

Chapter 3

English as a Global Language in Morocco: A Qualitative Study of Students' Motivations for Studying English



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Abstract This chapter sheds light on the global spread of English in Morocco by examining university students' motivations for selecting English as a field of study. Drawing on qualitative approaches in applied linguistics, two instruments have been employed to collect data: Email interviews and focus groups. A total of 286 Moroccan students participated in this study. They were in attendance at five public universities located in Marrakesh, Rabat, Kenitra, Oujda, and Meknes. Ten analytical typologies accounting for students' motivations have been identified: (i) Language attitudes and beliefs, (ii) Cultural interest, (iii) Ideal L2 self, (iv) Instrumentality (v) International orientation, (vi) Language facility, (vii) Linguistic vitality, (viii) Social milieu, (ix) School Milieu, and (x) Multilingual orientation. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the evolving status of English in Morocco and its implications for language policy and planning in the country.

Keywords Spread of English · Global English · English-in-Education · Teaching of English in Morocco · Moroccan language education policy

3.1 Introduction

Applied linguists have investigated the global English phenomenon and its effect on local and global linguistic ecologies. Crystal (2012) argues that a language is considered global when it has acquired a distinct role in various polities across the world, such as becoming the mother tongue of the majority of citizens (e.g., England and New Zealand); attaining the status of an official language (e.g., India and Cameroon); being considered the preeminent foreign language in secondary education (e.g., China and South Korea); or being used as a medium of instruction in lieu of the mother tongue in institutions of higher education (e.g., UAE and KSA). As such, a global language is pervasive and permeates all walks of life, including

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sports, music, entertainment, politics, tourism, popular culture, the media, education, and the internet.

De Swaan (2010, 2013) posits a global language system in which the ranking of each language is contingent upon its “communication potential” (Q-value), which is determined based on its “prevalence and its centrality”. This system is hierarchical in nature and breaks languages into four categories: Hypercentral languages are found at the summit, whereas peripheral languages are positioned at the bottom of the pyramid; supercentral and central are located in the middle. Currently, English is the sole hypercentral language owing to its status as a global language. Although Chinese boasts the highest number of speakers in the world, it has not yet been elevated to the status of a hypercentral language due to its limited global reach. Hence, it is considered a supercentral language.

One area that reflects the global dominance of English amply is academic publication. Ammon (2003) examined Anglo-Saxon bibliographic databases and found that by 1995, 87.2% of scholarly articles in the natural sciences and 82.5% in the social sciences had been published in English. Taavitsvainen and Pahta (2003) note that in 2001 nearly all doctoral dissertations (118 out of 119) at the University of Helsinki Faculty of Medicine were composed in English, whereas in 2001–2002, 50% of doctoral dissertations in the Faculty of Arts were written in English. Hamel (2007) points out the following interesting facts about English supremacy in the academic arena: At the turn of the twentieth century, English, French, and German were the three dominant languages in scientific publishing. German had the upper hand in medicine, biology, and chemistry; French in law and political sciences; English in political economy and geology. However, due to America’s political and military ascendancy after World War II, English has gradually ousted German and French to become the most dominant language in international scientific publishing.

One reason for the ascendancy of English is “its propensity for acquiring new identities, its power of assimilation, its adaptability for ‘decolonization’ as a language, ... and above all its suitability as a flexible medium for literary and other types of creativity across languages and cultures.” (Baugh & Cable, 1993). However, one should be wary that this diffusion, or rather hegemony, is all but natural. Nor is it a byproduct of some intrinsic qualities of the English linguistic system. If history is any measure, Greek, Latin, and Arabic made inroads into new territories, because of the armies of Alexander the Great, the legions of the Roman Empire, and the Moorish armies, respectively. “And English ... has been no exception” (Crystal, 2012, p. 9). History shows that the US and the UK exerted strenuous efforts to promote English monolingualism through entities such as the United States Information Agency, the British Council, and the ELT projects, which has given rise to linguicism, a process which operates in similar fashion to racism and sexism, by promoting one language at the expense of another and legitimizing a monolingual reality (Phillipson, 2013), facts which can also result in “linguistic capital dispossession” (Phillipson, 2017, p. 13).

Despite the potential ramifications of the global spread of English on learners’ personal and professional lives, little research has been undertaken on students’ motivations for studying English in Morocco. To date, no study has investigated

university students' motivations for selecting English as a field of study instead of Arabic or French. Hence, the general aim of this study is to explore the phenomenon of global English in Morocco by examining the following questions:

1. What are students' motivations for selecting English as a study major instead of Arabic or French?
2. What do the findings reveal about the status of English in Morocco?
3. What are the implications for language shift and maintenance in Morocco?
4. What are the implications for language policy and planning in Morocco?

3.2 Motivations for Studying English

Motivation is a psychological construct that has attracted the attention of applied linguists. Viewed from a socio-psychological perspective, motivation encompasses learners' efforts and goals to acquire the language. Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) make a distinction between two types of orientations: an integrative orientation, in which learners show a positive disposition toward the L2 community and willingness to be affiliated with the members of that community and their culture; and an instrumental orientation, in which learners seek pragmatic benefits, such as landing a decent job or earning a high income. Orientations are thus long-term goals, which, when combined with attitudes, nourish students' motivation to learn the language. Orientation and motivation are two different constructs: A student might display a given orientation toward an L2; however, he or she might not be highly motivated to attain his or her goal (Gardner & Tremblay, 1994). Motivation is then the level of intensity and effort exerted to achieve the goal reflected in the orientation.

It is worth noting that this distinction is not always hard and fast, and several studies have used the terms interchangeably and described orientation as intrinsic and extrinsic (e.g., Harter, 1981) or instrumental and integrative orientation, or combined the two, which results in "motivational orientations" (Noels, 2001, p. 117). Besides the issue of operationalizing the terms motivation and orientation, Gardner's concept of integrative motivation rests on a belief that learners seek identification or affiliation with a well-defined and stable Anglo-American community. Such conceptualization may no longer be valid, as the English-speaking community is in a state of flux as captured by Kachru's model of World Englishes (1992), which demonstrates how new indigenized and localized varieties of English have emerged in outer circle countries. Widdowson (1997) also argues that due to the rapid spread of English, the so-called native speakers can no longer claim exclusive ownership of English. In this sense, "others", especially in outer and expanding circles, can claim rights to English ownership on a par with their inner circle counterparts; their varieties can be considered as baseline rather than non-native or foreigner talk (Widdowson, 1997). Blommaert (2010) explains that speakers' linguistic repertoires are mobile rather than fixed, and move across a vertical space in which "socially, culturally and politically salient distinctions occur" (p. 5). As encapsulated by Lamb (2004, p. 3):

In the minds of learners, English may not be associated with particular geographical or cultural communities but with a spreading international culture incorporating (inter alia) business, technological innovation, consumer values, democracy, world travel, and the multifarious icons of fashion, sport and music.

It follows that the goal of learning English for many learners does not reside in communicating with native speakers per se, but with non-native speakers. Sifakis (2004) even suggested using the term “English as an Intercultural Language” instead of “English as an International Language,” since English today is used frequently in intercultural encounters. In this respect, Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009, p. 3) raise the following questions:

Does it make sense to talk about integrative attitudes when ownership of English does not necessarily rest with a specific community of speakers, whether native speakers of British or American English varieties or speakers of World English varieties? ... Does the notion of integrative motivation for learning English have any real meaning, given the increasing curricular reframing of English as a universal basic skill to be taught from primary level alongside literacy and numeracy?

One significant concept that was born out of this debate is Yashima’s notion of international posture (2000, 2002, 2009). According to Yashima, due to the rapid expansion of English worldwide, EFL learners can no longer identify with one specific group of English speakers. In this view, English serves as means to connect learners and speakers from various countries; and while some of these speakers are native, EFL learners are not generally inclined to relate to them. In fact, identification with native speakers from the US and the UK was one of the least supported items regarding subjects’ reasons for studying English (Yashima, 2000). International posture is made manifest in learners’ “interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and, one hopes, openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures” (Yashima, 2002, p. 57).

In this study, the term motivations will be used to describe factors, orientations, and perceptions identified by students as being conducive to their language choice. The study will be informed by Yashima, Ushioda, and Dörnyei’s theoretical concepts, such as international posture, cultural interest, and so on. These terms will be used loosely and insofar as they provide a depiction of students’ motivations. Instead of adopting an etic stance (i.e., researcher-centric) in which categories or units of analysis are defined a priori, this study will utilize an emic approach (i.e., participant-centric) in which the units of analysis, categories, and constructs are extracted from the in-depth information provided by the informants regarding their feelings, experiences, and perceptions vis-à-vis studying English, Arabic, and French.

3.3 The Linguistic Landscape in Morocco

Morocco is a multilingual community, where speakers grow up exposed to three or four languages, most prominent of which are Arabic, Amazigh, French, and Spanish. Code-switching or rather polylingual languaging, to use a more recent term by Jørgensen (2008), is the norm rather than the exception. Depending on their proficiency level, Moroccans will make use of appropriate linguistic features drawn from a combination of these codes to convey their messages and achieve intersubjectivity. While Amazigh is an official language and Spanish continues to exercise influence in Northern Morocco, these two languages do not enjoy wide currency among university students. This section highlights major aspects of Arabic, French, and English, the three languages with the highest number of enrollment in Moroccan universities.

3.3.1 *Arabic*

According to the 2011 Moroccan constitution, Arabic is a co-official language of Morocco, alongside Amazigh. However, the term Arabic is vague at best as various varieties of Arabic exist along a continuum, such as Quranic Arabic, Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Middle Moroccan Arabic, Educated Spoken Arabic, and Moroccan Arabic or Darija (Marley, 2004; Youssi, 1995; Ennaji, 1995). Using Ferguson's definition of traditional diglossia (1959), Morocco can be considered a diglossic community, in which Modern Standard Arabic is the high variety as it is often used in formal domains, such as religion, education, and administration; whereas Moroccan Arabic is the low variety due to its use mainly as a spoken medium and its lack of a standardized variety. However, even this is problematic since the Moroccan variety is not always intelligible to speakers from other Arabic-speaking countries due its lexicon and to a lesser extent morphology, which have been significantly impacted by centuries-long contact with Amazigh, French, and Spanish. In addition, many Moroccans do not consider Moroccan Arabic as a language, much less a variety of Arabic and prefer to speak in French instead in the public sphere. It seems that when Arabic is used today, it refers to Modern Standard Arabic, the variety used in formal education and the mass media, especially as a written medium. Therefore, it would be safe to limit the word Arabic to Modern Standard Arabic, and refer to the spoken variety as Moroccan Darija or the Moroccan vernacular. Arabic derives its power and prestige from its association with Islamic liturgy and its characterization as the language of divine revelation. It is thus promoted by the state as an index of national and religious identity, a fact underscored by the definition of Islam as the official religion of the state in the Moroccan constitution.

3.3.2 *French*

During the French Protectorate period (1912–1956), French was used as a medium of instruction in mission French schools, which educated children of French residents and Moroccan elite. These schools were anchored in *la mission civilatrice*, an ideology propagated in French colonies, which consisted of “civilizing” the colonized (Conklin, 1997). “The same education was provided for (some) children in Africa as for those in Lille: the same textbooks were used...” (Ager, 1999, p. 18). It was also mandated as the official language of the protectorate by the French authorities. After Morocco gained its independence in 1956, it launched the Arabization policy, whose purpose was to eliminate French from the educational system and key public domains, with a view to restoring Islamic values and safeguarding social and moral independence from the French. “For the Islamist movement, Arabization is a means to ensure the revival and spread of Islam in Morocco, which is subject to the influence of Western civilization, that is itself associated with social and moral decadence.” (Mouhssine, 1995, p. 45).

Sixty years later, the Arabization policy has proved to be a debacle. Not only has it failed to eradicate French from the educational system, but it has also been unable to develop a viable alternative, in which students are capable of entering the workforce and participating in the new economy. It is only ironical that many of the proponents of Arabization, especially from the Istiqlal Party, chose to educate their offspring in French mission schools and send them to pursue university studies in France so that upon graduation they return to Morocco and assume high-ranking government and ministerial positions. The current Minister of National Education, Professional Training, and Higher Education and Scientific Research has enrolled his children in a French mission school instead of a public one. Apparently, “after independence ... the French-speaking elite replaced the colonial rulers, applying much the same language policy in most cases or attempting to establish hegemony for a local variety” (Spolsky, 2018, p. 71). Today, French mission schools continue to thrive; they are highly selective as the number of applicants keeps increasing year in year out. French remains the de facto official language of vital domains, such as business, science, telecommunications, engineering, and medicine. French also plays a significant role in public education as it is used as a medium of instruction in science and engineering institutions of higher education. French indexes success, modernization, prestige, and social status. It is a linguistic capital, to use Bourdieu’s term (1991, 1998), that provides access to politics, education, the mass media, and the government, so over time this linguistic capital is converted into social and economic capital, an outcome that is not likely to come about with the exclusive mastery of one of the indigenous or national languages.

3.3.3 *English*

English is taught as a foreign language in Moroccan public schools as well as at university level alongside French in the freshman year. Recognizing the growing importance of English, the Ministry of Education mandated that English be taught starting Grade 5, while previously it had not been introduced until Grade 10 (Dahbi, 2004). The government also launched the English Baccalaureate in 2014, in which English instruction was to be allocated more time, and science courses to be taught in the English medium. In the private sector, there are American curriculum schools in the cities of Casablanca, Rabat, Tangier, and Marrakesh. While most public institutions of higher education teach through the Arabic and French mediums, there is a growing trend to teach science and engineering courses in English due to the demand to publish in international journals in order to increase universities' ranking (Belhiah & Abdelatif, 2016). Additionally, the number of private universities offering partial or complete instruction in the English medium has been growing steadily. These include Al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane, International Institute for Higher Education in Rabat, Private International Institute of Management and Technology in Rabat and Casablanca, and The International University of Rabat. One British and one American university also offer degree and/or semester abroad programs, namely The University of Sunderland and Cardiff Metropolitan University in Casablanca, Rabat and Tangier, and The University of New England in Tangier.

Unlike French, English does not carry a colonial baggage (Ennaji, 1991). Therefore, learners' attitudes toward English are generally favorable (Buckner, 2011; Errihani, 2017; Marley, 2004; Sadiqi, 1991). Boukous, a prominent Moroccan linguist, whose writings are predominantly in French, predicts that English will surpass French in the long term as Morocco's most spoken foreign language due to traditionalist, Islamist, and nationalist movements distrust of the French colonial legacy and ideology, on the one hand, and the gradual recognitions of English as the language of international culture and advanced technology (Boukous, 2009). While the government continues to favor French over English for political reasons having to do with the French government's strong support for Morocco's claim to the Sahara region, an issue on which the US stands on neutral ground, alongside the US State Department's recurrent criticism of human rights practices in Morocco; globalization, tourism, social media, the internet, science and technology, along with the internationalization of higher education are all factors that will likely accelerate the growth of English in the country in the next few decades.

3.4 Method

3.4.1 Context and Participants

A total of 286 Moroccan students majoring in English participated in this study. Participants were in attendance at five universities located in Marrakesh, Rabat, Kenitra, Oujda, and Meknes. All students in this study reported having studied English, Arabic, and French in high school. Among these, 140 were males and 146 females. Their ages ranged between 18 and 21.

3.4.2 Instrument

One interview questionnaire was developed and emailed to students. To validate the instrument, it was first disseminated among some colleagues, all of whom were language teachers, and revisions were made based on their feedback. The interview questionnaire was piloted among a group of 50 students. After analyzing their results, it appeared that the questions were clear and no further changes were deemed necessary. Students were given the choice to provide their answers in the language with which they are comfortable. All but three students wrote their answers in English. Three focus group discussions were carried out subsequently focusing on aspects of the interview that needed further elaboration.

3.4.3 Data Collection

The study was conducted over a period of 6 months (September 2018–February 2019). The email interview form was filled out electronically. Participants were informed that they were participating in a research project and that their answers, school affiliation, and identity would remain confidential. They were also informed that their participation was voluntary, and that they were free to opt out of participation.

3.5 Findings

The findings are organized into 10 recurrent analytical typologies that emerged from the data: (i) Language attitudes and beliefs, (ii) Cultural interest, (iii) Ideal L2 self, (iv) Instrumentality, (v) International orientation, (vi) Language facility, (vii) Linguistic vitality, (viii) Social milieu, (ix) School Milieu, and (x) Multilingual orientation. Verbatim quotes from the study participants are integrated to illustrate students'

motivations for selecting English as a field of study. The quotes were edited for glaring spelling and grammar errors only to ensure authenticity and legibility.

(i) *Language attitudes and beliefs*

Several students indicated favorable attitudes toward English and its culture and conveyed their love and passion for studying English. They described English as a beautiful language that is worth studying. For some it was their favorite subject in high school; for others, it was one of the most important aspects of their lives and they take great pleasure when speaking in English:

I have selected English as a field for my university studies, because I am very fond of English language, culture and literature

English was always my favorite subject at school. After my baccalaureate, I pursued my studies in law but I always got that obsession to learn this language. So after getting my bachelor degree in private law I decided to join the English department

When I was young, I really felt that I have a good future in English language. I was dreaming the day when I'm going to speak as a foreigner. Speak it fluently, without any pressure. So that is way I chose this field to continue my studies, for passion, for loving this beautiful language. Because I feel so comfortable when I speak it. I feel that I exist when I speak the language that makes me comfortable

Arabic and French on the other hand were perceived as dull, obsolete, and incapacitating compared to English. The adjective boring was associated 32 times with Arabic. Several students expressed their hatred for French, mainly because of its colonial legacy, and viewed French speakers as snobbish, elitist, and conceited:

Arabic is not a language where you can find different opinions and thinking. It does not offer the freedom of expression, in particular, the freedom of writing. Many writers nowadays have switched to English because Arabic is restricting the way through a new form of language, thoughts and beliefs. In other words, Arabic does not help writers to express their new style and feelings.

Since I was a kid, I did not like French not because it is difficult, but rather because I always saw French as a progressive existence of the colonizer, France.

To be honest I've never been a fan of French and what made me hate it even more is how people speak it like ohhh!! pfffff bon bref tu vois pfff mais putain toi!It's just cancer!

(ii) *Cultural Interest*

The study participants cited several aspects of the English culture for which they have significant interest and affection. These included cinema, music, English TV programs, and English history:

As a teenager I was obsessed with American culture, movies and songs ... I was always a big fan of American language and history so I wanted to learn more about it

I used to like American songs; I was always repeating lyrics and trying to understand their meanings. These affected my choice after getting my Baccalaureate

With regards to Arabic, participants expressed their discomfort with some aspects of the Arab culture, such as conservatism and religiosity. Some implied that they did not identify with the Arabic culture. As for the French culture, it was only brought up once and participants stated that they knew little about it since they rarely watched or listened to French programs.

I could have chosen Arabic as a major if I was interested in Arabic culture, Classical Arabic poetry and Arabic history in general. I would also have chosen it if I was born in Saudi Arabia or in a country where Arabic is considered a main language.

Arabic feels culturally foreign in a way, especially classical Arabic. I don't particularly identify with for example: conservatism, Arabic/Bedouin/Islamic culture.

I was never interested in French or its culture, if I had a choice, I would have studied English at school rather than French.

(iii) *Ideal L2 Self*

A recurrent theme in the focus groups was a sense among participants that the person they would like to become in the future is someone who speaks English. Although currently English is not the dominant language in day-to-day communication in Morocco, participants expressed their desire to speak English on a daily basis with members of the English community. They see English usage as crucial for their happiness and self-image:

I always knew I wanted to study English but I was discouraged by words like 'it's only a tool', 'you need to study for a real job', 'do you only want to become an English teacher?'. But in the end I decided to switch to English because it's what I like and want to speak in the future, and better do something you like than please people and be miserable

I think life would be easier and more fun if I can speak that language as I can integrate into different societies and be part of them.

Some students expressed their desire to become writers in the future and said English would enable them to achieve their dreams of becoming successful writers:

I love reading novels, different types of books which made me more interested in this language. I love writing as well. I started writing short stories, poems and songs when I was twelve years old. One of my dreams is to become a writer even I'm not quite sure that I have that level but I think this language will help me in the future because I can express emotions and ideas on my journals in English better than in Arabic or French.

(iv) *Instrumentality*

A range of perceived benefits of mastering English were elicited. Many students stated that English would help them secure decent jobs, such as working as English teachers, interpreters, translators, and businessmen. Some students were bound to study sciences in college, but because of their poor mastery of French, they gave up and joined the English department, in the hopes that they will study sciences in English overseas upon earning their BA.

The job market makes it inevitable to study English. I had a strong desire to study history and philosophy but these majors are almost not needed in the job market, which led me to select my second preference, English.

English will give me the opportunity to get the job that I want which is to be an interpreter in one of the embassies.

I was not really imagining myself studying English at the university due to the fact that I got my high school degree in physics. However, I got cold feet when I heard that it was very hard especially in French and most people who have done it don't even last for the first year. If I speak English and master it, I will have a bright future as it will be easier for me to go and finish my studies abroad.

Arabic and French were perceived as being less competitive on the international marketplace.

The only importance of Arabic language I know is as a part of my identity but as more jobs demand English skills it won't do me any favor studying my mother tongue.

Arabic has more graduates and less job perspectives unlike the English language which has a bright future in Morocco.

French is slowly losing its position in the professional world, so it doesn't make sense to invest my time and energy in a dying language.

(v) *International Orientation*

A recurrent theme in the interviews was a sense among interviewees that English is an international language that helps build connections not only with people from English-speaking countries, but also with citizens around the world. Some participants also expressed their wish to seek residency abroad. Compared to English, Arabic and French were viewed as lacking similar international appeal:

English has become a language of all nations, besides, it will give me the access to understand and communicate with people from any part of the globe.

I always dreamt of following my brother's steps and pursuing my studies and living in the United states.

Arabic is no longer considered as an international language that will allow me to communicate with people from various countries and get to know their culture.

I find it illogical that our country is francophone in a world where the most valuable language is English

(vi) *Language Facility*

A common view among participants was that English is an easy language to learn due to its simple grammatical rules. Students expressed high self-confidence in their English proficiency and reported obtaining good marks in secondary school because the workload was manageable, which encouraged them to select English as a study major.

English was the only subject in high school which I was good at.

Actually there are two things I'm good at: Football or sports generally and English. After I had my Baccalaureate I wanted to specialize in football. The problem was that I didn't have a good grade. That's why I decided to select English because I felt good at English sections at high school, and also one of my dreams is to become a writer even I'm not quite sure that I have that level but I'm trying to be good at writing.

Participants' perceptions of Arabic and French were different. For many, Arabic is a difficult language to master because of its complex grammatical system. The workload in high school was not manageable as students had to read literature written in classical Arabic and memorize poetic verses they did not comprehend. French was a source of struggle and anxiety owing to its copious grammatical rules. This resulted in low academic performance and pushed many participants to abandon any hope that they will ever master French:

I found trouble studying it especially in high school, because I was a literature student and we had to study it mainly with all its poems and its old writings.

I had a lot of difficulties understanding some of the Arabic major's subjects like grammar. I have always had terrible marks in Arabic exams at high school.

I did not select French as a study field because I am terrible at it; I think French is kind of complicated especially its grammar and English is way much easier.

(vii) *Linguistic Vitality*

In their accounts of the events surrounding their selection of English as a study major instead of Arabic or French, one theme that became paramount was linguistic vitality. English was perceived as a central language with a high communication value and a superior culture. Arabic is viewed as a literary or school language with little value in participants' daily lives. French was considered more vital than Arabic as it has a higher value in the Moroccan marketplace, but not as central as English in its global reach:

Arabic is a literary language. Arabic is dying in today's world. Majority of job opportunities either abroad or here in Morocco require languages such as English and French.

French will become a dead foreign language.

(viii) *Social Milieu*

Two aspects of social milieu have been highlighted by participants as being consequential for their pursuit of a degree in English: Early exposure to English and parental encouragement. Before the advent of satellite television and the internet, Moroccans had little exposure to English. TV programs and literature were available almost exclusively in Arabic and French. Students' exposure to English did not start until the age of 15, when students reached high school. Today, exposure to English kicks off as soon as their life begins, thanks to the internet and satellite television, which are available at affordable prices. Parents play an important role in the process as they nurture their children's desire to learn and master the language:

As a teenager I was obsessed with American culture, movies and songs. I was always a big fan of American language and history so I wanted to learn more about it. Majoring in English was my dad's dream as well as mine. He had encouraged me to study what I love the most I believe that people choose a language for the same reason bank robbers rob banks: because that is where the money is and I see the future in English field.

English has been my passion ever since I was in the 3rd grade; it used to be my gateway to compensate for my lack of French and Arabic. But now it's my gateway to achieve my goals and become an English professor, one day perhaps.

(ix) *School Milieu*

Teachers and teaching methods have been cited by participants as playing a significant role in their choice of English instead of Arabic or French as a field of study. Participants perceived their English teachers as affable, friendly, and caring. They also stated that they encouraged them to pursue English studies at the university. Teaching methods were described as engaging, fun, and interactive:

When I was in high school I used to like my English teacher. She was very nice in the way she teaches, she made me love this language because of her method of teaching (acting, singing, doing different activities in class.

I solely joined the English department because of a teacher in high school; in fact, I used to despise the language. I used to dislike the language altogether because I couldn't understand it. But thanks to a great teacher, who prompted us to give our best, and helped us realize that all languages can be learned if given patience and persistence, I am studying English now.

Arabic and French teachers were generally perceived as dull, uninteresting, and disengaging. Teaching methods were viewed as too conventional, tedious, and teacher-fronted.

Arabic was one of the subjects that I really resented in my high school years. It was simply not fun, or at least not as engaging as my other subjects. The teachers also didn't help. They certainly influenced my decision, as their way of teaching was very linear and orthodox.

My experience in college with teachers made me hate the language somehow. It became a memory to how the teachers were careless about you as a student. They attend just to chat with other teachers and all what you can do in their class is writing a text till the session is over, thus French became a reminder of the torture we lived as students.

(x) *Multilingual Orientation*

Participants conveyed a keen interest in learning languages and indicated they were not satisfied with being bilingual only. For them, having spent ample time studying French and Arabic in primary and secondary school is reason enough to embark on a new linguistic endeavor. Participants did not seem to be ethnocentric or to fear assimilation due to their English specialization. They saw multilingualism as normative and desirable, and communicated a strong interest in learning foreign languages:

I think I've learnt enough about French and it's not a really interesting language for me.

I've always been interested in languages; therefore, I've learnt French, English, Spanish, and Korean. I've studied economics and got my degree, and wanted to get a degree in English studies in order to study multilingual communication; I think that this language is very important to open up for the world and communicate with others.

3.6 Conclusion

This paper sought to shed light on the phenomenon of Global English in Morocco by exploring university students' motivations for selecting English as a field of study. In recent years, colleges of arts and social sciences have been facing a growing demand for English studies, which has surpassed the demand for all foreign languages, including Spanish, a colonial language, and French, a *de facto* official language. Even the demand for Arabic, the language of Islamic liturgy and national identity, has been in decline. This study has identified the major factors behind this state of affairs: Positive attitudes toward English, interest in the culture of English-speaking countries, the perception that English will be vital in students' future lives, the importance of English as a high-value commodity, students' interest in reaching out to people worldwide, the perception that English is linguistically easier than French and Arabic, the status of English as a *lingua franca*, early age acquisition coupled with parental encouragement, effective teaching methods, and students' keen interest in learning foreign languages.

The findings suggest that English is starting to make inroads into the linguistic landscape in Morocco. While Morocco may have been considered outside Kachru's model of World Englishes, which distinguishes between inner, outer, and expanding circles, one can safely claim that the country is gradually moving toward the expanding circle. The notion that English is a foreign language in Morocco may no longer be tenable given that many children start learning it at an early age and end up with a mastery that far surpasses their proficiency in Arabic and French. Granted, the state gives priority to Arabic and French, but this is no barrier to acquiring English since the internet, satellite television, and language centers provide Moroccans with the necessary tools to learn the language. Not to mention the role of neoliberal agencies, such as the British Council, AMIDEAST, and the Regional English Language Office (RELO), in promoting English as a necessity in the twenty-first century.

This study has implications for language policy and planning in Morocco. The spread of English is not without harm. It was disheartening to learn that many students reported poor mastery of what they believed to be their mother tongue, Arabic, while others went as far as conveying their loathing of Arabic. It is also astounding that Morocco is host to numerous organizations advocating the protection and revival of its two official languages, such as The National Coalition for the Arabic language and Amazigh Citizenship Network—Azetta, to name just two. If appropriate interventions are not made, it is likely that Arabic will remain a school language that has no bearing on students' personal and professional lives. Assuming that Arabic will be linguistically vital simply in view of its official status and spiritual influence is as

naïve as it is ill-informed. The same remark is applicable to Amazigh, which eight years after its officialization is still lagging behind with regard to its implementation in vital domains, such as education, health, administration, and law. Effective measures need to be taken in order to ensure a sense of additive multilingualism, where all pertinent languages are treated more or less equally. These measures should target attitude planning, acquisition planning, and corpus planning. It is such a multilingual policy that will eventually see national languages and foreign languages live side by side without fear of minoritization or homogenization.

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