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Amazigh Language Policy in Algerian Education: Between Revendication and Slow Implementation

Silvia Quattrini

Abstract

Language policy in education is often a site of struggle for equality and identity, especially for minorities and Indigenous peoples.¹ This paper focuses on Amazigh language policy as it relates to, and sits in tension with, the advocacy of Indigenous Amazigh activists and language practitioners in Algeria. While the country has made some progress at a policy level concerning Tamazight teaching in schools over the past thirty years, this progress has often come at a high price for Amazigh activists and has been accompanied by socio-political tensions. Hence, the slow rollout of Tamazight teaching on the ground cannot be analysed without looking at the structural discrimination faced by the community and the overall shrinking of civil society space. The paper employs a human rights framework, particularly an Indigenous peoples' rights lens, while borrowing concepts from decolonial linguistics. Drawing on desk-based research of existing policies and targeted interviews with Tamazight speakers, the paper concludes that state-sponsored measures must be supported by genuine civil society participation, especially of representatives of concerned communities, through a human rights-based approach to language planning. It identifies priority areas for Amazigh language policy in multilingual education to advance equitable and inclusive education in Algeria.

Keywords: Algeria; Amazigh; Language Policy; Education; Advocacy

Introduction

Language policy is often associated with state policies that involve the official recognition of a language, and its use in education, public media, and administrations. Indeed, state policies represent a major component of language policy and ideology as they have historically played a fundamental role in creating and perpetrating patterns of (linguistic) subjugation.² In classical language planning, designed for European nations (mainly from the eighteenth to twentieth

century) monolingualism was seen as an ideal objective for national unity,³ a model exported to colonised Southern multilingual countries (mostly through the imposition of English, French and Spanish, but also Portuguese and Dutch).⁴ In colonial and post-colonial contexts, language policies in education have been used as a tool to govern and oppress, with exclusionary consequences that are still tangible today. Individuals and communities without access to those ‘major’ colonial languages⁵ are marginalised, as exemplified by the persisting lower rates of school retention in several African countries, especially when those languages are not associated with socio-economic opportunities.⁶

Throughout West Asia (Middle East) and North Africa, this monoglossic ideology was also adopted by recognising Arabic as the only official language (and Islam as the religion), with the aim of achieving national unity and legitimacy following independence.⁷ As highlighted by Kabel (2018) for the case of Morocco,

Language ideologies were central to the construction and legitimation of ethnic difference and at the same time a cornerstone of colonial administration. The association of Arabic and Arab with Islam on the one hand and Amazigh with shallow Islamization and a profound European if not secular collective political and cultural unconscious on the other hand further fortified the political instrumentalization of language ideologies for the purpose of defining and ruling the natives [sic].⁸

In Algeria, language, identity, education, and religion have been heavily politicised and language policies often used as a proxy for political conflict.⁹ Although the Tamazight-speaking population represented over half of the Algerian population in 1830,¹⁰ presently it ‘constitutes a minority of the population. Since the 1960s, and arguably before, the Arabic-speaking population vastly increased numerically, and importantly, became the governing class’.¹¹ While Arabic was introduced through the Arab conquests starting from the seventh century, its main impact on the progressively severe endangerment of several Indigenous Amazigh language varieties¹² has been mainly caused by its sole imposition in modern official state policies.

This paper starts by situating the Amazigh struggle within the context of the HIRAK (‘movement’ in Arabic; a non-party-aligned pacifist movement started in 2019), and the Covid-19 pandemic, before moving to a historical overview of Amazigh advocacy for language rights. The paper acknowledges Amazigh (pl. Imazighen) people¹³ being largely recognised as Indigenous to North Africa;¹⁴ their cultures are not homogenous and different varieties of the Amazigh language exist across countries and areas.

Indigenous peoples have a right under international human rights law to ‘establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning’ (art. 14.1 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).¹⁵ The right to education for all or for specific groups is recognised in several international treaties, while explicitly or implicitly acknowledging the right to receive

education in one's mother tongue.¹⁶ However, even when not explicitly acknowledged in these conventions, some relevant UN committees have issued commentaries that elaborate on the application of the right to education for Indigenous peoples.¹⁷ Moreover, UN bodies concerned with the rights of Indigenous peoples have issued several reports elaborating on this matter.¹⁸

Therefore, this article starts from the general assumption that Imazighen as Indigenous peoples have a right to quality and equitable education under international law, which entails the right to be educated in their mother-tongue as well as in the majority/dominant language of the country where they live. There are several modalities in which this right can be implemented, and the paper will not delve into a legal analysis of this principle nor a detailed assessment of its applicability from an educational perspective. Its aim is to present an analysis of Amazigh revendications and negotiations about their language in education by looking at socio-political tensions, historical developments, legal concessions and some relevant linguistic elements.

Methodology

Definitions of language policy that are solely centred on state policies can be problematic as they dehumanise, decontextualise and de-historicise those policies which have contributed to the creation of an ideological apparatus.¹⁹ Therefore, this paper does not only focus on the recognition of languages from a legal perspective per se (i.e. to look at public policy at the macro level); it also looks at the performance of decision-making and the processes of reclaiming, negotiating and subverting those policies led by Indigenous peoples, in this case how Amazigh movements kept their language alive at the micro level and advocated for its recognition despite operating within an authoritarian context.

The main questions addressed by the article are: how have Indigenous Imazighen advocated for the official recognition of Tamazight and its teaching in schools? Do the necessary legal and sociopolitical conditions exist today to ensure an equitable and effective enactment and integration of Tamazight language policy in education?

To answer these questions, the article employs a corpus of NGO/CSO reports, statements, and documents from local to international organisations, together with official government policies and documents. These resources are complemented by five in-depth interviews conducted online with three Algerian Tamazight speakers, two of whom were initially interviewed in April 2021 and then again in September 2023, alongside a third speaker. These reports, read alongside relevant literature on linguistics, are used as the foundation for a socio-political and analytical narrative of the rollout of Tamazight teaching in schools since the 1990s and its implications for Amazigh rights. The paper concludes by assessing the consistency of Algerian education policy planning with the right of Indigenous peoples to education in their mother tongue and by addressing gaps and priority areas in Tamazight language planning for multilingual education.

The Hirak, Covid-19, and the Amazigh People

In 2019, just before the Covid-19 pandemic, the then-president of Algeria Abdelaziz Bouteflika was seeking his fifth re-election after having ruled the country for two decades (1999-2019). However, as the elections approached, people took to the streets in what became widely known as the Hirak ('movement' in Arabic)—a non-partisan, pacifist movement demanding Bouteflika's departure and advocating for radical, structural change. These would have involved the replacement of the long ruling elite, keeping in mind that the country had gone through decades of high social tension, including a civil war, while experiencing endemic corruption.²⁰ While Bouteflika left the country, the elections that followed did not deliver any of the anticipated promises.²¹ The December 2019 election of Abdelmadjid Tebboune, followed by a constitutional referendum and local elections in 2020, saw very low popular participation (twenty-four per cent and thirty per cent respectively). This left most Algerians disillusioned and many kept peacefully demonstrating in the street.²² Tebboune was recently re-elected for a second term in September 2024 amidst claims of fraud.²³

In March 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, several restrictive measures were put in place and protests' organisers had to temporarily halt the demonstrations.²⁴ As many Amazigh communities live in mountainous or remote areas, they established community-solidarity initiatives during the pandemic. These included committees based on traditional systems, which functioned to provide assistance to those in need and limit the spread of the virus by stationing representatives at village entrances to ensure that only residents would come in and out. These forms of self-management and support were often seen with suspicion by Algerian authorities, who dismantled the committees and intimidated their representatives.²⁵

These governmental reactions need to be situated within a broader and intensifying climate of civil society repression and intimidation in Algeria, particularly against journalists and human rights defenders,²⁶ including Indigenous Amazigh activists.²⁷ Since 2019, while the president's official discourse promised to promote the rule of law and respect for human rights,²⁸ the reality on the ground shows that civil society space in Algeria has been shrinking further.²⁹ For instance, during the Hirak, some Amazigh activists were imprisoned simply for raising the Amazigh flag, a symbol of cultural identity shared by all Imazighen in North Africa. Even when not accompanied by claims of self-determination or autonomy, such acts have often been perceived by authorities as a threat to national unity.³⁰ Moreover, the Algerian president of the World Amazigh Congress, Kamira Nait Sid, has been detained since 24 August 2021 on criminal charges of 'undermining national security and state security' and belonging to a 'terrorist organisation' and is serving a three-year sentence.³¹ While the Hirak and Covid-19 pandemic presented new challenges for the Algerian government, eventually triggering specific repressive tactics, the overall history of containing civil society efforts and Amazigh advocacy for recognition in Algeria is not new. It is within this backdrop that the following historical analysis should be read.

Amazigh Advocacy for Language Rights: Historical Overview

Estimates of current Tamazight speakers in Algeria vary significantly, from seventeen per cent to forty-five to fifty-five per cent of the population. As there are no official statistics, most sources report twenty-five per cent. This also depends on whether one accounts only for those who actively speak the language or also includes those having a passive knowledge of the language with various degrees of understanding (as language use can be mixed with Arabic and French). Some regions are heavily Tamazight-speaking, such as Kabylia, while other Tamazight-speakers are concentrated in the Aurès Mountains, Mount Chenoua, Ghardaïa (Wadi Mزاب) and the Sahara.³²

While sources report that Amazigh language teaching was first provided in Algeria in the 1880s at the Faculty of Humanities in Algiers,³³ the post-colonial construction of the Algerian nation based on linguistic (Arabic) unification created a hostile environment for diversity, something that became discursively associated with threats to national unity.³⁴ After Algeria gained independence from France in 1962, Tamazight university courses were banned by the authorities³⁵ and the state started sponsoring assimilationist policies with the aim to promote Arabisation in education, administration and all public domains.³⁶ Arabic was recognised as the only official language in the 1989 Constitution and the use of languages other than Arabic was restricted in many contexts by a 1991 law on ‘The Generalisation of the Use of Arabic’.³⁷

These policies sparked a reaction from Amazigh activists whose aspirations to be recognised as integral to the Algerian nation were not being met. For instance, in 1980, the government banned a lecture on ancient Kabyle poetry at Tizi Ouzou University, which led to demonstrations and strikes throughout the Kabyle region and other Amazigh areas, reaching the capital Algiers. However, these demonstrations were met with repression by the authorities, leading to the death of over thirty people and the injury and/or arrest of several hundreds.³⁸ This movement is known as the 1980s ‘Berber Spring (of Kabylia)’ (tafsut imazighen in Tamazight), and Kabylia came to represent for many and remains until today the stronghold and pioneering site of the Amazigh movement.

Despite previously mentioned laws passed during those years on the Arabic language, Chaker identifies 1989 as a turning point that witnessed the reversal of a state trend in repressing and excluding Amazigh language and culture since independence.³⁹ Following the 1980s spring and the pressure of the Amazigh Cultural Movement, the setting up of a department of Berber Language and Culture at the University of Tizi Ouzou was announced by the Ministry of Higher Education in 1990, then followed by other cities.⁴⁰ Despite those concessions, protests continued, as exemplified by the 1994-1995 region-wide strike in Kabylia enacted by school teachers and students that paralysed the entire education system for an entire academic year. The main demand of this general boycott, known as grève des cartables (‘Schoolbags Strike’), was to introduce the teaching of Tamazight in schools. A main outcome of this movement was the government’s decision in 1995 to establish the High Commission for Amazighness (Haut Commissariat à l’Amazighité, HCA) after negotiations between the government and factions of the Amazigh

Cultural Movement.⁴¹ This body, which is still functional today, has as its mission to: ‘rehabilitate and promote Amazighness as one of the foundations of national identity; introduce the Amazigh language into the education and communication systems.’⁴² Over the years, the Commission has organised several activities, including academic conferences and seminars, and commissioned translations of literary and scientific work between Arabic, French, and Tamazight.

Despite these gains, another year of civil unrest, known as the ‘Black Spring’, played out in 2001. Initiated as a peaceful remembrance of the ‘tafsut imazighen’, and accompanied by demands for official recognition of the Amazigh language, violent riots erupted between authorities and protestors after lethal provocations by the gendarmerie, which led to the death of 120 people and the injury of thousands of protestors.⁴³ Another round of negotiations followed, leading to a constitutional amendment in 2002 that instituted Tamazight as a national language, while keeping Arabic as a national and official language (art.3). Another amendment was passed in 2016 with the new Article 4 stating that ‘Tamazight shall also be a national and official language’, therefore adding the official character to Tamazight. A presidential decree was passed in 2018 to support the officialization of the language brought by Article 4 of the 2016 Constitution through the creation of the Algerian Academy for the Amazigh Language.⁴⁴ Finally, in the 2020 Constitution (following the Hirak and the ousting of Bouteflika), Tamazight was conferred the status of an immutable language, meaning that it shall be excluded from any future constitutional amendment. Nevertheless, as noted in an interview with an Algerian language rights expert: ‘Every time there’s a step forward in recognition, it’s because a confrontation has happened. I fear the next step forward will be after another crisis.’⁴⁵

The creation of the Algerian Academy for the Amazigh Language would technically be a positive step forward for the practical implementation of the constitutional recognition. Its mandate is clearly stated in the second chapter of the law. Of relevance for this analysis, among the nine tasks listed under Article 6, are: ‘to collect the national corpus of the Amazigh Language in all its linguistic varieties; to establish a standardisation of the Amazigh Language at all levels of linguistic description and analysis’. We shall see in the next section why these tasks are important for the teaching of the language. Unfortunately, the Academy is still not in place in 2024, around a half decade after the decree was passed, which, according to some activists, speaks volume to the lack of political will to address specific issues beyond mere symbolism.

Some Language Planning Considerations on Tamazight in Algeria

Algeria is the largest country in Africa. With a total population of forty-four million inhabitants, and most of its territory covered by desert, Algeria’s population predominantly lives in the northern parts of the country (closer to the Mediterranean or in the mountains). However, several remote communities and cities are located in the southern parts and Algeria is overall a relatively populous country (tenth in Africa).⁴⁶ Since 2019, Algeria has been organised into fifty-eight governorates (wilayas), thus adding ten governorates to the previous administrative organisation. These are not mere geographic considerations; they can have an impact on language policy and

practice, including (but not limited to): the varieties spoken of a specific language, the communities' distribution and the connections between them (or lack thereof), the level of maintenance of their mother-tongue, depending on remoteness and exposure to other languages, and provincial administrative freedom when it comes to their territorial and economic resources and the implementation of education policies.⁴⁷

As previously mentioned, there are no official statistics on Tamazight-speakers (most sources mention twenty-five per cent of the total population), and different varieties of Tamazight exist in Algeria (and elsewhere in North Africa), with some areas of the country having a stronger concentration and higher numbers of speakers, thus often resulting in stronger claims for rights. The following table provides a brief overview and some basic information on those language varieties, listed from the most to the least spoken, according to available data.

Table 1: Amazigh Language Varieties in Algeria

Language Variety⁴⁸	Number of Speakers and Threat of Endangerment	Where it is Spoken
Kabyle/Taqbaylit	Between 3,000,000 and 5,000,000 Safe / potentially vulnerable	Kabylia (Governorates of Tizi Ouzou and Bejaïa, as well as parts of Boumerdes, Bouira, Bordj Bou Arreridj, Sétif, Jijel, Algiers, Oran, Tiaret, Ouargla)
Chaouia / Tachawit	Between 1,000,000 and 3,000,000 Safe / potentially vulnerable	Aurès Mountains (Governorates of Batna, Khenchela, Biskra, Oum El Bouaghi, Tébessa, Souk Ahras, Setif and Mila)
Tumzabt / Tamzabit	Between 150,000-300,000 Unsafe / endangered	Mzab valley (Governorate of Ghardaïa)
Tahaggart Tamahaq	Around 130,000 Unsafe / endangered	Hoggar Mountains (Governorate of Tamanrassret)
Chenoua / Tachenwit	Around 70,000 Unsafe / endangered	Chenoua Mountains (Governorates of Ténès and Tipaza)
Ouargli / Tegargrent	Around 10,000-20,000 Endangered	Governorate of Ouargla
Tugright / Tugurt	Less than 10,000 Endangered	Oued Righ, Touggourt (Governate of Ouargla)
Tidikelt /Tagcirt	10 to 99 Definitely endangered	Tit (Governorate of Adrar)

Source: All data is from the UNESCO World Atlas of Languages,⁴⁹ complemented with data from Ethnologue,⁵⁰ and summarised by the author.

Although these are all varieties of what is usually identified as one single language, significant differences exist between them, particularly at the lexical level.⁵¹ The level of documentation of each of these varies significantly too, with implications on the availability of descriptive and pedagogical materials (grammars, teaching supports, etc.). The most documented variety is Taqbaylit (Kabyle), not simply because it has the highest number of speakers, but also for historical reasons mentioned above (being the centre of the Amazigh cultural movement and political revendications). Kabylia also has a high concentration of universities and researchers, and many Kabyle Imazighen in diaspora have been actively writing in their mother tongue and creating teaching materials. As a matter of fact, and due to these factors, only a couple of varieties are currently taught in Algerian schools, despite a series of measures employed for the rollout of Tamazight teaching.

While the lack of written materials does not necessarily exclude the possibility of teaching and transmitting a language – African societies and Indigenous communities around the world have orally transmitted their languages for millennia often without having a writing system⁵² -if the language is to be integrated into the modern teaching system employed in most countries, then there is a general assumption that these materials constitute an important prerequisite for this integration.

The role of the Algerian Academy for the Amazigh Language, mentioned in the previous section and which has yet to see the light,⁵³ should then be, among other things, to collect the national corpus in all its linguistic varieties, meaning that they should collect all existing materials and invest in further documentation. Once this is achieved, they should plan to work on the standardisation of the Amazigh language, meaning that, by collecting all the national corpus, they would seek to develop one standard version of the language that can be used for official purposes, including its teaching. Although ‘[t]he academy is composed of about 50 qualified Berber experts with proven skills in the field of education, pedagogy and didactics, Berber linguistics, planning, anthropology, history, and computer science’,⁵⁴ this process should ideally also happen in sincere consultation with Amazigh community representatives and experts, to promote community ownership of what will become the official version.

Standardisation also means choosing a writing system. Tamazight has its own ancient alphabet, Tifinagh, which has been officially employed by Morocco since 2003, including in education. However, because of the lack of standardisation in Algeria, most people informally use the Latin script, with a smaller group using the Arabic alphabet, often resulting in ideological debates (Latin being associated with international languages and French colonisation, while Arabic being the language of Islam and also a symbol for the process of linguistic unification and Arabisation against diversity for many Imazighen).⁵⁵ Regardless of the alphabet that will be adopted, it must be stressed that language planning is a long-term process. This would feel as entirely top-down if the efforts made so far by both civil society organisations and academic contributors to language planning were to be excluded.

The Rollout of Tamazight Teaching in Schools

Specialised departments for Amazigh language and culture were set up in Algerian universities in the early 1990s, starting with the universities of Tizi Ouzou (1990) and Bejaïa (1991), both being situated in the Kabyle region. Similar departments were then created in Bouira (Kabylia) in 2010 and in Batna (Aurès) in 2013 (after the officialization of the language).⁵⁶

In 1995-1996 experimental teaching was launched in some middle and high schools in sixteen governorates, immediately after the creation of the HCA and under its supervision. The last official report on the situation of Tamazight teaching in Algeria by the HCA, which dates back to 2014, provides the following figures.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, more recent official statistics are unavailable.

Table 1: Number of Learners and Teachers of Tamazight in Algerian Schools From 1995 Until 2013

School Year	1995-1996	1998-1999	2001-2002	2004-2005	2007-2008	2009-2010	2012-2013
Learners	37,690	55,730	68,995	94,047	139,293	193,226	234,690
Teachers	233	184	217	387	670	1,148	1,654

Source: Haut-Commissariat à l'Amazighité (2014).

The governorate of Tizi Ouzou contributed by itself to an average of fifty per cent of the above figures. The most taught variety is by large Taqbaylit. This is due to this concentration in Tizi Ouzou in particular, and Kabylia more broadly; to the university departments' training of teachers mostly in Kabylia; and the lack of standardisation mentioned above.

Table 2: Number of Students per Tamazight Language Variety for Academic Year 2012-2013

Language Variety	Number of Students	Percentage
Taqbaylit	208,676	88,92%
Tachawit	24,965	10,64%
Tamahaq	1,049	0,45%
Tachenwit	0	0
Tumzabt	0	0
Total	234,690	100%

Source: Haut-Commissariat à l'Amazighité (2014).⁵⁸

Reports from the academic year 2015-2016 confirm that the increase in number of teachers is essentially concentrated in Tizi Ouzou, Bejaïa, Bouira and Batna, thus hinting that ‘this teaching only exists mainly in regions where the social demand is significant’.⁵⁹ Therefore, the vast regional disparities in language teaching can be read either as a limitation or a reflection of community demands.

According to all three interviewees (all adult Tamazight speakers, two men and one woman), the most significant limitation to implementing Tamazight teaching in schools is by far its facultative character. In fact, despite being an official and national language, according to a 2008 law on national education still in place today,⁶⁰ Tamazight teaching in schools remains optional (for schools to teach and students to study), unlike Arabic and French. This means that taking Tamazight classes does not contribute to students’ final results. An optional exam for the baccalaureate was established in 2003/2004.⁶¹ One of the interviewees affirmed: ‘Students are not interested in learning Tamazight because it’s optional; they already have too much content, and they don’t see the benefit of studying a language that is different from their variety. They prefer studying English or French.’⁶² This interviewee identified as Amazigh but still stated that she did not see the interest in teaching Tamazight in schools. Moreover, all interviewees, regardless of whether they advocate for language rights or not, agreed that students are not encouraged to take Tamazight classes because they need to focus on content that is contributing towards their final grades.

Sources also report that, despite the introduction in 1995 of Tamazight teaching in schools, this was mostly a symbolic response to the socio-political demands, as teaching was instituted without standardisation and sufficient training materials.⁶³ In 2001, Chaker observed that ‘the means put forth are for the moment very limited; so much the actions of the Berber associations, in terms of teaching and training, appear still much more significant than that of the HCA’.⁶⁴ Pedagogical materials were developed only from 2003 and these were mostly based on the Kabyle variety, another factor that may explain the refusal of teachers in other regions to teach such materials.⁶⁵

Starting from 2010-2011, a new policy of generalisation of Tamazight teaching was put in place, which allowed for the introduction of the language in the primary schools of Tizi Ouzou.⁶⁶ Taqbaylit, Tachawit, and Tamahaq are currently taught in primary and secondary schools in the governorates where these varieties are spoken at an average of three hours per week.⁶⁷ It is interesting to note that, despite having a good number of speakers, the teaching of Tumzabt seems to be non-existent (see Table 3) or very low (five teachers in Ghardaïa in 2016).⁶⁸ While commenting on the facultative state of the Tamazight language teaching, the former President of the World Amazigh Congress stated:

How can you say that you want to generalise a language if it is optional, if it is not compulsory? The term optional is disparaging and contemptuous. Twenty-five years after Amazigh language teaching began, this is still at the experimental and optional stage. Amazigh language teaching only survives thanks to activist teachers

and activist parents, but they are frowned upon by the administration and sometimes end up being tired. Kabylia is the region where Amazigh language teaching works best because it is populated by a large majority of Amazighs who are traditionally very attached to their language and culture.⁶⁹

Although the generalisation of Tamazight teaching nation-wide (i.e. introducing the language in every school of every governorate) was announced at the beginning of several academic years over the past decade, this has not yet happened in reality.⁷⁰ One must also clarify that there are different levels of decision-making before the teaching is actually implemented on the ground. The official decision by the Minister of Education is but the first layer, followed by the Directors for Education at each provincial level, who are responsible for implementing the decision. Even when regional directors are in agreement, the next level would be for school principals to ensure that teaching actually happens in their institutions and to find qualified teachers. On this matter, one of the interviewees commented:

Even when the Minister for Education announces the generalisation of the language, and even when the Directors for Education at the province level agree with it, I know there are teachers who go to work and find themselves with empty classes because of the discourse around it. Students think, what is the point of studying a subject that does not count towards our final results? It's sad to put it this way, but I'm sure they would not attend Arabic classes either if they knew that class wouldn't count towards their final results.⁷¹

According to the interviewees, many decision-makers are opposed to Tamazight teaching because of the stigmatisation associated with speaking the language, which in turn also manifests in the refusal, of some parents, to have their children learn it in schools. Negative attitudes towards Indigenous languages are a common factor contributing to their endangerment.⁷² McCarty (referring to Hymes 1980, p.110) affirms that '[t]he latent function of schools is to define a certain proportion of people as inferior, even to convince them that they are so, and to do this on the seemingly neutral ground of language'.⁷³ Moreover, English was recently introduced in Algerian schools as a compulsory subject.⁷⁴ Although competing mostly with French as an international language, this further demonstrates how Tamazight, despite being an official and national language, remains the only optional language in the Algerian curriculum.

In conclusion, several factors were identified for the slow rollout of Tamazight teaching in Algerian education: 1) the large regional disparities caused by stronger demands in Kabylia and other Amazigh-speaking areas alongside negative attitudes in other regions; 2) the still-valid optional character of the language teaching, which according to commentators shows a lack of political will to go beyond mere symbolism aimed at calming down community revendications; 3) the non-establishment-yet of the Algerian Academy for the Amazigh Language; 4) the lack of standardisation and availability of pedagogical materials and teachers. Addressing these

shortcomings could attend to the inclusion of other language varieties and regions in the nation-wide generalisation plan, thus fostering inclusion and countering stigma. However, the implementation of these steps would still take place in a political climate where Amazigh associations are not particularly welcome to operate.

The Impact of Covid-19 and Amendments to the Penal Code

It is undeniable that the Covid-19 pandemic has presented severe challenges to teaching arrangements all around the world. Needless to say, the impact was felt much stronger in countries with limited access to resources, especially technological resources and online connectivity, and even more so for marginalised communities.⁷⁵ In Algeria, primary and secondary schools were closed from mid-March 2020 for more than seven months, while universities provided online teaching until December 2020. However, distance learning was undermined by poor internet connections and limited access to laptops and other equipment (65.5 per cent of 2,000 professors interviewed in 2020 for a study stated it was an issue).⁷⁶

When it comes to Tamazight teaching, the teaching was reduced from three to 1.5 hours per week. On this matter, one of the interviewees stated:

It's true that most teaching hours for all subjects have been halved, but we need to look at how this reduction in teaching hours is actually reflected in the subjects taught. For example, if you divide a large amount of teaching time in half, you are left with a substantial number of hours, whereas if you divide a small amount of teaching time in half, you are left with very little. Subjects with a low hourly volume, such as Amazigh, are therefore much more affected. It often happens that these 'marginal' lessons are simply cancelled. This is not fair, and everything seems to be done in such a way as to suggest that teaching with a small timetable is not important.⁷⁷

Because of this reduction, and because Amazigh associations had been historically working on activities related to language teaching and cultural promotion, they tried to sustain their efforts in this direction. At the same time, the monitoring of Amazigh associations' work by authorities seemed to increase during the management of the Covid-19 crisis.⁷⁸ In this context, it is worth noting that two laws were swiftly passed in April 2020, seemingly taking advantage of the fact that the population's focus was predominantly on the pandemic: a Law on Preventing and Combating Discrimination and Hate Speech, and a law amending the Penal Code. The former, while nominally promoting human rights, is considered very vague by many, 'leaving the judge a margin of interpretation which allows them to repress under pressure in a judicial system that is considered far from being independent'.⁷⁹ The latter has also been criticised by human rights commentators for the potential limitations on freedom of the press and NGO work, as it criminalises the broadcast of 'fake news' deemed harmful to 'public order and state security'.⁸⁰

Moreover, Article 2 of the amended code foresees up to seven years of prison and a fine for receiving funds from abroad with the objective of ‘carrying actions that could harm the security of the State, the stability of its institution, national unity and territorial integrity’. Although not making any direct reference to Imazighen, the World Amazigh Congress has raised concerns about this article being ‘very dangerous for the Amazighs because it can be used to prevent them from receiving contributions from their brothers living abroad (to support initiatives such as those to face the Covid-19 emergency), thus striking a blow against the lifestyle and spirit of solidarity that is part of their culture.’⁸¹

This brief description implies that formal Tamazight teaching faced some challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic, as was the case for the general education sector. The shrinking civil society space and the monitoring of Amazigh associations also did not provide a favourable environment for it to thrive in the informal sector.

Conclusions: Addressing Gaps in Education and Ensuring Participation

In this article, we have seen how Tamazight has been recognised as a national and official language in Algeria after decades of advocacy from the Amazigh movement. Nevertheless, recognising an Indigenous language as official does not automatically translate into its inclusion in the school curriculum. This is very often the result of long-term community revendications, as well as language policy and planning in education that must be negotiated with decision-makers and language experts. On the one hand, practical considerations must be made, such as on the level of endangerment and documentation of a language, standardisation, availability of resources, teaching materials and qualified teachers, and geographical distribution of the Indigenous population across the country and/or in specific regions. On the other, it requires thinking carefully about the impact that colonisation, historical developments, and socio-political factors have had on that language - its perception, ideology, endangerment, (mis)representation - and its community of speakers, their claims and identity(ies).

Moreover, there is often a general assumption that providing education in a language other than the majority one somehow precludes access to the latter; an assumption that has been proved unfounded by numerous studies from Southern and multilingual countries that show the benefits of bi/multilingual education.⁸² Negative attitudes towards Indigenous and minority languages are often at the basis of those misconceptions. As expressed by an interviewee,

It's important to teach the Amazigh language, but it's also important to teach everything connected with that language, such as the history of the Amazigh people in North Africa, their knowledge and all aspects of Amazigh culture. The Amazigh people and their attributes (language, culture, history) are both obscured and devalued. [...] It is essential to teach history in a scientific manner, to combat negative prejudices and to make non-Amazigh people aware that the Amazigh language and culture are a rich resource.⁸³

As this article mentioned, Algeria has been witnessing a general shrinking of civil society space. This has included reprisals against Amazigh activists, whether during the Hirak demonstrations, in response to the Covid-19 crisis, or simply for their advocacy for Amazigh rights. This is part of a broader historical space of demands, contestations, repressions, and concessions.

The official recognition of Tamazight at a national level and its progressive inclusion in schools did come at a price. However, it is in place today, despite its limitations, and it is the result of Indigenous Amazigh advocacy and revendications that forced the Algerian state to negotiate with the Amazigh movement. Some commentators see these negotiations as a political strategy to limit further costs and a mere symbolic act that has often not been supported by any political will at the implementation level. This can be exemplified by the fact that Tamazight teaching is still optional three decades after its first introduction and despite the officialization of the language, as well as the continued non-establishment of the Algerian Academy for the Amazigh Language. Moreover, the roll-out of Tamazight teaching and most of its current resources, teachers, and students have historically been, and still are, concentrated in the Kabyle region. This does not come as a surprise if one situates it, on the one hand, against the backdrop of Kabylia being the epicentre of Amazigh revendications, and on the other, the dearth of language standardisation still in place today.

In conclusion, this analysis indicates that the conditions for an equitable and effective rollout of Tamazight language policy in education are currently lacking, especially when assessed against the framework of Indigenous peoples' right to education in their mother-tongue. From a legal perspective, some policies are in place but need to be strengthened by revising the 2008 law on national education to make the teaching of the Amazigh language compulsory and ensuring the creation of the Academy, with consequent sufficient funding allocation. From a socio-political perspective, the conditions seem to be even more limited, due to the repression of several Amazigh activists and the limitations faced by Amazigh associations to operate freely, including in terms of language education. Adopting a human rights-based approach to language planning is fundamental to achieving sustainable and resilient societies: state-sponsored measures need to be supported by genuine civil society participation, especially by representatives of concerned communities without whom the current gains would have not been achieved.

About the Author

Silvia Quattrini is the North Africa Associate at Minority Rights Group, focusing on racial and gender justice, language rights, and freedom of religion in Tunisia and North Africa, while collaborating with civil society and grassroots movements. She is also completing a PhD at the University of South Australia, researching Indigenous women's roles in multilingual education policies in Southern contexts.

¹ I capitalise the word ‘Indigenous’ in line with what is advocated by several Indigenous scholars around the world. For instance, Newcomb (2017) laments that in international law, the term state is spelled with honorific capital ‘S’ while Indigenous with symbolically subordinate lower case ‘i’ as a metaphor of domination. Newcomb, S. (2017). *Domination in Relation to Indigenous (‘Dominated’) Peoples in International Law*. In I. Watson (ed.) *Indigenous Peoples as Subjects of International Law* (Abingdon, Oxon UK; New York, Routledge).

² Many scholars, mostly linguists, have addressed this issue in depth, see for instance Ngūgĩ wa Thiong’o (1986) *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Heinemann Educational); Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove (2000) *Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* (New York: Routledge).

³ Hobsbawm, Eric J. (1990) *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

⁴ Franceschini, Rita (2013) ‘History of Multilingualism’ in Carol A. Chappelle (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (Oxford: John Wiley and Sons).

⁵ A vast literature from Southern and decolonial scholars exist on this matter. See for instance Bamgbose, Ayo (2000) *Language and Exclusion: the Consequence of Language Policies in Africa* (Lit Verlag); Makoni, Sinfree, Busi Makoni, Ashraf Abdelhay and Pedzisai Mashiri (2012) ‘Colonial and Post-colonial Language Policies in Africa: Historical and Emerging Landscapes’ in Bernard Spolsky (ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Language Policy* (Cambridge University Press); McCarty, Teresa L. (2011) *Ethnography and Language Policy* (Routledge); Quijano, Aníbal (1992) ‘Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad’ [Coloniality and modernity/rationality] *Perú Indígena* 13(29), pp.11-20; Veronelli, Gabriela A. (2015) ‘The Coloniality of Language: Race, Expressivity, Power and the Darker Side of Modernity’, *Wagadu*, 13, pp.108-134.

⁶ Heugh, Kathleen (2011) ‘Discourses from Without, Discourses from Within: Women, Feminism and Voice in Africa’, *Current issues in language planning*, 12(1), pp. 89-104.

⁷ Benrabah, Mohamed (2014) ‘Language and Politics in Algeria’ in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 10, pp.59-78.

⁸ Kabel, Ahmed (2018) ‘Reclaiming Amazigh in a Time of Devitalization’, in Hinton L., Huss L., & Roche G., *The Routledge Handbook of Language Revitalization*, pp.485-494.

⁹ Benrabah, Mohamed (2013) *Language Conflict in Algeria: From Colonialism to Post-Independence* (Multilingual Matters).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹¹ Rouabah, Siham (2022) ‘Multilingualism in Algeria: Educational Policies, Language Practices and Challenges’, *Journal of the British Academy* 10 (s4), p.24.

¹² I avoid the use of the term ‘dialect’ as it can have negative connotations, since ‘dialect’ is usually perceived as ‘less’ than a ‘language’. There are many studies on this terminology debate and its sociolinguistic implications; see, for instance, Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove and Teresa L. McCarty ‘Key Concepts in Bilingual Education: Ideological, Historical, Epistemological, and Empirical Foundations’ in Jim Cummins and Nancy Hornberger (eds.) *Bilingual Education. Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, Volume 5, 2nd edition (New York: Springer). I use variety in this context as a more neutral choice, as it is not the author’s place to choose what constitutes the Amazigh language/s. This choice should reside with the community of speakers.

¹³ While some refer to Amazigh as ‘Berbers’, I do not employ this term as it is an exonym (a term externally imposed) and not the one preferred by Amazigh/ Imazighen for self-identification.

¹⁴ Rouabah (2022); Amazigh in Algeria (January 2023), *Minority Rights Group*, accessed 28 September 2024 <https://minorityrights.org/communities/amazigh/>; International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), Algeria, <https://www.iwgia.org/en/algeria.html>.

¹⁵ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted on 2 October 2007.

¹⁶ Art.13 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966, ratified by Algeria in 1989), art.14 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), art.28(1) ILO convention no.169 (1989, not ratified by Algeria), art.28 Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989, ratified by Algeria in 1993).

¹⁷ E.g., General Comment no.11 (2009) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child para.56-63.

¹⁸ UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2008) Report of the international expert group meeting on indigenous languages to the UN Economic and Social Council. Doc no. E/C.19/2008/1; Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2012) Study on the role of languages and culture in the promotion and protection of the rights and identity of indigenous peoples. Report to the Human Rights Council. Doc no. A/HRC/EMRIP/2012/3. See also actions by UNESCO in the framework of the UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032, <https://www.unesco.org/en/decades/indigenous-languages>.

¹⁹ McCarty (2011) p.xii. For instance, in South Africa, language policies based on mother-tongue education were used during apartheid to further segregate non-white communities and provide lower quality education, see Heugh,

Kathleen (2013) ‘Multilingual Education Policy in South Africa: Constrained by Theoretical and Historical Disconnections’ in *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 33, pp.215–237.

²⁰ Martinez, Luis (2022) ‘Views: Is the Algerian Hirak Over?’, *Rowaq Arabi* 27 (3), pp. 13-19, <https://doi.org/10.53833/SPHF8052>.

²¹ Aalouane, Fouad (2021) ‘Elections and Democratic Transition in North Africa: The Case of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia’, *Rowaq Arabi* 26 (1), pp. 31-46, <https://doi.org/10.53833/OAFK4553>.

²² Ghebouli, Zine Labidine (24 August 2023) ‘Post-Bouteflika’s “New Algeria”: Transition in a Vicious Cycle’, Bawader, *Arab Reform Initiative*, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.arab-reform.net/publication/post-bouteflikas-new-algeria-transition-in-a-vicious-cycle/>.

²³ ‘Algeria Court Certifies President Tebboune’s Landslide Re-election Win’ (2024), *Al Jazeera*, 14 September, accessed 30 September 2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/9/14/algeria-court-certifies-president-tebboune-landslide-re-election-win>.

²⁴ Dris, Nouri (2020) ‘The Future of the Algerian Hirak Following the COVID-19 Pandemic’, Bawader, *Arab Reform Initiative*, 7 April, accessed 30 September 2024, <https://www.arab-reform.net/publication/the-future-of-the-algerian-hirak-following-the-covid-19-pandemic/>.

²⁵ Congrès Mondial Amazigh (2020) ‘Aspects de la Vie des Amazighs dans le Contexte du COVID-19’ [Aspects of Amazigh life in the context of Covid-19], 12 May, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.congres-mondial-amazigh.org/2020/05/12/aspects-de-la-vie-des-amazighs-dans-le-contexte-du-covid-19/>.

²⁶ ‘Algeria: Continued Restrictions on Human Rights Defenders Undermine Social Reforms says UN expert’ (2023), *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner*, 5 December, accessed 8 February, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/12/algeria-continued-restrictions-human-rights-defenders-undermine-social>.

²⁷ ‘Algeria: Mounting Repression as More Human Rights Defenders are Detained’ (2022), *Amnesty International*, 2 March, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/03/algeria-mounting-repression-as-more-human-rights-defenders-are-detained/>.

²⁸ ‘Algeria: Constitutional Reform Process Undermined by Crackdown’ (2020), *Amnesty International*, 25 June, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/06/algeria-constitutional-reform-process-undermined-by-crackdown/>.

²⁹ See for instance the 2022 case of the dissolution of the most prominent human rights organisation in Algeria, the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH). ‘Algeria: Appeal Hearing an Opportunity to Reinstate Leading Independent Rights Organization Dissolved Amid Intensifying Crackdown’ (2024), *Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies*, 28 January, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://shorturl.at/jrIX2>.

³⁰ Bagnetto, Laura Angela (2019) ‘Berber Flag Controversy in Algerian Courts Continues’ *Radio France Internationale*, 13 November, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20191113-flag-confusion-algerian-courts-condemns-or-acquits-same-charge>.

³¹ Zurutuza, Karlos (2023) ‘When Kamira Nait Sid Disappeared Under a Gas Cloud’ *Nationalia*, 16 November, accessed 8 February, <https://www.nationalia.info/new/11571/when-kamira-nait-sid-disappeared-under-a-gas-cloud>.

³² ‘Amazigh in Algeria’ (January 2023), *Minority Rights Group*, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://minorityrights.org/communities/amazigh/>. See also Hamdan, Jihad M. and Sara Kessar (January 2023) ‘Language Policy and Planning in Algeria: Case Study of Berber Language Planning’, *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 13 (1), pp. 59-68.

³³ Sabri, Malika (2014) ‘L’Enseignement de Tamazight dans les Différents Paliers: Peut-on Parler d’Évolution’ [Tamazight Teaching at Different Levels: Can we Speak of Evolution?] *Iles d’imesli*, 1 (6), pp.189-211.

³⁴ Chaker, Salem (2001) ‘Berber Challenge in Algeria: The State of the Question’, *Race, Gender & Class*, 8(3), pp. 135-156.

³⁵ Hamdan and Kessar (2023).

³⁶ Benrabah (2013; 2014).

³⁷ Loi n° 91-05 du 16 janvier 1991 portant généralisation de l’utilisation de la langue arabe [law no.91-05 of 16 January 1991 on the generalisation of the use of Arabic language].

³⁸ Amazigh in Algeria, *Minority Rights Group*.

³⁹ Chaker (2001)

⁴⁰ Hamdan and Kessar (2023)

⁴¹ Chaker (2001), p.144-145.

⁴² HCA, Missions, accessed 8 February 2024, https://www.hcamazighite.dz/fr/page/le-hca-p7?tag=bloc_27.

- ⁴³ International Crisis Group (2003) 'Algeria: Unrest and Impasse in Kabylia', *International Crisis Group*, Report n.15, accessed 8 February 2024, https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/north-africa/algeria/algeria-unrest-and-impasse-kabylia-0_13/5/2022.
- ⁴⁴ Loi organique n° 18-17 du 22 Dhou El Hidja 1439 correspondant au 2 septembre 2018 relative à l'Académie algérienne de la Langue Amazighe [Organic law no.18-17 of 22 Dhou El Hidja 1439 corresponding to 2 September 2018 concerning the Algerian Academy for the Amazigh Language], accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.joradp.dz/FTP/jo-francais/2018/F2018054.pdf>
- ⁴⁵ Interview with Nourredine Bessadi, expert on language rights, 25 September 2023. Here he was referring to the creation of HCA after one year of strikes in 1994-1995 and the various constitutional amendments. All interviews were conducted in French and quotes have been translated into English by the author.
- ⁴⁶ 'African Countries by Population (2024)', *Worldometers*, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.worldometers.info/population/countries-in-africa-by-population/>.
- ⁴⁷ For an overview of how these factors can impact language planning considerations see De Varennes, Fernand (1996) *Language, Minorities and Human Rights* (Kluwer Law International).
- ⁴⁸ Spelling of varieties changes across sources. I tried to use some of the most commonly used while maintaining the reference to the area/community of speakers.
- ⁴⁹ World Atlas of Languages, Algeria page, *UNESCO*, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://en.wal.unesco.org/countries/algeria>.
- ⁵⁰ Languages of the World, Ethnologue, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.ethnologue.com/language/tjo/>.
- ⁵¹ Hamdan and Kessar (2023), p.62.
- ⁵² Osborne, Samuel (2021) 'Aboriginal Knowledge, Agency, and Voice', in Kathleen Heugh, Cristopher Stroud, Kerry Taylor-Leech, and Peter I. De Costa (eds.) *A Sociolinguistics of the South* (United Kingdom: Routledge); Roy-Campbell, Zaline M. (2003) 'Promoting African Languages as Conveyors of Knowledge in Educational Institutions', in Arnetha Ball, Sinfree Makoni, Geneva Smitherman, & Arthur K. Spears (eds.). *Black Linguistics: Language, Society and Politics in Africa and the Americas* (Florence: Routledge).
- ⁵³ Arab Chih (2021) 'El-Hachemi Assad Réclame un Bilan des Institutions Chargées du Développement de Tamazight: "L'Académie de Langue Amazighe est en Jachère"' [El-Hachemi Assad Demands an Assessment of the Institutions Responsible for the Development of Tamazight: "The Amazigh Language Academy is in Fallow] *Liberté Algérie*, 9 October, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://www.liberte-algerie.com/actualite/l-academie-de-langue-amazighe-est-en-jachere-366357>.
- ⁵⁴ Hamdan and Kessar (2023), p.62.
- ⁵⁵ This point was raised by two interviewees, who also stressed that it is mostly Kabylis who use the Latin script. Hamdan and Kessar also mention that overall, the Latin script is the most used so far.
- ⁵⁶ Hamdan and Kessar (2023), pp.64-65.
- ⁵⁷ Haut-Commissariat à l'Amazighité (2014) 'Rapport sur la Situation de L'Enseignement de Tamazight en Algérie' [Report on the Situation of Tamazight Teaching in Algeria], Presidency of the Republic, p.7. The official report provides figures for each academic year from 1994-1995 until 2012-2013. I chose to include data for every two/three academic year, only simply to show the progressive increasing trend.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.9. The report uses slightly different names for some of the varieties, but I referred to those provided in table 1 for consistency's sake.
- ⁵⁹ Boukherrouf, Ramdane and Malika Sabri (2020) 'L'Enseignement de Tamazight en Algérie: Dialectes et Territoires Couverts' [Tamazight Teaching in Algeria: Dialects and Covered Territories], *Faits de langue et société* (6), p.13-14.
- ⁶⁰ Loi n° 08-04 du 15 Moharram 1429 correspondant au 23 janvier 2008 portant loi d'orientation sur l'éducation nationale [law no.08-04 of 15 Moharram 1429 corresponding to 23 January 2008 about the orientation law on national education].
- ⁶¹ Boukherrouf and Sabri (2020), p.12.
- ⁶² Anonymous interviewee, 25 September 2023.
- ⁶³ Boukherrouf and Sabri (2020), p.12.
- ⁶⁴ Chaker (2001), p.146.
- ⁶⁵ Sabri, Malika, 'Les Manuels de Langue Amazighe: Quels Objectifs pour Quel Enseignement?' [Amazigh Language Textbooks: What Objectives for What Teaching?] *Revue des Études Amazighes*, 2, p. 138.
- ⁶⁶ Boukherrouf and Sabri (2020), p.18.
- ⁶⁷ World Atlas of Languages, Algeria, *UNESCO*, accessed 8 February 2024: Amahaq, <https://en.wal.unesco.org/countries/algeria/languages/tahaggart-tamahaq>; Kabyle, <https://en.wal.unesco.org/countries/algeria/languages/kabyle-1>; Chaouia, <https://en.wal.unesco.org/countries/algeria/languages/chaouia-aures-1>.

⁶⁸ Boukherrouf and Sabri (2020), p.16.

⁶⁹ Interview with Lounes Belkacem, former President of the World Amazigh Congress, 28 September 2023.

⁷⁰ Boukherrouf and Sabri (2020), p.21. Iddir, Nadir (April 20 2023) ‘Son Introduction Connaît des Progrès dans les Écoles: Tamazight, l’Enjeu de la Recherche’ [Its Introduction Is Making Progress in Schools: Tamazight, the Challenge of Research], *El Watan*, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://elwatan-dz.com/son-introduction-connaît-des-progres-dans-les-ecoles-tamazight-lenjeu-de-la-recherche>.

⁷¹ Nourredine Bessadi, 25 September 2023.

⁷² Studies show how often stigmatisation, which is enforced by external powers through assimilationist policies and discriminatory discourses, can become internalised by marginalised communities (minorities, migrants etc.) to the point that parents stop transmitting the language to the younger generation. See for instance UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages, ‘Language Vitality and Endangerment’ (2003).

⁷³ McCarty (2011), p.39.

⁷⁴ Saad Allah, Abu Bakr Khaled (2023) ‘The Politics of Language in Algerian Education’, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 20 July, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/90230>.

⁷⁵ UNICEF Data Hub (last updated September 2022) ‘Covid-19 and Children’, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://data.unicef.org/covid-19-and-children/>; ‘Minority and Indigenous Trends 2021: Lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic’ (2022), *Minority Rights Group*, accessed 4 February 2024, <https://minorityrights.org/minority-and-indigenous-trends-2021-lessons-of-the-covid-19-pandemic/>.

⁷⁶ Lassassi, Moundir, Nadjib Lounici, Lylia Sami, Chamseddine Tidjani, Mohamed Benguerni (July 2020) ‘Université et Enseignants Face au COVID-19: L’Épreuve de l’Enseignement à Distance en Algérie’ [University and Teachers Facing COVID-19: The Test of Distance Teaching in Algeria], *Les Cahiers du Cread* 36 (3).

⁷⁷ Lounes Belkacem, 23 April 2021.

⁷⁸ See endnote 32.

⁷⁹ Bessadi, Nourredine (2020) ‘While We All Spoke About COVID-19, Algeria Passed Two Worrisome Laws in the Blink of an Eye’, *Minority Rights Group*, 12 May, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://minorityrights.org/while-we-all-spoke-about-covid-19-algeria-passed-two-worrisome-laws-in-the-blink-of-an-eye/>.

⁸⁰ ‘Algeria: Penal Code Amendments Restrict Freedoms of Expression and Association’ (2020) *MENA Rights Group*, 2 July, accessed 8 February 2024, <https://menarights.org/en/articles/algeria-penal-code-amendments-restrict-freedoms-expression-and-association>.

⁸¹ Bessadi, Nourredine (2020).

⁸² See for instance: Alidou, Hassana, Aliou Boly, Birgit Brock-Utne, Yaya Satina Diallo, Kathleen Heugh, and Ekkehard Wolff (2006) ‘Optimizing Learning and Education in Africa – the Language Factor. A Stock-taking Research on Mother-tongue and Bilingual Education in Sub-Saharan Africa’, *Association for the Development of Education in Africa, UNESCO Institute for Education, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*. Working Document for the ADEA Biennial 2006 (Libreville, Gabon); Ouane, Adama and Christine Glanz (2010) ‘Why and How Africa Should Invest in African Languages and Multilingual Education. An evidence- and Practice-Based Policy Advocacy Brief’, *UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning*; Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove and Kathleen Heugh (2012) *Multilingual Education and Sustainable Diversity Work. From Periphery to Center* (New York and London: Routledge).

⁸³ Lounes Belkacem, 28 September 2023.