Between Global English and National Identity: Rethinking English Medium Instruction Reform in Algerian Higher Education, Balancing Global English and National Identity

بين الإنجليزية العالمية والهوية الوطنية: إعادة النظر في إصلاح التعليم الجامعي باللغة الإنجليزية في الجزائر وبناء توازن بين البعد العالمي والهوية الوطنية

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Abstract:

The growing use of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in higher education has become closely associated with academic internationalization, knowledge exchange, student mobility, and institutional competitiveness. In Algeria, the increasing role of English raises particular questions within a multilingual context in which Arabic and Tamazight have official status, while French remains influential in scientific, technical, and administrative domains. This study examines the prospects and challenges of EMI reform in Algeria by relating national developments to wider global, African, and MENA experiences. Drawing on Spolsky's (2004) language policy theory and established EMI scholarship (Dearden, 2014; Macaro et al., 2018), the study uses a qualitative policy analysis of the MESRS (2022) policy document, supported by relevant scholarly and comparative evidence. The analysis focuses on policy coherence, teacher preparedness, curriculum and institutional capacity, and linguistic identity. Four main challenges emerge: limited teacher readiness, continued reliance on French-medium resources, fragmented policy development, and tensions surrounding linguistic

identity and the postcolonial context. At the same time, EMI may strengthen Algeria's academic internationalization, student mobility, and graduate employability. Comparative experiences suggest that its sustainable implementation requires gradual reform, sustained teacher development, curriculum adaptation, and stakeholder involvement. The study therefore advocates a context-sensitive approach in which English complements rather than replaces Arabic and Tamazight, allowing Algeria to pursue internationalization while preserving its linguistic and cultural diversity.

***key words**:* English Medium Instruction; Algeria; Language Policy; Globalization; Educational Reform; Multilingualism

ملخص باللغة العربية:

ي يشهد التعليم العالي عالميًا توسعًا متسارعًا لاعتماد التدريس باللغة الإنجليزية بوصفه أداة لتعزيز التدويل الأكاديمي وتيسير تداول المعرفة ودعم حركية الطلبة والباحثين. في هذا السياق، تطرح الجزائر مسألة إدماج الإنجليزية كلغة تدريس في الجامعة ضمن واقع لغوي متعدّد الأبعاد، حيث تتمتع العربية والأمازيغية بوضع دستوري رسمي، في حين ما تزال الفرنسية مهيمنة في المجالات العلمية والتقنية والإدارية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل إمكانات إصلاح نظام التدريس باللغة الإنجليزية في الجزائر وتحدياته من خلال مقاربة نقدية تُؤطر النقاش الوطني ضمن التجارب العالمية والإفريقية وتجارب منطقة الشرق الأوسط وشمال إفريقيا.

تستند الدراسة إلى نظرية السياسة اللغوية، وبشكل خاص نموذج سبولسكي، بالإضافة إلى الأطر المرجعية المتعلقة بتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في التعليم العالي(Dearden, 2014; Macaro et al., 2018) ، وتتبنى مقاربة نوعية لتحليل السياسات، بالاعتماد على تحليل وثيقة وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي (MESRS, 2022)، إلى جانب الأدبيات العلمية والأدلة المقارنة ذات الصلة. ويركز التحليل على اتساق السياسة اللغوية، واستعداد الأساتذة، والمناهج والقدرة المؤسسية، والهوية اللغوية.

وقد أظهرت النتائج وجود أربعة تحديات رئيسة تتمثل في محدودية استعداد الأساتذة لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية، والاعتماد المستمر على المناهج والمراجع باللغة الفرنسية، وطبيعة الإصلاحات الجزئية غير المتكاملة، بالإضافة إلى استمرار الجدل الإيديولوجي المرتبط بالهوية اللغوية وسياقات ما بعد الاستعمار.

في المقابل، تبرز فرص مهمة يمكن أن يتيحها اعتماد التدريس باللغة الإنجليزية، من بينها تعزيز اندماج الجامعات الجزائرية في الفضاء الأكاديمي العالمي، وتحسين قابلية توظيف الخريجين، ودعم حركة الطلبة. وتشير التجارب المقارنة إلى أن نجاح هذا التحول يتطلب إصلاحًا تدريجيًا، وتكوينًا مستمرًا للأساتذة، وتكييف المناهج، وإشراك مختلف الفاعلين. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن التدريس باللغة الإنجليزية ينبغي أن يُستخدم كرافد تكميلي لا بديلاً عن العربية والأمازيغية، بما يحقق التوازن بين متطلبات التنافسية العالمية وصون التنوع اللغوي والثقافي الوطني

الكلمات المفتاحية: التدريس باللغة الإنجليزية؛ السياسة اللغوية؛ التعددية اللغوية؛ إصلاح التعليم العالي؛ العولمة؛ الجزائر

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1. Introduction

English has firmly established itself as the leading lingua franca for international communication, higher education, scientific research, and the global knowledge economy (Crystal, 2012).Its growing significance has expedited the global adoption of English Medium Instruction (EMI), which has emerged as a key strategy for fostering academic internationalization, improving graduate competitiveness, and enhancing institutional visibility. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2021), more than 80% of indexed scholarly journals are published in English, while the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2019) points out that English proficiency is increasingly correlated with labour-market mobility and participation in the global economy. Consequently, many non-Anglophone countries are re-evaluating their language-in-education policies to reflect the growing strategic significance of English. Recent EMI research further indicates that the rapid expansion of EMI necessitates context-sensitive language policies that balance internationalization with multilingual educational realities, rather than considering English as a universal solution.

In this global context, Algeria has recently undertaken significant reforms aimed at enhancing the role of English within its educational system. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESRS, 2022) has put forth measures to broaden the use of English in universities, particularly in postgraduate education, scientific research, and academic publishing. Recently, the Ministry has expedited initiatives related to English Medium Instruction (EMI) by promoting English-language training programs for university instructors

and students, while advocating for the gradual integration of English into higher education, signaling a strategic shift towards educational internationalization. However, these reforms transcend a mere linguistic transition. They raise critical questions regarding the feasibility of implementing EMI within Algeria's multilingual educational landscape, where Arabic and Tamazight are constitutionally recognized, while French continues to dominate many scientific, technical, and administrative disciplines. Thus, the challenge is not simply whether English should take on a greater educational role, but how its expansion can be reconciled with Algeria's linguistic diversity, historical experience, and national identity.

Despite the increasing attention from the government towards English Medium Instruction (EMI), scholarly discussions about its implementation in Algeria remain predominantly focused on policy issues. There is a lack of extensive conceptual analyses that combine language policy theory with international EMI experiences. Most existing discussions highlight the potential benefits of English or discuss policy announcements, offering limited critical examination of how global EMI frameworks can be adapted to Algeria's distinct multilingual and postcolonial context. This conceptual gap necessitates a theoretically informed analysis that can link international EMI scholarship with the evolving language-in-education policies in Algeria.

This study presents a theoretical and conceptual analysis of the prospects for English Medium Instruction in the realm of Algerian higher education. It leverages Spolsky's (2004) language policy framework and the EMI models put forth by Dearden (2014) and Macaro et al. (2018), while also considering recent advancements in EMI research. The paper critically assesses Algeria's emerging reforms in relation to global experiences and contemporary discussions on multilingualism, educational internationalization, and language policy.

To guide the analysis, the study addresses the following research questions:

- **What theoretical and policy factors shape the implementation of English Medium Instruction in Algerian higher education؟**
- **What lessons can Algeria draw from EMI implementation in selected Asian, African, and Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) contexts؟**
- **How can Algeria develop a context-sensitive EMI reform model that advances internationalization while preserving its national linguistic identity؟**

Through the examination of these questions, the paper adds to the expanding literature on EMI scholarship by proposing a theoretically grounded framework for EMI reform that views English as a complementary language rather than a substitute within Algeria's multilingual educational system. In this regard, it seeks to demonstrate that the successful implementation of EMI is contingent not only on reforms in language policy but also on aligning international educational aspirations with the sociolinguistic realities present in the country.

2. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative policy analysis approach to examine the prospects and challenges of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Algerian higher education. It combines analysis of an Algerian policy document with relevant scholarly and comparative evidence from international EMI contexts.

The main documentary source is the Note circulaire relative à l'introduction de l'anglais dans l'enseignement supérieur issued by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESRS, 2022). It was selected for its direct relevance to the expansion of English in Algerian higher education. The comparative evidence was drawn purposively from selected Asian, African, and MENA contexts, including Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey, because their experiences offer relevant insights into policy development, institutional preparedness, and linguistic considerations.

The materials were examined through close reading and thematic comparison, guided by four dimensions emerging from the theoretical framework: policy coherence, teacher preparedness, curriculum and institutional capacity, and linguistic identity. The comparison was used to identify recurring challenges and policy lessons that could inform a context-sensitive approach to EMI in Algeria.

3. Theoretical Framework

This section utilizes language policy theory and EMI scholarship to analyze the potential implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Algeria. These viewpoints collectively offer a conceptual framework for exploring Algeria's multilingual educational landscape.

3.1.Language Policy Theory

The concept of language policy goes beyond mere official legislation, incorporating language practices, ideologies, and management (Spolsky, 2004). Spolsky's framework was selected because its three dimensions provide a concise lens for examining the relationship between Algeria's language policies, actual

language practices, and beliefs about languages, making it particularly suitable for the country's complex multilingual context.

These three interconnected dimensions include (1) **language practices**, which represent the real usage of language; (2) **language ideologies**, which relate to the beliefs and values surrounding languages; and (3) **language management**, which involves formal decisions that oversee language use.

In Algeria, these dimensions often show divergence. While Arabic and Tamazight are upheld as national and official languages, French continues to be the leading language in scientific and technical higher education (Benrabah, 2014). In contrast, English is increasingly regarded as the language of science and internationalization, despite its limited use in teaching.

Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) propose that a successful language-in-education policy must exhibit coherence among macro-level policy, meso-level institutional execution, and micro-level classroom practices. Algeria illustrates the difficulties encountered in achieving such alignment. Similarly, Ricento and Hornberger's (1996) "onion metaphor" highlights that language policy operates across multiple interconnected layers, including policy, practice, ideology, and community expectations. This perspective indicates that the effective implementation of EMI in Algeria relies on the collaborative engagement of policymakers, institutions, educators, and students.

3.2. EMI Frameworks

As noted by Dearden (2014), English Medium Instruction (EMI) refers to the practice of utilizing English to instruct academic subjects in nations where English is not the primary language for the majority of the populace (p. 2). This method has experienced significant growth worldwide, especially in higher education, where English is commonly acknowledged as the lingua franca for research, science, and international cooperation. EMI is increasingly viewed as a strategic tool for the internationalization of academia, promoting engagement in global knowledge networks, improving institutional competitiveness, and broadening students' access to international educational and career opportunities. Thus, EMI serves not only as a teaching methodology but also as a language policy that aligns with wider educational and economic goals.

In their systematic review of EMI research, Macaro et al. (2018) concluded that while EMI increases students' exposure to English, it may hinder content learning when teachers lack adequate linguistic and pedagogical preparation.

Coleman (2006) similarly argues that successful EMI implementation requires institutional commitment alongside pedagogical reform. More recent scholarship has extended these foundational perspectives by emphasizing that effective EMI implementation depends on context-sensitive language policies, multilingual pedagogical practices, teacher professional development, and collaboration among institutional stakeholders rather than on the exclusive use of English as the medium of instruction (Macaro, 2022; Rose et al., 2023; McKinley et al., 2024). Consequently, contemporary EMI research promotes adaptable implementation models that respond to local sociolinguistic contexts and institutional capabilities while preserving the aims of internationalization. Collectively, these frameworks furnish a detailed analytical perspective for evaluating Algeria's EMI potential by revealing both the opportunities and limitations present in its linguistic, educational, and political contexts.

4. Algeria’s Multilingual Educational Landscape

To grasp Algeria's opportunities for the adoption of English Medium Instruction, it is essential to contextualize current reforms within the country's historical, sociolinguistic, and political backdrop, given that its multilingual setting has been deeply affected by colonial histories, post-independence policies, and the latest developments regarding Tamazight and English.

4.1. Colonial Legacy and Arabization

Algeria's linguistic landscape has been molded by its colonial legacy. During the era of French colonization (1830–1962), French was institutionalized as the language of administration, education, and scientific inquiry (Bouzidi, 2006). After achieving independence, Algerian leaders introduced Arabization policies to restore cultural identity, elevating Modern Standard Arabic to the status of the national language. Nonetheless, French continued to have a significant impact, particularly in the realms of science, technology, and higher education (Benrabah, 2014).

4.2. Recognition of Tamazight

After decades of sociopolitical challenges, Tamazight was officially recognized as a national language in 2002 and subsequently as an official language in 2016. This recognition not only reflects Algeria's multicultural identity but also adds complexity to language-in-education policies by introducing an additional layer of multilingualism (Benrabah, 2014).

4.3. The Marginal Position of English

English was incorporated into Algeria's educational framework relatively late, first appearing at the middle school level in the early 1990s, where it has consistently been secondary to Arabic and French (Bouzidi, 2006). Even though it is widely taught as a foreign language, English has seldom been used as a medium of instruction in Algerian schools and universities.

In recent years, Algeria has undergone a significant policy change aimed at reinforcing the role of English across different educational tiers. Since 2022, English has been introduced in primary education from Grade 3 onwards, while the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research has expanded its application in universities, particularly in postgraduate education, scientific research, and institutional communication (MESRS, 2022). These reforms represent the initial phase of a gradual transition towards English Medium Instruction (EMI), rather than its complete implementation. Current initiatives have primarily concentrated on improving English language proficiency through teacher training, language support programs, and the progressive incorporation of English into academic practices. However, the implementation of EMI remains uneven across Algerian higher education institutions due to variations in institutional readiness, teacher preparedness, curriculum development, and the availability of resources for English-medium instruction (Al-Fanar Media, 2022).

Thus, Algeria is currently operating within a complex multilingual setting that comprises Arabic (the official national language), Tamazight (which has been recognized as both a national and official language since 2016), French (which remains influential in scientific and higher education), and English (whose role is growing through ongoing educational reforms).This shifting linguistic landscape creates opportunities for academic internationalization while highlighting the necessity for a context-sensitive and sustainable approach to the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI).

5. Global Pressures and Regional Comparisons

The discussions surrounding English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Algeria are interconnected with larger global trends. By situating Algeria within the framework of international and regional experiences, this section emphasizes the opportunities, challenges, and policy considerations that ought to guide future EMI reforms.

5.1. English as the Global Academic Lingua Franca

English has established itself as the preeminent language of higher education on a global scale. Wächter and Maiworm (2014) noted the substantial

increase in English-taught programs in Europe, which rose from only a few hundred in 2001 to more than 8,000 by 2014. Graddol (2006) suggests that this growth reflects not only linguistic transitions but also the convergence of economic competitiveness, cultural influence, and political globalization. More recent research on English Medium Instruction (EMI) suggests that universities are progressively incorporating English into their wider internationalization strategies. This shift aims to improve global competitiveness, foster research collaboration, and promote academic mobility, while also raising issues related to educational equity, multilingualism, and the preparedness of institutions (Rose et al., 2023; Macaro, 2022). These patterns underscore the structural pressures that non-Anglophone countries, including Algeria, encounter in aligning their educational systems with global academic expectations.

5.2. EMI Implementation in Asian and African Higher Education: Lessons for Algeria

Experiences drawn from Asia reveal both the advantages and dangers of EMI. In South Korea, the broad adoption of EMI during the early 2000s was fueled by the intention to boost international competitiveness. However, studies have indicated that educators frequently did not receive sufficient training, which adversely affected both instructional quality and student learning outcomes (Byun et al., 2011). In a similar vein, both China and Malaysia have incorporated English Medium Instruction (EMI) into their wider internationalization strategies to enhance global competitiveness and improve graduate employability. Although these reforms have bolstered institutional visibility, they have also highlighted ongoing issues such as unequal student participation, language proficiency, and the disparities between urban and rural institutions (Hu & Lei, 2014; Gill, 2014). Recent comparative studies indicate that the effective implementation of EMI relies not merely on the adoption of English, but also on continuous investment in teacher professional development, institutional backing, and language policies that are sensitive to the specific context (McKinley et al., 2024; Pun & Macaro, 2024).

African experiences further reveal that the speed and context of implementation are critical factors in the success of English Medium Instruction (EMI). Rwanda's decision in 2008 to replace French with English was influenced by geopolitical and economic priorities; however, the limited readiness of teachers and inadequate educational resources constrained the reform's effectiveness (Samuelson & Freedman, 2010). In contrast, Tanzania adopted a more cautious approach, focusing on the preservation of Kiswahili while expressing concerns that extensive reliance on English could widen educational inequalities and undermine national linguistic identity (Qorro, 2006). Collectively, these

experiences suggest that sustainable EMI implementation necessitates gradual policy development, adequate institutional capacity, and careful consideration of local sociolinguistic realities, rather than rapid changes in language policy.

In the case of Algeria, these international experiences show that English Medium Instruction (EMI) ought to be viewed not merely as a language reform but as a thorough educational policy that requires coherent planning, teacher readiness, institutional commitment, and ongoing evaluation.The comparative evidence indicates that balancing internationalization with national linguistic priorities is more likely to yield sustainable outcomes than implementing swift, large-scale reforms.

5.3. Regional Experiences in MENA

In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) reflects a continuous negotiation between internationalization and established linguistic traditions. Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey were selected as purposive comparative cases because their experiences provide contextually relevant insights into the linguistic, institutional, and pedagogical dimensions of EMI reform. Their comparison helps identify lessons relevant to Algeria while taking into account the distinct historical and sociolinguistic conditions of the Algerian higher education system.

Morocco and Tunisia illustrate how English has gained importance without displacing the historically dominant role of French. In Morocco, English has increasingly been promoted as a language of modernization and global engagement, although French continues to dominate scientific and administrative domains because of its long-standing institutional position (Sadiqi, 2010). Similarly, Tunisia has expanded the use of English, particularly in science and technology, while French remains the principal language of higher education and administration (Daoud, 2001). These experiences indicate that EMI reforms are more sustainable when they complement rather than abruptly replace existing linguistic arrangements.

Turkey presents a different perspective. While English Medium Instruction (EMI) expanded greatly during the 1990s and 2000s, its implementation highlighted major challenges, particularly when educators and students lacked adequate English proficiency (Kirkgoz, 2009).Ongoing studies continue to emphasize that language support mechanisms and teacher preparation are crucial for maintaining the quality of education in EMI programs (Macaro, 2022).

Regional experiences collectively suggest that the successful implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) is reliant on the alignment of language policy with institutional capacity and sociolinguistic contexts. For Algeria, these cases highlight the significance of adopting a gradual and evidence-informed approach that strengthens English while also recognizing the ongoing educational roles of Arabic, Tamazight, and French.Instead of pursuing merely symbolic language reforms, Algeria should prioritize sustainable implementation, supported by adequate planning, stakeholder engagement, and long-term investment in both human and institutional resources.

6. Challenges of Implementing EMI in Algeria

While English Medium Instruction (EMI) presents significant opportunities, its execution in Algeria faces limitations due to structural, pedagogical, policy, and ideological obstacles. These interrelated factors demonstrate that effective EMI reform relies not solely on language policy but also on institutional capabilities and sociolinguistic contexts.

6.1. Teacher Preparedness

Teacher readiness remains a key challenge in the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI). The majority of university educators in Algeria have received their education in French and continue to teach scientific and technical subjects in that language (Benrabah, 2014). Consequently, many of these instructors have strong expertise in their disciplines but lack experience in teaching content in English. Research consistently indicates that successful EMI requires both language proficiency and pedagogical competence specific to the discipline (Macaro et al., 2018). Furthermore, evidence from South Korea demonstrates that inadequate preparation of teachers can compromise the effectiveness of EMI reforms (Byun et al., 2011).

Recent empirical evidence from Algerian universities similarly points to gaps in teachers' linguistic preparedness and professional training for EMI, reinforcing the need for targeted capacity building before and during implementation (Mansouri, 2026; Hadj Ameur & Brahimi, 2026).

6.2.Curriculum and Resources

Curriculum development is a notable challenge. The teaching materials that currently exist are primarily French-based, while resources in English are limited and often not sufficiently adapted to the Algerian context. This reliance on external materials may compromise the relevance of instruction and perpetuate dependence on foreign knowledge sources (Benrabah, 2014). Comparative

research indicates that the effectiveness of English Medium Instruction (EMI) is lessened when curriculum reform does not align with language policy changes (Coleman, 2006), thereby highlighting the urgent need for locally contextualized instructional materials.

6.3. Policy Fragmentation

A further challenge involves the disjointed nature of language policy reforms. Although recent initiatives have increased the use of English, these reforms are frequently introduced without sufficient coordination across educational levels. As Shohamy (2006) argues, language policies that are implemented in isolation risk being merely symbolic rather than transformative. Thus, for Algeria, it is essential to ensure policy coherence across all educational stages for the sustainable implementation of EMI.

6.4.Ideological and Identity Tensions

The implementation of EMI is also shaped by linguistic ideologies and national identity considerations. Arabic and Tamazight are central to Algeria's cultural and national identity, while French continues to play a significant role in higher education. In this multilingual setting, the proliferation of English may lead to concerns about the transformation of linguistic hierarchies. Phillipson (1992) asserts that the introduction of English can strengthen linguistic dominance if it is not introduced with an awareness of local languages. Consequently, the success of EMI in Algeria is contingent upon positioning English as an additional academic resource rather than a substitute for the national languages.

6.5. Prospects for EMI in Algeria

Although there are structural and ideological obstacles to the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI), it presents considerable opportunities for enhancing Algeria's higher education system and its global engagement.

Firstly, EMI can promote academic internationalization by allowing Algerian universities to engage more actively in worldwide research networks and to boost the international visibility of their academic contributions. Given that English is the primary language of academic discourse, its broader adoption in higher education could foster research collaboration and the exchange of knowledge (Coleman, 2006).

Secondly, improved proficiency in English can broaden students' access to international scholarships, exchange programs, and opportunities for academic

mobility, thus increasing their competitiveness in a progressively globalized higher education landscape (Graddol, 2006).

Ultimately, EMI has the potential to enhance the employability of graduates by improving their English language competencies, which are increasingly valued in fields like science, technology, business, and other internationally focused sectors (OECD, 2019).

These opportunities collectively indicate that EMI can support the modernization and internationalization of education. However, achieving these benefits requires a coherent, context-sensitive reform strategy that ensures gradual implementation, institutional readiness, and alignment with Algeria's multilingual educational environment.

7. Towards a Unified Reform Strategy

Considering the multilingual educational context of Algeria and the challenges highlighted above, the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) demands a coherent, tier-sensitive strategy that promotes sustainability, inclusivity, and alignment with the linguistic realities of the nation, rather than pursuing fragmented or symbolic reforms.

7.1. Gradual Tier-Sensitive Introduction

A gradual implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) is crucial for ensuring that institutions are prepared and for reducing disruptions in education. Research conducted in Turkey indicates that a phased approach allows institutions to adjust more efficiently to changes in language policy (Kirkgoz, 2009). In Algeria, universities, especially those focused on scientific and technical fields where English is already significant, represent the most suitable initial phase. Lower educational levels should incrementally improve English language skills to maintain continuity throughout the educational system. This strategy would promote coherence in policy and ease the transition to EMI.

7.2.Teacher Training and Professional Development

Teacher readiness is a critical factor for the effective implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI). Successful EMI demands both a strong command of the English language and the skill to teach subject content in English (Macaro et al., 2018). Therefore, it is vital to reinforce Continuous Professional

Development (CPD) by providing language training, EMI pedagogical strategies, and discipline-oriented instruction. Establishing partnerships with international universities can enhance professional development through collaborative training and academic exchanges, thereby promoting the sustainability of EMI reforms in the long run.

7.3. Curriculum Localization

The success of EMI reform is fundamentally connected to the accessibility of suitable learning resources. Algeria's ongoing dependence on translated French materials may restrict the relevance of teaching resources within its multilingual educational framework (Benrabah, 2014). Rather than being merely a pedagogical issue, curriculum localization serves as a strategic dimension of sustainable EMI implementation. Comparative research on EMI suggests that imported materials frequently do not reflect local linguistic, cultural, and disciplinary contexts, which can lead to diminished student engagement and instructional effectiveness. Therefore, the challenge is to balance international academic standards with locally relevant content, enabling EMI to support internationalization while maintaining national educational priorities.

7.4. Stakeholder Engagement

Findings from EMI and language policy research indicate that stakeholder engagement plays a pivotal role in the sustainability of educational reforms. The imposition of policies from the top often results in resistance, as teachers, students, and parents have limited input in the policy-making process (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). In multilingual contexts like Algeria, this challenge extends beyond educational practices to encompass language, identity, and equity issues. Therefore, stakeholder participation should be perceived not just as a consultative process but as a crucial mechanism for enhancing policy legitimacy, fostering institutional ownership, and ensuring effective long-term implementation.

7.5. Balancing Globalization and Identity

The adoption of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Algeria requires balancing internationalization with national identity. While the expansion of English may reinforce linguistic hierarchies if implemented uncritically (Phillipson, 1992), EMI should complement rather than replace Arabic and Tamazight. An additive bilingual approach can promote global competencies while preserving the educational and cultural roles of Algeria's national languages, supporting internationalization without compromising its multilingual identity.

8. Conclusion

This theoretical analysis shows that Algeria is at a critical crossroads, balancing the demands of academic internationalization with the preservation of its multilingual identity. While English Medium Instruction (EMI) offers opportunities for global academic integration, student mobility, and graduate employability, its implementation remains constrained by challenges related to teacher preparedness, curriculum design, policy coherence, and institutional capacity.

Drawing on Spolsky's (2004) language policy model and the EMI frameworks of Dearden (2014) and Macaro et al. (2018), this paper highlights the value of viewing EMI reform through both language policy and pedagogical perspectives. Its main theoretical contribution lies in bringing these perspectives together to interpret Algeria's shift towards English within its particular multilingual and historically shaped linguistic context. Rather than positioning English as a replacement for Arabic or Tamazight, EMI should be integrated as a complementary resource that supports internationalization while preserving Algeria's linguistic diversity.

The analysis also points to several practical priorities, particularly gradual implementation, sustained teacher preparation, curriculum development, institutional support, and meaningful stakeholder engagement. At the same time, the study's qualitative and policy-oriented nature, together with its reliance on documentary and comparative evidence, limits the extent to which its conclusions can capture the experiences of teachers and students across Algerian universities. Further empirical research is therefore needed to examine how EMI reforms are experienced and implemented in different institutional and disciplinary contexts.

In summary, Algeria's experience should be understood within the broader movement towards multilingual and internationally oriented higher education. An incremental and evidence-informed approach to EMI is more likely to support the goals of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (United Nations, 2015) while strengthening Algeria's participation in the global academic community without diminishing the educational and cultural roles of its existing languages.

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