

**A Critical Pragmatic Study of Political Discourse: An Excerpt
from the Spoken Speech of Former President Abdelaziz
Bouteflika**

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Abstract: This article presents a critical discourse analysis of an excerpt from a YouTube video in which former Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika delivered a campaign speech promoting the Civil Concord referendum in Tizi Ouezou in 1999. The study aims to examine both the pragmatic and linguistic dimensions of the excerpt, highlighting the way the language is employed to convey implicit meaning. Drawing on Fairclough's (2001) CDA approach and applying Mullet (2018) framework, we analyze the themes, language, context, and relations embedded in this speech. The analysis revealed the use of several pragmatic tools including implicature, reference, speech acts, repetition, ellipsis and symbolism. Through these techniques, President Bouteflika sought to foster a sense of belonging and unity while promoting women's empowerment, Kabyle identity and language, national cohesion, and cultural and linguistic diversity.

Keywords: CDA; Pragmatics; Algeria; Abdelaziz_Bouteflika; 1999.

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Introduction:

The importance of language in politics is undeniable. British sociolinguist and critical discourse analyst, Norman Fairclough (2001), in his book *Language and Power*, states that “language is not a neutral medium, but a site of power struggles and ideological contestation, with implications for social structures and social change.” (p.25). In other words, language goes beyond its function as a channel of information transfer; it becomes a vessel that carries ideological disputes, social tensions, and aspirations for transformation. Similarly, Yu Xing, a political scientist and former university professor from China, underlined the crucial role of language in changing state governance, sustaining the spirit of the nation, and steering political objectives (2013).

From this perspective, scholars have granted much of the attention to examine how political discourse reflects, reproduces, and challenges power dynamics. Yet, despite this rich body of work, less focus has been given to the specific pragmatic and textual strategies through which power is enacted in context. The Algerian post-colonial context, marked by a civil war, identity politics, and struggle over national unity, provides a particularly compelling case. This political environment required not only the assertion of authority but also careful negotiations of sensitive issues, such as unity, regional identity (Kabylism), and feminism. This makes Algeria a fertile ground for understanding language operation in persuasion and reconciliation.

Therefore, the central objective of this study is to undertake a pragmatic and linguistic analysis of the selected excerpt, with the aim to gain an in-depth insight of the way in which political actors employ language as a strategic tool to construct legitimacy, consolidate authority, and reconfigure social dynamics. Through this analysis, the study seeks to further demonstrate how the specific socio-political context of Algeria in 1999 informed Bouteflika’s discourse and conditioned it, projecting him as a unifier and modernist leader. In doing so, the research highlights the dialectical relationships between language and context, in ways that foster national cohesion, cultural and ethnic tolerance, and the acceptance of feminist role in the society. Ultimately, our study shows how political discourse not only

reflects but it is also shaped by the broader political, social and ideological parameters.

By combining critical discourse analysis with pragmatic tools, this study emphasizes the language's role in reflecting and driving political action. The paper is divided into main sections. The first section presents the theoretical and methodological framework, the case study, and the context of the speech. The second section, being the practical section, covers the material used, conducts the pragmatic and textual analysis, and summarizes the findings.

Research Problem and Hypotheses:

The core problem addressed in our study lies in understanding how political discourse acts as a persuasive and legitimizing instrument within the Algerian context. Although Bouteflika's speeches have formerly been examined semantically, historically and contextually (Ain-Sebaa, 2013; Ouahiba, 2015; Tizegha, 2021), little attention has been devoted to their pragmatic and linguistic dimensions. This study, therefore, shifts the focus from the macro-level questions of power dynamics to the micro-level mechanisms of language use. Specifically, it conducts a critical pragmatic discourse analysis of Bouteflika's 1999 speech in Tizi Ouezou. It aims to uncover how specific discursive choices function pragmatically and textually as tools for persuasion, identity construction, and ideology framing. In doing so, it addresses a gap in Algeria's discourse studies, which have often overlooked the interplay between pragmatic strategies and political authority in moments of national transition. Accordingly, this research is guided by the following questions:

1. How can pragmatic strategies in Bouteflika's discourse be understood as tools for constructing political legitimacy?
2. In what ways does the negotiation of regional and national identities in his speech illustrate the role of language in managing sociopolitical tensions?
3. What does the representation of women in Bouteflika's discourse contribute to broader narratives of reconciliation?
4. What is the role of intertextuality, symbolism, and cultural references in reinforcing solidarity through political discourse?

The problem is thus located and the interjunction of pragmatics, Critical Discourse Analysis, and political communication, and aims to uncover the mechanisms through which Bouteflika's discourse sought to shape public perception and consolidate power. Based on our research problem, we formulate the following hypotheses:

1. Legitimacy through Language: Bouteflika's discourse employs pragmatic tools (such as, implicature, and speech acts, and reference) to construct political legitimacy and reinforce his image as the unifier of the nation.
2. Socio-political Embeddedness: The effectiveness of Bouteflika's discourse are deeply influenced by the Algerian socio-political context of the late 1990s, and functions reciprocally by mitigating the social and political tensions.
3. Dialectical Relationship: Political language in Bouteflika's discourse is not only a reflection of contextual parameters but also an active force in shaping social attitudes, values, and collective identity.
4. There is a reciprocal relationship between language and political functioning operationalized through cultural references.

I. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) is a multidisciplinary approach to language study that examines power, inequalities, and intrapersonal interactions between individuals in the social and political context (Van Dijk, 2001, p.352). CDA is, then, particularly effective in analyzing politics in relation to language, as it extends beyond mere description of data to uncover hidden ideologies.

A defining characteristic of CDA is that its methods are not standardized. This comes due to its trans-disciplinary nature, which allows flexibility in method selection and formation, depending on the research context and goals (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010, p.1214). This flexibility has led to the development of various research routes, often referred to as "schools", each approaching CDA from a particular perspective. Yet despite their differences, these schools share certain fundamental principles, notably the importance of clarifying a researcher's stance and point of view (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p.1).

Among the most influential approaches is Fairclough's model, which approaches discourse analysis from a contextual and textual perspectives. His framework analyses (1) the structure of text (textuality), (2) how discourse is produced and consumed (intertextuality), and (3) how these dimensions are embedded in a wider socio-political and cultural context, while still being truthful to the researcher's lens (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 73–85). The present paper adopts this Faircloughian perspective as its theoretical foundation, while operationalizing it through Mullet's (2018) practical CDA framework to analyse Bouteflika's 1999 speech.

I.1- Norman Fairclough's Framework for CDA

The following section draws on Fairclough, whose approach and methodology to CDA underpin this study. CDA treats language as a form of social practice that reflects how social relations are reproduced, perceived, and negotiated (Janks, 1997, p.341). By tolerating the constraints of context borders, subjects use language creatively to meet the contextual demands in a political context (Fairclough 2001, p.25). This interplay between language and context exemplifies the power of language in political discourse, which forms the foundation of CDA, and the rationale behind our study.

Building on his earlier work, Fairclough (2001) developed a comprehensive framework that merged multiple approaches into a systematic, flexible, and easily applicable procedure for critical discourse analysis (Mullet, 2018, p.2). This framework was inspired by Fairclough's (1992) model, while incorporating insights from key scholars, such as Kress (1990), Van Dijk (1993), and Wodak (2001). The resulting approach underscores the interconnection between language, power, and context while offering a problem-solving stance that is both descriptive and analytical (Mullet, 2018).

It is important to distinguish the terms used in our study: the term 'model' refers to the conceptual structure adapted by Fairclough and his colleagues to study discourse critically, while the term 'framework' refers to the practical, systematic, step-by-step procedure developed as a guideline for conducting academic research. Mullet's (2018) framework operationalizes this approach to

make it particularly suitable for specialized discourse that requires taking into consideration the context of the discourse.

I.2- Integrating Pragmatic Analysis into Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides an overarching methodological model for this study, as it investigates how discourse both reflects and reproduces relations of power and ideology (Fairclough, 1992, p. 87). For the analytical procedure, we adopt Mullet's (2019) seven-stage CDA framework. While a pragmatic analysis is not explicitly part of this model, it has been incorporated into the fifth stage, which concerns the external relations of discourse. By identifying the pragmatic devices employed in the excerpt, such as speech acts and implicature, we relate their function to the power socio-political context.

Pragmatics, defined by Levinson (1983, p. 9) as "the study of the relations between language and context that are basic to an account of language understanding," enables us to capture Bouteflika's communicative intentions and the implicit strategies embedded in his discourse. Drawing on Austin's Austin's (1962, p. 94) and Searle's (1969, p. 16) Speech Act Theory, political utterances are understood not only as statements but as performative acts as well. This strategic language feature is employed by Bouteflika to legitimize his authority, appeal to the Kabyle audience, foster women's rights, and reinforce national unity. Therefore, a pragmatic analysis within CDA highlights how linguistic devices are mobilized in relation to context to reveal the purposes and the ideologies underpinning Bouteflika's discourse.

II. Study Sample

This study applies Fairclough's (2001) model of Critical Discourse Analysis to examine a speech delivered in 1999 by former Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika (1937-2021), who held office from 1999 to 2019. This speech marked a pivotal moment in the history of Algeria as it was delivered in the aftermath of a devastating civil war (1991 – 1999), also known as the Black Decade. At that time, Bouteflika proposed a national reconciliation project through a referendum to put an end to the war. Upon assuming power,

Algeria entered a period of political stability and national reconciliation. This speech acted as a rhetorical instrument of nation-building after a war that left the population fractured. It was selected for analysis to explore how language can serve as a means of political reconstruction and repositioning, and how leaders can, through language, transition the nation to a more unified posture. After this speech, President Bouteflika served as president for four consecutive terms, which reflects his strong discursive strategies.

The socio-political context of Algeria in 1999 provides a rich pragmatic ground for our study owing to the population's ideologically fragmented landscape, the French colonial heritage, and social heterogeneity. These factors resulted in a highly charged political environment in which language plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception, imposing and maintaining authority. Consequently, the Algerian context offers a fertile land for linguistic and pragmatic studies within political discourse, particularly in a society navigating historical trauma and social transitioning after a devastating civil war.

II.1- Methods and Materials

Mullet's (2018) framework, employed in this study, provides a qualitative analytical approach for critically describing, interpreting, and explaining how discourses construct, maintain, and legitimize social inadequacies. The model can be tailored to any critical discourse study due to its flexible and exhaustive nature (p.2). Mullet's framework is extended to include an in-depth analysis of the pragmatic tools utilized in the speech. While our analysis primarily focuses on the textual and the pragmatic dimensions, the interpretation of the findings is extended to the broader contextual and interdiscursive perspective in which the discourse occurs.

This framework was specifically selected for two main reasons:

1. **Structure applicability:** The well-crafted process aligns with the requirements of a linguistic-pragmatic study.
2. **Credibility:** The framework is generated by renowned figures in the field of discourse analysis, ensuring methodological rigor and reliability.

Table1. Analytical Framework of Mullet (2018) adapted from Fairclough (2001)

Stage of Analysis		Description	Example
01	Select the discourse	Select a discourse related to injustice or inequality in society.	Experiences of women who work in male-dominated workplaces; portrayal of LGBTQ individuals in the media.
02	Locate and prepare sources	Select data sources (texts) and prepare the data for analysis	Newspaper articles, textbooks, interview transcriptions, advertisements, song lyrics, and visual media.
03	Explore the background of each text	Examine the social and historical context and producers of the texts.	Characteristics of the genre, historical context, production process, overall slant or style, intended audience, intended purpose of the text, publisher characteristics, and writer characteristics.
04	Code texts and identify overarching themes	Identify the major themes and subthemes using the choice of qualitative coding methods.	Thematic analysis, open or inductive coding, axial or deductive coding.

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05	Analyze the external relations in the texts (interdiscursivity)	Examine social relations that control the production of the text; in addition, examine the reciprocal relations (how the texts affect social practices and structures). How do social practices inform the arguments in the text? How does the text in turn influence social practices?	Dominant social practices and norms (e.g., women in caregiver roles), social structures (e.g., social class or caste system, governments and legal systems, institutions such as schools).
06	Analyze the internal relations in the texts.	Examine the language for indications of the aims of the texts (what the texts set out to accomplish), representations (e.g., representations of social context, events, and actors), and the speaker's positionality.	Headlines and leading statements, structural organization or layout of the text, use of quoted material, vocabulary (e.g., high frequency or sensitizing words), grammar, voice, and linguistic devices such as turn-taking, metaphor, or rule-of-three.

07	Interpret the data	Interpret the meanings of the major themes, external relations, and internal relations identified in stages 4, 5, and 6.	Revisit the structural features and individual fragments, pacing them into the broader context and themes established in the earlier stages.
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Source: Mullet (2018, p.7)

II.2- Results and discussion

Step One: Selecting the Discourse

For this study, we have selected an official speech delivered by Abdelaziz Bouteflika as president, promoting the national Reconciliation project in 1999. The speech took place in the region of Kabylia, in Tizi Ouezou. Abdelaziz Bouteflika was elected president in 1999 in an attempt to put an end to the Civil war of Algeria (1992 – 1999), which resulted in total fatalities of about 44,000 victims. It is worth mentioning that paralinguistic signs, such as voice tone, facial gestures, etc. are not taken into account in this study.

Step Two: Locate Data and prepare data sources

The primary source of data for our study is visual media, specifically a video recording of Abdelaziz Bouteflika's 1999 speech, publicly available on the YouTube platform. This medium was chosen for two main reasons. The first reason is the authenticity of discourse. The speech represents naturally produced discourse with minimal prior preparation, as it was delivered without reliance on a written manuscript or structured notes. Such spontaneity offers insight into unfiltered rhetorical and pragmatic strategies. The second reason is the accessibility of the data to the readers of the thesis and to the general public, which allows for transparency, scrutiny, and counter interpretations.

The preparation of the discourse followed three main steps:

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1. Identification of the speech: Locating the speech on the YouTube platform.
2. Selection of data: Extracting a clip from minute 02:42 to 07:20, covering the introduction and the first three themes of the speech.
3. Transcription and Translation: the selected segment was transcribed in the Algerian Dialect, which was the variety employed by the president himself, and subsequently translated into English for analysis

Step Three: Explore the Background of the text

This speech was delivered as part of a campaign promoting the Civil Concord Project in 1999. It also marked the first presidential public address in the Kabylia region by a head of state in many years, underscoring its political and symbolic significance.

In 1999, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika issued a law of amnesty regarding the Islamist rebel groups following nearly a decade of violent civil war between these groups and the Algerian government (Tenue d'un référendum sur la politique d'amnistie en Algérie, 1999). This war was rooted in the 1992 coup that negated the Islamist party in the legislative elections. The war lasted close to ten years, from which came the naming decade and resulted in grand massacres that witnessed extreme brutalities and brought about great numbers of deaths varying from 44.000 to 200.00 (Cavatorta, 2008), from which the word 'black' in the 'Black Decade' was inspired (Ghanem, 2021).

During this period, Berber resistance movements against both the government and the Islamist groups emerged. These movements called for secular and democratic reforms, which President Bouteflika, at that time, promised to concretize (Tripp, 2019). To bridge the deep political and cultural division between Kabylia and the rest of Algeria, President Bouteflika strategically chose Tizi Ouezou, known to be the capital of the Kabylia region, with almost all of its citizens being Berbers, as the site of his speech. In doing so, Bouteflika acknowledged the region's political significance but also foregrounded broader themes of national unity, including the role of women in the Algerian community, and the country's linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity.

Step Four: Code texts and identify overarching themes

The analyzed section of the video addresses three central themes. The first concerns Kabylia, where Bouteflika evokes the region's conflicts and highlights presidential attempts at reconciliation. The Second theme reflects Bouteflika's feminist-oriented approach, where he underscores the role of women in Algerian society. The third theme demonstrates Bouteflika's reference to his city of origin, marked by an emphasis on Algeria's linguistic and cultural diversity. For the analysis, we employed open conceptual codification by segmenting the speech into thematic units according to the implicit ideas discussed in each portion. This thematic segmentation allows us to identify clearly the following major themes in the excerpt:

Table2. The Main Themes Tackled in the Excerpt

Theme	Start Time – End Time	Main Idea with Examples
Kabylia	03:39 – 06:33	Tamazight importance for Algeria, the Tamazight Language, and Tamazight history. The purpose behind this theme is to address the tension between Kabylia and the rest of Algeria as former president Bouteflika tries to fill the pit, which has been shoveled through history between the said parties. An example from the text is: “I am now in the heart of Djurdjura, and what do you know of Djurdjura? I am at home with my people, my clan, a Berber indeed”.
Women Empowerment	07:00 – 07:20	role of women statistically and politically, as he said: “I am a guest of Lalla Fatma

		N'Soumer ×2 and I am aware of the value of the woman.”
Diversity	06:33 – 07:00	The reference to the diversity of accents as he pronounces one word in a particular accent from the west of Algeria (Tlemcen): “I come from a place called Tlemcen, and people inside Tlemcen and outside Tlemcen hear about the place called Kabylia”.

Step Five: Analyze the external relations in the texts (interdiscursivity)

This part represents the pragmatic aspect of our critical analysis.

The analysis of Kabylia is demonstrated below in Table 2.

Table3. The External Relations of the Text (Theme One: Kabylia)

Pragmatic Tool	Example from the Text	Explantation
Reference Implicature lies in how Bouteflika refutes wrong perceptions about Kabylia being separate from Algeria.	“ ...as if I come from Australia and Tizi Ouezou is in New Zealand...”	In reference to the relationship between Australia and New Zealand, although the majority of New Zealand’s early settlers were Australian (Smith, 2012), around the 1880s, New Zealand was considered an Australian colony. Despite sharing a common sovereign, the two countries are recognized as distinct entities, each making independent economic and political decisions (Smith, 2012). Their histories even include instances of economic

		and military conflict. President Bouteflika invokes this example as a metaphor to illustrate how foreigners might perceive Kabylia as a colony of Algeria aspiring for independence. He seeks to refute this perception and reinforce national unity.
Expressive illocutionary speech act, through apologizing	“...If you ever hear me speak Berber poorly, this is negligence on my part...”	An acknowledgment of error is an attempt to bring to the hearers a sentiment of forgiveness and tolerance, and to appear to the audience as vulnerable and prone to mistake.
Perlocutionary speech act, which shows in the clapping		The audience clapped after this statement (refer back to the video at 04:34).
Declarative illocutionary speech act	“...I did not work hard to properly savor the language of ...”	This expression implies self-blame and a feeling of guilt. The aim is to evoke a feeling of forgiveness and regret. The use of word ‘savor’ is used to imply that the Berber language is enjoyable to learn and speak. Bouteflikapraises the language and motivates the people to accept it and learn it.
Reference	“.... The language of	Reference to Si Mohand Ou Mhand (1848 – 1905), who is an

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	Mouhand Ou Mhand...”	important Berber poet, most known for calling for liberty (Boutouchent, 2020).
Reference Rhetic locutionary Act, giving information about his relationship with a famous Kabyle figure. An illocutionary speech act, creating a relationship of friendship between the Berbers and himself.	“...even though I was good friends with Mouloud Maameri, may he rest in peace...”	Mouloud Mammeri (1917–1989) was a renowned Kabyle author and linguist. He holds great significance in Berber heritage, to the extent that the University of Tizi Ouezou is named in his honor. In 1980, his lectures at the University of Tizi Ouezou were banned, sparking endless riots that led to the Berber Spring.
Rhetic locutionary act, information about the transition of language use between him and Mouloud Maameri. An illocutionary speech act, to	“...We used to talk in French, then in Arabic, then in Tamazight...”	The order of mentioning the languages French, Arabic, and Tamazight is not arbitrary. Around the 1960s, 6 million people of the total Algerian population spoke French. After independence, Algeria witnessed the ‘official policy of “Arabization”, which aims to promote indigenous Arabic and Islamic cultural values throughout society,’ (Languages of Algeria, 2023), leading to Bouteflika’s intention to establish Berber as an official

establish a sentiment of promise to acknowledge Berber as a language.		language, which he constitutionalized in February of 2016 (Leclerc, 2010).
Directive illocutionary act. Commissive illocutionary act, through promising.	“...Accept it from me to Arabize you as I become Berber, and so we become Arab Berbers ×3.”	The use of the expression ‘accept it for me ’ shows both directiveness and humbleness in the speech to make himself and his decision acceptable to the Berbers. The use of the expression ‘Arab Berbers’ in this order grants the adjective ‘Arab’ the significance of being the first, and to the noun ‘Berbers’ the particularity of minute distinction (not any Arabs, and not just Arabs).
Reference	“...I am now in the heart of Djurdjura...”	The president’s mention of Djurdjura, which is the longest mountain chain in the area of Kabylia, is an acknowledgment that the region of Kabylia boasts a wealth of natural heritage.
Assertive illocutionary act	“...and what do you know of Djurdjura...”	Bearing a sentiment of greatness through this rhetorical question.
Symbolism Declarative illocutionary act	“I am at home with my people, my clan, a Berber indeed ×3...”	Using the word ‘home’ to describe Kabylia. Using the expression ‘I am at home’ to establish rapport between him and Kabylia.

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		Using the word ‘my clan’ to establish a bond of belonging to Kabylia. Using the expression ‘a Berber, indeed.’ To validate his belonging to Kabylia.
Reference Symbolism	“...I am a guest of Lalla Fatma N’Soumer ×2...”	Reference to Lalla Fatma N’Soumer, a prominent Kabyle female figure who defied the French colonial army in Algeria, leading entire villages into battle and breaking the socio-political codes of her time (Delajoux, 2022). This reference paved the way to Bouteflika’s feminist narrative.

The Algerian-Kabylia conflict dates back to the post-colonial period, where the region of Kabylia was sidelined as the Algerian Government attempted to establish a system that is in core Arab, ignoring the Berber language and culture (Hoffman & Gilson Miller, 2010). The conflict continued even after that, as the Berbers still denounced what is known as ‘Hogra’ or oppression in terms of the alienation practiced against them by the Algerian Government (L’Algérie: Agitation et Impasse en Kabylie, 2003). The clash intensified during the Black Decade after the death of a young Berber man at the hands of the government forces who were leading the fight at that time. Riots spread, and the response of the government was heavy-handed, resulting in great numbers of deaths and injuries (Stora, 2001).

These events rose to cause great detachment between the Berbers and the rest of Algeria as they constantly proclaimed autonomy, more economic freedom, recognition of Tamazight, and other political reforms (McDoughall, 2006). Following this rich historical background, President Abdelaziz attempted in the major part of his

speech to bridge the gap between Kabylia and the rest of Algeria. To achieve that, he foregrounded Kabylia throughout his address, emphasizing reconciliation and unity through a variety of pragmatic techniques.

Table4. The External Relations of the Text (Theme Two: Women's Empowerment)

Pragmatic Tool	Example from the Text	Explanation
Expressive illocutionary act	“Nice ululation ×2”	An attempt to praise the fashion of joy women demonstrated in response to his presence.
Reference Declarative illocutionary act.	“I am a guest of Lalla Fatma N’Soumer.”	President Bouteflika refers to the prominent Kabylia woman figure, Lalla Fatma N’Soumer, to advocate for the rights of women and seek their political approval. He refers to a female figure rather than a male figure to particularly acknowledge the significance of the feminine portion in society.
Assertive illocutionary act.	“I am aware of the value of the woman and the value of the woman in Kabylia.”	He employed the term “aware” to express his conscious recognition of the value of women in Kabylia.
Directive illocutionary act	“...tell your women, your mothers, your	Employing a command-like expression to show authority over men, for the sake of women. It also aims to evoke

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	sisters and your daughters...”	a sense of responsibility in men towards women, and to remind them of the rights of these women, employing an assertive tone.
Locutionary act, with the mention of statistics. Assertive illocutionary act	“...who represent 52 percent of the people in Algeria”	Bouteflika employs statistical information to imply the significance of the number of women in comparison to men. The president sought to employ statistics to increase credibility, persuasiveness, and memorability. Through this locution, the president intended to make women more visible as an instrumental portion of society.
Commissive illocutionary act	“...that they must ^{×3} be granted all of their rights guaranteed to them by the Algerian Constitution.”	An implied promise on his behalf toward women of Kabylia in particular, and of Algeria in general. The president used three times the modal verb ‘must’, which denotes the sense of obligation and compulsion.

As background to the analysis of this theme of the discourse, we draw on the results of a statistical study from the World Bank, which revealed that women constituted approximately 49.2 % of the total population around the year 1990 (World Bank, 2022). This near-equal demographic significance underscores the socio-political significance of women within Algerian society at that time. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika knew that it was important to draw attention to women in his 1999 speech, aiming at securing their eventual support

as a pivotal constituency in the success of his reconciliation project. Table 4 above illustrates how Bouteflika employed pragmatic strategies in his discourse as he frames his appeal to women as an integral part of Algeria's national rebuilding.

Table5. The External Relations of the Text (Theme Three: Diversity)

Pragmatic Tool	Example in the Text	Explanation
Assertive illocutionary ct	"...and I come from a place called Tlemcen, and people inside Tlemcen and outside Tlemcen hear about the place called Kabylia."	Bouteflika mentions his origins to establish authenticity as a person who had an ordinary Algerian life experience, evoking humility. The city of Tlemcen is located in the vast west of Algeria and is not considered one of the biggest Algerian cities, which is, according to Kelly (2022), a way to send a feeling of shared values and shared identity.
Reference to the linguistic notion	"...and I come from a place called Tlemcen, and people inside Tlemcen and outside Tlemcen hear about the /ləʔbejəl/."	Employing the regional accent of Tlemcen while pronouncing the Arabic word for Kabyle people /ləqbejəl/ in the Tlemcenian Accent /ləʔbejəl/ (replacing the sound /q/ in Arabic with the glottal stop /ʔ/. Bouteflika implies that no matter how far Kabylia can be, and no matter how the language may be, 'Kabyle people' would still resonate, and people from

		across Algeria would identify them.
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Algeria's cultural and linguistic diversity has long shaped the image of Algeria in the eyes of Western observers. Locally, however, this diversity is perceived ambivalently, celebrated as a marker of richness while also seen as a potential factor of division. In his speech, President Bouteflika strategically referred to the accent of Tlemcen, which is considered one of the most distinguished accents in Algeria, as a way to reaffirm his personal origins and identity. By invoking his hometown, he simultaneously reminded the public and the spectators that he remained connected to his roots while he aims to nourish the relations between the region of Kabylia and the broader Algerian nation by using his hometown as a remote yet unifying reference.

Step Six: Analyze the internal relations in the text

As far as language is concerned, former president Abdelaziz Bouteflika utilized a broad set of linguistic devices to embody his ideologies as an instrument of persuasion.

1. Repetition and Anaphora

The use of anaphora, or the repetition of words and phrases, is a rhetorical device used to establish impact, reinforce cohesion and emphasis, and induce the audience to remember the importance of the transmitted message (Chilton, 2004, pp. 56-50). Note that within the duration of 5 minutes 38 seconds of the excerpt analyzed, President Bouteflika employed 6 notable repetitions:

- "Nice ululation" (×2)
- "One of the foreign journalists asked me" (×2)
- "Consider this negligence on my part" (×2)
- "We become Arab Berbers" (×3)
- "A Berber indeed" (×3)
- "I am a guest of Lalla Fatma N'Soumer" (×2)

Such instances of repetition consolidate his ideologies of unity, belonging, and reconciliation.

2. Emotive and Evaluative Language

The speech makes use of emotive and loaded words such as as feel, negligence, erroneous, and all, which carry significant affective weight. These lexical choices aimed to resonate with the audience's emotions and reinforce Bouteflika's sincerity.

3. The Use of Ellipsis

Ellipsis appears in the passage, "because you do not have the slightest clue about the Algerian affairs," rather than elaborating on the details of the Tamazight affairs. Bouteflika employs omission to suggest obviousness to frame the lack of awareness of the Western World regarding the Algerian status quo.

4. Pronouns and Synthetic Personalization

Bouteflika relied heavily on personal pronouns as rhetorical tools. The pronoun I was used 13 times to emphasize identity, authority, and solidarity, while the pronoun we was used twice as the present shortened the distance between himself and the audience, creating an alliance, and conceptualizing a sentiment of group identity coalescing for a greater purpose. This technique exemplifies what Fairclough (2001, p.52) terms synthetic personalization, a discursive strategy employed by politicians to establish a sense of personal connection with their audience.

Synthetic personalization appears in:

1. The use of we and you pronouns (employed four times).
2. The use of colloquial language, e.g.:
 - a. 'دزغريدة' /dʒəʁɪ i:dæ/ (ululation),
 - b. 'معقن' /mʁəgən/ (mute),
 - c. 'الفرونساوية' /əl'fɑrɑsæwija/ (French language),
 - d. 'داري' /da:i/ (my home).
3. The use of the Tlemcenian accent, where /q/ is replaced by a glottal stop /ʔ/ (see minute 06:45 of the video).
5. Euphemism

The colloquial word ‘مَعْقَن’ /mʕəgən/ (mute) functions as a euphemism, softening the harshness of disability-related discourse while sustaining colloquial proximity with his audience.

6. Othering and Adversarial References

Bouteflika employed references to other populations to create distance and a sense of adversary:

- ‘الألماني’ /əl'alma:ni/ (German),
- ‘الشعوب الأوروبية’ /ə'ʃu:ʕu:b əl'ʔu:ɪ u:pijæ/ (European nations),
- ‘الأجانب’ /əl'æʒæ:nib/ (foreigners),
- ‘العالم’ /əl'ʕæ:ləm/ (the world).

This distancing strategy reaffirmed Algerian identity in contrast to outsiders.

7. Intertextuality and Cultural References

Bouteflika makes extensive use of cultural references, such as:

- Greeting the audience in Berber: أزول فلاون (“Azul fellawen”), to establish a sense of belonging.
- The use of the word ‘دز غريدة’ to honor women in the audience.
- Referring to cultural figures such as Lalla Fatma N'Soumer, Mohand ou Mhand, and Mouloud Mammeri to display a range of cultural knowledge and foster belonging and unity through mobilizing cultural memory.

8. Rhetorical Questions

The use of rhetorical questions, e.g., “...and what do you know of Djurdjura?” to create a feeling of grandiosity and impact, positioning the Western observers as learners vis-à-vis his authority as the leader and representative of the country.

9. Choice of Language Variety

Bouteflika chose to deliver most of his speech in Algerian Dialect deliberately, with minimal use of Standard Arabic, and none of French in this excerpt. The president positions himself closer to

people from modest backgrounds, many of whom lack fluency in French or allegiance to Arabization. He aims to connect socially and politically with the marginalized, reinforcing his position as the “people’s president”.

10. Storytelling

Finally, the use of storytelling emerged as an effective persuasive device that captured the audience's attention. Its effectiveness lies in its ability to create a connection, to raise curiosity by drawing the listener to the narrative, to evoke empathy, and to form a sense of shared experience.

Step Seven: Interpret the data

In light of the present analysis, we can conclude that former president Abdelaziz Bouteflika employed an array of persuasive techniques exerted through language. Pragmatically, this section of the speech was densely rich in speech acts, reference, and symbolism. Among these, reference emerged as a repeated occurrence. Our analysis counted a total of 8 reference instances. Bouteflika referred to several prominent Algerian figures, such as Mohand Ou Mhand, Mouloud Mammeri, and Lalla Fatma N’Soumer, to inspire motivation, to reinforce solidarity, and to legitimize his position. Furthermore, he evoked Algerian regions, such as Djurdjura, Tlemcen, and Tamenrasset, to foster national identity, unity, and a sense of pride, while also citing international references, such as Australia, “German Friend”, and “European people”, to project an image of cultural awareness of global engagement. This reference variety demonstrates Bouteflika’s tendency to invoke names of figures and places to institutionalize his speech in a way that is distant from conventional political discourse. In addition, we identified a significant variety of speech acts, 19 occurrences, including apologies, promises, validation, assertiveness, personalization, and advocacy of political causes. These acts functioned as mechanisms through which Bouteflika sought to create rapport between his audience and himself, and ultimately construct his political legitimacy.

One of the most sensitive issues addressed by the former president is the Tamazight conflict. Delivered in Tizi Ouezou, the symbolic

heartland of the Berber community, this theme demonstrated closeness to its socio-political context, which justifies the setting's strategic choice. The analysis demonstrated that the Berbers shaped Bouteflika's political position. Bouteflika's openness in accepting the Berber language and heritage is also reflected in the integration of women in the political arena, through validly manifesting their rights. Through addressing these issues, Bouteflika underscored Algeria's cultural, linguistic, and social diversity while seeking to manage the socio-political tensions of the country at the time, in a way that consolidated his power as the nation builder.

Linguistically speaking, the speech exhibits the presence of devices like anaphora, loaded language, euphemism, ellipsis, intertextuality, repetition, and synthetic personification. Repetition was of a particular occurrence, as our analysis note 6 repeated statements during a 5-minute excerpt, employed to induce the audience's collective memory, engagement, and add emphasis. Similarly, Bouteflika deliberately shifted registers, incorporating regional accents, elements of local dialects, and a blend of Standard Arabic, Algerian vernacular, and Berber. These techniques were not merely ornamental; they served Bouteflika's broader intention of positioning himself, closely, tightly, and irreversibly, as part of the Berbers, defender of women, and a true national loyalist, ultimately, consolidating his power of change and securing support for his reconciliation project.

Conclusion:

The excerpt analyzed in the present article reflects the socio-political status quo in Algeria at the end of the Black Decade, highlighting the challenges confronting the country and the rhetorical persona of the president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika. It underscores his speaking skills, eloquence, wisdom, and most importantly, and most importantly his rhetorical expertise. The discourse demonstrates how presidential authority was exercised to reshape the mindsets of the inhabitants of Kabylia, steering them toward a more unified national stance and a greater acceptance of coexistence with the Arab communities in Algeria, and how this authority is shaped by the context of the speech. To exercise his discursive power, Bouteflika employed a multiplicity of speech strategies, such as symbolism,

implied language, lexical diversity, and a deliberate alternation between strict and humble registers. These techniques reveal Bouteflika's capacity to exert influence and mobilize public sentiment. Ultimately, this analysis demonstrates how political speech can conceal ideological intentions embedded within the fabric of language, subtly guiding the audience toward specific political and cultural alignments.

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Appendix

Authentic Text in Arabic

أزول فلاون

دزغريدة صـح 2×

سالي سال من صحافيين الأجانب 2× وهو يقول كيف تشعر بنفسك في تيري وزو و كأنني جاي من استراليا و تيزي وزو في نيو زيلندا

قل يا صديقي الصحفي الألماني قل للشعب الألماني الصديق و قل للشعوب الأوروبية و قل لشعوب العالم بان كل جزائري يجي على تمنراست. اذا سمعتوا لسانى معقن مين نتكلم الامازيغية هادا تقصير مني ×2 ما جتهدتش معملتش لارم بش ندوق لي لغتوا لغة محند أومحمد مع ذلك كان صديقي رحمة الله مولود معمرى كنا نتكلموا بالفرونساوية ولينا نتكلموا بالعربية و ولينا نتكلمو بالامازيغية على أساس ان تقبلوا مني اني نعربكم تقبلوا مني كذلك انا اتمزغ و سنكون عربا امازيغ ×3 على كل حال يا صديقي الصحفي سالت سؤالا قد يخالفك في صدرك لانك لا تفقه شيئا في شؤون الجزائر انا الان في ربوع جرجرة و ما ادراك ما جرجرة انا في داري و اهلي و عشيرتي قبائلي و نص ×3 وانا من منطقة في تلمسان ناس تلمسان داخل تلمسان و خارج تلمسان يسمعو بمنطقة يسموها القبائل انا ضيف عند لالة فاطمة نسومر ×2 و نعرف قيمة المرأة و نعرف قيمة المرأة في بلاد القبائل و مادام فتحت حديثي بالمرأة ابد ان نحملكم رسالة من الان بشروا نساكنم بشروا امهاتكم بشروا خواتانكم بشروا بناتكم بما انهم يمثلوا 52 بالمئة من سكان الجزائر و انه لابد ×3 ان تعطى الحقوق كل الحقوق اللي يضمها الدستور للمرأة 7:20.

The translated Text from Arabic into English

Azul Fellawen, Nice ululation ×2

One of the foreign journalists asked me ×2 how I feel when I am in Tizi Ouezou, as if I come from Australia and Tizi Ouezou is in New Zealand. My German Journalist friend, tell the German people, tell all the European people, and all people in the world that every Algerian citizen comes from Tamanrasset. If you ever hear me speak Berber poorly, consider this negligence on my part ×2. I did not work hard to properly savor the language of Mohand Ou Mhand, even though I was good friends with Mouloud Maameri, may he rest in peace. We used to talk in French, then in Arabic, then in Tamazight. Accept it from me to Arabize you as I become Berber, and so we become Arab Berbers ×3. Anyway, my journalist friend, you asked me an erroneous question, because you do not have the slightest clue about the Algerian matters. I am now in the heart of Djurdjura, and what do you know of Djurdjura? I am at home with my people, my clan, a Berber indeed ×3, and I come from a place called Tlemcen, and people inside Tlemcen and outside Tlemcen hear about the place called Kabylia. I am a guest of Lalla Fatma N'Soumer ×2, and I am aware of the value of the woman and the value of the woman in

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Kabylia. Since I speak of women, I would like to send you a message; tell your women, your mothers, your sisters, and your daughters, who represent 52 percent of the people in Algeria, that they must be granted all of their rights guaranteed to them by the Algerian Constitution. 07:20.

Link of the Speech:
<https://youtu.be/8kPki0hPmx4?si=yOP9aLWgqtujmexp>