EL - HAKIKA (the Truth)
Journal for Social and Human Sciences

Volume :24 / Issue 03 / (2025), PP:225-254

Investigating the Use of Transliteration and Romanisation in Algeria: Reasons, Impacts, and Expected Future. A Case Study of Writings by Facebook Users in Algeria.

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Received: 04/08/2025, **Accepted**: 24/09/2025, **Publication**: 30/09/2025

Abstract:

The current study tries to explore the integration of transliterated and romanised Arabic in multilingual online communication by Facebook users in Algeria. The article tackles the users' experiences and feedback, gauging their satisfaction with the scripts. The article also highlights the reasons, impacts and the expected future of adapting these scripts. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were selected for this research. The findings showed different views towards this lingistic practice ; while many respondents view these tools as useful and identity-affirming, others argue that they undermine language integrity and reinforce poor spelling habits.

Keywords: transliteration; romanisation; Facebook; reasons; impacts.

INTRODUCTION

Romanisation, one type of transliteration used for different purposes, is writing a non-Latin script in the Latin alphabet. For instance, Arabic romanisation is based on the representation of written and spoken Arabic in the Latin alphabet. The Arabic word 'ذاب', which means *'melt'* in English, for example, may be romanised as *'dab'*. This representation is characterised by using unstandardised Latin letters and non-universalised phonetic symbols. On one hand, the second letter in the word (ذاب) is a vowel letter that may represent lengthening in Arabic, especially when it is medium. On the other hand, the first consonant sound is the interdental /ð/ instead of /d/.Therefore,

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'ذاب' is more expected to be romanised as (ʔaab). In a nutshell, romanisation is the writing of a non-Latin script in the Latin alphabet, such as Arabic. It uses unstandardised Latin letters and phonetic symbols.

Transliteration is derived from the verb 'transliterate' that is composed from the Latin preposition and prefix "trans" and the word "līt̄era" (littera), meaning "letter". Simply put, transliteration is the process of converting letters from one alphabet into another. Unlike transcription, where sounds of the target language represent sounds of the original word, transliteration is the process of translating one writing system into another. (*Dictionary.com*, n.d.). The representation of Arab names in French is an example of how each character from the source language is assigned a corresponding character in the target language. Transliteration is frequently used for names of individuals, locations, organisations, and innovations.

In summary, both transliteration and romanisation are based on converting writing systems, using both non-standard Latin letters and transcribing in non-universal phonetic symbols. This system is widely spread among non-Latin populations, such as Arab people. Thus, what are the motivating factors behind their use in online communication, and what consequences might they have?

1. Purpose of the Study

With the development of the internet and social media, remarkable changes have occurred in how people communicate. Digital communication has raisen, and new linguistic forms have been utilised. Facebook users in Algeria, for instance, have increasingly used transliterated and romanised Arabic. While this is seen to be a form of linguistic creativity or technological adaptation, it also raises concerns about the dilution of Arabic script and the fragmentation of language norms, especially in informal writing contexts. The current study aims to explore the use of transliteration and romanisation among digital communication users, particularly Facebook users in Algeria. The purpose behind the study is to identify and examine the linguistic, cultural, and digital motives that lead to romanised Arabic script. Additionally, this article sheds light on the linguistic and cultural implications of the scripts in a multilingual digital context. Through this analysis, the study also seeks to find out about the impacts of these linguistic practices, the social attitudes towards them, and the probable future of written Arabic in Algeria. Respectively, to analyse whether transliteration and romanisation work as a tool for universal communication, linguistic creativity, and/or accessibility. Furthermore, the research seeks to collect

insightful views concerning the expected future of romanised Arabic among Facebook users in Algeria's multilingual context.

2. Statement of the Problem

In the context of Algeria, Facebook users often romanise and transliterate Arabic; they represent Arabic sounds with Latin scripts in different situations. Common examples include expressions like *"salam"* (سلام) for greeting, *"labas"* (لابأس) for "good/well," or *"bghit"* (بغيت) for "I want." Also, some expressions use numerals to replace Arabic letters that have no exact Latin equivalent, like *3* for ع, *7* for ح, and *9* for ق in the following words: *"3awd"* (عاود) for "repeat," *"7ar"* (حار) for "hot," and *"9ahwa"* (قهوة) for "coffee." Such writings may pose challenges for unfamiliar users due to the lack of standardisation. Moreover, the matter may become more challenging when excessive words and sentences are made in utterance. For instance, the sentence *"rani nat9ahwa f l7ouma"* (راني نتقهوى في الحومة), meaning "I'm having coffee in the neighbourhood," mixes French/English with Arabic transliterated in Latin letters. These examples elucidate the research problem of whether transliteration supports modern linguistic adaptability or contributes to the weakening of the Arabic script in Algeria.

Transliterated and romanised Arabic scripts raise awareness about linguistic erosion among Facebook users in Algeria. Similarly, they offer insights into evolving digital identities and communicative flexibility. The subjectivity in consonantal, vocalic, and diacritic spelling and their consistency cause complicated comprehension. For example, *"ri7,"* or *"rih"* for ريح(wind); *"ri9,"* or *"riq"* for ريق(saliva); and *"5oya,"* or *"xoya"* for خويا(my brother).

In addition, Arabic's short vowels are often omitted, or shortened, or replaced, written subjectively depending on the writer's intuition or dialect. *"3omar,"* or *"Omar"* for عمر(proper name 'Omar'); *"t3ala,"* or *"t3ela"* for تعالى(come); *"nrou7,"* or *"nro7"* for نروح(I / we go). Moreover, Arabic script uses diacritics (harakat) to clarify pronunciation, but in romanisation, these are usually ignored, creating ambiguity in meaning. *"ktb," "keteb,"* or *"katab"* for كَتَبَ(he wrote); *mr," "mar,"* or *"marra"* for مَرّ(he passed).

Therefore, the lack of consensus regarding the legitimacy, function, reasons, consequences, and expected future of transliteration and romanisation presents a sociolinguistic issue. Despite its widespread use, romanisation/transliteration remains unexplored in the Facebook context in Algeria, especially regarding its linguistic,

cultural, and digital impacts. This study, therefore, tackles this gap by exploring the reasons and impacts behind this linguistic practice. Additionally, the research addresses its possible future shaping the linguistic and social context and online Facebook communication in Algeria.

3. The Scope of Transliteration and Romanisation in Algeria

Both reading novels written by Arab authors and visiting the social media platforms of many Arab countries, where people are expected to write in Arabic, can exemplify the spread of transliteration and romanisation. Thus, the use of transliteration and romanisation in Algeria—an Arab country—is a shared phenomenon. However, the essence and the reasons that lead to this phenomenon may differ. In Algeria, the evolution of transliteration and romanisation is a response to mainly five factors : the historical influences, the linguistic diversity, the education policy, EMI implementation, and the rise of social media communication.

3.1 Historical Influences

Before the arrival of the French, Arabic and Berber were the symbols of the linguistic identity in Algeria. However, it was the result of the French colonisation period in Algeria (1830-1962) that French has had a noticeable impact on reformulating the linguistic context in Algeria. French became dominant in education and administration then. After independence in 1962, Algeria launched Arabisation policies in order to restore the status of Arabic; 'However, this policy did not succeed in establishing Arabic as the dominant language. Education and administrations were not free from French. Also, many Algerians have both spoken bilingually and integrated French scripts in their writings. The matter that has facilitated the way to the use of transliteration and romanisation. (Belfarhi, K. (2019).

3.2 The Linguistic Profile of Algeria

In addition, the coexistence of Arabic, Berber, French, and other linguistic forms in Algeria has helped the people there to use different means to express themselves, especially in online communication. Moreover, adopting Latin scripts for Berber in education, official contexts, and daily communication has fostered the role of transliteration and romanisation as a practical writing system.

According to (**Lafkioui, 2008**), most Berber chose Latin script due to its modernity and adaptability. In addition, many websites, treating subjects about language, culture, and history are in French.As an example, French is the primary language used in forums, such as the website *Kabyles.net.*Tifinagh, however, is restricted to conversations, and most contributions are writen in Latin.

In addition, there is no doubt that exposure to a foreign language brings about bilingual/multilingual individuals. Algeria's implementation of many foreign languages in the different phases of educational studies, primary, middle, and secondary schools, not to mention higher education levels, has resulted in the evolution of transliteration and romanisation. Bilingual and plurilingual environments necessitate bilinguals and multilinguals who are expected to use Latin scripts in order to express themselves. On that basis, Carina Lynn Briggs claims, "Francophone Algerian writers can overcome each of the internal dilemmas they face by writing in the French language." (**2010, p.2**)

3.3 Latin as a Script for Teaching Berber

Teaching Berber in Algeria has also assisted in the spread of transliteration and romanisation among Algerians. Historically, Tifinagh was the script used for Berber. However, after the recognition of Berber as the second official language alongside Arabic in Algeria in 2016, Latin was the script set for writing the language. The High Commission for Amazighity reported that "the majority of teachers were neither in favour of teaching Berber through Tifinagh script nor through Arabic script." (**Hamdan, J. M., & Kessar, S. ,2023, p.66**) The choice of Latin was as a response to adequate reasons, among which was integrating non-Arabic vocabulary in Algeria's linguistic context.

3.4 English as the Primary Medium of Instruction (EMI) in Algerian Universities

Algeria's higher education has implemented English as the primary Medium of Instruction (EMI) starting from the academic year 2023-2024. Adopting English, a language scripted in Latin, as the language of instructions will broaden the scope of its vocabulary use. Moreover, for the reason of bridging the linguistic gap between

educators and students, transliteration and romanisation practices will spread. On this, Touahmia, S., & Bakar, F. (2024) point out that the majority of teachers and students recognise the status of English in education. They also reckon that Algeria's high education aims at using English as EMI to extend its use in the country and in academic research. Accordingly, this policy not only promotes the status of English in Algeria but also leads to the use of Latin scripts at university—a nation's educational institution with a considerable number of the country's population.

3.5 The Evolution of Online and Digital Communication

The evolution of online and digital communication is one of the factors that urges people in Algeria to romanise and transliterate. Unlike face-to-face, online communication requires writing in some instances. The success of this type of communication depends on feedback between communicators. Once social media joins people from different areas with different writing scripts, there must be a means to cause communication to happen. Thus, Algerians, originally writing in Arabic, feel the need for bridging the linguistic gap by using Latin scripts.

In addition, many Algerians prefer to communicate online using Transliterated/Romanised Arabic rather that Arabic, even if Arabic script keyboards are available. This tendency is amaily due to accessiblity to the Latin scripts, as observed in al Khalil's (2003) research, which highlights the practicality and ease of typing as key motivations for this choice.

In summary, transliteration and romanisation in Algeria reflect the country's complex linguistic history, shaped by native linguistic forms, colonial rule, language policies, and its response to digital communication.

4. Reasond and Impacts of Using Transliteration an Romanisation

Based on the reasons-and-effects relationship where the significance of the reasons is measured by their outcomes, the current points try to elucidate the motives and impacts of transliteration and romanisation. Once the realm of communication has varied between

face-to-face and online, transcending geographical and linguistic borders, transliteration and romanisation serve as a potential tool for bridging the gap between diverse interlocutors with various linguistic forms and scripts. Thus, it is important to explore the significant reasons and impacts of transliteration and romanisation, mainly in four ways.

4.1 Bridging Language Barriers and Enhancing Communication

Transliteration and romanisation play a crucial role in overcoming language barriers. Thanks to them, people who are unfamiliar with traditional scripts can have the chance to accessibly communicate with others who convert scripts into phonetic equivalents in the Roman alphabet. For example, Algerians usually transliterate words, especially on social media platforms. The transliterated term 'kirak' for 'How are you?' from Arabic « كيف حالك» demonstrates this. Other examples include 'saha' for 'thank you' or 'good' (صحة) and 'labes' for 'fine' (لابأس).

Doing so enables non-Arabic speakers to grasp the pronunciation of these words. This is more plausible in digital communication where "transliteration serves to be a phonetic bridge by forming a phonemic orthography where a language learner could easily learn new words in a targeted language using the symbols of source language" (**Sugadev, 2024, p. 248**). Moreover, transliteration and romanisation provide the same function even within the same community. As an example, in Algeria, where there are two official languages, Arabic and Tamazight, each with a distinct linguistic form, transliterated and romanised terms clear up the ambiguity of non-familiar terms.

4.2 Enabling Inclusivity and User Engagement

Transliteration and romanisation enhance user engagement by fostering inclusivity. Non-native speakers with limited literacy in a given script may engage with cultural and linguistic content. For

instance, online chatting on platforms lacking Arabic script support witnesses the use of such script forms. The use of the expression 'manaarf' ('I don't know') illustrates this. Other phrases like 'shokran' (شكراً, 'thank you') and 'afwan' (عفوًا, 'you're welcome') are also common examples.

This hybridised communication enhances broader participation, especially if access to a standard Arabic keyboard is limited. Moreover, transliteration and romanisation promote engagement among various Arabic communicators who know Arabic but are literate in the Roman alphabet. In short, the integration of these forms into multiple writing systems and online communication can instil cultural and linguistic inclusivity across communities.

> Most of these technologies originally were designed to incorporate the ASCII keypads. As a result, Arabic speaking internet users communicate in these technologies by transliterating the Arabic-version text into French/English using the ASCII-forms. To overcome the Arabic letters that do not have an approximate phonetic equivalent in the ASCII script or phones, numerals, that graphically approximate the Arabic letter, are used instead.
>
> **(Benmoussat, 2011, p.245)**

4.3 Preserving Cultural Identities

Writing and digitally posting native terms in transliterated and romanised scripts preserve the sender's cultural heritage. Language and identity are interlinked, and by using transliterated forms, individuals can maintain the phonetic and semantic essence of their language. For example, using terms like 'Habibi' (حبيبي, 'my dear') and 'Insha'Allah' (إن شاء الله, 'God willing') retains the cultural and religious connotations embedded in the words. Such practices ensure that the cultural depth and linguistic uniqueness are not lost in translation.

For example, Arab proper names are transliterated and romanised. Names like Abdelhamid, Boudiaf, Boudjemaa, and Mouloud showcase cultural significance in Algerian heritage. The role of transforming these scripts goes beyond phonetic matters. For example, the name 'Mouloud' in Algerian culture signifies the Prophet's birth and carries religious and cultural importance.

In addition to proper names, address terms in Algerian culture play a similar role. For instance, the use of the terms 'khoya' (خويا, 'my brother') and 'khouti' (اختي, 'my sister') in the novel 'Rih El Djanoub' by Abdelhamid Benkhlouf and the use of the terms 'baba' (بابا, 'father') and 'yema' (يما, 'my mother') in Buqalah poetry, respectively addressing non-siblings and non-parental individuals, are both linguistically and culturally significant. Linguistically, they exhibit the phonetic legacy of the system by providing equivalent phonetic forms in the Roman alphabet. Culturally, these scripts express the sense of community and solidarity shared by the Algerian people. Furthermore, writing these terms in such scripts symbolises diction, where writers select terms that connect meaning and style effectively. Indeed, transliterating and romanising geographic names, proper names, and address terms ensure the linguistic existence of the people using them and boost their sense of identity, belonging, and nativity. This is plain in Deluzain's (1996) claim —*as cited in* Mbarachi and Igwenyi (**2018, p. 29)**

> Naming is a universal process that differs significantly from culture to culture on how they are given. Its primary purpose in every culture is to linguistically and appropriately label an individual. In other words, naming is a cultural construct of identifying a person through the employment of the cultural strategies in the given society and its realisation through language. '' Mbarachi and Igwenyi (**2018, p. 29**)

4.4 Language Learning and Cross-cultural Experiences

Transliteration and romanisation serve as educational tools, simplifying language learning by providing phonetic equivalents that help users link spoken and written forms. They create accessible entry points into Arabic pronunciation (Holes, 2004). For instance, beginners learning Arabic often start with phrases like 'Salam' (سلام, 'peace') or 'Shukran' (شكراً, 'thank you') in romanised form before transitioning to the Arabic script.

Additionally, transliteration is not restricted to writing for readers or post viewers ; tourists also benefit. Bilingual dictionaries generally use transliterated and romanised scripts to bridge the gap between different writing systems. For example, maps in Arabic-speaking regions often transliterate place names, enabling non-Arabic speakers to navigate more effectively.

Transliteration and romanisation bring about global interconnectedness. Romanised Arabic on social media, especially by Algerian users, is exposed to an international context. These tools enable Algeria's cultural writings and digital posts to encompass both a cultural and linguistic identity, resonating globally while utilising these forms, such as unicode.

On this Mammeri claims :

> The interest in transliteration here falls within the scope of digital literacy : the multitude of transliteration solutions and the variety of dedicated Unicode characters make the understanding and manipulation of transliteration challenging for anyone unfamiliar with advanced digital technologies. (**Mammeri, 2022, p. 160**). (Translation mine)

4.5 Revitalising Language Identity

Being a powerful tool for keeping language forms alive, transliteration and romanisation work to revitalise endangered linguistic systems. Their system that is based on converting words

from one script or phonetic form into another lights the way for a broader audience to access the language system they refer to. For instance, Jain Blommaert (2008) emphasises the role of romanisation in making the linguistic system accessible to non-native speakers or learners, allowing them to engage with the system despite their unmastery of the origin of the scripts. He argue, "However, uncritical adoption of new tools and technologies is leading to resources that are difficult to reuse and which are less portable than the conventional printed resources they replace." (**Bird & Simons, 2002**)

In other words, his idea focuses on the crucial role the systems play in enabling a linguistic system to cross cultural and geographical borders. Thanks to transliteration and romanisation, a wider number of users outside the linguistics system native community can share that system ; thus, transliteration and romanisation are resilient to endangerment. Hence, transliterated and romanised languages and dialects endure and avoid the threat of extinction in this way ; they survive.

4.6 Documenting Oral Traditions

There is no doubt that we forget what we say, but we never forget what we write. Oral statements may easily fade from memory, but written forms survive. Thus, there is an urgent need to document oral cultures.

In the words of Walter J. Ong (1982), documenting oral traditions is a necessity for saving them from fading away over time.

> Without writing, the literate mind would not and could not think as it does, not only when engaged in writing but normally even when it is composing its thoughts in oral form. More than any other single invention, writing has transformed human consciousness.'' (**Ong, 1982, p. 78**)

Moreover, documenting non-altin traditions in a romanised Arabic scripts serves more in preserving oral tradition both as a cultural heritage and as a linguistic artefact. As a consequence authors who transliterate and romanise some terms while writing in another language, they preserve both their culture and their linguistic system as well. For instance, many Algerian writers who mainly wrote in French transliterated and romanised some terms. Examples of these are shown below:

Table 1. **Romanized and Transliterated Arabic Terms in Algerian Writers' Works**

Writer	**Term 1 (Meaning)**	**Term 2 (Meaning)**	**Term 3 (Meaning)**
Assia Djebar	*chibani* (elderly man)	*qahwa* (coffee)	*zawiya* (religious school)
Kateb Yacine	*baladi* (my country)	*makhzan* (storehouse)	*djemaâ* (community assembly)
Ahlam Mosteghanemi	*haraga* (illegal migrants)	*zed* (extra/surplus)	*douar* (small village/hamlet)
Malika Mokeddem	*oued* (river/stream)	*siqaya* (watering place)	*saha* (health/well-being)
Rachid Mimouni	*ghorba* (exile)	*hogra* (oppression/injustice)	

The use of these transliterated and romanised terms is by no means a linguistic powerlessness ; however, it is a sign of linguistic expertise. As an example, the words *'chibani', 'zed', 'qahwa', 'djmaa', and 'douar'* were colloquially used, symbolising the cultural specificity of the terms, especially when read in a full context, respectively:

"Le chibani restait à l'ombre, racontant les histoires de sa jeunesse." (**L'Amour, la Fantasia, 1985, p. 78**)

"Un peu de zed dans notre courage, et l'histoire aurait été autre." (**Mémoires de la Chair, 1993, p. 84**).

"Autour de la qahwa, les femmes racontaient des légendes." (**L'Amour, la Fantasia, 1985, p. 121**)

"La djemaâ se rassemblait au pied du grand arbre." (**Nedjma, 1956, p. 47**)

Spivak, G.C. emphasises how transliteration and romanisation foster culture authentically regardless of the unfamiliarity of the terms. If translated, for example, *'chibani' or 'zawiya'* may not convey the real connotative cultural meaning, but do if transliterated or romanised, for they embody the emotional undertones related to them. For example, *"Le douar s'éveillait au chant du coq."* (**Mémoires de la Chair, 1993, p. 47**).

The authors exemplified the balance between cultural authenticity and accessibility. On one hand, they demonstrate how transliteration and romanisation document their culture without losing their essence, and on the other hand, they offer access to non-native readers to explore their linguistic systems and traditions. It is, therefore, an invitation for the readers to discover the cultural roots of the terms.

Linguistically, the use of such terms colloquially serves many reasons. For instance, the terms *'chibani', 'zed', 'haraga', 'saha', 'ghorba', 'qahwa', 'hogra', and 'siqaya'* are used for preserving the emotional resonance of these terms, showing regional identity, and understanding the terms' pronunciation.

First, using equivalent terms for these terms does not carry the meaning authentically. The term *'oued'* in Malika Mokaddem's work directly reflects an image of 'oued' in the minds of those who know its connotation; however, for those who do not know, it is ambiguous: is *'oued' for 'a river'* or for *'stream*'? In addition, using these terms symbolises the authors' regional identity.

In terms of pronunciation, the transliterated and romanised terms display the sense of language rhythm, structure and mainly the phonetic quality. For instance, the syllable structure of these words is totally different from the French one. In addition, the bold transliterated letters in the following words – ***h****arga, sa****ha, h****ogra, ***gh****orba, **q****ahwa, si****q****aya, djem****aa,** *and doua****r,*** *respectively* **–** refer to sounds that do not have counterparts in the sound system of the French language.

5. The Expected Future of Romanised and Transliterated Arabic on Facebook

5.1 Increasing Digital Integration

The interplay of various scripts, such as transliteration and romanisation, increases digital integration by fostering inclusive communication across various linguistic communities. Algeria's linguistic landscape, including classical Arabic, modern standard Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Tamazight, and other foreign languages like French, necessitates the development of digital platforms. Therefore, the use of transliteration and Romanisation continues its spread and usage across social media. For instance, Algerian users, most of the time, write 'kirak', 'salam', and 'sbah el khair'.

In a work by Bengrait, she reveals that Algerian youth use a colloquial and variable mode of writing that is unfamiliar for other users on the internet. People use French and Arabic with English (code-switching) and use Latin letters constitently in non-standard ways to render Algerian Arabic because there is no predetermined system. The way characters are written can be confusing or vague and it is difficult to determine exactly what Arabic sounds represent.(**Bengrait, N. 2021**)

Transliteration and romanisation preserve cultural heritage embodied in conserving scripts and documenting oral traditions. On the one hand, it is thanks to the use of these writings on Facebook that unknown scripts may become familiar to other users from other areas. Moreover, because of transliteration and romanisation, the scripts symbolising a certain form of writing may not be forgotten. Thus, social media platforms, such as Facebook, allow these scripts' users to exhibit their culture digitally. On the other hand, Facebook users can use transliteration and romanisation to script their diaries and stories

and express their thoughts worldwide. It is true that books, novels, etc., can do instead. However, on most occasions, books, novels, etc. are written in formal, standardised, conventionalised forms of language. Hence, transliteration and romanisation – informal, non-standardised, non-conventionalised forms of scripts – can pave the way for a new category of people with a marginalised form of script for being in the realm of inclusivity and heretical literature in a digital world. In brief, transliteration and romanisation can make valuable contributions to their users, mainly in the scopes of culture and linguistics.

5.2 Education Use

Enhancing the role of transliteration and Romanisation use among Algerian users is thanks to the incorporation of various linguistic forms. Once MSA is widely used in formal education, the inclusion of other linguistic forms may give positive results. Beginner students learning languages with different alphabets can benefit from transliteration and romanisation. The scripts allow them to pronounce foreign words without needing to master the target linguistic form. This approach bridges the gap between spoken and written language forms of the language.

Moreover, notetaking, an important skill in studies, can be well organised thanks to transliteration. "A professional academic transcription company can provide a neatly organised and summarised transcript. With this, you can get the most out of your notes and easily understand your usually hard-to-read writing." (**TranscriptionWing, 2020, para. 3**).Romanised notes taken can be time-saving due to the complexity of the characters of the mother tongue, such as Arabic. Romanising these scripts expedites the written process, enabling students to collect much information in a shorter time. As a consequence, it is ensured that key points are not missed, easing the comprehension and retention of the notes.

5.3 Standardised Trends

The use of transliteration and romanisation in social media platforms contributes to the standardisation of these scripts. Traditionally, dialects were oral, with a restricted usage in written communication. However, it is thanks to social media that these

linguistic forms have noticed a presence in written messages, comments, and posts. The trend both reflects the origin of the linguistic preferences of its users and helps in developing a suitable writing script of the linguistic form – transliteration and romanisation. For instance, 'qamis', 'qahwa', 'sajad', etc., are transliterated terms that can help in broader accessibility to the nature of the linguistic form.

5.4 Culture Exchange and Globalisation

The variability of the transliterated and Romanised linguistic forms in Algeria plays a significant role in its globalisation and preserves its cultural heritage. Arabic – CA, MSA, AA; Tamazight; and other forms, such as French, enable Algerian people to have a chance to engage with multiple spheres. Linguistically, it is believed that 'You are what you speak'; language is maintained by utilising it in a variety of contexts, such as education, cultural events, and the media. This helps to conserve language for future generations. A language's existence and continuity can be guaranteed by communities who elevate its linguistic significance, particularly if it has written scripts. On this, Crystal says,

> Language has no independent existence, living in some sort of mystical space apart from the people who speak it. Language exists only in the brains and mouths and ears and hands and eyes of its users. When they succeed, on the in ternational stage, their language succeeds. When they fail, their language fails. (**2003 p.7**).

The quote shows that the language is on the way it is written to reflect people's identity. In other words, your identity is known from the linguistic form you use to communicate, speak, and write, verbally or nonverbally. Therefore, the variability of the spoken and written forms by Algerians helps them have a diverse cultural sphere.

5.5 Technological Advances in AI and Translation Tools

Technological advancement and AI have a significant implication for script translation tools, such as translating transliterated and romanised scripts. Creating AI tools and software that comprehend transliteration writings fosters the accuracy of transliteration. For instance, DziriBert signifies an advancement in AI by addressing linguistic diversity, demonstrating efficient data

utilisation, advancing Natural Language Processing (NLP) capabilities, and encouraging open-source collaboration. Its development reflects a broader trend towards creating more inclusive and efficient AI technologies.

Moreover, this will improve the system of machine translation by providing users accessibility to digital content and exposing them to cross-lingual communication. In a nutshell, this technological advancement both bridges the gap of linguistic system barriers and highlights the importance of developing AI models that cater to under-represented languages and dialects, promoting inclusivity in technology.

6. Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The study employs a mixed-method approach ; it combines qualitative and quantitative methods, respectively textual analysis and a questionnaire, to express the phenomena of transliteration and romanisation in Algerian linguistic practices. Additionally, it is better noted that the questionnaire contains both qualitative and quantitative enquiries ; using the mixed-method approach helps in a more nuanced exploration of this linguistic phenomenon, transliteration, and romanisation. The combination of the methods will clarify perspectives on the topic and facilitate answering how and why these linguistic forms have spread in Algerian literature and online communication.

6.2 Data Collection Method

Questionnaire

To collect data from Algerians from different regions, a question is designed aiming to investigate daily reasons for using transliteration and romanisation on Facebook, the perceived impacts of these practices, mainly on linguistic identity and cultural heritage, and the predictions about the future of these linguistic phenomena. The questionnaire was made on Google Forms ; it was distributed online.

The sample included individuals from different regions, ages, educational levels, different categories from society, and different

linguistic preferences so that a broad range of perspectives could be captured. Moreover, the questionnaire incorporated both qualitative and quantitative questions. The quantitative questions included measurable data such as frequencies, demographic information, and preferences. However, qualitative questions encompass linguistic choices, personal expectations, and personal perceptions.

In brief, this approach, a mixed-method approach, will ensure a variety of datasets that work to balance between statistical analysis and personal insights in order to provide clear interpretation of these data.

6.3 Sampling Description

The questionnaire was distributed to a target sample of 50 participants from different regions of Algeria, aiming to capture a wide population. However, only 24 responded, representing less than half of the intended individuals. Moreover, the questionnaire included other sections for regional identification, the challenges faced while using transliteration and romanisation, and sections about the reasons, impacts, and expected future of these scripts. In addition, the sample were asked to mention some of the transliterated/romanised Arabic examples they use or come across on Facebook.

6.4 Ethical Consideration

In order to ensure transparency and conduct the research on the basis of academic ethical guidelines, the research respectfully ensures the existence of the following points :

- All the respondents were informed about the purpose of the questionnaire.
- Anonymity and confidentiality of participants are maintained.
- The analysed literary works are academically cited.

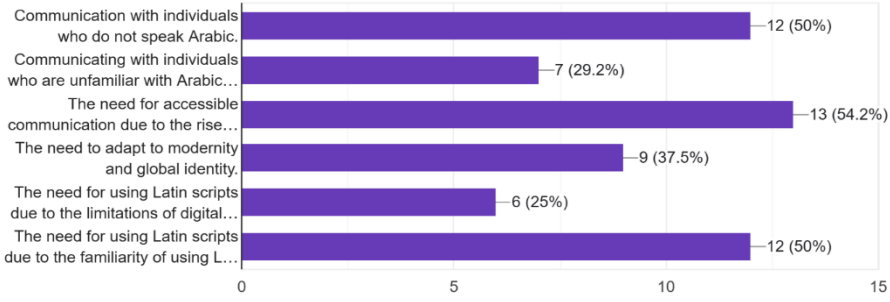
7 Limitations of the Study

Several limitations may have affected the reliability and the depth of this study. First, although 50 individuals received the questionnaire, only a limited number, 24 participants, responded. This introduces a non-response bias and restricted statistical significant results. Second, the limited detailed geographic identification data, such as regional

diversity provided by respondents, affected the analysis. On the one hand, the small size of the respondents affected analysing regional variation effectively. On the other hand, lack of demographic variety limited the generalisability of the results and hindered the generalisability of the results to a broader population.

8 Data Interpretation

8.1 Data Interpretation for the Reasons for Using Transliteration and Romanisation on Facebook

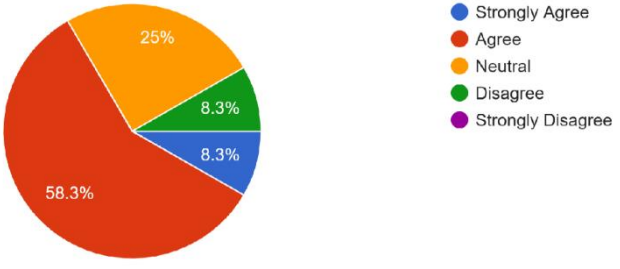


Graph1. Participants' Motivations Behind the Use of Romanised Arabic Online Communicationtransliteration and romanisation on Facebook.

Noticeably, 54.2% of respondents claim that their principal reason for transliteration and romanising is the need for accessible communication, while 50% of them stated that their main reasons are ‘communication with non-Arabic speakers’ and their ‘familiarity with Latin script’. In addition, 37.9% highlighted that the motive that leads them to transliteration and romanisation is their need to adapt to modernity and global identity, and 29.2% believed that communicating with individuals unfamiliar with Arabic is their reason. Another 25% of the respondents preferred transliteration and romanisation due to the limitation in Arabic keyboard tools. These distributions demonstrate that Facebook users shift to transliteration and romanisation mainly due to technological limitations, convenience, and socio-cultural identity.

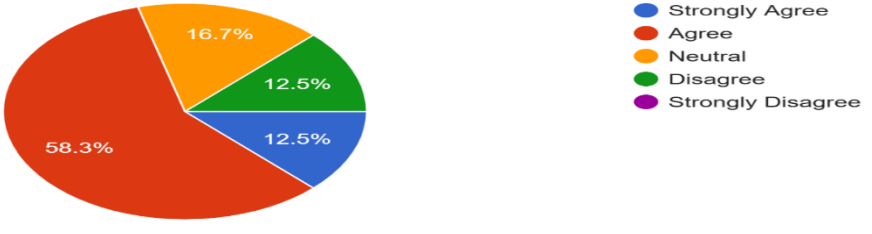
Qualitatively, the participants explained that transliteration facilitates their communicative engagements with others who cannot read Arabic, or they miss Arabic keyboards. In addition, some regarded this as a necessary shift for inclusivity, mainly in multilingual contexts. Others viewed this linguistic shift as necessary to foster immediacy in communication, as rapid communication requires linguistic accuracy.

Data Interpretation for the Impacts of Using Transliteration and Romanisation on Facebook



Graph 2. Perceived Role of Romanisation in Overcoming Language Barriers on Facebook

The respondents answers about the impacts of transliteration and romanisation use show that the majority either agree or strongly agree that they both help overcome language and script barriers and foster cultural diversity and inclusiveness. Notably, a portion of 58.3% agreed on either impact. However, strong agreement varied; 8.3% strongly agreed about the first impact, while 12.5% on the second.



Graph 3. Perceived Impact of Romanisation on Cultural Diversity and Inclusiveness"

Similarly, disagreements with both impacts highlighted two different portions, 8.3% and 12.5%, respectively. Meanwhile, neutral views regarding the mentioned impacts scored 25% for script barriers and 16.7% for multicultural understanding and inclusion. These stances imply while the majority consider dual impacts, overcome language and script barriers, and foster cultural diversity and inclusivity, a minority varied their views between undecided and unconvinced.

The table below shows the respondents' varied answers; they can be classified into three main categories: positive, negative, and neutral/conditional views.

Table 2. Participant Perspectives on the Role of Transliteration and Romanisation in Social Interaction

Category	Respondents' Views	Sample Responses
1. Positive Impacts	Facilitates communication / Enhances interaction	• Facilitates communication and reduces barriers • For easy and fast communication • Quick and easy
	Enables cross-linguistic understanding	• It helps in the case of interacting with those who are not familiar with Arabic. • It can facilitate understanding of others. • Bridging language barriers
	Encourages social and cultural inclusion	• It helps learning a new trend of acquiring a

		community language.
	Frees users from formal constraints	• They allow you to free yourself from the constraints of official communication to express your opinions independently.
	Supports lexical recognition and word learning	• It helps identify words, and demonstrates an understanding of words' context and etymology.
	Promotes ongoing interaction	• It makes a constant interaction among individuals.
	Enhances mutual understanding	• It would enhance people's communication and interaction with each other.
2. Negative Impacts	Risk of confusion or miscommunication	• It may make it easier for some but more confusing for the majority. • Cause confusion and misunderstandings |
	Loss of language originality	It would reduce the originality of the language.
	Semantic distortion	It can change the meaning of some original words.
	Loss of language	It would reduce the

	originality	originality of the language.
	Semantic distortion	It can change the meaning of some original words.
	Inconsistencies due to lack of standardisation	Inconsistencies due to lack of standardisation
3. Neutral / Conditional Views | Context-Dependent Impact	Mixed effects |	• Although it can cause confusion, it also facilitates communication.
	Conditional utility	• Transliteration and romanisation are useful tools but must be used carefully to avoid miscommunication.
	Generic agreement	• To facilitate
	General communication aid	Transliteration and romanisation can facilitate communication and make people understand each other.
	Functional but limited	• Transliteration and romanisation can impact interactions through different exchanges.

The open-ended responses in the table above show several perspectives regarding the impacts of transliteration and romanisation

for facilitating smoother communication. While some acknowledged positive impacts, others granted negative ones. Moreover, another category recognised varied impacts controlled under preference. In summary, these diverse perspectives reveal that transliteration and romanisation use highlights both functional benefits and perceived risks in addition to context-dependent effects.

8.2 Data Interpretation for the Expected Future of Using Transliteration and Romanisation on Facebook

The data reveals a clear and dominant rejection of using romanised Arabic in formal educational and administrative contexts. The majority of participants oppose this potential future practice, primarily due to concerns about:
The data obtained shows a strong rejection of using Romanised Arabic in official educational contexts for diverse reasons. Their rejection can be summarised as:

- Lack of standardisation: Respondents fear that romanised Arabic cannot deliver the clarity and consistency expected in academic and legal texts.
- Loss of linguistic integrity: Many believe it would undermine Arabic, leading to educational hindrance and increased errors in literacy. Terms and expressions such as “illiteracy”, “fossilisation of errors”, and “linguistic stupidity” were cited to express these concerns.

- Cultural erosion: A significant majority of participants claimed that using Romanised Arabic in official contexts could surpass national and linguistic heritage and undermine Arabic, causing its decline.

Despite this opposition, a minority of participants expressed a nuanced view. Some suggested limited, situational use for Romanised Arabic, such as:

- Informal note-taking by students.
- Bridging communication with non-Arabic speakers, especially in early stages of learning.

9. Data Analysis

9.1 Data Analyses for the Reasons of Using Transliteration and Romanisation on Facebook

The data obtained highlights that transliteration and romanisation are flexible and inclusive tools in online communication, mainly when Arabic script input is limited. This idea promotes Warchauer's view that language use is shaped by technological affordances, helping users to avoid script restrictions for more effective interaction. Nevertheless, the data also reveal the context-dependent nature of using transliteration and romanisation, as misunderstandings between communicators can be referred to the lack of standardised script forms. In spite of these challenges, the majority of participants express positive views, echoing Crystal's (2001) argument that the emergence of new digital forms like transliteration and romanisation is not a sign of language decay but rather a sign of creative language evolution. Therefore, adopting these scripts, allows its users bypass script barriers and bridge the linguistic gaps ; thus, they accommodate diverse interlocutors — fostering connection and adaptability in diverse digital environments.

9.2 Data Analyses for the Impacts of Using Transliteration and Romanisation on Facebook

The responses from the respondents reveal a dual perspective concerning the impacts of transliteration and romanisation use on Facebook. On the one hand, some believe that these linguistic phenomena help in including the interactions, especially in fast-paced contexts. This can mirror Blommaert's (2010) idea that the need for accessibility and social mobility shapes online language practices. Moreover, he adds that transliteration could be seen as empowering in informal settings. In addition, responses such as '*…allow you to free yourself from the constraints of official communication to express your opinions independently.*'? line with Androutsopoulos' (2006) observation that variation of language in online use functions as a form of personal identity expression.

On the other hand, some consider transliteration and romanisation as a reflection of serious issues about the integrity of Arabic as a formal written code. Responses, such as *'It may make it*

easier for some but more confusing for the majority.', '…it can change the meaning of some original words or cause confusion and misunderstandings…', 'It would reduce the originality of the language.', and 'Writing in Romanised Arabic can be challenging. Often, I find myself switching to English or resorting to the original form.' relate with Palfreyman and Al Khalil's (2003) vision embodied in considering unstandardised romanisation as a potential source of fragmentation.

9.3 Data Analyses for the Expected Future of Using Transliteration and Romanisation on Facebook

Regarding cultural and national identity, many respondents see romanisation as a threat that may cause loss of the cultural identity and respect for Arabic. Claims such as *'threat to Arabic identity', 'undermines linguistic standards', 'erosion of official language', and 'contribute to linguistic decline'* project the respondents' strong rejection. Moreover, one respondent insists that romanised Arabic is not a language and should not replace authentic scripts. Others refer to it as a non-legitimate writing system, unsuitable for academic or legal settings. On this, it is believed that script change can dilute linguistic heritage, due to the risks involved in moving away from traditional writing systems. In addition, romanised Arabic is viewed to cause cultural disconnection when used in formal settings, reflecting concerns over its impact on linguistic identity and appropriateness.

Finally, despite this rejection, a few respondents acknowledge the use of romanised and transliterated Arabic in academic settings, but in limited contexts. Their suggestion stressed that it should remain a temporary and non-official tool used in informal note-taking or as a transitional instruction for non-native speakers. These views correspond with Warschauer et al (2002) that romanised Arabic is largely restricted to informal digital communication and not expected to expand into official domains.

Overall, the respondents strongly favoured using Arabic scripts in formal and educational settings, as it is symbolic, educational and culturally important. Therefore, the institutionalisation of Romani rejected and transliterated Arabic remains marginal, with a limited approval in contextual and non-official contexts.

CONCLUSION

Arabic transliteration and romanisation reflect an interplay between linguistic convenience, digital adaptability, and cultural identity. The findings claim that their emergence was primarily out of necessity, as limitations in Arabic keyboards on digital devices, the impact of globalisation, and the desire for speed and informality in online communication. Many respondents reckoned that romanised Arabic helped them save time and express themselves freely or facilitated their interactions with others unfamiliar with Arabic scripts.

However, while their motives are practical, the impacts of romanisation and transliteration reveal deep concerns. Many see its rôle restricted to undermining language integrity and educational standards, contributing to poor spelling habits, and spoiling Arabic proficiency. Moreover, the challenge of the lack of standardisation issue was raised. Participants highlighted the impacts of inconsistent spelling, pronunciation and standardised scripts. For instance, the Arabic word 'حب', 'love' in English, would be written as 'hob', '7ob', or 'hoob'.

Looking to the expected future, the data strongly stresses treating romanisation and transliteration as informal tools, related to the casual, digital, and interpersonal contexts. Others, however, acknowledge its functional use for note-taking or teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. Despite this recognition, the institutionalisation of romanised Arabic will not gain legitimacy in academic and administrative settings.

In conclusion, while transliteration and romanisation are adaptable in the digital world, their role is expected to be restricted. The challenges that resulted do not only refer to technical and educational consequences but also to preserving cultural and linguistic identity. The respondents voiced that transliterated/romanised Arabic is not just a tool for writing but a symbol of linguistic and cultural identity.

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