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Social Linguistic Capital and Entrepreneurial Communication in Algeria: A Sociolinguistic Study of ESP/FOS, Market Access, and Symbolic Mobility

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ABSTRACT: *This article examines linguistic capital as a sociolinguistic, symbolic, and economic resource in entrepreneurial communication in Algeria. It also develops the idea of Social Linguistic Capital to explain how speakers use their linguistic repertoires in socially meaningful ways. The point is not only whether speakers are correct or fluent, but whether they can use language strategically, relationally, and appropriately in real professional encounters. Building on Bourdieu's notion of linguistic capital, the article argues that language gains entrepreneurial value when it helps speakers gain recognition, build trust, negotiate identity, enter networks, and reach professional opportunities. The empirical basis is a quantitative study of 120 participants, including university students, recent graduates, and working professionals in Oran, Algeria. The reported findings show a strong positive relationship between linguistic capital and entrepreneurial communication ($r = .62$), while regression results indicate that linguistic capital is the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial communication ($beta = .58$, $p < .001$). The article connects ESP/FOS, multilingual repertoires, market access, and social mobility through a clearer sociolinguistic model. It concludes that language education in Algeria should move beyond general proficiency and help learners develop socially situated communication skills for pitching, networking, negotiation, intercultural interaction, and professional self-presentation.*

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurial Communication, ESP, FOS, Social Linguistic Capital, Social Mobility, Sociolinguistics

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Introduction

In multilingual economies, language does more than carry ideas from one person to another. It can open doors, create trust, mark credibility, and help speakers move into professional spaces that would otherwise remain difficult to access. This is especially clear in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs do not succeed by having an idea only; they must explain it, defend it, adapt it to different audiences, negotiate around it, and make others believe that it is worth supporting.

Algeria offers a particularly rich context for studying this relationship because its linguistic situation is layered and socially meaningful. Arabic, French, and English do not have the same symbolic or professional value in every domain. French still has a strong presence in administration, business, and many professional settings, while English is increasingly linked with start-ups, digital work, research, global markets, and international mobility. These languages therefore circulate not as neutral tools, but as resources connected to prestige, access, and recognition.

The article places linguistic capital at the centre of entrepreneurial communication. Its central idea is that language proficiency can become both economic and symbolic value. This version keeps that argument and develops it further by proposing Social Linguistic Capital as a conceptual contribution. The term refers to the socially valued ability to use language varieties, registers, styles, code-switching, politeness strategies, and communicative confidence in ways that produce recognition, belonging, access, and symbolic advantage within a given community or institution.

This distinction matters because entrepreneurial communication is not simply a matter of knowing English or French. It also depends on knowing which language or register to use, at what moment, and with whom. A young Algerian entrepreneur may use English in an international pitch, French in a professional document, Arabic in local institutional communication, and local varieties to build rapport. What matters is not only the size of the repertoire, but the social intelligence that guides its use.

The study is guided by the following question: How does linguistic capital, including its social and interactional dimension, influence entrepreneurial communication and access to economic opportunities in Algeria?

1. Research Objectives and Hypotheses

The study has four main objectives. First, it examines the level of linguistic capital among students, recent graduates, and working professionals. Second, it investigates the relationship between linguistic capital and entrepreneurial communication. Third, it explores how language inequality may contribute to wider socio-economic inequality. Fourth, it proposes Social Linguistic Capital as a conceptual tool for understanding how multilingual speakers turn language resources into trust, recognition, and professional access.

The article retains the three empirical hypotheses proposed in the study:

1. H1: Specialized language proficiency in ESP/FOS is positively associated with entrepreneurial communication.

2. H2: Unequal distribution of linguistic capital contributes to the reproduction of socio-economic inequalities.

3. H3: Existing language training programs only partially meet the communicative requirements of the entrepreneurial sector.

A fourth proposition is added as a conceptual contribution rather than as a fully tested statistical hypothesis, because the original questionnaire did not directly measure Social Linguistic Capital:

1. P1: Social Linguistic Capital mediates the movement from language proficiency to entrepreneurial opportunity by helping speakers adapt language to audience, relationship, and institutional context.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Linguistic Capital and Symbolic Power

Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital (1986) is useful because it reminds us that language competence is never merely technical. A speaker's language becomes valuable when a specific social field recognizes it as legitimate. In education, administration, business, and professional life, certain accents, registers, languages, and styles are rewarded more than others. This unequal recognition is what turns language into symbolic power.

In entrepreneurial communication, linguistic capital appears in ordinary but decisive situations: writing a professional email, presenting a business idea, negotiating a contract, describing a service, or establishing credibility with a client or investor. As Bourdieu (1986) argues, a speaker who can move with ease across professional, business varieties, and local interactional styles has more communicative options than someone whose linguistic repertoire is limited or socially devalued. He emphasizes that language competence is never merely technical but rather functions as symbolic power when recognized as legitimate within a specific social field.

2.2. Conceptual Contribution: Social Linguistic Capital

This article proposes Social Linguistic Capital as a working concept that extends linguistic capital toward the social and interactional value of language. Linguistic capital usually refers to the value of language competence itself, including fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and mastery of a legitimate language. Social Linguistic Capital focuses more closely on how speakers use these resources in interaction to gain trust, recognition, participation, and symbolic mobility.

The concept does not replace Bourdieu's linguistic capital (1986); rather, it extends it into live, relational dynamics. While Bourdieu establishes that language forms acquire value only within a social field that recognizes them as legitimate, Social Linguistic Capital maps how speakers actively generate that legitimacy through situated, real-time choices. Furthermore, this construct must be explicitly distinguished from Dell Hymes' classic notion of communicative competence. While communicative competence focuses on a speaker's underlying psychological and sociolinguistic capacity for appropriate interaction, Social Linguistic Capital emphasizes the distinct market convertibility of those interactional choices—turning register shifts, code-switching, and strategic politeness into tangible social trust, institutional status, and economic opportunity.

For example, a student who speaks academic English well possesses linguistic capital. A student who knows when to use academic English, Algerian Arabic, French, humor, politeness, or code-switching to build trust and participate successfully possesses Social Linguistic Capital. This distinction is especially relevant in Algeria, where professional communication is often multilingual, relational, and context-sensitive.

Dimension	**Linguistic capital**	**Social Linguistic Capital**
Core focus	**Language competence:** fluency, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and legitimate language.	**Social use of language:** register choice, code-switching, politeness, audience adaptation, and communicative confidence.
Main question	What language resources does the speaker possess?	How does the speaker use these resources to gain trust, belonging, access, and recognition?

Typical evidence	ESP/FOS proficiency, professional terminology, formal writing, language certification.	Successful networking, rapport building, strategic multilingualism, identity negotiation, and persuasive self-presentation.
Entrepreneurial value	Allows participation in formal professional communication.	Allows the speaker to move across social spaces, negotiate relationships, and convert communication into opportunity.
Algerian example	Using English or French to write a business proposal.	Knowing when to use English, French, Arabic, or local varieties to pitch, reassure, negotiate, or build solidarity.

Table 1. Distinguishing Linguistic Capital and Social Linguistic Capital

Note. The distinction is used to clarify the conceptual contribution of the article. Social Linguistic Capital is presented as a working construct that future empirical studies should test more directly.

Rather than functioning as competing frameworks, this conceptualization positions Social Linguistic Capital as an operational extension of Bourdieu's classical model (1986). While traditional linguistic capital catalogs the structural resources a speaker possesses, Social Linguistic Capital explains the strategic deployment of those resources during live interaction. In the volatile Algerian entrepreneurial ecosystem, this distinction shifts the focus from static grammatical correctness to dynamic market agility—validating why technically proficient speakers may still fail if they cannot fluidly align their register with local network expectations.

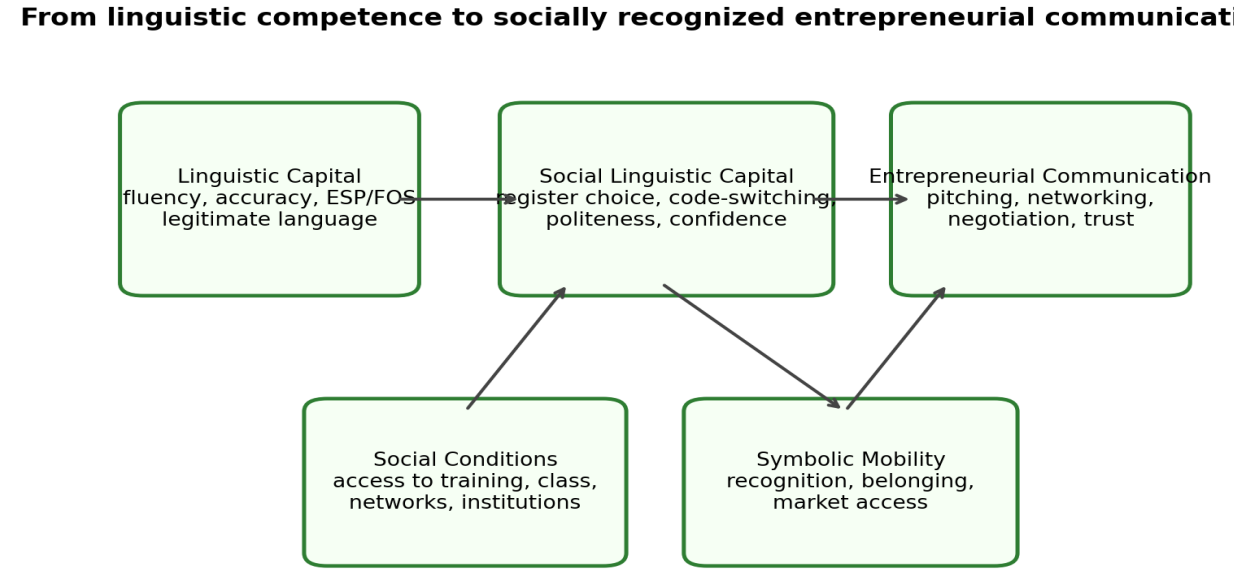


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Social Linguistic Capital in Entrepreneurial Communication

Note. The model shows how linguistic competence becomes entrepreneurial value when it is recognized socially and adapted interactionally to the audience, context, and communicative purpose.

2.3. ESP/FOS and Professional Language Needs

ESP and FOS are intended to connect language learning with concrete professional needs. Instead of teaching language as isolated grammar or vocabulary, specialized language training should prepare learners to perform tasks that resemble workplace and entrepreneurial communication. These tasks include presenting a project, asking for clarification, writing a proposal, managing a meeting, describing a service, and negotiating with a client.

In the Algerian higher education context, Benali Reguieg (2025) argues that effective ESP pedagogy depends on stronger collaboration between ESP teachers and subject-matter instructors, since such cooperation helps align language instruction with discipline-specific content, learners' academic needs, and professional communication requirements.

The problem is that many language courses remain too general. Learners may study English or French for years without being trained to use those languages in entrepreneurial situations. If specialized language teaching does not include authentic professional genres and interactional practice, linguistic capital remains difficult to convert into economic opportunity.

2.4. Entrepreneurial Communication as Social Practice

Entrepreneurial communication (Blommaert, 2010) is more than the transmission of information. It is a set of situated practices through which entrepreneurs build credibility, persuade others, create networks, and obtain resources. Communication in this field is social because it depends on audience expectations, institutional norms, professional relationships, and cultural meanings.

From a sociological perspective, entrepreneurial communication is also shaped by social position. People who have stronger access to education, technology, professional networks, and valued languages are often better prepared to communicate in entrepreneurial spaces. For that reason, linguistic inequality can easily become economic inequality.

Construct	Operational meaning	Sociolinguistic relevance
Linguistic capital	The value of language proficiency, especially in ESP/FOS, within professional and entrepreneurial contexts.	Shows how language becomes symbolic and economic capital.
Social Linguistic Capital	The socially valued ability to use varieties, styles, code-switching, register, and interactional strategies to gain recognition and access.	Explains how language competence becomes social trust, belonging, and symbolic mobility.
Entrepreneurial communication	The ability to pitch, negotiate, network, persuade, and build credibility in business settings.	Shows language as a practice of market participation.
Socio-economic perception	Participants' views of how language shapes opportunity, mobility, and inequality.	Connects language to social stratification and access.
ESP/FOS training	Specialized language instruction designed around professional and occupational needs.	Links higher education to market communication needs.

Table 2. Key Constructs and Operational Meanings in the Revised Article

***Note**. The added construct of Social Linguistic Capital strengthens the theoretical originality of the article and creates a bridge between sociolinguistics, ESP/FOS, and entrepreneurship studies.*

Synthesizing these dimensions establishes a holistic framework where language education directly intersects with macro-level market economics. By operationalizing these constructs, entrepreneurship ceases to be viewed as a purely financial endeavor and is instead recognized as a deeply embedded sociolinguistic practice. Consequently, the classroom delivery of ESP/FOS serves as a critical institutional mechanism: it can either democratize market access by fostering adaptable social repertoire (Gumperz, 1968; Hymes, 1972) or inadvertently cement existing class stratifications by favoring those with preexisting linguistic advantages.

Entrepreneurial communication is also affected by social position and interactional networks, from a sociological perspective. People who have stronger access to education, technology, professional networks, and valued languages are often better prepared to communicate in entrepreneurial spaces. Because professional interaction and collaborative networks are foundational to developing this communicative capacity—particularly in multilingual institutional settings—research on collaborative frameworks notes that collaborative methods, including peer observation and team teaching, work best in environments with an English Medium Instruction. In such environments, these platforms provide a platform for instructors to share best practice, receive and give feedback, and work together to develop strategies for language and content instruction integration (Benaired et al., 2024). For that reason, linguistic inequality can easily become economic inequality.

3. Method

3.1. Philosophical Assumptions and Research Design

The current study employs a quantitative explanatory design to assess directional relationships and to test whether linguistic capital predicts entrepreneurial communication outcomes. The research is based on a post-positivist philosophical paradigm, which assumes that social and linguistic phenomena can be systematically observed, measured and analyzed to reveal objective patterns in a particular socio-economic reality.

While the main model for prediction is explanatory, there is also an exploratory aspect of the study through the introduction of Social Linguistic Capital as a new conceptual construct. The double orientation is methodologically justified: the empirical survey measures established variables through an explanatory framework, while the inclusion of Social Linguistic Capital is an exploratory extension that lays the basis for future operationalization and expanded theoretical measurement.

3.2. Study Area, Sampling Method, and Population

The target population for this study is multilingual people in Oran, Algeria, working in professional, academic, and entrepreneurial settings where language skills have a direct impact on economic participation. To access this population, a sample of N = 120 participants was recruited using convenience sampling, dictated by accessibility, geographic constraints, and time limitations. While non-probability convenience sampling would not be generalizable to the national population, it is an appropriate and methodologically acceptable procedure for focused inquiries in particular sociolinguistic contexts.

The sample was purposefully stratified into 3 separate sub-groups to reflect a developmental trajectory of market integration:

- University Students (n = 60, 50%): Individuals who are currently acquiring formal linguistic capital in higher education before entering the active labor market.
- Recent Graduates (n = 40, 33.3%): indicating gumtree transitional agents in the first stage of professional and entrepreneurial access.

- Working Professionals (n = 20, 16.7%): Active market participants, fully integrated in entrepreneurial and commercial spheres.

This graduated distribution allows the study to explore differences in linguistic capital at different stages of professional socialization.

The design is suitable because the research measures relationships between variables and tests whether linguistic capital predicts entrepreneurial communication. At the same time, the article adds a conceptual extension by introducing Social Linguistic Capital as a construct that future research can operationalize more fully.

Category	Number	Percentage
Students	60	50%
Recent graduates	40	33.3%
Working professionals	20	16.7%
Total	120	100%

Table 3. Participant Distribution

Note. The sample brings together three groups that may experience different levels of access to linguistic capital and professional communication opportunities.

3.3. Instrument

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed around the study objectives and theoretical framework. The questionnaire included four sections: socio-demographic information, linguistic capital, entrepreneurial communication practices, and socio-economic perceptions. Items were scored on a three-point Likert scale: 1 = no, 2 = somewhat, and 3 = yes.

Table 4 presents the main questionnaire dimensions and their reliability values. The results show that the scales used for linguistic capital, entrepreneurial communication, and the socio-economic dimension have acceptable to good internal consistency. This means that the items within each dimension measure the same general construct in a reasonably stable way. The proposed Social Linguistic Capital dimension is included for future validation, since it was not directly tested in the present questionnaire.

Dimension	Measurement focus	Cronbach's alpha	Interpretation
Linguistic capital	ESP/FOS proficiency and language resources	.81	Good internal consistency
Entrepreneurial communication	Interaction, negotiation, networking, and pitching	.78	Acceptable internal consistency
Socio-economic dimension	Perceived access, opportunity, and inequality	.75	Acceptable internal consistency
Social Linguistic Capital (proposed)	Code-switching, register choice, rapport-building, and audience adaptation	To be tested	Added for future validation

Table 4. Questionnaire Dimensions and Reliability

Note. The first three reliability values are retained from the study. The added Social Linguistic Capital dimension is proposed for future instrument development.

Because Social Linguistic Capital is introduced as a conceptual contribution, future versions of the questionnaire should add items on code-switching, audience adaptation, register control, multilingual confidence, rapport-building, and professional politeness strategies. These items would make it possible to test the construct empirically rather than using it only as a theoretical lens.

4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple linear regression, and an optional ANOVA comparison across participant categories. Descriptive statistics summarized the level of each variable. Pearson correlation measured the strength of the relationships among variables. Regression analysis assessed whether linguistic capital predicted entrepreneurial communication after controlling for socio-economic perception.

While the questionnaire uses a 3-point Likert scale yielding ordinal data, parametric statistical analyses (Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression) were applied in alignment with robust empirical literature on sample size resilience. Methodological research demonstrates that when sample sizes are sufficiently large (N \ge 100), the Central Limit Theorem holds, rendering parametric tests highly robust against violations of normality and scale discreteness without inflating Type I or Type II error rates (Edgell & Noon, 1984; Norman, 2010). Furthermore, simulation studies by Rhemtulla et al. (2012) and Sullivan and Artino (2012) confirm that parametric metrics can safely interpret categorical and restricted ordinal variables when the sample distribution mimics interval properties, providing reliable predictive insights for exploratory sociolinguistic frameworks.

5. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered strictly to foundational ethical principles governing human subjects research. Prior to data collection, informed consent was secured from all participants. Specifically, individuals were fully informed about the study's academic purpose, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and how the collected data would be utilized. To ensure the right to withdraw, participants were explicitly notified that they could discontinue their involvement at any point during the questionnaire completion without penalty, coercion, or consequence.

Furthermore, participant anonymity and data confidentiality were strictly protected. No personally identifiable information (such as names, IP addresses, or institutional identification numbers) was requested or recorded on the survey instruments. The collected quantitative data were stored in password-protected digital files accessible solely by the research team, ensuring that individual responses remained entirely anonymous and secure. Future research building upon this framework should incorporate formal institutional review board (IRB) clearance documentation and explicit data retention protocols detailing the eventual secure disposal of records.

6. Results

6.1. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics indicate moderate levels of linguistic capital, entrepreneurial communication, and socio-economic perception. The mean score for linguistic capital was 2.31, and the mean score for entrepreneurial communication was 2.25 on a three-point scale. These results suggest that participants possess some language-based resources, but not at a level that fully satisfies professional and entrepreneurial needs.

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Linguistic capital	120	2.31	0.45
Entrepreneurial communication	120	2.25	0.50
Socio-economic perception	120	2.10	0.40

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for the Main Variables

***Note**. Scores were measured on a three-point scale from 1 to 3. The results should be read cautiously because the study provides summary statistics rather than raw data.*

The standard deviations SD (ranging from 0.40 to 0.50) indicate relatively low dispersion around the means. This narrow spread suggests harmony among the samples regarding their moderate levels of linguistic capital and entrepreneurial communication, with responses clustering predominantly between the lower and upper middle tiers of the scale.

6.2. Correlation Analysis

The correlation matrix shows a strong positive relationship between linguistic capital and entrepreneurial communication ($r = .62$, $p < .01$). This supports the argument that participants with stronger language resources tend to report stronger entrepreneurial communication skills. The moderate correlations involving socio-economic perception also suggest that language resources are connected to broader social and economic conditions.

Variable	1	2	3
1. Linguistic capital	1	.62**	.45**
2. Entrepreneurial communication	.62**	1	.39**
3. Socio-economic perception	.45**	.39**	1

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Matrix

*Note. ** $p < .01$. The correlations are retained from the study and should be verified against the raw dataset before journal submission.*

=0.62 indicates a moderately strong positive correlation, but in social sciences and education research, this is generally considered a robust relationship. However, its strength should be reported alongside sample size, p-value, and confidence intervals to give a full picture of reliability.

A strong positive correlation between linguistic capital and entrepreneurial communication ($r = .62$, $p < .01$) confirms that formal language skills are a fundamental requirement to operate in the Algerian business environment. However, the moderate relationship between linguistic capital and broader socio-economic perceptions ($r = .45$, $p < .01$) has deeper sociolinguistic implications; it suggests that participants explicitly perceive language as an ideological gatekeeper related to class mobility and institutional privilege. Moreover, since entrepreneurial communication also co-varies with socio-economic status ($r = .39$, $p < .01$) this finding combined with the previous one suggests that economic opportunity in Algeria is systematically mediated by a speaker's position within the linguistic market. This points to structural association rather than isolated, linear causation.

6.3. Regression Analysis

The multiple linear regression model indicates that linguistic capital is the strongest independent predictor of entrepreneurial communication capabilities ($\beta = .58$, $t = 6.50$, $p < .001$). Perceived socio-economic status

also contributes significantly to the predictive model, albeit with a smaller effect size (β = .25, t = 2.56, p = .012).

Together, these two independent predictors account for 48% of the total variance explained in entrepreneurial communication outcomes (R^2 = .48, F(2, 117) = 54.2, p < .001). This high proportion of explained variance strongly suggests that structural language resources and contextual social awareness function as co-dependent assets in determining an entrepreneur's interactional performance within the market.

Predictor	B	SE	Beta (β)	T	p
Constant	0.85	0.21	-	4.05	< .001
Linguistic capital	0.52	0.08	0.58	6.50	< .001
Socio-economic perception	0.23	0.09	0.25	2.56	.012

Table 7. Multiple Regression Predicting Entrepreneurial Communication

***Note**. Model summary: R^2 = .48, F(2, 117) = 54.2, p < .001.*

While the empirical model confirms the predictive power of formal linguistic capital, it does not directly capture the interactional dynamics of Proposition 1 (P_1). Consequently, P_1 serves as a conceptual lens for interpreting these structural relationships and provides a theoretical roadmap for future research to operationalize and measure real-time social adaptability

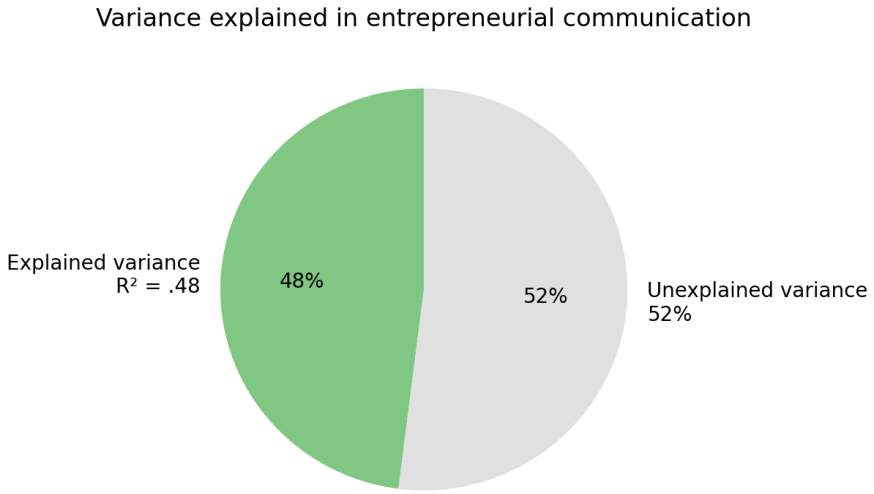


Figure 2. Explained and Unexplained Variance in the Regression Model

Note. The model explains 48% of the variance in entrepreneurial communication, suggesting that linguistic capital and socio-economic perception are meaningful predictors when considered together.

6.4. Group Comparison

The optional ANOVA results suggest statistically significant differences in linguistic capital across participant groups. This finding is useful because it indicates that students, graduates, and professionals

may not have the same access to valued linguistic resources. However, group means and post hoc comparisons should be reported in the final version to make the result fully interpretable.

Group	N	Mean	SD	F	p	Tukey HSD
Students	60	2.18	0.43	5.23	.007	A
Recent Graduates	40	2.36	0.45	-	-	B
Working Professionals	20	2.58	0.41	-	-	B
Total	*120*	*2.31*	*0.45*	-	-	-

Table 8. ANOVA Summary and Descriptive Statistics for Linguistic Capital Across Groups

Note. Group means sharing a common letter are not statistically significantly different from each other ($p < .05$). $df = (2, 117)$.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of professional status on perceived linguistic capital across three distinct groups: students (n = 60), recent graduates (n = 40), and working professionals (n = 20). There was a statistically significant difference in linguistic capital scores between the groups, $F(2, 117) = 5.23$, $p = .007$.Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Working Professionals ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 0.41$) was significantly higher than that of University Students ($M = 2.18$, $SD = 0.43$). Recent Graduates ($M = 2.36$, $SD = 0.45$) also demonstrated a significantly higher baseline of linguistic capital than current students, but did not significantly differ from the seasoned working professionals. These directional results reveal that perceived linguistic capital increases alongside active workforce integration, leaving current university students at a distinct communicative disadvantage before graduation.

7. Discussion

7.1. Linguistic Capital as a Strategic Resource

The findings support the first hypothesis. Linguistic capital is strongly associated with entrepreneurial communication, which means that language proficiency should be understood as a strategic resource. In business situations, language helps speakers present themselves, explain value, negotiate meaning, and create credibility.

In Algeria, the value of language is shaped by the linguistic market. French continues to have practical and institutional value in many professional domains, while English is increasingly linked with global entrepreneurship, digital work, and international visibility. Arabic and local varieties remain important for trust, solidarity, and local legitimacy. This multilingual configuration makes Algeria a rich context for studying how different linguistic resources become different forms of capital.

7.2. Social Linguistic Capital as the Study's Main Conceptual Contribution

The main contribution of the article is the concept of Social Linguistic Capital. This concept explains why linguistic competence alone is not enough. A speaker may know English or French, but still struggle to communicate entrepreneurially if they cannot read the social situation, adjust the tone, choose the appropriate register, or build trust with the audience.

Social Linguistic Capital therefore captures the relational side of language. It includes communicative confidence, strategic code-switching, register awareness, politeness, humor, audience design, and the ability to move between local and global speech norms. These abilities are not minor details. In entrepreneurship, they may determine whether a pitch sounds convincing, whether a client feels respected, or whether a professional relationship can continue.

This conceptual addition moves the article beyond a general discussion of language proficiency. It shows that entrepreneurial communication depends on the social value of linguistic practice: the ability to make language work across people, institutions, and markets.

7.3. Language and Social Inequality

The results also support the second hypothesis. Linguistic capital is linked to socio-economic perception, which suggests that language inequality is not separate from social inequality. People who have access to higher-quality language education, professional networks, and international exposure are more likely to acquire high-value language resources. Those without such access may face symbolic and economic barriers. This is why language education should not be treated as a purely academic matter. It is connected to employability, social mobility, and economic participation. If only privileged groups acquire the forms of English and French valued in professional markets, language becomes a mechanism that reproduces inequality rather than reducing it.

7.4. Mismatch Between Language Training and Entrepreneurial Needs

The third hypothesis is also supported. Participants report moderate levels of language competence, but these competences are not always aligned with entrepreneurial communication. This mismatch is common when language teaching remains general while the labor market requires task-based, genre-based, and interactional skills. This finding calls for a stronger needs-based approach to ESP and FOS. In entrepreneurial contexts, language courses should include professional genres, real tasks, case studies, simulations, networking practice, intercultural communication, and feedback on tone, persuasion, and audience awareness.

The directional patterns revealed by the ANOVA framework present a critical sociolinguistic paradox for higher education. If perceived linguistic capital peaks primarily after active workforce integration, university students face a systemic disadvantage, lacking the required market agility prior to graduation. This 'chicken-and-egg' dilemma underscores that higher education institutions must not leave the acquisition of interactional competence to chance or post-graduation exposure. Instead, it demands the immediate integration of deliberate, simulated market experiences into the university curriculum.

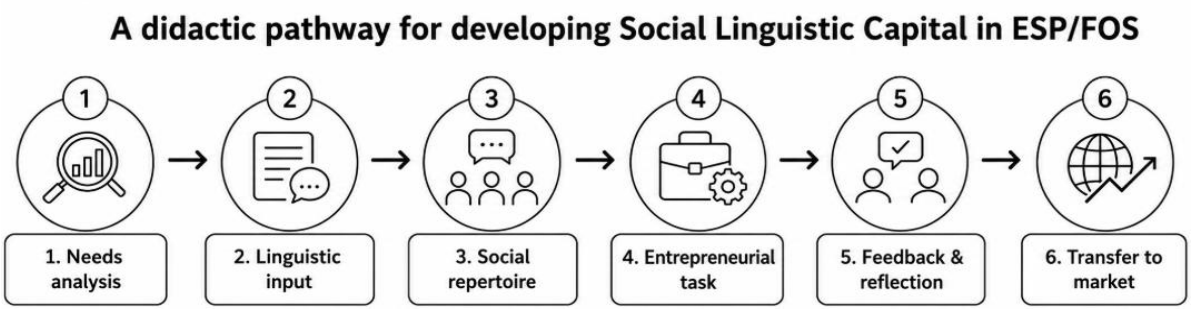


Figure 3. A Didactic Sequence for Developing Social Linguistic Capital in ESP/FOS

Note. The sequence shows how ESP/FOS can move from language input to socially situated entrepreneurial communication. The key addition is the social repertoire stage, where learners practise adapting language to audience, register, and relationship.

The pathway moves from identifying learner needs to applying communication in real market-oriented contexts. The social repertoire stage is central because it develops audience awareness, register control and relational communication.

In language education, for instance, we should adopt learner-centered, experiential approaches to close the gap between abstract linguistic knowledge and real market demands. As Benaired and Benali Reguieg (2024) demonstrate in their work on communicative skill development, active pedagogical approaches like dramatization and role-play move beyond rote memorization by forcing learners to 'exceed the limitations of lessons and actively contribute to the construction of meaning'. By engaging in simulated professional and social scenarios, learners actively cultivate their Social Linguistic Capital—building the interactional confidence, register control, and emotional agility required to pitch, negotiate, and network effectively in competitive entrepreneurial environments.

8. Pedagogical and Policy Implications

The findings have clear implications for higher education and entrepreneurship training in Algeria. First, ESP and FOS programs should be designed after careful analysis of local market needs. Second, language courses should train students to perform real entrepreneurial tasks rather than only memorize vocabulary lists. Third, courses should teach Social Linguistic Capital explicitly by helping learners practice audience adaptation, code-switching, politeness, turn-taking, and intercultural negotiation.

A more inclusive policy would also address access. If English and French are treated as high-value resources, students from less privileged backgrounds need affordable opportunities to develop them. Otherwise, linguistic capital will continue to reproduce social inequality.

Finding	Didactic implication	Example of classroom practice
Linguistic capital predicts entrepreneurial communication.	ESP/FOS should be linked to real business communication tasks.	Students prepare and deliver a two-minute business pitch.
Social Linguistic Capital connects language to trust and recognition.	Courses should teach register, code-switching, audience design, and rapport-building.	Students compare how the same pitch changes for a local client, a bank officer, and an international partner.
Language inequality reflects socio-economic inequality.	Institutions should democratize access to valued languages.	Offer free workshops in professional English/French for students from different fields.
Training does not fully meet market needs.	Curricula should be revised through needs analysis and employer consultation.	Invite entrepreneurs to evaluate student pitches and provide feedback.
Multilingualism is a resource.	Arabic, French, English, and local varieties should be treated as part of the professional repertoire.	Use bilingual role-plays where students shift language according to audience and purpose.

Table 9. From Research Findings to Didactic Action

Note. The table translates the study results into practical teaching decisions for ESP/FOS programs and highlights the added value of Social Linguistic Capital.

Table 9 suggests that language courses should not remain limited to vocabulary or grammar, but students should be trained to pitch, negotiate, adapt to different audiences, and use multilingual resources effectively. The table also highlights the need to reduce language inequality by giving all students better access to professional English and French. In this sense, it connects research results to concrete classroom practices that can make language learning more useful for entrepreneurial and professional life.

9. Limitations and Future Research

The study provides useful insights, but several limitations should be acknowledged. The sample was selected through convenience sampling and was limited to one urban context. This limits the generalizability of the findings. The data were also self-reported, which means that participants may have overestimated or underestimated their linguistic and entrepreneurial abilities.

Another limitation is the cross-sectional design. The results show relationships between variables, but they do not prove long-term causation. Future research should use longitudinal designs, interviews, classroom observations, and performance-based tasks to examine how language competence develops into entrepreneurial action over time.

Most importantly, Social Linguistic Capital is introduced here as a conceptual contribution, not yet as a fully measured empirical variable. Future studies should operationalize it through questionnaire items,

interviews, discourse analysis, and observed entrepreneurial tasks. This would allow researchers to test whether Social Linguistic Capital mediates the relationship between linguistic capital and entrepreneurial outcomes.

Conclusion

This article argues that linguistic capital is central to entrepreneurial communication in Algeria. The findings show that specialized language competence, especially in ESP and FOS, is strongly associated with the ability to communicate in entrepreneurial contexts. Language is therefore not only an academic skill; it is a resource that can shape access to markets, networks, and social mobility.

The article's main contribution is the proposal of Social Linguistic Capital. This concept describes the socially recognized ability to use language varieties, styles, and communicative strategies in ways that create recognition, belonging, access, and symbolic advantage. It adds a relational and interactional dimension to the study of linguistic capital by showing that the value of language depends on how speakers use it in real social spaces.

The study also shows that language training must be more closely connected to the realities of the labor market. ESP and FOS should not remain abstract academic fields. They should help learners practise the language of pitching, negotiation, networking, and intercultural communication. A stronger alignment between language education and entrepreneurship can help Algerian learners and professionals participate more confidently in local and global economic spaces. In this sense, developing Social Linguistic Capital is not only a pedagogical goal. It is also a way to support more inclusive economic participation.

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Appendix A

Suggested Items for Measuring Social Linguistic Capital

The following items are suggested for future research. They can be rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Domain	Sample item	Purpose
Audience adaptation	I can adjust my language when speaking to teachers, clients, officials, or friends.	Measures ability to adapt language to social role and context.
Code-switching	I know when switching between Arabic, French, English, or local varieties helps communication.	Measures strategic multilingual awareness.
Register control	I can move from informal speech to professional speech when the situation requires it.	Measures control of formality and style.
Rapport-building	I use language to build trust before asking for support or cooperation.	Measures relational communication.
Communicative confidence	I feel confident speaking in professional situations even when I must use more than one language.	Measures confidence in multilingual professional contexts.

Table A1. Suggested Social Linguistic Capital Items

Note. These proposed items make Social Linguistic Capital measurable in future studies.

Appendix B

Sample ESP/FOS Entrepreneurial Communication Task

Task title: Adapting a business pitch for different audiences.

Objective: Students practise linguistic capital and Social Linguistic Capital by adapting the same entrepreneurial idea to three audiences: a local client, a bank officer, and an international partner.

Procedure: Students prepare a short pitch and perform it three times, changing language choice, register, politeness, and persuasive strategy for each audience. They then reflect on why each version changed.

Criterion	Developing	Competent	Strong
Clarity of idea	The business idea is difficult to follow.	The idea is understandable with some details.	The idea is clear, concise, and convincing.
Language accuracy	Frequent errors reduce understanding.	Errors are present but communication remains clear.	Language is accurate and appropriate for the task.
Audience adaptation	The same language is used for all audiences.	Some changes are made for different audiences.	Language, tone, and examples are clearly adapted to each audience.
Social Linguistic Capital	Limited use of register, politeness, or multilingual strategy.	Some awareness of register and relationship-building.	Strong use of register, code-switching, politeness, and rapport-building.

Table B1. Mini-Rubric for Entrepreneurial Pitching

Note. The rubric can be adapted for English, French, Arabic, or multilingual entrepreneurial communication tasks.

No.	Title	Page
Table 1	Distinguishing Linguistic Capital and Social Linguistic Capital	p. 4
Table 2	Key Constructs and Operational Meanings in the Revised Article	p. 5
Table 3	Participant Distribution	p. 6
Table 4	Questionnaire Dimensions and Reliability	p. 7
Table 5	Descriptive Statistics for the Main Variables	p. 8
Table 6	Pearson Correlation Matrix	p. 8
Table 7	Multiple Regression Predicting Entrepreneurial Communication	p. 9
Table 8	ANOVA Summary for Linguistic Capital Across Participant Groups	p. 10
Table 9	From Research Findings to Didactic Action	p. 13
Table A1	Suggested Social Linguistic Capital Items	p. 15
Table B1	Mini-Rubric for Entrepreneurial Pitching	p. 15

Appendix C

List of Tables and Figures

The following appendix records the tables and figures included in the article and their final page locations in the formatted ALTRALANG version.

List of Tables

Table C1. List of Tables Included in the Article

List of Figures

No.	Title	Page
Figure 1	Conceptual Model of Social Linguistic Capital in Entrepreneurial Communication	p. 4
Figure 2	Explained and Unexplained Variance in the Regression Model	p. 10
Figure 3	A Didactic Sequence for Developing Social Linguistic Capital in ESP/FOS	p. 12

Table C2. List of Figures Included in the Article

Appendix D

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

Abbreviations

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance
EC: Entrepreneurial Communication
ESP: English for Specific Purposes
FOS: Français sur Objectifs Spécifiques / French for Specific Purposes
LC: Linguistic Capital
N: Number of Participants / Sample Size
ORCID: Open Researcher and Contributor ID
P1: First Proposition
SLC: Social Linguistic Capital
SD: Standard Deviation
SE: Standard Error

Symbols and Statistical Meanings

α: Cronbach's Alpha; a measure of internal consistency or reliability
β / beta: Standardized regression coefficient showing the strength of prediction
B: Unstandardized regression coefficient
df: Degrees of freedom
F: F-value used in ANOVA or regression model testing
p: Probability value / significance level
$p < .05$: Statistically significant result
$p < .01$: Highly statistically significant result
$p < .001$: Very highly statistically significant result
r: Pearson correlation coefficient
R^2: Coefficient of determination; percentage of variance explained by the model
t: t-value used to test the significance of a regression predictor
%: Percentage
=: Equal to
<: Less than
: Greater than
≤: Less than or equal to
≥: Greater than or equal toa