



Laboratoire des Etudes Algériennes Anglophones (LEAA)/

Algerian Anglophone Studies Laboratory

Study Day on

"Ethical and Social Implications of English Language Dominance in Virtual Spaces: Challenges and Opportunities for Algeria"

November 27th, 2024 (Online and In person)

Study day president: Prof Souryana Yassine

Call for papers

In an increasingly interconnected digital world, the dominance of the English language online has far-reaching implications for individuals, societies, and cultures worldwide. This study day aims to explore the ethical and social dimensions of this phenomenon and foster interdisciplinary dialogue among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. It puts a special focus on the Algerian context where English is becoming an important part of the linguistic landscape (both in real and virtual contexts) and is gaining higher status in the linguistic market of the country by challenging the traditional linguistic choices in the fields of Education, Higher Education and even Social Communication.

In contemporary digital landscape, the ascendancy of the English language online reverberates across borders, impacting individuals, societies, and cultures on a global scale. This phenomenon carries multifaceted implications that extend beyond linguistic boundaries, shaping the ways in which we communicate, interact, and perceive the world around us.

At the core of the issue lies the omnipresence of English as the lingua franca of the internet, serving as the primary medium of communication in various online platforms, from social media to e-commerce. This dominance affords English-speaking individuals unparalleled access to information, resources, and opportunities, consolidating their advantage in the digital sphere. Conversely, it poses challenges for non-English speakers, who may encounter barriers to participation and engagement in online discourse, thereby exacerbating digital divides and inequalities.

Moreover, the hegemony of English online intersects with broader sociocultural dynamics, influencing perceptions of power, prestige, and identity. English proficiency is often equated with social status and economic success, leading to the prioritization of English language learning in

educational systems worldwide. Consequently, individuals and communities may feel compelled to adopt English as a means of social mobility, potentially eroding linguistic diversity and endangering minority languages and dialects.

Furthermore, the dominance of English in the digital realm has profound implications for cultural expression and representation. As English-language content proliferates online, indigenous languages and cultural heritage risk marginalization and commodification, as they struggle to compete for visibility and recognition in an English-dominated landscape. This phenomenon underscores the need for concerted efforts to preserve and promote linguistic and cultural diversity in the digital age, safeguarding the richness of human expression and heritage.

Additionally, the global prevalence of English online raises ethical considerations regarding linguistic imperialism and cultural homogenization. The imposition of English as the de facto language of the internet may perpetuate asymmetrical power relations and undermine linguistic rights, particularly for marginalized communities whose voices may be marginalized or silenced in English-dominated spaces. Thus, efforts to promote linguistic equity and digital inclusivity must be central to the discourse surrounding English language dominance in the digital age.

In short, the dominance of the English language online has far-reaching implications for individuals, societies, and cultures worldwide, shaping patterns of communication, social interaction, and cultural expression in the digital age mainly as relates to the multilingual Algerian context where English is recently being adopted as the language of instruction in Higher Education. While it offers opportunities for global connectivity and collaboration, it also poses challenges related to linguistic equity, cultural diversity, and ethical considerations.

We invite submissions of papers addressing various aspects of the ethical and social implications of English language dominance online. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

1. Linguistic Imperialism and Cultural Hegemony: Critiques of the spread of English as a global language and its impact on linguistic diversity and cultural identities.
2. Access and Equity: Examination of how English language dominance online may exacerbate digital divides and perpetuate inequalities in access to information, resources, and opportunities.
3. Power and Representation: Analysis of how the privileging of English in virtual spaces shapes power dynamics, representation, and visibility of diverse voices and perspectives be they literary or social.
4. Digital Literacies, information literacy, and Language Pedagogy: Exploration of the role of digital literacies in navigating English-dominated online environments and implications for language teaching and learning as well as the skills of accessing, evaluating, and using online information ethically.
5. Online Communication and Identity: Investigations into how the use of English online influences identity construction, belonging, and social interactions in virtual communities.
6. Multilingualism and Translation: Studies on strategies for promoting multilingualism, translation, and localization in online platforms to foster linguistic diversity and inclusion.

7. Ethical Guidelines and Policies: Examinations of ethical considerations and policy implications for addressing language dominance issues in digital spaces and promoting linguistic equity.

Researchers, scholars, educators, and practitioners from diverse disciplines, including linguistics, communication studies, education, sociology, anthropology, cultural and literary studies, and digital humanities, are encouraged to submit abstracts for paper presentations.

Selected References:

1. Algeria Ministry of Education. (2019). Report on the Status of Language Education in Algeria. Government of Algeria.
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21. Wright, S. (2004). *Language Policy and Language Planning: From Nationalism to Globalisation*. Palgrave Macmillan.

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Important dates:

- Deadline of abstract submission: **November 15th 2024**
- Notification of acceptance: **November 20th 2024**
- Study day: **November 27th 2024**

Abstracts: Use the participation form attached to send a 300 words abstract to the following email address: english.virtualspaces@ummtto.dz

Study Day Abstract Proposal Form:

*"Ethical and Social Implications of English Language Dominance in Virtual Space:
Challenges and Opportunities for Algeria"*

November 27th, 2024

Email: english.virtualspaces@ummto.dz

Full Name	
Contact details: email, phone number	
Academic Affiliation	
Title of the presentation	
300 words Abstract	
Key Words	