Title: Social media and Arabic: code-switching amongst Algerian students living in the UK

Abstract:

This paper explores the concept of individual identity construction and code-switching amongst Algerian students living in the UK. By adopting social media as the main context because although code-switching tends to only occur in spoken language, social media use tends to have moved into informal language use similar to that of the spoken rather than the written form. The interest and rationale lies in understanding the evolvement and the globalisation of language through immigration and also access to global communication media.

In this respect, a triangulation approach to research is followed to capture the data required. In parallel, an interpretivist approach is used to explore the type and prevalence of English language code-switching that occurs, through social media interactions amongst a group of Algerian students. Moreover, a sample size of 15 participants are recruited to send their post, tweets and conversation over the course of three month period. At the outset of the research each participant will complete a detailed questionnaire to provide a profile of individual identity including gender which is then further explored in their subsequent use of code-switching if and where it occurs. Finally a sample of code-switching users will be interviewed to explore perspectives on how and why this phenomenon is occurring, what purpose it serves, and to establish whether there is a link to identity and code-switching use.

The outcomes are aimed at contributing to academic discussions on the evolvement of Arabic as a language, the link between gender and Arabic code-switching and also the influences of social media on Arabic language use.