

Doctoral School of English Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities, Eötvös Loránd University
shilimeriam1@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7287-7982>

Mariem Shili: The Impact of English as a Lingua Franca on Learners' Motivation and Attitudes towards Languages Other Than English (LOTES)
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The Impact of English as a Lingua Franca on Learners' Motivation and Attitudes towards Languages Other Than English (LOTES)

Given the accelerating widespread of English as a lingua franca in the world and the continuous need for multilingualism, the role of learners' motivation and attitudes to learn languages has come to be considered of paramount importance. In this regard, this study seeks to investigate the impact of English as a lingua franca on learners' motivation and attitudes to learn languages other than English (LOTES) in the multilingual context of Tunisia, where English, French, and standard Arabic are considered to be competing in many spheres of society. Throughout the investigation, this study adopts a quantitative research design whereby survey data is collected from 105 Tunisian students. The findings from the statistical paired samples *t*-test comparisons and regression analyses reveal that the general dispositions of Tunisian learners towards the three languages of their context are characterized by significant differences, mainly in favor of English. Nevertheless, their perceptions of English as a lingua franca could predict their effort toward standard Arabic but not towards French.

Keywords: English as a lingua franca, languages other than English, motivation, LOTES, language learning attitudes

1. Introduction

Ever since the rise of globalization in the world, the omnipresence and status of English as a global language have triggered a variety of controversial debates. Consensus over the dominance of English has been widely accepted as globalization is gaining a significant foothold in different areas of societies around the world (Bangboe, 2001). In this respect, considerations have been attributed to the increasing challenges brought by the prestigious status of English in the educational sphere in general and on the ascribed value of languages other than English (LOTES), as well as multilingualism in particular (Henry, 2017).

As evidenced by numerous factors, the global status achieved by English paved the way for the emergence of English as a lingua franca (ELF) that is used “as a global means of inter-community communication” (Seidlhofer, 2015: 20). Taking multilingualism into consideration, the emergence of ELF would undoubtedly impact the spread of other languages such as French, German, or Arabic as common languages (Csizér & Illés, 2020). Given that research within the field of

applied linguistics and language learning motivation has long been mainly focused on investigating learners' motivation towards English as a target language, there has been an increasing demand for shifting the scope of interest of language learning motivation research from the monolingual bias towards the investigation of LOTEs. The same issue was raised by Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017), who questioned the extent to which the previously established motivational frameworks are applicable to LOTEs investigations.

In order to develop a better understanding of the contemporary language situation of the 21st century as well as the variety of challenges faced by languages other than English in light of the often-claimed superiority of English, it is important to examine the attitudes, and motivational factors that trigger the choice of certain languages over the others, and that interfere within their acquisition process. The latter is mainly important as language learning motivation has long been acknowledged within the field of applied linguistics as one of the most principal factors that account for both the success and failure of learners (Alizadeh, 2016).

According to the literature published in the special issue of LOTEs in the *Modern Language Journal*, the overwhelming importance of English in today's world may have negative effects on the motivational factors for learning other languages (Henry, 2017; Ushioda, 2017; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). Meanwhile, a number of other empirical contributions argue against the potential threats of English on LOTEs and conclude that English does not necessarily represent a threat to multilingualism and other languages (Henry & Apelgren 2008; Huang, 2019).

Despite the number of studies that have been conducted on language learning motivation and attitudes, the amount of research that considered the issues of LOTEs with regard to English as a lingua franca remains scarce and insufficiently investigated within different contexts. Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie addressed this matter by describing the imbalance among English and LOTEs research stating that “over 70% of all empirical investigations were conducted to examine motivation related to this single language, with the gap between English and LOTEs steadily increasing” (2017: 455).

1.1. English as a lingua franca (ELF)

The omnipresence of English all over the world combined with the increasing number of students and jobseekers living abroad has paved the way for the emergence of English as a communication tool that facilitates intelligibility among international speakers. Consequently, with English starting as a communicational tool and spreading into a plethora of transnational domains such as business, education, politics, technology, science, and entertainment, it has become inevitable to notice the manifestation of English as a lingua franca (ELF) or common

language in the era of postmodern globalization. The latter is further emphasized by Devrim and Bayyurt who observed that “it is an undeniable fact that English has become a global lingua franca. It is the most commonly spoken foreign language, language of media, language of technology, and language of science” (2010: 4). The rapid emergence of ELF stimulated the attention of considerable linguists over the years, leading to a variety of definitions that seek to explain the concept of English as a lingua franca. For instance, House (2003) referred back to the original sense of the terms ‘lingua franca’, where she stated that it had originated from “Arabic ‘lisan-al-farang’ – was simply an intermediary language used by speakers of Arabic with travelers from Western Europe” (House, 2003: 557). The author considered ELF as a language for communication within an interaction between two or more lingua cultures in English, where English is not considered as the native tongue. Furthermore, Ur provides a definition of the ELF user in general as “any person using English for lingua franca purposes, regardless of which actual English variety he/she employs to do so” (Ur, 2010: 85). Firth (1996) makes a different distinction between EFL as spoken by native speakers and EFL used in communication (by both native and non-native speakers) by referring to the second as a “contact language” used as a tool of communication between people who do not share the same identity characteristics, and who have chosen English as the foreign language for communication purposes.

The idea conveyed by Firth is similarly expressed by Holmes, who defines lingua franca in general as a term that “describes a language serving as a regular means of communication between different linguistic groups in a multilingual speech community” (Holmes, 2013: 82). Moreover, Crystal (2003) states that a certain language does not merely manifest into a global language owing to the fact that it is easier to learn and has less complicated grammatical structures than the rest of languages, in fact, Crystal further notes that without its political, economical, historical and socio-cultural prominence, a language’s large inventory of vocabulary, internal structure or peculiar literary and religious usages would not entitle it to become a lingua franca, or even survive as a working language (e.g., Latin nowadays).

The previous implications mentioned by the aforementioned scholars would inevitably lead us to consider the role of multilingualism in ELF investigations. As a matter of fact, multiple views, similar or opposed, of scholars have been raised within the field, taking the example of Jenkins, who criticized the conceptualized dominance of English vis-à-vis other languages claiming that “ELF research up to now has focused on English as the ‘superordinate’, with the other languages of its users in the role of ‘co-hyponyms’” (Jenkins, 2015: 63), and called for a reconceptualization of the notion of ELF. Indeed, Jenkins’ call for a reconceptualization implies the perception of English as a language placed among

other languages in a multilingual interaction out of choice, but not necessarily chosen as the means of communication (Jenkins, 2015).

Researchers such as Busse (2017) explored attitudes toward English as a lingua franca and LOTEs among adolescent students of four countries, namely, Bulgaria, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain. Busse's findings revealed that learners from these countries were aware of the importance and high status of English as a lingua franca as compared with the low importance of LOTEs. Additionally, Busse asserted the need for the strategy of promoting plurilingual identities as learners had signaled their awareness of the threat imposed by the increasing use of ELF in European countries on attitudes towards minority languages.

Given the importance as well as the controversy of English as a lingua franca within the field of education and vis-à-vis other languages, the current study is interested to investigate the implications of English as a lingua franca on the linguistic situation of LOTEs in the context of Tunisia. The latter will be reported by the results of the analysis to be conducted as this paper progresses.

1.2. Language Learning Motivation and Attitudes

Throughout the history of research in applied linguistics, the role of motivation has been widely recognized, as it has been considered as a crucial, and perhaps most important variable of individual differences involved in the learning process. To begin with, let us indicate that the term 'motivation' in itself does not suggest any other meaning that is idiosyncratic or different to the meaning implied by motivation in the field of psychology, and which entails the innate behaviour of choosing an action and willingness to put effort into it. In other words, motivation may reflect the causes behind people's decision to do something, the duration of their willingness to sustain that exact action, and to what extent they are willing to pursue it (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013). Language learning is among the activities that are susceptible to the degree of motivation held within an individual. According to Csizér (2017: 419), "choice usually refers to the fact that L2 students choose to learn, while both effort and persistence relate to the learning process itself: the amount of energy invested into language learning and how long students persevere". Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008: 56) observed that "without sufficient motivation, individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals". In fact, Dörnyei highlights the importance of motivation for second language acquisition (SLA) and language learning in general, in a way that "it provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in SLA presuppose motivation to some extent" (Dörnyei, 2005: 65).

Given the amount of research conducted for the purpose of establishing a common understanding of motivation, Dörnyei (2005) asserts that it is more useful

to distinguish between the different principal phases of research in the field of motivation: (a) the social psychological period, (b) the cognitive-situated period, (c) the process-oriented period, and (d) the socio-dynamic period.

Given the scope of this research which addresses the language learning motivational and attitudinal differences in the multilingual context of Tunisia, the main definition that will be used in this study is proposed by Gardner (1985: 10) within the socio-educational model. According to the latter, motivation was described as an “extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity”, and which comprises three elements, namely, an effort to learn a language, a desire to accomplish and achieve a certain goal, and positive affect reflected through enjoyment and enthusiasm towards learning the language (Gardner, 2001). Furthermore, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013: 41) expressed that “it is two orientations labeled *integrative* and *instrumental* that have become the most widely known concepts associated with Gardner's work in the field”. Indeed, Gardner (2001: 5) defined *integrativeness* as a variable reflecting “a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community”, and which implies not only integration within the target community but also an innate desire to acquire the language to interact with them. Meanwhile, the instrumental notion was described in the words of Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013: 41) as “the utilitarian counterpart of integrative orientation in Gardner's theory, pertaining to the potential pragmatic gains of the L2 proficiency, such as getting a better job or a higher salary”.

Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model was applied by a variety of researchers when investigating attitudes and motivation for languages other than English. As an illustration, Kraemer's (1993) study assessed the generalizability of Gardner's socio-educational model in the context of Israel. The study targeted 484 Israeli students learning Arabic and concluded that the main components of the socio-educational model were indeed applicable to contexts that are different from the initial Canadian context (Kraemer, 1993). Gardner himself conducted previous studies on LOTEs within the socio-psychological framework. For instance, in an empirical study conducted by Gardner and MacIntyre (1991), implications for the socio-educational model suggested that the motivational factors contained within the model are highly important and influential within the process of second language learning, especially in a multilingual context.

The main aim of this study is to contribute to filling the gap alluded in the previous introductory section above, by elaborating on and examining the impacts of English as a lingua on learners' motivation and attitudes to learn languages other than English in the Tunisian context, which is a multilingual context that has not been adequately investigated from such a perspective in previous years. Based on

the proposed research questions, this study seeks to present an overview of the characterization of the different dispositions of Tunisian students towards the three main actively present languages in their context, namely, standard Arabic, French, and English. Additionally, the influential relationship between English as a lingua franca and their efforts toward both French and standard Arabic will be investigated.

The three research questions addressed in this research are the following:

- 1 What characterizes Tunisian secondary school and higher education students' differing dispositions towards English and French?
- 2 What characterizes the Tunisian secondary and higher education students' differing dispositions towards English and standard Arabic?
- 3 How does English as a lingua franca affect learners' motivation to learn languages other than English?

2. Methodology

For the purpose of fulfilling the aim and objectives of this study, a quantitative research design was used. The purpose of conducting this study using a quantitative methodology is to acquire an overall estimate and evaluation of attitudes as well as opinions of a larger number of participants.

The questionnaire instrument "see Appendix" used in this study was devised based on previously established questionnaire items by a variety of researchers, namely, Busse (2013); Clement, Dörnyei, and Noels (1994); Dörnyei and Csizér (2002), and Noels, Pelletier, Clement, and Vallerand (2000). The included items were chosen in accordance with the Tunisian linguistic and educational context. The questionnaire employed in this study included a combination of 63 Likert-scale items from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* (1 to 5) and was devised into four sections. The first part elicited personal biographical questions of mixed forms in order to provide information about participants' gender, native language, spoken languages, and level of proficiency in each language investigated in this study. The three remaining sections consisted of items measuring the respondents' attitudes and motivation toward learning each of the three languages in the context of English as a lingua franca. Within each language section the same five scales were included and modified depending on the examined language, namely: (a) language universality, (b) intrinsic motivation, (c) instrumental motivation, (d) effort, and (e) milieu.

In order to test the reliability and relevance of the questionnaire proposed for this main study, a pilot questionnaire was sent out online to 30 participants. Based on the given results of the piloting phase, the necessary modifications were applied to the questionnaire prior to its distribution for the main study. Following the results

obtained, a few modifications had to be taken into consideration. The majority of the scales created for measuring language learning motivation and attitudes for each language had a significant Cronbach alpha value ($\alpha > .70$), which means that they were reliable. Exceptions were detected with the four items measuring intrinsic motivation to learn English with a value of ($\alpha = .543$), however, the internal consistency value of the latter would rise to ($\alpha = .756$) if a negative item “I would not study English if it was not imposed by the education system” was deleted or modified. Moreover, intrinsic motivation to learn French had a lower ($\alpha = .382$) which was similarly caused by the negative item that was problematic in the case of the English language above, and if that item is deleted the reliability coefficient would rise to ($\alpha = .867$). With regards to the internal consistency of the set of items combined into scales to measure attitudes and motivation towards standard Arabic, the highest Cronbach alpha was seen with the four items measuring effort ($\alpha = .920$), meanwhile, in terms of intrinsic motivation, a low value of ($\alpha = .585$) was reported due the same problematic negative item, which if deleted, a reliable coefficient of ($\alpha = .837$) would be reported.

Based on the given results of the initial pilot questionnaire, the problematic negative item mentioned above was modified, a new item “if I know English, I can communicate with people from all over the world” was added within the scale of language universality and another was modified within the same section for a better clarity of statement for participants, meanwhile, scales that demonstrated a reliable coefficient were left unmodified.

The total number of participants in this study is 105 Tunisian language learners who successfully completed and submitted the study’s questionnaire. The inclusion criteria were aimed at learners of secondary and higher education as they all would have been exposed to the three languages investigated in this current study. According to the data collected, the majority of participants were female students, totaling 60 participants (57.1%), while the rest were male students (42.9%), 45 in all.

The data was collected using an online questionnaire. As the context of the investigation is Tunisia, the main questionnaire was devised in English and then translated into French, which is the language mainly used for questionnaires in the educational sector, and checked by an external translator for validity. The data was analyzed using the 22nd version of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Consequently, all items were compiled into constructs based on their internal reliability as measured by their Cronbach’s alpha (α). As for data analysis, a set of descriptive statistical tests were performed in order to provide an overview of the data and the participants included in this study. In order to answer the first and second research questions, a paired sample *t*-test was performed for the purpose of comparing the mean values scored by the different scales relating to the

three languages of investigation. To answer the third research question, a set of statistical regression analyses was conducted. These tests aimed to investigate the extent to which the various motivation and attitudes measuring scales influence the dependent scales of the study namely, effort towards French and effort towards standard Arabic. Through the use of the linear regression statistics, the obtained models were then constructed by gradually adding the independent variables to obtain a final model that accounts for the linear relationship between the investigated variables. Finally, it must be noted that the value of statistical significance was set to $p < .05$ prior to conducting the test due to the sample size of this study.

3. Results

In order to examine the degree of the interrelatedness of the items comprising the scales involved in this study, the collected data sample was checked for internal consistency. Results showed that the fifteen scales included in this study proved to be statistically reliable. In terms of constructs measuring the different types of motivation and attitudes towards the English language, the highest Cronbach alpha value was obtained for *effort* $\alpha = .934$ followed by *instrumental motivation* scale $\alpha = .911$, and the reliability coefficients for both *intrinsic motivation* ($\alpha = .858$), and *Milieu* ($\alpha = .869$) were relatively similar. Meanwhile, the lowest Cronbach alpha value ($\alpha = .665$) was linked to the English language universality scale which comprised four items.

The number of items measuring motivation and attitudes towards the French language in the questionnaire demonstrated a great degree of internal consistency, whereas, in contrast to the English universality scale mentioned above, the French universality scale revealed a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .865$. Moreover, constructs such as *intrinsic motivation*, and *instrumental motivation* had an approximately similar Cronbach alpha value of $\alpha \geq .80$, while *effort* in French language had a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .932$.

In terms of the reliability coefficient of items measuring the motivational dimensions and attitudes towards Standard Arabic, the results revealed a desirable Cronbach alpha for the majority of scales. For instance, *effort* had the highest reliability value of $\alpha = .882$, followed by $\alpha = .864$ for the construct of instrumental motivation. Another highly acceptable value of $\alpha = .847$ was shown for intrinsic motivation and milieu $\alpha = .813$. Meanwhile, a slightly acceptable reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .638$ was scored for standard Arabic universality.

3.1. Paired Sample T-Tests

As an answer to the first research question of this study, a set of paired-samples *t*-tests were conducted among English and French. The results of the first *t*-test analysis, displayed in Table 1, contain the comparative results between the two languages.

The results obtained in Table 1 indicated that there is a significant difference in the scores of English language universality ($M = 4.45$, $SD = .559$) and French language universality ($M = 3.07$, $SD = .952$) by a value of $t(104) = 15.060$, $p < .05$. Furthermore, comparison between English intrinsic motivation ($M = 4.54$, $SD = .611$) and French intrinsic motivation ($M = 3.26$, $SD = .849$) revealed a significant difference ($t(104) = 11.513$, $p < .05$). A statistically significant degree of divergence ($t(104) = 14.522$, $p < .05$) was also detected for English instrumental Motivation ($M = 4.70$, $SD = .497$) and French instrumental motivation ($M = 3.28$, $SD = .882$). In terms of Effort scores, a statistically reliable degree of differences ($t(104) = 12.950$, $p < .05$) was reported between French effort ($M = 3.26$, $SD = .911$) and English effort ($M = 4.63$, $SD = .638$) constructs. Similarly, the *t*-test results reported a significant difference between English milieu ($M = 4.71$, $SD = .511$) and French milieu ($M = 3.40$, $SD = .994$) constructs with a value of $t(104) = 12.898$, $p < .05$.

Table 1. Paired Samples *t*-test among English and French language constructs

Factor pair	Paired Sample Statistics		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>			
English Language Universality - French Language Universality	4.45 3.07	.559 .952	15.060	104	<0.001
English Intrinsic Motivation - French Intrinsic Motivation	4.54 3.26	.611 .849	11.513	104	<0.001
English Instrumental Motivation - French Instrumental Motivation	4.70 3.28	.497 .882	14.522	104	<0.001
Effort English - Effort French	4.63 3.26	.638 .911	12.950	104	<0.001
Milieu English - Milieu French	4.71 3.40	.511 .994	12.898	104	<0.001

The findings of the first paired *t*-test sample of differences between English and French scales suggest that Tunisian learners are more likely to have positive attitudes and motivation toward English than towards the French language. In fact, all of the included clusters mentioned above revealed significant differences

between the two languages, which demonstrates the ‘rivalry’ between French and English in Tunisia (Battenburg, 1997). In terms of the perception of which language is considered a lingua franca, based on the collected answers, the participants seemed to perceive English more than French as a lingua franca. This finding is consistent with studies discussed in the literature implying that students are more aware of the higher status achieved by English as a lingua franca as compared to other languages (Busse, 2017). The existing disparity between the mean scores of intrinsic motivation between French and English can be interpreted as students in the Tunisian context seem to find learning English more enjoyable and satisfactory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) than French. Thus, the language’s employability, utility, and social status (Ushioda, 2017) were more dominant for English rather than French in this context. In the same regard, the value of mean difference demonstrated with *effort* in both languages indicates that participants were more willing to exert effort to learn and enhance their learning of English more than French. Given that effort is one of the main components of motivation (Gardner, 1985), it is inevitable for learners to be motivated to learn a language without being ready to invest effort. The latter is emphasized by Noels, Clément, and Pelletier (2001: 434), who noted that those who learn “English because it is valuable and fun are likely to exert more effort and persist longer at language learning”.

For the purpose of answering the second research question included in this study, the previous findings included in Table 2 provide insightful implications for the overall perceptions of the underlying dominance and high value attributed to English in the Tunisian context as compared to standard Arabic. The findings indicated that there exist significant differences in scores obtained by both languages. For instance, in what concerns English language universality ($M = 4.45$, $SD = .559$), and standard Arabic universality perceptions ($M = 1.80$, $SD = .621$) there is a significantly high degree variation with a value of $t(104) = 34.765$, $p < .05$. Moreover, the scores reported for English intrinsic motivation ($M = 4.54$, $SD = .611$) as compared to standard Arabic intrinsic motivation ($M = 2.06$, $SD = .724$) had a significant degree of variance explained by a value of $t(104) = 25.268$, $p < .05$. Scores for instrumental motivation, in the same way, were reported to have been significantly different $t(104) = 36.194$, $p < .05$ between standard Arabic ($M = 1.72$, $SD = .653$) and English ($M = 4.70$, $SD = .497$). In terms of Effort and Milieu scales, both scales similarly had a significant degree of variation between the two languages, whereby the mean for Effort in English ($M = 4.63$, $SD = .638$) was higher than with standard Arabic ($M = 1.69$, $SD = .649$), $t(104) = 30.000$, $p < .05$, and the mean for English milieu ($M = 4.71$, $SD = .511$) was significantly higher ($t(104) = 38.486$, $p < .05$) than the mean scored by standard Arabic milieu ($M = 1.76$, $SD = .649$).

Table 2. Paired Samples *t*-test among English and Standard Arabic constructs

Factor pair	Paired Sample Statistics		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. deviation</i>			
English Language Universality - Standard Arabic Language Universality	4.45	.559	34.765	104	<0.001
English Intrinsic Motivation - Sd Arabic Intrinsic Motivation	4.54	.611	25.268	104	<0.001
English Instrumental Motivation - Sd Arabic Instrumental Motivation	4.70	.497	36.194	104	<0.001
Effort English - Effort Sd Arabic	4.63	.638	30.000	104	<0.001
Milieu English - Milieu Sd Arabic	4.71	.511	38.486	104	<0.001

As evidenced by a reflection upon the items included within the first construct, Tunisian students are more aware of the status achieved by English as a global language with a high value both inside and outside their context. This finding is in line with Stevens' (1983: 106) observation of the Tunisian context regarding language attitudes: "for many, Arabic—and in particular Classical Arabic—is somehow deficient with regard to twentieth-century communication needs and is uninteresting". With regard to motivation, it is indicated that these learners are more intrinsically and instrumentally motivated to learn English rather than standard Arabic. The latter fact could perhaps be explained by a variety of factors such as using English for occupational purposes (EOP) in Tunisia, teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) programmes, and the high demand for English by business companies (Daoud, 2001). Furthermore, the results of the *t*-test for the *effort* and *milieu* scales demonstrate a significantly higher degree of divergence.

3.2. Regression Analyses

Given that the third research question of this study is concerned with the extent to which motivation and attitudes towards English learning have an impact on learners' efforts toward French and standard Arabic, this section presents the results of the four linear regression analyses conducted among independent variables consisting of English motivation and attitudes scales and *effort* in both French and standard Arabic as the dependent variable to be predicted.

The results shown in Table 3 ($R^2 = .090$, $F(5,99) = 1.95$) indicate that out of five independent variables of English attitudes and motivation scales, only one variable, namely, *English language universality* ($\beta = -.342$, $p < .05$) has a significantly negative impact on the dependent scale of effort in standard Arabic with a value of $B = -.447$. The model further suggests that English intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .008$, $B = .009$), English instrumental motivation ($\beta = .158$, $B = .232$), Effort English ($\beta = -.240$, $B = -.275$), and English Milieu ($\beta = .283$, $B = .198$) do not have a significant impact on their degree of effort towards standard Arabic.

Table 3. Regression analysis results of the linear relationship between English motivation and attitudes scales and standard Arabic effort scale as a dependent variable

Variable	Final Model			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	Sig.
English language universality	-.447	.160	-.342	.006*
English intrinsic motivation	.009	.173	.008	.958
English instrumental motivation	.232	.255	.158	.366
Effort English	-.275	.200	-.240	.171
English Milieu	.283	.214	.198	.189
R^2	.090			
<i>F</i> for change in R^2	1.95			

Note: (β) the beta coefficient is the degree of change in the outcome

* $p < .05$: Statistically significant value

The second linear regression analysis (Table 4) was conducted by adding the total number of scales measuring attitudes and motivation in both English and standard Arabic as independent predictors, and standard Arabic effort as a dependent criterion variable. The results obtained are significant ($R^2 = .739$, $F(9,95) = 29.877$, $p < .001$), with perceptions of the English language as a lingua franca ($\beta = -.149$, $p < .05$) having a significantly negative impact on effort in standard Arabic ($B = -.195$). These results indicate that the participants' attitudes towards English as a lingua franca and their perceptions of standard Arabic in terms of universality do not only have a negative influence but can also predict their efforts in standard Arabic.

The third linear regression presented in Table 5 seeks to highlight the impact of English motivation and attitudes scales on the participants' efforts toward French language. The results obtained were non-significant ($R^2 = .499$, $F(5,99) = .499$), showing that none of the independent English related variables – namely, English Language Universality ($\beta = .112$, $p > .05$, $B = .182$), English Intrinsic Motivation ($\beta = -.184$, $p > .05$, $B = -.274$), English instrumental Motivation ($\beta = .174$, $p > .05$, B

= $-.130$), Effort English ($\beta = .174, p > .05, B = .249$), or Milieu English ($\beta = .004, p > .05, B = .006$) – have had a significant effect on the dependent variable depicting learners’ willingness to exert efforts in their French learning.

The fourth linear regression presented in Table 6 was conducted in order to determine which motivational and attitudinal dimensions affect the participants’ effort towards French. Interestingly, none of the scales related to English motivation and attitudes had any significant impact on learners’ degree of effort for French language. Nevertheless, the findings reveal that effort towards French can be predicted by their perceptions of French language universality ($\beta = -.228, p < .05, B = -.218$), their French intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .461, p < .05, B = .495$), their French instrumental motivation ($\beta = .331, p < .05, B = .341$) and the dispositions of their milieu towards French ($\beta = .280, p < .05, B = .256$).

Table 4. Regression analysis results of the linear relationship between English and standard Arabic motivation and attitudes’ scales and standard Arabic effort scale as a dependent variable

Final Model				
Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	Sig
English language universality	-.195	.094	-.149	.041*
English intrinsic motivation	.104	.097	.087	.289
English instrumental motivation	.033	.145	.023	.820
Effort English	-.150	.112	-.131	.185
English Milieu	.148	.120	.103	.219
Standard Arabic language universality	-.269	.083	-.228	.002*
Standard Arabic intrinsic motivation	.256	.088	.253	.005*
Standard Arabic instrumental motivation	.440	.092	.393	.000*
Standard Arabic milieu	.496	.079	.441	.000*
R^2	.739*			
<i>F</i> for change in R^2	29.877			

Note: (β) the beta coefficient is the degree of change in the outcome

* $p < .05$: Statistically significant value

Based on the obtained results of the linear regression analyses, effort toward standard Arabic in the Tunisian context is predictable from the participants’ perceptions of English as a lingua franca. In other words, the status achieved by English as a universal language does impact their efforts toward learning standard Arabic. The latter is in line with Diab’s (2006) and Bani-Khaled’s (2014) findings, which demonstrated low perceptions of Arab students toward standard Arabic compared to their high estimation of the role and status of English as a lingua franca. In terms of effort toward the French language, however, the two linear

regression analyses revealed that, based on the findings of this study, learners' effort toward French is not significantly impacted by the status of English in Tunisia. These findings are consistent with previous observations about the important status of French and English in Tunisia specifically, and in North Africa generally (Ayoun, 2007). Moreover, these findings are consistent with Battenburg's (1997: 288) observation that although it is increasingly becoming clear that English will compete with French in a multitude of fields in Tunisia, yet "most Tunisians agree that English will not replace French in the near future".

Table 5. Regression analysis results of the linear relationship between English motivation and attitudes' scales and French effort scale as a dependent variable

Final Model				
Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	Sig
English Language Universality	.182	.206	.112	.379
English Intrinsic Motivation	-.274	.223	-.184	.222
English Instrumental Motivation	-.130	.329	-.071	.694
Effort English	.249	.258	.174	.336
Milieu English	.006	.276	.004	.982
<i>R</i> ²			.025	
<i>F</i> for change in <i>R</i> ²			.499	

Note: (β) the beta coefficient is the degree of change in the outcome

**p* < .05: Statistically significant value

Table 6. Regression analysis results of the linear relationship between English and French motivation and attitudes' scales and French effort scale as a dependent variable.

Final Model				
Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	Sig
Effort English	.074	.172	.052	.668
English Milieu	-.013	.183	-.007	.943
French language universality	-.218	.096	-.228	.026*
French intrinsic motivation	.495	.105	.461	.000*
French instrumental motivation	.341	.123	.331	.007*
French milieu	.256	.101	.280	.012*
<i>R</i> ²			.600*	
<i>F</i> for change in <i>R</i> ²			15.835	

Note: (β) the beta coefficient is the degree of change in the outcome

**p* < .05: Statistically significant value

4. Conclusion

This study has been conducted for the purpose of gaining an insight into the various attitudinal and motivational dispositions of Tunisian secondary and higher education students towards languages other than English by focusing on the three vigorously present and competing languages in the country (i.e., English, French, and standard Arabic) in light of the status of English as a lingua franca.

With regard to the first and second research questions, the set of descriptive paired sample *t*-tests that was conducted for the purpose of identifying the participants' different dispositions towards the three languages under investigation has revealed that, in the Tunisian context, factors such as language universality, intrinsic motivation, instrumental motivation, willingness to exert effort, and milieu influence in language learning are all in favor of English rather than French or standard Arabic. Moreover, the comparative paired sample *t*-test performed between French and standard Arabic-related scales has indicated that, in the Tunisian context, learners' perceptions of French as a universal language are significantly higher than of standard Arabic. Additionally, the important status played by French in the country (Daoud, 2001) has been confirmed through their strong intrinsic motivation, instrumental motivation, milieu influence, and willingness to put efforts towards French than standard Arabic.

Considering the third research question of this study, the conclusions obtained by the set of regression analyses have highlighted and confirmed the fact that English as a lingua franca has a negative impact on learners' efforts toward standard Arabic. Yet, Tunisian learners' English intrinsic motivation, instrumental motivation, effort in English, and English milieu influence do not significantly impact their effort in standard Arabic. Additionally, results indicate that students' motivation to put effort into learning French is not significantly influenced by their effort, milieu, intrinsic motivation, and instrumental motivation towards English.

Furthermore, this study validates the ambivalence of attitudes towards the three languages and the continuous rivalry between English and French (Daoud, 2001; Battenburg, 1997). Nevertheless, it is important to note that although the results implying that ELF did not significantly affect the participants' effort in French were not expected, yet they are consistent with both previous empirical contributions indicating that English does not necessarily generate negative impacts on motivation and dispositions towards LOTEs (Busse, 2017; Marlina & Xu, 2018). In fact, other languages are also considered as resources of immense value (Ehrenreich, 2010, as cited in Jenkins et al., 2011).

There are several limitations identified with this study. First, the number of sample responses collected within this research $n=105$ might have contributed to the shortcomings and unexpected results obtained by the slightly acceptable Cronbach alpha of two constructs of English language universality ($\alpha = .665$), and

standard Arabic universality ($\alpha = .638$). Furthermore, due to the time limits and the fact that I have conducted this study about the Tunisian context from abroad, and in an unprecedented period of a pandemic and lockdown, access to official secondary schools and universities in order to distribute the questionnaires was slightly problematic. To a certain extent, the number of respondents could be said to reflect and mirror the different language learning characteristics of the larger population of Tunisia in light of the emergence of English as a lingua franca in the country. Nevertheless, a bigger number of respondents would have helped provide further generalizable results, especially that similar previous studies that investigated the Tunisian context from a language learning attitudinal and motivational framework are relatively limited. With that being said, future research is encouraged in order to provide further examinations to develop the initial findings of this research by taking into consideration the aforementioned limitations, perhaps with the inclusion of a qualitative research design that could shed more light on different aspects of motivation and attitudes towards languages in the Tunisian contexts. In the same respect, more focus on other languages in the Tunisian multilingual context such as Spanish and Italian is recommended.

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