

CHACHOU, IBTISSEM. *La situation sociolinguistique de l'Algérie: pratiques plurilingues et variétés à l'œuvre*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013. ISBN 978-2-343-00505-8. Pp. 317. 31,50 €.

In investigating Algeria's sociolinguistic situation by looking at multilingualism, language contact, language status, and language in media, Chachou's stated goal is to offer a more empirical approach than previous studies, based on "des méthodes empirico-inductives recouvrant la compréhension et la contextualisation" (293). Chachou describes the general sociolinguistic context of Algeria and revisits the concept of diglossia and the language continuum as developed by Ferguson in 1959. She finds that Ferguson's classifications do not adequately cover the complex roles of languages in Algeria. For instance, Algerian Arabic does not hold official status—the official languages are standard Arabic and Berber—despite being one of the most frequently used languages in Algeria. Chachou reminds the reader that in 1999, Abdelaziz Bouteflika delivered his presidential campaign speeches mostly in Algerian Arabic. In her analysis of language status and her attempt to find the appropriate terminology to refer to the varieties of languages present in Algeria, Chachou rejects terms such as "dialectes berbères" (61) or "sabir" (61), as they are demeaning and result from a rigid, diglossic, hierarchical classification (118). She proposes instead to accord greater value to vernacular languages, for example by teaching *malhun*—centuries-old popular poetry sung and written in the vernacular language found in the Maghreb—in the schools, since it represents remembrance and cultural traditions. Examining language in media such as cinema, theater, and songs, Chachou points to the absence of Algerian Arabic and Berber in newspapers even though those languages are present on national television. She notes the strong position of standard Arabic on the public radio while local radio stations increasingly broadcast Algerian Arabic or *l'arabe médian*, a variety situated between the standard and the vernacular. Algerian Arabic and Berber dominate in music, although Rai folk music uses borrowings from French and Algerian Arabic and code-switches between the two. The second half of the book deals with language in newspaper advertising, covering theory (for example, Bourdieu's notion that language and values reflect power relationships, ideologies, and norms), linguistic strategies used by advertisers ("Algerianisms," monolingual and bilingual signs, and the predominance of standard Arabic during Ramadan and other Muslim holidays), and English and Italian borrowings. Examples are followed by brief data analysis. Overall, this book contains a great deal of useful information, but its goals, which cover a wide range of contexts, may be overly ambitious and at times not particularly original. The chapters on advertising are the book's strength, as they offer a rich set of data. The data, however, could benefit from deeper analysis. Nonetheless, this volume provides a valuable contribution to the field of Maghrebi sociolinguistics due to its empirical approach.