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### **Title**

**The influence of the American Culture on the Algerian English  
Speaking YouTubers' Cultural Identity when Designing Videos**

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## ***Dedication***

*I dedicate this work to my only family member, my only source of inspiration, motivation and support*

*My Mother*

*Without her endless love and encouragement I would never have been able to complete my graduate studies.*

## Abstract

*The current study aims to investigate the influence of the American culture on the Algerian English speaking YouTubers' cultural identity when designing videos. It is based on three objectives. First, it seeks to explore YouTube features that contribute to the display of identity and cultural practices of YouTubers. Second, it aims to find out how the American cultural influences spread among the Algerian English speaking YouTubers. Third, it aims to find out the place that the American culture and the English language are acquiring among Algerian YouTubers. In order to meet the above-mentioned objectives, Hecht's (2005) Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) is adopted as a theoretical framework. For collecting data, 30 videos uploaded by 13 Algerian English speaking YouTubers have been selected as the main corpus of the study. To reinforce the data obtained from the videos, an online semi-structured interview is conducted with four Algerian YouTubers, whose videos were selected. The research is qualitative in nature; therefore, the findings of the research involving both the content of the 30 videos and the responses obtained from the interview are interpreted using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). The results of the study reveal that the video is the main feature which allows cultural identity expression. The findings of the video analysis also reveal that a variety of factors, such as the global popularity of the American music, fashion brands, and film industry that reflect the American lifestyle, along with the influence of their YouTubers, contributed to the spread of American cultural elements among Algerian YouTubers. Finally, the Algerian YouTubers' use of English in their videos demonstrates the significant place English is acquiring and the co-existence of the Algerian and American cultures on the Algerian YouTube.*

**Keywords:** Algerian YouTubers, American cultural globalization, Cultural identity, video.

## **List of Abbreviations**

**ASMR:** Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response

**CTI:** Communication Theory of Identity

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**LGBTQ:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer / Questioning

**QCA:** Qualitative Content Analysis

**R&B:** Rhythm and Blues

**URL:** Uniform Resource Locator

## List of Symbols

∅ Absent

✓ Algerian cultural aspect present

∨ American cultural aspect present

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# *General Introduction*

### 1- Statement of the Problem

Social media has become an increasingly popular component of our everyday life in today's globalized society. It provides a setting for people all over the world to communicate, exchange messages, share information, and interact, regardless of the geographical distance between them. That is, in today's technology-driven society, people regularly consume and make use of communication technology affordances.

It provides access to diverse cultural products from all over the world and enables identity expression. Unlike traditional media such as television, CDs, or books, it allows people to communicate and engage with information that is quickly accessible on the Internet. YouTube is an example of a social media platform that gives insights into foreign cultural products, which facilitates cross-cultural consumption of media content, hence influences the cultural identity of the users.

YouTube is a video sharing media platform that launched in 2005 and has proceeded to be one of the fastest growing social media networks globally, with over two billion monthly active users (YouTube, 2022). From a cultural perspective, the increasingly popular YouTube now offers an easy way for people to seek inspiration and share their own skills with others. Additionally, it has opened up a new channel for cultural exchange. YouTube offers a participatory culture in which to develop, interact, and learn (Chau, 2010). Thus, YouTube is much more than an online platform for sharing and broadcasting content because it supports participatory culture, meaning that it is easy to access and allows user created content. An important aspect of YouTube is the fact that YouTubers communicate the content of their channel to an audience including other YouTubers who can be different in terms of cultural background.

With 240 million users, the USA has the second largest use base for the platform which may make the American culture a great influence on the cultural identity of YouTubers around the world, including the Algerian ones. For the purpose of this dissertation, identity is defined as the individuals' understanding of who they are (Jenkins, 1996). That is, how a person views himself. Identity also implies the identification with a broader collective or social group we assume are similar to us (Buckingham, 2008). So, identity refers to a sense of belonging to a particular group based on various cultural categories.

Academic studies have extensively addressed the topic of factors that influence cultural identity on this new digital environment. Rosen and Laihanen (2017) who conducted a study entitled "Advancing Identities with YouTube" found that YouTube influences identity, and this occurs through a process where consumers acknowledge and reflect on their current self, and use various YouTubers and YouTube channels as sources of inspiration and knowledge to help them pursue their desired and ideal identities. The study entitled "Making an impact on the cultural landscape: The power of YouTube" conducted by Google (2018) to learn about YouTube's Cultural Impact demonstrated that YouTube was the most culturally impactful channel overall due to its ability both to generate and spread new ideas.

Chekir (2020) conducted a study about the Presence of English in the Algerian YouTubers' Channels aiming for a full understanding of the motivating factors that led the Algerian YouTubers to opt for English as the main language of communication in their YouTube channels. She focused on the importance of knowing the type of culture portrayed in the videos uploaded by the Algerian YouTubers in addition to the place that English occupies among them. The results of the study reveal that English is gaining much ground among Algerian YouTubers; and the major motivating factors for this linguistic switch are their wish to take part in the globalized world as well as conveying a modern lifestyle on YouTube and the fascination and the

influence of target culture rituals and lifestyle which are manifested in the different cultural aspects portrayed in their videos.

It is worth mentioning that in the Algerian context, factors that influence the Algerian YouTubers' cultural identity has not received sufficient interest; this is what inspires the present work to inquire the influence of American culture on Algerian English speaking YouTubers' cultural identity when designing and sharing videos online.

### **2- Aims and Significance of the Study**

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate the influence of the American Culture on the Algerian YouTubers' cultural identity when designing videos. The reason that lies behind my choice for this subject is because YouTube is the most popular platform for media consumption on the Web and to bring it to the forefront of current and future discussions of factors that influence Algerian cultural identity. Undoubtedly, social networking has proven to be a global phenomenon that has caused a significant paradigm shift in language usage around the world. Therefore, the present study aims also to determine the impact of Algerians YouTubers' use of English on its place on the Algerian YouTube.

### **3- Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The piece of research in hand attempts to answer the following questions:

- a) What YouTube features contribute to the display of YouTubers' identities and cultural practices?
- b) How do American cultural influences spread among Algerian YouTubers?
- c) What do these cultural practices reveal about the place that American culture and the English language are acquiring among Algerian YouTubers?

These questions are intended to guide and frame the project based on my interest in YouTube and cultural identity. In an attempt to answer these questions, I have advanced the following hypotheses:

- a) YouTube as a media platform has many features and frameworks that serve as indicators of the cultural identity of the user including the description box, user profile, community and posts...
- b) Algerian YouTubers are influenced by the American tendencies such as popular trends, or lifestyle vlogs which they get attached to and therefore try to follow these tendencies as models when designing their own videos.
- c) Algerian YouTubers' promotion of American culture and English language, to be deeply embedded in their cultural identity, accentuates the American culture's domination over the Algerian one.

#### **4- Research Techniques and Methodology**

To achieve the objective of the study, I have adopted the qualitative method for data collection and data analysis. The data collected consists of YouTube videos designed by Algerian YouTubers and due to the massive scale of YouTube; I limited data collection to two categories: Vlogs and Trends. In addition to an online interview with some YouTubers whose videos were selected. As for the data analysis, Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is adopted to account for information obtained from the videos. To conduct this research, I heavily rely on the Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) by Hecht (2005) which identifies four frames of identity and their interpretation that operate collectively within the features and framework of YouTube.

### **5- Structure of the Dissertation**

The overall structure of this dissertation follows the traditional simple model. It consists of a general introduction, four chapters and a general conclusion. The introduction has discussed the background relating to the main concepts and previous studies in the field, in addition to the main aim and purpose of the dissertation, along with the research question guiding the thesis. The first chapter deals with the review of the literature related to the major theoretical concepts as well as the definition of terms. The second chapter presents the research design in addition to the procedures of data collection and data analysis. The third chapter presents the results obtained from video content analysis of Algerian YouTubers and the interviews. The last chapter is devoted to the discussion of the findings on the basis of the theoretical framework in order to give answers to the research questions. Finally, this dissertation ends with a general conclusion which presents a summary of the different points tackled throughout the research and provides recommendations for future research.

*Chapter One*  
*Review of the Literature*

### Introduction

The ubiquity of social media has transformed the human experiences and its influence on the lives of individuals and communities is evident. Today, YouTube has mounted to a huge societal component of how people communicate through videos and share their voices around the world. As individuals come into contact with YouTube content, their cultural identity shifts, that is the wide spread use and increasing time spent on this platform cause users to create an online self-representation or identity.

This chapter is a review of the literature on the influence of the American culture on the Algerian English speaking YouTubers' cultural identity. It presents and explains the theoretical framework by providing an overview of the key concepts that are used throughout the research. It is divided into three sections. The first section is entitled *YouTube*, the second is named *cultural identity* and the last one is entitled *Communication Theory of Identity*. The first section presents a brief historical overview of YouTube and gives due concern to the use of YouTube platform as a means for cultural expression and production. In the second section, culture and identity are defined. The last section contains the presentation of the analytical framework upon which this work is based which is the Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) proposed by Hecht (2005).

### 1- YouTube

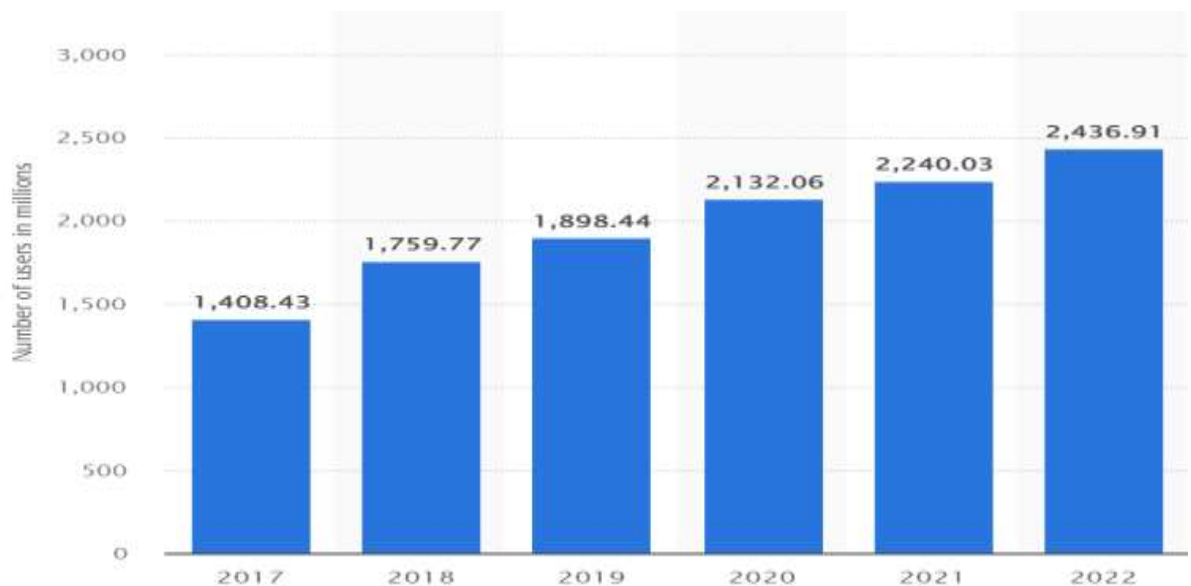
#### 1.1- Definition and Short Historical Background

YouTube is a free video sharing platform where users can watch, like, share, comment and upload their own videos; featuring a wide variety of user-generated content that ranges from music and gaming videos to vlogs and educational clips. According to Watkins and Michael (2011), YouTube is an online video repository in which nearly any digital video file can be stored

and exhibited free of charge. This video service can be accessed via many devices such as PCs, laptops, tablets and via mobile phones on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).

YouTube was founded by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, former employees of online commerce website PayPal. YouTube was founded in 2005 and was purchased by Google for \$1.6 billion only one year later (Jean & Green, 2009). By the summer of 2006, YouTube was serving more than 100 million videos per day, and the number of videos being uploaded to the site showed no sign of slowing down (Hosch, 2020).

Since its launch, YouTube has grown from a repository of videos into the biggest online video platform worldwide. The video giant is now a leading online destination for millions of users from around the world; this can be further elaborated if we look at figure (1)



**Figure 1: Forecast of the Number of YouTube Users from 2017 to 2022 (Statista, 2020)**

In 2017, YouTube's user base in the World amounts to approximately 1,408.43 million users and by 2022 the number grew to more than 2,240.00 million. Thus, the number of users has never stopped from increasing over the years.

### **1.2- Reading YouTube as a Platform**

Every time the users open the YouTube platform, they find a main page announcing a number of things: a search box where they enter key terms to search for video clips based on their interest, a banner ad to promote a brand and/or to get visitors from the host website “YouTube” to go to the advertiser's website, a topic bar which was added last year (YouTube Help, 2021). The feature displays topics recommendations which aim to help users find a great content to view more easily. It suggest also channels and videos which are customized and determined by watch history, search history, and channels the user is subscribed to, in addition to more general factors, like where the user lives and the time of day.

The home page layout is designed to facilitate quick access to popular content. According to Jean and Green (2009) “The website provided a very simple, integrated interface within which users could upload, publish, and view streaming videos without high levels of technical knowledge”(p.1). If we consider how YouTube presents and organizes the content for its users, it becomes clear that people are not just watching a video, but taking in information and data as well.

### **1.3- YouTube Videos**

The term video refers to the moving pictures and typically combines images and sound for a compelling multimedia experience. Videos can include text as well, which often appears as captioning for spoken words or as text in an image. Video is a form of multimedia that conveys information through two simultaneous sensory channels: aural and visual.

YouTube video is a media that involves sounds and Images, YouTube provides a simple way for people to store videos online and share them with others and set no limits on the number of videos users could upload, Heinich et al.(2002) define it as an “electronic storage of moving

images”(p.192). YouTube videos cover any topic anyone cares to upload a video about such as music, photography, style, cooking, fitness training, dance, travel, gaming etc. These videos are easy to share, as Jean and Green (2009) contend “YouTube offered basic community functions such as the opportunity to link to other users as friends, and provided URLs code that enabled videos to be easily embedded into other websites” (p.1). That is, by clicking on the share button the user gets the video’s URL and code for embedding the video onto an external website, along with buttons that assist in posting the video to Facebook or a similar social networking site.

YouTube is not just a platform for sharing but also for arnering likes and comments, The video can be “liked” by clicking a “thumbs up” icon or “disliked” by clicking a “thumbs down” icon; it can be flagged as containing inappropriate content, added to a user created playlist or “favorites” list for future viewing and finally, it can be commented on by the users in the comment section where they can also engage with other viewers’ opinions. In simple words, the users can offer feedback on what they have just seen.

### **1.3.1- YouTube Vlog**

The term “vlog” comes from “video blog” and that is exactly what it is. A vlog is simply a blog where the medium is a video instead of written words. Vlogs are a form of online publishing, allowing everyone with web access and simple video production tools such as a computer and a webcam or a cell phone with video capabilities to create and post content.

The video streaming site YouTube relies on user-generated content, which allows YouTubers from all around the world to post and broadcast their ideas and opinions and get feedback from their followers, opening up a new kind of self-expression: vlogging which is a conversational type of video that represents well the slogan of YouTube: ‘Broadcast Yourself’. Aaron (2015) defines it as “the act of recording news and opinions about a particular subject via

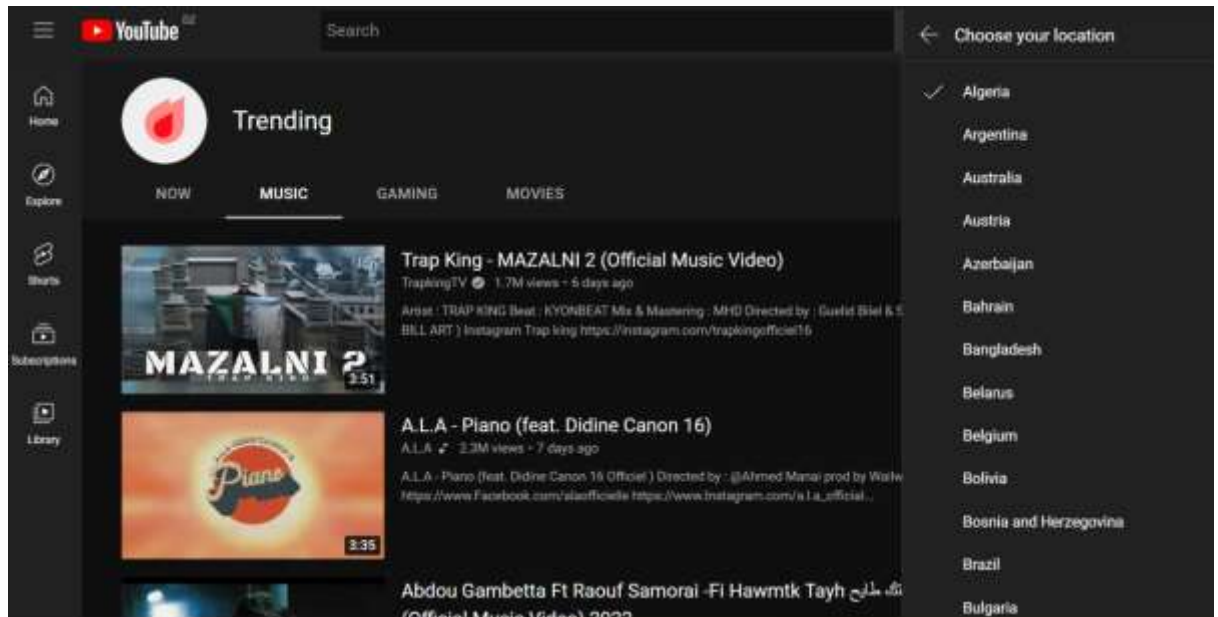
video and publishing this recording online” (p.8). In other words, YouTube vlogs match the idea of public self-expression.

### **1.3.2- YouTube Trend**

A trend refers to the most talked about topics on social media (Stec, 2020). In other words, it is a topic discussed a lot on social media within a short period of time. Trending videos on YouTube are a general indication of what viewers currently like. YouTube shows a unique list of trending videos for each country. It uses the following factors to decide trending videos: View count, where the views are coming from, how quickly the video is generating views, and the age of the video.

YouTube’s Culture and Trends team discusses what YouTube viewers across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region watch. Three trends that have captivated audiences on YouTube in MENA are identified: With family at the core of Arabic culture, this theme is a driving force behind YouTube creators’ content in the MENA region, as well as gaming and Arabic pop music. This is not a fleeting trend, but a broader indicator of the types of content that consumers are choosing to watch (Hussein & Merchak, 2021).

The Trending tab on YouTube renamed ‘Explore’ on the app as of March 2020 (YouTube Help, 2020) displays trending videos that are localized to the viewer’s country with the option to change the country setting to view what is currently popular in a specific location. The trending videos can be Tutorials, challenges, Ask Me Anything, ASMR (autonomous sensory meridian response) and vlogs or any other type of video that many people choose to watch. Here’s an example of trending music videos in Algeria.



**Figure 2: Music Trending Videos in Algeria**

In Figure 2, everyone in Algeria sees the same trending tab, which is different to the one that everyone sees in Argentina, for example. These videos are trending in Algeria and ranked by popularity.

It is important to keep up to date on youth-culture phenomena and know which YouTubers are popular and which channels are trending, and YouTube’s trending page is an excellent way to get acquainted with topical content on YouTube or the content which is most supported and viewed by other users. Being a YouTuber is more than simply recording a video with apparently improvised content (Marôpo, 2017). This task, according to the author, demands strategies such as finding a target audience and interpreting YouTube Trends to identify keywords to describe the video and facilitate its delivery to the target audience. That is, the YouTuber needs to locate a target audience and interpret YouTube trends in order to identify the trends that will attract this intended audience before uploading their video.

### **1.4- YouTube as a Popular Culture**

YouTube is playing an important role in defining current popular culture on a global scale. The streaming platform has changed the way people share and view videos throughout the world and has influenced culture in today's society. Kevin Allocca, YouTube's Head of Culture and Trends, shares three key insights into how YouTube has influenced popular culture that are Niche experiences, interactivity and individual expression (Allocca, 2017). With YouTube being a niche for mainstream popular culture, as Allocca mentions "rather than making content designed to appeal to the masses, creators on the web are able to pursue what they are personally passionate about and audiences who share those passions find them" (para. 2). That is, the YouTubers create content by transforming niche interests into large, shared experiences. From this perspective, YouTube offers a new way to produce culture and share it with others. The second key mentioned is interaction which explores creativity on YouTube; as Allocca explains "YouTube becomes a creative environment that is both interactive and collaborative, yet also distinctly personal" (para. 3). Lastly, according to Allocca YouTube has always been a place where small moments that is individual experiences can become culture. That is, YouTube can be viewed as a context where individuals share their experiences with an audience; these experiences or personal creativity evolve and turn into a culture.

#### **1.4.1- YouTube in Algeria**

Algeria is quite open to social media, all of which are Western, with no specific Algerian developed social media. Supporting more than 70 languages (Google Developers, 2021) including Arabic, French and English YouTube has helped immensely the proliferation of this media into the society as there is no language barrier to use it. The utilization patterns of the Algerian youth for social media are very much in line with global, regional and Western patterns

of usage. YouTube ranks at the second position in terms of the most visited sites in Algeria (Alexa, 2022). Overall, the Middle East and North Africa region is ranked second in the world with the number of daily YouTube video views with more than 310 million views (Cabral, 2015). Moreover, YouTube's success can be linked to a number of factors including the accessibility of the platform, the attractiveness of video and the easy engagement through comments which enable even those with limited literacy to understand the content.

In brief, it is apparent that YouTube is an open platform, which allows its users to access and share content without any time or place limitation. It is also a new space for cultural identity manifestations, which are embedded in the videos.

## **2- Cultural Identity**

### **2.1- Identity**

Identity can be defined as the manner in which people define themselves. It includes their race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. It is a person's frame of reference by which he perceives himself. A person's identity is created due to both personal factors as well as external factors. The influence of culture through the process of socialization powers this development. All people have different identities; these can be mainly categorized as personal identity and group identity. Buckingham (2008) states that "identity is something unique to each of us that we assume is more or less consistent over time ... Identity also implies a relationship with a broader collective or social .group of some kind"(p.1). In other words, a person's identity can be seen in different dimensions, namely cultural and personal identity.

Furthermore, identity nowadays is no longer geographically tied. As it is mentioned earlier, external factors such as exposure to foreign languages and cultures, which cannot be avoided today thanks to technology, have an impact on the creation of identity. YouTube is an

open platform that embraces a variety of languages and cultures across geographic boundaries. That is, YouTube provides a setting for the simultaneous circulation of media content across geographical borders and for the gathering of people from different lingua-cultural backgrounds (Lee, 2021). In other words, as one of many other digital technologies and online platforms that allow the instantaneous circulation of media content on a global scale, YouTube makes it possible for viewers, who are often geographically distant from each other to participate in the enjoyment of a variety of vlog content.

### **2.2- Culture**

Culture is the values, beliefs, thinking patterns and behavior that are learned and shared and that is characteristic of a group of people. Tylor (2016) defines culture as a “complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”(p. 1). That is, the term culture refers to the shared knowledge that members of a group community develop. In other words, the totality of a group’s thoughts, behaviors, and values that are socially transmitted as well as to members who consciously identify with the group (Jandt, 2018).

Culture is a defining feature of a person’s identity, contributing to how they see themselves and the groups with which they identify. It serves to give an identity to a group, ensures survival and enhances the feeling of belonging. UNESCO’s (2002) Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity provides the following definition of culture:

Culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. (p. 4)

This definition allows the interpretation of culture as consisting of distinctive patterns of human groups; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values.

Educators and scholars throughout the world are expressing great interest in the study of linguistic globalization since this relatively new phenomenon seems to hold a view that English is a mirror of cultural globalization, and is an accurate reflection of western culture. To further appreciate the topic, I will first explain the correlation between language and culture.

### **2.2.1- The Relation between Culture and Language**

Language is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties (Leveridge, 2008). That is, a particular language points to the culture of a particular social group, that is, the meanings of a particular language represent the culture of a particular social group. Interacting with a language entails doing so with the culture that serves as its reference point. Thus, they influence each other in a way that makes them inseparable.

Without language, culture would not be possible. Language reflects culture, and at the same time it is influenced by culture. In other words, culture and language cannot exist separately because they influence one another. In this regard, Brown (2007) asserts that “a language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture”(p. 171).

Learning a language, therefore, is not only learning the meaning, the grammar rules and the arrangement of words, but it is also learning the behavior of the society and its cultural customs (Elmes, 2013). That is, learning a language entails knowledge of its grammatical system which has to be complemented by culture-specific meanings.

### 2.2.2- Culture and Language in Algeria

The official languages of Algeria are Arabic and Tamazight or Berber. Though French has no official status, it is widely used by the government, culture, media and education, due to Algeria's colonial history while English is only taught in schools as a foreign language. Although Algerian Arabic and Berber are predominant in creating and maintaining interpersonal relationships in person and online, English is used by some Algerian content creators as the main language of communication. According to survey conducted by Euromonitor (2012), among the reasons for learning English include use of the Internet and interaction with people from around the world. That is, due to their growing exposure to social media, an increasing number of Algerians are showing an interest in the English language which is a lingua-franca for these internet users. Furthermore, the use of English for professional communication, prestige, status, and modernization fulfills the interpersonal function (Euromonitor, 2012).

### 2.2.3- The Use of English by Algerian YouTubers

The English language has affected nearly every speaking community in the world. Algeria is no exception as the prominence of the language in different domains has increased recently. English was not widely spoken by the general population in Algeria; only businesses and establishments related to the tourism sector had services available in Basic English (Sahraoui, 2020). Now Algerians use English in online interaction for international and national communication. There is a rise in online social activities in English in Algeria. We keep seeing numerous English video blogging on YouTube emerging everyday, whether they are concerned mainly with entertainment, fun or self-education for example *Brahimi's Vlog Girls Weekend in Chrea* and *Rajaa's vlog Yennayer with Algerians in Houston*. In fact, English YouTube videos by Algerians are rolling now, "The advent of such social media spaces as Facebook and YouTube

offers a platform for Algerian youth to express themselves in English and become users of this language in an unprecedented fashion”(Belmihoub, 2018, p. 7).

### **2.2.4- The Influence of the American Culture**

The effectiveness of English as a language of mass communication is essential to the acceptance of American culture. English is therefore a language exceptionally well suited to the demands and spread of American culture (Daghrir, 2013). In other words, the English language provides a communication channel between America and the world. The worldwide spread of English has tremendously paved the way for American culture to be understood.

The spread of a culture throughout the world is referred to as cultural globalization. The last is defined as “the emergence of a specific set of values that are largely shared around the planet”(Castells, 2009, p. 117). From this standpoint, it can be said that cultural globalization is a social process of transmitting and exchanging certain ideas and interests across the globe. In a way, one can agree that the spread of cultural globalization is associated with Westernization and Americanization (Giddens, 2002). In general, U.S. has globalized its popular culture and people from different continents who have never been to the U.S. have a correct preconceived perception of what American houses, streets, and schools look like and they try to dress, greet, react, and communicate in the same way.

### **2.3- Cultural Identity**

Cultural identity is the identity or feeling of belonging to a group. It is part of a person’s self-conception and self-perception and it is related to national ethnicity or any social group that has its own distinct culture as the following definition indicates, “Cultural identity refers to identification with, or sense of belonging to, a particular group based on various cultural categories, including nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, and religion.” (V. H. Chen, 2014, p.1).

And it is constructed and maintained through the process of sharing collective knowledge such as traditions, heritage, language, norms and customs created and developed throughout history, forming a continual entity within a general and unequivocal cultural continuum usually associated with one nation. As Boski et al. (2004) state “Cultural identity refers to the content of values as guiding principles, to meaningful symbols, and to life-styles that individuals share with others” (p.457). In simple words, identity is the identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has a shared system of symbols and meanings as well as norms for conduct.

When people identify with their culture, they often embrace traditions that have been passed down through the generations. Cultural identity links a person to their heritage and can help them identify with others who have the same traditions and basic belief systems. So, a person claims an identity within the context of a group that has a common ancestry and shares a similar culture, race, religion, or language. This identity includes self-identification, sense of belonging to a cultural group, social participation, and cultural practices.

### **2.4- Cultural Identity on YouTube**

Through communicative practices, a person’s cultural identity is constantly enacted, negotiated, maintained, and challenged. That is, cultural identity is constructed in the process of communicating or interacting with others. Thus, “Identities are not the fixed markers people assume them to be, but are instead dynamically constructed in the moment” (Oyserman et al., 2012, p. 2). Anyone who uses the internet is actively or passively creating an online identity whether they know it or not (Frunzaru & Garbasevschi, 2016). YouTube is by far the most widespread provider of online video streaming and thereby also a representative of the different aspects of how we can understand online identity formation.

Several studies looked at the YouTube setting specifically from this perspective to gain an understanding of how YouTubers develop their online identities. For example, D. Chen (2013) suggests specific stages for individuals to follow in creating a strong personal brand on YouTube. He utilizes acknowledged personal branding as a three-stage process: extract, express, and exude. First, the individuals are encouraged to look inside themselves to discover their key identifying attributes. They then construct a compelling “personal brand statement” around this attribute set. Finally, they create a strategy for making the personal brand visible to the outside world. That is, to communicate the personal brand by using those unique attributes and to implement the strategy to make their brand visible by using the right channels (D. Chen, 2013).

YouTube is an important space for identity-based communities. The aspect of sharing content reveals an online cultural existence that can be shared with other users; in addition, YouTube videos are embedded as modes of socialization and displays of cultural identity. YouTube’s content sharing and social networking capabilities create a “sense of belonging and identification with the community and, in return, loyalty to the platform.”(Chau, 2010, p. 69).

### **2.5- Participatory Culture**

Participatory culture is a term that is often used to talk about the apparent link between more accessible digital technologies and user created content (Jean & Green, 2009). YouTube works as a site because it supports the participatory culture of the larger Internet environment and its dominant mode of cultural collaboration. YouTube offers a participatory culture in which to develop and interact “by merging the technical aspects of youth as media creators with the social aspects of youth as social networkers” (Chau, 2010, p. 65).

This is reflective of a larger cultural shift where viewing media and consuming content has become a more social and active process:

In the middle of the last century the mass audience was largely conceived of as passive ...With the advent of digital technologies and new theories about the active character of the audience, we now see the viewer as interacting, participating, collaborating, and co-producing. (Strangelove, 2010, p. 117)

YouTube illustrates the increasingly complex relations among producers and viewers or consumers in the creation of content (Jean & Green, 2009). YouTube exhibits the five characteristics of participatory culture: low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing projects, informal mentorship, belief that individuals' contributions matter, and a sense of social connection (Chau, 2010). To join YouTube, there are low barriers, mainly an email is needed to create an account to be a YouTuber. YouTube does not require an account to use its service and view videos. Therefore, users can easily experiment with their identity artistically and in many ways. The participatory culture of YouTube enables users to create and share content easily. They can take a photograph or record a video on their mobile phones and upload it immediately to be viewed by others. Informal mentorship can be achieved easily within this culture as users provide content that can benefit others and people can exchange experiences.

### **3- Communication Theory of Identity**

A person's ability to communicate and perceive their identity through the exploration and sharing of selfhood has never been easier thanks to social media applications like YouTube that promote user-generated content. YouTube offers a new way to search for meaning and identity in the digital information age. Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) focuses on "mutual influences between identity and communication and conceptualizes identity as communication rather than seeing identity as merely a product of communication or vice versa"(Jung & Hecht,

2004, p. 266). This theory focuses on both the individual and social components of identity and posits that Individuals' identities are performed as social behavior through communication. Meaning that, people's identities are expressed through communication as social behavior, or interaction with others.

The communication theory of identity proposes, among other things, (a) that people maintain different, overlapping identities within one cultural group and that these may vary in salience, which means the importance of one identity in relation to others, and intensity or the extent to which one displays the identity. And (b) that there can be different ways of expressing or experiencing a single cultural identity (Wahl & Juliann, 2014). From the perspective of this theory, cultural groups are constantly changing because these groups are created through communication; and people create their group memberships and their identities through communication.

According to Hecht (2005), identities manifest in one or more of four frames: personal, relational, enacted and communal. These four frames of identity may be considered independently for analytic purposes but are not really separate from each other. One's personal identity is infused into one's enacted and relational identities, as well as communal identities, just as the communal identities are a part of personal, enacted, and relational identities. "CTI refers to this as the interpenetration of the frames. These relationships can also be conceptualized as juxtapositions or mutual interdependence" (Jung & Hecht, 2004, p. 267).

### **3.1- Personal Identity**

The first frame of CTI is personal identity, which is an individual's self-concept or self-image. It exists at the individual level of analysis as a characteristic of individuals. "Identity as a personal layer provides understanding of how individuals define themselves in general as well as

in particular situations” (Hecht, 2005, p. 263). Thus, the personal frame is an identity construction based on how one views himself or her. “Personal identities are a person's traits, characteristics and attributes, goals and values, and ways of being” (Oyserman et al 2012, p. 33) Personal identity can simply be understood as the sense of self that an individual develops as he/she grows older and identifies him/her as different from others in the society. In other words, personal identity refers to the individual's interpretation of his or her cultural identity and is created through differences in characteristics when compared with others. This is not something that is static but something that is ever changing as the individual experiences new dimensions in life.

### **3.2- Enacted Identity**

The second frame of CTI is enacted identity, which is an individuals' performed or expressed identity (Jung & Hecht, 2004). That is, the enacted identity also called the enactment frame “reflects the communicative behavior symbolic of one's identity (e.g., assertive vs. introverted)” (Wahl & Juliann, 2014, p. 79). In other words, people enact their identities and exchange the enacted identities in communication. Jung and Hecht (2004) argue that enactments are not mere expressions of identity but are considered identity itself “In CTI, some aspects of communication are identity itself, and, at the same time, identity influences communication” (p. 266).

Enacted identity is the active voice of identity as it is acted out as social behavior through communication. That is, identity is seen as a performance, as expressed. “Thus, communication is the locus of identity in the enactment layer.”(Hecht, 2005, p. 263). In other words, enacted identity is how a person communicates their identity either verbally through language or non-verbally through behaviors. Identities emerge from what individuals say and do and how they act

in certain situations. Behaviors not only allow people and communities to express an identity, but the behaviors themselves can define identity.

### **3.3- Relational Identity**

The third frame of CTI is the relational frame of identity, which is the nature of an individual's role in a relationship. According to Wahl and Juliann (2014) "The relational frame represents the identity constructed through interaction with others" (p. 79). The relationships individuals have with bosses, friends, and teammates all help to construct identity and these relationships have identities themselves. Thus, identity is a mutual product, jointly negotiated and mutually formed in relationships through communication (Hecht, 2005).

Relational identity has four levels. First, an individual develops and shapes their identity partially by internalizing how others view him/her. This level of relational identity is referred to as *ascribed relational identity*. Individuals shape how to enact his or her identity partially in response to his or her interaction partners. Social roles are particularly important in shaping this aspect of identity. Second, an individual identifies him/herself through his/her relationships with others, such as someone's spouse and someone's friend (e.g. I am a husband, accountant, and friend). Third, identities exist in relationship to other identities. Since people have multiple identities they exist in relation to each other. One can be both a parent and lawyer; a teacher and follower; a lover and member of hate group. Fourth, a relationship itself can be a unit of identity. A couple as a unit, for instance, can establish a relational identity.(Jung & Hecht, 2004).

### **3.4- Communal Identity**

The fourth and final frame of CTI, the communal frame of identity, is how a group of individuals or collectivities define their identities (Jung & Hecht, 2004). Additionally, the communal frame emerges and manifests at the group level that is, it is "reflected in identity

shared with members of the group to which one belongs” (Wahl & Juliann, 2014, p. 97). Members of a group establish common group identities on the basis of common characteristics and history and these characteristics function to form the contents of the group’s identities (Hecht, 2005). The communal frame is powerful, because it helps set behavioral expectations for people in the group and outside the group. Communal identity is identified by observing a group’s communal activities, rituals, rites and holiday celebrations. Group members use cultural membership to maintain a sense of community with one another.

### **3.5- Changing Aspects of Cultural Identity**

As previously mentioned, cultural identities are not fixed but rather are negotiated, co-created, and reinforced in communication with others (Oyserman et al., 2012). That is, cultural identities may change due to several types of factors that influence a group of people. Globalization is part of the process that is reforming people’s identities.

Individuals undergo cultural identity transformation in order to achieve understanding, harmony and balance within themselves and their environment, and in their connection with others. Cultural groups reflect, re-create, unify, and maintain their cultural identities. Forming a cultural identity involves making choices about the cultures one identifies with and deciding to join the cultural community to which one belongs. In other words, constructing cultural identity entails making decisions about the culture to which an individual belongs, including the decision to identify and define oneself as a member of a cultural community. That is, cultural identities can be adapted and it is possible for members of dominant or majority culture to adopt elements of minority culture like dressing or music.

### Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the main theoretical concepts of my research. In its three sections, it has provided a definition of YouTube, accompanied with the historical background of its emergence. The same section has reviewed the importance of the YouTube platform as a means for cultural expression and production, accompanied by its history in Algeria. The second section of this chapter has introduced the basic concept of this research which is Cultural Identity. It has also reviewed the influence of both the American culture and the English language on the Algerian English speaking YouTubers. Finally, the Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) and its four frames have been discussed as the theoretical framework to be used in order to analyze and discuss the research findings presented in the last section. Now, we move to the next chapter of the dissertation, entitled “Research Design”, in which more information about the methodological part of the research is provided.

*Chapter Two*  
*Research Design*

### **Introduction**

This chapter is methodological in nature. It deals with the research design of the current study which is the influence of American Culture on the Algerian English speaking YouTubers' cultural identity when making videos. This chapter is composed of three main sections. It starts with a detailed description of the context of investigation. The second section provides a description of both the corpus and the procedures of data collection. This consists of a selection of 30 videos from the YouTube channel of the 13 Algerian YouTubers, in addition to an online interview with four YouTubers whose videos were selected. The third section, for its part, explains the procedures of data analysis, mainly the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) taking into account Hecht's (2005) Communication Theory of Identity.

#### **1- Description of the Research Area and Context of Investigation**

The purpose of this study is to look at the influence of the American culture on the Algerian English speaking YouTubers' cultural identity, and to shed light on Algerian YouTubers' use of English to communicate their channel's content. This is evident in the English videos produced by Algerian YouTubers, as well as the manifestation of English in the YouTube videos' title section, where the YouTubers write titles for their videos using the English language. As a result, this group of Algerian YouTubers who express their channel's material in English is the target demographic of this study, and it is conducted using the virtual context of the YouTube platform.

#### **2- Procedures of Data Collection**

The initial step of the practical part of this research is to gather sufficient data to answer the research questions. The data of the present research are obtained by means of a random selection of 30 videos taken from the YouTube channels of 13 Algerian YouTubers. The selected

videos cover the following categories: vlogs and trending videos in Algeria. The following section explains the approach to this data collection.

The Algerian YouTube channels were gathered by consulting different other sources such as Facebook, Instagram along with YouTube, some of them were serendipitously discovered. The selection of videos was finalized on June 10, 2022 and resulted in a collection of 30 videos.

## 2.1- Description of the Corpus

As aforementioned, a corpus of 30 videos is gathered to achieve the goal of determining the influence of the American Culture on the Algerian YouTubers' cultural identity when designing videos. The selected videos' length ranges between 2:07 and 21:33 minutes. The videos' links and the titles, as well as the names of the YouTube channels are provided in the following Table.

Channel names	Videos' Titles and Dates of Release	Videos' links ( URL)
Nour Brahimi	1- Sleeper Train in Algeria From Algiers to Annaba (April 2,2022) 2- I stayed 24 HOURS in Algeria's Worst Hotel (March6,2022) 3- Algeria   Oran City Tour 2021 اكتشف وهران مدينة جزائرية (September 22,2021)	<a href="https://youtu.be/6mSHdpsevaQ">https://youtu.be/6mSHdpsevaQ</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/C5WpTEmt1h8">https://youtu.be/C5WpTEmt1h8</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/k7Yqc6GtyRA">https://youtu.be/k7Yqc6GtyRA</a>
Selma Hamadou	1- Wedding Shopping (September 5,2021) 2- A Beach Day Vlog (August 9, 2022) يوم في البحر 3- تحدثت اللغة الإنجليزية ليوم كامل! في الشارع (September 6, 2019)	<a href="https://youtu.be/hx18ZfXn2kQ">https://youtu.be/hx18ZfXn2kQ</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/IOHcJVxdnK0">https://youtu.be/IOHcJVxdnK0</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/F6fWdUK0RIM">https://youtu.be/F6fWdUK0RIM</a>
Beauty by Raja	1- The Algerian / American tag (March 3,2018) 2- Yennayer with Algerians in Houston and New York Vlog (February 8,2019) 3- When ALGERIAN Girls Meet in New York and Jimmy Fallon Show (April 1, 2019)	<a href="https://youtu.be/s-UX6-lgrZo">https://youtu.be/s-UX6-lgrZo</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/MEAbsJq5HJI">https://youtu.be/MEAbsJq5HJI</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/bgdaJyiJuyw">https://youtu.be/bgdaJyiJuyw</a>
African Viking	1- Teaching my friend Arabic; Algerian dialect (September 21,2020) 2- Throwing A Surprise Birthday Party For My	<a href="https://youtu.be/gyLHCY7L60o">https://youtu.be/gyLHCY7L60o</a>

	Little Sister (January 30, 2020)	<a href="https://youtu.be/EXhAM6VzSk0">https://youtu.be/EXhAM6VzSk0</a>
Majid Hadjmoussa	1- Skikda Vlog (July 30, 2021) 2- English Winter Camp in Guerrara (March26,2021) 3- Languages Challenge (September 11,2020)	<a href="https://youtu.be/sbMUAzrJZF4">https://youtu.be/sbMUAzrJZF4</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/Lk4Lu0RDrBk">https://youtu.be/Lk4Lu0RDrBk</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/70V1bQb3bZM">https://youtu.be/70V1bQb3bZM</a>
Sifeddine Boumelit	1- DIDN'T EXPECT THIS!   Batna Snowday Vlog (March15,2019) 2- Street Art    Drawing Portrait at Street (September 14,2020) 3- Ride a plane for the first time (March29,2020)	<a href="https://youtu.be/IdNyuX3ktOI">https://youtu.be/IdNyuX3ktOI</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/KT23mn78OB8">https://youtu.be/KT23mn78OB8</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/uOm5iU1BqE8">https://youtu.be/uOm5iU1BqE8</a>
Karim Chahiani	1- LIVE FOR THE STORY   Van life Algeria (June 5, 2020) 2- Paragliding in Algeria   (November30, 2020) تجربة الطيران الشراعي في الجزائر	<a href="https://youtu.be/J4KR1R7nQWs">https://youtu.be/J4KR1R7nQWs</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/OnRu4OpI39Q">https://youtu.be/OnRu4OpI39Q</a>
Amine Allaf	1- تحدي!!!! اللغة الجزائرية و الانجليزية - Arabic vs. English challenge (January 30,2020) 2- Exploring a Ghost Town!(I'm not coming back here again) (April 24, 2020)	<a href="https://youtu.be/uMMRFTTinGQ">https://youtu.be/uMMRFTTinGQ</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/KWOne4MSHhM">https://youtu.be/KWOne4MSHhM</a>
Lokman DZ	1- Finally My first video in English –Walking and talking to people In Pacific Beach San Diego (September 18, 2021) 2- أمريكيون يكتبون أسمائهم بالعربية لأول مرة (April 22, 2022)	<a href="https://youtu.be/claiYv5xMMM">https://youtu.be/claiYv5xMMM</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/zpIN8RiUnWo">https://youtu.be/zpIN8RiUnWo</a>
Celia Ait	1- Happy moment in a happy place /Asif/ Tizi ousou (January 22, 2021) 2- We dared entering abandoned train tunnels 3- The hidden place of BLIDA(January20,2021)	<a href="https://youtu.be/WaVxuod5IPY">https://youtu.be/WaVxuod5IPY</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/CuBuGJPAo5E">https://youtu.be/CuBuGJPAo5E</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/nmLfXTxiXCc">https://youtu.be/nmLfXTxiXCc</a>
Samysamos	1- My Sister And I (April 1, 2021) 2- WE GOT ROBBED!! (April 19, 2021)	<a href="https://youtu.be/22Uwix3c2xg">https://youtu.be/22Uwix3c2xg</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/PKnyjx6SAQ">https://youtu.be/PKnyjx6SAQ</a>
Khaled vlogs	1- That's Gonna Be a Challenge! (September 6, 2021)	<a href="https://youtu.be/TonCIDfhY8Q">https://youtu.be/TonCIDfhY8Q</a>
Sam Shou	1- كاياك" أمريكي لكن بعقلية جزائرية" (July 25, 2020)	<a href="https://youtu.be/PjttkG0TNNM">https://youtu.be/PjttkG0TNNM</a>

Table (1): The Videos' Titles and Dates of Release, Links and YouTube Channels' Names

### 2.2- The Semi-Structured Interview with the Algerian YouTubers

To support the data obtained from the video analysis, an online semi-structured interview was conducted with 4 Algerian YouTubers whose videos were chosen to be analyzed; while the 26 other YouTubers did not answer the online interview request sent to their emails and Instagram accounts. The interviews were conducted between June 8, 2022 and June 14, 2022, and varied in length between approximately 15 and 30 minutes.

The semi-structured interview is defined as a method of research commonly used in social sciences (Ruslin et al., 2022). It usually involves a list of specific questions to be covered, often referred to as an interview guide. The questions in a semi-structured interview are accompanied by follow-up questions. The questions that “are not included in the guide may be asked as the interviewer picks up on things said by interviewees”(Bryman, 2012, p. 471).

The online semi-structured interviews conducted are divided into an introduction, along with three main sections. The interview begins with the part entitled *personal identity*; it contains questions related to the Algerian YouTubers’ personal identity and YouTube features that allow them to express it. The questions of the second section entitled *Relational identity* turn around the Algerian YouTubers’ thoughts about American culture and American YouTubers. The last section entitled *Perceptions about the place of American culture and English language among Algerian YouTubers*. The questions in this section, as the title suggests, are related to Algerian YouTubers’ perceptions of the position of English and American culture in Algeria.

### 3- Procedures of Data Analysis

The most appropriate method for interpreting the data of the corpus is considered to be Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA).The content of the videos is analyzed according to QCA to

achieve the goal of the present research, which consists of investigating the influence of the American culture on Algerian YouTubers.

### 3.1. Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

Qualitative content analysis is one of numerous research methods used to analyze data; it has been used fruitfully in a wide variety of research applications. It is defined as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). That is, QCA does not only extract objective content from texts to examine meanings, themes and patterns that may be manifested in a given text but also, enables researchers to gain a subjective but scientific understanding of social reality.

Moreover, Patton (2002) refers to QCA as “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings”(p.453). This definition implies that QCA embraces all Qualitative content /data sources including images, videos, audio, graphics, and symbols. According to Mayring (2014) QCA is a methodological and empirical approach of analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytic rules, without rash quantification. This means that QCA emphasizes an integrated view of speech/texts and their specific contexts.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) discussed three approaches to qualitative content analysis, which are conventional, summative and directed. However, this research relies mainly on **the directed approach** in which initial coding starts with a theory or relevant research findings. Then, during data analysis, the researchers immerse themselves in the data and allow themes to emerge from it. Content analysis using a directed approach is guided by a more structured process than in a conventional approach using existing theory or prior research; researchers begin

by identifying key concepts or variables as initial coding categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Therefore, Hecht's (2005) Communication Theory of Identity is applied in order to analyze the discussion of the data.

### **4- Limitations of the Study**

It is worth mentioning that the present research has faced certain limitations during the process of collecting data. The first limitation that can be referred to is my reliance on 30 videos as the main corpus. In addition to that, twenty-six of the YouTubers whose videos were selected to be analyzed did not agree to have an online interview. This may affect the reliability of the research as we cannot generalize the findings across all the Algerian YouTubers.

Second, qualitative research itself can be criticized for possible researcher subjectivity with regards to data analysis and interpretation. Data collection is also often time-consuming and may be effortful and laborious. However, in the case of the current research, the advantages of a qualitative approach far outweigh the disadvantages, as it allows us to explore the experiences and thoughts of the participants.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, the research design and research method of this study have been described. This part presented a detailed description of the data collected which consists of 30 videos uploaded by Algerian YouTubers, in addition to an online interview with four YouTubers whose videos were selected. Then, it described the data analysis procedure used. For this research, the Qualitative Content Analysis is adopted for the interpretation of the data. The results obtained will help to investigate the influence of the American Culture on the Algerian YouTubers' cultural identity when designing videos. Finally, the chapter addressed the limitations of the research. The analysis of the collected data will be presented in the next section.

## ***Chapter Three***

### ***Presentation of the Findings***

### Introduction

This chapter is empirical in nature. It is divided into two main sections. The first section deals with the presentation of the findings obtained from QCA of Algerian YouTubers' videos. The second section of this chapter is devoted to the presentation of the findings collected from the interview conducted with the Algerian YouTubers. The aim of this chapter is first, to highlight the influence of the American Culture and the English language on the Algerian YouTubers' cultural identity when designing videos. The findings are presented in the form of tables after the analysis of the selected corpus, relying on Hecht's (2005) Communication Theory of Identity.

### 1- Presentation of the Findings Obtained from the Videos' Analysis

#### 1.1- Enacted Identity

The YouTube Vlog is identified as a first-person representation. In other words, it is where the YouTubers communicate their cultural identity to others verbally through what is said, the language used and how it is used, or non-verbally, through their costumes, music, architecture, ceremonies ,or many other artistic or cultural expressions included in the UNESCO (2002) and Taylor's (2016) definition of culture. Thus, the manifestation of these cultural influences is analyzed in each video.

The tables below are created for each YouTube channel, in order to determine the various cultural features portrayed in Algerian YouTubers' videos and to detect the presence of the American culture in their videos. The symbol used when the cultural aspect presented in the video is American is **V** whereas the symbol **✓** is used when the cultural aspect presented is Algerian. Finally, the symbol **Ø** means the cultural aspect is not present in the video.

1.1.1- Nour Brahimi’s Videos

Cultural Aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
Sleeper Train in Algeria From Algiers to Annaba	∅	V	∅	∅	V ✓	V
I Stayed 24 Hours in Algeria’s Worst Hotel	∅	V	∅	∅	V ✓	∅
Algeria  Oran City Tour 2021	✓	✓	∅	✓	V	✓

Table(2): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Nour Brahimi’s Videos

The table above depicts both American and Algerian cultural aspects that are manifested in Nour Brahimi’s videos. The three videos start with the same YouTube introduction, where Brahimi introduces herself in English as a world traveler using a background picture of a Church that represents the Christian religion and which is also a part of the American culture. The first video is a vlog in which the YouTuber travels from Algiers to Annaba by a sleeper train. In this video, the YouTuber uses two American cultural aspects; the first one is an English song that she uses as background music, in addition to the fast food which is most popular in America. Brahimi speaks in English throughout the video, but she uses the Algerian Arabic dialect to advise the women watching the video not to leave the train station at night.

The second video entitled “*I stayed 24 hours in Algeria’s Worst Hotel*” is a best or worst travel trend where YouTubers visit either the high or least rated places and give their opinion about it. In this video, the YouTuber spends a night in a hotel in Algiers which is the least rated on Google and shares the experience with her audience. The YouTuber uses as background music the English song “This is the Moment” by Kadant. This song is a pop rock which is a music

genre of American origin. Concerning the language used in this video, Brahimi addresses her audience in English, but speaks to the hotel staff in the Algerian Arabic dialect.

The last video is a vlog where Brahimi has visited Oran city. In this video, she introduces Algerian traditional costumes such as “jebba”, music and the most famous street food “Karantika”. The YouTuber devotes a significant part of the video capturing and giving information about Oran’s historical buildings. In simple words, she introduces the area’s architecture such as the library which was originally a church, the national theater, Basha mosque, Bey’s palace and Santa Cruz. All these can be seen as symbols of the diversity of the Algerian culture. Regarding the language used in this video, the YouTuber addressed her audience only in English without using any Algerian national languages or dialects.

**1.1.2- Selma Hamadou’s Videos**

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
Weddings Shopping	✓	∅	∅	∅	V ✓	∅
A Beach Day Vlog	∅	∅	∅	✓	V ✓	V
تحدثت الانجليزية ليوم كامل في الشارع	∅	V	∅	V	V	∅

**Table (3): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Selma Hamadou's Videos**

The manifestation of Algerian and American cultural aspects in Selma Hamadou’s videos are displayed in the above table. The first video is a vlog where the YouTuber shops for her wedding dresses; she makes a tour in a store to show her audience several Algerian traditional clothes; possibly her aim is to introduce Algerian traditional clothes such as “Karakou” and “Kaftan” and she even tries them on to show how they look like. In this video, the YouTuber

uses English when she addresses her audience, but she talks with her mother and shop workers in Arabic.

The second video is a vlog, as it is depicted in its title “*Beach Day Vlog*”. In this video, the YouTuber spends her day at the beach with her family in Oran and shares the experience with her audience. After analyzing the video, two apparent symbols can be identified one of the American culture and the other of the Algerian culture. The first is the appearance of a well-known English-speaking cartoon called “Shaun the Sheep” which Hamadou watched in her car trip. The second is the architecture in Oran, as she films all the buildings in the city from her car including a mosque and the tram station. Concerning language, the whole vlog is in English, Hamadou speaks to both her audience and family who are part of the vlog in English, but Arabic subtitles are displayed at the bottom of the video all the time.

The last video is a language trend in which the YouTubers from non-English speaking countries start a challenge of speaking only English outside without translation as they go by their daily lives. Hamadou, in this video, spends a day in Algiers speaking to people only in English and she visits a coffee shop and tells the waiter her order in English, even though they do not speak the language, which can be viewed the first symbol of the American culture. The second is her choice of the coffee shop which is different from the ones popular in Algeria because it is a modern one with a western style. As for the background music, the YouTuber plays a song entitled “I’m Just Good” by Johny Grims, which is an R&B, a genre of popular music of an American origin.

1.1.3- Beauty by Raja’s Videos

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
The Algerian/ American Tag	∅	∅	∅	∅	V	V
Yennayer with Algerians in Houston and New York vlog	✓	✓ V	✓	V	V ✓	V ✓
When Algerian Girls Meet in New York and Jimmy Fallon Show	∅	V	∅	V	V	V

Table (4): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Beauty by Raja's Videos

According to the findings displayed in the table above, the cultural aspect displayed in the first video is a symbol of the American culture. In this video, the YouTuber answers questions asked by her followers in her Instagram account so that they can learn more about her. The YouTuber, in this video, uses English as the main language of communication to respond to them. One of the questions was about her favorite quote, she answers this by pointing a famous saying in English, “*Do what you love and love what you do*”. This quote is originally attributed to an American writer Ray Bradbury.

The second vlog entitled “*Yennayer with Algerians in Houston and New York Vlog*” includes all the cultural aspects listed in the table above. Although the video, which is about the celebration of the Amazigh New Year “Yennayer” is recorded by the YouTuber in the US; many Algerian cultural aspects are present including the Algerian traditional clothes, music in both Algerian national languages Berber and Arabic. Indeed, the YouTuber starts her vlog speaking in the Algerian dialect to explain what she is doing in this vlog then continues the rest of the video

using the English language. This video contains two American cultural aspects; the first is the background music which is in English, while the second is a brief presentation of New York City’s architecture and the most recognizable American monument, the Statue of Liberty.

In similar vein, the last video is another travel vlog filmed in New York City, The YouTuber records footage of many city locations including Times Square. She starts the video by sharing her breakfast with the audience, which can be considered as a symbol of the American culture, because the breakfast consists of a well-known sweet in American called “Waffle” and some fruits which is totally different from the Algerian breakfast. In addition, the only language used by the YouTuber in this video is English.

**1.1.4- African Viking’s Videos**

<b>Cultural aspects</b>	<b>Appearances Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Festivals And ceremonies</b>	<b>Architecture</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Cultural artifact</b>
<b>Teaching my Friend Arabic; Algerian Dialect</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	V✓	✓V
<b>Throwing a Surprise Birthday Party for my Sister</b>	∅	V	V ✓	∅	V	V

**Table (5): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects in African Viking's Videos**

The cultural items that appear in the first video are symbols, as can be seen from the findings listed in the table above. In this video, the YouTuber uses English to teach the Algerian dialect, popularly known as "Derdja". She refers to some Algerian dialect terms and phrases such as “Dzair” which is how Algerians refer to Algeria, the names of several vegetables and fruits, and how to ask basic questions. That is, the YouTuber sheds light on several facts of Algerian culture. It is also significant to mention that the YouTuber uses some American slang terms to

seem more like a native speaker and uses the language naturally as it would be used in the country's culture for example the slang term for friendship “Bro” can be heard in the video.

As for “*Throwing a Surprise Birthday Party for my Sister*”, it is a vlog where the YouTuber films the preparations for her sister’s birthday party. The vlog shows some of the American cultural artifacts, including sweets such as pop candy, Marshmallows and regular birthday cake, in addition to the English song, “Never Get Old” by Steve Hartz, played during the party which serves as a symbol for American parties. As it is music of dance genre. Additionally, African Viking in this vlog does not speak in any language except for English.

**1.1.5- Majid Hadjmoussa’s Videos**

<b>Cultural aspects</b>	<b>Appearances Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Festivals And ceremonies</b>	<b>Architecture</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Cultural artifact</b>
<b>Skikda Vlog</b>	∅	V	∅	✓	V	✓
<b>English Winter Camp in Guerrara</b>	✓	V	∅	∅	V	✓
<b>Language Challenge</b>	V	∅	∅	∅	V	V

**Table (6): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Majid Hadjmoussa's Videos**

The first video entitled “*Skikda Vlog*” depicts various Algerian cultural artifacts including architecture and symbols such as Algerian food and drinks; as well as two American cultural aspects which are the American artist Lauren Duski’s song “Poured” played as a background music in addition to the English language used by the YouTuber as the language of communication. In fact, this video is a vlog filmed in a beach in Skikda to show the natural landscapes mainly the mountains around the beach, the architecture in the area and the port. The main objective of the YouTuber, in this video, may be to promote tourism in Algeria and to

introduce the Algerian culture to foreign tourists visiting the country, as well as, to give them tips on where to find affordable groceries in the area. Food is another symbol filmed in the vlog; the YouTuber and his friends prepare a simple Summer Recipe for a Beachside Gathering that is popular in Algeria, this dish is called “chakchouka” and is easy to make.

The second video is a vlog where the YouTuber documents his journey in an English-only camp. After analyzing it, it can be concluded that most aspects included are related to the Algerian culture, with the exception of the fact that, in this vlog, the YouTuber and his friends are teaching the English language to kids, which can be related to the American culture. The first Algerian cultural aspect, in the video, is clothing. The viewers can tell that all the kids in the camp wear the same white cap, which is a part of the traditional Sahara clothing and it is called “tachachit” which symbolizes both the Islamic and the Algerian Sahara. Added to that, the YouTuber exposes his audience to other traditions of the Sahara such as drinking tea which was served with a sweet called “baklawa”; the Sahara has a unique culture where drinking tea is a part of everyday life and is significant in social gatherings because it represents hospitality.

As for the last video, it is a language trend where the YouTuber and his two friends challenge each other to say tongue twisters and spell words correctly in three languages, which are English, French and Spanish. All the cultural aspects in this video are American; the video starts with an advertisement of men clothes which includes clothing brands of American origin such as Calvin Klein and Nike. The YouTuber appears in the video wearing a t-shirt of the last brand and his friend with another t-shirt on which the sentence “we are the future” is printed. The last symbol in the video is the American flag, when the YouTuber presented himself as the one who would be speaking in English, the American flag appeared.

1.1.6- Sifeddine Boumelit's Videos

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
Didn't Expect this! Batna Snowday Vlog	∅	∅	∅	∅	V	✓
Street Art   Drawing Portrait at Street	✓	∅	∅	✓	V✓	✓
Ride a Plane for the First Time	∅	V	∅	∅	V	V

**Table (7): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Sifeddine Boumelit's Videos**

The first video, in the table above, is a vlog in which the YouTuber goes on a trip to Batna with his friends to take pictures in the snow. As can be noted from the table above, this video lacks most of the cultural aspects except for language and one cultural artifact. The YouTuber, throughout the vlog, talks to his audience in English which can be related to the American culture. As for the symbolic thing in this video, it is related to the YouTuber's intention to show the beauty of the natural site he visited.

The YouTuber, in the second video, spends a day with an artist who draws portraits for people in the street. This video includes different cultural artifacts related to the Algerian cultural identity. The first is the clothing; a woman appears in the video wearing an Algerian typical traditional dress called "Hayek" which is usually worn especially by older women. Architecture has a major part in the video, as the YouTuber films the different buildings of Algiers which include a varied history influenced by both internal and external forces such as the Turkish Empire and the French colonization. The last symbol in the video is religious; the YouTuber captures the mosque of Algiers which symbolizes Islam. The main American cultural aspect, in

this video, is the language, as the YouTuber speaks to both his audience and his friends in English, and even if his friends are not fluent, they still try to communicate in English.

The YouTuber, in the last video, films his trip from Batna to Algiers to do an art work there. American cultural features are the most dominant in this video; Boumelit plays an English song “La La Life” in the car ride to his work as a background music, which shows his influence by the American songs. And he uses English as the main language of communication in the whole vlog. Concerning the symbol detected in the table above, it is related to food, the YouTuber eats a chocolate pizza which is a well-known dessert made in American restaurants.

**1.1.7- Karim Chahiani’s Videos**

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
Live for the Story  Vanlife Algeria	∅	V	∅	∅	V	∅
Paragliding in Algeria تجربة الطيران الشراعي	∅	V	∅	∅	V✓	∅

**Table (8): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Karim Chahiani’ Videos**

The YouTuber uploading these videos is an Algerian travel blogger living in a van, so the videos on his YouTube channel are all about travelling. After analyzing the videos in the table above, only one Algerian cultural symbol can be seen, which is the YouTuber’s promotion of the Algerian natural landscapes by focusing his camera on mountains, rivers, deserts and other natural areas in Algeria. And he used Michael Shynes’ English song “Born Again” which is of a dance genre as background music to add excitement to vlogs. Furthermore, the YouTuber uses English in both videos; the only difference between the two is the lack of Arabic subtitles in the first vlog, which the YouTuber has used in the second video.

1.1.8- Amine Allaf’s Videos

Cultural aspects Video title	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
Arabic vs. English Challenge	∅	∅	∅	∅	V✓	✓
Exploring a Ghost Town! I am not Coming Back Here Again	∅	V	∅	∅	V	V

Table (9): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Amine Allaf’s Videos

The results of the analysis of a video challenge between the Algerian YouTuber Amine Allaf and his Canadian friend are depicted in table (8). The Algerian YouTuber introduces some Algerian Arabic dialect words to his Canadian friend, who only speaks English, and attempts to pronounce these words correctly. Among these words “bouzelouf”, “dowara”, “baklawa” and “zelabia” all of which refer to Algerian food and sweets. The YouTuber also mentions the name of a well-known Algerian singer Rai singer “Cheb Jelti”, who represents the Algerian popular Rai music which is a type of Algerian folk music.

The video entitled “*Exploring a Ghost Town! I am not Coming Back Here Again*” follows a trend of vlogging in abandoned locations. The YouTuber travels to Smuts in Saskatchewan, Canada, which is an abandoned city known as a ghost town. This video does not include any Algerian cultural aspects whereas it includes one religious symbol that can be related to the American culture. The last is a church which symbolizes Christianity as the YouTuber captures a Greek Catholic church which was built in the 1926. In addition to a country music, which is a style of the American popular music that originated in rural areas, played the American singer Lauren Duski. Moreover, the YouTuber communicates with his audience and provides them with

information about this ghost town using the English language, which is an important aspect of the American culture.

**1.1.9- Samy Samos’ Videos**

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
<b>My sister and I</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	V	V
<b>We got Robbed</b>	✓	∅	∅	∅	V	V

**Table (10): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Samy Samos’ videos**

The video entitled “*My Sister and I*” is a personal vlog, where the YouTuber and his sister talk about their sibling relationship to let the viewers know a little more about them. The video depicts a symbol from the target culture. The YouTuber plays a brief excerpt from an American film, DJANGO UNCHAINED when his sister claims that he impersonates the American actor and producer Leonardo Di Caprio. Adding to that, the conversation between Samy and his sister in this vlog is in English.

As for the second video, it is a funny vlog in which the YouTuber shares, with his audience, a short movie that he created with his friends then he plays behind the camera scenes when he was having fun with his friends. As it can be noted from Table (10), this video includes a costume related to the Algerian culture and the last is a Hijab which symbolizes the Islamic religion. The video includes also one American cultural aspect, which is the English language used by the YouTuber and his friends.

1.1.10- Lokman DZ's Videos

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
Finally my First Video in English- Walking and Talking to People in Pacific Beach San Diego	V	V	Ø	V	V	V
أمريكيون يكتبون أسماءهم بالعربية لأول مرة	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	V✓	✓

Table (11): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Lokman DZ's Videos

The first video entitled “*Finally my First Video in English- walking and Talking to People in Pacific Beach San Diego*” is an exploratory vlog in which the YouTuber documents his tour in San Diego city, USA. The vlog portrays many American cultural aspects. For example, the dress code features the Red Joker suit, which is a replica of the suit that the *Joker* wore in the American film “JOKER 2019”. The YouTuber also films a group of musicians performing on the street of San Diego that stand as a symbol of American cultural heritage. English is the main language of communication that the YouTuber uses, which reflects another American cultural aspect.

As for the second video “أمريكيون يكتبون أسماءهم بالعربية لأول مرة”, it is a vlog where the YouTuber goes for a walk in Washington Square Park and teaches Americans how to write their names in Arabic. Many of the cultural artifacts proposed in the table above are missing from the video and only one aspect of the Algerian culture exists which is the Arabic language. During each encounter with Americans, the YouTuber explains that the Arabic language contains more than twelve million words while English has around six hundred thousand words.

1.1.11- Khaled Vlogs' Video

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
That's Gonna be a Challenge	∅	∅	∅	V	V	V ✓

Table (12): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Khaled Vlogs' Video

“That’s Gonna be a Challenge” is a language trend video, in which the YouTuber challenges himself to speak only in English with Americans without the help of anyone. As it can be noted from the table above, in addition to using English, which is part of American culture, Architecture can be seen in the video, as the YouTuber’s encounter with people took place on the streets of Nevada City. However, the YouTuber did not deny his mother tongue, so he provided Arabic subtitles for his Algerian followers who are not fluent in English.

1.1.12- Sam Shou’s video

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
كايك أمريكي لكن بعقلية جزائرية	∅	V	∅	V	✓ V	✓

Table (13): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Sam Shou's Video

From the findings displayed in the table above, Sam Shou’s video portrays both Algerian and American cultural symbols. In this vlog, the Algerian YouTuber went to Munising, Michigan US to kayaking or canoeing and used a Pop English song called “Alive” as a background music whenever he was not speaking to his audience, which can be considered as the first American cultural aspect. The vlogger gives a great importance to the city’s architecture and he films a

Freemason building and wooden houses of the city. Wood is one of the main features for housing construction in the United States. The only Algerian cultural symbol included in the video is the language as the YouTuber occasionally addresses his viewers in Algerian dialect, and uses Arabic subtitles when he says English words that he believes his audience will not to understand.

**1.1.13- Celia Ait’s Videos**

Cultural aspects	Appearances Costumes	Music	Festivals And ceremonies	Architecture	Language	Cultural artifact
<b>Happy Moments in a Happy Place</b>	∅	✓	∅	∅	✓	✓
<b>We Dared Entering Abandoned Train Tunnel</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	✓	✓
<b>The Hidden Place ofBlida</b>	∅	∅	∅	✓	✓	✓

**Table(14): Algerian and American Cultural Aspects Manifested in Celia Ait's Videos**

The first video *“Happy Moments in a Happy Place”* is a travel vlog where the YouTuber shares her trip to Tizi-Ouzou, the vlog is primary shot near a river. As it is displayed in the table above, the video refers to some Algerian cultural features and only one American cultural aspect which is the English language that the YouTuber uses throughout the vlog. The latter include the Berber music which she has used while showing the mountains in her way to the river, and it also makes reference to the Algerian traditional dish named “Seksu” in the Tamazight language, which is specific to that region.

As for the second video *“We Dared Entering Abandoned Train Tunnel”*, it is a trend of vlogging in abandoned places. The YouTuber, in this video, explores an abandoned train tunnel in Blida which was built in the 1830s by the Ottomans. The opening scene of the video shows an American vlogger exploring a train tunnel close to Odell Lake in Oregon, United States. In addition to that, Celia Ait describes the entrance of the tunnel as *“the one from Disney movies”*

which is a well-known American animation company. These can be considered as being Symbols of the American YouTubers and movies' influence. In the same video, the YouTuber has used a time card from an American cartoon called Sponge Bob Square Pants, which is used to express time passing.

After analyzing the last video which is a travel vlog, two cultural aspects were found. The YouTuber visits Blida, more exactly a rural place called a Lazy. The YouTuber dedicates a significant portion of the vlog to recording the old architecture of the area, including old stone houses, and natural settings such as mountains and rivers which stand as symbols of the Blida region. Furthermore, the YouTuber focuses on filming the Algerian flag repeatedly throughout the video.

## 2- Presentation of the Findings Obtained From the YouTubers' Interview

The second data collection tool used in this research is the interview which has been conducted with four (04) Algerian YouTubers. The interview helps to bring more details that can help answer the research hypotheses and the research questions. The following are the detailed results of the interview.

### 2-1. Section One: Personal Identity: How the YouTubers view themselves?

#### Question 1: How long have you been uploading videos on YouTube?

The YouTuber	The years
Samy Samos	Six years
Celia Ait	Two years
Majid Hadjmoussa	Three years
Sifeddine Boumelit	Four years

**Table (15): The Number of Years the YouTubers Have Been Uploading Videos on YouTube**

The above table shows the number of years the four Algerian YouTubers have been uploading videos in English on their YouTube channels. The answers to this question differ from one YouTuber to another. The most experienced YouTuber have been uploading for six (6) years whereas the least experienced one has two (2) years of experience only.

### **Question 2: Which aspect of YouTube do you find inspirational?**

The aim of this question is to know what YouTube features compelled these creators to use YouTube. Their answers can be linked to their personal identities as YouTubers, as it shows why they chose to be YouTubers. All the interviewees agree that YouTube is a free platform that allows them to do many things when designing their videos. As one YouTuber says “YouTube algorithm can support any type of videos long or short and it is a global platform that everybody checks”. One of the best features of this platform is that it allows the users to upload videos of different length. The same YouTuber refers to another feature that he finds it inspirational on YouTube which is the fact that the creators on this platform can earn money from making videos.

### **Question 3: How can you define yourself as a YouTuber?**

This question is asked to know how these four Algerian YouTubers view themselves and it is directly related to their personal identities which represent the first frame of CTI and this can be thought of as alike to self-image. In other words, it is the understanding of oneself in the context of one’s role as YouTuber. Most of the YouTubers answered this question relating it to the goals they set before starting their channel and whether they reached them or not. One of the YouTubers explains that he believes that he is a beginner who still needs to learn many things and to develop his skills and abilities more. The others agreed that being a YouTuber is just an extra activity to have fun, and that they still have a long way to achieve their goals on this platform.

### **Question 4: Why did you choose to use English in your videos?**

The purpose of the above-mentioned question is to know why these Algerian YouTubers choose to use English in their videos. The answers to this question vary. One of the YouTubers, claims that English allows him to express himself more easily “I am more comfortable expressing myself in English”.

Other YouTubers claim that uploading videos in English help them to practise the language. In this respect, Majid Hadjmoussa for example, insists on practising after graduation “The first reason that made me choose to use English is that I studied English at the University” and to encourage his audience to learn it “and let them know that English is an easy language to learn and it can be used among friends just like French”.

The last YouTuber agrees with Celia Ait that English is a global language that will help them to reach a wider audience in order to promote the Algerian culture and Tourism. In this regard, Celia Ait supports the use of English as a global language by saying “Because I'm not giving the information only for the Algerians but for other followers”. Since English is widely used throughout the world, it is the appropriate language to communicate her content. And hence, “to speak up for my country because I think not a lot of people know about Algerian culture so I am trying to give them the image”.

### **Question 5: How does the American culture influence your video contents?**

This question seeks to discover whether the Algerian YouTubers are influenced by American culture or not. From their answers, it can be noted that all of the YouTubers are a little bit influenced by it.

One YouTuber believes that the American culture “is inspirational” and it helps them to create their own videos as he asserts. Moreover, another YouTuber explains that what encouraged

him to speak English is an American TV Show, “**Americans Got Talent**” which he likes to watch. However, they all agree that they are always selective of things in the American culture, especially those that are against their religion. In other words, since many aspects of American culture are incompatible with their religion, the Algerian YouTubers are selective when adopting anything from it. The YouTuber affirms that he feels “disgust when, for example, they promote for the LGBT that is why I am selective when it comes to things that are against our religion.” The last YouTuber explains that he likes to learn about this culture and adapt it to the domain of content creating on YouTube “as content creators, but I must stress the point of never adopting that cultural identity”.

### **Question 6: How are you different from other Algerian YouTubers who do not speak English and do not follow American trends?**

By asking this question, the interviewees are invited to talk about what differentiates them from the other Algerian YouTubers who do not use English in their channels. The findings show that the YouTubers agree that by using English they reach a different audience than those Algerian YouTubers who use Arabic, Berber or French. As one YouTuber says “We do not have the same audience”.

Majid Hadjmoussa further explains that for a global audience, English is essential and he gives an example:

Imagine that you want to learn about Brazil and their YouTubers upload videos in Portuguese and you don't understand this language so you are going to search for another YouTuber who uses English and this applies to Algeria and Algerian YouTubers.

Another YouTuber asserts that he does not follow American Trends and he thinks that he is different from others because he makes a different content and he does not stick to one specific

formula. He explains that he likes “to explore different video forms and topics and make up my own content instead of talking about something relative.”

### **2.2- Section Two: Relational Identity**

#### **Question 7: Who has inspired you to start a YouTube channel and how have they inspired you?**

This question is asked to determine how the YouTubers started their channels. Most of the interviewees agree that they started their YouTube channels out of their willingness and not because someone has influenced them. Samy Samos asserts that he wanted to share his content with people, that is why he started using YouTube “I remember making homemade videos with our family’s camera and I thought I could do the same but sharing with an audience”.

Conversely, Another YouTuber asserts that in addition to his love to make short videos and films; his friends encouraged him to start. Since he is from the south of Algeria Ghardaia, he wanted to change the false believe of most of Algerians as he says that “the southerners are presented as not well educated and YouTube is the key to do it”.

#### **Question 8: Who are your favorite YouTubers and why?**

The four interviewees were asked about their favorite YouTubers, purposefully to check whether they follow American YouTubers or the just Algerian ones. The first YouTuber Samy Samos listed four YouTube channels which include an American one that is *Nakey Jakey*, which he follows for making good video game essays and interesting documentaries. The second one Majid Hadjmoussa has also mentioned one American YouTuber who is *Logan Paul*, whom he describes as a genius.

The other Two YouTubers did not mention any American YouTube channel but they referred to Algerian ones such as *Joe Hattab* and *Khoubai*. Celia Ait further explains the reason that made her follow these YouTubers:

They are travelers and they don't just travel and tell people that they went a place or a hotel that it is fancy and they had fun. But they talk more about culture and etiquette of the county. So in their videos they give us more information and this is the kind of videos I like to watch and the kind of videos I try to give as well.

She relates her choice of these YouTubers to the cultural content that they present.

**Question 9: Do you think that presenting pictures, icons, symbols, etc. which portray "American" scenes, faces, architecture, customs, etc. is offensive to people in your culture?**

This question seeks to determine the extent to which the Algerian audience accepts American culture and the English language. According to the findings, three YouTubers claim that using American icons and symbols in their videos is appropriate and that the audience accepts it as being normal. They explain that “there are many trends that are worldwide known why not using them” as long as it is not discriminatory or offensive in a religious way, it is accepted. Celia Ait provides an example of an American animated comedy television series “some memes and funny stuff for example \*the few minutes later\* of SpongeBob.”

The last YouTuber prefers to be neutral by saying that he is selective about what to take from the American culture because not everything can be accepted. He explains that “the Americans aren't really the go to figure you want to look up to be honest”.

### **2.3- Section Three: Perceptions about the place of American culture and English language among Algerian YouTubers**

#### **Question 10: What do you think about the place English is occupying among Algerian YouTube users?**

The purpose of this question is to investigate the interviewees' opinions on the position that English occupies among Algerian YouTubers. The answers to this question indicate that all the YouTubers agree that there are not many Algerian YouTube creators that upload videos in English and that the number is limited. One YouTuber compared them to other social media creators saying that "But Instagramers and TikTokers use English more." And the same applies to the real life "If I talk about the Algerian youth, it is amazing how English is involved in their activities especially at University. Personally, I have attended many events that were totally in English".

#### **Question 11: Do you think that Algerian YouTubers should use English more or less, and why?**

Most of the YouTubers responded positively to this question which aims to discover whether the Algerian YouTubers should use more English in their videos. They explain that uploading videos where English is used as the main language of communication will reach more people and will encourage the Algerian audience to learn it. As Samy Samos says "Of course they should use it more because it will make their viewers want to learn the language, an extra language learnt is a door opened to endless possibilities".

Another YouTuber has a different opinion; they explain that the use of English depends on the content of the video itself:

Because there are many Algerian YouTubers who make daily vlogs or traveling vlogs where they just show, as I said before, the place or hotels they visited and the fancy things they got from there but not specified or worthy information so it is fine to speak in Arabic or another language.

They add that there is another option for all the YouTubers; they can use English subtitles to allow the viewers to see the translation which is another feature of YouTube that he likes.

### **Question 12: Do you think that Algerian YouTubers will be using more English than Arabic, Berber or French on their channels in the long run?**

This question aims to know about the four Algerian YouTubers' predictions for English's future in comparison to languages like Arabic, Berber and French on this platform. The findings show that the respondents agree that English will be the dominant language on YouTube in Algeria in the next few years. One YouTuber asserts that this linguistic shift has already started.

Ended I am positive about that. Algerian influencers on social media for example on Instagram, Snapchat started to mix Arabic and English when they speak and I am sure that YouTubers will take the language used on these platforms too.

They explained that English is used now alongside Arabic, Berber and French; and it will not take long before this language to dominate.

### **Question 13: Do you think that American culture has a positive or a negative impact on Algerian YouTubers and viewers?**

The answers to this question revealed that two YouTubers believe that the decision whether American culture has a negative or positive impact, as one YouTuber says, depends on the content or what is presented and “the person who is watching”. Celia Ait agrees with him and explains that there are some aspects of the American culture that have little to do with either their

religion or culture. Nevertheless, there are a lot of things that are advantageous and that we may learn.

Another YouTuber believes that the American culture is totally negative to the Algerian YouTubers and viewers. He asserts that 90% of YouTubers he has come across “have been influenced too much by the American culture and adopted their social problems as their own” and they try to treat them as if they are Algerian. While the last YouTuber thinks that the American culture has a positive impact on the Algerian YouTube users because the U.S. is a well-developed country and they have ideas that are worthy to be adopted by the Algerian YouTubers.

**Question 14: Do you think that the American culture constitutes a threat to the Algerian culture and then explain why?**

The aim of this question is to learn about the YouTubers’ views on whether the American culture poses a threat to the survival of the Algerian cultural identity or it does not threaten the status of the local culture and it has emerged as an alternative rather than a threat. The interviewees had two divergent views on the idea.

Two YouTubers consider that the preservation of the Algerian cultural identity is threatened by Americanization or the globalization of the American culture. They explained that the YouTubers try to show themselves in a certain way that does not represent their true identity but an imitation of the American one. In addition, they adopt some cultural practices that were never related to Algerians. The other two YouTubers, on the other hand, are not opposed to the spread of the American culture in Algeria and they do not view it as a threat. One YouTuber asserts that the American culture “does not affect our cultural identity” as long as the Algerians are selective on what they adopt.

### **Question 15: Do we have to take steps to protect our cultural traditions from the American cultural influences?**

The last question aims to determine whether Algerians should take action to protect their cultural identity from the spread of the American culture or not. The YouTubers have two opposing opinions on the concept.

Two YouTubers affirm that it is a must to protect the Algerian cultural identity. This can be done through YouTubers, “Our culture is very rich, and some creators have found a unique way to explore and shed light on our culture, for example, the YouTuber Morad Oudia” they explain that this YouTuber and others promote the Algerian culture. The other two YouTubers do not consider American influences as a threat therefore they think that there is no need to take any step. They explain that “Everything will change through time, so I think there is no need for protection; we are what we choose to be”.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has provided the main findings of this research. First, it has presented the results obtained from the corpus analysis, which consists in 30 videos analyzed qualitatively on the basis of Hecht’s (2005) Communication Theory of Identity. Then, it was followed by the presentation of the results obtained from the semi-structured interview conducted with four (4) Algerian YouTubers. These findings are interpreted and discussed in details in the next chapter.

*Chapter Four*  
*Discussion of the Findings*

### **Introduction**

This chapter aims at discussing the findings presented in the previous chapter. These findings are gathered from two resources: the analysis of the 30 selected videos of the Algerian YouTubers, in addition to the results of the semi-structured interview conducted with four of these YouTubers. The results of the two instruments are discussed simultaneously as they are complementary. This chapter encompasses three main sections, which aim to provide answers to the research questions advanced in the general introduction. The first section deals with YouTube features that contribute to the display of identity and cultural practices of YouTubers. The second section, in its turn, discusses how American cultural influences grow among Algerian YouTubers. The last section accounts for the discussion of the place that the American culture and the English language are acquiring among Algerian YouTubers.

### **1- YouTube Features that Contribute to the Display of Identity and Cultural Practices of YouTubers**

The results confirm that YouTube has a powerful potential as a free platform for identity and self-expression. YouTubers have been questioned about their personal identities to learn how they view themselves in relation to YouTube features that support the display of their identity and cultural practices. Hence, the personal frame of identity in Hecht's (2005) communication theory of identity is used to analyze their answers.

#### **1.1- Personal Identity**

According to the findings of the YouTubers' interviews, one of the many reasons why they have chosen to upload their videos on this platform, rather than any other video streaming platform, is because YouTube is a free service, and as a result, it has grown immensely popular over time. Another feature that compelled them to use this platform is the ease with which a

video file can be uploaded. Additionally, YouTube accepts almost all lengths and major video file types. That is, YouTube enables users to create and share content easily and for free, which makes this social platform their favorite.

The YouTube video affords self-expression, which links to cultural identity. That is, YouTube's role in the participatory culture is a place for posting videos, which displays the YouTubers' identity and cultural practices. The answers to the interview conducted with the Algerian YouTubers reveal that being able to successfully display their cultural identity was a major task that the YouTubers were trying to achieve through their videos. Similarly, Burgess & Joshua (2009) argue that YouTube videos match the idea of public self-expression. That is, YouTube has provided a free online public sphere for people to express themselves through a visual medium, which is the video.

The YouTubers choose to upload their content in English because it allows them to express themselves more easily, as Samy Samos explained. In other words, Algerian YouTubers use English as the primary language of communication in their videos because they are comfortable with it; particularly those who believe they should demonstrate their mastery of the language and produce something useful by using it because it was their specialty at university, including Majid Hadjmoussa and Selma Hamadou. A similar pattern of results was reached by Borni (2017) who explored Algerian students' use of English outside of the classroom. Surveying 30 English Master's students, the author reports that 70% use English at home. He adds that they set their phones in English and use the language in public. In terms of feeling capable of communicating about daily activities, 76% reported the ability to do so well. The YouTuber Majid Hadjmoussa, adds that he considers himself responsible for encouraging other Algerians to learn English. That is, the YouTubers motivate others to learn the language through interesting

learning activities. For example, the language challenges, which are trending, and the Vlogs which can be considered as being authentic materials for self-directed language learners.

The YouTuber Majid Hadjmoussa claims that one of the characteristics of the platform that pressured them to use it is that it allows content creators to earn money from their videos. That is, YouTubers have a variety of options for monetizing their videos, and one of them entails gaining a large audience, which can be achieved by uploading videos in English. As it has been already mentioned in the literature review, Algerians use English to interact with people around the world because it is the global language and a lingua franca among internet users (Crystal, 2003). In addition, YouTubers take advantage of English as a symbol of prestige:

English in Algeria has come to be regarded as synonymous with modernization and the idealized lifestyle portrayed by the Hollywood entertainment industry. It serves as a way for the people to convey linguistic sophistication, membership in an elite group of intellectuals and celebrities, and a modern and open lifestyle consistent with that portrayed in American movies and television shows. (Belmihoub, 2018, p. 11)

English in Algerian is associated with the prestige of the American culture, that is why Algerian YouTubers use it to gain more viewers from both Algeria and other countries. These YouTubers consider the English language as the language of technology, the modern world and, culture and they claim that they have a different audience than the other Algerian YouTubers who do not use English or follow any American trend. Hence, the English users are their target audience, and for them drawing inspiration from the American culture ultimately means being open to the world.

Apart from gaining a wider audience to monetize their videos, most of the YouTubers agreed that this platform and through using English, help them to promote the Algerian cultural identity and tourism. Celia Ait adds that the Algerian culture is not well-known, that is why as an

Algerian YouTuber she needs to speak up for her country because she thinks that not a lot of people know about the Algerian culture so she is trying to give them an image about it. Moreover, through sharing videos that present the Algerian culture in English, which is a lingua franca, they can target the whole world and hence, boost Algerian Tourism.

The first part of this chapter has answered the first question of this research, which is “What YouTube features contribute to the display of YouTubers’ identity and cultural practices?” relying on the first identity frame in Hecht’s CTI, which is personal identity. The discussion of the results obtained from the interview demonstrated that the YouTube Video is the main feature which allows cultural identity expression.

## **2- American Cultural Influences among Algerian YouTubers**

American cultural globalization influencing the entire world has been referred to as Americanization. This influence is demonstrated by the American culture-based YouTube videos, which are rebroadcast all over the world. As presented in the previous chapter, the influence of the American culture on Algerian YouTubers is evident in the various aspects that have been presented in the video analysis as well as in their responses to the interview questions regarding their opinions on American YouTubers and culture.

### **2.1- Enacted Identity**

Different American cultural aspects such as the dress code, architecture, and other cultural artifacts, are present in the Algerian YouTube videos, which are perceived as a sign of modernization, cultural openness and prestige. As already mentioned in the literature review, YouTube may contribute to the promotion of the American cultural globalization and Americanization.

Music is one of these aspects, which is used by all of the YouTubers in their videos either as a background music or just played in vlogs, which shows the deep influence of the US recorded music industry. Music serves as a medium for cultural interaction among groups from different countries. It helps to learn about the culture, and the language being used in a song. In fact, American popular music has consistently gained a growing global audience. America has witnessed the emergence of popular genres like blues, jazz, rock, R&B, gospel, soul, funk, heavy metal, punk, techno, salsa, and hip hop, all of which have had a significant impact on world culture.

In addition, artists have the ability to represent culture and have an influence on its spread; for example, both YouTubers Amine Allaf and Majid Hadjmoussa have used songs by the same American artist Lauren Duski which shows that the artists themselves can be influential. This result ties well with previous study by Achterberg et al.(2011) that examined the appreciation of popular music in America and three European countries.They found that these European countries seem to support the idea of globalization, as American hegemony increases and the one-way flow of culture from the United States to Europe continues, with the national artists of the three European countries increasingly making it into the popular music charts with songs sung in the English language.

Since the American film industry "Hollywood" is leading in movies and series production, the influence of American movies is also seen in the Algerian English speaking YouTubers' videos. For example, The YouTuber Samy Samos is influenced by the American movies which can be seen in his vlog, showing that his character resembles an American movie character. Lokman DZ is also influenced by the last because he disguises himself to look like an American actor. In addition to the American cartoons, which accurately depict the western culture. The

YouTuber Celia Ait adds time cards from a famous American cartoon and resembles locations that appeared in her video to those in the Disney movies.

The dress code reflects culture; that is, the dress code is an integral part of the YouTuber's image because it creates an expectation for the culture that the YouTuber wants to portray. Fashion brands are culturally driven products, and the American brands have been finding more favor worldwide and the Algerian YouTubers are no exception. The Algerian YouTubers appear in different videos wearing some well-known American brands such as Nike and Calvin Klein or even personalized clothing with expression of the custom choice, and the language that the YouTubers decided to use is English. As mentioned in the literature review, personal identity exists at the individual level of analysis as a characteristic of individuals (Hecht 2005). Hence, individual identities are connected to self-perception and other personal characteristics that can be objects which carry meaning such as dress code.

Today, English is becoming more and more popular all over the world. It has achieved the status of a global language (Crystal, 2003). Thus, creating any YouTube content with a global appeal necessitates the use of English, which serves as a lingua franca among the world's virtual communities. In other words, English is the best medium for ensuring and expanding the content's reach. Algerian YouTubers use the prestigious status that English has around the world to promote their content as well as their cultural identity. However, the spread of English is associated with American globalization; English is a language that is ideally suited to the spread of the American culture. Furthermore, as English is a foreign language in Algeria and not everyone in the audience speaks it fluently, when the YouTubers design their videos, they include English subtitles to help the viewers more effectively identify the information by reproducing a visual stimulus. Additionally, the language used to write the video titles clearly demonstrates the

influence of English. As twenty-seven out of 30 titles of the videos analyzed were written in English and only three were written in Arabic only.

Lastly, the manifestation of some aspects of American lifestyle, for example, the YouTuber African Viking imitates the American birthday parties and introduces her audience to different American sweet products, just like Sifeddine Boumelit who tries this kind of sweets in Algiers which may create a certain desire to imitate the same target culture products. Friedman (1998, cited in Daghrir, 2013) holds that “globalization has a distinctly American face: It wears Mickey Mouse ears, it eats Big Macs, it drinks Coke or Pepsi and it does its computing on an IBM or Apple laptop, using Windows”. Another example is the overlapping of the Algerian breakfast with the American one. Traditional pancakes or bread would likely be eaten with jam and butter or olive oil for a lighter breakfast; the French influence (coffee and croissant) is also very present and goes in harmony with the choice of the Algerian traditional breakfast menu because of the colonizing history. However, things are gradually changing Algerian YouTuber Beauty by Raja shares with her audience her breakfast, which consists of a well-known sweet in America called “Waffle”, and some fruits which is totally different from the Algerian breakfast. That is, America exports its culture on an unprecedented rate. From music to media, film to fast food, language to literature.

### **2.2- Relational Identity**

Relational identity represents the identity formed, as a result, of interactions with others. On YouTube, users can “follow” other accounts. Following another account means that the follower will see that user’s content in a personalized feed of content from everyone they follow. This section discusses the Algerian YouTubers’ answers to questions about whether they follow American YouTubers and their thoughts about presenting the American culture in their videos.

The YouTubers were asked about what motivated them to start their YouTube channels, to learn whether they were directly influenced by any American factor or not. Their answers to this question indicated that they started their channels out of personal decisions based on their love of YouTube and a desire to have an audience with whom they could share content. In other words, the YouTubers were not influenced by any American factor when they decided to launch a YouTube channel and they just wanted to achieve their personal goals.

Algerian YouTubers' relationship with American YouTubers is an example of how American culture has influenced them. When asked about his favorite YouTubers, Samy Samos mentioned the name of an American YouTuber, Nakey Jakey, and explained that he is a subscriber to his channel because he is a good video game essay designer, which is one of his favorite trends on YouTube. Logan Paul, another American YouTuber, was mentioned in the interview; the Algerian YouTuber describes him as a genius and successful YouTuber and explains that he gets inspiration from him.

The display of which and how many accounts a person follows allows for the construction of relational identity by publicly presenting an association of social accounts with which a person wishes to be associated. Hecht (2005) argues that identity is a product mutually formed in relationships. That is, identity cannot be formed alone but it is influenced by relationships. Hence, when Algerian YouTubers follow the American ones, they are actively constructing their relational identity. Papacharissi (2011) argues, the appeal of social media applications is that they provide a stage to publicly present oneself and one's social connections. He explains that the self "is expressed as fluid abstractions, reified through the individual's association with a reality that may be equally flexible"(p. 304). This concept points to the flexibility of an individual's identity and how it is reinforced through an equally flexible digital representation. Papacharissi also notes that identity can be seen as a social performance, especially on social media

applications, that is reinforced and authenticated by the association of social accounts. In this case, the Algerian YouTubers' relational identities are authenticated by their association with other accounts, which means following or subscribing to the American YouTubers and being the first to see the videos that they upload on their channels.

Moreover, watching some of their favorite YouTubers can help them think of ideas for their videos. This means that, by surrounding themselves with creatively inspiring people and staying connected with other creators, which involves watching and interacting with videos; they come up with ideas for their own videos. The interaction between these two cultures leads to cultural adaptation, which is a process that requires people to change their ways of life and communication patterns in order to adjust to a new culture. In other words, the continuing interaction with global culture results in the emergence of a new hybrid cultural identity. That is, the Algerian YouTubers adopt and assimilate the progress of the American culture in their own culture.

In regards to the spread of the American culture among Algerian YouTubers, the Algerian audience's acceptance of the appearance of these aspects is an encouragement to the YouTubers to use them in their videos. According to the YouTubers' answers, presenting pictures, icons and symbols that portray American scenes, faces, architecture, customs, etc. is not offensive to Algerians as long as it does not violate their religious beliefs. The YouTuber Celia Ait further explains that there are many trends of American origin that are worldwide known and there is no issue in using them. As it has been already mentioned, the main goal of all the YouTubers starting YouTube channels is to reach a wide audience and earn money. Therefore, Knowing the Algerian audience' attitudes towards the American culture is likely to help the YouTuber earn the audience acceptance.

As an exception, the YouTuber Samy Samos claims that the American culture cannot coexist with the Algerian cultural identity and that YouTubers should not be influenced by it. He explains that they should be really selective on the content that they adopt from the American culture and he adds that “as content creators, but I must stress the point of never adopting that cultural identity”. His choice can be explained by the fact that some customs, beliefs and practices of this influential country is considered unique to them and might not be appropriate in the Algerian culture and thus, not accepted by the audience. The YouTuber Madjid Hadjmoussa provided an example of a trending topic in the USA which cannot be accepted by the Algerians which is the LGBTQ+. Thus, it is important for the Algerian YouTubers to be knowledgeable about the cultural differences and not put aside their own identity.

The second section of this chapter has answered the second research question, which is “How do The American cultural influences spread among Algerian YouTubers?” Relying on the second and third identity frames in Hecht’s CTI, which are the enacted and relational identities. The discussion of the results demonstrated that a variety of factors such as the global popularity of American music, fashion brands, and film industries that reflect the American lifestyle, along with the influence of their YouTubers, contributed to the spread of American cultural elements among Algerian YouTubers.

### **3- The place that American Culture is Acquiring among Algerian YouTubers**

A community’s identity is defined by the shared experiences and common interests of its members, which characterize the community as a whole. The following section of this chapter is devoted to analyzing the communal identity of these YouTubers in the light of Hecht’s theory, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the meanings of the collected cultural aspects and the impact of the American culture and English language on Algerian YouTubers’ cultural identity.

### 3.1- Communal Identity

The cultural aspects presented in the videos provide some insight into the Algerian YouTubers' communal identity. In other words, their group identity can be identified by looking at the common cultural artifacts that they share. The majority of Algerian YouTubers promote and introduce Algerian cultural identity to both foreign and local audiences by capturing and sharing Algerian cultural heritage in their videos.

First, in the travel vlogs, the YouTubers share their travel experiences with the audience to influence tourists' travel destinations. These videos feature locations known for their stunning architecture as well as those with natural, historical, archaeological, and religious significance for example, Nour Brahimi's video "*Oran City Tour*"; in this video the YouTuber captures different historical sites to experience the history and culture of these places and to help preserving these places and the culture of those who live there. Because Food defines a community's culture, the YouTubers discuss local dishes and the best places to try them and they explain the flavor profile of the dish as well as the best way to eat it.

In the language trend vlog, Algerian YouTubers popularize their language and dialect on YouTube through language challenges. In these contests, they either show others how to write in Arabic (like in Lokman DZ's video of Americans writing their names in Arabic) or how to pronounce words from the Darja dialect (like in Amine Allaf's video of Arabic vs. English Challenge).

Lastly, the videos that popularize Algerian festivals, such festivals seek to inform community members about their traditions. That is, community cultural festivals provide a space for people to explore their identity by enhancing the feelings of social cohesiveness. For example, Beauty by Raja's video about "Yennayer" represents the celebration of the Berber New Year.

Small's (2017) study about the social impacts of festivals on communities reached the same results as this study, which shows that festivals enable community members to feel a sense of identity and connectedness and that these festivals allow local community members to develop a sense of identity. Hecht (2005) holds that communal identity is how collectivities define their identities. It is analyzed through the commune rituals, and celebrations of the group. The Algerian YouTubers, in this case, are unified in one communal identity thanks to the commune festivals that they share, which serve as a defining feature of their cultural identity.

As it is previously mentioned, cultural identity is not fixed; it may be changed due to several types of factors that influence a group of people. The same applies to the community of the Algerian YouTubers who, beside of displaying the Algerian cultural identity, show some aspects of the American culture in their videos. That shows the influence of the American culture, which is the global culture, on their identity. That is, this YouTubers' appreciation for some of the American cultural products evolved into an acceptance of these products as a part of their cultural identity. Moreover, Language, with its communicative, symbolic, and social functions, is an important component of cultural identity, and linguistic changes brought about by globalization are likely to influence the cultural identities of many YouTubers. That is, these YouTubers do not just share self-defining characteristics, that is the Algerian cultural aspects, but also engage in social action to construct an image of what the group stands for and how it is represented and viewed by others. In addition to their local identity, the YouTubers develop a global identity that gives them a sense of belonging to a worldwide culture and includes an awareness of the events, practices, styles, and information that are part of the global culture.

This is also reinforced by the data obtained from the interview, about the use of English and the display of the American cultural aspects by the Algerian YouTubers in their videos, which can be explained by the fact that the process of Americanization comes from the

globalization of English. Accordingly, the results reveal that all the YouTubers encourage the use of English by the Algerian content creators, especially the YouTubers who they think are few compared to content creators on other social media platforms and in real life, as Celia Ait explained that Algerian youth already use English in their activities especially at Universities. In other words, the Algerian Youth has positive attitudes towards the use of English and it is already a part of their activities, so all what they need is for the YouTubers to upload more videos in this language to help them learn it better. It is worth noting that the majority of these YouTubers did not major in English at university, but instead studied subjects like dentistry (Beauty by Raja), engineering (Celia Ait), art (Sifeddine Boumelit), and so on. Despite not having the chance to study English at university, they nonetheless developed a strong interest and admiration for the language, illustrating their understanding of English status as a global language.

In this regard, all the YouTubers agreed that English in the near future will be the dominant language on Algerian social media instead of French or the Algerian national languages. They explained that by the present state of English, many social media creators started to mix English in their speech even if they do not upload all their content in English. Amara(2018) investigated “English Language Use amongst Algerian Internet Users” and reached the result that EFL teachers and students and ordinary people use the English language on social media, this result demonstrates that the Algerian users of social media are becoming more and more interested in this language.

However, they had different thoughts on the American culture, most of the YouTubers agreed that there are many adventitious things that the Algerians can learn from this culture, because the U.S. is a well developed country and they have many ideas to adopt. But there are also things that should not be adopted to become a part of the Algerian cultural identity because they are inappropriate and can be considered as a threat that might damage it. Samy Samos

explains that some Algerian YouTubers “have been influenced too much by American culture and adopted their social problems as their own”, which means that the Algerian YouTubers were not selective on the content they adopted, which led them to treat social problems facing the Americas as their own. Moreover, the Algerian and American cultures have different set of values, and beliefs which make them very distinct from each other. As a result, the Algerian YouTubers should be careful in what they portray in their videos to avoid cultural clashes and to preserve their cultural identity.

As an exception, the YouTuber Sifeddine Boumelit believes that the American culture does not represent a threat to the Algerian cultural identity but, rather, only serves to strengthen it. This shows that some YouTubers are deeply influenced by the American culture and consider the adoption of it as a normal process and are aware of this because people can reject or integrate this culture; they are not merely passive recipients of cultural influences. He adds that, there is no way to stop in the face of the American globalization because the American culture is already spread and cross-cultural exchanges of ideas, food, music, media, and languages are valuable.

The third part of this research has answered the last question of this investigation, which is: “What do these cultural practices reveal about the place that American culture and the English language are acquiring among Algerian YouTubers?”. The discussion of the results demonstrated that The Algerian YouTubers’ use of English in their videos reflects the significant place that English language is acquiring, and that the Algerian and American cultures are both present simultaneously in the Algerian YouTube.

## Conclusion

The discussion of the results of the video analysis and the interview has provided answers to the research questions under the theoretical framework of Hecht’s (2005) CTI. The first section

of this chapter has been devoted to a discussion of YouTube features that help YouTubers display their identities and cultural customs. In addition to the YouTube algorithm, which allows videos to reach a wider audience, the main feature that allows cultural identity expression is the YouTube video in which they can portray different cultural aspects they have adopted from the American culture and promote their Algerian cultural identity. The second section discussed the factors that led to the spread of the American culture among the Algerian YouTubers including the global popularity of American music, fashion brands, and film industry that reflect the American lifestyle, as well as the influence of their YouTubers. The last section has accounted for the place that the American culture and the English language are acquiring among the Algerian YouTubers. The Algerian YouTubers' use of English in their videos demonstrates the significant place English is acquiring, and that the Algerian and American cultures are both present simultaneously in the Algerian YouTube videos.

# *General Conclusion*

The present dissertation has investigated the influence of the American culture on Algerian English speaking YouTubers while designing videos. This research has aimed to attain three main objectives. The first objective of the study consists of investigating the YouTube features that contribute to the display of identity and cultural practices of YouTubers. The second objective is to determine how the American cultural influences grow among Algerian YouTubers. The last objective aimed to identify the place that the American culture and the English language are acquiring among Algerian YouTubers. To attain such objectives, the study relied on Hecht's (2005) Communication Theory of Identity.

For the sake of answering the advanced research questions and confirming or refuting the hypotheses suggested in the general introduction, the current study relied on two types of data. It has used 30 videos selected from 13 Algerian YouTubers' Channels on YouTube as the main corpus. In addition to an online semi-structured interview conducted with four YouTubers whose videos were selected.

The findings of both research tools, video analysis and the semi-structured interview were analyzed on the basis of the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). The analysis of the data has been divided into two main sections. **The first section** has looked at the cultural findings from the videos. In order to better comprehend whether the Algerian English speaking YouTubers are influenced by the American culture, the research has sorted out the cultural items that are depicted in the videos, which include appearance, music, festivals and ceremonies, architecture, and other cultural artifacts. The analysis of the results gleaned from the semi-structured interview conducted with the four Algerian English speaking YouTubers made up the **second section** on its own.

As it has been discussed in the previous chapters, YouTube Video is the main feature that allows cultural identity expression; when YouTubers upload videos of themselves, they are actively expressing or displaying their identity. That is, by sharing videos a user is communicating with their audience how they want to be perceived. The ability to successfully display their cultural identity is the most important task that the Algerian English speaking YouTubers attempt to accomplish through their videos. Hence, YouTube's role in the participatory culture is a place for posting videos that display the Algerian YouTubers' cultural practices. In addition to the video, YouTube's algorithm that allows videos to reach a broader audience is a feature that contributes to the display of the YouTubers' cultural identity. Because English is the universal language and the lingua franca among internet users, Algerian YouTubers who want their content to be seen globally use it as the main language of communication in their videos. This leads to the disconfirmation of the first research hypothesis, which contends that Algerian YouTube as a media platform has many frameworks that serve as indicators of the cultural identity of the users, including the description box, community and user profile.

Furthermore, the findings of this study have demonstrated a variety of factors that contribute to the spread of the American cultural elements among Algerian English speaking YouTubers as portrayed in the videos such as the global popularity of different American music genres, as music helps to learn about the culture and the language being used in a song. In addition to the American fashion brands that have been found more favor by the Algerian YouTubers, and the American YouTubers and film industry that reflect the American lifestyle and this influence is mainly clear in the YouTubers' imitation of the same target cultural products. The spread of English, which is associated with the American globalization, among Algerian YouTubers is another factor discussed in the last chapter. This leads to the confirmation

of the second research hypothesis, which contends that Algerian YouTubers are influenced by the American tendencies such as popular trends, or lifestyle vlogs which they get attached to and therefore try to follow them as models when designing their own videos. However, the majority of Algerian English speaking YouTubers are conservative about many aspects of the American culture that contradict their traditions and do not align with Algerian Muslim values, including the spread ideas in the American society like the non-normative gender identity.

Moreover, the results of the present research have revealed that the Algerian YouTubers use of English in their videos demonstrates the significant place English is acquiring, and that the Algerian and American cultures are both present simultaneously in the Algerian YouTube videos. Besides their use English of and displaying aspects of the American culture; these YouTubers promote and introduce the Algerian cultural identity to both foreign and local audiences by capturing and sharing Algerian cultural heritage in their videos. This leads to the disconfirmation of the third research hypothesis, which contends that Algerian English speaking YouTubers' promotion of the American culture and the English language, which are deeply embedded in their cultural identity, will accentuate the threat of its domination over the Algerian one.

Future researchers who are interested in this field of study may examine other content areas where YouTube videos can be used as an educational resource and tracking its effectiveness would provide insight into how such technology is used for self-directed learning. Since identity can undoubtedly be evident on image-based platforms as well, I propose to further investigate the relationship between identity and content consumption on other social media platforms such as Instagram.

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# *Appendices*

### **The Semi-Structured Interview with the Algerian YouTubers**

This interview is part of an academic research conducted for the sake of explaining the influence of the American culture on the Algerian YouTubers' cultural identity. Therefore, I promise that all the information you provide will serve only my academic purpose.

#### **Interview questions:**

##### **Section One:** Personal Identity: How the YouTubers view themselves?

**Q 1:** How long have you been uploading videos on YouTube?

**Q 2:** which aspect of YouTube do you find inspirational?

**Q 3:** How can you define yourself as a YouTuber?

**Q 4:** Why did you choose to use English in your videos?

**Q 5:** How does American culture influence your video contents?

**Q 6:** How are you different from other Algerian YouTubers who do not speak English and do not follow American trends?

##### **Section Two:** Relational Identity

**Q 7:** Who has inspired you to start a YouTube channel and how have they inspired you?

**Q 8:** who are your favorite YouTubers and why?

**Q9:** Do you think that presenting pictures, icons, symbols, etc. which portray "American" scenes, faces, architecture, customs, etc. is offensive to people in your culture?

**Section Three:** Perceptions about the place of American culture and English language among Algerian YouTubers

**Q10:** What do you think about the place English is occupying among Algerian YouTube users?

**Q11:** Do you think that Algerian YouTubers should use English more or less, and why?

**Q12:** Do you think that Algerian YouTubers will be using more English than Arabic, Berber or French on their channels in the long run?

**Q13:** Do you think that American culture has a positive or a negative impact on Algerian YouTubers and viewers?

**Q14** Do you think that American culture constitutes a threat to Algerian culture and then explain why?

**Q15:** Do we have to take steps to protect our cultural traditions from American cultural influences?

**Please feel free to add any comments or remarks that did not come up during this interview.**

**Thank you**

Some Screenshots Taken from the Algerian YouTubers' Videos

