

# Co-crafting an alternative curriculum for languages. Or what does a decolonial approach to curriculum change look like?

28<sup>th</sup> February 2026  
University of Nottingham

[Dr Joseph Ford](#)



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## Decolonise MFL Curriculum Special Interest Groups

去殖民地化

descolonizar  
decolonizzare  
décoloniser

去殖民地化

dekolonisieren  
descolonizar  
decolonizzare  
décoloniser

деколонизировать

يُحَرِّر

dekolonisieren  
descok  
decolonise  
يُحَرِّر

деколонизир

Welcome to the Decolonise the MFL Curriculum Special Interest Groups webpage. The original group (concerned with bringing attention to the issues of race and racism in Secondary MFL) has now been joined by a group addressing the same issues in the Primary curriculum. Our shared aims are underpinned by our conviction that urgent research and pedagogical intervention relating to these issues is needed in our subject.



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

# ReflectED

St Mary's Journal of Education

*ReflectED: St Mary's Journal of Education*  
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ISSN 2046-6986

## Race and Racism in Secondary Modern Foreign Languages

Lisa Panford\*  
*St Mary's University*



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# French, German and Spanish

GCSE subject content

September 2025

This document incorporates updates from the previous version published in February 2025 and May 2022 and has been effective since the academic year beginning in September 2024



## GCSE FRENCH

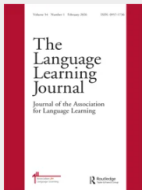
(8652)

### Specification

For teaching from September 2024 onwards  
For GCSE exams in 2026 onwards

Version 1.2 September 2025





The Language Learning Journal >

Volume 54, 2026 - [Issue 1: Language Policy](#)

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Articles

# CAR and the new dialogues about language education

Eva Duran Eppler , Jenny Amos & Viktoria Magne

Pages 9-17 | Received 29 Aug 2025, Accepted 05 Sep 2025, Published online: 20 Sep 2025

Cite this article <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2025.2558983>



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# England's national curriculum review misses opportunity to revitalise language learning

Published: November 24, 2025 5:34pm GMT

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The decline of languages education in England is a familiar and depressing story. Take-up of French at GCSE is down from 25% in 2009-10 to 18% in 2024-25. German has halved in the same period from 10% to 5%.



There is also a significant gap in take-up at GCSE by disadvantaged pupils (34%) compared with those from more privileged backgrounds (50%).

In March 2025, the interim report of a review of England's national curriculum diagnosed languages as a particular problem area. Languages education was deemed to be furthest away from the principles set out by the review panel. These included an engaging, coherent, knowledge-rich and inclusive curriculum, and the involvement of teachers in its design and testing.

The review's final report, now published, recommends a much sharper focus on the provision of languages in primary schools. It encourages a smoother transition from primary to secondary, which has been shown to improve languages take-up even in areas with relatively high numbers of pupils from

### Author



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### Disclosure statement

Joseph Ford does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

### Partners



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We have created a vocabulary list in collaboration with teachers and students which allows them to engage with **subjects that they have told us are meaningful and interesting**, as well as providing a strong linguistic and cultural foundation. The vocabulary list includes many of the basic and familiar words which you will already cover across key stage 3, as well as adding **new and up-to-date content to reflect the diversity of our students and their diverse range of interests** such as social equality, gaming, social media and the environment (p. 45).

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What did this *collaborative creation* of the vocabulary list with teachers and students look like?

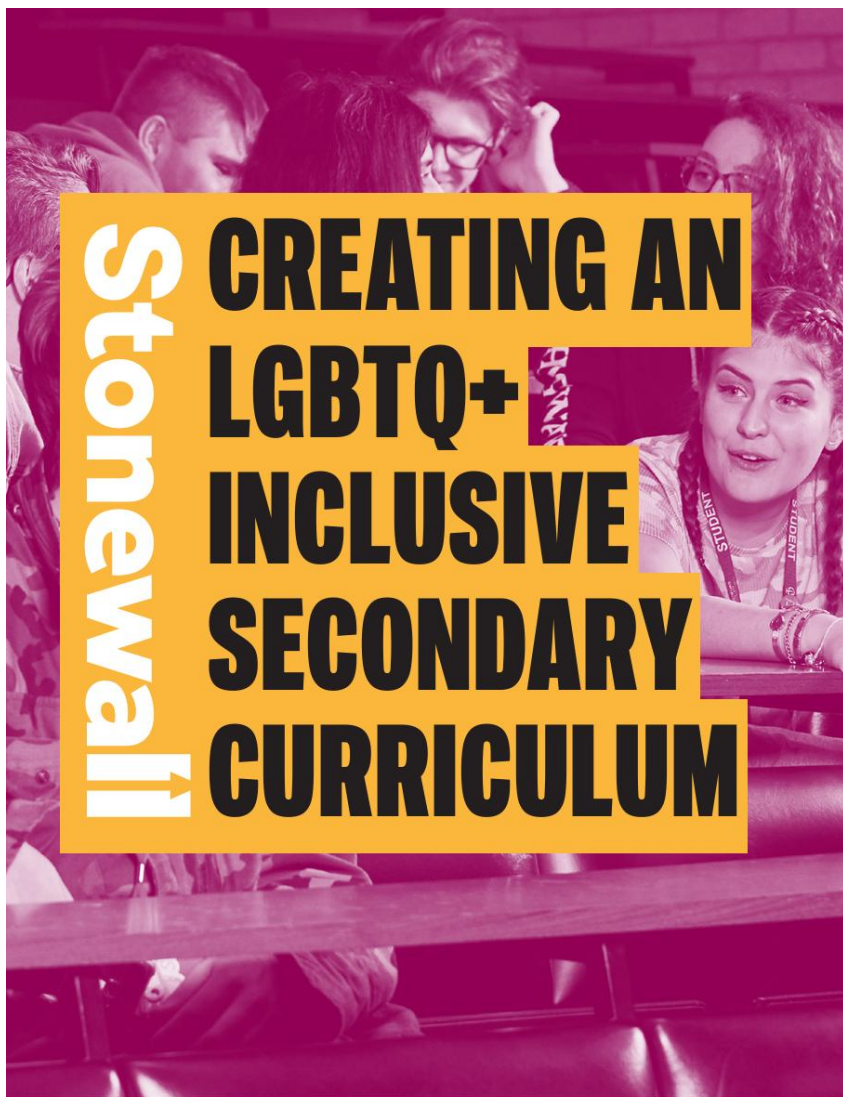
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*Who* defines a ‘strong cultural foundation’?



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## Support

If you would like to find out more about an LGBTQ+ inclusive MFL curriculum, Stonewall provides further support in their [‘Creating an LGBTQ+ Inclusive Secondary Curriculum’ resource](#). You can also find more support, along with specific examples of gender neutral language use in French, German and Spanish in our [‘Gender, diversity and inclusion in languages qualifications’](#) video.

SUPPORTED BY  Pearson



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## Module 2 Mon clan, ma tribu

### Zone de culture: Libre d'être moi

Objectives	Vocabulary	Grammar / Skills / Pronunciation
Talking about your identity Using emphatic pronouns	<p><b>Key language:</b> Qu'est-ce qui fait ton identité?</p> <p>Ce qui fait mon identité, c'est ... ma religion / ma langue / mon groupe d'amis / ma personnalité / ma famille / mon *genre.</p> <p>Tu es d'accord? Oui, je suis d'accord. Non, je ne suis pas d'accord.</p> <p>À mon avis, ...</p> <p><b>Additional vocabulary:</b> la carrière / le travail / le pays d'<b>origine</b> / la famille / le temps libre</p> <p>Il s'appelle (aussi) ...</p> <p>Il est ... chanteur / acteur.</p> <p>Elle est ... *blogueuse / chanteuse / actrice / joueuse internationale de foot.</p> <p>Il/Elle / Sa mère/Son père vient ... du *Sénégal / de France / de *Belgique / de *Mauritanie.</p> <p>Maintenant, ... il/elle habite ... en France / au *Québec / en Amérique.</p> <p>Il est fan de *l'Olympique de Marseille.</p>	<p><b>Grammar:</b> Possessive adjectives <i>mon, ma, mes</i></p> <p>Emphatic pronouns after prepositions (<i>pour, avec</i>): <i>moi, toi</i></p> <p><b>Culture box:</b> Multilingual francophone countries</p> <p><b>Culture box:</b> Non-binary pronoun <i>iel</i></p> <p><b>Culture box:</b> <i>Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité</i></p>

## Pearson Edexcel GCSE French FOUNDATION Scheme of Work



‘Quoique des îles comme la Martinique et le Madagascar continuent de **faire partie de** la France, l’Algérie **ne fait plus partie de** la France d’outre-mer et donc elle n’est pas dans le groupe de pays **faisant partie de** la francophonie. Par contre, l’Algérie était une colonie de la France de l’année 1830 jusqu’à 1962 quand les Algériens ont gagné leur indépendance.’

Words/expressions from list?

L’Algérie, la France d’outre mer, la Francophonie, Jusque, Partie, Gagner, Année, Indépendance, Donc, Leur, Faire/faisait/faisant (de), Être, par contre, continuer (de), etc.

So what's missing?

Algérien(s), Colonie, Colonialisme, Guerre...



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# The past as object of focus?



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## Influence of Islam on Language and Culture

### DISCUSSION POINTS

- What is your opinion on the use of the term *La Francophonie* to refer to countries in which French is one of the languages spoken?
- France is home to the largest number of Muslims in Europe – about four million. Does this surprise you? If so, why?
- What do you think about French *laïcité* laws? What about the ban on Muslim face coverings?
- Have you ever tried fasting before? What was it like or what do you think it would be like? Why do Muslims believe it brings them closer to God?
- Which French Algerian celebrities would you like to learn more about?
- What did you learn about the Algerian Independence War that you didn't know before?
- What do you think the future will hold for French- Algerian relations? What do you think should happen?

### ALGERIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Also known as the Algerian Revolution, the Algerian War of Independence was a seven-year war between the French military and the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN). In 1962, it ended with a truce and Algerian independence from French colonial rule which had begun in 1830, and lasted over 130 years.

French colonial rule in Algeria changed over time, but it is estimated that around one million white Europeans lived in Algeria during this time. They came to become known as *pieds-noirs* (black feet) because they wore shoes, whereas the native Muslim people did not. During the occupation, the French enforced the idea of Algeria as French and an integral part of France and attempted to erase Muslim identity by cracking down on mosques and religious schools. The French also established laws which made Algerian Muslims second-class citizens, whilst the French settlers and the Jewish Algerians were granted citizenship status, allowing them a much better quality of life. These laws allowed the French colonisers to steal Algerian land and use it for French agricultural and farming purposes. Algerian Muslims could gain citizenship if they denounced their Muslim faith and converted to Christianity, but despite this, most cases were still rejected.

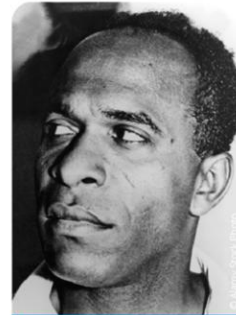


Algerian FLN troops parade through Algiers during the Algerian War, July 1962.

Middle Eastern culture and the Arabic language have had a huge impact in Europe, and French culture and language are no exception. Up to 700 words in French have an Arabic origin, some in Spanish. Here are some of the most commonly used words. What are these words in English? Can you match them up with the Arabic word from which it originates?

French	Arabic
café	zarāfa
sucre	jubba
coton	al-kuhūl
magasin	qahwa
girafe	orz
alcool	sukkar
jupe	qutun
riz	makāzin

The Arabic language has its own alphabet and words are not written this way in Arabic. The words listed here are called 'transliterations'. They are a way for speakers of English to understand the pronunciation of Arabic words.



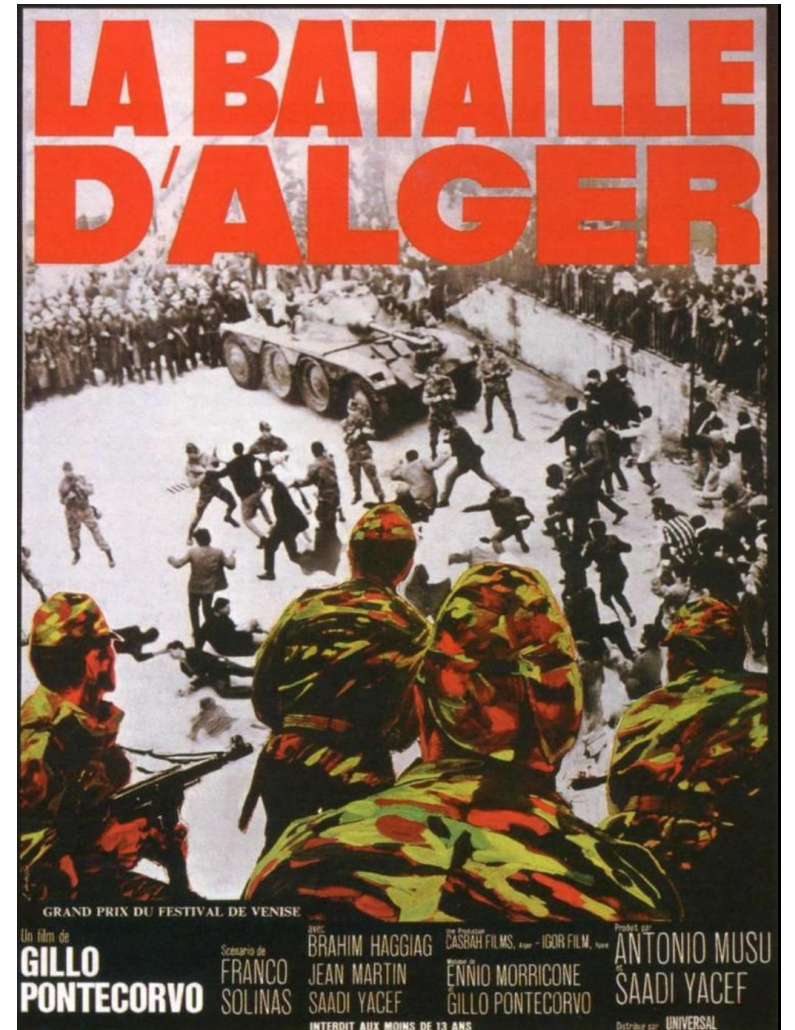
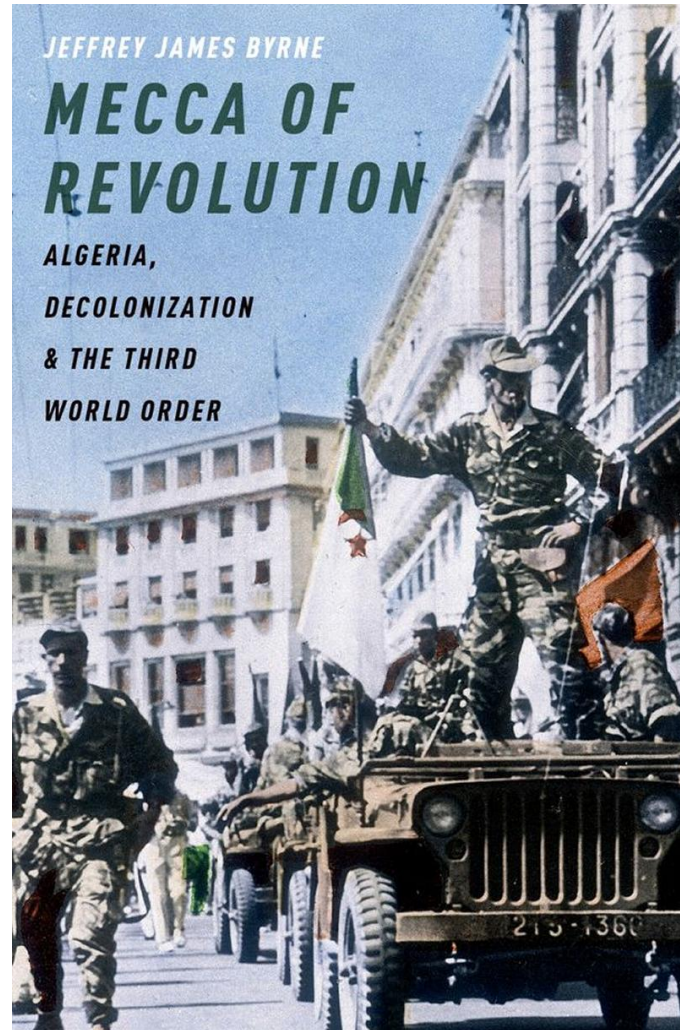
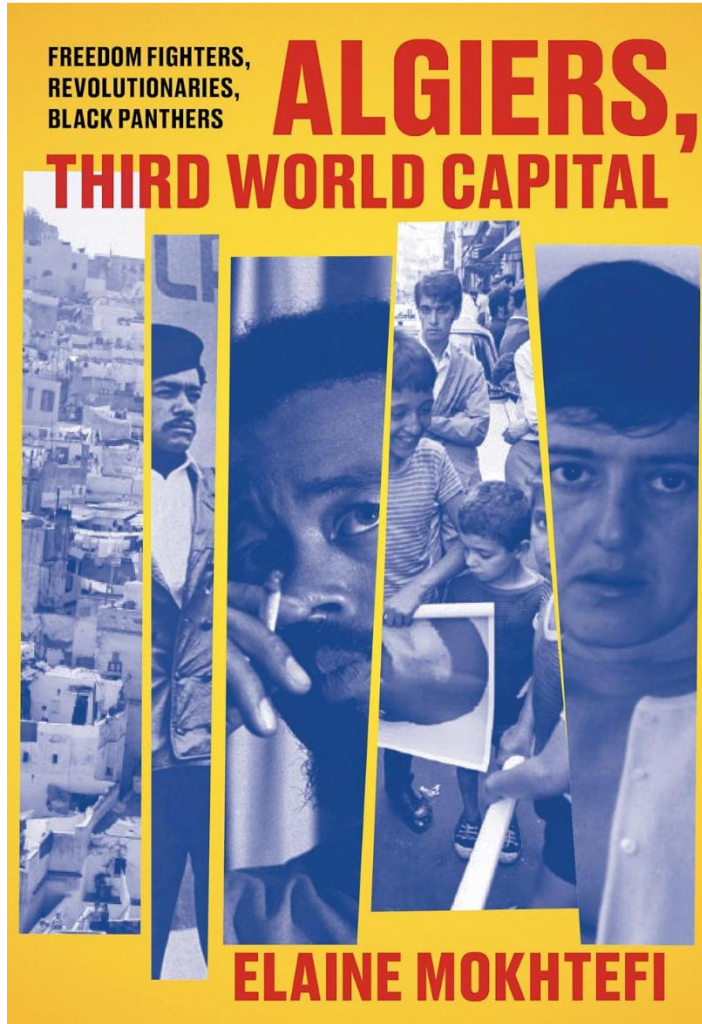
Frantz Fanon (1925-1961).

### Frantz Fanon

Frantz Fanon was an influential psychiatrist and philosopher from Martinique, a former French colony in the Caribbean. In 1953 he moved to Algeria to work with the traumatised French soldiers during the Algerian war; this is where he formed much of his political ideas. He was pro-independence and joined the FLN. Of the war he said, "When we revolt it's not for a particular culture. We revolt simply because, for many reasons, we can no longer breathe."

### Reflection

What do you think he meant by this?



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Article

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TEACHING  
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# Positive emotions and intrinsic motivation: A self-determination theory perspective on using co-created stories in the language acquisition classroom

Liam Printer   
The University of Bath, UK

Language Teaching Research  
1–29

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Or are we still tinkering at the  
edges?



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‘Discipline “makes” individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise’ (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 170)

‘Violence as a cultural relation enacted through the disciplining apparatuses of colonialism’ ([Leonardo 2025](#), p. 1105).

‘Transforming the definition of the intellectual as amateur inaugurates a sub specialization in education, namely educational criticism, by troubling, if not abandoning, a long-held belief that teachers should function as experts, whether from the left or right. This is less about disabusing teachers from having expertise, which they clearly have, and more about how they function within education and their relationship with knowledge production.’ ([Leonardo 2025](#), p. 1104).



# Ro Henry-Grant



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<https://research.london.ac.uk/search/student/2424/ro-henry-grant/>



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