

Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria  
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

**Aboubekr Belkaid University - TLEMCEM**

**Faculty of Letters and Languages**

**Department of Foreign Languages**

**ENGLISH Section**

*French and Algerian Arabic in a Bilingual Situation*  
*Case Study of Tlemcen Speech Community*

Dissertation submitted as a partial fulfilment in candidacy  
for the degree of MAGISTER in Sociolinguistics

***Presented by***

Mrs. Farah HASSAINE  
(Née BEN-YELLES)

***Under the Supervision of***

Dr. Z. DENDANE

***Board of examiners***

Pr. Smail BENMOUSSAT	Pr. President	Tlemcen University
Dr. Zoubir DENDANE	MC. Supervisor	Tlemcen University
Dr. Mohamed MELLOUK	MC. Ext. Examiner	Sidi Belabbès University
Dr. Ali BAICHE	MC. Examiner	Tlemcen University
Dr. Ilham SERIR	MC. Examiner	Tlemcen University

***Academic Year 2010-2011***

# Acknowledgements

This modest research work would not have been possible without the support of many people.

From the formative stages of this project, to the final draft, I owe an immense debt of gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Zoubir Dendane for his sage advice, insightful criticisms, and patient encouragement that helped me in writing this dissertation in innumerable ways.

Great appreciation is also extended to both Pr Smail Benmoussat and Mr. Abderrazzak Benzian who were abundantly helpful and offered invaluable assistance, support and guidance.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank those who agreed to be interviewed for, without their time and cooperation, this project would not have been possible.

Deepest gratitude is also due to the board of examiners, Pr S. Benmoussat, Dr M. Mellouk, Dr. A. Baiche and Dr N. Negadi and, of course, my supervisor Dr. Z. Dendane for having taken time to read and comment my modest dissertation.

Special thanks also go to all graduate friends, especially our group members: Razia Mrabet, , Fatema Ader , Amina Benguedda, Linda Boukli, Meriem Mejdoub, El Hadj Saïd Nabila, Faïza Benmansour, Maliha Meziane and Lamia Benadla, for their time and advice when discussing.

I would also like to convey thanks to all the English Department staff especially to Dr Nassim Negadi, Miss Yasmina Abdat for providing me with help and facilities.

I would be careless not to mention my best friend Amina Soulimane, whose extreme generosity will always be remembered.

Finally, I wish to express my love and gratitude to my beloved family for their understanding and endless love throughout my studies.

# Dedications

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family and many friends.

A special feeling of gratitude goes to my loving parents; Fouad and Adiba Benyelles.

To my husband Sofiane and his lovely family.

To my sisters Manila and Myriam and their respectively husbands Samir and Salim for being always there.

To my brother Fadlo and wonderful nephews Cherif ,Nassim and Malik whom they are so special to me.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my grandfather El Korso Ghouti for his invaluable prayers for me.

Finally, this work is dedicated to all those who believe in the richness of learning.

FARAH

# Abstract

This is a micro-sociolinguistic study of bilingualism in Algeria taking the speech community of Tlemcen as a case in point. The study attempts to explain how students in Tlemcen University use the French language as well as their mother tongue, Algerian Arabic, in the context of their studies. Lack of competence and problems in their mastery of French have opened a real field of investigation to approach this problematic issue in relation to many social factors.

By means of a questionnaire and interviews addressed to the students, the data collected are analysed by contribution of the students' attitudes and feelings towards the French language. Also, a comparative study is established between today's students and the 'first' generation, those people who studied French during and right after French colonialism, to show the mastery level of French between the two generations. The study reveals that even if it exists side by side with Arabic in the daily speech of Algerians, French is tightly related to political, educational and social factors.

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	i
Dedications .....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Table of Contents .....	iv
List of Tables .....	vii
List of Figures.....	viii
General Introduction.....	1
<b>Chapter one : Bilingualism and diglossia.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Introduction .....	6
1.2 Causes of bilingualism .....	6
1.2.1 History .....	7
1.2.2 Education .....	8
1.2.3 Economy.....	9
1.3 Bilingualism defined .....	10
1.3.1 The different types of bilingualism .....	12
1.4 Code Switching .....	16
1.4.1 Borrowings .....	18
1.5 Diglossia defined .....	19
1.5.1 Ferguson’s classical diglossia.....	20
1.5.2 Fishman’s extended diglossia.....	23
1.6 Relation between bilingualism and diglossia .....	25
1.6.1 Both diglossia and bilingualism (+D+B).....	25
1.6.2 Diglossia without bilingualism (+D-B).....	26

1.6.3	Bilingualism without diglossia (-D+B) .....	27
1.6.4	Neither bilingualism nor diglossia (-B-D).....	27
1.7	History of the Arabic language in Algeria.....	28
1.7.1	Linguistic colonialism in Algeria .....	31
1.7.2	The linguistic consequences of colonialism .....	33
1.8	Conclusion.....	34
	<b>Chapter two : Today's linguistic situation in Algeria.....</b>	<b>37</b>
2.1	Introduction .....	35
2.2	Today's linguistic situation in Algeria .....	35
2.3	Attitudes to the languages in contact.....	40
2.4	Social variables related to bilingualism.....	41
2.5	The national problem: Arabization.....	43
2.5.1	The official position AA/FR in Algeria.....	47
2.5.1.1	The Mass-Media.....	48
2.5.1.2	Culture .....	48
2.5.1.3	Education .....	49
2.5.1.4	The medium of official Governmental communication .....	50
2.6	Present day community in Algeria .....	51
2.6.1	Classical Arabic (MSA) .....	51
2.6.2	French.....	52
2.6.3	Berber .....	53
2.7	The problems of the multi-lingual Algerian child.....	54
2.7.1	The role of the family .....	55
2.7.2	The school .....	56
2.8	Political conflict between two languages .....	57

2.9	Conclusion.....	60
	<b>Chapter three : Case study of Tlemcen speech community.....</b>	<b>64</b>
3.1	Introduction .....	61
3.2	Questionnaire: aims and procedures.....	62
3.2.1	Data collection.....	64
3.3	Analysis and interpretation of the results .....	67
3.4	Attitudes towards MSA .....	85
3.5	Attitudes towards Algerian Arabic .....	87
3.6	Attitudes towards French.....	88
3.7	Benefits of Multilingualism.....	90
	General conclusion.....	98
	Bibliography.....	102
	Appendices.....	109

# List of Tables

<b>Table 1 :</b> Summary table of psychological dimensions of bilinguality (Hamers & Blanc, 1989).....	15
<b>Table 2 :</b> French Borrowings .....	19
<b>Table 3 :</b> Illustration for diglossic situation (Ferguson 1970) .....	21
<b>Table 4 :</b> Functions of H and L varieties .....	38
<b>Table 5 :</b> Language preferences .....	68
<b>Table 6 :</b> Students' language perception in terms of difficulty .....	69
<b>Table 7 :</b> Students' perception of languages in terms of beauty.....	70
<b>Table 8 :</b> Respondents' degrees of mixing languages .....	71
<b>Table 9 :</b> Necessity of French use in speaking .....	73
<b>Table 10 :</b> Students' language use .....	73
<b>Table 11 :</b> Students' degree of mastering languages .....	74
<b>Table 12:</b> Preferred language to be taught to future children .....	76
<b>Table 13 :</b> For or against purchasing scientific books in French.....	76
<b>Table 14 :</b> Students' views on future dominant language in Algeria .....	77

# List of Figures

<b>Figure 1</b> : Language preferences .....	68
<b>Figure 2</b> : Students' language perception in terms of difficulty .....	69
<b>Figure 3</b> : Students' perception of languages in terms of beauty .....	70
<b>Figure 4</b> : Respondents' degrees of mixing languages .....	72
<b>Figure 5</b> : Necessity of French use in speaking .....	73
<b>Figure 6</b> : Students' language use.....	74
<b>Figure 7</b> : Students' degree of mastering languages.....	75
<b>Figure 8</b> : Preferred language to be taught to future children.....	76
<b>Figure 9</b> : For or against purchasing scientific books in French .....	77
<b>Figure 10</b> : Students' views on future dominant language in Algeria.....	78
<b>Figure 11</b> : The status assigned to French by the first generation .....	79
<b>Figure 12</b> : Participant perception of the synonym of French .....	80
<b>Figure 13</b> : Appreciation of the use of French Language .....	81
<b>Figure 14</b> : The language preferred in reading newspapers .....	82
<b>Figure 15</b> : Use of French Language .....	83

# **General Introduction**

## **General Introduction**

Language arises, exists and possesses meaning only within a speech community. It is the basis of all human communication and can be a great unifier and sociocultural assimilation agent. Moreover, a common language seems to be the instrument which creates union and collective consciousness. It may cut across geographic frontiers, political parties, class barriers and other social distances. However, language sometimes can also be a great divider of social groups as well as a basis for social discrimination and a source of cultural and political antagonism.

As the sociocultural situation changes, similarly language changes. At certain times and under certain circumstances, linguistic changes occur. Many of them are due to social and educational changes; others are the result of all sorts of contacts with other peoples.

The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is a complex domain of research because of the coexistence of many languages: Modern Standard Arabic and the whole array of Arabic dialectal varieties, French, as a pervading second language, and Berber in a number of areas in Algeria. A real metamorphose is operating in Algerian daily speech and this occurs as a result of many variables, in particular sex, age, level of education and social class... This change is mainly due to an important attempt of arabization but unfortunately, the French language is still present in the Algerians' verbal repertoire. The main objective of our work is to show the clash between the Arabic language, the mother tongue and the French language which remains the cause of social and political conflicts among Algerians.

In the present sociolinguistic research, our aim is to study bilingualism among students in Aboubekr Belkaid University. The truth of the complexity and the richness of the sociolinguistic landscape in Algeria has led us to ask many questions about bilingualism and particularly to focus our interests in the practice of bilingual speech among the students.

We have chosen this topic because there are different attitudes about the French language among students and their level of French differs. Hence, our motivation in choosing bilingual students is their significant lack of mastery of French. Even though they are considered as bilinguals, they have many difficulties in the modules or subjects given in French, and some barriers make them stagnate in this language because of different social factors and social motivations behind this lack. However, it is not easy to account for students' attitudes and feelings towards the French language. Sociolinguistic studies alone cannot elucidate such issues as bilingualism is a cognitive, psychological and social phenomenon.

It is worth noting that the French language still occupies a great position in Algeria in many fields: social, economical, educational, administrative...Indeed, French coexists evidently with all Algerian Arabic dialects, on the one hand, and with Modern Standard Arabic, on the other. When asking students about French, we could notice its important place in many domains, whether institutional (MSA vs. Fr) or non institutional (with all the Algerian dialects). This fundamental position of French touches all the daily life of Algerians: students, teachers, politicians, businessmen, etc. And yet, the sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is paradoxical when considering French and the students' attitudes towards this language.

Fundamentally, the following questions are raised:

- What are the main reasons that affect students' level in French?
- Will their positive or negative attitudes toward French affect their academic performance at the university?
- Why don't students reach an adequate level in speaking French, though it has been taught for many years in basic, middle and secondary education? Whose fault is it? Is it the students' lack of interest? Or is the educational system responsible for the low level in French?
- Why do speakers of former generations have a much better command of French, especially those who learned it during and right after colonialism?

Trying to answer these questions, we put forward the following hypotheses:

- Students from rural areas display less competence in French than students from urban areas.
- Students of bilingual education master French more than students who grow up in a rather monolingual milieu.
- Girls are more interested and motivated than boys in using French, and thus show more competence in the language.
- The quality level of teaching French during colonialism and after independence is not the same.
- The language policy of independent Algeria, with the process of arabisation in particular, has played a crucial role in the decline of the level of French.

Mixed with Arabic or plain, the French language is used everywhere in Algeria; but the situation differs from one person to another and from a group to another. At the university, many students use French when speaking about their studies, though it is often mixed with their mother tongue. The switch between French and Algerian Arabic occurs frequently, and many French words and borrowings are used in daily conversation. However, some students are not competent enough in French and have difficulties in communicating in this language, even though they are supposed to be bilinguals. One task in our work is to try to compare students' competence and level in the use of French, not only in their daily conversation, but also in their studies to understand the extent to which they are at ease or not with matters in French.

Investigating attitudes towards French among students is another central interest of this study. Students engage in a simple bilingual conversation because they have a basic capacity to expand their linguistic repertoires, but it is another thing when some others engage in a complex bilingual speech with a perfect mastery of the two languages. In this sense, Muysken (1987:155) explains that "Several studies (Nortier, 1990; Poplack, 1980) have shown that different types of

bilinguals engage in code mixing, but complex mixing is mostly characteristic of speakers with high competence in both languages". This is true, in the case of our informants, those students who show more interest and are motivated in using the French language (whether in everyday conversation or in matters of their studies) without difficulties and show competence both in French and Arabic. However, there are students with no real control of French and show more difficulties and less competence in its use.

Bilingualism, switching, mixing, style shifting and other dual language phenomena are part of a common linguistic behaviour among Algerians. When bilinguals switch between French and Arabic, there might be motivation and reasons for this shift such as, for instance, bilingual students' use of French when there are no appropriate Arabic terms at hand. However, competence among students is significant and depends on many social parameters such as sex, education, social class... Also, the French language can be appropriately used for many other reasons, such as showing one's identity especially among girls or speaking about a particular topic.

In another facet of this work, we attempt to explore differences among students coming from rural and urban areas in terms of their use of French and their competence in the language. The two types of students have different socio-educational backgrounds, and to know how much these major factors affect their competence in French in relation to their academic experience.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter consists in describing the two linguistic phenomena characterizing the Algerian society, bilingualism and diglossia, with some literature review of the main sociolinguistic phenomena mainly diglossia, code switching and borrowing. We also try to distinguish between the different types of bilingualism with some examples from Algerian bilinguals. Then, explain the relation between bilingualism and diglossia from Ferguson's (1959) and Fishman's (1967) points of view. Finally, from a

historical perspective, the existence of different languages in Algeria, mainly French which was brought by the French colonizer.

The second chapter tries to explain at first all the linguistic parameters related to bilingualism, mainly attitudes and social variables; then explaining the French status in Algeria, and how Arabic and French in Algeria coexist.

The third chapter presents and discusses the quantitative data we have collected to come up with results that may answer the questions raised above. Conclusions about students' attitudes and feelings towards the French language are given in this chapter. Students' competence in the use of French depends on many social parameters. An important difference in French competence as recorded in two generations, the young bilingual students at the university and speakers from that generation who learned French during and after colonialism.

**Chapter  
one**

**Bilingualism and  
diglossia**

## **1.1 *Introduction***

Acquiring and using a language other than the mother tongue is the case of a great number of people all over the world. Bilingualism has always been an interesting subject among linguists, psychologists, anthropologists, dialectologists and, later on, sociolinguists. Significant literature has been developed dealing with bilingualism and perspectives about this subject are different depending on which side the matter is studied: psychologists raised questions about the use of two sets of languages by a single individual. Others have dealt with it from an educational perspective because bilingualism allows access to two different cultures. Moreover, the complexity of the coexistence of two different languages in a society leads anthropologists and sociologists to establish a nuance, because attitudes and norms are linked with language and have a direct impact on it as part of culture and society.

Sociolinguists were not content only to define the term bilingualism; they went further and strived to analyze the outcome where two languages are in contact in real situations. Furthermore, bilingualism may originate from various situations and is by no means restricted to any one particular stage of a particular development in a given time of language history.

## **1.2 *Causes of bilingualism***

Prior to any research analysis about bilingualism, we have to understand the concept and try to know the causes of its genesis. The phenomenon of bilingualism has different origins among which history, education and economy are perhaps the most important. A brief explanation can be given for each cause.

### **1.2.1 History**

Bilingualism is often associated with the movement of people. As a consequence, it emerges from the fact that two different groups of people speaking different languages are in contact. Such contact may occur as a result of trade, occupation, traveling, or migration... Nowadays, many people have to be bilingual to be able to communicate like immigrants who have to learn another language in order to work in the country they live in. Another prominent cause of bilingualism is colonisation whose effect might be the most lasting if it last long and if the colonizer's policy is impose their language on the colonized people. This is the case of the French long-term colonialism in Algeria which has resulted today in a persistent type of bilingualism.

The French colonizer imposed the French language in Algeria and it became the language of wider communication even if there were fewer French soldiers but thousands of Algerians whose mother tongue is Arabic. Later on, French became the official language of Algeria during the colonial period. That was the law of 1938 in which the French declared that the Arabic language was considered as a foreign language. In this sense, the dialectologist and colonial administrator William Marçais specifies a number of characteristics that make a language dominate the one it is in contact with: - language of the rulers; opening access to a great modern civilization, a clear language whose written form and oral expression are very close to it. Other traits make the dominated language lose ground: - language of the ruled; it expresses a medieval ideal; it is ambiguous and its written and spoken forms are very different; then the competition is unequal: the first one will inevitably make the second lose ground. Here's what W. Marçais says:

Quand l'une des langues est celle des dirigeants, qu'elle ouvre l'accès d'une grande civilisation moderne, qu'elle est claire, que l'expression écrite et l'expression parlée de la pensée s'y rapprochent au maximum, que l'autre est la langue des dirigés, qu'elle exprime dans ses meilleurs écrits un idéal médiéval, qu'elle est ambiguë, qu'elle revêt quand on l'écrit un autre aspect que quand on la parle, la partie est vraiment inégale : la première doit fatalement faire reculer la seconde . (Cited by Benmesbah, 2003).

Past historical events, such as colonialism and emigration gave birth to bilingualism in various countries. This situation remains true in many colonised and post-colonial countries as in North Africa, Paraguay, Canada, etc...

### **1.2.2 Education**

Education is one of the most important factors leading to bilingualism. The child acquires the vernacular language which he receives and develops at home, and then school helps the child to acquire a foreign language and to perform both languages (first language  $L_1$  and second language  $L_2$ ) during the schooling period from primary to higher education. For example in Algeria, children acquire Algerian Arabic (their mother tongue) at home, then they learn Modern Standard Arabic (hereafter MSA) in the first years of the schooling and later on, along with Arabic they learn French as a foreign language.

Religion is also another important factor in the spread of a language: the Qur'an helped the spread of the Arabic language, Christianity helped the propagation of Latin, Greek and Syriac languages and so Jewish helped the spread of Hebrew. In this respect, Granguillaume (1979) explains that the Arabic language which is known as Quranic language , Classical Arabic or today Modern Standard Arabic (a simplified version of Classical Arabic) owes its presence to Islam and the sacred book Qur'an. Muslims are tightly related by this divine language of their religion that makes their Arabo-Islamic identity unified, as he (1979:13) said:

En ce qui concerne le Maghreb, il est certain que la langue arabe coranique est transmettrice de mythes. On peut même dire qu'elle transmet le récit de la légitimité radicale pour la majeure partie de l'opinion.

Another recent factor which plays an important role in developing the bilingual receptive skill, especially among children, is television; that is to say, children are attracted by some French programs particularly cartoons, so they start to imitate the characters and therefore the language used.

### **1.2.3 Economy**

Trade and commerce are other causes of bilingualism because they lead to the movement of people from rural areas where only one language or dialect is spoken to cities where another language is used. People from rural areas are attracted more and more by big cities because of better conditions of life. Therefore, the linguistic outcome is an increase in bilingualism, particularly if all business is conducted in the 'other' language.

Today, across a multiplicity of social, political and economic determinants, bilingualism results from accepting the power structure of the international language of economy over the world. Indeed, English language is spoken by over one billion people in the world, among whom about one third have English as their mother tongue as Benmoussat (2007:100) explains:

The English language is undisputedly the world's prime international language. It is the language of inter-national diplomacy and business negotiations, of academic conferences and scientific research. Global air-traffic and maritime control is carried out in English. This worldwide recognition could also be explained in terms of overall balance of world power and the extent to which the language is found outside its original setting.

These are briefly some causes of bilingualism. Let us now define the concept *bilingualism*, a term which can lead to confusion unless its use is clearly defined.

### ***1.3 Bilingualism defined***

Bilingualism is the standard term for the use of two languages by an individual speaker or a group of people. The terms bilingual and bilingualism cover a wide range of situations and communities. Thus, bi- in bilingualism implies only two languages and in case of multilingualism there are more than two languages.

In popular usage, one may say that a person is bilingual when he speaks two languages no matter to what degree, while the term multilingualism is appropriate when it is the matter of more than two languages. A country like Canada may be referred to as bilingual whereas Switzerland and India are multilingual.

We shall need to consider the problems of bilingualism in somewhat more details although the subject is so vast and only some aspects can be dealt with. A corollary of this, it is difficult to say at what point of mastery one can talk of someone being bilingual. Therefore, definitions of bilingualism vary widely depending on the angle it is approached. In trying to answer the question ‘What is bilingualism?’, Baetens Beardsmore’s, (1982:1) argues that “Bilingualism as a term has open-ended semantics”.

Bilingualism was long regarded as the equal mastery of two languages. Thus linguists’ definitions of bilingualism are divergent to the question of degree. Weinreich (1953) defines bilingualism simply as ‘the practice of alternately using two languages’. Similarly, Mackey (1962:52) defines bilingualism as “The ability to use more than one language”. In contrast Bloomfield (1933:55) and Haugen (1953:7) proposed respectively the following definitions: bilingualism is the “native-like control of two languages” and “the point where a speaker can first produce complete and meaningful utterances in the other language”. Here, one could understand these definitions differently from the one of Bloomfield’s perfect use of a foreign language with the mother tongue, to Mackey’s and Weinreich’s and Haugen’s lack of competence or simply the practice of two languages.

Though in bilingualism language competence is very important, the assessment of bilingualism lies not only on social factors but also on individual skills which are relevant when discussing the performance of bilinguals who are part of a wider socio-cultural milieu which has a direct impact on communication in the society.

What complicates the definition of bilingualism is the issue of degree. Simply put “degree of bilingualism refers to the levels of linguistic proficiency a bilingual must achieve in both languages” (Chin and Wigglesworth, 2007:5). Here, any layman could wonder if a bilingual person is a person who knows at least a word or some expressions in the foreign language and therefore, the definitions of linguists such as Haugen (1953) Mackey (1962) and Bloomfield (1933) are applied and equal the views expressed by ordinary people.

Recent efforts have led sociolinguists to crack the nutshell in defining bilingualism and debates are still developing in this matter. According to Hoffmann (1991), bilingualism should be viewed as a continuum with no clear cut-off point; that is to say, broadly speaking, the earlier definitions which tend to restrict bilingualism to the equal native-like mastery of two languages and narrowly speaking, the later definitions which allow for much variation in competence of a bilingual person. Indeed, Myers-Scotton (2006) claims that there is no accepting formula for exactly what is necessary for a person to claim to be bilingual. Similarly, Macnamara (1996) focuses the need to discuss the competence of bilingualism not as a social unity but as a single degree of a person taking into account the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Competence is seen as a continuum at the individual level, the bilingual who undertakes different degrees of competence in each of the four skills. In this sense Edward (1994: 37) explains :

Consider further the possible subdivisions: speaking skill, for example, includes what may be quite divergent levels of expression in vocabulary, grammar and accent. In fact there are about 20 elements here, all of which figure in the assessment of bilingualism; and – as any cursory regard to ‘bilingual’ speech quickly demonstrates – it does not follow that strength in one means strength in another.

For a better understanding of the subject, one can ask some questions to clarify to what extent a person is bilingual:

- What is the person’s proficiency in each language?
- How do people become bilingual?
- When and where do people use both languages?

However, if we consider that the person is bilingual, we could wonder whether:

- The bilingual person has a slight non-native accent in one or both languages ;
- The bilingual person could make occasional errors of syntax in one or both languages ;
- The bilingual person may speak both languages fluently but prefers only one language.

Accordingly, to answer such questions and to understand better the bilingual’s capacity in one or the other language.

### **1.3.1 The different types of bilingualism**

The distinction between different kinds of bilingualism refers essentially to the importance of identifying different groups of bilinguals and also the ways in which we could assess an individual’s developing bilingualism. Just as bilingualism could be defined from different points of view, different types of bilingual and bilingualism exist. The first set of description refers to the way in which we may describe bilingual proficiency. ‘Balanced’ bilingual is a term used to refer to a person who, in all contexts, can function equally well in either language, that is, a

speaker who is fully competent in both languages. Such individual belongs to those who are thought to have a perfect control of both languages in all contexts. The term ‘balanced bilingual’ was first used by Lambert *et al.* (1956) in Canada; but this case is very rare. Other terms have been used for this type, depending on linguists: ‘Ambilingual’, ‘Equilingual’, or ‘Dominant’ bilinguals.

However the reverse is true where a person has some functional abilities in a second language but does not master, and/or has some degree of fluency in one language and not in the other language. Here, we may refer to such bilinguals as ‘receptive’ (or passive) bilinguals as opposed to ‘productive’ (or active) bilinguals. The difference here is between those who understand a language but cannot express it, and those who can do both.

Another important distinction is between ‘additive’ and ‘subtractive’ bilingualism. Additive bilinguals use both languages in an equal and useful value in a prestigious sense, whereas subtractive bilingualism occurs when one language dominates the other.

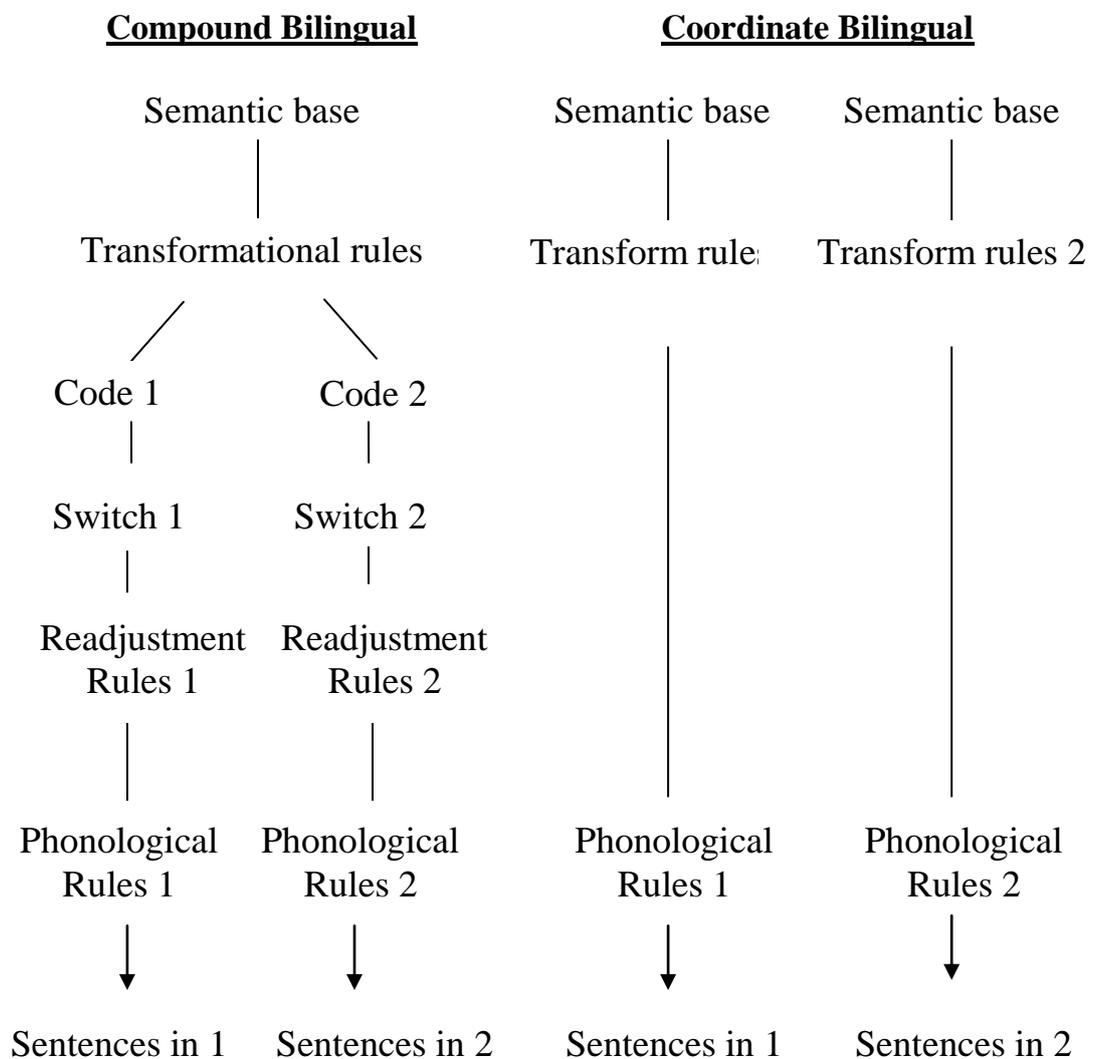
‘Primary’ and ‘secondary’ bilingualism are also terms which can be encountered as sociolinguistic concepts. Children naturally acquire their mother tongue, whereas secondary bilingualism is when they acquire a foreign language systematically and through formal instruction. In all cases of bilingualism types, competence is the rule, as Hamers and Blanc (1983:27) explain:

The dimension of competence enables us to take into account the relative nature of bilinguality, since it focuses on the relationship between two linguistic competences, one in each language.

Moreover, the distinction among bilinguals was brought to the attention of psychologists by Weinreich (1953) and was further elaborated by Ervin and Osgood (1954). This distinction is between ‘coordinate’ and ‘compound’ bilinguals. The coordinate bilingual is someone who, for example, learns one language at home and

another at school. He/ she will use the two languages for different purposes in different settings, whereas, the second term, ‘compound bilingual’, concerns someone who is at ease in both languages in any field. He/ she will have learnt both languages at the same time in childhood education or at home, when the two languages are used by the parents.

This distinction between two kinds of bilingualism refers essentially to the semantic aspects of language. In transformational grammar terms, the coordinate bilingual has two semantic bases, each joined to language specific input and output systems, whereas the compound bilingual has a single semantic base joined to two input and two output mechanisms. The figure below illustrates the two models:



(Source T. BELL. *Sociolinguistics* 1976: 119)

However, most scholars would agree that a bilingual need not have perfect command of both languages but can rather be defined as an individual who has learned some of the elements of the second language or dialect<sup>3</sup>. (Rubin 1968:18). This is an extremely useful definition because it allows us to understand the process of becoming a bilingual and focus on the ability to communicate instead of the perfection of the linguistic skill.

Here is a table summarizing the different types of bilinguals in relation to different psychological and social dimensions of bilinguality proposed by Hamers and Blanc (1983:26):

Dimension	Type of bilinguality
1. according to competence in both languages	(a) balanced bilinguality (b) dominant bilinguality
2. according to cognitive organization	(a) compound bilinguality (b) coordinate bilinguality
3. according to age of acquisition	(a) childhood bilinguality : i. simultaneous ii. consecutive (b) adolescent bilinguality (c) adult bilinguality
4. according to presence of L <sub>2</sub> community in environment	(a) endogenous bilinguality (b) exogenous bilinguality
5. according to the relative status of the two languages	(a) additive bilinguality (b) subtractive bilinguality
6. according to group membership and cultural identity	(a) bicultural bilinguality (b) L <sub>1</sub> monocultural bilinguality (c) L <sub>2</sub> acculturated bilinguality (d) deculturated bilinguality

**Table 1** : Summary table of psychological dimensions of bilinguality (Hamers & Blanc, 1989)

Bilinguals are known for their ability to mix their languages or code switch when they speak. This phenomenon occurs during communication, when bilinguals use or substitute a word or a phrase from one language with a phrase or a word from another language. This is the case of most Algerians, who switch and mix Algerian Arabic (AA) with French in every day speech communication. Situations and settings are different, and Algerian bilinguals switching depends on many parameters. Some switch only when they forget a word and/or speak in French for one minute and then continue in AA or vice versa. Others start their conversation in French and continue in AA and so on. We can find many ‘passive’ bilinguals in Algeria, whose competence in French is almost non-existent but use some French words and could understand some expressions. Thus the term ‘passive’ bilingual can be applied for the category of ‘non fluent’ bilinguals. However, ‘receptive’ or ‘active’ Algerian bilinguals can produce and understand the French language easily. In Algeria, nowadays, some people have lost the knowledge of much MSA and French, and sometimes they know neither French nor Arabic words. Such a state has been termed ‘semilingualism’ by some linguists to show a relative skill weakness in both languages.

### ***1.4 Code Switching***

When two populations come into contact, their social and cultural activities will certainly influence each other. In many bilingual speech communities, persons who have some knowledge of the other language get used to switching between the two. Code-switching is defined as the use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversation or interaction. The switch may be only in one word or for longer stretches of speech.

In Algeria, knowing that it is a bilingual country where French is used in many domains and in everyday speaking situations, the Algerian dialect is characterized by a lot of French words and even expressions. ‘Switching’ is a common characteristic of Algerian speech. Here, two questions can be raised:

1. What are the factors which lead to code switching?
2. And how does a person manage to switch from one language to another?

Some believe that the main reason for code switching is lack and insufficiency to go on in the opening language, or that the selection of words in code switching from one language rather than another is more or less random (Myers Scotton, 1993). For instance, in Algeria an educated person will change his/her language in social intercourse. If he/she is with friends or relatives he/she knows their language preference and adopts accordingly. If he/she is with a group of people he/she does not know well, language choice will be based on particular factors such as: age, gender, status and educational level.

People usually switch constantly and unconsciously from language to language even with the family. In each instance, Algerians identify themselves with a different speech network to which they belong. Usually, they converse in their own dialect at home and with friends, though that dialect, AA, might be characterized with a great number of French borrowings and French expressions. However, there are occasions at home when they communicate in French, for instance, during a discussion between sisters and brothers, etc.

Many Algerian educated people have acquired the habit of speaking about specific topics in the French language. The reasons for that are mainly connected with education and domains they work in because French is the language in which they were trained to deal with this topic. For instance, a great number of lawyers, politicians, economists, converse in French. Sometimes they use French because

they lack the knowledge of MSA and the Algerian dialects lack the specialized terms adequate for the discussion.

Thus, switching and mixing for bilinguals are in principle not different from using words that do not belong to the native tongue. Frequently, people utilize some foreign or borrowed words consciously or unconsciously from the second language.

### ***1.4.1* Borrowings**

In Algeria, where many populations mainly French, Spanish and Italians, came into contact in the colonial periods either antagonistically or for trade, the exchange transactions, were rather one-sided. Their social and cultural activities will certainly influence each other. Since all the social activities are linguistically mediated, the respective languages will react upon each other, particularly in the form of borrowing.

Not only have the Algerians done most of the borrowing, they have also had to adopt the conquerors' language. Therefore, as a result of continuous daily contact with French during the colonial period and later, the Algerian dialects are now characterized as having a lot of French words and expressions. Some Spanish words may be heard particularly in the western part of the country (Oran, Ghazaouet, etc...) because of the Spanish trade or conquest that occurred before the French arrival. But it was the French language which penetrated the population to the extent that today it may be considered as a second language.

Both educated and illiterate people use a lot of French words in their everyday conversation, often making them sound like Arabic words. Here is a table where some examples of borrowing words from French language are used unconsciously in daily Algerian speech.

Algerian Arabic	French	MSA	English
kuzina	cuisine	maṭbaḥ	kitchen
fərʃeṭa	fourchette	ʃu:ka	fork
ṭabla	table	mæ:ʔida	table
köʒe	congé	ʃoṭla	holiday
villa	villa	manzil	cottage
bys	bus	hæ:fila	bus
əlloṭo	auto (mobile)	sija:ra	car
bartšo	par-dessus	miʃta:f	coat
brönze	bronzé		suntanned

**Table 2 :** French Borrowings

Haugen explained a category of borrowings called ‘loanblend’. In such a case, one part is borrowed and the other belongs to the original language (Romaine 1989: 52). This is the case in Algeria where borrowings or loanblend are adapted to Arabic grammar, for example in the word: kuzina, Algerians say [kuzinaat], the plural form by using the plural suffix of Arabic grammar {a: t}.

In the Algerian speech community, borrowing and code switching are common phenomena between French and Algerian Arabic. Another characteristic of the Arabic world in general and Algeria in particular is the use of dialectal Arabic (mother tongue) in daily speech and MSA in particular situations.

### ***1.5 Diglossia defined***

Diglossia is one of the most important linguistic characteristics of the Arabic-speaking world. The term ‘diglossia’ was first introduced by Emmanuel Roidis and Psychari Yaniss (1828) who described Modern Greece situation where two languages or varieties : Katharevousa and Demotiki were in use for different purposes in Greece (Boyer:1996). Later on, it was the French linguist W. Marçais who introduced the term ‘diglossie’ in 1930 to characterize the use of two types of Arabic in different settings. Then, it was the North American linguist Ferguson

(1959) who popularized the concept by studying communities where two varieties of the same language were used in ‘complementary distribution’, i.e. for different functions and in different contexts. He showed that in the Arabic speaking countries, there is a High variety and a Low one of the same language filling different functions in society. The High variety (H ) is used in formal situations and for the medium of instruction, while, the Low variety (L), the colloquial form of Arabic is used in everyday speech context and at home. Likewise, Fasold (1984:40) explains that diglossia “refers to the distribution of more than one language variety to serve different communicational tasks in a society.”

### ***1.5.1* Ferguson’s classical diglossia**

In order to fully understand the phenomenon of diglossia, we propose an explanation of this particular situation in Arabic speech communities; underlying mainly what Ferguson (1959) explains about some typical characteristics of diglossia which were classified as follows: function, prestige, acquisition, standardization, stability, grammar, lexicon, and phonology.

In a diglossia situation, each variety of the language has very specific functions. This is known as the specialisation of function for the L and H varieties of the language. In one set of situations, only H is appropriate and in another only L, with the two sets overlapping slightly. As an illustration Ferguson gives a table suggesting the possible situations, with the indication of the variety normally used:

<b>Situations</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>L</b>
Sermon in Mosque	X	
Instructions to servants, workers		X
Personal letter	X	
Speech in parliament	X	
University lecture	X	
Conversation with family, friends, colleagues		X
News broadcast	X	
Radio		X
Newspaper editorial	X	
Caption on political cartoon		X
Poetry	X	
Folk literature		X

**Table 3 :** Illustration for diglossic situation (Ferguson 1959)

From this table, we observe that H and L are strictly divided according to their functions. Thus, the H variety is employed for writing, formal speech and education. The L variety is intended for private life. It is acquired as the mother tongue and is not subjected to any normative control.

However, the situation in formal education is sometimes more complicated than is indicated here. For instance, in the Arab world, formal University lectures are given in H but explanations may in a large part be given in L, especially with scientific and technical subjects.

Moreover, in secondary schools, a considerable part of the teacher is taken up with explaining in L the meaning of material in H which has been presented in books, programmes...etc. this will be exemplified through the Algerian case which we shall deal with later on in the present study.

The speakers in this particular situation regard the H as superior and sometimes even deny the existence of L. Thus, H has a high prestige value and consequently is considered to be superior to L. Indeed, in Arabic communities, if a speaker is not fluent in H he is considered as ignorant of Arabic. This belief in the superiority of H is connected either with a belief that the H variety is more logical and more beautiful, or with religious regards.

The parents use L with their children. Thus, the L variety is the first to be learned by children at home. H variety is heard by children from time to time, but this variety is learned only when children enter school. We observe a distinction in the method of acquisition. The grammatical structure of H is learned in terms of 'rules' to be imitated while the grammar of L variety is learned spontaneously without explicit explanation of grammatical rules.

Standardization is another important characteristic of diglossia. In some languages such Arabic and Modern Greek there is a strong tradition of grammatical study of the H form of the language and there are grammars, dictionaries, treatises on pronunciation and style. In the case of Arabic, the Classical variety or MSA is highly codified with well established norms for all levels of speech, namely grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. However, the colloquial variety does not possess written standard norms for speech. This accounts for the wide variation encountered at all levels when dealing with the colloquial form.

In Arabic for example, the colloquial variety differs in many ways even within the same country; while the Classical form is more or less similar all over the Arab world. According to Ferguson diglossia is a relatively stable language situation which will persist for several centuries provided the society is stable.

The grammatical structure is one of the most striking differences between H and L: H has an inflectional system which is much reduced or not present in L variety and has grammatical categories absent in the L variety. The H variety has a

greater morphological complexity. For instance in the case of Arabic the H variety has three cases in the noun, marks by endings, the colloquial variety has none.

Generally speaking, the greater part of the vocabulary of H and L variety is shared. However, the H variety includes in its lexicon technical terms and expressions which have no L variety equivalents. The L variety includes in its lexicon popular expressions and some nouns which are absent in the H variety.

Ferguson states that it is rather difficult to propose any generalization on the relationship between the phonology of H and that of L in diglossia in view of the diversity of the data. He explains that H and L phonologies may be moderately distinct as in Arabic; or quite similar as in Greek.

In the case of Arabic, the H form tends to be more standardised while the L variety allows greater dialect variation.

Now that we have outlined the main characteristic of diglossia, let move to Ferguson's definition of diglossia which sums up its main features:

Diglossia is a relatively stable situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include standard or regional standard), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community or ordinary conversation.

### **1.5.2 Fishman's extended diglossia**

After Ferguson (1959) introduced for the first time the term 'diglossia' in sociolinguistics; some linguists, psychologists and sociologists treated this phenomenon in another way of thinking relating diglossia not only to the Arab world or to the other cases mentioned by Ferguson, but also to bilingual societies.

To evoke languages in contact phenomena, the term bilingualism was, for long alone available. Thus, it was used for describing the use of two distinct languages by an individual for specific purposes. However, significant considerations joined the two concepts bilingualism and diglossia and made the distinction of the social aspect.

Gumperz (1961, 1962, 1964 a, 1964b, 1966), was the first to remark that diglossia exists not only in multilingual societies which officially recognize several ‘languages’, and not only in societies that utilize vernacular and classical varieties but also in societies which employ separate dialects, registers, or functionally differentiated varieties of whatever kind.

Thus, we can claim that diglossia exists in regard to the English speaking communities in countries like Britain or U.S.A, where various sociolects, styles or registers are used for different functions. To support this last example, we only need a sample X of formal speech with a sample Y of informal speech. Indeed, from this distinction, differences will be reflected not only in syntax and in the range of lexicon, but also in actual lexical items. However, this example does not fit Ferguson’s cases. It is not relevant to an understanding of the situation in Algeria between L (AA) and H (MSA).

On the other hand, Fishman (1967) considers the notion of diglossia from a point of view of an entire society. He works on the relationship between two distinct languages mainly Europeans societies, which had an important centre of interest. Indeed, the linguistic differences must be functionally distinguished and the degree of individual bilingualism is an important typological criterion.

## 1.6 *Relation between bilingualism and diglossia*

Fishman (1972) extends the concept of diglossia and discusses the interrelationship of diglossia and bilingualism as shown in the four-fold table below (Fishman 1972:93)

		Diglossia	
		+	-
Bilingualism +	1/Both D and B	2/B without D	
	3/D without B	4/Neither D nor B	

### 1.6.1 **Both diglossia and bilingualism (+D+B)**

The first category refers to a situation in which a large proportion of the population over the world can operate in more than one nationally recognized code. There is not only a functional division between the codes, but an agreement that one is to be more valued than the other. Fishman suggests that there are a few nations in this category. This situation seems to be exemplified by Paraguay (Rubin, 1968) where more than half of the population speaks both Spanish and Guarani as H and L respectively; and by the Swiss German/ Standard German of German speaking cantons, by the Colloquial / Classical of the Arab world and the French speaking part of Canada where English and French have H and L functions respectively in certain interactions.

Fishman (1971b: 27) claims that the typical +D+B situation is one where there is "...a fairly large and complex speech community such that its members have available to them both a range of compartmentalized roles as well as ready access to these roles..."

Here, a distinction between intragroup and intergroup +D+B would be useful. The former group will be symbolised, for instance by the Arabic speaking countries where both Modern Standard Arabic and a local variety of Arabic are used for communication among members of the general speech community. The latter group will be represented by the Montreal case where the French speaking community mainly uses French for intragroup communication and English for conversation with non-speakers of French, although, it is the case that some native speakers of French communicate in English on certain scientific topics. Another example of Puerto Ricans; who use English or Spanish according to the domain: English for religion and education; Spanish for home and friendship.

### **1.6.2 Diglossia without bilingualism (+D-B)**

Examples of this situation could be found in many European countries in the pre-world war era (Fishman 1971) where European elites used French or German as the H languages and the local language as the L form. In language communities of this type there is a strict functional distinction of language varieties according to H and L variants. For instance, in a community X, the elite ruling forces live apart from the 'ordinary' people and intentionally differentiate their language from that of the masses. The social differences between the two groups are clearly established and there is little interaction between them. Generally speaking, it is the language of the stronger group that is accepted as the official language of the community.

It seems that similar language situations are often observed in colonial countries, with the H language being that of the colonial power and the L language(s) being spoken by the local population.

Another example related to this category, is given by Verdoodt (1972:44), in Alsace and Eastern Lorraine where there is “upper-class speaking French and a lower-class speaking a German dialect, each with a language appropriate to its own restricted concern”.

### **1.6.3 Bilingualism without diglossia (-D+B)**

Here, Fishman (1971 b) raises the significant point that “ Bilingualism is essentially a characterization of the social allocation of functions to different languages or varieties”. Verdoodt (1972) offers an example of East-Belgium where the situation is not diglossic in spite of the fact that there is a functional separation between the functions that the Dutch speaker is likely to play in that language and in French, since there is no agreement amongst Belgians that either language is H or L. Moreover, a legal statement of this situation is symbolized by the co-equal national official status of both languages.

### **1.6.4 Neither bilingualism nor diglossia (-B-D)**

This type is now rarely found and slowly dying out. According to Fishman (1971 b), “only very small, isolated and undifferentiated speech communities may be said to reveal neither bilingualism nor diglossia”. He also explains that this type is easier to hypothesize than to find.

In dealing with bilingualism and diglossia we have limited our analysis to some of their characteristics. The reason for this is that the two concepts are two ‘wild’ to be discussed satisfactorily in a few pages.

Before going into the discussion of the manifestation of multilingualism in Algeria, the next part of this study will be devoted to a brief history of the linguistic situation in Algeria.

### ***1.7 History of the Arabic language in Algeria***

Algeria experienced multiple vicissitudes during its history. Because it suffered from so many invasions, it is not an easy task to ascertain precisely the origins of the Algerian population as a whole. The original inhabitants of Algeria were the Berbers whose ancient historical origins are still obscure. Over the centuries, many conquerors came to the Maghreb in general, but few had succeeded to establish permanent empires. Prior to French colonialism, the most significant invasions of Algeria were those of the Romans, the Vandals, the Byzantines, the Arabs, and the Turks. Of these, the Arab invasions of the 7th and 11th centuries left the most important cultural traces on people. Okba Ibn Nafi was one of the Arab leaders in the middle of the 7th century who introduced their civilization dominated by the Arabic language and Islam. Until the coming of Banu Hilal, the invasion of Arabs brought about extensive 'Islamisation' and 'Arabisation' and brought Arabs from Arabia to North Africa.

In the 12th century, the Arabs participated in the development of art and science and therefore to the innovation of architecture in some cities and this was done by a national culture and the use of a national language: Arabic. This was witnessed by the data collected before 1830.

As a consequence of the 'Reconquista' and the religious intolerance in Spain, many Muslims left Andalusia and came to settle in the Maghreb. This was followed by the settlement of the Spanish as conquerors in the 15th century. The Spanish presence in Algeria was concentrated mainly in the West and the coastal areas which were known for trade and commerce. However, the Spanish were confronted

by the famous ‘Barbarossa Brothers’, the Turkish who came to help the Muslims of the Maghreb, in defeating and ousting the Spanish from Algeria. They are the link between the Maghreb and the Ottoman Turks. In 1830, Algeria was still part of the Ottoman Empire. Turks, Kouloughlis (descendants of Turks married to Arab women), Moorish Andalousians expelled from Spain, Arabs and Berbers constituted the population.

In this respect, Queffelec *et al.* (2002: 26) said:

Les Maures andalous expulsés d’Espagne (...) qui, fort nombreux à Nédroma, Tlemcen, Médéa et Miliana, forment la bourgeoisie, (Bourdieu, 1970 :65), ont pour activités le commerce, l’exploitation.

Algeria was an exploited colony ruled by the Turks and some natives; stability gained ground in all domains and this during two centuries as *Queffelec et al* (2002) explains:

Le Maghreb central sous domination Turque connaît alors deux siècles de stabilité administrative, économique, politique et culturelle jusqu’à 1830, année qui vit l’Algerie subir l’invasion des troupes françaises.

The beginning of the long struggle was caused by the famous incident called ‘Le coup d’éventail’<sup>1</sup> between the last Turkish Dey and the French consul in 1827 and this led to the invasion of Algiers by the French whose expedition started at Sidi Ferruch in June 1830.

The new conquerors were going to implement a new culture and consequently a new language. In that period, the Algerian linguistic situation was complex and the French task to impose their language was however difficult; in fact many languages existed in Algeria: Arabic (native language, it was taught in the Koranic schools known as the Zawiyet and Medariss) Berber and French. In this sense, Queffelec *et al.* (2002) explained that the succession of the invasions and the occupation of the maritime counters and the great agglomeration involve the establishment of languages and various linguistic dialects.

<sup>1</sup> *Le coup d’éventail: In 1827, The Turkish Dey hit the French consul Duval with his fly-whisk.*

The French leaders in Algeria were puzzled by the urgent need to choose the language of communication. In 1932, the Duke of Rovigo imposed the French language as the language of instruction to reinforce their domination in Algeria. He claimed that: “The real prodigy to operate will be to replace progressively Arabic by French”, (Quoted in Calvet). Also, Genty de Bussy (1932) claimed that it was more urgent to teach French to Algerians than to teach Arabic to French people. Arabic was marginalized and the implementation of French as the medium of instruction started progressively in public schools and other domains such as commerce, administration...etc

Arabic would only be useful for communication with Africans. However, the new language: French will be not only the key to Algerians to be able to converse but also an opening door to the French civilization<sup>2</sup>. Genty de Bussy explains that beyond Arabic was nothing but a language, French was of higher value, he says:

Au-delà de l'Arabe, il n'y a rien que la langue ; au-delà du Français, il y a tout ce que les connaissances humaines, tout ce que les progrès de l'intelligence ont entassée depuis tant d'années. (1835: 75)

On the other hand, according to Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, Arabic was already the language of universal science. A few centuries before, young Europeans used to cross the Mediterranean Sea to learn Arabic in Andalusia. In that period, Arabic was the only medium which gave access to research in sciences such as mathematics, chemistry, medicine, astronomy, etc.

To summarize, the French invaders in Algeria harshly imposed the French language and culture in spite of all the varieties that existed in Algeria at that period. The French authorities succeeded a total domination, blanking out the indigenous language, by enforcing laws and intensive instruction to introduce French everywhere. In doing this, France aimed at breaking the Arabo-Islamic identity and at changing it radically.

---

<sup>2</sup> M.G Blottière (1933 : 74) : *Publication du comité national métropolitain du centenaire de l'Algérie. Cahier du centenaire de l'Algérie.*

In what follows, we shall deal with the resistance of Algerians in front of the enemy to maintain and keep their land, identity and language; then, we shall examine the major factors that produced linguistic changes in Algeria.

### **1.7.1 Linguistic colonialism in Algeria**

During the whole colonial period, the French invaders tried to destroy the personality of the Arab inhabitants by acting upon the language. Not surprisingly, the French system was one of discrimination against the Algerian culture and language since Algeria is proud of that sacred Arabic language, the language of Islam which was taught in all places (Mosques, medersas and zaouiyas...). The French strived to eliminate this sacred patrimony. In this respect Queffélec et al. (2002) admits that the educational system in pre-colonial Algeria, based on the religious principles of Islam, made up the foundations of the Algerian society. It was that system of education that the French army decided to consider as the first target to destroy, and they succeeded to a large extent...

Le système éducatif de l'Algérie précoloniale basé sur les principes religieux de l'Islam constituait le fondement de la société algérienne dont il régulait les aspects religieux, culturels, sociaux, économiques et politiques. Son importance était telle dans le bon fonctionnement de la société qu'il fut la première cible de l'armée coloniale qui élimina presque tous les établissements scolaires (écoles coraniques, médersas) et édifices religieux (zaouïas, mosquées). (2002)

Progressively, the French closed all mosques where Arabic culture was taught. France wanted to abolish the Arabo-Islamic culture completely. This is considered as a crime by A.Taleb Ibrahimi (1976). Such a policy was, of course, intended to make the conquest secure and to promote political solidarity.

However, the efforts made to suppress the Algerians' mother tongue were crucial for the French antagonism. The French virtual thought on favouring the

prohibition of the Arabic language was a symbol of their spiritual independence and unity. Moreover, social and psychological tensions were created between the two sides especially when the French language had been forcibly imposed in public communication and schools. The Algerians used their mother tongue at home and a standard form of Arabic in their religious prayers. This opposition encouraged the Algerian's desire for the use of their language as a symbol of their violated national or ethnic being.

The history of Algeria 'starts' in 1830 (A.T Ibrahimi 1976:14). Under the French occupation, Algerians lost their dignity and were subject to depersonalization. Indeed, some Algerian children had less chance of gaining entry to French schools; even if they did get in, they sometimes left the primary school at an early age to help their fathers to make a living. In spite of all attempts of assimilation done by the French, the Algerians were faithful to their legacy, the Arabic language, but started to send their children to French schools acting in favour of the future of their children to learn the language of the enemy and therefore to use it against them to be armed in front of such situation. They also started to be aware that French is a language of emancipation in all domains. French was presented as a positive element, a modern language with a fruitful future.

At that time, people were unaware that before Descartes, there was Ghazali and before Vico there was Ibn Khaldoun, as Queffélec et al. (2002:11) claims:

“L’histoire de l’Algérie ne commence pas avec la révolte de l’Emir Abd el-Kader et encore moins à partir des invasions pré-hilaliennes du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle ‘’.

During colonialism, the Algerians were inculcated with a French culture learned at public schools. And this was the way Algerians contributed indirectly to the distraction of their cultural patrimony, which was in due course replaced by French culture. In part, because of force and discrimination, the 20th century

Algerian had in some cases become that colonial stereotype: uneducated, unemployed and psychologically hostile.

In what follows, we shall deal with the great linguistic traces left by the French colonialism.

### **1.7.2 The linguistic consequences of colonialism**

After independence in 1962, Algeria faced serious economic, political, social and cultural problems. The linguistic question concerning of the official state language was one of those problems. To impose linguistic unity on the Algerian nation was a gigantic task; at the same time politicians realized the necessity and urgency of this task. As a result of historical events, Algeria is a nation of many languages, namely: Berber, Arabic and French.

It is evident that in an independent multilingual country the choice of one language over and above the others as the national and official tongue may lead to national strife. Indeed, choosing one of these languages would seem to favour one group against the others, but to choose French would seem to favour those with education in French; in any case, it would hardly be a symbol of nationhood for a North African state. The idea of adopting Berber as the official language was rejected on the basis that it does not possess the same cultural prestige as Arabic. As a result, the Algerian government argued that MSA must be adopted because it connects the community with its glorious past and with other Arabic-speaking societies. That was not a hard choice of the Algerian government after independence, to re-introduce MSA in administration, education, and government because Arabic is the language of Islam and the one used by the whole Maghreban countries. However, the hard task relied on the will of Algerians, because many of them, mainly educated ones, were taught in French. Also, the crucial problem was to find those Arabic teachers who master MSA, to teach and re-educate all Algerians in Arabic, this sacred, and at that time, lost language.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

Bilingualism in Algeria is not a hazardous linguistic phenomenon; it is the consequence of a long French settlement in the Algerian territories. In spite of the Algerian's linguistic richness, that is, the coexistence of many Algerian and Berber dialects with the French language, people are still confused whether the French language is part or not of their everyday speech. However, the status of French is also ambiguous; some people say that it is a foreign language and others say that it is evidently a second language. Nevertheless, Algerian bilinguals differ and the mastery of French depends on many social parameters in Algeria; putting apart borrowings where people used many French words in their daily life without being, actually conscious of their use.

After Algeria's independence (1962), the whole country was in troubles because of many changes left by the French people. The Algerian governments' reaction must be rushed up to build a new instruction; keeping the Arabo-Islamic identity and erasing all kinds of colonial traces especially, the French language. That was not a simple task for Algerians. To succeed in arabising the country, we need to fill in the gap which separates the two languages, which is not an easy task, but great efforts were made to solve the linguistic problems. The development of education and the mass media will certainly remedy these problems.

**Chapter**

**two**

**Today's linguistic  
situation in Algeria**

## 2.1 Introduction

As a result of its particular history, Algeria has developed a complex linguistic profile with Arabic and its regional varieties in most of the country, Berber dialects in a number of areas and French as a functional secondary language, a legacy of the colonial period. This language situation gives rise to serious problems that warrant a special study. Algeria can be considered an approximation to a bilingual and diglossic nation. The majority of Algerians could be considered bilingual and diglossic to a certain degree because they speak both Arabic and French and because of dialect adjustments that many people make when moving to different cities. Arabic, French and all Algerians dialects, including Berber varieties, constitute a real mosaic which allowed in a way the expansion and maintenance of French in Algeria.

## 2.2 Today's linguistic situation in Algeria

Algerian bilingualism denotes particular linguistic characteristics. It is practiced in different ways by the majority of Algerians, by intellectuals as well as illiterate people. Therefore, the Algerian population can be divided into several sociolinguistic strata: educated, uneducated and semi-educated bilinguals.

Educated bilinguals: they speak both the local dialect and standard French. This is defined by Meillet (1934) as 'le bilinguisme des hommes cultivés'. The two languages play different parts in their lives. Ordinarily, the dialect is the home language while the other serves a wider range. Moreover, some educated Algerians are multilingual for they speak Arabic, Berber and French, and use them in different domains. However, not all Algerians speak Berber except those who have it as their mother tongue. Educated bilinguals show a gallicized life style. Such bilinguals are members of the medical and educational professions, civil servants, etc. Their French has several characteristics, particularly at the phonological level, that is to

say, in many cases it is very difficult to distinguish between a French native speaker and a French educated Algerian.

Uneducated bilinguals: Colonialism has been conducive to a great number of illiterate people. Approximately 80% of the Algerians population could not read and write after independence. Nonetheless, among them we find bilinguals (see types of bilinguals in Chapter 1). It is clear that all of them speak a local dialect (either Arabic or Berber). So, when and how did they acquire French?

During colonialism, the dominant language, French, was used by the rulers and by those who were 'serving' them. They were either workers on their own lands, or home helps. Their minds were conditioned to French attitudes and even to the French language. This group of bilinguals, generally of peasant or working class origin, regard French very much as a foreign language, unlike the bilinguals of group one. Their French pronunciation sets them apart not only from native speakers, but also from the bilinguals of group one. In this second case, the term bilingualism is not used in the sense of equal facility in two languages but, is understood to begin at the point where the speakers of one language can converse without problems with the speaker of another language. Proficiency in both languages is not a necessity. The main point is the production of meaningful utterances in the other language. Thus, what we require from a bilingual is not a degree of perfection in both languages but just a sufficient communicative facility by means of the other language to conduct daily language, which is the case of most uneducated Algerians who understand French even if they don't speak it, but use some French words adapted morphologically and phonologically to Algerian dialects, to make themselves understood.

The problem will increase if we consider the third group: semi-bilinguals. This group consists of bilinguals whose fluency in French is non-existent but they are typically of the same social background as those of group 2. This group is bilingual in the sense that its members speak both MSA and Berber.

A further aspect of Algerian multilingualism is observed in a lot of daily conversations among youngsters. Very often, elements from either Arabic or French, Berber/French, or MSA/ French are mixed in a conversation to such an extent that it is impossible for either an Arab hearer or French listener to identify the spoken language.

At the moment, bilingualism in Algeria could be defined as an unstable situation. It is a temporary state, because of the promotion of MSA by the mass media and the arabisation program; that is to say, Arabic is replacing French everywhere, a process described as 'subtractive bilingualism' by Lambert (1978).

Boyer argues that Algeria is a multilingual country where French and Berber still remain a source of political conflict. Moreover, Gallagher thinks that the policy of arabization requires a very determined effort and will take at least a generation. He declared that: "French is the language of Algeria, and there is no mistaking".

While French was the language of 'French Algeria', it is still to a large context, the language of 'Algerian Algeria'. However, Arabic is flourishing and French, mainly the language of the nationalist elite, will one day be replaced by another Algerian language but on timing there is uncertainty 'Algerian socialism', as Ben Bella has declared, "will not be valid unless we acquire the dimension [Arabic] which we lack..."

Moreover, it is important to mention that nearly 20% of the population speaks Berber dialects. There is actually a great deal of variation in the way in which Algerians speak and use either Arabic or Berber. Furthermore, these linguistic developments are enhanced by social boundaries.

The national and official language is Arabic, the first language in schools. Television programmes are either in Arabic or French. Newspapers, magazines are

either in Arabic or French. Berber has no official status in Algeria, but those who speak Berber defend their language and want to be taught at school. However, it has recently been declared as a national language by the government.

As already mentioned, not only is the linguistic situation in Algeria bilingual but also diglossic. MSA is in a diglossic relationship with colloquial varieties. Particular functions are assigned to each variety of the language. In the Algerian case, the high style is written and is compulsory for certain purposes. Here is a sample of situations, with indications of the appropriate form of the language to be used in Algeria:

High form (H)	Low form (L)
Al-fusha MSA	Algerian dialects
Official language of the country Political speech Religious activities Newspapers Education	Mother tongue Used constantly in all ordinary conversations Folk literature Daily street speech, market...etc

**Table 4 :** Functions of H and L varieties

Algerians normally adapt the language to the situation. Depending on their experience, they learn to adapt their speech according to the hearer, what they are talking about and to whom. But one may only use MSA in daily speech for greetings, for example when people meet each other they say: [’assalaamu ‘alaykum] or when they want to thank a person they say: [baaraka allahu fik]; MSA is used in religious sermons of Friday given by the Imam of the mosque.

A person who has learned to speak the High variety (MSA) fluently and accurately will not use it in a purely conversational situation because it would be a

felt as pedantic. Conversely, a speaker of Low language (Algerian Arabic) will not use it in a formal situation; otherwise he will be an object of ridicule and criticism.

In Algeria, MSA is considered as High style and is called 'Al-fusha', whereas the Algerian Arabic dialects are regarded as inferior, and are called 'Addaridja'. The superiority of MSA is connected with Islam. Indeed, Classical Arabic is the language of the Qur'an which constitutes the entire Arabic grammar. Concerning grammar and lexicon of MSA, Ferguson (1959:33) says that "In diglossic communities the high style may have striking differences in grammar and in word order, and in the area of the vocabulary the high style may have a much more learned and classical lexicon than the low".

In Algerian Arabic, we feel a high frequency of words assigned to low status. The low variety is not written and we observe considerable variation in the pronunciation, the grammar and lexicon. For instance, in MSA the H word for 'see' is /ra'aa/, the L word is [faaf]. The H words will never be used in ordinary conversation. Similarly, the L words are not normally used in formal settings or in the written Arabic.

Algerian diglossia is characterized in particular ways. Some people want to use their dialect as a real North African language. They do not use MSA. The principal argument against MSA seems to be that it is difficult to learn and to write. Because Arabisation has been implemented in Algeria, a potential diglossic situation has arisen. This situation already exists in other North African countries. To succeed in arabising the country, we need to fill in the gap which separates the written and oral Arabic languages, which is not an easy task because of the diversity of the various dialects.

In addition to the Algerian diglossic problems, the existence of French does not facilitate the linguistic situation. Attitudes towards languages are very difficult to measure and are not always the same. In what follows, we shall deal with people's feelings and attitudes towards languages.

### 2.3 Attitudes to the languages in contact

Attitudes in bilingual situation are very different; Rubin (1968:15) calls attention to the fact that:

A bilingual situation may be expected to produce different types of attitudes; some reflect emotional value of a language for its speakers, others the value of a language from a social or group point of view, still others reflect its value from the point of view of formal attributes.

All the three types of attitudes may be encountered in the Algerian context. The first type may reflect the attitude towards both varieties of Arabic as well as Berber; the second type reflects the attitudes towards both Algerian mother tongues, the third type reflects the attitudes towards French and even those towards Classical Arabic.

Nonetheless, this does not imply that there is always a one-to-one relationship, because when analyzing attitudes to languages in Algeria, we are often faced with a dichotomy which may originate from the cultural ambivalence of most Algerians (Dendane, 2007). Indeed, most Algerians are ambivalent in their feeling about almost all the available languages. That is, in spite of the stigmatization of the Low variety, most Algerians are proud of their mother tongue, a natural tendency to language loyalty. People are also proud of MSA, the language representing a symbol of their religion. But at the same time, they do not deny the importance of French, a language that they consider as prestigious and often associated with a high status in education.

Bilinguals and multilinguals have various attitudes to each language. A bilingual may feel his native language to be better in some respects but his other language(s) better in others. Indeed, he may feel his mother tongue to sound better but another language to be clearer in expression.

In Chapter 3, we will try to identify the kinds of attitudes Algerians have towards each of their languages (MSA, Algerian Arabic and French), and to try to answer the question: Why don't students master the French language, in spite of their bilingual education, knowing that the majority of their lectures are in French? The informants are from the university, those who belong to the two departments of politics and economics.

Attitudes, in any case, are very difficult to measure. However, in spite of this, some indications of the attitudes towards French and Algerian Arabic can be found in the results of the questionnaire. Thus, the data of our field work is taken from the questionnaire answered by 100 students - bilinguals - and 50 civil servants (among them people aged from 50 to 75 from different statuses) to have more information between the clash of French mastery among actual students and bilingual people issued from French education. Reactions of the two languages tend to vary from individual to another and from one group to the other, depending not only on age and sex, but also on the social and educational background.

## **2.4 Social variables related to bilingualism**

Previously in chapter 1, we have discussed types of bilinguals related to individual variables, mainly competence. Various other classifications are possible depending on variables such as language usage and cultural identity (Bhatia and Richie, 2004:118). Other factors such as age, educational background, attitudes and motivations may be seen as variables influencing bilingualism.

Acquiring another language from infancy is not the same as learning it as an adult. Psycholinguistic studies show that early bilinguals are much more at ease with the languages that they have learned than an adult in learning another language

---

the effort made being greater. Penfield and Roberts (1959) explained the facility attributed to a child for their greater cerebral plasticity than adult difficulties (In Hamers and Blanc (2000:74). Age plays an important role in acquiring a second language; native-like fluency in L2 of a bilingual child is more developed in pronunciation for instance than a bilingual at a later age, who may never achieve this native-like pronunciation.

Bullock and Toribio (2009) distinguish 'true' bilinguals as those who have been exposed to two languages from early childhood, and thus possess advanced linguistic and communicative abilities in both languages. This is true in our society, where fluent bilinguals are those whose parents gave them a bilingual education or simply those who lived from birth in the colonial period and had contacts with French-speaking people.

However, all kinds of bilinguals try to master as much as possible their second language because of their positive attitudes towards this language. We have noticed that there are two kinds of bilingual students in Tlemcen University, those we can classify under the labels proposed by Fishman (1977): 'folk' and 'élite' bilinguals. A category of students tend to change their language and use French more frequently, because they feel their spoken language has a lower status in the society. The dominant language is used by 'élite' bilinguals who master another language or dialect which gives them more value than the 'folk' bilingual. Students very often shift from their own dialect (AA) to French especially when they speak with other students or when their own dialect is socially stigmatized. As far as bilingualism is concerned, students' attitudes towards AA or Fr are influenced by different cases or behaviour; bilingual students may use French when speaking about studies and/or because they are ashamed of their dialect (because his/her dialects is stigmatized), and they may use simply their native tongue AA, and probably sometimes switch to French.

Indeed, we have seen that some Algerian children start school with more control of French than others. Consequently, these children develop different attitudes toward Arabic and French. These are social in origin and may be considered as the result of parental influence and then social class membership. Therefore, the children's motivations vary as well.

As French is a language used in some higher studies in Algeria, students are motivated to learn it; but it is clear that many students do not master it once at the university. They only have some poor knowledge and utilise some words or phrases that they acquired in their childhood. According to their proficiency, students' motivation and attitude differ; those who were interested in that language during their earlier studies, French is no longer a difficult language and they have no problems, whereas those who were not motivated and gave no importance to this second language, find difficulties and perhaps keep negative attitudes towards it.

## **2.5 The national problem: Arabization**

Language is usually identified with national pride, honor and prestige as well as with tendencies toward national survival. Linguistic differences are sometimes a source of international misunderstanding and a block to peaceful and useful action. Nonetheless, the main reason for adopting a national language is its function as evidence of unity, solidarity and complete acculturation within a country. Therefore, a return to one's culture including the national language was necessary after independence and will progressively suppress the feeling of inferiority.

In Algeria, the importance of learning Arabic has been stressed, since it has been adopted in the constitution as the official language of the country. Standard Arabic is expected to become a sort of lingua-franca of the country. It is therefore stressed that a common language like Arabic, will promote national unity and

solidarity. During the whole colonial era, Arabic declined and vegetated. Today in all the Algerian department, state schools are found everywhere contrary to the colonial period. Arabization is an essential part of the schooling program but French still has its importance and status in Algeria and the ex-minister of education, A. Taleb Ibrahim mentioned that we should not destroy our acquired colonial knowledge, but we should make the most of it.

During the colonization, the majority of Algerians received French education; however, to use the language of past oppression as a dominant medium of instruction or communication would be felt as a national shame. After independence, Algeria faced the great problem of language. In Algeria, where different languages and numerous dialects have coexisted during many years, it would be convenient to have one language.

The Algerian government wanted to restore its Arabo-Islamic patrimony by implementing the arabization process to unify the Algerian people after 130 years of instability, war and lost identity. Speaking about preserving the national identity, the previous president Houari Boumediene (who died in December 1978) claimed – addressing himself to secondary school students, and explained that Algeria:

Ce que nous ne saurons trop vous conseiller, c'est de sauvegarder la personnalité Algérienne. Il est vrai que l'Algérie est située entre deux continents. Elle appartient en effet au continent Africain mais elle se trouve aux portes de l'Occident. Nous faisons donc partie d'un continent arriéré en voie de développement et nous avons en face un continent qui a ses qualités et ses personnalités. Autant nous sommes ouverts aux sciences et au progrès que nous ont apportés les nations qui nous ont devancés dans ce domaine, autant nous devons être soucieux de conserver notre personnalité et nos valeurs et autant nous devons faire pour préserver notre patrie et renforcer ses bases.

Thus by virtue of its history and language Algeria is Algerian. Our past and present, our culture and civilization prove that we are Algerians. Underdevelopment

is caused by man himself. The preservation of our culture will help us avoid being a population without soul and history.

However, teaching French or other foreign languages is not excluded. It is one thing to be nationalist, quite another to be chauvinist or isolated. To bring out this last point, here is a passage of 'La Charte Nationale'<sup>3</sup> (1976: 66) in which it is made clear that the 'return' to the national language and its necessary adaptation to the society's needs do not rule out a strong encouragement of the acquisition of foreign languages. The point is to preserve our identity while opening up to others in order to understand their culture, to know their languages to communicate with the external world and to reach sciences and modern techniques.

Cette récupération totale de la langue nationale et sa nécessaire adaptation à tous les besoins de la société n'excluent pas un ferme encouragement à l'acquisition des langues étrangères. A cet égard notre idéal le mieux compris est d'être pleinement nous-mêmes, tout en nous ouvrant sur les autres et en maîtrisant, en même temps que notre langue dont la primauté reste indiscutable, la connaissance de langues de culture qui nous faciliteraient la constante communautaire avec l'extérieur, c'est-à-dire avec les sciences et les techniques modernes et l'esprit créateur dans sa dimension universelle la plus féconde<sup>4</sup>.

Thus, the re-evaluation of our culture is necessary with a wide window opened to the modern world of sciences. The Algerian population should try to maintain a distinctive style of living by preserving its habits and language. This preservation, reflected in the process of Arabization, constitutes the best means of protecting their original identity. Being the essential tool to restore the Algerian identity, Arabisation is necessary.

Arabization in Algeria was necessary after independence. However, it was not an easy task to achieve. The reason for this is the connection with the 'colonial cultural impact'. Colonialism, during one hundred and thirty years, did all its best to suppress Arabic as a working language in Algeria. The object was to deprive

---

<sup>3</sup> La Charte Nationale : Algerian Constitution established in 1976.

<sup>4</sup> K.Mameri, 1977 : Citation du Président Boumedienne, 3<sup>e</sup> Edition, Société National d'Édition et de diffusion, Alger

---

Algerians of their culture and replace it by French civilization. It is a miracle to see that Arabic and Berber survived after Algerian independence. However, after so long, the re-establishment of Arabic as the national language is too delicate to be hurried. This is introduced in Taleb Ibrahimi's speech when he said that:

“Arabization is essential but it must not be rushed or chaos will follow; ‘witness’, he said, (Gordon, D.C: 191).

Thus, Arabization should have taken place progressively. The next factors which deepen the difficulty to arabize the country is related to teaching. In Algeria where more than 80% of the population were illiterate, and in starting arabizing the country, teachers were not qualified and it took time to train teachers for primary, secondary and university levels. Between the age of six and eleven, the children were trained properly in Arabic.

Another drawback is presented as follows: a lot of Algerians are hostile to the Arabic language. They cannot free themselves from the French language and even its culture. This group is represented mainly by intellectuals who regard Arabic as a language for common people. One of the many contributory reasons for this might be perhaps the shortfall in Arabic teaching beyond primary level.

Gender is also another important factor; we have observed that French is used more by girls than boys. Girls, associate French with freedom, modernism, equality and prestige. They avoid the Arabic language because it symbolizes frustration and inequality for women.

As a result of the colonial era and the policy of Arabization, two groups of intellectuals have developed in Algeria; the French words are used here for this is the way the groups were referred to:

- The ‘Arabisants’
- The ‘Francisants’

The first group is closer to Islam and less open to the modern world because of their pure Arabic education, that is, they learned Arabic in Qur'anic school which was called 'Medersa', where they learned the Qur'an by heart with a very old method, and they did not adapt to the French language during and after independence. On the other hand, the second group, represents those people whose native tongue is Arabic but they learned French during colonialism and therefore they are called the 'Francisants' because of their French education.

Nowadays, these two groups are easily differentiated. The 'arabisants' are those people who could tell you the entire French colonialism story and who, to a certain extent, have a negative attitude towards the French language. However, they might understand many French words and expressions but they are not able to speak neither to read French like the 'Francisants'. These latter have more control in French and they are considered as perfect bilinguals since they could read and write in the French language. Consequently, the split between those two groups made after the split between two kinds of bilinguals in Algeria. Thus, different kinds of bilinguals exist according to the French education and therefore their motivation and attitudes towards the French language are somewhere traced.

### ***2.5.1 The official position AA/FR in Algeria***

At different points in the history of Algeria, official policies acted decisively upon the language concerned. The status and function of languages in Algeria were and still are determined by the government. The shift from Arabic to French has been initiated by the conquerors. Similarly, the re-arabization of the country has been imposed from the top. In Algeria today, there is an official policy which is in a sense bilingual. However, at the same time, we observe a clear move towards the establishment of a monolingual state. Indeed, there is a general riposte of the 'Arabisants' against the diffusion of French, particularly because of the persistent use of French in a number of channels, including the media, the arts and, of course, education, as explained in what follows.

---

### 2.5.1.1 The Mass-Media

- Daily newspapers

Nowadays, many daily newspapers exist in French and Arabic, and people readings depend on their preference and/or competence which language they are at ease with. For example, Le Monde, sells 60.000 copies per day. Al Moudjahid, Le Quotidien, La République, L'Expression, El Watan, are written in French and : El chaab, El Djoumhouria, El Nasr, are written in Arabic, so there is choice between the two languages, and nowadays even AA is written in Latin script (for social entertainment) in some newspapers, for bilingual readers.

- Radio

Radio broadcasts too are in French and Arabic. There are many networks, one of them broadcasts in MSA, and some of the programmes are in 'dialectal' Arabic. Another one broadcasts mainly in French, and the third channel broadcasts in Berber.

For residents of rural area, the radio is the most familiar medium of mass communication with programme in Arabic dialects and Arabic music being the most popular.

- Television

TV programme are either in Arabic or French. It seems that the only period of the year when there is a tendency towards the supremacy of Arabic is Ramdham (Fasting period of the Muslims world). Indeed, this is due to the various programme such as the life of the prophet,etc.... Otherwise, news, cartoons, films, instructional etc... are delivered in French or Arabic channels.

### 2.5.1.2 Culture

- Literature

The majority of publications are in French but several distinguished works have appeared in Arabic.

- Theatre

The Algerian National Theatre, presents a number of popular plays in Arabic, mainly with revolutionary themes. Algerian Arabic has occupied a significant place in the total artistic production of the country and appears principally in popular plays, songs, and films. Films such as 'La Grande Maison' based on the book written by Mohamed Dib are very popular within the country.

However, recently in many important departments such as Oran, Tlemcen, and Constantine; the Cultural French Centre opened its door with France convention and proposes many social and cultural activities, for example: test of proficiency in French, miscellaneous books in French literature and also theatre plays in several themes performed in French.

- Concerts

Classical Arabic music called 'Andalous', popular Arabic music (mainly in Algerian Arabic) such as Raii songs, and all the revolutionary songs are in MSA.

- Cinema

The language in which films are shown is in French and some films are in Egyptian or Lebanese Arabic; a great number of films are imported. American films are dubbed in French, and all the French films are shown in French. Arabic films are shown in the language of the country from where they have been imported. Finally, all Algerian films are shown in either French or Algerian Arabic, or in both.

### **2.5.1.3 Education**

Algeria devotes a considerable part of its national income to education, which is regarded as a national priority sector. One of the fundamental motives of the national educational 'policy' is the 'Algerianization' of the personnel and the progressive 'Arabisation' of education. MSA is the language of the medium of

instruction in Algeria. Children acquire their mother tongue at home but MSA as the language of education from primary school to university.

Today, French is taught as foreign language from primary school until University. Knowing that French language is used directly or indirectly in the Algerian speech community, and that it is taught in schools, used by most intellectuals as a prestigious language; some Algerians are acting against the coincidental bilingualism, whether this is positive or negative they have negative attitudes towards this language.

A glance at the school curriculum helps us to see that French and Arabic are still competing for the first position in education. However, the situation is constantly evolving in favor of Arabic, as French is still considered as a foreign language even if it is the second language used in Algeria. Bilingualism is firmly established, in that both Arabic and French are widely available and desired.

#### **2.5.1.4 The medium of official Governmental communication**

The Algerian government was the first unit to adopt MSA as the medium of communication. Mastery of Arabic has consequently become vital for Algerian politicians. This meant intensive training in Arabic for most of them, since a great number of our ministers received education in French. Arabic is the language used officially in all politicians' speech, although, Algerian Arabic is often substituted unofficially.

Arabic is the official language of the legislature courts. All court cases must be recorded in Arabic even though the actual proceedings are in Algerian Arabic.

More evidence of the existence of the French language is the fact that many public documents including the constitution are written in Arabic and French. The main reason for this is that a large proportion of the educated population is not able to function efficiently in Arabic. Consequently, there is still a large amount of

bilingualism in the political domain, even though this may not be apparent at first glance.

We may conclude that French and Arabic are competing at all levels. MSA is progressively gaining ground but it will still take some time before it can be said effectively to play a practical role of a national language for Algerians.

On the other hand, Algerian Arabic is rather extensively used, compared to Berber which is hardly used at all in official functions. Indeed, the position of Berber-speakers is curious. There is no question of their being underprivileged as individuals, or under-represented in the elite. At the same time, there is the pretence that this bilingualism does not exist. Officially, some lectures at university are done in Berber language.

In the section which follows, we shall deal with the status of MSA, Fr, AA and Berber in Algeria.

## **2.6 Present day community in Algeria**

In Algeria three languages French, Arabic and Berber have coexisted for the past hundred years. All three languages have a different origin and not much in common historically. All of them, however, are part of the Algerian culture, even though they are the expression of contrastive trends within the socio-cultural heritage.

### ***2.6.1 Classical Arabic (MSA)***

Classical Arabic, which is the language of the Qur'an, was simplified to Modern Standard Arabic for the medium of instruction and for some formal conversations with the Arabic world. Today in Algeria, MSA is officially recognized as the country's national and official language.

The use of Arabic in administration and political matters created problems for the population. French educated people worry about their future, and as a result, they constitute an opposition to Arabization. We do not think that the Arabisation campaign should worry them, as Algeria will probably be arabized one day, but this will take time. Meanwhile, Arabic is becoming the dominant language at the written as well as the oral level.

AA consists of a considerable number of dialects. Both Arabic and Berber dialects have an extensive oral literature, which constituted 'Le Maquis'<sup>5</sup> of the people during the colonization. People are fascinated by the different types of Arabic that are spoken in different parts of Algeria. Most of the time linguistic variation is not only a matter of pronunciation, but it also shows in grammar and vocabulary. This sort of variation as found in Algeria has a regional basis.

However, there is also some variation where is not regional. For instance, in a locality such as Tlemcen which our study takes part, we observe that people from different social background speak different dialects.

### ***2.6.2 French***

Though the French left Algeria a long time ago, their language has not. This is so at a number of levels and works differently in Algiers. In Algeria, French was inherited from the colonial power and became the language of the bureaucracy. Statistically, Algeria is the most francophone country among the old colonies (Calvet, 1974, p219). But who speaks French in Algeria?

In 1969, 81.5% of the population was Arab; 17.9% Berber; 0.4% French and 0.2% other nationalities. Of these, 74.6% were illiterate; 5.5% were educated in Arabic; 8.9% in French; 10.6% in French and Arabic, 0.4% in other languages. Thus in a country where approximately three quarters of Algerians were illiterate, 20% of the population could write and read French in 1969.

---

<sup>5</sup> Le Maquis is an underground resistance mouvement

After forty eight years of independence, let us consider the position of French in Algeria. In Algeria, as well as in Tunisia and Morocco, there is an oral and written French culture of high quality. It is spoken by many students and French educated adults, in particular in the cities. Every year, a great number of Algerians immigrate to France in search of work. Migration to France has continued up to now, to fill France's reconstruction manpower need. These emigrants constitute a means in favour of the diffusion of the French language. The maintenance of French is due as well to inter-marriage. All those factors will maintain the coexistence of French besides Arabic for years. French is still predominantly used in administrations everywhere.

Considering the plurality of the Algerian languages, it would be interesting to ask such a question: what is the mother tongue of Algerians?

A great number of Algerian students, when asked about their mother tongue, were puzzled and did not know what to answer. French is the language they learned since the age of 5 or 6, with parents, friends, out side home, etc. This is the one they learned from the family. Some Algerians ignored completely the use of French language in their society; others unconsciously used only some French words and for the majority of students, AA is their mother tongue but it represents a mixture of MSA and French.

### ***2.6.3 Berber***

The Berber branch of Semitic Hamitic is known from the ancient times through inscriptions in the Libyan language from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The Arab invasions of the Maghreb did not completely arabize the indigenous Berber population. In Algeria, 29% of pure Berbers remain concentrated mainly in Kabylie.

The most important of the language areas in Northern Algeria is that the 'Great Kabilie', East of Algiers and extending as far as Bejaia. It is in this region that the speakers of Kabyle are found. Slightly south and east of this area in the Aures, the region in which Chaouia is spoken. In the southern part of Algeria there

are also isolated communities of Berber speakers. It is difficult to classify the Berber dialects in terms of the overall structure so that Mozabite, Ouargla, Touggourt, and Gourara have been treated as isolated dialects with a clear relationship to each other but with their status as languages or dialects not clearly defined.

Further South, the area in the vicinity of Touat and Tizi Ouzou are usually classified as distinct from both this group and from that: the Tuaregs. The largest group of Berber speakers in the South consists of the various group of Tuaregs. Thus Berber is represented by various dialects such as Chaouia, Mozabite and Kabyle. There is actually a great deal of variation in the way these speakers speak and use Berber.

## **2.7 The problems of the multi-lingual Algerian child**

This part of the study seeks to explore the situation which leads the child to become bilingual. Children growing up with two or more languages soon after birth are generally subject of research topic and this over the past two decades involving mainly linguistic or psycholinguistic studies. If monolingualism reflects the normal behaviour of language development, consequently bilingualism will lead to contradictory assessment of the bilingual child. In this respect, Meisel (2008:91)<sup>6</sup> says that “the child exposed to more than one language during early developmental phases might be confused linguistically, cognitively, emotionally, and possibly even morally”

Serious problems of a multi-lingual child concerns mainly parents, educators and geographical situations. However, cases where children are raised in a bilingual education by choice, bilingualism is not a social necessity but rather a personal choice and this can be the case of immigrants, bilingual couples, etc.

In Algeria, where Colloquial Arabic is the native language, and most Algerian children speak it knowing that it is full of French expressions. However, there are some families who raise their children in both languages Arabic and French. These children become bilingual and consequently at ease with French.

---

<sup>6</sup> In Bhatia, 2008.

Generally, children learn French as a second language at secondary school and perceive it as a foreign language, except those who are bilingual from infancy.

Once at university, many students have difficulties with French matters, and are not proficient in either language, that is, for them Arabic is a very complex language and French is a foreign language that was not well taught previously. Problems of French use start from an early age among students. In fact, active bilinguals are fewer and the majority are considered as passive bilinguals, and it has been shown that the role of the family is very important in bilingualism.

### ***2.7.1 The role of the family***

It is very difficult to assert what is the universal language spoken in the Algerian home, since this depends on various factors. Therefore, here again a division between at least two groups is necessary.

a-What is the mother tongue of the children of the intellectuals?

In this case, the parents are either French dominant or master two languages (French and Algerian Arabic).

In some cases the Algerian child, up to the age of 6, is exposed mainly to French. From the mother he learns French nursery songs. Even if the parents are from different language backgrounds, they tend to use more French than Arabic when talking to the child. At the same time, he is inevitably exposed to the native tongue through grand-parents, home-help...etc, and Modern Standard Arabic through cartoons and Arabic TV channels...etc.

Thus, the child hears both languages from the start. However it appears for more than a year after he begins speaking, he has only one language system consisting of an Arabic base that includes much French material. The acquisition of

---

this language, which we might call 'Algerian language', is a process of unconscious habit formation resulting from imitation habits.

b-What language is the most commonly spoken in the home of ordinary people?

Algerian Arabic (or a Berber variety in some areas), of course, as it is their mother tongue. However, childhood bilingualism means the establishment of L2, French during the early school years, after the Algerian dialect has been learned in the family. It should be noted that they are exposed to MSA through school and TV, and Classical Arabic when learning the Qur'an.

### ***2.7.2 The school***

Primary school provides lessons of French as a second language from the third year onwards. The time devoted to Arabic instruction seems to be reasonable to make the children at ease in dealing with writing, reading, mathematics...etc. in Arabic. Until 1962, education in Algeria was elitist; therefore it was directed at a small number of people drawn from the educated class. Since 1963, however, it has become much more widespread. Furthermore, education is now universal and compulsory and available to all. While the educational standards in the narrowest sense may be seen to have declined, the overall standard of literacy and numeracy in Algerian has increased in marked and demonstrable fashion. Although education aims essentially at the social and cultural advancement of all Algerians, we observe a general lowering of standards.

A lot of Algerian children seem to grow up with the mastery of two languages apparently learning them with ease and without great social and educational effort. The child has a double adjustment task, since he operates in two different linguistic frameworks. His task is to switch back and forth from one language to the other. He must know the language of the home and imitate kinship circle but he also knows the language of the outside world, the school and the playground.

As the child grows up, he progressively discovers that the two languages differ in social acceptability. Thus according to the social parameters the child grown up in, preferences of what language or what words he uses depends on the milieu. The 'inferiority' of the mother tongue becomes prominent to an adolescent who will develop an inferiority complex. It is the parents' obligation to give historical and human evidence why individuals should retain their native language whatever it's cultural and linguistic values and this in order to maintain the child's social position among his community and also to assure and protect his confidence in himself and his people. Unfortunately, this is not an easy task since not all Algerians parents have been at school.

## 2.8 Political conflict between two languages

According to Weinreich (1953), two or more languages are said to be in contact alternately by the same person (quoted in Ditmar, 1976). Arabic and French are largely used side by side in Algeria, and AA is full of words and expressions, but even a whole discussion can be heard in French. Algeria is the only country among the Maghreban ones which has not joined the 'francophonie institutionelle', though it is the second francophone country over the world (Safia Rahal, 2001).

The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is complex; if we consider French and Arabic; knowing that Arabic (MSA) is the official language and French still has an ambiguous status in Algeria as Caubet (1998: 192) explains:

French as the language of the ancient colonizer has a very ambiguous status: on the one hand, it attracts official contempt (it is officially considered as a foreign language to the same extent as English) but, on the other, it is synonymous of social success and of access to culture and modernism.<sup>7</sup>

---

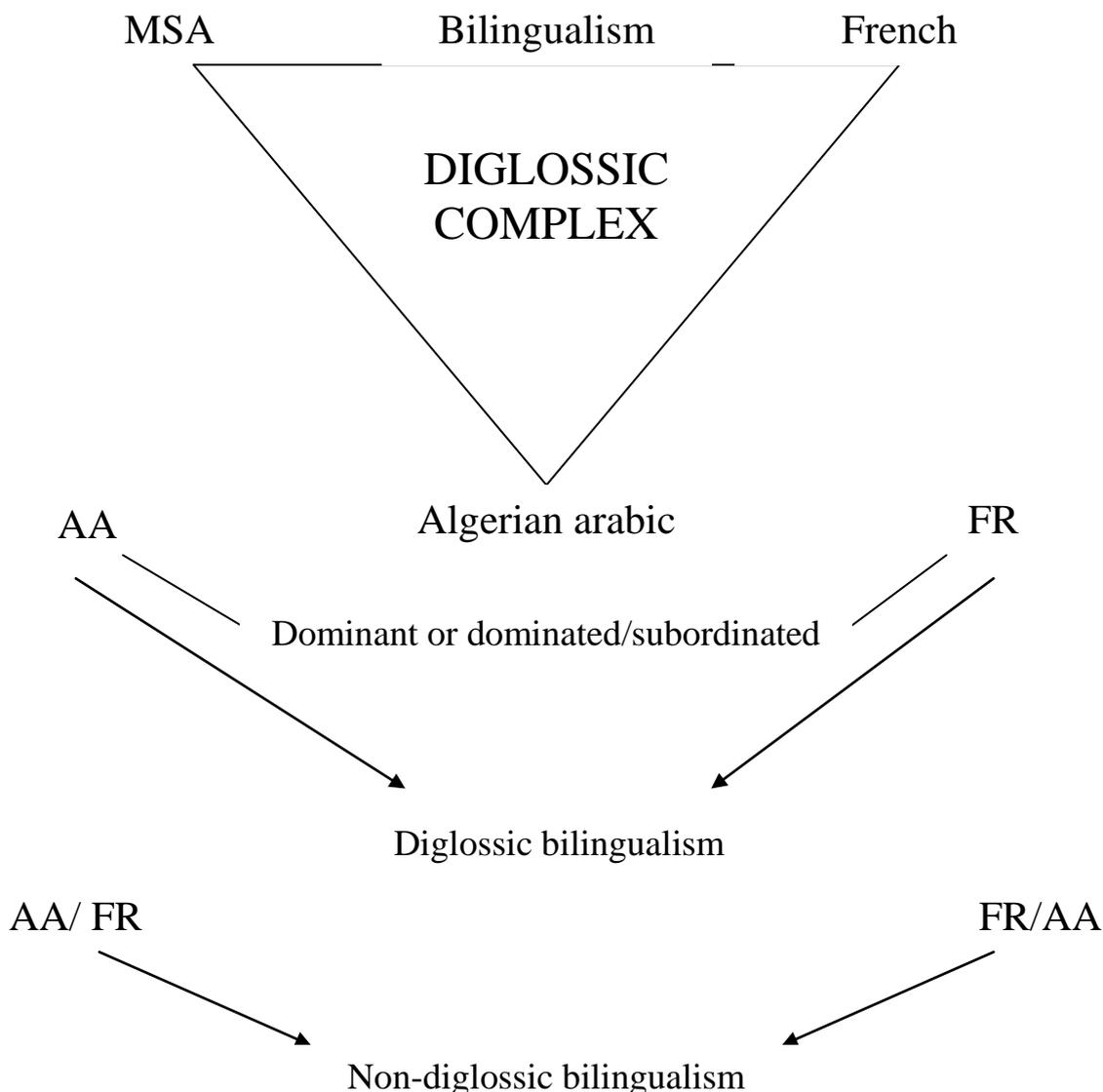
<sup>7</sup> My translation of the original French text : « Le français en tant que langue de l'ancien colonisateur à un statut très ambigu: d'une part il attire le mépris officiel (il est officiellement considéré comme langue étrangère au même titre que l'anglais) mais d'autre part, il est synonyme de réussite sociale et d'accès à la culture et au modernisme. »

This disguised conflict of French in Algeria arose many sociolinguists' interest, and is still unclear in the Algerians' mind. When explaining political conflict between two languages, Boyer (1996: 120) gives the following definition, which he says is the famous definition given in the congress 'Cultura Catalana' (1978), insisting on the fact that there is linguistic conflict when one language is politically dominant and the other politically dominated:

Il y a conflit linguistique quand deux langues clairement différenciées s'affrontent, l'une comme politiquement dominante (emploi officiel, emploi public) et l'autre comme politiquement dominée. Les formes de la domination vont de celles qui sont tolérantes sur le plan politique et dont la force répressive est essentiellement idéologique [...]. Un conflit linguistique peut être latent ou aigu, suivant les conditions sociales, culturelles et politiques de la société dans la quelle il se présente.

From Boyer's explanation we can say that in Algeria the linguistic conflict between French and Arabic is ideological. While all Algerians use AA, in its different forms and MSA is the linguistic norm of formal speech and the medium of instruction (diglossic situation), French is a social praxis used by Algerians in many required situations such as functional communication (at university, administration and governmental fields). Thus, the political conflict between French and Arabic in Algeria is still ambiguous, because even if French plays an important role in Algeria and is used in many domains, it is not recognized as a second language and thus politically dominated by MSA.

The Algerian sociolinguistic landscape is complex when we consider MSA, AA and French. If we apply the concept of Fishman's extended diglossia (1967) in the case of Algeria we can summarize this concept as follows:



From this diagram specially adapted to the Algerian case, we can say that in Algeria, diglossic bilingualism exist between French and AA, that is to say, when speakers use French language as a ‘dominant’ language and AA as a ‘dominated’ language in some situations; students tend to use French when speaking about their studies and neglect AA to a large extent in this situation.

The diglossic ideology in Algeria depends on many individual and social variables. As seen in the diagram above, a non-diglossic bilingualism exists. For instance, if a speaker is competent in both French and Arabic and uses them alternatively in everyday speech without any problem, that is, switching between

French and Arabic, the bilingual person here is in a non-diglossic bilingualism situation.

Furthermore, Arabic, French and AA are in a diglossic complex. AA is a hybrid language deriving from MSA and includes many French words often adapted to Arabic morphology and phonology.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

In speaking about the linguistic situation in Algeria, the French language is the central nutshell of discussion. Bilingualism in Algeria has been complex since independence. Today, this linguistic situation makes the richness of Algerians.

The real conflict which opposes French and Arabic language in Algeria is not linguistic but rather political. This bilingual linguistic policy adapted by Algerians is seen as a barrier by others and the situation remains somehow ambiguous.

However, the split between Algerians sociolinguistic situation is prominent. That is, two kinds of bilinguals exist in Algeria, whether speaking about the generation before Algeria's independence or those after. The distinction between 'educated' and 'non-educated' people is crucial in defining Algerian bilinguals. Thus, using some French words in the daily speech of Algerians does not mean that the person is bilingual. Those bilinguals have perfect mastery of the French language and use it when the situation requires its use.

**Chapter  
three**

**Case study in Tlemcen  
speech community**

### 3.1 Introduction

Bilingualism in the Algerian society has been accompanied by biculturalism. It is true that language to some degree reflects and embodies culture and therefore is an expression of it.

If the language of one group of speakers is held to be superior in a given context of circumstances, their culture will also be considered to be the superior one. This is probably one of the reasons why the French language is considered as a prestigious and ‘superior’ one. The Algerians are ambivalent in their culture. Nowadays, people live in two different cultures, and switch from one culture to the other as they switch from Arabic to French and/or Berber.

It should be noted that the impact of French civilization has been deep and lasting. Whatever the strength of anticolonialism, the heritage of ‘French Algeria’ will certainly colour the attitudes of Algerians for a long time to come. Although most of the people try to maintain a distinctive style by preserving their customs and language, the traces of French culture are still here. These are reflected generally by the use of French; people prefer to speak French in many cases so that they can be more valued in society.

To evaluate the rate of the use of French in Algeria and especially among students at university of Tlemcen, we have tried to be as objective as possible by proposing a questionnaire and interviews to a number of informants.

### 3.2 Questionnaire: aims and procedures

By choosing bilingualism as a target subject in this study, our aim is to explain this phenomenon in the Algerian society and attempt to know, how students in Tlemcen University use Arabic and French in the context of their studies and also their attitudes towards French. We will also try to make a slight difference between two generations; those who learned French during colonialism, in the late 50's and early 70's after independence, which we will call the 'first' generation; the other generation consists of those who learned French in school as a foreign language, that is, the generation which has grown up with an ambivalent education and which we will call the 'second' generation. The latter generation can be divided into two groups, if we consider their mastery of French; those who only learned French language as a subject in school but use many French words in their daily speech (because AA is full of French words) and code switch between AA and French in some contexts, and the second group are those who have been in contact with French language since their infancy because of their bilingual education (Arabic/French).

Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used in this research work. But we emphasize more on the qualitative one. From the beginning of this work, the French language was not a barrier but rather an evidence. Our aim was not to confirm bilingualism by employing a quantitative questionnaire or to know how much students use French in their daily life, but rather to explore this phenomenon and to describe individual experiences, to obtain specific information about participants, to share their opinions and to see their behaviours in social context. For example positive attitudes towards French was obvious from the beginning and the implication of quantitative data towards such answers gives us a better understanding toward the complex reality of how French is perceived by groups. Thus, we have not been contented by giving the questionnaire to our sample, but we have noted all the participants' observations. The data were interpreted according to the context of the participants' experiences. Context here means how students

progress in a bilingual situation and how the speakers use French in specific fields. We started first by evaluating the students' perception of French and their considerations and values about it. The comparison between the two generations was not so difficult since from the beginning the difference between levels of French use and expressions was prominent and very significant. The attentive analysis will begin by explaining why students lack proficiency in terms of French use. The students were asked to answer close-ended and open-ended questions regarding their general attitudes towards French. Close-ended question such as yes/no questions, require short answers with no explanations. However, this is a good way of collecting 'several precise information'(Wray and Bloomer, 2006). Also we have included the open-ended questions in the form of 'why questions' used as the main research technique. Thus, questionnaires as a qualitative method, allowed us to get more flexible information and to pave the way for our field-work to analyze the data.

To compare the level and the quality of the use of French between the two generations, we have decided to record some conversations of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation; their feeling and attitudes towards French. Unfortunately, no one accepted to be recorded, though we have explained the importance of their views. Nevertheless, we have established a questionnaire and attempted to give it to the participants of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation, but they preferred to reply orally and asked to sum up for them the research topic. We have explained our aim beyond this work and asked them to give us all their feelings and experiences about the French language; some of them gave us arguments about the low level of their children and explained from a political point of view the status of French in Algeria. The first meeting of groups from the 1<sup>st</sup> generation was one of the crucial components of this study, since not all the persons that we wanted to interview and speak with accepted. The 30 civil servants were chosen at random unlike students who were from biology department and have at least one module in French language.

### ***3.2.1 Data collection***

The data of this study is taken from the questionnaire answered by 100 students from Tlemcen University. It is important to note that Tlemcen Arabic is regarded as an urban variety of Arabic characterized by the realization of the phoneme /q/ as the glottal stop [ʔ], coexist with a number of rural varieties which have had a great influence on native speakers. However, the realization of [ʔ] sound in Tlemcen speech is typically maintained in women's speech. It is also used in the town centre but not in its surroundings and rural areas.

Tlemcen University presents a mixture of urban and rural dialects, that is, the use of [ʔ] sound by those who are originally from Tlemcen town, and the others who use [g] or [q] are from outside Tlemcen.

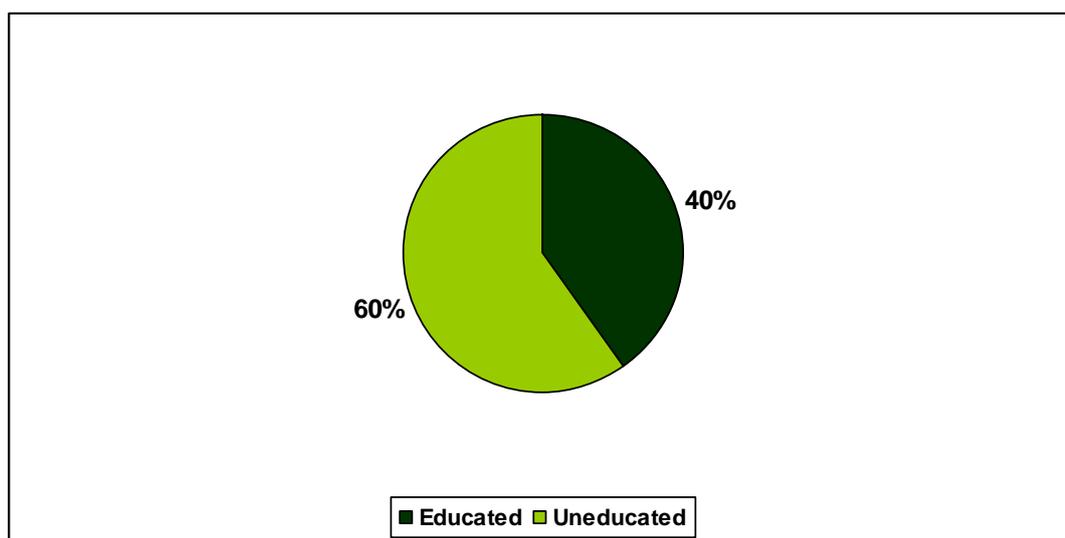
To study bilingualism in Tlemcen University, many parameters are taken into consideration: age, gender, education and socio-economic status. Thus, in our study, additional data are taken from interviews with the 'first' generation which was mentioned above, to establish the differences in the use of French and AA between the two generations.

For the other part of the study, to establish the difference between the 'first' and the 'second' generation, we have interviewed 30 civil servants. Unfortunately, they didn't accept to be recorded as mentioned above. Before asking the questions, which was done orally, we asked them to give us some basic information, mainly their social status.

The age varies from 50 to 80 years old. All informants have the same origin and come from Tlemcen or areas next to Tlemcen. They have different occupations and different social statuses: doctors, teachers, housewives, unemployed, business leaders and retired persons. All the informants master the French language but differ

in their level of education. In fact, there are 2 categories of the participants; those who were born before 1950 (mainly women) left after primary or secondary school and this for social reasons at that period and the majority of those who were born just before independence (from 1955) and afterwards had the chance to go further in their studies.

Thus, all informants (men and women) showed a real mastery of French language, the only difference between them was their level of education. The results showed that 12 informants were educated (3 women and 9 men) and 18 were uneducated (12 women and 6 men). Here is a pie-chart representing the different levels of education of the 30 civil servants.



Level of education of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation

During our research work, we have noticed that even if French is an important language for the students (because many modules are studied in this language) many of them lack proficiency in its use. At this level of our study, the split between 'passive' and 'active' bilinguals was prominent. This separation consists of making the difference between those students who have had enough exposure to French and a native-like comprehension of it, but have a little or no active command of it. Such students are especially recognized because they are

from rural areas and they have not acquired an active competence of French during their schooling. However, 'active' bilinguals are those students who showed no problem in the use of French language. Also girls show more interest and positive attitudes towards French language than boys.

The 100 students, who had the kindness to answer our questionnaire, were aged between 18 to 25 years old, and were chosen at random, most of them were from the biology department and others told us that they were from commerce and politics department. We accepted them to answer because we have considered that they are bilinguals and have some modules in French.

We gave the students the questionnaire, which was written in French. At the same time we have taken note by using a small conversation with each of the students asked. If the student didn't like the question or found it unclear, we tried at the same time to modify it, and provoked an interview to have more details. One particular and astonishing thing, is that few students (only boys,4%) told us that they couldn't read the questionnaire in French. So, we decided to establish another one in Arabic, so that the students could choose which language he/she is at ease with, also we gave some translation in AA for them.

Our first and foremost objective when giving the questionnaire to students was to get reliable and qualitative data. Therefore, by assisting and asking them orally, our goal was to see whether our questionnaire was understood. For the interviews which concerned the 'first' generation, all of the informants refused to be recorded. We have explained to them the topic and told them to answer some questions about the French language, or just speak about it. The result of all this part of study will be explained in the analysis of data.

### **3.3 Analysis and interpretation of the results**

This part of the study is the hardest one because of many parameters that build some barriers to our research work and also between the informants and the questionnaire put for them.

The sociolinguistic landscape in Algeria is obvious. This diversity in terms of Algerian dialects and how French is still represented in the Algerian society makes a multiple sociolinguistic viewpoints between people. For instance, some students told us that they all knew the ambiguous status of French in Algeria, and it is not worth doing this work because it will never be clear, and each person has a different view. They added that this is not a linguistic matter but rather a political conflict. Nevertheless, we have not taken into consideration some obscure remarks since our work is considered somehow as a scientific one and this to answer the question of bilingualism and why students lack the use of French in spite of all their previous courses in French matter. Also, the real clash of French use between those two different generations let us dig for some reasons of why students lack the use of the French language.

The informants were 50 boys and 50 girls all together, all students at Abou Bekr Belkaid University, their age varying between 18 to 25 years old. Some students were originating from Tlemcen and others from rural areas near Tlemcen such as Sebdou, Remchi, Maghnia...etc. Their level of education was the same, higher studies at university (first and second year at university). All of them were familiar with the French language but their level of mastery and preferences varies.

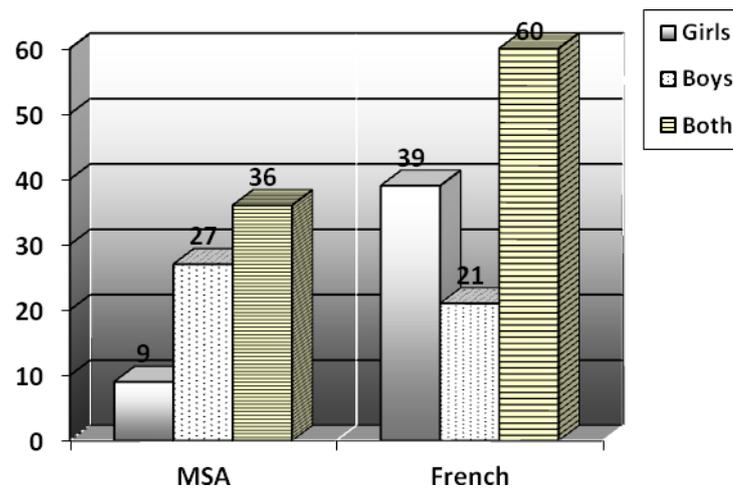
In the first question, we asked students language preferences' to make boy's and girl's distinction between French and Arabic preferences.

Which language do you prefer, apart from your mother tongue?

Sex	Females (48)		Males(48)		Both (96)	
Answers / 100	French	MSA	French	MSA	French	MSA
	39	09	21	27	60	36

**Table 5 :** Language preferences

- 04 girls said ‘neither French nor Arabic’



**Figure 1 :** Language preferences

As the result show, French language is appreciated by both girls and boys (60%), but girls showed more interest and preference to French. MSA is more appreciated by boys’ and their arguments were more prominent than girls. They told us that MSA is evidently a language of wider communication and in spite their real interest of French they were more talkative about MSA contrary to girls, who described the French language as a prestigious one. The gap between boys and girls preferences was prominent: boys prefer MSA and girls French.

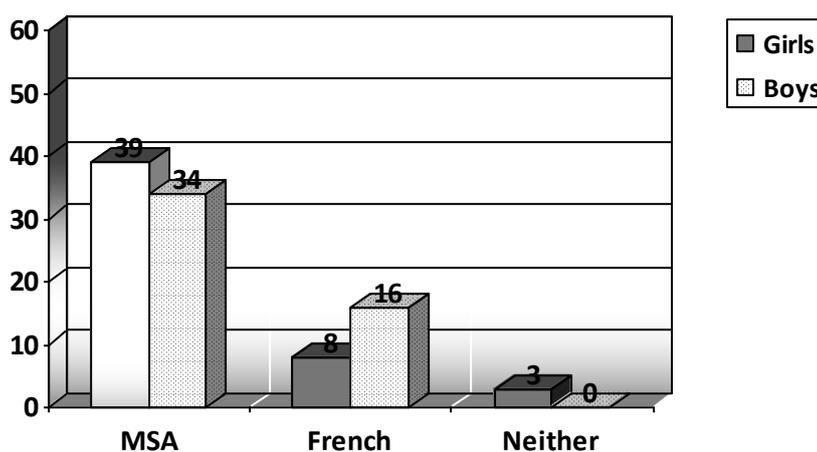
However, language preferences do not really show us the mastery or the difficulties faced among students in French and/or MSA. To evaluate students’ language perception in terms of difficulty, the following question was asked:

Which is the most difficult language?

Sex	Females (50)		Males(50)	
	French	MSA	French	MSA
Answers / 100	08	39	16	34

**Table 6 :** Students' language perception in terms of difficulty

- 03 Feminine's answers, said neither French nor Arabic.



**Figure 2 :** Students' language perception in terms of difficulty

MSA seems to be the most difficult language for both boys and girls. However, the boys showed more difficulties in French (16%), and told us that even if MSA remains a difficult language in terms of form and content; French still for them a difficult language to learn and to produce. Out of 50 boys, 16 said that French is, for them a difficult language, and we noticed that these students come from rural areas, where they said they have not been well taught in French matter from the beginning, and that French language is very seldom used in the area where they live. For girls (especially those who come from Tlemcen 30%), French is obviously easier than MSA in all contexts. Indeed, French grammar, they explain is more simple than MSA. Girls prefer to use French language when conversing with others than do boys. Even those girls, who are not originally from Tlemcen (20%) told us that they are not able to use French easily, but they are interested to master the French language and consequently motivated to learn it appropriately.

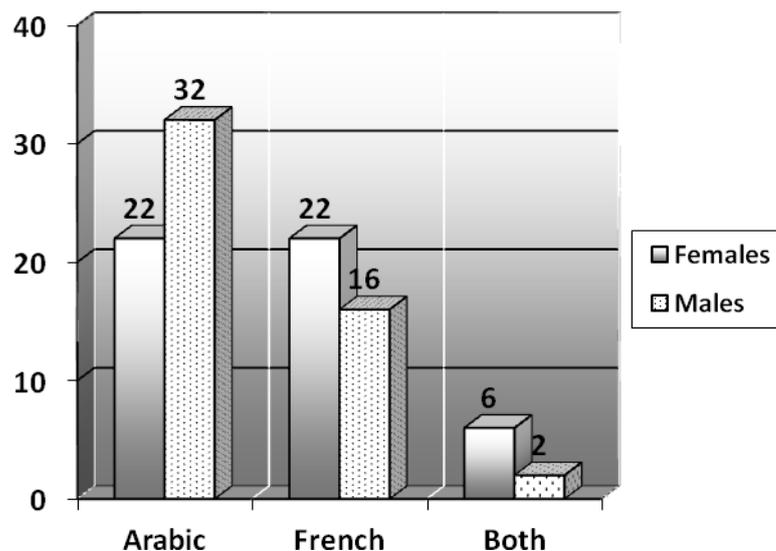
To go deeper, and know how students perceive the French language in comparison with their mother tongue, we have asked them to give us their impression in terms of the beauty of the two languages.

Which is the most beautiful language?

Sex	Females (50)		Males(50)	
	French	MSA	French	MSA
Answers / 100	22	22	16	32

**Table 7 :** Students' perception of languages in terms of beauty

- 08 respondents said 'both languages are beautiful'



**Figure 3 :** Students' perception of languages in terms of beauty

Not surprisingly Arabic is the beautiful language of the majority of the students. However, we notice that girls are always more in favour of French. Girls said that Arabic language is a beautiful one, but French is also beautiful in terms of its simplicity and prestige. Through this question we aimed at showing if the

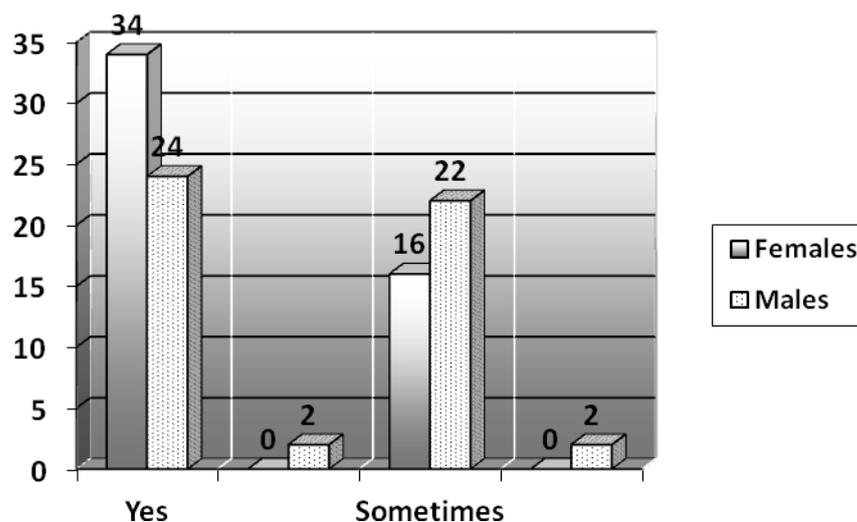
students' attitude towards French language may be indirectly influenced when speaking about the beauty of the two languages and if may be incite them to reveal what they think about French, because we know that attitudes towards the mother tongue is always positive. Student's mainly boys are very proud of their native language MSA, and they don't neglect the importance of French which they said is part of their speech and life.

After asking students about their feeling and perception of both Arabic and French, we moved to their daily speech considering the tow languages. We know that Algerian Arabic is full of French words, but in asking students if they mix Arabic and French when speaking, we insist that the question was in their daily speech at university, to see the influence of French lectures, and also to evaluate the degree of bilingualism among students.

Do you mix Arabic and French when speaking?

Sex	Females (50)				Males (50)			
	Yes	No	Sometimes	Not often	Yes	No	Sometimes	Not often
Answers/100	34		16		24	02	22	02

**Table 8 :** Respondents' degrees of mixing languages



**Figure 4 :** Respondents' degrees of mixing languages

Here, the results we obtained were revealing. Out of 80 students (boys and girls); 58 use both French and Arabic when speaking which indicates certainly the great amount use of French language. However, the split between students from rural and urban area was significant in terms of French language use, that is, the use of French is very restricted among people living in rural area, and students told us that the level of education in rural area where they live is far from the average. Consequently, their children have difficulties in French language once at university, because they were not so familiar with this language, and even if their parents use some words from French origin, they are not conscious that these words are French and we consider this as borrowings. On the other hand, in urban families, French is more frequently used among people and children acquired easily French as second language because the majority of them received a bilingual education.

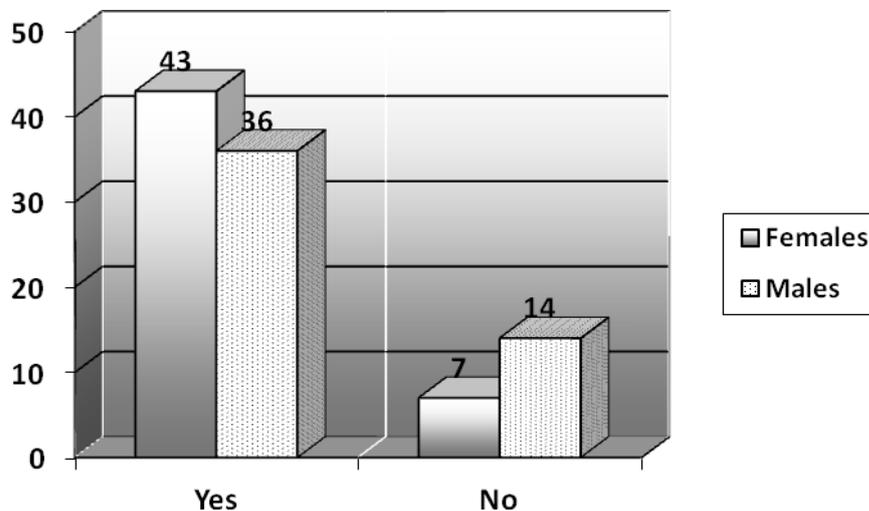
To know how much French is used in the daily life of students, we have asked them which language they use when speaking with relatives and friends. Certainly AA is the language used in the daily speech of Algerians, but let us see the degree of French use. Also, they explain us their need of French use in their daily

communication is prominent, and here is the results which shows that a lot of French is used.

Do you feel the use of French necessary when speaking?

Sex	Females (50)		Males(50)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Answers / 100	43	07	36	14

**Table 9 :** Necessity of French use in speaking

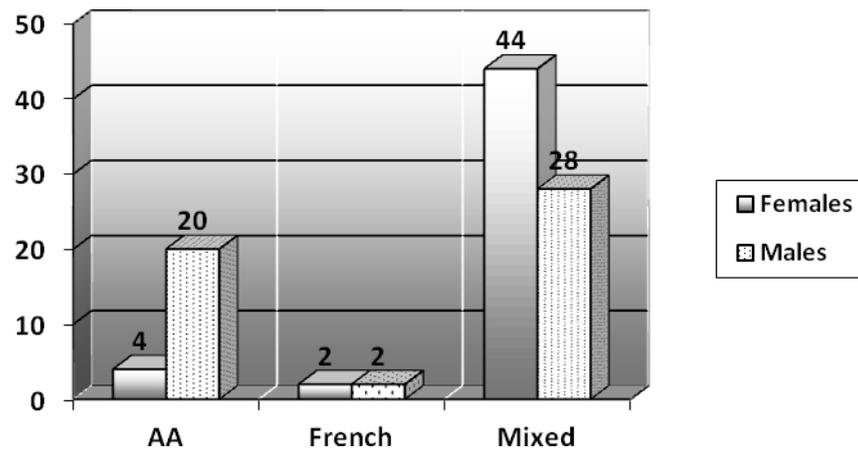


**Figure 5 :** Necessity of French use in speaking

Which language do you use when talking to your family members, friends?

Sex	Females (50)			Males (50)		
	A.A	FR	Mix(A.A+FR)	A.A	FR	Mix(A.A+FR)
Answers/100	04	02	44	20	02	28

**Table 10 :** Students' language use



**Figure 6 :** Students' language use

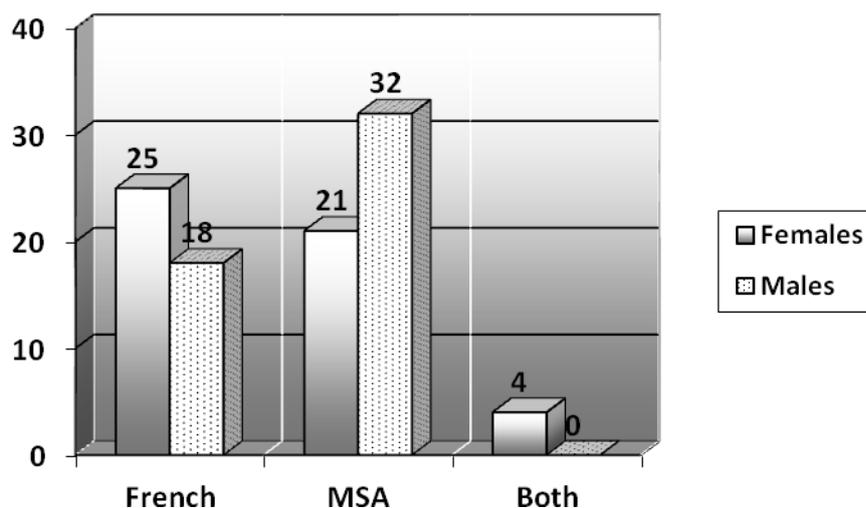
We can conclude that AA is full of French words and expressions, but informants told us that they can't use constantly French language in a normal conversation, but a huge amount of code switching (Arabic/French) is noticed. Only 2% of our informants told us that they really used a lot of French language when speaking with their relatives. We have asked our informants if they use a mixed language in their daily life because AA is full of French words and sometimes they couldn't find Arabic equivalent or they only used a mix language because they don't master any language in fact, neither MSA nor French. Their answers were in the following question:

Which language do you master?

Sex	Females (46)		Both	Males(50)	
	French	MSA		French	MSA
Answers/100	25	21	04	18	32

**Table 11 :** Students' degree of mastering languages

- 04 Feminine's answers, said Both French and Arabic



**Figure 7 :** Students' degree of mastering languages

Both girls and boys were not at ease with this question. They answered with no real confidence, especially girls, who showed more interests for French language. For the majority of boys, MSA is the language that any educated Algerian must master and pride. However, girls told us that MSA is hard to master, and revealed that French is not a difficult language; this is why they have more competence in French. They added that nobody will use MSA in every day speech except in some particular situations which are rare, however, French language is more used in many formal situations such as in administration, university, conferences...

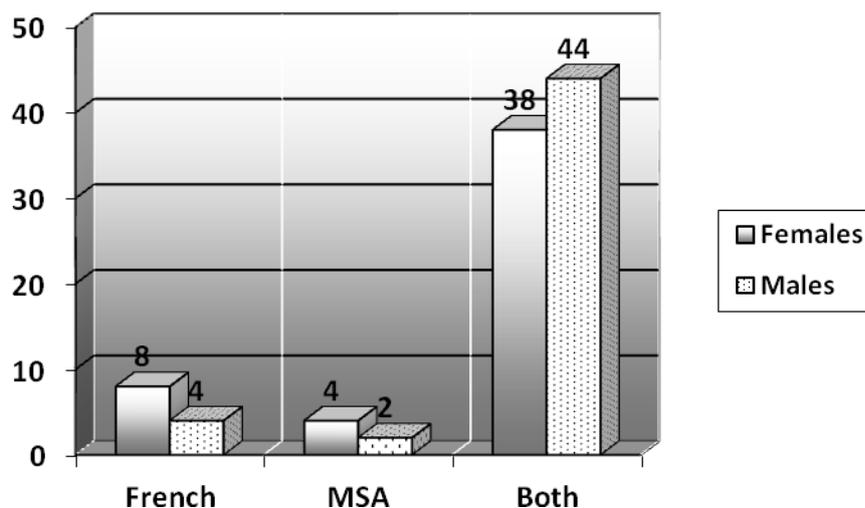
Girls and boys don't behave the same linguistically. It is evident that most of girls showed a great interest of French. Boys interests' was mainly in MSA, and in spite of their positive attitudes towards French, they avoid its use as far as possible and are less competent than girls. The 18% of boys, who master French, are those graduate students who project to finish their studies abroad.

Let us now see if they privilege to learn French to their children.

Which language do you want your children to learn?

Sex	Females (50)			Males (50)		
Answers/100	French	MSA	Both	French	MSA	Both
	08	04	38	04	02	44

**Table 12:** Preferred language to be taught to future children



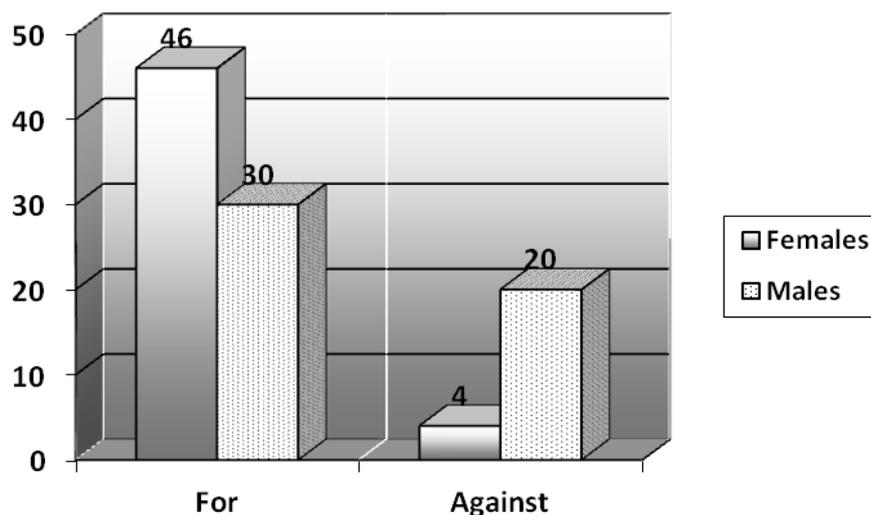
**Figure 8 :** Preferred language to be taught to future children

It is obvious that for students both MSA and French are the two fundamental languages for their future children. Only few informants (4%) especially boys do prefer MSA. Positive attitudes towards French were expressed in this question especially boys, who till this question show an interest about French language.

Are you for or against purchasing scientific books in French?

Sex	Females (50)		Males(50)	
Answers / 100	For	Against	For	Against
	46	04	30	20

**Table 13 :** For or against purchasing scientific books in French



**Figure 9 :** For or against purchasing scientific books in French

Nowadays, the majority of scientific books are either in French or English. Students (girls and boys 60%) are for reading books in French. Those 20% who are against are boys which level in French is very low.

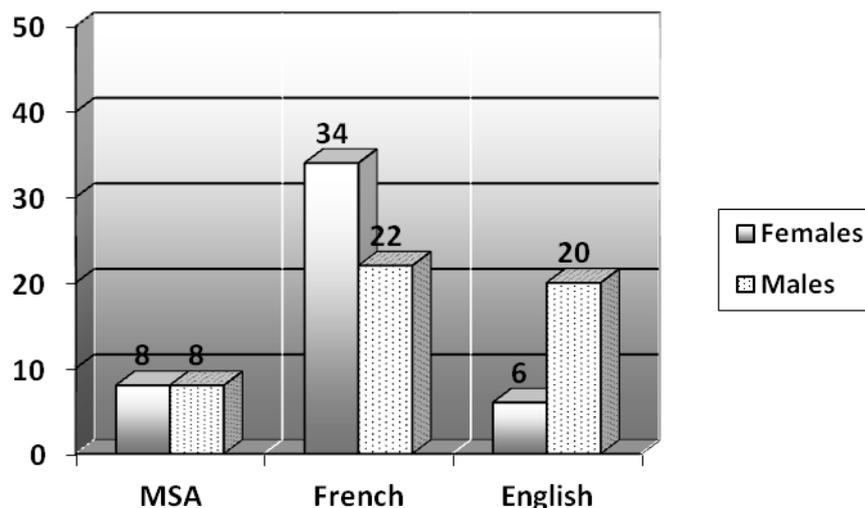
The last question was established to know if the students are influenced by French as a future language in Algeria. As noticed before, an important number of boys don't feel themselves at ease with French language. These deficiencies don't stop them to expect French as a future language in Algeria. However, English language is also an appreciated language by boys more than French; let us see the result in the following graph:

What language do you expect to be dominant in the future of Algeria?

Sex	Females (50)			Males (50)		
	MSA	French	English	MSA	French	English
Answers/100	08	34	06	08	22	20

**Table 14 :** Students' views on future dominant language in Algeria

- 02 Feminine's answers, said Chinese.

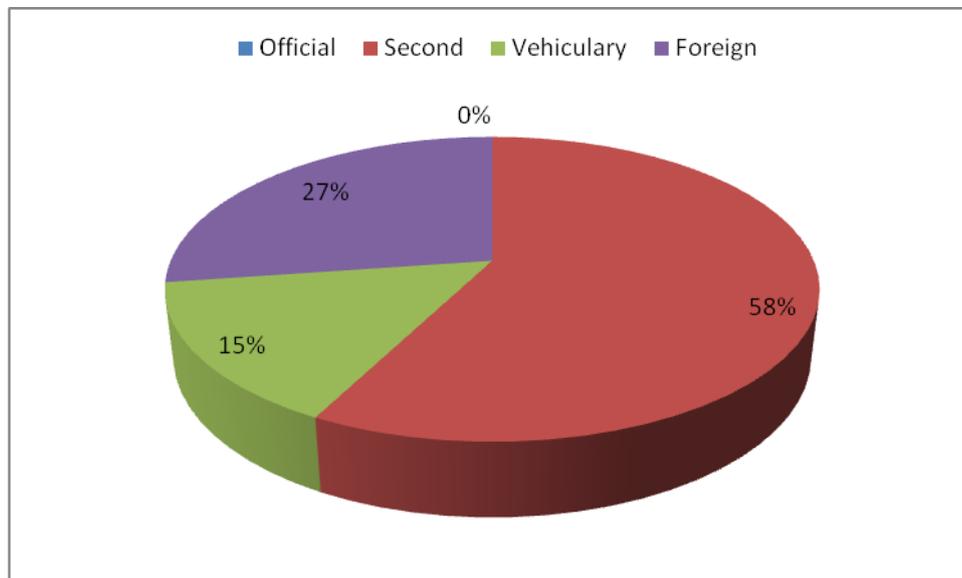


**Figure 10 :** Students' views on future dominant language in Algeria

This question was given at last to investigate students' preferences and awareness about their views of a future language in Algeria. French is still a language that mainly girls appreciate 34%. For boys, MSA is the language of their religion, but they said that it will be interesting to invest more in English in the future because they consider it as an important language over the world and for them it is easier to learn English than French. Also, it was very curious that two girls spoke about Chinese language. The reason beyond this, they explain is that in Algeria nowadays there is a Chinese working population and for them we will one day learn their language to facilitate our communication with them.

Now let us have a look at the results of the questionnaire given to the 1<sup>st</sup> generation. The first question aimed at knowing how informants consider the status of the French language in Algeria.

1. For you, which is the status assigned to French? Official, Second, Vehicular, Foreign



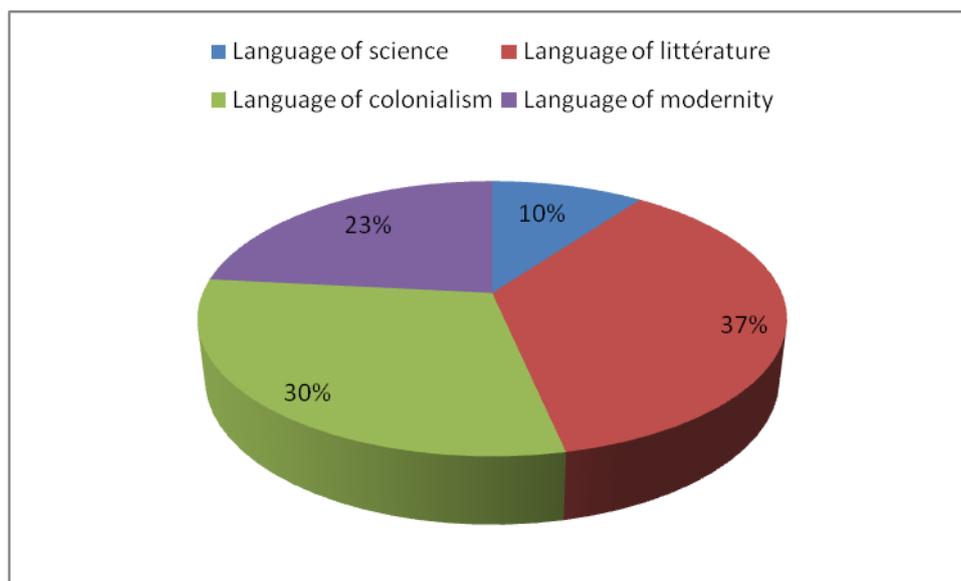
**Figure 11** : The status assigned to French by the first generation

Through this question we aimed at showing if the informants of the first generation are aware of the status given to French in Algeria. None have answered ‘official’, men and women are aware of the linguistic situation in Algeria. For the majority French is a second language in Algeria. Those who answered ‘foreign’ told us that politicians do not accept French as a second language and deny it totally.

French was and still is a foreign language. For the term ‘vehicular’, which was translated from French ‘véhiculaire’, we have explained to the informants that the term is when people speak French language without interruption and use it as code switching between AA and French not when people use French words within the dialect when speaking because we know that AA is full of French words and expressions. Code switching exists in Algeria and especially in specific situations. For instance, when a doctor speaks with his patient, the French language is used to explain some ideas and the doctor will express himself in French. But he will not use French with all kinds of people; with those who do not understand French the doctor will certainly use some French words but not codeswitch between AA and French. Also, our informants who consider French as a foreign language explained

to us that the term ‘foreign’ does not mean ‘strange’ language, because they said that French is a language that we find everywhere among Algerians. After independence Algeria did not adopt French and wanted to suppress it totally, but French remains among the Algerian heritage.

2. For you, the French language is synonym of:

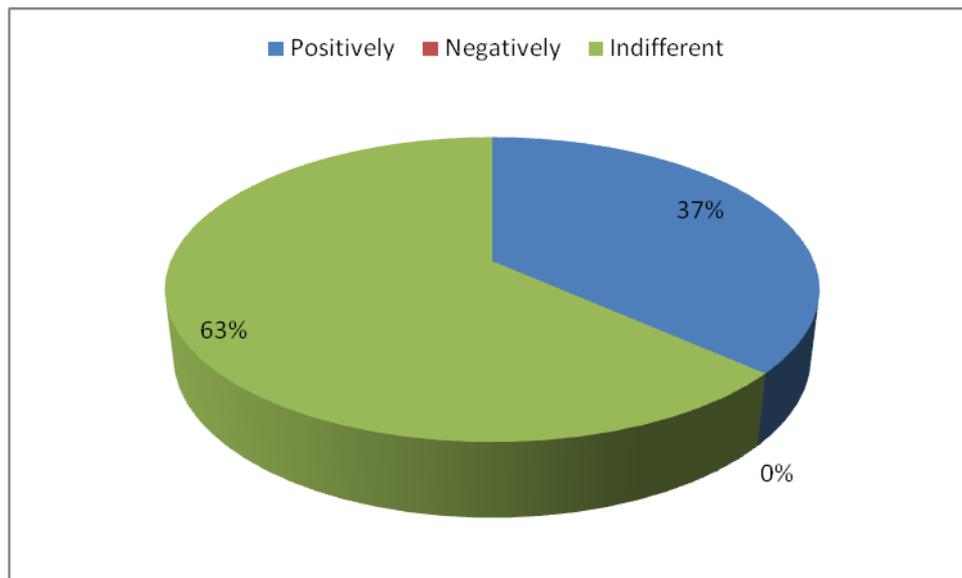


**Figure 12 :** Participant perception of the synonym of French

Here the answers were very interesting, since each of our informants explains why he chose such an answer. People are aware that French is the language of the colonizer, but not everyone sees it the same way. 11 out of 30 consider French as the language of literature because, they explained, they could not read in Arabic since they were ‘Francisants’, that is, they were taught only in French school during colonialism. After independence, they had not the opportunity to learn Arabic and fortunately they had learnt some Arabic in places where the Qur’an is taught. This was not an Arabic school teaching but rather a school to learn only the Qur’an. So, even if they did not continue their studies, they acquired some skills in French and consequently they read a lot in French. Those whose answers were ‘French is synonym of language of colonialism’ told us that even if they could attribute the other synonyms, French is still the language of the colonizer and this will never

change. If we had not been colonized by France, they said, perhaps this language would be seen from another angle by all Algerians. Still, French is also seen as a language of science and especially by doctors and educated people and a language of modernity because of biculturalism Algerian people have.

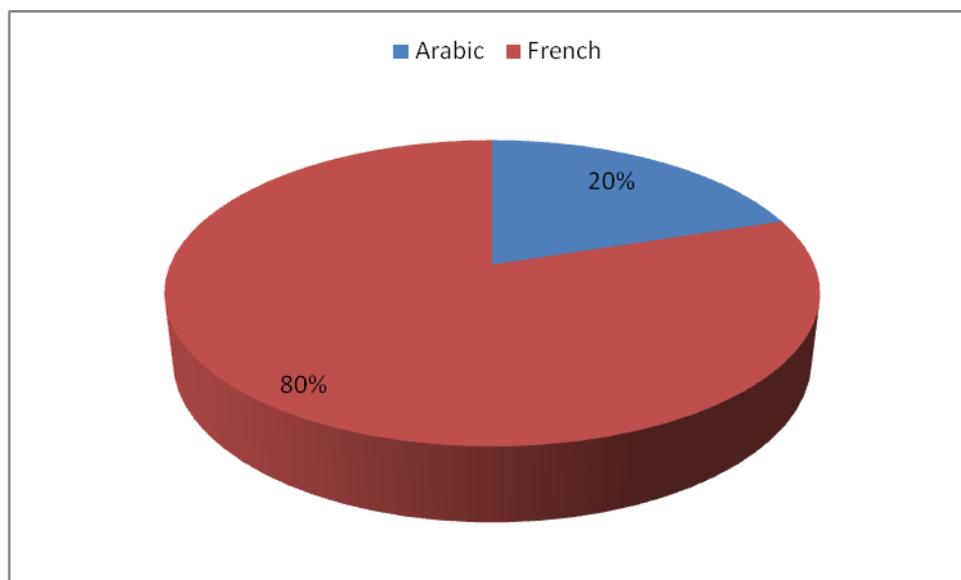
3. How do you judge someone who uses a lot of French in his/her Arabic?



**Figure 13 :** Appreciation of the use of French Language

Nowadays no one criticizes someone who speaks in French. People are totally convinced that the French language is a precious heritage from a painful era. Thus, people are somehow indifferent about the use of French in the daily speech. There are some people who find it positive to use French and our informants said that we can distinguish those educated from uneducated people from their level in French. If a person speaks French well, even if this person is not educated, they know that he or she is a person of a certain level.

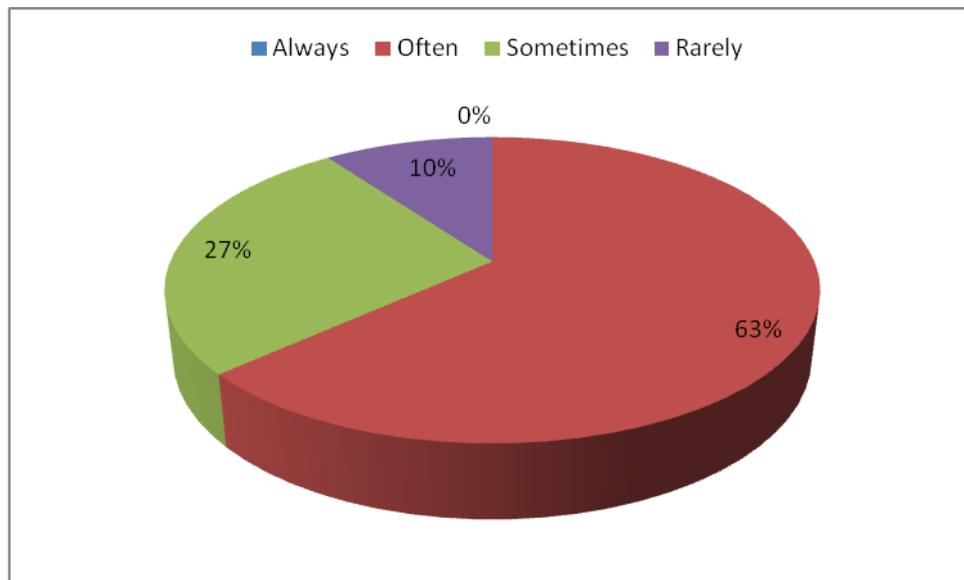
## 4. Do you prefer to read newspaper in Arabic/ French? Why?



**Figure 14 :** The language preferred in reading newspapers

As the results show 80% of our informants prefer to read newspapers in French. The reason behind this is that the majority of them (men and women) are ‘franciscants’, that is, they were taught in French school or they have some knowledge in French, and also apart from learning the ‘Qur’an’; they did not go to Arabic schools. Thus, even if some of them told us that they were at Arabic school right after independence, they have many difficulties to read Arabic. The rest of the informants 20% who prefer to read newspapers in Arabic were mainly teachers in primary school and housewives whom are obliged to learn Arabic because of their children.

## 5. To what extent do you use French in your daily speech?



**Figure 15 :** Use of French Language

It is evident that AA is full of French words and expressions. The question above was asked to know if the first generation, are enough kept by the French language even if their children are what we call the generation of ‘Arabisants’. Here our informants answered directly that all Algerians use a lot of French in their speech, whether in formal or in informal situations. 63% of the first generation included doctors, teachers and employers answered often, the others had shared views, between using more AA than French in their daily speech but they insisted on the importance of French words. No one uses French in daily life.

- *Summary of findings*

With the results background in mind, let us consider the following question:  
How do the two generations differ in language use?

It was prominent during our data collection that the first generation masters French much more than the second one. Questionnaires and interviews in this work with the two generations suggest that there is a gap of identity between them. Generally, the first generation is seen as having closer connections to ‘traditional’ behaviours, religion and believes while the second one is seen as more ‘civilized’ and consequently closer to new tendency, modern world and technology. Also each group has a particular ‘fashion sense’; they dress differently, and even use different kind of repertoires. By examining the questionnaire results, we can notice that there is indeed a difference in French pronunciations. That is, the first generation seems to have a ‘better’ pronunciation of French than the second one; not only in intonation but also in accent, but we should take in consideration that the sample of the first generation that we interviewed in Tlemcen was from a certain social class and the majority were educated. Basically, the first generation uses more French than the second one even if this latter is closer to the modern world. However, the results show that the two generations are not, at least quantitatively very different, that is they use French in their daily speech very often and this language is part of their life. The degree to which they identify the use of French could be ‘very strong’, ‘strong’, ‘somewhat strong’, but there was a real significance between the quality of the use of French between them. The first one, ‘have a strong command of it’, that is, they master French not only in speaking but also in writing. So the quantitative data do not indicate any strong differences between these two generations in using French except in that the first generation have more command and mastery of French. This lack is due to the quality of teaching French during colonialism and after independence.

In order to elicit the students' attitudes towards the languages concerned (MSA, Fr and Arabic) our conversations and discussion with the students and the 1<sup>st</sup> generation give us a general explanation about the way these are regarded. The interpretations of the results are summarized in the following section.

### **3.4 Attitudes towards MSA**

Arabic has long been regarded as a God given language, unique in beauty and majesty, the best equipped and most eloquent of all languages for expressing thoughts and emotions (Chejne 1965:449). In Algeria, pride and prestige are commonly associated with MSA. Not only is it believed that MSA is the language of the future with regard to its religious and cultural importance, but it is even regarded as unique in beauty.

Most of the informants' show they prefer to hear a 'political speech' performed in MSA, even if they do not understand it fully, because of the supposed beauty of expression or sacredness of this language. In response to the criticism that Arabic is merely a 'primitive' language, many Arabic speakers pointed to its "extraordinary vital poetic quality". Because of this poetic quality, many students feel Arabic is particularly suitable for the expression of emotion. Indeed, it is considered by most students (bilingual and trilingual) to be the most eloquent of all languages for expressing thoughts and emotions.

A common answer was that Arabic literature is the best compared to French or English, because it is more expressive. Even though most Algerians admit that classical Arabic is difficult to acquire, the illiterate masses as well as the Arabic-educated or even the French-educated intellectuals do praise its aesthetic qualities. Moreover, for Taleb-Ibrahimi (1976), Arabic is perfectly adequate for the discussion of philosophical, theological, scientific and other abstract ideas.

In order to understand fully the attitudes towards MSA we need to consider the various reactions to ‘Arabization’.

In Algeria MSA is achieving some national importance; however the campaign of Arabization is not over yet. The difficulties and obstruction encountered in this everyday struggle demonstrate that Arabization is not simply a question of constitutional articles. There are two basic attitudes towards Arabization:

- **French- educated Algerians**

This group tends to have a negative attitude towards Arabization. This is also true of many Berber speakers. This reaction is quite understandable, for Arabization either means compulsory re-adaptation and re-education or possible loss of status. There has been a strong pressure on all French educated Algerians, to learn and eventually master MSA. In most Algerian administrations for example, most of the documents are in Arabic, so this is a problem for those who were taught only in the French language.

- **Arabic educated- Algerians:**

Nonetheless, a lot of Arabic educated people accept French on an almost equal basis with Arabic while emphasizing the greater importance of Arabic as an educational and cultural medium.

- **The rest of the population**

Most illiterate -if not all- praise and esteem MSA. For many of them, Arabization means the entire suppression of French, the colonial language. Whether this is positive or not, it will be considered in the last part of this work.

### 3.5 Attitudes towards Algerian Arabic

If Arabic is the language of Algeria's cultural past and French the language of its colonization, Algerian Arabic is the language of daily life interaction. Even the most educated Algerian feels the impulse occasionally to express some feeling or thought in his own dialect. And, if there is some validity in the questionnaire figures indicating that AA is the native tongue of Algerians spoken in different dialects; the questionnaire also shows that AA is full of French words.

Native speakers have an attitude of pride towards their own dialect. There is also a strong feeling of language loyalty towards Algerian Arabic as opposed to MSA; for it is considered to be a defining feature of Algeria versus any other Arab country.

On the other hand most Algerians feel rather proud about their own dialect and this has led to the creation and multiplication of stereotypes attached to each one. Positive as well as negative attitudes towards specific dialects have developed along different lines. This may be the reason behind the government's official policy; for they are putting the stress on unity by making MSA the national language.

Another attitude labeled "awareness of linguistic norms" (Rubin 1968:17) is found in Algeria. Almost all Algerians are aware of the mutual influence of French and Algerian Arabic. As a result, many Algerians do not speak conventionally correct French or Arabic. Many old people complain that none spoke good French any longer, or good Arabic dialect; the language is always mixed. In fact, most people are aware of the fact that most of the time they do not speak 'pure' French but rather a mixture of two languages.

Because French has dominated Algeria for some time, Algerians' mother tongue can never be the same again. Algerian Arabic vocabulary needs some sort of

purification. It also needs a control of new creations so that the linguistic continuum between Arabic dialects can be intelligible.

### **3.6 Attitudes towards French**

The attitude of students towards French, in turn, whether it is positive or negative, will affect their academic performance once at university. This is what the questionnaire reveals especially among students from rural areas. We have attempted to find out what kinds of attitudes students have about the use of French language; and how did their attitudes affect their academic achievement; and also what factors contribute to the lack of French use in their studies.

MSA is the language of Algeria; it is associated with official use, with education, administration, the mass media...etc. It is also dominant because it is associated with the religion. French is also esteemed by a large proportion of the population. It is almost always learned by all Algerians as a second language in primary and secondary classes, and still has a prestigious status in formal situations. In spite of the fact that most Algerians keep deeply in their minds negative memories about French rule, this does not mean that French is not liked. This is particularly true of all those who have been educated in French.

The most extreme nationalists - particularly the 'Arabisants' - feel frustrated by the constant use of French as a medium of communication and instruction. They accuse this French educated generation of having colonized minds. They even protest against the use of French in education and administration, and thus ask for complete Arabization of the country institutions. Those People are also from rural areas, which they have no contact with French language and consequently their children will have difficulties once at school with this the French language.

However, there is an opposite trend whereby one is considered old-fashioned if one is constantly heard talking in Arabic. Most male students we have asked

about which language they use when addressing a girl replied that Arabic is not an adequate medium of conversation in this situation. They even added that most probably they would have more chances in getting the sympathy of the girl if the language used is French.

In Algeria, antagonism towards French is not entirely linguistic, but also economic and social. Indeed, French is looked at as the language of a certain class, not simply the educated one but also the richest as well. 'Upper-class' informants tend to be more proficient in French than in Algerian Arabic; whereas, rural informants, much more frequently tend to learn Arabic first and to be more proficient in it. The use of French is often defended on the grounds that it is always more cultured to know two languages. Many people are also aware of the importance of French in economic, political, and intellectual exchange with the outside world.

As a result of this examination of attitudes towards MSA and French it may be concluded that:

- Arabic is the important language of institutions (Government, schools...etc)
- Attitudes of pride and prestige are associated with both languages: French is rejected by many Algerians but it is also a source of pride in many circumstances. Generalized negative feelings towards MSA seem to come mainly from 'upper class' individuals who consider French as a prestigious language. Nonetheless, many of them recognize the linguistic and cultural qualities of MSA.

The French language is part of the Algerian life. As far as the students are concerned, their deficiencies in French matters are related to many social parameters. Even if the majority of students are motivated and have positive attitudes towards this language, they have a very different school career and came from different social context, that is, from the secondary school French was very badly taught, so learners were not motivated enough and then get a very bad image of this language that seems for them very complicated and hard to learn once confronted to French matters at university.

### 3.7 Benefits of Multilingualism

Today, Algeria is undergoing the influence of two opposing forces: linguistic nationalism and language. This gives rise to basic problems. Indeed because of French colonialism, Algeria is now developing a distinct national language as a symbol of its independence. But MSA is still a difficult language when used in many fields such as Science, Technology, and Economic...etc. And this is so, not because MSA is not an adequate language in those fields, but because the majority of educated Algerians have not reached a position of perfect mastery of MSA, and also because most of the printed materials in those particular fields are either in French or English. Our students have to be able to seek the knowledge they need in at least one of the languages in which most of the world's knowledge is available.

It is not surprising that, today Algeria gives a great deal of attention to learning foreign languages, and is taking language teaching seriously since on such skill depends the educational level of its students and hence the strength of the nation.

As a result of historical causes, French has come to be the one language that is widely known among the educated people in Algeria. Today most Arabic educated Algerians are conscious that language is part of Algeria and they wonder about its status, whether French is to be considered as a second language or given the status of English. In Algeria, the learning of French begins in primary school, whereas English classes start from the first year in middle school. The following objections may be made to this demand: although English is liked by most of the Algerian students, this language does not mean what French means to the Algerian population. French is not their language but they have adopted it, whereas English is not so familiar to them and remains a foreign language. Another reason is that, until the time when books written in the national language replace books now available in foreign languages, it is inevitable that Algerians will need to have a

good knowledge of French to study the subjects of scientific and technological interest. A working knowledge of the French language is therefore necessary for Algeria to establish a closer interaction between her local population and her immediate neighbours.

It is obvious that the time has gone when French might have become the unique language in Algeria. This language has lost its monopoly since independence in 1962, and had to be replaced by Arabic, but we cannot deny the qualities of Moliere's language. The Algerian's purpose is not to destroy the French language even if it is considered as the language of the previous enemy, but wish to get back their identity and use French to announce Algeria to the modern world. It is a useful tool for researchers in various matters. So, it is desirable to learn French besides Arabic.

In Algeria, a lot of works are produced in French. Thus, in order to make this literature accessible to Algerians, the French language is maintained in 'second position' in Algeria. Indeed, any bilingualism is an asset to be cultivated. In the questionnaire proposed to students, the responses for the questions: 'Are you for or against learning French in schools?' 'And, do you think it is better to maintain French in second position or rather to suppress it completely?' were totally (100%) positive as to the usage of French.

Moreover, the importance of a bilingual country is not only useful for political relations, international trade, and the application of medical skills...etc, but also for tourism and personal skill and pleasure. Many Algerians with their chauvinism seem to be unconscious of the fact that bilingualism or even multilingualism is a desirable accomplishment. By means of bilingualism, there is the extension of the cultural insights of the people, as each additional language that is acquired opens new 'windows' upon different worlds. In this sense, when Haugen speaks about languages, he states:

From a link, a bridge, perhaps we should say a channel of communication between groups. Groups which would otherwise centrifugally part company and rotate around axes of their own are kept in contact by bilinguals who span the linguistic borders. Such links are increasingly important in a larger world of discourse.

(Quoted in Joyce.O ,1965:414)

There is a need in the contemporary world for some capability, in at least one language other than the mother tongue. What is required of the individual is not the ability to translate exactly or master perfectly, but sufficient communicative facility by means of the other language to conduct daily activities in the world as it is.

In Algeria, bilingualism is a skill found predominantly among educated people. Will these bilinguals pass on their linguistic heritage to their children? If so, would this generation mastery of French equal their parents' mastery? And, what social and educational conditions would tend to maintain a clear "Diglossia+Bilingualism, Diglossic bilingualism situations"?

Finally, the last question which arises is whether we can expect the entire population of Algeria eventually to become completely bilingual or is there a maximum level beyond which we can expect one of the languages to begin to decline?

Considering the first two questions, there are many factors which may help to maintain this linguistic situation in Algeria. First, there is the factor of contact with people and the pride of the Arabic language in Algeria. Since French bilinguals are here, the language cannot be replaced entirely by another one.

The conclusion which may be drawn is that if the distribution of usage functions of at least two languages is mutually exclusive or particularly so, it might be possible for a totally bilingual Algerian nation to be sustained. On the other hand, if the 'Arabisants' were to be successful in their desire to arabize Algeria entirely, MSA would progressively become the dominant in all the domains, while all the other languages would decline.

However, Arabophones preserve their language through isolation. This recognition and preservation of the Arabic language (mother tongue) might be one day supplemented by their adoption for official purposes and for communication across language boundaries within the nation. This approach, tolerance of multilingualism, will eventually represent an official policy of recognizing cultural pluralism as a fundamental characteristic of the Algerian nation.

# **General Conclusion**

## **General conclusion**

In the present study, which arose primary from sociolinguistic interests, we have attempted to illustrate the causes of Algeria's linguistic diversity, and tried to give a general idea about Algeria's linguistic past, present and possible future. We have seen that despite the fact that the Algerian population has struggled to express its own identity, there still exist clear linguistic problems.

Many linguists, psychologists and sociolinguists find the Algerian linguistic situation extremely complex. This situation encourages them to wonder about the linguistic landscape which has undergone many important changes throughout time. Algeria has always been a multilingual country, and its linguistic history confirms that, because of the succession of several civilizations which have left linguistic traces, mainly the French language which remains a linguistic legacy in Algeria after more than 50 years of independence. Such linguistic situation will probably last for many more years.

A high degree of bilingualism is reflected in the daily speech of Algerians. Indeed, French remains a second language in Algeria and continues to be used in spite of the government's official decision and efforts to arabise the institutions. It is interesting to understand how people behave linguistically and especially towards French, and to know the degree of their efficiency in this language; here we consider the mastery of French not how people use French to convey meaning by using borrowing words.

Various classifications of kinds of bilinguals are possible depending on variables such as sex, age, language usage and cultural identity. In our investigation, in which we have tried to evaluate student's degree of French mastery, we have observed these different kinds of bilinguals. All definitions of bilingualism tend to consider the notion of degree in relation to social variables which play an important role in determining bilingual proficiency.

In the present research, we have tried to elicit students' attitudes towards French and consequently to ascertain their competence in the French language. We can say that apart from the fact that all students are bilingual, the linguistic distance between Arabic and French is fundamental, that is even if French is constantly present, it is not well known and spoken by all students.. Furthermore, even if we are able to see the problem of adequate use of French among students, it is difficult to ascertain the degree of competence students have in French. However, the differentiation between rural and urban students was prominent and helps us a lot to know about their motivation and performance concerning French. We have also found that both students from rural and urban areas, those who master French, were girls in majority. Boys show less interest about French even if they have positive attitudes toward the language. That is, they use French in their everyday conversation, a lot of French words and expressions especially when there is no equivalent in Algerian Arabic, but have many difficulties in their studies when they are faced with the problem of studying modules in French.

The social background of students from rural area affects the use of French in their academic performance because we have seen that they were not able to read for example the questionnaire in French and show a lot of difficulties in comprehension. Those students who are considered as passive bilinguals told us that they have no motivation in this foreign language, because some were raised by illiterate parents, others started to learn this language only once at school. People from rural areas only speak their native tongue and sometimes use French borrowing words unconsciously. However, in urban areas, especially among students from Tlemcen, French is not a foreign language but omnipresent. Most of the families from urban areas, especially those intellectuals, doctors and educated people raise their children in a bilingual education; consequently their children are very familiar with this language and once at school, they show no difficulties in using it.

Also, we have found that the level of French of the first generation is higher than that of the second one, and this is due to the quality of learning during and right after independence which was very efficient.

The result of our project has revealed that students, who master French and find no difficulties once at the university, are those from urban areas, particularly those whose parents insisted on giving them a bilingual education. Also, girls show more motivation and competence for French than boys. Generally, attitudes towards French are positive, and students from rural areas were a little ashamed because of their low level in French. But they told us that this is not their fault, and that from the beginning they were not taught the French subject appropriately at school, which led them to feel less motivated and less concerned with this language. Teachers are conscious of this lack. There might be solutions such as for example to propose an adapted French course for specific purposes. Certainly, this will not treat all the problems found but such course is probably an advantage for those students concerned.

Most students in Tlemcen University show a very low level in French and don't know whose fault is. It is true that the French oral practice is low among students but this does not mean it is the reason behind their deficiency in French. Nowadays, things begin to change since foreign language learning methods have been improved and with the new technologies the growing generation is much more involved than the precedent one. Researchers must investigate these problems faced by students once at the university, and consider their difficulties in French. Many questions are to be investigated and solutions may be found by linguists, For example, further research may investigate in the following questions: what are the main social factors that affect students' level in French matters? Should educationalists and linguists create a special French class for those students in need? And perhaps even a more interesting study would lead to the design of a language course that seeks to improve students' competence in French.

# **Bibliography**

## Bibliography

---

BHATIA, T. K. & RITCHIE, W. C. (2008). *The Handbook of Bilingualism*. Blackwell Publishing.

BELL, R-T (1976), *Sociolinguistics : goals approches and problems*, B.T Batsford Ltd, London.

BENMESBAH, Ali, *Algérie : un système éducatif en mouvement*, in *Le Français dans le Monde* n° 330, Novembre/Décembre 2003.

BOUCHARD E et HOWARD G. (1982), *Attitudes towards language variation. Social and applied context*, Edward Arnold.

BOYER H. (2001), *Introduction à la sociolinguistique*, Paris, Dunod.

BOYER H. (éd) (1997), *Plurilinguisme : « 'contacte' ou 'conflit' de langues ? »*, Paris, l'Harmattan.

BOYER H.(1996), *Sociolinguistique : territoire et objets*, Neuchâtel, Delachaux et Niestlé.

CALVET L.J (1999), *Pour une écologie des langues du monde*, Paris, Plon.

CALVET L.J (2002), *Le marché aux langues. Les effets linguistiques de la mondialisation*, Paris, Plon.

CALVET L.J (1974), *Linguistique et colonialisme. Petit traité de glotlophagie*, Paris : Payot.

CALVET L.J (1987), *La guerre des langues et les politiques linguistiques*, Paris, Payot.

CHARLES ANDRE J. *Histoire de l'Algerie contemporaine: conquete et colonization*, Presses Universitaires de France.

Charte Nationale (1976), SND Alger .

CRYSTAL D. (2001), *Language and the internet*, Cambridge University press.

DE SAUSSURE (1979), *Cours de linguistique générale*, Classique, Hachette.

## Bibliography

---

DITTMAR N.(1976), *Sociolinguistics*, A critical survey of theory and application, Edward Arnold.

EDWARDS, J (1994). *Multilingualism*. Routledge.

FASOLD R. (1990), *The sociolinguistics of language* , Blackwell publishers .

FERGUSON , C-A (1959a), *Diglossia* , Word, Vol 15,pp 325-40.

FISHMAN J-A,(1978), *The sociology of language*, Newbury house publishers, Rowley, Massachusetts.

FISHMAN J-A, (1967), *Bilingualism with and without diglossia: diglossia with and without bilingualism*, Journal of social issues, Vol 23, n°2, pp 29-38.

FISHMAN J.A, (1971), *Sociolinguistique*, Paris, Nathan et Bruxelles, Labor.

FISHMAN J-A , (1968b), *Sociolinguistic perspective on the study of bilingualism*, Linguistics, Vol 39, pp21-49.

FISHMAN J-A, (1968), *Language problems of developing nations*, New York, Wiley.

FISHMAN J-A,(1972), *Language in social change*, Standore University press.

FUCHS C. et LE GOFFIC P. (1975), *Initialisation aux problèmes des linguistiques contemporaine*, Hachette Université.

GARMADI J. (1981), *La sociolinguistique*, Presses Universitaires de France.

GEORGE YULE ,(1985), *The study of language*, Cambridge University press.

GIGLIOLI P-P,(1972), *Language and social context*, Penguin .

GILLESPIE J. (1960), *Algeria: Rebellion and revolution*, Ernest Ben Limited, London .

GORDON D-C, (1966), *The passing of French Algeria*, London University press.

## Bibliography

---

GUESPAIN L et MARCELLESI J-B, *Pour la glottopolitique*, Langages, n°83.

HAMERS and BLANC (1983), *Bilinguality and Bilingualism*, Cambridge University Press.

HYMES D, (1964), *Language in culture and society*, Harper and Row, New York.

LABOV W, (1976), *Sociolinguistique*, Paris, Editions de Minuit.

LACHREF A, Réflexions sociologiques sur le nationalisme et la culture en Algérie, in : *L'Algérie nation et société*, SNED? Alger .

MACKEY W-F, (1976), *Bilinguisme et contact des langues*, Paris, Klincksiek.

MARCELLESI J-B, (1981), *Bilinguisme et diglossie*, Revue trimestrielle 15<sup>o</sup> année.

MEISEL, J. M. 2008. 'The Bilingual Child' in *The Handbook of Bilingualism*, Bhatia and Ritchie eds. 2008 Blackwell Publishing.

MUYSKEN P, (1987), *Language contact and Bilingualism*, Edward Arnold, London.

MYRES-SCOTTON C. (1993), *Social motivation for code switching. Evidence from Africa*, Oxford University press.

PICKLES D. (1963), *Algeria and France*, Methuen and Co, Ltd.

PRIDE J-B (1971), *The social meaning of language*, Oxford University press.

PRIDE and HOLMES, (1972), *Sociolinguistics*, Penguin Books.

Psychologies et société, 4, 2001/2.

QUEFFELEC A. et al, (2002), *Le français en Algérie: lexique et dynamique*, Editions Ducolot.

RIVERS W-M, (1976), *Speaking in many tongue: Essays in foreign-language teaching*, Newbury house publishers.

## Bibliography

---

ROMAINE.S (1989), *Bilingualism*, Second edition, Blackwell publishers Ltd.

RUBIN J. (1968) *National bilingualism in Paraguay*, Mouton.

SAYARD A. (1967), *Bilinguisme et éducation en Algérie in Castel and Passeron, J-C (1967)Education developement et démocratie*, Paris, Mouton.

TALEB A-L . (1976), *De la decolonization à la revolution culturelle (1962-1972)*, SNED Alger.

WEINREICH U. (1953), *Languages in contact*, New York , Linguistic Circle of New York.

WEINREICH U. (1964), *Languages in contact : findings and problems* , The Hague : Mouton.

## Webography

Retrieved from:

-Safia rahal. (2001) La francophonie en Algérie : Mythe ou réalité ?

<http://www.initiatives.refer.org/Initiatives-2001/notes/sess610.htm>

-Mouhajer Noureddine .Algeria : An intricate bilingual and diglossic situation

<http://webs.uvigo.es/ssl/actas2002/04/12.%20Mouhadjer%20Noureddine.pdf>

-Haouari Bellatreche (2009) L'usage de la langue Française en Algérie

<http://ressources-cla.univ-fcomte.fr/gerflint/Algerie8/bellatreche.pdf>

-Algeria : Arabization

<http://countrystudies.us/algeria/53.htm>

-Genty de Bussy. Cahiers du centenaire de l'Algérie

<http://aj.garcia.free.fr/Livret11/L11p74-75.htm>

-Abdenour Arezki ,Le rôle et la place du Français dans le système éducatif algérien

<http://www.unice.fr/ILF-CNRS/ofcaf/23/AREZKI%20Abdenour.pdf>

-Politique linguistique ou linguistique politique – le cas de l'Algérie

[http://www.upicardie.fr/LESCLaP/IMG/pdf/elimam\\_politique\\_linguistique\\_algerie.pdf](http://www.upicardie.fr/LESCLaP/IMG/pdf/elimam_politique_linguistique_algerie.pdf)

<http://www.u-picardie.fr/LESCLaP/spip.php?article125>

-Le Français en Algérie

<http://www.ambafrance-ma.org/institut/rabat/fax/algerie1.htm#fra>

-Zoulikha Bensafi , Bilingualism in Algeria

<http://webs.uvigo.es/ssl/actas2002/04/02.%20Zoulikha%20Bensafi.pdf>

-Ait Dahmane Karima (2007) Enseignement/apprentissage des langues en Algérie  
entre représentations identitaires et enjeux de la mondialisation

<http://ressources-cla.univ-fcomte.fr/gerflint/Algerie1/karima.pdf>

# Appendices

**Questionnaire N° 1** (Proposed to students, second generation)

1. Which language do you prefer, apart from your mother tongue?

MSA, French, both

2. Which is the most difficult language?

MSA, French, Neither

3. Which is the most beautiful language?

MSA, French, both

4. Do you mix Arabic and French when speaking?

Yes, No, sometimes, not often

5. Do you feel the use of French necessary when speaking?

Yes, No

6. Which language do you use when talking to your family members, friends?

Algerian Arabic, French, Mix

7. Which language do you master?

MSA, French, both

8. Which language do you want your children to learn?

MSA, French, both

9. Are you for or against purchasing scientific books in French?

For, Against

10. What language do you expect to be dominant in the future of Algeria?

MSA, French, English.

**Questionnaire N° 2 (Proposed to first generation)**

**1.** For you, which is the status assigned to French?

Official, Second, Vehicular, Foreign

**2.** For you, the French language is synonym of:

Language of Science, Language of Literature, Language of colonialism,  
Language of modernity

**3.** How do you judge someone who uses a lot of French in his/her Arabic?

Positively, negatively, indifferent

**4.** Do you prefer to read newspaper in Arabic/ French? Why?

Arabic, French

**5.** To what extent do you use French in your daily speech?

Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely

**Questionnaire N° 1 in French** (Proposé aux étudiants, deuxième génération)

1. Mise à part votre langue maternelle, quelle langue préférez-vous ?

Arabe, Français, les deux.

2. Pour vous, quelle est la langue la plus difficile ?

Arabe, Français, aucune des deux

3. Pour vous, quelle est la plus belle langue ?

Arabe, Français, les deux.

4. Utilisez-vous le Français et l'arabe dans une même conversation ?

Oui, Non, Des fois, pas souvent.

5. Trouvez-vous nécessaire l'utilisation du Français quand vous parlez ?

Oui, Non

6. Quelle langue utilisez-vous quand vous discutez avec les membres de votre famille et vos amis ?

Arabe algérien, Français, mixte des deux.

7. Quelle langue maîtrisez-vous le plus ?

Arabe, Français, les deux.

8. Quelle langue voudriez-vous que vos enfants apprennent ?

Arabe, Français, les deux.

9. Etes-vous pour ou contre l'achat de livres scientifiques en Français ?

Pour, Contre

10. Pour vous, quelle langue dominera en Algérie dans l'avenir ?

Arabe, Français, Anglais.

**Questionnaire N° 2 in French** (Proposé aux personnes de la première génération)

1. Pour vous quel est le statut attribué à la langue française ?

Officielle, secondaire, courante, étrangère.

2. Pour vous, la langue française est synonyme de:

Langue de Science, langue de littérature, langue du colonialisme, langue du modernisme.

3. Comment jugez-vous une personne qui utilise beaucoup le Français lorsqu'elle parle en arabe ?

Positivement, négativement, indifférent.

4. Préférez-vous lire les journaux en arabe ou en Français ? Pourquoi ?

Arabe, Français

5. Jusqu'à quel point utilisez-vous le Français dans vos discussions quotidiennes ?

Toujours, fréquemment, des fois, rarement.

## Questionnaire N° 1 in Arabic

1. ما عدا لغتكم الاصلية ما هي لغتكم المفضلة ؟

العربية الفرنسية الاثنین

2. في رأيكم ما هي اصعب لغة ؟

العربية الفرنسية اية واحدة

3. في رأيكم ما هي اجمل لغة ؟

العربية الفرنسية الاثنین

4. هل تستعملون الفرنسية و العربية في نفس الوقت ؟

نعم لا في بعض الاحیان ليس غالبا

5. هل للغة الفرنسية اهمية عندما تتكلمون العربية ؟

نعم لا

6. اية لغة تستعملون عندما تتحدثون مع اقاربكم و اصدقائكم ؟

العربية الفرنسية الاثنین

7. اية لغة تتمكنون منها الاكثر ؟

العربية الفرنسية الاثنین

8. اية لغة تريدون تعليمها لاولادكم ؟

العربية الفرنسية الاثنین

9. هل انتم مع او ضد شراء الكتب العلمية باللغة الفرنسية ؟

مع ضد

10. في رأيكم ما هي لغة المستقبل في الجزائر ؟

العربية الفرنسية الانجليزية

## Questionnaire N° 2 in Arabic

1. في رأيكم ما هي وضعية اللغة الفرنسية ؟  
رسمية ثانوية حالية اجنبية
2. في رأيكم اللغة الفرنسية تمثل  
لغة علمية لغة الادب لغة الاستعمار لغة الحضارة
3. كيف تحكمون على شخص يستعمل كثيرا اللغة الفرنسية في محادثاته ؟  
ايجابيا سلبيا بدون رأي
4. هل تفضلون قراءة الجرائد الناطقة باللغة العربية او الفرنسية ؟ لماذا ؟  
العربية الفرنسية
5. الا اية درجة تستعملون اللغة الفرنسية في محادثاتكم اليومية ؟  
يومية غالبا في بعض الاحيان نادرا

## Summary

This work is a macro sociolinguistic study of bilingualism in Algeria taking the speech community of Tlemcen as a case in point. Student's lack of competence in French opened a real field of research.

By giving a questionnaire to random sample in Abou Bakr Belkaid, the 100 informants (girls and boys) express their attitudes and feelings towards French. The findings show that mastery of the French use depend on many parameters mainly sex, social class and cultural identity. Urban and rural students differ in their use of French, and the results reveal that rural students are less competent in French than urban ones.

**Key words:** bilingualism, multilingualism, bilingual competence, attitudes.

## Résumé

Ce travail est une étude macro-sociolinguistique sur le bilinguisme en Algérie avec comme échantillon d'étude, la communauté de Tlemcen. La question de la compétence linguistique nous a ouvert un champ de recherche. Un questionnaire a été donné à un échantillon aléatoire de 100 étudiants (filles et garçons) de l'université Abou Bakr Belkaïd pour qu'ils expriment leurs attitudes et sentiments envers la langue française. Les résultats obtenus montrent que la maîtrise du français dépend de beaucoup de paramètres principalement : le sexe, la classe sociale et l'identité culturelle. Nous avons constaté aussi que les étudiants ruraux sont moins compétents en français que les étudiants urbains.

**Mots clés :** bilinguisme, multilinguisme, compétence bilingue, attitudes.

## ملخص:

تناولت هذه الدراسة الماكروسوسيوغوية لازدواجية اللغة بالجزائر ظاهرة نقص الكفاءة في اللغة الفرنسية لدى طلبة جامعة أبي بكر بلقايد بتلمسان أثناء البحث، تم توزيع استقصاء على عينة عشوائية مكونة من 100 طالب (ذكورا وإناثا) للوقوف على مواقفهم ومشاعرهم اتجاه اللغة الفرنسية. أظهرت نتائج البحث أن إتقان استعمال الفرنسية يعتمد على عدة ثوابت / عوامل منها: الجنس، الطبقة الاجتماعية والهوية الثقافية. يختلف الطلبة الحضر عن البدو في استعمالهم اللغة الفرنسية، والنتائج توحى أن الطلبة البدو أقل كفاءة في استعمالهم اللغة الفرنسية من الطلبة الحضر.

## الكلمات المفتاحية

ازدواجية اللغة - تعددية اللغة - كفاءة ازدواجية اللغة - مواقف