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**Parents' Attitudes towards Introducing English in the
Algerian Primary School**

*This Extended Essay is Submitted to the Department of
English as a Partial fulfillment of the Requirements of the
Master's Degree in English: Language studies*

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Dedication

With all my love i dedicate this work to

The light of my eyes my dear Father and Mother for their encouragement

To my dear brothers and sisters

To my husband and my son Rayan

To my dear friends Abd Rahim, Nesma, Imene, Safia, Nouri, Hamza

To all whom I know

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Abstract

Various studies have been carried out in the sphere of language attitudes. The study at hand aimed at measuring parents' attitudes towards the introduction of English as a subject in the Algerian primary school. The study relied on a mixed questionnaire that covered forty (40) participants randomly selected. The findings revealed that the majority of the participants have positive attitudes toward the inclusion of English as a school subject in primary education instead of delaying it until the middle school as it is currently the case. These attitudes are governed by the present status of English, being the world language. However, still a minority of teachers expressed their preference to keep the situation as it is, with only French introduced to learners in primary schools.

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1.1 Introduction

Algeria is a diglossic and, at the same time, a multilingual speech community. This is due to the coexistence of a number of varieties within the same country. The present chapter tends to give an outlook of the current linguistic situation of Algeria. It sheds light on the status of each language. This makes it necessary to review language planning and policy initiated and implemented by the Algerian authority.

We should also throw some light on the Algerian Arabization policy after the independence aiming at favoring standard Arabic as the sole national and official language of Algeria especially at the level of education and administrations. In addition, we have attempted in this work to come up briefly with some aspects of the incorporation English as a global language besides to its status in the Algerian educational system.

Moreover, the purpose of this chapter is to contextualize some of the most theoretical approaches to inquiry in the field of language attitudes. Definitions, theories, measurement's method are discussed.

1.2 Part 1

1.2.1 The Sociolinguistic Situation of Algeria

Most world countries have more than one language. Algeria is not the exception. It is de facto a meeting ground for various languages. This is due to its history which is marked by numerous invasions by different people, and hence different linguistic groups. This has shaped its sociocultural structure as well as its sociolinguistic profile. This verity makes Algeria a laboratory for sociolinguistic studies. In fact, Algeria contains a number of languages; the three main ones are Arabic, Tamazight and French

1.2.1.1 Arabic

Arabic is the dominant language in Algeria. It is identified in two forms: classical/standard Arabic (also called modern standard Arabic) and Colloquial or Dialectal Arabic.

1.2.1.1.1 Modern Standard Arabic

Modern Standard Arabic (hereafter MSA) is the national and official language of Algeria as it is determined by the constitution of the country. MSA is actually no more than a modern form of Classical Arabic (henceforth CA) or the so-called Quranic Arabic. This makes it enjoy a prestigious position among the Arabic-speaking World. In fact, “Arabic is seen as a God-given language unique in beauty and majesty, the best equipped and the most eloquent of all languages for expressing thought and emotions” (Chejne, 1965:449). Within the same line, Fleish (1964:3) points out that “Classical Arabic has the prestige, an immense prestige which is multiplied by two because it is twofold: the prestige of great language of culture [...] and that of a language of religion”. The differences between CA and MSA are relatively small, and the main differences appear at the levels of stylistics and vocabulary (Djennane, 2016).

1.2.1.1.2 Vernacular Arabic:

Every Arab country is characterized by a dialect or dialects used for daily informal communication. Algerian Arabic (AA), known as ‘Derdja’, is the mother tongue of the majority of Algerians. AA displays significant regional variation and the differences among the mutually intelligible regional dialects increases the further we move from one area. Thus, we recognize a person speaking a certain variety as belonging to a certain region. AA has a much-simplified vowel system, and it is full of linguistic borrowings, especially from Tamazight, Turkish and French.

1.2.1.2 Tamazight

Tamazight, or Berber as it is also labeled, is an indigenous language of North Africa as a whole. It was spoken in a large area stretching from Siwa Oasis in Western Egypt extending westward to the Canary Islands through Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco (Achab, 2001). As far as Algeria is concerned, Tamazight encompasses five major varieties located in different regions. Kabylia (Takbaylit) counts the highest number of speakers across the country. Shawi (Tashawit) is spoken in the South-East of Constantine, mainly in Batna, Khenchla and Oum-El-Bouaghi. Shenwi (Tachenwit) is a minority variety spoken in the mountain of Chenwa (West of Algiers). Mzabi (Tamzabit) is localized in Ghardaia and its surrounding agglomerations. Targui is the language of Touareg, spoken in some remote spots of the Sahara like Ahaggar.

1.2.1.3 French

The presence of French in Algeria is due to French colonialism which lasted more than 130 years. The French language was considered as the official language of Algeria during the colonial era. After independence in 1962, the Algerian government implemented the policy of arabization with the aim of replacing French by Arabic. Despite the large-scale arabization, French still enjoys a prestigious position in the Algerian society; it continues to fulfill important functions, particularly in higher education, technology, sciences and the media (Djennane, 2017). The strong presence of French can easily be noticed even in daily conversations being formal or informal. In this respect, Bencherfa (1987:123) reports that

by examining closely the different types of speech such as: the political speech, the conversations on official or scientific subjects, the plays, personal letters from one person to another, courses given in university at the college or at school and finally the conversation within family, we notice in the majority

ofcases the alternation of passages in Algerian Arabic passages in Modern Standard Arabicand in French

1.2.2 Language Planning and Policy

Language is an instrument of human communication; it represents the identity of an individual. Cooper (1989) observes that “language is the fundamental institution of society. To plan language is to plan society” (Cited in Djennane, 2016:1). Therefore, language planning and policy (LPP) activities are of prime importance in every society. In fact, LPP emerged as an area of academic research during the early 1960s (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1998:358).

Spolsky and Shohamy (2000) argue that the terms ‘language planning’ and ‘language policy’ are used interchangeably to designate the same kind of activities. However, other linguists, such asBaldauf (1994) and Schiffman(1998 in djennane), prefer to treat them as distinct entities. In this view, “language planning is an activity most visibly undertaken by government, intended to promote systematic linguistic change in some community of speakers” (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997:6). Moreover, Cooper (1989:45) points out that language planning refer to “deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or fundamental allocation of their language codes”. As for language policy, Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:6) define it as “a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the plan language change in the society, group or system”.

1.2.3 Dimensions of Language Planning

Kloss (1969) mentions two types of language planning based on the distinction between language as an autonomous linguistic system and as social institution. These two types are status planning and corpus planning.

1.2.3.1 Status Planning

According to Haugen (1972), Fishman (1974) and Eastman (1983), status planning deals with the selection and use of language in relation to education administrations, mass media, judiciary, trade and international relations. Then, decisions around language status occur at various levels depending on the linguistic make-up of the society. Language status may focus on essential subjects, such as which local language or local variety to choose. Thus, status planning deals with which language should be official, national, regional and so forth. Eastman (1983:16) proposed that decisions about language choice and language literacy might be conducted on the basis of the following questions:

- 1- Is literacy desired in the first language alone?
- 2- Is literacy desired in the language of larger regional group if that language is neither a first nor a national language?
- 3- Is literacy desired in the language of a person's domicile regardless of region of birth?
- 4- Is literacy desired in both the first language and/or the second language?
- 5- Is literacy desired in the official national alone?

On the other hand, in the countries under former colonial combination, decisions regarding language choice had been primarily on the basis of nationalism which means the choice of and indigenous language in order to enhance patriotism and to preserve culture and traditions, or on the basis of nationism which refers to the use of an international language or language of wider communication for political integration and linguistic efficiency (Fishman, 1971)

1.2.3.2 Corpus planning:

Lo Bianco (2004: 724) argues that corpus planning deals with activities aimed at the promotion of the form of the language to function as the medium of education, administration, scientific research. In this respect, Cooper (1989:13) argues that corpus planning deals with “activities such as coining new terms,

reforming spelling, and adopting new script. It refers, in short, to the creation of new forms, the modification of old one or the selection from alternative forms in spoken or written code”

1.2.3.3 Acquisition Planning

In addition to ‘status planning’ and ‘corpus planning’ initiated first by Kloss(1969), ‘Acquisition planning’ which refers to “organized efforts to promote the learning of the language” (Cooper 1989:165). The main focus of acquisition planning is to influence the allocation of users or the distribution of languages by means of creating or improving opportunity or incentive to learn them or both (Demissie et al, 2009:11)

1.2.4 Language Policy in Algeria

Right after independence Algeria spelled out a rigid linguistic policy known as ‘arabisation’. Such policy aimed at displacing the colonial language (i.e., French) by Arabic. Arabisation is therefore understood as “a reaction to French cultural and linguistic imperialism, [and the goal of policy-makers] was to turn the clock back and reverse the impact of over one hundred and thirty years of enforced French language by reviving Islamic cultural values and establishing Arabic as the national language (Rebai-Maamri, 2009:np). Algeria’s rulers affirmed a belonging to the Arabic-speaking World and to the Islamic Nation to recapture a sense of identity that the French colonizer divested. Consequently, the first constitution of the young republic declared Arabic as national and official language besides Islam as the religion of the state. Algeria began to reconstruct itself with strengthening the position of the Arabic language in different walks of life. Arabisation gained momentum under the presidency of Houari Boumedienne (1965-1978). In one of his public speeches, Boumedienne reported that “without the recuperation of this essential and important element which is the national language, our efforts will remain useless, our personality incomplete and our entity a body without soul”.

Arabic gradually gained ground in different sectors. As far as education is concerned, the primary school was arabized steadily. About this, Benrabah (2007) reports the following:

Starting from 1962, the Algerian government that inherited the remnants of an education system focused on European content and conducted in a foreign language by foreign teachers, sought to gradually increase Arabic sessions in all levels and all subjects were taught in Arabic and there was a decrease in the amount of time for teaching French. This policy of course favored the national integrity and unity and religion” (in Rezig, 2011)

Materials to teach Arabic were primarily imported from Egypt (Benrabah, 2007:229-230). In February 1966, the president Boumedinne established a new publishing house to write only in Arabic and ended the work of the French publishing houses (Abu-Haidar, 2000:156)

Besides education, arabisation influenced other sectors. For instance, in 1968 a national law decreed that all government administrators were required to be competent in Arabic and the use of the dialect was forbidden by January 1971 (Abu-Haidar, 2000:157).

1.2.4 English as a Global Language

At present day, humanity uses 6,909 languages¹ (Anderson, 2010). However, there is a need for the adoption of a common language that allows people worldwide to communicate. Crystal (2003) claims that the essential reason to make a language international or global is the power of its people. In the present time, English is a global language and the world lingua franca. Broughton et al (1978, 1980) observes that English is the “major world language”. McArthur (2001:4) defines international English as follows

The English language, usually but not necessarily in its standard form, either when used, taught, and studied as lingua franca throughout the world, or when taken as whole and used in contrast with American English, British English, South African English, etc: it is difficult to predict the shape of international English in the twenty-first century. But it seems likely that more rather than less standardization will result... We may, in due course, all need to be in control of two standard Englishes- the one which give us our national and local identity, and the other which puts us in touch with the rest of the human race

Meanwhile, it is also the language of international traffic control as well as the principle language of a world publishing science and technology. Likewise, Broughton 1978, 1980 claims that English is the language of debate at the United Nations and the language of command in the NATO.

1.2.4.1 The status of English in Algeria

Nowadays, English has become a kind of a universal language according to many factors and reasons, and the national language of many countries as mentioned above. As for countries where English is not a national language, it is regarded as first or second foreign language taught in schools and universities. As far as Algeria is concerned, English is regarded as a 'foreign' language taught throughout the middle and secondary schools. It is also a subject of instruction in different fields in the university. It is also taught in military, economic and cultural institutions. However, English remains a language of limited use in comparison with French. Hamdi (1999:13) writes that:

the Algerian authorities are aware of that fundamental need for English, at a time when Algeria may be called upon to play a leading role in international affairs. We have only to examine the shift from French to English as subject in the educational curricula, or the ever-increasing number of students registering in the English departments of the universities

The integration of English in the curriculum contributes for an increasing number of its users. In fact, there are social calls among the young generation and even professionals to take measures and promote the teaching/learning of English. Some people went further and called for replacing French by English in the Algerian school.

1.3 Part II: Language Attitudes

One of the most interesting subjects in the area of social psychology is the study of language attitudes. Apple & Muysken (1987: 16) observe, the fact that languages are not only objective, socially neutral instruments for conveying meaning, but are linked up with the identities of social or ethnic groups has consequences for the social evaluation of, and the attitudes towards languages.

1.3.2 Language Attitudes in the Area of Social Psychology

Garett (2010) argues that defining the concept of attitude is not simple, given the breadth of the term and the importance of the different aspects of attitudes. It has been known for a long time that the way we speak has an impact on, and gives impression to, the person we speak to. This gives us an idea about what an attitude is. For example, we can say that someone has a positive attitude towards the new president, or he has negative attitudes towards working in the weekend. Thus, in our everyday speech, we may use the term attitude to refer to notions, ideas and opinions that we have towards people, events, places, etc.

The work on language attitudes has been conducted under different disciplines, including social psychology, anthropology, sociology of language, education and sociolinguistics. However, despite of the extensive work on language attitude, arriving at satisfactory definition is still hard. Generally, a deep work in the area of language attitudes is traced specifically in the social psychology of language more than other academic discipline (Baker, 1992; Giles et al., 1987). According to Edwards (1994:97), attitude is “the cornerstone of traditional social psychology”. The incorporation of attitudes in the area of social psychology goes back to

Allport's (1935) definition, in which he defines attitude as follows "a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or a dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (in Baker 1992:11).

According to Edwards (1982:20), even within the much work in the core of social psychology concerning attitudes there is no general agreement on its definition. Eiser (1986:11-13) tells that the general unifying concept that most of researcher agree upon is that attitudes are subjective experiences involving evaluation of different kinds of attitude objects, and are related to behavior. The term language attitude means attitudes that are precisely about language. According to Crystal (1997:23) language attitudes are "the feelings people have about their own language or the languages of others"

Scholarship about (language) attitudes has developed on the basis of two psychological approaches, named as the behaviorist and the mentalist approaches.

1.3.2.1 The behaviorist approach:

In this theory, linguists argue that attitudes can be inferred from the responses that an individual makes to social situations, i.e., as a response to stimulus (McKenzie, 2010:21). Here, researchers do not ask for self-report as well as indirect inference of attitudes but they find it sufficient to observe, tabulate, and analyze overt behavior (Fasold, 1984:148). Perloff (2003) mentions that "the behaviorist view of attitudes has largely been discredited, although it should not be completely discounted because attitudes are often thought to directly influence behavior" (in McKenzie, 2010:21)

1.3.2.2 The Mentalist Approach

Most language attitude work is based on a mentalist view (McKenzie, 2010:21). The mentalist approach builds on Allport definition who sees attitude as

an internal state of readiness, which when aroused by stimulation of some sort will affect the responses of the individual. This means that attitudes are viewed as internal units located in the human mind according to which people cannot observe directly someone's attitudes; they might be studied on the basis of the person's self-reports or by inferring them from the direction and the insistence of the person's external behavior (Baker, 1992:11; Fasold, 1984:147; Gardner, 1982:132).

Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) argue that "the mentalist often gives a tricomponential analysis of the attitude arguing that it is made up of affective, cognitive and behavioral components (ABC) model" (in Djennane, 2016). Eiser (1986) points out that the ABC model can be explained by the definition of Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) in which "attitudes are predispositions to respond to some classes of stimuli with certain classes of response, those classes of response being affective, cognitive and behavioral". Concerning this view, measurable independent variables such as person's situations and other attitudes objects make the role of stimuli, and develop attitudes which compose of three parts: affect (verbal statement about feelings), cognition (verbal statements of opinions, thoughts and beliefs), in addition to behavior (verbal statements about behavior) (Baker, 1992:12). Thus, the mentalist paradigm argues that attitudes objects generate people's opinions and beliefs and probably make them act in a certain way.

In analyzing ABC model view of attitudes we can make a difference between attitudes and other related terms, such as opinions and beliefs

In addition to the mentalist and the behaviorist views, another view to attitudes relates to the discursive view presented by Potter and Wetherel (1987). In this view, attitudes are defined socially (in the social-constructivist paradigm) arguing that social reality as people perceive it is built in social interaction through language. Within this view, attitudes are viewed as a static input-output mechanism or as the respondents' positive or negative reaction to stimuli. Alternatively, language attitudes are seen as everyday linguistic action or discourse practices in interaction situations (ibid). Consequently, attitudes can be considered to be part of the public debate about languages and its speakers (ibid). Attitudes are said to be

the act of expressing your opinions towards an issue, i.e., for or against (Billing, 1987:177-178).

Attitudes are variant from one situation to another; they can also vary in the same situation depending on who you are exchanging attitudes with and what sort of arguments are put (Cargileet al, 201). Questioning person's attitudes towards a language can be done in another way "how does A express her opinion in different situations?" and "according to which reasons A's presents her opinion in in form x or in form y?" (ibid)

1.3.3 Methods of Measuring Language Attitudes

Measuring language attitudes has been carried out by different research methods and techniques, as mentioned below.

1.3.3.1 The Direct Methods

According to Fasold (1984), the direct methods are generally used to study people's attitudes towards languages or towards regional and social dialects of one language, and how do people react to linguistic and non-linguistic features, such as pronunciation and word choice. Studying language attitudes can be done through some research instruments, like questionnaires, interviews and both can include open or closed questions. Baker (1992:17-18) mentions another type of answers which can be represented on Likert scale.

The direct methods have been subject to criticism. Fasold (1984:147) reports that the respondent's self-reported data is not always valid. Moreover, respondents may answer in a certain way because they want to appear socially desirable and prestigious (Baker, 1992:19). Another criticism is that the purpose of the research and the researcher can affect the informants' answers. For example, the interviewer's linguistic and non- linguistic behavior may indicate to the interviewee what the proper answers are in each case (Baker, ibid). Therefore, linguists, such as Baker (1992), observe that the data collection tool requires providing a wide variety

of favorable and unfavorable attitudes besides including a representative sample population. Only under such conditions, the direct method can reach reliability.

1.3.3.2 The Indirect Methods

The indirect methods mean that the research subjects' do not know that their language attitudes are being investigated. The most generally used technique in indirect methods is the match-guise technique (MGT) introduced by Lambert and his associates in 1960. Such technique builds on the presentation of various audio pieces that are recorded in different languages, and the informant is required to listen to a speech samples and evaluate the speakers. This is a reason why this approach is often referred to as the speaker evaluation paradigm (Cargile et al., 1994:2013). It is suggested that the speech style and the accent that the informants hear will trigger associations between a certain speech style or accent and a certain group of speakers, and thus the speech sample is thought to evoke special stereotypes in the informants mind (Giles and Coupland, 1991).

It goes without mentioning that the indirect methods to attitudes measurement have also subject to criticism. Fasold (1984:153-154), among others, argues that the content of the speech sample may have an effect on the results as does the way the text is read. He adds that measuring language attitudes in a language studio is very far from everyday life.

1.3.3.3 Discourse analysis:

In the discursive view, measuring language attitudes using the direct and the indirect methods is not possible. This view holds that language attitudes should be measured by the discourse analysis method based on the beliefs, among others, that language is used for many purposes, that meanings arise from the interaction of the communicative acts and that texts are never 'neutral' (Giles and Coupland, 1991:54). Discourse analysts mention that tests try to establish rhetorical, political and ideological positions, through complex means (ibid).

Giles and Coupland (1991) observe that in discourse analysis participants' can speak or write freely and their speech is usually a reaction to the questions given by the interviewer so the attitudes are inferred through constructive and interpretative processes which make use of the social actors' textual and contextual knowledge. In this approach, studying language attitudes is systematic analysis of spoken or written text instead of trying to measure people's language attitudes objectively.

Conclusion

As it has been mentioned in the first chapter's introduction, the objective of this chapter was to provide a general overview of the relevant literature concerning the description of the current sociolinguistic situation of Algeria, then, some related concepts of LPP have been briefly discussed, the Algerian arabazation policy have been also sketched, in addition to some aspects of the incorporation English as worldwide language and its status in the Algerian education system. Moreover,

Chapter Two

2.1 Introduction

One of the vital keys to research is to conduct a field work in order to the hypotheses and answer the research questions. This chapter outlines the methodology used in the pursuit of this research work. Then it constitutes a space to analyze and discuss the findings. Therefore, two parts make up this chapter.

2.2 Part I: Methodology Considerations

This part contains a brief description of the methodological framework of this research. Focus is on the aim of the study, the sample population and the data collection instruments, as it is discussed below.

2.2.1 The Aim of the Study

This study is guided by two research questions. The first one is set out to measure parents' attitudes towards introducing the English language in the Algerian primary school. The second question attempts to scrutinize the motivations and reasons guiding their attitudes.

2.2.2 The Research Design

Research refers to the systematic method consisting of stating the problem, formulating hypotheses, gathering data and analyzing them to reaching certain conclusions towards the concerned problem either in the form of solution(s) or in certain generation for some theoretical formulation (Kothari, 2004). Scholars have defined research design differently. Polit et al (2001), for example, argue that it is "the overall plan for collecting and analysing data including specifications for enhancing the internal and external validity of the study". Likewise, Parahoo (1979:142) defines it as "a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analysed". Burns and Grove (2003:195) describe it as "a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings".

This research is kind of a survey. Such method is seen as a technique of gathering data from a representative sample of individuals, using different instruments composed of questionnaires, observations and interviews (Polit and

Beck, 2001). This relies on collecting statistical data about the attributes, attitudes or actions of a population by administering standardized questions to a sample population (Babbie, 1990)

2.2.3 Sample Population

In research, the terms ‘population’ and ‘sample’ generally go hand in hand. Therefore, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between these two fundamental concepts. Parahoo (1997: 2018) defines population as “the total number of units from which data can be collected”. In other words, it is a group of individuals’ persons, objects, or items from which samples are taken for measurement, for example, a population of teachers, students, etc. They add that sampling is “the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population (ibid, p.95). The present study covered forty (40) participants. They are of different ages. They are all parents, including males and females. The majority of them are literate; they are university graduates.

2.2.4 Data Collection Instruments

Gay (1987) describes data collection instruments as devices used to gather data, like questionnaires, tests, interviews and checklists. It goes without saying that each instrument has its own strengths and weaknesses. In other words, there is no single research tool par excellence. As discussed previously in the first chapter, researchers measure language attitudes using different techniques. The present research built on the direct method using a mixed questionnaire.

The questionnaire is one of the most popular methods of conducting scholarly research. Gillham (2008:2) defined “Questionnaires are just one of a range of ways of getting information from people usually by posing direct or indirect questions”. One of the major advantages of using questionnaires is that they can cover a large population in a relatively short time. Questionnaires are usually of three types: structured (closed-ended questions), unstructured (open-ended questions), and mixed questionnaires. The questionnaire used in this study is of a mixed type as it consists of different questions. This renders qualitative and quantitative data. The

questionnaire was drafted in Standard Arabic as this the language that the respondents master. It is the task of the researcher to translate faithfully the Arabic version, including respondents' answers.

2.3 Part two: Data Analysis and Discussion

This part provides a description of the data obtained through the questionnaire. Then, a discussion of the results will be furnished.

2.3.1 The Results

Each question will be analyzed individually. In fact, the first two questions are concerned with personal information about the informants. Half of the respondents are university graduates. The other parents are also literate, but they did not undertake university education. As for their linguistic qualifications, 80% of them do not master English. Most of them know very basic notions that they learned in middle and secondary school, with varying degrees of competence.

✓ Question3:

This item of the questionnaire revolves around the most important language in the world in the present time. It put forward four choices, namely Arabic, French, English and other languages. The informants, with no single exception, were definite in their answers. They all opted for English.

✓ Question 4: How do you see the English language?

This question is of prime importance as it attempts to determine learners' attitudes towards English. All the respondents expressed positive views. The reason that came in the forefront is that English is the mostly widely spoken language in the world, not only in its native countries but also worldwide. Respondents also consider that English is very important, beautiful and prestigious. These are societal judgments. For the respondents, English plays a prime role at the international level, such as trade, tourism and communication. Another strong reason relates to the web as English is the dominant language of the internet.

In fact, some respondents argued that university students with good control of English are more likely to find jobs compared with those who have no command of such language. For them, knowledge of English permits one to have access to a world of entertainment, such as movies, songs, books which are abundant in English more than any other language.

✓ **Question 6:** I am for promoting the teaching of English in Algeria.

This is a positively worded item. This is one of the cornerstone items of the questionnaire as it directly measures parents' attitudes towards promoting English in the Algerian education system. The results are presented in table 2.1, shown below:

Table 2.1: Parents' attitudes towards promoting English in the education system

	Percentage (%)
Stronglyagree	70
Agree	30
Disagree	00
StronglyDisagree	00

Table 2.1 clearly shows that all the respondents approve on taking steps to develop the teaching of English in Algeria. None of the informants expressed negative stand towards this item. This implies that English is highly valued.

✓ **Question 7:** I am for the teaching of English in the primary school instead of the delay until the middle school.

This question is also positively worded. This is the most interesting item of the questionnaire. This is meant to measure parents' attitudes towards the inclusion of English as a school subject in primary education. The results showed that a clear

majority of the respondents are for a change of the current situation in which English is only taught at the level of the middle school. Parents explicitly voiced their want to introduce English in primary education. Cons to this proposal formed no more than a marginal minority that did not exceed 10%. The results are presented in table 2.2, shown below. When required to justify their answers, most informants mentioned that introducing learners to this language at an early age is beneficial on the basis of the slogan ‘the earlier, the better’

Table 2.2: Parents’ attitudes towards the inclusion of English in the primary school

	Percentage (%)
Stronglyagree	70
Agree	20
Disagree	00
StronglyDisagree	10

✓ **Question 8:**

This item of the questionnaire revolves around what foreign language(s) parents prefer as subjects of instruction in primary education. In fact, the results were varied. The great majority of them (52.5%) opted for only English. Only 10% of them chose French. However, still 37.5% of them opted for both French and English. The results are sketched in table 2.3, mentioned below:

Table 2.3: Parents’ preference to foreign Languages in the primary school

	French	English	French + English
As far as the primary school is concerned, I am for the teaching of:	10%	52.5%	37.5%

This means that the vast majority of parents participating in this study are for a change of the current situation. Their calls to introduce English in primary education built on a variety of reason. They mentioned that English is a powerful language at the international language. It is the language of academic advancement and scientific research. This is why they stressed a need to give priority to English over French, or at least to be given equal priority.

Those who call for maintaining only French in primary schools reported that French should be prioritized as it is an essential language in Algeria. They mentioned that French is the dominant language in a variety of fields, such as higher education, administration, and medical fields. This is an evident truth. English is still a language of limited use in Algeria.

- ✓ **Question 9:** The teaching of English and French together in the primary school may have a great pressure on the child’s thinking

This item asks parents about their point of view regarding the cognitive load that may result from teaching French and English together in the primary school. The results are given in the following table:

Table 2.4: The Negative Impact of the Teaching of French and English on the Child’s thinking

	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	00
Agree	20
Disagree	75
Strongly Disagree	05

The informants expressed their optimism regarding introducing their children to two foreign language simultaneously. Only 1/5 of the participants exposed a negative stand from teaching both languages arguing that this may have negative impacts on young learners as it places a higher cognitive load on them. They also

argued that French and English are different languages which make it challenging for young learners to cope with them.

Pros of teaching both languages listed the following reasons:

- The child's brain is characterized by a higher plasticity which allows him to accept and learn two or more languages simultaneously
- Learning more than one language is a way to prepare children for their adult life
- The child may acquire a positive feeling if he learns more than one foreign language. This boosts his self-esteem

✓ **Question 10:** As parents, how can you help your children to learn English?

It should be made clear from the onset that the respondents are not experts in language teaching. Therefore, they provide proposals that they think fit their children to develop good competence in English. Among the suggestions that were mentioned is to make children in frequent contact with English through mass media. In other words, the respondents think that watching English cartoons and movies besides listening to songs may effectively foster their linguistic abilities. They also mentioned games as another possible effective technique.

2.3.2 Discussion of the Results

The overall objective of the present research is to measure parents' attitudes towards the inclusion of English in the Algerian primary school instead of delaying its teaching/learning until the middle school as it the case now. The aim was also to examine the reasons conditioning their attitudes.

Responses to the most important questionnaire items exposed a great deal of conformity in parents' answers. Also, most parents shared the same points of view. In fact, most of them expressed explicit positive attitudes to the most direct questions. Therefore, it is not surprising that most of them support promoting the teaching of such a language in the Algerian education system. In fact, many of them

went further to express clear sustain to replace French by English in primary schools. They argued that English must be given extreme priority. However, some other parents opted for teaching/learning both languages in the primary school, claiming that they are both beneficial for the learners. Those who objected on introducing English in primary education formed only a minor population. Such group of parents built their position on the verity that French remains a strong language in the Algerian society; a language associated with a variety of prestigious domains. They, of course, do not deny the importance of English. In fact, the majority of teachers did not consider introducing young learners to English and French as a serious issue that may hinder their academic development. They rather agreed that children are well equipped to cope with more than one language simultaneously under the right teaching/learning conditions. All in all, the results largely confirm the first hypothesis.

The results also revealed that parents' positive attitudes are guided by a number of reasons. Such attitudes are strongly associated with the international value of English, being the world first language. Parents are aware of the role and importance of English which the language of economy, politics, finances, science, technology, etc in the present time. English is simply described as the language of globalization. Although French is also an international language, it remains of less value when compared to English. This is likely to breed positive attitudes towards the language of power. Again, the findings confirm the second hypothesis.

2.4Conclusion

This chapter was a space to display the research findings. The aim was to provide adequate answers to the research questions and to test the validity of their associated hypotheses. In fact, the results revealed no significant mismatch in the parents' answers to the different questionnaire items. There was a general agreement among most of the participants on the importance of English. This world lingua franca is highly esteemed by the parents due to its utility worldwide. This has fostered parents' attitudes towards introducing it in the primary school where young learners can rapidly and effectively develop good command of it. It should be noted

that the present study made use of the direct method to attitudes measurement relying only on one research instrument. Therefore, the research exposes a number of limitations making generalisability of the findings quite difficult. Such limitations might be circled in future research.

General Conclusion

Parents are significant agents in the formulation of language education policies. Therefore, it is very interesting to consider their attitudes during the formulation process in order to ensure successful implementation. This research work was meant measure parents' attitudes towards introducing English in the Algerian primary school. This parallels an examination of the reasons guiding their attitudes.

This research is made up of two chapters. The first one constituted the theoretical background of the study. It sketched the current sociolinguistic situation in Algeria. It goes without saying that the present status of English in Algeria was discussed. English is still considered a second foreign language. Its use is very limited in the community, either publically or socially. However, there are encouraging hints showing a rise of English, especially among the young generation.

The second chapter is the cornerstone of the present research work. It is a field work conducted to provide answers for the questions upon which this research built. In fact, the results exposed positive attitudes of parents towards introducing English in the primary school. Those who expressed positive attitudes outnumbered those who revealed negative attitudes. As such, the first hypothesis was confirmed. Reasons guiding positive attitudes are primarily associated with the instrumentality of English at the international level. Participants' responses showed that they are aware of the necessity to know English in order to function well within the international community. They are aware of the cultural, scientific, economic, political, academic, communication, etc value of English. Therefore, the second hypothesis was also confirmed.

It should be noted that general agreement among the participants could not be met. There were some participants who exposed negative attitudes towards introducing English in the primary school. However, these formed no more than a marginal minority. Such informants reported clear preference to maintain only

French at this level of education. They supported French on the basis that it plays a significant role in the Algerian speech community. Although it is politically declared as a foreign language, it still fulfills important tasks in the community, officially and socially.

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إستبيان

هذا الإستبيان جزء من بحث للحصول على شهادة الماستر في اللسانيات و يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة موقف الأياء من إدماج اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية. رأيك مهم لتحقيق هذا البحث

شكرا على تعاونك

الرجاء الإجابة عن الأسئلة و وضع علامة X فيالخانة المناسبة للإجابة المختارة. يمكنك إختيار أكثر من إجابة إذا اقتضى الأمر

1. المستوى الدراسي :

الإبتدائي المتوسط الثانوي الجامعي

2. اللغة التي تتكلمها :

العربية الفرنسية الإنجليزية

لغات أخرى (حدد من فضلك).....

3. ما هي اللغة التي تجدها مهمة و ضرورية في الوقت الحالي؟

العربية الفرنسية الإنجليزية

لغات أخرى (حدد من فضلك).....

4. كيف ترى اللغة الإنجليزية ؟

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.....
.....

5. الكثير من الناس يرون أن اللغة الإنجليزية هي لغة ضرورية في الوقت الحالي. لماذا؟

.....
.....
.....

6. أنا مع تشجيع و تعزيز تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في الجزائر:

أوافق تماما أرفض أوافق أرفض تماما

7. أنا مع تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية بدلا من تأخيرها إلى غاية مرحلة التعليم المتوسط:

أوافق تماما أرفض أوافق أرفض تماما

لماذا؟

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8. في ما يخص المرحلة الابتدائية, أنا مع تدريس اللغة:

الفرنسية الإنجليزية الفرنسية + الإنجليزية

لماذا؟

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9. تدريس الإنجليزية و الفرنسية معا للطفل في المرحلة الابتدائية من شأنه أن يعرض الطفل إلى ضغط فكري زائد:

أوافق تماما أرفض أوافق أرفض تماما

لماذا؟

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10. بدورك كوالد, كيف ستساعد طفلك على تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية ؟

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