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**A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Use and
Perception of Insults:
Tlemcen Speech Community**

*Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in
Candidacy for the Degree of “Magister” in Sociolinguistics*

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Dedication

To my mother, brother, sister and husband

Meryem

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Abstract

Human beings use language to accomplish a variety of social acts. They are supposed to select from the whole grammatical correct expressions available to them, the ones which appropriately reflect the social norms that are settled to them for specific occasions. However, using speech goes beyond selecting correct grammatical sentences. This implies that each speech obeys the forbidden rules. Hence, it is not sufficient to acquire linguistic competence to speak adequately and to behave in a suitable and acceptable manner.

It should be borne in mind that in addition to the environments and the social structure of a given speech community, its values can also have effects on its language. The most interesting way in which this may happen is through the phenomenon known as taboo which can be characterized by behaviours that are believed to be supernaturally forbidden, or regarded as immoral or improper.

Taboo terms are classified into categories; insult and name calling are our concerns in this dissertation. Thus it is to this end that this work takes up general consideration of the use and perception of these two linguistic behaviours in Tlemcen speech community.

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Phonetic Symbols




Arabic Alphabet			
IPA			
ء	/ʔ/	ش	/G/
ب	/b/	ص	/s/
ت	/t/	ض	d
ث	/l/	ط	t
ج	/ʒ/	ظ	J
ح	/h/	ع	/ɛ/
خ	/U/	غ	/ɣ/
د	/d/	ف	/f/
ذ	/J/	ق	/q/
ر	/r/	ك	/k/
ز	/z/	ل	/l/
س	/s/	م	/m/
ش	/G/	ن	/n/
ص	/s/	ه	/h/
ض	d	و	/w/
ط	t	Vowels	
ظ	J	Short	Long
ع	/ɛ/	- a	ا a:
غ	/ɣ/	و u	u: و
ف	/f/	- i	i: ي

ق	/q/		
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List of Phonetic Symbols

These phonetic symbols approximate the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA):


- **Consonant:**

	<u>Tlemcen Arabic</u>	<u>English Gloss</u>
	➤ Plosive consonants	
[d]		[darwa 
‘now’		
[b]	[bNNt]	‘room’
[t]		[ta  i]
‘mine’		
[k]	[k]	[kla]
‘he ate’		
[ʃ]		[ʃamra]
‘moon’		
[ɸ]		[ɸa:r]
‘he flew’		
[ɰ]		[ɰba 
‘hyena’		

[q] [qalam]

‘a pen’

[]

[→dC+N]

‘come!’

➤ **Flap Consonant**

[r]

[radFBI]

‘ a man’

➤ **Nasal Consonant**

[m]

[m|NN⇒]

‘good’

[n]

[n⊗as]

‘he slept’

➤ **Lateral Consonant**

[l]

[lNNI]

‘night’

➤ **Approximant Consonants**

[w]

[waalu]

‘nothing’

[j]

[jBdd]

‘hand’

➤ **Fricative Consonant**

[f]

[fummm]

‘mouth’

[s]

[sNNf]

‘sword’

[z]

[zNNt]

‘cooking oil’

[G]

[Grob]

‘he drank’

[F]

[FbBI]

‘mountain’

[x]

[xaaf]

‘he feared’

[☞]	[☞urbaal]	‘sieve’
[⇒]	[⇒bBI]	‘cord’
[⊗]	[⊗abba]	‘he took’
[𐄃]	[𐄃rab]	‘he escaped’
[▪]	[▪☞☞𐄃]	‘he blew’

- **Vowels:**

- **Vowels of plain consonant**

Short Vowels:

Long vowels:

[N] → [xudmN] : ‘knife’

[NN] → [sNNf] : ‘sword’

[u] → [kursN] : ‘chair’

[uu] → [fuul] : ‘broad beans’

[a] → [⇒all] : ‘he opened’

[aa] → [baab] : ‘door’

- **Vowels of Emphatic Consonants**

Short vowels:

[e] → [ʔomʔeeG] : 'tomatoes'
[ee] → [ʔomʔeeG] : 'tomatoes'

[□] → [▪□□r] : 'wall'
[□□] → [▪□□r] : 'wall'

[ʔ] → [Gʔ⇒] : 'he danced'
[ʔʔ] → [ʔʔ⇒] : 'it lasted'

Long vowels:

[beda] : 'white'

[foʔ] : 'towel'

: 'he danced'

List of Abbreviations

AA: Algerian Arabic

CA: Classical Arabic

FTA: Face Threatening Act

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

PTSD: Post-traumatic stress disorder

PUH: Peace Upon Him

TA: Tlemcen Arabic

P1: participant one

P2: participant two

P3: participant three

P4: participant four

P5: participant five

P6: participants six

P7: participant seven

P8: participant eight

General Introduction

Human languages are regarded as the most important instrument for communication. They are used to sending vital messages about life, character and personality. Indeed, these messages are generally interpreted differently because of the impact of our culture which is able to explain how we think and behave in various situations. In a general sense, language occupies a vigorous place to influence people's views and concepts about their world. By means of language,

individual identities become explicit since it mirrors their social status and environment.

Normally, people's communication involves various types of speech. Arguably, taboo language can be considered as the type of speech which is regarded as immoral and inappropriate. Nevertheless, this phenomenon exists and is frequently used in all cultures in spite of its nastiness. Indeed, such linguistic behaviour is classified into categories; insults and name-calling are our concern in this research paper. These words however are often acquired within the family environment, typically outside the classroom, because they belong to taboo categories in general and they are considered as a sin in religion in particular.

Men and women are said to use language differently. Thus, gender, which is considered as a very important variable to analyze the use of language in society, is taken into account to demonstrate how men and women use and perceive insults. Actually, women use soft and prestigious language in order to attain respect and to 'look like' ladies, whereas men generally do not care too much about their speech; they look only for ways which enable them to keep their virility.

Besides, the emotional impact of insults and name-calling depends on people's experience with a culture and its language conventions. Thus, in relation to the idea that language, that is, the means by which people express their opinions, is intimately related to culture. In the same line of thought, we have taken into consideration the sociolinguistic theory known as Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis. In the main, this hypothesis focuses the idea that language and culture are interdependent. Therefore it would be of great importance for the analysis of insult and name calling within the Tlemcenian speech community.

Yet, they can also be a source of causing shame and embarrassment when they are used inappropriately. Such inappropriate use may be perceived as rudeness and impoliteness as it may result in many conflicts either physical or psychological. Henceforth, the theory of politeness is evoked in order to emphasize the conventions of the suitable use of language which is the goal of the majority of people to keep their 'face' and their dignity. So, it is necessary for the speaker to choose the adequate code to express himself, since the use of offensive language, particularly insults and name calling or prejudice, are believed to be extremely harmful to the addressee.

As far as the Algerian culture is concerned, one should note that there are several ways employed to harm the others. So, we try in this research paper to examine and describe the different categories of linguistic taboos and the strategies used by speakers to avoid the use of these words through different types of replacement of taboo words with more acceptable expressions.

Euphemism can be the alternative of any bad or offensive expression, because it enables people to disguise unpleasant terms. Similarly, proverbs can also be used by old people especially, instead of insulting in order to express their opinions about the addressee's behaviour or speech.

This study aims mainly at analyzing the relationship between language, culture, and emotions. The key reason for this research paper is to emphasize the nastiness of insult and name calling and the paradox which concerns this unkind habit in a Muslim's speech community. In fact, Islam emphasizes on courtesy and forbids this habit, because of the harm which it may cause.

Thus, with regard to the above mentioned issues, 3 key questions require further analysis:

Why do people use insults and taboo words though they know that such behaviour is not acceptable in society? Or more precisely, what are the aims of insulting others?

Are name-calling and proverbs used in this context the best tools to achieve these targets?

And if insulting people is considered as embarrassing and harmful, so to what extent can insult affect one's self esteem?

First, we may hypothesize that the primordial aim that leads people to employ insults is to express emotions, especially anger and frustration and to annoy the listener and demean him. Second, insult and name calling are well suited to express and arouse somebody's feelings as they are often used to attain such goals. Proverbs can sometimes function as insults, but with moderation and wisdom. Third, we can suppose that words hurt people more than a physical impact which may be forgotten through time.

To answer these issues, three chapters are suggested: literature review, sociolinguistic and cultural situation in Algeria, the research methodology and data analysis.

The first chapter will be an introductory part where we shall mention the most important previous work related to our topic. The main key concepts which we shall deal with in this chapter are language and culture as two interdependent tools, categories of taboo, euphemism and proverbs. Linguistic Relativity, theory of politeness and Hymes' classification of speech are the frame-works which sustain

our work step by step. Additionally, three fields of study are included, namely Anthropology, Pragmatics and obviously Sociolinguistics, in order to look at the issue at stake from several angles.

The second chapter will be devoted to the historical and linguistic background of Algeria in general and Tlemcen in particular. Algeria is regarded as a multilingual country where Arabic, Berber and French coexist. However, as the title of our work implies, we are concerned with how insulting and using name calling function in order to communicate feelings and emotions in Tlemcen speech community. Moreover, as it belongs to the same sociolinguistic context as that of Algeria, the rubric of linguistic relativity was applied to highlight the Algerian culture which concerns politeness, insults and compliments. Additionally the notion of /BrCdfIA/ appears as the essence of all the Algerians' culture. Finally, Islam is introduced to generalize the unacceptability of this nasty habit.

In the third chapter, we shall give details about the research method followed to answer research questions. In fact, three tools have been used: a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and participant observation which has been proceeded to obtain spontaneous speech of old people.

A quantitative and qualitative data analysis will be provided in this chapter, in addition to this we shall try to give an explicit and plain interpretation to the obtained data. The questionnaire is used in order to collect sufficient data about which terms are used more than others both by males and females. The semi-structured interview aims at knowing the effects of name calling during participants' childhood and nowadays. Finally, the oral tradition is inserted to sustain our work, given that proverbs are most amenable to study in natural settings.

1.1-Introduction

Language is one of the most salient elements in human life; it is used to attain a variety of social and cultural goals. In speech, some lexical items are considered as being normal, elegant and acceptable. However, taboo words especially are never regarded as acceptable speech forms of the conservative speakers of a language.

Simultaneously, language reflects the culture of its users and, at the same time, it is influenced and shaped by it. It also reflects the social values and differentiates between the masculine and the feminine world, because men and women are supposed to use different styles in their communication. Thus, each individual requires a linguistic code in order to communicate his/her unique experiences.

In this regard, the focus of the present chapter will be on the type of relationship between language and culture which may result in different ways of speaking. Taboo language and its categories, including euphemism which can be used as an accepted channel to replace harmful terms will be taken into consideration to illustrate these ways of speaking.

Henceforth, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, Hymes' classification of speech, Austin's speech acts and the theory of im/politeness will be the basic methods of research followed in this dissertation. Finally, we shall consider how the following fields of study namely, anthropology, pragmatics and sociolinguistics, analyze this linguistic phenomenon.

1.2-Theoretical Background

Researchers from a wide variety of backgrounds have been interested in the nature of the relationship between language and culture. Consequently, we shall look at some ways in which language and culture are said to be linked. It is generally agreed that language and culture are closely related. Culture refers to ideas and beliefs which are interpreted by people's language that is used as a medium of communication. So, it is obvious that our thinking is influenced by the

language we use. Brown (1994:165) describes the two as follows: “a language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture”.

1.2.1- Culture

Culture, on the one hand, usually refers to intellectual and creative products, it also includes beliefs, practices, traditions and the religion of a society. A widely used definition adopted at the World Conference on Cultural Policies (Mexico1982) is as follows:

Culture ...is...the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs.¹

Nevertheless, the term culture is used differently by cultural anthropology and linguistics. The former is interested only in the artefacts of a community, such as its music, theatre, clothing, whereas the latter relates to learning and knowledge. Goodenough considers culture as a socially acquired knowledge; and to better understand his idea, it is worth quoting him at length; Goodenough (1957:167) says:

As I see it, a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for anyone of

¹ - www.unesco.org/culture/laws/mexico/html_eng/page1.htm;29.11.2011

themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end-product of learning: knowledge in a most general...sense of the term.

As the quotation clearly demonstrates, culture involves all the essential elements related to knowledge of beliefs, traditions and mode of life so as to be able to behave in a good manner in a given speech community. In the same line of thought, Goodenough (ibid) adds that “the necessary behaviours and beliefs that are learned do not come from any kind of genetic endowment”. As a matter of fact, we acquire them from people who surround us, either directly when we follow their instructions or only by watching their behaviour. Furthermore, Culture according to Hudson (1996:71) is the “know how” and “know what”. In other terms, a person must possess norms of life from his society in order to get through the task of daily living. In brief, this kind of knowledge plays an influential role when we communicate with other people, particularly when we use language, the verbal expression of culture.

1.2.2- Language

Language on the other hand is the principal instrument by which we conduct our social lives. Quoted in Lyons (1985:5), Sapir (1921:8) defines it “as a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntary produced symbols”. Thus, from this, we can construe that a variety of messages is transmitted through language which is not merely a means of exchanging information, but also the best way to make and maintain relationships.

Similarly, Hall (1964) considers language “as a purely human institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral auditory symbols” (quoted in Lyons, (ibid). The term institution here implies that the language spoken in any society is part of its culture, since using

language permits us to identify ourselves as it gives clues and information about our origin and the sort of person we are. Additionally, it becomes easier for the others to locate our place of living thanks to our language.

Culture and language are thus linked since culture activities are generally carried out through the use of language. In other words, culture includes ideas, customs and beliefs of a community which go along the population's language, whereas language serves as a medium of communication and interprets everything a speaker can think about and even his way of thinking.

Indeed, it would be logical to support the idea that people speak differently because they think differently. So, language offers them many ways to view the world where they live. Hence, the notion of linguistic relativity appears. This idea was picked up by E.Sapir² and his pupil B.L.Whorf³. Later on it began to be known under the name of the Sapir Whorf hypothesis.

1.2.3- The Sapir Whorf Hypothesis

Linguistic relativity or Sapir-Whorf hypothesis are two general terms used to refer to various hypotheses or opinions about the relationship between language and culture. "For Sapir, linguistic relativity was a way of articulating what he saw as the struggle between the individual and society" (Mandelbaum1949:165).

² - Edward Sapir 1884-1939 was the only professionally trained linguist among Boas's students, he was gifted with intuitive insight into grammatical patterning and historical relationships of linguistic families. Sapir contributed to general linguistic theory, as he made crucial anthropological contributions in ethnology, culture theory and cultural psychology.

³ -Benjamin Lee Whorf Benjamin (1897-1941) had a degree in chemical engineering from MIT; he worked as a fire insurance inspector for the Hartford Fire Insurance Company, pursuing linguistic and anthropological studies as a hobby. In 1931, Whorf began working with Edward Sapir at Yale University; he worked on decipherment of Mayan hieroglyphs and Hopi grammar, among other things.

In fact, Sapir recognized that language and culture are intimately related. He argued that they are inextricably related so that we cannot understand the one without the consideration of the other. In this regard he states:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group...We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation. (Sapir 1929:207)

Sapir and his student Whorf argued that we are not simply passive recorders of what is exposed in front of us in language; rather we impose our ideas on our environment as a result of the language we have. Accordingly, after acquiring the language in our childhood, we became influenced by it and start to shape our thoughts relying on what we have learnt and then we try to convince people by our ideas and principles.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis then focuses on the possibility that the structure and the type of language that we habitually use, the mother tongue especially, influences and determines the manner in which we think and behave. So, the hypothesis emphasizes the idea that one's reality is constructed by language and, then language results in different realities, which are incommensurable and infinite.

Similarly, Gumpers and Levinson (1996: 1), argue for the above idea in the following:

[...] the essential idea of linguistic relativity, the idea that culture, through language, affects the way we think, especially perhaps our classification of the experienced world.

In other words, when people acquire language, they acquire ways of thinking. Nevertheless, these ways are not noticed consciously because they seem natural to them. To sum, language symbolizes humans' experiences as it allows them to make innovations, and also permits its users to identify their social and cultural status. These in fact are the main features which embody the relationship between language and culture.

However, even if language is the medium through which people show their common culture and exchange their opinions and beliefs, certain terms may not be said. And the role of the language learner in this context is to decide which words are appropriate for a given social setting. Taboo terms for instance refer to expressions that are morally wrong and inappropriate.

1.3- Taboo as a Linguistic Fact

The word "Tabu" is an Austronesian term; more precisely its origin is from Polynesia. It was first discovered by Captain Cook⁴ who translates it to English and thus becomes "Taboo", meaning "sacred prohibition" or "ritual prohibition".

⁴ - Captain Cook: Among the many discoveries of Captain James Cook was a linguistic one, the term taboo. In a journal entry from 1777, Cook says this word "has a very comprehensive meaning; but, in general, signifies that a thing is forbidden, when anything is forbidden to be eaten, or made use of, they say, that it is taboo." Cook was in the Friendly Islands (now Tonga) at the time, so even though similar words occur in other Polynesian languages, the form taboo from Tongan tabu is the one we have borrowed. The Tongans used tabu as an adjective. Cook, besides borrowing the word into English, also made it into a noun referring to the prohibition itself and a verb meaning "to make someone or something taboo." From its origins in

In fact, Taboo words occur very frequently in all languages. They are connected with speech which is extremely prohibited. Trudgill (1995:17) describes them as follows:

Taboo can be characterized as being concerned with behaviour which is believed to be supernaturally forbidden, or regarded as immoral or improper; it deals with behaviour which is prohibited or inhibited in an apparently irrational manner. In language, taboo is associated with things which are not said, and in particular with words and expressions which are not used. In practice, of course, this simply means that there are inhibitions about the normal use of items of this kind.

Moreover, taboo words may cause shame and anxiety, as they can communicate a number of emotions such as anger, frustration and happiness. Sometimes they are used deliberately in order to achieve several sorts of personal and interpersonal outcomes that may be either positive or negative in terms of their impact on others.

As far as the former is concerned, a speaker may avoid a physical struggle when he insults the others. This act may help him at least to relieve his anger, as it may arouse the feeling of the others and thus a physical fight is expected, particularly with men.

A kind of humour can also be attained within groups by telling stories or jokes including taboo expressions. This may consolidate and ameliorate the

Polynesia the word taboo has traveled as widely as Cook himself and is now used throughout the English-speaking world.

<http://www.answers.com/topic/taboo#ixzz1awp42D00> 16/10/2011

relationships between the members of that group. Accordingly, taboo lexicons can pave the way to a myriad of social purposes that ordinary speech cannot. Though, they aim at provoking harm mainly, they are capable to intensify the emotional communication. Besides, people need to relieve themselves of depression, anger...etc. So, they select these terms to accomplish these goals. Furthermore, breaking the rules is sometimes an efficient way chosen in order to strengthen the relationships between people.

Taboo words, are discussed in terms of categories. Both A.Montagu (2001) and T.Jay (1996) identify approximately a similar set of categories that include: profanity, obscenity, vulgar language, insult and name-calling.

1.3.1- Categories of Taboo lexicons

Though, people in a single speech community use different forms of the same language to attain similar or different purposes, the forms of a language that reflect socially acceptable usage are universals. It is true that societies differ in what topics are taboos, but when we approach the taboo categories we nearly identify the same prohibitions. Words denoting taboo subjects which are considered socially unacceptable in all societies are as follows

1.3.1.1- Profanity

“Profane” which is the adjective of profanity, originally means “outside the temple” in Latin, and therefore referred to items not belonging to religion. Hence, a language which has the power to offend and a language which is extremely taboo are two distinct features that symbolize profanity. Montagu (ibid: 102) writes that

“profane” actually means “the abuse of anything sacred”. Thus, profanity refers either to a word or expression that shows disrespect or desecration of someone or something (holy things especially). Jay (ibid: 10) describes “profanity” in a similar manner to that of Montagu. He writes:

To be profane means to be secular or ... [t]o be ignorant or intolerant of the guidelines of a particular religious order, but profanity is not a direct attack on the church or religion.

It is thus, a form of rebellion that describes all the insulting and rude words or expressions used irreverently against anyone.

1.3.1.2- Obscenity

Montagu (ibid: 105) defines this category as follows “obscenity is a form of swearing that makes use of indecent words and phrases”, whereas Jay (ibid: 14) defines it simply as “unprotected speech”. He adds “while the notion of taboo restricts or inhibits what speakers say, obscenity functions to protect listeners from harmful language”. In fact many people will never employ words of this type and most others will only use them in a restricted set of situations. This simply implies that there are inhibitions about the normal use of items of this kind. The same idea is argued by Jay (ibid) when he says: “Obscenity has to do with the way that society has chosen that its government prohibits and controls the content of books and audio and video broadcasts to protect the audience”.

1.3.1.3- Vulgar Language

Traditionally, the word “vulgar” means not polite, neither elegant, nor well behaved. Yet, vulgar language or language of the streets is employed to debase or devalue the thing or the individual referred to or described. These expressions which are regarded as insensitive and distasteful depend generally on context, Jay (ibid: 20) clarifies the above idea when he says “some communities may produce more vulgarities than others, depending on prevailing social, intellectual, and economic conditions and values operating in the community”. This implies that the use of vulgar terms depends on the culture of a given speech community including its conventions, intellectual and economic status.

1.3.1.4- Insult

Insult is another category of taboo which exists in many forms across cultures and languages. At large, insult is considered as degrading, offensive and reprehensible, because it always expresses the opposite of someone’s value especially when it is intentional. Jay (ibid: 22) says in this respect that “such words are spoken with intent to harm, demean, or denigrate the listener”. So, the main purpose of insulting is to infringe one’s self esteem since it is used particularly to criticize the personal competence of the addressee.

Basically, transgression of the rituals of interaction and desecration of the language are two basic features of insult. These two aspects consequently lead the speaker to go beyond the law. Which law do we mean here? Definitely, the one of the correct language which is learned by every child through his parents and teachers.

1.3.1.5 Name-Calling/Prejudices

Name-calling, unkind nicknames or prejudices are attributions designed to hurt the others and to arouse their anger. Children often use words of this type like ‘stupid’, ‘idiot’...etc., when addressing their siblings or friends. Parents also find themselves using similar words to address their children or neighbours. Nevertheless, this phenomenon unfortunately possesses the potential to affect the individual development of any child because it produces both psychological and cultural effects. Besides, prejudice can take many forms. In the same line of thought Crystal, (1987:60) notes:

The subject matter ranges from subtle forms of intellectual sarcasm and humor to the crudest possible attacks on a person’s courage...At one level, attacks may be subtle and indirect, involving allusion and figurative speech; at another, there may be explicit taunts, boast, name-calling, and jokes at the other’s expense.

Brown (1995:8) defines prejudice as follows:

Prejudice is the holding of derogatory social attitudes or cognitive beliefs, the expression of negative affect, or the display of hostile or discriminatory behaviour towards members of a group on account of their membership of that group.

Nevertheless, the value of name-calling and verbal aggression on personal or social level is debatable. According to Hughlings (1958) (quoted in Dovidio et al, 2005:313) “the use of verbal insults is better than the use of physical assaults”.

Apparently, the home’s environment plays a tremendous role to make this phenomenon spread more. When parents use prejudices without consciously intending to, children try to imitate them in order to be like their parents or like their

older siblings. Even psychologists believe that what we have become and how we behave at present largely depend on how we were brought up by our parents and on how our siblings influenced us. In short, our family life has a direct effect on our personality.

This idea leads us to wonder how these words can be judged as taboo or simply how they acquire their taboo status. Definitely, no one is born with knowledge of taboo words including all the categories mentioned above. "It is only through the socialization of speech practices that an oral and folk knowledge of swearing etiquette is created" Jay (2009: 154).

This socialization of speech practices is therefore, a means through which the child makes acquaintances with many types of words, among them taboo terms and enables him to learn when and with whom it is suitable to use or to avoid them. This idea is supported by Kasper (1990:193) in the following "young children and 'non-native speakers require time and experience to attain an adult native speaker's knowledge of what is offensive or rude".

1.4- Euphemism

The word euphemism comes from the Greek word *euphemo*, meaning "auspicious /good/ /fortunate speech/ kind". *Ephemo* itself is derived from the Greek root-words *eu*, it means "good/well" + *phemo* "speech/speaking".

Euphemism is the use of other words or a phrase instead of the words required in an embarrassing situation. That is; people do not say directly what they mean exactly due to politeness. Williams, (1975:198) says that:

Euphemism refers to a kind of linguistic elevation or amelioration specifically directed towards finding socially acceptable words for concepts that many people cannot easily speak of.

In fact, people adjust their speech when they talk about topics which are shameful and sensitive, for instance, when a person refers to a period of prison which one of his relatives had spent, or when he mentions the names of certain occupations that have a rather humble status in our society such as garbage collectors, he moves immediately to euphemistic strategies. Hence, euphemism cannot flee the fact of being an alternative to taboo. Neaman and Silver (1983) say in this respect “euphemism is a way to substitute an inoffensive or pleasant word for more explicit, offensive one, thereby veneering the truth by using polite words”.

So, when someone decides to use an expression as a euphemism for the sake of hiding unpleasant or disturbing ideas, it often becomes a metaphor whose literal meaning is dropped. Yet, sometimes, people, particularly among older generations, employ proverbs that are often used metaphorically in order to replace harsh terms. Consequently, understanding their metaphorical nature enables us to unravel their real meanings.

1.5- Proverbs

Proverbs or communication quotes are popular sayings which contain advice about how to act and live. Most proverbs have their origins

in oral tradition; they involve encoding and intended messages which serve as a repository of people's wisdom and folklore.

It is obvious however that although few people use this kind of linguistic utterances, we cannot deny their crucial role in carrying messages to guide and influence people and their ability to preserve the ancient vocabulary. Indeed, this kind of saying includes the values and beliefs of a society. These values and beliefs are in effect deemed essential in life because they have a direct correlation to our needs as they shape our manner of thinking and responding to any circumstances we face.

Moreover, our acts are guided or done relying on our values, since they justify our actions and permit us to make the right choice and decisions and also to treat people adequately without using prejudices for example. Mele (2007.246) says in this respect:

Proverbs and some figurative expressions are intrinsically related to culture and reflect and safeguard a society's way of life...the proverb is valuable as it incorporates materials, social and ideological features of culture such as...values, beliefs and morals which are coded (linguistically) and passed down as tradition.

Accordingly, proverbs reflect not only cultural values and uniqueness but also commonalities shared across the society. In a nutshell, they reveal ways of seeing life; for instance, if a wife does not conform to her social role, she will immediately suffer from social disapproval which will generally be expressed or shown through a proverb. And because it is always linked with the transmission of wisdom and rules of conduct, it is thus believed to serve and follow the traditions since they are transmitted from generation to generation.

These were the most important categories used either directly or euphemistically to insult and demean the others. So, in order to have a clear idea about how they are used in society, we have approached three levels of analysis mainly anthropology, pragmatics and sociolinguistics.

1.6- Anthropological Analysis

First and foremost, one should note that the sacred is separated from the profane by a taboo or a limit and that the majority of ideas and arguments on the dichotomy profane- sacred derive largely from the anthropology of religion where it was used for the first time. Second, the word ‘sacred’ comes from the Latin word *sacer*, meaning “to set apart”.

Generally, religion attempts to offer answers to our needs and clarifies the ambiguities around us. It claims for society cohesion through its shared beliefs which offer a set of explanations to our actions. As it underlines rules of conducts that enable us to judge certain matters. So, in a sense, religion serves to unite a society under a system of beliefs which enables people to successfully and peacefully interact. Most importantly, religion defines and explains cultures because the culture itself can be better understood when we study its religion.

Basically, the sacred is the aim of all religious traditions that teach us wisdom and rules of life. This idea is sustained by Durkheim (2001.47) who believed that the dichotomy sacred/ profane represents the main characteristic of religion. He states that “religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden”.

In more simple and clearer terms, taboo as a logical term, is characterized by the equation: infringement implies sanction. This means that the sacred is a two-edge phenomenon; it can provide us with respect and esteem, but if we approach it without regard for its power and limits with the profane, it can lead us to punishment or public shame.

In essence, transgression refers to the exceeding of bounds or limits, the infringement, violation of a law or a convention, or simply breaking the rules of good conduct. And it is through these acts of disobedience, that the sacred world is experienced and discovered. Smith (2008: 20) has recently argued that:

These binary distinctions are ‘imaginative templates’ which ‘enable societies to make sense of the world’ by discerning the sacred from the profane, the pure from the polluted’ or the good from the evil.

In the same line of thought, Freud (1983.20) defines the concept of taboo as follows:

The word ‘taboo’ denotes everything, whether a person or a place or a thing or a transitory condition, which is the vehicle or source of this mysterious attribute. It also denotes the prohibitions arising from the same attribute. And, finally, it has a connotation which includes alike ‘sacred’ and ‘above the ordinary’, as well as ‘dangerous’, ‘unclean’ and ‘uncanny’.

In sum, the profane world is the world of the taboo and transgression does not only deny or destroy the taboo; it exceeds it, and if we do not comply, it will definitely result in sanctions.

1.7-Pragmatic Analysis

1.7.1 Classification of Speech

Speech belongs to aspects of behaviour through which human beings communicate and influence one another. Furthermore, it is always required in order to accomplish a social activity, that is, speech is employed to obtain information, to express emotions and so on. As Malinowski (1923) claimed “In its primitive uses, language functions as a link in concerted human activity, as a piece of human behaviour. It is a mode of action and not an instrument of reflection”.

The study of speech as part of social interaction has involved many disciplines namely linguistics, sociolinguistics and anthropology where we find a crucial contribution named the ethnography of speaking or ethnography of communication put forward by Dell Hymes (1974) .This framework takes into consideration a variety of factors that are included in the speaking act, as it describes the most important ones for the sake of achieving specific communicative objectives. We shall now mention the acronyms of the word SPEAKING:

-S- Setting and Scenes

Setting refers to the time and place i.e. circumstances in which speech has taken place, whereas scene refers to occasions and events that help to create particular types of speech. For instance speech used at court is not the same as the one used at home. Furthermore, speech is supposed to define the scene, because certain types of speech are regarded inappropriate in certain circumstances.

-P- Participants

This factor includes the speaker-listener relationship in addition to the various combinations that one of them may occupy, for instance the speaker can be an addressor and the listener an addressee or sender receiver. So, a conversation generally includes a speaker and hearer who fulfill different roles in particular scenes.

-E- Ends

Ends refers to conventions recognized and put forward by society, and to the outcomes as well as personal goals that the members of speech community wish to attain on particular occasions.

-A- Act Sequence

This term refers to the various forms of speaking and to their real content as it includes the way these forms are used. For instance casual conversations, speech of the president or public lectures each go with particular and different kinds of language and topics chosen to talk about.

-K- Key

Hymes means by 'key' the way in which the message is transmitted or conveyed, in other terms key includes the manner, the tone of voice and even spirit and attitudes which can be either serious or mocking. Gestures used in certain kinds of behaviours can also be included in this part.

-I- Instrumentalities

Instrumentalities refer to the choice of the channel which may be oral or written and to the type of language chosen to be used in a conversation such as dialect, code or register and so on.

-N- Norms of interaction and interpretation (N)

This factor refers to the particular behaviours, properties and norms of interaction that help to fasten and approach the members of a speech community. In other words it refers to what is culturally and socially expected from the speaker.

-G- Genre

The last term refers to the type of speech itself which can take either the form of a poem, proverb, riddle or a lecture.

This formula of SPEAKING offered by Hymes under the form of an acronym is deemed necessary to explain the complexity of speech. Moreover, the formula may serve the speaker's awareness of his speech that should include all the eight items in order to handle a successful conversation and to be a competent speaker of a language. Consequently communicative competence is required to achieve a variety of targets such as the ones mentioned above. Saville-Troike (1996:363) points out:

Communicative competence extends to both knowledge and expectation of who may or may not speak in certain settings, when to speak and when to remain silent, whom one may speak to, how one may talk to persons of different statuses and roles, what nonverbal behaviours are appropriate in various contexts, what the routines for turn-taking are in conversation, how to ask for and give information, how to request, how to offer or decline assistance or cooperation, how to give commands, how to enforce discipline, and the like- in short, everything involving the use of language and other communicative dimensions in particular social settings.

These were then the pragmatic aspects of communicative competence that have to do with how language is used in communication situations to achieve the speaker's purposes. Furthermore, Malinowski (ibid) argues that one of the fundamental purposes of speech is to make social relations stronger what he called “*phatic communion*”. He means by Phatic Communion the kind of talking which everybody employs in order to recognize each other’s presence and value particularly.

An extremely influential classification of speech introduced by J. L. Austin (1962) the British philosopher, is worth mentioning. This classification known as speech acts was further developed by J.R.Searle. Speech acts are usually defined in terms of speaker intentions and beliefs, whereas the nature of conversations or utterances depends crucially on interaction between speaker and hearer.

1.7.2- Speech Acts

Thus, within this classification we aim to demonstrate the ability of a well-socialized speaker to know when certain speech acts, namely insults, are required, appropriate or inappropriate in order to successfully participate as a member of a speech community.

In fact, speech act theorists distinguish between three aspects of utterances; the locutionary act, the illocutionary force and the perlocutionary effect. First, the locutionary act refers to actions of performing words into convenient and correct sentences. Second, the illocutionary act is achieved only if we take into account the conventions of a society; in other words action intended by the speakers in order to produce an utterance. Finally, the perlocutionary act represents the effect that an utterance has on the feeling or attitudes of the listener.

These are the dimensions of speech acts which cannot be performed separately; that is, we always find these three aspects in a single utterance. In more simple and clearer terms, one specific insult may offend one particular addressee while it may not injure another because this fact depends on the speaker's intention in producing that utterance; in other words, this represents the illocutionary force of insult.

Indeed, as already mentioned, insults aim at damaging and injuring the addressee's reputation as shown in the following definition taken from Oxford English Dictionary and quoted in Jucker and Taavitsainen (2000.72):

Insult is an act, or the action, of insulting (...); injuriously contemptuous speech or behaviour; scornful utterance or action intended to wound self-respect; an affront, indignity, outrage. (OED 'insult' n.).

These are the most important features which include to a large extent the effects of insults on the target, that is, the perlocutionary dimension.

To sum up, then, the illocutionary force of an insult describes the primary act the speaker performs such as attack, assault or contemptuous remark, nasty comments and so on. These are forms of insult, whatever the reaction of the target. The perlocutionary effect on the other hand consists of offended and wounded feelings.

In addition, in spite of all its forms, insult can be reduced according to Jucker and Taavitsainen (ibid.73) to the following three essential elements: "first, a predication about the target", for instance the speaker utters things which

characterize his identity, profession and so on. “Second, this predication is perceived as inadequate and demeaning the target”. “And third, the target experiences this predication as a face threatening speaker intention”, that is to say, he believes that the speaker employed the predication with the intention to hurt him.

1.7.3-Theory of Politeness/Impoliteness

1.7.3.1 Politeness

Although taboo words are part of every culture and language, the topic is poorly studied because of its sensitive nature. Jay (1999: 10) claims that “the topic of taboo speech is so taboo that it has not been regarded as a legitimate topic for scholarly examination”. Thus, when scholars disregard or consider taboo as irrelevant to understand language, or in other words when they neglect the utility of taboo words in humans’ life, we are thus left with polite language only. So, the human nature in its entirety including anger, hate, and frustration and so on is disregarded as if these feelings and emotions had no role in the human language and life.

Consequently, it is necessary to study the linguistic taboos in any society from a socio-cultural perspective, because it may be helpful to the understanding of human nature and psyche.

Bower (1981) quoted in Jay (ibid: 158) argues that “the emotional aspects of words are an inherent part of their semantic meanings and that the emotional context for a word’s use is stored along with its semantic and syntactic properties”. In other terms, the emotional level attained through the utterance of a taboo experience is part of its semantic sense. This idea explains the emotional force of insulting words and their capacity to demean the listener.

One should note that the main home for politeness studies is sociopragmatics, and the extreme degree of offensiveness of words is always determined by pragmatic variables such as speaker-listener relationship and social settings, in addition to the words chosen and the tone of voice. One reason why this is the home for the study of impoliteness is that most work on politeness has been produced in this field. Leech (2003, 104) (quoted in Culpeper 2011:5) states that:

Politeness is situated in the field of sociopragmatics, because that research is geared towards “explaining communicative behaviour”. Likewise, investigating impoliteness involves the study of particular communicative behaviours in social interaction.

Politeness is best expressed through good manners. Its user often aims at making the others more relaxed and comfortable. Besides it is always linked with the idea that all people have an attribute which is called ‘face’. A sociological notion to account for politeness in behaviour, borrowed by the British social anthropologists Brown and Levinson from the work of the sociologist Goffman is worth mentioning. First, Goffman (1955:213, 1967:23) states in this respect:

Face means: the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of selfdelineated in terms of approved social attributes...

Similarly, Brown and Levinson (1978) identify two kinds of politeness, deriving from Goffman’s concept of face. They argue that “politeness strategies are developed in order to save the hearer’s face”. Face in term of politeness, refers to the respect that an individual has for him or herself, and maintaining that self-

esteem in public or private situations. It is deemed as a basic want which every member knows and desires.

Moreover, they distinguish between two types of politeness, positive and negative politeness. Both types involve maintaining positive or negative face, where positive face is defined as “the addressee’s perennial desire that his wants...should be thought of as desirable”, and negative face as the addressee’s “want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded” Brown and Levinson (ibid:101-129).

Thus, positive politeness refers to the want of each individual that his interests and intentions will be covetable to the others, that is, the person who chooses to use positive politeness aims at establishing a good relationship between parties and demonstrating closeness and affiliation, as he respects the person’s need to be liked and understood; direct speech acts, and compliments are parts of positive politeness.

Negative politeness however, designates the want of every ‘competent adult member’ that his actions will be unimpeded by others. For instance making requests less infringing allows people to act freely. In other words, it has to do with deference, distance, formality and the use of speech acts indirectly.

So, face means self-esteem, social standing, public self -image, which every individual claims and wants others to respect. Usually, we try to avoid embarrassing the other persons, or making them feel uncomfortable. Nevertheless, Face Threatening Acts (FTA's) are acts which lead to the infringements of the hearers' need to maintain their self-esteem, and respect.

Consequently, acts that menace the addressee's positive face are acts in which a speaker demonstrates that he does not support the addressee's positive face or self-image, e.g. complaints, accusations, or taboo utterances. And acts that threaten an addressee's negative face include instances in which the addressee is pressured to accept or to reject a future act of the speaker, e.g. offers or requests.

According to Brown and Levinson, politeness strategies are developed for the main purpose of dealing with these FTA's, and in order to avoid an immediate breakdown of communication, FTA requires a mitigating statement or some verbal repair. To sum, positive politeness strategies are intended to avoid giving offense, try to be friendly with the targets by using compliments, jokes, or nicknames, whereas negative politeness strategies are intended to avoid giving offense by showing deference, e.g. ,giving an opinion.

So, politeness plays a significant role in all societies since it founds the basis for a respectful interaction between human beings and for successful conversations. However, this does not imply that people behave correctly all the time; they may be impolite on certain occasions.

1.7.3.2- Impoliteness

Impoliteness on the other hand, is an important linguistic behaviour that is worth studying. It was systematically looked as the long neglected 'poor cousin' of politeness (Bousfield and Locher 2008:2). This unsuitable and unfortunate behaviour which is closely connected with emotional reactions implies simply deviations from the rules and conventions.

Culpeper (ibid: 23) states that “Impoliteness comes about when (1) the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and/ or constructs behaviour as intentionally face-attacking, or a combination of (1) and (2)”. Mouton (2011:59) adds:

Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and/ or beliefs about social organization, including, in particular, how one person’s or a group’s identities are mediated by others in interaction. Situated behaviours are viewed negatively-considered ‘impolite’-when they conflict...Such behaviours always have or are presumed to have emotional consequences for at least one participant, that is, they cause or are presumed to cause offence. Various factors can exacerbate how offensive an impolite behaviour is taken to be, including for example whether one understands a behaviour to be strongly intentional or not.

Hence, as the quotation implies, impolite behaviours make the listener’s reactions move, because they are offensive to the target as they aim at damaging his reputation and result almost all the time in disputes. However, the emotional impact of these behaviours differs from one person to another because it depends on one’s experience with a particular culture and its language conventions.

1.8- Sociolinguistic Analysis

1.8.1- Gender Differences in Speaking

There are various fundamental reasons why women may be linguistically different from men. First men’s and women’s choice of a given variety or language is connected with masculinity vs. femininity. Women usually look for ways to

achieve prestigious ladylike behaviours in their conversations, whereas, men enjoy practicing power in their society and in their conversations. In other words, men's dominance in conversations parallels their dominance in society. Women on the other hand, are regarded as subordinate to men. This is why they use more cooperative ways in their speech. Indeed cooperative discourse is characterized by the great tendency of asking questions. Hirschman (1973:10) notes in this context that "several of the female-male conversations fell into a question-answer pattern with the females asking the males questions".

Another way in addition to the use of minimal responses to be cooperative, women use more utterances that demand or encourage responses from their fellow speakers than men do. However, these features assigned to women are not natural according to Trudgill (1972), who says that "females, it would appear, are not striving for standard prestigious speech but are striving to use what their peers are using". Contrariwise, men tend to be competitive in conversations so as to maintain their masculinity. To do so, they usually interfere and break the speech of their companion as they challenge or dispute the speech of their partners. Furthermore, men do not care about the comments of others, they ignore them, and if they respond, their answers will be unenthusiastic and indifferent. Hence "cooperative" and "competitive" according to Coates (2004:143) "always come up together in conversation since different ways of talking may share the goal of creating group solidarity".

1.8.2- Gender Differences in Using Taboo Language

Sociolinguists have analyzed the effect of independent variables such as gender, age and social class on the use of taboo words. In terms of gender, women are expected to speak properly, Coates, (ibid: 126) notes that:

Women are more polite, indirect and collaborative in conversation, while men are more impolite, direct and competitive on the other hand, which reveals that “men pursue a style of interaction based on power, while women pursue a style based on solidarity and support.

Drawing on Brown and Levinson's work, Holmes (1995:2) also believes that, women in general are more polite than men, he says in this respect:

Most women enjoy talk and regard talking as an important means of keeping in touch, especially with friends and intimates. They use language to establish, nurture and develop personal relationships. Men tend to see language more as a tool for obtaining and conveying information.

In addition, women usually use euphemism in order to replace indelicate and rude expressions. Lakoff (2004:80) emphasizes the fact that women's way of speaking is expected to be suitable; he adds that “women are experts at euphemism...while men carelessly blurt”.

Hence, female/male use of taboo creates different attitudes, because women's use especially of derogatory language is evaluated as the most negative compared to that of their male counterparts. Traditionally, women have been characterized as the best persons on earth who take care of their prestige, etiquette and value within their society. Actually, women often try to escape negative judgments such as the one of belonging to lower or vulgar social status. So, a woman who uses bad language is inevitably inviting herself to receive not only negative social attributes, but also judgments concerning her moral standing and character.

Jay (1999: *ibid*) points that “women are expected to control over their thoughts, while men are free to exhibit hostile and aggressive speech habits”. This implies that taboo language is not often associated with women’s speech in any culture including all its conventions. In addition, the use of offensive language according to (de Klerk.1997) “represents an accepted social means of constructing a masculine identity”.

Thus, this social and cultural knowledge regarding taboo, rudeness, and impoliteness is acquired as the product of living and a as means of contact with different types of people, because through cultural experiences we learn which words are deemed polite or impolite in particular situations. Cameron (1998:280) emphasizes this idea in the following statement:

Men and women...are members of cultures in which a large amount of discourse about gender is constantly circulating. They do not only learn, and then mechanically reproduce, ways of speaking ‘appropriate’ to their own sex; they learn a much broader set of gendered meanings that attach in rather complex ways to different ways of speaking, and they produce their own behaviour in the light of these meanings...

Age is another element that has a greatest effect on using such type of language. De Klerk (1991) writes about this idea: “age is clearly the factor that had the greatest effects on response rates throughout, relating obviously to growing sexual maturity and to increased daring use of taboo items with increasing confidence and social power” (quoted in Murphy 2010:157). Thus, Young people, and adolescent boys in particular, use more taboo language than adults as a form of rebellion or to establish group identity. This trend begins to develop from childhood and continues till adulthood.

Relaxed environments are the most frequent places where we hear taboo terms from both genders, as they represent another striking causal factor which encourages the speaker to insult or to break the rule more than formal settings. For instance, the speaker feels more comfortable with this type of language in a pub or a café. Cameron (ibid: 281) adds that:

Performing masculinity or femininity ‘appropriately’ cannot mean giving exactly the same performance regardless of the circumstances. It may involve different strategies in mixed and single – sexed company, in private and public settings, in the various social positions that someone might regularly occupy in the course of everyday life.

Status, occupation, and income are also determinant of taboo language appropriateness, because employing such type of language carries strong connotations of lower socio-economic belongings, for instance a doctor or a teacher may use less offensive words than a trade man. In this regard Jay (1992) states:

There were differences in occupations as a function of gender and status; for example, men were expected to swear more than women in equivalent occupations and higher status personnel (e.g. dean) were expected to swear less than lower status personnel.

In all the cases so far mentioned above, it has been shown that females try to employ better linguistic forms in order to approach prestige, femininity, and deference. Nevertheless, masculinity is generally the only concern of males; this fact does not require too much effort and then leads them to the use of non-sophisticated language.

1.8.3- Virility

Virility, which is the spirit of masculinity, embodies the majority of males' qualities, including body appearance, tone of voice, nerves, and muscles. In other terms, virility is a matter of prowess, strength, and capability to manage life difficulties. These measures in effect, are essential traits of masculinity in the majority of cultures. Virility is then a significant strategy followed by males to express their vigour and vitality, and a way of proving how much men they are, or to show that they deserve to be called real men.

In general terms, the announcement of male superiority in his entourage, in addition to the stereotyped principles of power assigned to him are deemed essential for permanent and hegemonic ideas of masculinity. This hegemony is defined by Connell (1994:77) as:

The currently accepted answer to the question of what is the most essential, natural core and lowest common denomination of masculinity that guarantees (or is considered to guarantee) a man to be recognized as manly, thus making virility not only useful but also an indispensable category of historical analysis of masculinity.

To sum, virility refers to:

- An innate masculine superiority
- A symbol of honour
- Moral and bloody purity
- Power and bravery.

While the term of virility could be summarized in the above few principles, its expression could vary according to different cultural codes, social situations and personal ways of behaving, since virility has to do also with dignity, self-control, compassion, and good manners.

Yet, expectations about attributes, behaviours appropriate to women or men and about the relationship between them are shaped by culture of their speech community. So, what about their perception of taboo words in general and insult in particular?

1.9-Perception of Offensive Language

It is a natural fact that every day in our lives, we get angry or frustrated when unpleasant or unexpected events occur to us or things in general does not go as we wish. In these situations, the normal reaction is to release or express these strong feelings in a way or another.

Generally speaking, offensive speech, insults particularly, are expected to be injurious to its targets so that it is capable to evoke them troubles, humiliation, and inhibition. The idea can be clarified in the following statement:

Taboo is the prohibition or avoidance in any society of behaviour believed to be harmful to its members in that it would cause them anxiety, embarrassment or shame. He adds that “it is an extremely strong politeness constraint”. Wardhaugh (2006:239).

Matsuda et al (1993) and Sullaway (2004:10) outline even the psychological and physiological symptoms positing that “the harms experienced by victims of

hateful speech, are similar to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD): panic, fear, anxiety, nightmares, intrusive thoughts of intimidation and denigration.”

Additionally, both Coates, (1993); and de Klerk (1991) argue that “the use of expletives is perceived as an intrinsically forceful or aggressive activity” (cited in Locher et al: 293). Thus, it seems clear that negative attitudes are often expected from the addressee. In this context, Jay et al (2008:121) add that “the focus on harm from offensive words is based on their problematic emotive and aversive properties associated with psychological reactance and memorability”.

Furthermore, the meaning and impact of speech is first determined entirely by the contextual factors, such as the relationship between the speaker and the listener, in addition to the topic under discussion. Second, the most harmful speech is the one which is targeted specifically towards a vulnerable listener. Third, the degree of harm can be observed through changes of the target’s behaviour or the type of his reaction.

As for gender differences in perception of offensive words, there is general consensus that males are less influenceable than females. Various theories including biological, social, environmental and cultural determinism have been posited to account for this difference. Dewaele (2004:215) reported that, “overall, female participants gave higher scores than male participant to the perceived power of swear words...”

It is worth noting that the native language plays an important role in the way of perceiving harmful language, because the target is accustomed with these terms and knows very well the meaning of each word. This is why the use and perception

of taboo language are often studied with native speakers. This idea is supported by Harris et al (2003:561) who point out that:

Many studies that included diverse types of emotional phrases confirmed that emotional phrases presented in a first language elicited higher skin conductance responses than emotional phrases in a second language.

In the same line of thought, Dewaele (ibid), manifests that the emotional force of taboo terms perceived in one's native language is higher than the one perceived in foreign languages learned later.

1.10-Conclusion

In this chapter, we have tried to look at the literature underlying different theories related to the topic at hand, namely the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, Austin's speech acts classification, and im/politeness strategies. The former clarifies or justifies someone's choice of language, the second is merely included in this research because insult belongs to speech acts, and the latter allows us to describe people's daily behaviours.

We have also dealt with the categories of taboo lexicons, in addition to proverbs that can also be used as a means to demean or underestimate the others. Anthropology, Pragmatics and Sociolinguistics are the three levels of analysis taken into account in this chapter in order to demonstrate how this type of language works in a society.

Dichotomized notions and features of gender remain salient in both expectation and perceptions of everyday communication, and virility generally justifies the dominance of the ideal masculine, since negative attitudes are often expected towards women who use bad language.

In brief, the use of taboo language, namely insults and name-calling, may have devastating social consequences. Yet, it can be a source of potential embarrassment, and this inappropriate use may be perceived as rudeness, as it can be an effective way to achieve a number of desirable social effects, which include promoting social cohesion and harmony. Besides, it can be an acceptable substitute for physical aggression.

2.1-Introduction

For a long time in the past, Algeria was considered as the main interest of many invaders. It was occupied by people of different languages and cultures. This has obviously an enormous impact on its current linguistic situation and culture. Thus, as far as language is concerned one should note that it is more than just a means of communication since it influences our culture and even our thoughts.

So, the rubric of linguistic relativity is taken into account to clarify the relationship between culture and language or language varieties used in Algeria in general and Tlemcen in particular. Algerian culture, basically based on oral tradition, has shaped its social imaginary through legends, fables and proverbs which deeply structure our attitudes and thoughts.

Proverbs and idioms are regarded as the speech forms of the conservative speakers of a given language, as they are regarded as words of wisdom and truism in the culture of a particular region. Islam is also a substantial element which we have related to our research in this chapter in order to approach the sociolinguistic behaviour of name-calling from a religious point of view.

2.2- Historical Background of Algeria

The linguistic and cultural landscape of Algeria reflects its contacts with several languages and cultures. This kaleidoscopic situation is the result of a long chain of historic causalities namely colonization and migration which gave birth to what is called by (Bourdieu, 1983:46) “Un marché Franc” which refers to varied and condensed archival events and causalities.

It is worth mentioning that three major periods determine the linguistic profile of Algeria. The first one refers to the existence of Berbers in many territories in Algeria, the second one is characterized by the Arabic conquest which gave birth to the presence of Arabic in North Africa and the third represents the French colonization that has introduced the French language in Algeria.

Berber was the language of the indigenous populations before the arrival of Arabic-speaking invaders. It was primarily a spoken language although an ancient Berber script called tiffinagh survives among the Touareg of the Algerian Sahara.

The term 'Berber' was first introduced by the Greeks to refer to the people of North Africa. It was also used by the Romans and Arabs and all who occupied the region, but not by the people themselves. Instead, they use the term Imazighen or Amazigh its singular which means 'noble' or 'free men'. Today, the Berber people are very conservative because they still retain their own language and cultural traditions.

The Berbers, who were the first inhabitants of Algeria, were from the beginning of their record history subject to the effects of successive civilizations. In this regard, Magbaily (1999:30) says:

The Berbers, dispersed over North Africa, never formed a united front against any of these invaders. They lived in many separate kingdoms, speaking different dialect, some of which were markedly different from others.

Thus, the Carthagians and the Phoenicians conquered Algeria for about one thousand years. Laroussi (1997:22) says that "the prehistoric Algerian land had witnessed consecutive conquests since the Phoenician age". Consequently, a Hamito- Semitic language named Punic pervaded most of the Berber's areas. Elimam (2004:300-1) and Morsly: (1996:77) are quoted in Benrabah (2007:38) posit that "the Berbers of the interior remained monolingual but in urban zones, bilingualism and multilingualism, Berber -Punic, Berber- Punic- Roman became the norm" And due to the Roman settlement after the fall of the Carthage which lasted for six centuries, a new language called Latin penetrated the region.

Arabic which is the dominant language throughout North Africa was introduced to Algeria by the Arab Muslim conquerors of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. This was the most important historical event because it reflects both language and religion of Algeria nowadays. Furthermore, the arrival of the Bedouin Arabs or more precisely Benou Hillal who came in the 11th century and settled there nearly one hundred fifty years had had a great impact on the Arabic language and culture too. In that era “Arabic spread little by little and more and more Berbers became arabophone” Ageron, (1993: 766-7).

Prior to the French colonization, Algeria witnessed the attendance of Spanish people who occupied Oran and other coastal regions in the west areas, for more than two centuries. The Spanish existence also developed a fertile and considerable process of lexical borrowings that pervaded the Algerian vernacular⁵; e.g. ‘fiesta’ pronounced [feGta] and meaning ‘feast’.

In the late 15th century, Algeria became part of the Ottoman Empire which ruled at that time most of the central Maghreb until the 19th century. It was governed by “*pashas*” and “*deys*” who were Turkish governors. The Ottomans began to nominate governors known under the title of pasha; each one of them governed a period of three years. The official language employed at that era was Turkish; moreover, the Arabs and Berbers were totally expelled from the government’s jobs. In 1659, a kind of rebellion happened and again in 1671, these events conducted the leaders to appoint new governors known as deys. Oakes (2008:7) explains the Ottomans government as follows:

The Dey was officially to rule for life but of the 29 deys of Algiers, 14 were assassinated. The rule of deys over Algiers lasted from 1671 to 1830. The territory continued to be ruled from Algiers but with regional beyliks

⁵ -www.jllearn/3_1/mostari.pdf27/12/2011

(regional governors with fewer powers than the bey) in Constantine, Media, and Oran.

The presence of the Turkish had not had a strong influence like the previous ones, except for some borrowing words which are still used e.g. 'beylick', and some scripts which cannot be ignored by historians. On the other hand, the Turkish descendants who became part of the Algerian population acquired Arabic and assimilated to Algerian culture.

In fact, Algeria as compared with other Arab countries, received the most ponderous colonial impacts. Actually, the key era in Algeria's modern history is certainly the war of independence which culminated in one hundred thirty two years of struggle against the colonizers of France.

The French controlled all the domains namely education, government and most of the intellectual life for more than one century. They attempted to suppress and control Algerian cultural identity and to remould the society along French lines. Riesler C. (2004) reports the following:

The French colonizers driven by destructive craving for domination implanted a highly advanced acculturation policy based on a cultural policy of colonization designed and reflected at the highest state circles.

Nevertheless, these attempts to acculturate a whole nation in addition to the strong communicative need that predisposed the use of French language in the Algerian speech community had created a cultural resistance which defined and reinforced the present foundations of the Algerian identity.

These were the main historic events which have influenced and reflected the present Algerian speaking repertoire. Berber persisted among many foreign languages that Algeria has gone through; the Arabic language owes its present status to Islam which was brought by Arab immigrants, and finally French plays a paramount role in different communicative contexts either written or spoken, and has become part and parcel of the Algerians' codes used nowadays. So, it necessary to mention that the Algerian historical background has a direct influence on its current linguistic situation which is so complicated.

2.3-The Current Sociolinguistic Situation of Algeria

Algeria is regarded as a complex multilingual country where four varieties of languages are highly present in its speech communities. In other words, the sociolinguistic profile of Algeria includes classical Arabic and its modern form MSA which is the national and official language, Algerian Arabic spoken by almost all Algerians, and Berber recently recognized as a national language and of course French which is still widely used in many fields.

2.3.1- Classical Arabic/MSA

Arabic is the essential instrument of written documents and formal speech in Algeria. It was recognized as the sole national and official language of Algeria as designated in the constitution of 1963. Kh .Taleb Ibrahimi (1997:23) points out that:

Arabic was first introduced in 642 AD by the great invader Okba Ibn Nafaa whose introduction of Islam had profoundly changed the character of the region, bringing with it a new language which has paved the way to new sociolinguistic norms.

She adds (ibid) that “although there were many obstacles that prevented the development of Arabic language, it had succeeded to remain as a vivid symbol of Arabic identity and Islamic values”.

Arabic as a national symbol had confronted bitter struggles against the French language during the colonial era. French colonists deliberately tried to undermine its position in the country. Furthermore, they denied any Arabic official or educational existence. Consequently, they put a chart which implied that French is the official language and Arabic is a foreign one.

Arabic then was found and taught only in ‘Zawiyat’⁶ and ‘Medrasas’ (traditional schools). It represented the basic element of the Algerian society, although the colonial regime a kind of obstacle in front of it.

After its independence, Algeria felt a great need to regain its identity as an Arabic and Muslim country. So, as a reaction to the French cultural and linguistic imperialism, the decisions makers of the war of independence (1954-1962) and the leaders who came afterwards, devoted themselves to keep on Arabic and Islamic cultural values. Their focus was to establish and make of Arabic the national and official language of Algeria. This process was named arabization as it aimed at preserving the Arabic language and link it with religion and identity.

⁶ -Zawiyat is a word used to refer to Islamic religious school or monastery. The term is Maghrebi and West African, roughly corresponding to the Eastern term madrassa. A zawiya often contains a pool, and sometimes a fountain.

At the heart of preserving this identity, Islam was the central component which was decreed as the basic pillar in order to support the leader's efforts. As a matter of fact, the first text of the Algerian nation that was established as the main target of the war of independence promoted: "The establishment of the sovereign democratic social Algerian state within the framework of Islamic principles" [the Declaration of November 1, 1954]⁷.

In fact, since independence, the process of Arabization has not stopped starting with schools and universities, and then moving to media and administrations. Arabic was regarded as the best tool to restore the Algerian culture. Consequently, "nearly 30 laws have been enacted for this issue to eradicate the French language" (M. Benrabah, 1996). Indeed, the Tripoli Charter of 1962⁸ states: "The role of national culture shall be primarily represented in making Arabic, which is the expression of the cultural values of our country, its dignity and efficacy as being the language of civilization"⁹.

Modern Standard Arabic or MSA, which is a contemporary simplified version of CA, is privileged with the official status, though its oral use is restricted to specific contexts such as schools, newspapers and political or official discourses. In other words; no one employs it in its daily interactions; it is only used in its written form and in formal settings such as radio TV news, education...etc. William Marçais underlines the idea in the following:

La langue Arabe se présente à nous sous deux aspects
sensiblement différents: une langue littéraire dite Arabe

⁷ - www.worldcp.org.php. 30/11/2011

⁸ - At the end of the Algerian war of independence, the Tripoli programme, one of the most important documents in modern Algerian history was introduced, the product of the meeting in Libya of Algeria's Front de Liberation National (National Liberation Front FLN).

⁹ - www.el.mouradia.dz. 25/02/2012

écrite, dans laquelle seul aujourd'hui encore, sont rédigés les ouvrages littéraires ou scientifiques, qui exactement telle qu'elle se présente à nous, n'a peut-être jamais parlée nulle part en Algérie.¹⁰

Nevertheless, the procedures conducted to arabize the whole system are not favourable according to (Cheriguen, 1997) who says that "the whole Arabization project is contradictory with the predominant local dialect and also with the Berber language which was sidelined after independence but became a national language in 2002". In addition to this, Algeria is regarded as the first francophone country after France according to many sources, since French is still taught in schools and widely used in many settings.

2.3.2-Algerian Arabic

It is worth mentioning that the majority of the Algerian population is arabophone. They make up 72% of the whole of its inhabitants¹¹. Algerians usually use spontaneously Algerian dialectal Arabic (AA) as a spoken means especially in informal situations to express their feelings and thoughts and to communicate. It is generally known as Darija or Maghribi (Elimam 2003:42). AA is a variety derived from CA with a much more simplified vowel system; its vocabulary differs significantly from CA. Yet, these discrepancies resulted from the language contact phenomenon that has led to considerable assimilation to foreign words.

Contrariwise, AA is vitally used among the entire population, because it is the mother tongue of the majority, as it is highly intelligible in contrast to MSA. As

¹⁰ - "The Arabic language is presented to us under two sensitively different aspects: a literary language, known as written, the only one in which until today, the literary and scientific books are written, the language which is as presented to us, has never been spoken anywhere in Algeria". Marçais William, La diglossia Arab, in: L'enseignement Publique, V.12, December 130, p.40
¹¹- <http://www.africa.com/algeria.13/04/12>

a matter of fact, MSA is an alien to Arabic Algerian, since it could hardly be understood or decoded by old and illiterate people. Moreover, AA has many local varieties characterized by different accents, pronunciations and a significant number of lexical items.

2.3.3- The Status of French in Algeria

Quite simply, and despite the numerous efforts of the government, namely the Arabization project, French remains the language of instruction some branches at the university and it is still employed in many economic sectors. French is looked at in Algeria as a language in its own right, because of its own importance rather than as a language of the colonists. In fact, it has never lost its lingua franca¹² status, for it is generally needed in order to facilitate the access to western commerce and economy. Granguillaume (1983:25) puts it in the following:

La langue française demeure non seulement comme un résidu de la domination coloniale mais, comme ouverture à un monde différent, qui est le monde de la modernité et de la technique, certes, mais aussi le monde de l'émancipation et de l'affranchissement moral, lié à la civilisation de la consommation : c'est par ces deux canaux que la langue française impose sa loi.¹³

So, we cannot deny that French is part and parcel of the Algerian sociolinguistic environment. Its value as a useful language employed for the sake of obtaining a wider communication spreads to be highly recognized and appreciated in the intellectual sectors. Rabeh Sbaa (2002:59) argues that “60% of the Algerian population is either real or occasional francophone”

¹² - A lingua Franca is a language which is usually used by people whose mother tongue is different for the sake of facilitating communication between them.

¹³ - My translation: The French language is not only a residual outcome of the colonial domination, but as an obvious opening towards a different world which is a world of modernity and technique, but also a world of moral emancipation related to the civilization of consumption: these two causal factors in fact lead the French language to impose its law.

2.3.4-Berber

Nearly 7 million speak Berber in Algeria today, i.e. nearly 20% of the total population of the country¹⁴. The Berber tongue, which belongs to the Hamitic group of languages form diverse speech communities, it has four distinct subdivisions within Algeria. The most important of these is Kabyle Berber, spoken in the Kabylie area, centered on the areas of Tizi Ouzou and Bejaïa, but also extending into other parts of Boumerdes, Bouira, Bordj BouArréridj and Sétif.

2.3.5- Bilingualism and Diglossia

Concepts such as bilingualism and diglossia are helpful in understanding how different ways of linguistic resources are organized in a multilingual community.

A lot more can be said about bilingualism and diglossia in Algeria, but our present work, is not concerned with how these two substantial phenomena work. Rather, our main aim as already mentioned, is to study how both culture and language function in Algeria.

In brief, the co-existence of MSA, French and Berber gave birth to two major sociolinguistic phenomena, namely bilingualism and diglossia which can be apparent in the following situations: the use of Arabic- French, Arabic-Berber and finally Berber-French, though we are only concerned with the most prominent pair of language in contact in Algeria : Arabic and French.

¹⁴ -en.wikipedia.org/wiki/berber_languages

Algeria was deeply influenced at the linguistic level during the French colonization to the extent that it is almost impossible to hear a mere conversation between two Algerians without remarking the use of at least one or two French words. Obviously, the existence of French in Algeria has resulted in bilingualism including code switching and borrowings.

Bilingualism, an outstanding linguistic behaviour of the majority of Algerians, is characterized by its heterogeneity, since the Algerian speaker's linguistic competence differs in degrees. In other words, we can find speakers who know only few lexical items and others who are really native like speakers. Indeed, whenever languages are in contact, inevitable kinds of linguistic phenomenon such as borrowings and code-switching will generally be found. In this regard Myers-Scotton (2006:45) says:

Discussing loan words (borrowings) has a place in a volume on bilingualism because their presence in a language depends on some bilingual speakers who brought in the borrowed words in the first place.

Auer (2002:3) adds that “code-switching is related to and indicative of group membership in particular types of bilingual speech communities”.

Nonetheless, linguists' point of view differs in distinguishing between code-switching and borrowings. Milroy and Muysken (1995:263) define borrowings as the act of “taking a word or short expression and adapting it to the basic language”. Code switching on the other hand is “the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent” Poplack (1980:583).

In so far as to consider both borrowing and code switching, Dendane (2007:133) posits that “Borrowing usually arises from lack of vocabulary for particular items, mostly nouns, in the ‘receiving’ language, and is somehow distinguished from true code switching which is characteristic of bi- and multilingual speakers”.

Actually, borrowings and code switching have become part of the Algerian culture and identity since the majority uses them to convey meanings or to achieve certain purposes such as prestige. Hudson (ibid: 51) argues this idea in the following “Anyone who speaks more than one language chooses between them according to circumstances”.

As far as prestige is concerned, MSA and French are considered as "High" (H) varieties used in respectful settings, while colloquial Arabic still has a "Low" (L) status i.e. the vulgar variety that can be found in casual speech. According to (Fishman 1967:32) who revised Ferguson’s original proposal, diglossia could be extended to situations found in many societies where two forms that are unrelated genetically occupy the H and L; the case of AA and French in Algeria. He underlines this idea in the following quotation:

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 language varieties of whatever kind. (Fishman 1972c:92).

Thus, diglossia according to Fishman is not restricted to the use of two varieties of the same language one high (H) and the other low (L), it may rather occur within societies where two different dialects, registers, or even two

genetically different languages meet in a single conversation and are assigned to different functions, in particular, they are associated with higher prestige.

The interplay between languages has always been of great interest for linguists, since it is agreed that a particular language reflects the culture of its society. So, it seems necessary to point out a few historical milestones to highlight the different periods which Tlemcen has been through.

2.4- The Speech Community of Tlemcen

2.4.1- Historical Background

Tlemcen in Arabic Tilimsan, from the Berber Tilmisan or Tilmasin the plural forms of Tilmas which means spring, well of water or the town of the springs¹⁵. It has gone through several names, among them we cite, Agadir, Pomaria and Tagrart. It is located in the Northwest of Algeria. It is 140 Km far from Oran and 40Km from the Mediterranean Sea. Its population is 140 158 according to census of 2008.

The city of Tlemcen is marked by a very rich past through the passage of many dynasties and powers. Its centuries of rich history paved the way for the development of a glorious civilization and a citadel which had evolved during the Islamic conquests to become a great political capital whose history had undergone different manifestations and cultural prosperity in political, economic, social, and cultural fields.

Tlemcen was founded by the Romans in the 4th century CE under the name of Pomaria as a military outpost. In 1082, the Almoravid leader Yusuf Ibn Tashfin

¹⁵ -en.wikipedia.org/wiki/tlemcen

founded the city of Tagrart), which merged after the end of conquest Agadir and since then became known as Tlemcen (Tilimsan). Tlemcen probably passed from Almoravid to Almohad control in the mid-twelfth century. On the collapse of Almohad rule in the 1230s, Tlemcen became the capital of one of three successor states, the Ziyyanid kingdom of Tlemcen (1236 - 1554) and was ruled for centuries by successive Ziyyanid sultans. This period was ruled by Yaghomrassen Ibn Ziyān and the next settlers were the Ottomans whose role was important as well. During the Ottoman period, Tlemcen played a pivotal role in the scientific and cultural movements being one of the most important Beylic western cities thanks to the spread of schools and learning centres¹⁶. In addition to the prosperity of arts and architecture that took after the Ottomans' style.

During The French colonial period Tlemcen was also characterized by military occupation on the part of the colonizer during the whole period of colonial settlement. The Algerian people reacted against the existing conditions through different ways including military resistance. In 1911, Tlemcen witnessed a movement of great emigration towards the Islamic world Billad el Cham, El Hedjaz, and Egypt.

These long phases of struggle prepared the country for a new era from which its population had learnt a lot from their ancestors' previous experiences which lasted for more than a century of resistance to colonialism.

2.4.2- Linguistic Features of the Dialects of Tlemcen

The aim of the research paper at hand is to focus on how insulting people by giving them nicknames functions in the Tlemcen speech community. That is why it is worth giving an overview of its current linguistic specificities.

¹⁶ -www.tlemcen2011.org/the-history-of-the-city-of/11/2.html. 15.02. 2012






“Tlemcen town has long been regarded as a well- established prestigious centre whose native speakers are characterized by highly conservative social and cultural traits” Dendane (ibid:175). Tlemcen most famous linguistic feature is the use of the glottal stop [ʔ] as a realization of CA /q/. This is why its population is called [nes ʔWlli ʔVltlBk], and whenever you are in another town especially Algiers or Blida they usually ask you how do you say coffee in Tlemcen; this latter is in effect realized as [ʔahwa].

The dialect used in Tlemcen is an urban dialect. It has some common features with the other prevailing dialects in Algeria but with different characteristics which make it particular and unique. These features can be discerned through the phonological, morpho-syntactic, and lexical levels.

As previously mentioned the most salient aspect which symbolizes the dialect used in Tlemcen is the use of the glottal stop [ʔ] instead of the uvular [q]. For instance [ʔWlli], which means he said to me instead of [qWlli] that we may find in Beni Snous (west of Tlemcen) or even [gWlli] which is frequently used by other rural speakers.

Another distinction is made between the Bedouin dialects and the urban ones is the realization of the consonant /F/ as [dF] by Tlemcen native speakers e.g. [dFaw] meaning ‘they have come’ Or [WdFi] which is the Tlemcenian imperative form of the verb to come, Bedouin speakers pronounce them simply as follows [Faw] or [ʔarwAʔi] for the masculine and [ʔarwAʔi] for the feminine.

Morphologically speaking, the possessive third person masculine pronoun is dropped by the urban speakers who generally realize it as [u] instead of [hu] in a word like /kt^sabu/ which is originated from the CA word /kitabuhu/. Whereas, in the rural dialects it is realized /ktabeh/. Also, the feminine morpheme {-i} as in [Gufi] meaning ‘see’ is dropped in Tlemcen speech given that [Guf] is used to address both males and females.

The TA variety as compared to the numerous dialects used in Algeria has its specific lexical items that cannot be found elsewhere. For example the word to clean the house is realized as [na   ] in the dialect of Tlemcen and [ndir  K| Bda|r] in Algiers and Blida as [neq ] means doing the shopping. More lexical items specific to urban people of Tlemcen related to our work will be mentioned in chapter three and many other examples can be given in this context.

2.5-Linguistic Relativity and the Algerian Culture

A culture, as explained in the previous chapter, is not only the artefacts of what a group of people share as a common background. It is however, a way of thinking, feeling, believing and so on. Superstitions, myths, taboos, stereotypes, and prejudices belong also to the cultural components of a country. Algeria’s culture is strongly influenced by its religion, Islam, although in the past it was mainly influenced by the French culture. This does not mean that its population does not believe in superstitions, since it is common to hear that, if you do this or that, something bad will happen to you. Moreover, taboo and prejudice can be found in its speech communities depending on somebody’s culture and environment.

Accordingly, three language varieties, AA, MSA, and French are used differently according to each individual’s culture and educational background in

Algeria. Laroussi (ibid:25) points out that “une langue peut exprimer plusieurs cultures, et une culture peut être exprimée par plusieurs langues”¹⁷. Nonetheless, it is plain that AA as compared to French is closer to the population thoughts and beliefs.

Speakers of different languages may therefore have different worldviews, depending on the semantic and grammatical differences and similarities of the languages they choose, as they show typical behaviour relying on where they are from. Human language is thus, a vehicle used to transmit and express cultural dimensions. In other words, through language, humans create their own world.

(Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) put forward the following diagram in which they present the dimensions that influence our thoughts, behaviours and so.

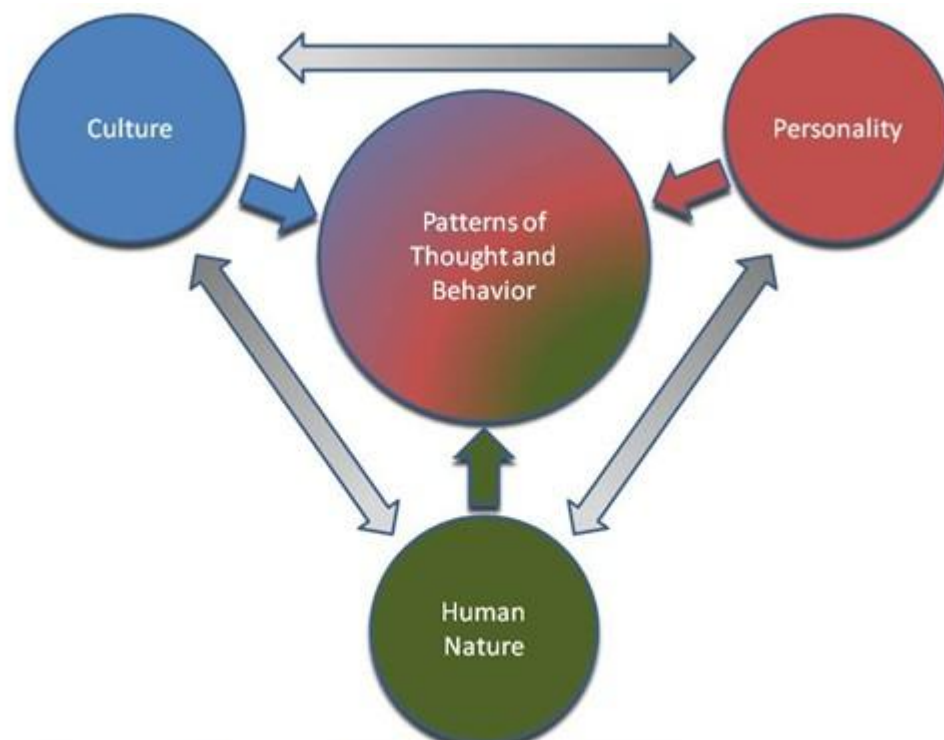


Figure 2.1 Source of thought, behaviour and interactions

¹⁷ - My translation: “A language can express many cultures, and a culture can be expressed in many languages.”

“The sources of influence on thinking and behaviour can be seen as existing at several levels, including human nature, culture, and personality”. The authors choose to represent these dimensions differently in order to highlight their nature. We have chosen a diagram where they select some cultural constructs. These levels are presented under the form of a pyramid; with human nature as the base all people share, and personality which is unique to the individual and placed at the peak with culture as a reflecting element to the group interactions.

The relationship between language and culture is so tight and can be symbolized in numerous ways that they can not be presented in a mere chapter. Because the rules about when, how, and where speech should be used in social interaction may vary widely between speech communities of the same country. Emmitt and Pollock (1997) argue that “even though people are brought up under similar behavioural backgrounds or cultural situations but however speak different languages, their world view may be very different”.

In fact, such studies of cross cultural differences in communicative norms are often referred to as the ethnography of speaking which is primarily concerned with “ways of speaking” (Hymes 1989). Johnstone and Marcellino (2010:4) put forth the idea that:

Hymes offers a theoretical basis for language study that accounts for both linguistic variation from individual to individual and relative linguistic coherence across the social realm, while also offering a methodological heuristic for investigating communication, often represented in terms of the SPEAKING mnemonic.

Additionally, Gumperz and Cook (1982:14) explain the importance of shared cultural background as follows:

Many of the meanings and understandings, at the level of ongoing processes of interpretation of speaker's intent, depend upon culturally specific conventions, so that much of the meaning in any encounter is indirect and implicit. The ability to expose enough of the implicit meaning to make for satisfactory encounter between strangers or culturally different speakers requires communicative flexibility.

Hence, the discrepancies in sociolinguistic norms across cultures may provoke real breakdowns in communication, because of people's different assumptions, expectations and lack of shared background of knowledge. A first example of how rules of social and cultural interaction in addition to the prevailing conventions influence the linguistic behaviour in Algeria is politeness in general, complimenting and insulting in particular.

2.5.1- Politeness and Complimenting

Making a compliment is considered as a suitable speech act which mirrors the admirable and acceptable manners in a culture. In fact, complimenting is an instrument for establishing good relationships and a social strategy that it is able to consolidate ties of solidarity. According to Holmes (1988a:485), compliment is defined:

[...] as a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speakers, usually the person addressed, for some "good" (possession, characteristic, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker or the hearer.

Olshtain and Cohen (1991:158) add that “the speech act of complimenting is intrinsically courteous and enables the speaker to make use of available opportunities to express and interest the hearer”. It is thus a significant social action in that it functions as a starting point for a conversation and allows social interaction to go on easily and adequately.

Complimenting in Algeria however, proves different from the one employed in other countries, since Algerian men usually do not compliment, and do not like much to receive compliments. This attitude is justified by the structure of the society where there are strong attempts to keep males and females separate or men in social activities. One should mention that these attempts are per se dictated by Islamic principles. Consequently, men complimenting women or vice versa can rarely be found in the Algerian speech community and if it happens it will be very exceptional.

Another factor which limits the use of compliments in the Algerian society is the fact that these belong to the feminine world rather than the masculine one. Moreover, this negative attitude towards the use of compliments has to do with Algerian stereotype and ideology; in other words, the widespread and deeply rooted belief among Algerians in the evil-eye. This belief is sustained by the Holy Koran; this is why the majority of the population believes in it and links it to any physical, social or professional harm.

Expecting such problems, Algerians avoid using compliments in order to avoid being considered as a potential source of causing harm to the others. Nevertheless, the absence of compliments, particularly if expected by the interlocutor who shows his new car for instance, may create an embarrassing situation for both the speaker and the interlocutor as it can be interpreted as a sign

of disapproval, jealousy or envy. Yet, the inappropriate use of compliments may cause embarrassment and even offense.

Hence, complimenting involves some kind of risk that is; evil-eye and breakdowns in communication. In such cases, the speaker feels guilty, so, he starts to look for some repair mechanisms in order to improve the situation. For instance, he will add immediately to the compliment a "protecting" religious expression: [mAGA ɁɁɁɁ ɁɁɁɁ] or [tbA|rBk ɁɁɁɁ]: "God gives prosperity", the corresponding usual answer is [ɁɁɁɁ jaɁɁɁɁɁɁɁɁ] or [ɁɁɁɁ jsBlɁɁmBk]: "God bless you".

Now, viewed from the addressee's angle, the situation following a compliment is also more uncomfortable and in order to protect the object of compliment; usually an individual uses religious elements, whereas in the absence of the guest or the friend, the following expression or spell is used: [xamsa f'ɁɁɁɁɁɁɁɁɁɁ] "Five in your eyes" often produced with the presentation of the speaker's hand with its five fingers.

2.5.2 Emotional Force of Insults as a Face Threatening Act

When we consider that the fact of interacting is limited by ritual and social constraints which are usually referred to as the social markers and norms that allow communication to occur in appropriate ways, politeness attitudes can be taken as examples.

On the one hand, it is necessary to know that within the framework of politeness theory positive and negative face described by Brown and Levinson (ibid), insults belongs to face threatening acts (FTAs). Moreover, they are really

powerful, since they allow the emotional force of the addressee to exceed its rational force.

Bowers (1981: 129) adds:

We argue that taboo words generate emotional reactions in part through verbal conditioning; that is through a simple form of learning, the sounds of taboo words become directly associated with emotional centres in the brain. Accordingly, taboo words can evoke strong emotions even when they are uttered without any desire to offend.

So, as the quotation implies language influences the way we think, for people may avoid thinking about certain topics in order to avoid saying aloud taboo words and insulting. In general, people wish to avoid potential need to insult others rather than avoiding the topic which may lead to conflicts or disagreements with people who may feel hurt.

The strength of such harm can be illustrated by considering the famous Algerian fable of the lion. Here it is. Once upon a time, a lion heard a woman praise his splendor and his courage, and then she adds: “but unfortunately he had a bad breath (or he smelled bad) [ʔummo ʔaje⇒]”. The lion was offended by her talk. Later, he came back to see her and asked her to check whether the wound which she had made had healed. The woman admitted without saying anything. So, before jumping on her in order to devour her, he said [ʔCʔ□⇒ ★●ʔ□)†•ʔ ʔ★ʔ□ʔ ♦ ʔCʔ□⇒ ★●•ʔ□■ʔʔʔ□ʔ]. It means that the injury of the prey (or of any part of the body) will disappear, but the one of the tongue remains.

Accordingly, the insult harms the others, and sometimes the harm is so deep and may create some deadly reactions which can be illustrated by the mortal attack of the lion. Offensive utterances harm people the same way that physical blows do (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, (1993).

The daughter in law will also break the taboo and thus be considered as impolite if she calls her father-in-law or mother in law by their names. Traditionally, she addresses her fathers-in-law by [sidi] and [lalla]. This behaviour is also connected with the culture of the country which is generally acquired with its norms. In the same line of thought Haviland (1974:264) says:

Culture is not an observable behaviour of a group of people, but an abstraction derived from it. Culture is a set of rules or standards which, when acted upon by members of a society produce behaviour that falls within the range of variance that members consider proper and acceptable.

However, the term [sidi], meaning something like ‘my master’ or simply ‘sir’ is gradually disappearing; it is replaced by [⇒bibi] and [⇒biba] meaning ‘my beloved’ in Tlemcen particularly. This very limited use is due to people’s awareness that the term should be consecrated only to God and His Prophets (PUH), and also often limited to the collective form: [sidirabbi] : my Lord; [sidna mu⇒ammBd]: our master Mohammed (PUH), for emphasizing the cohesion and uniformity of Islamic speech community.

2.6-Gender and Insults

2.6.1- Gender’s Features

First of all, we shall draw a distinction between sex and gender and show which one of them is suitable for our research. According to Nanda and Richard (2009:172), the term sex is often used to refer to females ‘and males’ physiological or biological features. Gender, however, refers to the social and cultural elaboration of the sex difference which delimits their social roles. So, in this section we shall use the term sex simply to classify people into male and female and gender to account for social and cultural factors.

Obviously, man and woman express themselves differently in conversation, and many linguists relate this to the existing of gender convention and assumptions in their speech community. Some of these fallacies according to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, (2005), include the following stereotypes:

- Men are strong while women are weak
- Men are brave while women are timid
- Men are aggressive while women are passive
- Men are sex driven while women are relationship driven
- Men are rational while women are irrational
- Men are direct while women are indirect
- Men are competitive while women are cooperative
- Men are practical while women are nurturing
- Men are rough while women are gentle
- Men don’t cry

All these fallacies lead to the creation of various gender ideologies and stereotypes in addition to the one mentioned above.

In fact, both choose the suitable way and language to convey their messages and emotions. Thus, in terms of language choice, women generally approach the norms of proper language in order to achieve prestigious forms. Men, on the other hand, usually talk more colloquially and do not care about their way of speaking which is sometimes less grammatical. In this regard Labov (1990) puts forth two principles:

Principle 1: For stable sociolinguistic variables, men use, a higher frequency of nonstandard forms than women... Women favour the incoming prestige more than men.

Principle 2: ... Women are most often the innovators.

Nevertheless, Milroy et al (1994) maintain that “it is misleading to say that women favour prestige forms: rather, women create the prestige forms in the sense that the forms they use become overtly prestigious in the community.”

In terms of emotion, women often relate what they say to emotions as they speak more personally, whereas men’s speech is less emotional and more factual. Describing, both genders’ style of speaking, Braun (2004:15) (cited in Massey 2005) argues that:

Female style of conversation is more polite and contains indirect orders rather than imperatives, this could be categorized as an absence of dominant behaviour. Men, on the other hand, use more directives. They also behave more competitively in conversations, for example interrupting and talking more often than their female conversational partners.

He adds (ibid) that:

By contrast, women display a more cooperative style of conversational interactions including minimal reactions to mark interest with such devices as “yes” or “mhm.

Hence, the choice of terms will depend on social features of the speakers or the hearers and on features of context-formality and most importantly on the speaker’s intention.

In Algeria women are traditionally regarded as weaker in mind than men, body, and spirit. Moreover, girls in particular are brought up to believe that they are inferior to men and must cater to them, and boys are taught to believe that they are entitled to the care and solicitude of women. Holmes (1997: 195, 196) argues that:

Research on language and gender has tended to follow the general development of feminist thought, moving from an essentialist paradigm where speakers were categorized in terms of their biological sex through a period where the significance of cultural concept of gender was recognized, together with social psychological dimensions, to a more dynamic social constructionist approach.

G. Tillion (1966:118) describes the characteristic that define masculine virility in North Africa and around the Mediterranean Sea as “an ideal, decent and brave man”¹⁸. Yet, the majority of men believe that their superiority is innate and genetically transmitted. Indeed, Muslims exhibit most often the following Koranic

¹⁸ - un idéal du parfait matamore.

verse to convince people (Surah el Nissaa: 26) ¹⁹"الرجال قوامون على النساء". Hence, this binary distinction appears to be a significant organizing principle in all societies. We can expect this to guide our evaluation and analysis in the next chapter.

As a matter of fact, AA possesses an emblematic expression [BrroFla] that urges man to conform to the spirit of virility which is deemed important to keep his honour. So, in order to go further into the notion of virility, we glance at how [BrrAjBl] or man is seen by man himself and what the main features of [BrraFBl] are in the Algerian speech community.

2.6.2- *Erradjel* seen by man

Real man represents the backbone of his entourage; he is supposed to be able to make right decisions and to accept to take responsibility and to be the leader and protector of his family. *Erradjel* in Algeria, is said to be the one who is [s⇔m⇔] that is to say 'pure' or 'correct', the one who does not lie and cheat and then sticks to his promises. Semantically, [s⇔m⇔] signifies a healthy person, it was said that during the primitive times the word [s⇔m⇔] means 'to purify' which is the synonym of 'to cure. Indeed, purity signifies health according to R.Caillois (1960:39). However, the man who is [s⇔m⇔] or [f⇔al] in Algeria is the one whom we respect and fear and impurity attacks his soul, the same as illness which may be the symptom of death.

Thus, it is strongly harmful to say to an Algerian man or to insult him by the opposites of the above features. [BrroFla] then urges man to conform to the spirit

¹⁹ - "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women" vb.noor-alyaqeen.com/html

of nobility which is a crucial element to keep his honour and status. Whenever this is not the case, he will attract the scorn of his entourage that will treat him as being [mAGi raFel] meaning ‘he is not a man’ or [mAGiⵔumdA] an expression widely used in Tlemcen, which implies we cannot rely on him. These are the most unkind, hurtful and hateful insults for man.

We can therefore say that this dominance of the ideal masculine is mainly due to the ideological principles planted in man’s mind since their childhood. It is usually clarified through the concept of virility and the code of honour according to the Algerian tradition.

2.6.3- Erradjel seen by Woman

Often, Algerian women consider themselves as inferior to men. This inferiority vs. superiority is due to the idealized image assigned to man, i.e. the significant role which he occupies in society, in other words, the role of moral and material protection especially.

All women generally speaking of man refer to him as the one who never lets you go or drops you. He is described as follows: [raFBI taⵔlaⵔⵏuba] and he is certainly the one whom they will end their lives with. In contrast, women are precarious, fragile, powerless and helpless. They are required to fulfill all the housework, and take care of their children. They have also to behave as a perfect housekeeper.

In spite of the inherited socio-cultural situation, man’s dominance is approximately undermined in our days by women who are undergoing great

educational and economic changes. Nonetheless, all these current and immense changes have not erased the traditions and principles of the nation.

2.7 – The Oral Tradition

The oral tradition consists of stories, poems, proverbs, and idioms which are capable of retaining and preserving some lexical items or expressions that are rarely or no longer used. The majority of modern investigators, whether Arab or foreign, find this kind of tradition more interesting because it is informative and illustrative, whereas old people consider it, particularly proverbs, as a mark of authenticity to the story involved.

Haak et al (1989:119) posit that “It is often said of this tradition every proverb has a story and conversely every story has a proverb”. This in fact is true as the meaning of the proverb is often opaque and ambiguous if we do not explain or tell the story that underlies it. This tradition is old and has existed since the early Islamic and pre- Islamic times (ibid). It has become part of the Algerian culture and their daily lives as well, since their presence could be traced back to the early Christian era.

Proverbs are very often used and appreciated by people. They summarize in a few words a whole story, and often have the indirect meaning of allusion. Though they are used mechanically by old people, they still leave much room for young speaker's skill and strategy.

Algerian proverbs are numerous so that the recipient has at his disposal a range of proverbs so varied that he can usually select one to fit into the situation. Sometimes they are used euphemistically, since euphemism per se does not trigger strong emotional responses.

Lakoff (ibid: 51) explains that “when a word acquires a bad connotation by association with something unpleasant or embarrassing, people may search for substitutes that do not have the uncomfortable effect”. For example, the mother in law would say to her daughter in law [laⵔtibA majruda wBGGwika bedduda] which means that the entry of the house is very clean and brilliant, whereas if she check the corners of the house she finds that they are dirty, instead of saying [mmwBusUa].

Furthermore, if someone talks a lot and his/her talk often brings him/ her troubles, she/he will definitely hear the following proverb by old or wise people [Blfumm BssakBt matBdUullu dBbbana]: ‘no fly will enter a shut mouth’. These proverbs belong to the pure Tlemcenian oral tradition, though we may find them in other parts in Algeria, but with different lexis.

2.8- Islam and Name- Calling

Religion is another means which belongs to the devices for maintaining conversation. In fact, reference to religion in conversation widely reflects spread religious beliefs which are deeply rooted in the culture of the people. On the other hand, religion is also used dynamically as a strategy by individuals to achieve their goals or intentions. In other terms, the illocutionary force of the speaker and perlocutionary effect on the hearer.

Language usage in Islam is most likely the primary factor in perpetuating what Islam is and what Muslims actually believe and practice. Consequently, the importance of religion in the culture of people is reflected in how they generally organize a conversation, and how they maintain it in particular. For instance, Islam prohibits radically the use of name-calling to insult or humiliate people, and in order to convince people to stop this bad habit, they use Koran verses as a proof.

Surah Al- Hujuraat which is named the Surah of social and polite ways of interaction by the Prophet (PUH), Muslims and people in general contains a verse (N°11) directed to people who use nicknames:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَرُوا بِالْألقَابِ بِئْسَ الإِسْمُ الفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ

الظَّالِمُونَ" (الآية 11)²⁰

The major reasons behind this Surah are: first [nebz] is the the use of bad names; God Saying [latanAbezu bil alkaab] means don't use nicknames, because [nebz] is the name which is hated by the hearer. Second, in the early times before Islam, people used to employ numerous names to call the same person, and when the Prophet Muhammed (PUH) employed one of them, he was told that the man became angry when we call him by it. Consequently the verse [bi ٱsa l'ism l'fusuk ba ٱda l'imAn], it implies that if you mention your friend by the name he hates, you will cause him harm, and causing harm for Muslims is [fusuk] i.e. a sin.

²⁰ -In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful “O you who believe! let not (one) people laugh at (another) people perchance they may be better than they, nor let women (laugh) at (other) women, perchance they may be better than they; and do not find fault with your own people nor call one another by nicknames; evil is a bad name after faith, and whoever does not turn, these it is that are the unjust”
<http://ruba1.com/vb/showthread.html/16.02.2012>

Another religious saying or Hadith was uttered by Prophet Muhammed (PUH), when he heard someone saying to a man [jabna l'jahu|dia] meaning ‘ you son of the jewish woman’.

"ما ترى من هاهنا من أحمر أو أسود ما أنت بأفضل منه إلا بالتقوى"²¹

The Hadith was succeeded by the following verse (n°12) from Surah Al Hujuraat:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

"أَيُّحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْنَاهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَحِيمٌ"²²

Weakness of faith and impiety consequently make a person likely to speak thoughtlessly and carelessly and transgress against others when he speaks. So, as it was previously mentioned that, Surah Al Hujuraat aims at showing Muslims good ways of behaviour and making them more aware about things which appear trivial, but in effect they are forbidden because of the harm they cause. Thus, it is noteworthy to dig deeper in order to clarify the harm which is caused by such type of language, and to see to what extent this phenomenon can affect the individual.

2.9- Conclusion

In this chapter we have dealt with the Algerian and Tlemcenian historical background which has resulted in their present intricate sociolinguistic situation and

²¹ -Whoever is here red or black you are not better than him except with fear of Allah -

²² - Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, surely Allah is Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful. www.quran.com31/05/2012

cultural image. Indeed, we have approached the hypothesis of linguistic relativity in order to highlight the link between Algerian and Tlemcenian cultures and their varieties of languages. In this respect, the Algerian way of complimenting, in addition to insulting by using nicknames appear to be part and parcel of daily speech for both man and woman though they differ in degrees. Furthermore, Islam the religion of the whole population prohibits these bad habits, in particular, the use of name calling for the harm they cause.

To conclude, we can say that shared language does not necessarily mean a shared set of socio-linguistic rules, especially in multilingual or in somehow heterogeneous speech-communities as is the case for Algeria, because communication problems may arise from the fact that speakers of the same language may have different sociolinguistic rules and thus may misunderstand each other's intentions.

3.1- Introduction

In the previous chapter, we dealt with the sociolinguistic context of Algeria in general and Tlemcen speech community in particular, in addition to their

historical background. We have also mentioned the significant linguistic characteristics of the dialect of Tlemcen which is the issue at stake. In this chapter, we shall consider a set of famous name-calling and popular sayings which are frequently employed in Tlemcen, focusing on how people perceive them. Thus, in order to obtain reliable data we have designed a methodology for the purpose of collecting quantitative and qualitative data that reflect the use of insults and name-calling in a social context. Thus, more than one research strategy are opted to attain the triangulation of instruments.

3.2- Methods of Data Collection

Data collection is regarded as an essential element in order to conduct and direct an empirical work. Nevertheless, it is difficult to decide which method of data collection is the best to deal with in a given research. O’Leary (2004, p. 150) remarks that:

Collecting credible data is a tough task, and it is worth remembering that one method of data collection is not inherently better than another. Therefore, which data collection method to use would depend upon the research goals and the advantages and disadvantages of each method.

First we have relied on a quantitative analysis of data collected through a structured questionnaire as a means to reach a large number of people more easily. Second, a semi-structured interview has been included to interpret and compliment the result of the questionnaire. Observation and recording conversations have also been helpful tools which enable us to collect proverbs needed for our investigation. These latter produce mainly qualitative data. Newman and Benz (1998:9) argue that any investigation necessitates ‘a combination of qualitative and quantitative

constructs which are often regarded as a matter of continuum rather than a clear cut dichotomy”.

The justifications of employing more than a single data gathering method is that each data gathering method has its strengths and weaknesses. So, triangulation of data instruments i.e. collecting information from two or more sources with multiple instruments is advisable. “Many different sources of information should be sought due to the fact that each of the procedures has different strengths and weaknesses” (Richards, 2001).

Questionnaires for example, have a low rate of return and once distributed, the items in a questionnaire cannot be modified, even if they are confusing to respondents. Furthermore, they cannot probe deeply into the respondents’ opinions and feelings. Interviews, on the other hand, “can compensate for this weakness by providing completeness and depth of coverage as well as the opportunity to clarify and extend because of the physical presence of the analyst” (Gall et al.1996). An observer will focus on phenomena that are routines to participants to be able to understand their context, specific incidents, and behaviors.

3.2.1-Quantitative data

The quantitative analysis measures the linguistic variables such as age, sex, level of education, and their impact on the choice of the informants. This choice however can be symbolized by which variety or terms the informant prefers to use in his daily life. Quantitative data is a kind of statistical and correlational method employed for the sake of obtaining specific, replicable and generalizable findings.

This instrument of investigation enables the researcher to provide plain and interpretation of the data collected because the findings are represented statistically in the form of graphs. Seliger and Shohamy (1989: 80-81) says in this respect: “In quantitative research one classifies results, counts them, and even constructs more complex statistical models in an attempt to explain what is observed”.

3.2.2-Qualitative data

The data obtained from this type of research usually take the form of explanations, stories, and events. In effect, the analysis of the results is difficult to control and to organize. Moreover, it is not classified into finite numbers. Objectivity is required at this level in order to make the data obtained qualitatively more experimental and scientific.

At this level, the researcher should first provide a clear and comprehensive image about the linguistic phenomenon which is examined, as we should be aware of what is going on in front of us, because we may sometimes be misled by the informant’s answers. Availability of data and avoidance of subjective judgments are also important elements required to study the situation under investigation.

3.2.3- Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a list of written questions to be completed by informants who are supposed to give answers and clues about our hypotheses. The questionnaire which we have used consists of closed questions and semi -closed (structured questionnaire), in addition to open-ended questions where the participants could write free responses (semi-structured questionnaires). As far as the former is concerned, participants are limited by the suggestions given to them in

advance. The latter however, includes only questions without any suggested answers.

The closed questions require from the informants to answer merely by 'yes' or 'no'. The semi-closed questions on the other hand, involve questions followed by pre-established suggestions, and informants are supposed to choose among them the one which they find close to their daily use or to their point of view. And in order to attain additional answers, we have asked the participants to propose or to supply us with other suggestions. Furthermore, the questionnaire involves two semi-structured questions (n°22 and24), where the participants are invited to give free answers.

One should note that in spite of the restrictions which are set up to conduct the informants, structured questionnaires have numerous advantages that helped us to guide our research and to analyze the data collected in a simple and easy way. Yet, the semi-structured questions supply us with unlimited data, and the answers are not homogeneous; this in fact can mislead us when we analyze them. Consequently, they may lack reliability and pertinence.

Another important element which should be taken into consideration is the language of the questionnaire. Researchers should select the suitable code that is to say; the language which is mastered or at least understood by their participants. Thus, we formulated the questions in MSA in order to have a kind of coherence, because the suggestions were listed in TA written with MSA scripts.

3.2.4 Interview

We have chosen the semi-structured interview which is frequently used in qualitative analysis. According to Gray (2004: 214) there are many reasons which

lead us to use interviews for collecting data and using it as a research instrument. She has given the following reasons (ibid):

- There is a need to attain highly personalized data.
- There are opportunities required for probing.
- A good return rate is important.
- Respondents are not fluent in the native language of the country, or where they have difficulties with written language.

Nevertheless, nobody accepted to answer the questions of the interview in a formal way, since the questions were embarrassing for some informants. So, we tried to keep the guiding questions and make them less formal. That is, we included the questions of the interview within our explanations about the topic. Indeed, 11 participants to whom we gave the questionnaire were interviewed at the same time. The conversation was recorded secretly, in order to avoid any change in the behaviour of the participants, aiming to attain naturalistic data.

The interview was inserted to permit us to focus our questions on the issue of the harm caused by the use of name calling or prejudice and their impact on the addressee. We have thus tried to gather thorough answers and explanations about the impact of such a linguistic behaviour. Therefore, with these data collection instrument we intend to answer our third research question: if insulting people is considered as embarrassing and harmful, to what extent can insult affect one's self esteem?

In this vein, in the first question the informants were asked if they still remember bad names assigned to them. The second inquiry aimed at knowing these

names. In the third question participants were asked if these bad names affect their personalities and characters.

3.2.5- Participant Observation

Participant observation is the third data collection instrument used in our research in order to collect proverbs or popular sayings which can support our work. The data collected is analyzed qualitatively. Obviously, the primordial goal in choosing different strategies in the same study is to balance them and to assure completeness of findings or to confirm findings.

It is worth noting, that sitting or living with the old generation (grandparents), observing their language, gave the observers the chance to hear many proverbs and idioms which include many stories and lessons to them and to the next generations, since they are regarded as a compendium of wise sayings.

The advantage of this tool of data collection is that it provided us with naturalistic data, in other terms the observers see how their grandparents actually speak when they are in their natural environment. Moreover, it gave them the opportunity to ask for more clarification and about the moral behind proverbs since they are learnt and used mechanically and sometimes ambiguous, furthermore, it is difficult to grasp their real meaning. In other words, participant observation is a method that attempts to understand the motives and meanings of people's behaviour from the viewpoint of those involved in the behaviour which is studied.

Nevertheless, it is a time consuming method and requires that the observer should be acquainted with the sample population under investigation, as he/she

should know their culture and master their language. Additionally, participant observation is not the most reliable research method, because it is impossible to repeat the complete data which is produced by the subjects, and everything that is said or done, represents simply the opinion of one observer.

Hence 3 participants, two women, one is 30 years old and the second is only 16, in addition to the man who is 38 years old. They were asked to observe and to take note; they gave us back the data under the form of a list of proverbs because no one had recorded any of the conversations. About 25 popular sayings were gathered; each one has a moral and a story behind it that is to say; they abstract the main points from the whole situation in a few words, and often have the indirect meaning of allusion.

3.3 Sample population

In fact, previous researches established name-calling as a frequently occurring speech behaviour. In other terms, it is found at universities and schools, work places and homes. Accordingly, to fill out the questionnaire, participants needed access to their place of work or study and homes. Thus, we have given the questionnaires to students, teachers, secretaries and housewives and so on. We shall deal with the results in detail later on.

Informants from different categories have been selected randomly for our research. Milroy (1987:24) says in this respect that random sampling aims at avoiding the following difficulties:

- Selection influenced consciously or unconsciously by human choice.
- Inadequate coverage of the population

- Inability to find certain section of the population
- Lack of cooperation by certain subsections

Yet, Tagliamonte introduces the term ‘representativeness’ as a good outcome of random selection. She says (2006:18-19):

Originally, sociolinguists based their methodology on sociological methods, attempting to achieve ‘representativeness’ in their data collection practices by constructing a random sample of their targeted group.

This implies that representativeness is ensured when we select informants at random. Tagliamonte adds (ibid: 24) that:

Once a target population has been defined, however, it is a good idea to observe principles of random selection as strictly as possible in order to ensure reasonable representativeness across the sample.

In order to achieve dependable data, the researcher should not interview people whom he knows very well, such as friends or members of the family. The following parameters were taken into consideration: gender, age, education level/ occupation. Consequently, we classified our sample population into four sub – categories. 93 informants were given a questionnaire, but 17 individuals stopped at the first question because they answered by no, or never. So, we shall deal only with 76 participants.

Age	Females	Males	Total
18-25	25	8	33
26-35	8	16	24

35-45	12	04	16
Above 46	/	3	3
Total	45	31	76

Table 3.1: Participant' categories

As it is shown in the previous table, we opted for random sampling. Thus, the type of speakers to be studied is identified in advance. Furthermore, the above table demonstrates that informants of different ages are covered in order to have equilibrium in the sample population of Tlemcen. When the sample population is chosen randomly, then every item in the population has an equal chance of being selected. Consequently, if all subjects participate, random sampling will be highly representative.

The first category is composed of 33 individuals, they represent (43.42 %) of the whole sample, and most of them are university students. They were selected from different departments, namely commerce, economics, juridical sciences and psychology. The sample is dominated by female respondents, which is interesting itself and helpful. Milroy and Milroy (1997: 53.) point out that:

Speaker sex is intended to be a methodological, exploratory variable: in other words, it is a purposely broad, unrefined social variable that can be easily taken into account at the data collection stage of research.

In the following table, we have divided the informants according to their occupations and levels of education:

Occupation	Females	Males	Total
University Students	26	19	45
University Teachers	2	1	3
Secondary school teachers	2	2	4
Lawyers	4	2	6
Accountants	3	5	8
Policemen	/	2	2
Housewives	8	/	8

Table 3.2: Informant's Occupations and intellectual levels

The above table demonstrates that the sample population which has been chosen is varied. In other terms, all the persons included came from different intellectual classes and working domains.

3.4-Analysis of the Data and Presentation of the Results

3.4.1- The questionnaire

The questionnaire comprises four parts; each part has its own focus. Part one aims at establishing the background information about the subjects, age, gender, occupations. The second part focuses on the informant's attitudes towards the use of nicknames in insulting people. The third part aims at obtaining a large number of answers about which lexical items are used more than others in the speech community of Tlemcen, and the last part focuses on the discrepancies between gender's uses of taboo terms in general and insults in particular.

Some participants criticize our choice of topic, but when we insisted on them to answer the questionnaire; they were convinced that this phenomenon exists even if they are not aware of it. So, questions from 1 to 3 are meant to identify the different attitudes of the informants, as representatives of the whole Tlemcen speech community.

1- Do you use nicknames to call people?

- a- yes
- b- Sometimes
- c- Rarely
- d- No

e- Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	29	16	45
b	15	12	27
c	1	3	4
d	5	12	17
Total	93		

Table3.3: Use of Nicknames

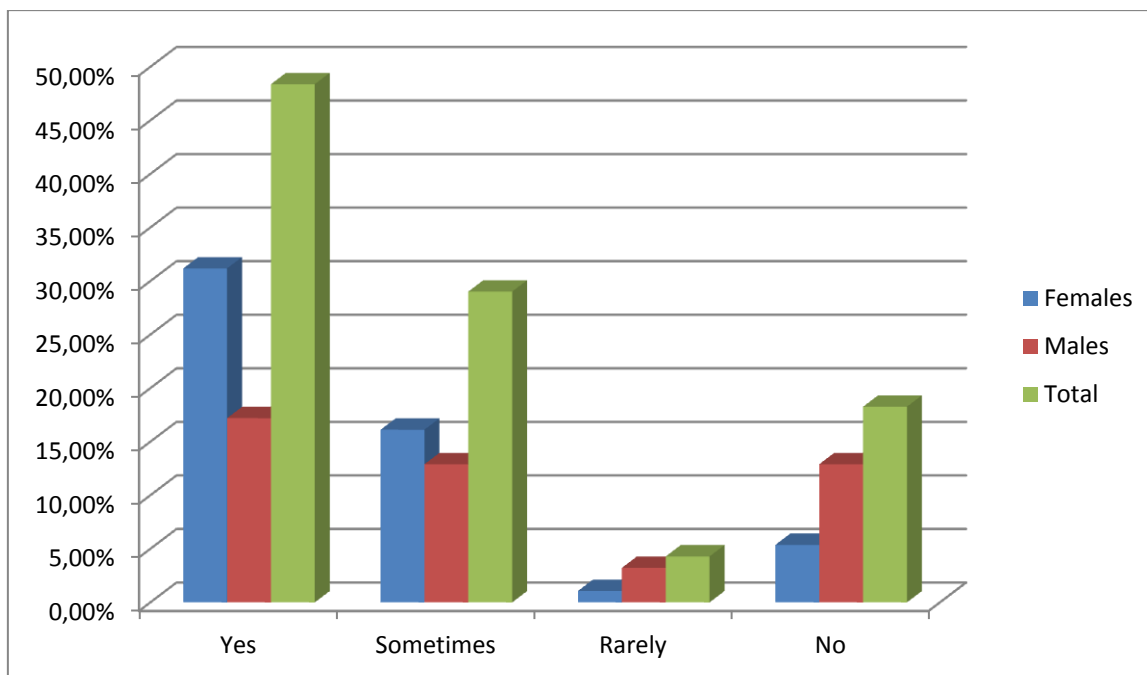


Figure 3.1: Use of Nicknames

As demonstrated in the table and the graph above, the majority of informants (48.38%) both females and males use name-calling daily and (29.02%) sometimes. The other participants who represent only (18.27%) answer that they do not use names to refer to people. Thus, at this level the 17 participants stopped answering the questions of the questionnaire since their responses were simply ‘no’ and the following questions focused on the terms which are very much employed by them within their society. Finally, we counted only (4.29%) of the informants who answered that they rarely use nicknames.

The results also show that people from different ages and statuses use name calling. One should mention that the presence of this habit is due to the way people raise their children, because home and school are considered as two major settings that participate in the child’s education see section (1.3.1.5). As a matter of fact, the socialization of speech practices is the vehicle through which a child starts to acquire knowledge and experiences about what is acceptable to do or to say and

what is not. Additionally, the child begins to uncover the sacred/profane world when he transgresses the rules and the conventions of his culture.

Nevertheless, it is plain that this bad phenomenon pervades our society where we remark that people use it either unconsciously or premeditatedly without taking into account religion that extremely forbids it, neither the harm which it may result in (see section 2.8). Religion teaches us which principles are right and which are wrong, as it emphasizes the unity of its people. So, the person who uses any of threatening acts, insulting words or bad behaviour conducts himself to stir hatred only, as he risks to be rejected by his entourage.

2- What are according to you the aims of using name calling to insult others?

- a- To underestimate people
- b- Demoralize them
- c- To get on people's nerves.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	23	5	28
b	9	4	13
c	13	22	35
Total	76		

Table.3.4: Aims of using bad names

Generally speaking, people use bad names and insults for reasons such as hurting others, given that they leave a long-lasting mark on the individual as they lead the person to doubt his own worth. In fact, insults can be either verbal, negative stereotypes or bad labels, as they include behaviours that are perceived as

humiliation, rudeness or offense. They play on the person’s vulnerabilities as they cause powerful emotions, since they generate strong feelings of resentment and they are able to unleash anger.

The above table demonstrates that (36.84%) of the participants see that nicknames aim at underestimating the addressee. (17.10%) said that names of this kind are usually used to demoralize the listener. Finally, (46.05%) answered the last suggestion, seeing that the aim of such linguistic behaviour is to get on somebody’s nerves or to try to annoy him/her. So we deduce from the subjects’ answers that each one has experienced an embarrassing situation. The results are also presented in the following graph, where we counted the percentage of both genders separately:

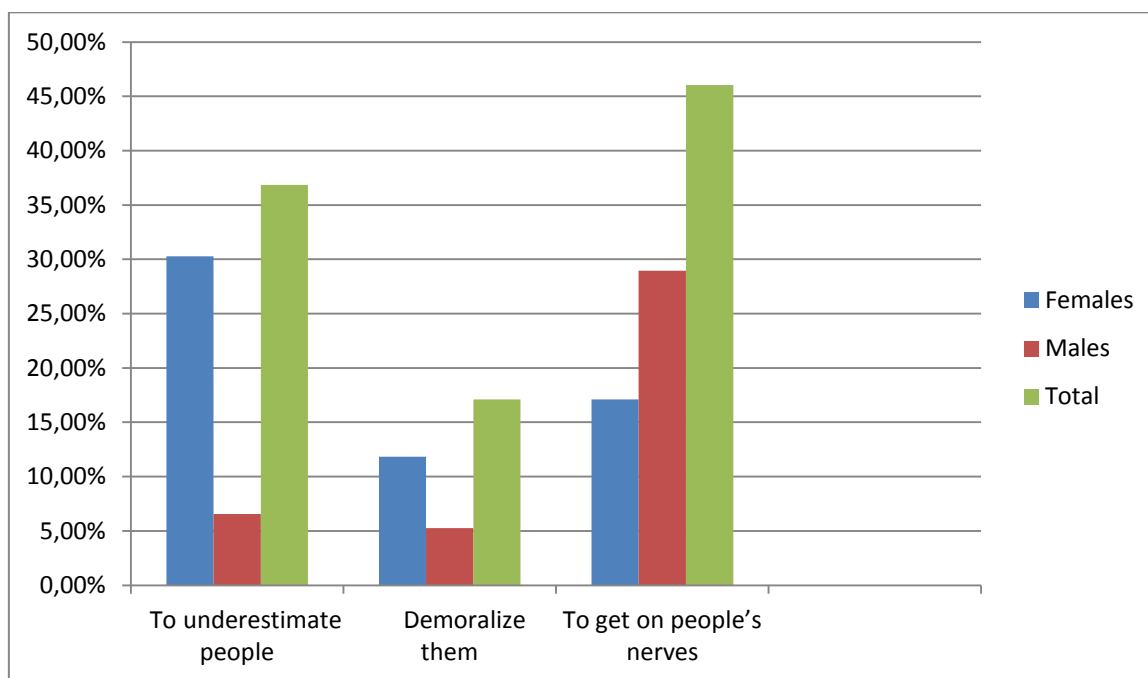


Figure 3.2: Aims of using bad names

The informants have three choices in order to identify the major aim of using nicknames. However, with regard to their answers we see that self-esteem, dignity, and the person’s personality which includes various habits are targeted (see

section 1.9). At this point, being called names cannot only damage the addressee but leave him/her believing that he or she is damaged, worthless, and useless, bad and defective. In addition, the person who is frequently named tends to act in ways that are consistent with that poor self-image and degrading treatment.

3- How do you evaluate the use of name calling in insulting people?

- a- It causes shame and embarrassment.
- b- It causes humiliation.
- c- It implies impoliteness.
- d- It is sometimes useful.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	21	16	37
b	5	10	15
c	15	4	19
d	4	1	5
Total	76		

Table 3.5: Assessment of use of name-calling

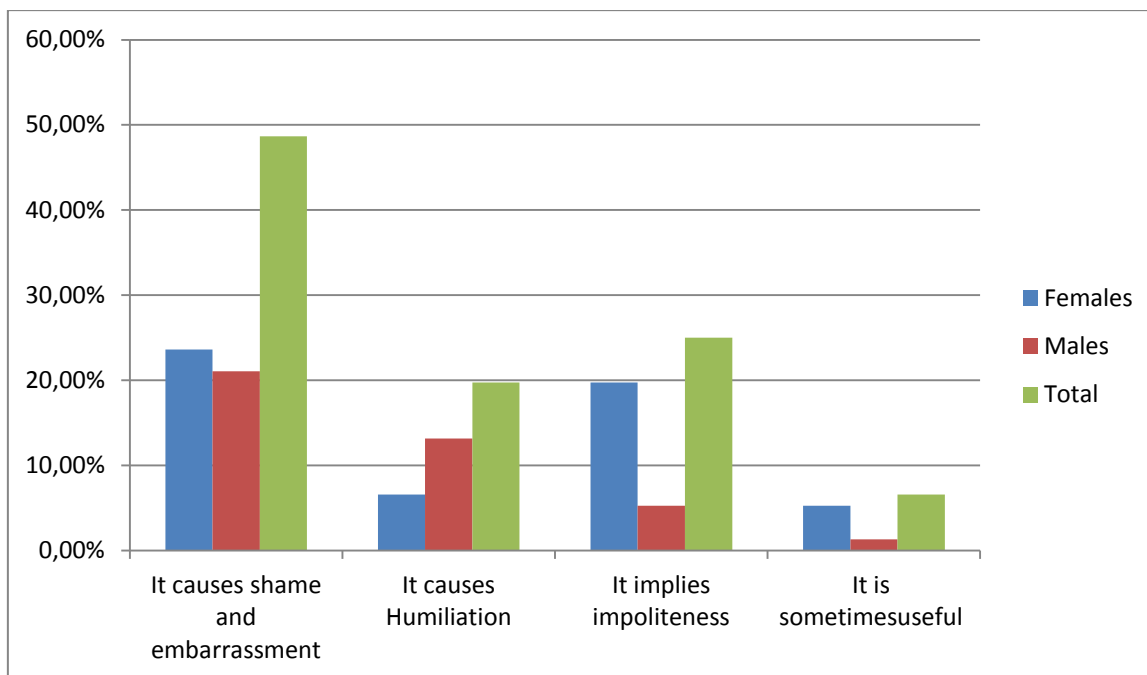


Figure 3.3: Informants' evaluation of name-calling

Values are a set of beliefs consisted of rules which tell people what is right and wrong, they also tell them how to live peacefully. In other words, how to avoid troubles and conflicts such as being considered as an impolite or to cause shame or embarrassment to others .i.e. acts that threaten the addressee's face (see section1.7.3).

Certainly, one of the prominent qualities of cultural values and norms acquired in the socialization process is politeness. It is an important component of socially appropriate behaviour in conversations. However, despite the censoring of taboo words, they persist in each community's lexicons as a means to attain a set of objectives (see section1.3). Hence, people will immediately react with emotion when their cultural norms and values are violated since the values and norms of culture are unquestionable.

In fact, the third question is closely related to the second one, since it has given us answers about how people see the use of bad names in their society.

Obviously, no one likes this bad habit but unfortunately we find it everywhere and the above results show that. Accordingly, (48.68%) evaluate it as the kind of language which causes shame and embarrassment, (24.99%) value it as an act of impoliteness. (19.72%) said that name calling is a humiliation to the addressees. Finally (6.57%) found it useful sometimes, because using jokes or bad nicknames may consolidate the group.

4- How do you name a woman who behaves like a man?

- a- /baba ra:dFB|/
- b- /⇒|ima |bKksM:r/
- c- /☒aNGa ra:dFB|/
- d- Others to be specified

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	24	9	33
b	13	7	20
c	8	15	23
Total	76		

Table 3.6: Nicknames use for mannish woman

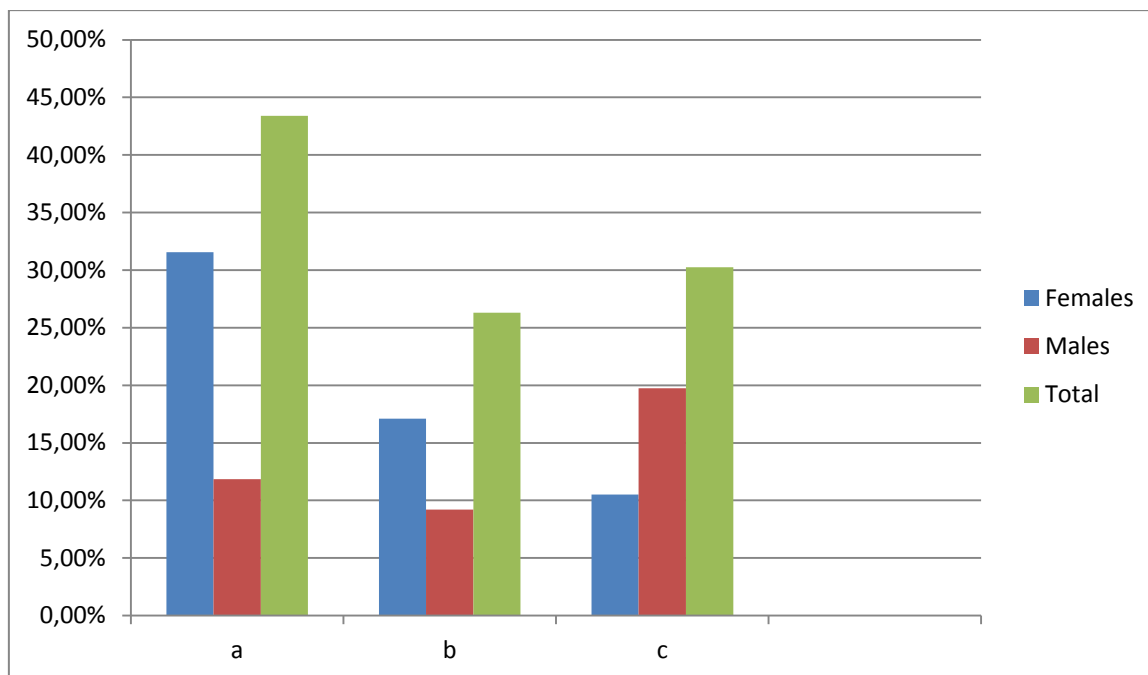


Figure 3.4: Nicknames use for mannish woman

What can be observed in the table 3.6 is that /baba ra:dFB|/ , / ⇨|ima |bKksM:r/ /⊗aNGa ra:dFB|/ have nearly equal percentages though /baba ra:dFB|/ takes up the first place with (43.41%) , are the most frequently used in Tlemcen. /baba/ is the opposite of /mama/ meaning successively ‘dad’ and ‘mum’, so the women who is expected to be called /mama/ is referred to as /baba/ . Moreover, we notice combinations of proper feminine names such as /⊗aNGa / or /⇨|ima / with words which refer typically to masculinity or masculine features to show that she is a woman with men’s aspects. Whenever woman adopts a masculine way she will be criticized as unfeminine or aggressive.

In fact, various features of women in general may result in one of the above insults. For instance if a woman behaves bravely or, if she defends herself or others whom she is responsible for loudly, moreover if she is always the one who decides in her entourage or takes the place of the man of his family she will probably hear one of these inappropriate prejudices. This is especially true for women high status.

Consequently, these prejudices are considered as an insult to women who are supposed to be the weaker and softer creatures on the earth.

These were the results of the fourth question, but we have demanded from the informants some suggestions where they have proposed even proper names of men such as/ Huari /and /Abdeqqa/ to call a mannish woman.

5- How do you call a man who has long hair?

- a- /ʔatiʔa/
- b- /mrejja/
- c- /bu:GʔC:r/
- d- Others to be specified

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	27	8	35
b	14	7	21
c	4	16	20
Total	76		

Table 3.7: Famous nicknames assigned to a man with long hair

Hence, (46.04%) of the participants use /ʔatiʔa/, which is a proper name often found in Tlemcen. (27.63%) answer /mrejja/, which is a derivative of the term /mra/ and means a woman. / bu:GʔC:r / is a compound word /bu:/ signifies ‘with’ and /GʔC:r/ means ‘hair’. The percentage of / bu:GʔC:r / that is (26.31%) is approximately the same as the one of / mrejja /as the graph below shows:

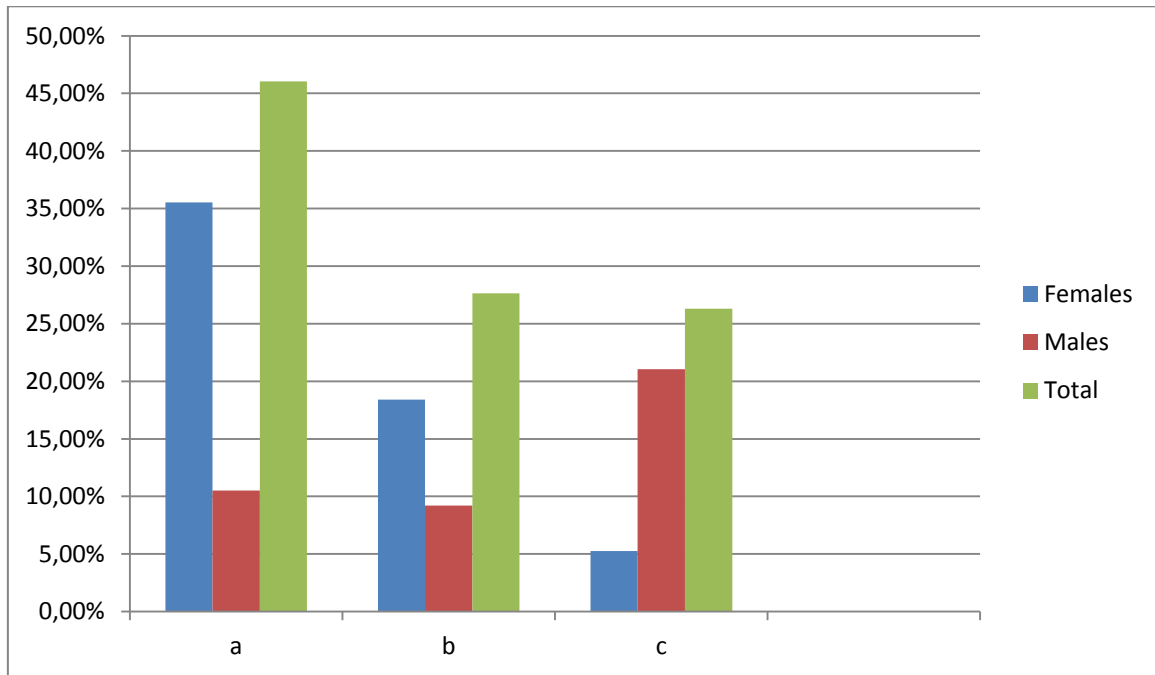


Figure 3.5: Famous nicknames assigned to a man with long hair

In fact, there exist many nicknames used to refer to people whatever their behaviour is, for instance /ʔatiʔa/ /mrejja/ and /bu:GʔC:r / are bad labels which people use to call a man whose hair is long. It is natural that each one of us has the appearance which Allah endow us by it. Hence, aspect of both men and women, let's say are universals. In other words, as opposed to women, men are expected to cut their hairs. Sometimes, we find that a man keeps his hair long and vice versa. So, they may be referred to either as /ʔatiʔa/ /mrejja/ and /bu:GʔC:r / if he is a man and / baba ra:dFB| / if she is a woman.

6- How do you name an unkind woman?

a- /sBmmija/

b- /mBsfara/

c- /mBrhuFa/

d- Other suggestions

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	17	12	29
b	19	15	34
c	9	4	13
Total	76		

Table 3.8: Bad names used to refer to an unkind woman

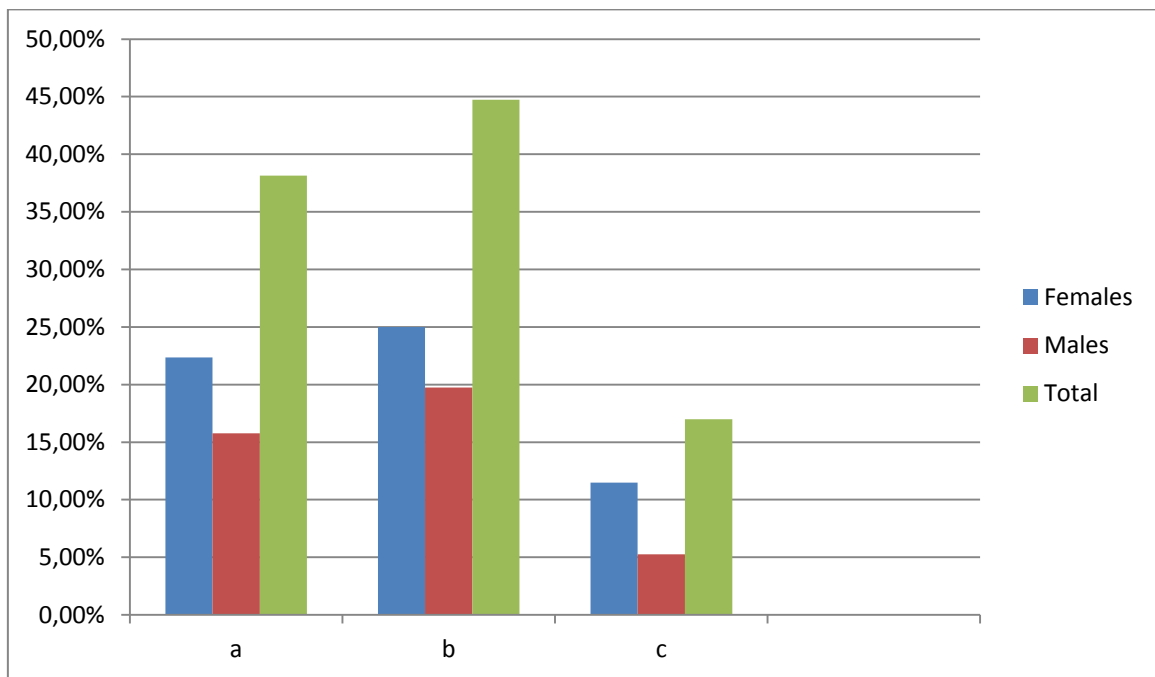



Figure 3.6 Bad names used to refer to an unkind woman

The sixth question focuses on names assigned to woman who is neither gentle nor friendly nor generous. As with the previous questions three suggestions were given, /semmija/, /mBsfara/, /mBrhuFa/. The first and the last propositions we can say that they are synonyms, /sem/ and /rWhF /and both of them signify ‘poison’. So, (38.14%) refer to an unkind woman by calling her by /semmija/, and (17%) use /mBrhuFa/. /mBsfara/ on the other hand, means a

woman who is ‘pale and ill’; however it has another connotation which refers to unkindness when it is used to describe an unfriendly woman, because good people are said to have always a nice look and smile. A famous idiomatic expression used in Tlemcen for the same purpose is /alɣha dA:rrha/ , it means that either ‘her heart and spirit are ill’.

7-How do you call a nasty man?

a- /mBsmu:m/

b- /na:ze/

c- /rA:sa mCrra/

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	31	11	42
b	5	17	22
c	9	3	12
Total	76		

Table 3.9: Unkind names used to refer to a nasty man

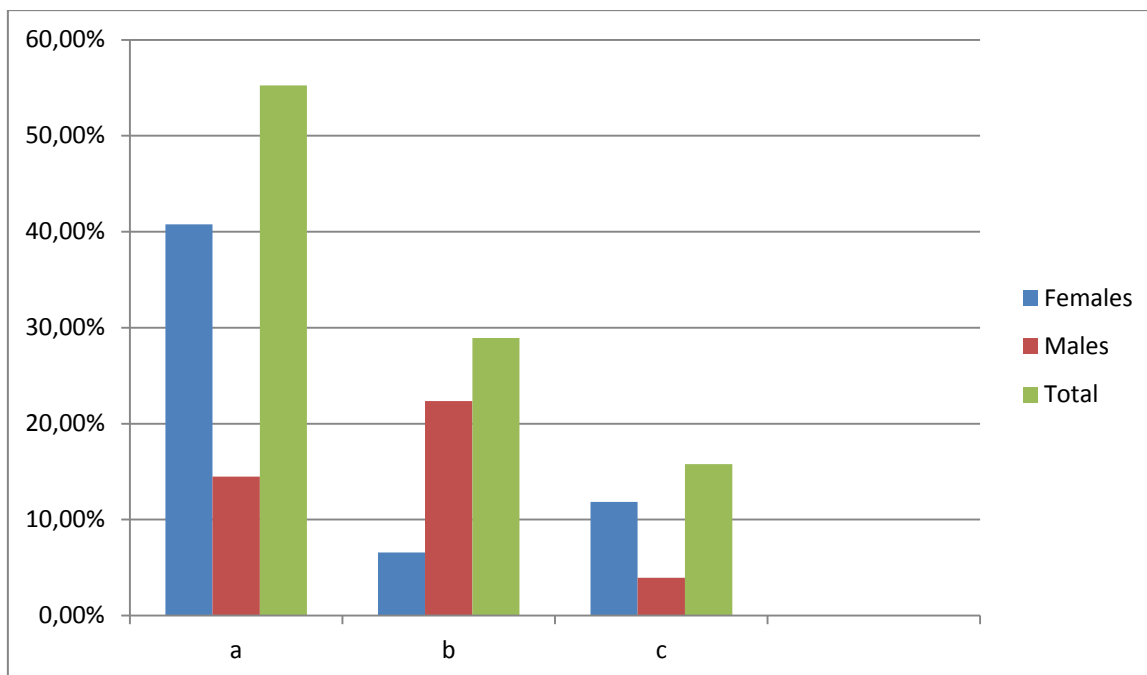


Figure3.7: Unkind names used to refer to a nasty man

/mBsmu:m/ is the masculine form of /mBsmu:ma/ already explained, and the true meaning of /na:ze/ refers to ‘cruel person’, / rA:sa mCrra/ is also a compound phrase where / rA:sa/ implies ‘category’ and / mCrra/ means ‘bitter’. These prejudices describing unfriendly men are used differently by males and females. The statistical results which show gender preferences or tendencies are in the above graph where we see that females have a tendency to use /mBsmu:m/ and males prefer using /na:ze/ for the sake of masculinity, since various terms in addition to the ones realized with the glottal stop [ʔ] are regarded as typically feminine terms in Tlemcen. In other words, we notice that both genders though they live in the same house have a different speaking repertoire which is specific to them. In general, (55.25%) use the first suggestion, (28.93%) use the second, and (15.78%) of the participants employ / rA:sa mCrra/.

8-How do you call a mean man?

- a- /mBqzW:z/
- b- /mBsma:r/
- c- /○✂ass/

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	23	10	33
b	14	6	20
c	8	15	23
Total	76		

Table 3.10: Unkind names used to refer to a mean man

The above table demonstrates adjectives that are very much used to describe a mean man in Tlemcen. We find that (43.41% use /mBqzW:z/ and (26.31%) employ /mBsma:r/ and (30.25%) use /○✂ass/. All these terms are employed as nicknames or insults to miserly persons. However, it should be noted that the word /mBqzW:z/ and many times we hear the word /qBzza/ is used particularly by young children indicate ‘few’. / mBsma:r / on the other hand, denotes a nail and /○✂ass / is the AA word for pair of scissors. The percentages are clarified in the following figure. These were the most widely terms to describe ungenerous people in Tlemcen as we can find them elsewhere in Algeria.

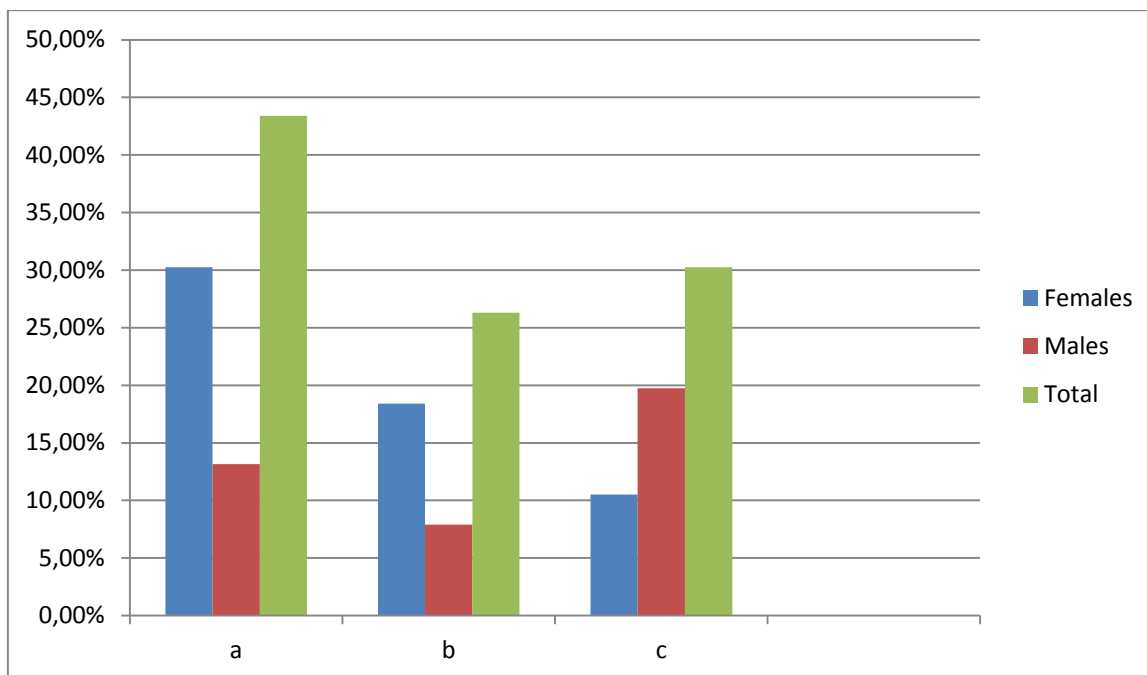


Figure 3.8: Unkind names used to refer to a mean man

9- Which name do you use to name a person who does not respect people?

a- /mWG_i mrabbi/

b- /sA: ar/

c- /mWjBswWG/

d- Others to be specified

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	19	8	27
b	17	5	22
c	9	18	27
Total	76		

Table 3.11: Unkind names used to refer to a person who lacks respect for people

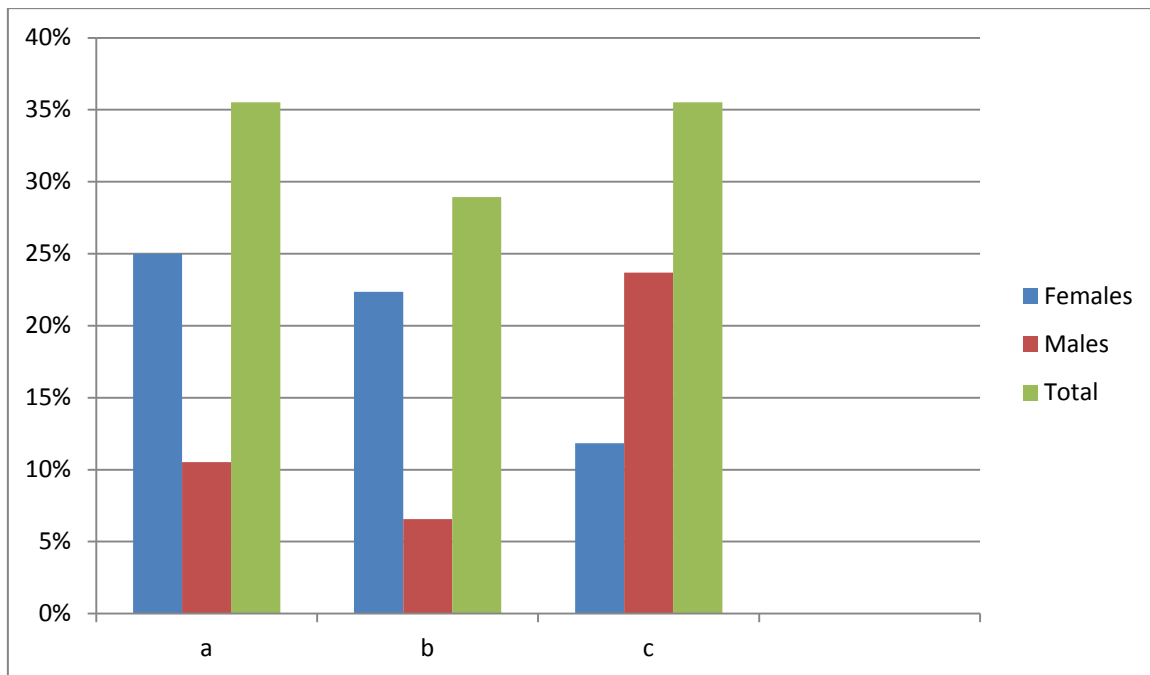


Figure 3.9: Unkind names used to refer to a person who lacks respect for people

It should be noted that respect, dignity and self-esteem are important principles that many people appreciate. So, whenever someone breaks the rule and tries to underestimate or humiliate people he will be regarded as / mWGi mrabbi / which signifies not polite, or / sA: ⓧar / meaning ‘an audacious’ and ‘fearless’ person or /mWjBswWG/ which indicates ‘worthlessness’. The results which are given about which of these three choices or adjectives are used to insult the person who lacks respect are as follows: the first proposition and the last have equal statistics i.e. (35.52%) for both, and (28.93%) used to employ the second one namely /sA:ⓧBr/.

Though it is contradictory to say that people insult the person who is disrespectful by employing some terms purposely, and insulting itself implies lack of respect. Sometimes, people react in this way in order to revenge or to relieve their pain. The participants also suggest that animal names are also used to insult or demean people.

10- How do you call a person who is not welcomed in a group?

- a- /mbassas/
- b- /wBFhu s⇒e⇒/
- c- /sa:mBt/
- d- Others to be specified

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	17	5	22
b	20	3	23
c	8	23	31
Total	76		

Table 3.12: Names used to refer to a person who is not liked by a group of people

/ mbassas / /wBFhu s⇒e⇒/ /sa:mBt/ in addition to some suggestions provided by the participants are terms used to label a person who is not liked and welcomed by a group. /sa:mBt/ which is the opposite of ‘sweet’ means that this person is ungracious. The results found show that it is widely used since it makes up (42.09%) out of 76 informants. (30.25%) of them use /wBFhu s⇒e⇒/, moreover it will be shown in the graph below that it is very much used by women (26.31%), and only (3.94%) represent the answers of men. /wBFhu/ denotes ‘his face’ and /s⇒i:⇒/ means ‘healthy’ both have the connotation of a person who is not ashamed. The informants suggest also the following terms /lBsga/ meaning glue and /⊗Wlga/ which is the Algerian word for ‘leech’, i.e. the small worm that attach itself to other creatures and it is difficult to get rid of it. Thus, both /lBsga/ and /⊗Wlga/ refer to undesirable things that are sticky.

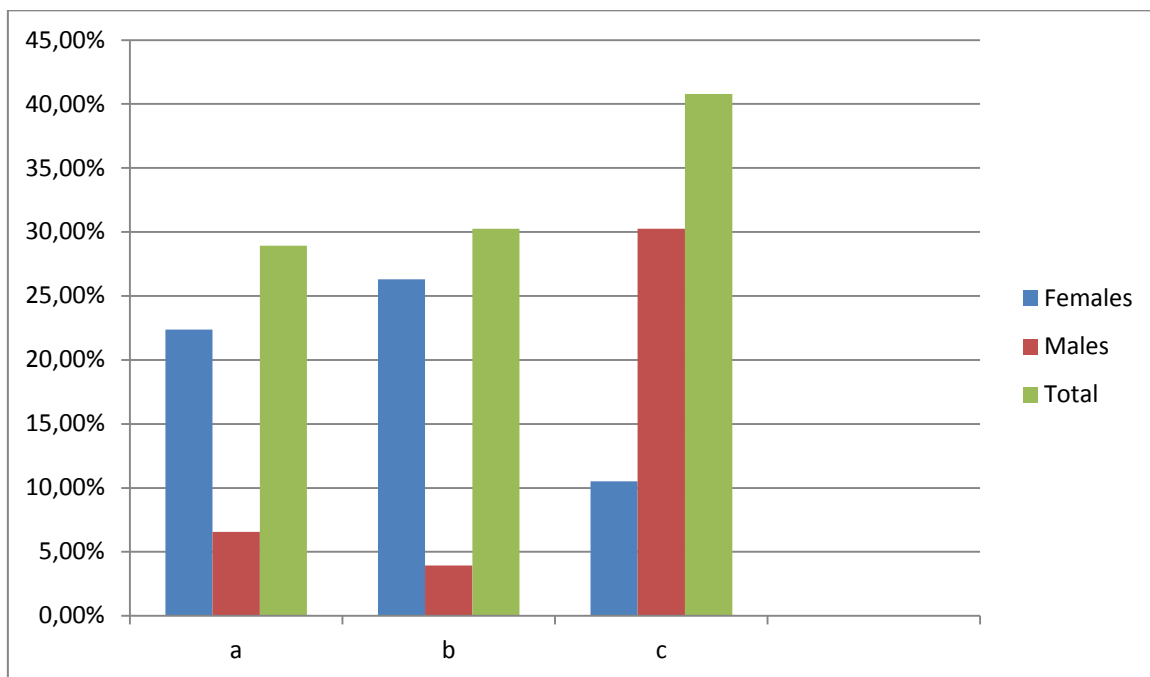


Figure 3.10 Names used to refer to a person who is not liked by a group of people

11- How do you call a person who is boring?

a- /laʔja/

b- /lafatig/

c- /lmard/

d- Others to be specified

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	9	17	26
b	7	11	18
c	29	3	32
Total	76		

Table 3.13: Names used to refer to a boring person

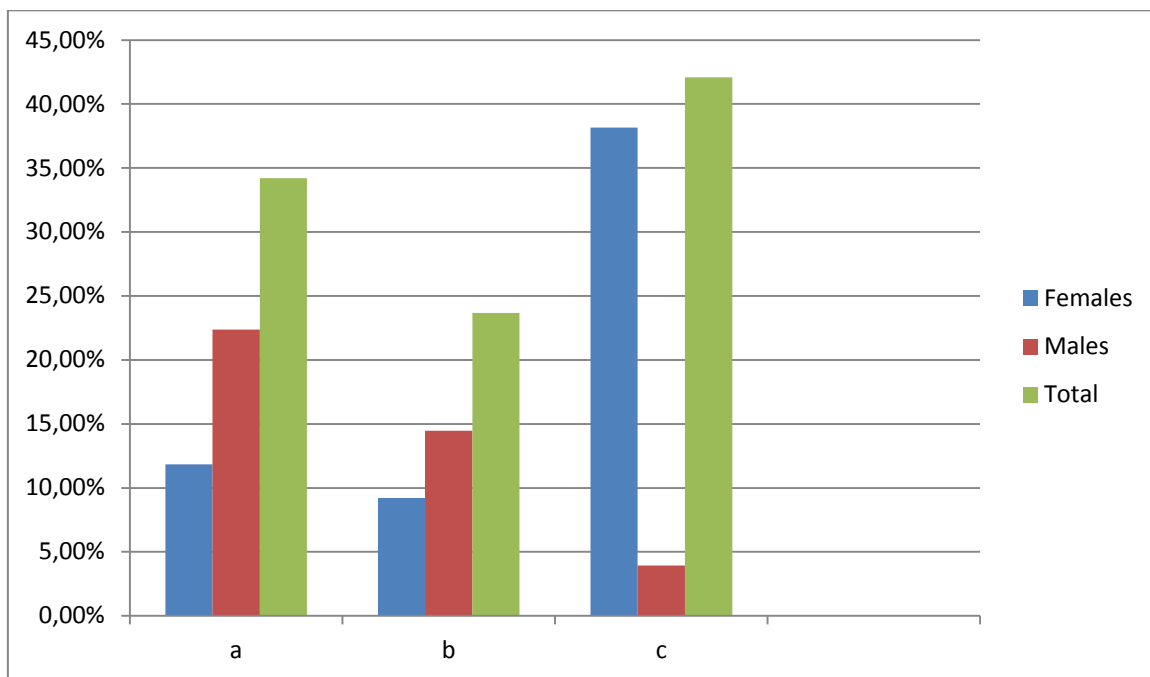


Figure 3.11: Names used to refer to a boring person

/laʒja/, /lafatig/ and /lmard/ are words used by adults and young people especially. The true meaning of /laʒja/ and /lafatig/ (a French word ‘la fatigue’ is ‘tiredness’, nevertheless, they are used by people as a negative label to refer to tedious or tiresome people. Thus, (34.2%) employ /laʒja/, whereas (23.68%) use /lafatig/ and we notice that the majority are men who prefer using /lafatig/. /lmard/ on the other hand, denotes ‘illness’. In general, (42.09%) use /lmard/ however, the results demonstrate that it is largely used by women (38.15%) as it is demonstrated in the graph.

The informants suggest the words /kaʒe/ and /ʒBdN/.

12- How do you call a person who does not understand quickly?

- a- /ɔWbBs/
- b- /bu:FWdi/
- c- /beggA:r/

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	11	8	19
b	33	2	35
c	1	21	22
Total	76		

Table 3.14: Names used to refer to a person who does not grasp quickly

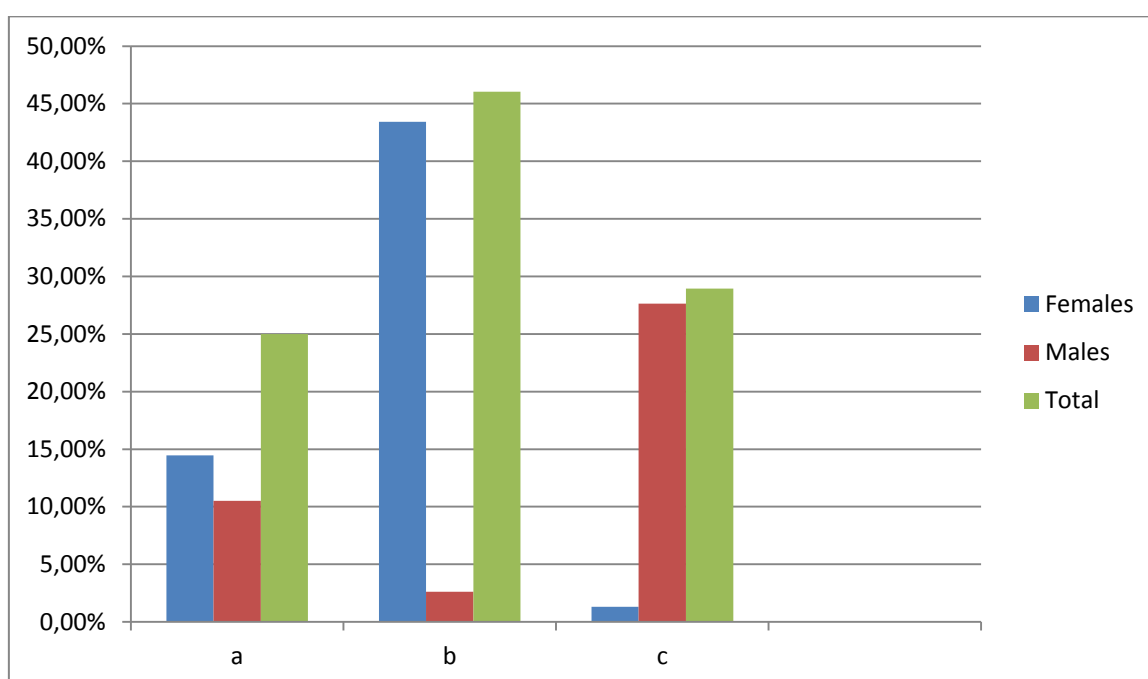


Figure 3.12: Names used to refer to a person who does not grasp quickly

As shown in the table and the graph above, (24.99%) use /⇒WbBs/ that means literally ‘stopped’, but it is used in this context to refer to a person who does not understand matters rapidly, and if we look at the percentage of the answers we find that the majority are men with (10.52%) who use it. (49.05%) for /bu:FWdi/, (43.42%) are women who choose to use this term. Finally, (28.94%) employ /begga:r/ particularly men. One should note that though /⇒WbBs/, /bu:FWdi/ and /begga:r/ are insults that pervade the Algerian society in general and

Tlemcen in particular, as they include all the characteristics of stupidity or less experienced person. Sometimes, they are employed between friends and teenagers for the sake of joking.

13- How do you call a naïve person?

- a- /bWhlu:l/
- b- /hbi:l/
- c- /tnA⇒/
- d- Others to be specified

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	11	8	19
b	33	2	35
c	1	21	22
Total	76		

Table 3.15: Names assigned to naïve people

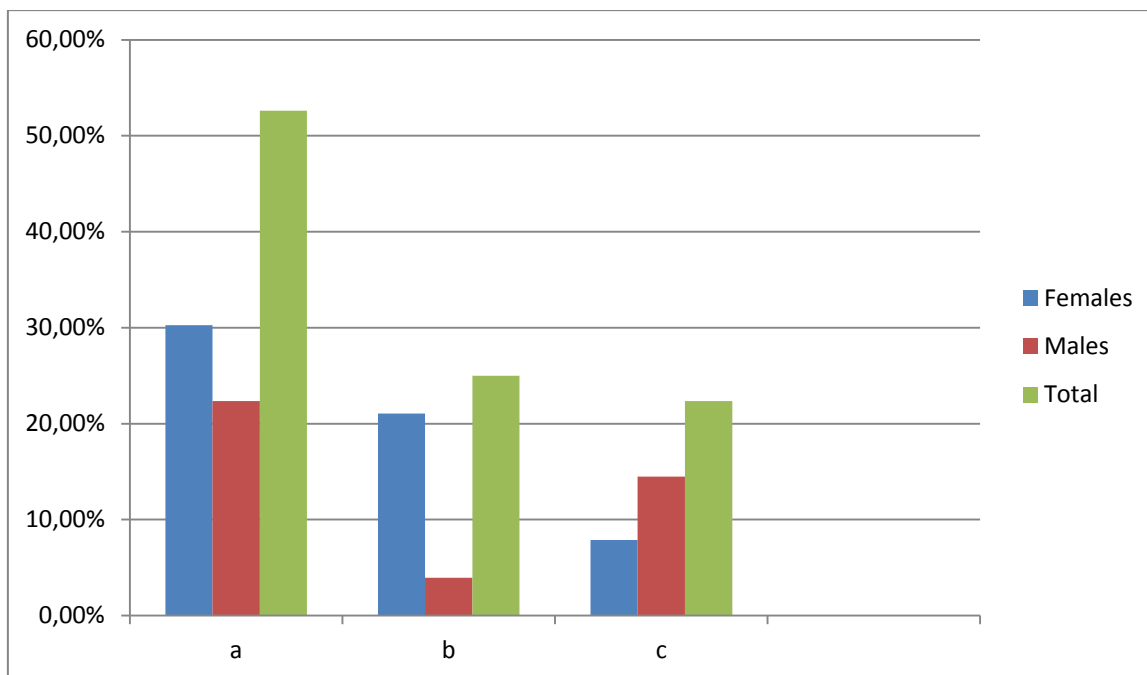


Figure 3.13: Names assigned to naive people

/bWhlu:l/, /hbi:l/ are terms used by women more than men though the results elucidate that even men use them in their daily speech. /tna⇨/, as we see above, is very much used by men. So, (52.62%) participants use /bWhlu:l/, (24.99%) use /hbi:l/, and (22.36%) use /tna⇨/. In fact, these name-calls are used to call people in order to jeer at them and even to express scorn for them, because they refer to the opposite of a brilliant and smart person. Indeed, people who lacks cleverness in order to manage their matters or at least to choose right decisions in their lives, may hear one of these bad labels. The informants suggest also /gni:na/ which means ‘rabbit’.

14- How do you name a nasty woman?

- a- /dFBnn ♦⊗W↗r:t/
- b- /♦W⊗ra/
- c- /thabbat BI○⊗alla ↵/

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	23	5	28
b	8	25	33
c	14	1	15
Total	76		

Table 3.17: Names assigned to a nasty woman

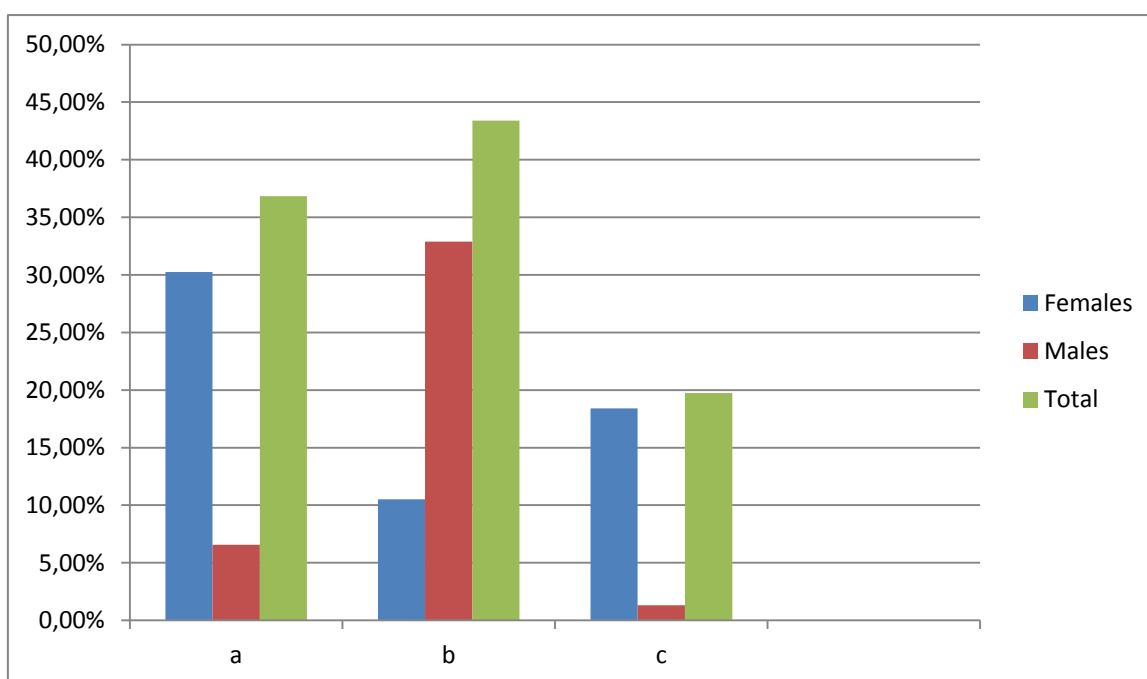


Figure 3.14: Names assigned to nasty woman

Taking a closer look at the data in the table and the graph, we can see that both males and females use the three terms to describe a malicious woman, except that more men prefer using /♦W⊗ra/ and more women like using / dFBnn ♦⊗W↗r:t / and / thabbat BI○⊗alla⊗/. Here are the results. (36.83%) of the informants use the first suggestion, (43.41%) of them employ /♦W⊗rW/ and (19.73%) use the last proposition.

Hence, / dFBnn ♦⊗W⊗r:t/, /♦W⊗ra / and /thabbat BI○⊗alla⊗/ are terms used to name a nasty woman. /dFenn /and /⊗W⊗r:t/ precisely means ‘a demon’, /♦W⊗ra/ signifies ‘dangerous’, i.e., she causes too much harm to people by playing dirty tricks on them. Yet, /thabbat BI○⊗alla⊗/ is an idiomatic expression used by Tlemcenian people especially women. / thabbat / means ‘to put something down’ and /BI○⊗alla⊗/ is a ‘suspended object’, but whenever this idiom is used by somebody he certainly means that this woman is able to do incredible things in order to defend herself or to harm the others. Nonetheless, the reasons behind females’males’ choices in describing a woman who is able to do terrible things, are that women are talkative and tend to use more compound expression than men do in order to achieve their target which is the main outcome of insulting people, i.e., causing harm.

15-Do you use French nicknames to insult the others? If so, mention them.

- a- daily
- b- never
- c- rarely
- d- sometimes
- e- Justify.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	9	7	16
b	13	15	28
c	17	6	23
d	6	3	9
Total	76		

Table 3.18: Use of French nicknames

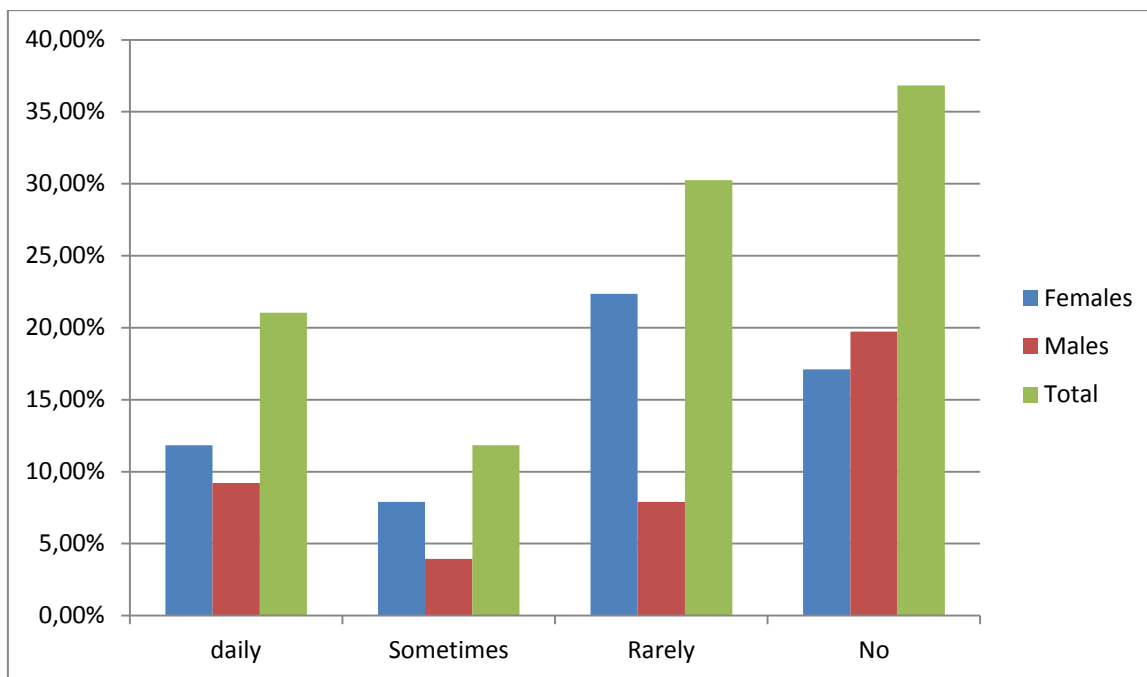


Figure 3.15: Use of French nicknames

Human beings need sometimes to express and relieve themselves of depression, fatigue, anger and so on. Taboo words however can be an efficient way to attain these targets; since language is a major vehicle that everyone can use it to express his feelings. So, the question n°15 was set up purposely in order to see if the use of French insults such as the ones gathered from the informants propositions : imbécile, stupide, crétin, borné...etc., and nicknames such as: olive, mongolien with the purpose of insulting people, have the same effect as the one uttered in Arabic.

In fact, nobody denies the influence of the French language on the Algerian population, as a result of long term contact during and after colonization (see section (2.3.3). Nevertheless, the results show that this language is rarely used in order to harm people in Tlemcen. Only (21.05%) of the informants said that they usually use name-calling in French and (11.83%) answered 'sometimes'. The rest which represents the majority 36.83% answered that they never use French bad names. Yet, (30.25%) particularly women said that they rarely employ them.

After analyzing the data we looked at the justification provided by the informants. First, we can say that it depends on the socio-economic status since highly educated people, who use French wherever they go, usually employ terms of this type. Second, some of them said that they prefer naming their siblings using the ‘darijA’ (colloquial Arabic), adding that the messages are better transmitted than the ones used in French, .i.e., the harm which is intended by the interlocutor will have greater effects on the listener than the one uttered in French.

16- Do you think that males and female differ in their use of insults?

- a- Yes
- b- No
- c- Rarely
- d- Sometimes
- e- Justify.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	33	17	50
b	3	1	4
c	1	2	3
d	8	11	19
Total	76		

Table 3.15: Females- males ways of insulting

As table chart 3.16 shows, the majority or the sample population (65.78%) said that female/male way of insulting is different. (5.25%) answered ‘no’, (3.94%) said rarely and finally (24.99%) said ‘sometimes’.

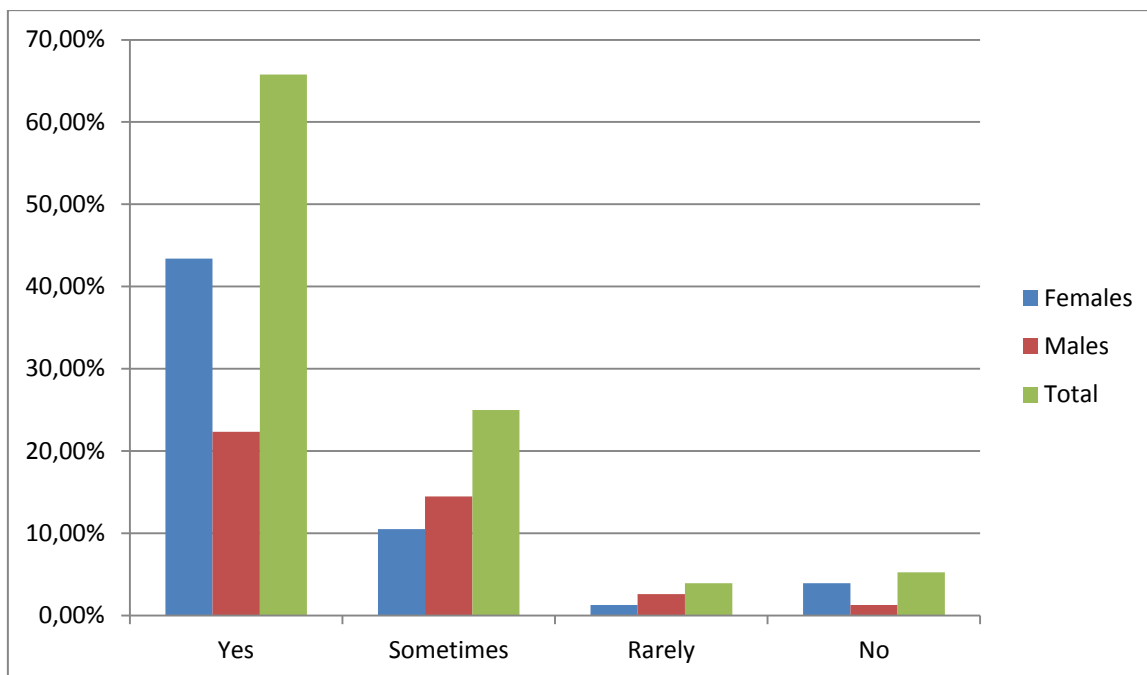


Figure 3.16 Females- males ways of insulting

In this concluding question we have also asked for justifications in order to clarify the discrepancy between the two genders. Taboo language is widely considered as a specialty of men rather than women. Moreover, women are expected to talk properly and not to talk roughly like men do. The informants emphasize the fact that women have the tendency to use insults which can be simply a bad label /OetWjra/ or wishing harm by using / dWwi:/ (cursing). Men on the other hand use offensive words and swear, except in formal settings, they try to adapt their speech and use only name calling which is harmful as well. Nevertheless the justifications provided by informants who said that women way can be similar are as follows:

- Nowadays even girls particularly adolescents use taboo terms.
- Furiosity can be an incentive factor that leads them to react unconsciously and then forget their femininity.

- The increasing independence in addition to the socio-cultural factors development that are undergoing our society.
- The influence by their social surroundings, for instance a girl who lives in a family where the majority of its members are men, she will definitely try to adapt her behaviour to the one of her brothers or uncles.

The above suggestions were given by men where we notice that they are against women freedom as they usually look for ways which enables them to occupy the dominant position in their entourage.

3.4.2 -Presentation of the Interview results

The study of linguistic taboos, namely insults and name-calling in any society from a socio-cultural perspective can be helpful and useful in the understanding of the human psyche, personality and character. It enables us to see how members of a given society react to the world around them. And if we understand why taboo words exist, we can understand the values and realities of the society. In other terms, it provides us with clues and sufficient information on how people think about certain matters. It also sheds light on the social customs, religious and beliefs, superstitions, and prohibitions. In this section we emphasize on the effects of the perceived insults by the informants.

1- Do you remember bad names assigned to you?

11 informants were given the questionnaire and were interviewed at the same time. In fact only 7 interviewees answered the first question seriously. They said that nobody can forget bad labels, especially those received during their childhood (see section 1.3.1.5), because of their fragility and lack of experience. Moreover, children cannot defend themselves either physically or by using speech. Children

who are frequently insulted by their siblings often remember the experience with pain even in adulthood. One participant (9.09%) among them said that he cannot forget bad names employed to call him. He added that they are etched on his memory because of the strong impression they left on him. However, the other 4 informants (36, 36%) were laughing all the time and didn't take the matter seriously, so, their answers were fluctuating; sometimes they said 'yes' and sometimes 'no'.

And when we ask them about their perceptions of insults or name calling nowadays as adults, they said that name-calling were difficult to deal with when they were young, but today they accept them without any reactions, except those that are related to the honour of the family and to their dignity. Given that men and women may receive different types of teasing. Men for example, do not support the comments about their weaknesses or observations questioning their manhood, and women hate hearing people making fun of their physical appearance and hurtful comments.

So, we have noticed that the majority of them memorize negative labels because of the harm they cause.

2- Can you mention these names?

Another informant accepted to answer us, so they became eight or (72.72%) and the others retired completely after they had given us the questionnaires. The answers are as follows:

P1- /sOinW/or/ bKta/ meaning successively 'fat' and 'a barrel' these two nicknames are used to mock at his weight.

P2. /Fda:dW/, which means ‘chicken’ because of his white skin.

P3 /pinokjo/ because he has a big nose.

P4- /IW☞FW☒/ means ‘a lame’ because of his leg handicap.

P5- /gBnfu:d/ meaning ‘hedgehog’ was used to mock at the hair style.

P6- /nemusW/ implies ‘mosquito’ was used to refer to him because of his small size.

P7- /sBllu:m/ and /⇒B■tweel/ used to name her because she is very tall. /sBllu:m / indicates ‘ladder’ and /⇒a■tweel/ is Tlemcenian terms derived from the Arabic word /tawe:l/ this latter was adopted morphologically.

P8- /sula⇒fWt/ which means ‘tortoise’, to a girl whose first name is Soulaf and her siblings call her to / sula⇒fWt/.

3- Did this bad name affect you?

(72, 72%) said that bad names affected their personality and demoralized them. Furthermore, they added that they hate hearing nicknames used to refer to them, because they make feeling inferior to their friends. Moreover, they often feel frustration, anger, and disappointment especially when teasing occurs repeatedly. One of them (P2) said to us that he hated hearing the word /Fda:dW/ even if it is used in its adequate contexts. For instance, if he hears someone speaking about chicken he would feel disgusted as if he is targeted.

To sum up, we can say that remembering name-calling and the pain they cause are not the only bad outcomes of this habit, personality and character of the person

who confront such behaviour may also be affected. Indeed, they make them feel less competent and worthless. See Crystal (section: 1.3.1.5). Even fully grown adults who are subjected to regular insults and bad labels are eventually affected by them, that is, they start feeling less adequate, less competent and less loveable.

3.4.3- Analysis of Popular Sayings

Proverbs and idiomatic expression are regarded as the heritage which symbolizes the culture and wisdom of the country as they are able to preserve its old or archaic vocabulary. They represent a typical aspect of the culture that we are describing, and sometimes they serve as an important means for conversation maintaining i.e. when a breakdown occurs, people use proverbs as remedy, or a repair.

We have previously stressed the importance of proverbs in the representation of a culture and that they can be used euphemistically to harm people or more precisely to make them correct their wrong behaviour (see section 1.4). Here are some famous proverbs used in Tlemcen speech community collected through a participant observation.

- /lUe:rmrW wGWr mrW/ means that well done things are woman made and nastily done things are woman made; this is used to tell the woman that if she wants to improve her way of life or to raise her children adequately or whatever, everything depends on her way of conducting her life.

- /Blmra lbeta dima mreta/ meaning that the white woman or the beautiful one is always ill, this proverb is used to criticize the woman who is lazy and proud of her beauty.
- /zahija UBUUi w⇒wajBFha nBnnu/ Zahia is a girl first name, / UBUUi / implies dirty, / ⇒wajBFha / means her properties and / nBnnu / in Tlemcen means ‘nice’. Hence, the whole proverb is employed to mean that the woman that is symbolized by /zWhijW/ is not liked and regarded as a bad one, but when it concerns something she owes people will speak with her and show her that she is very much liked.

/Gi:ta/ is another label used to call people who behave like this and show that they are loveable for the sake of getting what they want.

- /Blli⊗ajbu f wBFhu mWjUebbi:h/ meaning that ‘the person who has a default, cannot hide it whatever he does’ this proverb is used to say to people that things which are apparent cannot be hidden for instance nastiness and jealousy are defaults which cannot be covered up.
- /fut ⊗IW lwWd lharhuri w mWtfu5 ⊗IW l’wWd sBkuti meaning “Cross a turbulent river and beware of the silent one”. The function of this proverb is to make people know that the person who is talkative and make too much noise in his speech in order to show off, is better than the one who does not speak and does not show his intentions.
- /⊗rusBtnW mBt⇒ubG l⊗Wd:d/ /⊗rusBtnW/ is ‘our daughter in law’, /mBt⇒ubG/ means ‘she does not like’, /l⊗Wd:d/ is a sort of meat which Algerian used to hide after they had dried it, and use it later on. The old generation used this proverb to plain about the daughter in law who is

spoiled and do not take the economic situation of her husband into consideration.

- /draham IUUWdBm w tBbr:⇒ bIWlaha/ it means that ‘the money belongs to the house keeper and when the owner speaks in front of people, she tells that it is hers’. The main aim of using this proverb is to show to the interlocutor, particularly, the daughter in law that the source from which she got new dress or whatever, is already known, so it is needless to lie.

To sum up, we can see that proverbs can rarely be translated word by word. But they serve as a linguistic behaviour which is able to transmit a message from which the listener will get a moral that enables him to correct his habits and behaviours. Moreover, they represent the precious cultural and folkloric heritage which enriches any society’s culture. So, whenever old people or people in general decide to address the hearer euphemistically they will find at their disposal a range of proverbs so wide and so varied that they can select one to fit into the situation, for example into what has been talked about so far.

3.5- Conclusion

In this chapter we have reported the research methodology followed to collect the data needed in our work as we have tried to analyze them in an objective manner. First, quantitative data was gathered by the questionnaire that was given to 93 informants and only 76 answered it entirely. And in order to pursue a qualitative inquiry a semi-structured interview took place while the subjects were fulfilling the questionnaire, in addition to participant observation which represents the third instrument that was included to collect sayings and to attain the triangulation of instruments.

General Conclusion

Algeria is characterized with complex linguistic landscape which makes it a very interesting society that deserves to be studied linguistically. The present paper, explores the use and perception of insults in the society of Tlemcen, in terms of their relationship with the social context in which they are used in addition to the factors affecting them.

This study is not a mere description of categories of taboo in our society, but it provides some insights about the socio-cultural fabric of the speech community of Tlemcen as it reveals a set of Tlemcen customs and beliefs. Obviously, there are many similarities of the major categories of taboos across cultures but as the study shows, taboo lexical can also highlight the uniqueness or the difference of certain culture conventions, for instance, we may find people who grew up in the same region or even the same home, but they speak and behave differently. In other words, many terms which are considered taboo in one culture, may be neutral in another and foreign people realize the existence of the rules associated with taboos only after they have broken them. Consequently, people who do not respect these rules may face total embarrassment, or other serious outcomes. Islam however, can be a good reference to us since it provides us with right views about our values and beliefs. In fact, it is a matter of shared background which is required in order to avoid breakdowns in conversations

Insulting is considered as the speech act which is directly related to impoliteness and rudeness. We assume that this kind of knowledge is acquired early in childhood. Insults and name-calling are common social interactions, and can also be used in a playful manner with friends and between parents and children. However, it is the harm that insulting and name-calling cause that may discourage people, particularly, children who often start to hate school attendance due to this bad habit which erodes their feelings and self-confidence.

Indeed, this communicative act is influenced by several variables such as age, gender, social and economic statuses, in addition to the speaker-listener relationship. Nonetheless, the analysis of the motives that give rise to insults, have shown that humiliation and causing harm are the major aims that lead the speaker to use insult.

Actually, the combination of the four sociolinguistic hypotheses namely, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, Hymes' classification of speech and Austin's speech acts in addition to theory of im/politeness, make up the theoretical backbone of our research paper. The former is concerned with language, the main means of human communication and culture which mirrors the language, traditions and beliefs of people. In fact, each culture includes a variety of common ideas and habits that are formed by its members. These views however, are definitely expressed through language; the mother tongue particularly. To sum, this relativity between language and culture put forward by Sapir and his student Whorf, can be reflected in everyday use of language.

On its part Hymes' classification of speech describes a set of factors that contribute in the occurrence of an utterance in order to achieve specific aims. The ethnography of speaking contains important elements needed to choose which type of speech is suitable for a particular occasion, by taking into account the type of the

relationship between the addressor and the addressee. In addition to the conventions and behaviours that are learned early in somebody's childhood and that are expected by him whenever he speaks.

Thus, from the above mentioned factors that result in several types of speech, we can say that the process of speaking includes all sorts of things. Indeed, speech acts put forward by Austin are types of speech which are used by people in particular circumstances. Insults for instance are regarded as an inappropriate speech act that is able to infringe the rules as well as relations between individuals. Nevertheless, within speech itself, three aspects are supposed to be found in a single utterance i.e. the locutionary act, the illocutionary and the perlocutionary act.

The last framework is the theory of politeness which tackles the way relations between people are established in terms of face. On the one hand, it focuses on positive face as a tool to establish close and acceptable relationships between groups or friends and to show respect to the addressees. Negative face on the other hand, emphasizes deference and formality. In a nutshell, face refers to the ways followed by people in order to preserve their self-esteem and image. On its part, impoliteness may occur if face threatening acts such as insulting take place. FTA's are an alternative to avoid communication breakdowns or misunderstandings and to alleviate the severity of this type of speech.

The present research paper has taken into consideration the above theories to analyze the sociolinguistic phenomenon at hand. In this sense, we started our investigation by giving the questionnaire to the informants in order to verify if Tlemcenian people are aware of the nastiness of insults and name-calling. The participants' answers vary because some of them see that nicknames' major goal is to underestimate the addressee, others say that name-calling aims at demoralizing

the listener, whereas the majority emphasizes the fact that the aim of such linguistic behaviour is to annoy people and make them furious.

We also wondered about the evaluation of each individual of this linguistic behaviour. The results manifest that this phenomenon is not liked by the majority of the informants. This idea was sustained by their answers where they assess it either as embarrassing language or merely as an act of impoliteness and humiliation to the listener.

Our investigation led us to depict the most widely used nicknames in Tlemcen speech community, so as to demean or to insult people. These nicknames however include Algerian first names with another man's feature's terms such as in order to show the paradox between males and females. Others are only words which belong to the AA or TA, such as /behlul/.

Moreover, the fact that Algeria is a multilingual country where we notice the use of French by nearly all its population has led us to ask the participants if they employ French nicknames. The question seemed not interesting to the subjects since the majority justify their degree in using French bad names to be inappropriate if they want really to harm the target. In other terms, bad names uttered in the mother tongue have stronger effect than the ones used in French.

As far as age, gender and social-economic status are concerned we came up with the following conclusions: first we notice that people of different ages and genders in addition to the social place they occupy, use name-calling to insult or degrade the others. Nevertheless, one should note that females'–males' way of speaking in general is different, but we wondered if they use insult or taboo in a similar manner. The results demonstrate that though we have found some exceptional answers, women do not use offensive language as men do. They tend to

use name-calling and terms of wishing harm i.e. /dɛA:wi/ or cursing. Proverbs are another tool used to insinuate the bad manners of the target.

Consequently, the results obtained reveal that people do use name-calling in a manner or another. Furthermore, the questionnaire results indicate numerous variations in the evaluation of the use of name-calling in order to insult people. The data obtained from participants including both genders suggest that insulting and nicknames affect significantly the listeners as they may result in psychological problems. Overall, females and males use name-calling though the result reached through our data instruments manifest that men use more offensive terms than women.

Finally, it should be made clear that what have been done in this study is limited and needed to be complemented by another research to offer a more thorough picture about the cultural and linguistic system of Tlemcen, for knowledge of the taboo items of a culture is essential to successful communicative interactions.

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Appendix 1: The Questionnaire

في إطار دراسة ميدانية، الرجاء الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية:

1- السن:

2- ذكر أنثى

3- العمل.....

4- مكان السكن.....

5- هل تستعمل عادة الألقاب لتسمية الناس؟

نعم لا أحيانا ناذرا

6- ما هو هدفك من استعمال الألقاب لشتيم الآخرين؟

- الإطاحة بهم

- احباطهم

- جعلهم يثورون و ينرفزون

7- كيف تقيم استعمال الألقاب بهدف شتم الآخرين؟

- يسبب الخجل و الحرج

- إهانة

- يدل على عدم الأدب

- نافع في بعض الحالات

8- كيف تلقب المرأة التي تتصرف كالرجال؟

- بابا راجل

- حليلة لبوكسور

- عايشة راجل

- إقتراحات.....

9- كيف تسمي رجل شعره طويل؟

- عتيقة

-مرية

- بوشعور

.....- إقتراحات

10- كيف تلقب امرأة لا تحب فعل الخير؟

- سمية

- مشرارة

-مر هوجة

.....- إقتراحات

11- كيف تلقب رجل شرير؟

- مسموم

-نازي

- راسة مرة

.....- إقتراحات

12- كيف تلقب رجل بخيل؟

- مقزاز

- مسمار

-مقص

.....- اقتراحات

13- كيف تلقب شخصا لا يحترم الاخرين؟

- ماشي مرببي

- صاعر

- مايسواش

.....- إقتراحات

14- كيف تلقب شخصا غير مرحب به في المجموعة؟

- مبصص

- وجه صحيح

- صامط

.....-إقتراحات

15- كيف تلقب شخصا ثقيل الظل؟

- لعيا

LA FATIGUE

- لمرض

.....- اقتراحات

16- كيف تلقب شخصا ثقيل الفهم؟

- حابس

- بوجادي

- بقار

.....- اقتراحات

17- كيف تلقب شخصا سانجا؟

- بهلول

- هبيل

- طنح

.....- اقتراحات

18- كيف تلقب امرأة شريرة؟

- جن و عفريت

- واعرة

- عرايدية

.....- اقتراحات

19- هل تستعمل ألقابا باللغة الفرنسية لشتنم أو تسمية الاخرين؟

20- هل تختلف طريقة استعمال هذه الالقاب لشتيم الاخرين عند النساء مقارنة بالرجال؟

نعم لا ابدا أحيانا

.....علل

وشكرا

Appendix 2: Interview

1- هل تتذكر ماهي الاسماء التي كنت تلقب بها؟

.....

2- هل تستطيع أن تذكرها؟

.....

3- هل كنت تتأثر بهذه الأسماء السيئة الموجهة لك؟

.....

Appendix 3: Proverbs in Algerian Arabic

1- الخير مرا و الشر مرا

2- لمرأ لبيطا ديما مريطا

3- زهية خفي و حوايجها ننو

4- لعيبو فوجهو ما يخبيه

5- فوت على الواد لهروهوري و ما تفوت على الواد ساكوتي

6- عروستنا ما تحويش القديد

7- دراهم الخادم و التبريح بلالاها

8- العتبية مجرودة و الشويكة بالدودة

9- الفم الساكت ما تدخلو دبانة

Summary

Human languages are regarded as the most important instrument for communication. They are used to sending vital messages about life, character and personality. Indeed, these messages are generally interpreted differently because of the impact of our culture which is able to explain how we think and behave in various situations. In a general sense, language occupies a vigorous place to influence people's views and concepts about their world. By means of language, individual identities become explicit since it mirrors their social status and environment.

Normally, people's communication involves various types of speech. Arguably, taboo language can be considered as the type of speech which is regarded as immoral and inappropriate. Nevertheless, this phenomenon exists and is frequently used in all cultures in spite of its nastiness. Indeed, such linguistic behaviour is classified into categories; insults and name-calling are our concern in this research paper. These words however are often acquired within the family environment, typically outside the classroom, because they belong to taboo categories in general and they are considered as a sin in religion in particular.

Men and women are said to use language differently. Thus, gender, which is considered as a very important variable to analyze the use of language in society, is taken into account to demonstrate how men and women use and perceive insults. Actually, women use soft and prestigious language in order to attain respect and to 'look like' ladies, whereas men generally do not care too much about their speech; they look only for ways which enable them to keep their virility.

Besides, the emotional impact of insults and name-calling depends on people's experience with a culture and its language conventions. Thus, in relation to the idea that language, that is, the means by which people express their opinions, is intimately related to culture. In the same line of thought, we have taken into consideration the sociolinguistic theory known as Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis. In the main, this hypothesis focuses the idea that language and culture are interdependent. Therefore it would be of great importance for the analysis of insult and name calling within the Tlemcenian speech community.

we have tried to look at the literature underlying different theories related to the topic at hand, namely the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, Austin's speech acts classification, and im/politeness strategies. The former clarifies or justifies someone's choice of language, the second is merely included in this research because insult belongs to speech acts, and the latter allows us to describe people's daily behaviours.

We have also dealt with the categories of taboo lexicons, in addition to proverbs that can also be used as a means to demean or underestimate the others. Anthropology, Pragmatics and Sociolinguistics are the three levels of analysis taken into account in this chapter in order to demonstrate how this type of language works in a society.

Dichotomized notions and features of gender remain salient in both expectation and perceptions of everyday communication, and virility generally justifies the dominance of the ideal masculine, since negative attitudes are often expected towards women who use bad language.

In brief, the use of taboo language, namely insults and name-calling, may have devastating social consequences. Yet, it can be a source of potential embarrassment, and this inappropriate use may be perceived as rudeness, as it can be an effective way to achieve a number of desirable social effects, which include promoting social cohesion and harmony. Besides, it can be an acceptable substitute for physical aggression.

Yet, they can also be a source of causing shame and embarrassment when they are used inappropriately. Such inappropriate use may be perceived as rudeness and impoliteness as it may result in many conflicts either physical or psychological. Henceforth, the theory of politeness is evoked in order to emphasize the conventions of the suitable use of language which is the goal of the majority of people to keep their 'face' and their dignity. So, it is necessary for the speaker to choose the adequate code to express himself, since the use of offensive language, particularly insults and name calling or prejudice, are believed to be extremely harmful to the addressee.

As far as the Algerian culture is concerned, one should note that there are several ways employed to harm the others. So, we try in this research paper to examine and describe the different categories of linguistic taboos and the strategies used by speakers to avoid the use of these words through different types of replacement of taboo words with more acceptable expressions.

Euphemism can be the alternative of any bad or offensive expression, because it enables people to disguise unpleasant terms. Similarly, proverbs can also be used by old people especially, instead of insulting in order to express their opinions about the addressee's behaviour or speech.

This study aims mainly at analyzing the relationship between language, culture, and emotions. The key reason for this research paper is to emphasize the

nastiness of insult and name calling and the paradox which concerns this unkind habit in a Muslim's speech community. In fact, Islam emphasizes on courtesy and forbids this habit, because of the harm which it may cause.

Thus, with regard to the above mentioned issues, 3 key questions require further analysis:

Why do people use insults and taboo words though they know that such behaviour is not acceptable in society? Or more precisely, what are the aims of insulting others?

Are name-calling and proverbs used in this context the best tools to achieve these targets?

And if insulting people is considered as embarrassing and harmful, so to what extent can insult affect one's self esteem?

First, we may hypothesize that the primordial aim that leads people to employ insults is to express emotions, especially anger and frustration and to annoy the listener and demean him. Second, insult and name calling are well suited to express and arouse somebody's feelings as they are often used to attain such goals. Proverbs can sometimes function as insults, but with moderation and wisdom. Third, we can suppose that words hurt people more than a physical impact which may be forgotten through time.

To answer these issues, three chapters are suggested: literature review, sociolinguistic and cultural situation in Algeria, the research methodology and data analysis.

The first chapter will be an introductory part where we shall mention the most important previous work related to our topic. The main key concepts which we shall deal with in this chapter are language and culture as two interdependent tools, categories of taboo, euphemism and proverbs. Linguistic Relativity, theory of politeness and Hymes' classification of speech are the frame-works which sustain our work step by step. Additionally, three fields of study are included, namely Anthropology, Pragmatics and obviously Sociolinguistics, in order to look at the issue at stake from several angles.

The second chapter will be devoted to the historical and linguistic background of Algeria in general and Tlemcen in particular. Algeria is regarded as a multilingual country where Arabic, Berber and French coexist. However, as the title of our work implies, we are concerned with how insulting and using name calling function in order to communicate feelings and emotions in Tlemcen speech community. Moreover, as it belongs to the same sociolinguistic context as that of Algeria, the rubric of linguistic relativity was applied to highlight the Algerian culture which concerns politeness, insults and compliments. Additionally the notion of /BrrCdFlA/ appears as the essence of all the Algerians' culture. Finally, Islam is introduced to generalize the unacceptability of this nasty habit.

In the third chapter, we shall give details about the research method followed to answer research questions. In fact, three tools have been used: a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and participant observation which has been proceeded to obtain spontaneous speech of old people.

A quantitative and qualitative data analysis will be provided in this chapter, in addition to this we shall try to give an explicit and plain interpretation to the obtained data. The questionnaire is used in order to collect sufficient data about which terms are used more than others both by males and females. The semi-structured interview aims at knowing the effects of name calling during participants' childhood and nowadays. Finally, the oral tradition is inserted to sustain our work, given that proverbs are most amenable to study in natural settings.

Algeria is characterized with complex linguistic landscape which makes it a very interesting society that deserves to be studied linguistically. The present paper, explores the use and perception of insults in the society of Tlemcen, in terms of their relationship with the social context in which they are used in addition to the factors affecting them.

This study is not a mere description of categories of taboo in our society, but it provides some insights about the socio-cultural fabric of the speech community of Tlemcen as it reveals a set of Tlemcen customs and beliefs. Obviously, there are many similarities of the major categories of taboos across cultures but as the study shows, taboo lexical can also highlight the uniqueness or the difference of certain culture conventions, for instance, we may find people who grew up in the same region or even the same home, but they speak and behave differently. In other words, many terms which are considered taboo in one culture, may be neutral in another and foreign people realize the existence of the rules associated with taboos only after they have broken them. Consequently, people who do not respect these rules may face total embarrassment, or other serious outcomes. Islam however, can be a good reference to us since it provides us with right views about our values and beliefs. In fact, it is a matter of shared background which is required in order to avoid breakdowns in conversations

Insulting is considered as the speech act which is directly related to impoliteness and rudeness. We assume that this kind of knowledge is acquired early in childhood. Insults and name-calling are common social interactions, and can also be used in a playful manner with friends and between parents and children. However, it is the harm that insulting and name-calling cause that may discourage people, particularly, children who often start to hate school attendance due to this bad habit which erodes their feelings and self-confidence.

Indeed, this communicative act is influenced by several variables such as age, gender, social and economic statuses, in addition to the speaker-listener relationship. Nonetheless, the analysis of the motives that give rise to insults, have shown that humiliation and causing harm are the major aims that lead the speaker to use insult.

Actually, the combination of the four sociolinguistic hypotheses namely, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, Hymes' classification of speech and Austin's speech acts in addition to theory of im/politeness, make up the theoretical backbone of our research paper. The former is concerned with language, the main means of human communication and culture which mirrors the language, traditions and beliefs of people. In fact, each culture includes a variety of common ideas and habits that are formed by its members. These views however, are definitely expressed through language; the mother tongue particularly. To sum, this relativity between language and culture put forward by Sapir and his student Whorf, can be reflected in everyday use of language.

On its part Hymes' classification of speech describes a set of factors that contribute in the occurrence of an utterance in order to achieve specific aims. The ethnography of speaking contains important elements needed to choose which type of speech is suitable for a particular occasion, by taking into account the type of the

relationship between the addressor and the addressee. In addition to the conventions and behaviours that are learned early in somebody's childhood and that are expected by him whenever he speaks.

We have dealt with the Algerian and Tlemcenian historical background which has resulted in their present intricate sociolinguistic situation and cultural image. Indeed, we have approached the hypothesis of linguistic relativity in order to highlight the link between Algerian and Tlemcenian cultures and their varieties of languages. In this respect, the Algerian way of complimenting, in addition to insulting by using nicknames appear to be part and parcel of daily speech for both man and woman though they differ in degrees. Furthermore, Islam the religion of the whole population prohibits these bad habits, in particular, the use of name calling for the harm they cause.

To conclude, we can say that shared language does not necessarily mean a shared set of socio-linguistic rules, especially in multilingual or in somehow heterogeneous speech-communities as is the case for Algeria, because communication problems may arise from the fact that speakers of the same language may have different sociolinguistic rules and thus may misunderstand each other's intentions.

Thus, from the above mentioned factors that result in several types of speech, we can say that the process of speaking includes all sorts of things. Indeed, speech acts put forward by Austin are types of speech which are used by people in particular circumstances. Insults for instance are regarded as an inappropriate speech act that is able to infringe the rules as well as relations between individuals. Nevertheless, within speech itself, three aspects are supposed to be found in a single utterance i.e. the locutionary act, the illocutionary and the perlocutionary act.

The last framework is the theory of politeness which tackles the way relations between people are established in terms of face. On the one hand, it focuses on positive face as a tool to establish close and acceptable relationships between groups or friends and to show respect to the addressees. Negative face on the other hand, emphasizes deference and formality. In a nutshell, face refers to the ways followed by people in order to preserve their self-esteem and image. On its part, impoliteness may occur if face threatening acts such as insulting take place. FTA's are an alternative to avoid communication breakdowns or misunderstandings and to alleviate the severity of this type of speech.

The present research paper has taken into consideration the above theories to analyze the sociolinguistic phenomenon at hand. In this sense, we started our investigation by giving the questionnaire to the informants in order to verify if Tlemcenian people are aware of the nastiness of insults and name-calling. The participants' answers vary because some of them see that nicknames' major goal is to underestimate the addressee, others say that name-calling aims at demoralizing the listener, whereas the majority emphasizes the fact that the aim of such linguistic behaviour is to annoy people and make them furious.

We also wondered about the evaluation of each individual of this linguistic behaviour. The results manifest that this phenomenon is not liked by the majority of the informants. This idea was sustained by their answers where they assess it either as embarrassing language or merely as an act of impoliteness and humiliation to the listener.

Our investigation led us to depict the most widely used nicknames in Tlemcen speech community, so as to demean or to insult people. These nicknames however include Algerian first names with another man's feature's terms such as in

order to show the paradox between males and females. Others are only words which belong to the AA or TA, such as /behlul/.

Moreover, the fact that Algeria is a multilingual country where we notice the use of French by nearly all its population has led us to ask the participants if they employ French nicknames. The question seemed not interesting to the subjects since the majority justify their degree in using French bad names to be inappropriate if they want really to harm the target. In other terms, bad names uttered in the mother tongue have stronger effect than the ones used in French.

As far as age, gender and social-economic status are concerned we came up with the following conclusions: first we notice that people of different ages and genders in addition to the social place they occupy, use name-calling to insult or degrade the others. Nevertheless, one should note that females'–males' way of speaking in general is different, but we wondered if they use insult or taboo in a similar manner. The results demonstrate that though we have found some exceptional answers, women do not use offensive language as men do. They tend to use name-calling and terms of wishing harm i.e. /dɔ̀A'wi/ or cursing. Proverbs are another tool used to insinuate the bad manners of the target.

We have reported the research methodology followed to collect the data needed in our work as we have tried to analyze them in an objective manner. First, quantitative data was gathered by the questionnaire that was given to 93 informants and only 76 answered it entirely. And in order to pursue a qualitative inquiry a semi-structured interview took place while the subjects were fulfilling the questionnaire, in addition to participant observation which represents the third instrument that was included to collect sayings and to attain the triangulation of instruments.

Consequently, the results obtained reveal that people do use name-calling in a manner or another. Furthermore, the questionnaire results indicate numerous variations in the evaluation of the use of name-calling in order to insult people. The data obtained from participants including both genders suggest that insulting and nicknames affect significantly the listeners as they may result in psychological problems. Overall, females and males use name-calling though the result reached through our data instruments manifest that men use more offensive terms than women.

Finally, it should be made clear that what have been done in this study is limited and needed to be complemented by another research to offer a more thorough picture about the cultural and linguistic system of Tlemcen, for knowledge of the taboo items of a culture is essential to successful communicative interactions.

يتمثل مسعى هذا البحث في توضيح علاقة اللغة بالثقافة و مشاعر الاخرين، كما انه يتناول مسألة استعمال الالقاب بهدف شتم الناس كظاهرة اجتماعية سلبية نجدها في جميع انحاء العالم عامة والعالم الاسلامي خاصة- استجوبنا فئة من الناس الساكنين بمدينة تلمسان- حتى نستطيع ابراز التناقض بين هذه الظاهرة والاسلام الذي يحرم استعمالها. يستند هذا البحث كذلك على تحليل كمي و نوعي و ذلك باستعمال الاعمدة و الارقام لشرح الامثلة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: إهانة - شتم - جرح وإذابة الناس - الدرجة الجزائرية- المجتمع اللغوي التلمساني -

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche traite la relation entre la langue, la culture et l'émotion. Il prend en considération la méchanceté de l'insulte et l'utilisation des surnoms dans la communauté Musulman- la communauté de Tlemcen est prise comme exemple. Ce travail est basé sur une analyse quantitative et qualitative présentée et interprétée sous la forme des graphes et numéros.

Mots clés : humiliation – Insulte- blesser les gens- Arabe Algérien- la société linguistique Tlemceniene.

Summary

The present research paper aims at elucidating the relationship between language, culture, and emotions. It focuses on the unpleasantness of insult and name calling as a sociolinguistic behaviour and the paradox which concerns these unkind habits in a Muslim's speech community - Tlemcenian people are taken as a case in point-. The research work is also based on a quantitative and qualitative analyses presented and interpreted under the form of graphs and numbers.

Key words: humiliation- insults- hurting people and causing harm- Algerian dialect- the sociolinguistics of Tlemcen.