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**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

**Aboubekr Belkaid Universty-Tlemcen**  
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***Investigating Gender-related Use of Language in  
Maghnia Speech Community***

Dissertation submitted as a partial fulfillment in candidacy for the Degree of  
MAGISTER in Language Contact and Sociolinguistic Variation.

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Academic Year 2012-2013

*Dedication*

*To my dear and loving daughter  
"Hidayet"*

*I dedicate this work*

## *Acknowledgements*

*First of all, I am thoroughly indebted to my supervisor Pr. Ilhem MORTAD SERIR, who gave me freedom to work independently and to follow my ideas, yet providing support and help whenever needed.*

*I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my teachers during my first year of Magister, Dr. Z. DENDANE, Pr. I. MORTAD SERIR, and Dr. M. N. NEGADI, for their insightful teaching and activities.*

*I would also express my utmost gratitude to the board examiners who have devoted energy and time to read this dissertation. My appreciation goes to Pr. BENMOUSSAT who will take the chair of the examination, to Pr. BEDJAOUI, Dr. BENYELLES, Dr. BELMEKKI and Dr. SENOUCI.*

*Above all, my thanks go to those who helped me a lot in the completion of this piece of work.*

## *ABSTRACT*

The present research work is an attempt to test Maghnia speakers' attitudes towards using language. It aims to highlight the main socio-cultural factors that affect the construction of their language. It attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the language situation in Maghnia and, therefore, its impact on social interaction between both sexes. It also tends to prove that gender is one of the sociolinguistic variables that direct communication between humans. Another important purpose of this research work is to analyse the social structure of Maghnia families, especially, the norms that govern the relationship between females and males; and determine their position in this society. It aims to give an overview of the main stereotypes surrounding women's behaviour and language. Thus, it provides a real image of the attitudes of both sexes. To these ends, this work is built on certain objectives which open a gate on the real sociolinguistic situation of using language in Maghnia speech community in relation to gender. Firstly, it attempts to prove that the attitudes of speakers depend largely on their identity, gender and age. Secondly, it tries to discover what is behind the commercial contact of Maghnia speakers. Lastly, it tends to examine the effect of the social position of females on their language use. In this regard, we have relied on some research tools to investigate the differences in using language. Consequently, the outcomes of this research work show that there is a wide difference between males and females in constructing and using language. The findings also indicate that the socio-cultural structure is the first and main factor for such difference.

## List of Phonetic Symbols

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

- **Consonants:**

	Maghnia Arabic	English Gloss
[d]	[ndi:r]	‘I do’
[b]	[balek]	‘perhaps’
[t]	[nta:ʕi]	‘mine’
[k]	[kmaj ə n]	‘lorries’
[g]	[ga:ʕ]	‘all’
[ʈ]	[ʈa:ħ]	‘he fell down’
[d̪]	[d̪far]	‘a nail’
[q]	[rani nqasi]	‘I’m suffering’
[ʔ]	[ra:h jʔəðən]	‘he calls for prying’
[ð̪]	[lhað̪ra]	‘speech’
[ð̪]	[əlʔaða:]	‘harm’
[r]	[ru:ħ]	‘go’
[m]	[maka:nʃ]	‘there is not’
[n]	[nʕanni]	‘I’m singing’
[l]	[lʕars]	‘marriage’
[w]	[waʕta]	‘what’
[j]	[jədd]	‘hand’
[f]	[fi:n]	‘where’
[s]	[simana]	‘a week’

[z]	[zarbia]	‘a carpet’
[ʃ]	[ʃarika]	‘very rich’
[ʒ]	[ʒa]	‘he came’
[χ]	[χajba]	‘lazy’
[ʁ]	[ʁaya]	‘fine’
[ħ]	[ħaleb]	‘bootleggers’
[ʕ]	[ʕajba]	‘a handicap’
[h]	[hrab]	‘he escaped’
[ʂ]	[ʂajii]	‘it’s enough’

- **Vowels:**

- **Short Vowels**

[i]	[kursi]	‘chair’
[u]	[χubz]	‘bread’
[a]	[ħall]	‘he opened’
[o]	[foʈa]	‘towel’

- **Long Vowels**

[i:]	[fi:k]	‘wake up’
[u:]	[fu:l]	‘broad beans’
[a:]	[ba:ʃ]	‘with what’
[o:]	[ʂo:g]	‘market’

# *French Transcription*

## French Alphabet

## French Transcription

B	b
C	s
D	d
F	f
G	g
H	
J	ʒ
K	k
L	l
M	m
N	n
P	p
Q	k
R	ʁ
S	s
T	t
V	v
W	w
X	ks
Y	j
Z	z

**French vowels:** a= a/ɑ, an = ã, on = õ, en = ê, e= ɛ, es=e, i= i, in = ĩ, un = ã, on= õ, eu= œ, è = ɛ, ø = ɐ, o=ɔ, u= y, ui = ɥi, ou = u.

## *List of Acronyms and Abbreviations*

AA: Algerian Arabic.

Fr: French.

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic.



## *List of Tables*

Table 2.1: Gender Differences in Language Use in Maghnia Speech Community.....	46
Table 3.1: Categories of the Informants.....	87
Table 3.2: The Educational and Occupational Level of the Participants.....	89
Table 3.3: Gender Differences in Language Use.....	90
Table 3.4: Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Gender Differences.....	91
Table 3.5: Age as the Main Factor of Language Differences between Genders.....	92
Table 3.6: Women's and Men's Expressions.....	94
Table 3.7: Gender and the Frequency of Language Use.....	95
Table 3.8: Informants Attitudes towards the most Discussed Topic.....	96
Table 3.9: Language Use and the Geographical Location of Maghnia.....	97
Table 3.10: Bootleggers' Language and Men's Attitudes.....	99
Table 3.11: The Main Reasons for Using Bootleggers' Language in Maghnia.....	100
Table 3.12: Women's and Men's Main Differences.....	102
Table 3.13: Speakers' Attitudes towards Selecting Terms Referring to Colours.....	103
Table 3.14: Women's Attitudes towards French and Darija.....	104
Table 3.15: Women's and Men's Attitudes towards French in Maghnia.....	105
Table 3.16: The Main Reasons beyond Women's Use of French.....	107
Table 3.17: The Difference between Men and Women in Using Taboos.....	108
Table 3.18: Men's and the Use of Taboos.....	109
Table 3.19: Women's and the Use of Taboos.....	111

## *List of Figures*

Figure 3.1: Types of Interview .....	84
Figure 3.2: Gender Differences in Language Use.....	90
Figure 3.3: Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Gender Differences.....	91
Figure 3.4: Age as the Main Factor of Language Differences between Genders.....	93
Figure 3.5: Women's and Men's Expressions.....	94
Figure 3.6: Gender and the Frequency of Language Use.....	95
Figure 3.7: Informants Attitudes towards the Most Discussed Topic.....	97
Figure 3.8: Language Use and the Geographical Location of Maghnia.....	98
Figure 3.9: Bootleggers' Language and Men's Attitudes.....	99
Figure 3.10: The Main Reasons for Using Bootleggers' Language in Maghnia.....	101
Figure 3.11: Women's and Men's Main Differences.....	102
Figure 3.12: Speaker's Attitudes towards Selecting Terms Referring to colours.....	103
Figure 3.13: Women's Attitudes towards French and Darija.....	104
Figure 3.14: Women's and Men's Attitudes towards French in Maghnia.....	106
Figure 3.15: The Main Reasons beyond Women's Use of French.....	107
Figure 3.16: The Difference between Men and Women in Using Taboos.....	108
Figure 3.17: Men's and The Use of Taboos.....	110
Figure 3.18: Women's and The Use of Taboos.....	111

## *Contents*

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgements.....	II
Abstract.....	III
List of Phonetic Symbols.....	IV
French Transcription.....	VI
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations.....	VII
List of Tables.....	VIII
List of Figures.....	IX
Contents.....	X
General Introduction.....	1
<b>Chapter One: A Theoretical Background about Language and Gender.....</b>	<b>06</b>
1.1- Introduction.....	07
1.2- Language and Speech Community.....	07
1.3- Sex and Gender.....	10
1.4- A Brief Review of Gender and Language.....	13
1.5- Approaches to Gender Studies.....	14
1.5.1- The deficit theory.....	14
1.5.2- The Dominance Theory.....	17
1.5.3- The Difference Theory.....	18
1.5.4- The Reformist Theory.....	20
1.5.5- The Cultural Model.....	21
1.5.6- The Social Constructivist Theory.....	22
1.5.7- The Community of Practice Framework.....	23

1.6- Gender Differences at Linguistic Levels.....	25
1.6.1- Gender Differences in Spoken Language.....	25
1.6.2- Gender Differences in Written Language.....	26
1.7- Gender Variation in Language.....	28
1.8- Gender and Language Change.....	29
1.9- Gender and Identity.....	31
1.10- Gender and Politeness.....	32
1.11- The Myths and Stereotypes about Language and Gender.....	34
1.12- Women's and Men's Language Attitudes.....	36
1.13- Conclusion.....	38
<b>Chapter Two: An Attitudinal Account of Gender Differences in Language Use in Algerian context.....</b>	<b>40</b>
2.1- Introduction.....	41
2.2- The Socio-Cultural and Linguistic Contexts of Algeria.....	41
2.3- Maghnia History and Language.....	44
2.4- Gender Group in Algeria.....	45
2.5- Factors Affecting Gender Differences.....	46
2.6- Gender and Linguistic Variation in Algerian Arabic.....	48
2.7- Studies on Language and Gender in the Arab Societies.....	49
2.8- Algerian Women and Discourse Strategies.....	51
2.9- Oral Literature and Algerian Females.....	54
2.10- Gender and Language Choice in Algeria.....	56
2.11- Stereotypes Related to Gender's Language Use.....	60
2.12- Terms of Address and Gender in Algeria.....	62

2.13- Sexism Language and Algerian Culture.....	64
2.14- Naming Differences in Algerian Arabic.....	66
2.15- Attitudinal Approach and Gender in the Algerian Context.....	69
2.16- Conclusion.....	72
<b>Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Data Interpretation.....</b>	<b>74</b>
3.1- Introduction.....	75
3.2- Defining Research.....	75
3.3- Ethical Consideration in Research.....	76
3.4- Data Collection Methods.....	78
3.4.1- Quantitative Data.....	78
3.4.2- Qualitative Data.....	79
3.4.3- The Questionnaire.....	81
3.4.4- The Interview.....	83
3.4.5- Participant Observation.....	85
3.5- Population and Sampling.....	86
3.6- Data Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation.....	89
3.6.1- Questionnaire Analysis.....	89
3.6.2- Interview Analysis.....	112
3.7- Conclusion.....	114
<b>General Conclusion.....</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>129</b>

# General Introduction

## **General Introduction**

Communication, as an essential part of social relations, is built on language and acts since it strengthens human ties. However, communication differs from one individual to another depending on his age and gender. In fact, there was a belief that the way of communicating for men is different from that of women. As a result, many scholarly attempts prove that there are gender differences in terms of using language, constructing sentences and interacting.

Sociolinguistics is a discipline which takes into account gender as an essential variable and has established many theories for studying the difference between males and females in communicating. However, more recent scholarly works tend to prove that there are other factors which influence the gendered use of language including the identity and attitudes of the speaker in addition to other socio-cultural factors. In other words, the norms that each society imposes on its members affect the position of males and females and, therefore, their behaviour, communication and language use.

As far as the social differences are concerned, some studies relate gender differences to the social position of males and females in their society. They have argued that men and women live in different worlds and, therefore, they have different cultures. They have also based their views on the fact that these cultural differences are reflected in language and the way men and women communicate all along their social interaction. In contrast, some other approaches focus their attention on the way both males and females construct their language. In other words, these differences range from pronunciation or morphology to vocabulary.

Additionally, the stereotypes, that each society has developed, affect the gendered position and, therefore, their language use and perception in addition to their attitudes. In fact, the attitudes of each speaker are directly related to these stereotypes which become parts of the society's norms and direct its members' views.

Having appreciated previous scholarly works about the gendered use of language and attitudinal studies, we attempt to study the difference between Maghnia males and females in terms of their attitudes towards language use; proving, in the mean time,

that the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community affects the position of males and females and, thus, their way of communicating. Women's use of language is directed by the social norms of this society. Particularly, women, in Maghnia, who are more conservative than men and this fact influences their style and language. In this regard, the following research questions are raised as follows:

- 1- Do Maghnia males and females differ in their attitudes towards language use?
- 2- Does the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia affect language differences between its speakers?
- 3- Does the geographical location of Maghnia influence gender's use and construction of language?

Under these questions the following hypotheses are constructed:

- 1- The attitudes of Maghnia males and females towards language use may differ according to their age, educational background and other social and situational factors. Besides, females in Maghnia may be expected to use better or more correct language than males do.
- 2- There may be a correlation between language and the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community and this fact influences males' and females' use of language.
- 3- The geographical location of Maghnia may be a major factor that pushes males to develop a new vocabulary due to their commercial contact with Moroccans. Thus, this latter enlarges the gap between males and females in the way they interact, construct sentences and use words.

Hence, this dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first one starts with a review of the related literature in which the main theories, that explain the gendered use of language, are highlighted; besides gender differences in spoken and written language. Also, chapter one includes gender differences in terms of their identity, attitudes and the politeness strategies they tend to employ in their daily social interaction.



The second chapter will be devoted for describing the socio-cultural and linguistic profiles of Algeria. It will deal with Maghnia history, cultural position and its effects on its members' daily lives. Being exposed to the factors which determine language differences, chapter two investigates gender and linguistic variation in Algerian Arabic with a focus on the Algerian females and their discourse strategies.

The third chapter attempts to give an overview of the main techniques and methods which were employed, including the questionnaire, the interview and participant observation in order to test the validity of the hypotheses. As a result, the collected data will be quantitative and qualitative to test the attitudes of Maghnia speakers towards language use.

# Chapter One

## *Chapter One*

### *A Theoretical Background about Language and Gender*

1.1- Introduction.....	07
1.2- Language and Speech Community.....	07
1.3- Sex and Gender.....	10
1.4- A Brief Review of Gender and Language.....	13
1.5- Approaches to Gender Studies.....	14
1.5.1- The deficit theory.....	14
1.5.2- The Dominance Theory.....	17
1.5.3- The Difference Theory.....	18
1.5.4- The Reformist Theory.....	20
1.5.5- The Cultural Model.....	21
1.5.6- The Social Constructivist Theory.....	22
1.5.7- The Community of Practice Framework.....	23
1.6- Gender Differences at Linguistic Levels.....	25
1.6.1- Gender Differences in Spoken Language.....	25
1.6.2- Gender Differences in Written Language.....	26
1.7- Gender Variation in Language.....	28
1.8- Gender and Language Change.....	29
1.9- Gender and Identity.....	31
1.10- Gender and Politeness.....	32
1.11- The Myths and Stereotypes about Language and Gender.....	34
1.12- Women's and Men's Language Attitudes.....	36
1.13- Conclusion.....	38

## **1.1-Introduction**

One of the fundamental topics, that have attracted the interest of many sociolinguists in the last few decades, is the use of language and the social role of both men and women who use it. In fact, most societies recognise that language use is a marker of gender differences. In this vein, Tannen (1995: 138) has pointed out that:

**Communication isn't as simple as saying what you mean. How you say what you mean is crucial, and differs from one person to the next, because using a language is a learned behavior: how we talk and listen is deeply influenced by cultural expectations.**

Furthermore, language can be considered as a mirror of humans' emotions, feelings and desires. Henceforth, the use of expressions and terms differ not only from one individual to another, but also from one sex to the other.

Consequently, this chapter provides an overall explanation of gender differences in language use. It also aims to shed light on the different theories on language and gender including Lakoff's work, Tannen, Cameron, Eckert, Coates and Bucholtz.

## **1.2- Language and Speech Community**

Before attempting to tackle gender differences, it is advisable to provide an account of the language as the soul of any speech community. In this sense, Bucholtz (1999) tends to consider the speech community model as an ethnographic activity-based approach dealing with identities as fixed social categories.

Sociolinguistics, as a commonly known branch between scholars, has thrown much light on the concept of speech community. In fact, the exploration of speech community has paved the way for many scholars and sociolinguists to investigate many linguistic phenomena and consider them as social units in the notion of society. Under this point of view, Lakoff (1975) and other gender scholars have shown that a

single speech community is heterogeneous since there are many differences that must be taken into consideration in tackling some linguistic phenomena including age, race, and gender differences.

Interestingly, speech community has been defined differently and each definition proves that language is the first ingredient in the concept of speech community. In this respect, Trudgill (1992: 69-70) defines it as:

**A community of speakers who share the same verbal repertoire, and who also share the same norms for linguistic behavior, including both general norms for language use of the type studied in the ethnography of speaking, and more detailed norms for activities such as style shifting of the type studied by secular linguistics. It is an important term in both the ethnography of speaking and in secular linguistics.**

Similarly, Gumperz (1971: 101) affirms that a linguistic community is a group of multilingual or monolingual people who share the same norms of social interaction. In this light, he writes the following:

**A social group which may be either monolingual or multilingual, held together by frequency of social interaction pattern and set off from the surrounding areas by weaknesses in the lines of communication**

Accordingly, Labov (1972: 120,121) maintains that a speech community is formed of members who share the same norms. This argument is better understood from his speech as follows:

**The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms: these norms may be observed in overt types of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage.**

In fact, a very closed examination of Labov's statement reveals that a speech community is a set of shared norms and this argument has been supported by various scholars including, Bucholtz (1999: 208) who maintains that:

**The postulate is that speakers agree on and uphold certain linguistic forms as normative, regardless of differences social background which assumes a consensus model of society.**

On the other part, Saville-Troik (1996: 357) recognises that each member in a speech community has a repertoire of social identities and each participates in verbal and non-verbal communication. In the light of this idea, he claims that:

**[...]each member of a community has a repertoire of social identities and that each identity in a given context is associated with a number of appropriate verbal and nonverbal forms of expression.**

**(Quoted by Wardhaugh, 2006: 127)**

On the other hand, Hamers and Blanc (2000: 375) focus on regional and social bases in defining a speech community. In other words, a speech community can be either social or regional in which its individuals share the same linguistic system. In this regard, they state that:

**Any regionally or socially definable human group identified by the use of a shared linguistic system(s) and by participation in shared sociolinguistic norms.**

On his part, Spolsky (2004: 125) defines it as a social network in which individuals share the same knowledge and attitudes towards the use of language. In the light of this tight, he maintains that:

**(1) All the people who speak a single language (like English or French or Amharic); (2) a complex interlocking network of communication whose members share knowledge about and attitudes towards language use.**

What can be understood from the above quotations is that a speech community is based on a linguistic system, interactional settings and norms; however, language remains as the heart of it. Besides, the attitudes of individuals play a crucial role in pushing them to choose language. In fact, each individual is considered as a unit in building his speech community since he participates in sharing knowledge and language as a means of interaction and a set of attitudes through employing his linguistic repertoire and identity.

### **1.3- Sex and Gender**

From a sociolinguistic point of view, sex and gender are two different concepts in studying language. This view has been supported by many scholars. According to Mills (2003), sex includes the terms of masculinity and femininity which is biological features that identify males and females, whereas gender refers to the social norms that society imposes on them.

In fact, some scholars claim that masculinity is expressed in many ways including physical appearance, voice and behaviour. In this regard, Eckert and

McConnell-Ginet (2003: 10) argue that **“Sex is a biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex”**. In their point of view, masculinity and femininity is a social product and gender is a behaviour which is enforced by society on males and females. In this vein, they state that **“Thus the very definition of the biological categories *male* and *female*, and people’s understanding of themselves and others as male or female, is ultimately social.”** (Idem).

Furthermore, Coates (1998) posits the view that doing and performing gender is presenting oneself as a “gendered being”. Along with the same line of thought, Sadiqi (2003: 2) believes that the term gender was firstly used by linguists in social sciences. In this regard, she explains the idea as follows:

**The term ‘gender’ was first used in linguistics and other areas of social sciences. In linguistics, the term referred to the grammatical categories that indexed sex in the structure of human languages.**

She further explains that the feminist movement of the 1960’s and 1970’s observe gender in relation to sex, i.e., Gender is the construction of masculine and feminine categories in society. This view is deeply explained by Sadiqi (Idem) as follows:

**Feminist theories of the 1960s and 1970s used the term ‘gender’ to refer to the construction of the categories ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ in society. This construction was related to biological sex in contested ways.**

Additionally, many scholars have pointed out that gender was seen as a biological sex from a historical point of view .This movement was called the essentialist movement .In this sense, Sadiqi (ibid: 3) states that:



**Gender within the essentialist view was defined by three major clusters of characteristics: innateness, strict binarism, and bipolarization. Gender was qualified as innate because biological endowments were innate; it was binary given the strict binary opposition between men and women as two undifferentiated groups; and it was bipolar because human beings pertain to one of the two bipolar categories :male or female.**

On the other hand, later linguists consider gender as a social variable that should be taken into account in exploring society in addition to age and social class. Labov, on his part, argues that gender interacts with other social variables in constructing society. This movement was known as the constructionist approach. On their view, gender has been considered as a fluid and not a static notion as it is stated by Sadiqi (idem). She goes on to add that the main differences between these movements lie on the fact that the first makes a bridge between gender, ethnicity, age and class, whereas the later studies gender in separation from the previous categories. This statement is better understood through the following quotation by Sadiqi (ibid: 4) when she states that:

**constructionist view which clearly distinguishes it from the essentialist view is that whereas the latter considered gender as a separate category from other social categories such as ethnicity, age and class ,the former regards gender as intertwined with these categories. It is the interaction of gender with other social categories which explains its multiple meanings and continuous creation given that individuals constantly present themselves the way they want to be responded to in specific situations.**

In its general terms, later scholars try to bridge the road between the constructionist and the essentialist. These arguments lead to the emergence of many

theories such as: the deficit, the dominance, the reformist, the cultural model, social constructivist and the difference theory. These approaches argue for the relationship between language and gender as we will see in the following title.

#### **1.4- A Brief Review of Gender and Language**

The feminist movement is among the first waves that attract scholarly attention towards gender differences due to many factors including politics. Besides, many scholars insist on differences in terms of linguistic variation including Jespersen (1922) who is considered as the founding father of gender studies in terms of vocabulary innovation. Accordingly, Weatherall (2002: 2) states the following:

**The earliest concerns about gender and language can be traced to linguistics and to feminist theory and political practice. Gender has been invoked as an explanation for all manner of linguistic variation, including vocabulary innovation (e.g. Jespersen, 1922), pronunciation (see Coates, 1986), grammar (see Key, 1975) and communication style (e.g. Maltz and Borker, 1982).**

In fact, most of research papers focus on the nature of gender differences in the use of language. In this regard, Lakoff (1973: 45) observes that **“the marginality and powerlessness of women is reflected in both the ways men and women are expected to speak and the ways in which women are spoken of.”** Furthermore, Weatherall goes on affirming that early research, on gender differences, focuses on power of men in using language. She also claims that men interrupt during the conversation using power unlike women. In this vein, she (ibid: 4) writes that:

**The idea that there is power in language use was an important part of early research on gender differences in speech styles. For example, one suggestion was that men used interruption as a way of wielding their power over women in conversation**

**(Zimmerman and West, 1975).**

Lakoff (1973-1975) posits the view that language shows the position of females in society. On the other hand, Cameron has divided the study of language and gender into three important categories including Deficit, Dominance and Difference. She adds that all researchers in this area focus on differences between males and females in terms of expressing themselves.

Briefly speaking, a great amount of work has been conducted in the field of language and gender in the seventies and early eighties. In fact, the scholarly interest has moved from a simple issue of male dominance towards examining the style and language differences between males and females, but what are the reasons for these differences? And how do different models express gender differences?

## **1.5- Approaches to Gender Studies**

### **1.5.1- The Deficit Theory**

The deficit theory is one of the most interesting approach in studying language and gender. It suggests that **“women’s ways of speaking are, either by nature or nurture, deficient in comparison to men’s”** (Cameron, 1990: 14). Lakoff supports this view of gendered female language. In her point of view, women who feel that their way of speaking is deficient and that they lack power for instance due to their language usage go to classes offering such subjects as assertiveness training, which basically teach them to talk like man.

Interestingly, Lakoff argues that women’s language style is deficient, lacking in authority and assertiveness. She (1975: 43) also observes that women face a **“double bind”** where they are criticised or scolded for not speaking like a lady, but at the same time, speaking like a lady systematically denies the female speaker access to power on the grounds that she is not capable of holding the ground based on her linguistic behaviour.

In the same vein, Sadiqi (idem) claims that the deficit theory “**considered women’s language as an essentially ‘deficient’ version of men’s language**”. She (idem) further adds that:

**This theory was based on an essentialist view of the relationship between language and gender. It can be said to have its roots in ‘medieval’ notions of the ‘chain of being’: God above men, above women, above beasts, although many, including those who framed deficit theories, might reject this view.**

As it has been stated by Sadiqi, in this approach, there is a relationship between gender and language. She adds that this latter has its roots in medieval notions, for which it was criticised. It is also necessary to mention that this theory considered women with their language as disadvantaged as language users deviating from an implicit male norm. In connection with this, Sadiqi (Idem) says that:

**In this theory, given that the vital force of language was with men, women were but a diminished copy of the original man: Adam. Consequently, women’s language was an imperfect, deviant, and deficient gloss of men’s.**

What can be understood from Sadiqi’s statement is that this theory sees language as a source of man’s power, whereas women are descended from men i.e., Adam. Thus, females’ language is incorrect, imperfect and deficient. She goes on to add that in the field of literature, De Beauvoir (1949) sees women as ‘the second sex.’ whereas, the deficit theory seems to be a worthy concern by the work of the Danish grammarian Jespersen (1922) in the field of modern linguistics. In this regard, Sadiqi (ibid: 5) has pointed out that according to Jespersen “**women’s speech was a deviant form from the average male speaking patterns. Women used ‘insipid’ and ‘lady like’ language in an attempt to shrink from the ‘coarse’, but ‘virile’, usage of men.**”

In her point of view, Jespersen (1922) claims that women's language having almost no taste since females are more refined in their speech, they also use less coarse and gross expressions, whereas men are forced to be restricted to women's speech style would quickly be reduced to a state of boredom due to the nature of women's conversation. These views clearly illustrate how women are seen as being linguistically deficient in comparison to men.

Besides, Sadiqi (idem) adds that Jespersen dealt with four aspects of language which are related to women: **“verbal taboo, competing language, conversational language, and conservative language, which he presented as ‘problems’ with women’s language”**. In the light of this, she explains what Jespersen believes and considers more variability to men. In this vein, she (Idem) says that:

**He stated that women used limited and less extensive vocabulary and exaggerated the use of adverbs like ‘pretty’, ‘nice’, ‘just’, ‘very’ and ‘sweet’, but paradoxically, he granted that women ‘invented’ language. Women were further pictured by Jespersen as ‘more conservative’ than men, given their relatively greater use of euphemisms and polite forms, as well as their systematic avoidance of swearing.**

Under this point of view, the main protagonist of this approach is that Lakoff (1975) differentiates women's speech from men's speech in many ways. She puts vocabulary where there are differences at the grammatical level. Furthermore, she puts out that women have more words to describe colour, while men find colour as unworldly and trivial. In contrast, men have a larger vocabulary towards sport and economics. On the other hand, she mentions ‘meaningless’ at the lexical level and she gives the example of “oh, dear” as a mark feature of women's speech. As far as, the third level of grammar is “Empty adjectives”.

### 1.5.2 - The Dominance Theory

This theory claims that in mixed-sex conversations, men are more likely to interrupt than women. Besides, **“linguistic differences between men and women were triggered by inequitable power relations between the two sexes”** as it has been stated by Sadiqi (ibid: 6).

In fact, this theory stands for men’s power and dominance of women. Females’ submissive role in society is being reflected in language according to those who believe this to be the truth. It was Lakoff who was considered as the founding mother of “the dominance theory”. She argues that the main difference between male and female lies in the inequality of power between them. In this light, Wardhaugh (ibid: 327) writes that: **“Men use what power they have to dominate each other”**. He adds that: **“Lakoff (1975) adopts the position that men are dominant and women lack power”**.

According to Lakoff, women are obliged to exhibit qualities of weakness and are subordinate towards men. In her view, men’s dominance is the cause of their superiority in society and women’s subordinate to men. She further observes that women use a language which contains specific Linguistic features that indicate uncertainty and lack of authority. However, this idea was criticised on the basis that it deals with sex differences as a result of the feminist movement which appears side by side with the movement which was against racism.

Furthermore, Cameron (ibid: 14) claims that the dominance framework suggests that women’s way of speaking is the result of gender differences as well as the position of men i.e., power.

In its general sense, the dominance theory or what is also called power-based theory posits the view that men and women are believed to inhabit a cultural and linguistic world, where power and status are unequally distributed. In other words, this theory focuses on male dominance and gender division. However, Lakoff’s point of view, concerning women’s powerlessness and tentativeness, has been criticised by

many scholars. In this regard, Wardhaugh argues that: **“Dominance clearly fails as a universal explanation of gendered language differences”**. (idem).

### **1.5.3 - The Difference Theory**

In contradiction to the previous approaches, the difference theory bases its assumptions on the idea that men and women grow up in different cultures, social and linguistic worlds. In other terms, **“The difference theory suggests that women’s ways of speaking reflect the social and linguistic norms of the specifically female subcultures in which most of us spend our formative years”** as Cameron (ibid: 14) has pointed out. In the same vein, Tannen (1995) maintains that boys and girls have deficient cultures, and, therefore, they use language differently. Basically, this approach has been firstly created by Maltz and Borker<sup>1</sup>, where they argue that women and men constitute different ‘gender subcultures’ and in those two “cultures”, boys and girls **“learn to do different things with words in a conversation”**. Similarly, Crawford (1995: 1) posits the view that **“men and women are fated to misunderstand each other unless they recognize their deeply socialized differences”**. He goes on to describe how the **“fundamental differences between women and men shape the way they talk”**.(idem) These differences are, according to Crawford, ‘located within individuals’ and are different in ‘personality traits, skills, beliefs, attitudes or goals’. Following the same stream, Talbot (2010: 131) affirms that **“behaviour previously perceived as men’s efforts to dominate women is reinterpreted as a ‘cross cultural’ phenomenon”**.

In the part of Sadiqi, the difference theory has focused on women’s superiority over men concerning behaviour, style and cooperation. In the light of this idea, she (ibid: 10) writes that **“women’s behavior and style were celebrated and highlighted as positive and cooperative”**. She goes on explaining that women differ from men in terms of patterns of speech and she also argues that females are superior in certain linguistic domains. In this regard, she (Idem) states the following:

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker in Gumperz (1982: 200).

women were said to be better conversationalists for a number of reasons: (i) their elicitory strategies aimed at raising the level of conversation for all participants, (ii) they sought support in language, a strategy that was basically different from men's upmanship (cf. Tannen 1990), and (iii) they learned different behaviors from men as part of their social differentiation from playgroups onwards (Maltz andorker 1982, Tannen 1990, Thorne 1993). Given these characteristics of women's conversations, each sex needed to value the style of the other sex and women needed not be blamed for expressing their social roles (Tannen 1990).

What emerges from this theory is that men and women live in different cultural worlds. This fact leads them to different ways of speaking. Indeed, the relationship between males and females are different due to the fact that different rules govern the behaviour of two subcultures, although they live in the same environment. Thus, it emphasises that social and physical separation from their childhood causes different languages and beliefs in males and females. It is also necessary to mention that linguistic variation is considered as an interesting domain in investigation of gender differences. In the light of this, Wardhaugh (2006) distinguishes different areas of diversity. He claims that, the main differences between males and females lie in the intonation of their voices, vocabulary choice, the use of gestures and paralinguistic systems. He further argues that, women spend most of their time talking about home and families, whereas men are more attracted towards sports, political issues, business and taxes.

Although this theory has gained a great popularity, Sadiqi points out that later studies, including those of Bergvall (1996), Bing (1996) and Freed (1996), insist on the idea that they should focus on the similarities of both sexes instead of differences. In the light of this view, Sadiqi (2003: 11) cites women in Moroccan culture as follows:



**[...]in Moroccan culture, women often try to outsmart each other in conversations about their family affiliation through a type of verbal dueling where each participant brings an argument to show her family is older, richer, more learned, etc.**

#### **1.5.4 – The Reformist Theory**

What is called the Reformist theory views the previous assumptions of language and gender differently. They argue that the notion of sexist language has created a struggle between the different movements. Indeed, this approach does not consider language as a source of oppression and in order to lessen the conflict, they create certain expressions such as ‘chairperson’ instead of ‘chairwoman’. In this point of view, Sadiqi (ibid: 11) maintains:

**[...] ‘reforming’ language by freeing it from harmful sexist words and expressions. To achieve this goal, they geared their efforts to providing a set of neutral and inoffensive alternatives to sexist usages, such as ‘chairperson’ instead of ‘chairman’, ‘Ms’ instead of ‘Missus’ or ‘Miss’, ‘men and women’ instead of ‘men’, ‘humanity’ instead of ‘mankind’.**

She (ibid: 12) further claims that **“The Reformist theory stressed accuracy, neutrality, truth and fairness in language with respect to both masculine and feminine words and expressions”**. Basically, the aims of this approach tend to push most of feminist scholars to employ language in writings including publication journals, books and magazines in which they defended women’s rights. In fact, French and English languages have the great benefits of this movement since a great source of literature, psychology; sociology and linguistics are written by females such as Lakoff, Cameron, Tannen and Eckert...etc. The above view has been supported by the following quotation written by Sadiqi (Idem):

**Many conventions in both formal speech and publications have been changed to respond to these demands. The languages that benefited most from such endeavors were English and French.**

Although, this theory has succeeded in attracting many feminist waves, it has been harshly criticised as an approach that supports language and gender. According to Cameron, the Reformists neglect the idea that language cannot be controlled and, therefore, the differences between men and women. In the light of this view, Sadiqi (Idem) writes the following:

**In spite of its popularity, reformism in feminist linguistics has been heavily criticized and discredited as a theory of language and gender. According to Cameron (1992), reform measures remain ‘ineffectual’ as they cannot root out prejudice because what people say and mean cannot be controlled.**

### **1.5.5- The Cultural Model**

This model builds its bases on the idea that gender differences lie on culture. Tannen (1990), in her part, observes that the difference between males and females lies in the misinterpretation of the interlocutor of the opposite sex .i.e., males do not try to understand women during interaction. Along with the same wave, Maltz and Borker (1982) posit the view that males and females employ different ways to express themselves depending on their own cultural assumptions. They also argue that women depend on language to build equal relationships with men. In this regard, Weatherall states (ibid: 70) that:

**Maltz and Borker (1982) in their influential paper ‘A cultural approach to male-female miscommunication’ were the first to suggest that cross-gender communication problems could be**

**understood as an example of the larger phenomenon of cultural difference and miscommunication.**

On the other hand, some linguists believe that females' position in society relies on their important roles of taking care of children and home. They further claim that women are less self-centered and more relationally-related, whereas Tannen affirms that males employ language to build a hierarchical relationship. Besides, many scholars view that women should look after and control the language of their children. In other words, they are not allowed to use offensive or bad language. They explain the view that men are more task-oriented due to their responsibilities of raising a family. This idea leads to different social processes between gender and, therefore, differences in the cultural level and linguistics as well.

#### **1.5.6- The Social Constructivist Theory**

Due to the criticism that the previous theories have received, the constructivist model comes as a response to many scholarly researches. This leads many scholars to rethink on a new theory about language and gender. Consequently, this wave has attracted more attention towards understanding gender as a constitutive factor in building social identities. In this respect Freeman and MC Elhinny<sup>2</sup> state that **“language use as shaping understanding of the social world”**. They also add that language plays a crucial role in shaping relations and constructing social identities. Similarly, Cameron (ibid: 16) argues that social identities are constructed during the process of interaction between men and women:

**Linguists interested in analyzing the constitution of gender identities/gender relations need to look beyond lexical choice analyse who is represented as doing what, to who is and under what circumstances and with what consequences.**

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<sup>2</sup> Freeman and MC Elhinny in McKay and Hornberger (1996: 219).

Actually, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) maintain that the main principles of the constructivist model lie on the scholars' perception of gender as a social construct. Agreeing on this notion, Freeman and Mc Elhinny observe that studying the activity of both man and women allows the understanding of language as constituting reality. Therefore, research has moved from studying differences between men and women in terms of position towards research on similarities and differences of their speech. Thus, this would move language use towards the field of constructing gender differences as a social category.

Furthermore, Eckert and Mc Connell-Ginet<sup>3</sup> claim that gender differences have been limited to some aspects of social life including class, race and ethnicity. Moreover, Sunderland (2004: 17) views that the social constructivist theory of language and gender provides an ideal framework for the study of language and gender in comparison with the dominance theory. He (ibid: 172) concludes that the construction goes 'beyond words spoken and written'.

### **1.5.7- The Community of Practice Framework**

According to Sadiqi, the community of Practice is introduced by Eckert and Mc Connell- Ginet (1992) for the purpose of investigating gender construction rather than gender category. In this regard, she (ibid: 12) writes the following:

**The Community of Practice is more of a framework for analysis than a 'predictive' theory. It was introduced in language and gender research by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992).**

In fact, the community of practice has its roots in psychology, sociology, anthropology and women studies. It has also attracted the interest of many sociolinguists. Besides, Eckert and McConnell are not only criticising previous studies on language differences between genders, but also variationist sociolinguistic studies

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<sup>3</sup> Eckert and Mc Connell-Ginet in Bucholtz and Hall (1995).

since they impose categories on people. In other words, the main goal of the community of practice framework is to examine the way linguistic variables are used as means of identity construction. In fact, this approach focuses on studying gender as an aspect of social identity and relations. Henceforth, the community of practice focuses on three basic elements namely “[...] (i) **mutual engagement, (ii) a common goal, and (iii) a sharing of routine such as gestures**”. (Quoted by Sadiqi, idem). She further claims that individuals construct their identity in terms of ‘allegiance’ and ‘alliances’ which are not gender specific, but community specific. Besides, she also makes a difference between speech communities and communities of practice in terms of heterogeneity. In this regard, she (ibid: 13) states that:

**[...] communities of practice is characterized by a salient specific practice [...] The bottom line is that in communities of practice, the way gender interacts with other variables such as class, age, ethnicity, relationships, or saliency need to be highlighted.**

Moreover, Sadiqi talks about varying degrees of culture which controls its members. For instance, Moroccan culture has imposed strong constraints on males’ and females’ behaviour. Thus, her postulation of Moroccan culture is similar to Mc Connell and Eckert’s ideas of allegiances and alliances. In this vein, she (idem) reports the following statement:

**[...] albeit a great deal of heterogeneity with respect to age, power, etc. Within each community, communities of practice share a common goal in some sense, whereas speech communities do not necessarily share a common goal and, thus are heterogeneous in the strong sense of the word.**

As a concluding remark, this approach has seen gender as a way of social identity construction which variationist sociolinguistics must take into account when dealing with social variables.

## **1.6- Gender Differences at Linguistic Levels**

It is worth mentioning that there are differences between men and women in terms of written and spoken language. This idea has been supported by many sociolinguistic works as we will see in the following titles.

### **1.6.1- Gender Differences in Spoken Language**

In her study on women's and men's spoken English, Lakoff (1975) highlights that girls use the passive form more than boys, whereas these latter use what she calls 'rough talk' or active voice. In other words, females' language consists of empty adjectives, intensifiers and qualifiers, tag questions, hedges and polite forms.

Furthermore, Lakoff (1975) observes that women employ weaker and sweet-sounding swear words such as "oh dear" or "goodness", whereas men use stronger expressions such as "shit!" or "damn". Lakoff also argues that both men and women cannot use the language of each other since it is viewed inappropriate especially for males. Similarly, Jespersen maintains that women have their own vocabulary including adjectives and adverbs. In this light, he (1992: 251) writes the following:

**Women have smaller vocabularies, show extensive use of certain adjectives and adverbs, more often than men break off without finishing their sentences, because they start talking without having thought out what they are going to say and produce less complex sentences.**

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that men can switch easily between topics, whereas women turn always to the same topic supporting others opinions' and complementing them. Besides, females prefer talking about personal topics, while males prefer discussing sports, politics and public issues. In other words, they avoid

private topics, while women's language is most of time related to emotions and feelings. In connection with this, some scholars maintain that women's left and right sides of their brains are connected with each other and, therefore, there is a strong relationship between language and emotion. Besides, recent studies have proved that women have a larger and deeper limbic system and are able to express their feelings through language. He adds that they link thoughts with words when their brain is resting and this leads to an ease with communicating through language.

Moving further in our analysis, it is important to note that women and men differ in the use of dialect forms and accents. Labov (1966) tries to prove this statement through a scholarly work which focuses on certain groups of women. This study provides insights into the different models of prestige that males and females adopt, as well as explaining how and why accents change.

### **1.6.2- Gender Differences in Written Language**

It should be noted that research on gender differences in terms of written language is limited in comparison to studies in spoken form since written books, intonation and phonology cannot be always applied for research on spoken language. In this light, some scholars tend to study such differences according to different types of discourse, whereas others have focused on some specific linguistic characteristics such as adverbs, nouns, repeated words and synonyms. In this sense, Gyllgard (2006) investigates females' and males' differences in the use of linguistics features. Furthermore, he declares that there is always a problem in the investigation of written language differences between genders. He further observes that women use literature in order to show their superiority over men. In other words, females show their intellectual abilities which men lack. Henceforth, boys are less successful than girls in writing and reading. Along with the same line of thought, Brown (1994) posits the view that boys do not show any interest in writing when they get older since it is seen as a females' activity. Following this point of view, Millard (1997) claims that girls' style of writing is high than that of boys because of their experiences in reading, while men's style is not good because they rely on TV and computer games. Thus, their writing is not detailed in comparison with that of women. Additionally, Kanaris (1999)

maintains that women tend to write longer expressions which consist of more subordinate clauses and a wider range of adjectives. She further highlights that boys are attracted towards the use of “I” and girls towards the pronoun “we”.

In addition to this, Kanaris adds that women writers are regarded as more skilled at the level of text writing, whereas males are seen as “event-oriented”. Along with the same wave, Peterson (2002) claims that the strength of men’s personality can be seen through their writings, while women weaknesses are observed through their detailed written language.

On the other side, Whitelaw, Milosevic and Daniels (2000) observe that girls’ style of writing marks their good behaviour, rather than their good work. Moreover, they write that male writers choose to read is rarely what they are required to write.

In its general terms, one should note that research on written differences between males and females has gained much scholarly attention in the last few decades. The most important works have been done in this field by Trudgill (1972), Lakoff (1975), Labov (1990) and Coates (1998).

## **1.7- Gender Variation in Language**

Recently, sociolinguists have turned their attention towards the study of gender variation in language. In fact, sociolinguistic research on sex differences focuses on the quantifiable difference between men’s and women’s use of certain linguistic variables mainly phonological ones. With this purpose in mind, Bucholtz (2002) posits the view that previous studies were interested in the differences on both sexes in terms of language use rather than on the most important variables employed in their speech.

As studies have developed in sociolinguistics, researchers make a bridge between the studies of language in relation to gender. However, Mansfield and Trudgill (1994) maintain that there is a lack of research in terms of phonological variant used by both sexes. They carry out a survey in which they find that men use a higher proportion of the alveolar /n/ variant, whereas women employ a higher proportion of the velar plosive. In the same wave, Labov (1990: 205) summarises his study into three



principles the first is about what he calls stable sociolinguistic stratification in which men use a higher frequency of non-standard forms than women, whereas the second shows that women favour prestigious forms more than men, and the last one illustrates that women are most often innovators.

Furthermore, Fasold (1990) suggests that women employ a higher proportion of standard variant than men since it permits them to sound less local and to have a voice because they think that this act may put them in a superior social position to men. Similarly, Gordon (1997) explains that women resort to standard forms in order to avoid the social stereotypes surrounding the use of non-standard dialects. Deuchar (1989), however, claims that women employ standard forms as a politeness strategy in order to maintain face during their interactions.

On the other hand, Holmes and Meyerhoff (2003: 09) maintain that gender is still an essential factor in language variation and change, but it is a factor that interacts with other social variables in a community. In other words, it has to be ‘put into context’ as they (idem) claim. Similarly, Sadiqi (2003: 312) posits the same view claiming that it is in fact only within a particular culture that **“gender performance acquires meaning”**.

In short, most studies prove that women tend to use more formal forms than men and differ in their style. They also confirm that males prefer local linguistic forms of their speech communities, whereas females are attracted with supra-local forms. According to Milroy and Milroy, the reason behind such variation is the individuals’ identity. In this light, they write that:

**It should be noted that gender variation in speech is not necessarily evident to the casual observer. Normally, both sexes use the same variants, but in different quantities, and the differences are fine grained, therefore, they can normally be demonstrated only by quantitative means.**

**(Milroy and Milroy in Coulmas, 1998: 55)**

On the other hand, Labov (1966) shows that age and the social class of men pushes them to use standard form of English including the variant /ing/, while women tend to use the informal forms /in/. He adds that females prefer prestigious forms in order to have an important position in society. Labov (1990) summarises his findings claiming that males prefer non-standard forms, while females are innovators in linguistic change.

Similarly, Trudgill (1972) highlights that men, in Norwich, tend to use linguistic forms depending on their social class. He goes on stating that men, in working class, consider non-standard forms as marker of masculinity.

### **1.8- Gender and Language Change**

Most sociolinguists agree on the fact that women play a crucial role in language or linguistic change. They also argue that females are the leaders of linguistic changes. These changes involve new prestigious forms of the high social class, whereas men prefer changes in vernacular forms of the lower class.

On the other hand, more recent studies have shown that women's role in language change is very complicated. Following this point of view, Labov (ibid: 213, 215) insists on the idea that women adopt prestige forms of language from the upper ranks, whereas men are more interested in public consciousness.

Furthermore, Suzanne explains that gender differentiation in language leads to linguistic change. Therefore, gender has attracted the attention of many scholarly works in sociolinguistics since it has been seen as an important concept in language variation. In fact, sociolinguists tend to study gender differences in terms of what they call social variation i.e., the speech of different social groups, as well as stylistic variation or the speech of an individual in different contexts. She further argues that language variation is the main factor which leads to language change. In other words, it happens when a social group acquires a new linguistic form of another speech community.

Indeed, it is worth mentioning that early dialectologists were among the first who recognised the role of gender in language innovation. They have insisted on linguistic changes in their studies of rural dialects. For instance, Brun (1946)<sup>4</sup> illustrates those older members over fifty years who spoke only provençal dialect, whereas women underforty-five spoke mainly French. He also explains that since younger women did not speak provençal with their children, this leads their dialect to disappear. However, this view was strongly criticised by sociolinguists since they have found that some changes are associated with men rather than women.

Interestingly, sociolinguists have discovered that some linguistic variables are undergoing change. In some studies they have found that the lower middle class tend to employ more prestigious forms in formal speech. In comparison with the higher class, they resort to informal styles when dealing with each other. Henceforth, when a linguistic variable is undergoing the process of change, the lower middle class tend to use a new prestige variant. In this light, Hudson has declared the following:

**In any society where males and females have equal access to the standard form, females use standard variants of any stable variable which is socially stratified for both sexes more often than males do.**

**(Quoted by Nevalainen 2002: 186)**

In its general terms, most of sociolinguistic studies have maintain that the role of women is very essential in language change such as the spread of the pronoun “my” and the third person singular “s” which emerges from the lower class rather than the higher one.

## **1.9- Gender and Identity**

In few decades, the field of language and gender has been influenced by the theory of gender performance which is postulated by Butler (1990). In his point of

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<sup>4</sup> Cited by Gerard Van Herk (2012: 94).

view, the difference between males and females in terms of language use is the result of how they perform expressions. However, he adds, this performance is influenced by forms and speech of the society.

Additionally, Eckert (2000), in a study in Detroit, explains the impact of the speaker's identity in the use of language. She further adds that there is a correlation between gender and the social status of the speaker. She gives a good example of 'Jocks' and 'Burnouts' in a high school. She states that boys were attracted towards the use of an urban vernacular pronunciation, whereas Burnout and Jock girls tend to use the vowel (æ) as in bad. In other words, they were interested in the use of a suburban vernacular pronunciation.

Along with the same wave, Harvath (1985) follows what is called "the principle components analysis" in studying gender variation in language in Sydney. She finds that the speaker's different characteristics, which build their identity, are related to their way of selecting linguistic forms. She also shows that there are certain vowels which are used by teenagers in her sample to signify gender differences. In fact, she relies on Labov's works in New York in order to show certain differences in pronunciation according to the social class of the speakers. However, Labov was criticised by many scholars including Milroy (1992) in terms of gender differences in connection to social class, but her investigation helps them to understand gender differentiated language, or how gender interacts with social class. She further argues that gender and social class should be differentiated in sociolinguistic research. She bases her statement on the argument that language use has something in common with speakers' identity.

In addition to this, Denton (1997) introduces what she calls "practice based identity" which is concerned with studying the influence of identity of speakers in their performance, linguistic forms and other activities.

It is also worth mentioning, that there are major differences between girls and boys with regard to their personality traits. Besides, children's identity construction correlates with their gendered identity and their sex. For instance, in working class

families boys are encouraged to be active, independent and even aggressive, whereas girls are expected to be kindness and calmness, that is, they should follow the traditional view of feminist role in society as being good wives and mothers. This fact can be also found in middle class families where children enjoy a great degree of autonomy, whereas girls are expected to be professionally successful. On the other hand, boys should be oriented towards educational success.

### **1.10 - Gender and Politeness**

Most of scholars agree on the idea that politeness in speech is connected with women. In her part, Spender (1980: 36) observes that females are expected to use more polite forms than men. According to Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert and Leap (2000: 230), some scholars have shown that politeness theory is very essential in an interpreting women's and men's language use. In her part, Lakoff (1975: 52) insists on the idea that women's social role was that of 'arbiter of morality, judge of manners' and she adds that this latter encourages females to be linguistically polite. Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert and Leap (idem) further point out:

**One of the most influential early accounts of gender and politeness, however, comes from research carried out by Penelop Brown in Tenejapa, a Mayan community in Mexico. Brown (1980) draws on the model of politeness she developed with Stephen Levinson...**

In their point of view, politeness means showing interest to people's face. They divide this branch into positive and negative politeness. The former has to do **“with the expression of warmth or friendliness”**, whereas the latter **“has to do with not imposing on others, or threatening their face”**. In her investigation, Brown has discovered that women, in Tenejapan community, **“used the extremes of positive and negative politeness, while men spoke more ‘matter-of- factly’.”** as it has been noted by Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert and Leap (Idem).

In addition to this, Brown and Levinson relate their findings with the social position of women and men in Tenejapan society, for instance, **“vulnerability in relation to men and their need to protect their reputations”**. (1987: 231). In the same wave, Holmes (1995: 6) argues for the above idea claiming that **“[w]omen’s utterances show evidence of concern for the feelings of the people they are talking to more often and more explicitly than men’s do”**. Holmes further argues that women tend to focus on conversational features including tag questions, while this latter has attracted the attention of many researchers including Lakoff. In her side, she states that tag questions are parts of women’s as well as men’s language.

Furthermore, Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert and Leap (idem) give more important points about genders’ positive politeness such as irony which is **“[...] a positive politeness strategy (stressing shared assumptions and interpretations between speaker and listener)...”** Moreover, Brown and Levinson (1987) add that women employ also what is called hedging and understatement **“as a negative politeness strategy (the expression of strong feelings might be seen as an imposition on the person addressed)”** as it has been quoted by Coates (1998: 90, 92). She goes on to highlight that both girls and boys are urged to use polite forms since they learn them from their parents during their first years. Therefore, girls are expected to use more polite forms than boys, that is, the social milieu, where they can get in contact with other children who can push them to develop their own vocabulary. Similarly, Romaine (1994) argues that girls spoke more politely, whereas boys tend to employ more slang and swear words. She further explains her view claiming that parents look after their girls during their social upbringing; so, girls’ politeness can be regarded as the mirror of the societies’ norms and values.

### **1.11- The Myths and Stereotypes about Language and Gender**

It is very necessary to mention that our views and attitudes are the result of our culture. However, certain norms of this culture lead to the creation of certain stereotypes that restrict our language use. These norms are learnt by different generation and reflected in linguistic forms. In this respect, Frank and Ashen (1983: 27) claim that:

**Perhaps the most common stereotype about women's speech is that women talk a lot...there seems to be no study which supports this belief, while there are several which show just opposite.**

Furthermore, Graddol and Swann (1989: 2) share the same view claiming that stereotypes on gender differences are realised through language i.e., **“through proverbs, jokes, journalism, literature and even by serious language scholars”**. They further explain that **“Stereotypes of women's and men's speech are plentiful and they seem to have an extremely long history”**. Through these stereotypes, they add that women are **“consistently portrayed as chatterboxes, endless gossips or strident nags patiently endured or kept in check by strong silent men”**. (Idem)

Additionally, Berryman and Eman maintain that our views are based on stereotypes which are deeply rooted in our culture. In this sense, they (1980: 196) write that:

**Although very few actual cultural differences in the speech of males and females are empirically documented, there is a persistence of stereotypical assumptions, perceptions and expectations concerning the linguistic behaviour of the sexes.**

On the other hand, Romaine posits the view that these stereotypes reflect our attitudes. In this vein, she (1999: 4) claims:

**Stereotypes about how men and women speak reveal insights into our attitudes about what men and women are like or what we think they are supposed to be like. Perceived gender differences are often the result of these stereotypes about such differences, rather than the result of the actual existence of**

**real differences.**

What can be understood from the above quotation is that stereotypes affect the way men and women use language, especially their linguistic style. In their part, Hall and Bucholtz argue that stereotypes are the main factor beyond gender differences. In this regard, they (1995: 406) state the following:

**Through daily processes, certain words or grammatical expressions become the basis of discourse differences that both create and recreate the situations of gendered lives.**

Another stereotype between men and women is the way they use colour terms differently. In this sense, Talbot (1998: 38) quotes the following:

**Lakoff reports seeing a man ‘helpless with suppressed laughter at a discussion between two other people as to whether a book jacket was to be described as “lavender” or “mauve” (1975: 09). She concludes from this that from a man’s point of view such fine distinctions are trivial and beneath their notice’**

We should also mention that topics of conversation are also stereotyped since they are related to sex. Coates, (2003: 44) shows males and females differences in conversation claiming that **“the topic of these extracts is stereotypically masculine: they are about cars, about modern technology, about drinking, about travel”**.

### **1.12- Women’s and Men’s Language Attitudes**

It is worth mentioning, that Labov (1966) is the first who dealt with the study of language attitudes. In his research, he finds that women are more sensitive to prestige factors than men, when he asks them about New York dialect. In their study of gender, variation in Dutch, Gruyter and Brouwer (1989: 9) explain Labov’s finding as following:



**[...] in most cases women showed the greater style shift to the standard as the formality of the speech situation [...] they were more sensitive to prestige factors than men. When questioned about the New York City dialect women more consistently and sharply showed their distaste by calling it ‘horrible’, ‘sloppy’ and ‘distorted’.**

Similarly, Trudgill (1974) deals with language patterns of both women and men in Norwich in Britain. He finds that men are more attracted to non- standard forms of English, whereas females are more interested in using Standard English. In this vein, Gruyter and Brouwer (idem) summarise Trudgill’s point of view as follows:

**[...] men may attach a certain value to non –standard language because of the connotations of roughness and toughness, which are supposed to be desirable masculine attributes. When questioned directly, many men admitted that they would rather not speak the standard variety to avoid being seen as disloyal by their friends.**

He further finds that men use a covert prestige, whereas women employ an overt prestige. Besides, more scholarly attentions have been directed towards women’s and men’s speech behaviour. Most of studies use what is called the ‘matched-guise’ technique to gather information about men’s and women’s attitudes. They (ibid: 10) show that males who use standard forms are perceived as:

**[...]having more social competence (e.g. intelligence, ambition, self-confidence), while male speakers of a non-standard variety often score higher on the scale of social attractiveness (Kindheartedness, sincerity).**

They further explain that females' use of standard forms is connected with both masculine and feminine characteristics. Consequently, **“the standard pronunciation of women carried with it the usual connotations of social competence and occupational status, while being associated with femininity as well”** (idem).

Additionally, Edelsky (1979)<sup>5</sup> observes, through her investigation of intonation patterns in the United States that both male and female voices are receiving certain stereotypes since speakers use the straight rise contour. They also associate female voices with feminine attributes regardless of the contour used.

In its general terms, men and women have different attitudes. These attitudes are surrounded by several stereotypes which are rooted in the culture of their society. In fact, women's use of language is surrounded by negative connotations and for this reason men avoid standard forms since they are seen as parts of females' language.

### **1.13- Conclusion**

Throughout the first chapter, we tried to summarise the most important scholarly investigations in the field of gender and language. In fact, differences in language have been viewed differently due to many reasons. This fact leads to the emergence of many theories and approaches which provide a fertile soil for investigating gender in relation to language. The most important works are led by feminist scholars including Lakoff, Tannen, Cameron and Eckerts ...etc.

We have also dealt with males and females differences in using spoken and written language. We tried to show how scholars make a relationship between language and identity in investigating gender differences. Besides, previous works reveal that men and women differ even in the politeness strategies they use.

Broadly speaking, what can be summarised is that gender differences depend on many socio-cultural factors among which the identity of the speaker, his construction of the expressions he uses and the politeness strategies, he resorts to during his social interaction.

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<sup>5</sup> Cited by De Gruyter and Dede Brouwer (ibid: 10).

# Chapter Two

## *Chapter Two*

### *An Attitudinal Account of Gender Differences in Language Use in Algerian Context.*

2.1- Introduction.....	41
2.2- The Socio-Cultural and Linguistic Contexts of Algeria.....	41
2.3- Maghnia History and Language.....	44
2.4- Gender Group in Algeria.....	45
2.5- Factors Affecting Gender Differences.....	46
2.6- Gender and Linguistic Variation in Algerian Arabic.....	48
2.7- Studies on Language and Gender in the Arab Societies.....	49
2.8- Algerian Women and Discourse Strategies.....	51
2.9- Oral Literature and Algerian Females.....	54
2.10- Gender and Language Choice in Algeria.....	56
2.11- Stereotypes Related to Gender's Language Use.....	60
2.12- Terms of Address and Gender in Algeria.....	62
2.13- Sexism Language and Algerian Culture.....	64
2.14- Naming Differences in Algerian Arabic.....	66
2.15- Attitudinal Approach and Gender in the Algerian Context.....	69
2.16- Conclusion.....	72

## **2-1 Introduction**

The purpose of the second chapter is to shed some light on the socio-cultural and linguistic profiles of Maghnia speech community. It tends to prove that this homogeneous society has a shared linguistic system and norms, although the use of language differs depending on certain social parameters including gender, age and the educational background. In other terms, Maghnia speakers share the same religious principles, language and history.

Furthermore, this chapter aims at exploring gender groups in Algerian context in general and Maghnia speech community in particular since this latter has been influenced by many social and political factors throughout its history. The main factor which makes this society different is its geographical location and contact with Morocco. Therefore, this chapter will be an explanatory account of Maghnia society.

## **2.2- The Socio-Cultural and Linguistic Contexts of Algeria**

One should note that the cultural and linguistic heritage of a given speech community take control over its members and their use of language. In this sense, Sadiqi (2003: 17) describes Moroccan culture as follows:

**Moroccan culture is of a type that strongly constrains the behavior of men and women. The strength of this control comes from the fact that it is channeled through powerful cultural components that strongly regulate the lives of Moroccan men and women through powerful social institutions.**

She further adds that the social institutions control the individuals' use of language. She gives eight components which influence gender and lead to linguistic differences. In this regard, she (idem) claims that:

**Eight such components have a direct impact on gender perception, gender subversion and language use:(i) history,(ii) geography,(iii) Islam, (iv) orality,(v) multilingualism,(vi) social organization,(vii) economic status, and (viii) political system.**

It is agreed that Algeria is a coastal country and this fact has attracted the interest of many civilisations throughout history. It becomes the home for many people including the Phoenicians, the Romans, the Turks, the Arabs and later on the French. In this regard, Kay and Zoubir (1990: 69) give the most important points in Algerian history as follows:

**Before the Arab Conquest in the seventh century and the Islamization of the Berbers, Algeria was a Romance province. And before it was annexed by the French in the nineteenth century, turned Algeria into a pirate state open to a multiplicity of cultural models during two centuries of Ottoman presence.**

During the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries, Algeria witnessed the arrival of many Arabs and the spread of Islam. Henceforth, Arabic became the language of many Algerian tribes. This fact leads into a linguistic change due to the contact with the previous invaders.

However, Algerian history has changed because of the coming of Ottomans who published an empire which took all Maghreban countries as a part of this empire, indeed the Ottoman power helped in the protection of the Algerian coasts from the invasion of the Europeans. However, the Turks began losing their force by the 18<sup>th</sup> century and, henceforth, they gave up and paved the way for other European powers. Thus, the French empire took the opportunity to invade Algeria. The colonisation of the French took about one hundred thirty years. Consequently, the impact of the French language and culture is deeply rooted in Algerian history and leads to the spread of French.

Talking about the language of Algeria, modern standard Arabic is used as a national language in formal settings such as: public speaking, religious texts, education and other prestigious contexts, whereas the language of daily communication is reserved for use in more informal and relaxed situations such as at home and in coffees, moreover it represented by Algerian Arabic (AA) or ‘darija’<sup>6</sup>. In this vein, Ruedy (2005: 18) states:

**The Arabic speech most widespread in Algeria today is a dialect descended from these nomadic invaders. The sedentary Arabic dialects presumed to be pre-Hilalian are limited to the Arabic speaking parts of the lesser Kabylia [...] Algerian Sahara was dominated by a nomadic group known as the Towareg. The Aures and most of the Nementcha mountains were home to the Chaouia.**

Furthermore, the Algerian sociolinguistic profile is deeply influenced by the French language. Thus, Algerian Arabic has taken a lot from French. This is apparent in daily communication. However, the use of French is conditioned by certain social parameters including gender and the educational background. In other words, women are supposed to use more French than men and this fact is one of our concerns in this dissertation.

### **2.3- Maghnia History and Language**

Maghnia<sup>7</sup> is a town located in North western Algeria with a population of 85, 00 inhabitants. It is about 39 km from Tlemcen, 137 km South-West of Oran and 580 km

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<sup>6</sup> According to Sadiqi (2003: 48) “‘*darija*’ is derived from the Standard Arabic verb *daraja* which means ‘be spread among’ or ‘proceed gradually’”.

<sup>7</sup> It was the Arabs who gave the name Lalla Maghnia for Maghnia. This name refers to a woman who was worshiping in the area. She was buried near Maghnia. In this place is still today Kouba. This Kouba was built in the late eighteenth century.

West of Algiers. Besides, this town has borders with Morocco. This fact makes it an important for economic, political and cultural contact.

Furthermore, the history of this town is very rich since it witnesses the arrival of many people. In fact, Maghnia was occupied by its indigenous inhabitants in addition to many invaders including Quartzite, Basalt and the Greek. However, the first people who arrived were the Phoenicians and then the Roman who established a station called “Numerus Syrorum”<sup>8</sup> or simply “Syrorum” or “SYR”. They also established a military camp, surrounded by a wide and deep ditch and flanked by square towers. These towers contained four doors.

Additionally, the history of Maghnia witnessed the arrival of the Muslims who settled with the indigenous tribes. Indeed, it became an important place for settlement especially of the Roman inhabitants who were Arabised after Islamisation. Those people got in contact with the Berbers who were living in mountains and who formed one-fifth of the total population. In fact, the indigenous people (Berbers) took the nomadic habits of the Arabs. Henceforth, Maghnia became an important area for economic and commercial exchange.

In 1836, the French expedition came to Tlemcen. Lalla Maghnia was reported to the French officers. In 1843, it was colonised by the general Beadle. During the French period, the city was named Maghnia and was a part of the department of Tlemcen, but after independence, it was, again, renamed Maghnia.

As far as language is concerned, Maghnia people use Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in formal domains such as education and Maghnia dialect in informal setting such as family conversation. In fact, this dialect is the result of the contact with the Arabs and the indigenous people (Berbers). Today Maghnia dialect has changed due to the contact with Moroccan varieties. Besides, it has also taken from French language. What can be also observed is that Maghnia speakers have developed a rich vocabulary due to the commercial contact that appears recently.

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<sup>8</sup> The name ‘numerus syronum’ refers to the auxiliary unit of the Roman army which had its garrison in the camp.



## 2.4 - Gender Group in Algeria

It is essential to note that the cultural structure of a given speech community determines the position of both males and females. In other terms, there is a belief that the place of women is at home as housewives taking care after children, that is, women are culturally and socially determined. In this sense, Bassiouney (2009: 133) cites Sadiqi's point of view as follows:

**Sadiqi [...] alludes to the fact that it is not helpful to look at Moroccan women as one entity, since diversity within Moroccan society is essential for a clear understanding of women's position in society.**

Additionally, the attitudes of both males and females towards certain linguistic varieties are also influenced by the cultural structure of the society. For instance, women are more conscious in using language in Algeria i.e., they are aware that the social norms of the Algerian society govern their acts.

Furthermore, Algerian women are socialised from childhood to be polite and conservative. This fact leads Algerian women to use more prestigious forms of speech including French. Besides, it is very rare, in our society, to hear women swearing or using offensive language.

Interestingly, one should mention that some linguistic forms are seen as aspects of femininity such as the use of the glottal stop /ʔ/ in Tlemcen dialect. In fact, the glottal is seen as a stereotype characterising this variety. Therefore, Tlemcen males avoid it when they are talking to speakers from other towns. This view is better explained through some examples from Maghnia speech community as the following table shows:

<b>Terms in English</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
Money	[ 1bəzra ] or [tiki]	[ dra : həm ]
New	[ mʃamʃa ]	[ ʒdi : da ]
Drug	[ kəmja ] or [ʃiku:la]	[ lki : f ]
New clothes	[ ʃədda ]	[ ħaʦʦa ]
Lorries	[ kmajən ]	[ kamju : na : t ]

**Table 2-1 Gender Differences in Language Use in Maghnia Speech Community.<sup>9</sup>**

In addition to this, Algerian males try to show their superiority over females, whereas women struggle to prove their presence. This view is supported by Tannen (1990: 24, 25), in her investigation when she claims that men “[...] **struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure**”, whereas, she adds, women “[...] **struggle to preserve intimacy and avoid isolation, though there hierarchies in this world too, they are hierarchies more of friendship than of power and accomplishment.**”

## **2.5 - Factors Affecting Gender Differences**

It is worth mentioning that there are certain socio-cultural factors that affect the use of language between men and women. Among these reasons we have religious and traditional practices. In this sense, Bassiouney (ibid: 135) claims that:

**Tradition is perhaps one of the fixed independent variables that play a major role in Arab countries. A number of customs or ways of life that one may associate with religion are in fact associated with tradition.**

Additionally, there are economic factors which impose on men and women to be different not only in one speech community, but in the whole country, a good example

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<sup>9</sup> This table is my own research.

is of Maghnia society in which the economic status of its members pushes them to develop certain expressions and terms. These words differ between males and females due to their occupation and educational backgrounds. This idea is better understood from Bassiouney (idem) when she claims that:

**[...] economic disparities have great consequences for language use and certainly for issues related to language and gender and how communities function in a wider sense. Note also that in a country such as Egypt, at the beginning of the new millennium, 18 per cent of households were headed by women and not men ( El- Kholy 2002: 34), which may not be the case in some Gulf countries, for example.**

Moving deeper, one should mention that the social attitudes of both males and females affect the use of their language. In other words, the use of language reflects the social rules that control the attitudes of speakers. For instance, the speech of females is connected with home activities such as in [da:rna],[drahem], whereas males speech is related to work and business like in [lbəzra],[tiki]or [ʃarika] referring to money.

Henceforth, the differences between both sexes are determined by religious and cultural practices as well as the social rules that the society impose on them. These factors help females to develop a stock of words and phrases that males never use, but understand. A good example is in the use of [fa:ʔ] by Tlemcen females and [fəʔan] by males (he wakes up). Another example comes from Sidi Bel Abbes dialect in the use of my brother and sister while females employ expressions such as: [xuʒa] and [xti], males use [χajji] and [χajti].

## **2.6 - Gender and Linguistic Variation in Algerian Arabic**

It is agreed that most studies on gender differences, in the use of Arabic varieties, dealt with phonetic and phonological features. According to Bassiouney, the first study is done by Roux (1952) who examines differences between men and women in

Moroccan society. She posits the view that most studies are interested in studying the spoken form. She (ibid: 158) summarises the most important researches as follows:

**First, Roux (1952) examined the differences between men's and women's speech in Morocco in relation to specific consonants, such as *s*, *z* and *r*. Hurreiz (1978) in his study of Khartoum also examined the use of intonation. Royal (1985) studied the relation between pharyngalisation, class and gender in Egypt. Al-khateeb (1988) studied a number of consonants used in Irbid in Jordan, which include *q*, *k* and *t*, and one vowel, *a*. He studied them in relation to gender, education and age.**

Basically, recent studies have shown that the educational background of the Arab speakers is the most important variables that determine linguistic differences between males and females. In the light of this idea, Bassiouney (ibid: 161) further explains that:

**[...] women sometimes do not have access to education and professional life to the same extent as men do and thus their use of MSA is less than that of men. [...] women have a choice between the prestigious urban variety, a rural variety and MSA, they are more prone to choose the urban variety as a symbolic means of asserting their identity.**

What can be understood from the above quotation is that educated women, in the Arab world, tend to use more standard forms than illiterate ones. Bassiouney adds that women differ from men even in the use of urban and rural varieties.

## **2.7 - Studies on Language and Gender in the Arab Societies**

According to Vicente, a lot can be said about previous works on gender in the Arab world, but no research has dealt with it from a sociolinguistic perspective. In this regard, she (2009: 9) states the following:

**Many works have dealt with women and gender in Arab societies but only a few of them were carried out from a sociolinguistic perspective. The general trend has always been based on a historical, socio-cultural, political, legal or economic approach...**

Similarly, Sadiqi (2007: 642) claims that **“the study of Arabic from a gender perspective is still at its beginnings in spite of the fact that Arabic sociolinguistics has attracted the attention of scholars worldwide”**.

One should note that even Western scholars try to shed light on gender differences in the Arab world by comparing Western findings with the Arabic sociolinguistic situation. They come to a conclusion that previous Western works do not suit gender research in the Arab world.

It is also worth mentioning that Western scholars, including Trudgill and Labov, try to investigate gender differences according to certain social variables such as age, social class and the educational background. In this sense, Trudgill states that previous Western studies:

**Are all agreed that women, allowing for other variables such as age, education and social class, produce on average linguistics forms which more closely approach those of the standard language or have higher prestige than those produced by men.**

**(Quoted by Camrie Bernard and Mushira Eid, 1981: 200)**

Camrie and Eid further highlight that most important scholars such as Labov focuses on Arab researchers including Abdel-Jawad’s work in Amaan. In this regard Labov (1982: 78) claims that **“Abdel-Jawad [...] found that in Amaan it is men who use the highest frequency of standard / q /in all social groups”**.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Quoted by Camrie Bernard and Mushira Eid (ibid: 201).

Labov agrees with Trudgill on the view that previous Western studies on gender do not fit the Arab societies. In the light of this idea, he maintains that:

**The general principle [concerning the role of women in linguistic change] that emerged from studies in Europe, Canada, the United States, and Latin America is that women are more conservative in their reaction where stable or socially recognized variation is concerned. But this generalization has been reversed for a number of societies in the Near East and South Asia.**

**(Quoted by Camrie Bernard and Mushira Eid, *idem*)**

Furthermore, Labov (*ibid*: 78-79) declares that the social position of men in the Arab world influences their use of linguistic forms. In this regard, he maintains the following:

**It appears that where women have not traditionally played a major role in public life, cultural expectations will lead them to react less strongly to the linguistic norms of the dominant culture, and that this cultural force will apply even to women who are individually active and successful.**

**(Quoted in Camrie and Eid, *ibid*: 202)**

As far as studies on gender differences in Algeria are concerned, the most important works are done by Dendane (2007), for instance. Indeed, he focuses on studying variation at the lexical, phonological and morphological levels.

In fact, Algeria has important varieties which differ from each other at different levels. Besides, there is also a difference between people of the same town in using accent. These differences are apparent in the towns which are in the borders including Annaba and Tlemcen. In Maghnia dialect, for example, pronounce the third singular masculine object-pronoun as [ah] such as in [ʃəftah] (I saw him).

## 2.8 - Algerian Women and Discourse Strategies

It is agreed that males and females do not only differ on the linguistic features they use, but also on the discourse strategies they resort to. In this line, Vicente (2009: 20) states that **“Several studies have demonstrated that female and male sociolects are not solely differentiated by the production of some linguistic features but also by the use of certain discourse strategies.”**

On the other hand, Bassiouney (2009: 137) relates discourse strategies with honour and modesty. In this regard, Vicente (idem) writes that honour and modesty are:

**[...] linked to the world of anthropology, help to explain why Arab women behave differently from western women. [...] a good understanding of how honour and modesty operate in an Arabic-speaking society helps to recognize the linguistic choice available to women and their behaviour in this sense.**

Vicente (idem) also mentions Sadiqi's point of view concerning Moroccan women. In this sense, she states that:

**[...] female linguistic uses and practices are a reflection of the different status women have in society from the viewpoint of economy, law, education, etc. This author also considers that female discourse strategies are an answer to widespread and rocentrism in Moroccan society. This could also apply, with some differences, to most societies of the Arabic-speaking context.**

In fact, gender differences, according to Vicente (idem), may affect the perception and use of language. She also gives Sadiqi as an example claiming that women in Morocco:

**do not have the same opportunities as men of free access to languages due to social differences between genders. The public sphere is masculine, while the private sphere is feminine, and this circumstance is not only spatial but symbolic and linguistic.**

Vicente also sights Fatima's view about the fact that there are extra linguistic factors which influence gender use of language. She adds that the use of forms of address by females reflect their lower social status. She goes on claiming that **“naming people reflect differences in gender in Arabic-speaking societies because they reproduce underlying cultural and social attitudes”** (ibid: 21).

She concludes that these linguistic strategies are influenced by certain social and economic factors. In this regard, she (ibid: 22) states that:

**The use of one type of linguistic strategy or another to fight attitudes of male dominance varies depending on several factors: socioeconomic situation, access to education, type of habitat (rural/urban), ethnicity and religion.**

On the other hand, Sadiqi (2006: 289-267)<sup>11</sup> claims that Moroccan women, who have a good educational level, are capable of switching between languages, whereas a literate females use oral literature including poetry and popular sayings.

As far as Algerian women are concerned, all the previous scholarly views suit an Algerian context since females rely on honour and modesty in their social interaction. Moreover, it is important to mention that these strategies impose on them to search for substitutions and expressions to use in their relationship with each other.

Additionally, Sadiqi, in her article Women and Linguistic Space in Morocco, maintains that the level of education and their geographical background influence their

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<sup>11</sup> Cited by Vicente (idem).



communicative strategies. In the light of this idea, she (2003: 12-13) highlights the following:

**[...] women's communicative strategies are primarily dictated by their geographical origin and level of education. Rural women are predominantly illiterate and, thus, use female oral literature to empower themselves, and educated urban women use their language skills (code-switching) for the same purpose. Women's communicative strategies are highly structured.**

## **2.9 - Oral Literature and Algerian Females**

It is obvious that Algerian women have developed an acceptable amount of oral literature that they use in daily interaction. This literature includes poems, proverbs, euphemisms, tales and short stories. In fact, this literature represents the socio-cultural traditions of the Algerian family as an Arab society. In this vein, Vicente (ibid: 23) talks about the Arab women and their use of this literature as follows:

**Oral artistic expression produced by women in the Arab world in the form of poems, music or stories, provides interesting anthropological information regarding socio-cultural rules as well as linguistic testimony to the practices and use of language made by women. We deal with another branch of studies, typically ethnographic, regards gender as a cultural construction where language reflects the roles women have played, and still play, as guardians of the oral tradition.**

Additionally, the feelings and thoughts of Algerian females are apparent in the music and stories that are created by them. Indeed, their relationship with men is also obvious and proves the superiority of males. In this regard, Vicente claims that **“The Arabic-speaking region is characterized by the existence of a rich diversity of oral**

**traditions closely linked to the role played by women narrating tales, religious or autobiographical stories and reciting or singing poems.” (idem).**

What can be understood from this literature is that Algerian women try to prove their presence and status through writing. However, the main purpose of these stories is to protect their relationships in the society. In the light of this previous idea, Vicente (idem) argues the following:

**On some occasions it has been considered that the purpose of this activity is to show their presence in the community and even at times, to subvert the role given to them. But it is not always a subversive activity because many of these stories reinforce social boundaries and preserve standards of behaviour (cf. Yaqub 2003: 127).**

On the other hand, this oral literature is related to old illiterate women, whereas educated females tend to forget most of these traditions as it has been seen by Kapchan (2003: 236)<sup>12</sup> when he claims that poetic compositions in Algeria always cling to female sentiment and **“although the men are often the star singers, in the public imagination Algerian women are the acknowledged authors of traditions.”**

In the last few decades, the role of Algerian women is not limited to oral literature, but they start competing with men in the written domain including novels, poetry books and newspapers. Indeed, Algerian women show their superiority over men in these domains. They write by using both languages (MSA and French). Vicente (ibid: 24) supports this view claiming that:

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<sup>12</sup>As quoted by Vicente (idem).

**Despite the fact that Arabic-speaking women are usually associated with oral folklore and tradition, their activities are not limited to these spheres. There are also novels, poetry books, memoirs, newspaper articles and forums on the Internet. In classical literature (written in MSA)**

In its general terms, the position of Algerian females has changed due to many socio-cultural factors that Algerian society has witnessed in the last decades. In fact, old illiterate women are replaced by younger educated females. They take place in every field and forget about the ancient traditions and customs. In this sense, Vicente (idem) adds that:

**The social status of Arabic-speaking women has changed or is in the process of changing, especially in urban environments where former illiterate housewives have been replaced by young women with certain levels of independence and studies.**

However, this change is not the same as in rural areas, where women are still stick to oral traditions since they represent their socio-cultural norms.

## **2.10 - Gender and Language Choice in Algeria**

As we have explained before, Algeria is a multilingual country in which three languages interact between each other. However, the choice of language depends on the gender and the age of the Algerian speaker. In other terms, Algerian males and females differ in selecting the language they use since **“Gender interferes greatly with language use: women do not often have the same choices as men.”** as it is seen by Sadiqi (ibid: 6).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> From her article of (2003).

It is also worth mentioning that Algerian Arabic is used by both males and females. However, one should note that Algerian Arabic is mostly used by men and both genders in rural areas, whereas French language is employed by urban people especially women. In this sense, Sadiqi (idem) further explains the point that in Morocco society:

**Standard Arabic is a typically ‘male’ language, Moroccan Arabic is both a female and male language although it is more used by men in rural areas, French is a typically urban language and is used more by women than men.**

Hence, Sadiqi further adds that Standard Arabic is a marker of all Arab societies and represents their identity. She states that “[...] **Standard Arabic has remained the language of Arab identity, Arab literature/ poetry. as well as religious scholarship and practice**”. (2003: 7)

In fact, Standard Arabic, in Algerian society, is employed in most formal domains such as education, text books, politics, mass media and religious ceremonies. In this vein, Sadiqi, posits the view that all the Arab societies, including Moroccan speech community, use SA in prestigious domains. She further claims that men prefer SA than French in formal domains whereas; females are with using French language. In this regard, she (idem) highlights the following:

**The gender aspect of Standard Arabic resides in the fact that being the medium of the ‘public’ expression of religion and politics, it is more accessible to, and significant for men, as they are more closely defined in connection with public spaces such as the mosque, the government, etc. Whereas women are considered to inhabit, or rightfully occupy the private sphere, or the ‘home’.**

On the other hand, French language has replaced SA and being used in most prestigious domains including education. In Algeria, women consider French as a symbol of modernity and prestige, while Algerian Arabic is seen as an aspect of rural people. In this sense, Sadiqi (ibid: 11) explains the idea as follows:

**French is an urban super ordinate second language which is closely linked to education. It has, over the years, become very useful in the private sector. French is also necessary for obtaining employment and is, thus, positively perceived as a symbol of ‘modernity’, ‘enlightenment’, and ‘openness to the Western world’.**

She further explains that Moroccan women like all other Maghreb females are proficient in French rather than in Arabic. In this respect, she declares that “[...] **this language is more favored by women than by men. In fact, women tend to display proficiency in French more frequently than proficiency in Standard Arabic**”. (idem)

As far as code switching is concerned, Algerian women prefer to switch from AA to French for several reasons. The first and main one is that French is seen as a prestigious language. In this sense, Sadiqi (2003: 39) highlights that:

**One of the main reasons women use of code-switching is a search for prestige. In urban areas, little girls are often more encouraged to use French than little boys.**

Besides, one should mention that males also switch according to the context of their communication. In connection with this, Sadiqi (2003: 39) explains that in Morocco:

**Both women and men use code switching in their everyday conversation [...], but code switching is more associated with women than with men.**

In fact, what can be also observed is that **“urban women [...] are more likely to speak French and engage in code-switching involving French than men from the same social background.”(idem).**

Furthermore, it is important to note that Algerian males and females differ even in the degree of using French as other Maghreban societies. In this sense, Sadiqi (idem) maintains that:

**As for men’s code-switching, it seems that it differs from women’s in the sense that it is the presence of educated women which may trigger it. Men may use code-switching, for example, to impress these women.**

Additionally, she goes on claiming that males, when they use French words, try to change their pronunciation, whereas females employ them as they are. In this sense, she (idem) writes that:

**When women and men use words or expressions from French, men would be more likely to ‘mold’ the loans in the general morpho-syntactic structure of Moroccan Arabic, whereas women would tend to pronounce the loans as they are pronounced in French.**

What can be understood from the above quotation is that women prefer using French words as they are borrowed, while males try to change their pronunciation of these expressions such as in [feru:ʒ] becomes [firu:ʒ], [normalement] becomes [normarment]. Moreover, females may also use code-switching as a way to attract the

attention during communication especially in mixed-sex groups. In this regard, she (ibid: 40) states that:

**[...] in all-female and mixed groups, Moroccan women use code-switching as a means of attracting and maintaining attention in conversations [...]. The deliberate mixture of two languages has the effect of breaking the stream of thought and forces the interlocutors to pay attention to what the speaker is saying.**

## **2.11 - Stereotypes Related to Gender's language Use**

According to Sadiqi, gender stereotypes are reflected in the language males and females use. In other words, **“Gender stereotypes in Moroccan culture present a number of characteristics. First, they are mainly channeled through language”** (ibid: 123).

In fact, women, in Algerian culture, are viewed as weak and powerless. This weakness is reflected in their language.

According to Sadiqi the stereotypes that society builds, determine its members' attitudes. Indeed, these stereotypes have become parts of each culture. Consequently, men build their attitudes according to their culture. In this regard, Sadiqi (2003: 124) declares the following:

**[...] stereotypes highlight the ambivalent attitude of society in general, and men in particular, toward women. For example, men exhibit gender identity and are attested inarcas relating to home and work. These stereotypes highlight the ambivalent attitudes of society in general, and men in particular, toward women. For example, men exhibit a positive attitude towards mothers and good wives, but negative attitude towards a ‘female leader’ because the latter**

**jeopardizes their status quo.**

She further argues that women, in Moroccan society, are seen as poor and weak in communication such as in religious matters. In this sense, she observes that “[...] **women in Moroccan culture are implicitly assumed to be poor public leaders, poor interlocutors in religious matters, weak advisers in serious matters.**” (idem).

She also claims that stereotypes may be either positive or negative. For this reason, stereotypes determine the attitudes of the speaker. In connection with this, she writes that:

**[...] gender stereotypes in Moroccan culture may, in principle, be positive or negative. While positive stereotypes are not problematic, negative ones create prejudice and shape a powerful and lasting male-biased group mentality.**

In fact, these stereotypes appear in Algerian women’s language. Besides, females’ pronunciation is also considered as a stereotype, in addition to the choice of words and their styles. In the light of this idea, she (2003: 125) talks about Moroccan women as follows:

**In general, female talk, attributes, actions, and habits are more negatively depicted in the three Moroccan languages than male talk, attributes, actions and habits. It is on the basis of this stereotype that what is understood as ‘women’s language’ is often associated with a distinctive pronunciation (e.g. high pitch), distinctive word choices (e.g. diminutive), and distinctive performance styles (e.g. euphemisms).**



In short, Algerian females are seen as tools of gossip limit of their conversation and pronouncing words incorrectly. This idea is supported by Sadiqi when she investigates her country. She (idem) observes that females, in Morocco:

**[...] talk too much or too loudly, gossip, lie, limit their conversation to trivialities, pronounce words incorrectly or with too much precision, hesitate, and are too raucous or too polite. ‘women’s language’ is also stereotyped as domestic and subservient in Moroccan culture.**

## **2.12- Terms of Address and Gender in Algeria**

According to Kammoun, communicative strategies have changed in the last few decades due to the emergence of many feminist movements.

It is worth mentioning that Algerian people, like many other societies, have created terms related to address. They even borrow from other languages especially French such as Madame (Mrs.) and Monsieur (Mr.). In fact, both genders try to avoid using expressions from Algerian Arabic such [ marʃi ] or [ raʒli ]. In the light of this idea, Kammoun, in her study of gender differences in Tunisia, agrees on this view when she states the following:

**The word mra (“woman”) sometimes carries a derogatory connotation in use but not in its definition in general; the saying *lmra mra werajel rajel* (“A woman is a woman and a man is a man”) implies a woman is inferior and should not compete with a man’s superior status. For this reason, resorting to French allows both Tunisian men and women to get rid of their inhibitions when dealing with a taboo area to which women belong, and is also a way to show modernity...**

**(As quoted in Sadiqi and Ennaji 2011: 105).**

She further adds that most Maghreban societies tend to borrow French words. In this regard, she (idem) states the following:

**Naming strategies and ways of gender addressing have changed now women are more educated. The classic “madame” and “monsieur” are widespread, surpassing the domain of spouses. “My husband” or “your husband”, “my wife” or “your wife” are now termed respectively as *lmonsieur mteçi* or *lmonsieur mteçek* and *lmadam mteçi* or *lmadame mteçek*. Such forms of address are increasingly common in urban areas where *el mra* (“the woman”), as in for instance *jib l mra wija tçaaṣa baħðena* (“Bring the woman and come over for dinner”), has become *jib l madam wija tçaaṣa baħðena* (“Bring your wife and come over for dinner”).**

Additionally, there is also a difference between rural and urban genders. For instance, urban men and women prefer to use formal expressions when addressing their relatives such as [χeij] or [χiji] is referring to ‘my brother’ and [χəti] or [χiti] referring to ‘my sister’<sup>14</sup>.

On the other hand, rural people tend to use informal expressions. They also avoid prestigious language when they are communicating with each other unlike urban people. In this line, Kammoun (idem) declares that:

**In rural zones, relationships are more informal and more natural and do not conform to any hierarchical or institutional level. Men and women address each other using first names informally and publicly, also between couples “Oh Wife!” or “Oh Husband!,” particularly when old age, a factor of respect, very important in Arabs’ naming strategy, is not involved. If the woman is not acquainted with the man, he will simply say *ya mra!* (“Hey**

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<sup>14</sup> Each Algerian variety has its own terms related to address.

woman!”) but there is no real reciprocity, for a woman will then reply *ya baba!* (“Hey old man!”).

Broadly speaking, we notice that both genders differ in the terms they use when they address each other. Some expressions, however, acquire negative connotations due to their perception by males in the society such as [lmra] which is replaced by [dda: r] or [drari]: “my wife”.

### **2.13- Sexism Language and Algerian Culture**

Sexism language has its own position in Algerian culture and language as well. This is apparent in the Algerian vocabulary that people use in their everyday interaction. Besides, sexism language appears in all domains in modern standard Arabic (MSA) and Algerian Arabic (AA), such as in [qa:dʒi] and [qa:dʒia]: “judge”. In the light of this point of view, Sadiqi (2003: 129) highlights the following:

**[...] vocabulary items expressing male professions are culturally valorized, whereas the ones expressing female professions are not. The connotations of words referring to male professions are often associated with notions of leadership.**

She further argues that males create some terms to name women’s occupations in order to invoke mockery as it is represented in Algerian culture for instance [buznasia] : referring to a ‘businesswoman’ or [hallaba] referring to ‘a bootlegger woman’. In this regard, she (idem) maintains the following:

The terms *idaria*, *siyasiya*, and *musiqara* are rarely used. As for names of professions where women are not usually present, they are derogatory and trivializing in most cases (*bulisia* ‘policewoman’) or invoke mockery (*jifura* ‘woman driver’)

Interestingly, one should note that Algerian people have also created expressions to describe women and to insult them as well. Sadiqi (idem) describes lexical sexism in Moroccan languages as follows:

**Females are usually described and referred to in relation to their physical characteristics: *zwina* ‘beautiful’, *biDa* ‘white’, *çamra* ‘plump’, whereas men are less so. Physical beauty and plumpness are socially promoting attributes so far as women, not men, are concerned and are, thus, highlighted in everyday interactions.**

As for insulting, Algerian people have developed a vocabulary related to women’s physical description rather than men since females are seen negatively in the Algerian society such as in:[*essamia*] or [*elmaħrara*] referring to ‘jealous’, [*popia*] or [*triyā*] referring to their beauty. Similarly, Sadiqi (idem) maintains that “[...] **physical negative attributes are often used to describe or refer to women more than to men: *çayba* ‘ugly’, *çewja* ‘crooked’, *mçewwda* ‘too thin’, etc.”**

Moreover, men may use such expressions “[...] **to demean women and diminish their value in social interactions, and are more derogatory when said of women than when said of men.**” (idem).

Additionally, there are some lexical collocations in most Maghreb dialects. For example, instead of saying [*hadik lamra sazia*] or [*diguordia*] we say [*hadga*] referring to ‘hard-working’.

In short, lexical sexism, in Algerian culture, is natural since it is related to the speaker's identity, gender, power and ideology as it has been pointed out by Sadiqi (2003: 132).

#### **2.14- Naming Differences in Algerian Arabic**

According to many feminist scholars, language representations, which are propelled by naming, **“are commonly given from a male perspective[...]** For these feminists, naming[ ... ] is rather a process by which cultures select and fix what they consider reality.” as it has been explained by Sadiqi (2003: 133). Moreover, Spender (1980) claims that language is ‘man-made’. It is man, according to Spender, who creates meaning and women live in the world through men's meanings. In this regard, Sadiqi (idem) summarises Spender's point of view as follows:

**Spender (1980) goes to the extent of claiming that language is ‘man-made’, implying that it is men who have been creating meanings and women have simply been experiencing the world through men's meanings. According to these views, human languages are deeply, maybe exclusively, sexist in the sense that they represent the world on the sole basis of male-biased stereotypes.**

It is also obvious that Algerian women, after marriage, try to keep their father's names either in rural or urban areas. Similarly, Sadiqi notes that **“Moroccan women keep their fathers' family affiliation names after marriage in rural and urban areas, as family affiliation is an identifying factor in Moroccan culture.”** (Idem).

Concerning administrative papers, Algerian females try to keep their family names with the addition of their husband's names such as in [ əsajjɪda x zəwjat y ]: “Mrs x, the wife of y”. On the other hand, urban females are identifying by their husband's names for the purpose of prestige such as the case of Tlemcen society. In accordance to this view, Sadiqi (ibid: 134) observes that:

**In fact, in cases where the prestige associated with particular names is sought, women in general define themselves in relation to these names and endeavor to be named accordingly as *bent flan* ‘daughter of so and so’, *mrat flan* ‘wife of so and so’, *χut flan* ‘sister of so and so’, etc. It also happens that a married woman may define herself as *Madame X* where X is her father’s family name if the latter carries social prestige.**

She further maintains that there is a new phenomenon which spreads in most Maghreb society. This phenomenon includes the use of [madam], and [madmøzel]. In this sense, she (idem) notes the following:

**[...] urban women may be defined in relation to their husbands’ names. In introductions, for example, a relatively recent urban phenomenon, it is usually the case that women are introduced as *Madame /Mademoiselle* x ‘Mrs/Miss x’ where x is in principle the husband’s name if it follows *Madame* and the father’s name if it follows *Madame* and the father’s name if it follows *Mademoiselle*.**

Furthermore, we should note that Algerian males tend to hide their wives’ names when they are communicating with strangers. They tend to use [ra:ni mʃa: ədda:r]. The main reason behind such use is that naming females in the presence of strangers is seen as taboo. Sadiqi (idem) agrees on this view claiming that:

**[...] women are named *mmalin ddar* ‘owners of the house’ in public social interactions. As it is taboo in Moroccan culture to ask someone how his wife is (as Western people might to make polite small talk, especially if the speaker knows the wife), Moroccans would say *kidayr-in mmalin ddar?* ‘How are the owners of the**

**house’?**

On the part of men, the term [benti]: ‘my daughter’ is mostly used especially older ones. This view can be supported by Sadiqi (ibid: 135) when she says that:

**The term *benti* ‘my daughter’ is sometimes used in mixed groups by older men to younger women, or by bosses to secretaries to ‘hide’ men’s intentions.**

On the other side, urban males and females no longer try to borrow from French to hide the taboo meaning of such expressions. They use instead [madam]. In fact, this latter is employed as a sign of respect either towards married or unmarried females. Additionally, Algerian women tend to use what is called diminutives when talking with children such as [ħlijba]: ‘milk’, [χbijez]: ‘bread’, [mmi:ha]: ‘water’.

## **2.15-Attitudinal Approach and Gender in the Algerian Context**

As we have already explained, stereotypes surrounding language use between both sexes can be seen as the first factors that influence the speakers’ attitudes. Besides, one should note that most stereotypes, in the Arab societies, are created by males towards females. Moroccan women are viewed negatively in their society. Thus, the stereotypes, developed by males, determine their negative attitudes. In this vein, she (ibid: 123) states that “[...] **women are socially defined as more emotional, weaker, more wicked, more hard-working, more patient, and more obedient than men.**”

In fact, the attitudes of Algerian males towards females are between negative and positive. Henceforth, the expressions that both genders use differ according to their views. In this regard, she (ibid: 124) further highlights that:

**[...] women are at the same time weak, unreliable, and wicked by nature. Other expressions which invoke ‘social utility’ such as being a good wife and a good mother are more positive: *mra salħa ħsan men myat rajel* ‘a good woman is better than a hundred men.’**

In general, females’ talk and behaviour are viewed negatively in Algerian society. Indeed, **“Women and their language are systematically subject to biased, pejorative, and reductive stereotyping that is reflected in some most common expressions in every day speech such as *suqnnsa* (literally ‘women’s market’, but meaning ‘trivial’ and ‘unworthy’).”** as it has been mentioned by Sadiqi (2003: 125). Besides, one should note is that the attitudes of Algerian males towards females’ use of language are reinforced by the beliefs that the society has developed and tried to preserve. Similarly, Sadiqi tries to mention that, in Moroccan society, **“The social attitude to ‘women’s language’ is an attitude to a monolithic image of women that Moroccan society has constructed and wants to preserve.”** (idem).

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the component of Algerian society has changed. Indeed, women have taken an important position in different domains. This fact has changed the view of the society. However, the attitudes of males are between negative and positive. Concerning negative attitudes, men are against women’s change of linguistic behaviour. In this sense, Kammoun observes the following:

**[...] linguistic change is causing profound feelings of uneasiness, particularly regarding women’s change of linguistic behavior, which has overturned several gender stereotypes; the result has been a much less respectful attitude toward women in terms of civic and social rules and conventions.**

**(As quoted in Sadiqi and Ennaji, 2011: 206)**



This means that the position, which has been taken by Algerian women outside home, has raised annoyance between men concerning their role in the society. Accordingly, Kammoun (idem) states that:

**Women's occupation of public or men's space was perceived as an aggression, and a hostile attitude. Men felt their domain was being invaded by these inferior creatures, who competed with them on their own battlefield.**

Talking about the attitudes of males and females towards language use, one may note that they differ according to certain socio-cultural parameters including age, the educational background and occupation. For example, most urban Algerian females have positive attitudes towards the use of French in formal and informal settings. **“In fact, women tend to display proficiency in French more frequently than proficiency in standard Arabic.”** as it has been noted by Sadiqi in her article of 2003. She (2003: 11) further claims that:

**The general attitude to French is positive. Like Moroccan Arabic, French is used by both men and women, but it interacts significantly with gender; whereas men use French in the high administrative.**

On the other hand, Algerian males display positive attitudes towards the use of AA in informal domains and MSA in formal settings. However, this does not mean that males do not use French.

Broadly speaking, one should mention that the attitudes of gender, in Algeria, are deeply rooted on the socio-cultural norms of this society and represent a set of stereotypes.

## **2.16- Conclusion**

Linguistically speaking, this chapter tried to highlight the most important points in language differences between males and females in an Algerian context. Besides, it represented a socio-cultural study of Algerian language in relation to gender. It also gave an overview of the different discourse strategies that are employed by Algerian females and males.

Furthermore, this chapter, again, was an attempt to investigate women's use of naming and the different stereotypes which represent an important sum of Algerian culture and the stereotypes influence the speakers' attitudes and their perception of women's changing linguistic behaviour.

In fact, this chapter provided us with some insights concerning the socio-cultural and linguistic profiles of Algeria. It also gave us some views about the position of women in this society and the main differences that the society builds its roles on. Besides, the attitudes of Algerians have changed due to the position that females gain in society and, therefore, their use of language. Indeed, this chapter provided us with some ideas about the influence of French language and the attitudes of both males and females towards its use.

# Chapter Three

## *Chapter Three*

### *Research Methodology and Data Interpretation.*

3.1- Introduction.....	75
3.2- Defining Research.....	75
3.3- Ethical Consideration in Research.....	76
3.4- Data Collection Methods.....	78
3.4.1- Quantitative Data.....	78
3.4.2- Qualitative Data.....	79
3.4.3- The Questionnaire.....	81
3.4.4- The Interview.....	83
3.4.5- Participant Observation.....	85
3.5- Population and Sampling.....	86
3.6- Data Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation.....	89
3.6.1- Questionnaire Analysis.....	89
3.6.2- Interview Analysis.....	112
3.7- Conclusion.....	114

### **3.1- Introduction**

In the second chapter, we tried to give a succinct account of gender differences in an Algerian context. We dealt with the Algerian sociolinguistic profile. We also gave an overview of the main differences between males and females in terms of language use. Lastly, we dealt with the different communicative strategies used by females and which determine the way they interact.

Throughout the third chapter, we will talk about the main points in research methodology, data collection and analysis. We will also explain the importance of using many research techniques and methods since each method depends on another one in order to gain more naturalistic data.

Consequently, through applying many sociolinguistic methods, we will investigate the main difference between both genders in Maghnia speech community. We will explore the different socio-cultural factors that affect language use. We will prove that the geographical location of Maghnia helps in the creation of many expressions which are used by both genders in certain contexts and avoided by women in other contexts.

### **3.2-Defining Research**

It is important to note that research is a gate in order to acquire knowledge in specific domains. However, research needs techniques and methods in order to reach reliable and naturalistic data. In this regard, Goddard and Melville (2005: 01) define research as follows:

**Research is not just a process of gathering information, as is sometimes suggested. Rather, it is about answering unanswered questions or creating that which does currently exist. In many ways, research can be seen as a process of expanding the boundaries of our ignorance.**

In their point of view, Howard and Sharp's (1983: 6) research is **“seeking through methodological process to add to one's own body of knowledge and, hopefully, to that of others. By the discovery of non trivial facts and insights.”**<sup>15</sup>

In fact, the main aim of a piece of research is to answer some research questions in a systematic way. Accordingly, Kothari (2004: 02) highlights the following:

**The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered as yet.**

In his point of view, Lowe observes that research is an experience to get knowledge. He further maintains that research is the essence of any change in education. In other words, **“research can help us to explore education and education process,”** he (ibid: 6) adds.

Additionally, one may note that the first step in a research is observation. However, observation should be based on systematic steps. In other terms, **“[...] observations of what goes on around yours a rich source of research ideas. Some of these observations may be unsystematic and informal.”** as it is explained by Bordens and Abbott (2011: 57).

### **3.3- Ethical Consideration in Research**

It is agreed that all researchers face ethical problems depending on the nature of the subject at hand. In this sense, Padgett states that **“Ethical issues arise in all types of research [...] Indeed, the relationship between the researcher and the respondent [...] raises a number of ethical questions.”** (1998: 33).

In fact, before designing any research, the researcher should take into consideration the ethical research which may face him/her during data collection. For this reason,

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<sup>15</sup> Quoted by Lowe (2007: 5)

scholars have developed a number of ethical codes in order to guide researchers. Besides, the researcher should also take into account the effects of the participants on research. In this sense, Cohen, Manion and Morrison claim that “[...] **social researchers must take into account the effects of the research on the participants, and act in such a way as to preserve their dignity as human beings.**” (2000: 56).

According to Kimmel (1988)<sup>16</sup>, the researcher should avoid dealing with ethical problems when investigating a sensitive topic. In fact, the researcher should take into consideration the personal life and privacy of the participants. In this sense, Frankfort, Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) state the following:

**[...] the right to research and acquire knowledge and the right of individual research participants to self-determination, privacy and dignity [...] A decision to conduct research despite an ethically questionable practice [...] is a limit on the second right.**

**As cited by Manion, Cohen and Morrison (ibid: 60).**

In the same wave, Edwards and Mauthner explain that “**Ethics concerns the morality of human conduct.**” In social research, they add that “**it refers to the moral deliberation, choice and account ability on the part of researchers throughout the research process.**”<sup>17</sup>

In short, one should note that ethics are the first points that the researcher should look after since any problem may lead to dilemmas and failure in research. In this sense, Hamnersley (1999: 18) highlights the following:

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<sup>16</sup> As cited by Manion, Cohen and Morrison (idem).

<sup>17</sup> Edwards and Mauthner in Miller, Birch, Mauthner and Jessop (2012: 14).

**[...] ethical considerations were believed to set boundaries to what researchers could do in pursuit of knowledge. Now ethical considerations are treated by some as constituting the very rationale of research.**

**As quoted by Edwards and Mauthner (2012: 16).**

Basically, data were collected following some of the research methods.

### **3.4- Data Collection Methods**

#### **3.4.1 - Quantitative Data**

In doing any research, the researcher needs to mix methods since relying on one method or technique is not sufficient. In fact, quantitative methods deal with counting the amount of responses. In this regard, Thomas (2003: 1) defines quantitative methods as follows:

**Quantitative methods, on the other hand, focus attention on measurements and amounts (more and less, larger and smaller, often and seldom, similar and different) of the characteristics displayed by the people and events that the researcher studies.**

Thomas further claims that quantitative methods involve the use of statistical methods in order to give a general description of the phenomenon at hand, whereas qualitative methods give more detailed description of events. In this sense, King, Keohane and Verba (1994: 3-4) highlight the following statement:



**Quantitative research uses numbers and statistical methods. It tends to be based on numerical measurements of specific aspects of phenomena; it seeks measurements and analyses that are easily replicable by other researchers.**

**As quoted by Murray Thomas (ibid: 2)**

Interestingly, Glesne and Peshkin add that the results, which are accomplished by using quantitative methods, can be generalised to the whole population and this aspect is not found in qualitative methods. In this vein, they (1992: 6) observe that:

**Quantitative researchers seek explanations and predictions that will generalize to other persons and places. Careful sampling strategies and experimental designs are aspects of quantitative methods aimed at produce generalizable results. In quantitative research, the researchers role is to observe and measure, and care is taken to keep the researchers from “contaminating” the data through personal involvement with research subjects. Researchers “objectivity” is of utmost concern.**

**(idem)**

In sum, quantitative methods help the researcher to investigate the first steps for collecting data through statistical measurements. However, they are insufficient without qualitative methods.

### **3.4.2- Qualitative Data**

It is obvious that qualitative methods “involve a researcher describing kinds of characteristics of people and events without comparing events in terms of measurements of amounts.” as it is illustrated by Thomas (idem). Accordingly, Denzin and Lincoln (1999: 2) maintain that qualitative methods are multiple methods

which involve studying events through stories and interviews...etc. In this vein, they state the following:

**Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their naturalistic settings,[...] Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials-case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts.**

**As quoted by Murray Thomas (idem).**

In the same wave, Hennink, Hutter and Bailey claim that qualitative research uses a set of methods and techniques that differ from qualitative approach. It relies on interviews, direct observation or focus groups discussions. In this regard, they (2011: 20) say that:

**In broad terms, qualitative research is an approach that allows you to examine people's experiences in detail, by using a specific set of research methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods, and life histories or biographies.**

In the same line of thought, Denzin and Lincoln (2008b: 4) add that qualitative research “**involves an *interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world.*”** They further argue that qualitative researchers “**study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or *interpret*, phenomena in terms of the *meanings* people bring to them**”.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> As quoted by Hennink , Hutter and Bailey (idem).

Hennink, Hutter and Bailey argue that qualitative methods are more suitable for understanding people's views and life. Therefore, they provide the researcher with more naturalistic data. In this regard, they (ibid: 21) state that:

**Qualitative research is useful for exploring new topics or understanding complex issues; for explaining people's beliefs and behaviour; and for identifying the social or cultural norms of a culture or society.**

In its broad terms, using qualitative and quantitative methods is important in any research. This idea is better explained by Cobin (1990: 18) as follows:

**[ Both qualitative and quantitative methods ] can be used effectively in same research project. However, most projects and researchers place their emphasis on one form or another, partly out of conviction, but also because of training and the nature of the problems studied.**

**As quoted by Thomas (2003: 7).**

### **3.4.3 - The Questionnaire**

It is agreed that one of the most essential tools for data collection is the questionnaire which is regarded as a part of quantitative methods. Besides, it involves a set of questions which vary between open, close and multiple questions. In fact, the main difference between a questionnaire and an interview is that in an interview

**[...] it is the interviewer who asks the questions (and if necessary, explains them) and records the respondent's replies on an interview schedule, and in the latter replies are recorded by the respondents themselves.**

(Kumar, 2011: 145).

Additionally, one should note that the researcher should design good questions since they affect the quality of data collection. Henceforth, we have designed closed questions in which the choices may be with yes or no responses since **“In a closed question<sup>19</sup> the possible answers are set out in the questionnaire or schedule and the respondent or the investigator ticks the category that best describes the respondent’s answer”** as it is stated by Kumar (ibid: 151). Moreover, we have also designed multiple questions in which we provided the respondents with suggestions and gave them the chance to select according to their views and attitudes. As far as open-ended questions are concerned, most of our questions took this form since they provided the researcher with possible suggestions and recommendations. In other words, they **“[...]provide the respondents with the opportunity to express themselves freely, resulting in a greater variety of informants.”** (idem).

In addition to this, the language of the questions is also important in writing the questionnaire. In fact, most of scholars declare that the researcher needs to write precise and short questions in order to achieve rich answers. In this light, Kumar (ibid: 154) writes the following:

**[...] in a questionnaire, take extra care to use words that your respondents will understand as you will have no opportunity to explain questions to them. A pre-test should you what is and what is not understood by your respondents.**

As a result, we have focused on short questions since the better questions are designed; they help the researcher to reach wealth data. Consequently, the questions of our questionnaire are written in MSA, whereas the suggestions are in Maghnia dialect.

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<sup>19</sup> “In a closed question” is bold in origin.

### 3.4.4 - The Interview

The interview is another important method for data collection. It is a part of qualitative methods since it helps the researcher to get in a direct contact with the participants. In other words, it is a face-to face-conversation because it gives the researcher the opportunity to control communication. In fact, it completes the results of the questionnaire. It involves **“an interviewer reading questions to respondents and recording their answers”** (Monette et al, 1986: 156)<sup>20</sup>. Similarly, Burns (1997: 329) defines an interview as **“a verbal interchange, often face to face, though the telephone may be used, in which an interviewer tries to elicit information, beliefs or opinions from another person.”**<sup>21</sup>

One should note that the format of the question of the interview is very essential to provide the researcher with rich data. In this sense, Kumar (idem) writes that:

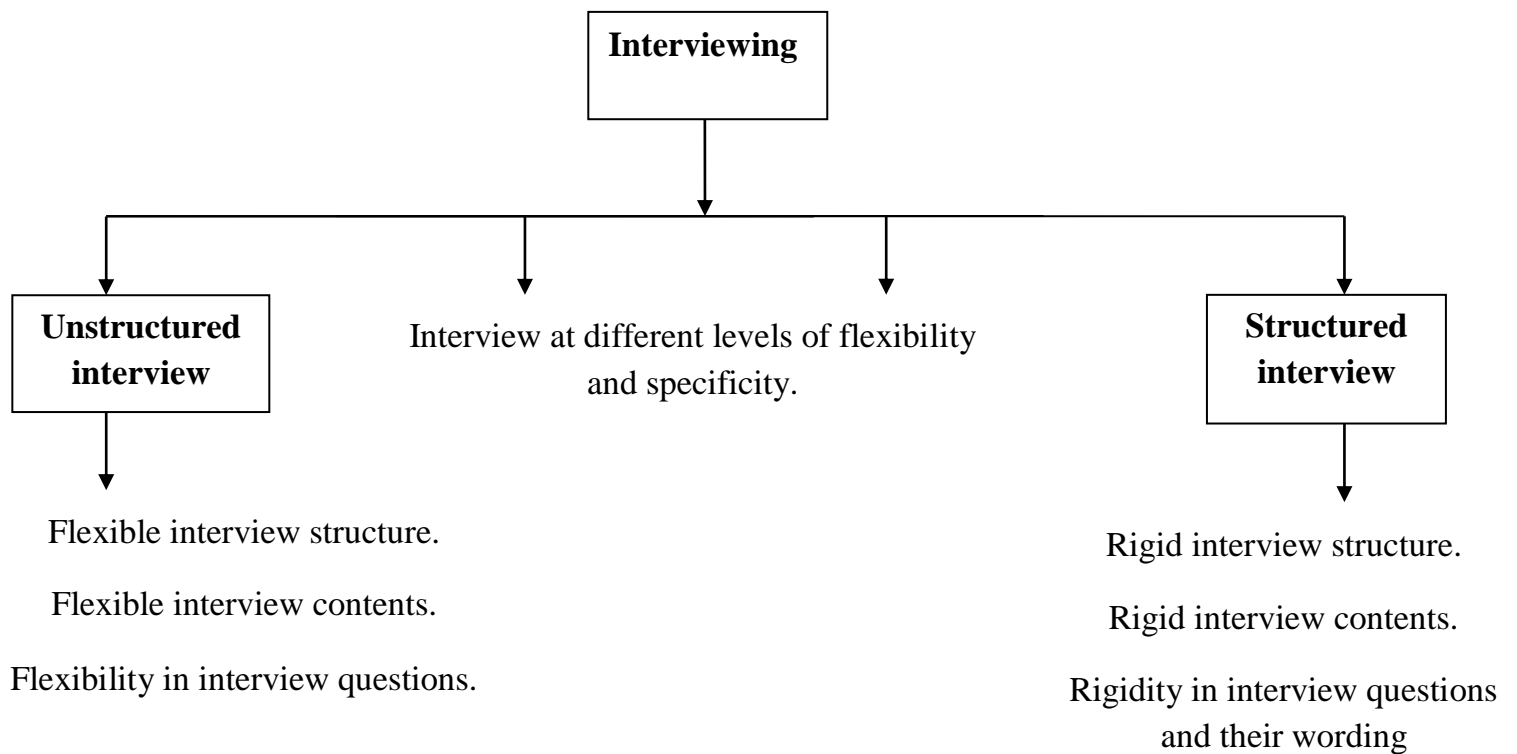
**When interviewing a respondent, you, as a researcher, have the freedom to decide the format and content of questions, decide the way you want to ask them and choose the order in which they are to be asked.**

In fact, there are many types of questions including open and close questions. In this sense, the interview can be unstructured or structured as the following figure shows:

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<sup>20</sup> As quoted by Kumar, (ibid: 144).

<sup>21</sup> (idem).



**Figure 3.1- Types of Interview taken from Kumar (idem).**

As far as our interview is concerned, we have relied on semi-structured questions, but we have faced many problems due to the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community. Thus, we have designed 5 questions. In the first one, we asked the participants for their views concerning the difference between males and females in using language, whereas in the second one, we tried to test their views towards the factors that affect language differences including the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community. In the third question, we asked them whether the geographical location of Maghnia affects their language use and results in some differences between males and females. In the fourth, we tried to evaluate the speakers' views towards women's use of French language, while the last question was about who are expected to use taboos in this speech community.

Furthermore, we have selected ten informants, whom we gave the questionnaire. In fact, we gave them a very detailed explanation of the core of our research and the

main objectives of this piece of work. Besides, we have relied on the interview to get in touch with the informants' views and attitudes.

### **3.4.5 - Participant Observation**

Participant observation is another important tool for data collection not only for sociolinguists, but also for other social sciences. In this sense, Dewalt and Dewalt (2011: 1) define participant observation as follows:

**[...] participant observation is a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, inter-actions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their routines and their culture.**

Furthermore, participant observation involves participating either in the interview or direct observation. In this regard, Taylor, Sinha and Ghoshal (2008: 107) claim that:

**In participant observation, it should be apparent that you might choose to utilize a variety of methods for obtaining data. These direct observation, respondent interviewing, informal interviewing, archival study and actual participation in the processes in which subjects are involved.**

In fact, observation is a part of qualitative methods. It is a type of observer method where **“the researcher gathers information in most unobtrusive fashion by simply watching the study subjects interact, preferably without their knowledge.”** as it is stated by Dantzker and Hunter (2012: 61). Thus, in participant observation, the researcher takes a role in the activities of the study.

### 3.5 – Population and Sampling

Choosing a sample population<sup>22</sup> for a survey is the most difficult step in data collection since it depends on the nature of the speech community, that is, whether it is homogeneous or heterogeneous. Besides, selecting sample is the first step to identify research boundaries. In this sense, Hartas (2010: 67) states the following:

***A population is a group of individuals or organizations that share the same characteristic [...] what defines a population is not its size (it may be small or large) but the presence of a specific characteristic.***

Additionally, once the individuals are selected, we can identify them as a sample which “**is a selection or a subgroup of the population we intend to study**” (Hartas, idem). Moreover, how the sample is selected is very important for the researcher. In fact, the sample should be representative for the whole population. In the light, Hartas (idem) highlights the following statement:

**How the sample is selected is very important for the validity of a study. To generalize research findings from the sample to the population, the sample has to be representative of the population from which it was drawn.**

In this work, our target population includes respondents from different educational backgrounds, occupations, gender and age which are important variables in any sociolinguistic research. Henceforth, our questionnaire is distributed to housewives, jobless, students, teachers and bootleggers...etc.

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<sup>22</sup> We can use a sample population or target population or simply population.



Hence, the population is selected; the next step is to determine the type of the sample. In this sense, the target population is selected randomly following what Hartas calls “**a simple random sample.**” In this light, she (idem) defines it as follows:

***In simple random sampling the participants or units of analysis are selected randomly from a population with the intent that the sample is representative of this population. The idea behind random sampling is that any bias in the population is distributed equally in the sample.***

Thus, we have classified our sample into four subcategories, 100 respondents have been given the questionnaire and 20 did not return it back. Henceforth, we will deal with 80 informants. As the following table shows:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
18-25	18	8	26
26-35	14	11	25
36-45	5	9	14
46-55	1	9	10
Above 56	2	3	5
Total	40	40	80

**Table 3.1. Categories of the Informants.**

As the previous table demonstrates, our respondents were selected randomly depending on some social variables especially age and gender. In this sense, the first category comprises about (26) of the informants i.e., they represent (32, 5 %) and most of them are students, town hall workers and housewives...etc.

It is also essential to note that the levels of education and occupations are so varied. This fact gives us the opportunity to test the knowledge of the participants and, therefore, their views and attitudes. This is better explained through the following table:

<b>Occupations</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>University Students</b>	11	3	14
<b>Teachers</b>	5	/	5
<b>Doctors</b>	1	/	1
<b>Biologists</b>	1	/	1
<b>Accountants</b>	1	3	4
<b>Chemist</b>	1	1	2
<b>Secretaries</b>	1	/	1
<b>Public Writers</b>	5	/	5
<b>Town hall workers</b>	4	8	12
<b>Computer Scientists</b>	/	1	1
<b>Lawyers</b>	/	3	3
<b>Nurses</b>	/	1	1
<b>Postmen</b>	/	1	1
<b>Translators</b>	/	1	1
<b>Hair dresses</b>	2	/	2

<b>Housewives</b>	6	/	6
<b>Dressmakers</b>	1	/	1
<b>Electricians</b>	/	1	1
<b>Painters</b>	/	1	1
<b>Carpenters</b>	/	1	1
<b>Mechanics</b>	/	1	1
<b>Taxi drivers</b>	/	1	1
<b>Grocers</b>	/	4	4
<b>Engineers</b>	/	1	1
<b>Gas Station Attendant</b>	/	1	1
<b>Bootleggers</b>	/	3	3
<b>Keepers</b>	/	1	1
<b>Retired</b>	1	3	4
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.2: The Educational and Occupational Levels of the Participants.**

### **3.6 -Data Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation**

Throughout the analysis of our questionnaire and interview, we are going to test the attitudes of both genders towards language use in Maghnia speech community.

#### **3.6.1-Questionnaire Analysis**

Throughout our questionnaire, we have insisted on two parts. The first one focuses on the participants' age, gender, occupation and place of working. The second part of the questionnaire insists on investigating their attitudes and motivations

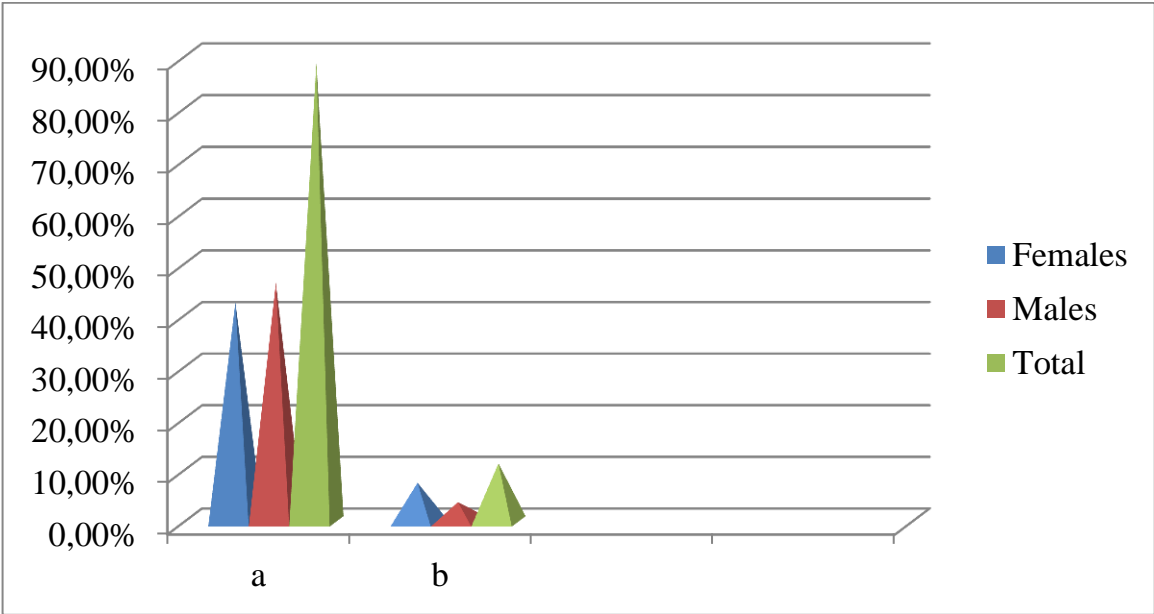
towards gender differences in language use. Besides, we gave them the opportunity to write their comments and suggestions. We also tried to see their views concerning social factors that affect gender differences. Moreover, we supplied them with questions that tested their opinions concerning which factors that support language differences, whereas the last questions insist on whether women differ from men in the expressions they use. Lastly, we also attempted to see whether women use French more than men as well as taboo language.

1- Are there any differences between woman and man in using language?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. Comments.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	34	37	71
b	6	3	9
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.3: Gender Differences in Language Use.**



**Figure 3.2: Gender Differences in Language Use.**

Looking at the results presented in the previous table and diagram, the majority of participants, who represent 88, 75%, supported the first proposition, whereas about 11, 25% claimed that women do not differ from men in terms of language use.

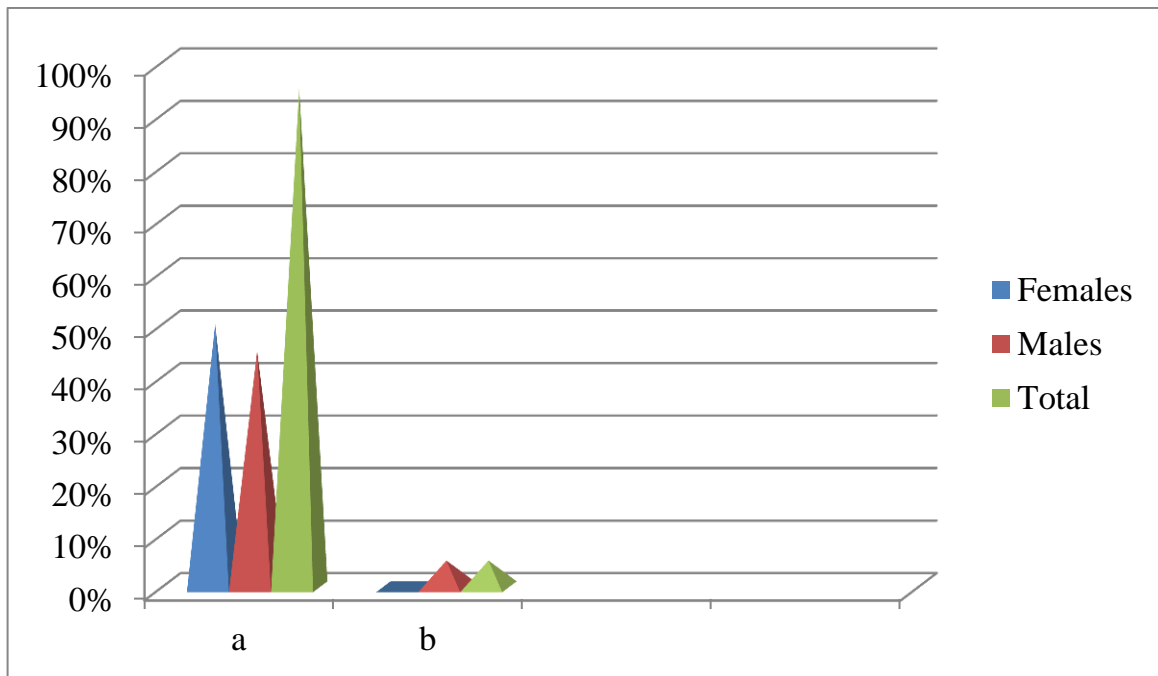
In fact, the informants gave us interesting comments. Some of them maintained that men tend to use harsh expressions due to their nature, while women prefer more soft words. They added that women are selected in terms of the expressions they use. They further explained that there are social, cultural and biological factors that support these differences. They went on claiming that the geographical location of a speech community such as Maghnia plays a crucial role in affecting language use between both genders. They also claimed that the educational background and identity of the speaker are also important. Lastly, they maintain that the structure of the society imposes on women to be conservative in terms of their behaviour and language. They concluded that the attitudes and motivations are important in determining language differences.

2- Do the socio-cultural factors affect language differences between genders?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. Comments.

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>a</b>	40	36	76
<b>b</b>	/	4	4
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.4: Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Gender Differences.**



**Figure 3.3: Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Gender Differences.**

The previous table and figure clearly show the differences between participants. In fact, 95% of them were with the idea that there are socio-cultural factors that affect language use, whereas 5% were against this view.

Interestingly, the comments of the participants were very rich. Firstly, they claimed that the social upbringing affects the individuals and, therefore, their behaviour and language. They further stated that the educational background of the speaker plays a fundamental role in developing his identity and language construction. Besides, they argued that these socio-cultural factors affect men more than women since males have more contact with outside in different domains especially economics (trade and commerce). They also observe that the individual is the son of his society because any changes in the speech community, in which he lives and interacts, affect his identity, thoughts and the choice of his language. They further commented that the religious norms differ from one society to another. In the case of Maghnia speech community, the social structure of the family imposes on women to control their behaviour and language. Whereas, men have more freedom which pushes them to create more expressions and words that they need in their contact and daily activities since Maghnia is located in the border with Morocco. This fact imposes on men to

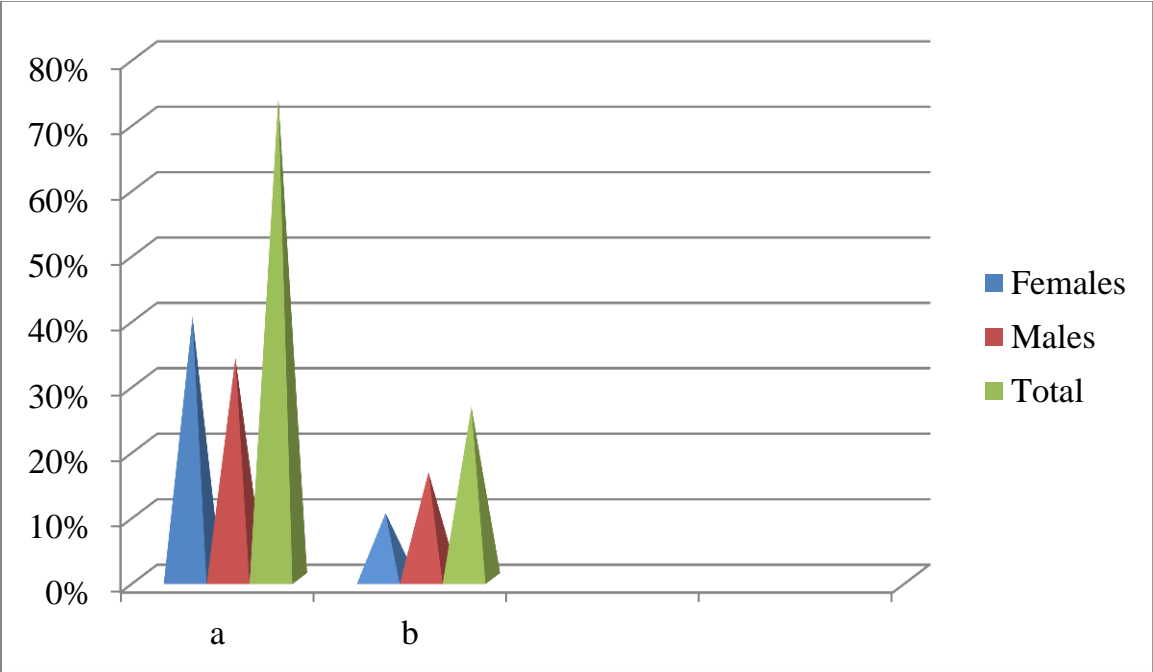
borrow more words from Moroccan dialects, French and sometimes even Spanish in order to use in their contact.

3- Do you think that age plays an important role in language differences between genders?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. Comments.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	32	27	59
b	8	13	21
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.5: Age as the Main Factor of Language Differences between Genders.**



**Figure 3.4: Age as the Main Factor of Language Differences between Genders.**

The previous table and figure depict males’ and females’ views towards age as an important factor that determines language differences. Henceforth, about 73, 75% of

the informants claimed that language differs from one individual to another depending on age and gender. In contrast, few participants, who represent 26, 25%, were against the idea that age affects language use.

Hence, the comments of the participants supported their choices. They observed that a child, for example, is born as a white paper in which both the parents and the society writes its lines on it. Moreover, when he grows up, these lines change depending on his/her gender. They further justified their answers claiming that some recent scientific researches prove that men are selfish in nature. This fact affects their behaviour and, thus, their language construction. In addition, most of the participants viewed that when men become older; they lose some of their brains' muscles and, therefore, the part which controls their anger. On the other hand, women are always watching their language before speaking. Lastly, they conclude that age is not only the main factor, but there are other social factors including identity and the educational background.

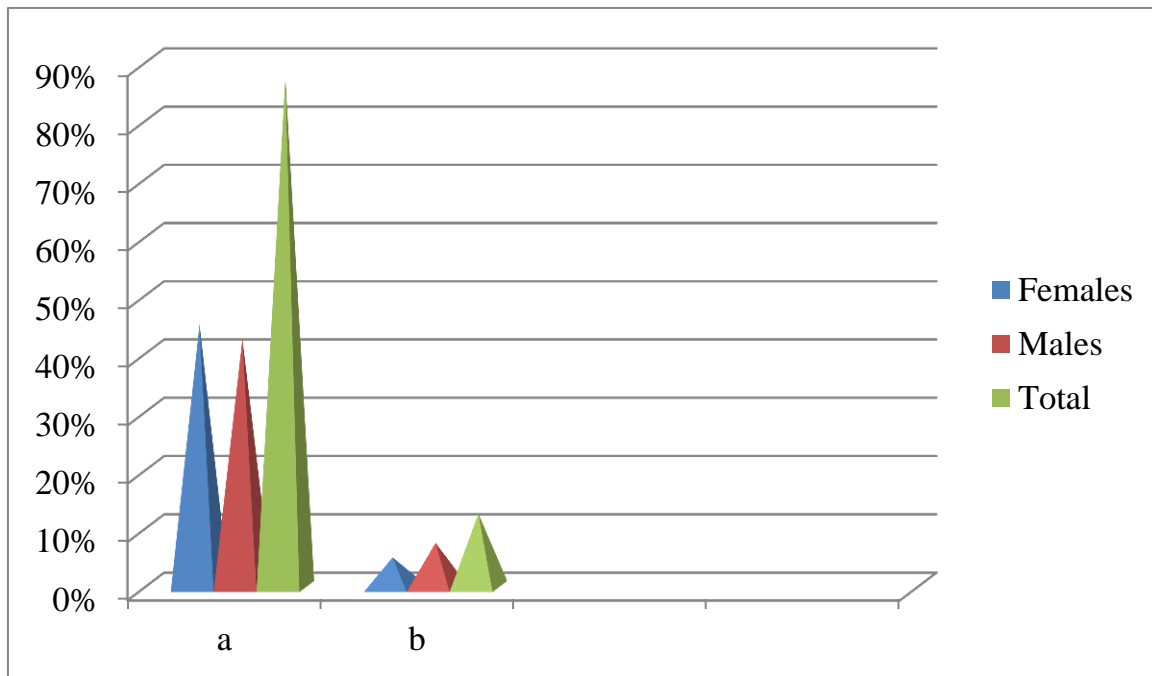
4- In your point of view, does the conservative nature of woman prevent her from using some expressions that man employs in his daily life?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. Comments.

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>a</b>	36	34	70
<b>b</b>	4	6	10
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.6: Women's and Men's Expressions.**





**Figure 3.5: Women's and Men's Expressions.**

From the assessment of the above results, it is obvious that 87% of the respondents show positive attitudes towards the point that women are conservative in nature, while 12, 5% of the informants claimed that today females enjoy more freedom in all domains, especially in using language.

They justified their answers claiming that the rules, which society imposes on its members, oblige women to behave in a good way since they are watched by their society. In other words, it will sound unfamiliar if someone hears females using men's expressions i.e., it is a part of the society's taboos. However, if the woman breaks these taboos, she will be not symbolised this conservative society. In fact, Islam has restricted the use of language not only for females, but also for males, unlike the Western societies which give more freedom and equality for their members. In short, you need not to be a sociolinguist to know that the majority of women pay a considerable attention as much to the way they speak as the way they appear. This might be a direct result of socialisation and awareness to social norms or correct in an appropriate behaviour.

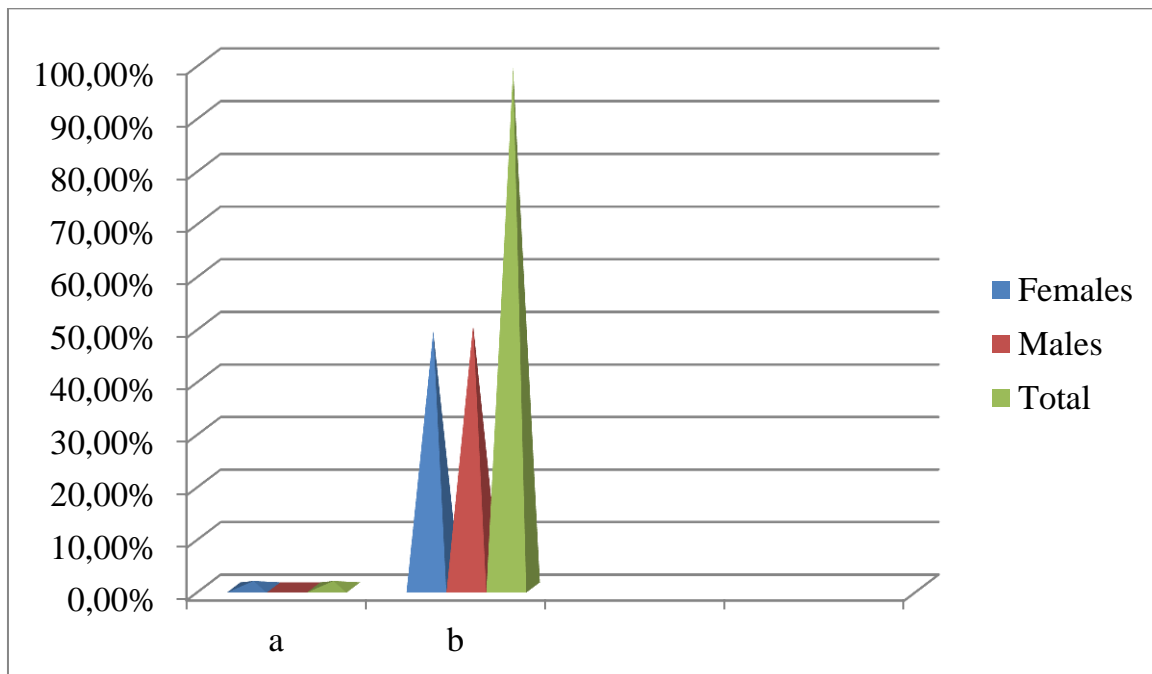
5- In your point of view, who are more talkative?

- a. Man.
- b. Woman.

c. Comments.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
<b>a</b>	1	/	1
<b>b</b>	39	40	79
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.7 Gender and the Frequency of Language Use.**



**Figure 3.6: Gender and the Frequency of Language Use.**

The above table and the corresponding figure clearly show the attitudes of both sexes towards the frequency of language use. In fact, 98,75% of the informants agreed with the idea that women are more talkative than men. In contrast, a few of them who represent 1,25%, declared that women are equal to men in using language.

Interestingly, the comments of the respondents were very rich. The majority of them observed that women are more talkative than men since they prefer to go in more details concerning the topic that they tend to discuss. They further claimed that speech is a part of women's nature since they used to store information and repeat them, after that they send these information to the place in which language is preserved, whereas men store these information directly. They added that some studies have proved that

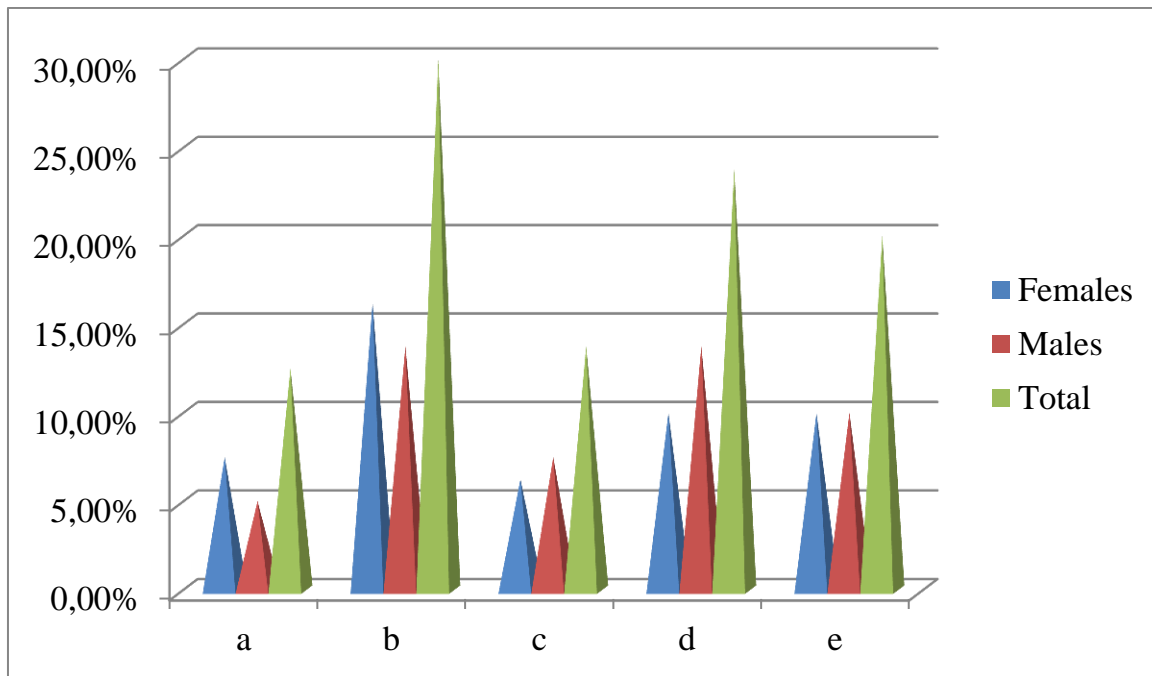
women are more talkative in mixed sex groups, in order to prove their existence such as in the bus, [hamma : m]: “bathroom”, hair dresses and between neighbours. They further claimed that they are more inclined to use technology such as mobile phone and the net. They concluded that women focus on emotions and feelings when they are speaking, and, for this reason, they are talkative because they want to express themselves.

6- Which topics do you prefer to discuss with your friends?

- a. The opposite sex.
- b. Future plans.
- c. Fashions and make up.
- d. Social and political problems.
- e. Work.

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>a</b>	6	4	10
<b>b</b>	13	11	24
<b>c</b>	5	6	11
<b>d</b>	8	11	19
<b>e</b>	8	8	16
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.8 Informants’ Attitudes towards the most Discussed Topic.**



**Figure 3.7: Informants' Attitudes towards the most Discussed Topic.**

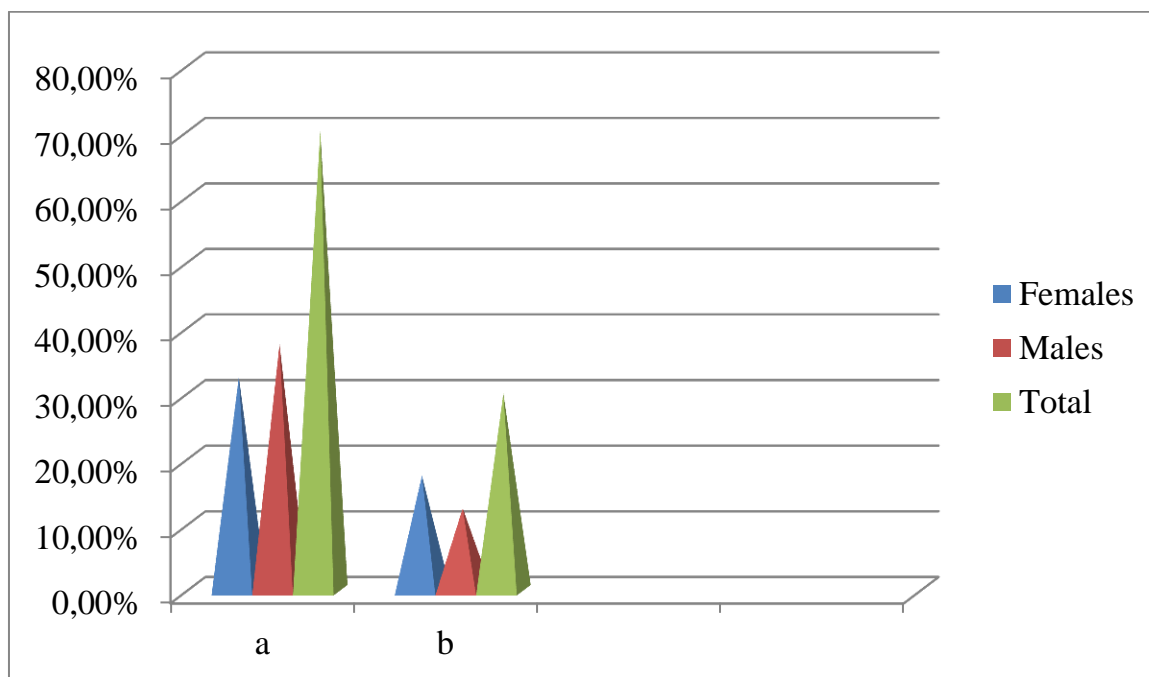
As we went back to the questionnaire, we found that about 30% of the respondents prefer to discuss their future plans. On the other hand, 23, 75% of Maghnia speakers tend to discuss social and political problems, whereas 20% prefer work subjects. In contrast, 13, 75% of the respondents declared that they enjoy fashion and make up especially females, while 12, 5% prefer talking about the opposite sex. However, they have not justified their answers.

7- In your point of view, does the geographical location of Maghnia play an important role in language differences between woman and man?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. Comments.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	26	30	56
b	14	10	24
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.9: Language Use and the Geographical Location of Maghnia.**



**Figure 3.8: Language Use and the Geographical Location of Maghnia.**

From the above table and figure, we may realise that the majority of participants, who represent 70% of the sample, were with the idea that the geographical location of Maghnia affects the use of language between both sexes. In contradiction, 30% of the informants maintained that language is always changing since teenagers prefer innovation in social interaction.

Hence, most of the participants observed that Maghnia is considered as an important area in the West of Algeria since it is located in the border with Morocco. In fact, in the last decades, most of the citizens support commercial contact with Moroccans through what is called the “dark market” such as the illegal exchange of fuel and other goods including drugs, clothes and food. This situation pushes men in Maghnia to develop a new vocabulary for language contact. Indeed, they even create specific slang in order to hide their contact such as [ *āmbijās*] which refers to drugs. They added that, these people, who are unconscious about social relations and interaction between both sexes, impose their position in this society over women. In other words, females, in Maghnia, are viewed as powerless and useless. In fact, they stated that the place of women is at home and their main works are cooking, washing

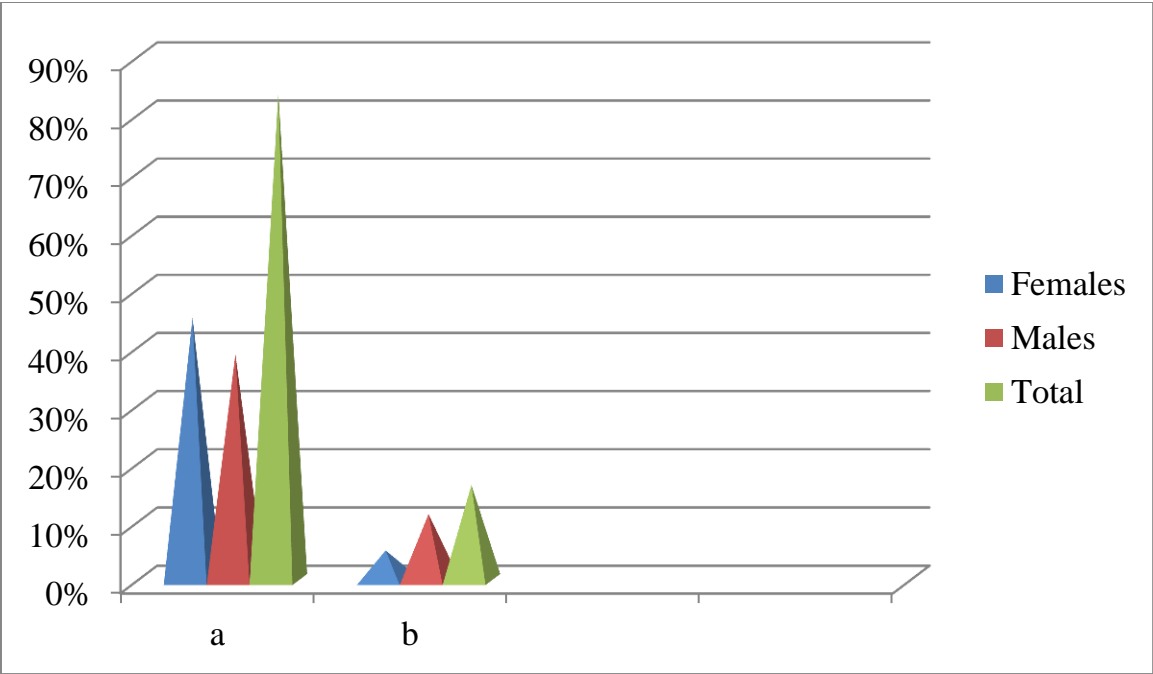
and looking after children. Moreover, some men consider woman just as a machine to give babies. In their point of view, woman goes out just twice in her whole life. The first is to her husband’s home, whereas the second is to the cemetery.

8-Does man prefer using bootleggers’ language in Maghnia?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. Comments and suggestions.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	36	31	67
b	4	9	13
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.10: Bootleggers’ Language and Men’s Attitudes.**



**Figure 3.9: Bootleggers’ Language and Men’s Attitudes.**

This question aims at determining the attitudes of both sexes mainly men towards the use of bootleggers’ language. About 83, 75% of the participants declared that men

use this language. In contrast, few of them, who represent 16, 25%, declared that men do not use bootleggers' codes.

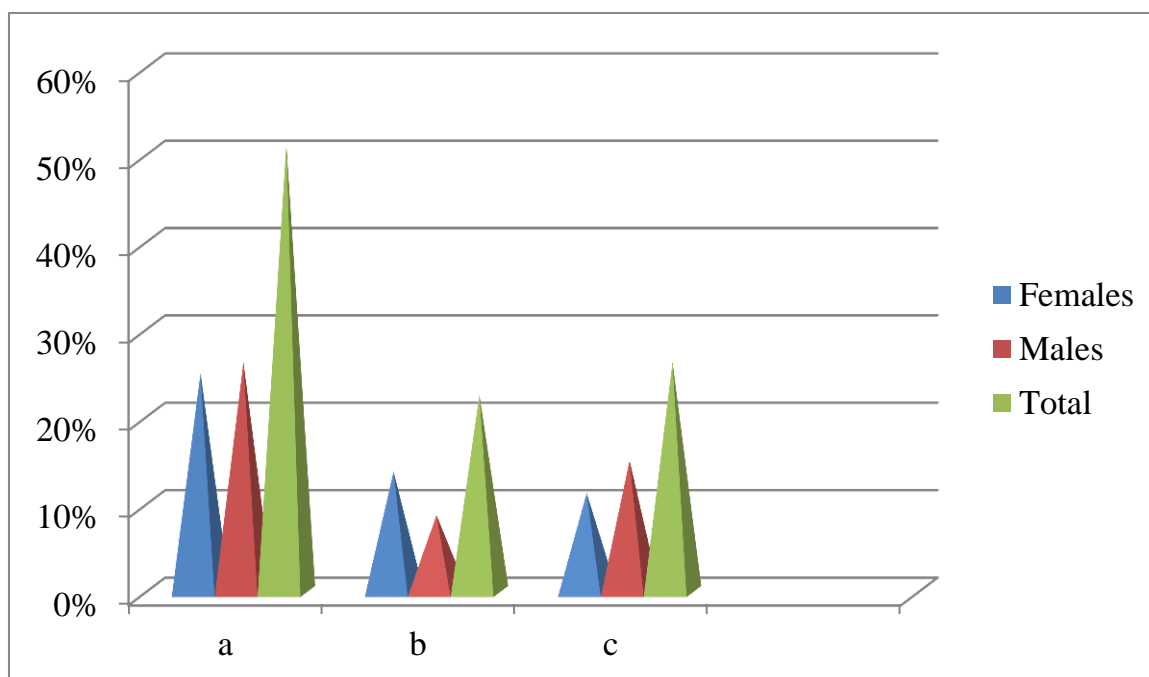
Yet, the majority of respondents justified their answers claiming that these codes are frequently used. They continued stating that the main factor which pushes them to practise this work is the lack of jobs and other social problems. Among the expressions that they create, we have for instance, [ʔajwa:n], which is used to refer to a bad product. Other important examples include [sko:rti] or [bɛrraj] which means the person who takes in charge to protect bootleggers from national security. They even create expressions referring to cars such as:[musta:ʃ hitler] or [ʃiʔana] referring to BMW,[kaskiʔa]or [beret] referring to Megane, [ qawqawa],[luza] or[mbalga] referring to Mercedes...etc. Furthermore, they use special words to illegal cars that they do not contain legal papers for instance [muqatila]. On the other hand, females do not employ such vocabulary.

9- According to your point of view, why do most men prefer using bootleggers' language?

- a. Because it is important in their work.
- b. Because it is easy to communicate.
- c. Because of the geographical location.
- d. Comments.

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>a</b>	20	21	41
<b>b</b>	11	7	18
<b>c</b>	9	12	21
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.11: The Main Reasons for Using Bootleggers' Language in Maghnia.**



**Figure 3.10: The Main Reasons for Using Bootleggers' Language in Maghnia.**

The figure and the table above clearly show the views of Maghnia speakers towards using bootleggers' language. In fact, 51, 25% declared that it is important in their work. In contrast, about 26, 25% of them observe that the geographical location of Maghnia plays a crucial role in pushing them to learn this vocabulary, whereas few numbers, who represent 22, 5%, stated that it is used as a means of communication. Their comments were between the first and the last proposition. They supported their choice by justifying that since the educational level of Maghnia speakers is low, it obliges them to search for other substitutions to interact and communicate especially in their commercial domains. They feel the need for developing a coded language to exchange ideas and in order to avoid the understanding of national security.

10- In which does woman differ from man?

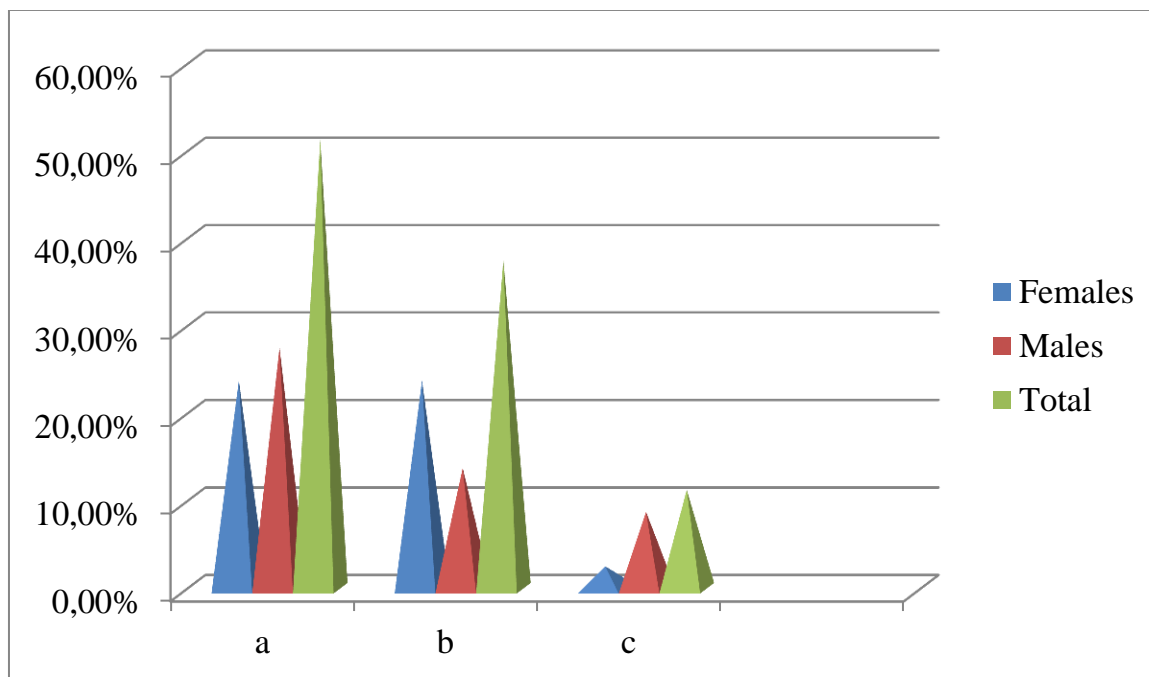
- a. In using expressions.
- b. In selecting terms.
- c. In constructing sentences.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	19	22	41



<b>b</b>	19	11	30
<b>c</b>	2	7	9
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.12: Women’s and Men’s Main Differences.**



**Figure 3.11: Women’s and Men’s Main Differences.**

What can be grasped from the previous table and figure is that 51, 25% of the participants are with the view that women differ from men in using expressions, while 37, 5% were with selecting terms. Finally, 11, 25% of them prefer the construction of sentences.

Henceforth, their comments were based on the idea that women are selective since they always look after their language. In fact, they added that women are creative because most of popular proverbs and poems were produced by females. On the other hand, they argued that males tend to use a simple language depending on religious and Quran verses. They further claimed that females differ from males in selecting topics they want to discuss. In sum, they viewed that if they differ in selecting expressions,

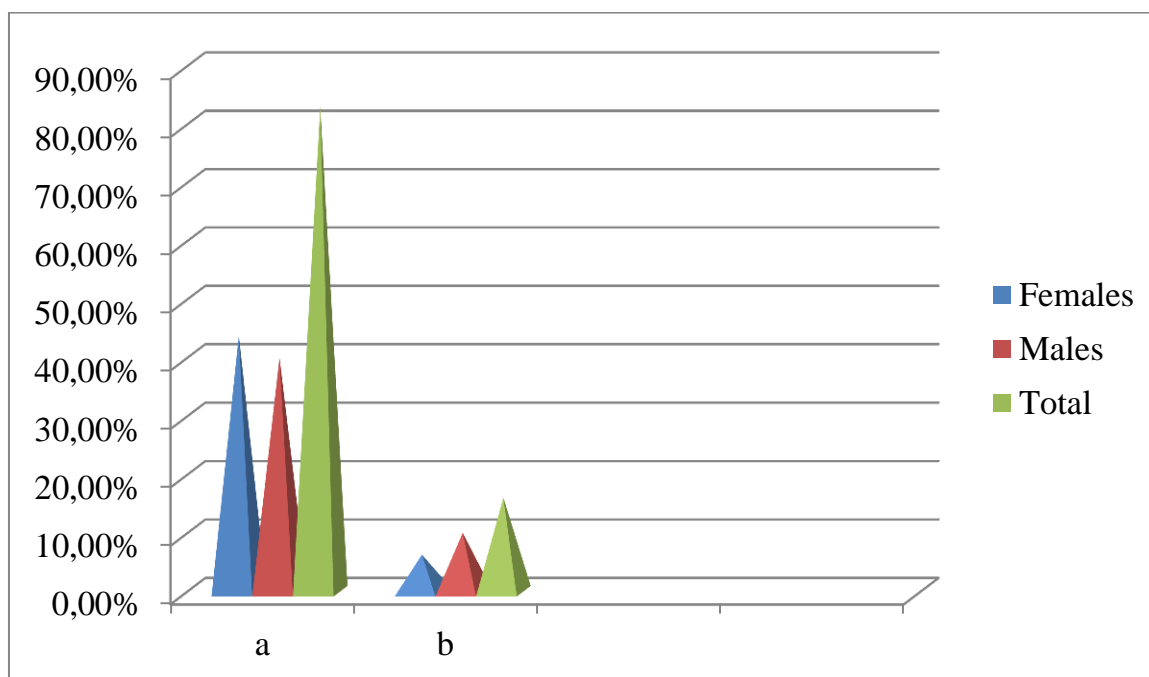
probably they will differ in constructing sentences since women try to build beautiful sentences, while men do not care.

11- Are there any differences between woman and man in selecting words that denote colours?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. Comments and suggestions.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
a	35	32	67
b	5	8	13
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.13: Speakers' Attitudes towards Selecting Terms Referring to Colours.**



**Figure 3.12: Speakers' Attitudes towards Selecting Terms Referring to Colours.**

The results above show that most respondents, who represent 83, 75% of the sample, declared that there is a wide difference between both sexes in selecting terms referring to colours. On the other side, 16, 25% of them were against this view.

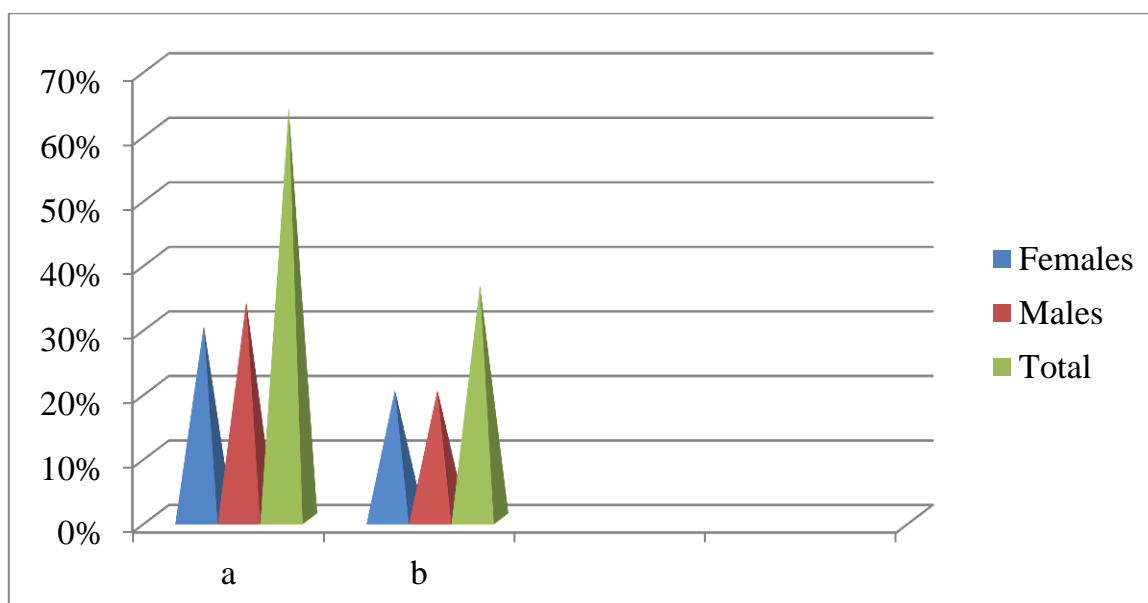
Furthermore, their comments were based on the claim that women prefer French words such as: [roz bā bā]: “pink”, [vert]: “green”...etc. In contrast, men mix between French terms and local words such as [blœ golwaz]: “blue”, [gri suri]:”grey”, [sablé]: “sand” and [khal]: “black”...etc. Besides, women tend to create expressions related to home activities such as spices, fruits and vegetables. For instance, [χuxija]: “peach”, [ʕasslija]: “honey”, [qarfija]: “cannel”, [zitija]: “oil”, [limija]: “lemon”...etc.

12- What does woman prefer using in Maghnia?

- a. Darija.
- b. French.
- c. Comments and suggestions.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
<b>a</b>	24	27	51
<b>b</b>	16	13	29
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.14: Women’s Attitudes towards French and Darija.**



**Figure 3.13: Women’s Attitudes towards French and Darija.**

As it has been shown in the previous table and figure, about 63, 75% prefer using “Darija” while 36, 25% show positive attitudes towards the second proposition.

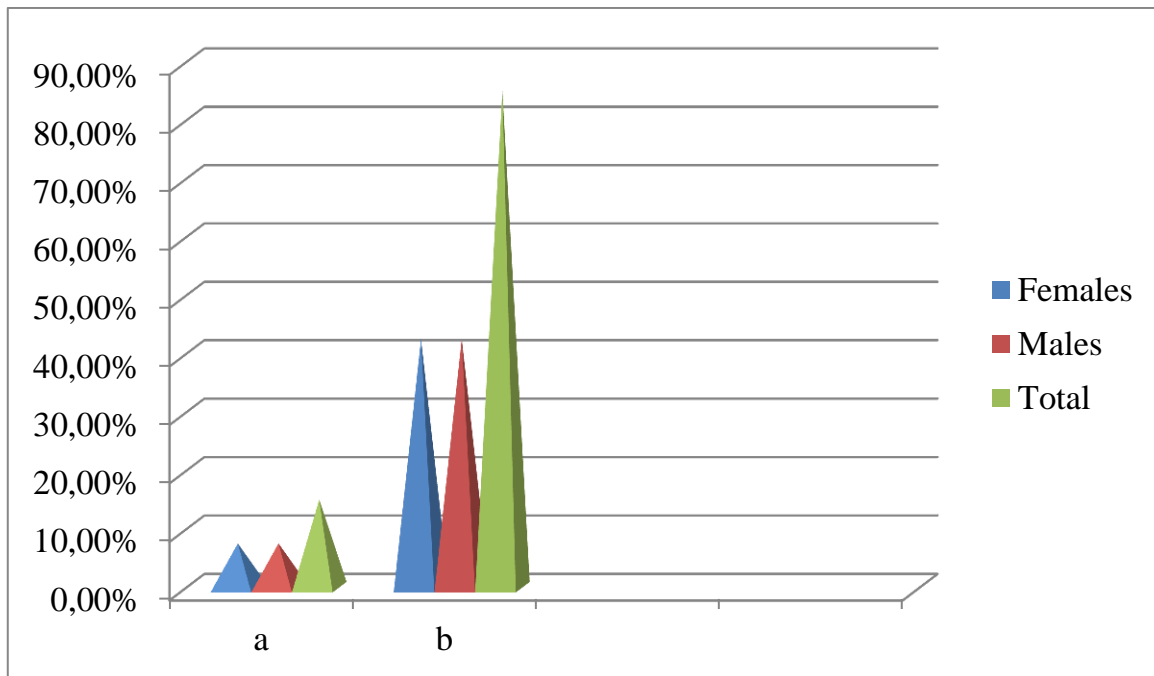
In fact, their comments were poor. Some of them argued that women mix between French and Darija through using words and expressions, such as [ce bon]: “it’s ok”, [lju : m jet, mais radwa elle sera absente]: “today she comes”, but tomorrow she will be absent.[rani radja nəbro : si senija]: “I am going to brush my teeth”...etc. They further stated that women use French in order to prove their superiority over men and to show their intellectual capacity. Indeed, they observe that females employ French words as they are pronounced, while men tend to change their pronunciation such as [no : rmarmø]: “normally”, [jji] : “juice” , [api]: “on foot”, [pipi]: “bipe”...etc. They concluded that the educational background of females play a fundamental role in directing their attitudes towards the use of French or Darija.

13- According to your point of view, who use more French language in Maghnia?

- a. Man.
- b. Woman.
- c. Comments.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
<b>b</b>	6	6	12
<b>a</b>	34	34	68
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.15: Women’s and Men’s Attitudes towards French in Maghnia.**



**Figure 3.14: Women’s and Men’s Attitudes towards French in Maghnia.**

From the above results, we can deduce that most respondents, who represent 85%, were with the idea that women have positive attitudes towards the use of French in their social interaction, whereas about 15% disagreed on this view.

Indeed, the comments of the participants helped us a lot in analysing this question since they argued that females are more interested in learning languages in order to prove their existence. They further claimed that women are always looking after their culture, that is, they are ambiguous while men have a limited interest in learning languages. They added that the use of French in Maghnia is very low and limited in comparison with Tlemcen for instance. Moreover, they maintained that the main reason behind this fact is that the educational level is very weak especially of men. For this reason, we find that men resort to the use of “Darija” with some French words.

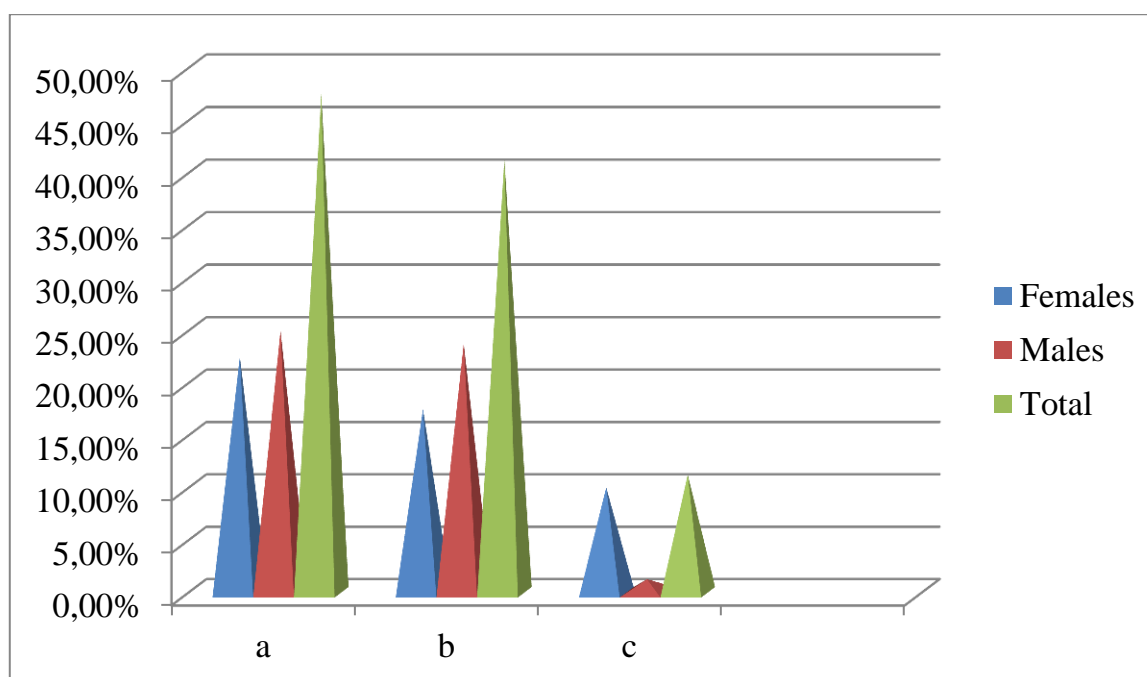
14- If woman in Maghnia use French more than man, so why?

- a. To show her educational level.
- b. To attract the attention of the others.
- c. To show her female nature.

d. Comments.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
<b>a</b>	18	20	38
<b>b</b>	14	19	33
<b>c</b>	8	1	9
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.16: The Main Reasons beyond Women's Use of French.**



**Figure 3.15: The Main Reasons beyond Women's Use of French.**

What can be summarised from the results is that half of the participants, who represent 47, 5%, declared that women use French to show their educational level. On the other hand, about 41, 25% of the informants were with the idea that females employ French to attract the attention of the others, while a few numbers, who represent 11, 25%, maintained that they use it to show their feminist nature.

Hence, they justified their answers claiming that most of women consider French as the language of civilisation and literature. In contradiction, men avoid using French

for several social reasons including the level of education, the nature of their work (bootleggers, builders and trade men). They also maintained that the level of teaching French in Maghnia is very weak in addition to their negative attitudes towards the use of this language.

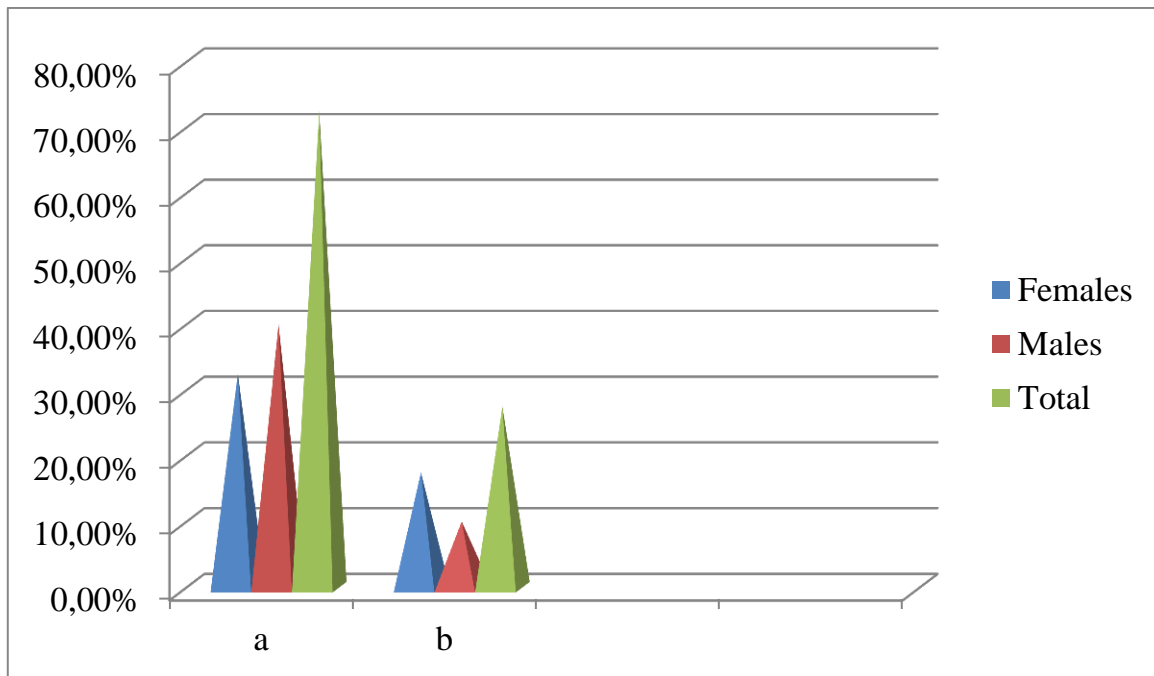
In conclusion, we can say that men, in Maghnia, have negative attitudes towards French, whereas women display positive attitudes.

15- In your point of view, are there any differences between man and woman in using taboos?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. Comments.

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>a</b>	26	32	58
<b>b</b>	14	8	22
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.17: The Difference between Men and Women in Using Taboos.**



**Figure 3.16: The Difference between Men and Women in Using Taboos.**

The results show clearly the view of participants. About 72, 5% of them observed that there is a wide difference between man and woman in using taboos in Maghnia. In contrast, 27, 5% of them claimed that woman is equal in using taboos with man.

They justified their arguments stating that the social norms of Maghnia speech community are very strict. For this reason, women have to look for their behaviour and language because they are always watched by society. They added that using taboos by men is the result of their outside daily contact. Henceforth, they learn vulgar words, blasphemies and epithets.

They further argued that women’s use of taboos is restricted to insults since in our social cultural system girls are born with a belief that they are better suited to be house’s wives, in this respect, woman’s gender is socially and culturally determined. Furthermore, they claimed that men have great expressions peculiar to them, which women understand but never pronounce them. Besides, women have a stock of words and favourite phrases that men never use.

16- In your point of view, who are expected to use more taboos between men?

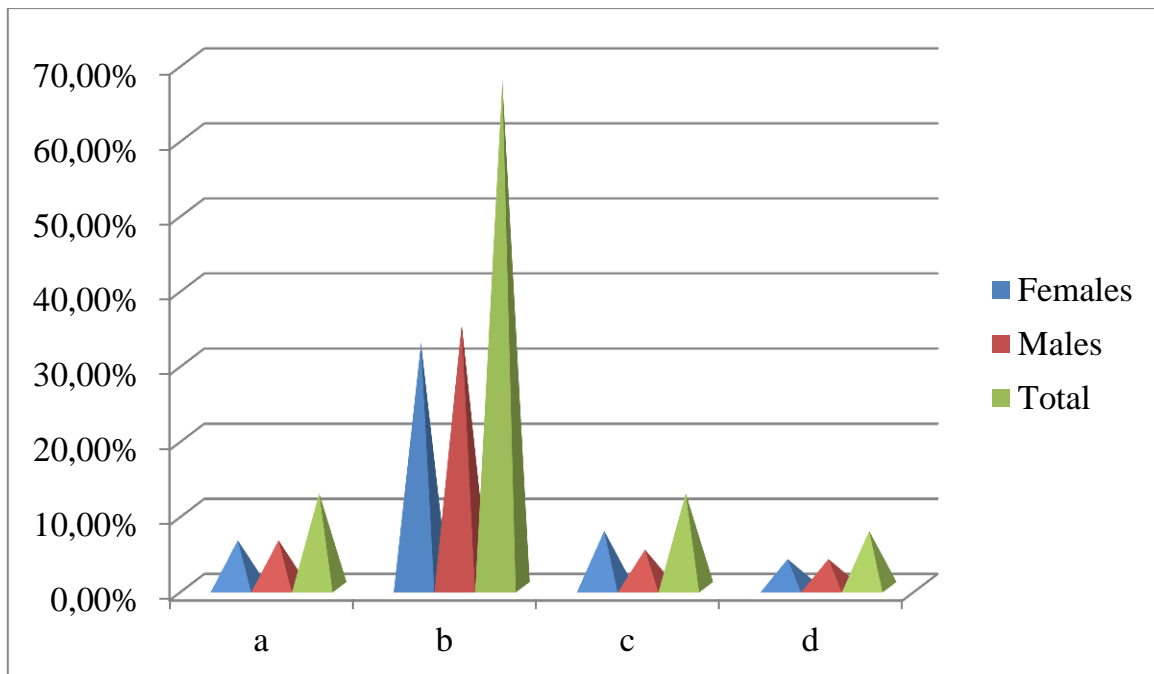
a. Children.



- b. Adolescents.
- c. Adults.
- d. Old people.
- e. Comments and suggestions.

Suggestions	Females	Males	Total
<b>a</b>	5	5	10
<b>b</b>	26	28	54
<b>c</b>	6	4	10
<b>d</b>	3	3	6
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.18: Men’s and The Use of Taboos.**



**Figure 3.17: Men’s and The Use of Taboos.**

The previous results denote clearly the views of most respondents. They show that 67, 5% of the informants took the second proposition into consideration. They

also proved that the remaining percentages are closer to each other because children and adults sometimes use taboos, while old people rarely employ such expressions.

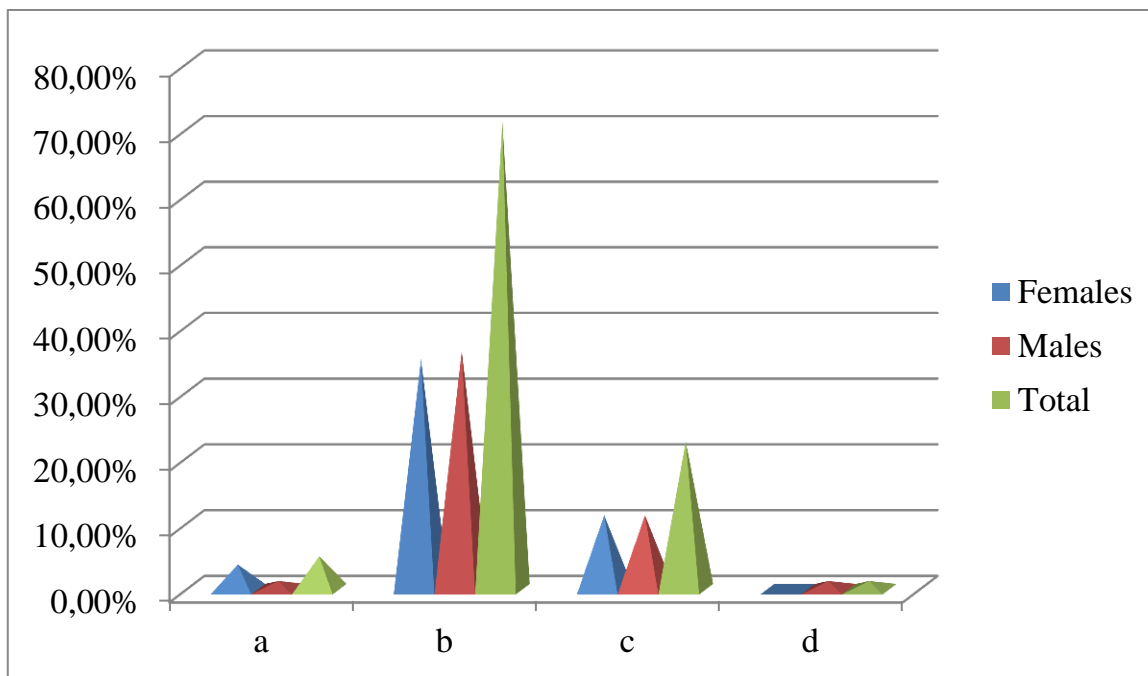
What can be understood from their comments is that teenagers tend to use taboos in order to prove their existence. Besides, most informants observe that the social upbringing influences his identity construction and, therefore, his behaviour and language use. In other words, children are born as white paper in which their parents and the social environment write their lines i.e., they behave and talk as their parents and friends do. They also argued that the social structure of the family in Maghnia is the main factor that pushes children and teenagers to use taboos in addition to the social environment where the child gets in contact with other children and, henceforth, they learn this language to prove their group identity. They also observed that Maghnia speakers employ taboos due to their commercial contact such as drugs sellers and bootleggers.

17- In your point of view, who are expected to use more taboos between women?

- a. Children.
- b. Adolescents.
- c. Adults.
- d. Old people.
- e. Comments and suggestions.

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>a</b>	3	1	4
<b>b</b>	28	29	57
<b>c</b>	9	9	18
<b>d</b>	/	1	1
<b>Total</b>	40	40	80

**Table 3.19: Women’s and The Use of Taboos.**



**Figure 3.18: Women's and The Use of Taboos.**

In this concluding question, the results show the participants' views concerning women's use of taboos. In fact, the majority of participants, who represent 71,25% of the sample, were with the idea that teenagers use more taboos than other ages.

In short, they concluded that there are some girls who use taboos for the purpose of attracting boys or what is called in our dialect [əddaşarhum]. They added that there are some studies which prove that girls are more attracted towards using the internet more precisely (face book) and mobile phone. This fact pushes them to learn unconsciously bad language.

In sum, they added that the social upbringing and the environment are the first contributors that encourage men's and women's attitudes towards linguistic taboos.

### **3.6.2- Interview Analysis**

One should note that males and females differ biologically and linguistically. These differences play a substantial role in constructing males' and females' identity, behaviour, beliefs and attitudes. For this reason, women differ even in using language. Therefore, in this section, we attempted to investigate the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speakers and its influence on females' position in this society. We also tried

to test their attitudes towards constructing and using language. Lastly, we tried to investigate Maghnia speakers' attitudes towards using language.

1-Do you think that there is a difference between man and woman in using language?

In order to collect our data, we have focused on a group interview in which we have selected two groups of ten participants from different ages, educational backgrounds and occupations. In fact, five females, who were given the questionnaire, were interviewed at the same time, whereas five male participants were only interviewed.

According to female participants, there is a wide difference between men and women in using language since they differ in their ambitions and attitudes. They claimed that some scientific investigations prove that males and females differ in selecting topics to discuss. For instance, men choose topics related to sport, politics, business and economics. On females' part, they prefer personal subjects including (families, intimacy). They further argued that the social environment, where the individuals live, affects their identity, behaviour and languages. They concluded that the social upbringing of the child and the socio-cultural structure of the society are governed by the norms that this society imposes on its members. These norms support the difference between men and women. On the other hand, male interviewees affirmed that males prefer short and simple sentences, whereas women construct very detailed phrases.

2-Do you think that the socio-cultural factors affect language use?

In this question, all participants, who represent 100%, claimed that the language of individuals in each society is controlled by social and cultural features. They gave a good example of the difference between rural and urban people since females and males, in rural areas, prefer using more dialectal forms of Arabic, while urban women prefer mixing between Fr and AA (code switching).

3-According to your point of view, does the geographical location of Maghnia play an important role in language difference?

According to males' interviewees, the geographical location of Maghnia speech community is the main factor that differentiates Maghnia from other towns due to the contact with the Moroccan society. In the same regard, female participants viewed that the social contact is apparent in the daily lives of Maghnia speakers (their speech, food and clothes etc.).

Indeed, the commercial exchange between Moroccans and Maghnia people pushes them to search for a new vocabulary to supply their needs especially secret codes and slang due to their illegal contact and exchange. Furthermore, this specific slang is what characterises Maghnia males since it helps them in their work. However, they concluded that it is also employed by most people since it becomes a part of their daily speech.

4- Does woman in Maghnia use French more than man?

In this question, two males maintained that the frequency of using Fr in Maghnia is low either by men or women due to the social structure of this society since 30% of children neglect their schools at early age in order to work as businessman. In contrast, most of the informants declared that women use Fr in order to show their educational and cultural levels over men. They added that women prefer other languages to express their feelings and emotions. Besides, Fr is considering as the most prestigious form in comparison to AA since it is viewed as the language of poetry and literature.

5- In your opinion, who use more taboos in Maghnia man or woman?

In this concluding question, the participants agreed on the view that both women and men use taboos, but they differ in the frequency and words they use. They added that women prefer insults, while men prefer blasphemies and profanity. They also claimed that females prefer using proverbs when they are insulting each other. They argued that the main factors that push them to use taboos are anger, annoyance and frustration.

### **3.7- Conclusion**

Throughout this chapter, we tried to prove the validity of the previous hypotheses through relying on some research tools and methods for data collection and analysis. Firstly, we gathered our information by a questionnaire that was given to 100 informants, but just 80 of them agreed to answer the questions showing their views and beliefs concerning the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia society and the position of woman in this speech community. Besides, we have also relied on a group interview as a second research instruments. Lastly, our primary research method was participant observation, which helped us a lot in getting in contact with Maghnia speakers.

# General conclusion

## **General Conclusion**

The overall findings of this research reveal that the use of language is linked to the society's norms and the individuals' attitudes which are controlled by these norms. Besides, there are many other social factors which influence language use between both sexes. In fact, the results also show that the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community affects the identity of both genders. Therefore, it also influences their construction, use of sentences and expressions.

In fact, this research work was based on several approaches and theories concerning males and females language. Moreover, it also took into consideration the reasons behind using language differently. Indeed, the findings of this work show that these differences lie in pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax, conversational patterns and politeness strategies. Henceforth, these results prove that females are more attached towards standard forms. In other terms, female speakers have been found to use forms considered to be better or more correct than those used by men, and using other languages including French which becomes one of the most difference that distinguishes males from females. In addition, the findings also reveal that the conservative nature of Maghnia society pushes its members especially females to follow the rules that it imposes. In other words, Maghnia females differ from men in language use, behaviour and their adherence to social norms.

Furthermore, the findings of this piece of work show that women also talk for the purpose of creating an appropriate atmosphere for their intimate relations. They also differ in their selection of the topic, they want to discuss. Moreover, these results reveal that women sometimes engage in conversations without a clear goal.

The most important results in this work are that Maghnia males differ largely in the words they use including terms referring to colours, clothes, cars and other objects. Besides, Maghnia males have created their own vocabulary which is a form of slang. In fact, this slang is the result of their illegal commercial contact with Moroccans since the majority of terms and expressions are in the form of codes. These codes are used as



markers that identify those who are working as bootleggers. However, this vocabulary has been used by most males in Maghnia due to their contact with each other and because about 65% of people work as bootleggers. Consequently, the geographical location of Maghnia directs the attitudes of both males and females towards using language differently, in addition to other sociolinguistic parameters.

As a concluding remark, our findings agree with Lakoff on the fact that gender differences in language usage reflect the unequal status of females and their position in society. In other terms, Maghnia society has imposed on its members the idea that men are superior over women and this fact determines their position. Moreover, the findings also reveal that Maghnia females share more positive attitudes towards discourse strategies than men.

Last and not the least, this dissertation offers a new explanation regarding gender differences in terms of their attitudes towards language use. It illustrates the point that there are certain social and situational factors which affect deeply the speakers' attitudes, choice and language usage. In other words, the socio-cultural structure of a given society is represented in their language. Indeed, this latter reflects clearly the norms of those who use it.

Another point that must be taken into account is that each society has developed certain stereotypes. These stereotypes become parts of the society's norms and are used to govern its members' use of language. This fact is apparent in Maghnia females' speech and behaviour.

From the above results, one might confirm that the norms of a given society are the results of its people's daily behaviours and interactions. Additionally, each society tries to create an appropriate atmosphere in order to realise a successful social relations. This atmosphere is built on certain rules which determine the position of both sexes and even each individual. Briefly speaking, females' position in society is culturally and linguistically determined and this fact creates other differences. In this regard, our attempt in this area is insufficient since more research should be conducted in gender differences in terms of their attitudes towards language use. Besides, there

are few studies which dealt with the attitudes of males and females towards using slang words and expressions. In this regard, Maghnia speech community provides a fertile soil for investigating gender's use of coded language. In this sense, there are many research questions which are raised: what are the reasons which push Maghnia speakers to use slanguage? Is it taken from AA or is it a mixture of Moroccan Arabic and Maghnia variety? What are the attitudes of females in Maghnia towards using slang expressions?

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# Appendices

# Appendix A

## Questionnaire

In the light of this study, could you please answer the following questions?

- a- Age
- b- Male  female
- c- Occupation.....

1- Are there any differences between woman and man in using language?

- a- Yes.
- b- No.
- c- Comments.

2- Do the socio-cultural factors affect language differences between genders?

- a- Yes.
- b- No.
- c- Comments.

3- Do you think that age plays an important role in language differences between genders?

- a- Yes.
- b- No.
- c- Comments.

4- In your point of view, does the conservative nature of woman prevent her from using some expressions that man employs in his daily life?

- a- Yes.
- b- No.
- c- Comments.

5- In your point of view, who are more talkative?

- a- Man.
- b- Woman.

c- Comments.

6- Which topics do you prefer to discuss with your friends?

a- The opposite sex.

b- Future plans.

c- Fashions and make up.

d- Social and political problems.

e- Work.

7- In your point of view, does the geographical location of Maghnia play an important role in language differences between woman and man?

a- Yes.

b- No.

8- Does man prefer using bootleggers' language in Maghnia?

a- Yes.

b- No.

c- Comments and suggestions.

9- According to your point of view, why do most men prefer using bootleggers' language?

a- Because it is important in their work.

b- Because it is easy to communicate.

c- Because of the geographical location.

d- Comments.

10- In which does woman differ from man?

a- In using expressions.

b- In selecting terms.

c- In the construction of sentences.

11- Are there any differences between woman and man in selecting words that denote colours?

a- Yes.

b- No.

c- Comments and suggestions.

12- What does woman prefer using in Maghnia?

- a- Darija.
- b- French.
- c- Comments and suggestions.

13- According to your point of view, who use more French language in Maghnia?

- a- Men.
- b- French.
- c- Comments.

14- If woman in Maghnia use French more than man, so why?

- a- To show her educational level.
- b- To attract the attention of the others.
- c- To show her feminist nature.

15- In your point of view, are there any differences between man and woman in using taboos?

- a- Yes.
- b- No.
- c- Comments.

16- In your point of view, who are expected to use more taboos between men?

- a- Children.
- b- Adolescents.
- c- Adults.
- d- Old people.

17- In your point of view, who are expected to use more taboos between women?

- a- Children.
- b- Adolescents.

- c- Adults.
- d- Old people.
- e- Comments and suggestions.



## **Interview**

1- Do you think that there is a difference between man and woman in using language?

.....  
.....

2- Do you think that the socio-cultural factors affect language use?

.....  
.....

3- According to your point of view, does the geographical location of Maghnia play an important role in language difference?

.....  
.....

4- Does woman in Maghnia use French more than man?

.....  
.....

5- In your opinion, who use more taboos in Maghnia man or woman?

.....  
.....

Thank you.

# Appendix B

## Questionnaire

- في إطار هذه الدراسة الميدانية، الرجاء الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية :

- 1- السن
- 2- ذكر  أنثى
- 3- العمل
- 4- مكان السكن

- من المعلوم أن المرأة و الرجل لا يختلفان فحسب في السلوك و البنية البيولوجية و إنما حتى في استعمال اللغة و طريقة تركيب الجمل و اختيار العبارات.

1- هل هناك اختلاف بين المرأة و الرجل في استعمال اللغة؟

- نعم  لا

- تعليق.....

.....

2- هل العوامل الاجتماعية و الثقافية تؤثر على كلا الجنسين في استعمال اللغة؟

- نعم  لا

- تعليق.....

.....

3- هل تعتقد أن عامل السن يلعب دورا هاما في الاختلاف اللغوي بين الجنسين؟

- نعم  لا

- تعليق.....

.....

4- في نظرك هل الطبيعة المحافظة للمرأة تمنعها من استعمال بعض الألفاظ التي يعتمدها

الرجل في حياته اليومية؟

لا

نعم

- تعليق.....

5- في نظرك أيهما يتميز بالكلام الكثير؟

الرجل

المرأة

- علل.....

6- ما هي المواضيع التي تميل للتحدث فيها مع الأصدقاء؟

- التكلم على الجنس الآخر.

- المشاريع المستقبلية.

- الأزياء و الماكياج.

- المسائل الاجتماعية و السياسية.

- مسائل العمل.

7- هل في نظرك يلعب الموقع الجغرافي لمدينة مغنية دورا هـا ما في الاختلاف اللغوي بين

المرأة و الرجل؟

لا

نعم

- تعليق.....

8- هل يميل الرجل في مغنية إلى استعمال لغة التهريب؟

لا

نعم

- تعليق.....

9- لماذا في نظرك معظم الرجال في مدينة مغنية يميلون لاستعمال لغة التهريب؟

- لأنها ضرورية في مجال عملهم.

- لأنها أسهل وسيلة لتواصل.

- ذلك راجعا لضرورة الموقع الجغرافي للمدينة.

- تعليق.....  
.....

10- فيما تختلف المرأة عن الرجل؟

- في استعمال الألفاظ.

- انتقاء المفردات.

- تركيب الجمل.

- اقتراحات.....  
.....  
.....

11- هل هناك اختلاف بين المرأة و الرجل في انتقاء الكلمات التي تدل على الألوان؟

- نعم  لا

- اقتراحات.....  
.....

12- هل تميل المرأة في مغنية إلى استعمال

- الدارجة  الفرنسية

- تعليق.....  
.....

13- من في نظرك يستعمل اللغة الفرنسية أكثر في مغنية الرجل أم المرأة؟

- الرجل  المرأة

- تعليل.....  
.....

14- اذا كانت المرأة في مغنية تستعمل اللغة الفرنسية أكثر من الرجل فلماذا؟

- لإظهار مستواها العلمي.

- لجذب انتباه الآخرين.

- لإظهار أنوثتها.

- اقتراحات.....  
.....

15- هل في نظرك هناك اختلاف بين المرأة و الرجل في استعمال اللغة البذيئة (السب، الشتم، لمعايرة)؟

- نعم  لا

- علل.....

.....

16- من يستعمل في نظرك اللغة البذيئة أكثر في فئة الرجال؟

- الأطفال.

- المراهقين.

- الكهول.

- الشيوخ.

- اقتراحات.....

.....

17- من يستعمل اللغة البذيئة أكثر في فئة النساء؟

- الأطفال.

- المراهقات

- النساء ما بين 30 و 55

- النساء ما بين 60 فما فوق

- اقتراحات.....

.....

و شكرا.

## Interview

1. هل تعتقد أن هناك فرق بين المرأة و الرجل في استعمال اللغة ؟

.....

2. هل تعتقد أن العوامل الاجتماعية و الثقافية لها تأثير في استعمالهما للغة ؟

.....

3. في نظرك هل يلعب الموقع الجغرافي لمدينة مغنية دورا هاما في الاختلاف اللغوي ؟

.....

4. هل تستعمل المرأة في مغنية اللغة الفرنسية أكثر من الرجل ؟

.....

5. من في نظرك يستعمل اللغة البذيئة أكثر في مدينة مغنية الرجل أم المرأة ؟

.....

وشكرا.

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة ميول المغناويين نحو استعمال اللغة اعتمادا على نظريات كمية ونوعية. كما تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اثبات أن البنية الثقافية للمجتمع المغناوي تؤثر بعمق على استخدام و بناء الكلمات و الجمل. كما تبرهن أيضا أن هناك اختلاف بين الرجل و المرأة في استعمال اللغة و ذلك راجع إلى المفردات التي بنوها نتيجة الاتصال التجاري. وقد اثبتت هذه الدراسة كذلك أن ميول المتكلمين ترتبط بالسن، نوع الجنس، المستوى التعليمي، الهوية و الثقافة. و عليه، فإن النتائج بينت أن النساء تتبع القواعد التي فرضها المجتمع المغناوي على طريقة الكلام و السلوك. كما بينت هذه النتائج أن الإناث أكثر تحفظا وبذلك تمثل قواعد هذا المجتمع اللغوي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** استخدام اللغة، الجنس، الميول، العوامل الاجتماعية و الثقافية، الأعراف المغناوية، المجتمع اللغوي المغناوي.

### **Résumé :**

Cette étude vise à étudier les attitudes de la communauté de Maghnia vers l'utilisation de la langue suivant les méthodes quantitative et qualitative. Il tend à prouver que la structure socioculturelle de la communauté de la parole de Maghnia affecte profondément leur utilisation et construction des mots et phrases. Il montre que les hommes sont différent en grande partie de femmes dans l'utilisation de la langue, car ils ont crée leur propre vocabulaire en raison de leur commercial contact. Il tente de confirmer que les attitudes des locuteurs sont fortement liées à l'âge, le sexe, le niveau d'éducation, l'identité et la culture. On conséquence, les résultats montrent que les femmes suivent les règles que la société de Maghnia a imposée en termes de discours et comportement. Ils révèlent également que les femmes sont plus prudentes et représentent les normes de cette communauté linguistique.

**Mots clés :** Utilisation de la langue, sexe, attitudes, facteurs socioculturels, normes de Maghnia, la communauté linguistique de Maghnia.

### **Summary:**

This study aims to investigate the attitudes of Maghnia speakers towards using language following quantitative and qualitative methods. It tends to prove that the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community affects deeply their use and construction of words and sentences. It shows that men differ largely from women in using language since they have created their own vocabulary due to their commercial contact. It also attempts to confirm that the attitudes of speakers are strongly related to the speakers' age, gender, the educational background, identity and culture. Henceforth, the results show that women follow the rules that Maghnia society has imposed in terms of speech and behaviour. They also reveal that females are more conservative and represent the norms of this speech community.

**Key words:** Language use, gender, attitudes, the socio-cultural factors, Maghnia norms, Maghnia speech community.



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***Investigating Gender-related Use of Language in  
Maghnia Speech Community***

Dissertation submitted as a partial fulfillment in candidacy for the Degree of  
MAGISTER in Language Contact and Sociolinguistic Variation.

**Summary of the dissertation**

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## *ABSTRACT*

The present research work is an attempt to test Maghnia speakers' attitudes towards using language. It aims to highlight the main socio-cultural factors that affect the construction of their language. It attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the language situation in Maghnia and, therefore, its impact on social interaction between both sexes. It also tends to prove that gender is one of the sociolinguistic variables that direct communication between humans. Another important purpose of this research work is to analyse the social structure of Maghnia families, especially, the norms that govern the relationship between females and males; and determine their position in this society. It aims to give an overview of the main stereotypes surrounding women's behaviour and language. Thus, it provides a real image of the attitudes of both sexes. To these ends, this work is built on certain objectives which open a gate on the real sociolinguistic situation of using language in Maghnia speech community in relation to gender. Firstly, it attempts to prove that the attitudes of speakers depend largely on their identity, gender and age. Secondly, it tries to discover what is behind the commercial contact of Maghnia speech community.

## **General Introduction**

Sociolinguistics is a discipline which takes into account gender as an essential variable and has established many theories for studying the difference between males and females in communicating. However, more recent scholarly works tend to prove that there are other factors which influence the gendered use of language including the identity and attitudes of the speaker in addition to other socio-cultural factors. In other words, the norms that each society imposes on its members affect the position of males and females and, therefore, their behaviour, communication and language use.

As far as the social differences are concerned, some studies relate gender differences to the social position of males and females in their society. They have argued that men and women live in different worlds and, therefore, they have different cultures. They have also based their views on the fact that these cultural differences are reflected in language and the way men and women communicate all along their social interaction. In contrast, some other approaches focus their attention on the way both males and females construct their language. In other words, these differences range from pronunciation or morphology to vocabulary.

Additionally, the stereotypes, that each society has developed, affect the gendered position and, therefore, their language use and perception in addition to their attitudes. In fact, the attitudes of each speaker are directly related to these stereotypes which become parts of the society's norms and direct its members' views.

Having appreciated previous scholarly works about the gendered use of language and attitudinal studies, we attempt to study the difference between Maghnia males and females in terms of their attitudes towards language use; proving, in the mean time, that the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community affects the position of males and females and, thus, their way of communicating. Women's use of language is directed by the social norms of this society. Particularly, women, in Maghnia, who are more conservative than men and this fact influences their style and language. In this regard, the following research questions are raised as follows:

4- Do Maghnia males and females differ in their attitudes towards language use?

5- Does the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia affect language differences between its speakers?

6- Does the geographical location of Maghnia influence gender's use and construction of language?

Under these questions the following hypotheses are constructed:

4- The attitudes of Maghnia males and females towards language use may differ according to their age, educational background and other social and situational factors. Besides, females in Maghnia may be expected to use better or more correct language than males do.

5- There may be a correlation between language and the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community and this fact influences males' and females' use of language.

6- The geographical location of Maghnia may be a major factor that pushes males to develop a new vocabulary due to their commercial contact with Moroccans. Thus, this latter enlarges the gap between males and females in the way they interact, construct sentences and use words.

Hence, this dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first one starts with a review of the related literature in which the main theories, that explain the gendered use of language, are highlighted; besides gender differences in spoken and written language. Also, chapter one includes gender differences in terms of their identity, attitudes and the politeness strategies they tend to employ in their daily social interaction.

The second chapter will be devoted for describing the socio-cultural and linguistic profiles of Algeria. It will deal with Maghnia history, cultural position and its effects on its members' daily lives. Being exposed to the factors which determine language differences, chapter two investigates gender and linguistic variation in Algerian Arabic with a focus on the Algerian females and their discourse strategies.

The third chapter attempts to give an overview of the main techniques and methods which were employed, including the questionnaire, the interview and participant observation in order to test the validity of the hypotheses. As a result, the collected data will be quantitative and qualitative to test the attitudes of Maghnia speakers towards language use.

## **Chapter One:**

### **1.1-Introduction**

This chapter provides an overall explanation of gender differences in language use. It also aims to shed light on the different theories on language and gender including Lakoff's work, Tannen, Cameron, Eckert, Coates and Bucholtz.

### **1.3- Sex and Gender**

From a sociolinguistic point of view, sex and gender are two different concepts in studying language. This view has been supported by many scholars. According to Mills (2003), sex includes the terms of masculinity and femininity which is biological features that identify males and females, whereas gender refers to the social norms that society imposes on them.

Furthermore, Coates (1998) posits the view that doing and performing gender is presenting oneself as a "gendered being". Along with the same line of thought, Sadiqi (2003: 2) believes that the term gender was firstly used by linguists in social sciences. In this regard, she explains the idea as follows:

**The term „gender“ was first used in linguistics and other areas of social sciences. In linguistics, the term referred to the grammatical categories that indexed sex in the structure of human languages.**

She further explains that the feminist movement of the 1960's and 1970's observe gender in relation to sex, i.e., Gender is the construction of masculine and feminine categories in society.

On the other hand, later linguists consider gender as a social variable that should be taken into account in exploring society in addition to age and social class. Labov, on his part, argues that gender interacts with other social variables in constructing society. This movement was known as the constructionist approach. On their view, gender has been considered as a fluid and not a static notion as it is stated by Sadiqi (idem). She goes on to add that the main differences between these movements lie on the fact that the first makes a bridge between gender, ethnicity, age and class, whereas the later studies gender in separation from the previous categories.

In its general terms, later scholars try to bridge the road between the constructionist and the essentialist. These arguments lead to the emergence of many theories such as: the deficit, the dominance, the reformist, the cultural model, social constructivist and the difference theory. These approaches argue for the relationship between language and gender as we will see in the following title.

## **Chapter Two:**

### **2-1 Introduction**

This chapter aims at exploring gender groups in Algerian context in general and Maghnia speech community in particular since this latter has been influenced by many social and political factors throughout its history. The main factor which makes this society different is its geographical location and contact with Morocco. Therefore, this chapter will be an explanatory account of Maghnia society.

### **2.2 - Gender Group in Algeria**

It is essential to note that the cultural structure of a given speech community determines the position of both males and females. In other terms, there is a belief that the place of women is at home as housewives taking care after children, that is, women are culturally and socially determined. Furthermore, Algerian women are socialised from childhood to be polite and conservative. This fact leads Algerian women to use more prestigious forms of speech including French. Besides, it is very rare, in our society, to hear women swearing or using offensive language.

### **2.3 - Gender and Linguistic Variation in Algerian Arabic**

It is agreed that most studies on gender differences, in the use of Arabic varieties, dealt with phonetic and phonological features. According to Bassiouney, the first study is done by Roux (1952) who examines differences between men and women in Moroccan society. She posits the view that most studies are interested in studying the spoken form. She (ibid: 158) summarises the most important researches as follows:

**First, Roux (1952) examined the differences between men's and women's speech in Morocco in relation to specific consonants, such as *s*, *z* and *r*. Hurreiz (1978) in his study of Khartoum also examined the use of intonation. Royal (1985) studied the relation between pharyngalisation, class and gender in Egypt. Al-khateeb (1988) studied a number of consonants used in Irbid in Jordan, which include *q*, *k* and *t*, and one vowel, *a*. He studied them in relation to gender, education and age.**

Basically, recent studies have shown that the educational background of the Arab speakers is the most important variables that determine linguistic differences between males and females.

What can be understood from the above quotation is that educated women, in the Arab world, tend to use more standard forms than illiterate ones.

## **2.8 - Algerian Women and Discourse Strategies**

It is agreed that males and females do not differ on the linguistic features they use, but also in the discourse strategies they resort to. In this line, Vicente (2009: 20) states that **“Several studies have demonstrated that female and male sociolects are not solely differentiated by the production of some linguistic features but also by the use of certain discourse strategies.”**

Vicente also sights Fatima's view about the fact that there are extra linguistic factors which influence gender use of language. She adds that the use of forms of address by females reflect their lower social status. She goes on claiming that **“naming people reflect differences in gender in Arabic-speaking societies because they reproduce underlying cultural and social attitudes”** (ibid: 21).

She concludes that these linguistic strategies are influenced by certain social and economic factors. In this regard, she (ibid: 22) states that:

**The use of one type of linguistic strategy or another to fight attitudes of male dominance varies depending on several factors: socioeconomic situation, access to education, type of habitat (rural/ urban), ethnicity and religion.**

As far as Algerian women are concerned, all the previous scholarly views suit an Algerian context since females rely on honour and modesty in their social interaction. Moreover, it is important to mention that these strategies impose on them to search for substitutions and expressions to use in their relationship with each other.

## **Chapter Three:**

### **3.1- Introduction**

Through applying many sociolinguistic methods, we will investigate the main difference between both genders in Maghnia speech community. We will explore the different socio-cultural factors that affect language use. We will prove that the geographical location of Maghnia helps in the creation of many expressions which are used by both genders in certain contexts and avoided by women in other contexts.

**The use of one type of linguistic strategy or another to fight attitudes of male dominance varies depending on several factors: socioeconomic situation, access to education, type of habitat (rural/ urban), ethnicity and religion.**

### **General Conclusion**

The overall findings of this research reveal that the use of language is linked to the society's norms and the individuals' attitudes which are controlled by these norms. Besides, there are many other social factors which influence language use between both sexes. In fact, the results also show that the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community affects the identity of both genders. Therefore, it also influences their construction, use of sentences and expressions.

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## الملخص:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة ميول المغناويين نحو استعمال اللغة اعتمادا على نظريات كمية ونوعية كما تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اثبات أن البنية الثقافية للمجتمع المغناوي تؤثر بعمق على استخدام و بناء الكلمات و الجمل. كما تبرهن أيضا أن هناك اختلاف بين الرجل و المرأة في استعمال اللغة و ذلك راجع إلى المفردات التي بنوها نتيجة الاتصال التجاري. وقد اثبتت هذه الدراسة كذلك أن ميول المتكلمين ترتبط بالسن، نوع الجنس، المستوى التعليمي، الهوية و الثقافة. و عليه، فإن النتائج بينت أن النساء تتبع القواعد التي فرضها المجتمع المغناوي على طريقة الكلام و السلوك. كما بينت هذه النتائج أن الإناث أكثر تحفظا و بذلك تمثل قواعد هذا المجتمع اللغوي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** استخدام اللغة، الجنس، الميول، العوامل الاجتماعية و الثقافية، الأعراف المغناوية، المجتمع اللغوي المغناوي.

## Résumé :

Cette étude vise à étudier les attitudes de la communauté de Maghnia vers l'utilisation de la langue suivante les méthodes quantitative et qualitative. Il tend à prouver que la structure socioculturelle de la communauté de la parole de Maghnia affecte profondément leur utilisation et construction des mots et phrases. Il montre que les hommes sont différent en grande partie de femmes dans l'utilisation de la langue, car ils ont créé leur propre vocabulaire en raison de leur commercial contact. Il tente de confirmer que les attitudes des locuteurs sont fortement liées à l'âge, le sexe, le niveau d'éducation, l'identité et la culture. On conséquence, les résultats montrent que les femmes suivent les règles que la société de Maghnia a imposée en termes de discours et comportement. Ils révèlent également que les femmes sont plus prudentes et représentent les normes de cette communauté linguistique.

**Mots clés :** Utilisation de la langue, sexe, attitudes, facteurs socioculturels, normes de Maghnia, la communauté linguistique de Maghnia.

## Summary:

This study aims to investigate the attitudes of Maghnia speakers towards using language following quantitative and qualitative methods. It tends to prove that the socio-cultural structure of Maghnia speech community affects deeply their use and construction of words and sentences. It shows that men differ largely from women in using language since they have created their own vocabulary due to their commercial contact. It also attempts to confirm that the attitudes of speakers are strongly related to the speakers' age, gender, the educational background, identity and culture. Henceforth, the results show that women follow the rules that Maghnia society has imposed in terms of speech and behaviour. They also reveal that females are more conservative and represent the norms of this speech community.

**Key words:** Language use, gender, attitudes, the socio-cultural factors, Maghnia norms, Maghnia speech community.

