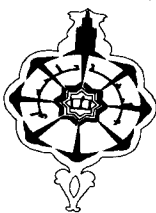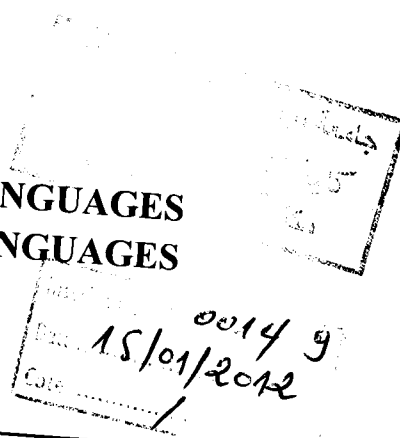PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
ABOU BEKR BELKAID UNIVERSITY-TLEMCEN

# FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
# DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
# ENGLISH SECTION

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## Bilingualism and Students' Attitudes towards Arabic and French in two Settings: The Islamic Sciences Department and the Faculty of Medicine, Tlemcen University

*Dissertation submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages as a Partial Fulfilment for the Degree of Magister in Sociolinguistics*

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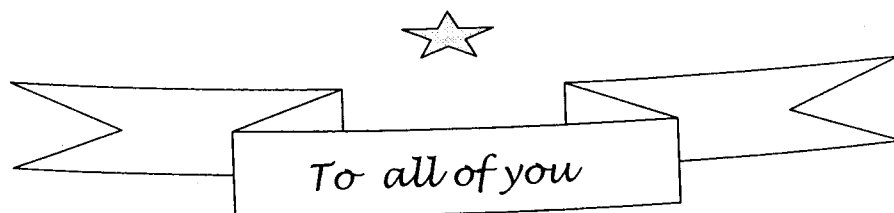| | | | |
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# Dedication

This research work is humbly dedicated first to my parents who have never stopped encouraging me all along my studies in working hard, and particularly each time I was about to take an exam, BAC, 'License', Magister... Thanks Mum and Dad for always trying to keep my spirits up!

I also dedicate this dissertation to all my teachers, starting from those of primary school right through to those who have led me to the 'Licence' in English and then, of course, those who introduced me to the world of sociolinguistics, Dr Z. Dendane, Dr M. N. Negadi Dr I. Serir, Dr A. Derni, DR G. Hadjoui and others.

I'd like to seize this opportunity to send a thought to my aunts and uncles, to all my cousins Chihab, Mansour and to all my friends and classmates, Bachir, Riyad, Samir, Abdessamed, Mohamed, Karim and Mohamed.

To all of you

## *Acknowledgments*

*Bilingualism and Students' Attitudes towards Arabic and French in two Settings:*

*The Islamic Sciences Department and the Faculty of Medicine, Tlemcen University*

## Abstract

Bilingualism is a pervading phenomenon that has characterized the Algerian society for many decades, just as it is of regular practice in a great number of countries throughout the world. The present work is an attempt at understanding such linguistic experience in an Arabic-speaking country in which the French language was strongly imposed during colonisation to the extent that today it may be, and is indeed, considered a second language from a linguistic standpoint. In fact, alongside Arabic, French continues to be used, almost spontaneously, by a large number of people in public domains such as administrations, in the spoken and written media, and particularly in a number of streams in higher education, the focus of this research work.

It is in two university settings, the Islamic Sciences Department and the Faculty of Medicine, that we hope to show that French, the language of the medical domain and exact sciences, is more appropriate, or at least thought to be so, even outside the lecture context, while, on the other hand, Arabic is tightly associated with religious domains. Such language relations and issues have their roots in the Algerian educational system and some cultural and historical values.

By gathering and examining information on students' language behaviour, collected in the two contexts by means of a number of sociolinguistic tools, we have tried to show in this dissertation the extent to which Standard Arabic and French are used in the university setting but also outside of it as well as the reasons behind, and attitudes towards, such linguistic behaviour.

## List of Abbreviations

AA : Algerian Arabic

CA: Classical Arabic

Fr: French

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

ISc: Islamic Sciences

Med: Medicine

CS: Code-switching

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# General Introduction

## General Introduction

The use of two or more languages in the same community is not specific to some countries as most monolinguals might think, particularly in the past century when being a bilingual was seen as lower in social status and culturally debased. In reality, it is monolingualism which is rather the exception; in most countries of the world today, including the Western World, we can detect the use of more than one language for various reasons resulting from factors such as historical background, conquests, emigration, economic situation, language policy, and so on. As a matter of fact, it is said that there are about 6000 languages distributed in only 200 countries in the world! Nowadays, people have become more aware of the importance and necessity of knowing a second or foreign language in a world where language contacts have become so common, in particular with the development of technologies of communication, globalisation and social networks through the internet. But much bilingualism has resulted from European long-term occupation during the colonial era, particularly in Africa and Asia.

Just like the rest of the Maghreb countries in North Africa, Algeria has gone through various historical events which have shaped a complex linguistic picture, as we shall see in this dissertation. Although its official language is Arabic, which seems to reflect a simple situation, the Algerian sociolinguistic reality is much more complicated than that with the existence of different Arabic dialects resulting in the well-known

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diglossic relation, Berber varieties in a number of localized areas, and French of course, the language of colonial legacy, which persists in its use and pervades the whole society to various degrees after almost half a century of independence and in spite of the non-recognition by official instances working on language policy.

Therefore, we would not have a full image of the Algerian linguistic situation without considering the status of French, on the one hand, and that of Standard Arabic, on the other. But as part of the Algerian linguistic profile, we will also necessarily deal, in this dissertation, with the diglossic phenomenon occurring particularly in formal contexts such as education, though most of our work will raise issues on bilingualism.

Arabic/French bilingualism is a topic that has been treated by many and in different ways in Algeria as well as in the other countries in the Maghreb. But in this research, we will not study the co-existence of these two languages in the broad sense; rather, the focus will be more on the different domains of use they are related to, namely in the context of higher education.

The major aim of this research work is to verify whether, as commonly accepted in the Algerian university context, French is more dominant in scientific and medical fields, and Arabic is associated with social/ human sciences and religious matters. Even though it might seem evident - the use of the two languages being decided at the level of the education ministry- we would

like to uncover the degree of their impact on students' actual linguistic behaviour, to explore the code choices related to such different linguistic domains as religion and science in everyday life and to try to measure the impact of language attitudes on students' behaviour.

In doing so, we will work on the comparison of two distinct university contexts in Tlemcen, the Faculty of Medicine and the Department of Islamic Sciences, as we expect to find differences in the use of Arabic and French and attitudes towards the two languages both within lecture settings and outside. Such differences reflect some interesting features of bilingualism that are found in the larger part of the community. The different levels of code-switching will also be part of our concern, as we expect such linguistic practices to vary from one university environment to the other.

The overall aim of our research then is to show that in Algeria we can encounter different users of Arabic and French, with different attitudes towards these two languages. We will try to show that, on the one hand, Arabic is usually associated with religion as it is the language of the Qur'an, the Holy Book of Islam, and, on the other, French has been linked historically to science and modernity. To achieve this task, we raise the following research questions:

1. Why do students in the two university settings behave differently in their use of Arabic and French? What are the reasons behind their linguistic behaviour?

2. Are students' attitudes towards the two languages responsible for their linguistic behaviour?

3. How are the historical and cultural backgrounds associated with the different attitudes each group displays towards the two languages?

With the aim of investigating such issues and to deal with the problem statement, we put forward the following hypotheses:

➤ **1.** Though the two student groups under investigation share similar socio-cultural and educational backgrounds, linguistically they appear to behave differently: because the lectures in the Islamic studies department are given in Arabic, the students there tend to use that language to a large extent, particularly in its higher form, while the students of medicine seem to favour French, the language of their studies, even outside the university setting.

➤ **2.** We put forward the hypothesis that students' linguistic behaviour results from their attitudes towards each language; positive attitudes lead to the acceptance and adoption of a given language, while a negative consideration of a given language consciously or unconsciously leads to its rejection or neglect at least.

➤ **3.** The students' attitudes towards the two languages are determined by their beliefs about the importance of these languages in their studies, but also in a wider context.

In the first chapter, we attempt to review some literature on bilingualism and see how different approaches may apply to our context. So, we will expose the different concepts that are relevant to our topic, in particular to discover how bilingualism can be related to attitudes towards the languages at play in a given speech community.

One aim of the second chapter is to give an overall picture of the Algerian sociolinguistic situation with a focus on the phenomena that characterize it: basically, bilingualism and diglossia. As this research work deals with linguistic variation and language behaviour in a university setting, we will have to draw on the Algerian educational system in order to better understand the students' language behaviour. To accomplish this task we shall expose a short history of the arrival of the two languages in the Algerian territory, and we shall speak about the educational system in Algeria that contributed to the development of such a situation.

The third chapter is devoted to the fieldwork and the research methodology: it exposes the different research tools used for data collection. The results are analysed and interpreted with the aim of trying to answer the main hypotheses in accordance with the elicited data.

The fourth chapter is a continuation of the inter-pretation of the data collected, though it focuses more on the students' attitudes towards the two languages used for instruction at the university, Modern Standard Arabic and French.

# Chapter ONE

# Aspects of Bilingualism and Resulting Phenomena

# 1. Language in a Multilingual Context

## 1.1 Introduction

The first chapter is devoted to the introduction of different concepts relevant to our topic which considers the co-existence of languages and language varieties in the community. As we are concerned with the use of Arabic and French in the Department of Islamic Sciences and the Faculty of Medicine in Tlemcen (Algeria), and as our aim is to compare students' bilingual behaviour in the environment of these two university settings, we feel it necessary to introduce a few concepts, in particular bilingualism and the resulting phenomena, code-switching, code choice and, of course, attitudes towards the languages at play. We will also deal with diglossia, a linguistic particularity that characterizes Algeria and the Arabic-speaking world as a whole.

## 1.2 Bilingualism defined

Bilingualism, the phenomenon at the centre of our work, is a phenomenon that has been defined by different scholars in so many ways, due to its complexity. Indeed, it has been dealt with at different levels and explored from different perspectives. Hornby (1977:8) argues that "bilingualism, like any other important social or behavioural phenomenon, does not fall neatly within the boundaries of any single discipline". The present state of research relevant to the topic indicates that a good understanding of bilingualism can only be reached through its consideration from different angles:

linguistic, psychological and socio-cultural. Bentahila (1983:19) insists that studying bilingualism requires an interdisciplinary approach that "involves looking at the same phenomenon from more than one viewpoint, and may provide insights and explanations which might not otherwise be evident." Indeed, he reminds us of Fishman's (1968) suggestion that "an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on psychology, sociology and linguistics, could prove to be the most valuable to the study of bilingualism." Bentahila (ibid.).

Bilingualism, in its broad sense, is the use or knowledge of two unrelated languages. Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary[1] gives a simple definition when it considers bilingualism as "the ability to speak two languages" and "the frequent use (as by a community) of two languages". But one of the drawbacks of this view is that it fails to make a distinction between bilingualism as a collective phenomenon in a great number of countries, and bilingualism as a linguistic competence acquired by individuals. Such distinction has been crucial in our understanding of bilingualism, in particular when we know that it concerns more than half the planet today. Grosjean (1994)[2] describes the complexity by saying that

> bilingualism is present in practically every country of the world, in all classes of society and in all age groups; in fact, it has been estimated that half the world's population is bilingual.

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[1] http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bilingualism accessed June 23rd 2011.

[2] in Spolsky, B. (Ed.) Concise Encyclopedia of Educational Linguistics. Oxford: Elsevier, 1999.

Therefore, bilingualism as a language contact outcome is not at all exceptional but spreads all over the world. The literature on the topic and statistics have shown that we are likely to find many more bilingual and multilingual speakers than monolingual ones in this world. But it is worth noting that various types of bilingualism can be observed in different types of communities, and even within the same society.

An important distinction is worth making about the phenomenon: Fishman's (1980) differentiation between societal bilingualism and individual bilingualism, sometimes called 'bilinguality'. Hamers and Blanc (2000:6) state that

> The concept of bilingualism refers to the state of a linguistic community in which two languages are in contact with the result that two codes can be used in the same interaction and that a number of individuals are bilingual,

whereas bilinguality or individual bilingualism is "...the psychological state of an individual who has access to more than one linguistic code as a means of social communication" (ibid.).

This distinction was not made explicitly in earlier definitions of bilingualism, as the focus was rather on individuals' linguistic proficiency. Definitions vary from one scholar to another in terms of the individual's language control of a second language, and on different perspectives as to who to call a bilingual.

One early definition was given in Bloomfield (1933:55) who viewed bilingualism in terms of "native-like control of two languages". But we cannot expect

every bilingual to have a perfect control of two languages and therefore such a definition excludes many other users of two languages. Indeed, in contrast, other scholars see a bilingual as having some knowledge of a second language. For McNamara (1967), for instance, a bilingual is "anyone who possesses a minimal competence in one of the four skills"[3]. For example, we may consider as a bilingual someone who understands only some discourse in another language, or someone who is able to read newspaper headlines.

We may consider much simpler definitions such as the one of Weinreich (1953:1) who views bilingualism as "the practice of alternatively using two languages", or Haugen's (1953:7) ability to "produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language".

But, more recently, Grosjean (1999:1) suggests the idea that if we only viewed as bilinguals individuals who master two languages, we would miss much about a language phenomenon resulting from the contact people have for so many reasons. He argues that

> If one were to count as bilingual only those people who pass as monolinguals in each of their languages, one would be left with no label for the vast majority of people who use two or more languages regularly but who do not have native-like fluency in each.

As research in the field has evolved, definitions of bilingualism have become more complicated but more accurate at the same time. Many of these focus on the existence of different types of bilinguals who may be

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[3] Quoted in Hammers & Blanc (2000:6).

classified in terms of how much they know of another language and the way they know it, though classification of speakers' capacities in different societies is always relative, as Hoffmann (1991:31) suggests: "From whatever angle we look at it, bilingualism is a relative concept."

Researchers in this field distinguish between two types of bilingualism in relation to the level of competency; 'linguistic competence' according to Chomsky (1965:3), is the innate knowledge of the grammatical system of one's language, but the concept has also been used to include control of two or more languages whatever the degree of proficiency may be, which can be seen along a continuum that includes different types of bilingualism.

### 1.2.1 Balanced bilingualism

'Balanced bilingualism' is a term that designates a person who possesses an equal competence in both languages, though this does not imply that the speaker is extremely competent in both languages, but is equally competent in a second language as he is in his mother tongue. This does not imply either that the speaker can use the two languages for any domain, but might use a specific language for certain domains and the other one in other domains.

### 1.2.2 Dominant bilingualism

Another type of bilingualism is characterized by proficiency dominance in one language over the other. Usually, it is the mother tongue which is dominant in

all skills, or mainly understanding and speaking and sometimes writing and reading. But under some conditions such as living in a foreign country, the second language may become more dominant, especially with emigrant school-children who have to practice the host language more than their own mother tongue.

### 1.2.3 Compound vs. coordinate

Different bilinguals around the world do not acquire two languages in the same way. For further understanding of what bilingualism is, we need to make the distinction between 'coordinate' and 'compound' bilingualism first put forward by Weinreich (1953).

- Compound bilingualism

A psychological state of the bilingual when this latter has a conceptual representation which is common to both languages, it proposes that for some bilinguals the two languages in question form a merged system, i.e., the bilingual person has the same mental image of the two words of the two languages using two signs for the same referent, e.g., *arbre* [aRbR] and شجرة [šadžara] refer to same object 'tree'. It usually happens when the person learns the two languages in the same contexts.

- Coordinate bilingualism

As opposed to compound bilingualism, coordinate bilingualism is when the speaker has two distinct representations, each for one language, i.e., the two different signs are used for two distinguished referents. It happens indeed when the two languages are learned in separate environments.

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## 1.2.4 Passive / Active

This way of classifying bilinguals has to do with the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Indeed, sociolinguists establish this way of differentiating between bilinguals in terms of their skills and command in the two languages. It ranges from the most passive form of bilingualism to the most active. Passive bilinguals have only receptive skills in a second language, which means they are able to understand to a certain degree a second language but they are not able to communicate properly. Gradually going up that grid of passiveness and activeness, we can meet bilinguals who can be more communicative but prefer to listen rather than to speak, till we reach a type of bilinguals who can be as productive in a second language as they are in their own.

Up to this point, we have been dealing with bilingualism in terms of skills, and classifying bilinguals in terms of levels of bilinguality, knowledge, and different abilities in a second language. Later on, researchers acknowledge the importance of the social dimension in describing bilingualism, as suggested in Mohanty (1994a:13)[4], for instance, who associates bilingualism with the social-communicative dimension when he says:

> Bilingual persons or communities are those with an ability to meet the communicative demands of the self and the society in their normal functioning in two or more languages in their interaction with the other speakers of any or all of these languages.

[4] Quoted in Hamers & Blanc 2000 :7

It is also worth citing Grosjean (1985) who views a bilingual speaker not as the sum of two monolinguals, but as someone "with a unique and specific linguistic configuration" (Grosjean, 1985: 470). Therefore, a bilingual's competence is to be measured differently from that of a monolingual, in the sense that bilinguals develop some unique language behaviour. Bilinguality in the Algerian context is reflected in the acquisition of AA along with French words, expressions and whole utterances found in everyday speech.

In this research work, the notion of bilinguality will be very helpful to understand the level of control of speakers of Arabic and French and their abilities in the different skills. On the other hand, the concept of societal bilingualism is also important in understanding some features of the Algerian linguistic situation, when we consider different types of interaction in the society at large.

Another dichotomy which has proved useful and important at the same time, is proposed in Lambert (1974). The two contrasted types of bilingualism that he qualified as 'additive vs. subtractive' are associated in his view with communities, not with individuals, though, in our context, the two concepts may concern individuals, particularly in the case of additive bilingualism, i.e., French as a second language.

## 1.2.5 Subtractive vs. Additive bilingualism

Sociolinguists think that the type of bilinguality can be shaped by the type of status assigned to a given language in a speech community. This means that

different members of a bilingual speech community can accept or reject the use of L2 or L1 depending on how this language is perceived. If the speaker is motivated in learning a second language, but maintains his native tongue, then it's a case of 'additive' bilingualism. But, 'subtractive' bilingualism occurs when L1 becomes weaker and may even be lost, as in the case of emigrants in front of the high pressure of the host language. Explaining Lambert's model, Baker (1988:112) writes:

> When the second language and culture are acquired with little or no pressure to replace or reduce in importance the first language, an *additive* form of bilingualism may occur [...]. When the second language and culture are acquired with pressure to replace or demote the first language, a *subtractive* form of bilingualism may result.

'Pressure' here may be related to the high status of the second language and thus favoured by the learners. In this respect, Hamers and Blanc (2000:29) say that "the type of bilinguality is also dependent on the socio-cultural environment, in particular the relative status of the two languages in the community".

We will try to show in the third and fourth chapters, when analyzing the collected data, that the two languages, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA, hereafter) and French, are to a certain extent differently valued among the two groups under study and this seems to affect the students' respective types of bilingualism. But there is another type of language relationship that characterizes our community, MSA with Colloquial Arabic, a relation termed 'diglossia'.

## 1.3 Diglossia

Though the term *diglossie* was first used by W. Marçais (1930) in French to characterize the differences between the written form of Arabic and its spoken forms, the concept of 'diglossia' was first introduced into sociolinguistics in Ferguson (1959:336) who describes it in an often-quoted definition as

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

In his famous article, Ferguson (1959) identifies four linguistic situations which he characterizes as diglossic: Arabic, Swiss-German, Haitian and Greek. In each of these situations, there is a High variety (H) and a Low variety (L), each used separately and serving specific functions, which made Ferguson explain their uses in terms of 'complementary distribution'.

In the Arabic-speaking world, the H variety, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) - which draws its rules from Classical Arabic (CA), the language of the Qur'an - is used alongside the L variety, consisting of all the colloquial forms used in the Arab world, made up of dialects varying from one region to another and from one country to another, sometimes to the extent that lack of mutual intelligibility may occur.

The H variety is generally used in formal situations such as education setting, literature, the written form and the spoken media, etc. The L variety, the mother tongue, is used for everyday speech and in informal situations. Romaine (2010:32) points out the distinction between the two varieties in the following terms:

> The standard language is used for so-called "high" functions such as giving a lecture, reading, writing, or broadcasting, whereas the home variety is reserved for "low" functions such as interacting with friends at home.

However, it may sometimes happen that the two codes are mixed or altered for various reasons, and thus, in order to explain better, or typically when an expression of a given idea is not available in the dialect, people may have to switch to MSA. In addition, as Dendane (2007:73) argues,

> the increasingly dynamic relationship between the two types of variety [...] results in their frequent contact and the emergence of intermediate varieties along the Arabic continuum.

As a matter of fact, increasing literacy in Algeria for example, seems to lead to a middle variety of Arabic used in semi-formal situations. This allows us to speak of a continuum from which speakers may select, according to the situation, the most appropriate variety to use. Bouhadiba (1998:1-2) refers to the phenomenon in terms of a "linguistic reality...characterized by a continuum

of Arabic where the varieties of this language are sometimes difficult to delimit...”[5]

## 1.4.Language attitudes

People's reactions towards the languages of their community have been regarded as very important in understanding the nature of language use and variation. Hence, some sociolinguists have used the concept of 'attitude', a widespread research instrument of central concern in social psychology, in particular to attempt to understand issues about language choice in multi-lingual settings. The study of language attitudes has indeed proved to be important to predict linguistic behaviour as far as speakers' choice of languages, the prestige they feel towards these, etc.

In French Canada, where bilingualism is a salient feature, Lambert and his associates (1967) conducted research into language attitudes toward French and English to attempt to determine the resulting effects on speakers' linguistic behaviour, in particular their positive attitudes towards English, generally perceived as more prestigious. One way of eliciting speakers' language attitudes they have used is the 'matched-guise technique': asking informants to evaluate the qualities of *one* speaker's guises using various languages or dialects, while the judges are convinced that they are evaluating *many* speakers. Labov (1966) too adopted a

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[5] My translation of the French text: "La réalité linguistique actuelle telle qu'elle se présente à l'observation est caractérisée par un continuum de l'arabe où les variétés de cette langue sont parfois difficiles à délimiter … (Bouhadiba 1998:1-2).

similar method to study New York speakers' evaluation of a number of linguistic variables.

Showing the importance of the impact of language attitude on speakers' behaviour, particularly in multilingual contexts Baker (1988:112) says:

> An attitude predisposes yet is capable of change. It is individual yet has origins in, and effects on, collective behaviour. An attitude is a hypothetical psychological construct yet impinges in an important way on the reality of language life.

Thus, research has shown that people have attitudes about the languages and dialects in their communities. These can and do influence speakers' language behaviour resulting in variation and even change according to whether they have positive or negative attitudes towards the users of these languages or language varieties.

Often, in multilingual settings, such as the one we attempt to examine, or even in communities where several dialects co-exist, a code, a language or a variety might be stigmatized or appreciated by a given portion of the community for certain reasons.

The notion of attitude towards languages implies different groups with different judgments having a positive or negative attitude toward a given code. This is particularly due to cultural, historical or ethnic reasons. In other words, a given group may associate a given quality or prestige to a certain code. It is important to notice that the two languages or codes that are being judged are not negative or positive in themselves but the speakers give them those values. In

Thus, a number of factors contribute to the choice of one code over another. These are important elements for our investigation as we will expect speakers to use different codes depending on their attitudes, but also on the domains of use and topics which may also allow the use of a mixture of languages and switching.

## 1.7 Code switching, Code mixing and Borrowing

Code-switching is a phenomenon that had not received attention till the early 1970s with Bloom and Gumperz (1972) who have shown that mixing two languages occurs in a very common way in all bilingual or multilingual settings, whenever bilinguals in a community interact.

Code-switching (CS hereafter) has been defined in a simple manner by Gumperz (1982:59) as "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or sub-systems."

Sociolinguists have tried to answer some pertinent questions in order to understand what code-switching is. Hamers & Blanc (2000:258) put these as follows:

- Under what social and pragmatic condition does code-switching operate?
- What are the grammatical rules governing code-switching?

It is agreed that two reasons govern CS:
- 1) the nature of the grammatical structure of the two languages involved;

- 2) the social rules that govern their speech interaction.

As a matter of fact, in addition to the grammatical structure that speakers of two languages have to respect when they switch back and forth, there are social constraints that can explain CS. Students of the Islamic department, for instance, would do all their best to use MSA in class, though some AA words may slip into their speech. But, in any case, they would avoid French words and expressions during the lectures, particularly when addressing teachers. Thus, on the whole, code-switching does not occur in a random way but under various types of constraints.

### 1.7.1 Grammatical Constraints on Code-switching

Poplack (1980) distinguishes between three types of code switching:

A- *Intersentential CS*: the switching occurs at clause or sentence boundary, one clause being in a language and the other in a different language.

B- *Intrasentential CS*: it happens within the clause or even at word boundary.

C- *Extra-sentential CS*: it consists in the insertion of a tag, from another language into a sentence.

The distinction between these three types of code-switching allows to determine the available possibilities of code-switching. The aim of sociolinguists is to understand the grammatical nature of code-switching, i.e., in what ways the grammars of

the two languages interact; so, they established, in particular in intra-sentential CS, that there is always a base language, or 'matrix language' (ML) as termed by Myers-Scotton (1993), and an 'embedded language' (EL). The ML is dominant and is usually the speaker's mother tongue, and the EL is inserted, as in, for instance,

- [rahum rajħi:n jɔlʕbu] *vers quatre heures*
  'They're going to play  by four.'

The ML is the code often spoken, the language in which the speaker is more proficient; but in our case, French, which is not the mo ther tongue, may well occur as the ML which may be explained from a social perspective.

### 1.7.2 Social approach to code switching

In this approach, CS is seen as governed by social situations and social rules. In the light of this perception, Blom and Gumperz (1972) distinguish between 'situational' CS when the topic changes or the situation is different; and as Downes (1998:83) says, "the situation type will predict which variety a speaker will employ." In the Algerian context, we may take an Arabic teacher who switches from MSA to AA or to French outside class, i.e.in unconstrained situations

On the other hand, 'metaphorical' CS may occur when no change occurs in the situation but the speaker's intention in switching is to convey a certain effect or simply to make a comment using a code that seems to be inappropriate for the situation.

## 1.7.3 Reasons for Code-switching

Code-switching is an inevitable phenomenon in bilingual speech communities, not only skills in both languages but also, the addressee, and social rules governs the nature of code-switching. Sociolinguists have detected several factors that can lead a bilingual to code-switching; some are mentioned here:

Gumperz (1982) lists examples of situations created to convey meaning as given below:

- to appeal to the literate
- to appeal to the illiterate
- to convey precise meaning
- to ease communication, i.e., utilizing the shortest and the easiest route
- to negotiate with greater authority
- to capture attention, i.e. stylistic, emphatic, emotional
- to emphasize a point
- to communicate more effectively
- to identify with a particular group
- to close the status gap
- to establish good will and support

Kow(2003) listed in her article some possible conditions for code switching:

- lack of one word in either language
- Some activities have only been experienced in one of the languages
- Some concepts are easier to express in one of the languages
- A misunderstanding has to be clarified
- One wants to make a point
- One wishes to express group solidarity
- One wishes to exclude another person from the dialogue.

## 1.7.4 Borrowing

Borrowing is defined by most sociolinguists as the incorporation of one word from a language into another, usually adapted to the morphological and phonological patterns of the recipient language (Poplack,1990). As a consequence of diverse language contact situations, borrowed words are often those objects or concepts that are new in the borrowing language. There are a great number of such lexical borrowings in AA as a result of its long contact with French: [əlkæmjunæːt] from French *les camions*, 'the trucks', clearly shows morphological and phonological adaptation to fit the system of Arabic. As mentioned above, words are borrowed mostly when the object they represent is absent in the culture of the borrowing language; so, in our case, we will focus on medical and scientific borrowed words and their use can be related to the different attitudes toward the languages. It is worth noting that what makes the distinction between borrowings and code-switching is the adaptation of single-word borrowing to the recipient language structure.

Let us consider the contrast in the two utterances:

    - [klæw kæməl lgaʈʼojæt]    vs. [klæw kæməl] *les gâteaux.*

    'They've eaten all the cookies'

The two sentences carry exactly the same meaning, but in the first one there is a borrowing, the adapted word [lgaʈʼojæt], while a code-switching instance is

evident in the second, as the French noun phrase *les gâteaux* is kept structurally unchanged.

One point that is worth mentioning here in relation to borrowing, code-switching and bilingualism as a whole, particularly in countries previously colonized for a long period, is the strong rootedness of the colonial language following a policy whose aim was to eradicate the people's language and culture. On the other hand, great difficulties face the language policy of the independent country to displace or to 'get rid' of the colonial language.

## 1.8 Bilingualism and Language Planning

One primary aim of language policy is to attempt to unify a country to create a monolingual nation, in particular when the state in question was under colonial rule, as is the case of the whole Maghreb, for example. The objective, of course, is to establish the most prestigious language as the official language and to implement it as the language of administration, national sectors, and most importantly as a medium for education. Schiffman (1996:i) writes in this regard:

> The language policies and rules that nations draw up dictate which form of language will be taught in schools and used as the official tongue of the nation."

It is in the nature of language, as Modern Linguistics has already proved it, to change over time influenced by social and geographical factors. But as nations are geo-polititically limited with borders, and

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as a nation is usually faced with the challenge of unifying its various communities and ethnic groups under one national identity, this determination to distinguish one's identity has pushed over time politicians and decision makers to impede the natural tendency to change, which language possesses, and to select a unifying form of the language which becomes the country's standard.

Throughout history, great nations and empires had always had policies for their languages in order to keep a solid nation's identity or when colonizing other areas to spread their languages and power. As a matter of fact, language policy is present in virtually every country whether it is monolingual or multilingual, as expressed by (Schiffman, 1996) 'no such thing as no language policy'. Language policy is always present as all nations are in search of identity and unity, to have control over its people's language and over language in different institutions.

In multilingual settings, it is essential for politicians to decide which languages represent the country, or which language is official, or how many languages are official. In general, it has always been government and decisions makers who decide about language use in a given multilingual country. Even in the apparent monolingual settings, language policy is present as those countries might be called monolingual but they actually possess a lot of dialects.

In France, for instance, Parisian French, the prestigious dialect of Ile-de-France was codified in its

spelling grammar and vocabulary and decreed by François the 1st by mid-16th century as the only official language and for the sake of standard use. That variety used in the King's Court was imposed on the whole nation, while all other French dialects were excluded from formal uses and education. This form of standardization was undertaken through the Académie Française (1635) whereas standard English, also the dialect of the King's Court, did not go through the institution of an academy. Another form of codification occurred in the case of Arabic as we shall see in the next chapter.

The point is that it is the nation's language policy which favours a given language or language variety, usually the one used by the powerful, to become the standard form of the country. Such policy leading to language planning - or 'language management', as Spolsky (2005) prefers to call it - may be explicit, written down in the form of texts or laws, or implicitly established by the authority. In this regard, Spolsky (2004: 8) says that

> language policy exists even where it has not been made explicit or established by authority. Many countries and institutions and social groups do not have formal or written language policies, so that the nature of their language policy must be derived from a study of their language practice or beliefs.

We believe that the language policy in Algeria has been established implicitly, and this is precisely the nature of language decisions in the Arab world, taken on the basis that Arabic is the language of the Qur'an, the sacred book of Islam. Thus, it is the so-called modern

form of Classical Arabic (MSA) which has become the official language of the 22 Arab countries.

Language policy is also important in post-colonial countries, mainly to decide whether to keep the colonizer's language or to recover the native language. Indeed, a number of countries formerly colonized by the French and the British have maintained the language of the colonizer as the official language; e.g. French in Senegal, English in Nigeria, etc.

Language policy, in general, can simply be stated as the actions undertaken by the government to promote a national language or to favour or discourage the use of a given language or dialect. Language planning is often associated with language policy, thought it can be undertaken by non-governmental organizations. It has been defined by Cooper (1989:45) as "deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others with respect to the acquisition, structure and functional allocations of their language codes."

Language planning exists in two forms, 'status planning' and 'corpus planning', the former meaning the change of the function of a language or a variety increasing or decreasing its status; the latter involves developing a variety of a language or a language in order to standardize it.

## 1.9 Conclusion

We aimed in this chapter to describe bilingualism in general as a social and individual phenomenon, and to show different types of bilingualism that we can relate later on to different speakers. Furthermore, the aim was to explain such relevant concepts as code-choice and attitudes towards a language showing that choices depend on the different attitudes people have towards a given language or code. As long as we are dealing in our work with two codes, this chapter was also an overview of what code-switching is and what has been done in this field, aiming to show how domains of use and topics can affect the nature of speakers' code-switching.

This chapter is also dedicated to the introduction of the concept of 'domains' of language use. In fact, many sociolinguists agree that in speech communities where several codes co-exist, in some domains (like home, work or religious place) speech is more favourably held in one code than the other. The aim in our case is eventually to identify religion and medicine as two domains or topics in which participants choose the codes that they think are more appropriate to these domains.

But before examining the fieldwork results obtained from our informants on the university site, with the aim of understanding students' linguistic behaviour and their attitudes towards the languages at play, we devote the next chapter to an overall description of today's linguistic situation in Algeria, which is not an easy matter given the complex relationship between these languages.

# Chapter TWO

# The Linguistic Situation
# in Algeria

## 2. The linguistic Profile in Algeria

### 2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the aim will be to shed some light on the linguistic situation in Algeria, in general, and to some of the features relevant to our topic, notably bilingualism in a more precise way. Moreover, we will try to explain the historical causes that have led to this situation in which Arabic and French co-exist.

One further aim is to relate the different attitudes and domains of use by the students of each of the two university settings to the history of the two languages. From the historical point of view, we shall see how Arabic was first introduced to Algeria and North Africa as a whole, with the spread of Islam starting from the 7th century, and then how, many centuries later, the French language came to play an important role in Algeria and the whole Maghreb during the long-term French occupation.

As a matter of fact, one objective of the French, in addition to the colonisation of the land, was to establish institutions that sought to marginalise the Arabic language and to impose French as the official language in Algeria, and of course the language of education. The point that is of concern to us here is that even after independence, French continued to be used in most scientific fields and, up to now, despite the efforts of Arabisation, the impact of the colonial language on the various scientific fields is still strong.

We will also attempt to show the evolution of the educational system in Algeria and the different steps that led to the implementation of Arabization at the various school levels. In this chapter, we will also expose the main hypotheses, and the methodology used to collect information from students for the purpose of comparing and analysing the use of the two competing languages.

## 2.2 Socio-historical Background

It is the long history of Algeria, and maybe its strategic geographical position that are responsible for its complicated linguistic situation with the co-existence, throughout the whole country, of several spoken Arabic dialects on the one hand, and on the other, Berber varieties in a number of scattered areas such as Tizi-Ouzou, the Mzab, and other dialects like the Chaoui and that of the Touaregs in the Sahara.

All these regional dialects co-exist side by side with Modern Standard Arabic in the commonly known situation, described by Fergusson as diglossic, MSA being the high variety, more complex, highly codified used in general in formal contexts. It is mainly the language of the press, television, administration and of course, it is the medium of formal instruction. Other dialects have a low prestige, but make up the mother tongue of the population. It might happen, however that in given circumstances people mix between the two varieties or borrow words from MSA into local dialects in every day conversation.

In addition to this already complicated situation, even if the national and official language is MSA, Algeria is recognized as a bilingual country, the outcome of the existence of French since 1830. From everyday life situations -where a great number of French words and expressions are mixed with the dialects- to high-level political or cultural domains, French is present everywhere, in the public sectors and administration, in a number of radio and TV programmes, in newspapers, advertising, literature, and of course, sciences, the language used in scientific fields at university.

In the next section, we attempt to give a more detailed picture of the linguistic situation in Algeria, and provide the historical causes of the current situation and more exactly to the languages which concern our investigation; their history is indeed of a great importance to understanding some of the values assigned to them.

### 2.2.1 The Historical Background

Originally a Berber land, Algeria and North Africa in general witnessed many invasions and colonisations that constantly changed it and finally shaped its current complex culture, linguistic profile and identity. The first inhabitants were here 1000 years BC and survived different continuous invasions through time, namely those of the Romans 100 AD, the Vandals 455 AD and the Byzantines in around 555 AD.

But none of those invasions left significant traces of their cultures or languages. It is mainly the Berber

language which was spoken in that region until the 7<sup>th</sup> century when, during the Islamic expansion, the area witnessed a serious linguistic change that would last forever; the spread of the Arabic language.

### 2.2.2 The Arab expansion

The Arab people were mainly tribes that lived separately throughout the peninsula of Arabia (modern Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan) and their existence may be traced back to the 9<sup>th</sup> century BC; they spoke Arabic, a language of Semitic origin. The Arab united themselves only under the religion of Islam, and since then most of the Arabs are Muslim (90%). Since then, the Arabic language has always been associated with Islam, as the Quran, the Holy Book of Islam, was revealed in Arabic and had a great level of eloquence.

It was after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that the Kalifs started the conquests of other lands than those near Arabia, spreading Islam, and with it the Arabic language. They went so far that by 750 AD, the Muslim empire stretched from East India to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and Spain. Arabic was spoken through all this wide empire and so strongly established as it was the language of the Quran and religion.

### 2.2.3 The Arabisation of the Maghreb

It was in 647 that the first troops of Arabs arrived at the Berber lands with the idea of expanding Islam in 'the countries of the West', *Bilad el Maghrib*,

as it was called by the Arabs. But, unable to control the whole area, it was only in 670 that 'Uqba Ibnu Nafi's soldiers penetrated the land and built a town called Kairaouan in Tunisia. Unlike the other invasions that the area witnessed, and like all other earlier Islamic expansions, this one was meant to last. Indeed, Arab Muslims importing a new religion, a new culture, and later on, new sciences and arts, were able to merge with that population changing its destiny forever.

However, it is the linguistic 'merging' that we are interested in. In fact, since the ultimate aim of the expansion was to spread Islam and Arabic, it was clear that the language was going to spread over the land except for a few areas. It is with the mixing of the two ethnic groups, Berbers and Arabs, the need for Berbers to learn the new religion, sciences and poetry available in Arabic, that the linguistic situation started to change in the area from Berber to a state of bilingualism then to the state of spoken Arabic in almost the whole area. Then, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the arrival of great numbers of Arabs belonging to the tribes called *Banu Hilal*, the process of arabisation continued; later, with the emergence of Muslim scholars in various sciences and philosophy from the Maghreb, Arabic became the language of science and knowledge.

The main point we are interested in, however, is that there was always a tight relation between Islam and Arabic. The Holy Book of Islam, the Quran, was sent to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Arabic, the language of his community. Most teachings of the new religion were to be conveyed in Arabic, and most importantly, the new

converts to Islam had to perform their prayers only in Arabic, one condition for prayer validity.

So, when the Berbers understood that the Arabs' arrival was different from earlier invasions, it was clear for many that Islam was the true religion and Arabic was the language to adopt; even those who did not master Arabic had to use borrowed words when it came to discussing a religious topic. As a matter of fact, it was through Arabic that the new religious teachings were conveyed to the Berbers, and this state of affairs continued to progress until great numbers of original indigenous people became arabised, and Algeria, as well as the whole area of the Maghreb, became part of the Arab Nation. Khaoula Taleb-Ibrahimi (1997:23) describes the first Arabisation and how the Arabic language is perceived in Algeria in the following terms:

> Algeria is Arab and has proclaimed itself Arab and Arabophone since the arrival of the successive waves of Arab fātiḥin[7] who then, with the Islamisation of the Maghreb, have permitted its arabisation. An arabisation which had been done slowly and over a long period, since the year of Okba Ibn Nafaa in the 7th century to the late one of the Hilali tribes.[8]

So, whether it was for the spread of Islam in Berber lands in the mid-7th and in 11th centuries, or

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[7] The word 'fātiḥin', meaning literally 'openers', refers to the first Arab conquerors who were in charge of the spread of Islam.

[8] My translation of the original text : L'Algérie est arabe et se proclame arabe et arabophone depuis l'arrivée des vagues successives de fātiḥin arabes qui ont donc, avec l'islamisation permis son arabisation. Une arabisation qui s'est faite lentement et sur une longue période, depuis l'année d'Okba Ibn Nafaa au 7ème siècle à celle plus tardive des tribus hilaliennes.

defending the Algerian land and the Islamic identity many centuries later during the Algerian war (1954-62) against the French colonizer, Arabic has always been tightly related to Islam. In fact, one of the incentives and self-consciousness in the early 20th century that led to the Algerian people's up-rising in 1954 was the fear of losing their Arabo-Islamic culture and identity, and assimilation to the French governing rule. Indeed, Djité (1992:19), a researcher interested in language planning in some African countries including his own, Côte d'Ivoire, and in Algeria in particular, reminds us that

> ...the policy of undermining the Arabic language, the language of their religion, and the attempt to assimilate them added insult to injury. Resistance to the French occupation had already been organized around Abd al-Qadir in 1839...

The last statement refers to the fact that the Algerians had always been aware of the French goal of turning the country into a French-speaking area and fought hard to get back the Arabo-Islamic identity, including its culture and language. As Djité (ibid. p.21) puts it, "nowhere else in Africa has the language issue been so central to the fight against colonialism".

The struggle in Algeria, however, was so hard and was going to last for a long time given the strength of the French armies and the repressive impact of its policy.

## 2.2.4 The French Colonisation and its Impact

Algeria witnessed a great number of invasions or occupations like that of the Spanish in the early 16th century and then the Turkish in the early 18th; but these did not leave any deep-rooted linguistic traces, except for some borrowed words like *t'absi* 'plate' from Turkish or *falta* and *bote* from Spanish, 'mistake' and 'boat', respectively.

However, in 1830, Algeria was going to witness the beginning of the greatest colonisation of its history, one that was going to transform the country significantly, particularly as far as its linguistic situation is concerned. It is after the 'fan slap' event[9], - just a pretext but for more obvious benefits that the French had in Algeria, driven by a will to expand its territories -, that France first attacked Algeria, beginning with a military expedition in Algiers and finally colonising the whole country.

Not to go through historical events that had no impact on the linguistic situation, and therefore of little relevance to our topic, it is necessary to mention that, unlike the French colonisation in Tunisia and Morocco, France aimed first to make of Algeria part of it, and doing so they aimed at destroying the country's identity at all levels, politically, religiously, linguistically and culturally.

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[9] The Algerian ruler at that time (1827), Dey Hussein, waved his fan to the face of Consul Pierre Duval who had brought the reply that France could not (or did not want to) pay back its debt to the Algerian govern//ment.

As a matter of fact, the French government used language as a means of colonisation; its policy was based from the beginning on erasing the linguistic identity along with the Islamic identity, as they knew that the latter would be an obstacle in their way. Indeed, this objective is illustrated in what the Duke of Rovigo declared in 1832:

> I consider the propagation of instruction in our language as the most efficient means to make progress in our domination of this country.[10]

So, in the French policy of total assimilation, it was in their plans to eliminate Arabic and substitute French for it. Another aim was to eradicate the religion. They started doing so by closing the network of Medrasas and Quranic schools, and by establishing a new educational system in favour of the colonists and with the aim of directing the populations, but in most cases making them more ignorant, for the 'autochtons' did not have the right to go to the French School in the first place.

For the colonisers, spreading the French language was a tool to control the country, and the educational system was meant to make those 'barbarians' more 'civilised'. That was the French language that they wanted to spread, the language of enlightenment, development and sciences.

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[10] My translation of the French text : "Je regarde la propagation de l'instruction de notre langue comme le moyen le plus efficace de faire des progrès à notre domination de ce pays"

Commenting on the various stages of the French conquest and the aims of the occupation, Rambaud, the minister of Public Instruction, declared in 1897 that the first conquest was accomplished through arms; the second consisted in imposing the French administration and justice; and the third would be undertaken through the school which would ensure the predominance of the French language and, in a word, to substitute it for the Arabic language in Algeria.

> La première conquête de l'Algérie a été accomplie par les armes et s'est terminée en 1871 par le désarmement de la Kabylie. La seconde conquête a consisté à faire accepter aux indigènes notre administration civile et notre justice. La troisième conquête se fera par l'école: elle devra assurer la prédominance de notre langue sur les divers idiomes locaux, inculquer aux musulmans l'idée que nous nous faisons nous-mêmes de la France et de son rôle dans le monde, substituer à l'ignorance et aux préjugés fanatiques des notions élémentaires mais précises de science européenne.

By imposing the French language and culture, the French strongly believed they came to 'civilize' the Algerians, while, there is evidence that they intentionally did the opposite, as far as education is concerned, at least. Phillipson, the author of the book *Linguistic Imperialism* reports:

> According to French government sources, when the French arrived to 'civilize' Algeria, the literacy rate in urban Algeria was 40 per cent – far higher than in France at the time. When the French left after 130 years of colonisation, the literacy rate among Algerians was, according to an optimistic reckoning, 10-15 per cent. [11]                          (Phillipson, 1992:112)

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[11] Statistics in Colonna (1975)

Indeed, since its first arrival, France had one aim: the total and complete invasion of the country, and they had planned the way of doing so, and this included the domination through language. In 1830 the Minister of War, Clermont-Tonnerre proposed a military exposition, but it was refused and after a failed obstruction that French ships had on Algiers, the military expedition was allowed. It is in Sidi Frej that the troops of the two countries met for the first time. But well organized and with better artillery, the French had won the battle and soon won more and more battles though they met fierce resistance at times from leaders such as El Emir Abdelkader, Cheikh Mokrani, Ahmed Bey and Fatima N'soumer. Due to the lack of unity, the first attempts of resistance had failed. However, France took a long time to dominate the whole country; it is only by 1930 that the whole country was under its control.

As mentioned above, the aim of the French was to make Algeria an integral part of France. Indeed, it was considered as a department of France (department d'Outre-mer). Soon, people from different parts of Europe, mainly from France, Spain, Italy and Malta, moved to Algeria to settle down and make a living.

At that time, Algeria was linguistically divided into two parts: the French and the colonists who used the French language, and the majority of Algerians who only knew Arabic and Berber in Berber-speaking areas. It was part of their political endeavor to make Algeria a French-speaking society, which meant the eradication of the Standard form Arabic and use French as a tool of domination.

Meanwhile, the Algerians became more and more illiterate, while the French school system was being established mainly for the French and other settlers who soon had the French nationality. It is only later on that a few Algerians were allowed at school. It was at that time that bilingualism began spreading, mainly among those Algerian elites who became francophone. Besides, the majority of people were weakly exposed to French allowing them to understand only some words and borrowings. It is only later on that French started spreading more among the population. The rise of those Algerian francophones was a crucial point in the resistance to the French: while the French thought they could control Algerians by teaching them French it is in learning that language that the Algerians had found abilities to fight the colonizer and eventually achieve independence.

Afterwards, different groups or cells in the Algerian resistance united and matured, and after a bloody sacrifice through a seven-year war, Algeria finally got its independence in 1962. The country was left with great losses in lives, but also in cultural and educational aspects. In fact, because of the language marginalizing policy the French rule had implemented, the Algerian society was left linguistically divided: a French-speaking élite who reached high intellectual capacities and ready for technological and scientific advancement, as well as political and financial jobs in the young government. The Arabophones, on the other hand, were cut-off from any type of development, except perhaps in Arabic literature and religion.

On the eve of independence, French had become the language used to control all important sectors, from education and administration to economy and business. There is no doubt that French played a crucial role in post-colonial economic and intellectual development in Algeria, but, in a way, it had also made the Algerians more conscious and apt to fight for independence.

The price to pay was to undertake almost everything in French starting from formal instruction. The world developed quickly and sciences evolved, but newly-independent Algeria could not follow these advancements using Arabic, and thus French was the only language in which sciences were available. The impact of the colonial language was indeed so strong that today, half a century after independence, and in spite of the Arabisation policy started very early, French continues to be used in a number of domains, in particular in higher education scientific fields. It is also used in everyday speech mostly in the form of borrowings, code-switching or mixed with Algerian Arabic and/or Berber, a linguistic profile that makes most of the Algerian people bilingual.

## 2.3 Today's Algerian Linguistic Situation

Today's linguistic situation in Algeria is the consequence of successive periods of its long history, on the one hand, and various political and social factors on the other. Algeria has indeed gone through so many events that have shaped its cultural and linguistic components resulting in a very complex situation. But two important events have played a crucially definite

role in its linguistic shaping: the introduction of Arabic started in the 7th century, and the establishment of the French language about twelve centuries later following a long-term occupation. Dendane (2007:68) argues that

> …the impact of the French language and its culture was so powerful that it started to reflect in many Algerians' speech and soon led to a sort of dual identity. The influence resulted in the usual linguistic phenomena that occur when two or more languages get in contact: the use of bilingualism and consequent code-switching, code-mixing and borrowing pervading the mother tongue in addition to the well-established phenomenon of diglossia.

### 2.3.1 Arabic and the Algerian Mother Tongues

Algeria's national and official language today is recognized to be Modern standard Arabic (MSA hereafter), although it is no one's mother tongue.

Another form of Arabic, known as dialectal or colloquial Arabic, is indeed the mother tongue of the majority of Algerians, in parallel with a number of Berber varieties in some parts of the country. For a great proportion of the population, it is Algerian Arabic (AA) which is spoken in everyday conversation which varies from a region to another and from city to city. The spoken dialect in Algiers, for instance, is different, in a number of linguistic features, from the one that we can hear in Oran, in Tlemcen or Bechar, though the degree of mutual intelligibility between the regional varieties is high, on the whole.

We can also qualify the Algerian linguistic profile as diglossic as it fits well with Ferguson's description of 'diglossia'. All the dialects coexist side by side with the higher form called Modern Standard Arabic. Characterized by prestige, which it draws from Classical Arabic, the language of the Qur'an, MSA is used in formal situations and education, in the written form and in religious speech. Therefore, MSA and AA have different functions and are used in separate domains. Ferguson (1959) describes such roles in terms of 'complementary distribution', i.e. the High variety is normally used in contexts where the L variety is not, and vice-versa.

But code-switching may sometimes occur from AA to MSA, generally when expressions are not available in AA, or the other way round, MSA to AA, to convey a message of solidarity with the people, as in the case of the president using AA forms to get closer to the audience.

Algerian Arabic in its different forms is not the only spoken dialect; the 'indigenous' spoken dialects, the Berber dialects, are still present on the Algerian soil, though scattered in a number of areas. They are used in separate regions, and their speakers can often switch to Arabic or French.

2.3.2 French and Bilingualism

As already mentioned several times throughout this dissertation, the presence of French constitutes an important component of today's Algerian linguistic landscape, a language that is associated with more than

a century of colonization and the policy that France undertook to eradicate the Arabic language in favour of the slogan 'l'Algérie française'. Indeed, very shortly after the occupation, the decision was to introduce the French educational system in Algeria, first for the colonists and then much later for some Algerians. The implementation of the French School left a deep linguistic impact in the Algerian society, and the repercussion was clearly felt in newly-independent Algeria and, half a century later, French is still strongly present on the Algerian linguistic scene.

Though a great number of Algerians are bilingual, particularly in towns and cities in the North, and master it to different extents, French is not recognized as an official language, as is the case in a few African post-colonial countries. Politically, it is not even considered as a second language, although it remains an important language recently introduced very early in the school curriculum, 3rd year primary.

Bilingualism among people can vary from the knowledge and use of just a few words in French, mostly in the form of borrowings, to the native-like control of that language among the élite and educated people, in particular those who attended the French School before and right after independence. The French language is also extensively present in the mass-media, TV and Radio broadcasting, newspapers and magazines, and even in sign-post and billboards. It is also taught supposedly as a foreign language up to the Baccalaureate exam, but the problem is that it becomes the medium of instruction at university level, mainly in the scientific fields.

### 2.3.3 Arabisation and the Algerian Education System

After such a long period of colonization, Algeria wanted to re-establish its identity, but the newly free country was faced with a dilemma as to the choice of the national language that was going to represent it and to be used in its administration. There are a number of obvious reasons that led to the choice of Arabic: because Classical Arabic in its modern form, MSA is highly codified, written and used for centuries before colonization as a language of refined literature and sciences, because it had been the only language of the Algerian government, administration and education before 1830, and finally because it was the current prestigious language in all other Arab countries due to its tight relation to Islam, it was thought to be *the* only language to be chosen as the national and official language of independent Algeria.

Beside the fact that Arabic is highly codified, all these reasons make it very strong which may explain why it resisted to colonization. This was not the case for other newly-independent countries that have seen their native tongues replaced by the colonizers' languages, as for instance in the case of French in Senegal and English in Nigeria.

In the rest of the Maghreb, Morocco and Tunisia, the same policy was undertaken right after the colonial period; that is, the urgent 'return' to Arabic and its consideration as the only official language, on the one hand, and the execution of the re-arabisation[12] process,

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[12] 'Re-arabisation' here is to be contrasted with the first arabisation of Algeria in the 7th – 11th centuries.

on the other. The feeling of belonging to the pan-Arab nation and the tight relation between Arabic and Islam is clearly stated in the first constitutions of Algeria, as shown below:

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| --- |
| **Constitution de 1963 [abrogée]** |
| **Article 4**<br>L'islam est la religion de l'État. La République garantit à chacun le respect de ses opinions et de ses croyances, et le libre exercice des cultes.<br>**Article 5**<br>La langue arabe est la langue nationale et officielle de l'État. |
| **Constitution de 1976 [abrogée]** |
| **Article 2**<br>L'islam est la religion de l'État.<br>**Article 3**<br>L'arabe est la langue nationale et officielle. L'État œuvre à généraliser l'utilisation de la langue nationale au plan officiel. |
| **Constitution de 1996 [en vigueur] \*** |
| **Article 2**<br>L'islam est la religion de l'État.<br>**Article 3**<br>L'arabe est la langue nationale et officielle.<br>**Article 178**<br>Toute révision constitutionnelle ne peut porter atteinte :<br>1- au caractère républicain de l'État;<br>2- à l'ordre démocratique, basé sur le multipartisme;<br>3- à l'islam, en tant que religion de l'État;<br>4- à l'arabe, comme langue nationale et officielle;<br>5- aux libertés fondamentales, aux droits de l'homme et du citoyen;<br>6- à l'intégrité et à l'unité du territoire national. |

\*Islam is the State religion; Arabic is the national and official language

Indeed, a program of Arabisation was declared by the first president Ben Bella, and successive presidents to arabise the national institutions starting with the educational system and the administration. It consisted in a slow introduction of Arabic first in the primary school, then progressively in higher levels. However, up to the 1970s, all subjects continued to be taught in French, given the lack of proficient teachers in Arabic. Then, with the help of teachers from Egypt, then Syria,

more subjects were taught in Arabic. The next step was taken in the 1980s when Arabic was integrated in some subjects in secondary school. Later on, in the 1990s, it was completely part of the educational system and later at universities for human sciences and social sciences.

We can point out here that scientific fields like mathematics, physics, biology and medicine itself were all, and still are, taught in French at the university. Perhaps it is worth noting that those who mastered French very well usually chose to study medical sciences and the use of French was always related to higher-status members of the society. The situation has changed since, but we want to verify in our work if this relation of medicine students and French is still affecting today's students.

## 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter is a general overview of the Algerian linguistic situation, and the historical evolution of Arabic and French. We have tried to focus on the fact that in spite of a firm decision to arabise the various Algerian institutions following the statement of Arabic as the official language, and though the arabisation process has had some success in education, many Algerians continue to speak French and to favour it for social advancement and scientific studies. Another issue relates to the diglossic nature of Arabic and resulting mismatch: MSA, the language of education, is not spoken in a spontaneous way by Algerians, which results in low achievement at school. On the other hand, French is only taught as a foreign language up to secondary school, but

when students reach university level and are interested to continue their studies in sciences, they are faced with the problem of language, except for those few who are lucky enough to be prepared one way or another, by their parents for example, to take on medical studies or other scientific fields.

It is important to mention that our hypothesis does not consider that Arabic is ultimately the language of religion and French the one of sciences but, in Algeria for historical and cultural reasons, people relate more Arabic to religious matters and French to scientific fields.

One aim of this research is to attempt to elicit students' attitudes towards the two languages. The next chapter is intended to examine the data collected from the students in order to understand their behaviour in relation to the languages associated with their studies.

# Chapter THREE

# Data Collection
# and Analysis

# 3. Data Collection and Analysis

## 3.1 Introduction

As in other social sciences, research in socio-linguistics cannot rely only on library readings and electronic resources. Once the research topic is chosen, literary review is of course necessary and very useful in helping to develop research questions and to propose hypotheses. However, it is through fieldwork, data collection and sample analysis, that our claims can be verified, confirmed or rejected. Observation of language behaviour is obviously central in sociolinguistic research, and as Johnstone (2000:1) puts it:

> Whatever its focus, sociolinguistic work is based on observations of people using language and analyses of those observations […], sociolinguists have methods for collecting their data in a systematic way

Sociolinguistic fieldwork is not an easy matter, in particular when we want informants to remain spontaneous in their linguistic behaviour. In fact, it is very hard to obtain natural speech when respondents are in an interview setting or answering a questionnaire. Such issue has been labeled 'the observers' paradox' by Labov (1972), a pioneer in sociolinguistic variation research. He asserts that

> …the aim of linguistic research in the community must be to find out how people talk when they are not being systematically observed; yet we can only obtain these data by systematic observation.

(Labov 1972: 209)

So far, the preceding chapters were concerned with the theoretical frame and concepts related to our research were considered, as well as the historical background and the sociolinguistic situation where our informants evolve. The present chapter deals with the methodology on which our research is based and attempts to provide explanations to the results obtained in the two studied settings with the aim of providing some answers to the proposed hypotheses.

## 3.2 Research Instruments and Methodology

This chapter is then devoted to the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected during our research most of which comes from 88 students in the department of Islamic sciences and the faculty of medicine. The data are mainly obtained from a questionnaire that has been administered to both groups with the aim of determining differences in their respective responses to the same questions, which will provide as we hope, answers to our main hypothesis, namely that students' language behaviour inside and outside the university setting is largely determined by their attitudes and motivation.

Other research tools involve note-taking about students' speech performed in both settings with the aim of providing more data for the research and shedding light on some similarities but mainly specificities of each group.

### 3.2.1 Participant Observation and Note-taking

Not aware of the researcher's presence, the students were observed in unconstrained situations, while we were taking notes about their utterances. 'Participant observation' was also used, through what is called a friend-of-a-friend technique, with the help of a cousin who is a student in the Islamic department. This technique has allowed us to obtain natural data, once the students got used to my presence.

We can observe that some ISc students tend to avoid using French in every day speech, and do their best to use MSA expressions and words. They seem to exhibit some linguistic behaviour which is specific to them. They favour the use of MSA in the form of specific sentences or clauses, not usually used by other speakers. One example is حيّاك الله [hajja:kalla:h], simply to mean 'Hello', an expression tightly related to religion and of course to Arabic, and which often replaces the usual السّلام عليكم [?assalæmu çalajkum]. Such behaviour seems to be used as a strategy by these students to distinguish themselves from others. We have also noticed the frequent use of MSA words and expressions related to their studies but mixed with AA in their everyday speech; e.g., a student saying to a teacher: الشيخ مليح المحاضرات هكا نحضرو باش نستافدو , that is 'Sir, it's good this type of lectures, we attend (them) in order to profit'. Another student said to his friend كانو دارو مقالة على التفسير 'They had written an article about the interpretation (of the Qur'an)'.

We observe that in these utterances and many others, the use of Arabic words in the dialect are extensively found in ISc students' linguistic repertoire

In contrast, we are more likely to find a different type of speech patterns among students of medicine. Here is an example of this kind of discussion[13]:

A: *Salut, ça va ?* kæš ma twaħħaštu l ʔraya, *ou pas encore ?*

B : *ça va , ça va* ... ħaʔʔa təmšiu ɣədwa l *l'hôpital ?*

A: *Soyez à l'hôpital.* kunu kæmǝl tǝmma matħaššmunæš... *C'est de nos droits qu'on parle...*

A : *Regardez une panoramique que j'ai fait.*

C : šwija flu wǝlla *le patient* maɣanduš *le pm.*

It is clear that discussions typical to medicine students and scientific fields in general vary from those we have observed in the department of Islamic sciences. These are due to the language of study which deeply influences and shapes the students' behaviour. Just as ISc students have a specific repertoire of words and expression in MSA, Med students display specific words and expression which make their speech so different. This results in a type of speech full of code-switching, mainly when medical topics are discussed and medical scientific terms ,available only in French, need to be used.

We can observe in this short dialogue intra-sentential CS as in [kæš ma twaħħaštu l ʔraya] *ou pas encore ?*', and extra-sentential CS as in ʻ[kunu kæmǝl tǝmma matħaššmunæš]... *C'est de nos droits qu'on parle*'.

---

[13] AA transcribed- French in italics. See the whole piece of conversation in Appendix 1.

Beside the repertoire which can shape the nature of language, we have observed in Med students' linguistic behaviour more acceptability and feeling of ease when it comes to using French, a behaviour not so much found among Isc students. This can appear in switchings like *Salut, ça va?*, or *C'est de nos droits qu'on parle!*, sentences which are not necessarily related to the medical field but are more likely to be found in the Med students' speech than in that of ISc students. This shows the positive attitudes Med students have towards French who may exhibit different patterns of speech whether they talk about medical topics or in their everyday communication.

Therefore, we can say that different socio-cultural orientations, different registers and different attitudes towards languages can explain important differences in the language behaviour among the two investigated student groups.

3.2.2 Unstructured Interviews

Sociolinguistic interviews are very important for data collection; different interview styles can be used according to the various aims and the types of data to be elicited, and particularly according to the degree of formality researchers aim at eliciting (Labov, 1972).

In our context, interviews with teachers and some students were also performed in order to elicit their linguistic behaviour, information that is different in kind from the one obtained in the written questionnaire.

In addition, these interviews, which were on the whole unstructured, have provided additional data to elicit attitudes towards the languages at play, and in a general manner ideas students have on these languages.

Two teachers in Medicine were interviewed in an informal way, the aim being to know their opinion on students' language behaviour. Both teachers agreed that the language level of today's students is very low compared to that of medicine students in the 1970s when the language of formal instruction was French and MSA taught as a secondary language. Of course, the teachers are aware that the young students came today with a background education in Arabic and consequently find difficulties switching to French. They also said they sometimes have to explain things in Arabic, MSA or AA, but they themselves find difficulties in doing so, as they were taught in French. One suggestion given by a teacher was to teach new medicine students terminology from the start to prepare them for the lectures.

As to the teachers of Islamic Sciences, they seemed to be quite satisfied with their students' proficiency in MSA. This is understandable when we consider the factors leading to such language competence :

- first, the students had all their pre-university instruction in MSA and so do not feel 'out of place' in the ISc department;

- second, given the tight relationship between Arabic and religion, the students motivation is enhanced;

- third, their attitudes towards MSA being positive, on the whole, can only reinforce their motivation for learning the language of the Qur'an.

In an informal interview, a student from the Islamic sciences department was asked to give an idea about the nature of his peers' language. He said that they can be classified, mainly, in two types: those who have not really chosen to study in this field, and he described their linguistic behaviour as not really motivated to use MSA and tend to use French from time to time; and the other students who have willingly chosen to study Islamic Law are more motivated to use MSA in class and even outside; these are also less motivated to use the French language.

A number of respondents have informed us that most students tend to avoid using French and use more MSA in everyday conversation as they identify it with religion and the Arab culture. One student insisted on mentioning that he himself masters French very well but prefers to use MSA.

### 3.3 The questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to the two groups in order to determine their respective skills in both languages and the attitudes they have for these languages. Apart from two open-ended questions the aim of which being to get views about students who master Arabic (fuṣḥā) and French, the rest of the questionnaire is in the form of close-ended questions, each having a

choice to make among a number of propositions. Here are a few questions we asked:

- Do you prefer using French or Arabic for such or such activity?
- Do you think you use Arabic more than French with your friends, family, at work, for studies..?
- Do you often change your way of speaking?
- Do you prefer to say these words in Arabic or in French?

| Culture | ثقـافة |
|---------|--------|
| Voiture | سيـارة |
| Portable | محمـول |

One aim of our research is to show if there are differences among the two groups, in the use of, and attitudes towards, the two languages in competition in the education domain. What types of differences are there, and what are they due to?

It is perhaps worth noting that the two studied groups belong to the same speech community and therefore share norms of speech, as they are under the same linguistic situation which involves bilingualism, code-switching, and diglossia, interesting phenomenoa that characterize the Algerian linguistic situation. Despite that fact, we want to show differences in their language use due to their different relationship to their study languages, Arabic and French, and whether they identify themselves as belonging to the same community or not, with the aim of giving a general idea of an aspect of

bilingualism in Algeria: relating French to science and Arabic to religion.

The questionnaire was distributed to the two groups of informants constituted as follows: 49 students from the Islamic Department (ISc) and 39 from the Faculty of medicine (Med). The age of the students varies between 18 and 38 years old among the Med, and between 20 and 30 among the ISc. We have considered the respondents' gender in our analysis, but we did not deal with age as a social variable.

The questionnaire was designed to determine the students' respective skills and competences notably in understanding, speaking and reading the two investigated languages, the hypothesis being that Med should have greater skills in French than in Modern Standard Arabic. This is partly due to the educational system in Algeria which had to keep the use of French as a medium of instruction in most scientific fields, and the use of MSA in all other fields except of course in foreign language studies.

But the hypothesis stipulates that differences in terms of skills are not due only to the nature of the education system but also to socio-cultural differences and attitudes towards the two languages that the two groups might have.

The students were also asked about the language they favour for watching T.V and using the internet, and this should determine, as we have said, not only the competency they have in both languages, but also differences in terms of cultural orientation and in

terms of what motivates them to watch TV or use the internet in such or such language.

Beside other questions on skills and how both student groups rate their own capacities in French and Arabic, students were given a list of expressions both in French and Arabic (MSA and AA) and were asked to show which kind of expression they use, the aim behind this being to determine differences in terms of code switching.

The questionnaire consists also of issues about the education system in the form of open-ended questions in which the informants are asked to give their respective opinion, freely, about speakers who are good at using French and others who possess a high proficiency in MSA. This part of the questionnaire is important as it helps in determining different ideas the students have on both languages, and attitudes toward these and towards their users in the Algerian society. It is also important as it is complementary to other questions concerning skills; we believe that differences in skills are conditioned by differences in attitudes toward both languages, and this can show that in Algeria we can encounter speakers with different attitudes toward French and Arabic which can affect their language use.

### 3.3.1. Differences in term of skills in MSA and Fr

The first three questions try to determine the students' knowledge about their own skills in both languages, those skills being understanding, speaking and reading.

67

In the first question the students of each group were asked which language they speak better. Surprisingly, 74.35 % of the Medicine students affirm that they speak Standard Arabic better, while the rest, only 25.64%, say they speak French better.

Therefore, despite our hypothesis which associates French with medicine, the data show that MSA is largely spoken better, and this is obviously due to the nature of the Algerian education system in which all the studies are in MSA before university while scientific fields are taught in French at the university level. As to those who state they speak French better, they are probably encouraged by their parents who wish their off-spring to become doctors, and thus are likely to have higher motivation for learning French.

Such language mismatch is indeed a problem for so many students who struggle to have an acceptable level in their studies. In the questionnaire, we gave the students a question to check if actually they suffer from the language they study in, an issue we shall analyze later on.

However, our hypothesis that each language is associated with a type of studies is once again reaffirmed when the data obtained in the two departments are compared, giving 100% of ISc who clearly and unanimously assert that it is Arabic they speak better. This shows, as pointed out before, that even if the two studied groups belong to the same Algerian speech community, they exhibit some important differences. In

the department of Islamic sciences, it is Arabic which is spoken better for all the informants.

Here's a table and then a graph showing the students' competence in speaking MSA:

Qu. 1: Which language do you speak better?

|          | MSA | French |
|----------|-----|--------|
| Med  N=39 | 29  | 10     |
| ISc   N=49 | 49  | 0      |

Table 3.1 The speaking skill in MSA vs. French

The graph below clearly shows the differences in students' beliefs as to their own speaking skill in MSA vs. French.
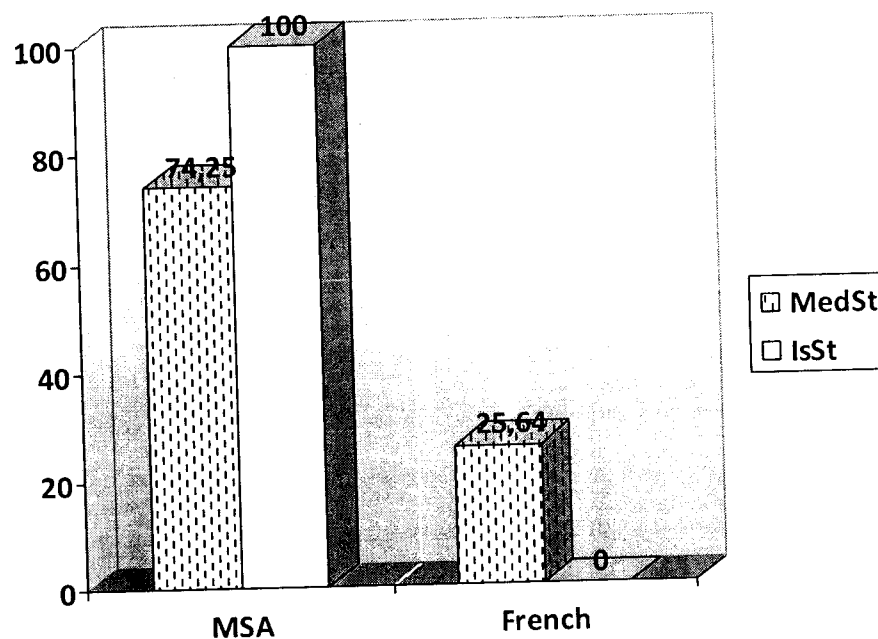


Fig. 3.1 The speaking skill in MSA vs. French

Similar results are obtained for the second question: 'Which language do you understand better?'. As many as 71.78% of the Med respondents say they understand Arabic better than French, while the rest (28.21%) say the opposite. On the other hand, all 100% of the ISc students affirm they understand Arabic better, as shown below.

Qu. 2: Which language do you understand better?

|  | MSA | French |
|---|---|---|
| Med N=39 | 28 | 11 |
| ISc N=49 | 49 | 0 |

Table 3.2 The speaking skill in MSA vs. French
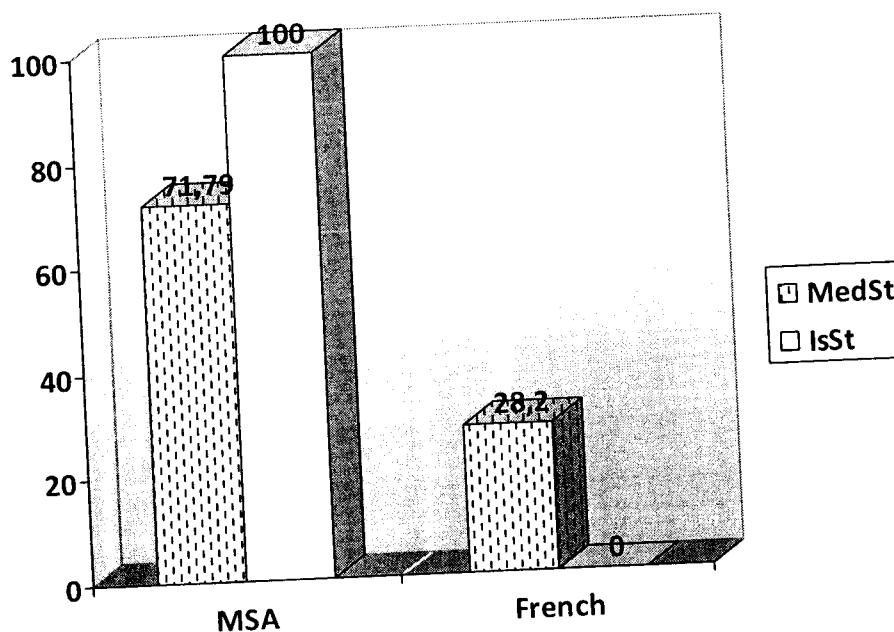


Fig. 3.2 The understanding skill in MSA vs. French

As expected, MSA is understood better than French when we consider all of the 88 respondents, i.e. 87.5%. This is clearly due to the fact that MSA is the language of instruction at all levels of pre-university education while French is taught just as a language subject. However, at first sight, it seems to be unexpected that 28% of the Med students understand French better, and on the other hand no student from the Islamic department has claimed to understand French better. But this can be explained in the following terms: their respective linguistic behaviour is in a great part related first to the domain of use, the study language, then to the different attitudes as well as to the motivations the students of both groups might have toward the two languages, in particular the fact the MSA enjoying high prestige because of its tight relation with the language of the Qur'an.

So, on the whole, what confirms our hypothesis to a large extent is that the ISc students are more proficient in MSA, the language of their studies, while the Med students aspire to have a sufficient proficiency in French. Such facts about the complexities of language show how various factors are intertwined, which makes the explanations difficult. Hoffman (1999:6-7) says in this respect:

> Language behaviour is highly complex, and no one academic subject alone can hope to explain it completely. Linguistic performance is influenced by emotional factors, by the speakers linguistic knowledge, and by perceived social values and norms.

What is salient about the results is the radical answer of the ISc in favour of Arabic, which obviously suggests a positive attitude, a much stronger idea or culture about Arabic, the 'language of the Qur'an' as they often refer to it. As far as French is concerned, some ISc respondents displayed positive views towards this language, possibly because they see it as a language of modernity and opening to the world, though others showed a negative attitude toward.

While combining the results of those 'skill' questions with the results of other questions, we hope to link these to attitudes toward the languages at play shown by the two investigated groups.

The third question is about reading: the informants were asked in what language they favour reading newspapers, books, etc...

Qu. 3: In which language do you prefer reading?

|            | MSA | French | Both |
|------------|-----|--------|------|
| Med N=39   | 16  | 09     | 14   |
| ISc N=49   | 40  | 00     | 09   |

Table 3.3 Reading in MSA vs. French
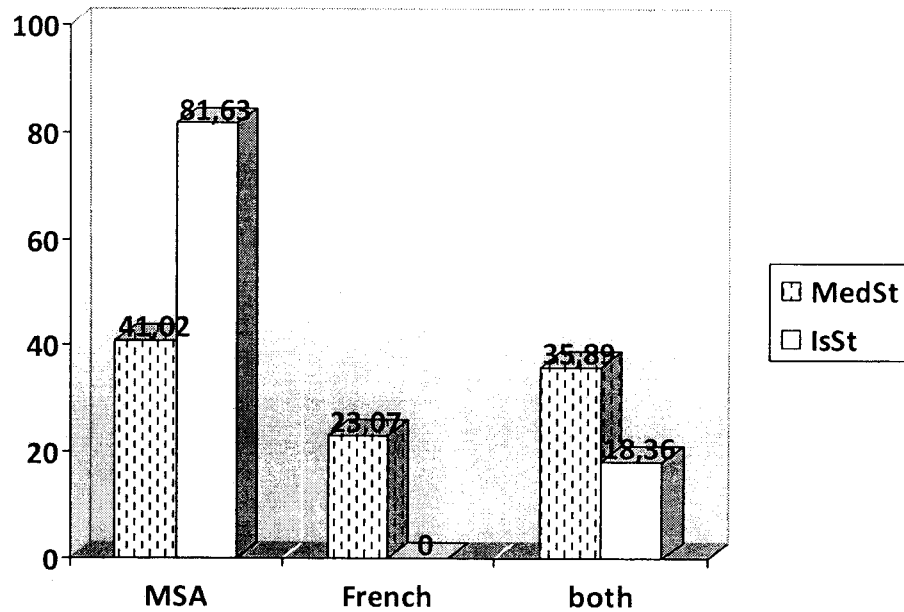
Fig. 3.3 Reading in MSA vs. French

The results show that 41.02% among the medicine students like to read in Arabic, while 23.07% prefer reading in French. At the same time, 35.89% say they enjoy reading in both languages. On the other hand, the ISc results show that 81.63% of the respondents prefer reading in Arabic while only 18.36% can read in both languages. The results speak again for themselves: Apart from the occurrence of borrowings, French is almost inexistent in the ISc students' practices which can be explained in terms of domain of use, but also as a result of negative attitudes towards this language, or the education system, and eventually other things like socio-cultural environment and orientations. But what is certain and interesting is that the two groups present differences in skills and linguistic behaviour, when we see the extent to which French is present among medicine students, and as we have said before, this is not due

only to the education system but also to cultural and social factors, as we shall provide more answers while analyzing the other questions. This should draw a clear picture of different kinds of speakers in Algeria and show aspects of bilingualism in this country.

### 3.3.2 Language Use and Preferences

In the fourth question, the students were asked in which language they prefer to watch different programs on TV and which they generally use while surfing on the web. We have intentionally chosen those activities as they are not necessarily related to their studies in order to show, in case there are different responses, that their different linguistic behaviour is related to other factors, mainly the different attitudes they have towards the two languages. The results are shown on the charts below:

Qu. 4: In which language do you prefer watching T.V programmes and using the Internet?

- ISc:

|  | Movies | News | Programs | Docs | Internet |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arabic | 23 | 42 | 40 | 35 | 31 |
| French | 9 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 10 |
| Both | 5 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 5 |
| No answer | 12 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |

Table 3.4 Language preference in watching TV and using internet among ISc students.

The graph represents clearly the results obtained:



*TV and internet use ISc St*
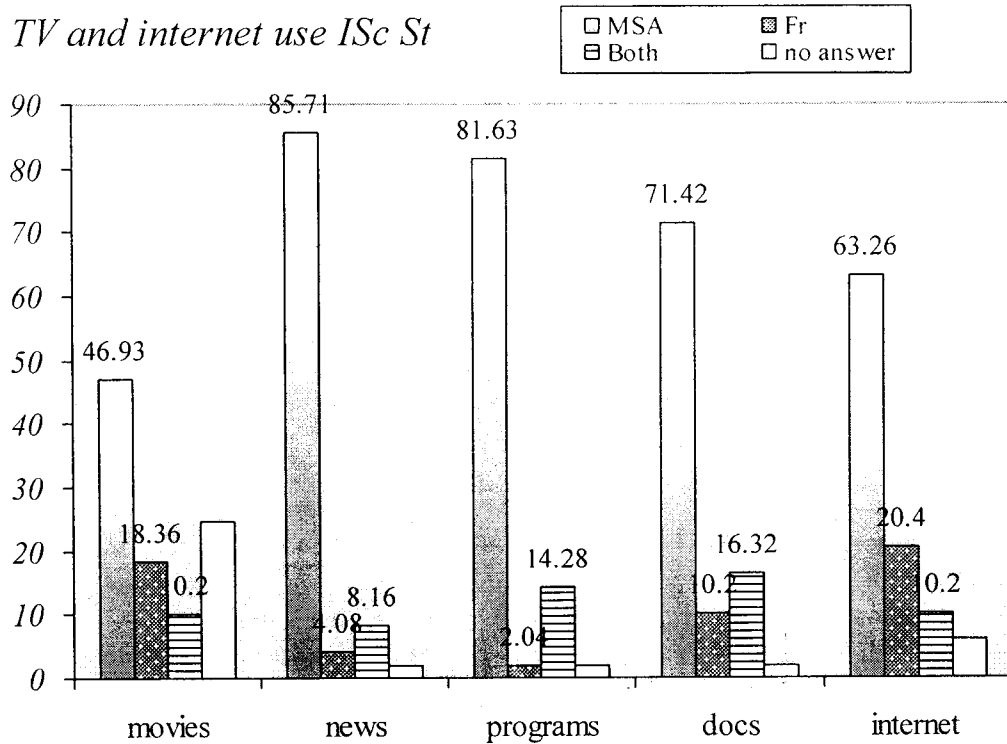
Fig. 3.4. ISc Language choice in TV and Internet use

The difference in the use of MSA vs. French appears clearly when we consider the Med respondents:

- Med:

|        | Movies | News | Programs | Docs | Internet |
|--------|--------|------|----------|------|----------|
| Arabic | 16     | 23   | 19       | 18   | 8        |
| French | 17     | 14   | 14       | 17   | 29       |
| Both   | 6      | 2    | 6        | 4    | 2        |

Table 3.5 Language preference in watching TV and using the Internet among Med students
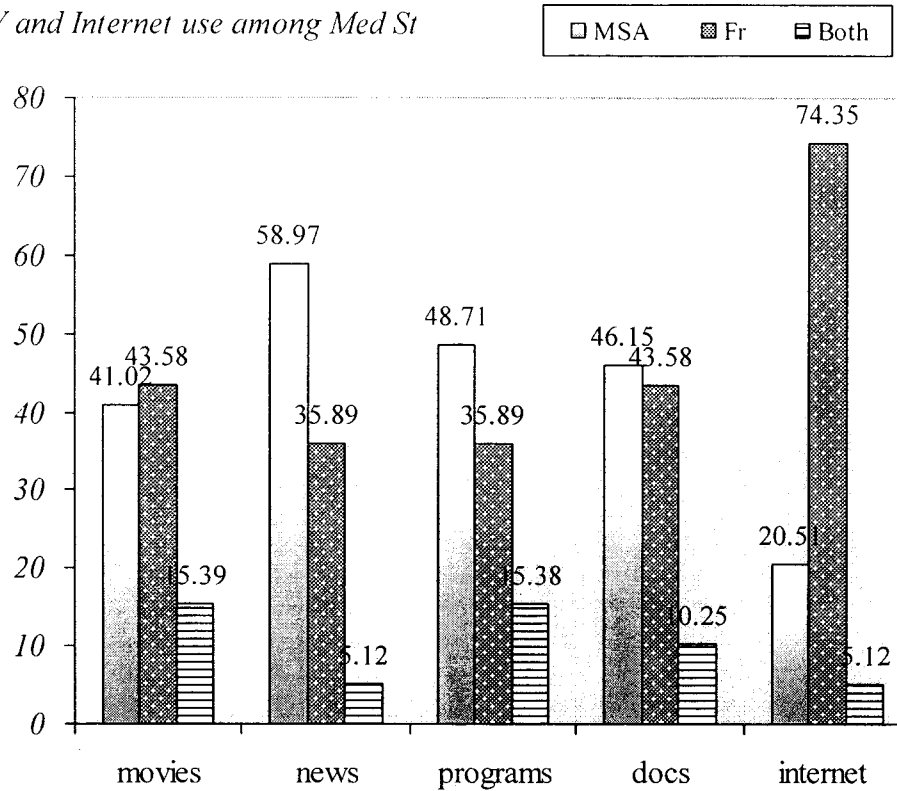
Fig. 3.5 Med Language choice in TV and Internet use

The most salient fact that can be drawn when observing the two graphs is the excessive presence of Arabic among students' choice in the Islamic department in watching TV and exploring the net, whereas the more balanced presence of Arabic and French among medicine students suggests that the two groups may be said to belong to different communities of practice (Eckert 2000) on the basis of language choice. We believe that Eckert's definition of 'communities of practice' fits our two groups of students in relation to the degree of Arabic and French practice and their attitudes towards the two languages, though they belong to the same speech community.

Here's one characterization of a 'community of practice' that Eckert (2000:13) puts forward:

> A community of practice is an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in some common endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations - in short, practices - emerge in the course of their joint activity around that endeavor. A community of practice is different as a social construct from the traditional notion of community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages.

We might well consider then that our informants have chosen to study either medicine or Islamic sciences on the basis of the value they give to the language of their studies, among other incentives of course, which leads to distinct linguistic behaviour, not only in university settings but also in everyday practices.

A few questions arise: Since news, movies, docs, etc. are available to both groups in Arabic and French, why are there many more students in medicine who prefer to do those activities in French than there are in the department of Islamic sciences? Do these motivations have an impact on language use? Are those motivations telling us something about their different conceptions of the two languages? Do they see Arabic and French the same way? Are different attitudes toward the two languages responsible for the different choices we can witness?

In fact the data presented above show that we can find more students in the department of Islamic studies that have a positive attitude toward Arabic than with

the Med students, whose opinions are more balanced. This can be partly due to the different levels of skills they have shown in the first questions, but most importantly, as already mentioned many times, to attitudes towards a language.

It is also worth noting that girls in the two settings are more in favour of French, though to different extents when we compare Med girls' results to those of ISc girls. Also, for some religious reasons some of the ISc respondents say they don't watch movies, and this may be a hint to identify the two groups as having different cultural/educational backgrounds and/or motivations, which obviously affect their respective language use and preferences.

### 3.3.3 Students' appreciation of their own skills in the two languages

The fifth question presented to the informants is a scale self-rating in which the students were asked to rate their proficiency from 'very good' to 'very bad' in order that we may determine how they perceive their different skills in the two languages, as shown in the following.

Qu.5:How do you consider your competence in the two languages

- ISc :

|        | Very good | Good | Average | Poor | Very poor |
|--------|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|
| Arabic | 09        | 23   | 15      | 2    | 0         |
| French | 0         | 6    | 23      | 14   | 6         |

Table 3.6 Competence in the two languages among ISc St.

*Proficiency in the two languages*

□ MSA     ▩ Fr
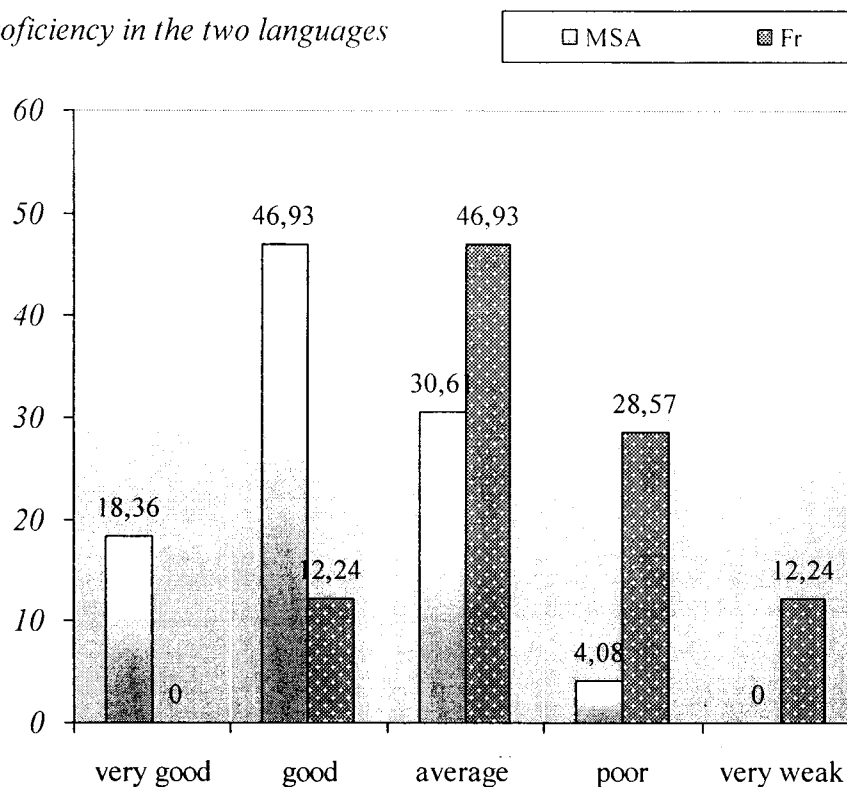
Fig. 3.6 Competence in MSA vs. French among ISc St.

The striking fact observed in the analysis of this graph representing the ISc Students' proficiency in the two languages is that the more the proposed answer is positive the more we can witness the presence of Arabic, and the more it is negative the more we witness the presence of French in the answers.

We can observe that in the column 'very good' for Arabic there was a little reservation as students may have felt that it is quite ambitious to be that good. But what is remarkable on the other hand is the 0% in the answer 'very good' proficiency in the French language, which means that among all the students who were involved no one believes he has high skills in French. This quite radical result can be rather significant.

In the answers 'good' and 'average' for Arabic the results show that the larger number among Islamic students qualify themselves as good or average which shows that Arabic for the majority is well mastered. But the more we move to negative answers the less we find responses among ISc informants concerning Arabic. However, they confess they have less proficiency in French than in Arabic; even in the negative answers such as 'very weak' about French are found.

On the other hand, we witness once again a 0% for those who have very weak proficiency in Arabic. This result once again demonstrates the positive attitude ISc students have about Arabic. This high proficiency in Arabic is obviously related to their studies, but more intimately to the status they give to Arabic, and the favourable attitude toward that language which in turn can affect language use. The two graphs below show the slight, but quite significant, differences that can be found when we consider gender as a variable.
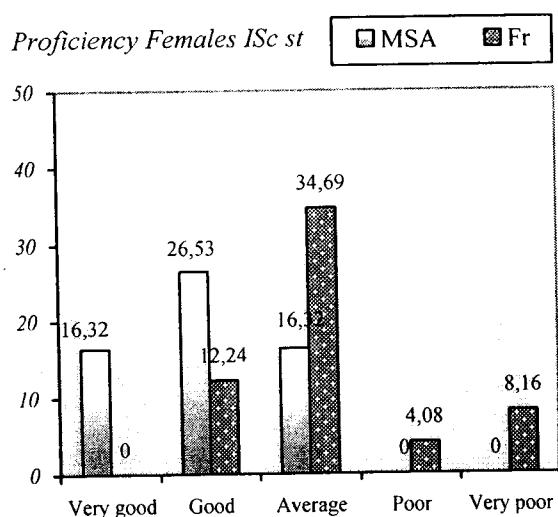


Fig. 3.7a. Females' proficiency in MSA vs. Fr
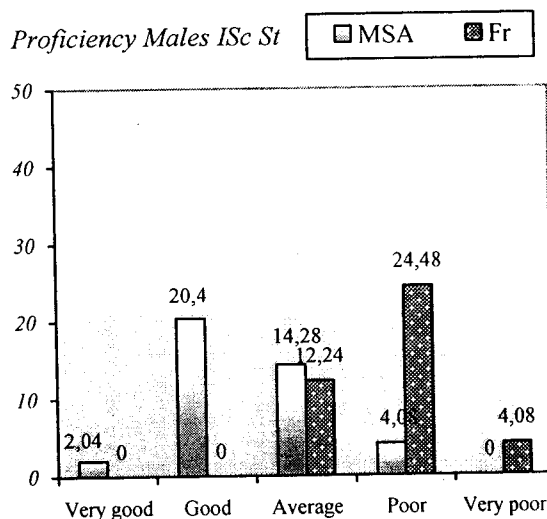


Fig3.7b. Males' proficiency in MSA vs. Fr

What is interesting to observe is that women believe they have better proficiency in French than men. Indeed, 12% of the females claim they have 'good' proficiency in French and almost 35% think their skills are 'average', whereas males had a 0% answer and just about 4% respectively. Such discrepancy can thus be related to gender and its effects on language use and choice.

The results in general confirm our hypothesis which claims that the Islamic department students have a high proficiency in Arabic, though many of them, particularly girls, consider French as worth studying and indeed their answers reveal that they are quite proficient in French, in some skills at least. As a matter of fact, there are some investigations in the Algerian society which agree on the overall higher interest that females have in learning French and foreign languages. Similar results are obtained with Med female students.

The Med students' answers for the same question were as follows:

|         | Very good | Good | Average | Poor | Very poor |
|---------|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|
| Arabic  | 15        | 15   | 6       | 1    | 2         |
| French  | 3         | 7    | 24      | 0    | 0         |

Table 3.7 Competence in the two languages among Med Students

The fact that we can encounter students with very good proficiency in French in the faculty of medicine, even if they are 'French-oriented', is significant for us, with the aim of showing differences with the present similarities.

We have also introduced the gender factor to know the competence displayed by Med female students as opposed to males.
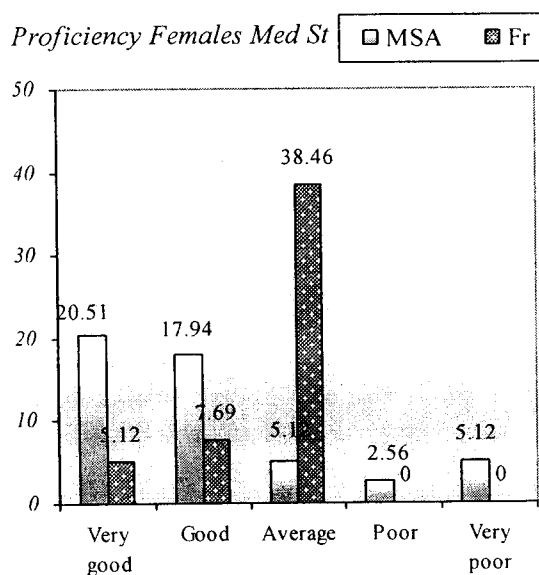


Fig. 3.8a. Females' proficiency in MSA vs. Fr
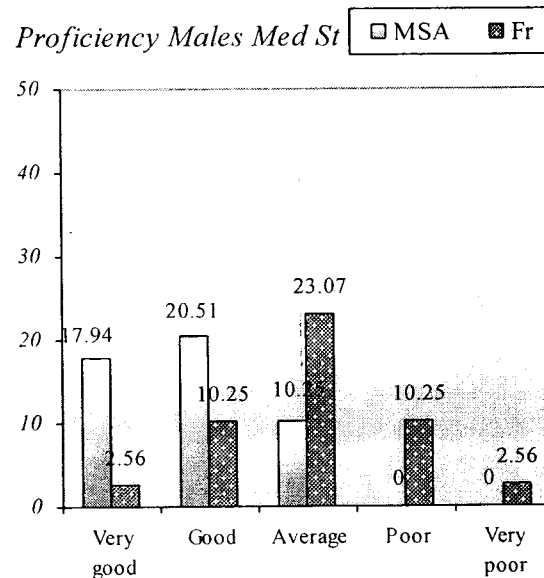


Fig3.8b. Males' proficiency in MSA vs. Fr

What is attractive in these gender-related results among Med students is that, first both males and females have a better overall proficiency in MSA which can be seen as evident given their pre-university instruction in it; but at the same time the graph shows that females are a little better than males in French, particularly when no girls say they are 'poor' or 'very poor' in the language while almost 13% Med boys admit having poor proficiency in it.

### 3.3.4 Students' Use of MSA/French in Everyday Speech

In question number six, the students of both settings were asked to rate the degree of their use of expressions in MSA and/or French during their everyday conversations. The results of such question can be very important for our hypotheses as this completes what we were trying to obtain from the preceding questions. Since the preceding questions tried mainly to determine students' skills and to give an overview of their respective attitudes towards the two languages, the present question tries to determine the consequences of such factors as attitudes and skills on everyday use. The students were asked to rate the use of the languages in everyday speech from 'always' to 'never':

Qu.6: Do you use words and expressions from MSA and French in your everyday speech?

- <u>ISc</u>:

|        | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|--------|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| MSA    | 10     | 10    | 24        | 7      | 0     |
| French | 3      | 4     | 21        | 19     | 2     |

Table 3.8 Use of MSA vs. Fr in everyday life among ISc students

As expected, the results show that even in relaxed situations (in everyday speech), ISc students use MSA expressions much more consistently than French one, the fact that confirms the impact of their attitudes.

84

MSA vs Fr Use IS St — □ MSA   ▨ Fr
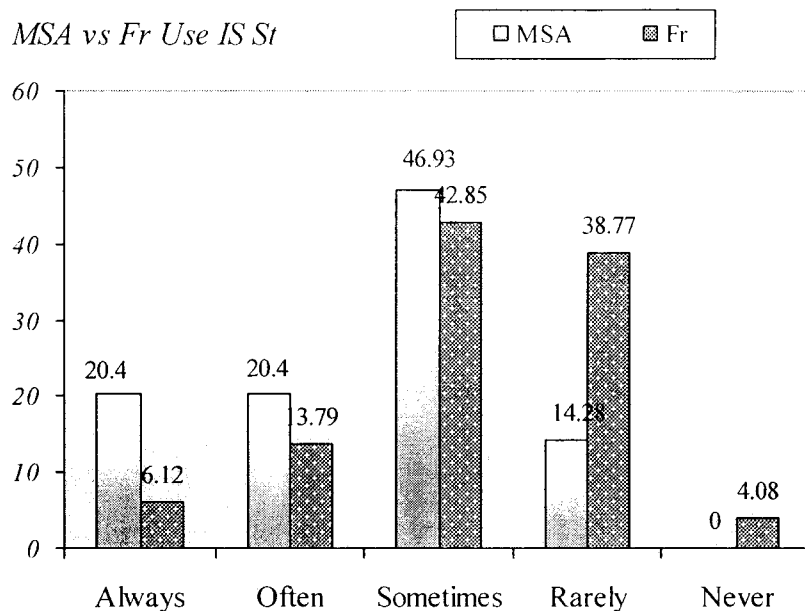
Fig. 3.9 Expression use in MSA vs French among ISc.

The bar graph shows that the use of MSA is always higher among ISc students. Within the positive part of the graph, the answers concerning Arabic are well rated while those in using French are toward the negative. In the column 'never', no one answered in favour of Arabic whereas for French only 4.08% said they never use French in everyday speech, except of course for the many French borrowings that are part and parcel of Algerian Arabic. This is certainly due to the different skills they have in French and Arabic which we have demonstrated before, and to their fields of study totally related to Arabic, which forms a domain of use for students pushing them more for the use of Arabic. Indeed, we have heard some ISc students who do their best to avoid established French borrowings replacing them by Arabic words, as in:

- loto > [sija:ra] 'car'; *les inscriptions* > [əttəsži:læt] …

This use of Arabic is commonly found in the domain of study, but can eventually spread to outside life when

the use of MSA come to replace unfound expression in the common dialectal Arabic; in fact the present chart shows that Islamic sciences students tend to include MSA expressions in their everyday life more than they include French expressions, especially when those utterance are needed in the colloquial dialect.

The graph above clearly gives us a hint about the level of code-switching among ISc students, which is more in favour of MSA/AA switches than French/AA ones.

The same question asked to the Med students reveals significantly different results as to their mixing of the standards in everyday conversation.

- Med:

|  | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MSA | 5 | 7 | 16 | 9 | 2 |
| French | 5 | 14 | 17 | 2 | 1 |

Table 3.9 Use of MSA and French in everyday life among Med students.
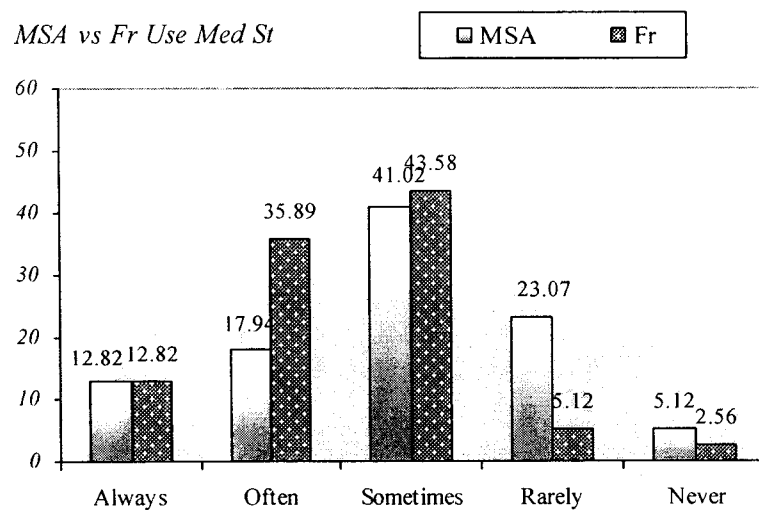


Fig. 3.10 Expression use in MSA vs French among Med.

Except for the answer 'always' where the results are quite balanced, we can observe that among the Med students, the use of French words and expressions is more favoured, i.e., a larger number favour the use of French. In other words, whenever the response is positive, the results for French are higher and in contrast they are lower for 'never' and 'rarely'.

When contrasted with what was obtained in the Islamic sciences department, we can assert that the students' respective studies or domains of use affect their language use, and that the two studied groups have to a certain extent different attitudes toward the two languages which as we can witness affect their language use. The Medicine students act as if they allow themselves more to use French than Islamic sciences students do. This also gives us an idea of the level of code-switching which is different in the two groups.

Not only do the Med students use French borrowed words and expressions – which is the case of most Algerian speakers' everyday language behaviour –, but they also tend to switch using French whole sentences. Indeed, many CS instances from the part of Med students do not seem to be random, but consciously produced to signal a certain proficiency in the French language which they relate to their studies and to sciences, modernity and advancement. Some of their answers suggest that using French outside the lecture setting gives the student a kind of better 'look' with friends, relatives and in the society. In contrast, ISc students feel another type of prestige when using MSA outside class settings, that of the language of the Qur'an.

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### 3.3.5 The Language of Study

In question number seven, the students of the two settings were asked whether they find difficulties in the respective language of their studies.

Qu. 7. Do you find difficulties in the language of your studies?

Consider the obtained results:

|     | Yes | A little | No |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ISc | 2 | 8 | 39 |
| Med | 7 | 22 | 10 |

Table 3. 10   Difficulties in the study language

The graph below gives us the results in percentages:
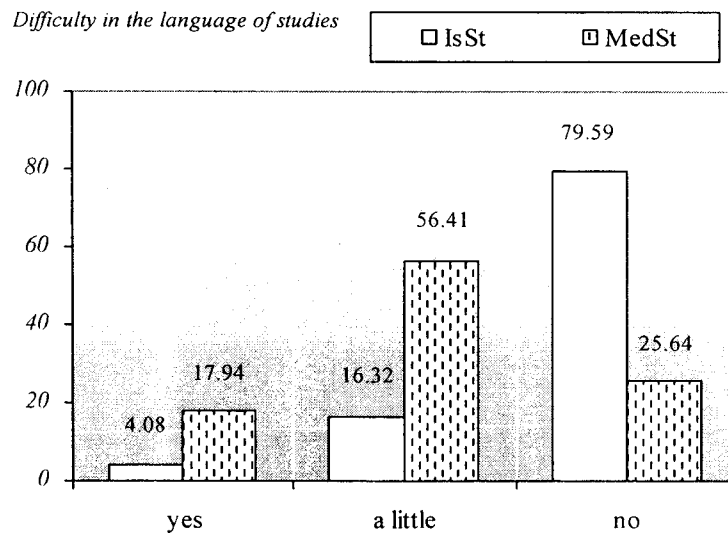


Fig. 3.11 Difficulties encountered in the study language

The table and graph show that for the larger part of the students in Islamic sciences department, Arabic causes no problem to the advancement of their study, which confirms their high skills in MSA. This is of course due to their motivations as the nature of their

studies requires a good mastering of that language. This also can suggest, from a psychological point of view, the positive attitudes they have toward Standard Arabic. The small number of answers showing that they find difficulties in Arabic might be due to the natural difficulty such language can represent. It might represent a number of students who were not really interested in the study of Islamic sciences.

As for the Med students, and far from what one can expect, there is quite a considerable number of those who find difficulties in their study language, though the number of those who said they have no difficulty in French is greater. The difficulties encountered among medicine students in their study language simply lies in the nature of today's education system which, as pointed out earlier, is obliged to keep French for higher studies in scientific fields. In fact, pupils do all their pre-university studies in Arabic, and once they have chosen a scientific field, the language of studies suddenly changes, which can affect students' abilities. We believe that the 17% are demanding the government to revise the educational system and that they are in favour of the study of medicine in Arabic. Still, on the other hand, there are 25% of students for whom there is no difficulty, or problem in studying in French, which once again suggests a positive attitude.

This confirms our hypothesis which stipulates that scientific fields, and medicine more particularly, have always been somehow associated with the French language in Algeria, and this, as mentioned earlier, has its causes in the fact that it was during colonialism that

modern sciences developed quickly and were brought to Algeria. But even after independence, mostly because of the lack of proficient teachers of sciences in Arabic, the only language available for scientific studies is still French despite the huge effort of Arabisation.

Questions number eight and nine are presented to the students in the form of what is called open-ended questions, as students are allowed to give their own opinions and points of view. In such questions, it is the qualitative results which matter most.

Students were asked in fact to give their own opinions and impressions they had toward a speaker who masters French very well, as opposed to one who masters MSA. All the questions asked were direct questions in which answers and facts are obtained from the quantitative results, where we could get an idea about the non-negligible differences in skills and language use found in the two university settings. Those quantitative results also gave us a hint of the possible different attitudes found in the two departments. This implies that the two questions 8 and 9 that we will analyse in the next chapter, are crucial in relation to the other quantitative questions, since they are a space where students can express themselves freely and where we can collect qualitatively significant data. These two questions are in fact crucial as they allow us to understand the different attitudes students have towards the two languages, mainly attitudes towards their interlocutors, as we shall see in the next chapter.

## 3.1 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have first attempted to deal with the methodology used for the investigation of the language behaviour of students from the two university settings, in particular to measure the degree of use of Arabic vs. French as well as their proficiency.

We have used a few research tools in our inquiry, but we have insisted much more on the questionnaires which revealed interesting features as to the use of and attitudes towards the two languages at play. On the whole, the results we have reached show the tight link of MSA with the department of Islamic Sciences and French with Medicine.

In the next chapter, we intend to focus more on the students' attitudes towards the two languages.

# Chapter FOUR

# Students' Attitudes
# toward their Languages

# 4. Students' Attitudes towards their Languages

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the students' views about the two languages co-existing in the Algerian society, but also their attitudes towards the users of these languages.

A 'language attitude' can simply be defined as the feeling some people associate with a given language or language variety, a feeling that can be either positive or negative. The language in question can be either the people's dialect, the standard form of that language, or the language of others as is the case with French in Algeria. It is worth reminding that, from a purely linguistic point of view, nothing makes a language 'better' or 'worse' than another one. Rather, it is the social evaluation that gives languages prestige or lack of prestige. However, such a social perspective is important to consider as the prejudices and stereotypes associated with languages, and the attitudes that a group of people displays toward these can affect their language use, as we will show, especially in a bilingual situation like that of Algeria.

## 4.2 Measuring Language Attitudes

Collecting data with the aim of studying language attitudes is perhaps much easier than measuring these. Various techniques have been used to determine the way people evaluate languages, dialects and styles, some being direct like the few questions in our fieldwork, others being indirect. In particular, the 'matched-guise

technique' developed by Lambert and his team (1972) has allowed researchers to reveal unconscious feelings about a particular language and attitudes toward its speakers.

In the present work, we have used a questionnaire as a primary research tool. The last questions, in particular the open-ended ones, are meant to determine the attitudes of the two student groups toward the two involved languages and their users. The aim, as mentioned earlier, is to understand language skills and use by defining differences in attitudes, which might be the outcome of different social environments, education, or it can be for individual reasons. We believe that, beside other factors, motivation is important in learning languages, but attitudes have also proved to be a strong incentive for using or avoiding those languages.

The differences in the attitudes towards the standard form of Arabic and French distinguish most of the students under consideration as they have specific motivations towards the language of instruction. But some students might encounter problems in learning, mainly in medicine, when they do not necessarily have positive attitudes toward the study language. As Gardner (1985:10) points out that "motivation ... refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language". He believes that the motivation to learn a foreign language is mainly related to some predispositions and the attitudes of the learner.

An interesting statement related to this combination of "effort plus desire" is provided in the Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (1992:199):

> Expressions of positive or negative feelings towards a language may reflect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc. Attitudes towards a language may also show what people feel about the speakers of that language.

As a matter of fact, our participant observation, some unstructured interviews as well as the results of the questionnaire, allow us to depict differences in language skills among the students in the two settings, in relation to their motivation in learning the study language. However, there are a number of Med students who find difficulties in their studies because of their weaknesses in French and, at the same time, their pre-university instruction being in MSA. As for the ISc students, they seem to feel 'at home' when using MSA which has always been the language of instruction for them. The next section deals with the students' attitudes towards these two prestigious languages.

## 4.3 Attitudes towards MSA and French

One central reason for contrasting MSA with French in this research work is that the two languages enjoy high status in the Algerian society, though on different grounds:

- MSA is tightly related to the High variety known as Classical Arabic, the language of the Qur'an and thus

revered by all Arabs and Muslims throughout the world; its long-established status as the language of sciences for many centuries before the advent of colonialism has also given this language a high degree of prestige.

- French too is regarded as a prestigious language for its association with the modern world, sciences and technology, business, economy and international communication. However, the French colonial policy of total denigration of the Algerian people's language and culture has never been forgotten, and some consider today's language problems, particularly in the education system, as resulting from the policy of French oppression. Bourhis (1982:44)[14] writes in this respect:

> To this day the influence of the French language and culture has been so enormous in North Africa that language reform in favour of Arabic has had to proceed very gradually through a phase of French/Arab bilingualism

One important outcome of such co-existence of two prestigious languages in the Algerian society and the persistent bilingualism lies in the contrasting and sometimes conflicting attitudes towards these languages.

In this final chapter, we want to insist on these differences in attitudes among subjects belonging to the young generation whose reactions toward each language are certainly responsible for a number of stereotypes. There seems to be a kind of competition between the two languages and the speakers' perception of each.

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[14] In Bouchard Ryan and Giles, 1982.

## 4.4 Interpretation of the Results

The two open-ended questions, eight and nine – How do you consider the student who speaks French / Arabic (fuṣḥā) very well? –, were analyzed both quantitatively, i.e. by counting the number of positive and negative answers each student had on a speaker's proficiency, and qualitatively by analyzing what they actually said. The quantitative results are presented in the following tables and graphs contrasting the students' attitudes:

- **Med**: N=39      - **ISc**: N=49

|  | Positive | Neutral | Negative | Positive | Neutral | Negative |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MSA | 20 | 13 | 6 | 43 | 6 | 0 |
| French | 26 | 10 | 3 | 32 | 9 | 8 |

Table 4.1 Attitudes towards good speakers of MSA and French

The two tables provide the students' answers on how they consider a proficient speaker in French, then in MSA. Each answer is classified as 'positive', 'neutral' or 'negative' according to what the respondent writes; an answer that illustrates the necessity of knowing languages is considered positive; those which mention the speaker's arrogance (French) or backwardness (MSA), for instance, are seen as negative. Neutral answers are those that reveal no emotional feeling from the part of the respondent, as in those who gave 'It's normal' as an answer.

In the form of percentage, these results are represented
in the two graphs shown below in an opposite view which
allows comparisons to be made clearly.

a - **Med**: N=39                    b - **ISc**: N=49
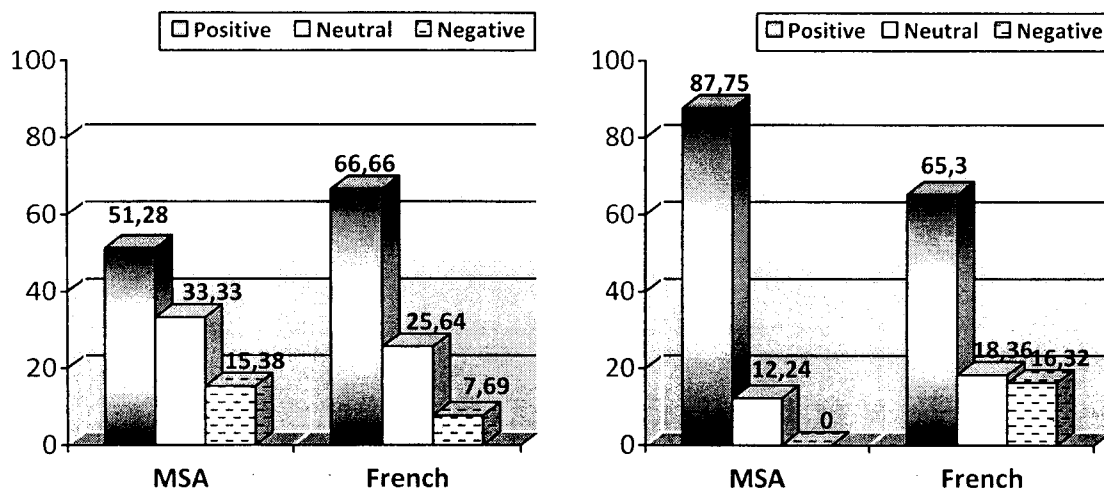


Fig. 4.1 Attitudes towards good speakers of MSA and French

As expected, the bars show that the Med students
display more positive attitudes towards good speakers of
French, because, for them, French is the language that
will lead to success in their studies. However, we can
see that the bar concerning positive attitudes towards
MSA is quite high too. This is due to the fact that
people in a general manner share a similar point of view
about Arabic, the language of religion and identity,
culture and traditional literature.

The ISc students, on the other hand, give a much
higher value to good MSA speakers than Med students
(almost 88% vs. 51%). Again, this is understandable when
we consider the importance given by students of Islamic
Law to Arabic being the language of the Qur'an, and

hence the high prestige associated with it. In fact, what is not explainable lies in the few respondents who gave a rather neutral view (12%) on proficient users of MSA. No students showed a negative attitude, though.

But what is of interest to us here lies in the small differences we can encounter in the respondents' answers; approximately the same number of students in the two groups show a positive attitude towards French (about 66% vs. 65%) while we were expecting a much higher percentage among the Med students, and perhaps a much lower number among the ISc students. These results are rather significant as we can see them more clearly during the qualitative analysis of the answers.

Another remarkable outcome is the quite significant proportion of Med respondents who see a good speaker of French negatively (7%), while in contrast, no ISc student displays negative attitude to good MSA speakers.

As already mentioned, the quantitative analysis can give us just an idea about the degree of positivity or negativity found in each group, not what type of attitudes and ideas the students have on the users of the two languages. It is the qualitative analysis that can show us the real core of their thoughts which can be really helpful for us in linking attitudes and language use as well as skills. Johnstone (2000:37) asserts that

> The analysis phase of sociolinguistic research is often quantitative as well as qualitative. This means that analyzing sociolinguistic data often involves some counting, explicit or implicit, in order to answer questions about how often things happen, in addition to the descriptions that help answer qualitative questions about how and why things happen.

Thus, we have analyzed the quantitative results merely as positive or negative attitudes, which cannot show what those ideas are really about. Though students of both settings have sometimes positive attitudes toward a given language, their ideas and opinions sometimes differ substantially. Also, a positive attitude can sometimes have a negative connotation, so we will have to take into consideration the quality of the students' opinions in order to have a clear idea about their respective attitudes and how these can shape their language use. It is only when we start the qualitative analysis that we feel some cultural distance separating at least some members of the groups under study. They sometimes have different cultural backgrounds which shape the different attitudes they may have toward the two languages. These, in turn, can affect their language use to some extent.

One overall impression we can have is that Arabic is highly appreciated in the Department of Islamic sciences, a high valuation that is also found among many of the Med students, because there is a religious, cultural and psychological dimension revolving around the high status of this language. This high rating might induce an effect on language use. Indeed, people who have very positive feelings and attitudes toward MSA and negative attitudes toward French will try to avoid, when they can, using French borrowed word or code-switching from AA to French, with increasing use of MSA in their everyday life, as the results will show.

If we consider the ISc students' positive attitudes towards French, we can deduce that these are for a large

part conditioned, as students claim that it is a good language to learn but only for study purposes. There are other students who believe that French is good to practise but only in scientific fields, which in a certain sense confirms our hypothesis stipulating that French is usually associated with scientific matters.

On the other hand for other students, French is still regarded as the language of the invaders, ' لـغة الخصم' 'the language of the enemy', as it was referred to in one comment. For some others, it is good to learn French but they believe that Arabic is better, and they urge people not to neglect the language of the 'Umma. Many students affirm that it is good to learn French, proving it with the Hadith " مـن تـعـلم لـغة قـوم أمـن شرهم" which shows once again cultural direction affecting their attitudes toward Arabic and French. For some students someone who uses French is seen as 'open' toward other cultures, while others see knowing French as a good way of spreading Islam. However, for others, someone who speaks French very well is negatively perceived as he imitates western civilization and might be influenced by social behaviour that is against Islamic principles.

We have also observed some similarities in the attitudes of the two groups as they belong to the same community. Yet, some cultural differences separating members of the two groups, seem to affect their different opinions and their language use. A number of Med students have shown positive attitudes toward Arabic users. We can witness also less positive attitudes toward a good Arabic speaker like those who affirm that

it is good to learn Arabic but one must learn French to balance his knowledge, or that Arabic is good but useless for studies. Some have shown very negative attitudes like those who think that someone who masters Arabic is 'old fashioned', behind modern times; some even go further and have a very debasing look on a proficient speaker of Arabic, saying that he/she is an object of jokes, too much classical and even boring. One effect of such negative evaluation of MSA is that, though the questionnaire form was in Arabic, some medicine students gave their answers in French.

In contrast, for the medicine students, someone who excels in French is generally well appreciated, thinking it can help him succeed in studies. Some of them believe that handling French very well is perfect and that they do want to be like that.

These different ways of thinking and perceiving the two languages and their users have led us to believe that attitudes in fact affect language use, and motivations to learn a given language can affect skills and language use.

These open-ended questions have provided us with a clear idea about similarities and differences in the way the two groups perceive MSA and French, and the status they give to each language. We believe that different attitudes can largely explain differences in people's skills in the language they favour and in its use.

The degree of borrowing use and code-switching can be explained in terms of attitudes towards a language, which we will see in the analysis of the last part of

the questionnaire. But before, there is another question which reveals students' attitudes as to the language policy followed by the Algerian state. In fact, in spite of the Arabisation policy undertaken right after independence, the institutions have been unable, or unwilling, to extend the use of the official language to many educational domains at university level, in particular medical sciences and other scientific fields. One problem that has arisen from such political decision is reflected in the weaknesses we witness among students registered in one of these scientific fields. What can we expect from a student who has had all his primary and secondary education in Arabic, and then is required to do further university studies in French? Showing the necessity of taking the right decisions in language policy, Lewis[15] (1981:262) states the following:

> Any policy for language, especially in the system of education, has to take account of the attitude of those likely to be affected. In the long run, no policy will succeed which does not do one of three things: conform to the expressed attitudes of those involved; persuade those who express negative attitudes about the rightness of the policy; or seek to remove the causes of disagreement.

The point is that if the Algerian Arabization process had been extended to include the university level in all branches, the young 'bacheliers' would not be faced with the acute problem of learning Arabic for twelve years at school then having to switch to French at university level if they choose to study a scientific branch.

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[15] Quoted in Baker (1988 :112).

In question number ten, the students were asked if they wished that all university level studies were undertaken in MSA; the results are presented in the following table and graph:

Qu. 10 Would you like all the university studies to be undertaken in Modern Standard Arabic?

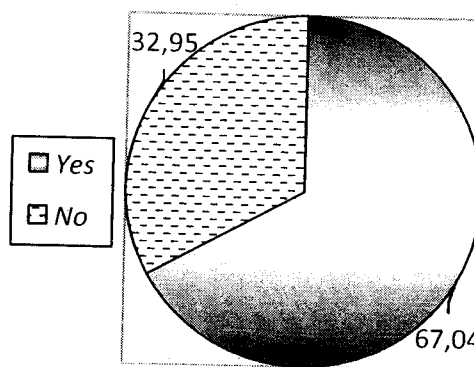| | ISc N=49 | Med N=39 |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 37 | 22 |
| No | 12 | 17 |



Table 4.2 Students' wish for MSA as a language of instruction

Clearly, more than two thirds of the student population wish, perhaps for distinct reasons, that all studies at university level were in MSA, which would solve the education dilemma mentioned above.
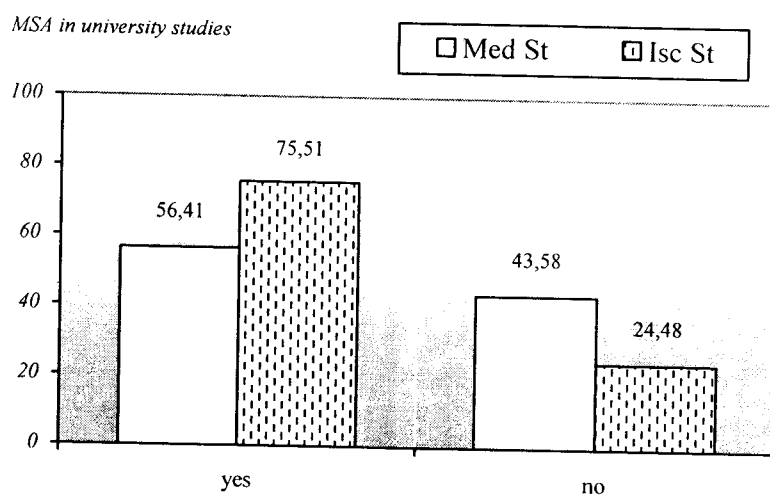


Fig. 4.2 Appropriateness of the study language

So, generally it is MSA which is favoured among Islamic Law students except for a few exceptions which are commonly used in French, in particular technological words borrowed that have come into Arabic before their equivalents were proposed in MSA. Examples of such words are 'telephone' and 'auto'. But we maintain that Arabic is much used among ISc students while French occurs with more restriction than among the Med students.

Those differences of degree of code-switching among the two groups can reveal to a certain extent, different models of speakers we meet in the Algerian speech community. Such differences are quite obvious among the two groups and are directly related to differences in attitudes we have shown in preceding sections.

## 4.5 Conclusion

We have attempted to reveal through the analysis of the obtained data the differences in the two student groups in term of French/Arabic skills as well as the tight relation between language use and the different attitudes we encountered in the two settings. We can notice that Modern Standard Arabic is tightly related to religion, and this is true in all the Algerian community. But in the department of Islamic studies, as learning revolves around religion, we can encounter many more people who have shown positive attitudes toward Arabic and neutral or even negative attitudes toward French. As for the faculty of medicine, the students' language behaviour appears to be more balanced between positive and negative attitudes toward Arabic, and more

favorable toward French. Our study relates those differences in attitudes and perceptions about the two prestigious languages to students' differences in language skills and language use. In this research, we have also shown that the domain of use affects language use to a large extent. The greater use of MSA among Islamic Law students is certainly due to the effect of domain of use as their studies are all in Arabic.

The education system is in a great part responsible for the relation between French and scientific fields in Algeria. We can observe that code-switching is higher when the topic of medicine is involved, and this is due to the absence of scientific words in Arabic in their repertoire and the presence of those words in French lead them to code-switching. Medicine students are just part of the community and we are likely to find code-switching from AA to French everywhere, not only where scientific topics are involved, but also in everyday speech. One thing that plays a crucial role in using or avoiding French is certainly the speaker's attitudes towards this language and towards its users.

# General Conclusion

# General Conclusion

Resulting from socio-historical events that have led to the contact of a number of languages and language varieties, the Algerian linguistic situation has become so complex and interesting at the same time. In addition to the diglossic nature, a phenomenon that characterizes the Arabic-speaking world, bilingualism still pervades the Algerian society half a century after independence. Indeed, most Algerian people are familiar with French, though to various degrees. This allows us to consider the phenomenon in terms of societal bilingualism, as Arabic and French co-exist in the community in so many domains, and individual bilingualism or bilinguality which can be measured in terms of the proficiency of individuals.

Although Arabic, in its standard form, is considered as the official language of the state, French is used in many domains, from everyday speech, often mixed with Arabic, to administration and other sectors, business companies, etc. Though in reality French is felt to be a second language and used as such, in education it is taught as a foreign language officially, at primary and secondary levels, and then, at the university, it is the language of instruction in many branches, particularly the scientific, technological and medical ones.

The overall aim of this research work has been to draw the attention to one feature of the complicated Algerian bilingualism. From all the recurrent linguistic domains in the Algerian society, which vary from

everyday life to education, to cultural domains and media, and are crucially responsible for language choice and code-switching, we have chosen to investigate the two domains, religion and sciences, and how these domains affect students' language choice, hoping this can illustrate an important feature of Algerian bilingualism.

The objective was to show that in the two university settings, medicine and Islamic sciences, it is easy to observe speakers with different language behaviour resulting mostly from their attitudes towards the two competing and prestigious languages, MSA and French.

On the basis of the observation that French, in the Algerian university context is the medium of instruction in scientific and medical domains while MSA is the language of religion, and social/human sciences, we have put forward the main hypothesis that in spite of the fact that the two student groups chosen for investigation share similar socio-cultural and educational backgrounds, linguistically they appear to behave differently, not only in lecture settings but also outside the university. One obvious reason for their language behaviour is related to the language used for studying.

Our investigation is an attempt to show that students' motivation to become more proficient in one or the other language plays an important role in their linguistic behaviour. But the most significant factor that seems to determine their language choice and to enhance their linguistic skills lies in their attitudes

toward the two languages and toward the users of these languages. Indeed, it has been shown that positive attitudes make people accept and adopt a given language, while a negative view of a language consciously or unconsciously leads to its rejection or neglect.

We have tried to show that in Algeria French is more appropriate, or at least thought to be, for the medical domain and for other sciences, this having its causes in the education system and some cultural and historical values that somehow relate, but not always, French to science. We can attest, on the other hand, the same phenomenon concerning the relationship Arabic has with religion; even if we can talk about religion in any language, people want Arabic to remain the only language strongly associated with Islam.

By means of a number of research tools used in our investigation, in particular the sociolinguistic questionnaire, but also participant observation and interviews, we have been able to collect data showing the students' language behaviour as far as the use of the two competing languages, MSA and French. We believe that the hypotheses we have put forward are confirmed to a large extent. The analysis and interpretation of the data have indeed allowed us to draw some conclusions as to the use of the two languages:

- The students of medicine, as expected, switch much more to French in everyday conversations; one reason for such behaviour is that French is the language of instruction in their studies. But motivation does not seem to be enough to make them favour French. For them,

it is clearly the language of modernity, technological advancement and professional success, though they are aware that English, the language of wider communication, is well ahead in science and research, technology and business fields.

- The students of Islamic Sciences, on the other hand, display overall positive attitudes towards MSA, which they refer to as the language of the Qur'an. Such attitude plays a crucial role in enhancing their motivation not only for improving their MSA proficiency in the study context, but also in using it outside of the university setting. Such linguistic behaviour often results in an AA/MSA mixture that may become in the long run a middle variety of Arabic used increasingly. However, we have found out that many students in this department showed positive attitudes towards French as they consider learning languages as an important thing in knowledge as a whole.

The gender variable has also been investigated 'en passant', in relation to the two languages. The comparison between male and female informants has revealed that on the whole female students are better in French in the two settings, a phenomenon that can be attested in the whole Algerian society.

We have also tried to explain why one group does not mind using French borrowings while other individuals do avoid them. At the end, we can say we just wanted to encounter different speakers and describe their speech, investigating the differences whether they are personal, social or cultural, that affect their respective speech.

In the light of what has been said, our aim in this research work has been to explore the dimension of Algerian bilingualism in the two university settings, and to show that the two groups of speakers have different levels of bilingualism trying to determine the different attitudes they have for each of the two languages.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1    *Conversations*

### 1. ISc students

A : عندنا درس تع الأنجليزية

We have a lecture of English

B : و شحال تقرو من يوم

And how many days do you have class

A : خمس ايام فالأسبوع

Five days in the week

### 2. Med students

A: *Salut, ça va ?* kæš ma twaħħaštu l ʔraya, *ou pas encore ?*

B : *ça va , ça va* ... ħaʔʔa təmšiu ɣədwa l *l'hôpital ?*

A: *Soyez à l'hôpital.* kunu kæməl təmma matħaššmunæš... *C'est de nos droits qu'on parle...*

A : *Regardez une panoramique que j'ai fait.*

C : šwija flu wəlla *le patient* maɣanduš *le pm.*

A : *Non, je ne trouve pas que c'est flou et...* ɣandhum kæməl les pm.

C : matəzɣafš rani ɣi nadħak... *Le cliché est bien fait.*

A : *Non,* mazɣaftš.., *mais tu m'a pas dis ce que tu en penses...*

C : *A première vue* dro:s laɣqəl mazal ma nado: š

B *Je pense qu'il y a les dents de sagesse supérieures qui n'ont pas trouvé l'espace sur l'arcade alors elles sont resté incluses!!*

A : *Oui c'est ça, Asma. Le seul problème c'est que y a pas d'espace*

B : *Donc il faut les extraire ...*

C : nichæ:n ; *l'abscence des germes* maməjjəztəlhæ:š !

في إطار بحث في علم اللغة الاجتماعي، نرجو من الطلبة الأعزاء ملئ هذا الاستبيان، وشكرا...

– السن: ........     – الجنس: ..............     – السنة الجامعية: ...............

-----------------------

1. أية لغة تتكلمون أحسن؟   – العربية الفصحى ☐   – الفرنسية ☐   (ضع علامة **X** في الخانة)

2. أية لغة تفهمون أحسن؟   – العربية الفصحى ☐   – الفرنسية ☐   (ضع علامة **X** في الخانة)

3. بأي لغة تطالعون (جرائد، كتب، إلخ...) – الفرنسية ☐   – العربية ☐   – كلتا اللغتين ☐

4. بأي لغة تُفضلون مشاهدة البرامج التلفزيونية الآتية واستعمال شبكة الإنترنات؟

|  | الأفلام | الأخبار | الحصص | أشرطة وثائقية | الإنترنات |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| العربية الفصحى |  |  |  |  |  |
| الفرنسية |  |  |  |  |  |

5. كيف تُـــقــدّرون براعتكم في كلتا اللغتين ؟ (ضع علامة **X** في الخانة المناسبة لإجابتك)

|  | جيد جدا | جيد | متوسط | ضعيف | ضعيف جدا |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| العربية الفصحى |  |  |  |  |  |
| الفرنسية |  |  |  |  |  |

6. هل تستعملون كلمات أو عبارات من العربية الفصحى / اللغة الفرنسية في حديثكم اليومي؟ (ضع علامة **X** في الخانة المناسبة)

| العربية الفصحى | دائما | كثيرا | أحيانا | قليلا | أبدا |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| الفرنسية | دائما | كثيرا | أحيانا | قليلا | أبدا |

7 . هل تجدون صعوبة في اللغة التي تدرسون بها؟   – نعم   – شيئا ما   – لا   (ضع في إطار)

8. كيف تنظرون إلى الطالب(ة) الذي يُجيد التحدُّث باللغة الفرنسية؟

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

9. كيف تنظرون إلى الطالب(ة) الذي يُجيد التحدُّث باللغة العربية الفصحى؟

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

10. هل تودّون أن تكون كل دراسات التعليم العالي باللغة العربية الفصحى؟ – نعم ☐ – لا ☐

11. ما هي الكلمات والعبارات التي تستعملونها عادة في حديثكم اليومي؟

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Examens | | امتحانات |
| Inscriptions | | تسجيلات |
| Je me suis inscrit | | سجلت نفسي |
| Voiture | اللوطو | سيارة |
| C'est impossible | | غير ممكن |
| Culture | | ثقافة |
| Semaine | سيمانة | أسبوع |
| Les etudes | القراية | الدراسات |
| Téléphone | التيريفون | الهاتف |
| Je suis conscient | راني conscient | راني واعي |

شكرا جزيلا على مشاركتكم...

## Questionnaire to Students

Research work in sociolinguistics; you are kindly required to fill in this questionnaire. Thank you...

- Age: ......          - Sex: ............          - Academic year: ............

1. Which language do you speak better?  - MS Arabic [ ]          French [ ]
2. Which language do you understand better?  - MS Arabic [ ]          French [ ]
3. In which language do you prefer reading (newspapers, books, etc.)  - MSA [ ]  French [ ]

   Both [ ]

4. In which language do you prefer watching TV programmes and Internet use?

|  | Movies | News | Programmes | Docs | Internet |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MS Arabic |  |  |  |  |  |
| French |  |  |  |  |  |

5. How do you consider your competence in the two languages?

|  | Very good | Good | Average | Poor | Very poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MS Arabic |  |  |  |  |  |
| French |  |  |  |  |  |

6. Do you use words or expressions from MSA / French in your everyday speech?

| MS Arabic | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| French | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

7. Do you find difficulties in the language of your studies?

   - Yes [ ]          - A little bit [ ]          - No [ ]

8. How do you consider the student who speaks French very well?

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

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

9. .How do you consider the student who speaks Arabic (fuṣḥā) very well?

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

..

10. Would you like all the university studies to be undertaken in Modern Standard Arabic?

- Yes ☐

- No ☐

11. What are the words and expressions that you usually use in your everyday speech?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Examens | | امتحانات |
| Inscriptions | | تسجيلات |
| Je me suis inscrit | | سجلت نفسي |
| Voiture | اللوطو | سيارة |
| C'est impossible | | غير ممكن |
| Culture | | ثقافة |
| Semaine | سيمانة | أسبوع |
| les etudes | القراية | الدراسات |
| Téléphone | التيريفون | الهاتف |
| Je suis conscient | conscient راني | راني واعي |

Thank you very much!