

**DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA**  
**MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**  
**UNIVERSITY OF ABDELHAMID IBN BADIS MOSTAGANEM**  
**FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**



**UNIVERSITE**  
**Abdelhamid Ibn Badis**  
**MOSTAGANEM**

## **Title**

**Second Language Acquisition among Kabylis Living in  
Arab Communities:  
Case of Kabylis in Mostaganem and Oran**

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of Master's Degree in English language and Communication.

**Submitted by:**

**Ouali Nedjma Sabah**

### **Board of Examiners**

**Chair: Dr. Hanane SARNOU**

**University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis**

**Supervisor: Dr. Dalal SARNOU**

**University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis**

**Examiner: Dr. Leila BEKRI HAMERLAIN**

**University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis**

**Academic Year: 2019-2020**

## *Acknowledgements*

A special acknowledgement and gratitude to the BEST teacher and supervisor: **Dr. Sarnou Dalal** for her kindness, help, valuable advice and constructive comments.

I am deeply thankful and grateful to the board of examiners for their willingness to evaluate my work and to provide helpful comments and remarks:

**Dr. Sarnou Hanane**

**Dr. Bekri Hamerlain Leila**

My sincere thanks to all the people who have kindly submitted, and accepted to be a part of this research.

I would like to thank those who gave me their time in the form of greatly appreciated teaching and moral support, both in this degree and in passed times;  
my **Teachers** without exception.

## *Dedication*

I dedicate this work to the dearest people to my heart.

I would like to thank my family members specially my Mother and Father for their constant care, my cousin Asmatine for her help and valuable advice, my sisters Rahma, Djouher, and Fatima, my nieces Maroua and Farah, and last but not least my brothers Mohammed ,Mehdi, Ahmed and Sououd.

My special thanks are presented to my friends Cherif. F, Djabou .C, Bekihal. A, Bendelal .R, and Barka .A, and colleagues Medjahed. N and Hassain D. Kh who have been a great help.

## *List of abbreviations*

**A.A:** Algerian Arabic.

**S.A:** Standard Arabic.

**K:** Kabylia.

**F:** French.

**CH:** Chaoui.

**LAD:** Language acquisition device.

## *List of figures*

<b>Figure 01:</b> a brief overlook on the informants' mother tongue .....	22
<b>Figure 02:</b> investigation about the existence of a second language .....	23
<b>Figure 03:</b> Proclaiming the other languages used during childhood .....	23
<b>Figure 04:</b> the reaction of being exposed to Algerian Arabic .....	25
<b>Figure 05:</b> the difficulties faced in learning Algerian Arabic .....	25
<b>Figure 06:</b> the reaction of the informants towards Standard Arabic .....	27
<b>Figure 07:</b> Difficulties towards Standard Arabic .....	27
<b>Figure 08:</b> the effect of learning a new language on attitude and language maintenance .....	28
<b>Figure 09:</b> the process followed to acquire the target language .....	29
<b>Figure 10:</b> the role of parents in making the children bilingual .....	30
<b>Figure 11:</b> the importance of family and environment .....	30

## *Table of contents*

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>I</b>
<b>Dedication</b> .....	<b>II</b>
<b>List of abbreviations</b> .....	<b>III</b>
<b>List of figures</b> .....	<b>IV</b>
<b>Table of contents</b> .....	<b>V</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>VII</b>
<b>General introduction</b> .....	<b>01</b>
<b>Chapter One: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria</b>	
1.1 Introduction .....	04
1.2 A brief overview of Algeria's history .....	04
1.3 Languages used in today's Algeria .....	05
1.3.1 Arabic .....	05
1.3.1.1 Standard Arabic .....	05
1.3.1.2 Algerian Arabic.....	06
1.3.2 French .....	06
1.3.3 Berber (Tamazight) .....	07
1.3.3.1 General Information on Berbers .....	07
1.4 Aspects of language acquisition.....	09
1.4.1 Theories and concepts of language acquisition .....	09
1.4.1.1 Behaviouristic view on language acquisition.....	09
1.4.1.2 Cognitivism .....	11
1.5 Concepts of second language acquisition and learning .....	12
1.5.1 Behaviourism and second language acquisition .....	12
1.5.2 The psycholinguistics approach to second language learning .....	13
1.5.3 Age factor in second language acquisition.....	13
1.6 Language attitude.....	14
1.7 Language preservation.....	14
1.8 Conclusion.....	14
<b>Chapter Two: The Methodology of the Research, and Data Collection</b>	
2.1 Introduction .....	17

2.2 A brief overview on second language acquisition .....	17
2.2.1 Language attitude.....	17
2.2.2 Language maintenance .....	18
2.3 The data collection.....	18
2.3.1 The respondents .....	19
2.3.2 The type of the questionnaire.....	19
2.4 Results and discussion .....	20
2.4.1 Information about Kabylis and their attitudes towards Arabic and standard Arabic .....	21
2.4.2 Language maintenance and the environment .....	21
2.5 Data Analysis .....	22
2.6 Conclusion.....	31

### **Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Results**

3.1 Introduction .....	33
3.2 Discussion of the main results .....	33
3.2.1 First Section.....	33
3.2.2 Second Section .....	35
3.3 Conclusion.....	37
<b>General conclusion.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>46</b>

## *Abstract*

The present research aimed at investigating the issue of second language acquisition for Kabyle speakers living in Arabic speakers' societies of the Western region of Algeria precisely in Mostaganem and Oran. In fact, the linguistic situation in Algeria is complex due to several factors, mainly the colonial history and the establishment of many civilizations which led to the variation of speech. The major query in this work is to know the process that Kabyle speakers went through to acquire Arabic as a second language. Also, we seek to find out if Arabic would influence their mother tongue. In other words, our main questions are: how did Kabyle speakers manage to learn Arabic as a second language? And did Kabyle speakers succeed in preserving their identity and language despite the environment that seems linguistically different. To achieve these objectives, we opted for relating our data to linguistics, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics. This work is mainly devoted to study the different linguistic backgrounds that distinguish Algeria. In the practical part of this research, we opted for a qualitative questionnaire partially retrieved from Benhattab's investigation on Berbers of Oran as a research tool to answer our research questions. The findings of this work come out with the conclusion that second language acquisition might be a behavior, and that Kabyle speakers of Mostaganem and Oran under study have showed a positive attitude towards the languages existing in the country precisely Algerian Arabic, and succeeded in preserving their mother tongue, as they showed loyalty and belonging to their language and culture.

**Key words:** language acquisition, behaviourism, Kabyle speakers, Arabic



# **General introduction**

# General introduction

---

Every language has a set of properties that distinguish it from other languages. The same language also varies from one region to another and it varies among the individuals of the same speech community as well. The best example we can provide is Arabic since it differs from one country to another, one region to another and one community to another.

Linguistically, Algeria is well known for being a rich country that has so many different speech varieties in its repertoire. Algerian Arabic is the dominant variety in this country as it is used as a code of interaction between all the different dialects.

Berber speakers in Algeria and kabylians in particular, constitute a relatively small number of the population which technically makes kabylians a minority. Living in big cities like Mostaganem and Oran, where the most commonly used speech variety is Algerian Arabic and that has created some issues among kabylians in terms of language acquisition as they were only familiar with the Kabylia language. In such circumstances being able to learn a new language and preserving one's identity and language might seem as a hard task; thus, it would be interesting to see how kabylians as a minority group have managed to acquire Algerian Arabic and whether they will succeed at preserving their mother tongue or will be influenced by their current society.

The present research deals with Kabylians as a linguistic minority living in the western region of North Algeria. It aims at investigating the different attitudes and linguistic habits this ethnic group would have towards the different languages that they are exposed to. Accordingly we would hypothesize that a second language can be acquired easily if we consider it as a behavioural response that relays on imitation, memorisation as well as observation, and that a language can be maintained if one is constantly exposed to the family and the environment.

Therefore, the major questions this work seeks to answer are: how did this minority group acquire Arabic as a second language? And is it possible to maintain one's native mother tongue when living in a community that speaks a different language?

This work is composed of a general introduction, three chapters, a general conclusion, and one appendix. The first chapter provides the reader with the theoretical part which is composed of two sections: In the first one we intended to shape out the sociolinguistic and linguistic situation in Algeria, and point out at the different languages existing in the Algerian society, i.e. Algerian Arabic, Standard Arabic, Berber and French. The second section is

# General introduction

---

devoted to psycholinguistics, in which we deal with second language acquisition from a behaviouristic view.

The second chapter is devoted to the data collection as it consists of a qualitative questionnaire that we retrieved some of its aspects from Benhattab's work (2004), as well as an analysis detailed in graphs.

The third chapter contains the analysis of the data findings, as it includes a well detailed analysis of the results that have showed the whole process that our respondents went through in order to acquire a second language.

# **Chapter One:**

## **Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

# **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

---

## **1.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, we aim at presenting major aspects of the linguistic and sociolinguistic situation in Algeria as we intend to shed light on the different periods which marked the history of the country, and the impact of the invaders, who indirectly contributed to the emergence of a linguistic variation in Algeria. The present chapter also tackles the diversity of speech varieties in Algeria, notably standard Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Berber and French. We will also recall some initial information on Berber, its geographical distribution in the country, and then we would introduce Kabylis in details.

In addition, this chapter is also an attempt to discuss the process of acquiring Arabic as a second language among Kabylis minority living in the western region of the country. Therefore, this chapter includes as well a brief passage about language maintenance and language attitude.

## **1.2 A brief overview of Algeria's history**

Due to the absence of archaeological studies, the pre-historical period of Algeria remains unknown. However the common belief among historians is that Berbers were the first population who lived in North Africa, even before the Phoenicians landed in this area in the year 1200 B.C. According to Humbaraci, A. (1966, P.12): *“The Berbers, apparently, are one of the oldest races in the world; no one seems able to trace their origins”*.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the various periods Algeria has been through, the country was the target of several invasions and conquests which led to the coming of many ethnic groups. All these events have remarkably influenced the linguistic repertoire of the country by the establishment of different cultures, civilizations and languages. The Berbers<sup>2</sup> presence has marked the history of Algeria.

Many historians have argued that Algeria is originally Amazigh, as Chaker, S. (1988, P.16) claims in his book that: *“the bottom of the population of the Maghreb is of Berber origin, the immense majority of the current Arabic speakers are only Arabized Berbers”*.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Quote retrieved from: Humbaraci .A (1966, p. 12). Language in Algeria: the continuing problem. By Djabri. A. (1981).

<sup>2</sup> Berber: are known to be the original inhabitants of north Africa due to the mixture of peoples coming from the east called libou with North Africa's prehistoric inhabitants.

<sup>3</sup> Original text : « le fond de la population du Maghreb est d'origine berbère, l'immense majorité des arabophones actuels ne sont que des berbères arabisés ».

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

In fact, many other civilizations succeeded, starting from the Carthagi civilization established by the Phoenician traders who came to North Africa. And then, the era of the Roman Empire began after defeating the Carthagi. The main languages used at that time were Berber, Punic and Latin.

Few centuries later, the vandals came to dominate the area and put the Roman rule to its end. After more than a century, it was the turn of the Byzantines to end the Vandal control. The Byzantine domination was finished by the invasion of Arabs who marked their presence by implementing the Arabic language as well as civilization and to spread the Islamic Religion.

Algeria witnessed the Spanish settlement by the end of the 15th Century. It was followed by the Ottoman Rule that came with the purpose of protecting Islam and lasted three centuries until the French colonization took its place in 1830, and established for more than a century until it was forced to leave the country after the Revolution of its people in the 1962, leaving the Algerian society richer at both the cultural and linguistic level.

Invasions played a major role in shaping today's Algeria .The various civilizations established in the country and the exposure of its people to different languages were the main reason behind Algeria being a multilingual country.

Among all the languages mentioned above only four are still used nowadays in the Algerian different regions which are: Berber with its all varieties (Kabylian, Chaoui, Mezabite and so on), Standard Arabic (School) Algerian Arabic i.e. dialect (everyday life) and French.

### **1.3 Languages used in today's Algeria**

Algeria is well known for being a multilingual country due to the influence of the historical events it has witnessed in the past and it became a linguistic heritage. The latter is composed of four languages (Arabic, Algerian Arabic, French, and Berber) stated as follows:

#### **1.3.1 Arabic**

Arabic is one of the symbols representing the Algerian identity and its religion, this latter may be put in a well-detailed description starting with the following:

##### **1.3.1.1 Standard Arabic**

It is the official language of all countries of the MENA (MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA) region where it is used in the educational system, in formal settings and

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

---

official circles. Modern or standard Arabic is the academic form of any Arabic language variety. As Ennaji, M. (1991) states that:

*“Modern Standard Arabic is standardized and codified to the extent that it can be understood by different Arabic speakers in the Maghreb and in the Arab world at large. It has the characteristics of a modern language serving as the vehicle of a universal culture.”*

Arabic has a huge value and prestige for being the language of Islam and the language of the sacred Qur'an and the reference of Arab Muslim identity.

### **1.3.1.2 Algerian Arabic**

Algerian Arabic is the mother tongue of the majority of the Algerian population. It has no written form, and it is often just spoken. This colloquial language is said to be a mixture of some Standard Arabic, French, Spanish and Turkish which makes it complex and understood only by Algerians. This language is particularly used for everyday life interactions and discussions. It is consisted of several variations differing from one region to another which are either urban or rural.

Algerian Arabic reflects the folk's culture and heritage of popular songs, stories and sayings as Taleb, I. (1995) state that:

*“These Arabic dialects represent the mother tongue of the majority of the Algerian people (at least for the ones who are originally Arabophones), the first socialization with the community is what makes the individual's universe affective.”<sup>4</sup>*

### **1.3.2 French**

French is mainly acquired as mentioned above due to the French colonialism which lasted one hundred and thirty years and that led to the obligation of learning it. Today it is considered as the first foreign language in Algeria.

---

<sup>4</sup> The original text : « Ces dialectes arabe constituent la large maternelle de la majorité du peuple algérien (au moins pour les Arabophone d'origine), la première socialisation, de la communauté de base. C'est a travers elle que se construit l'imaginaire de l'individu, son univers affectif. »

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

---

### **1.3.3 Berber (Tamazight)**

Berbers or Amazighs are an ethnic group of several nations mostly indigenous of North Africa and some Northern parts of West Africa. Berbers tend to call themselves some variant of the word **I-mazigh-en** and its singular form is **A-mazigh**, which possibly means “free people” or “noble men” as mentioned in the San Francisco Chronicle Article march16, 2001.

#### **1.3.3.1 General Information on Berbers**

According to Lipinski, E. (2001) the name Berber has its ancient parallel in the Roman and Greek names such as Mazices. However, Ibn khaldoun claims that the name Mazigh is derived from one of the early ancestors of the Berbers.

The word Berber is seen as an umbrella term that covers and represents all the minority languages existing in Algeria. The Berber language is considered to be native to Algeria. It spans across a large portion of North Africa including Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, and Libya.ect

According to an article written by Michael, B. (2016)<sup>5</sup>, the Berber population in Algeria is estimated from 9 to 13 million spread all over the country and being geographically separated by natural barriers such as mountains and deserts, and linguistically separated by Arabic speaking areas.

The majority of Berbers are now Sunni-Muslim. The Berber identity is usually wider than a language and ethnicity and encompasses the entire history and geography of North Africa. Berbers are not an entirely homogeneous ethnicity and they include a range of societies, ancestries and lifestyles. The unifying forces for the Berber people may be their shared language or a collective identification with Berber heritage and history.

The Berber Alphabet is called “Tifinagh” which the anthropologist Jean, S. (2004) mentioned in his book *Berbers* that the origins of the word Tifinagh tend to be Phoenician. Mainly it is an Abjad script used to write the Tamazight language. It was adopted and fixed in the 19th century precisely in 1960’s by the linguist Mammeri, M. (1976) as he spoke about it in his book *Berber grammar*.

---

<sup>5</sup>Article retrieved from Britannica : Michael Brett: Berber people (august 17<sup>th</sup> 2016)



## Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria

Tamazight now enjoys the status of a national language after being officially recognized in the Algerian constitution in 2002 and seen as one of the representers of the Algerian identity. Nowadays, it is taught at schools in some Berber speaking communities.

It is said to be composed of many languages or to word it differently, language varieties that come as follows:

- **Taqbailit (Kabylian):** it is an important Berber variety since Kabylis are considered as the largest Berber speaking group in Algeria. As Weitzman, M. (2001) states that:

*“The Kabylis are unique among the Berbers in that they have a long history of corporate identity and have been intimately involved in the major developments throughout Algerian history. Since the time of the French conquest from their fierce resistance to the French rule, to being the subject of sustained French attention in an effort to wean them away from Algeria’s Arab Muslims.”*

Taqbailit is spoken in the central north of the country. The Kabylia region consists of many wilayas which are Tizi Ouzou, being the capital city of the great kabylia and Bejaia, representing the small kabylia. In addition to other urban centres such as Bouira, Bordj Bouariridj, Boumerdes and some other regions like Beni Wertilane in Setif. Besides this Taqbailit represents the Amazigh variety that we tend to deal with in this research paper.

- **Tachawit (Chaoui):** known also as Chawiya Berber it is spoken in the Awres Mountains of North-eastern Algeria and it is made up of different urban centres such as Sétif, Batna, Khenchla and Annaba.
- **Tamzabit:** it is spoken by “Beni M’zabs” they live in oasis area of Southern Algeria, precisely in Ghardaia. It is considered as the most conservative speech group in the country which makes it an important Berber community.
- **Tachenwit:** it is spoken in some places in the cities of Tipaza and Cherchell in the west of Algiers.

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

---

- **Tamahaq:** linguistically related to Tamazight. Tamahaq is also called Tahaggart it is spoken in the Ahaggar and the Tassili areas in the south of Algeria. It represents alongside with Tamashaq and Tamajeq which are the main sub-branches of the Touareg variety which is widely spread also in Mali and Niger and western Libya.

### **1.4 Aspects of language acquisition**

The question of how we acquire language has always been an important issue for early Psycholinguists like Pavlov and Watson, as the struggle is still even nowadays. The concepts of language acquisition have led several researchers to question and investigate it. And for that, they have come with different theories and perspectives that identify the latter in various ways, such as Skinner, and Chomsky, who contributed in developing more studies about language acquisition and who have different points of view.

#### **1.4.1 Theories and concepts of language acquisition**

The aspect of language acquisition has been a critical study, since we have witnessed various contradictions between scholars going under the name of the behaviourists such as Burrhus Frederic Skinner. Behaviourists claim that language acquisition is a behaviour without forgetting to shed light on the importance of the environment. On another hand, other scholars named cognitivists such as Noam Chomsky, claim that children are born with an innate ability to acquire any language without necessarily feeling the need of family or the environment. These two main theories are going to be discussed in the following sections.

##### **1.4.1.1 Behaviouristic view on language acquisition**

Starting with Merriam-Webster's definition of behaviourism, also known as behavioural psychology, it is a school of psychology that takes the objective evidence of behaviour such as measured responses to stimuli as the only concern of its research and the only basis of its theory without reference to conscious experience. In other words, behaviourism is a systematic approach to understanding the behaviour of humans and other animals.

We also can say that it is a philosophy based on the proposition that all things which organisms do, including acting, thinking, and feeling, can and should be regarded as behaviours.

John B. Watson claims that this latter must be seen as a science. In 1931 Watson wrote an article entitled "Psychology as the behaviourist views it". As he pointed out that all behaviour is learned from the environment. Behavioural psychology in general believes that

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

all actions of humans and animals are learned behaviours which can be learned and unlearned. His article is often referred to as the behaviourist manifesto, in which Watson .J. B. (1913, p. 158) outlines the principles of all behaviourists:

“Psychology as the behaviourist views it is a purely objective experimental branch of natural science. Its theoretical goal is the prediction and control of behaviour. Introspection forms no essential part of its methods, nor is the scientific value of its data dependent upon the readiness with which they lend themselves to interpretation in terms of consciousness. The behaviourist, in his efforts to get a unitary scheme of animal response, recognizes no dividing line between man and brute. The behaviour of man, with all of its refinement and complexity, forms only a part of the behaviourist’s total scheme of investigation”<sup>6</sup>

The purpose behind this theory is to promote psychology and study it in a scientific way, and that the focus must be on the observable behaviour rather than the internal one like thinking, without forgetting that behaviours are determined by the environment. While its strengths are what makes this latter more credible and used, since the predictions it gave can be scientifically tested and tested with evidence, in addition to real life applications like therapy and the numerous experiments conducted to compare between humans and animals that supported this theory.

It has been said that Charles Darwin’ theory of evolution in 1958 was the starting point of this theory as it became a scientific rationale for using animal experiments to know and learn more about humans. In the nineteenth century Ivan Pavlov conducted an experiment in the development of conditioned response in dogs, following Pavlov’s steps Watson have studied the behaviour of children through phobia using mice in the twentieth century, showing an empirical evidence of classical conditioning in humans. Later, Skinner contributed with an experiment, which consisted on training a pigeon by giving it some prizes. And that shows that languages are acquired through a process of stimulus-response-reward. Skinner’s theory “operant conditioning” is still used nowadays in the analysis of human behaviours and psychology, as he claims that reinforcement is a way of acquiring language, by saying that: an important process in human behaviour is attributed to reward and punishment” B. F. Skinner (1968).

---

<sup>6</sup> Passage retrieved from: McLeod, S. A. (2017). Behaviourist approach.

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

---

According to Wikipedia operant conditioning also is a type of associative learning process, the strength of behaviour is modified by reinforcement or punishment, and involves behaviours controlled by environmental stimuli. Therefore, this latter was not only applied on language acquisition but was also used in the educational system, since behaviourist approaches emphasise changing behaviour through rewarding correct performance. According to the behaviouristic view language is constructed thanks to the exposure of negative and positive reinforcement. Its purpose is to increase behaviour.

Behaviourism was criticised, since it did have some weaknesses, it is true that the role of punishment is to decrease the undesired behaviours, yet it has been said that it can have a psychological impact on children personality like trauma. As well as other reasons, like ignoring biology as Skinner expressed no interest in understanding how the human mind functioned, and comparing humans to animals.

It is highly necessary to point out at some ancient Kabylia myths that our grandparents believed in, as they claim that speaking constantly to a newborn enhances his/her ability to speak quickly and fluently, they believe that newborns actually pay attention to all what has been said in front of them, as they claim that it is highly important and necessary to use clear and understandable speech, not fragments like using the word “didi” to refer to a scratch or injury or sometimes even danger, as they say that such words will actually disturb his/her learning process. And that, parents specially Kabylia mothers tend to talk to their children for hours per day, and it has been said that this experiment has always succeeded<sup>7</sup>.

### **1.4.1.2 Cognitivism**

Cognitivism is a theory which asserts that humans are genetically pre-programmed to learn languages, this latter was mainly developed by Noam Chomsky who is seen as the father of modern linguistics. He believes that language is innate and genetically transmitted, in other words, this means that a newborn baby does not come to the language learning task with a blank mind but actually he is innately "pre-disposed" for language acquisition, as he suggests also that language is universal and unique to only humans, this latter was confirmed after conducting experiments that consisted on teaching language to a variety of animals.

In 1960 Chomsky presented the concept of language acquisition device, which is a theoretical component of the individual's thought Chomsky, N. (1965, P.25). According to Wikipedia the

---

<sup>7</sup> Myth. Retrieved from: *les histoires de grand-mère* and real life experiences.

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

---

LAD concept is an instinctive mental capacity which enables an infant to acquire and produce language. Chomsky has explained this latter by saying that languages are infinite pertaining to sequence of word forms and grammar. Then these word forms organize grammatically correct sequences of words that can be pooled over a limited lexicon of each independent language. So LAD is tasked to select from the infinite grammars that is then correct for that language that is presented to an individual like a child.

However Chomsky's theory has been criticized because it led to problems such as how can LAD pick which grammar is correct for a given language<sup>8</sup>. It was criticized also for neglecting the role of the environment.

Every theory of language acquisition has strengths and weaknesses, whether it is behaviourism or cognitivism. It can be said that we are all born with an ability to acquire languages; yet it needs to be developed and crafted with the help of many factors like interaction.

### **1.5 Concepts of second language acquisition and learning**

A second language is seen as a choice while first language or the mother tongue is not because a person cannot tell how he learned it, because the process happens at an early age and he was exposed to it more often. Second language is not natural but rather learned by the own person's will in order to communicate with native speakers of that language.

#### **1.5.1 Behaviourism and second language acquisition**

Behaviourist Theory of Second Language Acquisition (BTSLA) is somehow similar to first language acquisition, since behaviourists believe that language behaviours are learned by imitation, reinforcement, and copying adult language behaviours. They claim that language is not determined by self-discovery, but more from speech and language models, usually parents or other family members. In other words, they focus on external forces that shape a child's language. The latter has referred to some remarkably interesting concepts, like imitation and practice, as they are considered important in order to understand the behaviourist ideas of speech and language development. They claim that children imitate words they hear their parents say and try to pronounce them the best they can, until they pronounce words that are close to what parents say and parents by their turn they accept and reinforce it. This may be

---

<sup>8</sup> Passage retrieved from Wikipedia, article: Hausser, R. (2004, p 919,922). "What if Chomsky were right?" Journal of child language .Cambridge University Press.

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

---

applied in the case of kabylisians acquiring Arabic from perhaps their parents, friends or environment.

### **1.5.2 The psycholinguistics approach to second language learning**

Psycholinguistics is well known for being an integration of two fields psychology and linguistics, and it is referred to as a hybrid field according to Titone and Danesi (1985, P.31). This term was coined by Pronko in 1946. In fact, the latter studies the relation between language and mind. At the beginning, the psycholinguistic approach supported the idea that language acquisition is innately determined and that, it is rewired by birth since both acquisition and improvement in language are biological process. Acquiring a language, as a specific ability for human beings, requires certain perceptions, skills, cognition, abilities and many other mechanisms<sup>9</sup>.

Psycholinguistics focuses on what humans know when they talk and how they acquire that knowledge and how that knowledge is put to be used. Matlin (1994) states that the central approach of psycholinguistic theory, in general, is that people, especially the young, are biologically predisposed to language learning, and that what is learned is not so much a string of words but transformational rules that enable the language learner to understand the sentences heard. This means that developmentally appropriate instruction must be considered in second language learning.<sup>10</sup> This approach relies mainly on the four skills which are reading, writing, listening and speaking.

### **1.5.3 Age factor in second language acquisition**

As we all know and agree that many elements can influence language learning like biological factors, mother tongue, intelligence, emotions, motivation and age factor. Lenneberg (1967) claim in his critical period hypothesis that there is a biologically determined period of life when language can be acquired more easily which is technically from the age of 2 until puberty. Beyond this time a language is more difficult to acquire. He explained more by saying that his hypothesis is related to neurophysiologic mechanisms where he suggests that late bilinguals the early and the late acquired languages are represented in spatially separated parts of the brain Broca's area<sup>11</sup>. In early bilinguals, however, a similar activation in Broca's area takes place for both languages. This loss of the

---

<sup>9</sup> Passage retrieved from article: Demirezen, M.( 2004, P. 28) relations between psycholinguistics approach and foreign language learning and teaching.

<sup>10</sup>Passage retrieved from: Parviz, M. (2012, p 02) Psycholinguistic Approach to Second Language Acquisition

<sup>11</sup> Broca's area: also called convolution of Broca, it is a region of the brain that contains neurons involved in speech functions, it is located in the frontal part of the left hemisphere of the brain.

## **Chapter I: Aspects of the Sociolinguistic and Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

---

brain's plasticity explains why adults may need more time and effort compared to children in second language learning. It is true that late bilingualism can often be difficult, but yet it is possible<sup>12</sup>. In the case of Kabylis, it can be said that the majority of them have learned Arabic before reaching puberty which made it a bit easy for them to acquire it.

### **1.6 Language attitude**

According to Merriam Webster as it defines language as a system of words or signs that people use to express thoughts and feelings; While, it defines attitude as a feeling or an emotion towards a state. Language attitude is the opinion or ideas a speaker has with respect towards a language, this latter plays a crucial role in the social behaviour of an individual, according to researches, having a positive attitude towards any given language may help and facilitate its acquisition.

### **1.7 Language preservation**

Nowadays, many indigenous languages are in their way to disappear because of the lack of their use, language maintenance is preserving one's own language and it is seen as highly important, since it revitalises and revivals forgotten languages.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

This chapter shed light on the most important key concepts of this research. We also introduced in brief the major facts of the linguistic situation in Algeria in addition to a reflection about the Berbers. The last sections were devoted to theories of Second Language Acquisition, language attitude and language maintenance. As a result we may say that, the aforementioned factors contributed in the making of today's Algeria and that language acquisition is a vast concept and its theories are contradictory yet they complete each other.

---

<sup>12</sup>Information retrieved from article: Karavasili ,K. (May 3<sup>rd</sup> , 2017) The age factor in second language acquisition

# **Chapter Two:**

**The Methodology of the Research, and Data  
Collection.**



### **2.1 Introduction**

The present chapter will be devoted to the analysis of the process of second language acquisition. It will also examine the different perceptions and attitudes of Algerians towards the languages existing and used in the country as we intend to give a general presentation about second language acquisition as well as language attitude. Then, a brief overlook on language maintenance will be introduced. The present chapter is made up of three sections. The first section will be devoted to a presentation of the aspects mentioned above. The second part will describe the research strategy we followed to best reach the objectives of this study. The third and last section will go over the analysis of the results received from the research questions.

Therefore, this chapter aims at investigating the motives that pushed the Kabyle language speakers to acquire Arabic as a second language and the struggle they have been into, and how they managed to preserve their identity despite of the surrounding environment that consists of an Algerian Arabic speaking majority. Our research focuses mainly on qualitative research and that is to insure the providence of a well researched data.

### **2.2 A brief overview on second language acquisition**

According to Merriam Webster language acquisition refers to the act of gaining knowledge in other words it is the process by which humans gain the ability to be aware of language and to understand it as well as to produce and use words and sentences to communicate. Parents and the environment play a remarkably interesting role in the acquisition of a second language especially for children and for that, language acquisition might be considered as behaviour, since it has been said that behaviour can be explained by environmental causes more than internal forces. To word it differently all humans need interaction and communication in order to acquire any language whether native language or second language. According to Dr Ouchdi.I, (2019.P51) it is true that we are all born with a cognitive system i.e. cognition is innate, but at some point it needs to be developed through interaction involvement, and communication.

#### **2.2.1 Language attitude**

The concept of language attitude is one of the most significant issues in language contact. The importance of a given language, in a given society, and within an individual, is determined by the speakers' attitude. It is often argued that attitude is an internal state presented in thoughts, opinion or a general feeling about something or someone. Triandis (1971) defines it as: "*A manner of consistency toward an object*". While the behaviourist

researcher David C. (1997) claims that the attitudes are: *“The feeling people have about their own language or the other languages of others.”*

The aforementioned definitions are given by researchers presenting different fields of study with diverse perspectives and opinions and for that we cannot say that there is one credible or accepted definition of language attitude. Yet, we can say that it is shaped according to one’s personal opinions about his language and since it involves feelings and thoughts which influence the behaviour.

### **2.2.2 Language maintenance**

Language is an important part of any society; it is the effort to prevent languages from becoming unknown, in other words when a speech community preserves its native language from generation to generation in environments where conditions consequently to a variety of factors are hostile to the preservation of the mother tongue. According to Hoffman (1991): *“language maintenance refers to a situation where members of a community try to keep language(s) they have always, used.”*

### **2.3 The data collection**

The data for this investigation was collected through a questionnaire distributed to a selected population of Kabyle language speakers living in Arab speaking communities in this case we have dealt with two wilayas Mostaganem and Oran. This method allowed us to obtain a representative sample and to gather qualitative data. It is highly important to state that whatever the method one chooses, it is not easy to measure attitudes which are mainly mental states that cannot be directly observed.

This questionnaire was mainly distributed to people of different occupations and from divers educational background, without precising their age or gender so as to provide them with the freedom of expressing their own thoughts anonymously. Our goal was to collect data in the simplest way possible. The objective of the questionnaire is to obtain:

- A brief overview on Kabyle language speakers' attitudes towards the languages existing in the speech community, i.e. Algerian Arabic and standard Arabic. Also, their reactions towards these languages.
- A detailed and profound interpretation of the process of second language acquisition among kabylians.
- A brief interpretation of language maintenance among our respondents.

### **2.3.1 The respondents**

As mentioned above, this research is more qualitative than quantitative. Therefore, there were 61 informants who represent the Kabyle language speakers living in the western region of the country, i.e. Algerian Arabic speaking areas. The participants represent both genders with an age estimation ranging from 17 to 50.

### **2.3.2 The type of the questionnaire**

There are variations of research methodologies that can be used, as we know there is no best approach between both quantitative and qualitative research due to existing strengths and weaknesses among both types. In the present we went with the qualitative research as it raises more issues through broad and open-ended inquiry and also understanding behaviours of values, beliefs and assumptions.

The qualitative approach in data collection is based on the naturalist paradigm which claims that reality and truth are multiple. In other words, there is not only one single truth or reality since people have diverse ways of thinking and every single person can capture the same truth from a complete different perspective.

Despite the fact that qualitative research does not get back to us with a recognizable amount of answers, yet the answers received might be used possibly to develop theories and hypotheses. In regard to the quality, and credibility of the responses.

The questionnaire used for the data collection is mostly not guided but there were some direct questions that require to be answered with either 'yes' or 'no'. However, in most questions, the respondents were asked to give not very long answers where they express their point of view. In other words, the respondents were not guided in their answers as they were given the freedom to give their own perspective on the research questions we can say that we went with open ended questions. As we must mention that, it was important to intervene and explain difficult words during the process of answering the questions.

The questionnaire was written only in English and distributed to English language speaking kabylians in order to insure the credibility of the answers and it consisted of two sections containing 09 questions stated as follows:

**Question01:** what is your mother tongue? (To precise the participant's mother tongue)

- 1) Kabyle
- 2) Algerian Arabic
- 3) Chaoui
- 4) others

## **Chapter II: The Methodology of the Research, and Data Collection**

---

**Question02:** while growing up, did you speak another language? (To expose the existence of any other language)

- 1) Yes      2) No

- If yes what is it? (Precision of the other languages spoken during childhood).

**Question03:** what was your reaction when you first heard the language used in the outside world? (To denote the reaction of being exposed to Algerian Arabic).

**Question04:** What were the difficulties you faced in learning Arabic as a second language? (To denote the difficulties of being exposed to Algerian Arabic).

**Question05:** What was your reaction when you heard Standard Arabic at school? (To proclaim the reaction of being exposed to Standard Arabic).

-Was it difficult for you to learn it? Explain. (This question was needed to investigate the difficulties of being exposed to Standard Arabic).

**Question06:** Did speaking Arabic affect your language, attitude and your way of thinking? Explain. (To shed light on language preservation).

**Question07:** How did you manage to learn both Standard Arabic and Algerian Arabic? (It was needed to confirm that language acquisition is more of a behaviour).

- 1) Via imitation      2) Via observation      3) Via memorization      4) else

-How? (Needed, for the profound analysis).

**Question08:** Do you think that parents play an important role in making their children bilingual? (To denote the role of parents).

**Question09:** Do you think that family and the environment help children in acquiring a second language? (To denote the role of the environment and family).

### **2.4 Results and discussion**

The analysis of the questionnaire will be done on the basis of the results obtained from the calculated results of the different questions interpreted in graphs. Then, it will be presented in the following grouping of questions. It is necessary to mention that the grouping of questions is adapted from Benhattab. L (2004), who approximately dealt with a research similar to ours. Its aim of was to gather the questions that tend to share some similarities.

### **2.4.1 Information about Kabylis and their attitudes towards Arabic and standard Arabic**

Question01: what is your mother tongue?

Question02 (while growing up did you speak another language) is grouped with its continuity (If yes what is it)

Question03 (How was your reaction when you first heard the language used in the outside world) is grouped with Question04 (What were the difficulties you faced in learning Arabic as a second language).

Question05 (What was your reaction when you heard Standard Arabic at school) is grouped with its continuity (Was it difficult for you to learn it), (the explanation will be left for the analysis)

### **2.4.2 Language maintenance and the environment**

Question06: Did speaking Arabic affect your language, attitude and your way of thinking? Explain.

Question07: How did you manage to learn both Standard Arabic and Algerian Arabic? (The explanation is left for the analysis)

Question08 (Do you think that parents play an important role in making their children bilingual) is grouped with Question09 (Do you think that family and the environment help children in acquiring a second language).

**2.5 Data Analysis**

**Question 01: what is your mother tongue?**

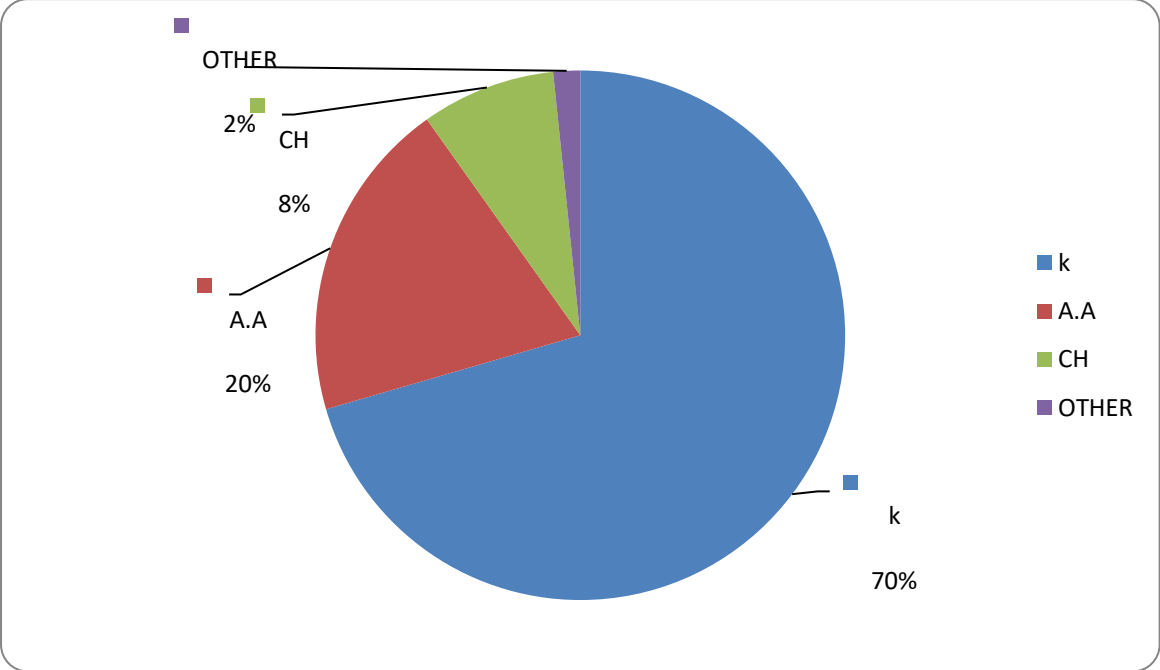


Figure 01: brief overlook on the informants' mother tongue.

The above graph shows that the majority of the informants are kabylians (more than 40) representing 70% of our participants, with some Chaoui representing 08% and one Naili representing the minority in this research with a percentage of 02% (presented in the “else” section), and 20%of the participants are kabylians by origins but tend to use Algerian Arabic as a mother tongue. The selected participants are from both genders and present the age from 17 to 50.

**Question 02:** while growing up did you speak another language?

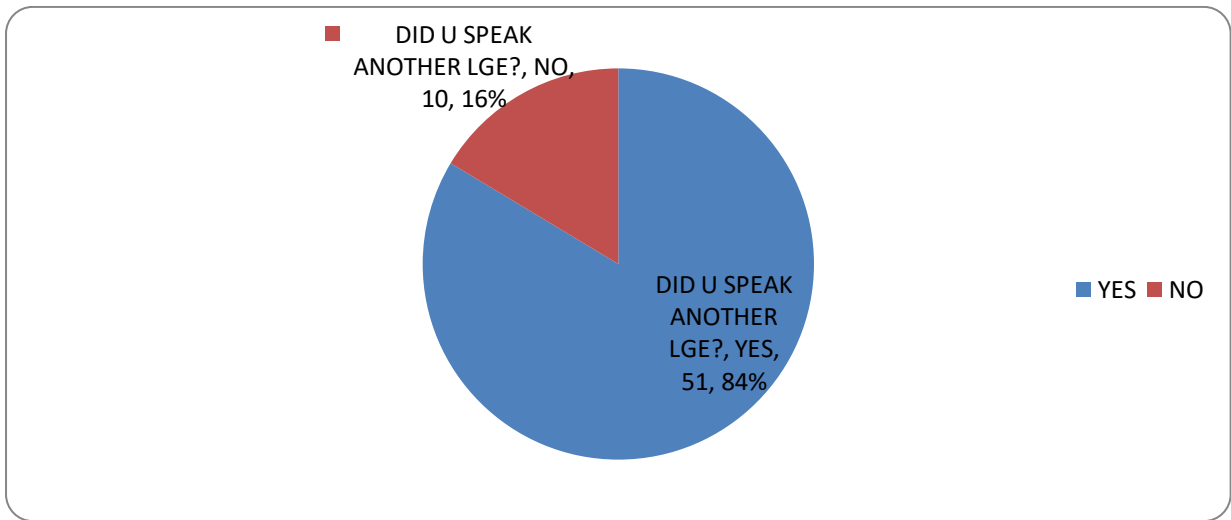


Figure 02: investigation about the existence of a second language

If yes what is it? (Continuity)

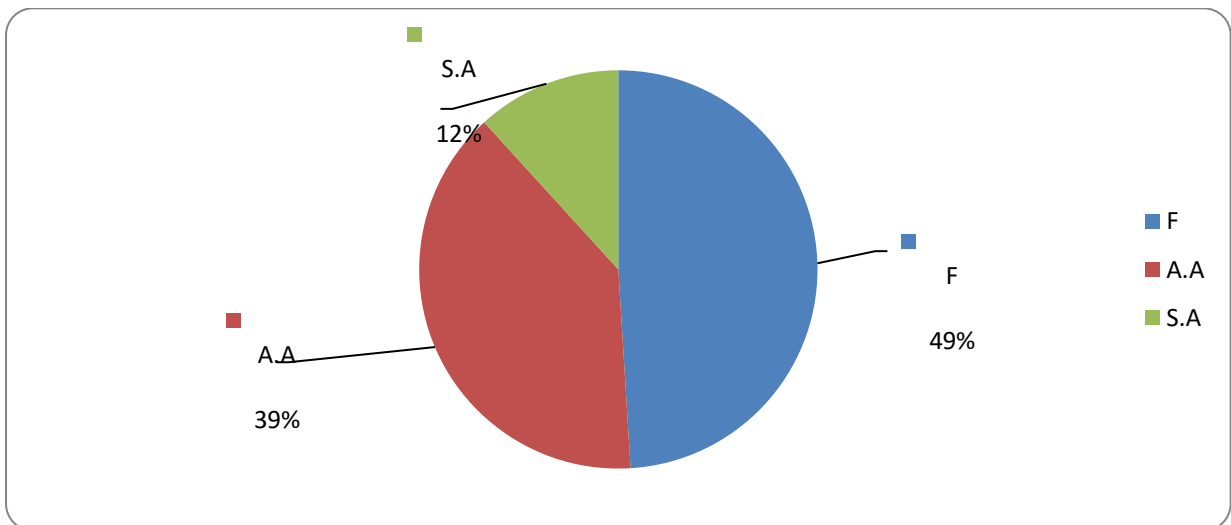


Figure 03: Proclaiming the other languages used during childhood.

The first graph above shows that the majority answered positively to the fact of speaking a second language during childhood with a percentage of 84% and said that it was mainly due to some specific factors particularly the necessity of interaction with the Arabic speaking environment.

As we can see, 16% of the participants answered negatively to the existence of another language in addition to the mother tongue. Probably, this was caused by the special treatment from the parents, so according to our respondents, parents tend to use a particular kind of policy toward language acquisition as they forbid their children to use any other language in

## **Chapter II: The Methodology of the Research, and Data Collection**

---

their presence except from the mother tongue. They claim that it is the best way to preserve the native language.

On one hand, the second graph shows the variety of languages used by the informants and that revealed the presence of French and Algerian Arabic in addition to Standard Arabic among the selected participants.

The highest percentage recorded belongs to the French language with 49% as the respondents' claim that they were exposed to French TV channels and were influenced by their bilingual parents who probably tend to use French in daily speaking.

Algerian Arabic comes in the second place with a percentage of 39%, and it is said to be due to the integration in the Arabic speaking society.

Standard Arabic scored the lowest percentage with 12%. Perhaps it is due to the fact of not being so used by Algerian people. The participants claim that memorizing the holy Qur'an and watching Arabic TV channels have been a remarkable help for them to easily acquire the language.



**Question 03:** How was your reaction when you first heard the language used in the outside world?

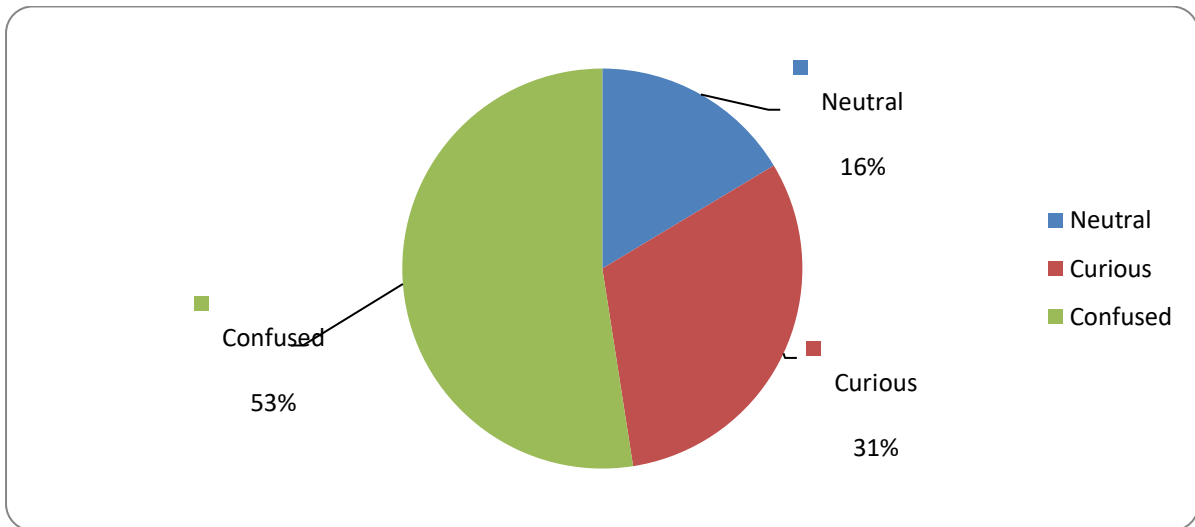


Figure 04: the reaction of being exposed to Algerian Arabic.

**Question 04:** What were the difficulties you faced in learning Arabic as a second language?

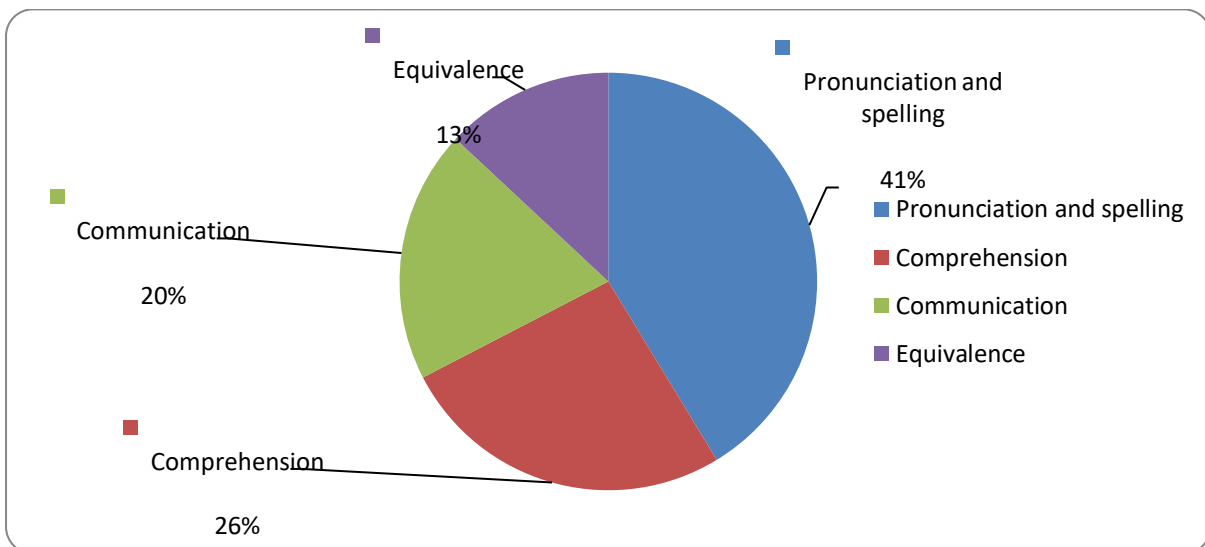


Figure 05: the difficulties faced in learning Algerian Arabic.

The graph above shows the reaction of the participants over the process of being exposed to a new language which is in this case Algerian Arabic, so we can see that 16% have been neutral to the idea, i.e. they did not show any kind of reactions, and 31% seemed curious about the language and wanted to learn more, while 53%, which represent the majority, were confused and afraid and had some remarkable difficulties in the learning and integration process.

## **Chapter II: The Methodology of the Research, and Data Collection**

---

The latter graph displays the major difficulties that the participants showed towards the acquisition of the mentioned languages. Most of them faced problems with spelling and pronunciation with a percentage of 41%, while 26% others had difficulties in comprehension and not being able to understand the target language while 20% of our participants referred to communication issues and not having the necessary baggage to communicate effectively, and as we can see 13% had a particular problem which is not finding the suitable word in the target language and therefore being obliged to use the one in the mother tongue and that often leads to some misunderstandings .

**Question 05:** What was your reaction when you heard Standard Arabic at school?

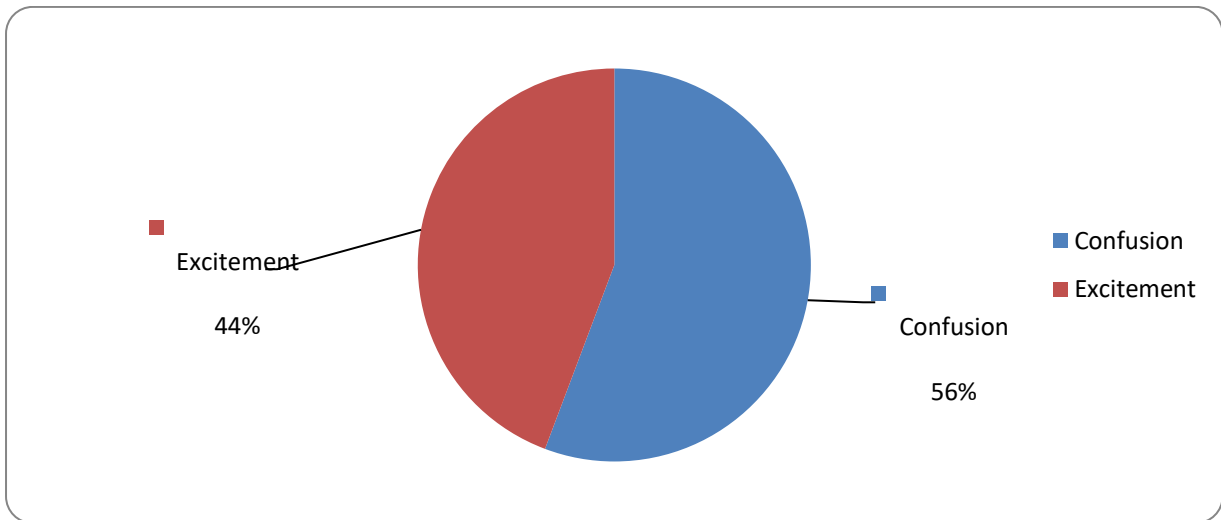


Figure 06: reaction of the informants towards Standard Arabic.

-Was it difficult for you to learn it? (Continuity)

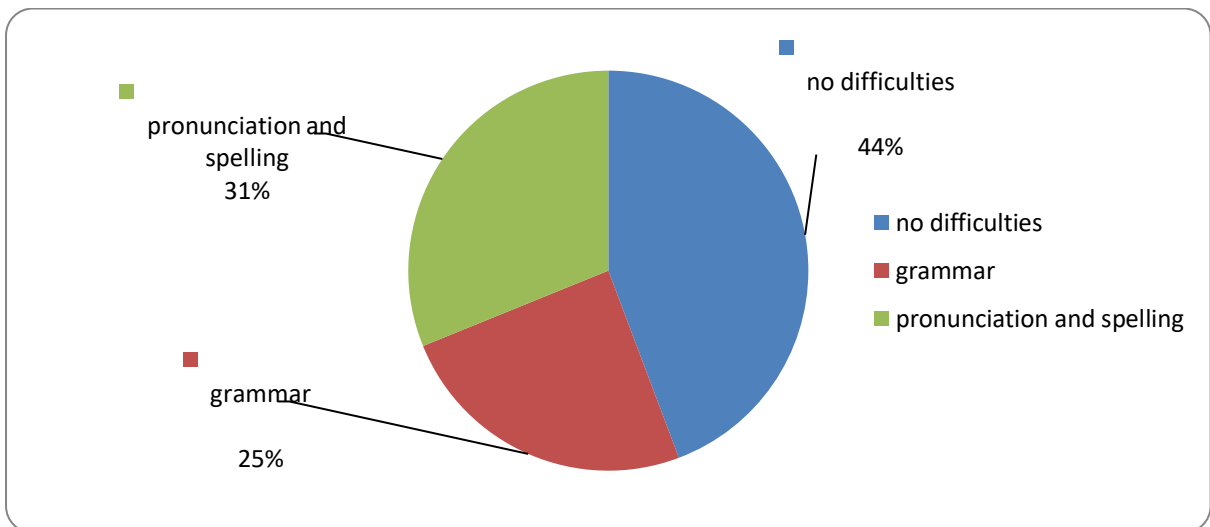


Figure 07: Difficulties towards Standard Arabic.

The graph above demonstrates the reaction the participants had when they received what could be referred to as " the second shock ”.

The results were constituted of two major elements: the first one is confusion and mainly scored the highest percentage of 56% and it took the lion’s share.

In fact, they claimed that standard Arabic was remarkably different from the Algerian dialect and much more complicated. As we can see, the second element was mainly an excitement, so

## Chapter II: The Methodology of the Research, and Data Collection

as the data showed, 44% of the participants were open to acquire languages easily without any difficulties since curiosity plays an important role in the process of acquiring any language.

The latter graph gives the results about the difficulties the informants faced in the moment they were exposed to Standard Arabic.

As we can see, the majority representing 44% did not have any kind of difficulties, while 25% of the respondents pointed at grammar issues and the remaining 31% shed light on pronunciation and spelling issues in addition to communication. The mentioned issues had a serious impact on the acquisition of the target language.

**Question 06:** Did speaking Arabic affect your language, attitude and your way of thinking?

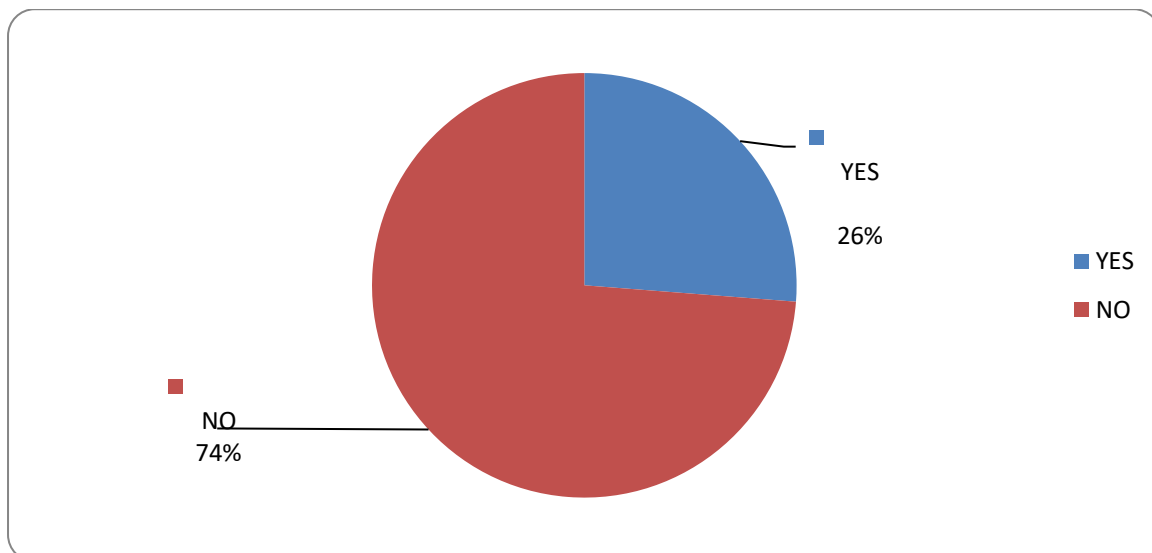


Figure 08: The effect of learning a new language on attitude and language maintenance.

The graph above shows that the majority of the respondents did not have any issues. In other words, learning Arabic as a second language did not affect their mother tongue, attitude and way of thinking in any way, and it just represents an extra language for them. In fact, it helped them to preserve their own identity, by observing the target situation and trying to be flexible and comprehensive.

As for the smallest percentage, it belongs to the ones who have let Arabic influence on their way of speaking, and thinking and have become a part of their lives. According to the participant's answers, they have found the Arabic language rich of vocabulary and grammar regulations in addition to its literature and poetry.

**Question 07:** How did you manage to learn both Standard Arabic and Algerian Arabic?

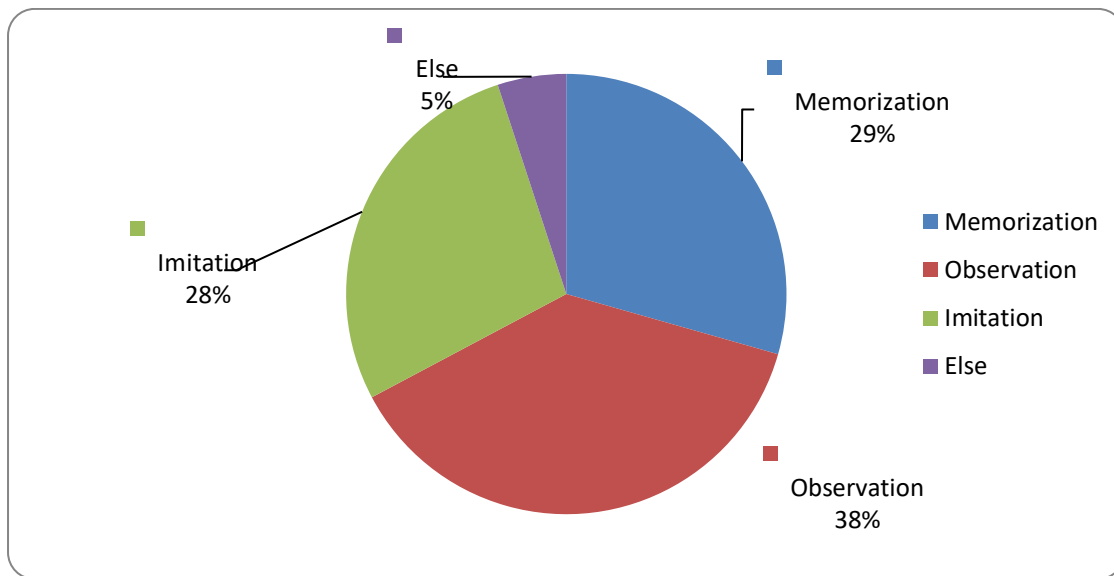


Figure 09: the process followed to acquire the target language.

The graph above explains and shows the stages and the process the informants went through to adapt and learn the language and the learning device they followed. As the results have showed, observation comes in the first place with 38%, followed by memorization with a percentage of 29%, and then imitation presenting 28% of the respondents. This shows the importance of communication and the interaction with people in acquiring languages.

Concerning “else” that represents 5% of the respondents it was a way to give the chance for the participants to give their point of view and to share with us their own experience.

**Question 08:** Do you think that parents play an important role in making their children bilingual?

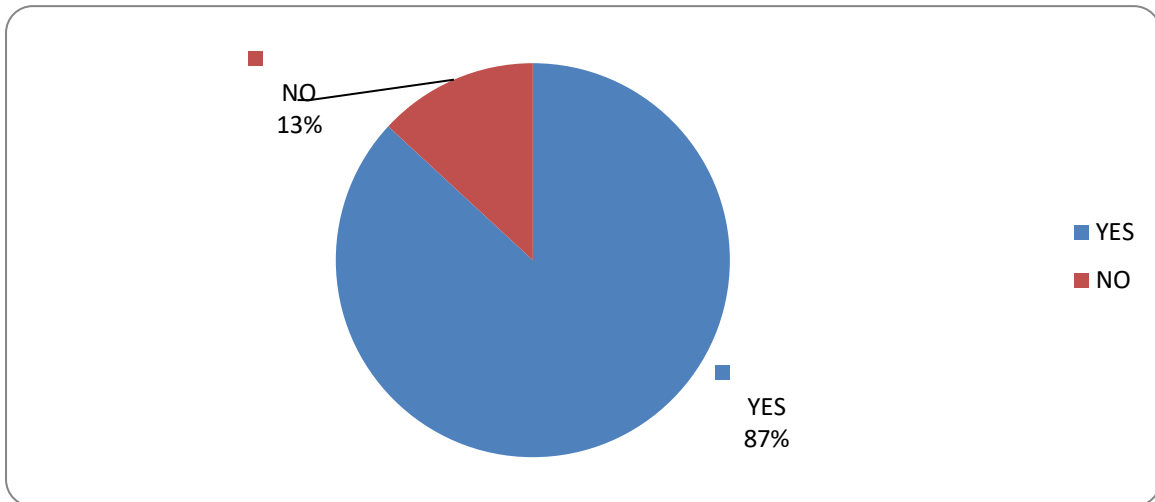


Figure 10: the role of parents in making the children bilingual.

**Question 09:** Do you think that family and the environment help children in acquiring a second language?

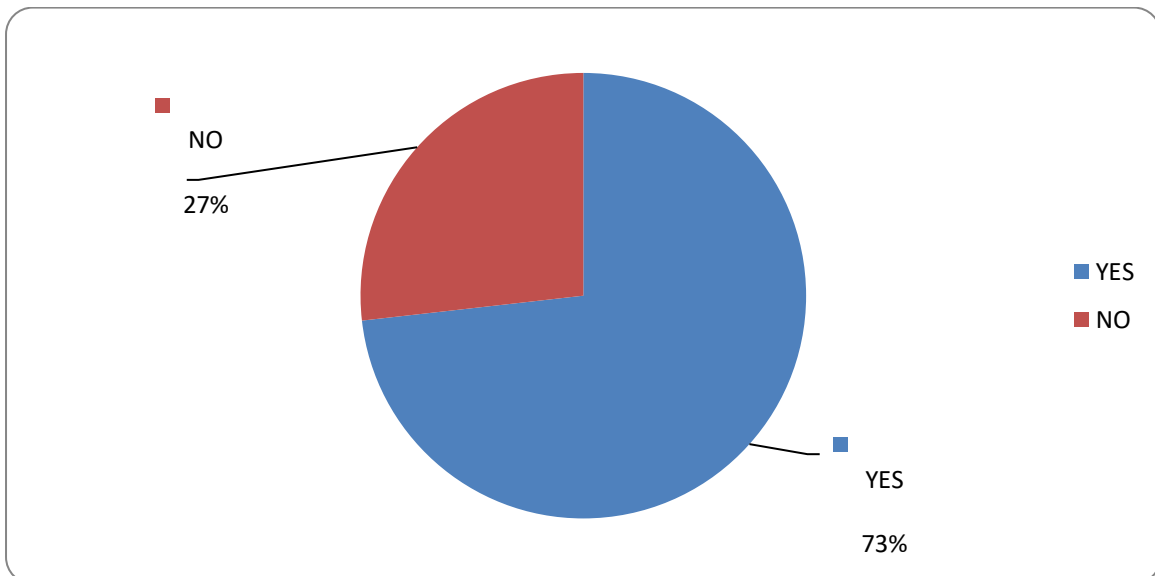


Figure 11: the importance of family and environment.

The graph above illustrates the remarkable presence of parents and their in making their children be able to speak more than one language. As showed above, the majority (87%) answered with yes and that is mainly due to the impact the parents leave on their children, but 13% said no probably because they had monolingual parents or the communication factor was missing in their lives.

The last graph tackles the importance of the environment, and family in shaping the child's mentality, and makes him/her more open to acquire new languages.

As showed in the results, 73% of the participants agreed and answered with a 'yes', based on their own experience and interaction with the environment while the remaining 27% were against and answered with a 'no' probably because they did not feel the necessity of being around people to acquire a language.

### 2.6 Conclusion

The major aim of this study is to examine second language acquisition among kabylians and their attitude towards the diverse languages in Algeria. From the overall results, based on the data analysis we can say that attitude can affect our behaviour and that it is related to language varieties. It can be said that the participants have shown a positive attitude towards the languages existing in Algeria, despite of the issues and difficulties they have faced in acquiring them. To support our results it is necessary to mention that Fishman, R. (1972) states that:

*“Attitudes don't have to be correlated with real language use in natural multilingual settings.”*

The results obtained from the above investigation reveal the choice of language, difficulties, and the use of different languages starting from this we have deduced that Algerian Arabic in addition to French are remarkably used by the Kabylians along side with the mother tongue, as we feel the need to shed light on the importance of the parents, family and the environment in making the acquisition of a language an easy task through interaction, communication and exchanging ideas and thoughts. We also have to refer to religious and cultural factors such as memorizing the holly Qur'an that may give the learner an idea and make the language used more familiar, this may prevent him/her from cultural shocks. Also, the influence of TV channels whether in Arabic or French is said to be so effective. In order to acquire any given language, interaction with people, family, parents and the outside world as whole is highly necessary.

Based on the examination of the results, the majority of the Amazighs have preserved their native language. Therefore, we may say that the Kabyle language is maintained in various domains of daily life such as “home” with a tendency of using French in some contexts.

# **Chapter Three:**

## **Data Analysis and Discussion of the Results**



**3.1 Introduction**

The present chapter will be devoted to the analysis of the findings of our investigation, and to the discussion of the results we have obtained from the data analysis. We also expanded this chapter to include a general conclusion that sums up the whole research that we have conducted. We will eventually confirm that that language acquisition cannot be possibly done without the existence of particular factors and that having a positive attitude towards a given language can help to facilitate the process of language acquisition. We would also highlight that language preservation as a significant part of the human's identity.

**3.2 Discussion of the main results**

In fact, this investigation was divided into two parts in order to get a clear analysis, so the first part is about language acquisition and its difficulties as well, and it is stated as follows.

**3.2.1 First Section**

The main findings that resulted from the first question showed that the majority of our respondents are originally Kabyls and that most of them have a tendency of speaking their mother tongue fluently. It is primordial to mention that , a small percentage belongs to some Chaoui and Naili minorities, who have had nearly the same experience as the Kabyls concerning the exposure to a new language and a new world as well as the difficulties in the learning process, adaptation and integration. For this reason, we have considered them as a credible source of information.

The second question was about the presence of any other languages during childhood. This question brought out some quite interesting answers, as the majority answered with yes, and that is due to the surrounding environment. On one hand, the respondents did explain that their parents and family were bilingual and wanted their children to be like them by exposing them to French TV Channels like Boomerang, Manga and Gulli, while some others hinted at the dominance of Algerian Arabic in their environment which made it easy to learn. On another hand, a small number of the respondents claimed that they were using Standard Arabic (SA) during their childhood and that is due to the exposure to Arabic channels like Spacetoon and MBC3. The role of the holy Qur'an was also significant for these respondents as they claimed that memorizing it as children helped them in being more fluent in speaking and understanding SA. In consequence, we can say that a child cannot acquire a language by himself/herself, i.e. without the help of the family, environment and all the other factors mentioned above.

The third and fourth questions were an analysis of the reaction and difficulties the respondents had towards Algerian Arabic (A.A). In fact, the majority were confused about this new language; according to their answers, Algerian Arabic was not a familiar language to them as they tend to say that they were not allowed to go to the outside world, so basically their real exposure started in primary schools where they had a remarkable amount of issues specially in the pronunciation and spelling as they completely differ from their mother tongue. Also, they had a problem with comprehension as they claimed that they were not able to understand what others were talking about. Another major problem they have faced is communication.

They said that even if they managed to understand some words, they did not know how to properly answer. A small percentage of the respondents pointed out on the issue of the lack of verbal repertoire in the target language which is a serious problem that a lot of people have. To explain further, this corresponds to when a person has the answer in his/her mind in his/her mother tongue and yet he/she does not know how to express it in the target language, i.e. he/she is not able to find the suitable word or equivalent term in the other language. Essentially, the main cause of these problems is the lack of interaction with the outside world and having the idea that the mother tongue is the only language existing in the world<sup>1</sup>.

Few participants were neutral about this dialect as they did not show any kind of reaction towards it; some of them said that they simply do not remember, while others said it was just normal.

Another category of informants were curious and tended to have a good will to learn A.A, mainly those respondents who were exposed more often to the outside world, so as a consequence going to school did not affect them in any way. On the contrary, it was a chance for them to learn it better.

The fifth question was devoted to the reaction and the difficulties our respondents faced with Standard Arabic. We can say that the reaction of most participants was confusion since they were not exposed to it in any way. However, learning this language was difficult for them since most of them said that they find it quite different from the dialects that are mainly a mix of several languages. Standard Arabic was more formal and complicated and was restricted with rules. More essentially, S.A was only used out of obligation<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> A respondent said he thought that Kabyle is the only language existing in the world.

<sup>2</sup> A respondent said that he only uses S.A to speak with teachers' i.e. only when he is obliged to do it.

The issues they faced were more about grammar rules as they found them complex and difficult, especially pronunciation and spelling as they had to start from scratch since S.A does not have a lot of similarities with A.A.

Meanwhile, the rest of the respondents were excited to learn more about this language as we mentioned above that some already had an idea about S.A, so automatically they did not show any kind of issues towards it.

### **3.2.2 Second Section**

The second part of our research investigation is devoted to the study of the aspects of language preservation as well as language attitude, and to show also the crucial contribution of the family and the environment in helping children to acquire a language.

Question number six was mainly about identity and personality, as we asked the informants to tell us if learning both S.A and A.A affected their way of thinking, attitude and language. On one hand most of the informants answered with no, as they claimed that learning the aforementioned languages did not affect them in any way. In fact, they have showed some positive attitudes over S.A and A.A, in fact they succeeded in maintaining their mother tongue and at the same time they expanded their knowledge through learning new languages.

On the another hand, the minority of the respondents said that learning the dialect and academic Arabic had an impact on them as they started to use these varieties more than their mother tongue and this made them lose their first language. They claimed that they were fascinated by the richness of the above mentioned languages and the easiness of their use.

According to our findings, the respondents who have maintained their mother tongue were exposed to a specific kind of rules as they called them “strict rules”. They claimed that their parents forbid them from using any other language at home except for the mother tongue and that the one who breaks this rule would be punished, while the one who sticks to it gets a reward. This is, in fact, exactly like the operant conditioning that B.F. Skinner developed in 1937 and that deals with the management environmental contingencies to change behaviour<sup>3</sup>. This theory includes positive and negative reinforcement that Skinner explained through his experiment with rats. To explain further, positive reinforcement strengthens a behaviour by providing a consequence an individual finds rewarding.

---

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved from: skinner, B. F. (1938) the behaviour of organisms. new York: Appleton-century-crofts

As an example, in our case if the parents give their children candies whenever they use their mother tongue as a reward, they will be more likely to repeat this behaviour in the future.

While the negative reinforcement, which is a removal of an adverse stimulus, i.e. rewarding, also strengthens behaviour. For example, if the child does not speak his mother tongue, parents would make him do something he does not like, so as to avoid that, he would consequently follow the rules. Starting from this, we may say that, the behaviouristic view about punishment and reward can be used to help in the maintenance of a language. On the other side, children who were given the total freedom to speak any language they want would lose their mother tongue and they would risk not showing a big importance to belonging and roots.

The seventh question was devoted to the way and the process of learning S.A and A.A. According to the results, the majority of the respondents used observation, memorization, and imitation to make the learning process easier. Furthermore, others added to the list listening, repetition, and questioning anything that is ambiguous. Starting from this, we may say that the acquisition or the learning of any given language cannot be done without having people around using the target language. Also, it can be said that our respondents tended to observe the speaker's way of pronouncing words and so on and then try to memorize them through repetition, similarly to the behavioural psychology Rote learning, according to Britannica and Wikipedia this latter is a technique that focuses on repetition. In other words, one will be able to quickly recall the meaning of the material the more he/she repeats it.

This can include children in their journey to acquire language and to be able to communicate with others. A child would observe his parents and try to analyse their gestures and actions and try to link them to previous information he learned. As for words, at the beginning the child will not be able to understand but after observing and analysing, he will be able to relate words and understand exactly like meaningful learning. Therefore, based on the results of this question, we may say that this process cannot be done without having people around and that also the way of learning can differ from one person to another.

Questions number eight and nine dealt with and showed the importance of the family and the environment, especially the important role that parents play in the lives of their children. So, according to the results of these two questions, the majority of our informants

said that their parents were the reason behind the fact that they are bilingual<sup>4</sup> and that listening to them speaking for instance A.A, S.A or in other cases French made them want to imitate them and be like them. As a matter of fact, this was a strong motive for them to wanting to learn a new language. At some point, we have all witnessed young children trying to imitate other people from their environment or imitating simply their parents and this leads us directly to B.F. Skinner's research that proved that behaviour is a learned response<sup>5</sup>. As Skinner claims, the brain was not a part of conditioning and, learning was through environmental factors. And this leads again to the radical behaviourism, which means that all actions required reactions. Skinner also argued that a child's behaviour can also be modified.

The environment has always been a central concept in behaviours' analysis. In a passage quoted from B.F. Skinner's book *Verbal Behaviour* (1957, P.01), he states that: "*Men act upon the world, and change it, and are changed in turn by the consequences of their actions.*"

A study called "*The sciences that studies environmental events that change behaviour*" Miller (2006, P.05). Has proved that the relation between behaviours' analysis and the environment is strongly linked and from this we may say that the environment can exist within a person and this is as much as important as the family.

### 3.3 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the analytical phase of the study. The obtained data which were analyzed qualitatively demonstrate remarkable findings concerning language acquisition, language maintenance and language attitude. These latter were analysed and discussed based on a behaviouristic view, and for that we may say that the results of the investigation we have conducted showed that the kabylians minority of the west have a positive attitude towards all other languages existing in Algeria. We also found out that they succeeded in preserving their identity and mother tongue, without forgetting to point out at the most important element of this research which is language acquisition, and for that it can be possibly said that the latter is a response to a specific act. However, this conclusion needs further investigations. We shall leave it open for further research, investigation and analysis.

It is primordial to precise that our research was not aimed in suspecting the credibility of the other theories that deal with the same topic.

---

<sup>4</sup> Bilingual here means that they speak mother tongue in addition to another language like A.A or French without going too far and speak about multilingualism.

<sup>5</sup> Retrieved from: skinner, B. F. (1938) *the behaviour of organisms. A system of behaviour*, new York: Appleton-century-crofts

# **General conclusion**

## General conclusion

---

In this research, we intended to examine the aspects of second language acquisition among kabylians living in the western side of Algeria (Mostaganem and Oran). Algeria is well known for the variety of languages existing in its repertoire; the present study was dedicated to and interested in the kabylians because they represent a small portion of the citizens from the above mentioned cities. And being in a city where Algerian Arabic is the dominant language would create issues for them in terms of language acquisition and language preservation as well as their attitude towards it.

The aim behind this study was to figure out how kabylians have managed to acquire Arabic as a second language. Also, we wanted to investigate if they have succeeded in maintaining their mother tongue despite of the surrounding environment that does not share with them the same language. We tried to examine these rationales through the analysis of kabylians' attitudes towards Algerian Arabic precisely and standard Arabic briefly, also we tried to analyse how they have maintained their mother tongue, and we tried to relate it to behaviourism.

It has been noted in the first chapter that the sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is complex due to the existing of so many various languages and dialects that have distinguished every city in Algeria from another and allowed it to have its own special culture and speech.

In order to communicate and convey a message, acquiring a language is primordial as it permits the speaker to be more aware about the target language and probably its culture.

The second chapter concerns the research methodology of the research. The one essential tool we used was a questionnaire with which we collected data. As for the sample, we relayed on a linguistic model retrieved partially from Benhattab, A.L. (2004). It allowed us to obtain the needed information to examine and analyse our respondents' perspectives and notions.

In the last chapter, we intended to interpret the results of the data collected through the questionnaire. The obtained results have showed that the acquisition of a new language was not something easy, yet it is not impossible either,

We may also point out that, despite of all the difficulties and the struggles our respondents have encountered during the process of learning Arabic as a second language; they have succeeded in acquiring it without being obliged to substitute it with their mother tongue.

## General conclusion

---

A language can be preserved when it is used in areas that we tend to be in most of the time; according to Downs (1998.P64), the more the domains where a variety is used, the bigger the chance it has to be maintained. In our case, the Kabyle language was used by our respondents in situations where the degree of familiarity and intimacy is higher. We also think it is highly important to denote that having a positive attitude towards any given language can help and facilitate the process of its acquisition.

From all what have been mentioned in this work, we may deduce that second language is a behavioural response, and it may be acquired through interaction with the environment, and the mother tongue can be maintained through practice.

By the end of this work, one should confess that this work was not easy for both the researcher and the respondents because it is highly difficult to evaluate one's inner mental state concerning the process of language acquisition, preservation and attitude since any change in the informant's answers can have a different effect on the results.



# References

## List of references

- Araiba,S. (june 2019).” Current diversification of behaviourism”. Perspectives on behaviour science.
- Bandura, A, & Walters, R. H. (1963). *Social learning and personality development*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Berber recognition in Algeria: « Journal Officiel », République Algérienne, (7 mars 2016)
- El Ouchdi, M. I.Z, (2019): L’enfant à l’école entre l’acquisition des savoirs et les savoirs acquis préface Pr Miliani Mohamed – Kounouz Editions Bibliothèque Nationale d’Algérie.2019 ISBN : 978-9931-706-32-8 dépôt 2019.
- Ennaji, M. (1991) “Aspects of multilingualism in the Maghreb” Université de Fés  
International Crisis Group (ICG), (2003) “ALGERIA: UNREST AND IMPASSE IN KABYLIA”
- Kadem,S. (January 25<sup>th</sup> 2015).Code switching and borrowing among Algerian English University students. Dissertation submitted to the department of English in fulfilment of the requirements for a Magister degree in Sociolinguistics. University of Oran.
- Leire, L. M. The main Theories of Language Acquisition and how they differ. University College Dublin theme: Language Acquisition and Disruption
- Mammeri, M, (1976). *Tajerrumt n tmaziyt (tantala taqbaylit) – Grammaire berbère (kabyle)* Paris, François Maspero
- Parviz, M. (2012).Psycholinguistic Approach to Second Language Acquisition “Department o Foreign Languages and Literature, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran”
- Servier, J, 2003,*Les Berbères, Presses universitaires de France, collection « Que sais-je? » n° 718, Paris 4e édition, (ISBN 2 13 053170 9), p. 31*

## Webography

- Arabic language. (2012). In Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Retrieved From <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/31677/Arabic-language>
- Culatta, R (2015) *Behaviorist Learning Theory*, Available at: <http://bit.ly/2jxr4aN>
- Djabri, A. (1981) *LANGUAGE IN ALGERIA: THE CONTINUING PROBLEM. Behaviourism retrieved from: do we need the environment to explain operant behaviour.*
- Ethnologue (2013). Berber language. Retrieved from: <https://www.ethnologue.com/subgroups/berber>
- Information about language maintenance retrieved from Wikipedia the free Encyclopaedia. [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language\\_preservation](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_preservation)
- Karavasili, K, (2014). *The age factor in second language acquisition*, Retrieved from: <https://termcoord.eu/2017/05/age-factor-second-language-acquisition>.
- Language attitude article retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/299748494\\_the\\_study\\_of\\_language\\_attitudes/link/5729d14908ae057b0a06ba68/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/299748494_the_study_of_language_attitudes/link/5729d14908ae057b0a06ba68/download)
- Language maintenance: [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language\\_preservation](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_preservation)
- Language varieties retrieved from:  
<https://www.academia.edu.net>  
<https://www.researchgate.net>  
<https://office.com/getword>  
[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamahaq\\_language](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamahaq_language)  
[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shawiya\\_language](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shawiya_language)  
“Tachawit” at Ethnologue Retrieved (2018-06-01)  
“Tamahaq” at Ethnologue (18th ed., 2015)  
“Mozabite” at Ethnologue (18th ed., 2015)
- McLeod, S. A. (2017). Behaviorist approach. Retrieved from: [www.simplypsychology.org/behaviorism.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/behaviorism.html)
- Mcleod,S.( 2018). Operant conditioning article Retrieved from: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/operant-conditioning.htm#positive>.
- Merriam-Webster, Behaviourism Available at <http://bit.ly/2qRnZ7J>

- Prince, K.. M.A, (February 5<sup>th</sup>) Positive and negative punishment Retrieved from:  
<https://bcotb.com/the-difference-between-positivenegative-reinforcement-and-positivenegative-punishment/>

# **Appendices**

## Appendix

# Questionnaire

*The aim of this study is to investigate the Kabylisians ability to acquire Arabic as a second language and the maintenance of their mother tongue despite of the surrounding environment*  
*In this questionnaire, we seek to know more about these issues through your personal experience*  
*Would you please answer the following questions based on your perspective, do NOT write your name.*

*Your participation is entirely voluntary, if there are some questions you do not feel comfortable to answer, please skip them.*

*Thank you for your cooperation.*

## Questions

1-What is your mother tongue?

- 1) Kabyle      2) Algerian Arabic      3) Chaoui      4) other

2- While growing up, did you speak another language?

- 1) Yes                      2) No

If yes what is it?

.....  
.....

3- How was your reaction when you first heard the language used in the outside world?

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

4- What were the difficulties you faced in learning Arabic as a second language?

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

5- What was your reaction when you heard Standard Arabic at school? Was it difficult for you to learn it? Explain.

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

6- Did speaking Arabic affect your language, attitude and your way of thinking? Explain.

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

7- How did you manage to learn both Standard Arabic and Algerian Arabic?

- 1) Via imitation      2) Via observation      3) Via memorization      4) else

How?

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

8- Do you think that parents play an important role in making their children bilingual?

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

9- Do you think that family and the environment help children in acquiring a second language?

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