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MASTER  
« Sociolinguistics & Gender Studies »

**The Effects of Socio-cultural Factors on Learning  
French as a Second language**

**Case Study: Third Year Students of French  
(Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Mostaganem)**

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## **Dedication**

*To the light of my life, my mother*

*To my kindest father*

*To my grandmother*

*To my brother and my sisters*

*To all my friends without forgetting anyone.*

*I dedicate this work.*

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to express my great appreciations to my supervisor. Mrs. HEIRECH Faiza for her guidance, remarks and patience to accomplish this research.

I would like also to thank all the members of jury who have kindly accepted to correct and examine my dissertation and to all my teachers during the last five years.

Finally, I hope my research will please you.

## **Abstract**

The present research work aims at investigating the potential effects that some socio-cultural factors have on learning French as a second language in Algeria. It explores the influences of those factors on third year students of French at Mostaganem university who live in urban cities. These factors are parents' educational level, parents' involvement in their children education and the economic-status of the family. The study is divided into three main chapters. The first one is devoted to introducing French as a second language in Algeria and the socio-cultural factors that affect on education. The second chapter is concerned with describing the tool of the investigation and analyzing the students' answers to the questionnaire. The last chapter discusses the findings, suggests some recommendations and notes some limitations of the study. Generally, this paper tries to reveal whether there is a positive or negative relationship between the socio-cultural environment of students of French as a second language and their academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Socio-cultural factors, French as a second language, academic achievement.

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## General Introduction

Learning a second language can be influenced by many factors like age, gender, society, and culture. Researchers see that the socio-cultural factors play an important role in influencing and determining the academic achievement of the second language learners. When referring to socio-cultural factors, it is necessary to include elements like family, parents' education, parents' income, environment and culture. As they have their impacts on education in general, those factors have the potentials of either assisting or hindering the learners in their academic achievement.

As an Algerian student of English, particularly of sociolinguistics, many personal observations have motivated me to work on a topic in the language-society arena. Recently, I have noticed that most of the students who master the French language are those who live in the urban areas. It has also been noticed that their families have a high socio-economic status as well as good educational backgrounds. So, that is the reason behind the choice of my research topic. Through the present study, I wish to find out whether or not these factors are the reason behind their good level in French language.

The aim of the present study is to investigate the effects of some socio-cultural factors on learning French as a second language in Algeria. That is to say, the focus will be on the following problematic «Does living in the urban cities have a positive influence on the students' mastery of the French language?». This research work adopts third year students of French language at Mostaganem university who live in the urban areas to be participants in the procedure of investigation.



As it is mentioned above, the socio-cultural factors can influence learning a second language. Social factors, like living in an urban city, can have a positive effect on the students' academic achievements. In addition, the social class and status of the students can influence on their achievement in learning a second language. Indeed, students who live in urban areas, where all the facilities are available, are not like those who live in poor environment and conditions. That eventually reflects the positive and negative attitudes of students towards learning in general and learning French in particular.

The present piece of research raises the following questions:

- Is there any relationship between living in the urban areas and achieving good results in learning French?
- Do the socio-cultural factors, like the family environment, the surroundings and the social class of the family, influence the learning of French as a second language in Algeria?

In order to answer the aforementioned research questions, the research hypothesizes that:

- There is a positive correlation between living in the urban areas and the students' academic achievements in learning French.
- Parents' involvement, the economic status of the family and other socio-cultural factors has a strong influence on the learning of French as second language in Algeria. .

This research consists of three chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework of the topic. It presents an overview on French as a second language in Algeria, then the socio-cultural factors that influence second language learning. The second chapter deals with the practical issues of the study where the hypotheses are tested through analyzing the questionnaire's responses. The third chapter is devoted to discussions, recommendations and limitations.

# **Chapter One**

## Literature Review

## Introduction

This chapter will give an overview on the French as a second language in Algeria, then it will introduce some of the socio-cultural factors that effect on the process of learning a second language. These factors are the family, parents involvement, the economic status of the family... Since these factors have a direct impact on learner's achievements, it is paramount importance to explore them, especially these related to education and second language learning. Also, this chapter will emphasize on the relationship between language and culture and it important for language learners. It deals also with the sociolinguistic theory of Bernstein who was interested in studying the relationship of education and learner's social class. Which means, the difference between working class and middle class.

## 1. French as a Second Language in Algeria

French is one language among others in Algeria; it takes an important place and fulfils many social activities. It is one of the daily languages of communities besides Algerian Arabic and Berber

### 1.1 The Origins of French in Algeria, Historical Background

According to the history of Algeria, the invasion of the French is due to the incident between the last Turkish Dey and the French consul Du Val in Algeria in 29 April 1827, it was called « *Le coup d'éventail* », the Turkish Dey fired the French consul Duval using his flywhisk in front of the audience, as a result the French have seen it as an insult to the

French consul, but in reality this was just a pretext, there were other historical reasons, economic, religions, and politics. French blockaded Algeria for three years, then used the failure of the blockaded as reason for military expedition against Algeria in (1830).

The second biggest imperialist state, France added Algeria to its list of colonized countries, days full of fear and pain seemed to never end. A Great number of Europeans referred to as « pied noire », were sent to Algeria, French soldiers usurped land from Algerian (Deniz, 2016, para. 04)

Rubai (2009) states « *When French colonized Algeria in 1830 was not merely economic exploitation or political domination it sought, but a comprehensive annexation that aimed at eliminating its culture* ». That is to say, the French came with the idea of civilizing the country with a new language and new culture, they wanted to transform the Algerians and their background, they started controlling education and many other domains. Taleb Ibrahimi (2000: 66) says about French language that it was

The only language among the other languages which lasted and influenced the users. It has gained a particular statue in the Algerian society. The French language which was imposed on the Algerian bay fire and blood, constituted a fundamental element in the French policy of depriving people from their identity and deculturation ». Quoted in Chami (2009: 393)

## 1.2 The French Language Uses

Rubai author of « The syndrome of the French language in Algeria » (2009) claims that « *French continues to be the dominant language in business and professional circles* » and « *that certain aspect of formal education and research are still carried in the French language and a great part of the economic and industrial sectors and press still use French extensively* ». We will have a look at the place where the French language use in different domains such as schools, administration and mass media.

### 1.2.1 French in School

Pupils started to learn French as the first foreign language preliminary from the fourth grade. since (2003) many reforms took part in education that led to the teaching of French from the second grade instead the fourth. The same process (reforms) was conducted in the Algerian middle school

In the middle school, it was decided that pupils study four year instead of three. Thus, English is being taught as a second foreign language starting from the first years instead of the second. Despite the struggles and the effort to Arabize the whole educational system until the tertiary level, most scientific fields remained to be taught in French such as, Medicine, Biology, Technology, Mathematic, etc. Which created many difficulties for the students who were subjected to the Arabization process. (Ali Chaouch, 2006)

### 1.2.2 French and Social Contexts

Algerian people use French language in their everyday life interaction as a part of their way of speaking. French is an important tool for work, and is still used in the Algerian society such as, in the administration, in mass media, in the political and some official meetings. In addition, they exchange short messages called SMS through the cellular phones by using French language more than the Arabic. TV programmes have a big influence on people, because, most of the Algerian people have satellite dish in their home, they can watch French programmes such as ; French news, French films.....etc. As a result using these satellite programmes increased the level and the use of French language during these last years and they became using it spontaneously. (Lamia Ali Chaouch, 2006). Sebaa claimed that « *It is like this that some hours of programme received by the satellites, give benefit to French that all the laws of arabization cannot do it for Arabic* (Sebaa, 2002 : 105).

### 1.3 Age Factor

Age has a big effect on learning a second language. During childhood there is period called « Critical Period Hypothesis ». It refers to the idea that human brain is ready to learn languages. That is, if a person does not acquire a language during this period, he will face some problems later on. Brown (2007: 53) refers to this hypothesis as « *A biologically determined period of life when language can be acquired more easily and beyond which time language is increasingly difficult to acquire* ». That is to say, young learners can

perform better than adult learner, because they start learning the second language at the early stages of their childhood.

To conclude, we can say that children can acquire a second language more easily than adults. However, this does not mean that older students are not effective learners, they can face all the problems and obstacles to acquire a second language.

#### **1.4 Socio-Cultural Factors**

According to Brown (2007) language is an aspect of culture and culture is an aspect of language, that is to say language and culture are related. Gonzalez (2004: 58) concludes that « *The more an individual is familiar with the culture of the host country, the easier will be communicate ; and these factors in turn will promote integrative motivation and more rapide l2 learning* ». An understanding of the relationship between language and culture is important for those who use and learn language, and to all what is related to education. To have a clear picture on the relationship between language and culture, we need first to know the real meaning of culture.

Brown (2007: 176) defines it as « *A way of life, it is the context within which we exist, think, feel, and relate to others, it is the glue that binds people together* ». He sees that each group of people perceives reality according to their cultural system, that is to say, what may appear in a particular culture right, may seem inappropriate in another one. Larson & Smally (1972:39) describe culture as « *A blueprint that guides the behavior of people in a community and is incubated in family life* » cited in Brown (2007: 176). They mean that



culture governs our behavior in a group and help us to know what other expect of us and what will happen if we do not live up to their expectation, so as a result we can know how far we can go as individuals and what is our responsibility in a group.

Pinker (1994) says « *Many linguists agree upon the concept that language is an innate faculty with human race and that is not an artifact* ». Quoted in Jinliang.Z (2006; 42). According to him, we cannot say that language can be isolated from culture. That is, if a person want to understand a culture or to maintain his cultural identity, the language is the only method to achieve, because human thought is an important component of culture, and language is a medium to transfer thought. Brown point that « *The acquisition of second language, is also the acquisition of second culture* » (2007: 177). .which means, the learner cannot learn or acquire a language without learning its culture, because the language reflects the system of values and behaviours inherent to a particular culture, so to speak a new language need to enter a new culture.

Edward Sapir, in his studies with Benjamin Lee Whorf, recognize the close relationship between language and culture, concluding that « *It was not possible to understand or appreciate one without knowledge of the other* » (taken from Waedhaugh (2002:220).Cited in David Elmes (2013:12). This means, the language of people reflect their culture, because they values certain things and do them in a specific way , so all what they values or do in their life reflects in the way of using their language.

Culture as a process undermines the idea that culture can be learned through superficial aspects like food, costume, and holidays. It is experienced though

language, however because language is inseparable from culture. Learning a second language requires learning the linguistic aspects of the target culture. Second language acquisition is second culture acquisition ». (Christopher & Spackman, n.d, 02)

Because there is a correlation between language and culture, lot of scholars and studies discussed the relationship between education and socio-cultural factors such as family, parents' educational background, the socio economic of the family ...

### **1.4.1 Parents' Educational Level**

There is a link between parents and children's literacy level. « *Several recent studies found that parents with low literacy levels are less likely to help their children with reading and writing, and are more likely to have children with lower cognitive and language development level* ». (Jennifer, 2001: 04). That is, the more parents use a foreign language at home, the more higher their children achievement will be. Moreover, parents working as volunteers, homework helpers, and participant in school activities influence students' success (Bryce, 2008)

There are several reasons why parents' educational level may be related to the student's achievement in school. Parents with a higher educational level typically have more an opportunity to become more involved in academic success. However, parents with lower level of education may not feel capable of assisting their child or playing a role in his academic life, as may not understand the material or feel uncomfortable with their abilities.

(Khan, Nadeem, & Saima, 2015). In contrast, other studies show that some parents with lower level of education do become involved because of a desire for their child to achieve things they themselves could not. According to (Bakker, 2007) there are several ways that parents may become involved in their child's academics so that even parents with fewer resources can participate, and pave the way for his or her future.

### 1.4.2 Parents' Involvement in Education

The family plays an important role in formal and informal education. There is no specific definition of what parental involvement means. Some definitions include greater participation in the life of a school, while others focus on increased contributions to an individual child's learning process. « *There is one irrefutable truth in education, parent involvement in the school promotes student success and achievement* » (Johnston 1998:192). That is to say, the stronger the relationship, especially as they related to educational issues, the higher the academic achievement will be. Furthermore, he relates the good behavior of the students to the involvement of parents/ family in the educational process of their children. A study conducted by Mapp & Henderson examined the factors that influence low income parents' involvement. They found that « *social factors emanating from the parents' own experience and history influence their participation* » (2002: 41). These factors include parents' own educational experiences in school and their beliefs about family involvement as shaped by culture norms and values.

Parent involvement takes many forms; it can be described as having two broad components: school and home. At school, there are many ways parents can participate at

school-sponsored events, including attending parents-teachers conferences, enjoy accompanying the class on field trips, etc. In addition there is home component of parents involvement, there are many ways parents can work with their children at home to help them to be successful. For example, to be successful, students must arrive to school on time, and also they must come to the school ready to learn, and the most important thing parents can do for their children is to work with them on school e.g. : home work and everyday learning activities (e.g. : shared reading). As a result, parents will have a better understanding of what being taught and of teaching and learning in general.(Angelica, 2008).

According to Khan et al. « *Parents who don't go beyond elementary or secondary school are not able to give proper help to their children in the educational problems* » (2015:78). However, some researchers have not agreed with this, they agree that children's academic achievement is not necessarily depending on parents' educational level. For example, Haweks (1995) in his research study of parent's educational attainments concludes that, it does not affect on students academic achievement. Cited by (khan et al, 2015).

### **1.4.3 The Socio- economic Status of the Family**

Besides parental involvement, there is another important factor for students' academic success and that is their family's socio-economic status. « *Several ways of measuring have been proposed but most include some quantification of family income, parental education, and occupational studies* » (Robert, Bradley, Robert & Corwyn 2002: 371)

Several studies have been carried out in order to study the relationship between the economic status of the family and student's academic achievement. The findings appear that there is a positive relationship between the socio-economic status of the family and academic achievement of students (Preeti Singh, Garima Ghoudhay, 2015: 266). Thus, the socio-economic status is related with academic achievement positively, and the student's academic success differs from one child to another according to their social backgrounds. Furthermore, scholars have demonstrate with their research that children who come from a low socio-economic background in their early school year experience more problems as they grow older, these children tend to drop out of school early and are less likely to have college education (Eamon 2005, Horchschild, 2003) cited in ( Chandra & Azimuddin , 2013) . That is to say, they don't have access to extra learning facilities. Hence, the opportunity to get to the top of their educational ladder may not be easy. However, some studies showed the opposite. Charles & Alberto claim that « *Some children seem to succeed in school despite living in materially unpromising circumstances whilst others do less well despite a comfortable material environments* ». (2003: 24)

### **1.5 The socio-Linguistic Theory of Bernstein**

Bernstein is a sociologist of education, who tried to investigate the reasons of educational failure of children from disadvantages social classes. He was studying the socialization processes in general and the family in particular. He distinguished two kind of English codes; elaborated and restricted code. Also, according to him there are two social classes the middle and the working class. Children who belong to the middle class their

behavior are characterized by specific values, unlike the working class children who live in a poor or less organized environment.

Bernstein has emphasized on the life style of both working class and middle class groups, and the differences between them. Because, the human's perception of the world, the values, attitudes and behaviors he develops are obtained or acquired from his interaction with the member of his family, which is the first social factor where the child acquires his language.

As mentioned earlier, there are two speech codes which can be distinguished, the restricted and the elaborated one. Bernstein defines them as « *forms of spoken language in the process of their learning initiate, generalize and reinforce special types of relationship with the environment and thus create for the individual particular forms of significance.* » (1971: 76). That is to say, when a person use a language in a specific way within a particular societal class influences the way people assign significance and meaning to the thing about which they are speaking. Moreover, when the child learns his speech, at the same time he learns specific codes which regulate his verbal acts; he learns the requirement of his social structure. The restricted code is appropriate for those who share the same assumptions and understanding on the topic, also within the restricted code, the speaker depends on his background knowledge and shared understanding which create a sense of belonging to a particular group. It can be found between families or friends .....etc. On the other hand, the elaborated code doesn't require from the listeners sharing the same assumptions and understanding. That is to say, the elaborated code is more explicit and

clear and we can find it in a situation where there is no shared knowledge. For example, if a person said something new to someone he never met before, they would certainly communicate in elaborated code. According to Bernstein both of the restricted and the elaborated code are not different from each other in values and status. He points out that « clearly *one code is not better than another ; each possesses its own aesthetic, its own possibilities* ». (1971 : 135)

The elaborated code is very important for the school success. For Bernstein in his earlier work, both of the restricted and the elaborated code are present in the middle class society. However, working class children access to one code which is the restricted one. But later, he modified this by stating that the restricted code is particularistic with reference to its meaning, but universalistic with respect to its model, because just a few people have access to it. Then, a small difference appears in the link between codes and social classes, so all members of the society use the restricted code, but just few of them will use the elaborated one. (Bernstein, 1971: 136)

Social class plays a significant role in the process of socialization. Hence, people choose either the restricted or the elaborated code according to the social class they belong.

Socio-cultural factors can have a positive or a negative effect on the second language learning process because they play a huge role in the individual's life in general and education in particular. Thus, if a learner is socialized in an environment which recognize the importance of the children' education and discovering other cultures, this will have a positive impact on their academic achievement. Moreover, many sociologists, mainly Bernstein made a link between school success and learner's social class. That is, if the learner belongs to the working class families is less successful than those of middle class ones. The reason is that the learner from working class families are grown up in a big families where the support for school learning is limited because of the low of the educational level and bad living conditions, unlike those who come from middle class families where they live in better life conditions.



# **Chapter Two**

## **Data Description & Analysis**

## Introduction

This chapter represents the practical part of the work, it aims is to investigate the effect of some socio-cultural factors on the students of French at the university level, who live in the urban areas of Mostaganem. In addition, this questionnaire will help us to know if the students' level in the academic achievement, has a relation within their social or environment.

### 1.1 The Sample

The questionnaire was given to a group of (25) third year students at the university of Mostaganem.(07) Male and (18) female. The reasons why we select this category of students. First, to know if living in the urban areas have a positive influence on the learners' academic achievements in learning the language or not. The second reason is that, those students are mature enough to evaluate their level and give their opinions in learning French language.

### 1.2 Description of the Questionnaire

The given questionnaire includes (14) questions are between the closed one, where the students are asked to answer by « Yes » or « No » or picking up the suitable answer from the given choices, also the opened ones where the students answer freely and justify their responses.

The first question is about the students' level in French, then (Q02) is about where they started learning the language. (Q03) and (Q04) are about their parents' educational level, then in (Q05) and (Q06) they were asked about their parents' occupation. After that

they were asked about the language they often use at home (Q07). In (Q08) they were asked if there are people who master French language in their family. (Q09) is about the topics they discuss with their parent at home, then in (Q10) they were asked about their parents' reaction when they fail in their studies.

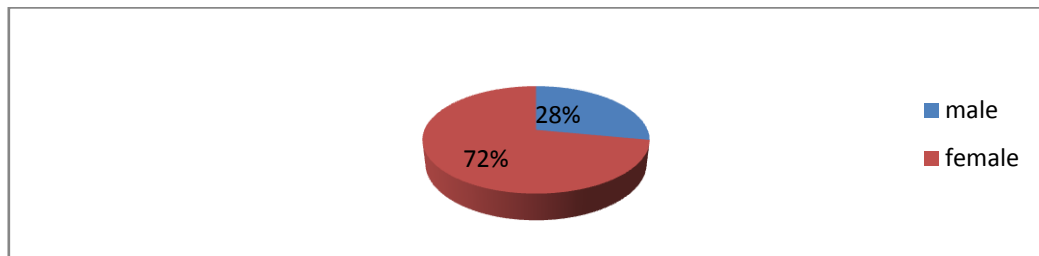
In (Q11) students were asked if they go to the library.(Q12) is about the language they read through. In addition,(Q13) they were asked if they like the company of people who are interested in French language, then justify their answers, and the last question is about the difficulties that make them unconscious while learning (Q14).

### 1.3 Analysis of the Questionnaire

#### Students' Gender

Male	07	28%
Female	18	72%
Total	25	100%

**Table 01: Students' Gender**

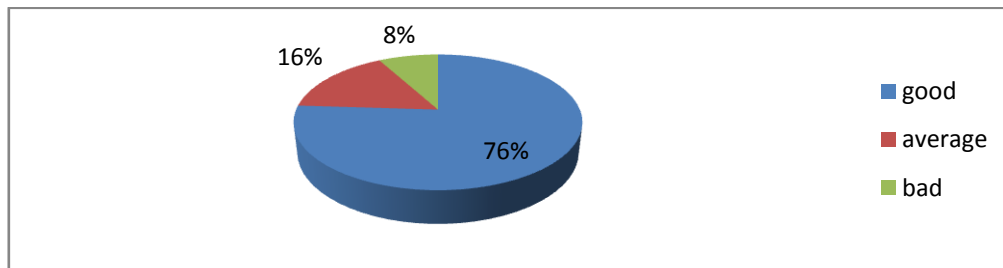


**Figure 01: Students' gender**

The table shows that 28% are male, and 72 % are female.

**Q 01: Is your French**

	Number of the students	%
Good	19	76 %
Average	04	16 %
Bad	02	08%
Total	25	100%

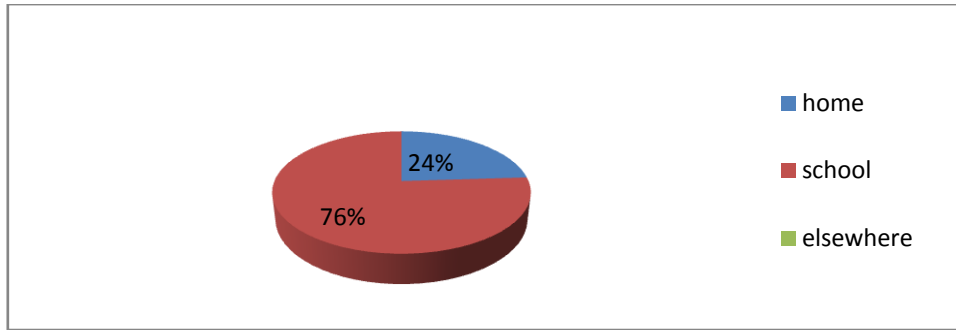
**Table 02: Students' Level in French****Figure 02: Students' level in French**

The majority of the students represented in 76% have good French, whereas 16% have an average, and only 08% of them claimed that they are bad at French. These results reveal that students are more interested in French language, since just a small number of them have a bad level.

**Q 02: Did you start learning French at:**

	Number of the students	%
Home	06	24%
School	19	76%
Elsewhere	00	00%
Total	25	100%

**Table 03: where the students start learning French**



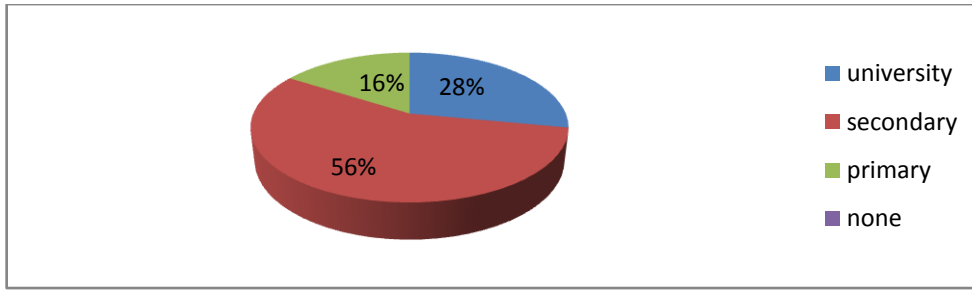
**Figure 03: where the students start learning French**

It seems from the table that Students who start learning French at school represents 76%. 24% of the students have been taught French at home. Which might be an advantage for them.

**Q 03: What is your father's educational background?**

	Number of the students	%
University	07	28%
Secondary	14	56%
Primary	04	16%
None	00	00%
Total	25	100%

**Table04: Father's educational background**



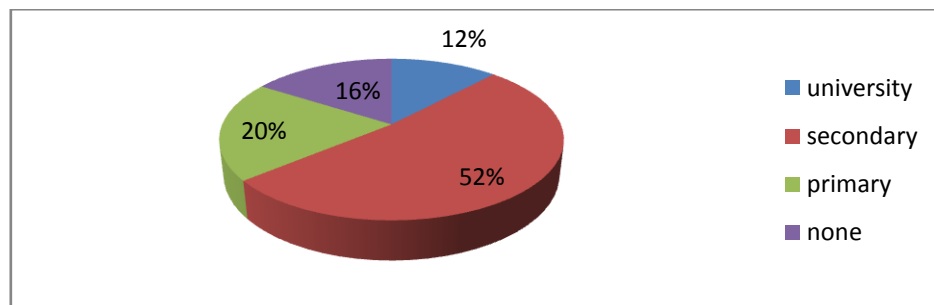
**Figure 04: Father’s educational background**

The majority of the students’ fathers have a secondary level 56%. This implies that people who live in the urban areas have the opportunity to be educated .Thus, parents can help their children in their studies or encourage them to be successful learners.28% of the students’ parents have a university level. The rest of fathers have a primary level, which is a quit normal result, because our study is concerned with those who live in the urban area.

**Q 04: What is your mother educational background?**

	Number of the students	%
University	03	12%
Secondary	13	52%
Primary	05	20%
None	04	16%
Total	25	100%

**Table 05: Mother’s educational background**



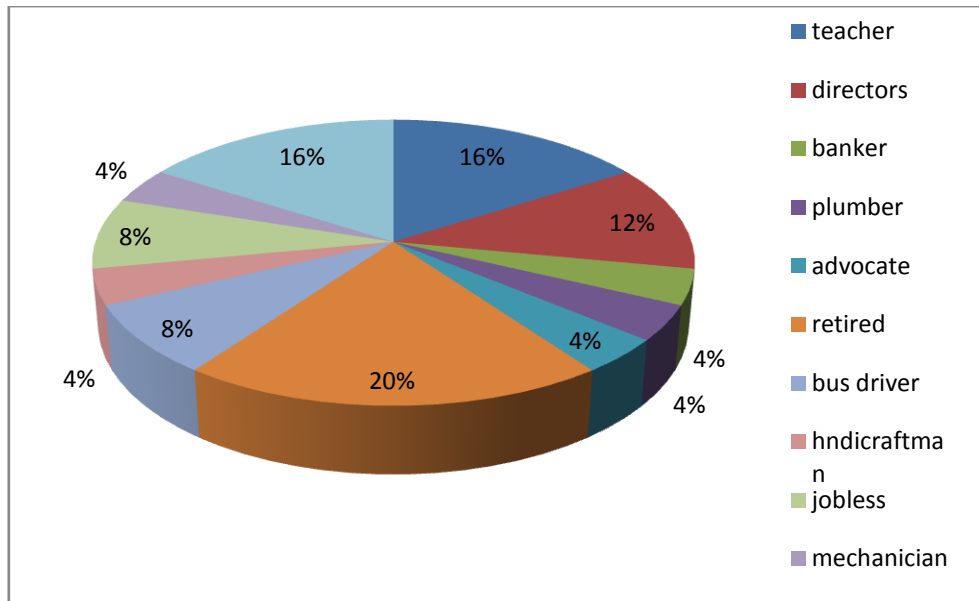
**Figure 05: Mother's educational background**

We found that 52% of the students' mothers have a secondary degree and 12% for those who have a university level. Whereas, 20% of the students' mothers have a primary level, 16% of them were illiterate.

**Q 05: What is your father's occupation?**

	Number of the students	%
Teachers	04	16%
Directors	03	12%
Banker	01	04%
Plumber	01	04%
Advocate	01	04%
Retired	05	20%
Bus Driver	02	08%
Handicraftsmen	01	04%
Jobless	02	08%
Mechanic	01	04%
Businessman	04	16%
Total	25	100%

**Table 06: Father's occupation**



**Figure 06: Fathers' occupation**

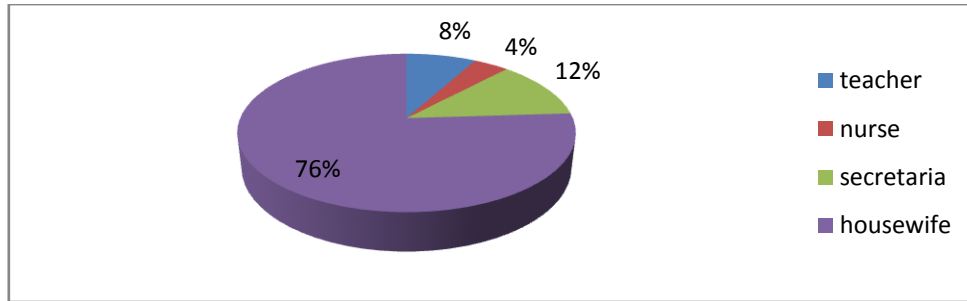
Students gave different occupations, 16% are teachers, 12% work as directors, 04% are banker, and 04% work as plumber, the same number work as an advocate and mechanic. 20% are retired, 08% work as a taxi driver, 04% are handicraftsman, 16% are a businessman, and only 08% are jobless. That is, most of the students come from middle class families. Thus, they live in comfortable social environments where all the facilities are available for them.

**Q 06: What t is your mother occupation?**

	Number of the students	%
Teacher	02	08%
Nurse	01	04%
Secretary	03	12%
Housewife	19	76%
Total	25%	100%

**Table 07: Mother's occupation**





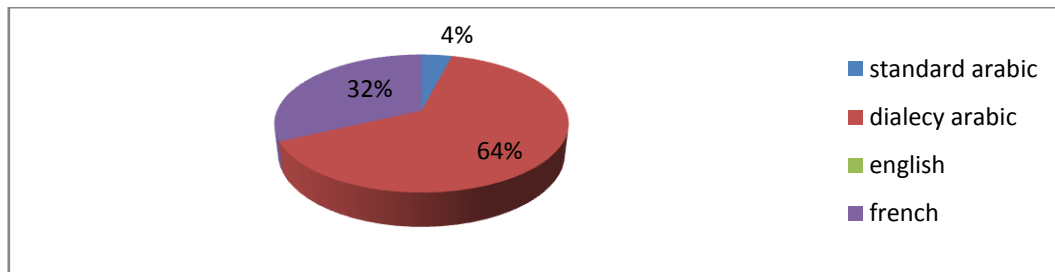
**Figure 07: Mothers' occupation**

The majority of the students' mothers are housewives 76%, though they have attended school, but this is not surprising because this is something normal in the Algerian Arabic society where almost all women are housewives. However this idea has changed and women became more active and playing an important role in the society. 08% are teachers and 04 work as a nurse, whereas 12% are secretary.

**Q 07: When you are at home, which language do you often use?**

	Number of the students	%
Standard Arabic	01	04%
Dialect Arabic	16	64%
English	00	00%
French	08	32%
Total	25	100%

**Table 08: Language they use at home**



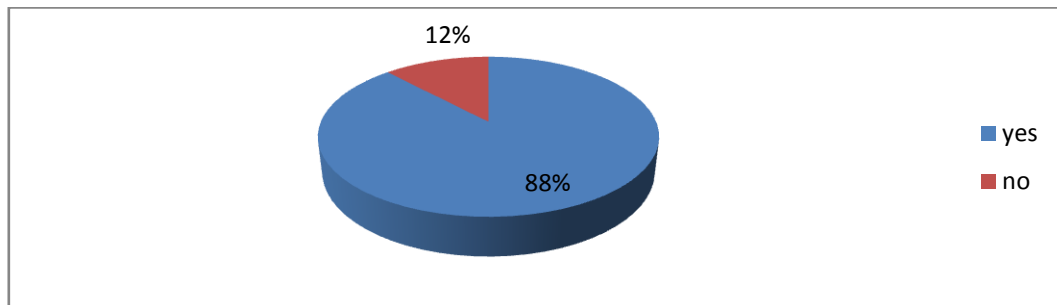
**Table 08: Language they use at home**

The 64% of the students claimed that they use the dialect Arabic which is something logical, because it's their mother tongue. 04% said standard Arabic and, 32% answered French and no one use English language at home.

**Q 08: In your family, are their people who master French language?**

	Number of the students	%
Yes	22	88%
No	03	12%
Total	25	100%

**Table 09: People who master French language in the students' family**



**Table 09: People who master French language in the students' family**

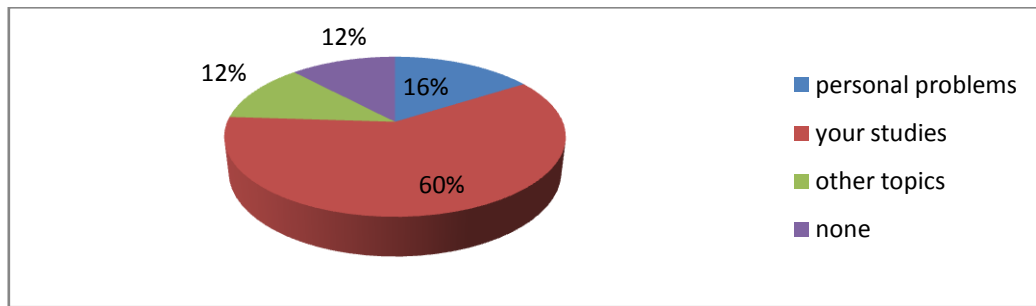
Students who have people in their family master the French language represent 88%, this indicate that the majority of the students have raised in an educated family, and only the minority of them 12% answered with no.

**Q 09: Which one of the following topics do you discuss with your parents?**

	Number of the student	100%
Personal problem	04	16%

Your studies	15	60%
Other topics	03	12%
None	03	12%
Total	25	100%

**Table 10 : Topics they discuss with their parents at home**



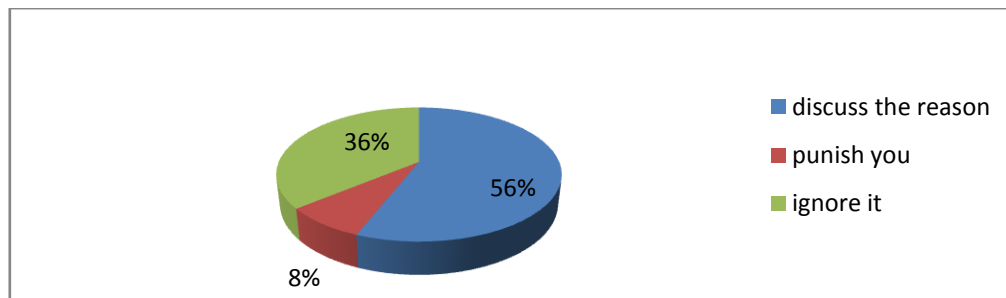
**Table 10: Topics they discuss with their parents at home**

Students who discuss with their parents topics about their studies represent 60%, and 16% claimed that they discuss personal problems. However, 12% do not communicate with them.

**Q 10: When you fail in your studies, do your parents**

	Number of the student	%
Discuss The Reason	14	56%
Punish You	02	08%
Ignore It	09	36
Total	25	100%

**Table 11: Parents’ reaction toward their children when they fail in their studies**

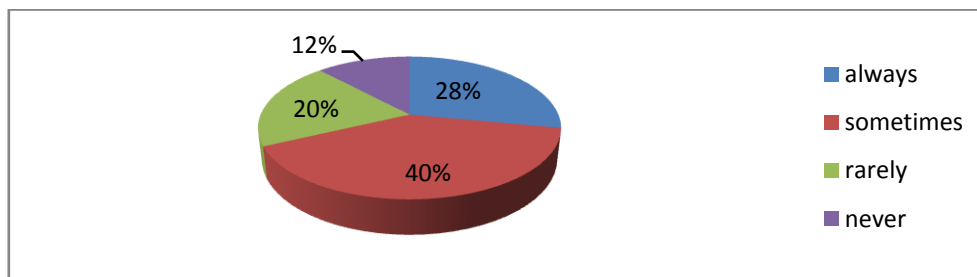


**Figure 11: Parents' reaction toward their children when they fail in their studies**

As it is shown in the table and figure 56% of the students claimed that they discuss the reasons behind their failure with their parents, and 08% of them said that they punish them, 36% answered that they ignore it

**Q 11: Do you go to the library?**

	Number of the students	%
Always	07	28%
Sometimes	10	40%
Rarely	05	20%
Never	03	12%
Total	25	100%

**Table12: How often the students' go to the library.****Figure 12: How often the students go to the library.**

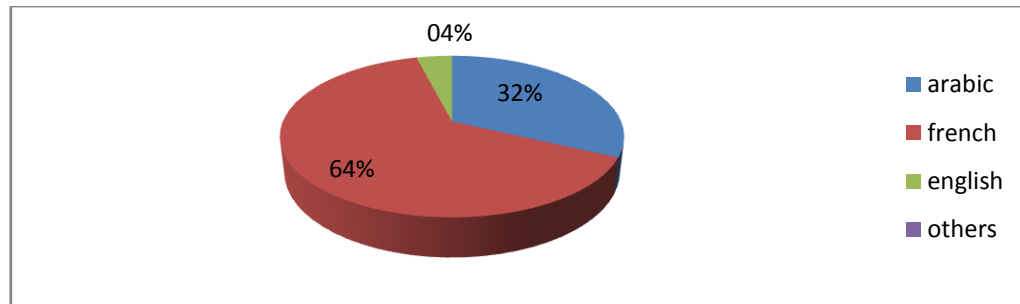
The table show that 28% of the participants said that they always go to the library, 40% of the students said sometimes. The 40% of them claimed that sometimes they go to the library, 20% said rarely and 12% represents those who never go to it.

**Q 12: In which language do you often read?**

	Number of the students	%
Arabic	08	32%

French	16	64%
English	01	04%
Others	00	00%
Total	25	100%

**Table 13: Languages students read through.**



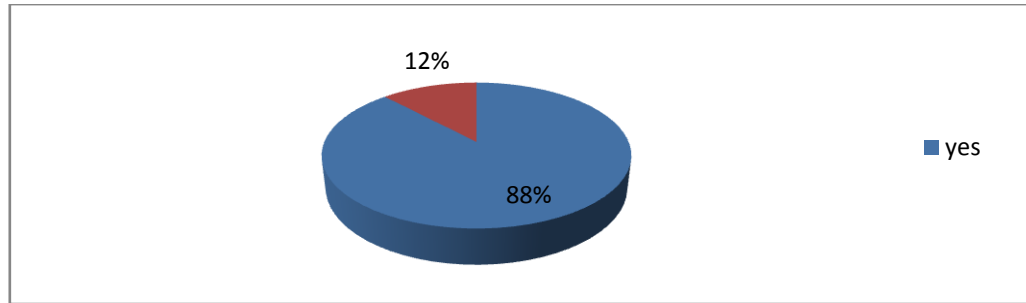
**Figure 13: Students' language they read through.**

More than half of students 64% stated that the French is the language that they read through. They may do that in order to improve their level in French, 32% of the students said Arabic language, and only 04% for those who said English.

**Q 13: Do you like the company of people who are interested in French (Please justify your answer)**

	Number of the students	%
Yes	22	88%
No	03	12%
Total	25	100%

**Table 14: Students who like the company of people who speak French.**



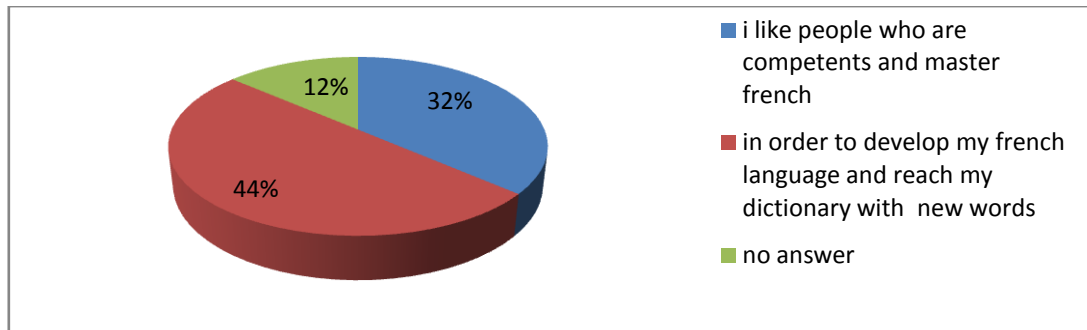
**Figure 14: Students who like the company who the company of people who speak French language.**

The majority of the students represented in 88% like the company of people who speak French, and only 12% answered with no.

**Students who answered positively justify their answers by:**

Reasons	Number of the students	%
I like people who are competent and master different languages	08	32%
I like to communicate with them in order to develop my French language and reach my dictionary with new words	11	44%
No answers	03	12%
Total	25	100%

**Table15: Students' reasons for liking the company of people who master French language.**



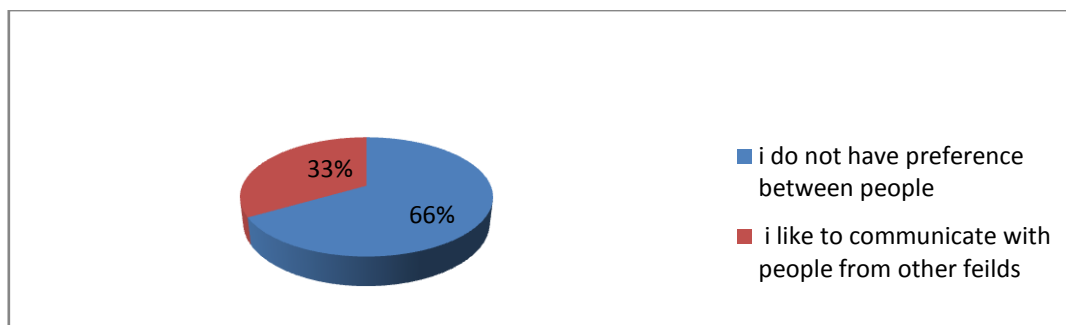
**Figure 15: Students reasons for liking the company of people who speak french language**

33% of the students like the company of people who master French language, in order to develop their French language and reach their dictionary with a new words, 32% liked their company because they like people who are competent and master different languages, and only 12% did not justify their answers.

**Those who answered negatively justify their answers by :**

reasons	Number of the students	%
I don't have a preference between people	02	66%
I like to communicate with people from other fields	01	33%
Total	03	100%

**Table 16: Students' reason for not liking the company of people who speak French language.**



**Figure 16: Students' reason for not liking the company of people who speak French language.**

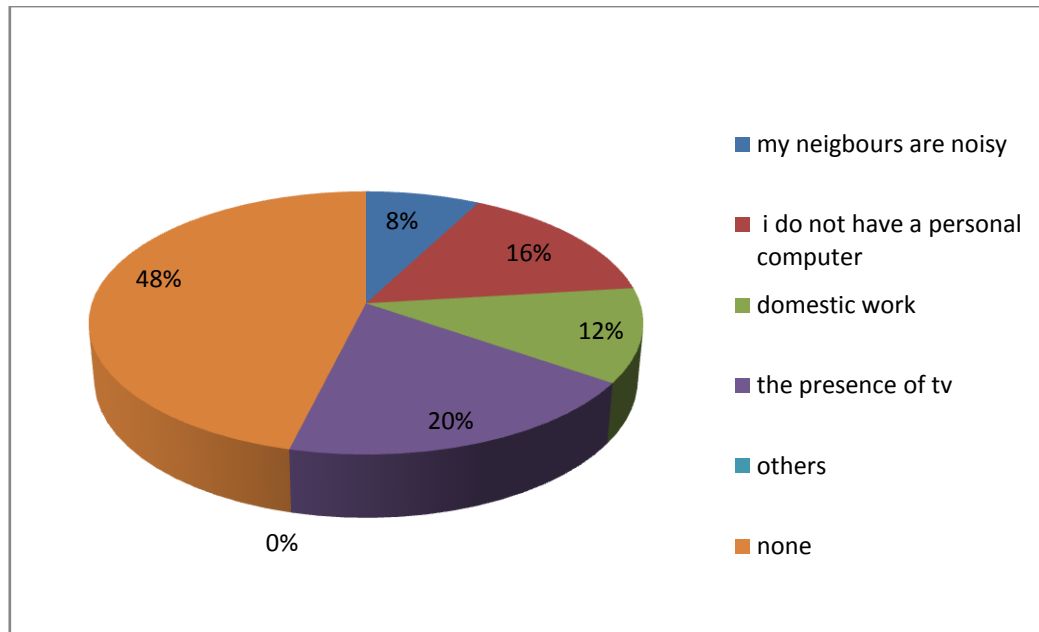
66% of the students justified their answers saying that, they don't have preference between people, 33% said that they prefer to contact people from other fields.

**Q 14: While studying at home, for example preparing for your exams, what are the problems that distract you while learning?**

Problems	Number of the students	%
My neighbors are noisy	02	08%
I don't have a personal computer	04	16%
Domestic work	03	12%
The presence of TV	05	20%
Others	00	00%
None	12	48%
Total	25	100%

**Table 16: Students' problems that make them uncomfortable while learning at home.**





**Figure 16: Students' problems that make them uncomfortable while learning at home.**

As the table reveals, 08% of the students stated that their neighbors are noisy which something normal in the urban areas, 16% claimed that they don't have a personal computer, while 12% said the domestic work, and 20% of the students are disturbed by the presence of the TV. All these factors have a negative influence on the students' academic achievement.

### **Conclusion**

The chapter represented the practical part of the research, it has dealt with the methodology of the given study « The effect of socio-cultural factor on learning French as a second language in Algeria », where the questionnaire was the means with which data were gathered and analysis.

# **Chapter Three**

## **Discussions & Recommendations**

**Introduction**

The present research aimed at examining the effect of socio-cultural factors on learning French as a second language in Algeria. The population of the study was third year French students who live in the urban area of Mostaganem. This chapter includes a discussion of the results of the study, as well as it provides some limitations and recommendations for further studies.

**1. Discussion of the Questionnaire Results**

The analysis of the data reveal that the majority of the students have an average French and most of them start learning French at school. We can notice from the results that students are more interested in learning French, because the minority claimed that they have bad French. Also, most of them started learning the language at school. That is, they have learnt French as a second language of the country after Arabic. Whereas, the minority of them has learnt the French language at home, which means, they may use French language as a part of their daily life.

Findings of this study also demonstrate that the home, the economic status of the family, parents involvement and the surroundings have a considerable effect upon the learners' achievement. According to the analysis of the student's responses, most of their parents have good educational background. The results support the findings of a lot of scholars who agree on the idea that the children who do well in their school they come from

an educative family which provide for them support and comfortable environment for learning at home, since their parents have already been to school so most of the respondents are from educative families.(Rana et al, 2015) & (Charles & Alberto ,2003)

The findings also point to the significance of Parents involvement; they indicate that students' level of achievement is related to their parent's involvement, because one of the most effective areas of research in education is the role of parents in students' academic success. Johnson (1998) claimed that, « *There is one irrefutable truth in education; parents involvement in the school promotes students success and achievement* ». And that what we have found in this particular study, more than half of the respondents their parents discuss with them studies' topics .So, parents must help their children and find solutions for their difficulties in learning a second language in order to avoid their failings. Corner (1984) also found in his work that learning development take place not only in school, but at home and in the community as well. Furthermore, the role of parent's involvement is very influential for shaping their children's behaviors and their way of thinking. In addition, a person who communicate and interact with his parents from childhood he will develop and obtain a strong personality in order to reach their intellectual potential, Odlin (1989: 131) concluded that « *Personality factor may also account for the varying degrees of success that individuals have in approximately pronunciation patterns in the target language* », As well as motivating him and making him more confident, because learning a second language is among a lot of activities in learners' life that requires a high degree of motivation and self confidence. Brown (2007: 156) stated that « *it is essential for learners to believe in themselves in order to succeed at a set of tasks* ». Moreover, it is admitted fact

that children of educated parents are more confident resourceful and experienced than the children whose parents lack of education. (Rana et al, 2015). That is why self confidence and motivation are very important elements in the process of learning a second language. Brown (2007: 168) stated that *«the most frequently used catch all term for explaining the success or failure of virtually any complex task, motivation is a star player in the cast of characters assigned to second language learning scenarios around the world »*. So, the more motivated the student is, the more successful he will be.

The effect of the socio-economic status also is an important factor. Preeti & Garima (2015) claimed that, *«It is generally believed that children from high and middle socio-economic status parents are better exposed to learning environment at home »*. Most of the respondents live in a good economic status because just 08% of the students' parents are jobless. That means their parents can abunds all the facilities and the materials they need such as books, computers, private teachers, etc. Socio-economic background of the family may influence on the students' academic achievement in several ways. According to (Schulz, 2005), the learner who grow up in a higher socio-economic status, their parents will provide for them all the necessaries they need such as ; financial support, and providing a comfortable environment in order to enhance the cognitive development.

According to the analysis of the students' responses about the language they use at home, we can see that most of them use the Arabic language, which is something normal, because it is their mother's tongue. In addition, most of them have people in their family who master a French language , that is they live in an educative family which can allow for

them to learn and practice the French language with them, because when the language is practiced the learning of the second language become more effective.

Parents-children relationship plays an important role in the children's life in general and in education in particular. Because, parents have always been the critical factor determining the academic and social success of the student, they can influence on their children either positively or negatively. In this study 60% of the students claimed that they discuss with their parents whenever they face problems in their studies. That is, their parents are present and aware of what going on in their children's education, especially when they fail in their studies. More than half of the students 56% discuss the reasons behind their failure with their parents, thus, their parents recognize how important education is for their children's success, and the best way to help them is to guide and direct them whenever they needed help, since most of their parents have already been to school. Moreover, parents should create a warm atmosphere at home and make their children feel competent; help them to handle the stress and trams during the exams. Furthermore, they have to allow their children chances to get into discussions to express themselves freely. As results, their children will feel support and encouragement from their parents.

The findings also showed that 28% of the students go to the library frequently, and 40% of them sometimes do. Furthermore, more than half of the students read in French language because they know that this can help them to improve their French level. Since

they live in the urban areas, their environment allow for them to go to the library whenever they want.

Learning a second language requires from the learner to be interactive and active with people. The findings appeared that 88% of the students like the company of people who master the French language, and they justify their answers by saying that, they like people who are competent and master French language, others said that they like their company in order to develop their French language and reach their dictionary with new words or to enhance their speaking skills. Which can have a positive influence on the students' attainments. Yet, some students do not like the company of people who master French language, because they like to communicate with people from other fields. However, this is not beneficial for them, because it can prevents them from improving their French language.

The home environment is viewed as an important factor for the individual's academic success. The analysis of the last question, the problems that make the students unconscious while learning at home revealed that 48% do not face difficulties while learning at home , and this result is predictable, because most of them live in a comfortable environment where all the facilities are available for them. The others complained about their noisy neighbors, domestic work, presence of TV, and the lack of the materials such as personal computer. All these factors can have a negative influence on the students' achievement in learning foreign languages in general and the French language in particular. Also, it can hindered them from reaching their goals and be successful in life.

The analysis also showed that there is a correlation between parents' educational background and their involvement in their children's study. That is, the higher the level of parents' education, the higher the level of their involvement, and this findings is an agreement with the findings of the research presented by( Charles & Alberto, 2003) on the involvement, parents support and family education in pupil achievement and adjustment. Moreover, in this results it can be observed that learners who come from a high and middle class socio-economic status have a good level in French language. This result affirms the previous work of (Preeti & Garima, 2015) on the impact of the socio-economic status on academic- achievement of school students, they found that having a high socio-economic status is the responsible factor on the good academic achievement of the students

## **1.2 Recommendations**

Learning a second language is a long process that includes all aspects of language such as lexicon, grammar, reading writing... etc. Yet, there are some factors that can influence on the process of learning a second language. Research has shown that students' who live in the urban areas, their level of French language is related to their social environment; their parents, the economic status of the family, etc. However, the socio-cultural variables are different and various. They include belief and value system, attitudes, acculturation levels; socialization goal and practice, language use at home, etc. So, the vast nature of the topic hindered us from tackling all the socio-cultural factors, we just highlighted the main ones. Thus, other factors may be more important in the academic



success of the learner. Furthermore, this research has neglected those students who live in the rural areas. So, my recommendations for further studies are:

- Firstly, since the study was conducted to examine the influence of some of the socio-cultural factors. We need to recommend for investigating other socio-cultural factors that influence on the learning a second language like feedback, peer interaction and self efficacy. A lot of scholars agree on the idea that those socio-cultural concepts influence on the process of learning a second language, because they force the learner to achieve his goals (Ozfidan, Machtmes & Demir, 2014).
- Secondly, to survey those who live in the rural areas and make a comparison between them and those who live in the urban city .In order to see whether living in a poor environments may have a negative influence on the students' success, or it can be a strong motive to carry on in their study and become successful in the future. We hope from the future studies to go more than that and make an investigation about how can living in the rural areas affect on the learners' academic achievement , especially on learning a second language, which was not given importance in this study.
- The present research, moreover, has shown that the socio-economic status of the family plays an important factor on the students' achievement, so it is recommended that the government should raise the economic-status of people.

- The same topic of this research can be dealt with in any other Algerian city. The diversity of social, cultural and economic backgrounds in the Algerian communities opens the door to researchers to conduct lots of studies in this respect.
- The case of French in Algeria is politically and historically critical. For that, learning French as a second language can be referred to that state. As it is the second language in the administrations and governmental institutions, using French proficiently by workers and employees of those sections can be studied. Potentially, the field of work generally can be a major factor by itself.
- Personal interests in French are also supportive in the course of education. It is not necessary that the good academic achievement of a student from high class or urban city is totally related to the socio-cultural factors only. That is proved by the examples of good academic achievements by students of poor social and economic conditions. Therefore, there must be a review not only on the external factors, but also the internal ones.

### **1.3 Limitations**

In conducting the questionnaire, I have met some difficulties that should be taken into consideration.

- The first limitation is the small sample just (25).this sample could not represent all the learners. So, it would be better to have a large group in order to get extrat information and different responses about the topic.

- The second limitation is that, when distributing the questionnaire, it was somehow difficult to find French students who live in the urban areas of Mostaganem. Also they were in the period of exams.

**Conclusion**

The present chapter, through the questionnaire interpretation, attempted to scrutinize the potential impacts that socio-cultural factors have on learning French as a second language. It has been proved that there is a correlation between the students' level in French language and those socio-cultural factors. In fact, the results show that living in the urban community, where all the facilities are available, affects positively on learning French as a second language in Algeria.

## **General Conclusion**

The present research paper has dealt with how socio-cultural factors have influences on learning French as a second language in Algeria. Third Year University students of French who live in the urban areas of the city of Mostaganem have been chosen as participants in the field of investigation.

At the beginning of this dissertation, an overview about the status of French language in Algeria was explored. Then, light was shed on the effect of the socio-cultural factors on learning of French as the second language. The focus was on parents' educational level, parents' involvement and the economic status of the family. Then, the analysis of the questionnaire took place in the practical issues and was followed by discussions and recommendations.

The results of this study showed that there is a correlation between living in a good social environment and achieving good results in learning French as a second language. Most of the respondents' parents are educated and highly involved in their education. That is, the students were grown up in an educated family that recognizes the importance of education for their future. Moreover, interacting with them and providing a supportive home environment and encouragement had a positive impact on their learning.

The effects of the socio-economic factors also play an important role in learning a second language. These factors and others like personality, age, gender, classroom conditions, teachers, and educational institutions can be studied in this context. The Algerian context of French as a second language is full of phenomena that are worth the

investigation. The case of English as a foreign language in Algeria, moreover, is an interesting arena to conduct studies on.

Finally, it is highly recommended that future studies go further and further in identifying the factors that hinder or assist learners of any language in their learning and academic achievements. The students who live in the rural areas can always make surprising results. That should be triggering researchers to look for specific variable for future studies.

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## Appendix

This questionnaire is designed to investigate the effect of socio-cultural factors in learning French as a second language in Algeria. We would like you to answer the following questions, if possible, so as we can progress in our research.

01- Are you

A Male                      b Female

02- is your French

A Good                      b Average

03- Did you start learning French at

A Home                      b School                      c Elsewhere

04 What is your father's educational background ?

A Primary                      b Secondary                      c University                      d None

05- What is your mother's educational background ?

A Primary                      b Secondary                      c University                      d None

06- What is your father's occupation ?

.....

07- What is your mother's occupation ?

.....

08- When you are at home, what are the language you often use

A Standard Arabic                      b Dialect Arabic                      c French                      d English

09- in your family, is there people who master French language ?

A yes                      b no

10- Which one of the following topics do you discuss with your parents

A Your studies                      b Personal problems                      c Others                      d None

11- When you fail in your studies, do your parents

A Discuss the reason                      b Punish you                      c ignore it

12- Do you go to the library?

A Always                      b Sometimes                      c Rarely                      d Never

13- In which language do you often read?

A Arabic                      b French                      c English                      d Others.

14- Do you like the company of people who are interested in French ?

A Yes                      b No (please justify your answers)

15- While studying at home, for example preparing for your exams, what are the problems that make you unconscious while learning ?

.....

## Annexe

Ce questionnaire est conçu pour étudier l'effet des facteurs socio-culturels dans l'apprentissage du français en langue seconde en Algérie. Nous voudrions que vous répondes à la question suivante si possible afin que nous puissions progresser dans nos recherches.

1\_Est-ce ton niveau en langue Française est

A-Très bon                      B-Moyen                      C-Mauvais

2\_Tu as commencé à étudier le Français

A-A la maison                      B-A l'école                      C-Un autre endroit

3\_Quel est le niveau scolaire de ton père

A-Universitaire                      B-Moyen                      C-Primaire                      D-Néant

4\_Quel est le niveau scolaire de ta mère

A-Universitaire                      B-Moyen                      C-Primaire                      D-Néant

5\_Quelle est la profession de ton père

.....

6\_Quelle est la profession de ta mère

.....

7\_Quand tu es dans ta maison, Quelle langue emploies-tu le plus souvent

.....

8\_Au sein de ta famille : ya-t-il une ou des personnes qui s'expriment en langue française

A-Oui                      B-Non

9\_Sur quel(s) sujet(s) tu discutes avec ta mère

A-Problèmes personnels      B-Sujet scolaires et études      C-Sujet divers      D-Néant

10\_Quand tu échoues à ton examen

A- Ta famille cherche-t-elle la cause      B- Elle te punit                      C- Elle ignore l'échec

11\_Est-ce tu vas la bibliothèque

A-Toujours                      B-Des fois                      C-Peu                      D-Jamais

12\_Quelle langue adores-tu

A-Langue Française                      B-Langue Anglaise                      C-Autre langue

13\_Est-ce que tu aimes fréquenter des gens qui s'expriment en Français

A-Oui                      B-Non

14\_Quand tu étudies à la maison, sachant que tu prépares tes examens, Quels sont les problèmes qui te rendent mal à l'aise en ce qui concerne les études

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