

AHMED DRAIA UNIVERSITY – ADRAR



FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a Master's  
Degree in Linguistics and Didactics

**Sociolinguistic Variation in Ouled  
Bouhafs Spoken Arabic**

**Presented by:**

**Mrs. HAFSA BAKADER**

**Supervised by:**

**Pr. BACHIR BOUHANIA**

**Academic Year: 2015 – 2016**

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## Abstract

This present work is an attempt to investigate and analyze the sociolinguistic variation in the small village called Ouled Bouhafs . It is situated seven kilometers far from Adrar, the city centre. Our first objective is to describe and analyze the linguistic features characterizing OB' speech mainly the phonological, the morphological, and the lexical ones. This research work has two chapters. The first is devoted to the literature review that has a strong relation with the field of sociolinguistics. We shed some light on some linguistic concepts in that field by defining them. Then, we moved to giving some definitions of Arabic and its variants (CA, MSA, and colloquial Arabic). Eventually, we have narrowed our study in the second chapter to investigate the speech community of OB. We have given the different features of speech showing in the meantime how OSA differs between its speakers. We relate these linguistic features to social variables mainly age and gender. In order to have reliable data, we have gathered some from this speech community using a quantitative method.

# Didication

**I DEDICATE THIS MODEST WORK TO MY HELPFUL, OPTIMISTIC, AND SUPPORTIVE MOTHER WHO HELPED ME BY OFFERING A LOT OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND PRAYERS.**

**TO MY BELOVED FATHER FOR HIS HELP AND SUPPORT. I OWE A GREAT DEPT TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS.**

**TO MY FAITHFUL, PRECIOUS, AND HELPFUL HUSBAND WHO SUPPORTED ME WITH HIS SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL HELPS.**

**TO MY SISTER KHADIDJA WHO HELPS ME WITH ENERGY AND GUIDANCE IN FULFILLING THIS WORK.**

**FINALLY, TO MY LITTLE SWEETY SON 'MOUADH' AND ALL THE MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY BAKADER AND RACHIDI AND ALL PEOPLE WHO WISH GOOD FOR ME.**

# Aknowledgements

FIRST OF ALL, OUR THANKS GO TO ALLAH THE ALMIGHTY, THE MOST MERCIFUL WHO HELPS ME TO FULFILL THIS WORK.

WITH A GREAT EFFORT, WE HAVE FINISHED THIS WORK WITH THE HELP OF SOME PEOPLE TO WHOM I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE.

I OWE A GREAT THANK TO MY RESPECTED SUPERVISOR DR. BOUHANIA BACHIR FOR HIS GUIDANCE, CORRECTING THE WORK AND FOR HELPING ME WITH DOCUMENTS.

FINALLY, I EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION TO ALL THE TEACHERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, FROM WHOM I LEARNT A LOT.

## List of phonetic symbols

### Consonants

#### Plosive

[b] : [bæb] 'door'

[t] : [latei] 'tea'

[d] : [dorrak] 'now'

[k] : [kteb] 'book'

[g] : [ga:si] 'solid'

[q] : [ssu:q] 'market'

[ʔ] : [ʔaʃ] 'what'

#### Fricatives

[f] : [fa:r] 'mouse'

[s] : [serwal] 'trousers'

[z] : [zwijen] 'beautiful'

[ʃ] : [ʃu:f] 'look'

[x] : [xawwaf] 'coward'

[ħ] : [ħawwes] 'search'

[ʕ] : [ʕru:s] 'bride'

[h] : [hnaʃi] 'hurry up'

[ʂ] : [ʂala:t] 'prayer'

#### Affricate

[ʒ] : [ʒu:ʒ] 'two'

#### Lateral

[l] : [lajnta] 'when?'

#### Nasals

[m] : [mni:n] 'from where?'

[n] : [niʃan] 'exactly'

#### Flaps

[r] : [rafəd] 'hold'

#### Approximants

[w] : [win] 'where?'

[j] : [james] 'yesterday'

## **Vowels**

[æ] : [klæ] 'he ate'

[a] : [razəl] 'man'

[i] : [ʃɪn] 'not good'

[ə] : [ʃəd] 'take'

[o] : [nod] 'stand up'

[a:] : [fa:r] 'house'

[i:] : [ʃəli:t] 'I prayed'

[u:] : [saru:t] 'a key'

## **Diphthongs**

[aj] : [ʃajnijja] 'my eyes'

[aw] : [ʃalaw] 'they prayed'



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**List of Acronyms:**

AA: Algerian Arabic

AAEV: American African English Vernacular

BEV: Black English Vernacular

CA: Classical Arabic

LWC: Lower Working Class

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

OB: Ouled Bouhafess

OSA: Ouled Bouhafes Spoken Arabic

USA: United States of America

UWC: Upper Working Class

# General Introduction

Language is the most beneficial and stressful means of communication that enables people to convey messages and maintain social relationships. It represents a gift from God that specifies humans. Yet, not all humans speak in a homogenous way. For this reason, it is undoubted that language varies between countries, towns, villages, and even between individuals in the same speech community. Not only that, even individuals in the same family may differ in matter of speech i.e, each one has his own distinctive linguistic features. This fact is known as language variation and it has attracted the attention of many sociolinguists and researchers for many years. These latter have tried to analyze and decode the complexity of that phenomenon.

William Labov was the first one who initiated the study of language variation. He tried to describe the relationship between the social variables and the linguistic variables using experiential research work. We mean by the social variables the age of the speaker, his gender, his ethnicity and finally his social class and their relation with linguistic variables i.e, the phonological, the morphological, and the lexical ones.

We have also tried to examine language variation in relation to social factors in this research work. Then, we observed and analyzed the speech community of OB for the sake of testing the sociolinguistic issues mentioned in the review of literature. To tackle these issues, this research can be structured in the form of the following questions:

- ❖ What are the different linguistic features of OB's speech?
- ❖ What kind of language variation exists in OSA?
- ❖ Does the gender and age cause variation in the speech community of OB?

In order to have exact answers to these questions, we have proposed the following hypotheses:

- OB as any speech community has its own features of speech that distinguishes it from other dialects in the same district.
- OSA shows variation between its speakers in matter of phonology, morphology, and lexicons.
- Gender and age are two essential variables that cause language change in OSA.

This present work consists of two parts; one theoretical and other practical. The first one is devoted for the review of literature related to language variation beside to the definition of some sociolinguistic concepts. In the other one, we have tried some light on the linguistic situation of OB. Moreover, we have used the Labovian method by relating the phonological, the morphological, and the lexical variations and their correlation with social factors mainly age and gender with a quantitative. We have done an interview with thirty informants (ten pupils from each academic level). By doing so, we want to test the use of some variables which are /ð/, /θ/, and /d/.

By the end we made recordings for both males and females aged between 25 and 80 years old. Then, we analyzed them to get adequate answers for our proposed questions.

## Chapter one

# Sociolinguistic Concepts Related to Language variation

## Chapter one: Sociolinguistic Concepts Related to Language Variation

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## 1.1 Introduction

Language is the most essential instrument that enables people to interact and communicate with each other. Language has attracted the attention of different linguists and sociolinguists who investigate and try to understand the complexity of that phenomenon. Yet, language was initially studied separately from society as, was the case for the scholars De Saussure (1916) and Chomsky (1965) who studied it as "abstraction from society in which it operates" (Lyons, 1995: 221).

Researches ensure the fact that language cannot be studied unless it is related to the society where it is used. Therefore, we notice that variation which occurs is due to some sociological factors such as the gender of the speaker, his age, his social class, his level of education...ect. Hudson (1996:3) supports this fact as follow: "to study speech without reference to the society which uses it, is to exclude the possibility of finding social explanations for the structures that are used"

Linguistically speaking, there exist many varieties of languages which differ from each other in matter of formality, standardization, and informality. Sociolinguistics, as a wide field of human sciences gives a great importance to language variation since it is a features of humans i.e, just as humans change all the time due to several reasons, language as well changes because of various linguistic variables. In other terms, sociolinguistic studies aim to describe how a given language or a given dialect can be affected by age, gender, and social class or ethnicity of the speaker.

In our research , we are interested in Arabic and its different varieties being classical (CA), or Modern Standard (MSA) or colloquial Arabic. Thus, we will try to shed some light on its different varieties mentioning in the meantime some aspects of Algerian Arabic. Moreover, we will try to explain some linguistic concepts that are of a great importance in any sociolinguistic study.



## 1.2 Language varieties

Generally speaking, sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to society i.e., the extent to which language is influenced by the surrounding social structure.

In other words, it investigates the influence of different social factors on the way people speak. Moreover, it is interested in how languages vary in the same speech community. In this sense, Coulmas (1997:p.2) states that sociolinguistics "*investigates how social structure influences the way people talk and how language varieties and patterns of use correlate with social attributes such as class, sex and age*" (As mentioned in Wardhaugh,Ronald.An introduction to Sociolinguistics)

Ever since the mid and the late 1960s, there have been many articles and various books that tackle sociolinguistic issues -among which- language variation. In this respect, Chambers et.al (2004) say that "the study of language variation and change is the core of sociolinguistic enterprise"

The field of sociolinguistics is divided into two different approaches. Nevertheless, they are both complementary. Micro sociolinguistics deals with the influence of the different social factors such as age, gender, and education on the use of language. However, "macro sociolinguistics studies what societies do with their language, that is, attitudes and attachment that account for the functional distribution of speech in society, language shift, maintenance and replacement"(Coulmas, 1998).

In the same domain, other linguists such as Wardhough (2006) who argues that the study and the investigation of language variation reveals important issues related to language and its changes.

Language is just as any social phenomenon that is surely affected by the society where it is used i.e , its social context . In fact, there are several factors that cause language variation such as age , sex, social class, or educational background. Thus, we can have varieties of the same language.

Actually, the notion of variation and language varieties has attracted the attention of many linguists and sociolinguists. Accordingly, Hudson (1996, p.22) defines a variety of language as "*a set of linguistic items with similar distribution* ". In other words, we usually find in each language different varieties ranging from the most standardized and formal to the most colloquial and informal. This view allows us to say that all of Classical, Modern Standard, and colloquial are varieties of 'Arabic'.

That idea is described by Wardhaugh (2006, p.25) as follows "all languages exhibit internal variation, that is language exists in a number of varieties"

### 1.3 Difference between language and dialect

In each speech community, language is the most powerful and effective medium of conveying messages between speakers. It is defined by Holmes (1991) as "a collection of dialects that are usually linguistically similar, used by different social groups who choose to say that they are speakers of one language, which functions to unite and represent them to other groups".

Similarly, Goodenough (1981.P:5) defines it as "*a set of standards and organizing principles for a proper speech behavior. The standards comprising every known human language may be seen as ordered into several systems or levels of organization: the phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and symbolic.*"

In other words, language is always considered as more standard since it has its written form and grammar textbook. Indeed, it shows a variety of differences as compared to a dialect among which, a language is considered to be prestigious vis- a- vis a dialect.

For this reason, we may hear it spoken in official conferences, in various mass media, and in news papers where it is used by the intellectuals, and it is the one which is taught in school having its own vocabulary, spelling and grammar. An illustration, if we take Standard English as a language, it has different dialects such as Cockney, Yorkshire...etc.

Eventually, Wardhaugh (2006.P:25) defines it as opposite to a dialect by saying "*a language is used to refer either to a single linguistic norm or to a group of related norms and dialect is used to refer to one norm*"

We have to mention that speakers who cannot understand each other they are speaking two different languages. Whereas, if they are able to understand each other , then they are speakers of different dialects of the same language. This fact is known as mutual intelligibility. Dialect then is a term used to refer specifically to varieties with low social status. Accordingly, Trudgill (2004:3) defines it saying that "*a dialect is a substandard, low-status, often rustic form of language generally associated with the peasantry, the working class, or other groups lacking in prestige.*" In other terms, dialects usually do not have a standard or a codified form and they are rarely –if never- used in written form.

Moreover, a dialect is a variety of speech that reveals information either about the speaker's geographical or social belonging. For this reason, Chambers (2003:7) says that a dialect "*varies from other dialects of the same language simultaneously on the three linguistic levels: phonologically, grammatically, and in terms of vocabulary.*"

The term dialect is divided into two kinds; regional or social. Regional dialects exhibit differences in matter of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar depending on the geographical area of the speakers. In this concern, Wordhaugh (2006:44) says "*there may be distinctive colorings in the language which you notice when you move from one location to another*". Moreover, regional dialects are studied by dialectologists and they reveal information about our geographical belonging (where we come from)" Holmes(1984:134) says in this domain, "*dialectologists can distinguish regional varieties for almost every English country, e.g, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Northumberland, Somerset, Cornwall and so on, and for many towns too.*" In other terms, regional dialects enable us to distinguish between people from different areas by providing some linguistic differences.

Social dialects, on the other hand, distinguish speakers basically due to their social backgrounds such as their level of education, class, and ethnic group. Thus, people sometimes choose consciously a given dialect in order to display their belonging. As an example, the majority of black speakers in the USA tend to use the black vernacular English (B.E.V) in order to show their membership and ethnic group.

#### **1.4 Arabic and its Varieties:**

##### **1.4.1 The Arabic Language**

Arabic belongs to the Semitic subgroup of the Afro-Asiatic languages. It is the largest language in this family because of its richness of vocabulary. Arabic is used as the native language for more than 280 million of people in 22 countries<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, it is spoken in the region that starts from Western Asia to the north of Africa. In other words, it is spoken from Iraq in the eastern boundaries of the Arabian Peninsula to Morocco and Mouritania in the West of Africa.

During the pre-Islamic era, Arabic was used basically in the poetry of the Arabian Peninsula. Yet, in the mid 7th century and later its use has extended due to the rise of Islam especially after the different Arabic conquests. Thus, Arabic increased to be spoken north into the Levant, east into Iraq and west into the north of Africa.

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Watson (2002:6) in this respect says that "the rise and the expansion of Islam was not only a religious and hence cultural conquest, but also a linguistic conquest"

Before starting to discuss the issue of Arabic varieties , we have to shed some light on the basic linguistic features that distinguish its different forms. In other terms, researchers in universities and in academic fields usually foccuses their studies on Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), whereas, others who are interested in religion or in the field of history make their foccus on Classical Arabic (CA) and finally people who investigate the use of Arabic in dailylife are interested in the colloquial language of a given region in the Arab World. Thus, we deduce that Arabic language comes into three distinct forms i.e, Modern Standard Arabic(MSA) , Classical Arabic (CA), besides dialectal or colloquial Arabic.

#### **1.4.2 Classical Arabic**

Classical Arabic (CA) is the language used by Allah in his Holy book, the Quran. It was primarily used in poetry in the Western Hijazi tribe of Quraysh. Nevertheless, in the 8th and 9th century, it was codified by the Abbasid grammarians in order to be correctly read during the Abbasid era. Thus, CA plays a beneficial role so as to unify all the Arab countries from the Atlantic Ocean to the Perisian Gulf. During the Islamic History, CA was used in the royal and princely courts. It is language of Islam and it has gained a special importance after the spread of Islam. This variety differs from MSA in terms of vocabulary especially because it can be found only in the Quran or in the ancient poetry .

According to Ennaji ( 1991 :7-8) CA is "*...the language of Islam. It is codified and the vehicle of a huge body of classical literature.*"

#### **1.4.3 Modern Standard Arabic(MSA)**

MSA is the modern version of CA. It is the official language of all the Arab speakers in the Arab world. Accordingly, Ennaji (1991: 19) defines MSA as "*...standardized and codified to the extent that it can be understood by different Arabic speakers of the Maghreb and in the Arab world at large. It has the characteristics of a modern language surving as the vehicle of universal culture.*" MSA in its general sense, is the language that is used in official circumstances where modern expressions are used. Therefore, MSA is usually heard in the media and is taught in schools.

MSA emerged since the 19th century due to nationalism. Its primary objective is to unite all the Arab countries from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Sea under one common language.

#### 1.4.4 The colloquial Arabic

Colloquial or dialectal Arabic is the mother tongue spoken in the various regions of the Arab world i.e, the language used in every day communications whether in Algeria, Lebanon, or Saudi Arabia,...etc. Therefore, colloquial Arabic shows a regional variation either in the same country or between countries. All of these varieties are mutually intelligible. Yet, there are some exceptions where speakers of a given variety are not able to understand other varieties. For example the Middle Eastern speakers claimed that they find a difficulty to understand North African Arabic speakers whereas the reverse is true i.e., the North African Arabic speakers can understand other Arabic speakers because they are familiar with the Middle Eastern media.

Actually, the Arabic regional dialects can be divided into two major groups which are Maghrebi and Middle Eastern dialects. The first group represents the dialects that are spoken in North Africa (more exactly the Maghreb that includes Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya). The speech of this region is influenced by its colonizer's language e.g.France, Spain, Italy or influenced by Berber. For this reason, we notice that there exists a variety of several foreign words such as French and Spanish ones. The table below offers more clarification to this issue:

Agerian Arabic	The origin	Gloss
[t̪abla]	French	A table
[kozina]	Spanish	A kitchen
[ʃala]	French	A living room
[ʃəmbra]	French	A room
[stilu]	French	A pen
[fərmlijja]	French	A nurse

#### 1.1 Examples of some loan words used in AA

The other group, on the other hand, is Eastern Arabic variety that includes the Arabian Peninsula i.e., Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Yemen, besides to the countries of the Levant which are Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan.

Broadly speaking, dialects of the Maghreb and the Middle East vary at all linguistic levels. The table below clarifies more this idea:

Maghrebi variety	Middle East	MSA	Gloss
[mʃit ldzamiʃæ]	[roħt ʔilkolija]	[ðæhabto ʔila ldzamiʃa]	I went to the university
[ana nəhəb nsafər bærʃa]	[ʔana ʔahəb ʔasafer wajəd]	[ʔana ʔoħibibɔ ʔussafiru kaθirən]	I love travelling very much.
[fin kənti]	[kənti fin]	[ʔajna kənti]	Where were you ?
[ræni rajəħ nəqra]	[ʔana rajəħ ʔaqrəs]	[ʔana ðahibun ʔila ʔaddirasa]	I am going to study.

### 1.2 Illustration of variation between Maghribi Arabic and the Eastern one.

On the other hand, if we narrow the scope of study to shed the light only on the Maghreb, we find that variation exists in the same region itself. In other terms, the variety that is used in Algeria varies from that of Morocco, Tunisia, or Libya in many aspects. Actually, the three different varieties show a lexical variation in their daily communication i.e., Morocans and Tunisians tend to use the feminine form when they are addressing a man or a boy e.g., they say [mʃiti] instead of [mʃit] or [koli] instead of [kol].

Moreover, the linguistic terms that are used within one dialect are different from the other. Accordingly, there are plenty of words that have totally changed from one country to the other. Here are some expressions that are used in a variety of ways depending on the country. Here are some examples about this issue:

Algeria	Morocco	Tunisia	MSA	Gloss
[nhəwes]	[kanqəlləb]	[nlawəʒ]or[nfərkəs]	[ʔabħaθɔ]	I search
[jəhdər]	[jədwi]	[jəħki]	[jatakallamɔ]	He speaks
[nzaʃəq]	[kanədhək]	[nfadlək]	[ʔamzaħɔ]	I am joking

### 1.3 Illustration of language variation from different regions

From the examples above, it is obvious that there exists a linguistic variation between the three countries in spite of the fact that they belong to the same region, i.e, the Maghreb. Additionally to this , these three dialects are totally different from the Standard language i.e, MSA.

### 1.5 Algerian Arabic

Algerian Arabic (AA) is the mother tongue of Algerian speakers and it is the language that is usually used in daily life communication. AA is spoken by the majority of Algerians ' about 83 per cent of the population.' It is characterized by the presence of some foreign words that are borrowed from different languages such as French, Turkish, Spanish...etc) eg, [kuzina], [t̥awa], [t̥abla] . These languages had a great impact on Algerian speech. For this reason, we may hear a mixture of foreign words in their use of language either borrowed as they are or adopted phonologically. The table below provides illustrations about this fact:

Borrowed words	Gloss	Words adopted phonologically	Gloss
[bibɪ]	A baby	[t̥abla]	A table
[rizistɔns]	A heater	[fɔrʃit̥ɑ]	A fork
[frizidiɔr]	A fridge	[bumba]	A pump
[tilifizjun]	A television	[kuverta]	A blanket
[tilifu:n]	A telephone	[rubba]	A robe
[klimatizu:r]	An air conditioner	[maʃina]	A machine
[portabl]	A mobile phone	[funara]	A veil

### 1.4 examples of some borrowed words and other phonologically adopted

Code mixing is another linguistic phenomenon that appears in Algerian Arabic. In other terms, Algerians, especially the northerners, tend to switch between different codes in their speech i.e, they use different languages in different circumstances. This issue is due to several social, historical or personnel reasons e.g (either due to the impact of the colonization, or simply because of prestige.)

Actually, AA is spoken essentially in three regions which are from Constantine to Algiers in the East; the Oranic regions in the West; and the Sahara in the South. Surely, there exists a huge linguistic variation between these three regions since each region has its special way of speaking and each region has urban as well as rural dialects. In fact, this variation sometimes affects the mutual intelligibility between the speakers. Accordingly, speakers of Algiers cannot fully understand the dialect of Adrar and vice versa, and even the speakers of Tindouf may not understand or be understood by the inhabitants of Annaba, Oran, or even by the speakers of the Sahara themselves.

The linguistic terms that are used in each region are not the same. Depending on our personal observations, the table illustrates that idea:

Oran	Algiers	SoukAhrass	Tindouf	Adrar	Gloss
[lotɔ]	[ʔonobil]	[lkahrba]	[lwata]	[kərruʂa]	A car
[ʒurjan]	[drari]	[dɖaqs]	[tərka]	[lʂajel]	Children
[zwawəʃ]	[zzawəʃ]	[zwawəʃ]	[tju:r]	[tju:r]	Birds
[rani ʔadi]	[rani rajəh]	[rani mrawweh]	[rani rajəh]	[rani maʃi]	I am going.

### 1.5 Variation between different regions in AA

We notice from the table above that the words which are used in the north are not the same in the east, or in the west, or in the south. Another ambiguous example that the speech of Wad Suf, instead of saying simply [jaju:rt] 'yogurt', they say [ilhibil elmidardir filqiwaʔa]. This fact surely affects the mutual intelligibility between these regions.

Phonologically speaking, AA has 24 consonants in addition to the short and the long vowels. Yet, AA has a distinctive feature from SA that is the omission of short vowels in some positions such as in [xizana] which becomes [xzana] (wardrobe), or [turab] that becomes [trab] (soil) and thus we deduce that AA speakers tend to shorten the syllable structure of Standard Arabic. Furthermore, we observe that some diphthongs such as [aj] and [aw] are substituted by long vowels [i:] and [u:]. Here are some illustrations about this fact: [ʂajn] becomes [ʂie:n] or [ʂi:n] (eye), and [ʒawf] that is pronounced [xu:f].



Another example about phonological variation is the use of the phoneme /q/ that is pronounced differently across Algeria. In the table below, we try to give examples from different places where the phoneme /q/ is uttered in a variety of ways:

Algiers	Oran	Tlemcen	Jijel	Gloss
[ʃanduq]	[ʃandug]	[ʃanduʔ]	[ʃanduk]	A box
[qul]	[gul]	[ʔul]	[kul]	Talk
[qrib]	[grib]	[ʔrib]	[krib]	Near
[soq]	[ʃug]	[soʔ]	[suk]	A market
[mərqa]	[mərɡa]	[mərʔa]	/	A sauce
[tfarqna]	[tfargna]	[tfarʔna]	[tfarkna]	We have been separated.
[qəlb]	[gəlb]	[ʔəlb]	[kəlb]	A heart
[qərʃa]	[gərʃa]	[ʔərʃa]	[karʃa]	Courgette

### 1.6 Different realizations of the phoneme /q/ across Algeria

We notice from the examples mentioned above that the phoneme /q/ causes variation in AA. This latter sometimes leads to confusion in terms comprehension and makes the mutual intelligibility difficult unless people are familiar with the dialects of different Algerian regions.

#### 1.6 Language Variation

Language is a means of communication that helps to convey information, thoughts, and feelings. Moreover, language enables its users to communicate and exchange ideas. Yet, these latter show a big variability in their speech. In other terms, the use of language differs from one speaker to the other. Wardhaugh (2006: 5) says in this respect" *No one speaks the same way all the time and people constantly exploit the nuance of*

languages they speak for a wide variety of purposes". Variation is in fact caused due to several factors including the speaker's gender, his educational background, his age, his social class, or his geographical background.

Variability is a property of all languages in all over the world and it appears in different levels which are the phonetic, the phonological, and the morphological level. Wardhaugh (2006: 130-131) supports his idea as follows: "*It is quite apparent that no two individuals are exactly alike in their linguistic capacities just as no two social situations are exactly alike. People are separated from one another by fine gradations of social class, region and occupation by factors such as religion, gender, nationality and ethnicity.*"

The study of variation represents an essential subject of sociolinguistics which tries to investigate how languages vary and how these different factors influence it. Concerning the issue of language variation and the different variables that affect it we may distinguish two kinds of variables. There are some independent variables that represent the social variables including gender, social class, the ethnicity...etc and other dependent ones that represent the linguistic variables.

### 1.7 The linguistic variable

A linguistic variable is a linguistic unit that has many alternative variants where the meaning remains constant, but the form changes either lexically, phonologically, or syntactically. For instance the word pussy, to refer to the cat, is an example of a lexical change. Wardhaugh (2006:15) defines it as "*a linguistic item which has identifiable variants*" whereas Trudgill (2004: 50) says that: "*linguistic variables can often be regarded as socially different but linguistically equivalent ways of doing or saying the same thing.*" Moreover, the linguistic variable is seen as 'free variation' as stated by Meyerhoff (2006, p10): "*In the past, it was described as 'free variation': by free they meant that there were no clear linguistic constraints which would predict when you got one variant rather than another. So, free essentially meant unconstrained.*".

Phonologically speaking, the phoneme /t/ has two or more variants in the English spoken in Norwich e.g, 'tea [ti:], between [bətwi:n], bitter [bitə] [bi?ə], bit [bit] [bi?]' . From the examples above we notice that [t] is realized sometimes as [ʔ] and it may be

simply realized as [t]. Moreover, this variable actually has three variants in Norwich: "[t] = [t], [t]=[tʔ], [t]=[ʔ]"p:51.

From another angle, the syntactic variable occurs in most English dialects where speakers use a multiple negation such as in: " 1) *I don't want none, or he didn't nothing* instead of '*I don't want any 'or 'he didn't do anything*' Labov (1972) has classified the linguistic variable through three distinctive types depending on the degree of consciousness of the speaker while using certain variables. Accordingly, a variable may be a marker, an indicator, or a stereotype. A marker is a variable used by the speaker consciously, and it "not only shows social distribution, but also stylistic differentiation." (Labov,1970 :188) .However, the indicator is a variable which the speaker uses with less awareness or as Labov says that indicators are variables which "are used by each individual in more or less the same way in any context"(Labov: 188). A stereotype, on the other hand, is a popular description of the speech of a given group of people as the example '*Thirty Third Street*' or '*bird*' used in New York as '*toity toid street*' and '*boid*'. Eventually, we can say that the linguistic variable is defined as a linguistic item with alternative variants that interchange between each other without affecting the meaning, it co-varies according to the speaker's age, gender, social class, and ethnic group. In what follows, we will examine the relationship between language and previous social factors and to what extent they influence language use.

### 1.7.1 Age

It is logical that a language, as any dynamic phenomenon, varies all the time. The age of the speaker is one among the factors that plays a significant role in this variation. Sociolinguists argue that the young speakers exhibit a big variation while speaking vis-a-vis the older ones. Chambers et al (2004:157) clarifies how the change happens by saying : "*For an innovation to be purely age-based it must involve the replacement of a linguistic feature by all the younger speakers in a community regardless of their social class, sex and other social characteristics*". Moreover, Janet Holmes ( 2001 :206) says that age-grading differences: "*are interpreted as indicators of change in progress. Younger speakers tend to use more of the newer or innovative forms, and the older speakers use more of the older, conservative forms, the ones they adopted in their teenage years*"

From the quotation above, we deduce that the change happens essentially in the speech of the young people because these latter use some linguistic items that are different or may be innovated from those of the old people.

Accordingly, if we make a stratification that is based on age, then we can notice the change in the speech of people through their life from one generation to the other as Labov (1994: 112) says: "*generational change is the basic model for sound change.*"

### 1.7.2 Gender

Another social feature with which the linguistic variation happens is the gender of the speaker. Accordingly, the language varies depending on the sex of the speaker. For this reason, we may find certain linguistic differences between men and women in matter of communication i.e. speech.

Actually, the issue of gender and its impact on language has attracted the attention of many sociolinguists who proved the fact. Among which, Bouhadiba (2002:38) says:

*"sex correlates with linguistic variation."* Beside to Trudgill (2002: 62) who says "*men have a great many expressions peculiar to them which women understand but never pronounce themselves.*" In another article he affirms that there exist certain variations in the speech of children as well, he says (2002: 62): "*sex differentiation in language has been shown to occur even in the speech of children.*"

Women use a variety of speech that differs from that of men in their use of prestige and the standard forms of language, especially in the western societies. Trudgill(1995:69) in this regard says: "women on average use forms which more closely approach those of standard variety or the prestige accent than those used by men".

Moreover, women are more conservative in their speech than men as it is argued by Meryerhoff (2006: 204): "*Women who move to a new village when they get married maintain their first language.*"

Female speech is mainly characterized by a cooperative style by which they tend to engage all the members of the group in the conversation speaking about their private lives. They listen to each other and sometimes interrupt each other to show agreement or to give support or to finish what her partner intends to say. Concerning this issue, Robin Lakoff (1975) summarizes the characteristics of female speech in the following points:1) they use a lot of tag questions because of their lack in power and confidence. 2) their speech is full of hedges .3) they use the exaggeration by the use of empty adjectives, adverbs with

emphatic stress. 4) females often speak in a polite form so as to be liked or autonomous. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to neglect status and prestige i.e. they do not usually use the standard variety of language and they are more oriented toward the vernacular.

In this regard, Downes (1998: 210) says :"*...men are relatively integrated into social networks which act as a norm enforcement mechanisms for the vernacular.*" Eventually, men are more likely to dominate some business meetings rather than speaking about private topics such as feelings and personal life.

To conclude about the correlation between the language and the gender of the speaker, we draw a table that summarizes the speech of each gender:

The male speech	The female speech
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men use a low speech</li> <li>• They swear a lot using 'wallah' and 'oqsimu billah'.</li> <li>• They are assertive in group interaction.</li> <li>• They use falling intonation rather than rising.</li> <li>• Men use traditional males' topics as business, sports, and politics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They use politeness in their speech.</li> <li>• They exaggerate a lot.</li> <li>• Their speech is full of hedges such as I guess, I think.</li> <li>• They use high pitch and rising intonation.</li> <li>• Women use a lot of tag questions in their speech as in it's cold, isn't it?</li> </ul>

## 2.7 Stereotypes about male and female speech

### 1.7.3 Social class

The social class to which the speaker belongs is another distinctive feature among the linguistic variables. In other terms, the person who belongs to the high class does not speak like the one who belongs to the middle class as well as the low class. Trudgill (1995:23) defines the social class as :"*a term used to refer to any hierarchical ordering of groups within society*". The term social class was first used in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century following the industrial and political revolution of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Usually, sociolinguists use a kind of stratification in order to classify people in a social system. They base their classification on the occupation or the educational level. In Algeria, for instance, people are classified through their level of education since there is no

class system. In England, English speakers can know from which rank the speaker is through the dialect he or she uses i.e, whether he is of a higher or lower social status.

From an investigation that is made in Norwich where [ng] varies in matter of pronunciation depending on their social class, Trudgill (2004: 5) says that: "*there is a very clear relationship between usage of this variable and social class membership: the [ng] .2 /n/ variants is much more typical of working class speech. Secondly, it indicates that there is a language difference in scores between the LWC (Lower Working Class) and UWC (Upper Working Class).*"

Moreover, Gumperz' s work (1958) in India is also among the works about social stratification. It confirms that there is a relationship between linguistic variation and caste membership. Labov's work interested (1966) is in the presence and absence of the sound /r/ in words like 'car' and 'hard' based on the social class of the speaker. Eventually, Trudgill (1995:28) summarizes the findings of these works by saying: "*linguists have known for a long time that different dialects and accents are related to differences of social class background.*"

#### **1.7.4 Ethnicity**

Ethnicity is one among the social factors that affect the individual's speech. An ethnic group can be defined as a sum of several cultural, racial, linguistic, political, educational, religious, or economic factors that identify a given group of people and separate them from others. As we have mentioned above language is a distinctive feature by which human beings are identified. In this respect, Holmes (2013:186) says: "*Many ethnic groups use a distinctive language associated with their ethnic identity.*"

Accordingly, each ethnic group has a certain way of speaking or uttering certain words and phonemes. Holmes (2013: 188) adds in this regard: "*The pronunciation of [r] in words like part and star is widely noted as a marker of Scottish ethnicity. American Jewish people often signal their ethnicity with a distinctive accent of English within any city in which they have settled.*"

African Americans have created a new variety of English known as African American vernacular English (AAVE). This latter has a variety of distinct features from US which is a symbol of ethnicity. This variety was first introduced by the black speakers who live in America and use a variety known as Black English Vernacular in order to show their ethnic belonging. B.E.V was later replaced by American African English Vernacular (AAEV). This latter is characterized by some differences at the grammatical

level and the phonological one. From the grammatical side, AAEV is characterized with the absence of the copula 'to be'. However, at the phonological level as Hinbel (2005) says, they stress the first syllable rather than the second. Similarly, Irish speakers in Belfast use a distinct variety of English to show their ethnic membership belonging.

Additionally, each ethnic group is distinguished from the other by its religion. In other terms, religion is another feature of ethnicity. Furthermore, as Arabs we have a particular language that characterizes and even specializes us to be distinct from others, that is to say, Arabic. This latter is an essential identifying feature of ethnic groups belonging.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have tried to shed some light on language variation. We focused particularly on Arabic and its varieties i.e, MSA, CA, and the colloquial Arabic. We also tried to show their different features. Concerning language varieties in general, we give some differences between the language and the dialect. Eventually, in order to narrow our field of study, we give some characteristics of AA and its varieties across its regions.

Moreover, we have tackled on language variation that is an important subject of sociolinguistics. We have given a brief definition of the linguistic variables and we tried to show the relation between these variables and the social factors i.e. age, gender, ethnicity, and social class. In other words, we have presented to some extent the correlation between the dependent (linguistic) variables and the independent (social) ones explaining in the meantime to what extent these factors affect and influence our use of language. Actually, these sociolinguistic issues affect directly our language use. Yet, we will test these facts upon the dialect of Ouled Bouhafs.

## Chapter two

# Sociolinguistic variation in the speech of OB



## **Chapter Two: Sociolinguistic Variation in the Speech of Ouled Bouhafs**

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## Sociolinguistic variation in OB's speech

### 2.1 Introduction

Language variation is a subject of great importance in the field of sociolinguistics. Many researchers, interested in this phenomenon, try to investigate how languages vary from one region to the other and how they differ between individuals as well. Furthermore, they search for the reasons that lead to this variation. Actually, any language is dynamic by nature i.e., it varies all the time. Arabic is one among the languages that vary from one country to another. Not only that, language may differ across the same country. As an example, in Algeria, there exist many varieties of Arabic.

In our research, we shall analyze OB's speech which is a dialect among the Adrarian speech community. It has its special features that are of course different from the dialect that is used in the city centre as well as the other dialects used in Algeria. We shall examine the variation of these characteristics among individuals relating them with different linguistic features and social variables mainly age and gender. In order to reach exact and reliable information, we collect data from the native speakers in this village.

### 2.2 Research Methodology

Language is a dynamic phenomenon that attracts the attention of many sociolinguists. In our research, we shall examine the issues that we have mentioned in the theoretical part and we will test to what extent they exist in the dialect of OB. In doing so, we collect data based essentially on personal observations and recordings. As a member of the speech community of OB, this facilitates the task of gathering data. In this research, the first instrument that is used is observation i.e., we take notes during interactions between speakers of OB' speech community. In fact, personal observation is a beneficial way of gathering data and helps to gain time since we observe and we take notes simultaneously. Milroy and Gordon (2003:68) support using this method by saying :*"Participant observation can be an enormously fruitful method for sociolinguistic analysis. It produces a tremendous supply of high quality data and crucial insight into community dynamics."*

Yet, we did not depend just on this method. Moreover, we have used recordings with the native speakers in order to get reliable data. Actually, we gathered data from different speakers - males, females, young, and old, educated and illiterate.

The period of March was a helpful time since a lot of marriages are celebrated. Women in this period join alltogether discussing several topics, that what gives us the opportunity to record them using the mobile phone. The participants are not informed that they are being recorded in order to avoid the pressure. In doing so, we have sit with women for almost one hour listening, observing, taking notes and from time to time recording.

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Concerning the issue of variation in men's speech, we ask our relatives to do the recordings for us. Nevertheless, we have benefited from the opportunity of being in the bus, where men talk a lot (we mean men from my village.) So, we listened and we recorded in the same time. In the end, we gathered, transcribed, and analyzed the data.

The general aim of this research is to examine variation in my village and analyze the different linguistic features that distinguish it from other 'ksours' villages or from the city centre. We shall examine the correlation between linguistic features and social variables. In our analysis, we will rely on the Labovian hypothesis that sees age and gender as two main factors that lead to language variation.

In our research, we have asked the participants who are pupils in the three academic levels living in OB to read some variables and analyzed them. Generally speaking, the participants who are considered by the research are children, adolescents, adults and old people. In other terms, my informants are males and females aged between 5 to 70 years old.

### **2.3 Geographical Situation of OB**

OuledBouhafess is a small village (ksar) among 'the 400 ksours of Touat'. It is located in Timmi district. It belongs to the municipality of Ouled Ahmed Timmi which belongs to the willaya of Adrar. Its borders are Akbour from the north, Mahdia from the south, SabkhatTamentit from the east, and finally the ancientOuledbouhafes (OuledBouhafeslgdima) from the west. Its name refers to its founder "ShikhBouhafes". In 1006 BC, " Akbour" was settled in OB. Its population is not too much and they work in farming and agriculture. For this reason, there are a lot of palm trees and they use the technique of Fugaraas a system of irrigation.

Each year, OB is known with its celebration to some occasions known as 'ziara'. The majority of women in OB are housewives from the same village. Thus, they speak alike using the similar terms which makes the task easier for us. Women most of the time meet each other in their houses especially on occasions such as weddings, [Iʃid] [zijara],...etc.

Actually, we have chosen this village as a case study because we live there. So, we already have some knowledge or background about its sociolinguistic features. In our study we are interested mainly in the speech of OB and examining the influence of age and gender that cause variation.

### **2.4 Linguistic variables**

As we have mentioned in the theoretical part that there exist certain variation in any speech community in all over the world. Practically speaking, we have done our examination in OB in order

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to test this idea. Actually, not all people in OB are originated from this ksar. In other terms, the intermarriages cause and enlarge the variety since some wives are from different places, e.g, either from the town, the south of Adrari.e, Aoulef and Reggane, or from the northern cities. Thus, in our data collection, we take in consideration these facts but we base our studies on those people whose parents are originated from OB.

### 2.5 Phonological variables

In each speech community, there exist certain differences in matter of language use either phonologically, morphologically, or lexically. Concerning the phonological variation in the speech of OB the two variables /θ/ and /ð/ are uttered differently whether in the speech of children or the aged ones, either males or females. The two variables are sometimes realized as they are but for others they are pronounced respectively as /z/ and /t/. In order to examine this, we observe and listen to our participants reading some words or sentences that include these variables.

From another side, OB' speech is characterized with the omission of the vowel in the first syllable as compared to the speech of people who live in the city centre or generally different from MSA. The table clarifies this idea:

OB' speech	The city centre speech	MSA	Gloss
[rahjəbki]	[rahujabki]	[inahujabki]	He is crying
[raktsmɑːʕ]	[raktasmaʕ]	[hal anta tasmaʕu]	Have you heard?
[Kəntnħfed]	[kuntnaħfad]	[kuntuaħfidu]	I was memorizing.
[rahujkteb]	[rahujektəb]	[innahujektubu]	He is writing

### 2.8 examples of the vowel omission in OB's speech

#### 2.5.1 The variable /ð/

The variable /ð/ causes a huge variation in the speech of OB. It is realized for some as /ð/ while others pronounce it as /z/. To test this fact, we have asked the informants who are ten pupils (boys and girls) from primary, ten from middle, and ten from high school. Concerning pupils in primary school, they were asked to read words such as [ðahaba] ذهب 'he went', [ustaðun] استاذ 'teacher', and [ðanbun] ذنب 'a sin'. Actually, all of the participants pronounce them with the phoneme /z/. Their realizations were as follows: [zahaba], [ustazun], and [zanbun]. Yet, one girl had a distinct reading i.e, she pronounced the /ð/ because of the fact that she grew up in the north of Algeria

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(Algiers). So, her pronunciation is different from her peer group although she has lived in OB for two years or more.

As far as pupils of middle and high school are concerned, we have given them sentences that include this variable and two others. Here are the five sentences:

- 1) [la juflihu aɖɖalimuheiθuata] ' لا يفلح الظالم حيث أتى '
- 2) [iða kana əlkalamu min fiddatinfəssukutu min ðahabin] ' اذا كان الكلام من فضة فالسكوت من ذهب '
- 3) [ʔanaʔantaɖʒiruhumunðuʔassabaħ] أنا أنتظره منذ الصباح
- 4) [ʒuðrunʔaɖbaħu min ðanbin] عذر أقبح من ذنب
- 5) [qadʔaʒðara men ʔanðara] قد أعذر من أنذر

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We notice that the variable /ð/ is repeated a lot in the five sentences. Yet, it is pronounced as /z/ by all the participants except five pupils in the middle school (four girls and one boy. These latter pronounce it correctly because they study in the Quranic school and they are accustomed pronouncing these words

### 2.5.2 The variable /θ/

Among the distinctive features that characterize OB' speech is the pronunciation of /θ/. People in this speech community pronounce the dental /t/ instead of /θ/. The the result of our test are the following:

MSA	OB'speech	Gloss
[ħeiθu]	[ħeitu]	where
[miθli]	[mitli]	like me
[θalaθa]	[talata]	three
[θijjiabun]	[tijjiabun]	clothes
[θamanun]	[tamanun]	cost

As we have mentioned in the previous example, only the four pupils i.e, the three girls and one boy have succeeded in pronouncing /θ/ while the others pronounce the dental /t/. Yet, all the pupils of high school failed in the realization.

### 2.5.3 The variable /d/

We will finish our speech about the phonological variables that characterize OB 'speech with the phoneme /d/. This latter is realized as /z/ in OB. For more clarification, the table below exhibits its realization:

OB' speech	MSA	Gloss
[ʔazzalimin]	[ʔadqalimin]	the unfair
[ʔentazrətuhu]	[ʔintadertuhu]	I waited him
[mizalla]	[miqalla]	umbrella
[zala:m]	[qala:m]	darkness
[zabei]	[qabei]	gazelle

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[zɑ:hira]	[ɖɑ:hira]	a phenomenon
[zərf]	[ɖərfun]	an envelope

Eventually, we noticed that the phonemes /ð/, /θ/, and /d/ are rarely pronounced as they are. Rather, they are respectively pronounced as /z/, /t/, and /z/ whether in the primary, the middle, or the secondary school.

#### 2.6.1 Morphological variable {ih}vs {u:}

Among the morphological differences that exist in OSA is the suffix {ih}. It has a significant role because it is used in the third person singular masculine, as an object pronoun e.g [gətlɪh], 'I said to him'. This latter is the reduced form in MSA [qultulahu]. Yet, in the city centre the morpheme [u:] replaces [ih]. For more illustrations, here are some linguistic items used in OB as opposed to the city centre:

OSA	City centre	Gloss
[zgɪlɪh]	[ʕajəʔɪlɪh]	call him
[bʕatɪh]	[bʕətlu]	send him
[ʃrɪtɪh]	[ʃrɪtlu]	I bought to him
[ʕɪtɪlɪh]	[ʕɪtɪlu]	I gave him
[ktəbtɪh]	[ktəbtlu]	I wrote to him
[zəbtɪh]	[zəbtlu]	I brought him

#### 2.6.2 The variable {ija} vs. {i}

Another morphological feature in OSA is the existence of the suffix {ija} instead of {i:}. It is used in the first person singular also as an object pronoun e.g [galɪjja], 'he said to me'. It is used in MSA as [qɑ:lali]. As we did with the previous example, in a comparison with the variety of speech used in the city centre, the morpheme {ija} is replaced by {i:}. For more clarification, we will examine such examples in OSA:

OSA	City centre	Gloss
[zɪblɪjja]	[zɪbli]	bring me
[ɣsəllɪjja]	[ɣsəllɪ]	he washed to me
[ktəbtɪjja]	[ktəbtli]	he wrote to me

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[sməhlija]	[smehli]	forgive me
[srəqlija]	[sreqlija]	he stole me
[fliksilija]	[fliksili]	send me money

It is crystal clear from the examples above that the speech of the city centre is closer to MSA style where there is the use of the suffix {i:}.

### 2.7 Lexical variation

Language by nature changes due to several factors i.e., place, time, and society. When the society starts changing, the language changes as well, either in its form or in its meaning.

#### 2.7.1 Lexical variation in form

It means the fact that certain words have the same meaning but different forms in the same dialect or in two different ones. We will show some illustrations of the differences between MSA and OSA:

OSA	MSA	GLOSS
[gədra]	[qidrun]	A pot
[mħerma]	[xima:r]	A veil
[tilifu:n]	[hatifnaqqal]	A mobile phone
[tɑ:qa]	[nafiðatun]	A window
[ħit]	[zidarun]	A wall
[rged]	[na:ma]	He slept
[zgiba]	[ki:sun]	A bag
[kərɬab]	[miħfaɖatun]	A school bag
[ħuta]	[samakatun]	A fish
[ɟajjil]	[aɬfæl]	Children
[mubila]	[darrazanarijia]	A motorbike
[stæd]	[malɟəb]	A stadium
[mu:s]	[sikki:n]	A knife
[zwijsən]	[zami:l]	Handsome



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### 2.9 illustrations of lexical variation in form

It is clear from the table above that the words used in MSA have the same meaning with those of OSA but differ in forms. Moreover, there are some words which have the same form and the same meaning but different pronunciation.

We can also illustrate for this idea by giving terms that show variation between some ksour where the words have the same meaning but they have different forms such as:

OSA	TamentitBoufaddi	gloss	
[gaʕda]	[mrajħa]	[mqanda]	she is sitting
[bba]	[didi]	[bæbæ]	dad
[jawini]	[wi:li:]	[wini]	Oh my God!
[drri:fa]	[zwaina]	[ħwidga]	a nice person

**2.10**

### illustrations of lexical variation

#### 2.7.2 Lexical variation in meaning

It is the fact that some words have the same form but different meaning. In other terms, the speakers of OB use some linguistic items that are used in MSA as well but they do not mean the same. This idea is clarified more in the table below:

OSA	Meaning in English	MSA	Meaning in English
[da:r]	He turned around	[da:run]	A house
[məħsu:s]	Ill	[maħsu:s]	Concrete
[mna:seb]	An iron item used in cooking	[mana:sib]	Positions
[ma:leħ]	A nice person	[ma:liħ]	Salty
[maktu:b]	Destiny	[maktu:b]	Written
[ħarrak]	To run	[ħarraka]	To move some thing

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### 2.11 illustration of lexical variation in meaning

We can deduce from these examples that lexical variation deals with synonymy and polysemy. Synonymy means that two or more different words have the same meaning but different forms such as [ʒalasa] and [gʕad] 'he sit'.

On the other hand, polysemy refers to the fact that one word has more than one meaning as shown in the following table:

OSA	Meaning in English	Second meaning in OSA
[ka:r]	A bus	A vessel
[xi:r]	Welfare	Greeting
[soɣ]	A market	Throw out
[nahdar]	I am talking	I am joking
[ʕandek]	You have	Be careful

### 2.12 Examples of polysemy in OSA

### 2.8 Language variation based on gender

In fact variation due to differences between men and women in matter of speech is manifested at different levels. In other terms, once doing our recordings we notice that men speak in a totally different way from women. The differences include the topics discussed, and other features of speech. Concerning women's topics, they are very limited, that is to say, they speak mainly about their private life or other subjects from the surrounding environment such as [zwaʒ], [ħfada], [tħara],...etc. A noticeable feature in OSA' women speech is that it is affected by the situation where they are. In other words, if they are in a wedding, their speech will be all the time closely related to it such as talking about [lʕarʒ], [ləʕris], [lxatba]...etc. The following dialogues illustrate this idea:

W1: sməʕtu weld alħazəlħasanħteb? (did you hear that the son of AlhadjAlhasan has made the engagement?)

W2 :?iwa: tba:rkəllah!walu ma smeʕnaji, mnin? (really! we did not know. From where?)

W1: galulikħtabmənmeħdia bent alħaʒSliman. (they said that his fiancé is from Meħdia the daughter of AlhadjSliman.)

W3: slə:ʕənnbi!alħaʒslimanʕandulbentlliwaslaləzzwaz? (Peace be upon the Prophet! Does AlhadjSliman have a mature girl?)

W1 :?ijjih, tbarkallah. (yes, may Allah protect her.)

### Sociolinguistic variation in OB's speech

W3: ʔiwaallahjaslaħ. (May Allah

We notice from the dialogue above that women centre their speech on engagement since they are on an occasion of a wedding.

Let us consider another example of women's topic that is about death in a home where there is a funeral [laʕza]:

W1: lajelahailatah, innalilahwainnaileihiraziʕu:n. (there is no God but Allah, we are worshipers of Allah and we will return back to him.

W2 :ʔeʕħlegbəsmallsh? (what happened?)

W1: melħir bent sidalmaʕtafajədumətaħ. (Oumalkhir the daughter of sid al mostafa, died.)

W2: la:ʔelahailatah, twəfatmskina. səʕiramazal. waʕkantmrida? (Shedied?!.She is still young. Was she ill?)

W1: ʔijjih. (yes.)

The women this time are at a funeral; for this reason their speech is about death, (any thing that is related to it), and mainly about the person who died and the good deeds.

On the other hand, men's topics differ from women's ones. In other words, their speech is usually about politics, sports, occupation, beside to talking about some electronic matters, or new innovations such as mobiles, cars, televisions...etc. Indeed, men as well give importance to sports and cars...etc. They pass most of the time discussing a single point in an organized way such as the discussion of a football match.

Here is a passage from a dialogue of men aged from 25 to 30 years who spend a lot of time speaking about the same subject:

M1: ʕmerkmlʕəbtumʕamurinjuftjilsiwəbaħtubnatiʕakθarmənanzirro, w bstta w sttinkəffa. ( have you ever played with Moreno in chancily and you gained more than 1-0?)

M2: anagəltmʕarijal. ( I said with real.)

M1: wahmʕarijal, ʔawelmusem da fihʕamsa. Wəʔawelmarrajdarrebflaliga. (yes, with the team of Real, the first season, it takes five goals and it was the first time he trained in the League.)

### Sociolinguistic variation in OB's speech

M2: muflaliga...( not the league)

M1: ʒlahlaʒblenglizwəʒaljankifikif? ( Do the English players and the Italian ones play in the same way?)

M3: kəlhawəʒariqtu. ( each one has his own way of playing.)

Unlike women, men are likely not to discuss the topic that is related to the setting where they are. Accordingly, although they are in a wedding their conversation is about sports. Moreover, men during a long period of time stick to one subject to discuss whereas women switch from one topic to the other in the same time.

Another point of view that shows variation between men and women in matter of speech is the linguistic features of each gender. In fact, from the data that we have gathered we notice that there is a huge variation concerning the conversational styles used by each of the sexes.

Accordingly, among the linguistic features that characterize men' speech is that men in OB use factual events and some social problems rather than speaking about their personal issues. They use a report style in order to reveal certain exact piece or pieces of information. The dialogue that follows clarifies this issue:

M1: anagəltlik ɖa lɐrmiʒlaχamsawʒʒri:nsana.( I said he passed the driving test at the age of 25 years old)

M2: anawelahʒirχuja ɖah ʒlawəhedwəʒʒri:n. ( believe me my brother passed it at the age of 21 years old)

M1: anaχuja ɖah ʒlaχamsawʒʒri:nbaʒʒaħhadaklqanunləqdim.(my brother did so when he was 25 years but in the previous system.)

M2: makanʒmenha!ʒrɔspor ʒʒaħʒlaχamsawʒʒri:nbaʒʒaħ ....(no way! To have a driving license of a transport actually is at the age of 25 but.....)

M1: ʒmmalakifikif mem llurχamsawʒʒri:n. (so, it is the same thing for the lorry's one!)

M2: lukankifikifʒlaχamsawʒʒri:n, tana ndirʒrɔspor. ( so, if it the same thing ,me too I will take the transport' one?!)

M3: muħal!ʒrɔsporbalaklazemjikunʒandekllur. ( Impossible! To have such type of driving test I think you need to have to pass the lorry' one first.)

M2: waluʒlahwəʒndirbih? ( No, what has it got to do with it?)

### Sociolinguistic variation in OB's speech

We understand from the previous dialogue that men contrary to women, speak of subjects that are beyond their private life (as in the case of the driving license). They use exact terms by naming each vehicle its name

Furthermore, men usually speak objectively and they avoid repeating ideas and details. Men interrupt a lot in the conversation whether they are with the same or with the opposite gender. By doing so, they aim to show that they are aware of the topic of the debate. As mentioned in the first chapter that men swear too much during the conversation, the male speech of OSA confirms this idea because men swear a lot in order to be confident in their speech. Men also use a lot of loan words i.e, French words such as:

The use of loan words in OSA	Their origin	Gloss
[telfizju:n]	La television	Television
[mem ʃɔz]	La Meme chose	The same thing
[ʧrɔnsɔr]	Le transport	Transportations
[bjensu:r]	Biensure	of course
[diriket]	Direct	Directly
[roʃar]	Trop tard	Too late
[norma:l]	Nourmal	Normal
[kuzi:na]	La cuisine	Kitchen
[æddu]	La douche	Bathroom
[liku:n]	[l'ecole	The school
[mikru]	L' ordinateurur	The computer
[lfɔ:t]	Le vote	The election
[lblasa]	Une place	The place
[sima:na]	La semaine	The weak
[ssa:k]	Le sac	A bag
[fuʃuko:pi]	Photo copier	Photocopier
[balɔ]	Le ballon	Football
[lloʃo]	L'automobile	A car

## Sociolinguistic variation in OB's speech

### 2.13 Examples of some loan words in the male speech of OSA

Actually, the words stated in the table above are used most of the time by men but this does not mean that women never utter them. They rarely use them in their speech. For example, women are likely to use [ʔabʕilijja] or [sawrilijja] 'make me a copy' instead of [dirilijjafoʔokoppi]. Moreover, men in OB are characterized with their exaggerated use of French numbers rather than using the Arabic ones. Not only that, when men speak about cars, they usually name each car with its specific name for example: they say [ʔri:twaʔnedssuuki] 'I have brought a Suzuki.' or [ʔufʔhalrahidiriʔaksent had lʔamat] 'in your opinion, how much does the 'Accent' cost these days?' Women on the other hand, give one name to all the cars i.e, the small ones are called 'daweo' [dajju] and the big ones are [kamju]. A passage of male speech clarifies this issue:

M1: welaʔjamulajlaʔdidrahifaʕlafihennar had lʔamat. ( Ohmoulay, believe me the vehicles are very expensive these days.)

M2: ʔanallivajbathali laksuntlilijahadatwafatrahitgu:l fi mjawstt:nmalju:nʔaʔbamafihawaluwennasʔajʔhinʕliha. (For me the strange thing is that the Accent that is like death certificate but it costs 160 millions although it is useless.

Women as well use a variety of ways of speech that are distinct from men. Accordingly, they use tag questions, hedges, exaggeration, politeness, and the use of a cooperative strategy i.e, the rapport style. In the coming lines, we will examine each of these features in OSA.

First of all, through our examination of women' speech in OB, we observed that there exist a frequent use of tag questions in their conversations. This idea is clarified in the dialogue that follows:

W1: bentekmaʔʔuba, wlawalu? ( your daughter is engaged, doesn't she?)

W2: ʔijjihtba:rkeʔah. (yes, she does.)

W1: ʔaʔabha weld elʔaʔmba:rek, wlawalu? ( the son of AlhadjMoubarek engaged her, didn't he?)

W2: ʔijjihhwa. ( yes)

W1: ʔaʔbetʕemnawel, jak haka? ( she did her engagement last year, didn't she?)

W2: walulla had lʕam. ( No, just this year.)

W1: uʔjart. ( it's good.)

In this passage, the woman seems to be aware of the information, yet, she pretends that she does not know. The woman uses tag questions in order to open the conversation and encourage her

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partner to participate. Consequently, the use of tag questions by women does not imply that they lack confidence, but they may also use them to open a dialogue or to push others to engage in a conversation.

The use of hedges is another feature of women's speech. Whenever women talk they use some terms that imply that they are not sure about their ideas because of their continuous use of hedges. To clarify this fact, we will examine the following conversation:

W1:  $\chi$ i:r $\acute{e}$ lik $\acute{o}$ m, rihihnanafisa? (hello, is there Nafissa?)

W2: kanthnaja, w  $\acute{c}$ tarhawlat $\chi$ arzet. ( she was here but maybe she left again.)

W1: mat $\acute{c}$ arfi win m $\acute{f}$ at? ( you don't know where did she go?)

W2: j $\acute{c}$ udmja:tlbentbbamani. ( maybe she went to see the daughter of Bamani.)

W1: dikllitaqram $\acute{c}$ aha, ( that one who studies with her?)

W2:  $\eta$ ijjih $\acute{c}$ la $\acute{h}$ sabha. (Yes, I guess so.)

In the above conversation, we see that woman2 is not certain almost in all of her answers. This could be because she indeed does not know the exact answer or just because hedges become a habitual feature in women's speech.

Women in OB are characterized with their polite style of speech. Politeness appears in situations where women tend to make their direct requests or orders sound less forceful, to congratulate others, or to offer prayers. Let us consider this conversation as an instance:

W1:  $\acute{h}$ maldikmatgaditbark $\acute{f}$ ilijjaqasrinta $\acute{c}$ if $\acute{c}$ ij. ( can't you please help me in doing couscous?)

W2: wa $\acute{f}$ ga $\acute{c}$ ulikml $\acute{c}$ ars? ( is it for your daughter' wedding.)

W1:  $\eta$ ijjhn $\acute{f}$ alah. ( yes, if God will.)

W3: lajntabitinan $\acute{z}$ u? (When do you want us to come?)

W1:  $\acute{y}$ adwajar $\acute{h}$ emlwalidinlakansa $\acute{c}$ dkoml $\acute{h}$ al. (tomorrow if you can. May Allah bless your parents.)

W2: n $\acute{f}$ alahmafih $\acute{z}$ mi:l. ( Ok, if God will, there is no problem.)

W1: ja $\acute{c}$ melmulanaj $\acute{f}$ awnkom $\acute{c}$ la $\chi$ ufow $\acute{t}$ a $\acute{c}$ tu. (May Allah help you too.)

Woman1 uses the formula "can you please" in addition to some of prayers to make her request more polite although she knows that they can help her whenever they have time.

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A noticeable feature of women' speech in general and of OB in particular is exaggeration. This latter is well-seen when describing things. Women frequently exaggerate by using a lot of adjectives in order to express their admiration, surprise or excitement. The data below reflects this idea:

W1: ftidarmuħamed weld bamani. ( have you seen the house of Mohammed the son of Bamani.

W2: walumazalmaftħa, fħlah? (No not yet. Why?)

W1: laftijħa:lzwiina, zwiina, zwiinatba:rkəħah. (if you just see it , it's very-very-very beautiful.)

W2: sħaħ ! (really)

W1: wajllazwiina, thablmangedgaħnəwsafħalik( it is very nice can't even describe it to you.)

W2: ħiwajaħtiħazetlbuħ. ( May Allah protect him.)

Actually women use these metaphors and exaggerated adjectives such as the word [zwiina] instead of saying simply [zina] in order to show to what extent they were surprised from something beautiful. Eventually, a noticeable feature in the speech of women in OB especially the young ones (25-40years) is that they use a prestigious way of speech when they are addressing a strange woman. Men on the other hand, do not pay attention to this point i.e, they speak naturally without any sophisticated way. We tried to gather the prestigious expressions used by women and we compared them with men's ones. The following table offers extra information:

Female expressions	Male expressions	Gloss
[zuħ]	[zuħ]	Two
[wah]	[ħijih]	Yes
[ħlah]	[ħlah]	Why
[kaħ ma kajen]	[ħaħkajen]	What is happening
[kirakəħ]	[ħaħħaħbar]	How are you?

#### 2.14 Illustrations of prestige in female speech

In the table below, we will try to exhibit almost all the words mentioned above and used by women of OB:

	Words used by women of OB	The equivalent in English
Tag questions	welawalu?	Isn't it?



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	Jakhakka?	Isn't it?
Politeness	jerħamwaldik mafihɜmil maɞɞigiilasaɞdekalħal	May Allah bless your parents. Never mind Can't you please?
Hedges	waqila ɞjɜud ɜɞarha ɜlaħsabha ɞjkun	May be Perhaps Perhaps she Perhaps she It may be
Exaggeration	ħħalzwiina thabel ɜalama rawɞa mangədgaɜnawsafha	It is wonderful! Amazing ! Exciting! Very beautiful I can't even describe it.

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### 2.15 A summary of women' speech characteristics in OB

Eventually, to finish describing the way OSA is affected with the gender of the speaker, we have to say that gender plays a significant role in language variation. We summarize all the above mentioned features of speech of both sexes in the following table:

Female speech in OSA	Male speech in OSA	Gloss
[gedged]	[niʃan]	Exactly
[waqila]	[ʔjkun]	Perhaps
[muʒuʃ]	[mrid]	Ill
[sajba]	[msalia]	I do not have anything to do
		Maybe
[ʔiʃud]	[rbama]	I don't think so
[maʃdibiha]	[madnit]	Good done
[msawja]	[mrigla] or [ħakma]	Hide it
[tərħiha]	[dəssiha]	Go away
[d̪arreg]	[t̪lef]	But
[lakajənni]	[bəʃʂaħ]	Good
[milħa]	[mliħa]	Beautiful
[zwwina]	[mliħa]	May Allah bless you
[gdhaʃlik]	[barakatahufik]	

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### 2.16 Expressions used in OSA

We notice from the table above that the words used by females are not the same of males and it confirms the fact that language varies due to the gender of the speaker. It needs to be mentioned that it is true that women have some words that are peculiar to them yet they are not exclusive to them. Rather, men can also use them but rarely.

### 2.9 Language variation based on age

Age causes a huge variation in matter of language i.e, each of the young and the old speakers have their own lexicon. It is referred to as age grading that means that the linguistic features change according to the age of the speaker. In other terms, the young speakers and the old ones of OSA do not speak in a similar way. This change appears essentially in vocabulary and in the pronunciation of some terms. The variety used by young people changes progressively due to several factors. Among which, the youngsters are aware of technology's advancement the thing that pushes them to use some French terms such as [mikro], [lasuxi], [lwifi], [blutut]...etc.

Furthermore, the majority of young generations-especially the males- get the Baccalaureate diploma so they travel to the north to finish their studies so they are affected in a way or in another by the dialects used there. This fact affects the mutual intelligibility between the two generations. The elders on the other hand, stick and conserve their variety. As an example, the phoneme /q/ is never used by old speakers OSA but it exists in the speech of the young speakers. Accordingly, the word 'ancient' is pronounced by an old man or woman as [gdima] whereas a young one pronounces it [qdimɑ]. Since /q/ is more prestigious than its variant /g/, the young OSA speakers are oriented to the phoneme /q/ instead of /g/.

For this reason we hear them saying [maqsu:m] instead of [magsu:m] 'cut' or [zənqɑ] instead of [zga:g] or [brrɑ]. This happens because the young tend to use a higher social status that is called 'overt prestige' form while the elders use /g/ as a marker of 'covert prestige', that is to say, they do not pay attention to the status when speaking. We will exhibit certain expressions to examine the linguistic differences between the young and the old generations in the table below:

Old generation	Young generation	Gloss
[qabala]	[belʕani]	On purpose
[ʃʃaru:t]	[meftaħ]	A key
[gbæʔa]	[jaser]	Too much
[bardu]	[ʕʒeb]	It's incredible
[halli]	[hadamakan]	Only

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[lʕi:]	[tʕam]	Couscous
[lmesʕuli:n]	[lmesʔuli:n]	The responsables
[ettivrad]	[eʕʕaħa]	The body
[nssawʔek]	[ndarbek]	I hit you
[jjames]	[lba:reħ]	Yesterday
[ɣdda]	[ɣadwa]	Tomorrow
[lkaruʕʕa]	[lɔʔɔ]	A car
[slki]	[fu:ti]	Pass
[jaħaħ]	[rwaħ]	Come here
[bu:ʔwil]	[sarwa:l]	Pants
[zħaf]	[kħaz]	Move aside
[twali]	[waqila]	Maybe
[jqilʕʔartek]	[barakaħaħufik]	May Allah bless you
[lʔajel]	[lbzu:z]	Children
[msuleħ]	[mɣawed]	A mad person
[ħanfra]	[ennif]	A noze
[lmħadra]	[eʕʕameʔ]	The Quranic school
[ʔarrabija]	[lgaffa]	A basket
[msrija]	[maɣzen]	An attic
[lfgari]	[jjabab]	Youngsters
[frraga]	[frraqa]	Extension cord
[seli]	[naħħi]	Takeoff
[ħawwaq]	[ja:]	A turban
[lqu:s]	[jambra]	A room
[baħnini]	[ʕaddi]	My grand father
[aʕadbik]	[ʕaħitek]	Well done
[ʕriħa]	[lbard]	Cold
[smajem]	[lħama:n]	Hot weather
[assalha:m]	[barnu:s]	Traditional woollen garment
[ħjaħa] [taɣuja]	[lbarma]	Gourd
[kani:f]	[visi]	Toilette
[fqala]	[qafila]	Button

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[rʒæni]	[sanani]	Wait for me
[mɔəmma]	[sabta]	A belt
[lqeb]	[ʒi:b]	A pocket
[tmævaʔ]	[tmadad]	To lean
[ʒʒabaʔ]	[kulwa:r]	A hallway

#### 2.17 Linguistic variation between the old and young people

It is clear from the table above that the terms used by oldpeople including both males and females are not the same used by the young ones and maybe they are going to disappear.

From another angle, the elders' speech contains some words borrowed from Zenete such as [tarammir], [tiʒmarin], [tiʒrad], [tama:ra], [tʒilif], [tʒenʒif], [etamrat]...etc.

We notice that the majority of these Zenete words begin with the phoneme /t/. Yet, these terms are rarely heard in OSA except by elders. Moreover, while doing the recordings, we remarked that the old speakers unlike the young ones have an extensive use of idiomatic expressions. They use these idioms either to offer pieces of advice or to make irony. In fact, it needs a lot of thinking so as to extract what they want to say by a given wise idiom.

For example, they say [berzzænanbaʒessɔf] so as to mean 'you have to be patient in doing things'. They also say [mninʒazmetʒamʒalgaʒʒalmʒa] to blame someone who came late. Generally speaking, each setting has a special idiom to express. Furthermore, they also have different terms for months that may be ignored by the youth. Here are some examples so as to illustrate this idea:

Months according to the elders	Gloss
[ennajer]	January
[fubraj]	February
[ibrin]	April
[manjuh]	May
[ʒuʒet]	August
[tuber]	October

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### **2.18 Illustrations of the terminology of months by elders**

#### **2.10 Conclusion**

Eventually, in this practical side, we have tried to examine all of the linguistic aspects mentioned in the literature review and apply them on the speech community of OB. We have dealt with the phenomenon of language variation in OSA mainly the phonological, the lexical, and the morphological one. In addition to that, we have shed some light on gender-based differences and age-based differences that exist between OB' speakers. We have found that male speakers have many linguistic features that diverse from the female ones as well as the old people who show a huge linguistic variation vis-a-vie the young ones.

# General Conclusion

Many sociolinguists investigate on the phenomenon of language variation and how it differs from one region to the other and between individuals themselves. In this present research, we have tackled the issue of sociolinguistic variation in the speech of OB. In fact, we have followed the Labvian method that studies the interrelation between the social structure and the linguistic structure. Using a quantitative method, we tried to explore the relation between the social variables such as the age of the speaker and his gender and the three different linguistic variables mainly phonology, morphology, and lexicon.

From our investigation to the linguistic aspects that characterize OB, we have discovered many features of this speech community. We have noticed that variation is based on age and gender mainly. Yet, the ethnicity and level of education do not represent essential social variables. In other terms, these two do not cause a significant variation between speakers in OSA' speech community.

The data that we have reached after our investigation can be summarized in the following points:

- ❖ The dialect used in OB knows variations in matter of phonology as compared to the speech variety that is used in the city centre, some variables such as /ð/, /dʒ/, and /θ/ are not realized similarly by the informants. Rather, the majority of the participants pronounce them respectively as /z/, /z/, and the dental /d/.
- ❖ Morphology also causes a huge variation in OSA. Accordingly, both of the morphemes {ja} and {ih} replace {i:} and {u:} in a way of comparison between the city centre' speech and OSA.
- ❖ In matter of lexical variation, we have exhibited language change either in matter of form or meaning i.e, OSA' speakers use some linguistic items that have the same forms with MSA but differ in meanings whereas they sometimes use the same words that have different meanings in MSA.
- ❖ The female use of OSA is different from the male use in a variety of ways since each sex has his/her own way of speaking and special linguistic features.



- ❖ The young speakers also converge in matter of speech from their elders counterparts. In doing so, they use some new or innovative terms to be distinct from the old speakers.

Eventually, it needs to be added that we have emphasized in our investigation just on the two social variables which are age and gender. So, it would be an interesting thing for future challenge to continue this research emphasizing in the study on educational level or ethnicity or may be the socio-economic level and their impact on OSA' use. Thus, the question that can be asked is : is it possible for OSA to be affected by other social variables?

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