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**Language Change in the Spoken Arabic**  
**Dialect of El-Menia**

**Doctoral Thesis in Sociolinguistics**

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my parents and  
my sisters.

Special thanks to my wife for her tremendous support throughout these  
tough years.

To my little princes Farid and Yacine.

## **Abstract**

The current research aims to investigate language change in the Arabic dialect of EL-Menia, a small city located at about 800 Kms from the capital Algiers. For such endeavor, four stereotypical linguistic features are investigated: the substitution of [y] for [q], code-switching, the use of the pragmatic marker “wa”, and the use of diminutives, all of which are analyzed in correlation with social factors such as age, gender, practice, social networks, and family. The last criterion, however, is given considerable attention due to the uniqueness of the social structure of El-Menia. Among others, the important question the present research attempts to answer is which linguistic features are undergoing change? The hypothesis driving this research is that given the complexity of the targeted speech community, language change is taking place with drastically different pace. The work makes use of a mix-methods approach of investigation: the quantitative analysis and the qualitative data interpretation. Three data gathering tools have been used: anonymous observation, focus group interviews, and virtual focus groups (VFGs). The overall number of speakers who participated in the research is 386. The findings offer an exhaustive descriptive analysis of language variation concerning the variables. In regard to language change, the results of the research show that attitude, prestige, and formality are factors that result in language change in El-Menia. However, their influence on people depends on the family criterion that can be considered as a social network through which language change and variation flow from one social group to another.

**Table of Contents**

• Acknowledgements .....	i
• Dedication .....	ii
• Abstract .....	iii
• Table of Contents.....	iv
• The System of Phonetic Transcription.....	x
• List of Abbreviations.....	xi
• List of Figures.....	xii
• List of Tables.....	xiv
• List of Maps.....	xvi
• List of Pictures.....	xvii
<b><u>GENERAL INTRODUCTION</u></b> .....	1
<b><u>1. CHAPTER ONE: LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE</u></b>	
1.1. Introduction.....	10
1.2. Fields of Inquiry.....	11
1.3. Internal Approach to Language Study.....	12
1.4. External Approach to Language Study.....	14
1.5. Sociolinguistics.....	15
1.6. Code, Variety, Language, and Dialect.....	16
1.7. Speech Community.....	17
1.8. Social Networks.....	18
1.9. Community of Practice.....	20
1.9.1. Social Learning Theory.....	20
1.9.2. Community of Practice: Language Change.....	21
1.10. Language and Gender.....	23
1.11. Gender and Language Variation.....	24
1.12. Age-Grading and Language Variation.....	25
1.13. Language Change in Progress.....	27
1.14. Child Language Variation.....	30
1.15. Ethnicity and Language Change: Nullifying Other Social Factors.....	31

## Table of Contents

---

1.16. Language and Race.....	32
1.17. Language and Attitudes.....	34
1.18. Language Contact.....	36
1.19. Societal Multilingualism.....	37
1.20. Language Planning.....	38
1.21. Standard Languages.....	39
1.22. The Repercussions of Language Planning for Language Change.....	40
1.23. Speech Accommodation and Language Variation.....	41
1.24. Audience Design.....	42
1.25. Implications of Language Change: Simplification Versus Complexification...	45
1.26. Conclusion.....	47

## **2. CHAPTER TWO: THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC SITUATION IN ALGERIA**

2.1. Introduction.....	51
2.2. The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria.....	52
2.2.1. Algeria: Historical Background.....	52
2.2.2. Berber.....	53
2.2.2.1. Berber: language.....	54
2.2.3. Arabs and Islam: The Conquest of North Africa.....	55
2.2.4. Arabic: The Change from Classical to Colloquial.....	56
2.2.4.1. Classical Arabic.....	58
2.2.4.2. Phoneme Inventory of Classical Arabic.....	60
2.2.4.3. The Emergence of Colloquial Arabic: Bedouin Versus Sedentary Dialects.	61
2.2.4.4. Substitution of Sounds in Colloquial Arabic.....	62
2.2.5. Modern Standard Arabic.....	63
2.2.6. Reconceptualization of Diglossia.....	64
2.2.7. French: The Rise of Bilingualism.....	65
2.2.8. Code Switching: A Changing Feature in Language.....	67
2.3. El-Menia.....	69
2.3.1. El-Menia: Social Structure.....	70
2.3.2. Chaamba: Origins.....	72
2.3.3. El-Menia Arabic Dialect: Salient Linguistic Features.....	73

## Table of Contents

---

2.3.3.1. The Substitution of [ɣ] for [q].....	74
2.3.3.2. The Phoneme /q/.....	75
2.3.3.3. Lexical Variation.....	76
2.3.3.4. Diminution in El-Menia Dialect.....	77
2.3.3.5. The Pragmatic Marker “WA”.....	79
2.4. Conclusion.....	81

### **3. CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES**

3.1. Introduction.....	85
3.2. Research Methodology in Language Variation and Change (LVC).....	86
3.2.1. Quantitative Approach.....	86
3.2.2. Qualitative Approach.....	87
3.3. Research Design.....	88
3.3.1. Anonymous Observation.....	90
3.3.2. Rationale Behind Observation.....	92
3.4. The Sample.....	94
3.4.1. From the Theoretical Sample to the Sample.....	95
3.4.2. The Sample Universe.....	95
3.5. Family Structure as an Influencing Factor.....	97
3.6. The Sample Stratification.....	98
3.7. The Sample Size.....	100
3.8. The Sampling Technique: Purposeful Sampling (PS) .....	102
3.8.1. Opportunistic Sampling.....	103
3.8.2. Snowball Sampling (SS) .....	103
3.9. Interviews.....	104
3.9.1. Interview Types.....	105
3.9.2. Focus Group Interviewing.....	106
3.9.3. Contextual Styles in Interviews.....	108
3.9.4. Interview Questions.....	109
3.10. Folk Linguistics: Collecting Data on Attitude.....	110
3.11. Virtual Focus Groups.....	111

## **Table of Contents**

---

3.11.1. Facebook Groups.....	112
3.11.2. Procedures.....	113
3.11.3. Rationale.....	114
3.11.4. Drawbacks.....	115
3.12. Data Analysis Software and Procedures.....	116
3.13. Ethical Considerations.....	117
3.14. Conclusion.....	118

## **4. CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS**

4.1. Introduction.....	122
4.2. Anonymous Observation.....	123
4.2.1. The Substitution of [y] for [q] (Anonymous Observation) .....	126
4.2.1.1. Statistical Analysis of the Substitution of [y].....	128
4.2.1.2. The Gender Factor.....	129
4.2.1.3. The Age Factor.....	129
4.2.2. Code Switching.....	133
4.2.2.1. Variation by Places.....	133
4.2.2.2. Variation by Gender.....	134
4.2.2.3. Age and Code-Switching.....	135
4.2.3. The Pragmatic Marker “wa”.....	137
4.2.4. The Use of Diminutives.....	139
4.3. Interviews.....	140
4.3.1. The Substitution of [y] for [q] (Interviews ).....	143
4.3.1.1. Gender.....	144
4.3.1.2. Variation by Practice.....	145
4.3.1.3. Variation by Age.....	148
4.3.1.4. Variation by Families.....	150
4.3.2. Code-Switching.....	153
4.3.2.1. Code-Switching by Non-Native Speakers.....	155
4.3.2.2. Variation by Practice.....	155
4.3.2.3. Variation by Age.....	157
4.3.2.4. Family Factor.....	159



## Table of Contents

---

4.3.3. The Pragmatic Marker Wa.....	162
4.3.3.1. Age.....	163
4.3.3.2. Practice.....	164
4.3.4. Diminutives.....	164
4.3.4.1. Gender.....	165
4.3.4.2. Practice.....	166
4.3.4.3. Family.....	167
4.4. Conclusion.....	169
<b>5. CHAPTER FIVE: LANGUAGE VARIATION IN THE DIALECT OF EL-MENIA AND IMPLICATION FOR LANGUAGE CHANGE</b>	
5.1. Introduction.....	172
5.2. Reflection on the Substitution of [ɣ] for [q].....	173
5.2.1. The Distinctiveness of [ɣ].....	174
5.2.2. Gender.....	175
5.2.3. Practice and Formality.....	177
5.2.4. Variation by Age and Family.....	181
5.2.5. Child Language Variation .....	182
5.3. Reflection on Code-Switching in the Dialect of El-Menia.....	184
5.3.1. Code-switching and Gender.....	185
5.3.2. Code-switching and Practice.....	186
5.3.3. Code-switching by Age and Family.....	187
5.4. The Relationship Between Code-Switching and the Substitution of [ɣ].....	189
5.5. Reflection on Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa” in the Dialect of El-Menia	190
5.5.1. Functions of the Pragmatic Marker “ wa”.....	192
5.5.2. The Relationship Between Age and Practice in the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa”.....	194
5.6. Reflection on the Use of Diminutives in the Dialect of El-Menia.....	196
5.7. Implications for Language Change.....	197
5.7.1. Language Change in Progress: The Revert Substitution of [q] to [ɣ].....	197
5.7.2. Language Change in Progress: The Inclusion of French in the Dialect.....	198

## Table of Contents

---

5.7.3. A Dialect Language Feature Decay: The Fading of the Pragmatic Marker “wa” .....	199
5.7.4. A Feminine Language Feature: The Use of Diminutives.....	200
5.8. Language Change in the Dialect of El-Menia.....	200
5.9. Reasons for Language Change in Arabic Dialect of El-Menia.....	202
5.9.1. Attitude towards the Dialect.....	202
5.9.2. Prestige and Formality.....	203
5.9.3. Dialect Convergence.....	203
5.9.4. Social Networks.....	204
5.10. Family and Language Change Threshold.....	204
5.11. Revisiting the Research Hypothesis.....	206
5.12. Limitations of the Study.....	207
5.13. Recommendations for Future Research.....	209
5.14. Conclusion.....	209
<b><u>GENERAL CONCLUSION</u></b> .....	213
Bibliography .....	219
Appendix.1. Observation Phase Data of all variables .....	237
Appendix.2. Interviews Data of all variables.....	246
Appendix.3 Speakers with less than 100 % Average in the Substitution of [ɣ] (Interviews) .....	253
Appendix.4. In-depth Statistical Analysis of all Variables by Families.....	255
Abstract ( Arabic ) .....	263

## The System of Phonetic Transcription

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic
ء	'	سماء
آ	Ā	آمن
أ	Ā	سؤال
ؤ	w̄	مؤتمر
إ	Ā	إنترنت
ئ	ÿ	سائل
ا	A	كان
ب	b	بريد
ة	h	مكتبة
ت	t	تنافس
ث	θ	ثلاثة
ج	j	جميل
ح	H	حاد
خ	x	خوذة
د	d	دليل
ذ	ð	ذهب
ر	r	رفيع
ز	z	زينة
س	s	سماء
ش	š	شريف
ص	S	صوت
ض	D	ضرب
ط	T	طويل
ظ	Ḍ	ظلم
ع	ς	عمل
غ	γ	غريب
ف	f	فيلم
ق	q	قادر
ك	k	كريم
ل	l	لذيذ
م	m	مدير
ن	n	نور
ه	h	هول
و	w	وصل
ى	ý	على
ي	y	تين

## List of Abbreviations

CA .....	Classical Arabic
CAT .....	Communication Accommodation Theory
CMC .....	Computer-mediated Communication
COP .....	Community of Practice
CS .....	Code-Switching
LP .....	Language Planning
LVC .....	Language Variation and Change
MSA .....	Modern Standard Arabic
OP .....	Opportunistic Sampling
PS .....	Purposeful Sampling
SS .....	Snowball Sampling
VFG .....	Virtual Focus Group

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1. Phonological Variables by Community of Practice.....	22
Figure 1.2. The Distribution of the Centralized Diphthongs /ay/ /aw/.....	26
Figure 1.3. The relationship between Use of Vernacular Forms and Age.....	26
Figure 1.4. Apparent-time Distributions of Innovative Features in PST and GRITS...	29
Figure 1.5. The Derivation of Intra-speaker from Inter-speaker Variation, by Way of Evaluation.....	43
Figure 1.6: The “Strength” of Factors Influencing Variation.....	44
Figure 3.1. The relation Database Schema used to Investigate the Relation Between the Different Aspects in the Research.....	99
Figure.3.2. Difference between Random Sampling and Purposeful Sampling.....	102
Figure 3.3. Comparison between Participants in the Facebook Groups Survey.....	116
Figure 4.1. The Frequency of the Substitution of the [ɣ] for [q].....	128
Figure 4.2. The Mean and the Standard Deviation of Males and Females for the Substitution.....	129
Figure 4.3. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of the [ɣ] by Age Groups.....	131
Figure 4.4. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of the [ɣ] by Both Genders.....	132
Figure 4.5. Multiple Simple Lines of Mean Values of the Substitution of the [ɣ] by Places.....	133
Figure 4.6. The Mean and the Standard Deviation of Males and Females for Code-Switching.....	134
Figure 4.7. The Correlation Between Code-Switching and the Degree of Formality.....	135
Figure 4.8. The Simple Line of Mean Value of Code-Switching by Age Groups.....	136
Figure 4.9. The Simple Line of Mean Value of Code-Switching by Age Groups.....	137
Figure 4.10. Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa” by Places.....	138
Figure 4.11. Simple Lines of Mean Value of the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa” by Age Groups.....	139
Figure 4.12. Clustered Bars of Mean Values of the Substitution of the [ɣ]for [q] by Family and Gender.....	144
Figure 4.13. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of the [ɣ] (Interviews)	148

Figure 4.14. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] by Gender (Interviews).....	149
Figure 4.15. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] of Family 1 by Gender .....	151
Figure 4.16. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] of Family 2 by Gender .....	151
Figure 4.17. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] of Family 3 by Gender .....	152
Figure 4.18. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] of Family 4 by Gender .....	152
Figure 4.19. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] of Family 5 by Gender .....	153
Figure 4.20. Mean and Standard Deviation of Code-Switching by Families and Gender .....	154
Figure 4.21. Simple Line of Mean of Code-Switching (Interviews).....	158
Figure 4.22. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender.....	158
Figure 4.23. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 1) .....	159
Figure 4.24. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 2) .....	160
Figure 4.25. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 3) .....	160
Figure 4.26. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 4) .....	161
Figure 4.27. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 5) .....	161
Figure 5.1. The functions of Pragmatic Markers [wa] / [bba] in the Speech Community of Ouedi Righ .....	193
Figure 5.2. Language Change in the Arabic Dialect of El-Menia .....	201

## List of Tables

Table 1.1. PST and GRITS features.....	28
Table.1.2: Phonological Variables for Subjects with Foreign- and Native-born Parents in New York City .....	32
Table 1.3. Processes of Simplification and Complexification .....	46
Table 2.1. Consonantal Phoneme Inventory for Eighth-century Classical Arabic .....	63
Table 2.2. Partial Assimilation in the Arabic Dialect of Djelfa -Algeria.....	62
Table 2.3. Chaamba Families in El-Menia According to the Censuses of March 29 <sup>th</sup> , 1896.....	70
Table 2.4. Chaamba Families in El-Menia According to the Censuses of October 9 <sup>th</sup> 1958.....	71
Table 2.5. Phonological Features of Sounds [ɣ] and [q].....	75
Table 3.1. Time spent in Observation and Places Distribution.....	91
Table 3.2. A Sample Grid for Saving Data Obtained from Observation.....	93
Table 3.3. Sample Distribution for a Family.....	100
Table 3.4. Strengths and limitations of Focus group discussions .....	107
Table 3.5. Internet Users Statistics for Algeria.....	112
Table 3.6. Participants in Virtual Focus Groups ( Facebook Groups ).....	115
Table 4.1. Distribution of Sample and Places in the Observation Phase.....	123
Table 4.2. Sample Distribution for People Observed at Markets.....	124
Table 4.3. Sample Distribution for People Observed at The Grocery Shop.....	124
Table 4.4. Sample Distribution for People Observed at the Townhall.....	124
Table 4.5. Sample Distribution for People Observed at Mosques.....	124
Table 4.6. Sample Distribution for People Observed at Coffee shops.....	125
Table 4.7. Sample distribution by Gender.....	125
Table 4.8. The Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] for [q] by Places.....	126
Table 4.9. Words Registered with the Sound [ɣ] Substituted for [q].....	127
Table 4.10. Statistical Overview on the Substitution of the [ɣ].....	128
Table 4.11. The Correlation Between the Substitution in the Dialect of El-Menia and the Criterion of Age.....	130

Table 4.12. The Mean and Standard Deviation Values of Code-Switching by Places.....	134
Table 4.13. Statistical Analysis of the Frequency of the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa”.....	137
Table 4.14. Statistical Analysis of the Use of Diminutives.....	140
Table 4.15. Statistical Analysis of the Use of Diminutives by Age Groups.....	140
Table 4.16. Sample Distribution for Family 1.....	141
Table 4.17. Sample Distribution for Family 2.....	141
Table 4.18. Sample Distribution for Family 3.....	141
Table 4.19. Sample Distribution for Family 4.....	141
Table 4.20. Sample Distribution for Family 5.....	142
Table 4.21. Interviewees ‘ Practices Distribution.....	142
Table 4.22. Statistical Overview on the Substitution of the [ɣ] (Interviews).....	143
Table 4.23. Substitution of the [ɣ] by Families.....	143
Table 4.24. Substitution of the [ɣ] by Gender.....	144
Table 4.25. Mean Values of the Substitution by Non-Native Speakers.....	145
Table 4.26. The Mean and Standard Deviation of the Substitution by Practice and Gender.....	147
Table 4.27. Code-Switching in Anonymous Observation and Interviews.....	154
Table 4.28. Code-Switching by Non-Natives.....	155
Table 4.29. Code Switching by Interviewees.....	156
Table 4.30. Frequency of Occurrence of Pragmatic Marker “wa” .....	162
Table 4.31. The use of Pragmatic Marker “ wa” ( Interviews) .....	163
Table 4.32: The use of Pragmatic Marker “ wa” by Age.....	163
Table 4.33. The use of Pragmatic marker “ wa “ by Practice.....	164
Table 4.34. The Frequency of Occurrence of Diminutives.....	165
Table 4.35. The Frequency of Occurrence of Diminutives.....	165
Table 4.36. Statistical Overview on the Use of Diminutives by Male and Females	166
Table 4.37. The Use of Diminutives by Practice.....	167
Table 4.38. The Use of Diminutives Age Groups and by Gender.....	168
Table 5.1. Family Interviewees Aged between 41 and 60 Substitution of the [ɣ]	181
Table 5.2 Frequency of the Substitution of [ɣ].....	184



Table 5.3. Count of Code-Switching for Participants in Formal Type of Works in Each Family.....	188
Table 5.4. Participants Older than 75 Years Old Code-switching.....	189

## List of Maps

Map 2.1. Ancient North Africa. Extracted from Naylor, P. C. (2009). North Africa: A History From Antiquity to the Present (1st ed).....	53
Map. 2.2. Berber-speaking Areas in North Africa.....	54
Map.2.3. Arabic Speaking Countries.....	57
Map 2.4. El-Menia ( El-Goléa) Geographical Position.....	69
Map 2.5. Bedouin Chaamba in Algeria.....	73

## List of Pictures

Picture 2.1. A Fragment of a Manuscript Dated 1370 Years Old.....	59
Picture 3.1. An Example of Questions Posted by Facebook Group Administrators.....	114
Picture 5.1. A Snippet from Facebook Conversation on Language Change in the Dialect .....	176
Picture 5.2. A Snippet from Facebook Conversation on Attitude towards Code-switching.....	185
Picture 5.3. A Snippet from Facebook Conversation on the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa”.....	191

# **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### General Introduction

In the very early days of this sociolinguistic inquiry, a participant from the South of Algeria made a captivating comment on how far language has changed. He stated that fifty years ago the ways people spoke in the North and the South of Algeria were indistinguishable, but now he barely understands what they are saying. He went further avowing that when listening to Northern Algerian dialects in television he would not mind some subtitles. Despite the fact that such statement comes from a hardly educated man and in a context of a joke, it strikes the core idea of the current research which is language change and variation. Thus, what might be considered as a simple witticism, for a linguist, it triggers several questions of what, why, and how, which in turn can be the backbone of a solid scientific investigation on language change.

The certain inevitability of language change has been a fundamental truism not only among linguists but throughout the ages by philosophers and poets. However, such wide view on the changeability of language is definitely not met with the same agreement on how it should be studied as the approaches adopted in the investigation of language change remain a topic of intense debate and more importantly a subject of perpetuated development. The latter is reflected in the diversity of disciplines concerned with the phenomenon. In this vein, there is no question that we have come a long way from the eighteen-century comparative method of historical linguistics to variationist sociolinguistics.

The substantial expansion of research fields on the matter is inextricably related to our conception of language itself, from a purely independent autonomous system to a social and cultural phenomenon. Consequently, there is a growing body of literature dealing with language change which reflects convolutions caused by the interdisciplinary nature of the subject. Furthermore, contrary to the belief held by some that the topic has been exhausted, the amount of theoretical work alone stands as an evidence falsifying such a claim. (See Aitchison, 2001; Auer, Hinskens, & Kerswill, 2005; Battye & Roberts, 1995; Blount & Sanches, 1977; Chambers & Schilling-Estes, 2013; Chambers, Trudgill, & Schilling-Estes, 2002; Cooper, 1989; Crain, Goro, & Thornton, 2006; Eckardt & Blankensee-Colloquium, 2008; Escure & Schwegler, 2004; Frey, Somerman, & DeWitt, 2012; Fried, Östman, & Verschueren, 2010; Gelderen, 2011; Gianollo, Jäger, & Penka, 2015; Good, 2008; Hickey,

## **General Introduction**

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2003; Keller, 1994; Krug, 2013; Labov, 1994, 2006, 2010; Marshall, 2004; Milroy & Llamas, 2013; Sayahi, 2014; Tagliamonte, 2012; Trask, 2009, 2013; Trudgill, 2011).

Practical studies, on the other hand, also echo the lively interest in the subject matter. (See Albirini, 2016; Ammour 2012; Bright, 1990; Cloutier, Hamilton-Brehm, & Kretzschmar, 2010; Eckardt & Blankensee-Colloquium, 2008; Fezzioui 2013; Moussadek 2013; Pelkey, 2011; Penny, 2000; Sayahi, 2014; Siebenhaar, n.d.). In fact, each work brings more insights and specificity by narrowing scopes focusing on describing different languages and dialects in various regions in the world. Accordingly, investigations on language change do not only show how languages change but they portray and uncover how people speak. Thus, alongside their primary goals, keeping a record of people's language is alone considered a compelling reason knowing that no language lasts forever.

On the idea of language death, languages do not change abruptly but it is a slow process that is preceded by variation. When a speaker has two or more alternative ways of talking at any level of language whether sound, lexis, syntax, or meaning, there is the chance that the speaker will abandon one choice in favor of others. This very simple example stands as the logic behind understanding language change. In this regard, Weinreich, Labov, & Herzog (1968) emphasize that heterogeneity and variation in a language do not necessarily imply that language change is taking place. Conversely, however, all kind of change has to entail variation. Then the very first question that needs to be addressed in the current research is which field of study will be suitable to attain the current work's aims?

Being concerned with a dialect, dialectology stands as a prominent discipline. Yet, the inclusion of social aspects mandates also putting the work into the framework of sociolinguistics. Hence, it is easy to get caught in a debate fueled by the dichotomy between the two fields. This study adapts Chambers's view (2002, p.06) based on the assumption that "The relationship between traditional dialectology and sociolinguistics is oblique rather than direct, but both are in the broadest sense dialectologies (studies of language variation)". Pointing to the similarity between the two area of research, Kretzschmar (1995, p.271) describes them as "Dialectology and sociolinguistics: Same coin, different currency".

### Research Questions

Mindful of this, although the main aim of the research is to explore language change in the dialect of El-Menia, it is certainly unavoidable to embark on a research building a sociolinguistic profile about variation in the dialect. In fact, it is the latter that would constitute much of the work because giving a statement about language change is simply providing a final conclusion on particular linguistic variables. In other words, while there are limited possibilities for language change whether a complete change which means the loss of linguistic features or a change in progress, there are a myriad of factors governing language variation. Accordingly, in pursuit of such an endeavor, the research will explore structural language variation in correlation with the social structure considering factors such as age, gender, ethnicity with the promise to understand the language variety, its distinct linguistic features, people's attitude, and where the language variety is heading. Translating the aims into a practical research, the following questions offer clear guidelines for the study:

1. What are the linguistic features that characterize the dialect of El-Menia?
2. To what extent such features are distributed along the social categories?
3. What is the people of El-Menia's attitude towards their dialect?
4. Which linguistic features are undergoing language change?
5. What are the causes of language change?
6. To what extent the social structure, in particular family structure, is steering the language.

Regarding the first question, attempting to explore all stereotypical linguistic features of El-Menia in one study is rather arduous. Therefore, the present investigation takes advantage of a prior pilot research in which four salient linguistic behaviors were deemed important based on native people's views: the substitution of [ɣ] for [q], code-switching, the use of the pragmatic marker "wa", and the use of diminutives. The second question tries to account for how such linguistic conducts relate to the social structure. Therefore, it tries to raise the hypothesis that those variables are not random but they are sociolinguistically relevant. As far as the third question, probing into prevailing attitudes is of paramount importance as often being one of the causes of language change.

## **General Introduction**

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The next set of questions is only valid if it can be established that there is at least one variable undergoing change. Only then, the talk about the causes of language change can be plausible. The last question is related to the hypothesis of the thesis. The social structure of the selected speech community is rigid, however, not in terms of hierarchies as in the caste or class systems, but people in the society are mostly grouped by families. Over the years, the tendency of people to live next to their families and the little mobility have resulted in extended families which can be regarded as small communities with their own mosques, schools, and distinct habits. The hypothesis behind these questions is that: given the complexity of the targeted speech community, language change is taking place with drastically different pace. Hence, while some social categories could have preserved some salient linguistic features, others in the same speech community might have completely abandoned it.

### **The Significance of the Study**

The answer to each of the questions asked in the research can be considered a potential contribution to the literature. Although there is a growing body of literature about Algerian dialects, the vastness of the region still dwarfs any number of research carried out so far. For instance, even after a thorough search, no similar work on the dialect was found. A situation which is alarming because no official record of the dialect is kept. Having in mind that the dialect of El-Menia, like any other language, is not immune to language change, keeping a record of its salient linguistic variables is alone a very important goal.

In the reviewed literature, recent sociolinguistic studies overlook the idea of extended families since often such way of living is considered to be archaic and something of the past. The uniqueness of the community of El-Menia lies in its basis on extended families and the dense social networks that bind members, a reason that renders the work of great worth. In fact, besides the well-known social factors which define one's language such as gender, sex, age, and ethnicity, family affiliation is looked at as a unity of analysis in studying variation in the present research.

In addition to this immediate goal, studies on local dialects in Algeria would in future assist in the creation of a dialect atlas. Albeit it remains a long-term goal, this study seeks to contribute to such database by shedding light on the dialect of El-Menia. Furthermore, the inquiry will attempt to unveil the effect of the complex social structure



## **General Introduction**

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that exists in El-Menia on language. Given the rigidity of the selected speech community, it may be difficult for non-natives to conduct such a research. Consequently, it is a valuable opportunity for exploring the sociolinguistic situation and language variation in El-Menia.

Another significance of the study lies in bringing academic attention to vernacular forms of Arabic. In the early days of the investigation, some scholars dealing with Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic showed a negative attitude towards the topic when interviewed. Their views were against carrying out an in-depth examination on a vernacular which they saw as an inferior language even referred to as a simply a deformity in language. Through both theoretical and practical sides of the work, we will try to support the idea that such variation is no less complex than official languages.

### **The Context of the Study**

One of the fundamental facts about language is that it varies according to people, time, and place. Such variation is driven by a myriad of reasons that emanate from the existence of several languages and language varieties in the same context. Algeria is a good example of the diversity of language, as it is considered a complex multilingual society where alongside the official languages Arabic and Tamazight, and with the presence of French as an influential language, there exist several language varieties which are based or influenced by the official languages. Furthermore, the vast geographical area that Algeria covers results in many geographical dialects which make it an interesting case for sociolinguistic studies.

Accordingly, the research is conducted in El-Menia (El Goléa), a small city which lies at the center of Algeria at approximately 870 Km from the capital city Algiers. The context of the research represents a small-scale sample of the complexity found in the whole country. Officially, Modern Standard Arabic is the language spoken in formal contexts, statement that, as will we see, is questionable. Everyday speech is done through the local dialect. French, on the other hand, remains an influential language whether used in administrations or through code-switching. However, people of El-Menia are mostly of Arab origins which means that Tamazight is confined to a small portion of the society. Therefore, there was no attempt to ponder on the effects of Tamazight on the dialect.

### **Methodology**

While in natural scientific fields scientists can recreate experiments in labs or confined spaces where they have control over variables, sociolinguists are not highly privileged as the nature of the subject of language induces investigation in the social context where it is naturally used. Consequently, the questions asked in the research can only be answered by the researcher immersing in the selected speech community observing and accounting for relevant linguistic behaviors. Thus, a mixed-method approach of investigation will be undertaken in the research: the quantitative analysis and the qualitative data interpretation. The questions of what linguistic features characterize the dialect of El-Menja and how these features are distributed along social categories will be answered by counting those re-occurring linguistic features and relating them to users and the environment where they occurred. However, statistical analysis alone is insufficient to provide answers to questions about attitude and language change. Thereby, final conclusions require the researcher's interpretation through qualitative evaluation.

The work makes use of three data gathering tools: anonymous observation, focus group interviews, and virtual focus groups (VFGs). The opt for triangulation is first to overcome the deficiencies of each one of the methods and second to maximize data validity through confirmation and cross-referencing of data from multiple perspectives. Consequently, each tool is designed for a specific purpose and information. For instance, the observation phase is the first stage in the research designed to probe into the society by listening to what people say, how they speak, how their speech varies according to how, when and who. The aim is to gather enough cues and linguistic tokens. For such an endeavor, the researcher will attempt to collect notes on people's daily speech. Observations are done in public gathering places such as coffee shops, administrations, mosques, and schools. The idea is that data will cover language use in various places covering formal and informal language use. With the idea of the observer's paradox in mind, anonymous observation is the best choice to obtain accurate data.

The collected information lay the foundations on which interviews are planned since the researcher is able to make decisions on the sampling procedure, the sample and the sample size. However, due to ethical considerations, the inability to record people nor to ask them for detailed information are two limiting factors in observations. Interviews, on

## **General Introduction**

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the other hand, provide more controlled environments in which the researcher records and collects data safely and with limited interference. Considerable attention is devoted to the numbers attained from interviews as they are deemed of a paramount importance in the statistical analysis of language variation. Yet, interviews also fail in addressing questions related to attitudes. Consequently, resorting to virtual focus groups is necessary to overcome deficiencies interviews suffer from in regard to attitude-related questions. Information collected from the last method is purely qualitative in nature and its primary goal is to back the first two data collection instruments.

Each of the methods referred to above has its own sample. The total number of people observed is 177 that subdivides into 46 females and 131 males. The initial plan was to interview 180 participants; nevertheless, the final sample comprises 148, 79 females and 69 males. As for the virtual focus group, 61 members participated in public debates (27 males, and 34 females). Therefore, the overall number of speakers who participated in the research is 386 speakers.

### **Structure of the Chapters**

The research comprises five chapters divided into two sections. The first chapter is purely theoretical with the aim to shed light on the phenomenon of language change from the perspective of present-day related literature. The primary goal behind the chapter is to critically review theories on language change to arrive at a suitable theoretical framework on which the whole work will stand. Still, the first issue in this regard is that although the talk is about language change, much of the discussion is devoted to language heterogeneity. Complicating the matter further, it is rather clear that the different theories and views about language change do not align in terms of findings as each one focuses on a particular aspect. For instance, the emphasis can be on one particular group at the expense of others. Thus, confining the framework to one view might well result in ignoring crucial factors.

The second chapter is historical in nature and it is divided into two parts. The first section provides an extensive overview of the historical background with the main aim to investigate the complex sociolinguistic situation in Algeria. The attempt is to track down the history of Algerian people while at the same time referring to how historical events have influenced languages in the region. Through deductive reasoning, we attempt to pinpoint

## **General Introduction**

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the origin of the people of El-Menia and their language. The second part offers a closer view about El-Menia and the dialect focusing on the salient linguistic features.

The third chapter is all about making careful choices on the best way to conduct a sociolinguistic fieldwork. Being aware that once observation or interviews are done, it is rather impossible to go back and repeat them if an aspect is deemed wrong. Decisions made are based on tried-and-tested methods used in previous work and ones adapted specifically for the current research minding the nature of the society. Moreover, even before engaging in the fieldwork, the researcher tries to predict and avoid common issues that may arise during data collection. The chapter offers a detailed overview of the approaches adopted, sampling techniques, and data collection methods as well as the rationale behind every choice.

Chapter four is quantitative in nature offering detailed numerical data on participants' linguistic behavior. The results in the chapter cover two data collection instruments: anonymous observation and interviews. The opt for triangulation, nevertheless, raises the problem of redundancy since each aspect will be looked at from two views which make the chapter loaded with repeated charts. Nevertheless, cross-referencing of data remains one crucial element for confirmation and data validity. The fourth chapter does present plain data and it is devoid of any discussion.

The last chapter addresses research questions and offers final conclusions. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first section gives thorough reflections on stereotypical linguistic features covered in the analysis in which the focus is on language heterogeneity. Alongside the discussion, data from the virtual focus group is used to bring more credibility. The second part utilizes the conclusions about language variation to make a final statement about language change. Finally, it ends with a presentation of the limitations of the study and recommendation for future research.

# CHAPTER ONE

## Language Variation and Change

### 1.1. Introduction

It does not require a linguist to perceive the changing nature of language, a simple reflection on the way elders and young people, men and women speak, and the way languages differ will suffice to realize the variation language exhibits over time and place. Simply, as all matters are in a constant state of change, language is not out of the equation. Nonetheless, ruminating over the questions of what changes, how and why will certainly need a scientist. Albeit the fact of change is palpable, construal and theories on the matter are far from satisfying. Such a statement is backed by Aitchison' view (2001) on the causation of language change. His idea lines up with linguists who deem the subject of language change as a disastrous area of research. Likewise, the issue in investigating this subject is perhaps understood better in accounts such as “the causes of sound change are unknown “by Leonard Bloomfield in 1931 (as cited in Aitchison 2001, p 134). Similarly, Harris (1969) remarked that “the explanation of the cause of language change is far beyond the reach of any theory ever advanced”.

In the light of this, the following inquiry does not confine itself to a single paradigm to investigate language change but instead opts for a deductive approach. Consequently, the aim of the first chapter is to provide an exhaustive literature review that would meet the requirement of the field research about the dialect of El-Menia. Furthermore, concepts referred to in the chapter will be all viewed from the perspective of language change and variation. For this quest, the first chapter aims at addressing the following questions:

- 1- What is language change?
- 2- How is language change perceived in the present-day literature?
- 3- What are the causes of language change?
- 4- What are its repercussions on language?

The attempt to scrutinize the subject methodologically would surely necessitate starting from the question of what language is in order to comprehend the components that are involved in language change. However, it is not like that there is a universal definition of language but often literature yields many.

For simplicity sake, it is rather better to begin with a simple definition that reflects the primary function of language which is communication: “a system of symbols and rules that enable us to communicate” (Harley, 2014, p. 4). Yet, many systems in life would easily conform to such description for example telephones, the internet, transmission systems, and communication systems. In the search for one that is more human-specific, the linguist Noam Chomsky argues “that language is innate, species-specific, and biologically pre-programmed” (in Harley, 2014, p 36). Then, once adopting this definition, an inconsistency will soon emerge which is the tremendous unevenness of the way language is used. Even within the same family, finding two people speaking in an identical way is not likely to happen. Consequently, a different approach to look at language is needed to accommodate for these variations and here where the social context is accounted for, “language is an instrument of communication that depends jointly on an underlying physiological system and a system of social control” (Labov, 1989, p.1). Taking into consideration the social context where language is naturally used will explain the fluctuation in language.

These views of language do not by far mirror the true number of definitions that the literature can offer. The main purpose is not reviewing definitions per se but to analyze their repercussions for the study of language change. Each perspective brings different components and variables, therefore, the question of what changes in language is intimately related to our perception of language itself. Since examining each definition can be rather difficult in the context of this thesis, an alternative method is exploring the related fields of inquiry.

### **1.2. Fields of Inquiry**

Ever since the subject of language started to be looked upon objectively, linguists have realized the complexity of all languages without exception. However, intricacies language divulges were not always acknowledged. Instead, language was perceived from a narrow-angle with the fixation on its internal structure, merely a system of its own merit. Yet, the relativity of the adjective assigned here should be conscientiously noted as what is considered to be narrow now, once constituted the full picture. The idea here is that language as a system did not change but rather the understanding of it which has, in turn, ushered the advent of a considerable number of fields that are either under the umbrella of

linguistics or influenced by it. In this research, fields of inquiry are to be tackled under two headings: internal and external approach to language study.

In this section, going through such disciplines accommodates two purposes. First, from a purely methodological standing point, situating a topic in a particular field or fields is essential. Nevertheless, it is the second aim that holds more prominence due to the reason that they are to be regarded more than merely an effort of compartmentalization of the subject of language, but each field carries different variables to the theme of language change and variation.

### **1.3. Internal Approach to Language Study**

Contemplating the internal components of language yields fields such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Phonetics deals with the physiological aspect of the human sound from its production, perception, and its acoustic properties (Brinton, 2000). Concentrating solely on the visible aspect of language, one realizes the convolutions involved in the production of sounds as an attempt to speak must go through different stages. If the chemical operations inside the brain are overlooked, the chain of physical events in the speech organs alone is highly complex and the slightest alteration in the way they behave is surely going to produce a different set of sounds (Ball & Rahilly, 1999). The latter explains why that from a purely phonetic point of view, each person has his/her own unique way of pronouncing sounds, thus, the manner of speaking can be considered as a fingerprint.

However, phonetics alone cannot account for some discrepancies languages exhibit. For instance, while the human articulatory system is fully capable of producing all sounds human can pronounce, finding a language with all these sounds is not likely to be found, as each language system has a specific number of possible sounds that have significance and carry meaning. Additionally, focusing on sound alone does not explain the fact that humans are good at perceiving sounds even if the message is not clear. In fact, it is not a strange phenomenon for one to understand a word only by hearing part of it. Hence, comes the role of phonology. The latter is more language-specific than phonetics which makes it more suitable for the topic at hand, and indeed, it would be rather difficult to find a book which does tackle the subject of language change without a reference to phonology, at least this holds true for the decent number of books reviewed for this thesis.



## Chapter One: Language Variation and Change

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Obviously, speaking involves more than just sounds but combinations of sound that carry meaning thus comes the importance of lexicon and morphology. Undoubtedly, word structure in any language is subject to change. In this regard, Anderson (2015) refers to the idea of the change in the morphology of English as the result of lexical borrowing. In his example, he states that Middle English has borrowed many nouns that are derived from verbs which end with -ment from continental Old French and Anglo-French. Similarly, to any systematic change that can be studied in phonology, morphological change can form regular patterns which can be investigated (Anderson, 2015)

Despite the attempt to isolate each part of language for simplicity and more specificity, they are all related and any alteration would affect them all. This is best explained by (Frajzyngier, 2015) :

“The prevalent factors affecting language change are the same factors that have been invoked in the study of language change throughout linguistic tradition...phonetic and phonological changes that trigger morphological changes, which in turn are contributing factors to changes in phrase and clause structures; frequency of use; word order changes; borrowing; and other phenomena involved in language contact” (P.308)

In short, Frajzyngier explains the repercussions of changes at any level in language whether in phonetics, phonology, morphology, or syntax. Certainly, semantics is not out of the chain reaction language change provokes, as the meaning of words changes entirely or new meanings can be added (Coulson, 2001). By contrast to what was discussed in the matter of the internal approach to language study, pragmatics being related to study of language in use is perhaps more suitable to be under the heading of external approach to language study. However, the scope of the field is still debatable as according to (Crystal, 2008, p. 397), the field can be seen to study “‘area’ between semantics, sociolinguistics and extra-linguistic context “ or “ “ only with those aspects of context which are formally encoded in the structure of a language”. In other words, there is the need to look beyond the structure of language to mind aspects that are related to contexts where language is used.

### 1.4. External Approach to Language Study

The internal structure of language unaccompanied produces a large number of variables to be considered when talking about what changes in language. However, our understanding of what language has evolved considerably in recent years and such involvement is reflected in the field of linguistics as the latter has matured into a multidisciplinary field which draws knowledge from separate different areas of concern (Meyer, 2009). Consequently, the outcome of the bond between various fields and linguistics is that the list of subfields expands exponentially to include for example anthropological linguistics, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, computational linguistics, neurolinguistics and so on. Each one of these fields brings more variables that are likely to change in language. As an illustration, the directions of psycholinguistics promise more than ever to explain the relationship between language and cognition by shedding light on how language is processed in the mind. Such knowledge has deepened linguists' understanding of the way language is perceived, produced, and how errors are made (Brown, 2005). This insight on how language works from a psycholinguistic point of view helps in explaining the choices people make when they use language.

Unlike the internal approach view of language which is to some extent circumscribed in the number of fields and can give a linguist a sense of control, looking at language from an external view complicates the matter entirely as the number of fields related to language is ever increasing. A good example can be taken from new concepts "internet linguistics. The latter is a new field as the term itself is introduced by David Crystal in 2011 in his book *Internet Linguistics*. As the name suggests, the area of research is a result of the link between the study of language and the internet which is, of course, the largest database of language one can find now. The field is defined as "scientific study of all manifestations of language in the electronic medium" (Crystal, 2011, p. 2). The idea behind the example is that even with such newly introduced fields there is the concern for investigating language change. Crystal (2011) explores such notion from different perspectives: vocabulary, orthography, grammar, pragmatics, and styles. The conclusion he arrives at is that the use of new media has effects on the use of language and also its internal components.

With such a brief overview of both approaches of language study, it is not a secret the immensity of the subject of language change. Now, the question that arises is what to opt for as a suitable field or fields for the current paper. In this regard, (Hickey, 2003) refers to two theoretical frameworks that can be taken in the investigation of language change: linguistic typology and sociolinguistics. The former still conforms with the idea of the internal structure of language, however, it is the latter that holds more prominence to the research.

### 1.5. Sociolinguistics

The importance of sociolinguistics and its significance to the research lies in the reason that many of the terms that are related to language change and variation are under the umbrella of sociolinguistics. The latter is a sub-branch of linguistics that scientifically studies the relationship between language and society. It shifts the focus from the study of language at the level of the individual to cover social context in which language is naturally used. Labov (2010, p. 7) avows that “The central dogma of sociolinguistics is that the community is prior to the individual”. Aligned perfectly with Labov, but said much before, Whitney (1867, p .404) stated that:

“Speech is not a personal possession, but a social; it belongs, not to the individual, but to the member of society. No item of existing language is the work of an individual; for what we may severally choose to say is not language until it be accepted and employed by our fellows. The whole development of speech, though initiated by the acts of individuals, is wrought out by the community.”

The reasons why the quote is worth looking into is that it came in a time when linguistics itself was not recognized as a science, let alone sociolinguistics because the development of the latter is often associated with the work of William Labov in the 60s of the previous century. Moreover, Whitney was very explicit in introducing the key terms that drive present-day work in the field of sociolinguistics and one of them is society. According to him, language cannot be designated as such unless it is both recognized and utilized by the society where it is used. He even went on saying that what actually connects

any word to its idea simply has nothing to do with the origin of the word, length, nor its phonetic form, but the only thing that matters is that mutual understanding people in a society have for the word (Whitney, 1867). Thus, studying language only from its internal structure would definitely yield an incomplete picture of what language really is, its function, and why it is changing.

With the introduction of society to the study of language, the quest to investigate language change gets even more complex as that requires other tools that surpass linguistics to intersect with other disciplines related to society. The result of the development is perceived in the interdisciplinary nature of the field as it extends beyond linguistics to overlap with anthropology and sociology (Farr, 2014). No doubt that each discipline brought to language study brings with it new concepts which need to be examined. For example, sociology carries with it notions such as speech community, social structure, gender, race, and ethnicity. On the other hand, anthropology brings the subject of culture to the mixture, hence, complicating the subject even further. On the idea that relates society and culture, Rapport and Overing (2000, p.41) refer to codification which in their words “gives onto messages about the external world and their passage between those who share knowledge of the code”. What they refer to can be translated into the function of language, however, with the involvement of the notion of society other terms start to come up such as code, variety, language, and dialect.

### **1.6. Code, Variety, Language, and Dialect**

Since these concepts will be repeated throughout the whole paper, it makes sense to clarify the writer’s standing towards them as such terms can have a different meaning in respect to how they are used. At the very beginning of the chapter, it was established the fact that there are variations in the way people speak; in fact, everyone has a unique way of speaking designated by the term ‘idiolect’ or ‘one’s personal dialect’. (Crystal, 2008, p. 236). Nevertheless, in the endeavor to study languages, linguists focus on prevailing linguistic aspects that are perceptible in a particular group of people, in this quest often terms used are variety, language, and dialect.

The term variety corresponds with the variations language manifests. It is utilized as an umbrella term for language, dialect, accent, social dialect, and regional dialect. It is a neutral term that spare a linguist the convolutions the other terms bring (Baker, 2010).

Crystal (2008) sees that the term variety can serve three functions, first, he sees that the term can be deployed where ‘the distinctiveness of language ‘is easily noticed as ‘London English’ or ‘religious English’. However, there are other cases where the term is used in relation to other social variables such as age, sex, gender, and ethnicity. It can also be used as a cover term to dialect, register, medium, and field. He adds that, for some sociolinguists, it can be restricted to a special type of language as for example occupational purposes.

Dissecting the possible ways these variations might affect communication; several scenarios arise. First, the variations two speakers exhibit are substantial to the extent that they don’t understand each other. In this case, it can be assumed that they speak two different languages, for example, one speaks English while the other one Arabic. The criterion used here is mutual intelligibility. The second scenario, when two interlocutors understand each other, they can be said to speak the same language. Yet, it is not always this simple, the example of speakers of Cantonese and Mandarin poses an issue as both are said to speak Chinese. The reason that both are deemed to be language varieties of the same language goes to politics. The same can be said about Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish as these are perceived as distinct languages, yet, people speaking these two have no problem understanding each other (Chambers & Trudgill, 2004).

Pondering over such situations makes one revert to the basic definition of language as a means of communication and what the terms some use to label the difference between language and dialect does align with the science of language. Indeed, the famous quote ‘a language is a dialect with an army and navy’ becomes useful in showing that the delineation between language and dialect is mostly political. Therefore, as far as this research is concerned, the term language, dialect, a variety are going to be used interchangeably to refer to a certain way of speaking. On the other hand, the term language is used to refer to official languages such as Arabic or English. However, if it is used without any explicit reference to a certain official language, then, it should be regarded as a way of communication, a variety.

### **1.7. Speech Community**

The notion of relationships between language and society sociolinguistics brings to the study of language also carries another challenge into a scientific inquiry which is delineating the boundaries of society. From a solely sociological point of view, for example,

Stolley (2005, p. 43) sees a society as consisting of “people who interact and share a common culture.” And he also sees that unlike old definitions, the new era of communication, globalization, and transportation, such term is not confined to a restricted geographical area. On the other hand, Rapport and Overing (2000) believe that instead of the idea of a general sense society, the term should be applicable to people that are involved in face-to-face interaction and often related with the concept of sociality.

The same complication is brought to sociolinguistics, as the demarcating exact boundaries of a study is an arduous task. Focusing on language, sociolinguists deploy the term speech community which is no less subject to debate than the term society. Initially, the concept of ‘speech community’ attempts to simplify and contain a specific group of people, thus, instead of focusing on the entire society, a speech community would refer to a particular group. However, the problem lies in defining the criteria that outline a speech community. The most common criteria deployed is shared norms of communication and rules of conduct ( McKay & Hornberger, 1996). In other words, it is that mutual understanding that people hold towards speech that makes them a speech community. Crystal (2008, p. 446) sees a speech community as “regionally or socially definable human group which can be identified by the use of a shared spoken language or language variety”. Crystal’s definition introduces two issues: first, it again provokes the same issues which plague the term society, as what does make a group socially definable? The second problem lies with the word group.

The concept of a group is crucial to sociolinguistics as it enables practitioners to systematically investigate and focus on a small sample that can be deemed representable. For example, people can be grouped with regard to the code they use, region, gender, ethnicity, and endless other criteria. However, these groups are still constructs and by far they do not mirror the complexity of individuals due to the fact that people simply do not adhere to a clear group but are often involved in complex networks of related groups. Then, excluding the wider picture may well be beneficial for scientific and methodological reasons yet, it might also dismiss important variables.

### **1.8. Social Networks**

The idea of investigating language and language change by categorizing or grouping people into fixed speech communities might help to tame the complexity the study of any

## Chapter One: Language Variation and Change

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society poses. However, the notion of grouping and fixation contradicts the changing and the dynamic nature of both language and people who use it. Therefore, while the focus on the different categories society is composed of can yield description of linguistic variables that might correlate with a particular group, the latter may face limitation in accounting how linguistic variables come to exist in certain groups and not others. Therefore, the concept of social network holds the promise for better understanding the inner dynamics and the processes that result in linguistic variables.

The concept is brought from sociology where the main emphasis is not restricted to a defined group but it includes the relationships that occur between groups (Stolley, 2005). In fact, 'social networks' has a remarkable similarity with the idea of 'system theories' in which relation between groups are presented as web-like interactions where each group influences and at the same time is influenced by others. For instance, what happens inside home influences our behavior at school and vice versa. Furthermore, groups can also overlap with each other. Consequently, other factors come to play such as the pattern of communication, the role of the participants, and the boundaries of the group (Donald , Lazarus , & Lolwana, 2006). Now, considering language is a mirror of our behavior, all that was said about the interactions that occur in a society is manifested in language and language use.

Indeed, social networks are exemplified in the work of (Dubois & Horvath, 1998). Their study on the speech community of Cajuns in southern Louisiana shows how the linguistic variables /θ/ and /ð/ correlate with age, gender, sex, and social network. In the language variety they were concerned with, people have the tendency to say 'dis' and 'dat' for this and that. What makes the investigation interesting is that they were not only asking the question who is saying what but rather inspecting the source of such linguistic behavior. For such reason, methodologically, they adapted, along with other criteria, the idea of open versus close social network. The former refers to the social network of a person who travels, socializing with other groups of the society while the latter denotes the reverse. They found that women in open networks drop the variants [ t, d] as opposed to close network and relate this first to schooling as girls at the community stayed longer at school as opposed to men. Second being in an opened network often meant women have to socialize with others or marrying outside the Cajun community. (Dubois & Horvath, 1998)

Another important point related to social network, and connected to individuals, has to do with the role of the speaker in the group. People with great power and a strong social network have more influence on others. So, the people who position themselves in different groups, they function as bridges on which language variables are transmitted. On the idea of language change, the above example shows how within the same group, female have different attitudes towards language use. Consequently, a network analysis is more helpful in understanding the conditions that yield certain groups to resist language change while others can be more resilient. For example, Milroy and Horvath relate the use of strong vernacular speakers with those who have strong ties with their neighbors. (Milroy & Gordon, 2008).

### **1.9. Community of Practice**

#### **1.9.1. Social Learning Theory**

Studying the connection between language and society in sociolinguistics poses several issues which are related to fieldwork. Unlike working in confined laboratories, language-in-use entails fieldwork and direct contact with society. Yet, the latter still remains an abstract notion that needs to be exactly clarified if one is to approach it correctly. In this pursuit, and similar to the concepts of ‘speech community’ and ‘social network’, ‘community of practice’ promises new ways of looking at society. Community of practice is a relatively new concept introduced by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) in their work ‘Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation’, and further developed by Wenger in ‘Community of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and identity’ in 1998.

Although Lave and Wenger ‘s work is primarily concerned with learning in social context, more precisely the theory is named ‘Situated Learning’, it overlaps with the current research in two elements. The notion of community overlaps with our quest which is finding ways to facilitate inquiries in society by finding better ways of explaining linguistic behaviors that might correlate with a particular group of people. Second, there is no question that language is mostly learned through social interaction, therefore, learning is at the center of the topic.

The basic idea behind the concept is that there are shared practices in a community. However, despite the simplicity of the notion, all the complications lie behind the



connotation of the word practice. Wenger (1998) relates practice to doing, nevertheless, not simply just doing but “doing in historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do” (Wenger, 1998, p. 47). He further extends the practice to cover three rudiments: practice as community, as learning and, as meaning. As for the first, practice as an activity in the midst of community requires participation. The last refers to the active involvement and membership in social communities around social enterprises (Wenger, 1998). Furthermore, the picture gets more interesting when participating is related to learning as on this respect Lave & Wenger (1991) associate the construction of knowledge with the active engagement of people around such enterprises. Knowledge and meaning often go hand in hand, thus, when people participate in doing something, they actively engage in the process of constructing and negotiating meaning.

### **1.9.2. Community of Practice: Language Change**

While it may seem that the topic has deviated from the main goal, the aim here is still the focus on language because in the midst of all what is said language plays a crucial role in the participation of the construction of knowledge. Taking this notion to look at society can be rather beneficial because a study would include not just groups of people involved, or the what relationships they have with others, but it would extend to include another criterion which is what kind of activities people of a community gather around, kind of learning is taking place, and discourse employed. Of course, a community of practice should not be regarded as a separate entity from the wider speech community in which it resides. For sure, participants in such a community would not devise new ways of speaking but rather they tend to use more oriented and specific ways geared towards the practice they have in common (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

By way of illustration only, and not by way of limitation, the case study of Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) at Belten High School in Detroit Michigan can be seen as a good example for exhibiting the relation between sociolinguistics and the subject of community of practice. Being comprised of adolescents from the outer community in which the school is situated, one would surmise that a linguistic study on language variation is going to reproduce identically tantamount results found in the community; yet, such assumption is not necessarily true when the concept of community of practice is deployed. According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003), the backing of vowels /e/ and /ʌ/, for

## Chapter One: Language Variation and Change

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example, flesh is pronounced like flush, and lunch is pronounced like launch, is a salient feature in the community. However, within the school, they notice the existing of two opposite groups named Jokes and Burnouts. The former “institutionally-based community of practice” who conform and associate themselves with school norms so as their social interaction. On the other hand, Burnouts reject school regulations and norms, furthermore, their social life is more based on the outer community in the neighborhoods and public spaces. The repercussion of these tendencies of these groups is manifested in their clothes, behavior, territory, and ultimately on the way they use language. In this regard, the Jokes use more standard code than the one deployed in the community while the Burnouts relay extensively on the use of local vowel shift.

In another example of the use of community of practice can be seen in the work of Christine Mallinson and Becky Childs on the speech community of Texana in North California, USA (2005). In their work, they notice that the African women’s practice of attending the church has created a perceptible division showed in two social groups: church attendee and porch sitters. As far as language is concerned, the church women show tendencies towards traditions and associate themselves with the local community while porch sitters’ use of language demonstrates the opposite. Results of their study are shown in figure 1.1 (Mallinson & Childs, 2005)

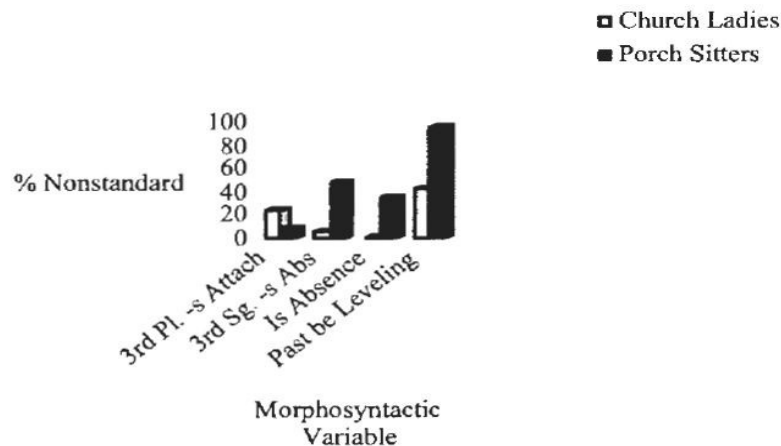


Figure 1.1. Phonological Variables by Community of Practice

Note: the diagram retrieved from “Communities of Practice in Sociolinguistic Description: African American Women's Language in Appalachia” by Christine Mallinson and Becky Childs (2005, p6).

Overall, the results that are obtained in the two studies above show the significance of opting community of practice as a vital variable in understanding language variation. Both examples own it to the idea of speech community to describe variables that belong to groups from the very same community. Unfortunately, unlike the previous concepts that are integrated into sociolinguistics, the idea of community of practice is still immature, therefore, and in alignment with Barton and Tusting (2005, p. 36), there is still “the need for a more fully developed theory of language within the theory of communities of practice”.

### **1.10. Language and Gender**

Language variation is driven by the fact that language is a manifestation of behavior and identity. Nevertheless, given the immense difficulty of analyzing that in every person, the adaptation of the notion of groups would certainly ease the complexity and help arriving at general conclusions. However, the groups referred to above are constructs, therefore, they are fallible because themselves are subject to change and interpretation. By contrast, grouping by gender is supposed to be relatively straightforward as it is based on sex. Unfortunately, it is not that simple as the term is often used as an umbrella term for several concepts such as sex, sexuality, and sexual identity. Therefore, instead of investigating in the literature the question of how gender and language correlate with each other, another pivotal question needs to be resolved which is what does gender really means?

A review of the literature on the subject clearly shows the agreement on the fact that sex and gender are two separate terms (Motschenbacher, 2010 ; Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003 ; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003 ; Coates, 2004 ; Christie, 2000). Sex is strictly related to biological differences regarding reproductive potential, thus, referring to a binary distinction between males and females. On the other hand, the concept of gender is still substantially influenced by sex, yet, other factors come into play such as social expectations and attitudes. In the matter, Eckert & McConnell-Ginet ( 2003, p. 10) see that “gender is the social elaboration of biological sex”. They assert that besides sex, all the differences

that exist between men and women are constructs. That is to say, norms that dictate the way men and women behave, dress, and more prominently to our subject, talk are all imposed by society and simply there are no biological bases. Therefore, that binary division found in sex does not simply hold true with gender. Having this in mind, in the endeavor to relate language and gender, opting for gender as a simple binary variable in a sociolinguistic study is not going to be sufficient.

### 1.11. Gender and Language Variation

In the reviewed literature, the attempt to study language and gender goes back to 1922, specifically to the work of the Danish linguist Otto Jespersen. In his book ‘Language, its Nature, Development and Origin’, he devoted a whole chapter entitled “The Woman” where he provided examples of how women use language. For instance, he referred to the idea that in many parts of the world, women are not allowed to mention the name of their husbands as “superstitiously believed to entail certain evil consequences” (Otto, 1992, p. 289). Such example also reflects the status of women at that time. However, he did not rely solely on such folk beliefs but took what can be deemed as a modern approach to refer to language variation as he tackled the subject in relation to choice of words, power (he used the idea competing languages), phonetics and grammar, adverbs, and punctuation specifically the period. However, as interesting as the work of Otto Jespersen is, it lacks the solid scientific ground that can make his claims stand up (Coates, 2004).

With the advent of sociolinguistics and the cravenness to the adaptation of the scientific approach, more specificity has been brought to the study of language and gender as the traditional dichotomy enforced by normative rules on how men and woman use language is no longer accepted. Instead of embarking upon studying the criterion of gender in isolation, current trends take into consideration various social characteristics in women’s language such as age, social class, religion, speaking in formal or casual situations, in what is referred to the dynamic approach (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003). Moreover, the concept of community of practice brings new insights into the idea of gender. On this, Litosseliti (2006) brings forth several aspects that are involved in a workplace that can have effects on both men and women’s language such as the type of the workplace, the pattern of the interaction, the role, power, and dominance.

### 1.12. Age-Grading and Language Variation

We live, age, decay, and die, and nothing can escape such faith, not even language as it follows the same path. Therefore, age is a category that should neither be discarded nor taken lightly in any sociolinguistic study. Indeed, in all the literature on the subject of language variation, the age category is always present and plays an important role. The criterion of age cuts across all the other variables such as gender, ethnicity, and race. That explains why age as an aspect is rarely referred to in isolation, it is often accompanied by other social categories. Second, and more importantly to the research at hand, language variation is strongly related to age. On this detail, the literature offers two concepts: ‘age grading variation’ and ‘language change in apparent time’.

As for age-grading variation, McKay and Hornberger (1996, p.165) assert that “Age grading involves features associated with specific age groups as a developmental or social stage”. They further refer to age-grading as the process whereby a speaker tries to imitate and speak like the next older age group in the community as he/ she matures. That is to say also, that in the process of maturation and moving from an age group to another, a speaker uses speech which is appropriate to the age group. Nevertheless, it should be noted that variation resulting from age-grading do not affect language at the community level. (Wardhaugh, 2006).

The work of William Labov in the community of Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts on the shift in the phonetic position of the first elements of the diphthongs /ay /aw/ often stands as a prominent example. In the investigation of centralized diphthongs, Labov examined these linguistic features minding several aspects such as regions, age, ethnicity, and occupation. For the current research and in the attempt to perceive the age-grading process in language, figure 1.2 is an adaptation of the results found by Labov (Labov, 1972).

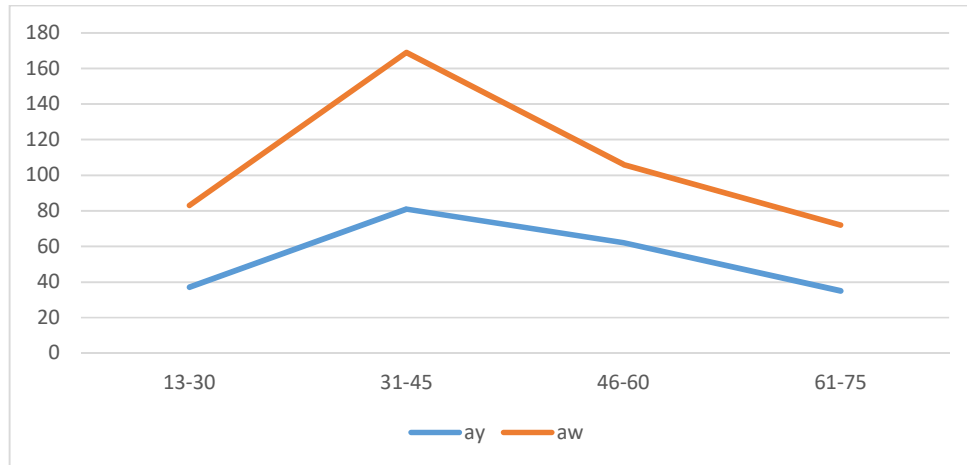


Figure 1.2. The Distribution of the Centralized Diphthongs /ay/ /aw/

Note : the graph is adapted from Labov ‘ Sociolinguistic patterns ( 1972) P. 22

In an alignment with Labov’s findings on the behavior of variation in age grading, Holmes (2013) offers what can be seen as a typical u or v shape pattern of language variation found in age grading studies. The graph 1.3 illustrates the use of [in] and [ɪŋ] in men’s language in a New Zealand survey. The graph shows that people use standard form more when they are younger or much older. However, non-standard form of language is associated with the middle-aged category.

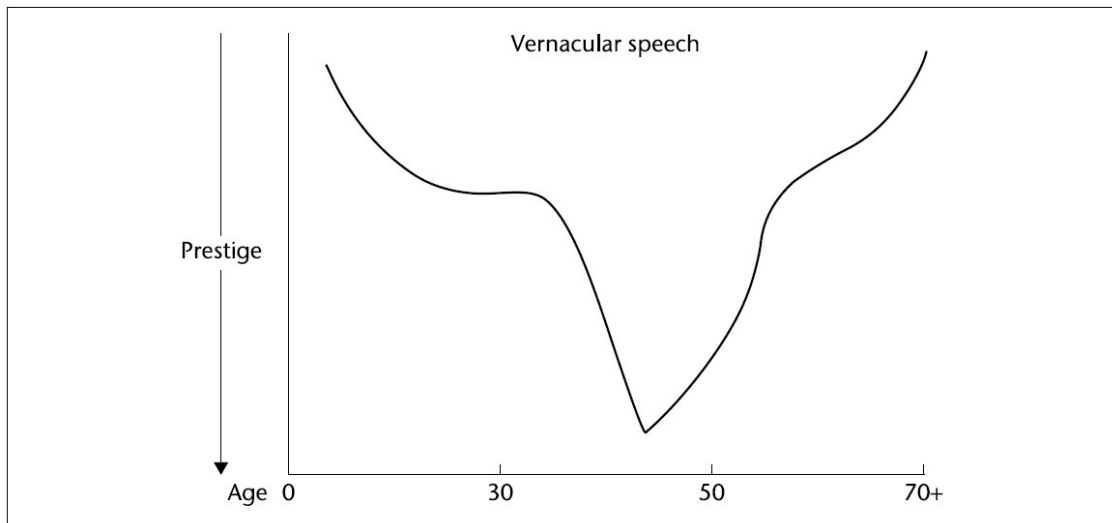


Figure 1.3. The Relationship between Use of Vernacular Forms and Age

Note: the graph is taken from Holmes, *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (4. ed), (2013, p.178 )

Both examples provided above are from one point in time. Thus, from this standing point, a linguist speculates that speakers are going to follow the same subtle way found in figure 1.3. However, Wardhaugh (2006, p. 197) raises an interesting question that perfectly corresponds to the examples provided:

“How can we be sure that in each of the examples given above the younger people will not change their linguistic ways as they get older, with those changes being in the direction of the use of the groups which are presently described as being older?”

Indeed, there is simply no guarantee that one speaker in his /her middle age decides not to conform to norms or what is deemed appropriate to his /her age group. Instead, one might decide to maintain the same speech pattern. If such situation happens on a large scale that means what was found in the two figures for examples does not fall in the concept of ‘age-grading’ but instead what is presented is a language change in progress.

### **1.13. Language Change in Progress**

Not so long the subject of language change was tightly restricted to diachronic studies and historical linguistics, often thought that it can only be perceived through analyzing results from studying language at different points in time. While there is no question on the effectiveness of the methods and approaches of historical linguistics at arriving at results, the latter often describes the outcomes of the change and offer little insights on questions such as how did it happen? What has motivated it? And sometimes even what was the initial state? (Cukor-Avila & Bailey, 2013).

Hypothetically, let’s picture that in a language there is a certain linguistic feature or features that are undergoing language change, and it is not yet complete. Thus, in this case, language change is there, constant but slow. Now, the essence of studying language change in progress lies in the fact that any synchronic study that includes these linguistic features and is broad enough, including several age groups, can provide a researcher with how language is changing. Therefore, the researcher is not obliged to wait until the change

## Chapter One: Language Variation and Change

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is complete to start a study. This approach to language study is referred to as ‘apparent-time’.

In this vein, William Labov sees that dichorionic development of language can be professed from studying linguistic differences among different generations. The concept is different from real-time evidence of language change where language change is investigated by analyzing results from different points in time. Indeed, with Martha’s Vineyard Labov was able to confirm his hypothesis by comparing results with the evidence collected 30 years ago in the Linguistic Atlas (Cukor-Avila & Bailey, 2013). The construct provided by Labov makes the criterion of age more than just a way to group people but as a chronometer to illustrate language change from a single point in time.

An example to be considered when talking about the apparent-time construct is seen in the work of Bailey et al. (1991) (as cited in Cukor-Avila & Bailey, 2013) where they studied 14 features of Texas speech in a phonological survey (PST) and a Grammatical Investigation of Texas speech (GRITIS). For illustration, in this paper, the focus will be on eight linguistic features ( Table 1.1).

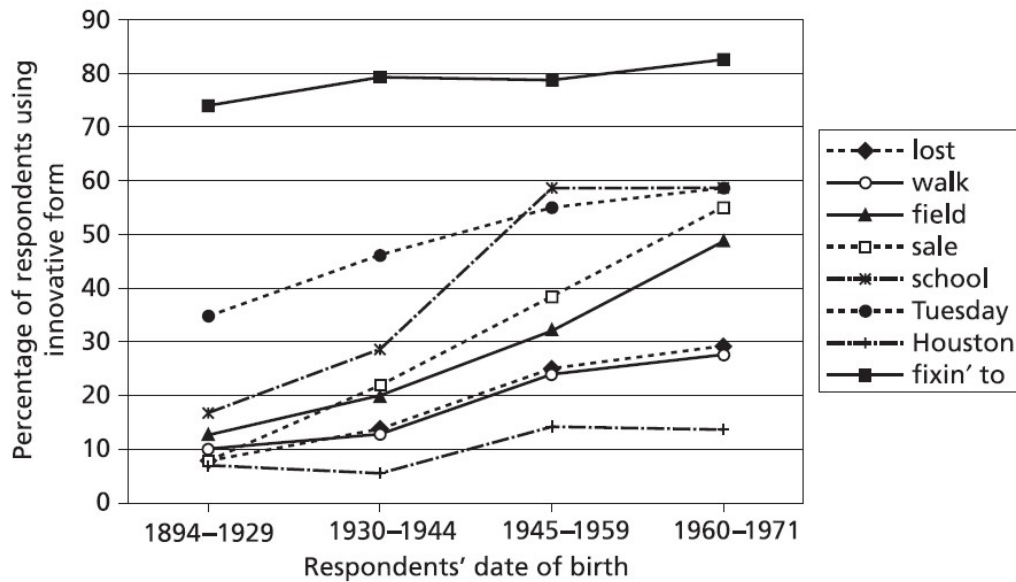
Table 1.1. PST and GRITS features

Target Item	Process	Innovative Form	Conservative Form
<i>lost</i>	merger of /ɔ/ and /ɑ/	[wɑk]	[wɔk]
<i>walk</i>	merger of /ɔ/ and /ɑ/	[wɑk]	[wɔk]
<i>field</i>	merger of /i/ and /ɪ/ before /l/	[fild]	[fɪld]
<i>sale</i>	merger of /e/ and /ɛ/ before /l/	[sɛl]	[sel]
<i>school</i>	merger of /u/ and /ʊ/ before /l/	[skʊl]	[skul]
<i>Tuesday</i>	loss of /j/ after alveolars	[tuzdi]	[tjuzdi]
<i>Houston</i>	loss of /h/ before /j/	[justn]	[hjustn]
<i>fixin</i>	to use of quasimodal	<i>fixin to</i>	-----

Note: the table is extracted from Chambers, J. K., & Schilling-Estes, N. (Eds.). (2013). *The handbook of language variation and change* (Second Edition) P .242.



Figure 1.4. Apparent-time Distributions of Innovative Features in PST and GRITS.



Note: Graph Retrieved from: Chambers, J. K., & Schilling-Estes, N. (Eds.). (2013). *The handbook of language variation and change* (Second Edition) P .243.

The example provided above renders the perception of language change visible from the standing of one point in time. The comparison of four age groups clearly indicates the increase in the use of four linguistic features. The findings of this apparent-time study are also confirmed through the comparison with real-time evidence collected from the Linguistic Atlas of the Gulf States (LAGS) 15 to 20 years ago. (Cukor-Avila & Bailey, 2013).

However, the apparent-time hypothesis is not without limitations, the first problem that might well interfere with the reading results is the idea of age-grading. As in the latter, although a speaker shows a high degree of variability in language, he/she still is going to adapt and revert back to norms, thus, what happens is simply a closed cycle of language change that affects the individual but leaves the whole speech community intact. However, Milroy & Gordon (2008, p .36) see the damage age-grading evidence ‘is not fatal’, as variation related to age is connected to “ features that involve a high degree of social awareness and would, therefore, be more readily subject to conscious manipulation”.

Consequently, the adaptation of the apparent-time hypothesis needs to be followed by a careful selection of linguistic variables.

### 1.14. Child Language Variation

From the age-grading to the apparent-time construct, the criterion of age is a cornerstone and plays a principal role in the investigation of language variation and change. Nevertheless, while a large and growing body of literature has investigated language variation in adults and adolescents, the work on children, especially pre-school age, remains considerably less studied. Roberts (2013) states that there are two reasons behind this. First, she sees that in the field of language variation, the focus has always been on adolescents and adults as those are often perceived as having full control of their dialect and can actually contribute to language change and variation. By contrast, children are often thought to be just receptors of the dialect. The second reason is still driven by the first one and to the apparent-time hypothesis, the issue here is that most work on language variation and change is backed by the assumption that dialect pattern achieved at adulthood does not change substantially during the lifespan of the speaker.

However, the importance of connecting language variation and change with children cannot be easily discarded. On his remark on sound change and the principle of 'laziness', Labov (2006) raised the point that cuts to the chase of the topic, as he explains the process of inheriting sound change by children. He emphasizes that while parents can be aware of the choice they make when altering sounds in words whether because of laziness or carelessness, it is often their children who will complete the sound change process because of the ignorance of the distinction. Labov's avowal carries a clear refutation to the claim that children are just 'acquirers' of language and they have no impact on language change and variation because he explicitly explains that while parents or older generations can be initiators of language change, it is their children who render language change in progress to a complete one.

With the establishment of the involvement of children in the phenomenon of language change, comes a compelling question that is when exactly, or in which year, do children start acquiring linguistic features that are governed by social variation and not ruled by constraints? An answer to the question can be found in the work of Roberts and Labov (1995) (as cited in Roberts, 2013). They have investigated the acquisition of the

short 'a' as in cat pattern in some preschool children in Philadelphia with consideration to lexical, phonological, and grammatical conditioning. In their conclusion, they have identified that children between the ages of three and four in the sample have not only started to acquire socially governed linguistic features but they also indicate an acceleration of language change. All in all, child language acquisition remains a fertile ground for researchers to investigate and bring new insights to the topic of language change and variation.

### **1.15. Ethnicity and Language Change: Nullifying Other Social**

#### **Factors**

The basic assumption behind sociolinguistics is that identity is reflected in language and even when talking about age or gender for example from a purely linguistic perspective, the idea of identity is always there. In her book 'Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self', Alcoff (2006, p.02) sees that "social identities such as race, ethnicity, and gender remain the most telling predictors of social power and success". For sure, language is at the heart of all these. However, ethnicity can be deemed a bit difficult to be defined. Probably the most popular definition is that which refers to it by "the relation between language use and ethnic background" (Trask & Stockwell, 2007, p. 86). Yet, such definition does hardly say anything. Labov aligned with the idea of Alcoff, sees that ethnicity is a social identity and he further adds that it is "attributed to people by virtue of their descent, an acquired rather than an achieved characteristic. It represents the answer to the question "What are you?" (2006, p. 245). Labov makes it clear that ethnicity is not something a person opts for but it is dictated by birth. He further explains that the primary criterion responsible for grouping in regard to ethnic background is usually 'religious affiliation'.

On the question of how ethnicity would correlate with language and more importantly with the idea of language change, Labov (2006) avers that out of the five social factors, social class, age, gender, neighborhood, and ethnicity, he has dealt with in his book 'Principles of Language Change: Social Factors', ethnicity is the most powerful contributor to language change. He asserts that the reason goes to the fact that ethnicity can simply nullify or reduce the effect of other social factors. The study on the New York Jewish community is a good example of such a case. In the latter, the sample is comprised of upper-middle-class younger men aged from twenty-one to thirty-nine and older women

## Chapter One: Language Variation and Change

from working class between the ages of forty and sixty-five. Moreover, for each group, he has taken reading from two generations.

Table.1.2: Phonological Variables for Subjects with Foreign- and Native-born Parents in New York City.

	<i>Upper middle class Jewish younger men [21–39 yrs]</i>				<i>Working class Jewish older women [40–65 yrs]</i>			
	<i>(æh) scores</i>		<i>(oh) scores</i>		<i>(æh) scores</i>		<i>(oh) scores</i>	
	<i>2nd gen.</i>	<i>3rd gen.</i>	<i>2nd gen.</i>	<i>3rd gen.</i>	<i>2nd gen.</i>	<i>3rd gen.</i>	<i>2nd gen.</i>	<i>3rd gen.</i>
<b>n</b>	3	6	3	6	6	3	6	3
<b>Mean</b>	31.0	30.3	27.0	24.5	28.6	28.6	19.9	20.6
<b>Std dev.</b>	7.8	5.8	1.6	4.8	3.9	10.0	3.5	1.1
<b>t</b>	0.15		0.86		0.47		0.33	

Note: The table is taken from Labov ‘Principles of Linguistic Change. Vol. 2: Social Factors 2006 p. 248

With the diversity shown in table 1.2, one would expect to find a miscellany of linguistic features because of the social factors involved. First, considering the age factor, there are substantial differences, such factor alone should result in language variation and change. Second, the move from the middle class to the working one is also a factor that should not be taken lightly. Third and most important is the gender differences. However, with all aspects at hand, the numbers do not reflect the same diversity which normally they should. Labov also refers to the idea that another important effect of a factor was diminished which is language contact..

### 1.16. Language and Race

Unlike the other concepts reviewed in the work such as gender, social class, ethnicity, race seems a topic that everyone is trying to avoid, it is always there, mentioned along with the social factors but no dedicated chapter to it often can be found. Of course, this might be related to the current humanities trends and also the fact that it can bring all sorts of prejudices and political conflicts, especially for researchers. Furthermore, in the

literature reviewed there is the tendency to use the concepts of race and ethnicity interchangeably, which generates several questions as what does the concept race stand for? what is the difference between ethnicity and race? Why there is little literature on the topic, or more precisely why everyone seems to evade going deeper in the topic when it comes to the relationship with language?

As for the first question, the concept of race is borrowed from biology, it means ‘a local kind or variety within a species’ (Moore, 2008, p. 8). When the concept is projected in humans, things tend to get complicated. That is, the widespread of humans as species in the world entails wide variability in appearance. The explanation of this goes to conditioning, as every organism adapts to its environment. For the humans, this is reflected in physical traits such as color as some are darker than others, some taller or shorter, different types of hair (Moore, 2008). While ethnicity encompasses several aspects for example beliefs, culture, and religion, race is purely related to physical appearances. Although all that has been said is accurate as biology is a pure hardcore science, the complication arises because for some the word race has become synonymous with ‘racism’ which is in fact wrong.

Unlike the term race, racism is a social construct that emerged from the idea that physical characteristics people display are not trivial but are also rooted in the psychology of people. A belief that was fostered by some biologists, anthropologists, historians, and even philosophers during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries (Moore, 2008). Such belief paved the way for categorizing people and justifying that some are better than others. Of course, science renounces such claims and so do social sciences. Regarding the latter, Carter and Green (1996, p.64) see “that social science has resisted the interrogation of the concepts 'race', 'racial' and 'race relations', a charity rarely extended to other common-sense concepts”. Certainly, sociolinguistics is not an exception. This is what explains the fact that many strong names in sociolinguistics do not venture deep into the idea of race.

However, no matter how one wants to escape controversies the word ‘race’ brings, it is there, even if not explicitly expressed. In the book ‘Language Myths’, in his section entitled ‘Black Children are Verbally Deprived’ Wolfram (1998) tackles the subject of racism and language. He asserts that no one can deny the certitude that African-American children speak differently, however, by differently some mean worse. According to

Wolfram, it is simply a myth, and to be nurtured it needs to be justified by ‘objective fact’ and a common sense. He explains that what was deemed as ‘objective fact’ behind the assumption that African-American children ways of speaking are deficient is the use of language test that was based on norms from standard English.

Sure, there is no question that scientists are objective, the same cannot be said about people, accordingly, subjectivity always remains a persistent problem. The literature on the idea of language and race still suffers from gaps that need to be addressed. Furthermore, the notion of race and racism have taken a different path and perhaps have been substituted with other matters that hold similar connotations but bring less hullabaloo. Language racism now can be perceived in subjects such as language and identity, language and attitudes, language and nationality language and politics. (Weber, 2015)

### **1.17. Language and Attitudes**

The driving force that fuels language racism is not science, although people are given the illusion that it is the case, the true reason behind such belief is people’s feelings towards the language of others. When it comes to language and attitudes, the same idea persists which is people’s feeling, however, the difference is that with language attitudes, the concept is extended to how people also feel about their own language. On the matter, Crystal (2008, p. 266) sees that language attitudes in sociolinguistics refer to “the feelings people have about their own language or the language(s) of others. These may be positive or negative ...” the inclusion of both positivity and negativity in people’s view makes the concept appealing to sociolinguists which is reflected in the abundance of it in the literature. Furthermore, unlike the words race and racism which are likely to trigger negative emotion, the term attitude is neutral.

In relation to language, Preston (2013) asserts that people do not necessarily hold attitudes toward language but in fact, it is towards people. She explains that people tend to have certain beliefs about other groups, as some are seen as hard-working, some intelligent, others romantic, and even lazy. These feelings do not stop only here but also language is going to be perceived accordingly. Certainly, it is a fundamental truth in linguistics that languages are equally complicated, still, whether positive or negative feelings, they must have effects on language. The questions that are provoked now are: what are the aspects

involved in language attitudes? how does it affect language? And does attitude result in language change?

As for the first question, Albirini (2016) believes that language attitudes include three sides: affect, cognition, and behavior. The affective side corresponds to the idea tackled above which is the speaker's reaction towards a language. The cognitive facet refers to the actual factual knowledge the speaker has about the language. The last element, in fact, can be seen as the manifestation of the previous ones. It denotes the overt behavior of the speaker towards language. It is then, the last element that is going to be the focal point in the question of how attitude affects language; simply due to the reason of the difficulty of investigating the first two elements.

In the article 'Sociolinguistics of Immigration', Chambers (2003) offers an example of how behavior, resulting from language attitudes, incorporates with language and language change. He asserts that an attitude towards a language is triggered by language contact, in other words, it is the exposure to a foreign way of speaking that makes people develop a feeling towards the newcomers and their language. Once foreigners arrive in numbers they constitute a minority among the host speech community. Now, the dark consequence of attitude, according to Chambers is seen when the native people start discriminating on the bases of language or accent. For example, minorities are expelled from employment in certain kind of jobs such as teachers, salesman just because of the accent. Consequently, what happens here is that minorities are excluded from prestigious jobs.

In the light of such attitudes towards minorities, whether they are grouped because of immigration or ethnicity, one would expect a reaction. And indeed, the situation inclines two possibilities, first, the group converts on itself, resulting in the maintenance of the linguistic features characterizing that particular group. The second scenario is adequately explained by Labov (2006, p. 191) as he asserts that "speakers feel that their adoption of the linguistic form will lead others to attribute to them the positive traits of the given group and allow them to share in the privileges of that group." Thus, the outcome of such reaction is the abandonment of the group's language or linguistic features in favor of that of the host community, put simply, language change is inevitable.

### 1.18. Language Contact

The examples of Chambers and Labov on how language correlates with attitudes bring attention to a very important element which is the exposure to a new code. Hence, without the contact with a foreign code, both examples would not have taken place. In this regard, language contact is defined by Thomason (2011, p 01) as “the use of more than one language in the same place at the same time.” Thomason also acknowledges the deficiency his definition suffers from, as there could be a situation where two speakers of two languages existing in one place yet there is no interaction between them. However, it is the other situation that matters, when there is contact and communication. In the same regard, Trask and Stockwell (2007 , p 136) in their definition shift the focus from the situation to the result, as they state it is “Changes in one language resulting from the influence of another language”.

The definition of Trask and Stockwell strikes the heart of the research by establishing a relation between language change and language contact. In fact, in an alignment with them, Holmes (2013) confirms that it is through interaction and contact that linguistic change is carried. She also recognizes that language contact is a defining criterion in the speed of language change because a community with little contact with the outside world, their language would see a slow change in comparison to another with strong interactions. The consequences of language contact are not restricted to the speed of language change, but it extends to several significant areas that are all so crucial for understanding the mechanism of language change such as multilingualism, prestige, language shift, language chain, language convergence and divergence, and language death.

There are two points that need to be considered before delving further into the topic. First, it is unavoidable, especially at this stage, to revisit the term language because language contact is not confined to cases where there are two distinct and unrelated languages, but it covers dialects of the same language. Second, language contact does not require necessarily the existence of two languages in the same place. Thomason (2011) emphasizes that written languages also are included in the idea of language contact. He offers the example of Classical Arabic and the Quran, as although the language is not used, it remains influential to many other languages Turkish, Persian, and Malay.



### 1.19. Societal Multilingualism

The humans' capability of acquiring or learning a language is rather phenomenal and simply nothing prevents a person from acquiring or learning more than one language. If a person knows only a single language, he/she is referred to as 'a monolingual person'. However, Bialystok (2001) sees that a monolingual person is probably a fiction as coming to contact with another language or at least a fragment of it is unavoidable. He clarifies his statements by stressing the idea that no language is pure. For such reason, the focus will shift to the concepts of bilingualism and multilingualism. The former denotes the ability to speak two languages while the latter is a cover term for the ability to speak two or more. (Trask & Stockwell, 2007)

Bilingualism and multilingualism are properties of individuals or societies. Certainly, one should be aware that societies do not speak but rather people do, in this sense, multilingual societies can be defined as societies where "two or more languages are used routinely" (Trask & Stockwell, 2007, p. 32). Despite the simplicity of the definition, trying to exemplify is problematic because one would be blocked by the language versus dialect dichotomy. Weber, ( 2015) gives an example of this as he states if someone, in the nineteenth century, from Luxembourg speaks both Luxembourgish and German, he is going to be perceived as a monolingual person as Luxembourgish was seen as a dialect of German. However, at the present time, the same person is designated as multilingual. Thus, politics is still exerting a strong influence on linguistics. Consequently, in an alignment with Weber (2015), in this paper, a multilingual society will include dialects and variation of the same language.

The existence of two languages or more at the same time and place can hardly go without raising problems. Indeed, according to Matras (2010), there is rarely language contact without conflict. He explains that that happens due to the fact that speakers of 'small languages' struggle to maintain a balance between their native language and the language of the large group which provides a better social-economic status. Hence, individual bilingualism or multilingualism is not responsible for language change, but it is the societal ones that trigger language change.

### 1.20. Language Planning

In all the driving forces of language change that have been tackled so far as gender, age, ethnicity, language attitudes, language changes unconsciously and often at a slow pace as there is nothing steering it. In contrast, “Language planning is deliberate language change; that is, changes in the systems of language code or speaking or both that are planned by organizations that are established for such purposes or given a mandate to fulfill such purposes” Rubin and Jernudd (1971) (as cited in Cooper, 1989, p. 30). Certainly, there are several definitions of language planning (LP), in fact, Cooper (1989) listed twelve definitions. In the latter, language planning swings between an activity to change language as the definition above, or an activity to solve a language related problem as that of Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971 who see language planning “as a political and administrative activity for solving language problems in society”. (cited in Cooper, 1989, p. 30).

Whether for changing or solving problems, the idea of a deliberate act of changing language is at the core of it. Definitions of language planning often seem to show a positive aspect; but if one were to ponder over the situation, he /she would realize that no matter how positive it is, change often entails two directions: whether enforcing and enhancing a language or the other way around. Even if the aim is to solve a problem and enhance a particular language that would come at the expense of another. Perhaps the latter justifies the ‘battery of criticism’ idea of language planning receives as its practitioners are accused of “serving the interests and agendas of dominant elites while passing itself off as an ideologically neutral, objective enterprise” (Ferguson, 2006, p. 3).

Perhaps language planning is best described through questions of who plans, what, how, and for whom. As for the who, changing language on a national scale mandates the existing of a powerful administrative entity which is often a government or can be a conquering party. Therefore, the people referred to are mostly politicians. Now, for the what is to plan, it is going to be covered under the idea of standard languages. The how is linked to the types of language planning. As for the whom, it will be included as examples of the consequences of LP on language and particularly its influence on language change. In this part of the paper, types of language planning are briefly reviewed as still the weight will be laid on consequences. However, before talking about language planning, rather an

important concept needs to be introduced which is ‘standard languages’ as it plays a major part in understanding the processes of LP.

### 1.21. Standard Languages

Right from the start of the paper, the writer was carefully deliberate to avoid falling into the dichotomy of language, dialect, variety; nonetheless, when the topic of language study is linked with politics, which is behind language planning, one can hardly escape the distinction. Accordingly, Crystal (2008) sees that the term standard in sociolinguistics refers to a ‘prestige dialect/variety’ in a speech community. He adds that, from a purely linguistic perspective, it is not like that a variety can be labeled as standard while another as substandard, but is that act of standardization that renders a dialect or a variety as such.

The processes of standardization are selection, codification, elaboration of functions, and acceptance. An endeavor of standardizing a language needs to start first by selecting a variety. However, the selection process is not random but often is associated with the powerful group in the speech community. Once a variety is selected, the second stage is establishing norms of writing, and for such a reason, the selected variety needs to conform to strict rules and conventions that regulate its grammar, spelling, and style. Next, if language is to gain importance, it needs to be implemented and used in several domains in society. Finally, a language needs to be accepted by its users (Penny, 2000).

Although the primary reason for pondering over the process of language standardization is mainly to set the stage for language planning and the effects the latter has on language, the act of standardizing a language has also significant effects on language change. In fact, the whole process of standardizing language is linked with the establishment of linguistic uniformity (Deumert, 2004). Indeed, one of the procedures of elaboration implies minimizing language variation. Therefore, instead, the enormous variation languages would exhibit across the social spectrum, standard languages are bound by rules and norms which work as shackles. Furthermore, no matter how noble are the goals of LP, there are often ramifications as it affects regional varieties and that of minorities (McKay & Hornberger, 1996). In the opposite direction, attempting to force the standard language by assigning functions to it requires maximizing the spread of the selected variety in all domains.

### 1.22. The Repercussions of Language Planning for Language Change

Considering what has been said concerning language planning, one would expect to find an abundance of literature on the effect of LP on language change; however, it is quite the opposite. The corpus reviewed for the current research has validated such a claim. Furthermore, despite the fact it can be deemed as an old statement, Ferguson (1983) attests that there is a disassociation between the studies of language planning and the systematic study of language change. He avows that there are two reasons for such a situation. First, it is a result of language planners' impatience to investigate language change or even examine its effects. Second, it goes back to the nineteenth and twentieth trends of language change studies which often discarded language planning efforts whether because seen as irrelevant to language change or simply distrusted. Therefore, the endeavor to revoke the idea that LP has no effect on language change requires contemplating examples of language planning.

Scientific investigations of the effects of language planning often do not study language change directly but frequently examine language attitude which in turn is a clear motivation for language change. In this regard, the work of Ferrer (2010) provides a scientific inquiry about how politics interferes with language and generates certain attitudes that in turn steer language. The setting of the work is in Spain where two varieties, Castalian and Valencian, form a complex situation. The intricacy arises due to several reasons. First, Castalian is a dominant and the language variety of the majority while Valencian is the variety of a minority. Second, a sociolinguistic conflict that goes back to the sixteenth century when Castalian was opted for by aristocrats and clergymen as the language of culture. Third, a political conflict regarding the nature of the Valencian variety as there were two opposing views. On one hand, the view from international linguists who deemed Valencian as a geographical variety of Catalan; on the other, Valencian speakers' belief that contradicts the first one, and state that it is rather a different language (Ferrer, 2010).

Ferrer's methodology comprises the use of the real-time approach of comprising results and the use of the matched-guise technique to convert people's attitude into a measurable variable. The Real-time approach necessitates the presence of a previous study or studies that stand as a baseline to be compared with. The current example itself is a replica of another survey done in 1998. The results of the investigation confirm the fact that

altering a status of a language does affect also its use as speakers of the language start declining and so the norms of what is deemed to be accepted grammar. (Ferrer, 2010)

### 1.23. Speech Accommodation and Language Variation

With the consideration of all what has been discussed so far in regard to language change, it is rather impossible for one to deny the findings of sociolinguistics. However, in agreement with Giles, Robinson, & Smith (1980), the fact that practitioners of the study of language and society focus on large-scale social entities such as the groups that have been tackled would mean that a close view of what happens at the individual level is missing; thus, details that could contribute to the understanding of language are rather excluded or neglected. Giles et al (1980 ) even go further claiming that sociolinguists tend to separate the study of language from the actual definition of language as being a behavior and that the latter is responsible for molding language in society. Consequently, a theoretical perspective that elucidates the processes that result in language change and in the same account takes into account individuals is needed.

Communication Accommodation Theory, CAT henceforth, provides a different approach than the one adapted above by pondering over the psychological processes that happen in the scenario of interacting with others. Initially, the accommodation theory was labeled ‘Speech Accommodation Theory’, developed by Giles and his associates to denote “the adjustment of one’s speech or other communicative behaviours vis-a` -vis the people with whom one is interacting” (Bell , 2009, p.647). However, it has been extended to cover other types of communication. The implementation of the approach in this paper helps to arrive at the answers of two questions: why does a speaker change his / her way of speaking, and second how does it change?

The answer to the first question has been always present since the beginning of this paper as a speaker being in a dynamic social context is always seeking approval from the social group he/ she belongs to. The examples referred to above related to the idea of language attitudes conform to this notion. Whether to be associated with a prestigious language, to gain advantages by the hosted society or to avoid political conflicts, the main purpose is acceptance (Wardhaugh, 2006). An essential component of the Communication Accommodation Theory is the modification of speech by the speaker, thus, the notion of

change is very crucial. Certainly, the compelling question is how does a speaker change language to be more favorable to the community?

In this aspect, the theory advances two concepts to explain the behavior of speakers which are convergence and divergence. The former denotes the process in which a speaker sacrifices certain linguistic features that result in speaking like the others. On the other hand, divergence is the exact opposite of convergence, the speaker shifts away from ways of speaking to be in favor to others (Wardhaugh, 2006). Convergence and divergence behaviors are not merely restricted to speaking but also cover other areas such as culture. In fact, Giles et al (1980) identify two types of accommodation. Overt accommodation can be exemplified in the situation where one changes the language in a bilingual setting, while covert accommodation includes aspects such as accent, speech rate, and pauses (Giles, Robinson, & Smith, 1980). However, the root of the Communication Accommodation Theory in psychology still poses few issues when being adapted to sociolinguistics. For such purpose, accommodation in linguistics is often correlated with the notion of style, such association is found in the definition of accommodation by David Crystal: “theory in sociolinguistics which aims to explain why people modify their style of speaking (accommodate) to become more like or less like that of their addressee(s)” (2008, p. 6). Consequently, another approach developed by Allan Bell that raises purely from sociolinguistics emerged labeled ‘Audience Design’ (Brown, 2005).

### 1.24. Audience Design

The concept of ‘Audience design’ bears remarkable similarities with the previous theory discussed as still changes in one’s ways of speaking are neatly dictated by an addressee or addressees. In fact, even Bell admits that he benefited from insights from CAT. Nevertheless, the difference between the two theories can be summarized in the fact that instead of the notion of behavior that requires cogitating on psychological processes, thus, falling under the header of psychology, the gist of the Audience Design model is style-shifting. The emergence of the theory goes back to Bell’s doctoral studies in which he worked on syntactic and phonological variations, specifically, intervocalic /t/ voicing in New Zealand English which can be realized as an alveolar voiced flap or stop instead of a voiceless stop; such variation would make words like writer and better sound like rider and

bedder. The work was done in the NZ radio station where Bell concluded that the same news readers altered their style in accordance to their audience (Bell, 2001).

Bell summarizes his model into ten points. In this paper, only those that are deemed relevant to the topic will be reviewed starting from the definition of style. Regarding the latter, Bell sees that “style is what an individual speaker does with a language in relation to other people” (Bell, 2001, p. 141). Therefore, style, according to Bell, is neither related to functions nor mechanisms but rather to people. However, the social perspective is not excluded from the picture. Figure 1.5 indicates the interconnection between the individual speaker variation and that of the group. The figure holds the significance of the approach to understand and explain language variation on a social scale.

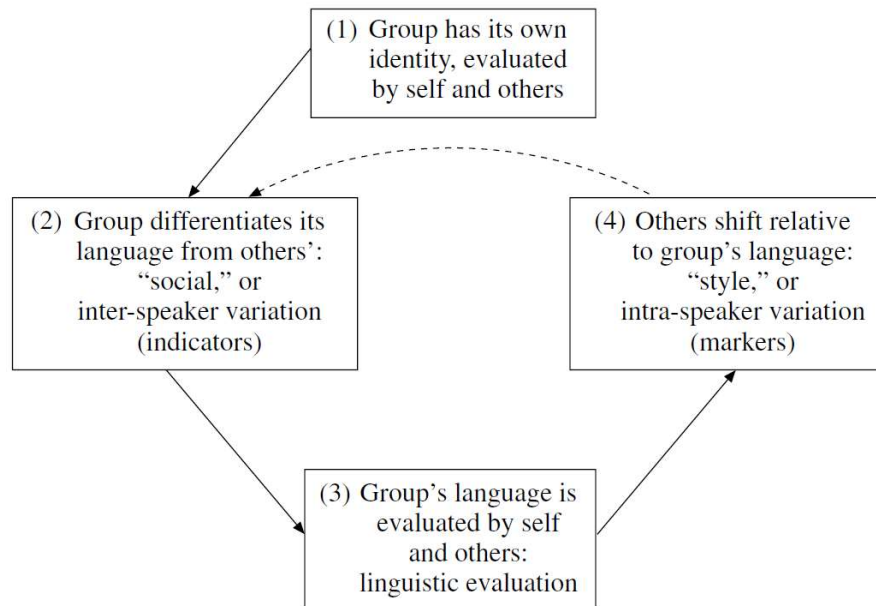


Figure 1.5. The Derivation of Intra-speaker from Inter-speaker Variation, by Way of Evaluation

Note: Retrieved from “Back in Style: Reworking Audience Design. In Eckert, Style and sociolinguistic variation Page 142.

On the relation between style and social variation, Bell proposes that “Style derives its meaning from the association of linguistic features with particular social groups” which is, in fact, the second point in the theory. Next, the theory is not restricted to a single code but also encompasses situations where two or multiple languages are used, in this regard,

## Chapter One: Language Variation and Change

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Bell recognizes the importance of all different sorts of codes deployed when people are speaking and he sees that “Audience design applies to all codes and levels of a language repertoire, monolingual and multilingual” (Bell, 2001, p. 144).

The next element relates language variation at a social scale with that found in an individual speaker: “Variation on the style dimension within the speech of a single speaker derives from and echoes the variation which exists between speakers on the “social” dimension.” (Bell, 2001, p. 145). In other words, a speaker does not necessarily bring new linguistic variables into his / her ways of speaking but rather the speaker is still bound by variables that carry social meaning. Hence, style-shifting as a process is still determined by social rules on how language needs to be used; that also means that variation resulting from style shifting does not invalidate language variations caused by age, ethnicity, gender, or social class.

Preston (2001) adapts, yet does not fully support the idea that “the speech of a single speaker derives and echoes the variation which exists between speakers on the “social” dimension”. Instead, she perceives the influences on language variation as taking the shape of a funnel (Figure 1.6). Figure 1.6 reflects Preston’s assumption that linguistic factors come prior to social ones in determining the way people speak, leaving stylistic factors to the last position. (Preston, 2001). Furthermore, figure 1.6 also reveals the significance of the study of style as being the first element that comes before speaking.

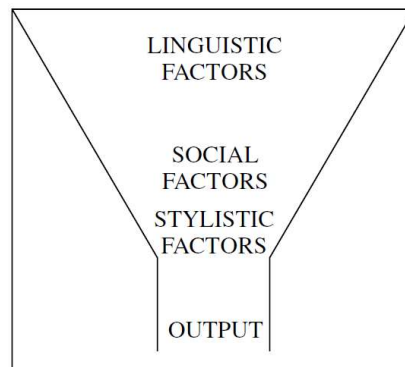


Figure 1.6. The “Strength” of Factors Influencing Variation

Note: Retrieved from Preston, D. R. (2001). *Style and The Psycholinguistics of Sociolinguistics: The Logical*. In P. Eckert, *Style and Sociolinguistic Variation*, Page 280



In the same vein, William Labov (2001) also acknowledges the importance of pondering on style in sociolinguistic studies. However, he sheds light on the approaches to style shifting in sociolinguistic methodology whether as “a naturalistic, ethnographic phenomenon, and style-shifting as a controlled device for measuring the dynamics of sociolinguistic variation.” (Labov, 2001, p. 85). He further expands this by presenting six principles of the notion of style, among which Bell’s principle is the second: social/ stylistic symmetry, Bell’s principle, the cross-over pattern, stylistic reinterpretation, stylistic evolution, and the sociolinguistic interference (Labov, 2001, p. 86). Labov’s reference to style is also important because he relates it to the notion of language change as he sees that in earlier stages of language change, style-shifting is not found but it can only be perceived when the change matures and maximizes, and is assigned with prestige. Despite the focus on style is rather important, imperial works deploying Audience Design framework remain few compared to other models in sociolinguistics perhaps this is due to the fact style is individual and finding a representative sample is difficult (Labov, 2001)

### **1.25. Implications of Language Change: Simplification versus Complexification**

Most of what was discussed about language change was about the question of why; thus, focusing primarily on the causes. Despite the answer to the question of how language change is manifested has been always present in the example provided, meditating on the consequences of language change systematically is necessary. On this subject, Matthews (2003) links the change in people with that in language, he asserts that change in language is not simply an alteration in ways of speaking but it is a change in the underlying system of language. However, the issue that persists is that which is illustrated in the question of William Labov (1989, p. 01), “Where to find the most systematic view of the linguistic system?”. Labov offers answers: first, that can be found in genetic mechanic found in the individuals or “in the community that exerts the stimulus and control.”

Consequently, examining language change at the language structure level is inevitable. However, in lieu of disuniting the subject into two compartments separating the topic of language structure from the study of language and society, the approach adopted in the rest of the chapter is to bridge the gap between the two. Nevertheless, linking the two slants needs to be grounded on a theoretical framework that systematically relates the social

## Chapter One: Language Variation and Change

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factors and language structure. The works of Peter Trudgill ‘Sociolinguistic Typology and Complexification’ (2009), ‘Sociolinguistic Typology: Social Determinants of Linguistic’ (2011b) , and ‘ Social Structure, Language Contact and Language Change’ (2011a) allow the theoretical ground that “ the suggestion is that there may be a tendency for different types of social environment and social structure to give rise to, or at least be accompanied by, different types of linguistic structure” (Trudgill, 2011a, p. 237).

In the course of vindicating his claims, Trudgill realizes that despite the abundance of the corpus related to the topic of language change and the foregone conclusion that language changes over time, there are dramatically two opposing views about the direction of variation. On one hand, those who take a sociolinguistic approach in studying language change believe that language contact leads mostly to ‘simplification’. On the other, typologists advance the exact opposite notion which is ‘complexification’ (Trudgill, 2011). The following table summarizes and illustrates the difference between the two concepts and their impact on language structure.

<b>Simplification</b>	<b>Complexification</b>
The regularization of irregularities	Irregularization
An increase in lexical/ morphological transparency	Increase in opacity
A reduction in syntagmatic redundancy, e.g., grammatical agreement	Increase in syntagmatic redundancy
The loss of morphological categories	Acquisition of morphological categories

Table 1.3. Processes of Simplification and Complexification.

Note : Adapted from Peter Trudgill (2011 , p.6)

The gist of Trudgill’s theoretical construct lies in the idea that both the processes of complexification and simplification can be accounted for from a sociolinguistic point of view. He asserts that four points are responsible for the outcome and the direction of language change: isolation versus contact, dense versus loose social networks, social stability vs instability and relatively small vs relatively large community size (Trudgill, 2011). Nevertheless, these factors remain closely related and influence each other. For

example, an isolated stable community would more likely incline towards dense social networks. Such fact also means that the endeavor to explain how these parameters correlate with language change is difficult.

Regarding contact, Trudgill sees that communities with low contact tend to preserve language complexity as opposed to ones with high contact. In fact, he associates the processes of complexification with the low contact communities. Thus, these low contact communities not only preserve complexity but further increase it. In contrast, in communities where there are multilingual language contact situations the result is ‘simplification’, more precisely language change is exhibited in morphological simplification. Moreover, it is necessary to distinguish between short-term contact involving adults versus a long-term situation where proficient bilingual children are involved. The former situations are believed to lead to language simplification while the latter result in the opposite (Trudgill, 2009) .

Overall, the sociolinguistic typological approach’ Trudgill advances has two purposes in our research. First, it offers a neat summary for the chapter, second and more importantly, it relates the topic of language change to both the social dimension of language use and the language structure systematically.

### **1.26. Conclusion**

The chapter started with a rather bold claim that research in the area of language change is disastrous and prone to failure. While this might hold some truth because of the intricacies the subject brings and the overlapping nature of the topics involved, a clear picture of language change is perceived when a broad view is used. First, on the question of what changes language, the review of the literature clearly confirms that every aspect of language is not immune against language change. Nevertheless, the distinction internal vs external approach to language study does not benefit the study of language change. Instead of reinforcing such dichotomy, both approaches need to be adapted in the endeavor to explore language change. After all, it is the structure of language that changes not the social variables.

While there is no question that ‘language change’ is well studied under the field of sociolinguistics, the issue lies in how to approach society. The latter is simply so large for

a study to cover. Therefore, ‘speech community’, ‘social networks’, and ‘community of practice’ facilitate the sampling process in research. Yet, in lieu of opting for one over the other, a researcher would need to consider them all for a complete and representative sample. A research sample based only on the notion of ‘speech community’ will most likely be representative of the people, however, relationships that exist in the community would be only revealed through examining the social networks. Yet, it is the concept of ‘community of practice’ that brings forth the relation between the people and what they do. By that, it promises new insight.

The literature review in chapter one shows that gender, age, and ethnicity are not simply social factors to be tackled in a linguistic study but they are the driving force in language change. Still, even if these factors indeed can be beneficial in the study of language change, the example above of how ethnicity can nullify all the effects of other social criteria poses an issue. Therefore, in the attempt to interpret language change through social criteria, a researcher needs to have a wide view of all the variables. Of all the social criteria, the age criterion has a rather additional purpose in the study of language change as it enables a synchronic investigation to be viewed as a diachronic one. Lacking any previous studies on language variation and change about El-Menia, the current research could be the first to investigate language change in the region of El-Menia, opting for apparent-time construct is necessary and inevitable.

In the literature review, it is evident that multilingualism is an important ingredient for language change. The presence of two or more languages in the same context accelerates the effect of language-contact- induced phenomenon. Furthermore, conflict is the ultimate result when multiple languages are spoken in the same community. Such conflict can come naturally from attitude, prestige, or norms or could be triggered through a deliberate act of language change often through processes of language planning.

Looking at society from the notion of social groups is rather helpful, but the close look at how language is affected at the level of individuals is rather missed. Here, comes the role of ‘Speech Accommodation and Audience Design theories to shed light on the reasons that influence a speaker and drive him/her to alter the way of speaking. Since studies adapting such notions need to devise a research methodology that is based on face-

## **Chapter One: Language Variation and Change**

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to-face interaction, therefore, using these theories have repercussions for the methodology chosen.

Whereas all that has been said about language change focused on the causes, the work of Trudgill on language processes of simplification and complexification helps to understand the results. The importance of his work is seen in the fact that it combines both the internal and external approaches of language change study. It draws a relation between how languages change according to the social structure. Trudgill's work brings more systematic ways of incorporating social factors in the study of language structure.

Finally, albeit the current chapter offers a decontextualized literature review on the subject of language change in the dialect of El-Menia, it was rather necessary to draw up-to-date picture studies on language change. The aim of the first chapter is to provide a broad view of language change without excluding theories by adopting a single paradigm. On the contrary, each view is to be minded when devising the research methodology.

## CHAPTER TWO

# The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria

### 2.1. Introduction

Being contextually specific means that despite the broad overview the first chapter offers, it remains woefully insufficient to account for language change and variation involved in the context of the research. Many factors contribute to such a statement, from the existence of several languages in the world, the coexistence of different language combinations, and people involved. Each of these raises different questions and points to certain directions which in turn entails different theories and methodology. The current chapter draws from the literature; however, it takes a rather narrow yet more detailed view focusing on the sociolinguistic situation of Algeria. Despite that the research is not about the whole country, this approach will allow the researcher to concentrate on the prevailing linguistic aspects in EL-Menia which is the primary concern of the practical side of the paper.

The current chapter starts from the assumption that language change is a result of a social one (Guy, 2011). Thus, any study should not separate itself from the history of the people concerned. Such claim is backed by William Labov as he quotes from Meillet :

*“The only variable to which we can turn to account for linguistic change is social change, of which linguistic variations are only consequences. We must determine which social structure corresponds to a given linguistic structure, and how, in a general manner, changes in social structure are translated into changes in linguistic structure”* ( Meillet 1920, p. 16-17 Labov’s translation, as cited in Labov, 2007, p.24).

However, translating the statement into a practical endeavor is rather problematic since studying social change is not a trivial matter as the number of questions to address increases exponentially. The starting point of the second chapter is the investigation of the Algerian history with the aim to understand the factors that contribute to the current sociolinguistic situation. In this endeavor, the following questions guide the current chapter:

- 1- Who are the people of Algeria?
- 2- What were the languages used in the past and what has survived?
- 3- What are the languages used now and how they coexist?
- 4- What is the language policy and how is it affecting language use?
- 5- What are the salient linguistic features in the dialect of El-Menia?

### **2.2. The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria**

A review of the literature on the sociolinguistic situation in Algeria shows that complexity characterizes many aspects. For the attempt to pinpoint the causes of such complication, the first element to be considered is the languages used in Algeria. According to Bassiouney (2009), language varieties used in Algeria are Arabic, Chaouia, French, Kabyle, Tachelhit, Tamazight, and Taznatit. The number of varieties used alone shows that there are different social groups. Nevertheless, the situation gets more compounded once one reads a statement such as that of Meftouh, Bouchemal, & Smaïli (2012, p. 1) in which they state that “ In several countries through the Arabic world, no one speaks the Modern Standard Arabic language. People speak something which is inspired by Arabic but could be very different from the modern standard Arabic”. Albeit, the term “something” is a bit punitive to describe any code, it shows how divergent labels used to designate a certain way of speaking from the actual language.

It was established in the first chapter that variation is an important ingredient for language change. Consequently, despite the convolutedness of the matter at hand, a systematic study is rather needed to account for the current sociolinguistic situation. For the purpose, the historical background of Algeria is to be reviewed to establish a connection between language varieties used and the people. Furthermore, unlike the first chapter where the emphasis was more on general theories of language change, the emphasis in the second one will be on influential languages in the Algerian context. Thus, even if the second chapter remains a theoretical part, it is more oriented towards the practical research.

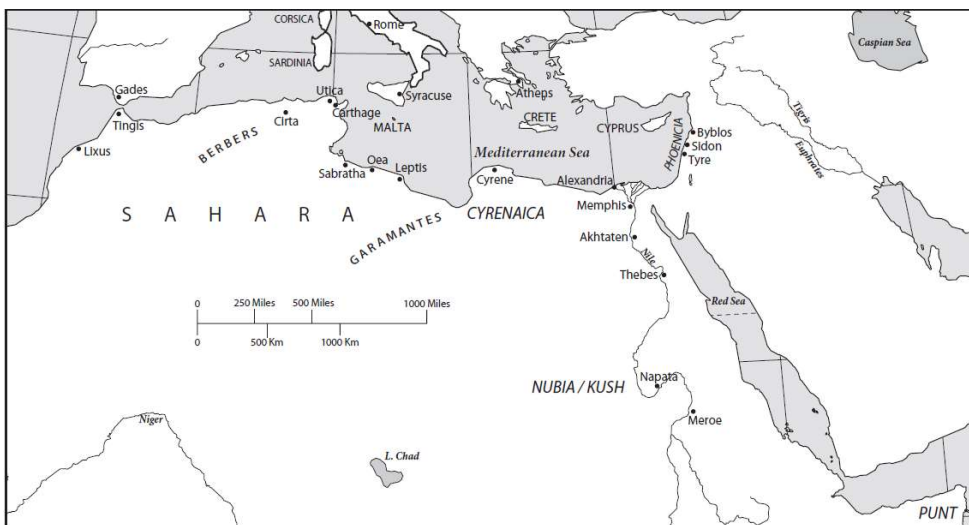
#### **2.2.1. Algeria: Historical Background**

Algeria is situated in North Africa and is bordered by the Mediterranean sea to the North with a coastline that stretches about 1200km. Two chains of mountains define the geography of the country as they divide it into three regions ( Aitsiselmi, 2006). The economic potentiality, the geographical location along with wealth the land provides are two factors that made the region subject to many raids and immigration waves. Indeed, the region has witnessed the arrival of many people as Romans, Phoenicians, Greeks, Vandals, Arabs, Turks, and at a later stage the French. Those people and civilizations they brought with have not only changed the demography of the region but also the linguistic situation.



### 2.2.2. Berber

The anthropology of the region classifies Berbers as the native people. Etymologically, the name is derived from the Latin "barbaros", a term that the Greek used to designate anyone who had a different culture or language. Despite the proliferation of the term in the literature, it has a bad connotation. Thus, the terms Amazigh or Tamazight are used instead by intellectuals to refer to both the identity and the language of the people (Ennaji, 2005). Historically, Berbers primarily dwelled west of the Nile Delta and have a population in Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and the Sahara (Naylor, 2009).

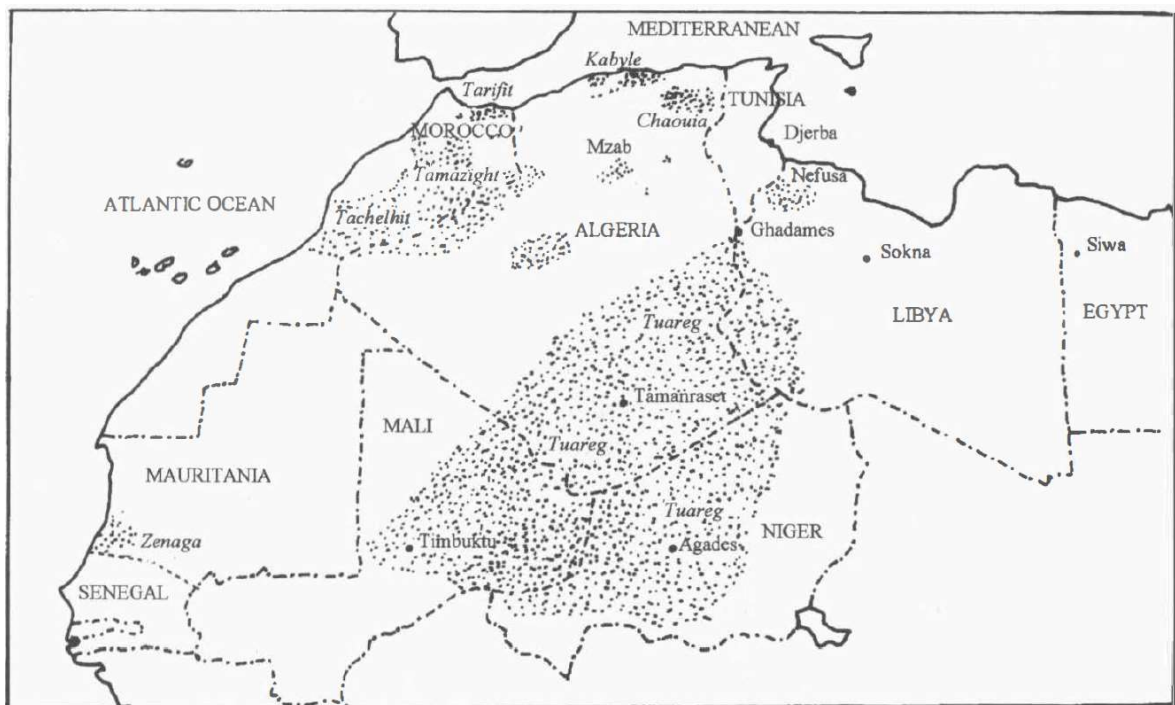


Map 2.1. Ancient North Africa. Extracted from Naylor, P. C. (2009). *North Africa: A History From Antiquity to the Present* (1st ed).

Map 2.1 shows the territory of Berbers at the pinnacle of the Carthaginian civilization which was founded by Semitic Phoenicians from Tyre in Lebanon. Later, the Romans gained dominance in North Africa defeating the Phoenicians which ended up fleeing to Spain or mixing with Berbers. Later, several civilizations claimed the regions from Vandals (Germanic tribe from Northern Europe), Byzantines, Arabs, Ottomans (Turks), Spanish, French, British, and Italians. (Naylor, 2009). However, the introduction of all these civilizations throughout the history of the region had drastically changed the demography resulting in the diminishing of Berber to small areas today.

**2.2.2.1. Berber: language**

Similar to the people, the Berber language is considered one of the oldest languages in North Africa. It has been the language of many civilizations such as Al-Mourabitin, Al-Mouahhidin, Al-Berghouata, Al-Mariniyyin (Ennaji, 2005). The Berber language is often said to be part of the Afro-Asiatic Languages. The language is mostly an oral one which makes use of Phoenician symbols as Alphabet (Abdelkarim, 2009). While the introduction of an advanced civilization means development for the native people, the same cannot be said about language. Indeed, Ennaji (2005) confirms that the existence of Berber is confined to small mountainous areas where the geography helped in the isolation of the population from the penetration of mainly Arabic which is the dominant language today.



Map. 2.2. Berber-speaking areas in North Africa. Extracted from Versteegh, C. H. (1997). *The Arabic Language*.

Map 2 shows the areas where the Berber language is used. In this regard, Ennaji (2005) states:

*“There are altogether ten major varieties of Berber in the Maghreb. (i) Tashelhit spoken in southern Morocco, (ii) Tamazight in the Middle Atlas in Morocco, (iii) Tarifit in northern Morocco, (iv) Kabyle in Tizi-Ouzou (Algeria), (v) Mzab in Ghardaia (Algeria), (vi) Shawiya in Aures (Algeria), (vii) Tuareg in the extreme south of Algeria, Niger and Mali, (viii) Tamashek in Niger, Mali and Nigeria and (ix) Tamahaq in Libya and Nigeria; (x) Tunisian Berber spoken in the West of Matmata and in the east of Gafsa ” (p. 79).*

He also adds that isolation in these mountainous regions is behind the incomplete Arabic penetration which has become a dominant language. A statement that Baccouche (2005, p.572) also agrees to as he attests to the idea that Berber despite being the original language in the region “ it was gradually replaced by Arabic”. The latter proves that even with the coming and going of many civilizations, the Berber language endured; however, the introduction of Arabic has changed the linguistic situation of the region significantly.

### **2.2.3. Arabs and Islam: The Conquest of North Africa**

The first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the rise of Islam and Arabs. On this, Naylor (2009, p.57) says “The irruptive Arabs then overran North Africa, which resulted in a historic disruption and discontinuity”. Regardless of what connotation the statement might carry, relating it to the history of Berber shows that the introduction of Arabic was a turning point in the history of the region. There is no question that the Arab conquest was driven by Islamic reasons as Jihad (fighting in holy wars) was one of the pillars of the religion. The endorsement of the new religion had a tremendous impact on people and most importantly on the linguistic situation of all the regions it was introduced to.

The message of Islam started in 610 when Prophet Mohammed recited the message from Allah. Twenty years later, Muslims dominated Mecca and soon after started the expansion of Muslims. It was under the caliphate of Umar bn al-Khattab the Muslim armies conquered Byzantine Egypt in 639 under the leadership of Amr ibn al-‘As. This act paved the way for the expansion in North Africa. In 669, Uqba Ibn Nafi succeeded in the conquest of Tripolitania establishing a military zone which later became Qayrawan, one of the

important city of Arabs in Tunisia in 970 (Naylor, 2009). The events referred to above constitute what comes to be known as the first wave of Arabs (Boucherit, 2005).

There is an agreement that what is referred to by the second wave of Arabs to North Africa had enormous consequences, some even advance the adjective “devastating”. The event starts as a result of the escalated tension between Fatimids and Emir al-Mu’izz the ruler of the Zirids. Upon his declaration of support of the Abbasids in 1048, ties were severed between the Fatimids and Zirids. Fatimids responded by summoning the tribes of Banu Hilal and Banu Sulaym. These nomadic tribes from the Arabian Peninsula had a notorious reputation of being troublesome. Indeed, Banu Hilal defeated Zirids in 1052. Their tendency of destroying and wiping cities from their monuments, businesses, and homes had lasting effects on the Maghreb compared to that of Romans or Byzantines (Naylor, 2009).

Unlike the first wave which consisted of mostly sedentary urban people, the latecomer in the 11<sup>th</sup> century were generally nomads. A division that still up to now has a cultural significance that is rather very noticeable in language. Moreover, the nomadic nature of the Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaym and later Banu Ma’qil was more accepted by the Berbers. Such acceptance ushered the assimilation of Berbers to the Arab culture. Naylor (2009) speaks about intermarriage that occurred between the Banu Ma’qil’s Awlad Hassan and Sanhaja Berbers which has resulted in the latter adopting Arabic as their language. Culturally, the arrivals of a huge number of Arabs and the adaptation of Islam has a significant impact on the population of Berber (Ennaji, 2005). The end result of all what has been discussed about the invasion of Arabs can be perceived in Map 2.2 as almost all of North Africa today has become Arabized.

### **2.2.4. Arabic: The Change from Classical to Colloquial**

The Arabic language belongs to the Semitic language family which in turn also is part of the Afroasiatic phylum in which Ancient Egyptian, Coptic, Cushitic, Berber, and Chadic are also included. It is spoken in 23 countries with more than 422 million speakers (UNESCO, 2012). Despite the brief discussion of the history of the people and the land, it is rather clear that the rise of Islam in the seventh century is the ultimate reason behind the flourishing of the language. Map.2.3 shows that Arabic was able to be the dominant language in North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. However, the time span between

## Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria

today and the seventh century, the enormity of the geographical area it has covered, and the number of people speaking the language, are factors that contributed to the complexity of the sociolinguistic situation of the language. Hence, in-depth study is rather crucial for one to comprehend the history of the language, its structure, and variation.

Looking at the varieties of Arabic from the perspective of a contact-induced change and variation yield a theoretical framework that is based on two processes: Koineization, and creolization/pidginization (Albirini, 2016). A view that is also backed by Bishop (1998), still, he adds “language drift” as a factor. Research on the variation that Arabic exhibits makes use of these theories to account for the emergence of Classical Arabic, Colloquial Arabic, and Modern Standard Arabic as well as the differences between them. Furthermore, these processes are also seen responsible for the emergence of new Arabic-based varieties (Albirini, 2016).



Map.2.3. Arabic Speaking Countries. Extracted from Watson, J. C. (2007). *The Phonology and Morphology of Arabic*. Page 07.

The term koineization refers to “a process of interdialectal contact leading to an amount of linguistic restructuring”. (Miller, 2005, p. 293). The concept of koineization is used to account for the development of CA. This view is backed by the idea that modern varieties of Arabic emerged because of various sociolinguistic phenomena such as dialect mixing, accommodation, and leveling. The theory of koineization is useful to understand the grammatical reconstruction that came as a result of the contact between urban, rural, and Bedouin tribes. However, the idea of koineization is prone to many issues that mostly emanates from the lack of concrete history of the language. For instance, to account for language change, the first problem to address lies in the understanding of pre-Islamic Arabic. Moreover, a detailed study is needed to explain whether the grammatical reconstruction was triggered because of internal or external influence.

The creolization/pidginization theory also takes language contact as the main reason for the emergence of a new dialect. A theory that is advocated by Versteegh (1984, 2004) who sees that the processes of pidginization, creolization, and decreolization are responsible for the deployment of colloquial dialects of Arabic. Versteegh indicates that the necessity for communication between the Arabs and the people they came in contact with was behind the emergence of CA. Unlike the notion of koineization in which a certain degree of leveling is involved where features of both languages in contact are selected, pidginization of a language would mean a radical reconstruction (Miller, 2005). In spite of the criticism the theory received, Bishop (1998) sees that the creolization/pidginization can be used to understand the starting point of Arabic vernaculars.

### **2.2.4.1. Classical Arabic**

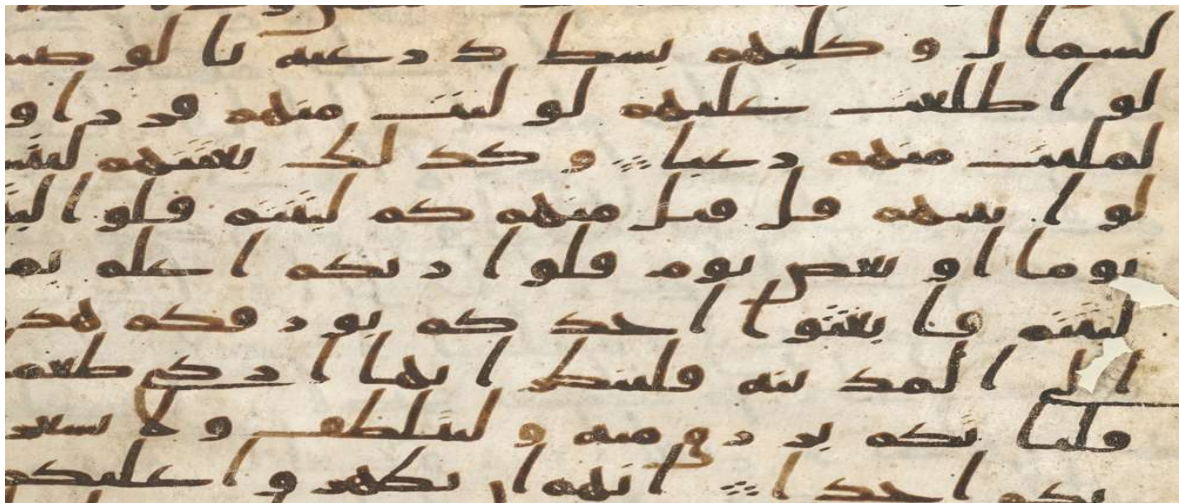
Wolfdietrich (2005) presents two views of the term “Classical Arabic” (CA). From one side, the Arab grammarians who see that CA is that one of the 8<sup>th</sup> century which is correct and pure. On the other side, Western scholars use the concept to differentiate between the language and its vernacular varieties. Notwithstanding these views, there is an agreement in the literature that the roots of Classical Arabic are the Quran as being the holy book from Allah and the pre-Islamic poems which are often conceived as a literary excellence. In fact, poems at the time played an important role in the preservation of the language, as for Arabs in the past, the perfectness of language was considered imperative.

## Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria

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However, pre-Islamic poems and even the Quran at an earlier stage were transmitted orally and regardless of the perfectness of the language, a language cannot be considered as such unless it is standardized. Versteegh, (1997) counts three compelling reasons behind the standardization of Arabic. The first one goes to the rapid expansion of the empire. More particularly, the threat from the emergence of many varieties from the divergence between the Bedouin and the other colloquial varieties. Again, the second motive is related to the growth of the empire, however, it has to do with politics and language policy. The central governments whether in Damascus or Baghdad sought to gain control over all matters including linguistic ones. Last, moving from a small tribe in the Arabian Peninsula to an empire required expansion in the lexicon. Nevertheless, the latter had to be regulated to ensure a certain degree of uniformity.

It goes without saying that the codification of the Quran had a major role in the preservation of what is referred to now by Classical Arabic. Yet, the aim to render the orally transmitted messages into text would require code selection, codification, elaboration, and acceptance (Holmes, 2013). As for the selection phase, CA was based mainly on the western Hijazi Tribe of Quraysh that was considered prestigious. Codification and elaboration proved to be problematic as orthography used at that time was primitive.



Manuscript 2.1 . A Fragment of a Manuscript Dated 1370 Years Old. Retrieved from: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/07/world-oldest-quran-manuscripts-uk-50722110034399.html> on 10 /07 /2017

In this regard, manuscript 1 reveals two issues that faced Zayd ibn Thabit and the committee responsible for codifying the Quran. The obvious one is the lack of the diacritic dots that would help differentiate between some phonemes like **ش – ص, ق – ض**. The second matter is related to the indication of short vowels in scripts. The solution of the problem is credited to Al-Khalil ibn Ahmad Al-Farahidi, one of the earliest Arab lexicographer, who elaborated the vowel markers replacing the dot system with specific shapes (Versteegh, 1997).

### **2.2.4.2. Phoneme Inventory of Classical Arabic**

No doubt social change is a driving force of language change. Based on this statement, the brief historical review of the emergence and spread of Arabic is a clear indication of linguistic change. Arriving at evidence of such claim, examining language structure is imminent. The first aspect to inspect in the latter is sound features, hence, starting with phonetics and phonology. The interest at this stage is to provide a phonological analysis of Classical Arabic which it serves as a referencing point for comparison. According to Watson (2007), Classical Arabic inventory comprises twenty-nine phonemes and manners of articulation ( Table 22). She further confirms that there is a change in both colloquial and Modern Standard Arabic both of which are subject to further investigation in the chapter.

	Labial	Labio-dental	Inter-dental	Dental-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Laryngeal
Plosive emphatic	b			t, d ṭ	ʃ/g <sup>j</sup>	k	q		ʔ
Fricative emphatic		f	ṭ, ḍ ḍ	s, z ṣ	ç		χ, ʁ	ħ, ʕ	h
Nasal	m			n					
Lateral emphatic				l ḏ					
Tap				r					
Glide					j	w			



Table 2.1. Consonantal Phoneme Inventory for Eighth-century Classical Arabic. Extracted from (Watson, 2007) Page 13.

### **2.2.4.3. The Emergence of Colloquial Arabic: Bedouin Versus Sedentary Dialects**

The expansion of Islam meant substantial contact with different languages. For instances, the conquered territories comprised Syrians, Copts, Persians, Turks, and Berbers. Each with a different language yet all had to learn Arabic either to practice the new religion or simply to communicate with their conquerors (Versteegh, 1993). As an example of the consequences, it has already been established from Map.2.2 that the Berbers lost their vast ground in North Africa along with their language to Arabic. The example raises questions about the ramifications of the contact in both languages. Nevertheless, the focal point here is the change Arabic has undergone as a result of such a contact. The question, still, mandates mediating on the initial state of language contact, more precisely, addressing the question of what are the varieties of Arabic people came in contact with?

Going through the history of Arabs during the Islamic and Pre- Islamic era, it is hard not to notice the dichotomy Sedentary / Bedouin. Such distinction plays up to now a major role in the investigation of Arabic dialects. The term Bedouin is used to designate nomads or people who have nomadic ways of living that are characterized by a tribal social network. Linguistically, Bedouin Arabic is often considered to be more conservative in contrast with the sedentary one (Rosenhouse, 2005). In this regard, Versteegh (1997) confirms the idea that the language of Bedouins was considered pure and reflects the pre-Islamic time, an important reason that made Sedentary population perceive Bedouins as “ideal type of Arabs”.

It was mentioned earlier in the section that Arab immigration from the Arabian Peninsula to North Africa was done through waves. The first wave contained mostly military personals that dwelled camps and larger cities. Arabic being concentrated on urban locations, leaving the countryside out, meant that North Africa remained Berber-speaking. A situation that soon changed after the second invasion. Contrary to the first wave in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the second one included Bedouin tribes that have different customs and more importantly distinct dialects. Furthermore, it is believed the number of Bedouin who arrived

in North Africa reached one million (Versteegh, 1997). Additionally, Bedouins entered deeply into North African lands reaching the south. These Bedouin groups can be divided into three groups: Banu Hilal in the center of the Maghreb, Banu Sulaym in Tunisia and the Banu Maqil in Morocco (Grand'Henry, 2005). The defining characteristic of the second invasion was behind the drastically accelerated process of Arabization in North Africa.

There are a number of linguistic features that differentiate Sedentary-type dialect from Bedouin-type one. It is very difficult to think of them as a clear-cut line between the two. However, there are some prominent features that need to be highlighted to be used later in this paper as a reference. Perhaps, one distinctive feature of Bedouin dialects is the realization of the Classical Arabic phoneme /q/ either as a voiceless uvular stop [q] or devoiced [g] (Palva, 2005). The second prominent feature is the preservation of the interdental. Furthermore, it is attested that in Bedouin Arabic gender distinction are retained in the second and third person plural of pronouns and verbs. Regarding the third person singular masculine of the pronominal suffix, -u -o are used in sedentary dialects while -ah , -ih in Bedouin ones. In addition, Bedouin dialects are characterized by the utilization of “dual” in nouns (Versteegh, 1997).

### **2.2.4.4. Substitution of Sounds in Colloquial Arabic**

The change referred to above in the realization of the phoneme /q/ in both Bedouin and sedentary dialects is merely one example of a widespread phenomenon in Arabic vernaculars. The concept of substitution in linguistics is referred to as “the process or result of replacing one item by another at a particular place in a structure” (Crystal, 2008, p. 463). In an alignment with the definition of Crystal, Ibrahim (2012, p. 61) sees that it is “ the process of replacing one segment by another at a particular place in words under certain conditions”. In Arabic dialectology, the term substitution is treated as a direct translation to the word "الاببدال" ‘al ?ibdaal’. However, in Western literature, studies tackling the subject of the replacement of sounds are dealt with under the header of “sound change”.

Sound change in language holds special consideration in language study as it is clearly one of the recognizable traits in language change. While the term might seem self-evident, arriving at a unified definition is problematic (Garrett, 2015). Nonetheless, in accordance with the idea of substitution, the view of Bybee (2008, p.115) is prominent. According to him, sound change is “the result of the reduction or retiming of gestures that

occur with automation of production”. This alteration in production can remain at the level of allophones or extend to language-specific change, hence, a phonological change. Reasons behind change often fall into two categories whether internally or externally motivated (Hornsby, 2014).

The phenomenon of sound changed is well documented in Arabic literature, the works of Sibawayhi, Ibn Jinni (1955), Ibn il Sukait(1978), Al-lugawi(1960) attest to such fact. For instance, Al-lugawi provided more than 500 examples of sound substitution in Arabic dialects that cover most sounds. According to As-Sammer (2010) reasons of substitution of sound correspond to phonological processes which are often driven by attempts of the speaker to reduce articulatory efforts such as analogy, assimilation, dissimilation, metathesis, sound addition, and sound deletion. On the other hand, there are the sociolinguistic factors which come as a result of contact between dialects and Arabic. For example, Arabs used to change soft sounds in their speech with harsh ones to indicate the harsh environment they live in (El-Fakharani, 2010). As an example , [h] in [hatta] ‘until’ is substituted for [ħ] [ħatta]. As an example of assimilation, table 2.2 shows a few examples taken from the Arabic dialect of Djelfa in Algeria.

<b>Input</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
qanbu:la	qambu:la	‘bomb’
junkur	juṅkur	‘he denies’
ħangu:d	ħaṅgu:d	‘cluster’
mangu:l	maṅgu:l	‘taken from’
janfaħ	jaṃfaħ	‘it benefits’

Table 2.2. Partial Assimilation in the Arabic Dialect of Djelfa -Algeria. Extracted from (Slimani & Jisheng , 2017, p. 214)

### **2.2.5. Modern Standard Arabic**

Arabic enjoyed a high status during the times of conquests as Arabs expanded to large areas. However, with the decline of the Islamic empire, the language suffered a similar fate. This is certainly true under the Ottomans as despite the Arabic remained the language of Islam, it lost its role in administration to Turkish which was used as a language of communication with the central government. A situation that had also ramifications on the social status of the language. Furthermore, the European conquests and the introduction

of French and English had also lasting consequences. All these events led to the rise of the Arab nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century and with that the call to promote Arabic as a language of All Arabs (Versteegh, 1997).

Nevertheless, the existence of Classical Arabic and its vernaculars constitute two extremes ends. Both of which did not conform to a national language. From one side, being tied to the Quran and the written form, Classical Arabic was to some extent shackled and immune to language change. The resistance classical Arabic showed towards the new introduced culture of the Europeans made it difficult to be adapted as many concepts did not have equivalents in the Arab culture. On the other, Arabic colloquial dialects exhibited variation to the extent the question of whether they are still to be referred to as Arabic or different languages is raised. (Miller & Caubet, 2010). A fact that was further established by the decrease of mutual intelligibility as a result of the growth in the geographical area the language covers.

Subsequently, the development of what is referred to now by “Modern Standard Arabic” was imminent. Al-Khawalda (2000), attests that there is no unified definition of MSA. Hudson (2001, p.227) sees that MSA is “a modernized and somewhat simplified derivative of Classical Arabic, has become the medium for serious writing, broadcasting, and formal public speaking”. It serves as the official language of Arab governments. Unlike CA, it shows little variation but some minor differences can be traced due to the influence of local dialects which affect lexical choice and phonological features (Brinton, 2000). The differences between CA and MSA are noticed in lexis and stylistics while morphology and syntax remained mostly the same (Watson, 2007). However, MSA is still significantly divergent from CA in phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon.

### **2.2.6. Reconceptualization of Diglossia**

The coexistence of both MSA and CA in a speech community and the huge variance between them give rise to a unique sociolinguistic phenomenon: diglossia. For more than four decades, the definition of Ferguson still offers a description of the sociolinguistic situation of the Arab world.

*“A relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (Ferguson, 1959 [1972], pp. 244–5)*

In this paper, the interest in Diglossia is beyond the description of the situation but to meditate on how it is related to language change. There is no question on the accuracy of the definition in the matter of the existing of different varieties in a speech community. However, the division between H and L has clearly deviated from being portrayed as an interesting sociolinguistic phenomenon to a social problem. The dichotomy diglossia brings has been seen as a threat to what is referred to as the perfectness of Classical Arabic ‘Fusha’. A condition that is translated into a competitiveness between L and H that obscures the true complexity involved (Boussofara-Omar, 2005).

In the light of this, the reconceptualization of the notion is rather needed. An action which should start by raising questions to stir upcoming research. For instance, the idea that there is a clear division between L and H and that their usage can be related to certain places has to be revisited. Instead, Boussofara-Omar (2005) argues that studies need to explore the natural way the languages coexist and the complexities arise from their coexistence. Furthermore, she calls for bringing more practicality to the subject shifting from the view as being “relatively stable situation”. On the matter of language change, there is the necessity to apply a variationist approach to the study of diglossia by considering the interplay between social factors and linguistic constraints.

### **2.2.7. French: The Rise of Bilingualism**

So far, the talk about the history of Arabic was done through the focus on all the countries of North Africa as they have shared the same events. Northern African countries have similarity been conquered by Arabs and later dominated by the Ottoman empire. The French colonization is clearly a changing point in the history of the region which undoubtedly has a tremendous effect on language. In 1830, France started the colonization

## **Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria**

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of Algeria, an event that lasted for 130 years. An old-school imperial conquest that was based on the destruction and total dominance (Maddy-Weitzman, 2011). A policy driven by the aim of assimilating the colonized people has left deep scars in all social aspects (Bassiouney, 2009).

Language-policy was no different, the latter was driven by three strategies: (1) only Europeans and elite natives can have access to schooling; (2) creating social categories by provoking division between ethnic groups; (3) posing a draconian restriction on the use of Arabic (Sayahi, 2014). Prior to the French colonization, Quranic schools were effectively responsible for education as according to Metz (1993), they were effective as literacy rate was 40 percent; a number that is considered good even at today's standards. However, the French banned all these schools and replaced them with the French educational system. A move that had two consequences on the people. Consequently, the rate of illiteracy increased drastically. Despite that colloquial Arabic remained used, the ban of MSA from institutions meant that the language suffered from the cut from modern development in "modern bureaucratic, financial, and intellectual affairs." (Metz, 1993, p. 88).

In the endeavor to weaken the social structure by introducing division, France also provoked the old rivals igniting the clash between Berbers and Arabs. The French took advantage of the cultural differences between the Arabs and the Berbers by favoring the latter through advocating a strong francophinizing stratagem. Ilahiane (2006) sees that Berbers were in fact easily assimilated than the Arabs. He also asserts that French induced the idea that Berbers are the superior race and the elite. The ramification of this policy can be easily noticed as indeed Kabyle are more fluent in French. After the independence, the same situation still persists as according to the French ambassador Bernard Amy that 60 % of visas are granted for Kabyle (Chirazi, 2017).

The Arabic language was deliberately targeted as being the carrier of culture. In 1938, Arabic was proclaimed a foreign language and French the only official language (Nadia, 2011). A decision that had lasting repercussions even after more than fifty years after the independence. Pushing the French language to the top of the list had certainly made it very important for Algerians to access schools, administrative matters, or generally to communicate with their conquerors. After the independence, the situation perhaps got even worse as French is still perceived as a prestigious language that reflects modernity and

education (Sayahi, 2014). Despite the countermeasures taken by the Algerian government through Arabization, French maintained its dominance due to several reasons. Most prominent of them is the role of mass media as the most influential newspapers and TV channels broadcasted were in French.

In-depth into the linguistic side, one should take into consideration that “when languages, dialects, or varieties are in contact, they are almost always in a very real sense in conflict, both at the level of linguistic system and at the far less tangible level of their place within the society” (Walters, 1989, p. 54). It will be unwise and unscientific to say which language has won, but when the Algeria Minister of Higher Education declared in 2005 that eighty percent of first-year students are unable to maintain average because of linguistic incompetence, clearly French is still upholding the same importance. (Bassiouney, 2009). Furthermore, French was even able to infiltrate Modern Standard Arabic and vernaculars through profound sociolinguistic situations of code-switching, code-mixing, and borrowing. However, there is a question that it is rather absent from the literature which is where is this state going? Most copra on the matter look at Algeria as a homogeneous linguistic sample yet the truth by far is different.

### **2.2.8. Code Switching: A Changing Feature in Language**

The presence of Berber, Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Colloquial Arabic, and French certainly triggers various kinds of contact-induced phenomena. On the latter, Matras (2010, p.131) counts seven ‘mechanisms of change’ in which code-switching is the first as it remains the most studied and referred to in the literature. Gunvor (2005 , p.414 ) defines ‘code-switching’ as “ a linguistic or discourse practice in which elements and items from two or more linguistic systems, or codes... are used in the same language act or interaction”. He also asserts the fact that code-switching emerged from the field of language contact and should still be looked at from that field.

In the study of language change in a multilingual society, CS simply can not be overlooked. In fact, in the relation that connects code-switching and language change, the former is considered to be an initial state of the latter. Sayahi (2011) clarifies this point further as he sees that code-switching can accelerate language change which in this is case already in progress. Thus, CS is both a result of language change and also an agent for it. However, scholarly literature offers a description of the social phenomena, much like a

snapshot focusing on the situation, unfortunately with little reference to how it correlates with language change. Sayahi confirms that studies of CS in North Africa as “ a facilitator or language change” (p.115) are scarce. The statement might well be valid for academic articles and books but the amount of research in unpublished theses and dissertations is a different story (Watson, 2007). Still, this body of research often focuses on the description of CS and neglect the study of CS as a changing criterion itself. For instance, how the Arabization process in Algeria, which seeks to revert decades of change French has caused, is affecting CS as a practice?

The answer to the question entails the comprehension of the inner mechanism that defines CS. The primary ingredient to enable code-switching is the access to two or more codes. Depending on how items of both codes are arranged in an interaction determines the type of code-switching. Inter-sentential code-switching is the behavior of mixing items of both codes outside the clause or sentence level (Bhatia, 2006). Intra-Sentential code-switching or sometimes referred to as “ extra-sentential switching”, the mixing happens within the level of a sentence. As most aspects in sociolinguistics, the mixing of linguistic systems can be both explained in a matter of constraints and rules, thus taking a grammatical/syntactic perspective, or by taking into account the discourse / pragmatic view. In other words, raising the questions why and what was the purpose behind the change.

The mixing of codes bears remarkable similarities with the notion of ‘diglossia’. However, there is disagreement between Western and Arab scholars in this regard. The disagreement lies in the concept of ‘allocation of functions’ and the notion of ‘domains’ Ferguson (1959) advanced. Gunvor (2005) attests that non-Arabist sociolinguists reject the association of code-switching with diglossia as they see the mixing in the latter is always done consciously with respect to the domain in which language is used. On the contrary, code-switching is done both consciously and unconsciously (Myers-Scotton, 2006).



### 2.3. El-Menia

The research is conducted in the small town of El-Menia which sometimes is also referred to by El Goléa. It lies at the center of Algeria at approximately 870 Km from the capital city Algiers. According to the census of 2010, the population of El-Menia was estimated at 50,000 inhabitants. It is believed that the Garamantes, Berber people who were once an advanced civilization in what is now Libya, are the founders of the city. Such claim is based on the Garamantian graves found in El-Menia, more specifically found at what is referred to now as “ Gsar”. In the past, the town was referred to by the name “Tawrirt” “تاوريرت” which is of a Zenet origin. According to the El-khen (2014), before the coming of the Arabs , the Zenets were the dwellers of the city. This assumption based on the existence of few Zenet families at the present day. More importantly, ruins of an irrigation system called ‘ Foggara ‘ is found also in El-Menia. The same system still exists in the regions of Gourara, Touat, and Tidikelt that lie south to the city. After the arrival of the Arabs , the name Tawrirt changed to “قلايعة” Qolayaa” a diminutive name for the word “ castle’. Furthermore, the name also changed to El-Menia. During the colonization period, the name was replaced by El Goléa ; however , the name remains mostly in administrative matters as people tend not to use it.



Map 2.4. El-Menia ( El-Goléa) Geographical Position

Source: The map is taken from Google Map service

**2.3.1. El-Menia: Social Structure**

It is clear now that in Africa the expansion of Arabs came at the expense of Berbers. El-Menia stands as a good small-scale example of the transformation North Africa witnessed in population. The presence of Zenets in general in Algeria is limited to small pockets and mostly in the region of Gourara, Touat, and Tidikelt. In El-Menia, few families remain that consider themselves as being descendent of the Znata tribe, however, upon asking if they can still speak the dialect, the answer was negative. In the region where Zenet, a variety of Tamazight, is still used, it is considered to be in danger of becoming extinct despite the effort of revitalizing the language through its use in the local radio station (Bouhania, 2014). The picture in El-Menia is different, Zenet is not used at all and the only Tamazight variety one can hear on the local Radio is Mazb variety. The Mozabites are considered Berbers with their large population concentration in Ghardaia Province at 270 km from El-Menia. Despite the nonexistence of statistics on the number of Mozabites in El-Menia, their presence is still limited judging from the use of the variety.

With the reduction of both Zenet and Mozabites to minorities, the large population, therefore, consists mainly of Arabs. A fact which is clear by looking at the historical tree of most families in El-Menia as it shows that these are related to Chaamba tribes. The claim is backed by two censuses. The first one was done on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1896 and the second one on October 9<sup>th</sup> 1958.

Table 2.3. Chaamba Families in El-Menia According to the Censuses of March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1896. Extracted from Ben-Oualha 2014. Page 127

<b>Tribe Name</b>	<b>Families</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>El-Moidi Tribe</b>	Ouled Bel Kassem	46	42
	Ouled Maammar	80	47
<b>Tribe of Ouled Aicha</b>	Ouled Amhamed	41	32
	Ouled Echeikh	46	27
	El khnablich	30	18
<b>Tribe of Ouled Sid Elhadj Yahya</b>	Ouled Kaddour Ben Yahya	13	11
	Ouled Aaodin	17	17
	El Grainat	48	31

## Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria

<b>Tribe of Ouled Fredj</b>	Dhamna	66	57
	ElMhadi	130	93
<b>Tribe of Ouled Zaid</b>	Ouled Elhadj Dahman	55	44
	Ouled Elhadj Manssour	44	36
<b>Total</b>		616	455

Table 2.4. Chaamba Families in El-Menia According to the Censuses of October 9<sup>th</sup> 1958.

Extracted from Ben-Oualha 2014. Page 127.

	<b>Families</b>	<b>Members (inhabitants)</b>
<b>Tribe of Ouled Zaid</b>	Ouled Maammar	600
	Ouled Bel Kassem	450
	Ouled Elhadj Dahman	700
	Ouled Elhadj Manssour	950
<b>Tribe of Ouled Fredj</b>	Dhamna	1300
	ElMhadi	1000
	Ouled Aicha	1000
	Ouled Sid Elhadj Yahya	1200
<b>Total</b>		7200

The two tables show the number of Chaamba families in El-Menia. From early stages of colonization, France sought to destroy family ties by changing the tribal nature of the people. It severed the connection with the names of tribes by reducing them. Comparing the two censuses, France was able to leave only two big tribes by merging all families together. However, the old names of tribes still remain up to now but they are used as names of streets in which still the old family combination persists.

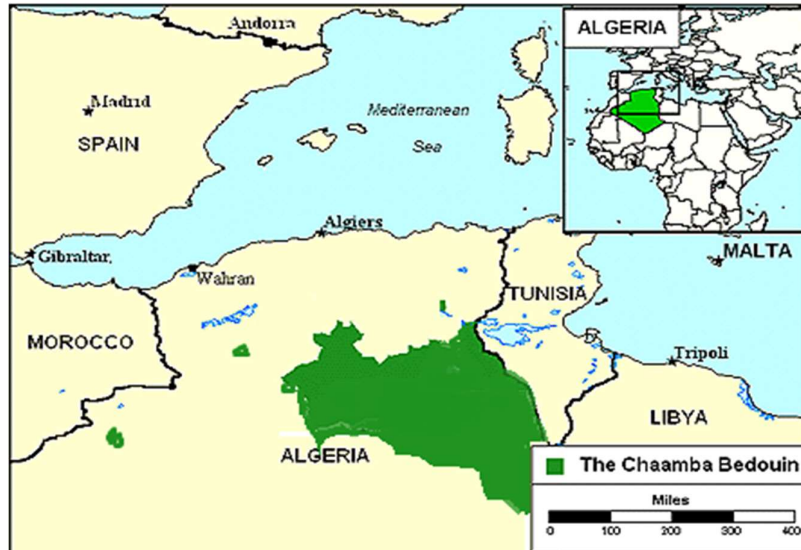
Even today, the rigidity of the tribal system and family ties can be found in the social structure. The latter is reflected in the family structure as most of them are extended ones in El-Menia. There is the tendency for people to not travel or even move far from the family. That means that one would find a huge concentration of houses that bear the same family

name. In some cases, the family name might even be seen in the school found in the area and the mosque. These tendencies of young people have resulted in small tight communities where outside contact is limited. Furthermore, such kind of environment would also make it difficult for new people to move to the city. Although, there are no numbers to back this claim, still, a person who has lived in the city would attest to that easily.

### 2.3.2. Chaamba: Origins

Tracking the history of Chaamba is necessary to investigate the coming of Arabs to El-Menia. Chaamba tribes are descendants of Banu Sulaym . They belong to one of the family branches of Hakim Ibn Hisn Banu Oulaq from Ouaef Ben Bahtha ben Sulaym ( حكيم (بن حصن بن علاق من عوف بن بهثة بن سليم) . They arrived with the Hilalian wave in 1051. There is a considerable debate on the events that led to Banu Sulaym to leave their fertile land in what is now Tunisia and go deep into the Algerian desert. Therefore, it would be rather wise to skip the era between their arrival to North Africa and their movement to the south. The starting point for the establishment of Chaamba in the south of Algeria was in Matlili in 1156. At first, the place where Chaamba arrived, Oudi Matlili ( valley of Matlili ) was occupied by a Hilalian tribe called “ El-Mharza”. Because of this is the reason perhaps many French historians consider Chaamba to be related to Banu Hilal. However, because of conflict, El-Mharza moved even further south towards Touat and Gourara what is now called Adrar (Benoualha, 2014).

With time, Chammba tribes grew bigger in number because of allies and many smaller tribes decided to bear the name as a protection for them. The growth of population motivated the Chaamba to find a fertile ground. Consequently, some of them headed east . Among the migrated families were Ouled Maammar , and Ouled Bel Kassem , and later Ouled Fredj. Subsequently, the immigration of Chaamba south meant the decimation of the Zanet Gsar. Chaamba were not only confined to Mitlili and El-Menia but they have spread throughout many regions in the Algerian Sahara such as Ourgla , and Oued Souf.



Map 2.5. Bedouin, Chaamba in Algeria. Retrieved from [https://joshuaproject.net/people\\_groups/11284/AG](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/11284/AG)

### 2.3.3. El-Menia Arabic Dialect: Salient Linguistic Features

Referring to the dialect in question by the ‘Dialect of El-Menia’ does not imply that the language variety is unique to the region nor it can be seen as different. However, the aim is to counter the oversimplification that characterizes research on Algerian dialects. Often studies reduce the complexity found in Arabic dialects to the term ‘Maghrebi Arabic’ (Lafkioui, 2013 ; Albirini, 2016 ;Behnstedt, 2009 ; Abu-Haidar, 2005 ; Youssi, 2004). Thus, research on dialects, and in linguistics in general, needs to be void of plain generalization in which often details are overlooked. Perhaps looking at the dialects in the Maghreb as one dialect chain or continuum would rather be more scientific than putting them into one basket. A native speaker would notice the variation that characterizes the Algerian dialects by detecting salient linguistic features, the same kind of linguistic features that will be referred to in this section.

The trace of the origin of the people to Chaamba to Banu Sulaym means that people are of Bedouin origin and so the language should be. Accordingly, from a theoretical perspective, the dialect of El-Menia should contain Bedouin dialect features. Indeed, in the following chapter, a brief overview is given to the sociolinguistic features that define the dialect such as the substitution of [ɣ] for [q], noticeable lexical variation, diminution, and

the pragmatic marker “wa”. The main goal of the brief discussion in this section is just to pave the way for a more detailed analysis in the practical part of the work.

### **2.3.3.1. The Substitution of [ɣ] for [q]**

One of the noticeable linguistic features in El-Menia dialect is the substitution of [ɣ] for [q]. For instance:

تغلط	To be wrong	[tɔɣlɔt]	[tɔqlɔt]
تتغاشا	To faint	[ tətɣæʃə]	[ tətqæʃə]
تغضب	To get angry	[ tɑɣdab]	[ taqdab]
مغزل	Spinning	[mɑɣzɛl]	[maqzɛl]

The change in the realization of the phoneme /ɣ/ is not unique to El-Menia as it occurs in many regions throughout Algeria. Nevertheless, the spread of the phenomenon is not met by the same interest in academia. Therefore, it is imperative to look for more less scientific way to obtain data in regard to the linguistic variable, more specifically turning to ‘folk linguistics’. It can be surprising the amount of data non-linguists provide as well as the advantage of relying on such data (Pelkey, 2011; Kerswill & Williams, 2002). Indeed, a question on the regions where people substitute the [ɣ] sound to [q] was posted in a forum web page (2017). The answers taken from that page are :

- 1- Arabs of Ghardaia
- 2- Region of Oued Righ which includes El M'Ghair and Djamaa. Specifically , the substitution is related to the following Arab tribes: Rahman , Sulaymiya , El-Draissa , Ouled Moulat , Ouled Said Omar , and Ouled Naïl.
- 3- Arabs of Ouargla.
- 4- Western part of Batna . Ouled Sahnoun , Slalha , El-Shara in Barika , Djzzar , and Bitam.
- 5- Laghouat
- 6- Bouïra Province : Most of Arab regions , Sour El-Ghozlane , Ain Bessam , and Bir.
- 7- Medea province : most of southern region from Ksar Chellala to Ksar Boukhari.

- 8- Most of Djelfa province.
- 9- Southern part of Saida .
- 10- El Bayadh Province.
- 11- Naâma Province.
- 12- Sidi Bel Abbès: Telagh

Notwithstanding the answers need to be verified on a firm scientific ground, they offer insight and help raise few questions. First, why the substitution seems to affect the eastern region of Algeria more than the western? Why are the northern regions not affected? Is there a link between Banu Sulaym tribes and the substitution? The lack of prior linguistic studies will regrettably render questions unanswered to be left to mere theories.

Turning to a more structuralist approach , [ɣ] and [q] share many similarities that could be the driving force behind their change. Table 2.4 shows the closeness in their phonological features.

	Class features		Place features											Laryngeal features			Manner features						
	cons	son	labial	labiodental	coronal	ant	dist	dorsal	high	low	back	tense	pharynge	ATR	voice	sg	cg	cont	strident	lateral	del rel	nasal	
ɣ	+	-	-	-	0	-	0	0	+	+	-	+	-	-	0	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
q	+	-	-	-	0	-	0	0	+	-	-	+	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2.4. Phonological Features of Sounds [ɣ] and [q]. Adapted from Phonological Features Chart (version 11.02 February 2011) by Jason Riggle.

**2.3.3.2. The Phoneme /q/**

In Algerian dialects, the realization of the classical Arabic phoneme /q/ ق follows the distinction between urban and Bedouin. Thus, /q/ is realized as voiceless /q/ in sedentary dialects while it becomes voiced /g/ in Bedouin ones. The only exception is with the dialect of Tlemcen as it becomes glottal stop (Grand’Henry, 2005). In EL-Menia, the dialect follows the Bedouin pattern in the pronunciation of the standard Arabic /q/.

Example:

MSA	EL-Menia Dialect
القمر / El Qamar/	[gamra]

There remain also resistant words in which the realization of the /q/ does not change. Most of these words are related to religious terms:

MSA	EL-Menia Dialect
قمر Moon	[gamra]
يقرى He reads / studies	[jaqra]

### 2.3.3.3. Lexical Variation

In matter of lexical variation between dialects, scholars interested in Arabic based dialects often take a different approach than those focusing mainly on English. For instance, in one extreme end, Kastovskj (1992, p. 338) sees that “Dialects are usually established on the basis of phonological, and to certain extent inflectional criteria, while lexical differences only play a supplementary role, or, not infrequently, are disregarded altogether”. While on the other end, linguists interested in Arabic dialects tend to lay weight on lexical differences in dialects. On that, Versteegh (1997, p. 184) attests that “lexical differences are responsible for most of the regional variation in Standard Arabic.” Aligning with the idea, Lafkioui (2013) also confirms that the differences between different Arabic vernaculars lie in lexical variation.

Lexical variation is more than a choice of word but is “regarded as clues to the different cultural universes associated with different languages” (Wierzbicka, 1992, p. 63). Taking this notion, traditionally, people of El-Menia relied mostly on farming and raising camels. The dialect is rich of lexical terms to designate many plants. However, economical propensity as well as changes in lifestyle have resulted in a shift in ways of living which is also reflected in language choice. For example, in the past rooms in El-Menia did not use to have big windows like ones we have now , but there used to be often a small hole in the



## Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria

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wall which is called “شِبارة” . With the change in architecture, elders still used the same term to designate to conventional windows.

English	MSA	El-Menia Dialect
Window	نافذة / nafida /	تاقا – شِبارة [Taqa] [ʃbara]

Also , in the diversity that characterizes the dialect of El-Menia, and Algeria in general , we take the example of the verb “ I am going “ . while in four instances the meaning is the same , changing one over another will reveal the speaker’s identity or at least shows attitude. In El-Menia most people use the expression راني مروح [rani mrawaħ ] .

راني ماشي	[ rani maʃi]
راني رايع	[rani rayaħ]
راني مروح	[rani mrawaħ ]
راني غادي	[rani qadi] , [rani ɣadi]

### 2.3.3.4. Diminution in El-Menia Dialect

A diminutive is a derivative word which alters the meaning of original stem to express little (Bussmann, Trauth, Kazzazi, & Bussmann, 1996). Zewi (2005) relates the concept with the idea of the change in morphological pattern to express reduction and diminution. If a speaker says “ what a cute kitty”, it would be comprehended as an emotional response to the size of the cat or simply that the speaker loves it. The latter is also referred to by the term hypocoristics. However, the two terms, hypocoristic and diminutives, are distinguished in accordance with the meaning of the original stem. If the derivative is a common noun, adjective, or adverb, the derived word will be referred to as a diminutive. On the other hand, if the original word is a proper noun then the term used is hypocoristics (Savickienė & Dressler, 2007).

Diminutives are not simply words with modified semantic meaning but often their construal is linked to verbalization events. A reason that makes understanding the connotation of diminutives outside context arduous. In his book ‘Diminutives *in English*’,

## Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria

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Schneider (2003) provides a detailed study of their utilization in English. He demonstrated how the same diminutive is used to express impoliteness, mortification, or on the contrary exalting. He further suggests that there is an allocation of functions between analytic and synthetic diminutives. The former performs as modifiers and are often the ones most literature refers to as minimizers. While synthetic diminutives “communicate the speakers' attitudes towards the respective referents “ (Schneider, 2003, p. 175).

There is an agreement in the literature that diminutives are dominantly used by women ( Protassova & Voeikova, 2007 ; Watson, 2006 ; Savickienė & Dressler, 2007 ; Jurafsky, 1996) . They tend to use diminutives to address children and other women. In fact, it is viewed as a stereotype usage of diminutives to be mostly used in the case of parent-child interaction. Consequently, Jurafsky (1996) indicates that the use of diminutives outside parent-child interaction in English would violate norms of politeness. However, the matter is certainly not that simple because other factors come to play as the type of relationship between speakers and the aim behind the speech act. Furthermore, it should be noted that while adults are aware of the difference in meaning diminutives hold, children can not discriminate between the original and the derivative form. (Savickienė & Dressler, 2007).

Indeed, preliminary data on diminution in El-Menia Dialect lines up with what has been said above. The dialect of El-Menia is featured by the use of diminutives especially women. Their use is mostly confined to family interaction where women include diminutives to address children and rarely men except family relatives. They take the form of nouns, verbs, adjective, and adverb. For people's name, in the dialect of El-Menia, diminutives are derived from first names and never last names. The same thing is also reported by Jurafsky ( 1996). He attests that it is rather rare for diminutives to be derived from last names. Verbs hold a special case, in CA and MSA, verbs are never found in a diminutive form.

### First Names

Name	Diminutive Form
محمد [mɒħamad]	محميد [mħimad]
عبد القادر [abdelqader]	قويدر [qjider]
عمر [ʔomar]	عميرة [ ʔmeira]

## Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria

فاطنة	[fatna]	فيطون	[feiton]
عبد الكريم	[abdelkarim]	كريم	[krejam]

### Adjectives:

English	MSA	El-Menia Dialect
Small	صغير	صغير [syer'jer]
Big	كبير	كبير [kbæ'jær]
Beautiful	زين	زوين [zw'yæn]

### Verbs:

English	MSA	El-Menia Dialect
To be lazy	تكسل	تتكيسل [tət'ker'səl]
dance	ترقص	تتريقص [tətrei'gas]
Play	يلعب	يتلاعب [jet'ler'ʔab]

### 2.3.3.5. The Pragmatic Marker “wa”

Listening to people in El-Menia also reveals a salient linguistic feature which is the use of “wa” “wa” at the end of a sentence as indicated in the sentences below :

El-Menia Dialect	Transcription	Meaning
راك رايح, وا؟	rak rajoh , wa ?	Are you leaving, aren't you ?
ربحنا وا ؟	rbaħna wa	We won , didn't we ?
راهي زاهيا الليلة وا؟	rahi zahya lajla wa	It is a happy night / it is a happy night , isn't it ?

In the first example, the speaker is clearly asking a question rendering the function of “wa” as a question tag. In the second example, despite the use of the same word “wa”, the tone used at the moment of speaking did not suggest he was asking whether they won or not, but it was a statement. As far as the third example, it was not clear whether the speaker was asking or stating.

Trying to clear the ambiguity and arriving at the answer whether the “wa” is deployed as a question tag or just added to the sentence takes us beyond the sentence thus

the move is toward discourse analysis. However, neither the length of the paper nor its objective allows venturing deeper into the field of discourse analysis. Still, the utilization of “wa” here as question tag can be regarded from the perspective of an utterance-final discourse marker (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). The first issue in understanding the discourse markers emanates from the labeling itself as several terms are assigned to designate them.

Terms as discourse markers, pragmatic markers, discourse particles, pragmatic particles, and connectives are often used to denote the same phenomenon (Andreas & Yael , 1998). As the naming differs, the definitions follow. In the attempt to ease the complexity of going through several definitions, going through the characteristics of discourse markers seems a rather better path to follow:

- 1- DMs constitute a heterogeneous set of forms which are difficult to place within a traditional word class (including items like ah, actually, and, just, like, now, really, well, I mean, I think and you know);
- 2- DMs are predominantly a feature of spoken rather than written discourse;
- 3- DMs are high-frequency items.
- 4- DMs are stylistically stigmatized and negatively evaluated;
- 5- DMs are short items and are often phonologically reduced, and are considered to have little or no propositional meaning, or at least to be difficult to specify lexically.
- 6- DMs occur either outside the syntactic structure or loosely attached to it and have no clear grammatical function
- 7- DMs are optional rather than obligatory features;
- 8- DMs may be multifunctional, operating on different levels (including textual and interpersonal levels) (Adapted from Andersen, 2001, p. 21)

Finally, two reasons have led to the avoidance of providing a definition and rather criteria. The first one aligns with the idea of Schiffrin (2001, p.55), “ Perspectives on markers differ in terms of their basic starting points, their definition of discourse markers, and their method of analysis”. Second, it is rather impossible to validate whether these characteristics apply to the particle “ wa” used in the dialect of El-Menia unless a practical inquiry is carried out. Consequently, it is only through investigation that a theoretical framework can be established as a starting point.

### 2.4. Conclusion

The current chapter started on the postulation that dissevering language study from the social context results in a poor understanding of factors that drive language change. In this respect, the chapter aims at providing a historical background by exploring the intricate sociolinguistic situation that characterizes Algeria. Albeit the focus of the research is confined to El-Menia, the investigation has to go far from the area designated to track the history of the people. The chapter takes a deductive approach tracking the change that occurred in the region by relating it to the origin of the prevailing language varieties today. Specifically, the second chapter deals with: Berbers, the advent of Arabic, and French at later stages, and how these events correlate with language. Hence, the second chapter is divided into two parts. The first section deals with the history of the region from a wider perspective. The second focuses on the context of the research more categorically the people of El-Menia and the salient sociolinguistic features that define the language.

A review of the literature on the subject of the Algerian sociolinguistic situation does hardly go without referencing to its convolutedness. Indeed, pursuing the history of the region and people show that the prelude of different civilizations has resulted in several language varieties ranging from Berber language varieties, Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Arabic vernaculars, ending with French. In regard to language change, the latter was driven first by the vicissitude of the demography whether because of natural movement, wars or conquest. Thus, a transmutation in people equals a change in a language. Second, the co-existence of these number of varieties triggers sundry kinds of contact-induced phenomena that affect language use, an effect that is still ongoing up to now.

As an example, shifting in demography, despite Berbers being the oldest inhabitants in North Africa, today Berber language is confined to small mountainous areas. Indeed, traces of Berber people living in El-Menia can be found. First, the old name of the city was “تاوريرت” Tawrit a name of a Zenet origin. Second, some families in El-Menia still identify themselves as Zenet. However, visits to those families showed that they don't use the language. Furthermore, the Zenet language variety is no longer spoken by the people of El-Menia attesting to the fact that during the observation phase no one was heard speaking

## **Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria**

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Zenet. Subsequently, Zenet is not a variable to consider in the study of language change in El-Menia.

The introduction of Arabic to the region had lasting effects. The second wave of Arabs to North Africa transmuted the sociolinguistic situation significantly. Contrary to the first wave, the second comprised of Bedouin people who facilely coalesced in with Berbers, a situation that led to the assimilation of Berber language varieties and the ascendance of Arabic. However, the latter withal was not immune to transmute, whether explainable by koineization or creolization/pidginization theory, Arabic today is just an umbrella term that hides underneath Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, and Colloquial Arabic. Today Classical Arabic is mainly associated with the Quran where the modern standard version of it is the one utilized in edification and formal setting. Thus, it is Colloquial Arabic that dominates everyday language utilization.

In the same respect, the French colonization at a later stage has further perplexed the sociolinguistic situation in Algeria. The language policy undertaken over 130 years has left a marked effect as it rendered the French language a dominant one. Assigning the adjective “dominant” can be indeed upbraided, however, the facts presented earlier in this chapter as French being still a prestigious language that plays a paramount role in administration and higher education can be hardly questioned. Still, the French language was not able to eradicate Arabic as the latter is deeply rooted in the culture of the people. Looking at an everyday speech in Algeria today shows that French vocabulary and structure penetrated colloquial Arabic through code-switching and mixing.

Then, El-Menia stands as a small-scale example of the sociolinguistic situation of the region. First, Colloquial Arabic remains the dominant language form used in everyday speech with conspicuous features such as the substitution of [ʏ] for [q], a distinguishable lexical variation, diminution, and the pragmatic marker “wa”. The dialect also conforms with the history of the people as it conforms with Bedouin dialect features. The French language is also present whether people speak it fluently in formal places such as administrative facilities or through code-switching.

Finally, the second chapter marks the cessation of the literature review in this research and although a discontinuity can be felt between the first and the second chapter, the fact is that both are of a great importance. The first one has provided the theoretical

## **Chapter Two: The Sociolinguistic Situation in Algeria**

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framework to understand language change. Then, it is this chapter that offers a contextualized and a narrow view on the study. Moreover, having established answers to the questions of who the people are and what they speak, the aim of next chapter is to devise a suitable methodology for a practical sociolinguistic analysis to arrive at an understanding of language change in the Arabic dialect of El-Menia.

# CHAPTER THREE

## Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Conceptual Issues



### 3.1. Introduction

Neither the first chapter nor the second one is meant to be looked at separately as each one offers an incomplete picture of the research. The third chapter aims at providing the methodology that binds the theoretical approach presented in the first chapter with the present sociolinguistic situation in EL-Menia. However, devising methodology for a sociolinguistic fieldwork is by far not a nugatory matter. That goes to the uniqueness of each speech community. Therefore, in alignment with the idea of Schilling-Estes (2013, p. 165), a researcher in sociolinguistics needs to balance between the adaptation of “tried-and-true techniques”, planning new ones, and improvising on the spot. Here comes the importance of carefully considering potential issues that may arise during the fieldwork by analyzing previous and similar work.

The careful consideration of possible problems that can plague the chosen methodology is to assure yielding tangible data which will be objectively interpreted to arrive at the research most important question: how is language changing in EL-Menia dialect? The dialect of El-Menia is certainly not immune to language change. However, the hypothesis driving this paper states that change is occurring at a rather drastically different pace in the society of El-Menia. To vindicate or to refute the hypothesis, the following questions need to be addressed:

- 1- What are the linguistic features that are causing perceptible language change?
- 2- Is the change in language manifested in all aspects equally or differently?
- 3- Which social groups are affected and which not?
- 4- What are the reasons behind the difference in the manifestation of language change?
- 5- What is the speakers' attitude towards the dialect?

Since most sociolinguistic studies, including this one, require fieldwork, intricacies will raise because of the relatedness to the human subjects. Naturally, the list of questions expands to respond to these quandaries. To address research questions and issues that would raise, the chapter is structured as follows: first, the approach adopted in the research will be reviewed. Then, the design employed will be discussed. The next idea addressed is the sample and the sampling process followed by a review of the data techniques used. Discussion of each element in this chapter comprises three questions: how is it done in

previous research? How was it tackled in this research? What is the rationale behind that? The chapter ends by pondering on ethical consideration guiding this investigation.

### **3.2. Research Methodology in Language Variation and Change (LVC)**

Drake and Heath (2011) attest that social science academics are always faced with the issue of selecting quantitative or qualitative paradigm. Logically, the choice of an approach over another must be justified and related to questions what to study and how; however, the issue is that the two approaches have been treated from a rather different point. According to Drake and Heath, the strive for objectivity and verifiable finding that can be replicated in quantitative research resulted in researchers missing details offered by qualitative approach. There is also the idea that qualitative research is prone to bias judgment and even worse can be deemed unscientific. On this regard, Tavakoli (2013) stresses that neither the quantitative nor the qualitative approach are immune to bias. In the latter, the researcher him/herself is the instrument of research and that increases the likelihood of bias or erroneous interpretation. On the other hand, bias in quantitative work can also be the result of ill sampling or analysis.

A review of the literature on the subject of LVC limpidly indicates that in term of research methodology, quantitative approach is synonymous with the study of language variation. In fact, the field of variationist sociolinguistics distinguishes itself by its methods which heavily accentuate conclusions drawn from quantitatively analyzed variables. Tagliamonte (2006, p.03) goes further associating qualitative approach with “ethnography of communication, discourse analysis, etc.” and quantitative with language variation and change. However, Bell (2007) sees that the practice of quantifying language into numbers threatens to distance research from real language utterances. He sees “the most exciting contemporary sociolinguistic research combines skilled quantitative analysis with a solid presentation of qualitative text” (Bell, 2007, p. 108). Mindful of this, both approaches were used to drive the practical part of the research.

#### **3.2.1. Quantitative Approach**

Following deep-rooted quantitative methods in sociolinguistic studies, the primary aim is to render the linguistic variables under the scope of the paper to quantifiable data that can be interpreted statistically from different perspectives. Furthermore, the adaptation

of the quantitative approach means also careful consideration of aspects that should be involved. Firstly, the principle of accountability dictates that “all occurrences of a given variant are noted, and where it has been possible to define the variable as a closed set of variants, all non-occurrences of the variant in the relevant environments.” (Labov, 1982, p. 30). In other words, besides counting frequencies, accountability extends beyond the variable to include all related variants.

Once enough information is gathered, the task is to find the pattern that relates variables to variants. In this aspect, different analytical procedures are performed on data to elicit patterns. For instance, a researcher would use simple operation designed to find: distributional analysis, multivariate analysis, statistical significance, constraint ranking, relative strength, and comparison. Or, he/she would opt for more advanced programming languages like “R” or SPSS which would yield more in-depth analysis of the behavior of variables. An example, the work of Baayen (2008) who provides, besides simple rudimentary operation, exhaustive details on different statistical methods: clustering, multidimensional scaling, hierarchical cluster analysis regression modeling and so on. As far as this paper is concerned, the design of the practical research necessitated amalgamation of a number of programs: SPSS, Visual Studio, Excel, and Access. More details about how this software will be used in data analysis procedures will be discussed in the current chapter.

Speech technology has evolved considerably in the last twenty years resulting in many speech recognition software. The latter can render speech act to visible waves from which slightest variation can be detected and studied. Thus, quantifying linguistic data would be more accurate. For instance, despite that the work of Gales & Young (2008) and Levinson (2005) are about applying mathematical formula and statistic procedures to facilitate speech recognition, the same technology can be used to understand language variation. Regrettably, studies on this domain have not reach practical stages when it comes to Arabic language-related studies compared to the advances seen in English (Telmem & Ghanou, 2018).

### **3.2.2. Qualitative Approach**

The choice of an approach over another is surely related to the nature of the questions asked. It is a truism that most variation studies of language are quantitative in

nature (Schilling-Estes, 2007). However, the call for the qualitative approach is necessary. Primarily, from a purely methodological standing point, there is the belief that the two approaches complement each other (Novikov & Novikov, 2013). Given the fact that most sociolinguistic investigation can hardly not escape incorporating data gathering tools such as case studies, interviews, and observation means dependence on the qualitative approach is unavoidable (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

The primary reason why the following research resorts to the quantitative method is to provide a rich description. While the backbone of the work is statistics from quantified data, scores, frequencies, and ranges, numbers alone are simply not enough to arrive at conclusions. Secondly, the research involves questions that are neatly linked to individuals and their attitudes, questions that numbers will not suffice to offer answers. Aligned with the idea of Mackey & Gass, (2005, p.163), it is that “holistic picture of the phenomena being studied” which is looked-for. Then, there is the need for the approach to remedy the fact that it is very difficult for a sociolinguistic study to have a very large number of participants, as any number will be ridiculed compared to actual people in a community. Furthermore, Brown (2004) attests that a sociolinguist needs to take an emic-perspective as opposed to an etic one in which many details will be missed.

### 3.3. Research Design

*“Not all variability and heterogeneity in language structure involves change; but all change involves variability and heterogeneity”* (Weinreich , Labov, & Herzog, 1968, p. 188).

Pondering over this idea means that the quest of studying language change starts from language variation. Nevertheless, the question is whether language variation in EL-Menia leads to language change or not? Therefore, the design of the research is fundamentally divided into two parts. First, the study starts with an investigation of language variation to yield solid numbers. Second, employing the same numbers to arrive at the answer to whether there is a change or not. Of course, this explanation is a simplified version of what is to come in this chapter as for each question a set of techniques are implemented to get the desired answers.

Nevertheless, nothing of what has been referred to above would be possible without unveiling the linguistic variables that are going to drive the research. At the basic level, linguistic variables are “two or more ways of saying the same thing” (Tagliamonte, 2007, p. 191). The literature yields several definitions of the term, however, the comparison Tagliamonte (2012) draws between the concept of ‘linguistic variable’ and ‘synonyms’ is interesting. She states that both refer to the same referential value, yet the criterion that sets linguistic variables apart is the idea of systematic alteration. So, the choice a speaker would make has to be governed by among other factors gender, age, social class, level of educational attainment (Montgomery, 2007). Albeit, most studies of language variation include the notion of language variation, Wolfram (1991, p.31) clearly states his disapproval towards “incorporation of social and linguistic variables within a single rule”. In other words, a researcher must be careful not to mistake linguistic variables with linguistic rules. In the same idea, Hazen (2007, p. 77) attests that linguistic variables are just constructs, more of “methodological toolkit” as opposed to linguistic rules.

Nevertheless, such a task is by far not an easy one. The real issue is first finding what to count and analyze agreeing with Labov’s statement (1969, p.728) that “The final decision as to what to count is actually the solution to the problem in hand”. Thus, Labov sees that a researcher needs first to make the following decisions: first, the population of utterances where variation occurs must be identified. Once the boundary of the variables is identified, the interest goes to recognizing the possible variants. Thirdly, Labov calls for the consideration of the possible sub-categories that might be relevant in counting frequencies.

Labov’s maneuvers to systematically unveil linguistic variables necessitate a close analysis of everyday language. Hence, an ethnographic approach is required. Yet, the latter also entails and demands to opt for triangulation in data resource as it is seen as a characteristic of ethnographic studies (Trappes-Lomax, 2004). Mindful of these, the current research uses three data collection methods: observation, focus group interviews, and virtual focus groups (VFGs). Triangulating data sources assures the credibility of the data gathered and helps amend gaps left from each method, consequently, arriving at a complete picture.

### 3.3.1. Anonymous Observation

The main data fueling the research comes from people speaking naturally. While that is not an issue as people do that all the time, the problem arises when they are aware of being observed. In describing the phenomenon, Labov (1972, p.113) introduced the term “observer’s paradox: To obtain the data most important for linguistic theory, we have to observe how people speak when they are not being observed”. The core idea is that people change their behavior and consequently their language when they are observed. Even troublesome, Feagin (2013) sees that all data collection methods are not immune to the problem. Overcoming such methodological drawback, a researcher has to devise strategies to deflect the attention of informants away and trigger their natural language.

The famous example of the use of rapid and anonymous observation comes from the work of Labov 1972. By concealing his identity and initiating natural conversations with people, Labov was able to elicit data more accurately. The trick was that he asked questions to provoke answers he already knows. Being aware of what the answer is, the only variable remains is how it is said. Indeed, Labov designed his question to produce “fourth-floor “answer, providing a linguistic environment of the pronunciation of the r-lessness. Being completely unaware of the true intention of the conversation, Labov succeeded surmounting observer’s paradox

Another well-known example in the use of observation comes from works of Eckert (1989, 2000). Unlike the already known answer, the gist of the work lied in long-term observation of the behavior of adolescents at school to uncover patterns. Eckert was able to overcome the problem of the observer’s paradox by blending in with the subjects of her work. Authorized by the school administration, the two years’ time span of the case study enabled Eckert to become part of the school community which in turn helped her to become a familiar face in the school. Thus, context and time made the collection of huge data from recordings and qualitative data possible.

Taking into consideration these two examples, the first stage in the fieldwork of current research is observation. The primary goal is to first discover the linguistic behavior of people of El-Menia, by mainly trying to address the questions of how people of El-Menia speak and what are the noticeable linguistic features that vary? For such aim, 47 hours throughout 30 days were spent in public places watching people and how they speak. Table

## Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Conceptual Issues

3.1 shows the distribution of time spent observing people and places selected. The latter covered formal and informal context, the objective was to cover all places as much as possible.

Table 3.1. Time Spent in Observation and places distribution

<b>Informal Contexts</b>	<b>Instances</b>	<b>Time Spent</b>	<b>Formal Contexts</b>	<b>Instances</b>	<b>Time Spent</b>
Coffee shops	4	13 Hours	Administration (town hall )	1	5 Hours
Markets	2	5 Hours	Mosque	4	11 Hours
A grocery shop	1	13 Hours			
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>31 Hours</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16 hours</b>
<b>Total Time of observation</b>		<b>47 Hours</b>			

Furthermore, observations were done in different districts in El-Menia. As indicated in the table (instances), for example, four coffee shops were visited. The selection of these coffee shops and mosques was not random but the attempt was to cover a major part of the city. Furthermore, crowded places were also subject to selection as it was considered an important criterion. While all places are considered public, the intricacy is with schools. For the research, school context is of a paramount importance. However, despite our constant effort and repeated requests, official consent was not granted to work inside these facilities. Nevertheless, six schools allowed us to stay in proximity to the school entrance. Unfortunately, clearance was granted only for 4 middle schools and 2 secondary, and no primary school. Faced with this methodological caveat, the need to reformulate interview participants at a later stage to include children was necessary.

Beside public places, the researcher worked at a grocery shop for 5 days. The shop provided an ideal place for observation for two main reasons. First, being an environment where the researcher is in control made initiating conversation with people very easy. Besides the usual talk between the customer and the shop owner, customers were asked short questions to elicit certain answers. The second reason is related to the tools used in

the observation. While it is considered unethical to use recording equipment outside with people's consent, the shop was equipped with cameras. Although, on a regular basis, the feature of recording sound in surveillance cameras is disabled – as it is not needed- the research enabled back the option of providing recorded feedback from customers. For ethical consideration, videos were not extracted from hard drives only sound, more detailed on this will be covered in the section about ethics.

The initial plan for the research included observation in a hospital and in streets. However, the two were dropped for insufficient and unreliable data. People at the hospital often speak quietly thus it is extremely difficult to keep notes. On the contrary, interference in streets and the impossibility of taking notes render observation outside impossible. In the same regard, the attempt to observe and listen to the language used by pupils outside schools witnessed similar problems.

### **3.3.2. Rationale Behind Observation**

The data collected through observation is meant to serve three objectives. The primary objective answers Labov's concerns mentioned above. That is whether the fluctuations are systematic and have a linguistic or social basis or are simply performance related, or just random. The answer to this question determines which linguistic variables to consider to be investigated further and which to be discarded. The next concern is where these variations occur, do they happen all over the El-Menia or they are restricted to specific regions? Then, the compelling matter is what are the noticeable social factors involved in these variations?

Observation phase is designed to produce two types of data: quantitative and qualitative. As far as the former is concerned, observing people's linguistic behavior can be rendered into numbers by taking notes on what linguistic variable, when, where, and by who. Despite the lack of recording equipment, the data are registered in a table (see Table 3.2). Of course, there are two drawbacks to using only observation and taking notes. Of course, there is no way to get the exact age of people, consequently, the research relies on guessing. Moreover, without proper recording tools, the research becomes susceptible to errors. Therefore, the data obtained are used as a baseline reference and for comparison mostly.



Table 3.2. A Sample Grid for Saving Data Obtained from Observation

<b>Age Estimation</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>The Substitution of</b>	<b>Code-Switching</b>	<b>Pragmatic Marker “wa”</b>	<b>The use of Diminutives</b>
<b>&lt; 10</b>	<b>Male</b>				
	<b>Female</b>				
<b>11- 20</b>	<b>Male</b>				
	<b>Female</b>				
<b>20- 30</b>	<b>Male</b>				
	<b>Female</b>				
<b>30 – 50</b>	<b>Male</b>				
	<b>Female</b>				
<b>50 - 65</b>	<b>Male</b>				
	<b>Female</b>				
<b>65&gt;</b>	<b>Male</b>				
	<b>Female</b>				

Although the work of Altmann (1974) refers to behavior in general, the methodology he chooses to reinforce quantitative data found in laboratories by observation of real-life was adapted here. Altmann (1974, p.230) sees that “internal validity should not be purchased through the complete loss of external validity”. In other words, a research should not stress internal validity and abandon external ones as it is through the former that the criteria of generalizability are sought. As far as this paper is concerned, starting with interviews alone would threaten the work as the possibility of missing the big picture is more likely to happen. On the other side, there is a limitation of observation as it is prone to interference (Creswell , 2014). Consequently, the ultimate objective of observation is to select a sample for interviews.

### 3.4. The Sample

Considered the primary source of data fueling the research, participants are of a paramount importance to the research. Therefore, the choice of one subject over another has serious repercussions for the overall conclusion. In fact, all aspects of the research design have to be aligned and connected with each other. Regarding the latter, Milroy & Gordon (2008, p.47 ) call for the “ interconnectedness of theory and method”. In other words, the process of sampling must be more than just a mere selection of speakers rather it needs to be grounded on a theoretical framework that provides defense on the choice and later the results.

There is no question that Labov’s methods of investigating language variation are unquestionable in a matter of quantifying data or turning language study into figures that can be interpreted easily (Labov 1966, 2006). However, the issue lies in the interpretations. For instance, Labov (2006, p.06) sees that “ groups living in close contact are participating in rapid linguistic changes which lead to increased diversity, rather than uniformity”. While Sankoff (1980, p.51) has a different view as he states that “ If people within a speech community indeed understand each other with a high degree of efficiency, this tends to place a limit on the extent of possible variation, and imposes a regularity”. Certainly, by no means, the two conclusions are contrasted here to falsify one of them. Rather, the intention is to prove that despite the sameness of the framework, the conclusions can be different.

In the first chapter, it has been discussed how for example ethnicity can be a nullifying factor. So, even if all aspects of two linguistic studies are similar, from framework adapted, sample, sampling procedures, to data analysis; one factor can simply render their final conclusions different. Therefore, a researcher needs to provide a minute account of all research aspects, although that is extremely difficult as there is always something overlooked. In the subsequent section, the sample selected, the approach adopted to the selection, and the rationale will be disclosed.

### 3.4.1. From the Theoretical Sample to the Sample

The current research aims at investigating language change in the dialect of El-Menia. Methodologically speaking, the term theoretical sample denotes the entire population to which the finding is to be generalized. In this case, the theoretical sample is estimated over 50,000 inhabitants according to the census of 2010. The challenge in any study with a large population is how one can move from a population estimated in ten or hundred thousand to a double-digit sample. Milroy & Gordon (2008) list three decisions that must be taken by the researcher about sampling procedures:

- 1- The boundaries of the community of people under investigation need to be delineated. Milroy & Gordon call this “defining the sample universe” (Milroy & Gordon p.26).
- 2- The need for the assessment of relevant social factors that might affect language use.
- 3- The sample size needs to be determined.

### 3.4.2. The Sample Universe

Certainly, the boundary of the research is geographically set as it is about residents of the city of El-Menia. However, the issue is with people and the decision of who is eligible for participation in the interviews. The answer to this question is often addressed by selecting native speakers which is an idea that persists often in sociolinguistic studies. The decision to select participants from the pool of who are deemed to be native people of El-Menia is itself problematic. It is necessary to clarify the criteria to be found in a speaker to be nominated for interviews.

Taking the perspective of Cook (2011, p.28), three assumptions drive the idea of “a native speaker”. First, a native speaker would be a person who acquired the language “naturally and effortlessly”. Second, a native speaker can distinguish between what is acceptable and what is not. Thirdly, there is the idea of knowledge of the community and loyalty to it. It can be attested that, besides foreigners, people in El-Menia all speak the dialect. However, the issue is who is still loyal to the dialect and its prominent linguistic features. Linguists often, in response, disqualify those participants who might not fit the

definition. For instance, Pelkey (2011) in his fieldwork has to debar some participants on the ground for two reasons. Firstly, informants who have been away for a long period of time outside the village. Second, others were not included because they were recently married in the village, therefore, they are not native speakers.

Certainly, it would be wise to follow the same decision as Pelkey (2011) in the exclusion of participants who have the same conditions as discussed above. Even if such an approach is rather logical, the move to choose some over others still might result in a biased sample. A claim supported by Milroy & Gordon (2008) who are in favor of the methodology Horvath (1985) used in her study on variation on Australian English, more precisely on sociolects of Sydney. Instead of going with the exclusion of non-native speakers, she included in her sample participants who have learned English as a second language. According to Milroy and Gordon (2008, p.27) , “ This decision turned out to be theoretically important since ethnic minority speakers seem to be leading linguistic changes that are affecting the entire Sydney speech community”.

In the same vein, Kasstan (2016) presented his work “ New speakers as agents of social and linguistic change in Francoprovençal-speaking communities” which refers to the idea of the influence “ a new speaker” brings to the community in terms of language change. Kasstan’s research questions were designed to investigate /l/ palatalization in obstruent and lateral word-initial consonant clusters /kl, gl, bl, pl, fl/. The aim is to explore whether there is accommodation and which variants are used. Despite the sample used was relatively small (16 native speakers, 2 late speakers, and 3 new speakers), the work shows how the new speakers affect the use of the dialect. Kasstan used real-time study in his inquiry as he used data found in “ Atlas linguistique et ethnographique du Lyonnais ” (Gardette, 1950).

The conclusion found in the work reveals two opposing views. On the one hand, “ Data from native speakers suggest that convergence is taking in the direction of the dominant language.”( Kasstan, 2016, p. 21) . On the other hand, Kasstan sees that “ While they [new speakers] are keen to show that they command the dialect, and are able to produce highly localised variants, they also demonstrate divergent speech patterns to L1 speakers – these variants might be linked to a wider pan-Arpitan identity”.

Both examples of Horvath (1985) and Kasstan (2016) show the significance of including non-native speakers and those participants who often get discarded in

sociolinguistic studies. Mindful of this conclusion, the sampling procedure followed in the paper does not exclude in advance participants who are considered new speakers. Nevertheless, the decision also brings the risk of influence from such participants. In response, participants who are deemed to be new speakers will be highlighted. It should be noted, however, that there will be no systemic way of including or excluding them.

### **3.5. Family Structure as an Influencing Factor**

The second decision to be made is to investigate social factors that affect language use. Although any social feature might have an effect even if it is negligible on language, the problem lies in those aspects that negate and has an overriding result on all other social facets. Having such factors might risk the whole research finding as the conclusion can be inconsistent. A researcher must identify in advance these factors and design accordingly. Here comes the importance of the systematic observation before sampling to avoid falling into this methodological issue.

Indeed, at earlier stages of the observation, the opted plan was to select randomly participants for interviews. However, a closer look at people's behavior in El-Menia and daily activities shows that the pattern of interaction is centered around family. EL-Menia's society is best described by the term *Gemeinschaft*. The latter denotes traditional types of communities which are based firmly on kinship, family, friendship and "closeness and unity". It is contrasted with the concept of *Gesellschaft* which is associated with "individuality, separation from others".

Consequently, in some areas in El-Menia, people's social network is closely related to neighbors and family with little interaction outside the network. Furthermore, some families constitute whole neighborhoods, having distinct norms and traditions. Consequently, every member of such families and neighborhood found themselves bound by untold norms. For instance, some families are more conservative than others in terms of female studying outside the city or even working. There is also the tendency for families to follow the same business line. El-Menia is characterized by a fertile soil, a reason why people are drawn to agriculture.

Auer, Hinskens, and Kerswill (2005) ponder on the matter of the influence of family structure and community type on language use. On that, they first shed light on the shift in Western societies from multi-generation family type to the nuclear family and the repercussion of that on language. The composition of the extended family differs significantly from a smaller one, the existence of the grandparents and other relatives helps in the transfer of dialectical features. Results of such situation, according to Auer, Hinskens, and Kerswill are seen in low variation in language. In contrast, the situation in a nuclear family “ may accelerate language change” (Auer, Hinskens , & Kerswill, 2005, p. 31).

Being aware of the influence exerted by the family on language, it would be unwise to ignore such a factor. Furthermore, at the core of El-Menia, people are still fond of their tribal origin and their families. Therefore, it is a cornerstone in the methodological consideration in the sampling procedure to mind the characteristics of the family to which the participant belongs. Therefore, the first aspect to be put in the record is the type of family designating a nuclear family by “N” and an extended one by “E”. For privacy reasons, from this point, the names of the families will be coded using “F+ code” to refer to them. Additionally, having in mind the notion of “community of practice”, the type of profession spread in the family if it exists will be minded.

### **3.6. The Sample Stratification**

It is at the level of the sample stratification that the decisions above are put into practice. Hitherto, the latter remain only two among other choices to be made to arrive at the final sample structure. However, the talk alone about choices is problematic because each choice brings about the risk of being bias. In response to such problem, Milroy and Gordon (2008, p.30) insist on lining up research objectives and sampling procedures. An alignment that gives the researcher’s judgment credibility and “defensible theoretical framework”.

The primary concern in selecting participants is attaining representativeness. A sample needs to reflect the social structure of El-Menia. Methodologically, a completely random sample would be more representative. Still, there are three issues that plague a random sample. First, social categories do not present themselves easily and are not distributed evenly throughout the society. For example, a random sample would easily miss the influence exerted by family in language change in this case.

The second problem is redundancy. A cursory look at the community of El-Menia shows homogeneity in social structure as there are no apparent social classes or differences in behavior. Consequently, if the sample comprises more than 100 participants arbitrarily, there is a chance that they are redundant. This view is supported by Sankoff (1980, p.51), who sees that “ It is crucial, however, that the sample be well chosen, and representative of all social subsections about which one wishes to generalize”.

The third problem is a constraint that prevents the researcher from choosing a non-probability sampling procedure. The reason is that the sample is not merely a reflection of the social structure to be studied but it is itself an analytical tool, a means to an end. In the current case, it is language change that needs to be elicited from the sample through the construct of apparent-time. In the latter, the age factor plays a crucial role, therefore, the sample structure needs to be designed with that in mind.

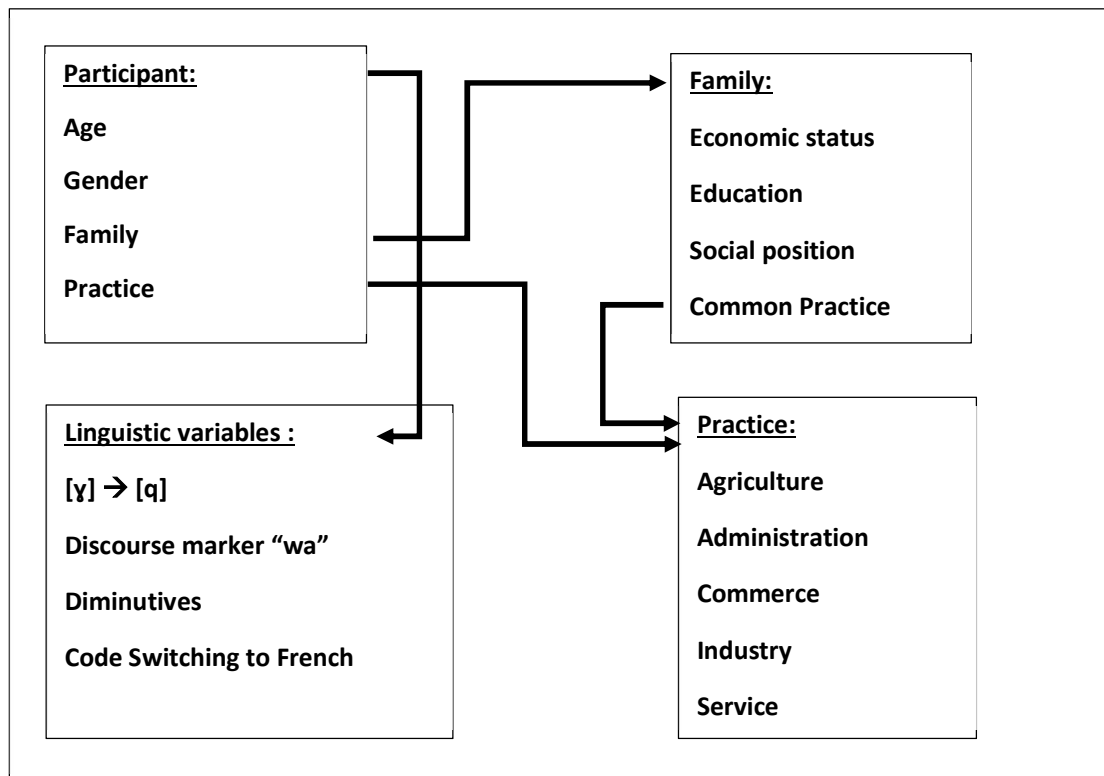


Figure 3.1. The Relation Database Schema Used to Investigate the Relation Between the Different Aspects in the Research

In the endeavor to tame the complexity involved in the sample structure, figure 3.1 shows the conceptual framework employed to investigate the relation between the different aspects in the research. The schema is inspired by a relational database in which all data is connected together. In fact, even the way data is going to be stored in the same process. The same procedures for storing and analyzing data has been referred to by Tagliamonte (2006) in “Analyzing Sociolinguistic Variation”.

In translating the theory into practice, all information is related together. Starting first by considering basic information from the interview informant such as age, gender, family, and practice. The two last features are in turn related to the other two tables that hold information about each family and practice. As far as the family table is concerned, for each family included in the research, a profile will be created; taking notes about important information: economic status, education, social position, and the common practice. Significantly, all tables are also linked with the linguistic variables recorded.

### 3.7. The Sample Size

Translating the above decisions into practical ones, the basic sample structure will be shown in table 3.3. Having access to five families, the same number of participants and sample structure need to be taken from each family. That means that the number of participants in interviews in the research is multiplied by five, thus, 180 participants. Again, as a reminder, the notion of family here does not necessarily mean people living in the same household. It refers to people bearing the same family name and living near to each other.

<b>Age</b>	<b>6 - 14</b>	<b>15 – 25</b>	<b>26 – 40</b>	<b>41 - 60</b>	<b>60 - 75</b>	<b>75 and older</b>
<b>Male</b>	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Female</b>	3	3	3	3	3	3

Table 3.3. Sample Distribution for a Family

The sample size still remains a small number compared to the actual population of El-Menia. In fact, looking at the ratio of such number, one would question the representativeness of the sample. Though, bearing in mind in the statement of Cukor-Avila and Bailey (2013) on apparent-time studies “ The value of apparent-time data is in large



part a function of the size and representativeness of the sample from which it is taken.” ; the importance of having a representative sample becomes clear.

As far as the size of the sample is concerned, with each criterion well-thought-out, there is a ramification in the sample size. So far, the following social factors need to be included: age, gender, practice, and family. The last two criteria expand the size of the sample exponentially even if the research is restricted to big well-known families in El-Menia. Therefore, table 3.3 shows the base sample size to be used for each family. The number of families is restricted only by family permissions. In the attempt to find the best sample size there are for sure two opposite views. The first view to be pondered on is that of Neuman (2014, p.270) :

*“For small populations (under 500), we need a large sampling ratio (about 30 percent) or 150 people, while for large populations (over 150,000), we can obtain equally good accuracy with a smaller sampling ratio (1 percent), and samples of about 1,500 can be equally accurate, all things being the same. Notice that the population of 150,000 is 30 times larger but the sample is just 10 times larger”*

Adapting such view for the current research means that 5000 participants are needed and undeniably the selected sample falls way short. On the same vein, Milroy and Gordon (2008) see that most studies in sociolinguistics fail to meet such numbers. They back such claim by providing examples from well-known sociolinguistic studies. On the one hand, the same homogeneity, referred to earlier, found in a linguistic community constitutes the reason which makes it possible for a small sample to be representative. Sankoff (1980) states that “

*“If people within a speech community indeed understand each other with a high degree of efficiency, this tends to place a limit on the extent of possible variation, and imposes a regularity (necessary for effective communication) not found to the same extent in other kinds of social behavior”*. (p51)

Sankoff’s view on regularities indeed comes in favor with the small number of participants in the sample design. However, bringing more credibility to the research design, the observation phase provides useful insight into variability.

### 3.8. The Sampling Technique: Purposeful Sampling (PS)

All along the discussion about the sample and in the decisions reached above, the conception of sampling was referred to implicitly. It was demonstrated how a planarly arbitrary sample would not yield the desired aims albeit it is flawlessly methodologically. Aligning with the idea, Creswell (2012, p.206) attests that random sampling is more suitable for quantitative studies. However, that selection of people who might well help in understanding the phenomenon in question calls for purposeful sampling which is “the research term used for qualitative sampling”.

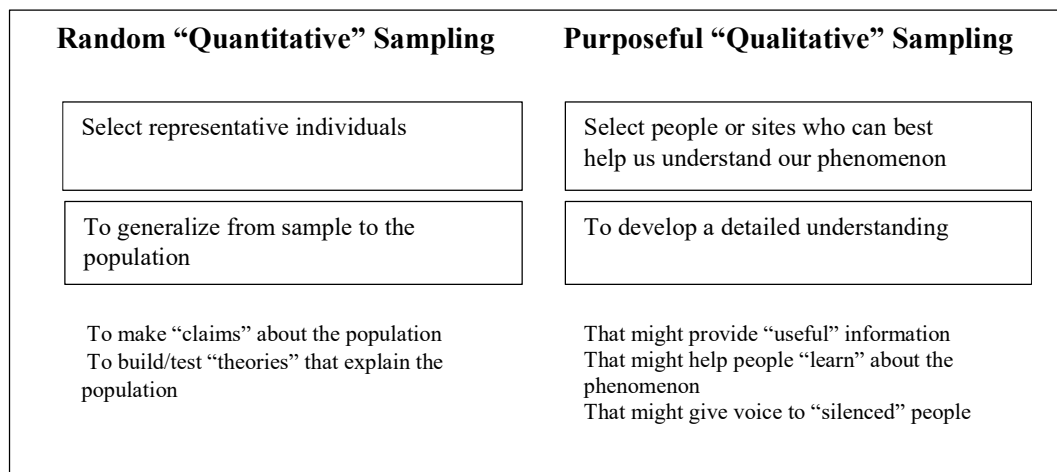


Figure.3.2. Difference between Random Sampling and Purposeful Sampling. Taken from Creswell, W. J. (2012). Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th ed). Page 206.

Figure 3.2 shows, in brief, the difference between random sampling and purposeful sampling. However, the strategy taken in the current research differs from the diagram as the aim is to move from purposeful qualitative sampling to a conclusion that should be found under random quantitative sampling. The latter is justified with the mixed approach used, still, the attempt to generalize any conclusion to the entire population should be done cautiously.

Creswell (2014) associates the use of purposeful sampling with data collection taking the form of observation, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials. Thus, it is rather suitable for the present research. Tavakoli (2013, p.397) adds that such an approach to sampling is employed when data needs to be fathered from real life and “researchers

work to get as close to their data as possible”. Nevertheless, the choice to go with PS entails also the use of two forms of PS: opportunistic sampling, snowball sampling, and confirming and disconfirming sampling.

### 3.8.1. Opportunistic Sampling

It is a type of non-probability sampling in which, as the name implies, the researcher adopts flexible approach “meld the sample around the fieldwork context as it unfolds” (Tavakoli, 2013, p. 436). Therefore, the researcher takes advantage of unpredicted opportunities and modifies the sample accordingly. It is labeled accidental sampling, haphazard sampling, and incidental sampling. Such type of sampling is linked with qualitative research. Despite its advantages, it is criticized on the ground that it can deter the attention from the original aim.

Since the first data gathering tool in the research is observation, the adaptation of opportunistic sampling provides a handy tool to select participants for interviews that are “information rich” and best reflect the social structure. In fact, the utilization of opportunistic sampling is rather necessary for the present research because of how interviews are done as there is no control over who stays or leaves. Sometimes, a child interrupts the interview and is found to be very valuable to be recorded. Therefore, efficiency and effectiveness are what opportunistic sampling provides.

### 3.8.2. Snowball Sampling (SS)

Snowball sampling is also a type of non-probability sampling. Having identified a few participants that meet certain criteria, the researcher asks those selected to nominate others who may have the same features necessary to the study (Berg, 2001). The prominence of the snowball sampling is that it can be the only way to find “hard-to-reach participants” (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 70)

On that, William and Kretzschmar (2011, p.200) see that the common practice in sociolinguistics is to draw a sample through “specific selection, often means the friend-of-a-friend, snowball method”. Schmid (2011) identifies another reason besides locating participants, in her studies, she was welcomed with warmth, friendliness, and even invited to meals because she was sent by someone close. Meeting participants with such hospitality for sure save the researcher from various issues.

Given the conservative nature of the society of El-Menia, asking people to do a sociolinguistic interview is going to be extremely awkward. Indeed, at the first attempts, people laughed at the request and most saw it as a joke. However, spreading the word through friend-of-a-friend gained the topic more seriousness and people started taking part in it willingly. Similar to Schmid (2011), people were more welcoming and often sent out an invitation for lunch or dinner.

Snowball sampling is also referred to by chain sampling, and network sampling (Tavakoli, 2013). In association with the last designation, Milroy and Gordon (2008, p.32) list another purpose of snowball sampling. They see that the adaptation of snowball sampling is not just a tool to gain access to participants but it is “an analytical construct” adopted to study the social network. Accordingly, the social network is revealed through the use of SS as it is likely that each participant will recommend a person related to in the network. It was through the way early participants recommended other ones for the research that made the conclusion about family ties possible. When asked “who can you recommend for the research?” “often the answer was “my brother, cousin, nephew, uncle, or brother-in-law” . Thus, one realizes that people have strong family ties and the social structure is deeply influenced by extended families.

### 3.9. Interviews

There is no question that observation yields valuable data as the latter are gained when people are in real life and most of the information is biased-free. However, there is a lack of control over the different aspects involved. First, there is no systematic way governing the occurrence of variables and variants, consequently, the researcher has to observe and wait. Therefore, it is a time-consuming method with no guarantee that the results will be satisfactory. Second, sometimes parts of speech are equivocal; then even if a variant is heard, it will be discarded because of this problem. Thirdly, some basic demographic information cannot be determined through observation only such as date of birth, education, occupation, and so forth.

In response to the above limitations, another data gathering tool in which full control can be asserted over variables and variants is required. Therefore, from the pool of data gathering tools, there is the need to one that maintains the balance between a controlled environment and one which offers participants a social context. The equilibrium is

necessary because the effects of “observer’s paradox” are still to be put into consideration and suppressed. Then, the choice is set on “interviews”. The primary reason behind the selection is described by Berg (2001) as he sees that interviews “augment field observation”.

There is an agreement in the literature that an interview is not merely a conversation but one with a purpose (Berg, 2001; Tavakoli, 2013; Bhattacharjee, 2012). It is not because most people are skillful in speaking, they would be too with interviews. In the latter, Tavakoli (2013) insists that interviews are arranged deliberately to collect data, that means nothing should be left to chance. The interview design needs to account for every aspect of the setting, the participants, the time, the topic, the questions, questing maneuvers, recording equipment, and consents. While there is an agreement on the elements to consider in interviews, it is the how that proves to be difficult as there is no unified way of doing interviews. The gap between the theory behind interviews and the actual practice emerges because of the uniqueness of each community. Accordingly, a researcher needs to make certain decisions about the way interviews are to be carried out so as to be successful.

### **3.9.1. Interview Types**

Having determined the participants, the decision to follow is how they are going to be interviewed. According to Feagin (2013), the classical type of an interview is one-to-one conversation that is used by Labov 1972 and 1984; Wolfram and Fasold 1974 (as cited in Feagin 2013). At the early days of the practical part of the current research, this method was tested first with four participants. The attempt failed completely due to several reasons:

- 1- Participants were skeptical about the nature of the conversation and the true intent of the researcher.
- 2- No recording equipment was allowed to be used.
- 3- The flow of the conversation could not be kept because of non- responsive behavior of interviewees no matter how persuaded they were.
- 4- The participants have never done an interview before and it can be safely assumed that most people in El-Menia did not.
- 5- Due to the above reasons, all the four interviews ended abruptly without attaining any valuable results.

These test interviews were intentionally held with relatives. So, if these results are obtained with people who are familiar with the interviewer, one can be sure that the matter would be further complicated with strangers. In reaction to the test, a different approach had to be taken where the previous issues can be avoided. The primary source of the problem in the first attempts was the adaptation of a one-on-one interview. The atmosphere and the seriousness of the conversation had a negative impact on interviewees.

The answer to these challenges was not designed but it was found by chance. One of the first participants offered an invitation to dinner. The customs in El-Menia is that people invite a group of people as often family relatives do come too. In the course of the meal, the topic of the research was brought up and the people accepted it. In fact, even those who have interviewed before were present and there has been a radical change in their behavior. Thus, it has become clear the advantage of the group over individuals when it comes to interviewing.

### **3.9.2. Focus Group Interviewing**

In relation to interviews, the concept of focus groups refers to the involvement of a small group of participants, often about 6 to 10, in a group discussion with the presence of a facilitator who keeps the discussion and topic-oriented towards the research and data to be collected (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 356). Albeit, the first interview was not designed or planned, it bears all the characteristics of a focus group interview. In fact, it was a starting point from which significant decisions have been made in the interviews design.

The history of the emergence of the focus group shows that the method was developed essentially to overcome the limitations of traditional interviewing techniques such as “the artificial nature of standard interview procedures, the influence of an interviewer on a respondent’s comments and the limitations of pre-determined closed questioning on enabling spontaneous responses or identifying new issues” (Hennink , 2007, p. 5). Focus groups were first used in commercial market research in the 1940s; today, the procedure is widely used in sociolinguistic studies.

It is then important to ponder on the question of why interviewing a group is better than an individual. The answer lies in the idea of “social facilitation”. The gist of the theory in psychology is that people exhibit different behavior when they are in a group. The

### Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Conceptual Issues

advocator of the theory Zajonc (1965) sees that the “mere presence” in a group leads to an increasing drive for readiness. In the case of the current research, participants felt more secured when in groups than they were alone. Such feeling helps the interview to establish a personal rapport with interviewees which in turn facilitates the task (Markus, 1978). In table 3.4, Hennink (2007) provides a detailed overview of the strengths and limitations focus group discussions.

Table 3.4. Strengths and Limitations of Focus Group Discussions

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
<p><b>Social setting:</b>  Replicates social interaction  Naturalistic setting  Comfortable and enjoyable</p> <p><b>Application:</b>  Variable structure  Wide range of applications  (exploratory, explanatory, evaluative)  Suitable for stimulus material  Useful in multi-method research</p> <p><b>Group environment:</b>  Large volume of information  Range of views  Limited researcher influence  Participants identify issues  Identify new issues  Spontaneous responses  Considered responses  Issues debated and justified  Seek clarifications  Study group interaction</p>	<p><b>Skills required:</b>  Requires skilled moderator  Less controlled environment  Need ‘permissive environment’  Risk of bias in participant selection</p> <p><b>Group dynamics:</b>  Some participants may dominate  Participants may agree  Little discussion  Influence of social pressure  Hierarchies may develop  Less confidential  Few issues discussed</p> <p><b>Data and analysis:</b>  Responses are not independent  Not suitable for individual data  Not for personal or sensitive topics  Large volume of textual data  Data analysis complex and time consuming  Costly</p>

Retrieved from Hennink, M. M. (2007). *International Focus Group Research: a Handbook for the Health and Social Sciences*. Press. Retrieved from <http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=321438>

The first strength listed in the table is so important for any sociolinguistic study where the aim is to achieve representativeness. Thus, replicating social interaction significantly increases the chance of participants to use the same everyday language. Berg (2001) points that the way meaning is negotiated is different from one-to-one interviews as

he sees that “meanings and answers arising during focus group interviews are socially constructed rather than individually created” (Berg, 2001, p. 115). In other words, the language used in interviews is rather authentic and is a replicate of the language used every day.

While it is evident the advantages of the utilization of focus groups to obtain authentic data, there are still limitations to be considered. The first restraint Berg (2001) lists is “less controlled environment”. Indeed, the problem with the adaptation of this method in this research is the inability to control participants during the interview as some may come and leave. Overcoming this problem requires filling the quota of sample stratification. Thus, the one-to-one conversation will also be used when necessary.

Another complication arises from interviewing women. With Islamic culture in general and the society of El-Menia in particular, being a male researcher, it is rather impossible to do interviews with adult females in general. For sure without female participants, the whole project is deemed to fail. The only solution found is to assign a female assistant for the task. Yet, this decision has also a serious repercussion represented in the possibility that the person assigned will not be able to stir the conversations to yield the information intended.

#### **3.9.3. Contextual Styles in Interviews**

The talk about sociolinguistic interviews has to include Labov’s work and methods as often the adjective “Labovian” is deployed to describe procedures implemented in interviews. However, Labov himself admits that while his work remains so influential in sociolinguistics, it also remains “[ the idea “The isolation of contextual styles” ] of the most misunderstood in terms of what it is all about”. Labov clarifies his standing toward the term and clarifies that “ the adjective “Labovian” is often used to describe a set of interviews that uses several different styles to trace the shift of styles with increasing formality, most typically spontaneous speech, reading, and word lists”. (Labov, 2006, p.58).

In the same regard, Becker, (2013, p.92) sees “The Sociolinguistic Interview is a controlled speech event designed to elicit a wide range of contextual styles from an individual speaker. During analysis, a linguistic variable (or variables) is quantified across these contextual styles to arrive at a range of that speaker’s production”. Labov and Becker



stress the importance of manipulating different styles which in turn would provoke diverse linguistic behaviors. By covering a wide range of speech styles, the interviewer assures the effectiveness of interviews.

Labov lists five contextual styles that a sociolinguistic interview needs to incorporate:

- 1- **Casual Style (A):** a speech style in which the subject uses everyday language with “a little amount of self-monitoring conscious” (Milroy & Gordon, 2008, p.200). For this particular style, Labov further distinguishes between five different substyles that can occur in an interview :
  - a. **Context A<sub>1</sub>:** Speech outside the formal interview.
  - b. **Context A<sub>2</sub>:** Speech with a third person.
  - c. **Context A<sub>3</sub>:** Speech not in direct response to questions.
  - d. **Context A<sub>4</sub>:** Childhood rhymes and customs.
  - e. **Context A<sub>5</sub>:** The danger of death.
- 2- **Careful Speech (B):** More formal speech often used to answer questions in the interview.
- 3- **Reading style (C):** The type of language used when reading.
- 4- **Word lists (D):** another step toward more formal language where the subject is asked to read a list of words.
- 5- **Minimal pair (D’):** This style extends formality in an interview even further.

#### 3.9.4. Interview Questions

The questions listed in the interview start from simple demographic ones where the aim is to collect information such as age, education level, occupation and employment status, income, family and marital status, business, and traveling places. Next questions to cover are related to friends and family. The purpose is to assess the subject social network density. Examples of questions are: how many friends do you have? are they school friends or where did you first meet them? where do you spend your free time usually?

The next range of questions in the interviews is aligned with Labov’s contextual styles framework. Consequently, subjects in the interviews were asked to read verses of the Quran. By asking this from the subject, the interview setting gets more formal and the objective is to see how language changes accordingly. Furthermore, participants were asked

to read a list of words which mostly contain the sound [y]. Along with words lists, the interviewer deliberately introduced words pronounced differently to provoke subjects and see their reaction.

The third series of questions aim is to elicit the subjects 'attitudes towards the language. Unlike the previous questions, focus groups methodology was not suitable for this kind of questions in the interviews conducted. The answers collected were not satisfying as the striking similarity of all answers collected meant two possibilities: that is the only attitude about the dialect or simply the overt behavior is different from the covert one. Since questions on attitudes are of a paramount importance to the research and interviews could not offer sensible answers, the need for another data collection instrument is imperative.

### **3.10. Folk Linguistics: Collecting Data on Attitude**

The failure of the previous data collection instrument does not come as a surprise. The same problem with 'observer's paradox', eliciting overt behavior about language is always problematic (Preston , 1994). In the same regard, Albirini (2016) avows that the study of language attitude is still considered an issue from a methodological point of view. He adds that the difficulty is in selecting the best approach to probe into language attitude. He further states that the question often asked with approaching language attitude is whether it should be tackled "atomistically or holistically". The former tries to isolate attitude as "autonomous construct that stands by itself", often done by investigating individual members of a community. While the latter, the focus shifts to variables such as context, society, speakers, and demography.

In this paper, the two have been used to collect data. The holistic methodology is considered in focus group interviews. The atomistic approach is taken with the current section with a dedicated data collection instrument. In this quest, Preston (2013, p.168) sees the questions that need to be addressed are: 1) what underlying beliefs, presuppositions, stereotypes, and the like lie behind language attitudes? 2) Where do people believe linguistically distinct places are? What mental maps of regional speech areas do they have? Preston acknowledges that the search for answers has to start from folk linguistics. Consequently, seeking non-linguists' belief about language. In relation to the last idea, Preston (1994, p.285) attests that "Folk belief reflects dynamic processes which

allow non-specialists to provide an account of their worlds”. While the questions are clear, divulging answers is rather difficult as proved with interviews as face-to-face interaction with the presence of others simply were hindering factors. The situation leaves the research with the question where and how to ask questions about language attitude. Consequently, seeking a place where participants can share without interference is a must.

### 3.11. Virtual Focus Groups

The concept of virtual focus groups (VFGs) is a relatively new one. Rather than the face-to-face conversation and sitting with participants in focus groups interview, in VFGs “all discussions are undertaken using CMC [ computer-mediated communication] ...”. VFGs bear the same principles with what can be termed “off-line methods of focus groups” with a sole difference which is the existence of all the setting in a virtual world. There is no question, such alteration has repercussion on the original method and outcomes (Murray, 1997, p. 542). Nevertheless, before delving further into the topic, the need to clear the ambiguity between the terms that will be used below is imminent.

In an agreement with Sue and Ritter (2007) , the interlocution about surveys is often and incorrectly associated with questionnaires; comparably, the discussion about online surveys follows the same issue. A survey is an umbrella term that stands for a set of methods for collecting data. It can include a questionnaire, interview, focus group, or observation. subsequently, the terms online survey in the rest of the paper is used to denote a data collection tool in general. (Tavakoli, 2013)

In sociolinguistics, probably the utilization of telephone-based survey constitutes the first attempts to gain access to participants across a wide geographical area using technology. However, the one-to-one medium of the telephone means that it is suitable for one type of interview, one-to-one. On the other hand, computer-mediated communication tools allow for more than one person to participate in a remote or a virtual setting. The advantages online data collection instruments bring to research are rather tremendous. In this respect, Sue and Ritter (2007) list seven benefits of online surveys: low cost, fast, efficient, contingency questions, effectiveness, direct data entry, wide geographic reach.

These advantages of online surveys are evident as their use has exceeded academic reasons to be used almost everywhere. From simple poles found in websites, embedded Facebook surveys, to stand along application such as SurveyMonkey, they all ease data

gathering process (Baron, 2013). Perhaps, the most appealing advantage is that anonymity participants feel they enjoy. The latter is reflected in their honest answers (Bloor, 2001). Particularly to the present research, the use of offline focus groups or face to face interviews was not successful in obtaining answers about participants' attitude towards the dialect of El-Menia. Thus, truthful answers are the solution and the main aim.

### **3.11.1. Facebook Groups**

From its launch in 2004 to the current day, Facebook has been successful in becoming a large social network service with a number of users exceeding 2 billion in 2017 (Statista, 2017). The numbers are no different when it comes to Algeria. Looking at table 3.5, the population of Algeria in 2017 is estimated at 41 million inhabitants 18.5 of them have access to the internet. Most of those who can log into internet use Facebook. Even if one questions the validity of these statistics, the reality clearly comes to stand with these figures as most people are using the internet whether through a computer or a smartphone. With all these figures in mind, it would be rather unwise for any researcher to ignore the tremendous data internet provides in general and Facebook in particular.

AFRICA 2017 POPULATION AND INTERNET USERS STATISTICS FOR 2017						
AFRICA	Population (2017 Est.)	Internet Users 31-Dec-2000	Internet Users 30-June-2017	Penetration (% Population)	Internet Growth % 2000 - 2017	Facebook subscribers 30-Jun-2017
Algeria	41,063,753	50,000	18,580,000	45.2 %	37,060.0 %	18,000,000

Table 3.5: Internet Users Statistics for Algeria. Adapted from Internet World Stats. (2017, December 24). Retrieved from Internet World Stats: Usage and Population statistics: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>

With the matter at hand, a Facebook group can be seen as “a place for group communication and for people to share their common interests and express their opinion. They let people come together around a common cause, issue or activity to organize, express objectives, discuss issues, post photos, and share related content” ( Black , 2017). Every Facebook group is managed by an administrator or administrators who control the

flow of the conversations. The setting inside such groups have resemblances with one of focus group interviews. This justifies the increasing numbers of studies, not only in linguistic matters, using Facebook groups as data source. (Pi , Chou , & Liao , 2013) (Gaysynsky , Romansky-Poulin , & Arpadi, 2015) (O'Bannon , Beard , & Britt, 2013) (Wang, Q., Woo, H. L., Quek, C. L., Yang, Y., & Liu, M. , 2012).

### 3.11.2. Procedures

For the virtual focus groups interviews, two Facebook groups were selected. For anonymity reasons, the names of the groups will not be exposed in this paper. One includes more than 65000 participants on the day this number was retrieved (26/12/2017), the other one 27800. It should be noted however that the numbers retrieved show Facebook users who have joined the groups but not who are active. Anyone familiar with Facebook would realize that these groups transcend simple online participants but they constitute virtual communities that are as complex as real ones. “Virtual communities are looked at as social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationship in cyberspace; community is based in ongoing communication” (Woods & Smith 2001 as cited in Seungyeon & Janette , 2006 , p.30).

As real communities, virtual ones are built by the experience people share, support, compassion, maintenance of trust. In fact, a high level of emotional understanding and support characterize these kinds of communities (Ulrike , 2010, p. 122). Hence, even approaching such communities need to be done with the same amount of caution. It is not because the interaction is mostly limited to writing that people will not exhibit the same kind of reaction they would in the real world. In fact, people on Facebook can be more suspicious of outsiders asking questions and initiating debate. The solution to get over such problem was by asking administrators in the Facebook groups to post the questions. Being familiar users, participants feel more secured and interact better with the posts.

Albeit the questions asked are the same as suggested by Preston (2013, p.168) , the method of questioning is different. Instead of posing a direct question to the group participants, a more provocative way of asking was selected. For example, instead of asking whether male and female speak similarly or differently, the question was put this way: “I want to understand something? Why some girls in El-Menia tend to change their dialect”.

As shown in picture 3.1 , the question is posed in a language which is not entirely MSA but some dialectal vocabulary used to avoid formality.



Translation: “I want to understand something? why some girls in El-Menia change their way of speaking”

Picture 3.1. An Example of Questions Posted by Facebook Group Administrators

### 3.11.3. Rationale

The rationale behind adapting this approach goes to the result of the pilot research. The first test done with Facebook groups involved administrating formal questionnaire with 14 questions using Google Doc. The document was not accepted and often generated negative feelings revealed through replies of users in the groups. The primary reason behind the lack of interest towards the questionnaire in the pilot research is the level of formality Google Doc shows. Second, some users noted that they could not open the questionnaire file in their smartphone; thus, a compatibility issue.

Beside technical issue amended by the adaptation of such approach and in agreement with Dörnyei (2003, p.14), several issues that plague the use of long questionnaires were avoided such as:

- 1- Simplicity and superficiality of answers
- 2- Unreliable and unmotivated respondents
- 3- Respondent literacy problems.
- 4- Social desirability (or prestige) bias
- 5- Self-deception
- 6- Acquiescence bias
- 7- Halo effect.
- 8- Fatigue effects

**3.11.4. Drawbacks**

The decision to go with an online survey also is not without limitations. The inability to collect accurate bibliographical data constitutes a major problem. While anonymity is the reason for the online survey success to retrieve attitude-related data, it is also what prevents the researcher from getting basic information such as gender, age, and place of birth. Although this information can be found in Facebook profiles of the users, they can be hidden due to privacy settings or can be fake. To deal with the difficulty, help was required from group administrators. Because of their knowledge of some of the users, they were able to identify the one from El-Menia and even provide some basic bibliographical information.

In another way to get the true identity of participants, when a user enters an interesting comment or found active in the conversation, they were contacted through a private message. However, not all response where to the research liking, some did not reply, others refused to share personal details. Table 3.6 shows population participated in the VFGs, specifying those who have confirmed their identity and those who did not.

Age	Male			Female		
	Confirmed	Unconfirmed	Total	Confirmed	Unconfirmed	Total
6-14	1	0	1	3	3	6
15-25	12	2	14	1	11	12
26-40	6	2	8	3	8	14
41-60	3	0	3	4	1	5
60-75	1	0	1	0	0	0
75 and older	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>

Table 3.6 : Participants in Virtual Focus Groups ( Facebook Groups )

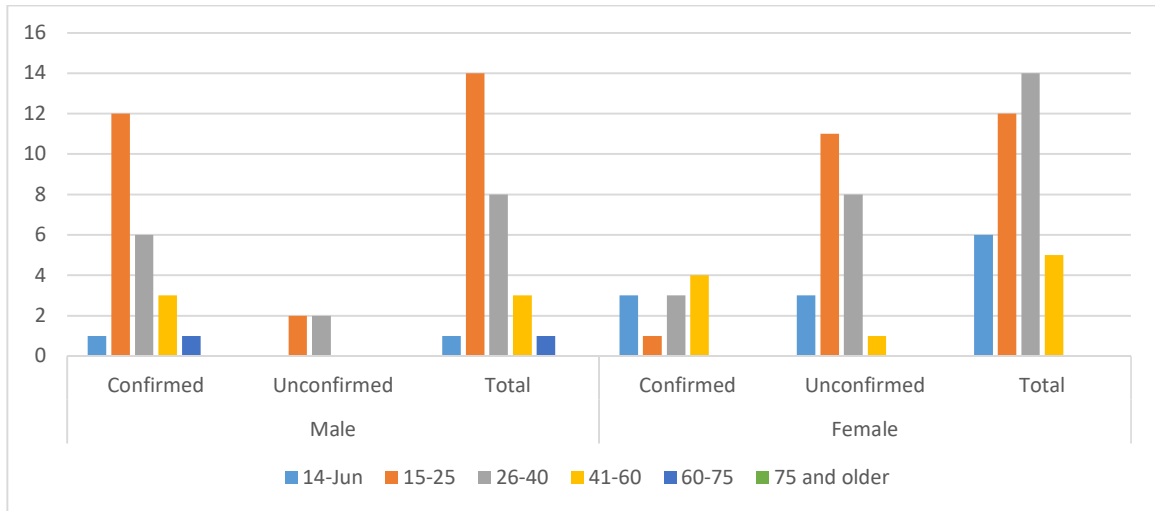


Figure 3.3. Comparison between Participants in the Facebook Groups Survey

Displaying information in chart 3.3 shows the inconsistency in the users who participated in the VFGs. The total of male participants is 27 while females take the lead with 34. Still, the picture is reversed when it comes to identities. Most confirmed participants are males with 23 against 11 from females. Nevertheless, in the survey, no participant was excluded from the survey as each has contributed to the discussion in the groups. However, each participant was tagged whether confirmed or not.

### 3.12. Data Analysis Software and Procedures

The main software used to analyze data is IBM SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Both tools are used to apply statistical operations on data and render graphs. Furthermore, given the complexity and interconnectedness of handling the data collected as well as the need for a relational database necessitate a dedicated application for data analysis. The latter is utilized for modeling linguistic variation. However, the absence of more sociolinguistic-oriented software tools such as VARBRUL can be regarded as a limitation in data analysis. Admittedly, being specifically tailored for sociolinguistics means that the software carries tremendous advantages. ( Bayley, 2013)

Yet, the limitations VARBRUL suffers from are the reasons being not deployed in the data analysis of this research. Most problems are technical ones as the program is old as the Dos version dates to 1988. The recent windows version was released in 2001, however, with the poor support and compatibility with new operations systems, it is rather



impossible to implement. On the contrary, the popularity of SPSS to conduct analysis in social sciences as well as the availability of documentation and support makes it a prime tool in this work.

### 3.13. Ethical Considerations

Most of the data gathered comes from everyday language and vernacular speech containing a range of information that can expose sensitive matters, endanger participants, or the least result in awkward situations. Thus, careful decisions also have to be made to ensure participants anonymity and ensuring easiness with the study. Achieving such an aim requires a code of ethics to be set and followed. In agreement with Ammon et al (2004), a sociolinguistic research does not go without some moral questions and dilemmas facing researchers. Some countries leave nothing for chance and enforce strict laws regarding confidentiality and research procedures while other have loose laws (Tagliamonte ,2006). The current research adheres to the more general guidelines that guarantee the protection of participants and in the same allows the continuity of the work.

Although there are broad guidelines for ethics that can be applied to most research, the deployment of three data gathering tools (Observation, Focus groups interviews, virtual focus groups ) means also three different set of ethical considerations. First, being done anonymously, no consent is required to be delivered. Yet, the issue is profound when it comes to getting data. Recording people in public places inconspicuously is rather a condemned practice by most linguists. For this conduct, the term “surreptitious recording” is often applied (Meyerhoff, 2007, p. 39). Like many countries, recording people without permission is considered a felony punishable by jail and fines in Algeria (according to article 303 repeated of Algerian Law). Subsequently, note-taking was the only tools utilized to keep a record of the data in the observation phase.

Some places included in the observation where not public and official clearance was an obligation such as schools and hospitals. For the former, several letters were sent to allow the investigation inside schools, unfortunately, none were accepted. As for hospitals, officials allowed sitting in public places as the waiting rooms with the promise to not to initialize any conversations with patients. In the markets, some sellers were more tolerant and offered to help with the study and allowed to be recorded. Still, they refused to sign

any written consent, offering only verbal ones also with the promise that their speech will not be shared in any kind of social media websites.

As far as focus group interviews are concerned, both written consents and verbal ones were granted to the researcher. All participants were aware of the nature of the work and the main objectives. Subjects were assured about their anonymity along all the procedures of the research from data recording, analysis, and publishing. To realize this aim, all names were encoded with letters and numbers that hint the data gathering tools used, age, and gender. Thus, disassociating names from the actual recording would certainly minimize any potential risk. The same process was repeated with interviews with females.

Nevertheless, with female focus group interviews, there was a different arrangement. No written consents were granted and verbal ones were with the condition that data must be used only for the research and it should be disposed of. Given the sensitivity of the nature of the conversation of the female interviews, extra caution was exercised in the protection of audio recording. Although not all subjects impose such condition, the researcher deems the preservation of audio logs of the interviews harmful if they fall in wrong hands. Thus, only raw statistical data table will be preserved and all records of names and places will be deleted.

Finally, virtual focus groups interviews require a different set of ethical guidelines. First, participants simply answered questioned posted by administrators without any awareness of the study. This can be made legal as any person sharing content on Facebook must adhere to the Facebook privacy policy. That means that the researcher is relieved of most of the responsibility related to the security of data. The Facebook groups used are publicly open and anyone can join so is the type of content shared in them. Context extracted from Facebook will be stripped from names and details that can help in identifying a person. Concerning deleting information, the researcher has no way to delete anything posted by others on Facebook. Therefore, it is up to participants to do so.

### **3.14. Conclusion**

Dealing with methodology, the third chapter consists mainly of decisions on how to conduct a sociolinguistic fieldwork to investigate language change and variation in El-Menia. The choices made a balance between tried-and-tested methods utilized in similar studies and ones that need to be adapted specifically to the nature of the society in question.

Hence, the chapter swings between a literature review and pure practical consideration tailored specifically for the current research. Furthermore, it offers a detailed description of procedures taken as well as the rationale behind each choice.

The first choice made in this chapter is concerning the approach adapted to collect data. It has been established that variationist sociolinguistics is primarily driven by the quantitative paradigm, yet, excluding the qualitative one is rather impossible as in most social sciences there is a need for qualitative interpretation of finding. Furthermore, data gathering tools selected swings between purely quantitative to qualitative which mandates the adaptation of both. Moreover, the quest to answer the question of whether the language in question is changing or not mandates splitting the who research into two phases: analyzing variables and later compare them to arrive at the conclusion.

The second decision is related to the research design to collect data. For the latter, three data collection tools are deployed for this task. First, anonymous observation is set to enter the community and provide a broad picture of the social structure and salient linguistic variables in the dialect of El-Menia. Most importantly, it is through this phase that decisions that have repercussions for the other data gathering tools are to be made such as helping in determining the sample boundary, sampling techniques, and sample size and participants. As far as the process, family structure is considered an important element in selecting participants with the aim to involve 180 subjects in the interviews. To achieve this number, purposeful sampling techniques were used, mainly opportunistic sampling and snowball sampling.

While observation provides rich data about everyday language, the absence of recording equipment and the inability to gain access to all social categories are major problems. On the contrary, focus groups interviews provide a context where participants engage in discussions with little influence from the interviewer. The adaptation of Labov's notion of contextual styles means that the interviewer is also able to stir the conversation to maximize the occurrence of variables. Focus group interviews in the practical research are the main source of quantitative data. While the presence of group discussion helps in stimulating real-life conversation, it is also a hindering factor when it comes to expressing an overt attitude. Therefore, the call for another data gathering tool was necessary.

### **Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Conceptual Issues**

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The next tool makes use of the massive online world and the number of Facebook users. The nature of Facebook settings and the safety users feel are determining factors helping to elicit answers about people's attitude towards the dialect. Additionally, relying on the internet and Facebook proves to be effective, simple, cost-effective, and efficient. Regarding ethics, Facebook user agreement also makes the matter less complicated about data recording and users protection. However, the method also suffers from limitations because it is technology which some might not have access to and others simply do not use it.

Overall, the current chapter aimed at providing answers to the how and why. The objective is to increase the external validity of the inquiry. The methodology must adhere to the principle of "transferability". That means providing a thick description of the involved elements in the research by offering a detailed, accurate and adequate account of the research background, context, variables, and issues. The minute specifics dealt with in the methodology design also ensure the success of the practical part as once interviews started, it is almost impossible to revert and change the design.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## The Findings

### 4.1. Introduction

There is no denying that the entire research is arranged to achieve the answer to one question of whether the dialect of El-Menia is changing or not. Yet, arriving at an answer that stands on a logical ground entails tending to a few inquiries. Because there is simply no direct approach to investigate language change, resorting to a thorough investigation of language variation is unavoidable. Consequently, formulating an answer to the matter necessitates providing a profile of the variables in questions to study people's linguistic behavior and to see whether there is a change or not and more importantly how and why. Such undertaking calls, as expressed in the previous chapter, for the adjustment of techniques from variationist sociolinguistics to suit the present research.

Minding the methodology devised in the previous chapter, the aim of the current one is to report and highlight major findings of the field research. The latter comes from three data gathering tools: anonymous observation and focus group interviews. Thus, the focus will be mainly on quantifiable data excluding results from the virtual focus group which will be revealed and discussed in the next part of the paper. As far as quantitative analysis is concerned in this section, four variables are measured: the substitution of the sound [ɣ], code-switching, the use of pragmatic marker "wa", and the use of diminutives. The sociological factors taken into consideration are age, gender, and locations for the anonymous observation phase. For interviews, age, gender, practice, and family affiliation are assessed.

With four factors and moderately numerous variables, the issue of how to consolidate them in information investigation techniques emerges. The possibility to shape distinctive combinations from these variables implies that each way of grouping may offer an alternate picture. Consequently, the factorial design is chosen as the best choice to cover distinctive choices in planning graphs and tables. Obviously, given the number of components included alone, adopting such an approach brings about a lot of information for this paper. Subsequently, there is the necessity of being selective in data processing. Although we are aware that any decision to exclude or include certain ways of calculating data can lead to biased results, the limited length of this paper is the primary reason behind such a move.

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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As a major aspect of the exploration plan, the initial two stages in information collection are intended to supplement each other. Be that as it may, the utilization of triangulation in the research design puts on a proviso in the section which is displayed in the repetition of information as both data collection phases offer details about, for the most part, similar variables and factors. Without a doubt, such reiteration undermines to overload the paper with numbers and measurements. All things considered, an excess of data is one of the attributes of triangulation (Taber, 2018). In this manner, it is essential to give an itemized investigation of both to land at precise correlation which thusly helps to yield in-depth discussion in the next chapter

### 4.2. Anonymous Observation

The first step in the observation phase is to have a deep look into the linguistic behavior of the people of El-Menia. The latter means getting involved in their daily activities. Surely, it is rather impossible to follow people into their homes but one can in public places. The same idea persists in Labov's contextual styles in interviews, the diversity of places visited is meant to ensure covering different contexts which in turn increases the likelihood of more variation. The primary criterion considered in grouping places in the observation is the formality of the context as places were divided into formal and informal. Apart from the degree of formality, each place has characteristics that set it apart, for example, people involved, topics raised, and the function. These characteristics are the criteria that define how people behave in a place. Certainly, these norms are reflected in language. Consequently, settings will be dealt with separately highlighting important findings.

Places		Frequency	Ratio %
1	Coffee Shops	56	31.6
2	Markets	24	13.6
3	The Grocery Shop	30	16.9
4	The Town Hall	48	27.1
5	Mosques	19	10.7
Total		177	100.0

Table 4.1. Distribution of Sample and Places in the Observation Phase

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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As indicated in table 4.1, the total number of people observed in this phase is 177 which are distributed unequally throughout the five places. Due to the characteristic of each place, controlling the sample is nearly impossible. For instance, given the culture of people of EL-Menia, one simply does not expect to find a female at a coffee shop. As for the mosque, notes were taken during lessons between the prayers of Al-maghrib and Al-'isha, a time when females do not attend mosques. In this regard, tables 4.2 to 4.6 show the detailed sample distribution of five places covered in the observation phase.

Age	0-14	15 – 20	21 – 35	35 – 50	51 – 65	65 >	Total
Male	3	1	5	2	3	2	16
Female	0	2	0	3	1	2	8
							24

Table 4.2. Sample Distribution for People Observed at Markets

Age	0-14	15 – 20	21 – 35	35 – 50	51 – 65	65 >	Total
Male	3	3	3	3	2	2	16
Female	3	3	3	3	2	0	14
							30

Table 4.3. Sample Distribution for People Observed at The Grocery Shop

Age	0-14	15 – 20	21 – 35	35 – 50	51 – 65	65 >	Total
Male	0	0	8	8	8	0	24
Female	0	0	8	8	8	0	24
							48

Table 4.4. Sample Distribution for People Observed at the Townhall

Age	0-14	15 – 20	21 – 35	35 – 50	51 – 65	65 >	Total
Male	0	0	4	5	8	2	19

Table 4.5. Sample Distribution for People Observed at Mosques



## Chapter Four: The Findings

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Age	0-14	15 – 20	21 – 35	35 – 50	51 – 65	65 >	Total
Male	1	7	17	11	11	9	56

Table 4.6. Sample Distribution for People Observed at Coffee shops

As far as the sample distribution in regard to gender, the end result is that 46 females have been observed versus 131 males; thus, male constitutes 74 % of the sample as indicated in table 4.7. Furthermore, the evenness in the overall sample is not only confined to gender as also some age groups were missing from some places. For instances, in coffee shops, for children aged from 0 – 14, only one was recorded. At mosques, cells in age groups of 0-14 and 15-20 were left with value 0. Contrary to the places mentioned and because of a sufficient number of people at the town hall, it was possible to normalize the sample.

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	46	26.0
Male	131	74.0
Total	177	100.0

Table 4.7. Sample Distribution by Gender

In the observations, the focus will be on the four linguistic variables: the substitution of the [ɣ] for [q], code-switching, the use of the pragmatic “wa”, and the use of reduction or diminutives. The analysis of every variable is done through four factors: the setting (formal or informal), the place (coffee shops, markets, the grocery shop, the town hall, mosques), gender (male or female), and age. Thus, putting any of these factors against each other promises yielding a different angle of looking at variation and for sure more data. (For a detailed overview of participants and results see appendix 1)

### 4.2.1. The Substitution of [ɣ] for [q] (Anonymous Observation)

Since it is a rather salient linguistic behavior in the dialect of EL-Menia, it would be the starting point of our investigation. Indeed, it was confirmed that in all the places visited the people of El-Menia substitute the sound [ɣ] for [q]. Standing as an evidence, table 4.8 shows that the mean values of the substitution of [ɣ] for [q] did not dip below 75% in all the places visited, recording the lowest average in markets with 77.08 % and the maximum score of 100 % at mosques.

Places	Gender	The Substitution	Standard Deviation
Coffee Shops	Female	.	.
	Male	90.86	19.42
	Total	90.86	19.42
Markets	Female	50.00	46.29
	Male	90.63	27.20
	Total	77.08	38.95
The Grocery Shop	Female	86.00	29.41
	Male	97.19	8.16
	Total	91.97	21.31
The Town Hall	Female	75.54	35.92
	Male	84.00	31.42
	Total	79.77	33.66
Mosques	Female		
	Male	100.00	.00
	Total	100.00	.00

Table 4.8. The Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] for [q] by Places

The substitution of the sound in the dialect of El-Menia touches almost every word that contains the sound [ɣ]. During observation and as indicated in table 4.9, 31 words in which the sound [ɣ] was altered to [q] were registered. The vocabulary in which the sound change occurs is not only dialect-specific as also words from Modern Standard Arabic are included. For example “يغسل” which means “he washes” in Modern Standard Arabic is pronounced /jaysal/, in El-Menia dialect with the standard form with [ɣ] or with voiceless uvular stop [q] /jaqsal/. Furthermore, the expression “راني غادي” / rani ɣadi / “I am going”

## Chapter Four: The Findings

is not typically used in the dialect and it was only heard twice during the whole time of the research. Yet, it is not the rareness of the occurrence that is peculiar but that it was uttered with [q] instead of [ɣ].

Words	Transcription	Meaning	Words	Transcription	Meaning
مشغول	[mafɔpl]	Busy	غشاش	[qa'ʃʃaʃ]	A Cheater
تغلط	[tɔqlɔt]	Make a mistake	غافل	[qa:fel]	Unaware
تتغاشا	[tatqaʃa]	To faint	غداء	[q'dæ]	Lunch
تعضب	[taqdab]	To get angry	غسل	['qsel]	Washed
غزال	[qzæ]	A gazelle	غطاء	[qʔɑ]	Cover
غريال	[qərbæ]	Sieve	غمس	[qames]	To dip
يغلي	[jɪqlɪ]	To boil	غفر	[qfar]	Forgave
غدوا	[qɔdwa]	Tomorrow	يلدغ	[yaldaq]	sing
غنية	[qɔnɪa]	A song	يددغ	[jdæqdæq]	To tickle
بيغي	[jabqi]	To like	يفرغ	[jfæræq]	To empty
غبرة	[qabra]	Dust	مغرب	[mæqræb]	Maghreb (time)
غلاف	[qʔɑ]	Cover	غليظ	[qlid]	Thick
غرداية	[qardaja]	Proper noun (a city)	صبغة	[sebqa]	paint
غيمة	[qajmə]	Cloud	صغار	[sqær]	young
غالي	[qæli]	Expensive	غار	[qar]	A hole or a cave

Table 4.9. Words Registered with the Sound [ɣ] Substituted for [q]

4.2.1.1. Statistical Analysis of the Substitution of [ɣ]

Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Range	Minimum	Maximum
87.15	100	27.35	100	0	100

Table 4.10. Statistical Overview of the Substitution of the [ɣ]

It has been mentioned in the second chapter that the replacement of [ɣ] for [q] in the dialect of El-Menia is a salient linguistic behavior. Indeed, both table 4.10 and figure 4.1 attest to such a claim. Looking at the arithmetic average of the occurrence of the variables shows that 87 % of the people observed used the sound [q] instead of [ɣ]. The mean is still susceptible to outliers, thus, considering the median is necessary. The latter indicates that 50 % of the variation is at 100 %. Still, the range or the difference between the high and low scores designates that there are 10 speakers who have abandoned the sound [q] for the standard [ɣ]. On the contrary, 132 speakers use the [q] variant.

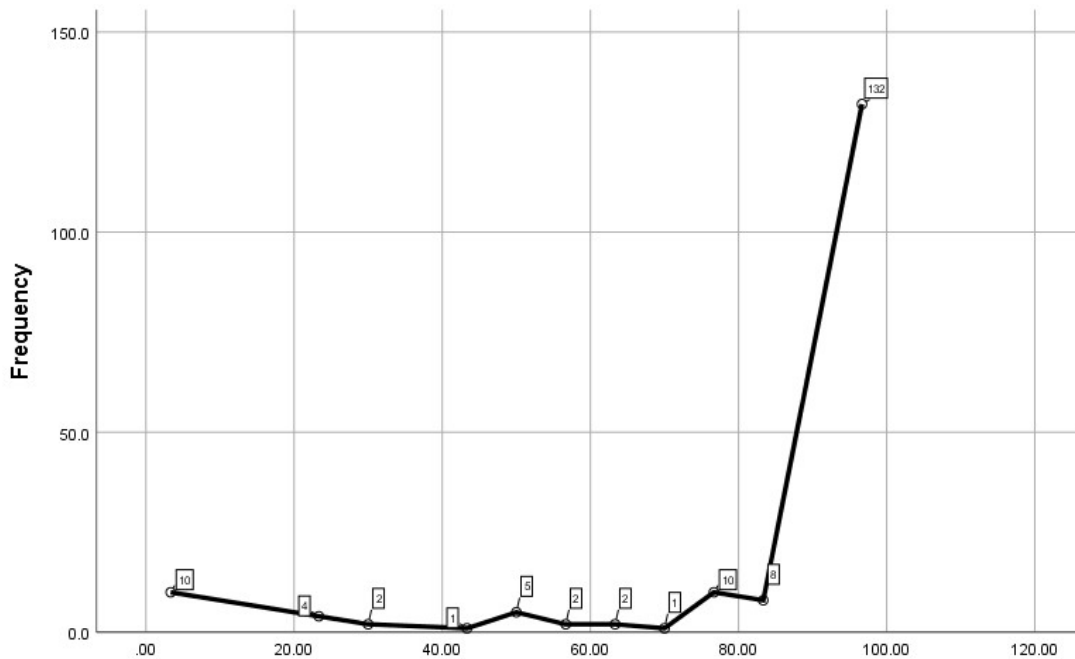


Figure 4.1. The Frequency of the Substitution of the [ɣ] for [q]

#### 4.2.1.2. The Gender Factor

Taking gender as a factor to explore the replacement of the [ɣ], the graph indicates that the use of the variant [q] is not bound to a particular gender group as its utilization is apparent in both males and females. As far as the rate of recurrence, it is shown that females have used the standard form [ɣ] more than males. The mean score of the use of the variable for females is 74% and 91 % for males. As indicated in graph 4.2, whether for males or females, the range is identical as both the same maximum and minimum scores can be found. However, the frequency in the two extreme points is different as it is clear that in 0 % substitution, females take the lead. On the other hand, males have more 100 % substitution rates.

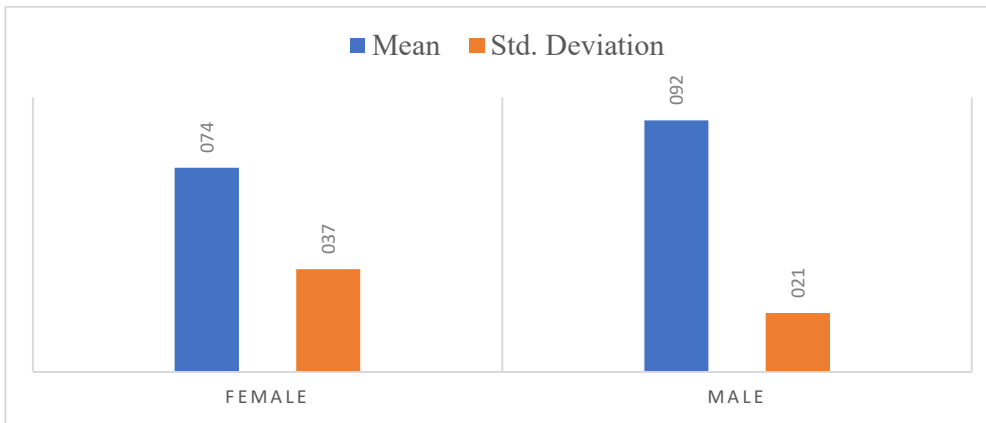


Figure 4.2. The Mean and the Standard Deviation of Males and Females for the Substitution

Whether the range or the mean, they only represent part of the scores obtained. It is the standard deviation that delivers a look at all numbers and how they vary. Looking again at the graph, the standard deviation for females is 37.30 and 21.27 for males. The difference is more than 57 %, therefore, in regard to the substitution of [ɣ], the occurrence of the variant [q] is consistent in males more than females. Even with the fact that the sample is not distributed evenly in terms of gender, the internal variation is not affected greatly by this.

#### 4.2.1.3. The Age Factor

Looking at the statistical report on the correlation between the substitution in the dialect of El-Menia and the criterion of age shows that the use of the variant [q] is spread throughout all the age groups observed. The scores of the mean, the range and the median

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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in all ages are high reinforcing the conclusion that the substitution is a prevalent linguistic behavior. The minimum mean score recorded is 79.51 while the maximum is 100 recorded with people aged more than 65. Indeed, out 17 elderly persons observed and all of them used the variant [q].

Age	Mean	N	Std. Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Median
0-14	87,50	10,00	31,73	0,00	100,00	100,00	100,00
15-20	85,94	16,00	26,97	0,00	100,00	100,00	100,00
20-35	81,51	48,00	29,22	0,00	100,00	100,00	100,00
35-50	79,51	43,00	34,69	0,00	100,00	100,00	100,00
50-65	96,40	43,00	15,82	0,00	100,00	100,00	100,00
65 >	100,00	17,00	0,00	100,00	100,00	0,00	100,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>87,15</b>	<b>177,00</b>	<b>27,36</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Table 4.11. The Correlation Between the Substitution in the Dialect of El-Menia and the Criterion of Age

The thought of age as a feature in language variation also entails the talk about change in apparent time. Contrary to diachronic investigations of language change which require filling the horizontal axis with dates, apparent-time based studies use people. Consequently, the data in table 4.4 need to be represented in a histogram with the percentage of the substitution of [ɣ] in the vertical axis and the six age groups in the horizontal one. The aim behind the graphic representation is the to look for what is referred to as the S-curve. In figure 4.3, the numbers show fluctuation that is fairly noticeable in age groups 20-35 and 35-50. In these two groups, the percentage of use of the variant [q] is decreased to a mean of 79,51%.

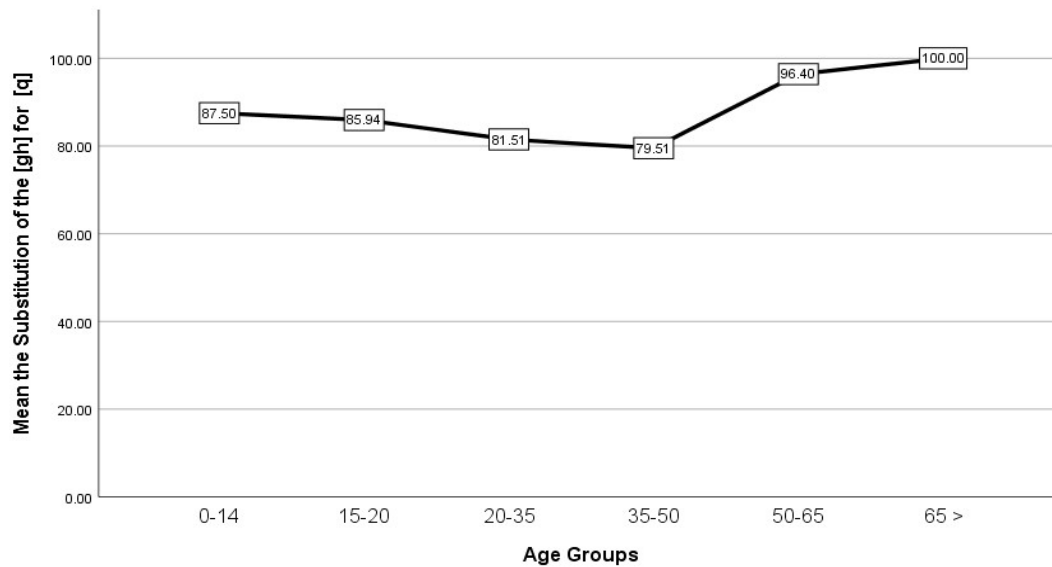


Figure 4.3. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of the [ɣ] by Age Groups

Furthermore, both the starting and ending points are of paramount importance in apparent-time studies. In this regard, the difference between the final and initial state needs to be considered. In the case of observation, people aged more than 65 do completely abandon the standard [ɣ] for the variant [q]. On the other hand, a mean of 87.50 % was recorded with the youngest generation. In the previous point concerning the influence of gender on the change to the sound [q], it has been noticed that the standard deviation of the use of the variant is high with female speakers than males. Therefore, it makes sense to split the data presented by applying the filter of gender to come to more perceptive insight concerning the relationship between the change in the substitution of the [ɣ] and gender.

Figure 4.4 divulges an exhaustive description of the use of the variant [q] by both genders. The orange line in the figure indicates the mean substitution of the [ɣ] in correlation with male speakers only. The fluctuation male speakers exhibit results in a line that looks most like the one found in the previous figure. The initial number retrieved from the age group of 0-14 is 85.72. Relatively similar mean values recorded in all age groups. Consequently, the orange line is a relatively flat line.

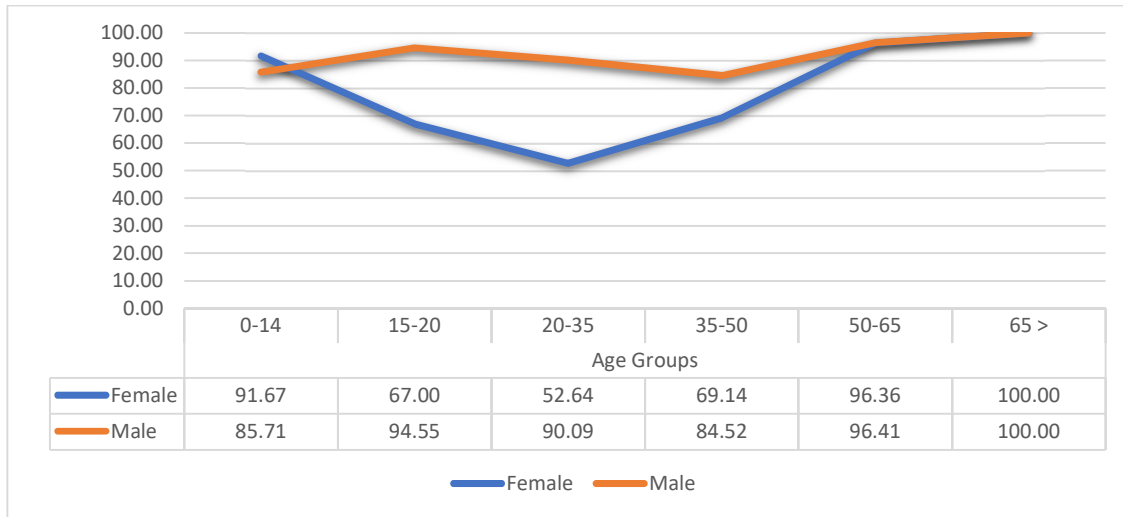


Figure 4.4. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of the [y] by Both Genders

Changing the filter in the histogram to incorporate only female speakers, the blue line divulges an entirely diverse picture. With females, a high mean number is recorded at 97.67 % and, again, a mean of 100 with elders. The distinction between the male and the female speakers is recognizably clear with a plunging to 52.64 mean with the people aged between 20-35. More precisely, starting from the second age group the line plunges clearly taking the shape of the S-curve. It is clear that both lines share similar points at age group 0-14, 50-60 and with speakers aged more than 65.

Due to the importance of the age criterion in answering research questions concerning language change, the next figure displays the connection between the substitution to the sound [q], age groups, and places where the sound change occurs. Thus, figure 4.5 contains five lines each represent a simple mean value of the substitution of the [y]. The yellow line indicates the sound fluctuation recorded at mosques. In the latter, the standard [y] was not registered therefore the line is flat. At coffee shops, the blue line shows a bit of a curve at age groups 20-35 and 35-50. However, such dip does not go beyond a mean value of 80. At the grocery shop, the line goes down to about 70 with the age group of 20-35. The red line showing the substitution at the market displays inconsistent result as the lowest scores were recorded with age groups 15-20 and 35-50.



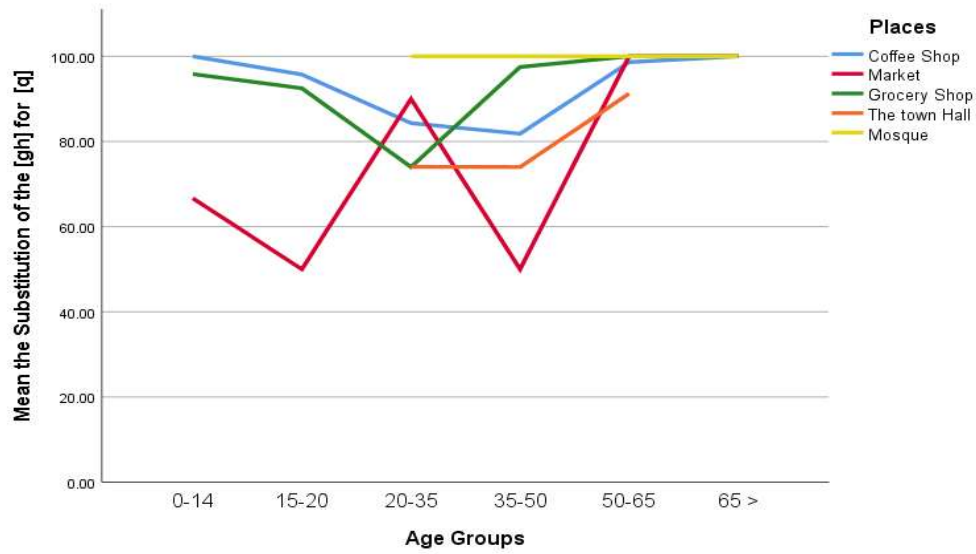


Figure 4.5. Multiple Simple Lines of Mean Values of the Substitution of the [ɣ] by Places

## 4.2.2. Code Switching

The next variable under investigation is related to code-switching. El-Menia dialect as many other ones in Algeria is featured by French/ Arabic code-switching. In this section of the research, the interest is analyzing code-switching in the dialect of Arabic by counting the occurrence of alteration between the latter during conversations. There was no attempt to record the type of code-switching and at what level it did occur. Therefore, whether the speaker observed mentions even a number in French, it will be counted. The results retrieved were analyzed with considerations of gender, age, and place recorded.

### 4.2.2.1. Variation by Places

Scores recorded in table 4.12 are the reason that vindicated the inclusion of code-switching as a sociolinguistic variable in the current study. The upper score noted was in coffee shops with a mean of 16.32 and variation of 15.26. The numbers get significantly low in other places varying from 1.67 in markets, 2.23 in the grocery shop, and 4.79 in the town hall. Such numbers can be explained by the fact that time spent in coffee shops is longer. The use of code-switching at mosques was not logged obtaining a mean of 0.

Places	Mean	Standard Deviation
Coffee Shops	16.32	15.26
Markets	1.67	3.20
The grocery shops	2.23	3.68
The Town Hall	4.79	4.92
Mosques	.00	.00

Table 4.12. The Mean and Standard Deviation Values of Code-Switching by Places

#### 4.2.2.2. Variation by Gender

In spite of the unevenness that plagues the sample regarding gender distribution, taking the variation between genders as a variable remains important. The below figure shows that both males and females include in their speech the French language. However, figure 4.6 demonstrates that male speakers code-switched more than females, taking the lead with a mean score of 8.05 which is double the value obtained with females. On the contrary, females show more consistency in the use of code-switching with a standard deviation of 5.17 then males which 12.49 was recorded, almost three times more than the one recorded with females.

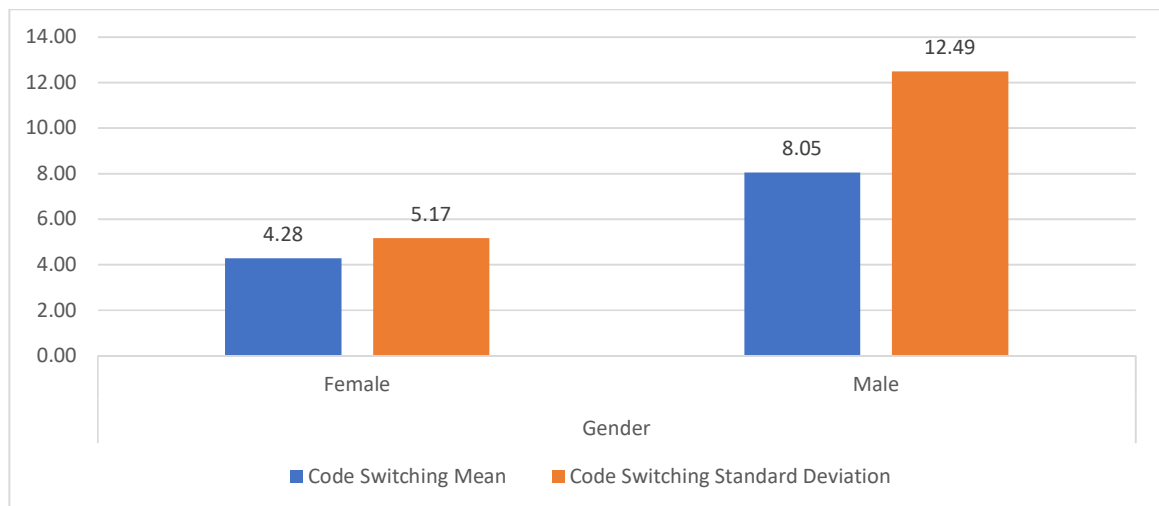


Figure 4.6. The Mean and the Standard Deviation of Males and Females for Code-Switching

Carrying on the same idea of the association between gender and code-switching, the next figure advances the influence of the degree of formality as a criterion. As a result, figure 4.7 demonstrates two opposing outcomes. Starting by informal context, male speakers, indicated with a red line, take the lead in the chart with a mean of 10.91, females with 2.71. Females on the other hand, in the blue line, take a different direction in regard to the inclusion of French in the dialect as in formal context show high usage of code-switching than males, recording mean values of 5.67 and 2.17 for females and males respectively.

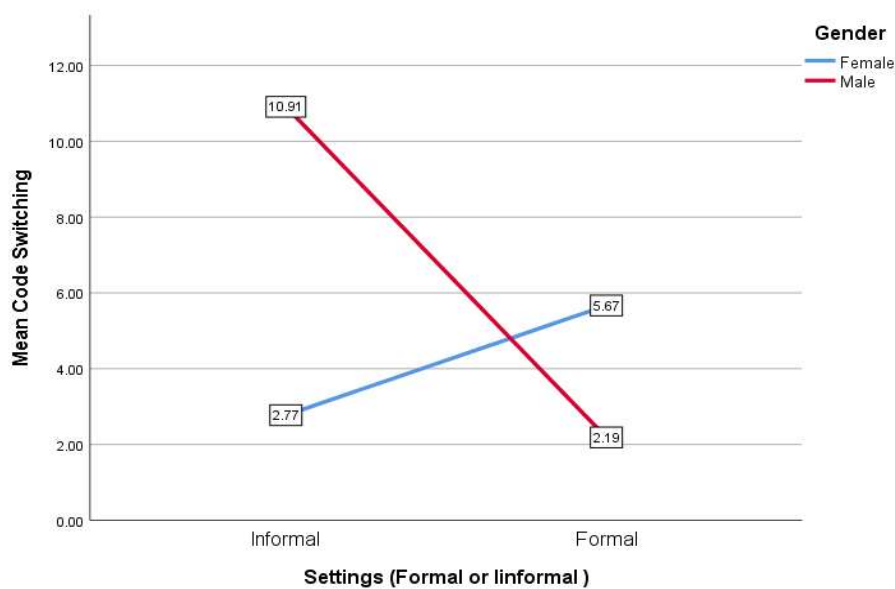


Figure 4.7. The Correlation Between Code-Switching and the Degree of Formality

### 4.2.2.3. Age and Code-Switching

As far as the relationship between as age and code-switching is concerned, figure 4.8 discloses the relationship between age groups and the number of times speakers code-switched. The values given here are the mean values. Starting from the younger age group, the score number of instances of code-switching is 0. The numbers rise steadily with people aged 14 – 36. Although similar high numbers are also recorded with age groups of 36-50

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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and 51-65, the line takes a decreasing direction reaching to a mean value of 2 with elders of 65 and more.

Figure 4.9 reveals more detailed information about the pattern of use of code-switching by males and females by splitting the line in figure 4.8. The two lines in figure 4.9 presenting males and females' code-switching exhibit similar curves. The same increase can be noticed in the use of code-switching between age groups of 0-14 and 21-35. Similarly, the decrease starts from the age group of 36-50. For the starting and the ending points, for the former, a mean value of 0 is recorded with both genders in the younger age group. With elderly speakers, females did not code-switch while males used French in their speech.

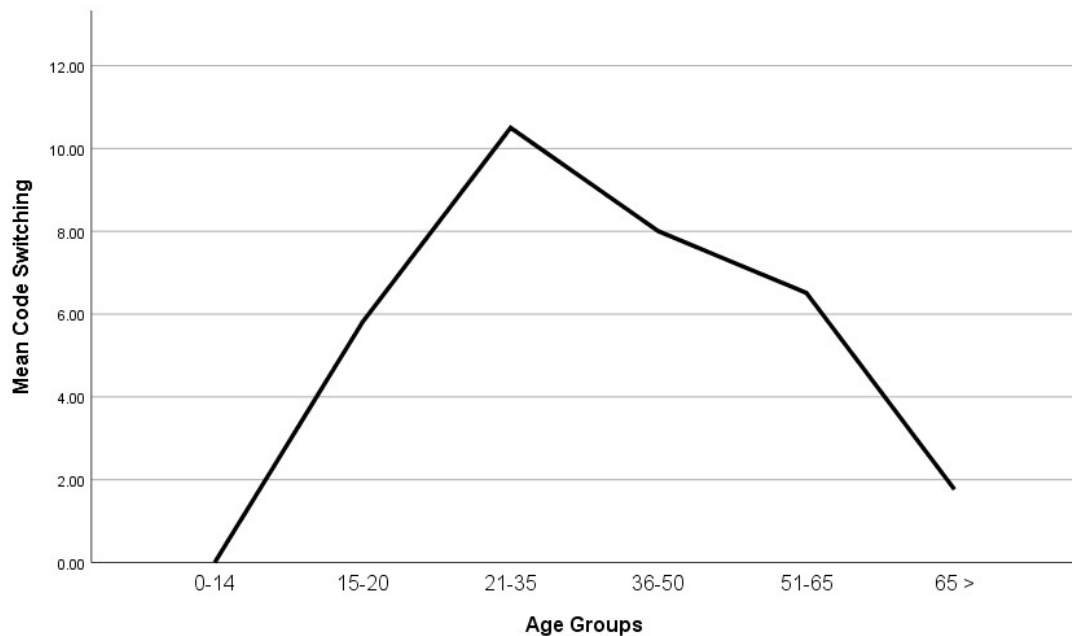


Figure 4.8. The Simple Line of Mean Value of Code-Switching by Age Groups

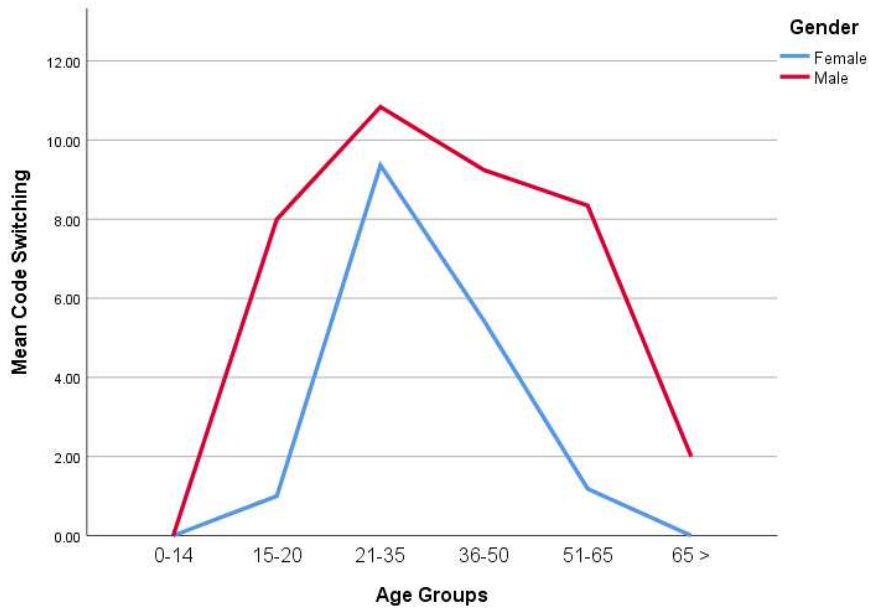


Figure 4.9. The Simple Line of Mean Value of Code-Switching by Age Groups

### 4.2.3. The Pragmatic Marker “Wa”

<b>Count</b>	177
<b>Mean</b>	0.46
<b>Median</b>	0
<b>Mode</b>	.000
<b>Std. Deviation</b>	0.96
<b>Variance</b>	0.93
<b>Range</b>	5
<b>Minimum</b>	0
<b>Maximum</b>	5
<b>Sum</b>	83

Table 4.13. Statistical Analysis of the Frequency of the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa”

Unlike the substitution of the sound [ɣ] and code-switching, the numbers with the use of pragmatic marker “wa” are low. The mean value of the usage is 0.46 with both median and mode at 0 indicating that many speakers did not use the marker. In fact, looking

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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more closely at the raw data obtained shows that out of 177 speakers observed only 47 used the marker (Table 4.13). Again, the next step in the investigation is looking at variation from the perspective of places where the marker was used. The pie chart (figure 4.10) indicates that 49 % of the occurrence of the “ wa” was in coffee shops. In the second place, at the grocery shop, 25 % was recorded. Relatively similar result at around 14 % was charted in markets and the town hall. At the mosque, the pragmatic marker was not used at all.

Although the registered numbers are low, establishing a relation between the use of the pragmatic markers “ wa” and age is of a great importance. Figure 4.11 shows that S-curve characterizes both females and males’ variation. For both genders, the young generation did not use the marker. Females, however, reach a mean of 1 with age group from 15-25, while for males with age group 21-35 with a mean of 1.1. With the next age groups, there is a rapid decline in mean values reaching 0 again with elders marking both lines.

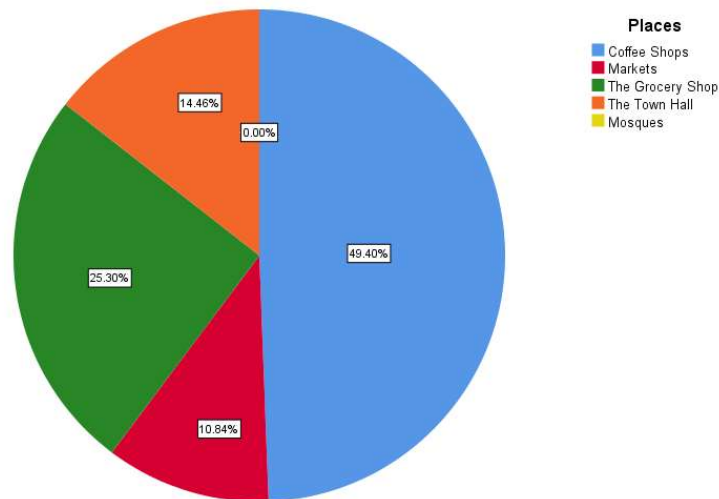


Figure 4.10. Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa” by Places

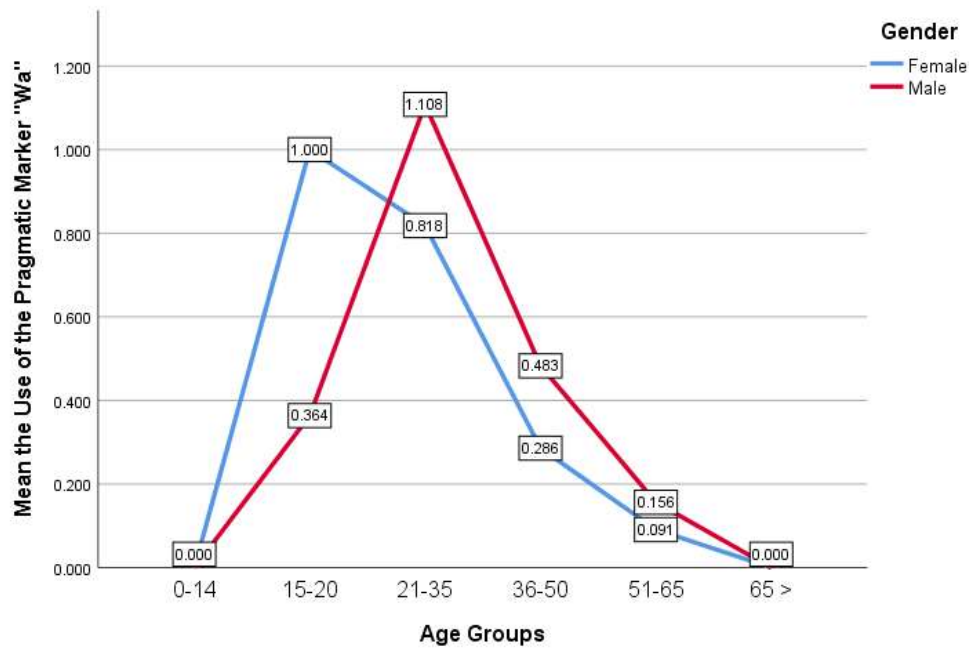


Figure 4.11. Simple Lines of Mean Value of the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa” by Age groups

#### 4.2.4. The Use of Diminutives

The previous analysis of the substitution, code-switching, and the use of the pragmatic marker “wa” was conceivable on account of sufficient quantitative data documented on the occurrence of the variables. In regard to diminutives in the dialect of El-Menia, the numbers do scarcely allow a similar sort of examination. Such a claim is supported by the data in table 4.14 which represents the statistical analysis of the occurrence of diminutive language forms. The first row in the table shows that out of 177 speakers observed 83 % of them did not use any kind of diminutives, that is 147 speakers. As a result, 17% of the sample is eligible for statistical analysis. Furthermore, the 17 % or 30 speakers are divided into 11 females and 19 males ( see table 4.15 ).

In regard to the distribution of the occurrence of the diminutives by age groups, table 4.15 indicates that for younger age group 4 cases were recorded, 1 female and 3 males. With the second age group, an equal number was registered. The high occurrence is with people aged between 21-35 in which 12 cases were listed. With people aged more than 50 only two people were heard using diminutives.

<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
0	147	83.1
1	25	14.1
2	4	2.3
5	1	0.6
Total	177	100

Table 4.14. Statistical Analysis of the Use of Diminutives

<b>Age groups</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>
0-14	1	3
15-20	3	3
21-35	4	8
36-50	3	3
51-65	0	2
65 >	0	0

Table 4.15. Statistical Analysis of the Use of Diminutives by Age Groups

### **4.3. Interviews**

Contrary to the previous data collection method, focus group interviews helped to overcome several limitations imposed by the need to stay anonymous. First, the ability to preside over who is to be involved in the sample helped to illuminate the evenness that characterizes the sample in regard to gender which made the comparison between males and females ‘speech is rather unfavorable. In the same vein, the controlled sample also assures filling all age group cells and that is rather important for the study of language change in progress. Second, the recording procedures utilizing notes and tables can be criticized heavily because it is prone to interference. More importantly, the construct suggested in this research involves studying language use in different families and that is almost impossible to accomplish through observation only.



## Chapter Four: The Findings

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Giving the nature of interviews and the conditions in which they were carried out, outright control over the number of the people in interviews is also very difficult to maintain. Regardless of the endeavors to take care of such an issue by completing one-one discussion to fill in the quantity, the numbers are not precisely what they should be. The aim was to fill three persons per cell arriving at 36 participants for each family with an overall sample of 180. However, the total number attained was 148 divided into 5 families ( Tables 4.16 – 4.20 ).

Age	6 – 14	15 – 25	26 – 40	41 – 60	60 – 75	75 >	Total
Male	3	3	3	3	2	1	15
Female	3	3	3	3	3	2	17
							32

Table 4.16. Sample Distribution for Family 1

Age	6 – 14	15 – 25	26 – 40	41 – 60	60 – 75	75 >	Total
Male	3	1	3	2	2	1	12
Female	3	3	3	2	1	1	13
							25

Table 4.17. Sample Distribution for Family 2

Age	6 – 14	15 – 25	26 – 40	41 – 60	60 – 75	75 >	Total
Male	3	3	3	3	2	0	14
Female	3	3	3	3	3	2	17
							31

Table 4.18. Sample Distribution for Family 3

Age	6 – 14	15 – 25	26 – 40	41 – 60	60 – 75	75 >	Total
Male	1	3	0	3	1	2	10
Female	2	3	3	3	2	2	15
							25

Table 4.19. Sample Distribution for Family 4

## Chapter Four: The Findings

Age	6 – 14	15 – 25	26 – 40	41 – 60	60 – 75	75 >	Total
Male	3	3	3	3	3	3	18
Female	3	3	3	3	3	2	17
							35

Table 4.20. Sample Distribution for Family 5

At this phase, the same sociolinguistic variables are investigated, however, additional criteria are included in the analysis. To begin with, the attention to the family notion in language variation requires counting family affiliation in data analysis. In this regard, each participant is labeled by his/her family name. However, due to privacy concerns family names were coded using numbers only. Furthermore, the discussion about the community of practice necessitates the examination of interviewees' practice. Table 4.21 shows the kind of practice interviewees do. Next, the choice to not bar participants on the excuse of being non-native means that each one was flagged whether to be native or not. The difficulty to turn the economic status of families and participants into quantifiable data that can be easily processed is the reason why this criterion is put under qualitative ones and discussed in the next chapter.

Practice	Frequency	Percent
Not identified	7	4.7
Jobless	14	9.5
Farming	17	11.5
Administrators	16	10.8
Commerce	4	2.7
Drivers	1	.7
Pupils	32	21.6
University Students	10	6.8
Retired	4	2.7
Housewives	35	23.6
Teachers	6	4.1
Doctors	2	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4.21. Interviewees 'Practices Distribution

### 4.3.1. The Substitution of [ɣ] for [q] ( Interviews)

Diagramming and dissecting the substitution of [ɣ] in the interviews uncover close numbers to the ones got in observation. Thus, table 4.22 further affirms that fact that the substitution of [ɣ] is a salient sociolinguistic feature in the dialect of El-Menia with a mean of 80 % and median of 100. The standard deviation recorded in interviews is 35. Still, the same range is recorded with 100 % with a minimum score of 0 and a maximum of 100%. Thus, the anonymous observation and interviews share similar numbers in regard to the alteration of the sound [ɣ].

Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
80.73	100.00	35.19	.00	100.00

Table 4.22. Statistical Overview of the Substitution of the [ɣ] (Interviews)

Taking into account the notion of family, the above scores need to be investigated from the perspective of each family. In this vein, table 4.23 indicates that for families F1, F2, F5 the obtained scores of the substitution hover around 80 % again with a range of 100 and almost the same standard deviation value at 32. The lowest usage of the variant [q] was recorded with family 3 as well as the highest standard deviation at 45.95. In the other end, the highest mean was registered with interviewees from family 4 at 93.20 %, however, unlike all other families interviewed, the minimum value is 40 %.

Family	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	Standard Deviation
F1	82.92	100.00	.00	33.58
F2	80.20	100.00	.00	34.63
F3	64.19	100.00	.00	45.95
F4	93.20	100.00	40.00	15.20
F5	84.86	100.00	.00	32.66

Table 4.23. Substitution of the [ɣ] by Families

4.3.1.1. Gender

In interviews, the sample is relatively more balanced than the previous phase with 79 females (53.6%) and 69 males (46.6). Despite the difference, triangulating data indicates that the obtained rates are remarkably similar. For females, the mean value of the substitution is 74.66 % which is lower than that of males at 87.68 %. The latter means that females favor the standard [ɣ] in their speech more than [q] during interviews. In relation to the dispersion of the use of the variant, females still take the lead with 38.96 in standard deviation value compared to that of males at 29.05.

Gender	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Standard Deviation
Female	74.66	100.00	.00	100.00	38.96
Male	87.68	100.00	.00	100.00	29.05

Table 4.24. Substitution of the [ɣ] by Gender

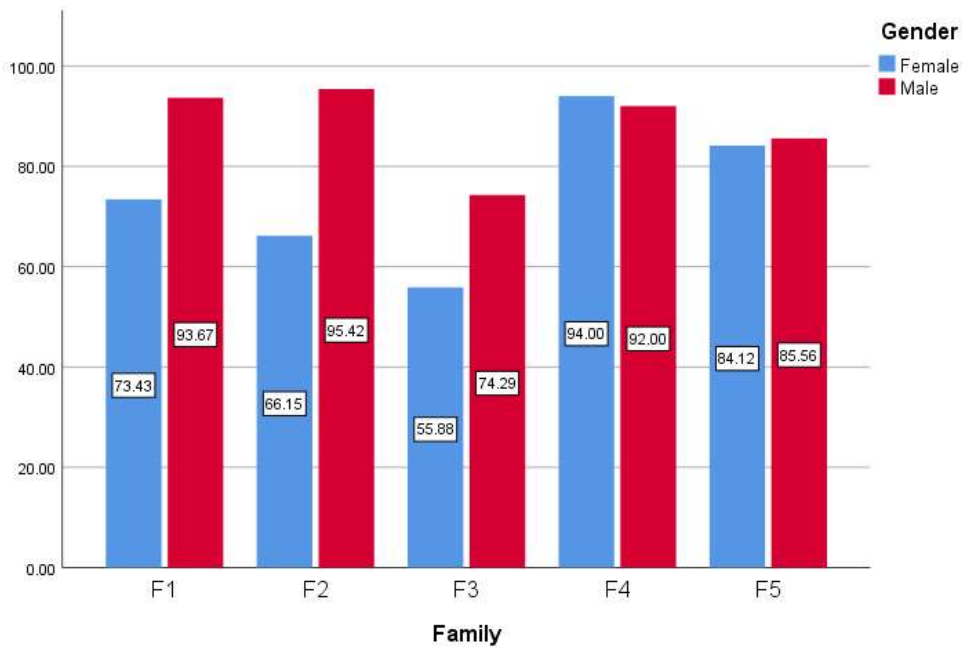


Figure 4.12. Clustered Bars of Mean Values of the Substitution of the [ɣ]for [q] by Family and Gender

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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Since the aspect of family is a crucial element in the hypothesis of the research, having a closer look at the linguistic behavior from this perspective is of paramount importance. Thus, the point of introducing the next figure is to comprehend the correlation between males and females' substitution in each family by indicating the mean value of substitution of both genders by families. First, with the exception of family 4, the clustered bars show that females are often behind when it comes to the use of the variant [q]. Families 1,2, and 3 reveal a big gap between males and females in the use of the variant and still, family 3 records the lowest scores with 55.88 % mean with females and 74.29 % with males.

One of the decisions taken in the methodology devised for the work is not to exclude non-native speakers, however, they still need to be flagged. Out of 148 speakers interviewed, the sample comprised of 5 females, who can be deemed not to be originally from El-Menia. Nevertheless, being wives and living with indigenous families is the reason to study their linguistic behavior and people around them, in particular, those who have children. As indicated in table 4.25, all those who are not native did not use the variant [q].

Code	Family	Gender ( age)	Practice	Mean of Substitution
12	F1	Female (24)	Housewife	0
22	F1	Female (43)	Housewife	0
48	F2	Female (38)	Doctor	0
74	F3	Female (36)	Housewife	0
75	F3	Female (40)	Administrator	0

Table 4.25. Mean Values of the Substitution by Non-Native Speakers

### 4.3.1.2. Variation by Practice

One of the advantages of interviewing people is one that gets to ask for detailed information, in this case, the interest is in their daily practice. The goal is to examine how the utilization of the substitution of [ɣ] connects with the speakers' sort of work. In the aspect, table 4.26 shows the count, the mean value, and the standard deviation of both males and females by the factor of practice. Given the size of the table, it has been divided into two parts.

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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Practice	Female			Male		
	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation
Not Identified	4	82.50	20.62	3	96.67	5.77
Jobless	7	68.57	47.41	7	98.57	3.78
Farmers	0			17	100.00	.00
Administrators	9	56.11	43.50	7	98.57	3.78
Merchants	1	100		3	100.00	.00
Drivers	0			1	100.00	
Pupils	14	67.14	45.31	18	68.89	46.13
University Students	4	50.00	40.82	6	79.17	19.60
Retirees	0			4	100.00	.00
Pre-School	0			0		
Housewives	35	89.43	28.79	0		
Teachers	4	53.33	45.22	2	72.50	38.89
Doctors	1	.00		1	20.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>74.66</b>	<b>38.96</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>87.68</b>	<b>29.05</b>

Practice	Total		
	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation
Not identified	7	88.57	16.76
Jobless	14	83.57	35.86
Farmers	17	100.00	.00
Administrators	16	74.69	38.58
Merchants	4	100.00	.00
Drivers	1	100.00	
Pupils	32	68.12	45.04
University Students	10	67.50	31.56
Retirees	4	100.00	.00
Pre-School	0		
Housewives	35	89.43	28.79
Teachers	6	59.72	40.34
Doctors	2	10.00	14.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>80.73</b>	<b>35.19</b>

Table 4.26. The Mean and Standard Deviation of the Substitution by Practice and Gender

Starting with the overall total (the second part), the important aspect to be minded when investigating the correlation between practice and substitution is the count or the number of interviewees engaged in each practice. For instance, the table indicates 100 % use of the variant [q] with drivers, however, only one speaker is interviewed in that category. Therefore, one can hardly talk about representativeness in such case, nevertheless, the finding has to be presented. In this vein and beginning with high averages, the maximum score of 100 % substitution is recorded with farmers, merchants, a driver, and retirees. Still, with the latter types of work no female was interviewed. The lowest averages are recorded with two doctors at 10 % . Moving up, teachers also are in the second position with only a mean of 59.72%. After that, pupils come with an average of about 67 which is listed with both males and females.

4.3.1.3. Variation by Age

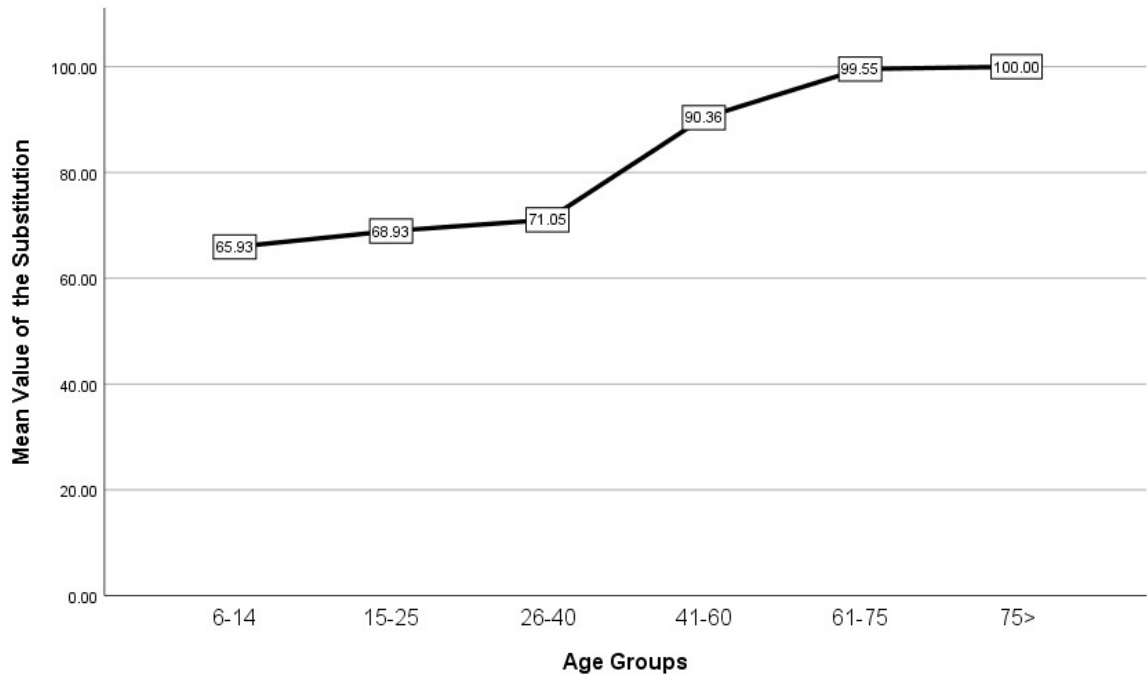


Figure 4.13. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of the [ɣ] (Interviews)

Although this lengthy chapter comprises mostly data on variation exhibited by interviewees, the ultimate goal is still answering questions about language change. Such an undertaking cannot be sought without putting the linguistic factors into question against the criterion of age since apparent-time construct is the adopted framework. Figure 4.13 delineates the conduct of all interviewees' substitution of the sound [ɣ]. Putting the linguistic behavior against age groups results in a curvy line that declines markedly and steadily if one is to look at it starting from the older age group. According to the chart, interviewees aged between 61- 75 have almost used only the variant [q] while for those aged more than 75 the sound [ɣ] was not recorded at all. The averages start to get lower gradually from age group 41-60 at 90.36. The line flattens between age groups 15-25 and 26- 40 at an average of about 70 % to dip again to 65.93 with speakers between 6-14.



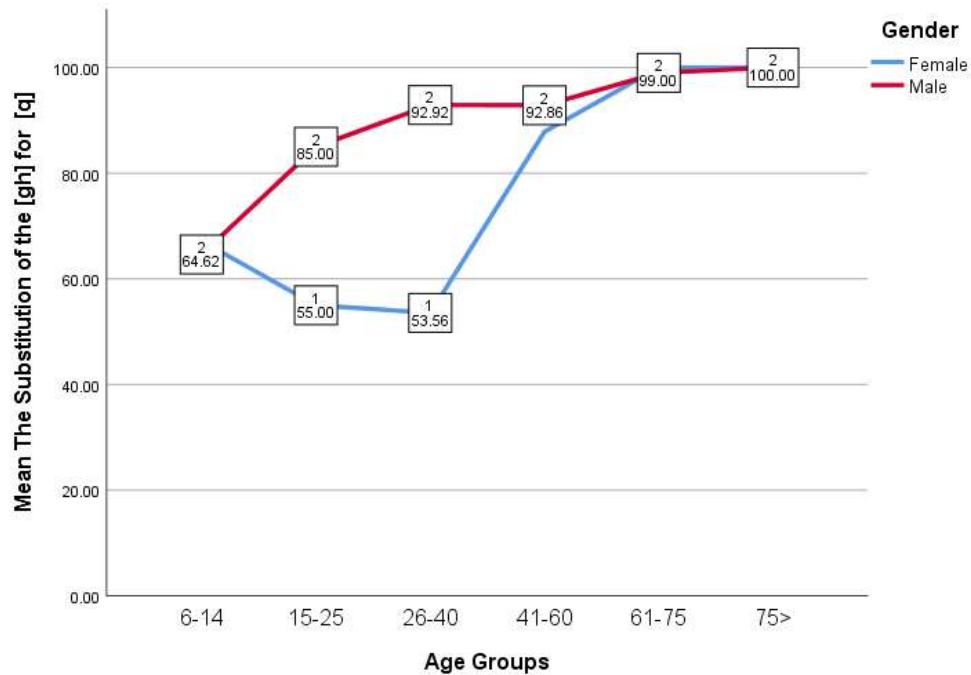


Figure 4.14. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] by Gender (Interviews)

In all the above diagrams and tables, female speakers demonstrate more variation than their male counterpart. So, it is rather mandatory to take a gander at the general picture from the two points of view. In this regard, the lines in figure 4.14 start from a single point which means that speakers between the ages of 6 and 14 whether males or females exhibited the same linguistic behavior in accordance to the pronunciation of [ɣ]. However, the lines take distinctly different directions which can be seen clearly in the second age group as an average of 85 % is recorded with males and 55 % with females. The variation with male interviewees is low as the red line indicates but not the same case is noted with females. While variation with females relatively stabilized between age 15 to 40, the pattern changes again drastically with the last age groups reaching the maximum average of 100 % with elders.

### 4.3.1.4. Variation by Families

Instead of examining the linguistic behavior of families individually, age will be considered the fundamental unit of discussion for the charts 4.15 to 4.19. These charts uncover the connection between the mean estimation of the substitution of [ɣ] and age groups. Furthermore, each figure divulges separate lines, blue for female interviewees and red for males. Starting with elders, it is clear that the interviewees aged 61 and more favor the sound [q] over the standard sound [ɣ]. The scores of all families with the older age group are at maximum 100 %. Similarly, the interviewees aged between 61 and 75 also show almost similar score with just family 5 rated at 98.33 % mean. Regarding gender at this level, no difference can be detected as all charts reveal the same pattern. Even with the next age group, people between 41-60, the numbers indicate high usage of the [q] however some fluctuations occur. For instance, the mean values in family 1 and 2 start to dip below the maximum score to 80% while the other still maintain the highest score. Again, the variance between the way male and females spoke in the interviews is marginal in all families except family 2 in which 20 % gap is charted.

Starting from age 40 and below, instability becomes clear in all the figures. First, in the first family, the average scores of both males and females hover around 100 % and 70 % an increased variability which is further demonstrated in family 2. In family 3, a substantial difference is noticed as females abandoned completely the change to the sound [q] while 90% average is still registered with male speakers. However, with families 4 and 5, the usage of the variant [q] gets high again and the gender difference diminishes in regard to that. High degree of variability is exhibited with younger speakers, this is clear when going to age groups 15-25 and 6-14. Furthermore, values appear to be inconsistent with previous values shown in the younger age group in family 3, 4 and 5 in which young female speakers used the variant [q] more than males.

**Chapter Four: The Findings**

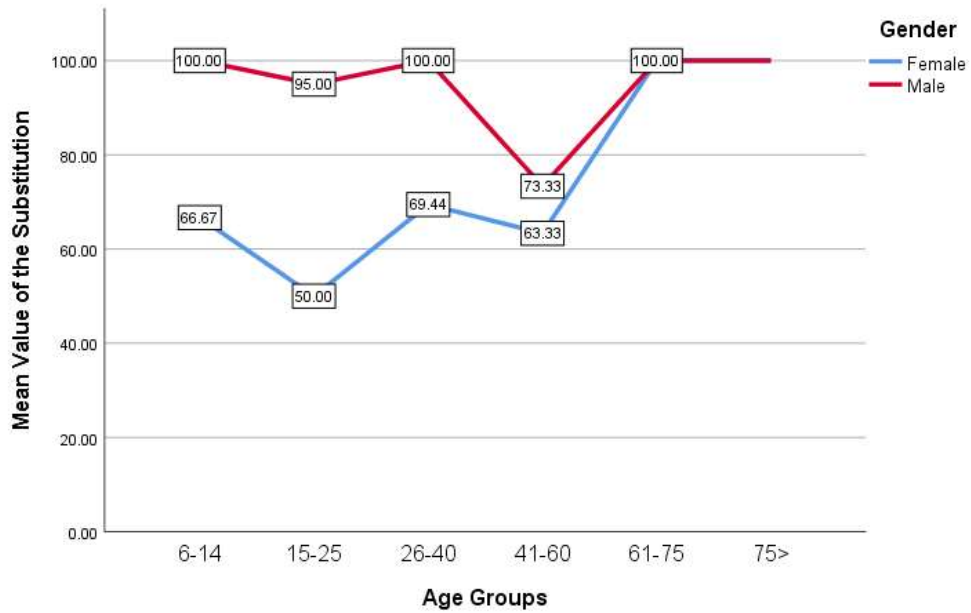


Figure 4.15. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of  $[\gamma]$  of Family 1 by Gender

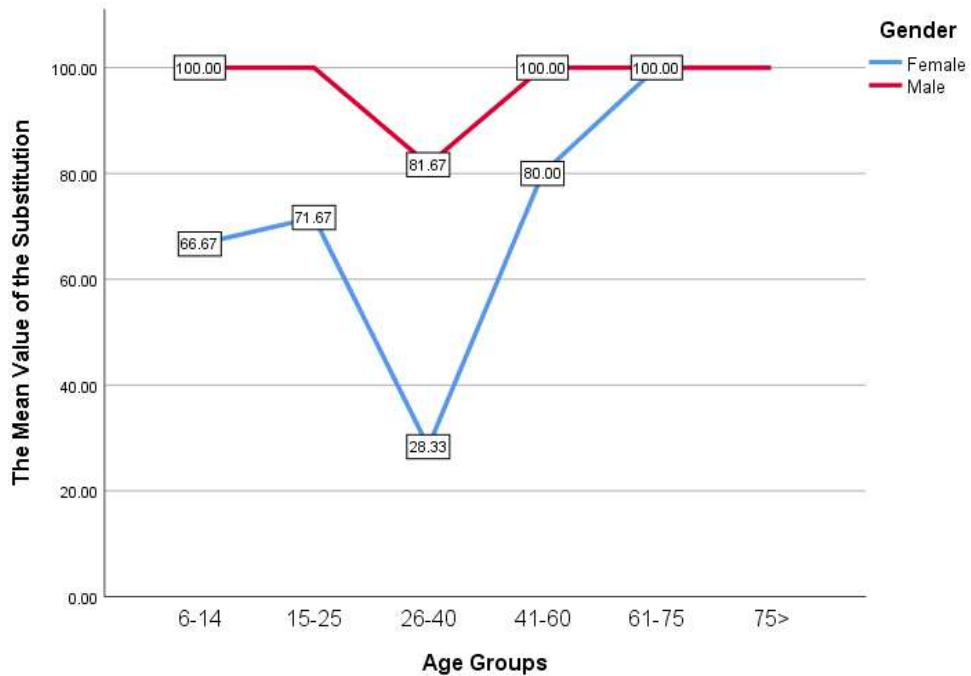


Figure 4.16. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of  $[\gamma]$  of Family 2 by Gender

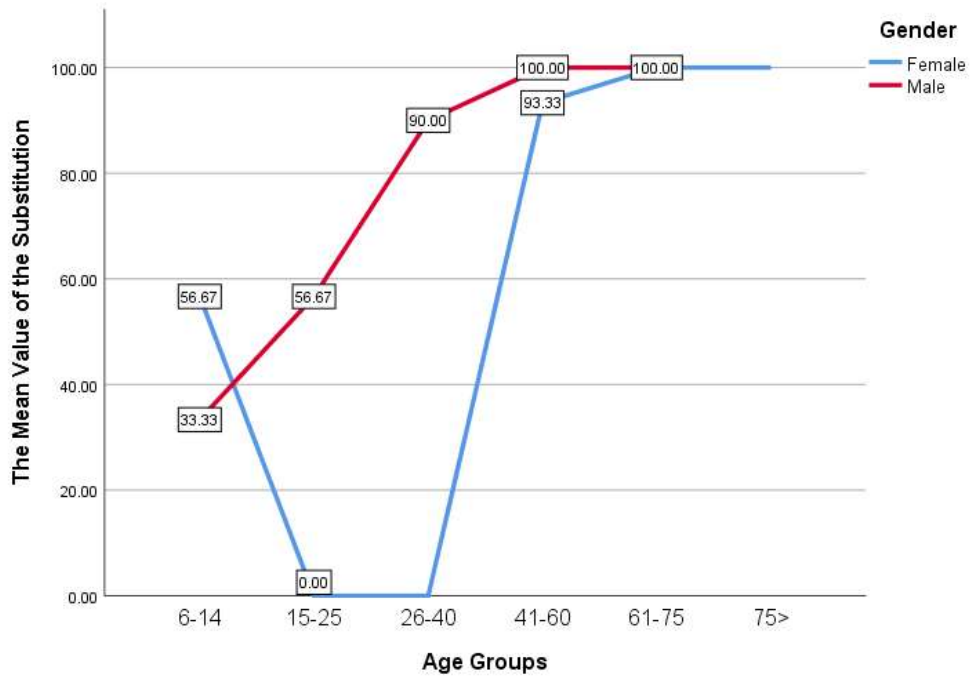


Figure 4.17. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of  $[\gamma]$  of Family 3 by Gender

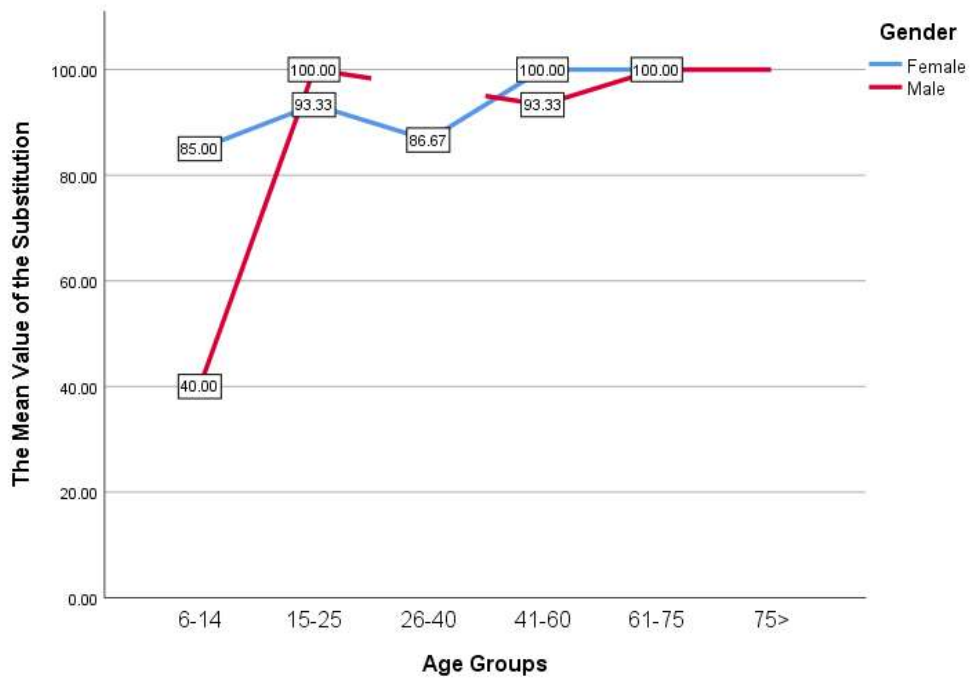


Figure 4.18. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of  $[\gamma]$  of Family 4 by Gender

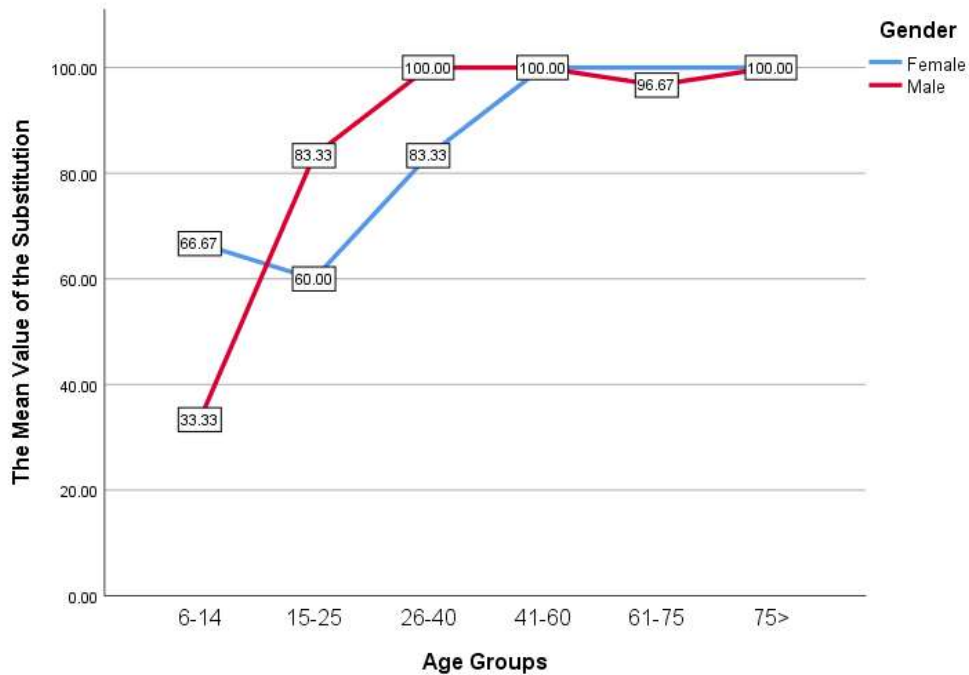


Figure 4.19. The Simple Line of Mean Value of the Substitution of [ɣ] of Family 5 by Gender

### 4.3.2. Code-Switching

Increasing validity is the aim of opting for triangulation in this research. That is done mostly in this case through redundancy of data through several sources. The latter is not going to take place in data analysis if the numbers add up. However, it is not always the case because there is the possibility that multiple perspectives bring conflicting results. Then, the inclusion of the comparison of these results becomes a must. Examining the data obtained from anonymous observation and interviews in regard to the substitution of [ɣ] revealed consistency. Therefore, there was no need to contemplate on the comparison. On the contrary, an overview of the basic statistics of the number of times speakers code-switched in observation and interviews reveals a gap between the figures.

## Chapter Four: The Findings

	Observation			Interviews		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Mean	4.28	8.05	7.07	1.78	1.90	1.84
Minimum	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maximum	16.00	54.00	54.00	12.00	18.00	18.00
Standard Deviation	5.17	12.49	11.17	2.71	3.14	2.91

Table 4.27. Code-Switching in Anonymous Observation and Interviews

Table 27 reveals the statistical finding of both anonymous observation and interviews side by side. First, the mean value of the occurrence of code-switching in observation is 7 while in interviews is less than 2 indicating a difference of three times. Accordingly, males and females' behavior follow the same pattern. 0 is the minimum value monitored in both data collection methods. Thus, this confirms that with some speakers' speech there was no trace for French. For specificity sake, 44.6% of the speakers observed did not code-switch while that number jumps to 52 % in the interviews. On the other hand, the maximum scores vary significantly. In observation, the count for French words reaches 54 and a max of 18 in interviews. As for the standard deviation, males take the lead with a score of 12.49 and 3.14 in observation and interviews respectively over 5.17 and 2.71 for females.

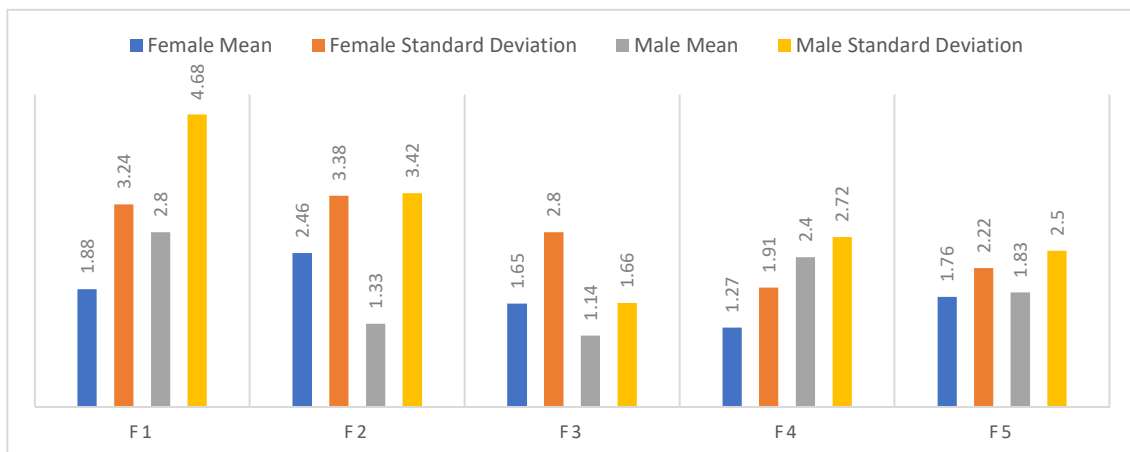


Figure 4.20. Mean and Standard Deviation of Code-Switching by Families and Gender

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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Investigating the behavior of speakers across gender, figure 4.20 provides an overview over the way interviewees code-switched taking into consideration family division. Starting with the mean values, females reached a mean of 2.46 as a maximum in F2 and a lower score in F4 with 1.27. On the other hand, the maximum mean value for males is 2.8 and the minimum is 1.14. As for the comparison, males code-switched more in F1, F4 and, F5 while it is the opposite in F2 and F3. The standard deviation scores show that in all families, except F3, female speakers showed consistency in the use of French than males.

### 4.3.2.1. Code-Switching by Non-Native Speakers

Code	Family	Gender (age)	Practice	Count of Code-Switching
12	F1	Female (24)	Housewife	1
22	F1	Female (43)	Housewife	0
48	F2	Female (38)	Doctor	12
74	F3	Female (36)	Housewife	0
75	F3	Female (40)	Administrator	0

Table 4.28. Code-Switching by Non-Natives

The decision to include non-natives in interviews is present in all variables. Therefore, tracking and analyzing the way these speakers speak is important. The reason is also to see whether the numbers obtained are going to be a deciding factor. Certainly, in the case of code-switching, the figures charted in table 4.28 remain insignificant to make a critical difference. The speaker that stands among them is the one with code 48 (see appendix 2) who code-switched 12 times. The subsequence element to be investigated is the correlation between the practice and code-switching.

### 4.3.2.2. Variation by Practice

Table 4.29 provides an in-depth overview over the number of speakers in each practice (count), both male and females, who code-switched during interviews as well as the minimum and maximum values, and the standard deviation. The first element to consider when contemplating the table is the count as it is a decisive factor in understanding

## Chapter Four: The Findings

the numbers. The number of housewives interviewed stands as the highest among interviewees scoring a mean of 0.69 which means that they have barely code-switched. The second most interviewed speakers are pupils. With the latter, the numbers are low registering mean values of 0.50 and 0.28 for females and males respectively. Next, with farmers, consisting only of men, a low mean was registered at 1.82 and a standard deviation of 2.53.

Practice	Gender	Mean	Count	Minimum	Maximum	STD
Not Identified	Female	3.00	4	.00	7.00	3.16
	Male	3.67	3	.00	7.00	3.51
Jobless	Female	1.43	7	.00	5.00	1.81
	Male	.71	7	.00	2.00	0.95
Farmers	Female					
	Male	1.82	17	.00	8.00	2.53
Administrators	Female	3.67	9	.00	9.00	2.69
	Male	1.43	7	.00	6.00	2.15
Merchants	Female	0.00	1	0.00	0.00	
	Male	2.00	3	.00	4.00	2.00
Drivers	Female					
	Male	.00	1	0.00	0.00	
Pupils	Female	.50	14	0.00	2.00	.76
	Male	.28	18	0.00	2.00	.57
University Students	Female	6.00	4	4.00	11.00	3.37
	Male	4.33	6	2.00	5.00	1.21
Retirees	Female					
	Male	.50	4	0.00	2.00	1.00
Housewives	Female	0.69	35	0.00	5.00	1.47
	Male					
Teachers	Female	4.75	4	0.00	7.00	3.20
	Male	8.50	2	5.00	12.00	4.95
Doctors	Female	12.00	1	12.00	12.00	
	Male	18.00	1	18.00	18.00	
Total	Female	1.78	79	0.00	12.00	2.71
	Male	1.90	69	0.00	18.00	3.14

Table 4.29. Code Switching by interviewees



Moving to more formal types of jobs, the numbers start to increase. Those who work in administration achieved a mean of 1.43 and a standard deviation of 2.15 for males while females attained a mean of 3.67 and 2.69 in standard deviation. In this category, the female speakers were the ones who code-switched more. The same kind of behavior is noticeable with university students in which the value of average code-switching was 6 for females and 4.33 for males. Relatively similar numbers were seen with teachers. Highest statistics were recorded with doctors however only two were interviewed. Of course, since we have only one male and female there can be no talk about the mean of the standard deviation.

### 4.3.2.3. Variation by Age

The plot of speakers' code-switching behavior in graph 4.21 indicates that the younger age group barely used French in their speech. The line makes a steep climb with the next two age groups 15-25 and 26-40 as the mean of the code-switching raises to 2.96. The numbers fall again with speakers aged between 41 and 60 to a mean of 1.62 and to the lowest average in the chart 0.41 with the age group 61-75. The average use of code-switching raises again with the older age group to 2.31 indicating that old speaker used more French in their speech during interviews.

Figure 4. 22 shows multiple lines that stand to represent the mean values of code-switching for both males and females. The average use of code-switching is similar to the first age group at 0.38 which indicates that young interviewees whether males or females exhibited the same linguistic behavior in regard to code-switching. With the next group, the lines take different directions as female interviewees score a peak of 4.07 mean value while 1.69 was recorded with males indicating that females favor the use of French more than males. The gap narrows with the next group as the average score of male speakers rises to 2.33 and that of females decreases to 3.47. The lines further take opposing directions showing a higher usage of code-switching by males than females with speakers aged from 41 to 60. As with older people between 61 and 75, the graph indicates similar results however the line takes a steep climb with the older age group with males. On the

contrary, old female speakers did not code-switch at all.

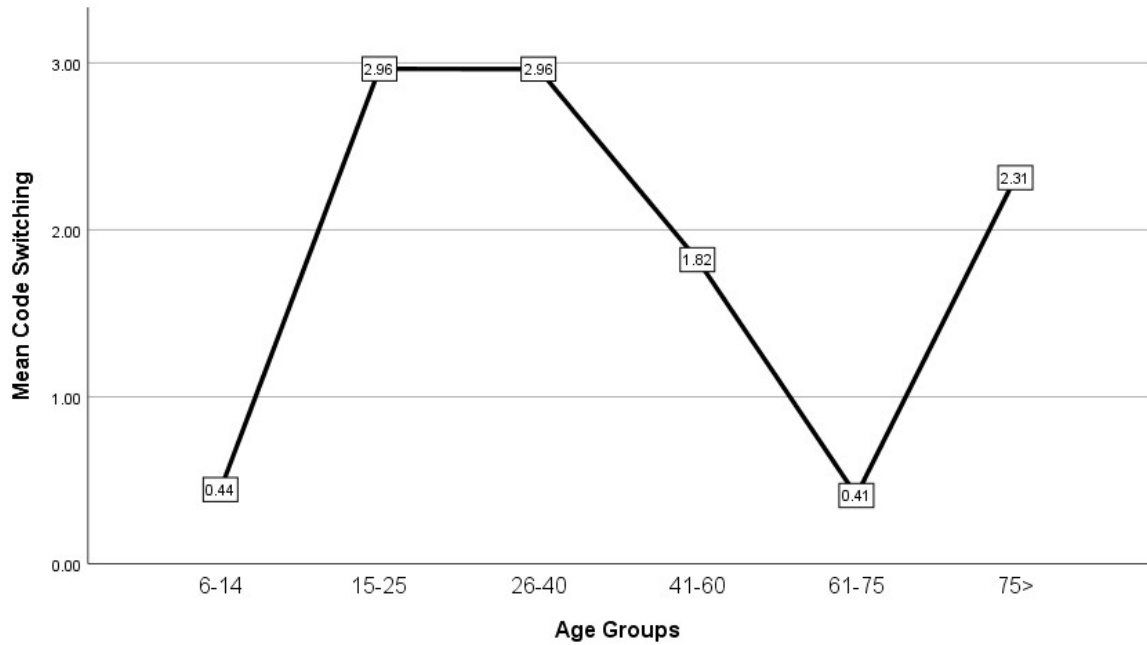


Figure 4.21. Simple Line of Mean of Code-Switching (Interviews)

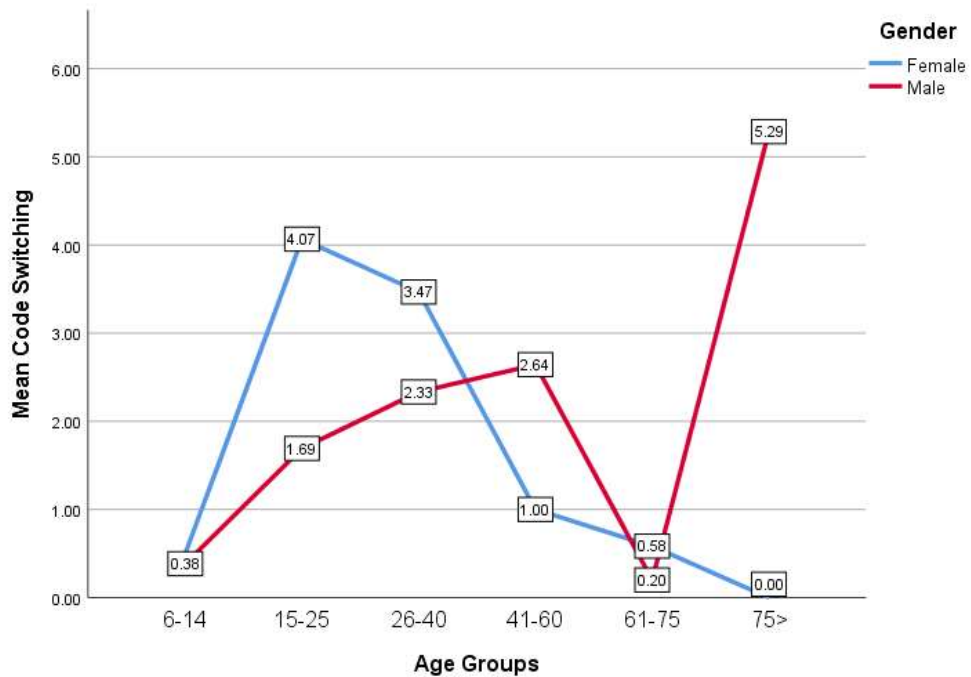


Figure 4.22. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender

4.3.2.4. Family Factor

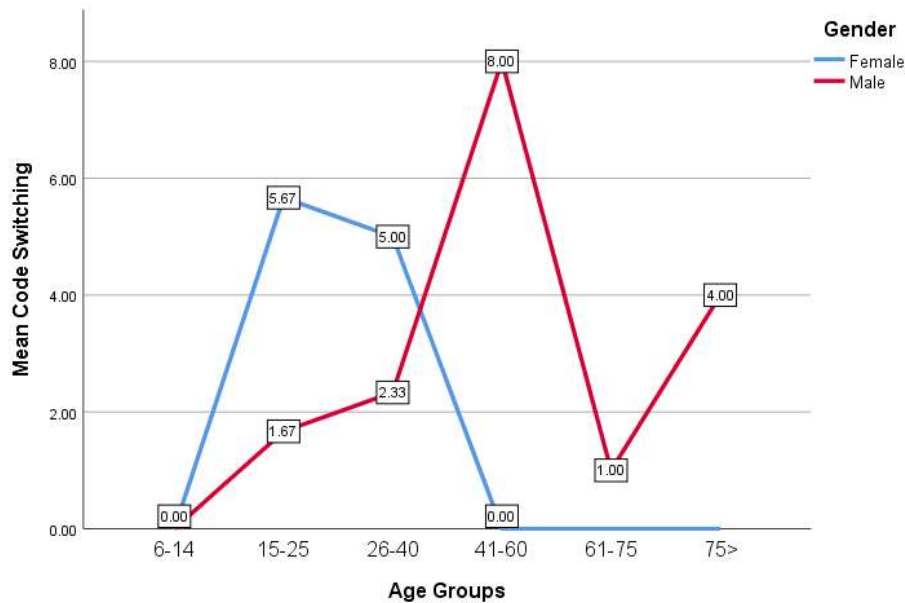


Figure 4.23. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 1)

The figures 4.23 to 4.27 come as a result of adopting the family criterion in analyzing the results. They also reveal how male and female speakers code-switched. A quick glance at the charts shows the heterogeneity of the interviewees' behavior among the five families. The average scores with the younger age group are consistent as they remain between 0 and 1 with both genders. However, the mean values with the age group 15-25 vary significantly between a maximum of 6.67 and 2 to a minimum of 1.67 and 0 for females and males respectively that means in this particular age group female interviewees were the one who favored codeswitching

## Chapter Four: The Findings

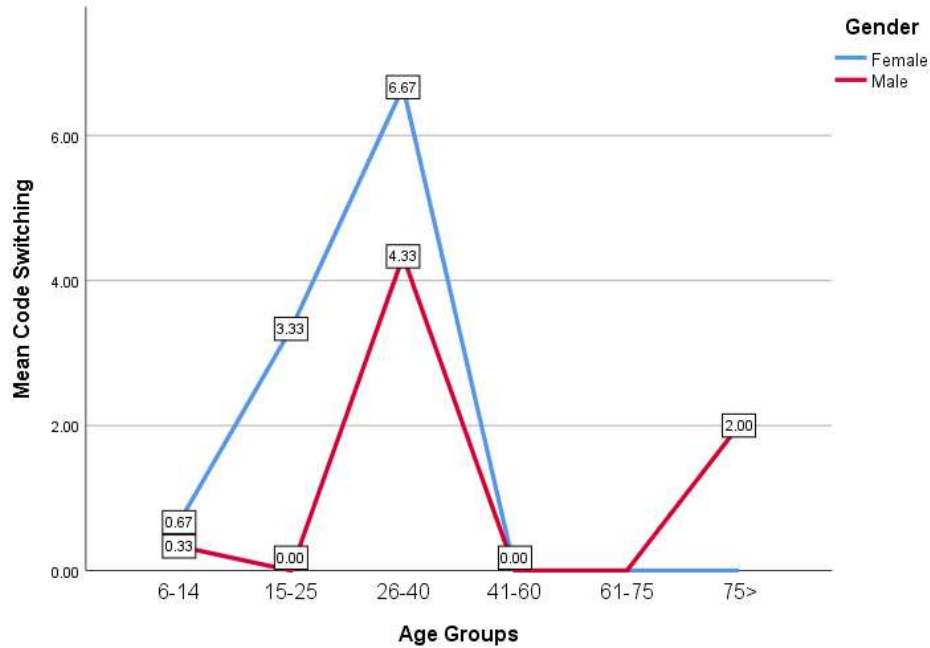


Figure 4.24. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 2)

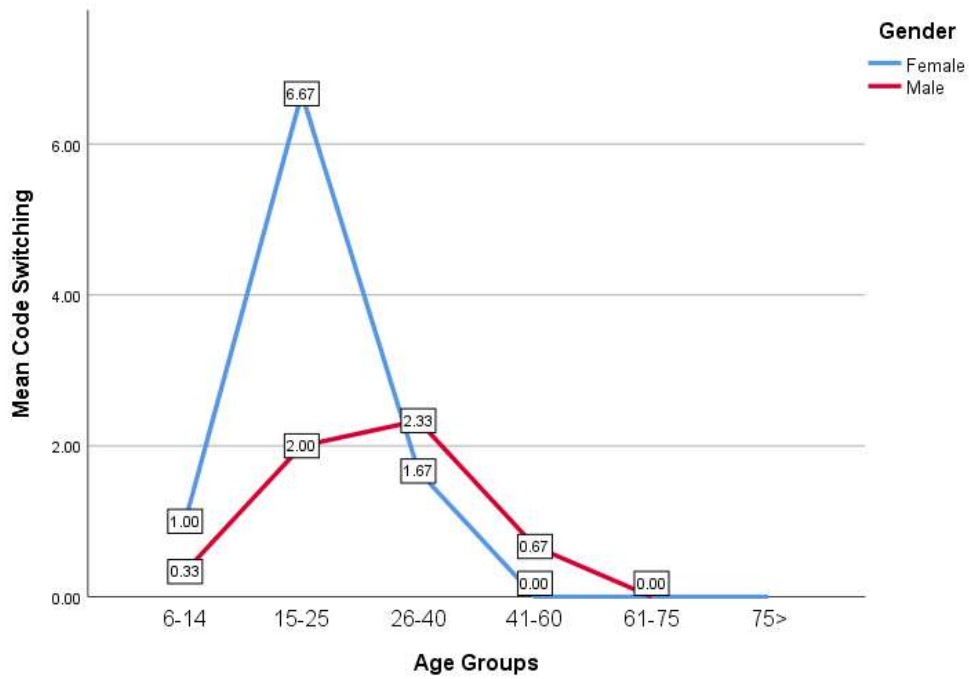


Figure 4.25. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 3)

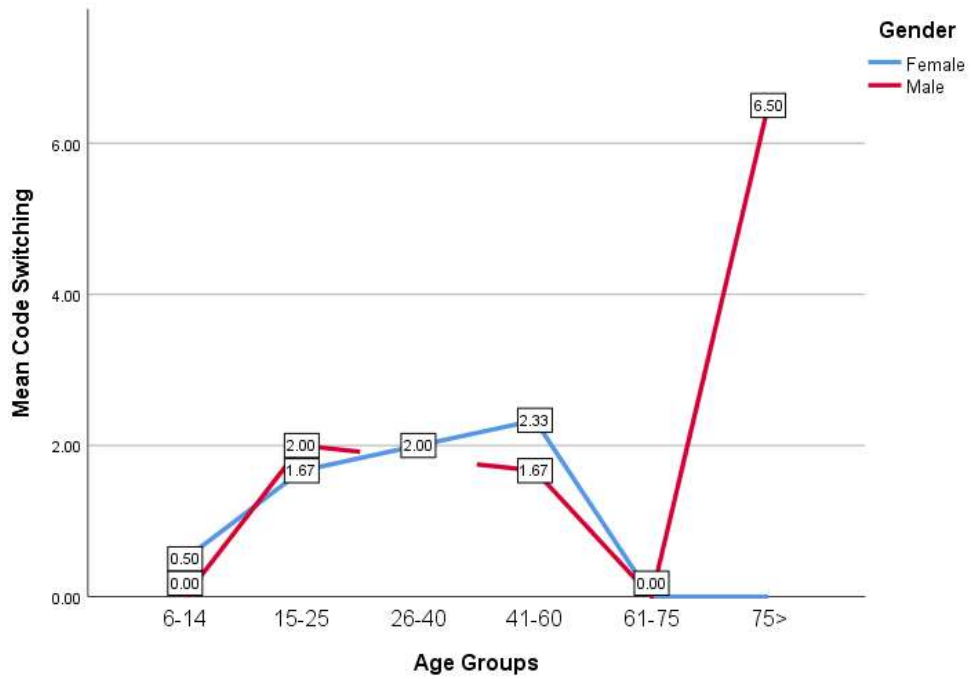


Figure 4.26. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 4)

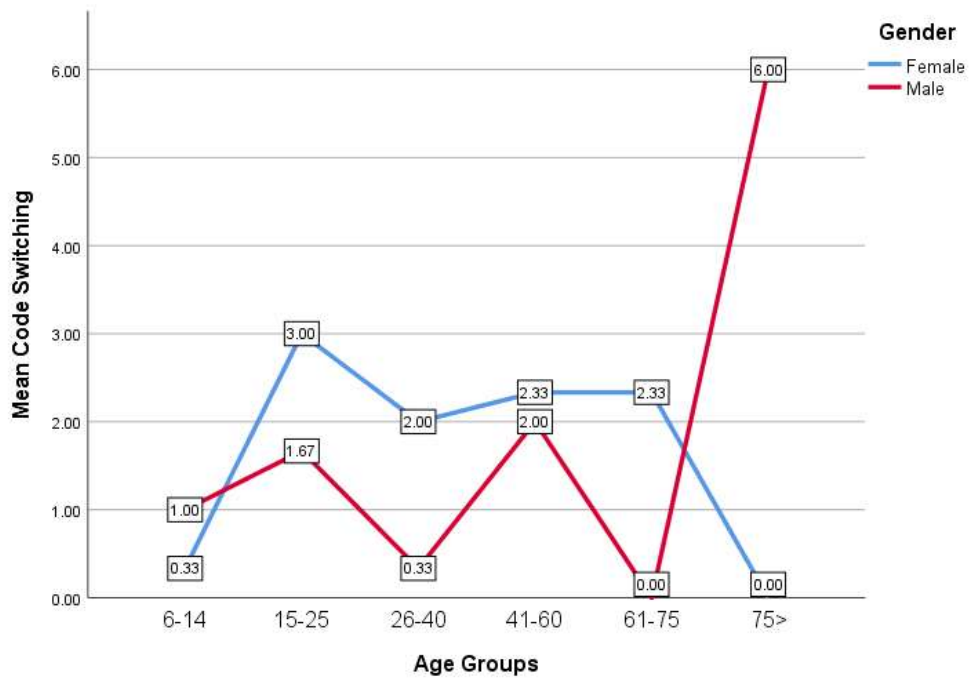


Figure 4.27. Multiple Line Mean of Code-Switching by Age Groups by Gender (Family 5)

The pattern still persists with speakers aged between 26 and 40 as high mean values are recorded with both genders. Furthermore, considerable variability is also clearly indicated by the gap between the male and female's scores. As for the next age group, the first noticeable difference is a degree in uniformity in the way males and females code-switched attaining scores of 0, 0.3, 2, 2.1 with families 2 to 5 in that order. However, family 1 is an exception as the highest mean value 8 was registered with females while male did not code-switch.

The discernable pattern associated with people aged from 61 to 75 indicates similar ones found in the previous age group as the repeated number is about 0 mean for all speakers in this category with the exception of F5. Elder females in the last age group with no exemption did not use any French in their speech. On the other hand, the charts in all families show that male elders use extensively code-switching.

### 4.3.3. The pragmatic Marker wa

Instances		Frequency	Percent
Valid	.000	126	85.1
	1.000	20	13.5
	2.000	2	1.4
	Total	148	100.0

Table 4.30. The frequency of Occurrence of Pragmatic Marker “wa”

The four variables investigated in the research can be divided into two on the basis of their widespread occurrence. The Substitution of [ɣ] for [q] and code-switching constitute the common and salient linguistic features. On the other hand, the pragmatic marker “wa” and diminutives are less used. Table 4.30 reveals that out of 148 participants interviewed only 22 mentioned the pragmatic marker during the interviews meaning that more than 85 %, divided into 70 females and 56 males, of interviewees, did not use it at all. Table 4.31 divulges details on the use of the pragmatic marker by the remaining 22 speakers who are split into 9 females with a mean of 1.1 (counting only those who used the PM) and 13 males.

## Chapter Four: The Findings

Gender	Mean	Count	Minimum	Maximum	Standard Deviation
Female	1.111	9	1.000	2.000	0.333
Male	1.077	13	1.000	2.000	0.277

Table 4.31. The use of Pragmatic Marker “wa” ( Interviews)

### 4.3.3.1. Age

Age group	Gender	Count	Mean	Range	Standard Deviation
6-14	Female	1	1.000	.000	.
	Male	0	.	.	.
	Total	1	1.000	.000	.
15-25	Female	5	1.200	1.000	.447
	Male	4	1.250	1.000	.500
	Total	9	1.222	1.000	.441
26-40	Female	2	1.000	.000	.000
	Male	5	1.000	.000	.000
	Total	7	1.000	.000	.000
41-60	Female	1	1.000	.000	.
	Male	2	1.000	.000	.000
	Total	3	1.000	.000	.000
61-75	Female	0	.	.	.
	Male	2	1.000	.000	.000
	Total	2	1.000	.000	.000
75>	Female	0	.	.	.
	Male	0	.	.	.
	Total	0	.	.	.

Table 4.32: The use of Pragmatic Marker “wa” by Age

Table 4.32 shows the relationship between the use of the pragmatic marker “wa” and the criterion of age. The distribution in the table shows that out of 22 times the marker was used 9 times was heard with participants aged between 15-25 and 7 times with age group of 26-40. Those numbers constitute more than 70 % of all use of the marker “wa”. As far as the first age group, only 1 time the marker was recorded. The elders, on the other hand, did not use it.

**4.3.3.2. Practice**

Putting the findings against the criterion of practice shows that most of the speakers who used the pragmatic marker are labeled as jobless as table 4.33 indicates. More precisely, 4 females and 5 males use the PM that is the total of 40 %. The next distinguishable numbers are registered with 3 male farmers and two housewives. The remaining individual occurrences are spread among administrators, pupils, and university students. The distribution in the table shows that most of the occurrence is associated with informal types of work. Due to insufficient data, a decision was taken not to consider the family aspect with the current factor.

Table 4.33. The use of Pragmatic Marker “ wa “ by Practice

Practices	Female		Male	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Not Identified		0		0
Jobless	1.250	4	1.200	5
Farmers	.	0	1.000	3
Administrator	1.000	1	1.000	1
Merchants		0	1.000	1
Drivers		0	.	0
Pupils	1.000	1	1.000	1
University Students	1.000	1	1.000	1
Retirees		0	1.000	1
Pre-School		0		0
Housewives	1.000	2		0
Teachers		0		0
Doctors		0		0

**4.3.4. Diminutives**

The last variable to be considered in the finding section is the occurrence of diminutives. Unlike the pragmatic “wa”, the results reveal that diminutives are common in the dialect of El-Menia. The subsequent table shows that more than 43 % of the speakers



## Chapter Four: The Findings

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have used them. It shows also the frequency of their use per one speaker. The results indicate that 27 interviewees used once a diminutive form, 10 twice, 4 three times, reaching up to 8 times with a single speaker.

Instances	Frequency	Percent
.00	85	57.4
1.00	27	18.2
2.00	10	6.8
3.00	4	2.7
4.00	6	4.1
5.00	9	6.1
6.00	4	2.7
7.00	2	1.4
8.00	1	.7
Total	148	100.0

Table 4.34. The Frequency of Occurrence of Diminutives

### 4.3.4.1. Gender

Separating the above results and focusing solely on interviewees who used diminutives unveil rather interesting numbers relating to the gender criterion. According to table 4.35 female speakers represent 80 % of those who used diminutives with a mean of 3.02 and a standard deviation of 2 while only 13 male speakers use them with an average of 1.77. No doubt, the figures in the table leave no room for speculation that the occurrence of diminutives is associated with females.

Gender	Mean	Count	Minimum	Maximum	Standard Deviation
Male	1.77	13	1.00	6.00	1.69
Female	3.02	50	1.00	8.00	2.02

Table 4.35. The Frequency of Occurrence of Diminutives

We carry the investigation with those 63 speakers who used diminutives by putting data into table 4.36 in which age is the defining aspect. It is clear that the occurrences are

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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well spread between all age groups whether for males or for females. The highest averages recorded with females are 4.50 and 4.75 with age groups 61-75 and 75>. The figures are insignificant to yield any meaningful mean or standard deviation values for male speakers.

	Female					Male				
	Mean	Count	MIN	MAX	STD	Mean	Count	MIN	MAX	STD
6-14	1.43	7	1.00	2.00	.53	1.00	2	1.00	1.00	.00
15-25	1.44	9	1.00	3.00	.88	1.00	4	1.00	1.00	.00
26-40	2.63	8	1.00	5.00	1.60	1.00	3	1.00	1.00	.00
41-60	3.30	10	1.00	6.00	1.89	3.00	2	1.00	5.00	2.83
61-75	4.50	8	2.00	7.00	1.77		0			
75>	4.75	8	1.00	8.00	2.25	4.00	2	2.00	6.00	2.83

Table 4.36. Statistical Overview of the Use of Diminutives by Male and Females

### 4.3.4.2. Practice

Again, when considering practice as an aspect in the examination of language variation, we consider only those who have used diminutives. Table 4.37 offers a detailed overview of the relationship between practice and the occurrence of diminutives by speakers during interviews. In this section, the most important column to look at is the count. Starting from the highest numbers, the noticeable raw is that of housewives as 25 times diminutive forms were used. The second figure is registered with pupils 7 times for females and 3 with males. Coming third is the jobless raw with 6 instances with females and once for males.

## Chapter Four: The Findings

Practice	Female			Male		
	Mean	Count	Standard Deviation	Mean	Count	Standard Deviation
Not Identified	4.25	4	.50	2.00	1	
Jobless	2.00	6	1.67	1.00	1	
Farmers		0		3.50	2	3.54
Administrator	1.33	3	.58	1.00	1	
Merchants	1.00	1		5.00	1	
Drivers	.	0			0	
Pupils	1.43	7	.53	1.00	3	.00
University Students	1.00	1		1.00	3	.00
Retirees		0			0	
Pre-School		0			0	
Housewives	4.12	25	1.96		0	
Teachers	1.00	3	.00		0	
Doctors		0		1.00	1	

Table 4.37. The Use of Diminutives by Practice

### 4.3.4.3. Family

The same procedure adopted with the previous variable is taken here, however, only speakers who have used diminutives are charted in table 4.38. Furthermore, unlike the separate charts that were used with all the above variables, the low numbers recorded is behind the decision to put all information in one table which displays data gathered through the criteria of age and family. Table 4.38 further confirms what has been said above of diminutives being a salient sociolinguistic feature of females. The total cell in each family also asserts that the same linguistic behavior is found across all families. In the same vein, low numbers were charted with male speakers with all families. Uncommon occurrence in comparison to other variables is also a hindering factor when trying to study language variation over age. However, the mean values show consistency through different age groups and families.

Table 4.38. The Use of Diminutives Age Groups and by Gender

Family	Age Group	Female		Male		Total	
		Mean	Count	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
F1	6-14	2.00	2		0	2.00	2
	15-25	3.00	1	1.00	1	2.00	2
	26-40	3.00	2	1.00	1	2.33	3
	41-60	3.00	3	3.00	2	3.00	5
	61-75	2.00	2		0	2.00	2
	75>	1.00	1	2.00	1	1.50	2
	Total	2.45	11	2.00	5	2.31	16
F2	6-14	1.00	1		0	1.00	1
	15-25	1.00	3	1.00	1	1.00	4
	26-40		0		0		0
	41-60	5.50	2		0	5.50	2
	61-75	5.00	1		0	5.00	1
	75>	6.00	1		0	6.00	1
	Total	3.25	8	1.00	1	3.00	9
F3	6-14	1.00	1		0	1.00	1
	15-25	1.00	2	1.00	1	1.00	3
	26-40		0	1.00	1	1.00	1
	41-60		0		0		0
	61-75	5.00	3		0	5.00	3
	75>	3.50	2		0	3.50	2
	Total	3.13	8	1.00	2	2.70	10
F4	6-14	1.00	1		0	1.00	1
	15-25	2.00	2		0	2.00	2
	26-40	2.67	3		0	2.67	3
	41-60	1.50	2		0	1.50	2
	61-75		0		0		0
	75>	7.50	2		0	7.50	2
	Total	3.10	10		0	3.10	10
F5	6-14	1.50	2	1.00	2	1.25	4
	15-25	1.00	1	1.00	1	1.00	2
	26-40	2.33	3	1.00	1	2.00	4
	41-60	3.33	3		0	3.33	3
	61-75	6.00	2		0	6.00	2
	75>	4.50	2	6.00	1	5.00	3
	Total	3.23	13	2.00	5	2.89	18

### 4.4. Conclusion

The Forth chapter has provided extensive numerical data on language variation in the spoken Arabic dialect of El-Menia. The chapter has dealt exclusively with quantitative analysis of the way four variables are used in the dialect. The aim has always been to turn linguistic behavior collected during anonymous observation and interviews into quantifiable data. Undoubtedly, cross verification of data from the two sources is beneficial by increasing the finding credibility, the constant repetition of data and analysis is one of the downsides of the current chapter. However, redundancy is unavoidable and rather necessary since the research makes use of triangulation in data presentation and investigation.

As far as the substitution of [ɣ] for [q], both findings of observation and interviews provide a strong evidence that it is rather a noticeable linguistic behavior in the dialect of El-Menia as high numbers of usage were registered. Furthermore, the figures align in the idea that the change in the sound is also heard in both male and females. Yet, it is with the latter that a high degree of variability is recorded. Furthermore, the results have shown that the alteration of the sound [ɣ] is also affected by practice as notable fluctuation has been charted in interviews demonstrating that high usage of the variant [q] is associated with informal types of work. The same conclusion also has been found with observation in informal settings. The careful investigation of the influence of the family criterion on language variation has also been beneficial in understanding the overall speakers' behavior.

The second variable in the list is code-switching. Contrary to the first one, triangulating the numbers shows a marked decrease in the statistics indicating that people code-switched more during observation than interviews. In both data collection sources, males have been the ones who code-switched more. Similar to the change in the sound [ɣ], code-switching has been responsive to the type of practice with higher usage in formal kinds of work. Heterogeneity is what has characterized the findings when the interviewees' linguistic conduct was dissected as no shared pattern could be observed.

The last two variables under investigation distinguish themselves from the above ones on the ground of low number charted in both of them. For instance, the occurrence of

## Chapter Four: The Findings

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the pragmatic marker “wa” has been rather rare in observation and even more during interviews limiting the ability to go through a detailed analysis of the variable. In the same vein, the use of diminutive forms has been marked by infrequency, still not as much as the pragmatic marker “wa”. Consequently, the variable has been put against gender, practice, and family factors. The primary conclusion in regard to this variable is its heavy usage by females compared to male speakers. As far as practice is concerned, the occurrence of diminutives is more common among housewives and participants who do not work.

In this section, the behavior of people with regard to the linguistic variables has been digitalized and turned into empirical data that can be treated without bias. It took two years to conduct fieldwork and analyze data and for sure it is almost impossible to put all that into a few pages. Thus, as mentioned in the introduction, for the sake of summarization, a selection process was carried out. However, such an undertaking is troublesome as it can be a source of bias. Still, considerable efforts have been devoted to avoid that. Finally, all that the chapter offers is the answer to the question of what happened during data collection and which can be translated into how people of El-Menia speak. Accordingly, the next chapter will attempt to make sense of all the numbers and try to answer the question of why.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El- Menia and Implication for Language Change

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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### **5.1. Introduction**

The decision taken in the methodological segment of this work was to opt for both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. Be that as it may, it is not like there is a choice as the two approaches have to be counted in. The reason is that whereas in some hardcore scientific disciplines the results leave little for the researcher to discuss since numbers alone answer research questions, researchers on language change are not so fortunate. The study of language change in progress needs to start from language variation mostly through quantitative analysis, which has been done extensively in the previous chapter. However, the answer to the compelling question of what such variation means for speakers has to be found on the qualitative ground. Furthermore, statistical analysis conceals a great deal about what occurred amid meetings and how the occurrence of a linguistic variable can be associated with speakers' behavior (Mallinson, 2013).

It has been asserted many times throughout the paper that the apparent-time construct stands as the only solution to study language change in progress in the dialect of El-Menia since no antecedent study can be found. In such a paradigm, data is accumulated within the same community from different social groups and more importantly from different ages. In the previous chapter, data were collected minding gender, age, practice, and family affiliation. The quest now is how to translate information collected into answers to the questions such as which linguistic variable is changing and how this change is spreading through society? Which social group is leading the change? How does family affect language change? (Radford, Atkinson, Britain, & Clahsen, 2009)

Nevertheless, the above questions constitute only a tip of an iceberg of inquiries about theories clarifying relationships between linguistic variables, factors, and social groups. Thus, the discussion of the findings will be aligned and confined to the reviewed literature in the first chapter. Subsequently, this chapter will try to make sense of the result attained from the exploration of the use of the four variables, the substitution of the sound [ɣ], code-switching, the use of pragmatic marker "wa", and the use of diminutives through deploying where necessary concepts dealt with such as speech community, community of practice, social networks, age-grading and language variation.



## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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The work utilized three data gathering tools, anonymous observation, focus group interviews, and a virtual focus group. The first two are considered the backbone of the research and have been dealt with lengthily in the prior chapter of the work, which leaves the virtual focus group. Findings from the latter are qualitative in nature and dealing mostly with the attitude towards the dialect through the following questions: what are the salient features in the dialect of El-Menia? What do people from El-Menia think about the dialect? Is the dialect changing? Answers of these questions through virtual focus groups, or Facebook groups in this case of the research, will not be considered alone but they will be used in the discussion as a means of triangulation whether to support or refute findings from the other data collection methods.

### **5.2. Reflection on the Substitution of the [ɣ] for [q]**

Triangulating data from the statistical overview found from anonymous observation and interviews (see tables 4.10, 4.22, and figure 4.1) leaves no space for speculations that the substitution of the sound [ɣ] in the dialect is a prominent linguistic feature in El-Menia. The high numbers enlisted uncover that the standard for speakers in El-Menia is to change the sound [ɣ] to [q]. One of the points amid interviews was the manner by which individuals in El-Menia see the change. The frequent answer received that the alteration to the sound [q] serves as an identity marker which reveals that the speaker is from El-Menia. On the other hand, if a speaker does not use [q], either means he/she is not from the town or “not loyal” to it.

It has been firmly declared in the literature review the impact of social identity as both a predictor of social power and success. As per most interviewees, the utilization of [ɣ] instead of [q] is perceived as a negative behavior and a speaker can be corrected or even laughed upon such an act. The alteration in the sound [q], therefore, is a sign of loyalty to the dialect. The reason behind such an attitude comes as a result of people feeling that this linguistic feature is tied to their identity and carries a sense of belonging and more importantly it is in danger of extinction. People of El-Menia are aware that pronouncing words with [ɣ] using [q] is not standard whether in MSA or other dialects that surround them. A situation that necessitates the protection of the language which reflects their culture.

On the idea of the relation between identity, culture, and behavior, C.Palomé (1990, p.261) sees “When two cultures come in contact, conflicts triggered by the language loyalty

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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of their members are likely to result if the latter feel their social and linguistic identity threatened by the other culture”. Although, one might think that El-Menia being part of Algeria such way of looking at the matter can be an exaggeration. However, the way people are overprotective of their way of speaking is best understood as culture conflict. The repercussion of the latter was clearly felt during interviews as speakers were attentive on how they talk specifically with regards to the substitution of [ɣ].

### **5.2.1. The Distinctiveness of [ɣ]**

In the second chapter, the phonological features of [ɣ] and [q] were highlighted further asserting that /ɣ/ and /q/ are two distinct phonemes in CA and MSA as well as in dialects of Algeria. However, in the dialect of El-Menia the sound [ɣ] is substituted for [q] (see table 4.9). In the same time, as many language varieties in Algeria, the sound [q] is pronounced [g]. One of the strategies executed amid meetings to evaluate uniqueness is articulating deliberately words with the two sounds to check whether that triggers any misconception in correspondence. For instance, pronouncing the phrase “ راني غادي ” I am going” “ [rani ɣadi] with [q] caused some confusion. Intriguing, however, when using [ɣ] sound with the word, interviewees understood the meaning and they acknowledged that such phrase is not originally part of the dialect vocabulary. Notwithstanding such word has been registered in the observation phase with [q].

The case alluded to above conforms with the notion of overgeneralization. As indicated by Tagliamonte (2012, p.78), this “refers to a change in the use of a linguistic feature such that it comes to be used in a new context”. There is no doubt that such illustration would not have been conceivable without dialect contact as the expression is borrowed from another dialect. In concurrence with Romaine (2005) and in relation with Trudgill’s theory of “Sociolinguistic Typology”, the borrowed items go into the process of regularization of irregularity. A process that will render the expression more accepted by the community. However, it was clear that the expression is new and interviewees were not used to it. Another important conclusion to be drawn is that though the sounds [ɣ] and [q] can be used interchangeably in the dialect of El-Menia, people still maintain awareness of the proper use of [ɣ] in words that are not originally from the dialect.

Interviewing teachers, in particular, those who teach Arabic, reveals that teachers encourage pupils to articulate [ɣ] when they speak MSA. Teachers declared that pupils

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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utilize the standard [ɣ] inside the classroom with few slips, yet they revert back to [q] when they speak casually. At the four mosques visited, we kept records of how people spoke lessons between the prayers of Al-maghrib and Al-'isha during which the substitution to the sound [q] was dominant ( see table 4.8 ). Nevertheless, when Imams or their students recited verses of the Quran, no substitution was heard. In one of the occasions, an Imam was asked about how young students at mosques (age 5 and under) use the sound [ɣ] when reading the Quran, he answered that “most very young students learn the Quran by heart and imitation of reading thus they rarely commit mistakes”.

The cases demonstrate that hitherto the sounds [ɣ] and [q] can be utilized conversely in the vernacular of El-Menia, individuals of El-Menia, from an early age, learn to distinguish between where the substitution of the sound is appropriate and where is not. In spite of that we have run over two instances of overgeneralization and since El-Menia isn't invulnerable to borrowing which is one of the prominent contact-induced phenomena, means similar cases are there. However, the inquiry was not designed with this in mind. Therefore, there is no way to tell how profound the situation is.

### **5.2.2. Gender**

It is rather difficult to speak about gender as a standalone social group or a factor in language change because of the overlapping nature of all the factors. Contrasting numbers from observation (figure 4.2) and those of interviews (table 4.24) in regard to the correlation between the substitution of [ɣ] and gender indicates that female speakers take the lead in the usage of the standard [ɣ] and also in the rates of standard deviation. Pondering on the reasons behind these numbers requires associating them with practice and age. Since the latter will be dealt with separately in this chapter, the attention will be directed to Labov's concept (2007, p.78) “Change from above and change from below”.

The change from above also referred to as cognizant change which is introduced by a dominant class. In El-Menia, female speakers, specifically those between 15-40 years of age, intentionally make an effort not to utilize [q] bringing about a linguistic behavior in which they swing between the two sounds. It is hard to state that this conduct is arbitrary as there are different factors in play such as the audience effect and more importantly style and prestige. The last two factors are deemed to be of a great influence on how female speakers pronounce /ɣ/. Indeed, university students interviewed stated they feel that their

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

dialect is stigmatized especially the alteration of [ɣ], thus, they tend to converge to other dialects.

The announcement is supported by Facebook members who additionally have disclosed comparable comments. Picture 5.1 is a case of a member grumbling that female college students come with a different way of speaking specifically from the north part of the country. It would have been beneficial to investigate university students 'way of speaking further but there is no university in El-Menia. Yet, even though only 10 university students were interviewed their comments were aligned with the same idea.



Translation: “ It does not change , just girls they go to university then come with different way of speaking some like those of Algiers , Oran, or Annaba.”

Picture 5.1. A Snippet from Facebook Conversation on Language change in the Dialect

Intentionally swapping amongst [ɣ] and [q] by the questioner amid discussion uncovers that young female speakers are often susceptible to speech accommodation more than their male counterparts. The effect was clear with females again between the ages of 15 and 40 as in many cases the substitution of [ɣ] occurred just after the interview using it meaning that speakers were affected. Still, the effect often did not last long as speakers revert back to the sound [q] or start swinging between the two. Still, there is a difference between the two cases. The first one, upon asking, speakers seem to have picked the sound unconsciously but as the interviewer repeated the same act it did not have the same result. Whereas with the second case, speakers who swung between the two sounds seem to have full control and their actions were intentional. Males, on the other hand, were not affected by the interviewer trick.

As far as the question of which social group is leading language change, even at this early stage of discussion, numbers from the quantitative analysis and remarks from the

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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qualitative investigation line up in the idea that females are behind more variation and change when it comes to the substitution of [ɣ]. Often females are considered innovators in language and are held responsible for language change. However, in the talk about language change in the dialect and the substitution of the sound [ɣ] one has to understand that young females are reverting the change toward the standard [ɣ], a behavior that even if it is resisted by people of El-Menia remains the norm from the perspective of the official language.

### **5.2.3. Practice and Formality**

Since the discussion is heading toward the official language which in the case of El-Menia is MSA, there is also the need for the inclusion of the influence of formality on language use and function. Given the inability to ask participants during the anonymous observation phase, the solution was to assess the relation between the occurrence of the variable and the degree of formality of the place in which it was heard (see table 4.8). The procedure was easier in interviews where participants could be asked directly about what kind of practice they engage in. Most of the participants have divulged their work except few who did not like to share.

The unbalanced sample in the first data collection method is considered a problem as it can result in an erroneous interpretation. As a result, the difference between male and female speakers will be discarded at this stage. All that can be said here is that the total shows that the substitution of the sound [ɣ] remains a noticeable linguistic behavior in all places. Although in the previous chapter, the townhall and mosques were referred to as formal places, there is a fundamental difference between the two. The former mostly comprises regular people who come for paperwork and few employees. Subsequently, the linguistic behavior is affected by this. The obtained result is the lowest recorded among all the places.

There are two conceivable clarifications. The nature of the place requires consistent collaboration between employees who regularly demonstrate a high level of convention in their language conversely to individuals who speak casually. However, this gap generates misunderstanding as in the following conversation between an employee and a male speaker aged around 60s shows.

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

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Employee: الحاج ونش راك كاتب هنا ؟ - El-hadj , what did you write here? (referring to a name of the town)

Person: "القيشة"

Employee: واش واش ..وين هادي What what , where is this ?

Person: لقواط ( Laghouat Province )

Employee: " الغيشة " هيه قاصد - You mean El-Ghicha!

After hearing this conversation, the employee in charge was asked about what really happened. He said that the problem was in the use of El-Ghicha which is a small town in the province of Laghouat. Misconception, notwithstanding, was not on the grounds that the worker does not know the town but rather because of the person composed it with the /q/. The employee further added that " old people often make this problem and substitute [ɣ] to [q] in writing, this is why we do not use the [q] in our speech". Of course, the employees' behavior affects people's use of the variant [q]. As for the second reason, of all the places where observation was conducted, the only balanced sample in regard to gender distribution is that of town halls. Relating it what the employee said and the idea presented earlier that females are susceptible to speech accommodation, it becomes clear that the low usage of the [q] is associated with female speakers.

Mosques, on the other hand, are strictly formal places in which one doesn't anticipate that individuals will simply talk arbitrarily. Adapting diglossia as a framework to understand how people are supposed to talk in such places, one would expect them to use only MSA. Nonetheless, this is not valid as no change to MSA was perceived except in few vocabularies that can be considered taboo to be mentioned and to our matter, only the variant [q] was heard when people spoke. Formality here is exhibited in the loyalty to the dialect and its features. The formal nature of the place also affects how people speak as they will be very selective about what they say and how. Besides, it would be rather embarrassing for a speaker to use [ɣ] instead of the [q] as most people who ask questions during lessons are regular attendees.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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Moving to less formal settings, coffee shops, markets, and the grocery shop, people pay less attention to their speech resulting in high fluctuation in these places compared to formal settings (see standard deviation in table 4.8). The variation exhibited in informal places also results in low usage of the variant [q]. What happened in public places like this is that people feel less controlled by vernacular rules and less worried about people's attitude towards them. Making use of interviewees' view, some speakers feel that the pronunciation of the [q] instead of the [ɣ] renders the dialect less prestigious which explains why some do change their linguistic behavior.

Focusing now on interviews, although the variation in numbers listed in table 4.26 plainly shows that there is a connection between practice and the articulation of [ɣ] as [q], one needs to be cautious in the interpretation of these figures. The reason behind this notice is that the sample was not designed specifically to probe into the relationship between the alteration of the sound [ɣ] and practice, yet the decision was not to exclude the investigation of its influence. Starting with gender division, [q] is more favorable for males who also use it with more consistency than females.

In table 4.26, four categories distinguish themselves with the maximum substitution average: farmers, merchants, drivers, and retirees. They are all characterized by being males only. Furthermore, the first three can be considered as informal types of work which are relatively not stable with mostly a meager income. Coming in the second place are the housewives, not identified, and the jobless. These groups, too, are characterized by informality and low economic status. Numbers fall with the formal type of work starting from administrators, pupils, university students, teachers, reaching the lowest scores marked with doctors. The third category consists of groups that have relatively a better income or are still parented.

The undertaking to decipher these findings is rather complex as several factors are involved. First, from a purely statistical standing point, economic status and the level of formality are deciding factors in the use of the variant [q] both of which are linearly related to practice. However, numbers do not divulge the exact reason because when referring to the community of practice, there are many aspects that characterize a group related by practice. In this regard, Barton and Tusting (2005) name: joint enterprise, shared repertoire of common resources of language, situated learning, participation, and mutual engagement.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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The question is which of those would help in explaining the relation between practice and sound change?

The difficulty is in pinpointing exactly to which aspect is behind the change as it is problematic to talk about a common endeavor nor shared repertoire of language resources as the diversity of types of work we are dealing with does hardly allow that. Roughly the same can be said about situated learning and participation. The notion of mutual engagement or the interaction between members is helpful in this context. Nevertheless, in this case, there is the need to expand the idea of engagement to include the interaction with other people outside the group. The purpose is to enlarge the talk about the repercussion of practice for language usage and refer to what kind of social networks interviewees come in contact with and the role of the standard language and prestige in the change of sound [q].

The change in the way of speaking in relation to function takes us back to diglossia (Ferguson, 1959). The issue here lies in adhering to Western beliefs on the notion of diglossia as it does not reflect what happens in El-Menia simply because no one was heard speaking MSA in formal contexts. Bassiouney (2009) elaborates more on the idea emphasizing that instead of the distinction between the high variety and the low one, there is prestige variety in L itself. However, the questions are what makes this High L prestigious? Putting it in other words, we can assume that there is a variety that places itself between H and L. Bassiouney (2009) further adds that this variety is influenced by H. Adapting this explanation, the sound [ɣ] being standard in MSA and also in other dialects is considered more prestigious even in L variety.

So far, the sound [ɣ] is related to prestige and formal types of work in the dialect of El-Menia. Formal types of work reside on different social networks than informal ones. For instance, interactions between teachers, administrators, or doctors require often the use of a more standardized form of the dialect. On the contrary, for merchants or farmers, there is no need to change the casual way of speaking. These social networks render linguistic behaviors exhibited by the two categories as norms and further exert pressure on their members to conform to them.



## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

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### 5.2.4. Variation by Age and Family

Without past research on the dialect of El-Menia, rolling out an inquiry about language change has to resort to apparent-time construct. The gist of the theory is the utilization of cross-referencing of several age groups to detect a change in language. Since the age groups in the observation phase came as a result of speculation because asking people about their age was not an option, the discussion in subsequent section makes use of numbers obtained in interviews only. Figure 4.14 is methodically divided into two parts by age groups. Starting with a higher occurrence of the variant [q], whether males or females, elders aged more than 61 did not use the variable [ɣ]. This category can be said to represent the dialect of El-Menia. Even if the family criterion is considered, the same picture persists as indicated in graphs 4.15 to 4.19.

In the second age group 41-60, the averages fluctuate considerably throughout the five families. However, at this level, the number of speakers in each family and in each age group is rather small, therefore, averages are susceptible to wide variation. A reason why a closer look at individual participants in families is necessary. Table 5.1 stands as an example of the intricacies that need to be unraveled to arrive at a solid interpretation. The table shows the significance of the inclusion of standard deviation. Admittedly, the latter was not incorporated in family graphs for summary sake. (For detailed result see the appendix 2). Still, even not displayed, it was taken into consideration all through the discussion.

Table 5.1. Family Interviewees aged between 41 and 60 Substitution of the [ɣ]

Age Group	Gender	Native SP	Work	Substitution (%)
41- 60	Male	Yes	Doctor	20 %
41- 60	Male	Yes	Administrator	100 %
41- 60	Male	Yes	Merchants	100%
41- 60	Female	No	Housewives	0 %
41- 60	Female	Yes	Housewives	90 %
41- 60	Female	Yes	Housewives	100 %

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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Looking at the variation through quantitative analysis is for sure going to conceal points of interest that in actuality best clarify participants' way of talking. For instance, the doctor interviewed often used [ɣ] in his speech despite being a native speaker conforming to what was discussed earlier on the influence of practice. On the other hand, females average of the substitution was taken down by the non-native female speaker. What the numbers are not saying is that the doctor's wife is also interviewed with a score of 33 % substitution recorded (Interviewee 17 see appendix). The wife is a native speaker and a housewife but it is rather clear the influence of the husband's way of speaking. In fact, it could be also a result of the wife's influence. For age groups 15-25 and 26-40, the variation is best explained through the connection with practice and prestige. Almost half of the interviewees questioned in these two groups consists of administrators, pupils, university students, teachers, and one doctor. A type of people whose, as discussed earlier, social networks would enforce the change to the standard [ɣ].

Before moving to the discussion about variation with the younger age group, the formality of the interviews needs to be taken into consideration. The aim of conducting unstructured interviews was to yield uncontrolled types of conversations in which interviewees can speak naturally. However, the result was not as expected as male gatherings were more formal than those of females. Most parts of the interviews were completed through one-and-one conversation. On the other hand, females' meetings were informal and they spoke loudly without hesitation. In fact, their conversations were helpful in qualitative analysis, especially when referring to children and variation. Therefore, the possibility that such a situation had repercussions on the findings can not be ruled out.

### **5.2.5. Child Language Variation**

Dedicating an independent section for the last age group comes as a result of two reasons. First, unlike the consistency demonstrated in the previous age groups, the marked unsteadiness in averages of the substitution with the younger age group requires cranking the microscope on participants and the causes of their linguistic behavior. Secondly, the topic of child language variation "is an area of research that emerged within the field of variationist sociolinguistics" (Roberts, 2013, p.263). Therefore, besides what has been said with adults in this research, it is important to include a different set of theories, as discussed in chapter one, in the discussion of the variation exhibited with children.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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The growing debate in variationist sociolinguistics and child language development is fueled by the challenge to distinguish between what is developmental variation and that which is acquired socially (Green, 2007). A child is often said to be between ages 6 and 12 some even extend that to 18, thus, the last age group in the discussion comprised children who have the lowest overall score recorded during observation and interviews compared to other age groups (see table 4.11, figure 4.5, and figure 4.14). However, those numbers provide a shallow view of what happened. Unlike adults with whom prestige and formality are linked with their change in linguistic behavior, children seem not to be affected by these reasons. Consequently, putting these numbers into words dictates looking into individual cases and the inclusion of the family criterion in the midst of the discussion.

One of the remarkable aspects in variation with children in the matter of the substitution of [ɣ] to [q] is that they do not swing between the two. Table 5.2 shows that out of 27 children talked with, 8 of them used only [ɣ] while 27 used [q] and only 3 swung between the two. Being a dominant linguistic behavior in the dialect, the 27 children's substitution is justifiable as they have acquired it. The eight's way of speaking, on the other hand, poses a question. An investigation had to be carried out to identify these eight. Starting with child 4 (see appendix 2), who is a 6 years old female, her parents are the doctor and his wife referred to earlier. Out of the eight children, 4 were confirmed that one of the parents does not use the [q] variant.

At this point, the talk is not about a degree of variation as much as a complete change towards standard [ɣ]. Whereas the variation shown from adults was a reflection of social factors on language and often the choice they made was conscious at some point, children interviewed were nurtured with one sound in mind. Of course, it is safe to assume that these children will be affected by social factors and they will be obliged to make a decision as to which sound they should use.

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

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Substitution of [ɣ]	Frequency	Percent
00	8	29.6
40.00	1	3.7
70.00	2	7.4
100.00	16	59.3
Total	27	100.0

Table 5.2 Frequency of the Substitution of [ɣ]

### 5.3. Reflection on Code-Switching in the Dialect of El-Menia

The reflection on code-switching in this research surpasses the idea of it as a mere phenomenon to extend to possible implications for language change in the dialect. Of course, it goes without saying that Algerian dialects are greatly influenced by French and El-Menia's is no exception. Furthermore, unlike the findings chapter in which the results from the four variables were treated separately, the discussion will include the relationship between code-switching and the substitution of [ɣ]. The study deployed a variationist approach by counting how many times speakers have code-switched during conversations.

In El-Menia as referred to earlier, the dialect is the matrix language while French is the embedded one. The framework on which an utterance was deemed to be code-switching is better explained through the definition of Haugen (1956, p.40) "when a bilingual speaker introduces a completely unassimilated word from another language into his speech". Certainly, the research can be harshly reprimanded for the shallow talk about code-switching since neither the methodology, the results, nor the discussion goes deep into the matter. Consequently, the discussion focuses on the idea of code-switching as a perceptible change in the dialect of El-Menia from its Arabic characteristics.

Starting by reflecting on the comparison between the results of code-switching from the two phases of data collection, there is a sharp decrease in numbers as low averages were recorded during interviews compared to the ones obtained in anonymous observation. However, it is difficult to interpret and to say whether people of El-Menia code-switch frequently or the opposite due to the lack of a baseline to draw a comparison. Upon asking interviewees about people's attitude towards French and its use, the common answer was

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

that it is not welcomed and most said they are not competent in that language. On the other hand, the answers of the VGF participants were more detailed as often they expressed a negative attitude towards French.



Translation :” I do not know French and I do not like it .....those who change their language , they just show off .....that’s it.”

Picture 5.2. A Snippet from Facebook Conversation on Attitude towards Code-switching

In the above statement in VFG (picture 5.2), a participant states that “I don’t know French and I don’t like it, and those who change their language [ Code-Switch to French] they do it to show off, that’s it”. Although it is said by one participant, the tacit agreement that statement was met with indicated that most group members share a similar feeling. The attitude comes generally from two causes. First, one of the constraints in switching to French lies in the lack of competence in that language. The first cause, in turn, fuels the negative attitude towards code-switching, a similar feeling also was detected with interviewees whether males of females.

### 5.3.1. Code-switching and Gender

Dissimilar to the substitution of [y] in which females are taking the lead, the numbers in code-switching demonstrate that the conduct is comparable crosswise over gender. Looking closer ( see figure 4.9), unmistakably females often code-switched more in formal places. More precisely, they code-switched often when they were engaged in

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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conversations with other females. Males, on the other hand, often were encouraged by the need to convey messages that dialect vocabulary does not satisfy. For instance, on many occasions, the participants borrow French words to refer to particular objects that simply neither the dialect nor MSA would provide. In other words, conveying effective messages sometimes can be only attained through resorting to French.

This reason also explains why even lower numbers were recorded during interviews than observation. The kind of topics raised doesn't simply justify the need to switch or borrow from French. However, there were two cases in which the interviewees tried to show their social status speaking with the interviewer using French. Yet, their behavior changed completely when speaking with other interviewees. With females, it was rather difficult to recognize any pattern in code-switching and although prestige was felt to be a driving factor, it is hard to detect that in recording as it can be better depicted in the speakers' gesture and body language.

### **5.3.2. Code-switching and Practice**

One of the questions that are often overlooked in the influence of practice on language is the difference between inside and outside the workplace. Though this research is not designed specifically to answer such a question, interviewees often explicitly said that their way of speaking is different at work as they have to use French since it is necessary. On contrary, there is no need for it outside. Therefore, even if practice indeed is a factor that encourages code-switching because speakers come into contact with different social networks, the effect does not last after speakers revert back to more casual contexts such as home. Definitely, this claim has little to be backed with in the current research as methodology and number do not permit that, yet, it has to be considered.

The findings in table 4.29 demonstrate that type of practice corresponds with the number of times a speaker code-switches. Nevertheless, upon looking closer at speakers' practice, it is clear that the level of education is also a crucial factor. Standing as an evidence, the low usage of code-switching is clear with participants who don't work in formal types of jobs. In fact, it has been asserted many times by interviewers that El-Menia suffers from huge numbers of pupils abandoning school earlier and therefore a high rate of unemployment. Unfortunately, our repeated requests for official statistics were always met with rejection. Moving to more educated participants, the numbers rise, however, the

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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unbalanced sample in regard to practice again is a hindering feature in yielding a reasonable interpretation in particular in the matter of code-switching between males and females.

### **5.3.3. Code-switching by Age and Family**

In the subsequent section, the relation between code-switching with consideration of the family criterion will be discussed. Starting with the overall picture, findings on the correlation between code-switching and age in both data collection methods indicate roughly the same conclusion (see figures 4.8, 4.9, 4.21, and 4.22 to 4.27): low occurrence of code-switching with a younger population and a sharp increase with peak values with age groups 15-25 and 26-40, and a sharp decrease with people aged 41 – 60. Finally, a marked usage of French with the older age group.

The low occurrence of code-switching with children is related to the age of onset of exposure. In other words, the age at which children start acquiring French. In this regard, there are two possibilities; whether they acquire it at home from an early age or they learn it at school. In the case of El-Menia, children are taught at primary school thus the talk is about pupils aged between 8 and 9 years old. A child still needs to master, to a certain degree, the language before he /she can use it in code-switching. In the discussion about the substitution of [ʏ], parents' linguistic conduct is passed on to their children. On the contrary, in all families interviewed, the number of times participants code-switched remained very low to influence their children's linguistic behavior. Furthermore, there has been an agreement that the use of French was stigmatized and not encouraged in society.

High numbers of code-switching are recorded with the age groups of 15-25 and 26-40. Speakers concerned here are often the ones who have formal types of jobs, therefore, the influence of practice and more importantly the level of education is perceived in their language. The count of workers presented in table 5.3 in each family closely correspond with the variation in code-switching instances. Assigning the adverb closely is justified by the fact that statistics and observing interviewees behavior did not yield a recognizable pattern to form a solid interpretation.

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

Table 5.3. Count of Code-Switching for Participants in Formal Type of Works in Each Family

Family	Gender	Adminis trator	University Students	Retiree s	Teacher s	Doctors	Total
F1	Female	1	2	0	1	0	4
	Male	1	1	0	0	1	3
	Total	2	3	0	1	1	7
F2	Female	2	2	0	0	1	5
	Male	2	0	2	1	0	5
	Total	4	2	2	1	1	10
F3	Female	2	0	0	2	0	4
	Male	2	3	1	0	0	6
	Total	4	3	1	2	0	10
F4	Female	1	0	0	1	0	2
	Male	1	1	0	0	0	2
	Total	2	1	0	1	0	4
F5	Female	3	0	0	0	0	3
	Male	1	1	1	1	0	4
	Total	4	1	1	1	0	7

The elderly, on the other hand, demonstrate contradictory behaviors. On the one hand, people between 41 and 75 years did hardly code-switch to French. Yet speakers aged more than 75 years old were more apt for the use of the local dialect and French in a single interaction. The plausible explanation lies in the level of education. Most speakers between 41 and 75 did not attend school at all, therefore, their access to French is limited. On the other hand, there is a spike in the instances of code-switching with the last age group perceptible with males only in family 1, 4, and 5. However, it is important to bear in mind that in each family there is only a maximum of six persons in each age group. The highlighted interviewees in table 5.4 stated that they are fluent speakers in French because of their past interaction with tourists.



## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

Table 5.4. Participants Older than 75 Years Old Code-switching

Family	Native	Gender	Age	Practice	Instances of code-switching
F1	Yes	Male	75>	Not Identified	4.00
F1	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	.00
F1	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	.00
F2	Yes	Male	75>	Retirees	2.00
F2	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	0.00
F3	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	0.00
F3	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	0.00
F4	Yes	Male	75>	Farmers	5.00
F4	Yes	Male	75>	Farmers	8.00
F4	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	0.00
F4	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	0.00
F5	Yes	Male	75>	Farmers	5.00
F5	Yes	Male	75>	Farmers	6.00
F5	Yes	Male	75>	Not Identified	7.00
F5	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	.00
F5	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	.00

### 5.4. The Relationship Between Code-Switching and the Substitution of [y]

Up to this stage, the variables have been treated independently. In light of the discussion above about code-switching and substitution of [y] for [q], motivations behind them in the dialect in El-Menia clearly overlap in two factors; prestige and the level of formality. Consequently, it is logical to assume that there is a relation between the two. The attempt to explore the relation statistically calls for the linear association between two variables through the measurement of bivariate (Pearson) factor. Unfortunately, the substitution was calculated by percentages while code-switching through the count of instances. Therefore, mathematical outcomes in this regard will not be accurate.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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As a solution, a qualitative approach will be employed through careful mediation over the results. The findings were filtered leaving only speakers who obtained less than 100 % average in the substitution of [ɣ]; in other words, those who either were alternating between the two sounds or have abandoned the sound [q] altogether. Indeed, a sheer glance at the numbers put side by side (See appendix 3) further confirms what was said earlier. It is rather clear that formal types of jobs dominate the practice column. On the correlation between the two variables, the table shows that often those who favor [ɣ] over [q] also are the ones who code-switch more.

### **5.5. Reflection on the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa” in the Dialect of El-Menia**

In the pilot research conducted on the dialect of El-Menia, we brought up the issue of what are the salient linguistic features? Of course, no one would know better the answer than the native people. The results obtained indeed confirmed people’s view on their dialect regarding the substitution of [ɣ] as a defining characteristic and code-switching as an emerging phenomenon. However, the findings on the use of pragmatic marker “ wa” do contradict our pilot research as the numbers obtained are extremely low.

In the observation phase, only 47 speakers were heard using the pragmatic marker “wa”, a number which is reflected in the low mean value registered ( see table 4.13). In the interviews, only 22 use it with an average of more than the one recorded in the observation phase. The occurrence of the pragmatic marker is characterized by being both random and isolated. Two descriptions that make arriving at a solid interpretation extremely difficult. Fortunately, in the discussion about the maker in the VFG, the participants provided what can be seen as conceivable reasons behind the rareness of the occurrence.

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

The image shows a snippet of a Facebook conversation. It consists of several posts and comments. The first post is in Arabic: "شكون لي يقول وا في تالي كلامو..راكي ماشي وا .....هههههه". Below it are "Like" and "39 minutes ago" indicators. A comment says "Like you.. I rarely use it." The second post is also in Arabic: "كيفك قليل وين تقولها". Below it are "Like" and "5" indicators. A comment says "Who is saying it these days ... I do not hear it at all." The third post is in Arabic: "شكون لي راه يقولها هاد ليام..منيش نسمعها قاع". Below it are "Like" and "6" indicators. A comment says "My brother use it as a sign of manhood hahahaha". The fourth post is in Arabic: "خوبا يقومها ياسر بترجل بيها هههه". Below it are "Like" and "0" indicators. A comment says "I do not know but I say it to my friends a lot." The fifth post is in Arabic: "منيش عارف بصح تقولها مع صحابي ياسر". Below it are "Like" and "0" indicators. A comment says "Only nomads use it." The sixth post is in Arabic: "يقولوها للعرويا اففف". Below it are "Like" and "0" indicators.

Picture 5.3. A Snippet from Facebook Conversation on the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa”

The discussion was initiated with the question of who is using “wa” at the end of his speech. The first one commented, “I, similarly to you, I rarely say it”. The second one was censored as it contains taboo words. The third one, in an exclamation, asks “who is saying it these days, I am not hearing it anymore”. The two participants’ views align with the investigation as indeed the two variables were rarely heard. In the third statements, the participants wrote that “his brother says it as a sign of manhood”. Unfortunately, the participant did not elaborate more on the idea nor could be contacted for further information. The last remark is more of a mockery than an opinion as he used the word “عرويا” [ʔrobi:zja] which denotes someone who is a nomad or more precisely in this context an idiot.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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The last two comments suggest that the use of pragmatic marker “wa” is somehow not welcomed by people and looked at as a negative behavior. Taking such remarks into consideration, we asked interviewees about their view on it. In this regard, the elders did not provide any helpful insight into the why. Participants in age groups 15-25 and 26-40, on the other hand, confirmed the view stated by VFG members on the use of the pragmatic marker “wa”.

### **5.5.1. Functions of the Pragmatic Marker “ wa”**

From the perspective of variationist sociolinguistics, variation exhibited in one’s speech is not simply an alternative way of speaking, but it serves a function whether to deliver a direct message or it represents some social embedded features. The same applies to pragmatic markers. Therefore, the endeavor to understand their functions calls for going through “the process by which the language user takes a sentence representation provided by the grammar and, given the context in which the sentence is uttered, determines what messages and what effects the speaker has conveyed” (Fraser, 1996, p. 167).

However, the methodology opted for in the research is a hindering factor in understanding the function of the pragmatic marker “wa”. Although the research is based on the two approaches quantitative and qualitative, it is the former which received considerable attention. Again, the marker was heard only 24 times by 22 participants thus during the whole interviews most speakers said it only once. Consequently, it is extremely hard to understand the intentional behavior of the marker from the part of the speaker and what impact it had on the hearer. Faced with these challenges, the solution is to resort to the qualitative approach and previous research done in this area of inquiry.

In his master dissertation, Ounissi (2017) investigates the use of pragmatic markers in the speech community of Ouedi Righ which is a region in Algeria located at about 700 km of El-Menia. Contrary to the result obtained in the current research, the use of “wa” is widespread in Ouedi Righ. Yet, he also got low numbers in Touggourt due mostly to non-natives as it is a commercial place where people from different regions of Algeria live and invest. Focusing on the methodology, in Ounissi’s work nine criteria were used: confirmation, exclamation, contraction, further inquiry, question, spontaneous use, used as a habit, and continuity of speech. He recorded higher numbers with confirmation, exclamation, and further inquiry.

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

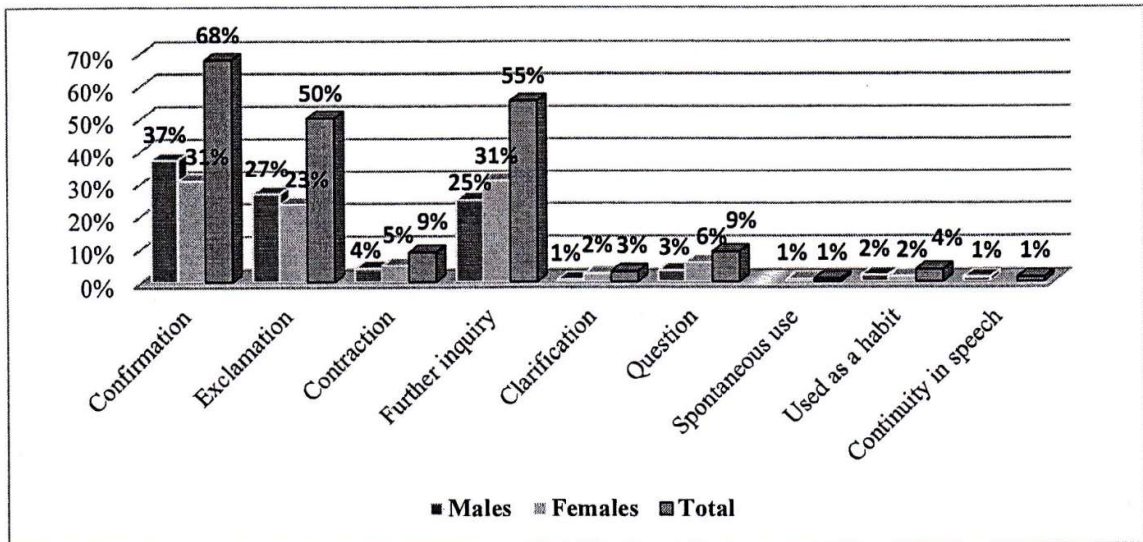


Figure 5.1. The functions of Pragmatic Markers [wa] / [bba] in the Speech Community of Ouedi Righ . Retrieved from Ounissi, A. (2017). The use of Pragmatic Markers in an Algerian Social Context: A Case Study of Ouedi Righ Speech Community. Unpublished Master Dissertation. P.53.

Starting from confirmation, the most common use of “ wa” was heard in greeting.

El-Menia Dialect	Transcription	Meaning
راك لباس وا ؟	ræk læbæs wa	You are fine, aren't you?

The example above was heard five times during observation in coffee shops and two times in interviews from the same person. Upon hearing it, the interviewee was asked about it. He said, “I have the habit of saying it and it is known here”. On the question of why did you use it? The answer was “ I frequently use it”. Yet, he also did not rule out the function of confirmation since he is enquiring about the well-being of the addressee. The interviewee further stated that the use of the marker is strictly related to close friends and

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

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also around the same age as it will be rude to say it to elders and it will be unaccepted for a younger person.

### Example 2

El-Menia Dialect	Transcription	Meaning
راك رايح, وا ؟	rak rajaæh , wa	Are you leaving, aren't you ?

### Example 3

El-Menia Dialect	Transcription	Meaning
حاسبني مترفه وا	rak habni metrafæh wa	You think I am rich, don't you?

In examples 2 and 3, the pragmatic marker “wa” is clearly used as a tag question. Both examples were recorded during the interviews. In example two, the speaker is enquiring about the confirmation of whether the addressee is leaving or not. In the third, the function of “wa” in this case is mostly used to express exclamation. However, in both instances, the use of a tag question is governed by social norms as it can be only said to close friends since the tone which was spoken with was a bit impolite. Nevertheless, in line with Holmes (2013, p.113) “interpreting the function of tags is a subjective business”. Complicating the matter further, among the types of pragmatic markers Fraser (1996) listed, he includes ones that serve as discourse markers. He elaborates that tag questions are called discourse markers when they do not contribute to the representative meaning but to the procedural one. Moore & Podesva (2009) also point to the difficulty of explaining the purpose of pragmatic markers as they state that “Tag questions, though they all conduce organized talk, can vary dramatically above the level of the utterance in their discourse properties and below the level of the utterance in terms of grammatical and phonological content” (p.479).

### 5.5.2. The Relationship Between Age and Practice in the Use of the Pragmatic Marker “wa”

The pragmatic marker “wa” is frequently heard with people aged between 15 and 35 in observation and interviews( see figure 4.11 and table 4.32). Mindful of the results, the

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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suitable approach is to investigate the reasons that render the pragmatic marker unfavorable by most people in El-Menia instead of looking into what motivates those who use it. From a birds' eye view, correlating the occurrence of PM “wa” with practice indicates that those who are designated as jobless are the ones who used it the most. Yet, the absence of any numbers in table 4.32 with age groups 61- 75 and 75 > raises the question of whether the marker is a real linguistic feature of El-Menia or is it just borrowed?

The answers to the question received from participants whether in the VFG or interviewees were not in accord with each other. The inconsistency emerges from two opposing views. Starting with the assumption that the elders speak the purest version of the dialect, the elders’ opinion matters the most. Yet, the old participants concerned did not offer any satisfactory answer and most provided vague comments. On the other hand, both participants of the VFG and interviews aged between 20- 35 avowed that El-Menia is known for the pragmatic marker “wa”. They have even asserted that older people use it in their speech, a statement which totally contradicts the research finding. Participants in the next age group offered an opposing view affirming that the marker is no longer used.

In such case, Foolen’s (2011) perspective of PMs is helpful as he points to the difficulty in analyzing them due to their polyfunctionality all of which need a closer look at topics related to pragmatics such as speech acts, implicatures, and politeness. No doubt, the latter has a significant role in shaping our linguistic behavior as it is ubiquitous in language. According to Brown (2015), politeness is the consideration of other’s feelings basically through minding how they should be “interactionally treated, including behaving in a manner that demonstrates appropriate concern for interactors’ social status and their social relationship” (p.326).

Assessing the participants’ behavior from the perspective of politeness, it becomes evident that the use of the marker “wa” is considered impolite. Hence, it is typically restricted between close friends and also confined to young male speakers. The marker is not used in open speech and never in formal contexts. The older the person gets the more formal he/ she becomes especially in addressing others. Accordingly, the elders in El-Menia do not add the marker to their speech. All along the discussion, practice and the level of education are intertwined and have a significant impact on the linguistic behavior of people

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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of El-Menia. On the same vein, the presence of the marker is associated with people doing informal types of jobs.

### **5.6. Reflection on the Use of Diminutives in the Dialect of El-Menia**

The numbers on the use of diminutive forms of the language from observation and interviews are clearly inconsistent as only 17 % of people observed used them opposed to 43% in interviews. Facebook participants assured that diminutives are regularly used in the speech of most people and all ages. However, the findings from interviews correlate with the literature review in the second chapter confirming that diminutives are dominantly employed by women who constitute 80 % of the overall participants who used them. Such finding, then, contradicts with what VFG participants think.

The attempt to understand the fluctuation in numbers dictates exploring the functions of diminutives in conversation. First names, verbs, and adjectives can all be reduced in the dialect of El-Menia. Although reducing first names can be considered a rude behavior, it is a common practice between female relatives and neighbors. In fact, female interviewees stated that reducing the first name is a sign of friendship and does not convey the meaning of little. A statement that is not shared with their male's counterpart who see that such a behavior would be considering ridiculing and can be accepted only as a humor from a close male friend. However, intimacy and endearment can also be conveyed through reduced first names. Both male and female speakers were heard addressing young children by their diminutive form of names in a way to indicate that they are small children. As far as last names are concerned, neither during observation nor the interviews a record of last names being reduced was kept. Most participants in this regard asserted that it is extremely insolent.

The utilization of diminutive forms of verbs and adjectives is also registered with participants. Verbs in diminutive forms can also have a negative connotation attached to the original meaning of the verb. Often the aim of reducing a verb would be to ridicule the action. The utilization of verbs in such case is mostly confined to conversations between parents and their children. Contrary to first names which are governed by strict untold social norms to whom they can be said, adjectives and verbs raise less worry. Reduced adjective forms often are used to describe small objects or children. Consequently, diminutive adjectives are heard more often than verbs or names.



## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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On the correlation between age and diminutives, the findings indicate that they are not confined to a particular age group but rather heard in the speech of all participants. Adding the family criterion to numbers does not divulge any recognizable pattern. Concerning diminutives and practice, it is rather difficult to identify any relationship nor linking them with a particular type of jobs is possible. However, formality in addressing people and the influence of contexts are controlling factors. Therefore, people who work in the formal type of jobs develop the habit of not using diminutives in particular names and verbs which also might impact their use in less formal contexts. In the same vein, as stated earlier, the nature of interviews with male speakers could have been the reason behind the low numbers recorded.

### **5.7. Implications for Language Change**

Albeit throughout the whole discussion above, there was reiterated mentioning of language change, we were punctilious not to jump to conclusions before examining all possible aspects in language variation exhibited by people of El-Menia with the variables investigated. Nevertheless, having in mind what was said earlier, it is at this stage that a valid interpretation of the implications of variation for language change in the dialect of El-Menia can be arrived at. Each variable will be looked at separately examining potential hints for language change in progress from gradient age distributions.

#### **5.7.1. Language Change in Progress: The Revert Substitution of [q] to [ɣ]**

The frequent occurrence of the variable and the variant in the same community is an indication that the change is not complete but rather in progress. The compelling question that needs to be addressed now: are people abandoning [q] for the standard [ɣ]? The comparison between the different age groups in the community of El-Menia does indisputably reveal that the younger generation exhibits more variation in this respect. However, another issue is raised here lies in the interpretation of such fluctuation in language whether as a change in progress or a closed loop of age grading variation which does not affect the dialect as a whole.

In El-Menia, almost certainly, there is a generation of young speakers who are raised articulating [ɣ] rather than the vernacular standard [q]. While the situation with those is a complete change reverting back to the standard [ɣ], there is the chance that such linguistic

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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conduct will be challenged by social norms thus they will go again to [q]. However, while there are forces pulling the change towards the [ɣ] there are others pushing it towards [q], naturally, the outcome is dependent on which ones prevail. From one side, the negative attitude towards the behavior of pronouncing [ɣ] as a sign of disloyalty to the dialect has a major impact on how people speak in particular in gathering. Then, there is the alternative point of view which is presented in seeing the pronunciation of [q] instead of [ɣ] as an odd conduct that goes against the norms whether from the standing point of MSA or other Algerian dialects. In turn, such inclination is also driven by prestige, a factor which influence grows proportional to the level of education.

Families who inspire their children to pronounce the standard [ɣ] are often the ones who relish good social and economic status. Therefore, it is naturally those children who will have the opportunity to acquire good education level will complete the circle of going to the more formal type of jobs which in turn enforces the use of a more formal language. Adding to that, the economic status of El-Menia is not a static variable. In the recent year, the society of El-Menia is changing significantly, more people are moving from agriculture to work in the government sector whether as administrators or teachers.

Having all this in mind, it is clear that forces affecting language change are not in equilibrium since the social structure is in constant change favoring more and more the use of the formal form of the dialect. At this point, hence, it is safe to say that the dialect of El-Menia is exhibiting a rapid change in regard to the substitution of [ɣ]. A change that will be difficult to revert by age as the factors that pull it away from [q] are rather stronger than those pushing to it. Of course, one has to keep in mind that the adaptation of apparent-time construct can only allow the research to provide sheer speculations of what might happen.

### **5.7.2. Language Change in Progress: The Inclusion of French in the Dialect**

Both the findings related to the variation on code-switching and the correlation between the latter and the substitution of [ɣ] designate that the same forces that push speakers to utilize [ɣ] instead of [q] are the ones incentivizing them to code-switch. Considering the relationship, the comportment of code-switching should be incrementing in proportion to the substitution, however, it is not the case in the community of El-Menia.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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The lack of competency in French is the major factor that prevents such a change. In El-Menia, it is difficult to find people speaking only in French. In fact, in conversations recorded, the use of French rarely passed the stretch of a sentence.

In addition, the prevailing attitude in the society of El-Menia works against the use of code-switching in particular in less formal places. Consequently, regular usage of code-switching is often dictated by the necessity to convey messages that can be very difficult to do with the local dialect. While the influence of prestige is still present as a motive to code-switching, it remains insignificant since it is not deemed acceptable by social norms. The ramifications of the status of French in general in the society are seen in the fact that it is not passed to children as we have seen with the age of onset of exposure in code-switching.

Unlike the conclusion we arrived at with the substitution as a good example of a change in progress, language variation exhibited with code-switching can be considered as a closed loop of language variation. Therefore, the fluctuations obtained in numbers are best treated as age-grading related rather than a change in progress. However, the balance that is keeping the behavior code-switching in check in the society is sensible and can be easily tipped since education level is improving day by day.

### **5.7.3. A Dialect Language Feature Decay: The Fading of the Pragmatic Marker “wa”**

The pragmatic marker “wa” in the dialect of El-Menia is so infrequent to hear, a day could pass listening to people and it would not occur. A situation that drove us to question whether “wa” is originally used in the dialect. However, upon further investigation, it has become evident that indeed it is. The sporadic occurrence of the pragmatic marker is primarily due to being confined to mostly one particular age group; those between 20 and 35 years old. On top of that, rules of politeness even in the mentioned age group prevent its utilization in most cases since it is circumscribed between close friends. Consequently, the conditions that control the pragmatic marker “wa” make it unpropitious by people of El-Menia and accordingly abandoned.

The talk here, thus, is not about language change in progress nor about age-grading variation but rather the situation represents a good example of a language feature that is fading away. The speed at which the marker is disappearing is related to the change in

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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society. The shift from a totally agricultural society to a modern one has a repercussion on the way people gather. The large group of people gathering after work is now something of the past especially for those who work more than seven hours a day. The consequences of the new situation are seen in the disappearance of that special language that binds close friends for a more formal one.

### **5.7.4. A Feminine Language Feature: The Use of Diminutives**

Of all the variables covered by the research, it is the utilization of diminutives that proved to be arduous to interpret. The difficulty emanates from the inability to predict when, where, and why they are used. Albeit the essence of variationist sociolinguistics that there is no random linguistic behavior, the inquiry could not pinpoint the exact causes that make a speaker uses diminutives. Indeed, in the discussion above, there was a reference to the functions of diminutives and why people of EL-Menia use them. However, even if these factors are met, there is simply no guarantee that a speaker would utilize them.

Adding to the unpredictability of diminutives, numbers are scattered across all age groups with no sign of gradual decrease. Accordingly, it is rather difficult to jump to a valid conclusion. For instance, numbers obtained don't offer answers to whether male speakers were used to utilize diminutives in the past and is what we see now a result of language change? From a purely qualitative standing point, the comments of the participants point to the idea that diminutives are disappearing from the dialect. If the same approach adopted with the other variables is deployed here, relating education level, prestige, and the level of formality, such comments would have a sense.

### **5.8. Language Change in the Arabic Dialect of El-Menia**

Having covered all the variables, it is time to examine the dialect of El-Menia holistically. The fundamental question and actually the very title of this thesis implies whether the dialect of El-Menia is changing or not? Surely, the result, its analysis, and the discussion all direct the attention to one answer that the Arabic dialect of El-Menia is indeed changing. Then, a change often entails a starting point and an ending one. The answer, thus, provokes the question of where is the dialect going?

Figure 5.2 is an illustration of what was discussed earlier on language change in the dialect. First, the change still put under the framework of diglossia since MSA is still

## Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change

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regarded as the H variety. Nevertheless, the L variety is split into two: L and H. The revert back to the sound [y], the use of code-switching, the absence of the marker “ wa”, and diminutives constitute a prestigious instance of the dialect of El-Menia referred to here by H which is distinct from the original dialect of EL-Menia L. The arrows represent the forces or the factors that push a speaker to switch between the two forms. The change is still in progress; therefore, the forces can push to the prestigious dialect of El-Menia and also pulls towards the L. It is difficult to say that the L variety of El-Menia dialect will disappear but it can be assimilated by the H. On the relation between the H instance of the dialect and MSA, the latter remains always influential to the dialect although it is hardly spoken by people of El-Menia even in very formal places. The only exception is with police and military personnel who were heard speaking MSA, unfortunately, no systemic study was done on that because of lack of permission and privacy issues.

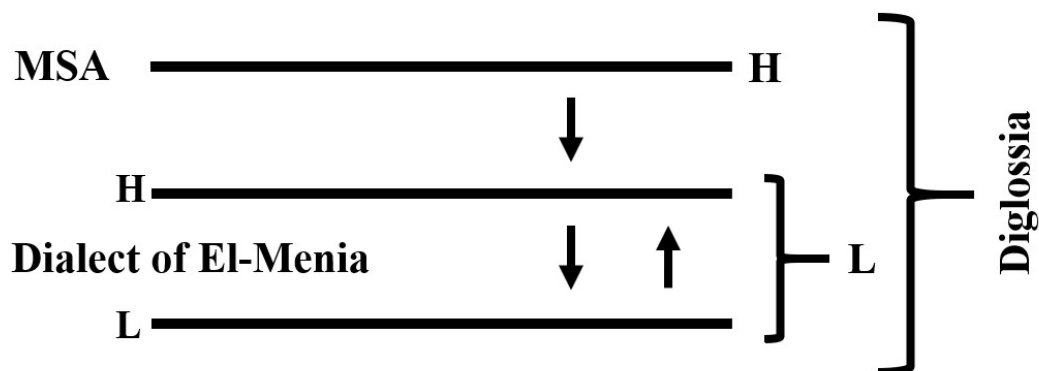


Figure 5.2. Language Change in the Arabic Dialect of El-Menia

The research has only dealt with four variables. Surely, there are other variables that define the dialect of El-Menia which remain uncovered. Hence, the current study does not postulate that the linguistic variables covered only are responsible for language change but they are just examples of the transformation the dialect is witnessing. Then, aside from the quantitative analysis which is a factual account of what happens, the qualitative examination offered is more subjective and is open to interpretation. In the same aspect, the paper acknowledges the fact that the talk about language change remains debatable.

## **5.9. Reasons for Language Change in Arabic dialect of El-Menia**

Having established that the dialect of El-Menia is changing, now is the time to look closer at the reasons. As seen above, the factors driving language change overlap in prestige, attitude, and formality. Mindful of this intersection, it is logical to adopt a holistic approach in the discussion about the reasons without reference to a specific variable. Of course, the reasons have been mentioned implicitly and explicitly all along the discussion, therefore, the subsequent section is more of a summary to the forces influencing the dialect of El-Menia.

### **5.9.1. Attitude towards the Dialect**

Dealing with attitude is an intricate matter since it is mostly connected with psychology. However, it is clear that people are not born with an attitude but it is acquired and learned whether through modeling or imitation (Bandura, 1977). In our case, it is neither the two but it is the society that steers attitude. For more specificity, the control starts from the close circle of parents, friends, moving to colleagues at work. Each of those has an influence on an individual. In the community of El-Menia, two kinds of attitude were registered: 1) A negative attitude towards people who modernize their way of speaking by using [ɣ] instead of [q] and code-switch. 2) An opposite attitude that makes people see that [ɣ] is the standard and the acceptable sound and code-switching conduct is a sign of prestige and modernity.

Perplexing the matter even further, attitude is not always openly expressed in one's behavior since there is an overt attitude and a covert one. Therefore, people can simply behave in contradiction to their belief. For instance, even those who are against modernizing the dialect state that contexts can push them to behave against their belief in an attempt to not to be noticed. So, they admit that it can be a subject of humiliation in some places because of their language. On the other hand, a strong attitude of loyalty to the dialect revealed through an extensive overemphasis on the salient linguistic features can be easily discerned. An attitude that pushes an individual to show stiff resistance towards any kind of language change. Often this faithfulness to the dialect is accountable for the age grading variation since a speaker reverts back to the acceptable social norms in a cycle that renders the dialect immune to change.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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### **5.9.2. Prestige and Formality**

The accumulated evidence in the research shows that people of El-Menia or at least most of the participants are aware that some of the salient linguistic features are stigmatized. While on a regular basis such a way of regarding does not have an effect on the dialect, adding the formality of context such as the type of work and the conventionalism of workplace, the picture changes. People start to pay attention to what they say and importantly to how they speak. The reasons vary from a context to another.

First, requisites of a workplace can be a driving force that exerts pressure on employees to utilize a formal type of language. That, in turn, affects people who attend such places. Second, every practice is associated with somehow fixed social networks which also enforce particular norms of language usage. Formal types of work often are associated with formal instances of language. As stated earlier, contrary to the belief that MSA is the language used in such cases, in El-Menia, a prestigious instance of the local dialect is utilized.

### **5.9.3. Dialect Convergence**

The topics of attitude and prestige can be raised only when there is some sort of comparison between two languages. In the theoretical chapter of the work, the phenomenon of dialect convergence was explained by the process in which certain linguistic features are sacrificed by speakers so as to sound like others. The question, now, is who are these others? In Algeria, there are prestigious dialects; often those spoken in the largest cities. Those dialects are looked at as a symbol of modernization and industrialization.

The fluctuation in the dialect of El-Menia, in particular, the instable usage of the variables is a result of people who are reducing stereotypical linguistic features to sound like other prestigious Algerian dialects. With no empirical data to back such a claim, this statement is no doubt based solely on the view of the researcher and is only possible because of knowledge of other dialects. Expanding the discussion on the subject matter of convergence entails the systemic study of other dialects in Algeria which unfortunately is not possible to cover in this current research.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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### **5.9.4. Social Networks**

Besides being a web of ties relating a speaker to the community where he/she belongs, social networks are channels through which language change goes through. In the research, the gathered empirical findings provide examples of how different social networks act as conduits of the language variation exhibited by social groups, in particular, community of practice. For instance, whether those who work in formal types of job or informal ones, their macro-level social ties dictate a certain way of speaking. Furthermore, the constant contact of members in a social network works a framework enforcing rules of linguistic conduct.

Additionally, social networks can be seen as boundaries. First, they enforce and strengthen the dominant attitude shared between members of the same network. They also isolate and provide separation between networks creating linguistic divisions in a single community. For illustration, in El-Menia, the society is divided into two fragments, those who see that the dialect is a source of proud and changing it is a sign of disloyalty to the origins. On the other hand, some see that the dialect is less prestigious and even goes against norms of Arabic and other dialects in Algeria. Both attitudes in each group are getting stronger as each social network “has the capacity to support its members in both practical and symbolic ways” (Milroy, 2002, p. 550)

### **5.10. Family and Language Change Threshold**

The separation social networks provide in society raises the question of how come El-Menia as a society has split in regard to language in the first place? According to the view presented in relation to social networks, theoretically, the positive attitude towards the dialect should only be getting stronger diminishing any other kind of belief about the dialect, consequently, preventing the formation of any other networks. It is logical, then, that there is a starting point of language change. Of course, it would be utterly non-sense to consider that there is one point in time when language changes suddenly. Instead, the concept of language change threshold here is denoting to a point when language variation in a language reaches a critical threshold resulting in accepted language change in the society.



## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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Projecting the idea on El-Menia, we can surmise that variation in language once was only a manifestation of the age-grading phenomenon. Then, as showed through the results, variation exhibited by participants solely is a good example of language change in progress and there is no doubt that it is accepted by a portion of the society. Hence, acceptance is the turning point which breaks the loop of age-grading related variation to a change in progress. Here comes the role of family as a criterion for investigating language variation and change. One's family constitutes the micro-level social network which one is a member in. Therefore, a family has a substantial influence on one's language.

All the five families interviewed in the inquiry are extended ones in which each member is connected with others through dense social networks. In fact, most families in El-Menia share similar characteristics that turn them into small communities. Whether a family member's language variation is originated from practice or interaction with other social networks, it has to be deemed acceptable by his / her immediate family and close relatives. Without approval of the family, most likely any new linguistic behavior will only be associated with and occur in its original context. Therefore, time is not the defining criterion of whether a change in language is accepted but it is related to how many family approve the change.

Supporting the above claim, through the adaptation of the quantitative approach, examining statistical numbers of all the variables (see appendix 4) shows that family 3, for instance, has scored the lowest average in the substitution, pragmatic marker, and in the use of diminutives. Family 3 stands as an example of a family in which language change has reached a critical threshold. On the other hand, with family 4, the high score values charted in all the variables are an indication that language change is met with resistance by family 4 family members. From a qualitative perspective, the impressions received from interviews with families line up with the conclusion obtained by numbers. Unlike other families, during interviews with Family 3 and 5, a sense of modernity can be distinguished in the style of living and also the way of speaking. The good economic status of the family members as a result of enjoying a prestigious type of work can be witnessed firsthand. However, A qualitative observation in the matter is no doubt highly subjective and susceptible to erroneous interpretations

### **5.11. Revisiting the Research Hypothesis**

Being mainly a descriptive study, it means that not too many hypotheses can be put forward. Actually, the only hypothesis that was suggested even at the research proposal level was that language change is taking place with drastically different pace due to the complexity of the speech community studied. After five chapters connecting the literature review with what is happening in the speech community, it is at this stage that a plausible answer can be formulated to evaluate the research hypothesis.

The first requisite in the construct is that there has to be a change in progress in the dialect. Indeed, all the gathered empirical evidence and analytical evaluation of the qualitative observation align with the idea that the dialect of El-Menia is witnessing language change in progress. On the complexity of the society, it has been asserted several times throughout the research, that the people of El-Menia place a high value on their families and the social structure and ties are based on extended families. All of which has implications for language usage and consequently change.

Having met the two conditions proposed in the hypothesis, time is for evaluating language change pace. The amassed factual data on language change in El-Menia support the hypothesis since as seen earlier, there is a growing split in the community of El-Menia in regard to the attitude towards the dialect. Each side of the community is influencing language in a different way. The results are two different speeds. An accelerated and systematic language change was seen with people who have a negative attitude to the dialect. A slow change, due to people's resistance, is observed with who value their dialect greatly.

Another support for the hypothesis comes from the answer to the question asked in the introduction of the current chapter of which social group is leading the change? Additional to the influence of attitude, the results gathered indicate that females are primarily responsible for language change. Seeking a higher status in society, often as a result of practice, females reflect the change in lifestyle in their language. Females' influence on language is rather far-reaching as they tend to pass effectively their language to their offspring who close the cycle of language change and render it a complete one.

### **5.12. Limitations of the Study**

Even being a descriptive study, there are shortcomings that would influence the result of the research. Sadly though, the big scale of the research from the largeness of the community and the number of variables addressed are all a source of possible limitations. In fact, every aspect in the investigation can be put to a question since there are always different standing points to the matter. Therefore, in the attempt to pinpoint exactly the deficiencies the work suffers from, the talk will include the choice of the literature review content, methodology, and findings and discussion.

One of the downsides of the literature review is the lack of specificity in terms of the approach adopted since the choice was to go with multiple tactics to study language change. Even if one perceives such a decision as a limitation, it can also be seen as a strength. The idea here is that no matter which paradigm one might select as the basis of a study, a decision of not to include other views simply does not mean they are not effective. It means that there are other ignored factors the researcher chooses not to look at. From one side, indeed, it is impossible to mind all variables and factors in one study, and limiting the study to precise points would for sure yield better results. However, in the current paper, the question of whether the dialect is changing or not required a broader view whether in regard to literature or variables in the practical phases.

Concerning the methodology selected, the first drawback is the sample size. The number of participants remains woefully insufficient especially that it needs to be representative of the whole community. Therefore, the research does not claim that generalizability is an attribute of this research, especially what concerns language change. Nonetheless, the descriptive analysis of language variation remains expressive, thus, adequately reflects the variation in the community. However, it should be noted that the original plan was to conduct interviews with eight families instead of five with four per cell that means two-hundred and forty participants. The issue lies in that three families were reluctant and delayed the interviewed.

Interviews with most participants proved to be very difficult. First, people in El-Menia are not used to such linguistic studies. Therefore, some were suspicious, others saw it as a kind of joke and took it lightly. The presence of the recording equipment too was very unwelcomed and often generated tension with interviewees. On the other hand, the

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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critical decision to assign a female assistant to handle interviews with females is problematic. No matter who is in charge of interviews, the insights of the researcher are more valuable. Even with recording, not being able to see the non-verbal behaviors of interviewees is a severe deficiency.

In this vein and in relation with methodology, a number of effects have been observed with interviewees because of their previous knowledge of the subject matter. First, social desirability bias is one of the serious problems the research suffered from. Albeit focus group can be an appealing setting where everyone talks naturally, participants can be affected by others and start speaking in a way that is more acceptable. The solution to this problem was one-one interviews; however, the latter also have their own issues. Talking to people individually triggered acquiescence bias which can be easily detected as participants' answers often become the ones that the researcher implies.

The number of variables included and the multiple perspectives adapted to study language variation resulted in huge data to analyze. That, in turn, imposed constraints on what to deem important. Therefore, subjective decisions had to be made that could have affected the outcome of the discussion. Consequently, it is possible that several important aspects are missed in the discussion that would have made the work more rewarding. For example, in-depth phonological analysis of the substitution is lacking. A detailed lexical variation profile of the dialect could also have been a valuable addition. Again, the aim of the research, on whole, was to investigate language change, however, that would not have been possible without language variation. Nevertheless, there was no heavy emphasis on variation itself.

Being denied to conduct research inside schools because of the absence of administrative clearances was one of the setbacks to study children's linguistic behavior. Language change in progress and children language variation are neatly connected. Unfortunately, despite our repeated attempt to be granted access, they have all met rejection despite the many verbal and written assurances shown. In the same vein, our sample has gaps which were caused mainly because people refused to do interviews at the last moments when it was impossible to bring others to replace them.

Financial difficulties were also a hindering factor. Traveling frequently to El-Menia to conduct interviews was financially demanding. Adding to that, out of five families only

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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two arranged formal gatherings where interviews were conducted. For others, the researcher had to organize formal events which were extremely costly. The absence of any funding agency in the research is a primary reason behind the sample size. However, even with limited resources, the researcher attempted to overcome most related problems.

### **5.13. Recommendations for Future Research**

The current study can be considered a point of time in the history of the dialect making it possible for real-time studies of language change to be conducted in the future. However, considering the fact that the salient linguistic features in the dialect of El-Menia are witnessing language change in progress, it is of utmost importance to conduct enquires dealing with them separately to maintain a record of the dialect. The findings related to the use of pragmatic marker “wa” are alerting that we are faced with endangered linguistic behavior in the dialect. In light of this situation and the whole findings, the following recommendations can be put forward

- Every deficiency stated is potentially a crucial aspect to be minded in future research about the dialect.
- Real-time studies have to be conducted comparing new synchronic studies with the current work.
- The influence of extended families on language variation has to be further studied.

### **5.14. Conclusion**

Although chapters three, four, and five are separated, they constitute one continuum with the primary goal to offer answers to the key questions of the research. The framework established in the three chapters is to investigate language variation through the quantitative approach and later to draw conclusions about language change through qualitative analysis. Accordingly, the first questions asked were concerned with the salient linguistic variables that define the dialect of El-Menia. Then, the next inquiries considered were related to how such variation is moving through the social structure. Minding the answers of the two former questions, a final statement on language change was offered.

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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The thorough reflections in the chapter have shown that each variable discussed has its own characteristics that set it apart in regard to language variation. Starting with the substitution of [ɣ], the latter has always been at the center of the discussion as being a stereotypical linguistic feature that characterizes the dialect of El-Menia. Consequently, the alteration of [ɣ], throughout the paper, has received extra attention. The reason behind such attentiveness goes to the fact that it serves as an identity card of the people of El-Menia. However, it has been shown that not everyone in the society holds a positive view toward [q] as a variant, an attitude that is behind the great amount of fluctuation recorded. The instability of the alteration of [ɣ] among people of El-Menia is not simply an age-grading-related phenomenon but actually a feature that is going through language change in progress. Change that is now complete by the children of those parents who favor the standard [ɣ] over the vernacular standard [q]. On the other hand, attitude is also responsible for the opposite behavior making people more attached to [q] as a sign of loyalty.

On code-switching, the same attitude that drives people to opt for [ɣ] is motivating people to mix between French and the local dialect in the same sentence stretch. However, even if code-switching can be perceived a phenomenon that is causing a perceptible change in the dialect since it has become mixed with French, the use of French remains limited to those competent in the language or at least have some basic knowledge of it. Although some look at code-switching as a prestigious behavior, the use of French is limited. The primary reason is due mostly to the level of education in regard to French. Therefore, code-switching, so far, remains best explained through age-grading variation.

The pragmatic marker “wa” is also an example of a changing salient linguistic feature that is disappearing rapidly from the speech of people of El-Menia. However, the current research has been conducted in a time when the utilization of the marker has shrunken mostly to one age group that of 15- 30. Moreover, rules of politeness related to the marker impose a restriction on to whom its use and when, and where it can be uttered. These deplorable conditions deter people from adding it to the end of their sentence. Unlike, the division characterizing the alteration of [ɣ], there is a tacit agreement on the usage of the pragmatic marker “wa” that explains its fading.

Variability charted concerning the utilization of diminutives has proven to be the most difficult to interpret. Admittedly, the research falls short of providing sufficient

## **Chapter Five: Language Variation in the Dialect of El-Menia and Implication for Language Change**

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account of their use and more importantly on the implication of language change. Furthermore, despite the attempt to relate diminutives with attitude, the link is rather weak because of the lack of any discernable pattern that would merit a strong evidence. The only unquestioned factual data is the one which relates diminutives with female speakers as a dominant social group using them.

The overlapping reasons behind the variation of the variables even if it is partially made are possible to adopt a holistic approach to discuss language change in El-Menia. In this consideration, it has been asserted that the dialect is undergoing language change in progress. A change that is exhibited in the formation of a prestigious instance of the dialect that is positioned between MSA and the actual dialect. Yet, while there are factors that encourage people to change their way of speaking, they remain other forces remain that inspire others to get more attached to their dialect. The result is a sharp linguistic division in the society.

The reasons behind the current situation range from style, prestige, type of practice, and formality. All of which are interconnected through social networks that act as both conduits further enforcing and amplifying these factors and also barriers isolating the two social groups. The notion of the family, here, is also very crucial as one's family constitute the first micro-level circle of interaction. Thus, whether language variation or language change, the attitude a family expresses is very influential and can steer the way family members speak. Consequently, that untold acceptance of the family marks language change threshold. A point at which a cascade effect is set in motion affecting all members of a social network.

# **GENERAL CONCLUSION**



### General Conclusion

Undeniably, the ultimate goal of the current work was a search for the answer to the question of whether the Arabic dialect of El-Menia is changing or not. Then, the dedication of five chapters to a Wh-question would definitely seem as an overstatement. However, in the case of language change, the simplicity of the answer does not reflect the complication of the underlying related questions. First, language does not change holistically but the change is caused by structural features which need to be identified and studied. On the other hand, alteration in language also results from external factors which mostly emanate from its use in the social context; another layer of complexity then is added compounding the matter even further. For the endeavor to unravel the intricacy of the correlation between these factors and language structure, the five chapters remain insufficient. Perhaps if the topic had been executed with more meticulous attention to details, the research would have been considerably longer.

In the pursuit for systematism, the first chapter provides the theoretical ground on which all the study is based. It offers a critical interpretive synthesis of the literature with the aim to establish methods for defining social groups which are divided by social factors as gender, sex, age, ethnicity, and practice. Yet, instead of limiting the study to one factor, the decision taken was to adopt a broader perspective incorporating several ones. The idea is based on the belief that taking multiple standpoints to look at language variation increases the chances of fully understanding what is happening in society. Furthermore, a researcher has to be aware that neglecting even one feature can threaten the findings of any work. The examples in the literature and in the current research clearly show how can one social variable negate other results.

Additionally, concepts such as ‘speech community’, ‘social networks’, and ‘community of practice’ are often discussed separately. Indeed, to shed light systematically on such way of grouping, there is a necessity for these theoretical constructs in an attempt for compartmentalization to reduce complexity. Yet, in the real world, all factors in a society are related. The dialect of El-Menia stands as an evidence because it is rather difficult to isolate one social group and talk about variation since the latter is a result of the convergence and intersection of several social factors ranging from gender, age, attitude, practice, and social networks.

## **General Conclusion**

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Language and society are in a bilateral relationship, a statement that justifies the inclusion of the second chapter. Accordingly, chapter two offers a detailed overview of the history of the region and the people. In this regard, the review of the literature shows how the existence of different civilizations shaped the demography of the area as well as the linguistic situation resulting in several language varieties from Berber language varieties, Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Arabic vernaculars, ending with French. El-Menia reflects the same convolutedness found in Algeria. Tracking the history of El-Menia takes us back to the second wave of Arabs, more precisely to Banu Sulaym from which the Chaamba descend.

The present social structure still bears similar characteristics of old tribal social systems in which members pledge loyalty to the family. A situation which still holds true in the social structure of El-Menia as people are so keen to their family affiliation. The result is seen in big extended families that have not changed significantly from the past. Minding such a distinctive feature in the community of El-Menia, the decision was to study language variation with the addition of family as a criterion that governs how people speak. In fact, as seen in the last chapter, one's family constitutes his/ her micro-level interaction, community, and social network; thus, having a significant impact on language.

The choices made concerning methodology are all reflections of the decisions made in the first and the second chapter. At the end of the research, perhaps one of the wisest choices made was going with methodological triangulation. The latter did not only increase data validity but without the use of three data collection instruments, the research would have failed to arrive at satisfactory answers. In the research, it is the observation phase that made a conclusion about the relation between social networks and practice possible. Listening to people in public places where they interact and speak is no doubt a factor which has contributed to the success of this phase. However, interference, unsafety, lack of recording equipment, and the inability to ask for demographic questions are all reasons that render it insufficient.

Sociolinguistic interviews are acknowledged to be effective tools and there is no question that a review of literature would rather yield rich details on their advantages and disadvantages. However, one can hardly be prepared to face that awkward moment when deciding to persuade people to do such interviews. The rigidity of the society and cultural

## **General Conclusion**

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norms in El-Menia make it impossible to just go and ask people, in fact, it would be rather unsafe. In the case of the present work, that was only conceivable because the researcher is native to the community and we have always come recommended by someone close. Even with these conditions, people were suspicious; consequently, conversations were limited at least at the beginning. Furthermore, no matter how hard we have tried, interviews with male speakers were often formal. Nevertheless, they are worth the effort, the interviews conducted for this research were very important as they have permitted the researcher not only to record linguistic variables but to pay attention to paralinguistic features.

The adaptation of a virtual focus group is for sure not a common practice. The gist of the idea is that instead of making a questionnaire, it would be better to initiate an online debate taking advantage of the popular social networking sites. Indeed, the discussions which took place in Facebook groups were very thorough and participants shared valuable data that would be difficult to extract if debates were done elsewhere. One of the benefits of virtual focus group interviews is that debates contain huge data and can take a long time as they are not limited by time. Therefore, it is recommended that considerable time needs to be allocated for such a way of collecting data.

The alignment of the theoretical side with the careful choices in the methodological part has made it possible to arrive at answers to the research questions. Concerning the first question, quantitative analysis confirmed the occurrence of the variables discussed however with different rates. The substitution of [ɣ] remains by far the most salient linguistic feature of the dialect. The inclusion of French and the local dialect in the same sentence stretch is also a common practice in the dialect. The pragmatic marker “wa”, despite its limited usage, is still marked as a feature of the dialect. Diminutives, on the other hand, are used in daily speech of people of El-Menia.

Although all the variables are associated with the dialect, their occurrence is not equally distributed along the social categories. For instance, while the substitution of [ɣ] is heard in the speech of most people of El-Menia and all social groups, code-switching is constrained by the level of education and access to French. The pragmatic marker “wa”, because of being considered impolite, is limited mostly to people aged between 15- 35 and often used in the interaction between close friends. While diminutives are not restricted by

## **General Conclusion**

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social norms that would prevent their use by any social group, they remain mostly associated with female speakers.

On the question of people's attitude towards the dialect, the short answer is that there are two prevailing attitudes. A positive one maintained by people who are loyal to the dialect and its stereotypical linguistic features. A negative attitude is driven by the feeling that the dialect is a subject of stigmatization and some of its linguistic features are odd compared to other dialects. However, the longer answer is, in fact, there are more contextual attitudes as one's attitude is not static but also varies in accordance with several factors. For instance, in El-Menia even some of those holding a positive view towards the dialect, in general, can have a negative standing towards a particular linguistic feature.

Accordingly, the dialect of El-Menia is not changing at one pace but the structure of the language is affected differently by factors such as age attitude, prestige, formality, social networks. For instance, while the substitution of [ɣ] for [q] is undergoing language change in progress, it is still met with resistance from a large portion of the society. Code-switching can still be looked at as age-grading variation, thus, is not affecting the dialect. On the contrary, the pragmatic marker "wa" is deemed unfavorable by most people and its use nowadays is limited to a very small social category. Due to the lack of sufficient data, the research did not arrive at a clear conclusion relating the use of diminutives with language change.

On the question of the causes of language change, it is safe to state that the same reasons that are causing language variation in the dialect of El-Menia are responsible for language change. However, the variation in the linguistic variables we have seen is often related to specific factors and particular social groups. Hence, comes the importance of the inclusion of the idea of language change threshold as a force that breaks the loop of closed variation to an actual change. Language change threshold is that point at which language variation becomes socially accepted allowing variation and change to flow to other social groups in a cascade effect. In the dialect of El-Menia, one's family is an important factor for achieving such acceptance.

All-in-all, as we have claimed at the beginning of this scientific endeavor, the answers to the research questions can be considered a valuable contribution to the literature. Thanks to the current study, a systematic analysis of the salient linguistic features of the

## **General Conclusion**

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dialect of El-Menia is made available for future research. Despite the limitations of the study, it has tried to offer an alternative way of describing language change by considering different factors in one study. Finally, the idea of language change threshold needs to be a subject of further research.

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# **APPENDICES**



## Appendix 1. Observation Phase Data of all variables

Setting	Place	Gender	Practice	Age	Substitution	Codeswitching	Pragmatic marker “wa”	Diminutives
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	pupil	0-14	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	pupil	15-20	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	pupil	15-20	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	pupil	15-20	100.00	14.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	pupil	15-20	100.00	7.00	1.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	pupil	15-20	100.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	15-20	85.00	25.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	15-20	85.00	11.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Drivers	21-35	100.00	0.00	2.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Drivers	21-35	50.00	0.00	3.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	21-35	75.00	41.00	5.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	University student	21-35	80.00	27.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Farming	21-35	100.00	22.00	4.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	21-35	75.00	37.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	21-35	60.00	28.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	21-35	33.33	35.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	21-35	80.00	5.00	5.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	3.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	1.000	2.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	21-35	80.00	54.00	0.000	1.00

Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	25.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Farming	21-35	100.00	17.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	21-35	100.00	42.00	5.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	36-50	100.00	11.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	36-50	25.00	28.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	36-50	50.00	48.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	36-50	100.00	21.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	36-50	100.00	39.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Drivers	36-50	100.00	0.00	1.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Drivers	36-50	25.00	0.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	36-50	100.00	11.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	36-50	100.00	27.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	22.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	36.00	2.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	36.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	27.00	0.000	2.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Farming	51-65	100.00	22.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Farming	51-65	100.00	15.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Drivers	51-65	100.00	5.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	51-65	100.00	25.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	administrators	51-65	85.00	25.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	51-65	100.00	44.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	10.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	20.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	15.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	65 >	100.00	10.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	65 >	100.00	5.00	0.000	0.00

Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Retired	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	commerce	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Farming	65 >	100.00	10.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Retired	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Coffee Shops	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	pupil	0-14	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	pupil	0-14	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	Markets	Male	pupil	0-14	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	15-20	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Female	Not identified	15-20	50.00	4.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	Markets	Female	Not identified	15-20	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	administrators	21-35	100.00	1.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	administrators	21-35	100.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	1.000	1.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	21-35	50.00	8.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Female	Not identified	36-50	50.00	6.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Female	Not identified	36-50	0.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Female	Not identified	36-50	0.00	6.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00

Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Female	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	Markets	Female	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	pupil	0-14	100.00	0.00	0.000	5.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	pupil	0-14	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	pupil	0-14	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	pupil	0-14	75.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	pupil	0-14	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	pupil	0-14	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	pupil	15-20	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	pupil	15-20	100.00	7.00	1.000	1.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	pupil	15-20	70.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	pupil	15-20	85.00	1.00	1.000	1.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	pupil	15-20	100.00	0.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	pupil	15-20	100.00	0.00	2.000	1.00

Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	Jobless	21-35	100.00	3.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	Jobless	21-35	100.00	1.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	Farming	21-35	100.00	4.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	University student	21-35	0.00	16.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	Not identified	21-35	44.00	4.00	2.000	2.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	Not identified	21-35	100.00	2.00	1.000	1.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	administrators	36-50	85.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	Farming	36-50	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	Drivers	36-50	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	Not identified	36-50	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	Not identified	36-50	100.00	2.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	Not identified	36-50	100.00	1.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	administrators	51-65	100.00	0.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	1.00	2.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00

Informal	The Grocery Shop	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	5.00	1.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
Informal	The Grocery Shop	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	3.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	6.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	21-35	85.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	11.00	1.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	21-35	65.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	6.00	1.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	21-35	100.00	12.00	3.000	1.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	21-35	100.00	13.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	21-35	60.00	8.00	0.000	2.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	21-35	0.00	15.00	1.000	0.00

Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	21-35	25.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	21-35	75.00	14.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	21-35	0.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	21-35	75.00	5.00	1.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	36-50	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	36-50	25.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	36-50	75.00	5.00	1.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	2.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	36-50	66.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	1.00	2.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	36-50	100.00	7.00	0.000	1.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	36-50	100.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00

Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	36-50	85.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	36-50	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	36-50	33.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	36-50	100.00	5.00	0.000	1.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	51-65	0.00	9.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	6.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	51-65	85.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00



Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	51-65	75.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	The Town Hall	Female	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	21-35	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	36-50	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00

Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	65 >	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
Formal	Mosques	Male	Not identified	51-65	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00

## Appendix 2: Interviews Data of all variables

Code	Family	Native	Gender	Age	Practice	Substitution	Code-Switching	Pragmatic marker “wa”	Diminutives
1	F1	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
2	F1	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
3	F1	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
4	F1	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	0.00	0.00	0.000	2.00
5	F1	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	2.00
6	F1	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
7	F1	Yes	Male	15-25	University Students	85.00	5.00	0.000	1.00
8	F1	Yes	Male	15-25	Pupils	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
9	F1	Yes	Male	15-25	Jobless	100.00	0.00	2.000	0.00
10	F1	Yes	Female	15-25	University Students	50.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
11	F1	Yes	Female	15-25	University Students	100.00	11.00	0.000	0.00
12	F1	No	Female	15-25	Housewives	0.00	1.00	0.000	3.00
13	F1	Yes	Male	26-40	Farmers	100.00	1.00	1.000	1.00
14	F1	Yes	Male	26-40	Jobless	100.00	2.00	1.000	0.00
15	F1	Yes	Male	26-40	Merchants	100.00	4.00	1.000	0.00
16	F1	Yes	Female	26-40	Administrator	75.00	4.00	0.000	0.00
17	F1	Yes	Female	26-40	Teachers	33.33	7.00	0.000	1.00

18	F1	Yes	Female	26-40	Housewives	100.00	4.00	0.000	5.00
19	F1	Yes	Male	41-60	Doctors	20.00	18.00	0.000	1.00
20	F1	Yes	Male	41-60	Administrator	100.00	6.00	0.000	0.00
21	F1	Yes	Male	41-60	Merchants	100.00	0.00	0.000	5.00
22	F1	No	Female	41-60	Housewives	0.00	0.00	0.000	2.00
23	F1	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	90.00	0.00	0.000	5.00
24	F1	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	2.00
25	F1	Yes	Male	61-75	Farmers	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
26	F1	Yes	Male	61-75	Farmers	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
27	F1	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	2.00
28	F1	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	2.00
29	F1	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
30	F1	Yes	Male	75>	Not Identified	100.00	4.00	0.000	2.00
31	F1	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
32	F1	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
33	F2	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
34	F2	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
35	F2	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
36	F2	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	0.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
37	F2	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
38	F2	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
39	F2	Yes	Male	15-25	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
40	F2	Yes	Female	15-25	University Students	50.00	4.00	1.000	1.00
41	F2	Yes	Female	15-25	Jobless	100.00	2.00	2.000	1.00
42	F2	Yes	Female	15-25	Administrator	65.00	4.00	0.000	1.00

43	F2	Yes	Male	26-40	Teachers	45.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
44	F2	Yes	Male	26-40	Farmers	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
45	F2	Yes	Male	26-40	Farmers	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
46	F2	Yes	Female	26-40	Administrator	85.00	4.00	1.000	0.00
47	F2	Yes	Female	26-40	University Students	0.00	4.00	0.000	0.00
48	F2	No	Female	26-40	Doctors	0.00	12.00	0.000	0.00
49	F2	Yes	Male	41-60	Administrator	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
50	F2	Yes	Male	41-60	Administrator	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
51	F2	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	6.00
52	F2	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	60.00	0.00	0.000	5.00
53	F2	Yes	Male	61-75	Retirees	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
54	F2	Yes	Male	61-75	Farmers	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
55	F2	Yes	Female	61-75	Jobless	100.00	0.00	0.000	5.00
56	F2	Yes	Male	75>	Retirees	100.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
57	F2	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	6.00
58	F3	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
59	F3	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
60	F3	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
61	F3	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
62	F3	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	70.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
63	F3	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	0.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
64	F3	Yes	Male	15-25	Pupils	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
65	F3	Yes	Male	15-25	University Students	70.00	4.00	0.000	0.00
66	F3	Yes	Male	15-25	University Students	100.00	2.00	0.000	1.00

67	F3	Yes	Female	15-25	Teachers	0.00	6.00	0.000	1.00
68	F3	Yes	Female	15-25	Jobless	0.00	5.00	0.000	1.00
69	F3	Yes	Female	15-25	Administrator	0.00	9.00	0.000	0.00
70	F3	Yes	Male	26-40	University Students	70.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
71	F3	Yes	Male	26-40	Administrator	100.00	2.00	0.000	1.00
72	F3	Yes	Male	26-40	Drivers	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
73	F3	Yes	Female	26-40	Jobless	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
74	F3	No	Female	26-40	Housewives	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
75	F3	No	Female	26-40	Administrator	0.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
76	F3	Yes	Male	41-60	Administrator	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
77	F3	Yes	Male	41-60	Farmers	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
78	F3	Yes	Male	41-60	Merchants	100.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
79	F3	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
80	F3	Yes	Female	41-60	Teachers	80.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
81	F3	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
82	F3	Yes	Male	61-75	Farmers	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
83	F3	Yes	Male	61-75	Retirees	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
84	F3	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	4.00
85	F3	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	5.00
86	F3	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	6.00
87	F3	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	4.00
88	F3	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	3.00
89	F4	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	40.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
90	F4	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
91	F4	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	70.00	1.00	1.000	1.00

92	F4	Yes	Male	15-25	University Students	100.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
93	F4	Yes	Male	15-25	Jobless	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
94	F4	Yes	Male	15-25	Jobless	100.00	1.00	1.000	0.00
95	F4	Yes	Female	15-25	Jobless	100.00	0.00	1.000	1.00
96	F4	Yes	Female	15-25	Jobless	100.00	1.00	1.000	3.00
97	F4	Yes	Female	15-25	Administrator	80.00	4.00	0.000	0.00
98	F4	Yes	Female	26-40	Housewives	100.00	2.00	1.000	3.00
99	F4	Yes	Female	26-40	Not Identified	60.00	4.00	0.000	4.00
100	F4	Yes	Female	26-40	Merchants	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
101	F4	Yes	Male	41-60	Jobless	90.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
102	F4	Yes	Male	41-60	Administrator	90.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
103	F4	Yes	Male	41-60	Farmers	100.00	2.00	1.000	0.00
104	F4	Yes	Female	41-60	Teachers	100.00	6.00	0.000	1.00
105	F4	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	2.00
106	F4	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	100.00	1.00	1.000	0.00
107	F4	Yes	Male	61-75	Farmers	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
108	F4	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
109	F4	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
110	F4	Yes	Male	75>	Farmers	100.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
111	F4	Yes	Male	75>	Farmers	100.00	8.00	0.000	0.00
112	F4	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	7.00
113	F4	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	8.00
114	F5	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	0.00	1.00	0.000	1.00
115	F5	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	0.00	2.00	0.000	0.00
116	F5	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00

117	F5	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	100.00	1.00	0.000	2.00
118	F5	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
119	F5	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
120	F5	Yes	Male	15-25	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
121	F5	Yes	Male	15-25	Pupils	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
122	F5	Yes	Male	15-25	University Students	50.00	5.00	1.000	1.00
123	F5	Yes	Female	15-25	Jobless	80.00	2.00	1.000	1.00
124	F5	Yes	Female	15-25	Administrator	0.00	3.00	0.000	0.00
125	F5	Yes	Female	15-25	Housewives	100.00	4.00	0.000	0.00
126	F5	Yes	Male	26-40	Jobless	100.00	0.00	1.000	1.00
127	F5	Yes	Male	26-40	Farmers	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
128	F5	Yes	Male	26-40	Jobless	100.00	0.00	1.000	0.00
129	F5	Yes	Female	26-40	Not Identified	70.00	1.00	0.000	4.00
130	F5	Yes	Female	26-40	Administrator	100.00	0.00	0.000	2.00
131	F5	Yes	Female	26-40	Housewives	80.00	5.00	0.000	1.00
132	F5	Yes	Male	41-60	Administrator	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
133	F5	Yes	Male	41-60	Teachers	100.00	5.00	0.000	0.00
134	F5	Yes	Male	41-60	Farmers	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
135	F5	Yes	Female	41-60	Administrator	100.00	0.00	0.000	1.00
136	F5	Yes	Female	41-60	Not Identified	100.00	7.00	0.000	5.00
137	F5	Yes	Female	41-60	Not Identified	100.00	0.00	0.000	4.00
138	F5	Yes	Male	61-75	Farmers	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
139	F5	Yes	Male	61-75	Not Identified	90.00	0.00	0.000	0.00

140	F5	Yes	Male	61-75	Retirees	100.00	0.00	0.000	0.00
141	F5	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	1.00	0.000	0.00
142	F5	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	5.00	0.000	7.00
143	F5	Yes	Female	61-75	Housewives	100.00	1.00	0.000	5.00
144	F5	Yes	Male	75>	Farmers	100.00	5.00	0.000	6.00
145	F5	Yes	Male	75>	Farmers	100.00	6.00	0.000	0.00
146	F5	Yes	Male	75>	Not Identified	100.00	7.00	0.000	0.00
147	F5	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	4.00
148	F5	Yes	Female	75>	Housewives	100.00	0.00	0.000	5.00



### Appendix 3. Speakers with less than 100 % Average in the Substitution of [y]

Family	Native	Gender	Age group	Practice	Substitution	Code-Switching
F1	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	.00	.00
F1	Yes	Male	15-25	University Students	85.00	5.00
F1	Yes	Female	15-25	University Students	50.00	5.00
F1	No	Female	15-25	Housewives	.00	1.00
F1	Yes	Female	26-40	Administrator	75.00	4.00
F1	Yes	Female	26-40	Teachers	33.33	7.00
F1	Yes	Male	41-60	Doctors	20.00	18.00
F1	No	Female	41-60	Housewives	.00	.00
F1	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	90.00	.00
F2	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	.00	2.00
F2	Yes	Female	15-25	University Students	50.00	4.00
F2	Yes	Female	15-25	Administrator	65.00	4.00
F2	Yes	Male	26-40	Teachers	45.00	12.00
F2	Yes	Female	26-40	Administrator	85.00	4.00
F2	Yes	Female	26-40	University Students	.00	4.00
F2	No	Female	26-40	Doctors	.00	12.00
F2	Yes	Female	41-60	Housewives	60.00	.00
F3	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	.00	.00
F3	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	.00	.00
F3	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	70.00	2.00
F3	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	.00	1.00
F3	Yes	Male	15-25	Pupils	.00	.00
F3	Yes	Male	15-25	University Students	70.00	4.00
F3	Yes	Female	15-25	Teachers	.00	6.00
F3	Yes	Female	15-25	Jobless	.00	5.00
F3	Yes	Female	15-25	Administrator	.00	9.00

F3	Yes	Male	26-40	University Students	70.00	5.00
F3	Yes	Female	26-40	Jobless	.00	.00
F3	No	Female	26-40	Housewives	.00	.00
F3	No	Female	26-40	Administrator	.00	5.00
F3	Yes	Female	41-60	Teachers	80.00	.00
F4	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	40.00	.00
F4	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	70.00	1.00
F4	Yes	Female	15-25	Administrator	80.00	4.00
F4	Yes	Female	26-40	Not Identified	60.00	4.00
F4	Yes	Male	41-60	Jobless	90.00	2.00
F4	Yes	Male	41-60	Administrator	90.00	1.00
F5	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	.00	1.00
F5	Yes	Male	6-14	Pupils	.00	2.00
F5	Yes	Female	6-14	Pupils	.00	.00
F5	Yes	Male	15-25	University Students	50.00	5.00
F5	Yes	Female	15-25	Jobless	80.00	2.00
F5	Yes	Female	15-25	Administrator	.00	3.00
F5	Yes	Female	26-40	Not Identified	70.00	1.00
F5	Yes	Female	26-40	Housewives	80.00	5.00
F5	Yes	Male	61-75	Not Identified	90.00	.00

### Appendix 4. In-depth Statistical Analysis of all Variables by Families

	Family		Statistic
Substitution	F1	Mean	82.9166
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound 70.8097
			Upper Bound 95.0234
		5% Trimmed Mean	86.5740
		Median	100.0000
		Variance	1127.609
		Std. Deviation	33.57989
		Minimum	.00
		Maximum	100.00
		Range	100.00
		Interquartile Range	13.75
		Skewness	-1.820
		Kurtosis	1.818
	F2	Mean	80.2000
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound 65.9073
			Upper Bound 94.4927
		5% Trimmed Mean	83.5556
		Median	100.0000
		Variance	1198.917
		Std. Deviation	34.62538
		Minimum	.00
		Maximum	100.00
		Range	100.00
		Interquartile Range	37.50
		Skewness	-1.635
		Kurtosis	1.400
	F3	Mean	64.1935
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound 47.3373
			Upper Bound 81.0498
		5% Trimmed Mean	65.7706
		Median	100.0000
		Variance	2111.828
		Std. Deviation	45.95463
		Minimum	.00

		Maximum		100.00
		Range		100.00
		Interquartile Range		100.00
		Skewness		-.683
		Kurtosis		-1.519
	F4	Mean		93.2000
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	86.9263
			Upper Bound	99.4737
		5% Trimmed Mean		95.5556
		Median		100.0000
		Variance		231.000
		Std. Deviation		15.19868
		Minimum		40.00
		Maximum		100.00
		Range		60.00
		Interquartile Range		5.00
		Skewness		-2.529
		Kurtosis		6.200
	F5	Mean		84.8571
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	73.6369
			Upper Bound	96.0774
		5% Trimmed Mean		88.7302
		Median		100.0000
		Variance		1066.891
		Std. Deviation		32.66329
		Minimum		.00
		Maximum		100.00
		Range		100.00
		Interquartile Range		10.00
		Skewness		-2.148
		Kurtosis		3.200
<b>Code Switching</b>	F1	Mean		2.3125
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	.8925
			Upper Bound	3.7325
		5% Trimmed Mean		1.7153
		Median		.0000
		Variance		15.512

		Std. Deviation	3.93854
		Minimum	.00
		Maximum	18.00
		Range	18.00
		Interquartile Range	4.00
		Skewness	2.539
		Kurtosis	7.680
	F2	Mean	1.9200
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound .5257
			Upper Bound 3.3143
		5% Trimmed Mean	1.4667
		Median	.0000
		Variance	11.410
		Std. Deviation	3.37787
		Minimum	.00
		Maximum	12.00
		Range	12.00
		Interquartile Range	3.00
		Skewness	2.331
		Kurtosis	5.183
	F3	Mean	1.4194
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound .5629
			Upper Bound 2.2758
		5% Trimmed Mean	1.1362
		Median	.0000
		Variance	5.452
		Std. Deviation	2.33487
		Minimum	.00
		Maximum	9.00
		Range	9.00
		Interquartile Range	2.00
		Skewness	1.772
		Kurtosis	2.646
	F4	Mean	1.7200
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound .7778
			Upper Bound 2.6622
		5% Trimmed Mean	1.4889

		Median	1.0000	
		Variance	5.210	
		Std. Deviation	2.28254	
		Minimum	.00	
		Maximum	8.00	
		Range	8.00	
		Interquartile Range	3.00	
		Skewness	1.381	
		Kurtosis	1.069	
	F5	Mean	1.8000	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound .9974	
			Upper Bound 2.6026	
		5% Trimmed Mean	1.6111	
		Median	1.0000	
		Variance	5.459	
		Std. Deviation	2.33641	
		Minimum	.00	
		Maximum	7.00	
		Range	7.00	
		Interquartile Range	4.00	
		Skewness	1.063	
		Kurtosis	-.347	
<b>The Use of the Pragmatic Marker "wa"</b>	F1	Mean	.18750	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound .01771	
			Upper Bound .35729	
		5% Trimmed Mean	.11806	
		Median	.00000	
		Variance	.222	
		Std. Deviation	.470929	
		Minimum	.000	
		Maximum	2.000	
		Range	2.000	
		Interquartile Range	.000	
		Skewness	2.610	
		Kurtosis	6.692	
		F2	Mean	.20000
			95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound -.00639
				Upper Bound

		Upper Bound	.40639
		5% Trimmed Mean	.12222
		Median	.00000
		Variance	.250
		Std. Deviation	.500000
		Minimum	.000
		Maximum	2.000
		Range	2.000
		Interquartile Range	.000
		Skewness	2.609
		Kurtosis	6.656
	F3	Mean	.06452
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound
			Upper Bound
			-.02709
			.15612
		5% Trimmed Mean	.01613
		Median	.00000
		Variance	.062
		Std. Deviation	.249731
		Minimum	.000
		Maximum	1.000
		Range	1.000
		Interquartile Range	.000
		Skewness	3.728
		Kurtosis	12.717
	F4	Mean	.28000
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound
			Upper Bound
			.09084
			.46916
		5% Trimmed Mean	.25556
		Median	.00000
		Variance	.210
		Std. Deviation	.458258
		Minimum	.000
		Maximum	1.000
		Range	1.000
		Interquartile Range	1.000
		Skewness	1.044
		Kurtosis	-.998
	F5	Mean	.11429

		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	.00340		
			Upper Bound	.22517		
		5% Trimmed Mean			.07143	
		Median			.00000	
		Variance			.104	
		Std. Deviation			.322803	
		Minimum			.000	
		Maximum			1.000	
		Range			1.000	
		Interquartile Range			.000	
		Skewness			2.535	
		Kurtosis			4.689	
		<b>The Use of Diminutives</b>	F1	Mean		1.1563
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	.5984
Upper Bound	1.7141					
5% Trimmed Mean				1.0069		
Median				.5000		
Variance				2.394		
Std. Deviation				1.54731		
Minimum				.00		
Maximum				5.00		
Range				5.00		
Interquartile Range				2.00		
Skewness				1.450		
Kurtosis				1.458		
F2	Mean			1.0800		
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Lower Bound	.2466		
			Upper Bound	1.9134		
	5% Trimmed Mean			.8667		
	Median			.0000		
	Variance			4.077		
	Std. Deviation			2.01908		
	Minimum			.00		
	Maximum			6.00		
	Range			6.00		
Interquartile Range			1.00			
Skewness			1.863			



		Kurtosis	1.950
F3		Mean	.8710
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	.2591
		Upper Bound	1.4829
		5% Trimmed Mean	.6541
		Median	.0000
		Variance	2.783
		Std. Deviation	1.66817
		Minimum	.00
		Maximum	6.00
		Range	6.00
		Interquartile Range	1.00
		Skewness	2.014
		Kurtosis	3.022
	F4		Mean
95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Lower Bound	.3303
		Upper Bound	2.1497
		5% Trimmed Mean	.9444
		Median	.0000
		Variance	4.857
		Std. Deviation	2.20378
		Minimum	.00
		Maximum	8.00
		Range	8.00
		Interquartile Range	1.50
		Skewness	2.132
		Kurtosis	4.078
F5			Mean
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	.7721
		Upper Bound	2.1994
		5% Trimmed Mean	1.2857
		Median	1.0000
		Variance	4.316
		Std. Deviation	2.07749
		Minimum	.00
		Maximum	7.00
		Range	7.00

		Interquartile Range	2.00
		Skewness	1.326
		Kurtosis	.485

## الملخص

يتعلق موضوع البحث بالتغير اللغوي في اللهجة العربية المنطوقة عند أهل المنعفة ، والتي تعد ولاية منتدبة تبعد عن العاصمة الجزائر مسافة 800 كلم ، وفي هذا المسعى تمّ دراسة أربع سمات لغوية نمطية هي : استبدال حرف " الغين " إلى حرف " القاف " ، التناوب اللغوي ، استخدام العلامة البراغماتية " وَ " وظاهرة التّصغير ، وقد عمل الباحث على تحليل كل منها بالارتباط بالعوامل الاجتماعية ، مثل : العمر ، الجنس ، الممارسة ، الشبكات الاجتماعية ، الأسرة ، وينبغي الإشارة إلى أنّ العامل الأخير قد أُعطي اهتماماً كبيراً بسبب تفرد البنية الاجتماعية للمنطقة . ومن بين مجموع الاشكاليات المطروحة يأتي السؤال المهم الذي تحاول هذه الدراسة الإجابة عنه متمثلاً في : ما هي المميزات اللغوية التي تشهد تغيراً ؟ ، وقد حُددت الفرضية التي يقوم عليها البحث على النحو التالي : نظراً لتعقيد الفئة الاجتماعية المستهدفة ، فإنّ تغيير اللغة يحدث بوتيرة مختلفة تماماً . ولتحقيق الهدف المنشود كان لا بد من منهج يسير عليه البحث مسدداً خطواته ، من أجل ذلك تمّ اتباع منهجين فرضتهما طبيعة المدونة هما : المنهج الوصفي التحليلي والمنهج الاحصائي . أمّا بخصوص الأدوات المستخدمة في جمع المعلومات فقد اختيرت ثلاث طرق هي : الملاحظة غير المشاركة ، المقابلة الجماعية ، المجموعة التّواصلية الافتراضية ، وقد بلغ العدد الإجمالي للعينة المدروسة 386 متحدثاً ، وفي الأخير قدّمت النتائج تحليلاً وصفيّاً شاملاً للاختلافات اللغوية المتعلقة بالمتغيرات اللغوية ؛ حيث أظهرت أنّ المواقف السلوكية ، والمهابة والاحترام ، كلها عوامل تؤدي إلى تغيير اللغة في منطقة المنعفة ، ومع ذلك فإنّ تأثيرهم على الناس يعتمد على معيار الأسرة الذي يمكن اعتباره شبكة اجتماعية يتدفق من خلالها تغيير اللغة والتّنوع من مجموعة اجتماعية إلى أخرى .

الكلمات المفتاحية : علم اللغة الاجتماعي - تغير لغوي - المنعفة - تنوع (لغة)