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*CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE OF
SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND ON
LEARNER IDENTITY*

*A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English as a Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master in Linguistics*

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Academic Year: 2021/2022

Abstract

This work aimed at investigating the potential effects of the socio-cultural factors on foreign language learning in Algeria. It evaluated the impact of these factors on third year secondary school pupils who live in rural speech communities. This endeavour was based on qualitative and quantitative approaches that examine thoroughly the data collected. In this prospect, a triangulation method is used with a sample of 90 pupils, final classes, and 8 teachers from the Secondary School of Laaroussi Larbi Sidi Housni. The findings revealed that pupils from rigid communities are affected by their socio-cultural background and their parental inherited complexity. Rigidity is backgrounded behind their attitudes, even though a clash may arise between generation Z which is open to change and the old generation that is still drowning in convergent traits and ethnocentricity. In this vein, divergence should be viewed as a positive aspect towards flexibility and ethnorelativism.

Key words: Socio-cultural factor; rigid community; generation z; divergent; ethnocentricity; ethnorelativism.

Dedication

We warmly express our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed in one way or another in the process of this endeavor.

We dedicate this modest work to:

Our beloved parents to whom we would forever be indebted to.

To all members of our families for their great love.

To our precious friends for their help and encouragements.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First and foremost, we want to thank the almighty Allah for the accomplishment of the work. It is after a hard work and determination that we have reached the end of this task and it is thanks to several people to whom we would like to express our deepest gratitude including our precious supervisor Dr. BELAID Louisa for her tremendous amount of assistance, constant guidance and her patience with us, we are truly indebted to her. Similarly, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to all the members of jury, Dr. MAHDAOUI Ahmed and Dr. FOUNES Oussama who have graciously accepted to examine and amend our dissertation. We are also grateful to all those who contributed and co-operated with us during our work compilation.

Table of contents

Abstract	II
Dedication	III
Acknowledgment	IV
Table of content	V
Acronyms and abbreviations	IX
List of tables	X
List of graphs	XI
General introduction	1
CHAPTER ONE: Theoretical Background	
1.1 Introduction	4
1.2 Understanding the concept of culture.....	4
1.3 Sociocultural background.....	5
1.3.1 Social class.....	6
1.3.2 Age.....	6
1.3.3 Religion.....	7
1.3.4 Gender.....	7
1.4 Identity.....	8
1.4.1 Theoretical perception of Teachers’ identity.....	9
1.4.2 Rigid settings impact on identity construction.....	10
1.4.3 Student-teacher rapport.....	10
1.4.4 Learners’ identity	11
1.5 Convergence and Divergence.....	12
1.5.1 Convergence.....	13
1.5.2 Divergence.....	13
1.6 Flexibility and rigidity	14
1.7 Egocentrism.....	15

1.7.1 Stereotype.....	16
1.8 Conclusion.....	17
CHAPTER TWO: Research Design and Methodology	
2.1 Introduction.....	19
2.2 Research instruments and methodology.....	19
2.3 Sampling.....	19
2.4 Questionnaire.....	20
2.4.1 Participants Questionnaire.....	20
2.5 Interview.....	36
2.6 Conclusion	42
CHAPTER THREE: Discussion of the Findings	
3.1 Introduction.....	44
3.2 Observation.....	44
3.2.1 Discussion of the observation results.....	46
3.2.2 Arabic as an intermediate language in EFL classes.....	48
3.2.3 Convergence / Divergence dichotomy.....	49
3.3 Discussion of the questionnaire results.....	49
3.3.1 Dialectal Arabic cultural impact	50
3.3.2 Cultural perception of females' second shift.....	51
3.3.3 Single sex classes	52
3.4 Discussion of the interview results.....	52
3.4.1 Teacher identity.....	53
3.4.2 Parental involvement	54
3.5 Recommendations and suggestions.....	55
3.6 Limitations of the study	56
3.7 Conclusion.....	56

General conclusion.....59

Bibliography

Résumé

الملخص

Appendices

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Acronyms and abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

L1: The First Language.

L2: The Second Language.

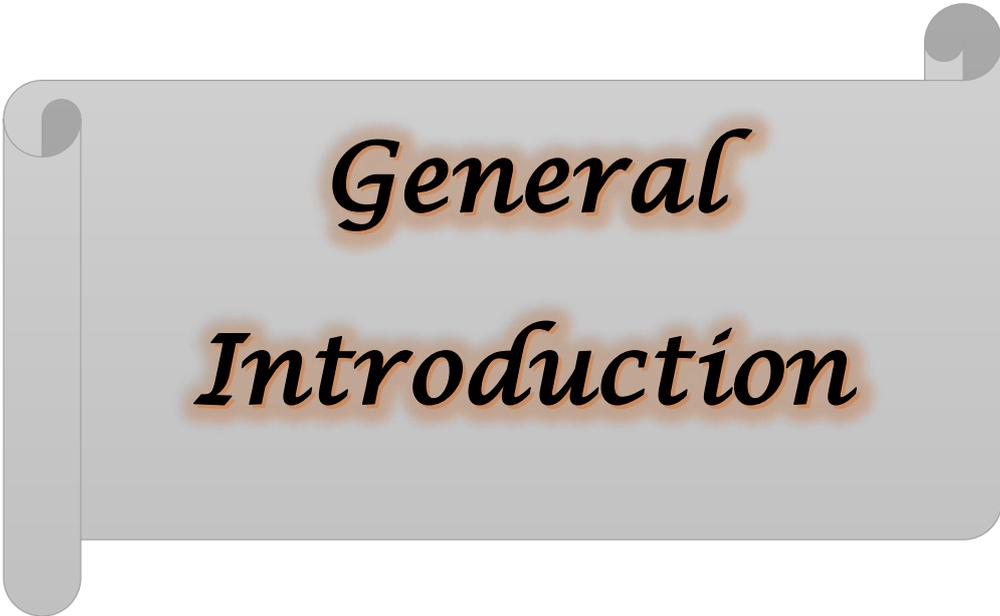
WHO: World Health Organization.

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Participants' Gender.....	20
Table 2.2: Fathers' Occupation.....	21
Table 2.3: Mothers' Occupation.....	22
Table 2.4: Parental School involvement	23
Table 2.5: Pupils' Interest in Learning English.....	23
Table 2.6: The Impact of Foreign Languages on Pupils' Lifestyle.....	28
Table 2.7: Reasons for Parents' Refusal.....	31
Table 2.8: Participants' Life Decisions	34
Table 2.9: Informants' Perspectives vis-à-vis Teen Mariage	36

List of Graphs

Figure 2.1: Participants' Gender.....	21
Figure 2.2: Parental Involvement.....	22
Figure 2.3: Pupils' Language Preference.....	24
Figure 2.4: Learning Skill Deficiency.....	25
Figure 2.5: The matrix language at home.....	26
Figure 2.6: The frequency of library visits.....	27
Figure 2.7: Languages Pupils use in Reading.....	28
Figure 2.8: Informants View towards Working Females.....	29
Figure 2.9: Pupils' Attitudes towards Heterogonous Classrooms.....	30
Figure 2.10: Parents View on Studying Away from Home.....	31
Figure 2.11: Participants' Vision vis-à-vis their residence.....	32
Figure 2.12: Pupils Reactions towards Living Abroad.....	33
Figure 2.13: Parental Motivation.....	35



*General
Introduction*

Communication among people from different regions can be difficult at times therefore people turn to adjust their speech in a way that is similar or different to the one they are speaking to depending on the situation, which may result in convergence and divergence. Thus, it is worth mentioning that, throughout history, language had been a vital organ for communities and societies. However, when it comes to language learning people differ, some learn faster than others some do not master another language except for their mother tongue and some master several languages except for the one they have acquired when they were kids. That is due to several factors such as the learner's identity that varies from one to another especially nowadays societies are a mixture of identities.

Identity is a perspective in life, something to reflect on, a print or legacy, and to base the lifestyle, manners, clothing and historical background. As a result, identity became the strongest factor in building a person's character, where they come from their ethnicity, religion, in some cases even skin color. In addition, language also plays a major role as it can affect deeply the language learning process due to the socio-cultural background of the learner and how he perceives a foreign language and if he/she is open to other cultures and other languages. The socio-cultural background is where does this student come from and how he has been raised, the educational level of his parents, the social and financial status, conservative or flexible family all these factors combined form the student's background and sometimes it becomes a barrier in language learning and can prevent the process.

In the light of all what has been mentioned this work aims at investigating the potential effects that socio-cultural background has on learner's identity construction. Besides, observing whether living in a rural area is of influence in learning a language. The present piece of research raises the following questions:

1-How learners' sociocultural background affect their learning process?

2-Do rigid areas have an impact on learners' identity construction?

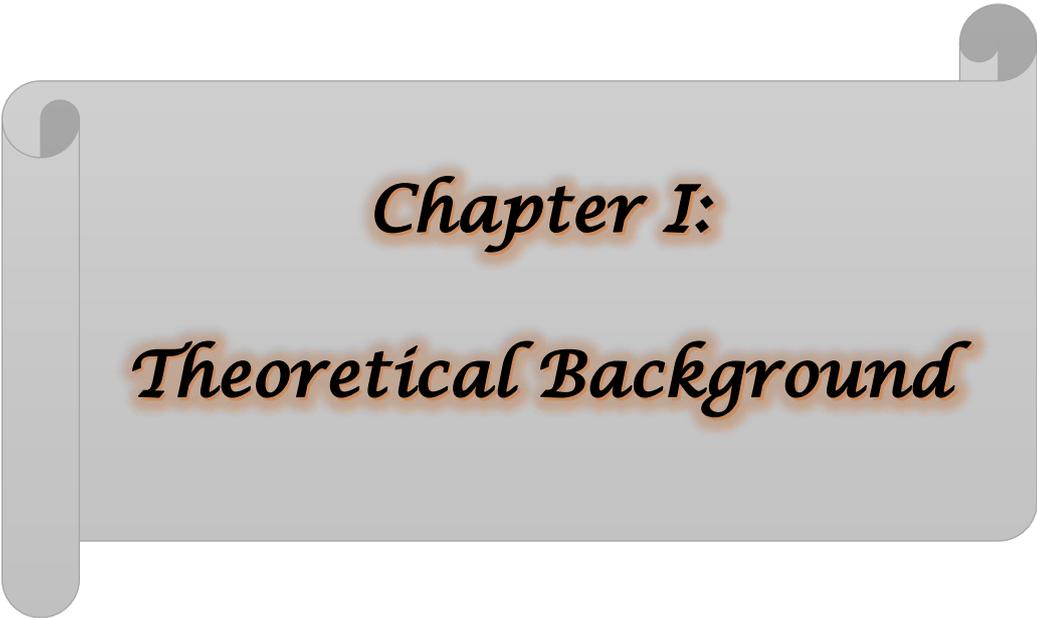
3-what are the sociocultural factors that influence the learners' identity and academic achievement?

In order to answer the aforementioned research questions, our research proposes the following hypotheses:

- -Socio-cultural background has a distinctive impact on learners understanding and learning a language.
- Rigid area could re-shape the learners' identity at school and in the workplace.
- Parental involvement/participation, and their socio-cultural background of the family have an influence on the identity of learners.

In order to achieve the purpose of the study, we will conduct qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data, accordingly data will be gathered by an interview addressed to teachers, and a questionnaire plus an observation of pupils. So third year Secondary School pupils of Laaroussi Larbi Sidi Housni will be adopted to be participants in the procedure of investigation. Accordingly, the study is comprised of three main chapters.

The first chapter will be devoted to the theoretical background of the research when the main focus falls on some definitions and concepts given by scholars about the socio-cultural factors that affect the language learning. The second chapter (the practical part) will cover the methodology of research describing the tools of investigation employed which concerns rural high school learners. The last chapter will deal with the findings as they will be discussed to confirm or deny the validity of the hypotheses suggested. It also includes a presentation of the limitations encountered. In addition to the recommendation of the research.



Chapter I:
Theoretical Background

1.1 Introduction

It is widely known that socio-cultural factors are large scale forces within so many factors that can influence the process of language learning. Habits, beliefs, backgrounds and common traditions appear as key elements in shaping an individual's language proficiency. Thus, this chapter provides a literature review and some previous studies related to the social variables that have an impact on the process of language learning.

1.2 Understanding the Concept of Culture

Culture is a very broad concept, one cannot find an exact definition that clearly describes this concept. In order to provide its most correct definition a great deal of research has been made by linguists, anthropologists and theorists the term can be defined as people's way of living that it includes arts, beliefs, values, language and religions of a population that are passed down from generation to generation. According to the English anthropologist Tylor (1991) as cited in Bennoukh, (2019) "*culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, behavior, art, law, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.*" (p. 874)

Similarly, Hofstede and Minkov (2010, p. 6) stated that "*culture is the collective programming of the mind*". Culture can also be viewed as a social phenomenon and a learned behavior not inherited that is to say it is created when people interact with each other through verbal and non-verbal language. However, it is vulnerable as it is constantly changing and easily lost.

When talking about culture, it is important to know that all human beings belong to a certain culture and within each culture it may include subcultures. Interestingly, it might be found surprising to know that there are people who live in the same society and share the same characteristics might have different cultural lens. Mahadi (2012) claimed that "*every society*

has its own culture; and different is within a society may have their own distinctive subculture”.
(p. 233)

The concept of culture may differ from one field to another but most of scholars agreed that one should know that whatever definition is given to it, it keeps changing and termed in different ways. Brown, (2000), as cited in Bennoukh, (2019) claimed that *“a language is part of culture, and a culture is part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture”* (p. 177). In other words, language and culture are two interlinked entities that complete each other and it is somehow impossible having a clear understanding of one without the other. Thus, when a language is gone the entire inner life of a people disappears because each language holds a piece of information about a place, a way of thinking and a way of living therefore, when you lose that language you lose the one connection you have with that certain culture.

1.3 Socio-cultural background

According to many studies, the evolution of an individual's language proficiency is to a certain extent formed by socio-cultural background, in other words, socio-cultural background affect student's language proficiency and language learning (Lori and Al-Ansari, 2001). As for sociocultural background as a concept it refers to ethnicity in terms of family's level of education as it has a powerful influence on what a person becomes and what they achieve in life, social class for it is a determinant of many of the most fundamental aspects of life, age, religion, gender and aspects which are learned and shared within a person's environment. Hence, generally speaking it represents most of the aspects that are responsible for facilitating or debilitating the process of language learning.

1.3.1 Social class

Several studies have been carried out in order to study the relationship between the economic status of the family and student's academic achievement. That finding showed that it is conventionally argued that family is the primary social group of an individual, which makes it the most influencing factor to the shaping of a learning identity. Parent's high income, occupation, social status and level of education, play a significant role.

Various studies argued that learners from a high socio-cultural families progressed at a faster rate than those from low socio-cultural families. In simplified words, the financial problems and less time availability parents from low socio-economic status face makes them provide their children with less academic support comparing to those from high socio-economic status (Salameh & Sathakathulla, 2018). To illustrate, wealthy parents provide their children with everything they need in their studies, such as; laptop, internet, paid extra courses etc. There are even private schools provided with expert teachers and purposeful curricula in order to help them in their academic path. Whereas, learners from lower class have to do extra work to succeed.

1.3.2 Age

The age of the learner has a significant impact on his/her capacity to master a new language. Chambers and Trudgill (1980) argued that learners who begin to learn a second language after the age of 15 years are less likely to obtain complete grammatical proficiency, they believe if the person does not acquire language during this period, he will find it almost impossible to do so later on. Whereas those who learn a language before puberty have more chances to acquire a native-speaker accent. That is to say, the earlier a person begins to learn the faster he acquires the mastery of a language since the human brain is most ready to receive input and to learn language at this early age. However, this cannot be ultimately conventional

we can see adults engaging in acquiring new languages and actually succeeding it, since they can profit from the background knowledge and strategies which they learned from their native language. To illustrate, there are here in Tiaret foreign languages learning centers like " " Where adults are able to learn the target languages they desire successfully. Finally, we can say that children can acquire a second language easily comparing to adults. However, this does not mean that oldest learners are not effective learners, they can face all the challenge and barriers to acquire a second language correctly.

1.3.3 Religion

It is worth mentioning that religion and religious beliefs are also contributors in influencing the behaviors, openness and attitudes of an individual toward learning a language in both positive and negative ways. Scholars like (Croucher & Harris, 2012; James, 1997) have all described religion and spirituality as “important elements of the human condition”. For they surround people’s daily lives and collaborate in decisions making.

It can also be considered as a contributor in the shaping of one’s way of thinking towards people and education because when a person is highly religious he/she might face difficulties communicating with people from other religions because they do not share the same principles and beliefs.

1.3.4 Gender

Gender as well represents another important factor in the set of factors that have an influence on the learning process, the World Health Organization (WHO) (n.d. Para. 1) defined gender as *"the socially constructed characteristics of women and men - such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed"*. Therefore, gender can be defined as a state of being constructed by society’s expectations of how should men and women act, walk, dress, choose career path and

even choose colors. Based on what has been mentioned above there is a possibility that language learning opportunities and experiences may not be quite the same for male and female learners. As it has been mentioned by Belaid & Sarnou (2020): “*it is agreed that boys and girls are not given the same treatment or the same attention in class*” (p. 127)

Not only in class, but this can occur in other life settings especially in rigid communities for we still see that men and women are not equally treated.

1.4 Identity

Identity, as a concept, it has been viewed differently by different socialists and it can be approached in a number of ways. Identity can be referred to as the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks or expressions and characteristics that define a person, it may include race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation and physical attributes. Michael (2014) has claimed that when a subculture deviates from society's rules, the construction and preservation of a distinctive identity becomes a necessity.

Broadly speaking, identity is related to people's understandings about ‘who they are’ and what makes sense to them. These understandings are linked to some certain attributes that has priority over other sources of meaning. According to many socialists, there are two main types of identity that people often use to demonstrate themselves: self-identity and social identity (Itulua-Abumere, 2013).

Firstly, self-identity or personal identity. This type refers to the process of the unique identity people develop over time and the way they shape a relationship to the surrounding world. This concept may include aspects of life that a person has no control over such as places of growing up, past decisions or even race or skin color, so generally self-identity represents the idea of how an individual is different from those around him/her.

Secondly, social identity, it can be defined as a created thought that a person has on which social group they belong to. Multiple social identities could be accumulated in one person as s/he could simultaneously be a father, lawyer and a Muslim and that is a result of specific choices made or lived experiences, some of these identities may last forever and some may shift throughout time.

Tajfel (1972) as cited in Abrams-Hogg (1990) claimed that "*the individual's knowledge he/she belongs to certain social groups, together with some emotional and value significance to him of the group membership*" (p.03). This would indicate that social identity gives a sense of belonging to the social world by marking similarities shared between society members rather than differences.

When talking broadly about the concept of identity, one should be aware that the construction of identity starts in an early age, better say 'From birth', the way a person is treated, and cared of by people in different environments creates a certain thought that a person has on himself and that affects all his performances in life, particularly the academic performance. Therefore, schools have a major impact on the creation of both learner's identity and teacher's identity and both contribute to the creation of citizen, it is indeed a complicated, but an everlasting process.

1.4.1 Theoretical perception of teachers' identity

Teaching effectively plays a crucial role in accomplishing a successive educational journey. Thus, several studies have focused on the level of teachers and their role in the classroom.

First, the concept of teachers' identity refers to how a teacher identify him or herself as an educator including the commitments and values they hold towards their profession.

According to Miller (2008, p. 174) Teachers' identity is considered to be "*relational, negotiated, constructed, enacted, transforming and transitional.*"

This means that a teacher's identity is not a static entity, but under constant construction and reconstruction process while gaining professional knowledge and experience.

Second, there is no doubt that the study atmosphere a teacher creates in the class is of high importance because it affects the learner's learning process. According to Lankshear & Knobel, (2003) it is important that we transfer from the strategy of empathetic-only to empathetic asset-based for it appreciates our students numerous distinct strengths. When we do this we search for honor and respect the values, characteristics that distinguish each student

1.4.2 Rigid context impact on identity construction

Some teachers intend to teach in a way that reflects their personality, and so this may have an impact on how the lessons are delivered, for instance; if a teacher comes from a rural background and his/her idea or view about the language they teach is narrowed and does not include its culture, they may transfer the language in way that is somehow related to their own culture and concerned only with learner's linguistic ability.

On the other hand, teachers who come from an urban area, may come with lots of information and knowledge about the language and its culture. In addition more openness to new ways of thinking that benefits learners and increases their attention to the language.

1.4.3 Teacher-learner rapport

It is important to know that the way a teacher acts and treats his students have an influence on the relationship created between them, As Tucker (2018) claimed in an article that a poor student-teacher connection is resulted due to a lack of awareness shown from the

part of instructor. This indicates that the teacher should be aware of how he/she should deal with a learner in order to create a strong relationship.

1.4.5 Learners' identity

The identity of learners has been a subject of interest over many years which made linguists approach that notion by defining it as follows:

A 'learner identity' can be broadly defined as how an individual feels about himself/herself as a learner and the extent to which he/she describes himself/herself as a 'learner'. In a clear way, it is possible to comprehend this concept as the development of habits and attitudes that have an impact on the learning process, and the evolving manner in which children understand themselves as learners. Coll (1988) maintained that a constructivist view of meaningful learning requires an individual's subjective experience of the learning situation.

As a matter of fact, a number of researches revealed that every individual is differed on the level of abilities and interest in learning which made the shaping and evolution of a learner's identity influenced to a great deal by some internal and external factors.

First, the internal factors consist of several elements that are mainly concerned with the inside of a person. Intelligence, personal interests and motivation represent these elements as they are responsible for the success or failure of language acquisition

The level of intelligence in learning differs from one to another because not all people share the same capacities in perceiving knowledge. Additionally, if a person is willingly interested in a learning a certain language it will be easy for them to learn. Oppositely to a person who is obliged to learn that language. Crump (1995) argued that the major components of learning are excitement, interest and enthusiasm.

Ryan & Deci (2000) stated that Learners are intrinsically motivated to learn when they believe they have a high level of autonomy and choose to participate in an activity rather than being forced to do so. In other words, motivation represents an important contributor in language learning as well because it grants a person with positive attitude and higher rate of effort making in the process.

Second, in contrary to the internal factors that come from the inside of a person, external factors represent the environmental elements that come from the outside of a person like society or family environment or even school environment.

Society's effect on learning can be both positive and negative depending on the quality of the social environment, if the effect is positive it might lead to a higher chances of perception on the level of learner's performance and if the effect is bad learners may face difficulties in grasping knowledge. According to Feng (2019) "*when students encounter anxiety in a language learning environment, they may not be able to attain exceptional academic performance.*" (p. 45) same thing for school environment, because the condition and availability of a school's resources can have a significant impact on lifting or worsen learners achievement.

To summarize all what was mentioned above, achieving a society of lifelong learning necessitates individuals with well- developed learner identity. Thus it is important to focus on building a positive identity because greater education creates a structured environment.

1.5 Convergence & divergence

Convergence and divergence are known to be the two main parts of the theory of communication accommodation. This theory was first coined by Howard Giles in 1971 and it suggests to change one's language in order to 'accommodate' whom they are speaking to. Soliz, Thorson and Rittenour (2009, p. 821) "*proclaim that accommodation is applied for approval,*

inclusion, affiliation, or interpersonal goals". The theory is basically applied to demonstrate how people try to accommodate the person speaking to by converging and diverging.

1.5.1 Convergence

Convergence is the process by which a person purposely change and adapt their language to be closer or more similar to their speech partners. An individual's Convergence can be shown in a variety of ways in communication, including language use, pronunciation, pause and utterance lengths, vocal intensities, non-verbal actions and intimacy of personal disclosures (Lehmann, 2015).

Such actions are usually noticed in numerous situations such as: writing a letter applying for a job, because when someone is writing a letter to apply for a job they write in a more formal way than usually do with their peers and use fancy words to sound more intelligent. Also this action might be noticed when a native speaker is trying to make their language easier to a non-native speaker by using simple and easy words or slowing down when talking. Generally, Convergence is founded on people's views of others, as well as what they can deduce about them and their backgrounds.

1.5.2 Divergence

According to Lehmann (2015), divergence is a linguistic strategy whereby an individual accentuates the linguistic differences between themselves and their interlocutor. In other words, it means creating a division between an individual and the person talking to by purposely moving the language style further apart. This action is used for several purposes such as: trying to show a higher social status or to show off extensive knowledge on a certain subject either to express or confuse the hearer. Also it can be used by people from different places who want to show off their identity where they purposely use dialects from their areas to keep their language apart from the arrivals. Language convergence occurs when a speaker accommodates an

interlocutor by speaking the latter's language, and engages in a conversation where he insists on speaking in his or her mother tongue. In this situation, the interlocutor must switch away from his or her native language for example an Algerian hotel receptionist Deals with a foreigner who hardly understands Arabic, however the Algerian worker keeps talking to him in his native language in order to show his identity and differences.

1.6 Flexibility & Rigidity

Despite the fact that flexibility and rigidity have a lot of meanings in everyday life it has been tough to conceptualize them (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010; Schultz & Searleman, 2002). An individual's way of analyzing information and dealing with different situations and problems in life can show whether that person has a rigid or flexible mind. When talking about flexibility and rigidity one should bear in mind that these two elements have a major influence on the way a person perceives knowledge.

On the one hand, the term flexibility is used to refer to the ability of developing a wide range of thoughts and reactions across several categories, as well as the ability of observing things from various perspectives. More specifically, flexibility refers to the changing of thoughts and plans by shifting the mindset in response to unexpected situations or being creative when the usual way of doing things change or doesn't work. This thinking could be of positive influence on the learning process because when it comes to making progress and achieving a successful educational journey one should be able to adapt to changing conditions and circumstances.

On the other hand, rigidity is considered as the incapacity to change thoughts and see things from a different perspective. Such stuck thinking makes a person perceive life through a pair of blinders, noticing only one of the many intricacies that exist. It also makes a person

unable to think of alternative ways to solve a problem because they expect everything to go exactly as how they know or as how they planned for it. Therefore any slight change in plans or situations may cause them to react with fear and hostility. Unlikely to flexibility such thinking could cause a negative effect on language learning because it reduces a learner's chances to develop their performance and produce better results.

1.7 Egocentrism

Egocentrism is a concept that was first derived from piaget's theory of childhood development. It refers to a cognitive bias in which a person assumes that others share the same perspective as them, more specifically, they are unable to take other people's point of view into consideration. (Floyd, 140) referred to egocentrism as someone who is "*unable to take another person's perspective*". Egocentrism can be found at any age: infancy, childhood, adolescence and even adulthood, hence, nowadays it is commonly noticed that it is widespread among individuals. this behavior can occur as a result of the development of one's identity, for instance an individual who receives a great deal of praise from parents or surrounding people about their gender, looks, feelings, ideas or even accomplishments makes them assume that they are superior and feel different and unique when facing a new social environment. When a person is being egocentric according to piaget's theories and studies it means that it influences their second language learning and the distinction in the cognitive development (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Wadsworth, 1996). For it has an impact on the process of perception and the ability of a person to give meaning to actions and behaviors. As cited in (Aydin, 2011) piaget also proposes that egocentrism impacts language acquisition for young children and is an early learning strategy related to inner or private speech to govern internal thoughts. This affirms that the more

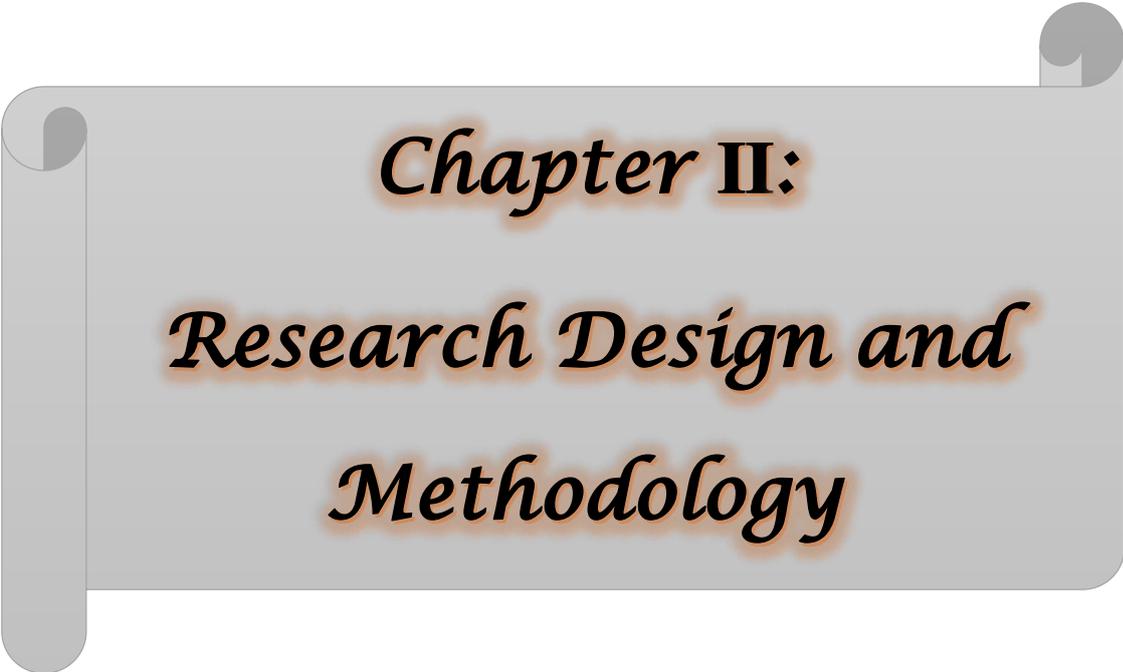
a person learns about their perception capacities the better they understand about themselves, others and the surrounding world.

1.7.1 Stereotype

The term stereotype is considered as a multi-faceted psychological construct that includes cognitive, attitudinal and evaluative elements (Spencer-Rodgers, 2001). In social psychology, this term stands for the act of shaping “a fixed belief about a particular group or class of people” (McLeod, 2015, para. 1). These beliefs could possibly be in a negative or a positive way. However, they may or may not accurately reflect reality considering that stereotypic people are more likely to take information that conforms to their model assumptions and ignore the ones that do not (Levon, 2014). This type of thinking may appear to be useful in gaining better understanding of the surroundings, yet it can also be considered as a disadvantage on the level of many aspects since it is overgeneralized and exaggerated. As McLeod (2015) maintained, stereotype makes us overlook the fact that people differ from one to another and are not all the same which makes the assumptions taken incorrect. When it comes to a comparison between the two lifestyles, it has been noted that a lot of people who live in urban cities consider themselves to be somehow superiors than the ones who live in rural regions simply for the reason that they have experienced living in such places and the image of rural populations was created in their minds to be poor, ignorant or with a very limited rate of thing and very conservative concerning the way they think, dress and even behave. Such kind of thinking was inherited overtime from generation to generation which makes it very difficult to be broken. Thus, all it can be said is that stereotype is unjust assumptions and unless a person actually experience something he/she should not a prejudgment (Devi, 2018).

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter is concerned with the theoretical part of the thesis, it provided an over view of the sociocultural factors that could possibly have a big influence on learners identity along their educational journey. We have assimilated that the aforementioned factors represent a linear in which they are tightly inter-relate, and the extent to which they have an impact is purely determined by the speech community in which individuals live.



Chapter II:
Research Design and
Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The theoretical background of the current investigation was covered in the preceding part. As follows, the second chapter will go into the research design and methodology. The major purpose of this study is to emphasize the impact of learners' socio-cultural background on their language learning process.

2.2 Research instruments and methodology

A mixed-method research design is used to achieve the purpose of this study. Mixed approach includes both quantitative and qualitative research techniques so that researchers can collect data, analyze it, and integrate the results. Quantitative because we have provided some statistics concerning pupils' attitudes towards learning languages and foreign cultures, as for the qualitative method it has been used for deeper comprehension since it allows to observe and ask questions that are somehow difficult to be measured statistically. Thereby, Creswell and Clark (2007, p. 5), claim that *“the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone”*.

Correspondingly, as quantitative or qualitative data alone will not be enough to adequately answer our research question. A triangulation may be the right choice to proceed while taking into account the study's credibility and complexity. In this perspective, a questionnaire, a semi structured interview and an observation are used to collect data.

2.3 Sampling

The questionnaire was given to 90 pupils of third year, 61 Females and 39 Male. The reasons why we have selected this category of participants. First, the majority of third year are about 17 years old or more, which makes them old and mature enough to deal with culturally sensitive questions. Second, our selected participants are supposed to join university whereby many divergent mindset exist. They are the same category of participants whom we observed in the classroom. As for the interview, we have interviewed eight experienced language teachers

who are from rural and urban areas and teach in this school, they are in charge of teaching final classes. The interview is composed of six direct questions which mostly revolve around pupils' performance, the impact of their parents and background on their success in school.

2.4 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to obtain data from third year pupils. The questionnaire is consisted of 10 questions, where we assured the use of simple and direct questions with understandable language due to the level of our participants. Both close ended and open ended questions were used, giving them the opportunity to answer freely. The questionnaire was given out in class. We hoped that by doing so, we might ensure that all of the respondents would complete and return the questionnaire and would help them in case they do not understand the questions as worded.

2.4.1 Participants' questionnaire

The participants' demographic variables are of importance, thus our sample is from both genders, the rate is represented as follows:

Gender	Number	Percentage
Males	29	32,22%
Females	61	67,78%
Total	60	100%

Table 2.1: Participants' Gender

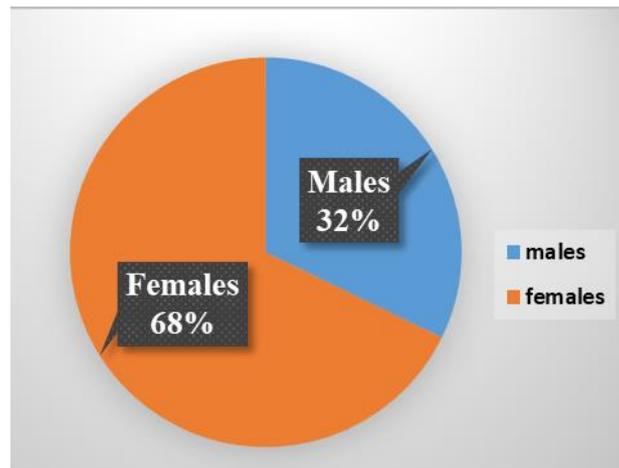


Figure 2.1.1: Participants' Gender

According to the findings, females make up the majority of participants, accounting for 68 percent of the whole sample, while males have a lower percentage as they present 32 percent. Females outnumber males in the classroom as their existence is remarkably predominant.

Question 2: What is the job of your parents?

Objective: The aim of this question is to see how the occupation of parents may affect their children's ability to learn and acquire languages.

Jobs	Number of students	Percentage
Self employed	13	15.55%
Handicraftsmen	6	6.66%
Drivers	3	3.33%
Public service workers	12	13.33%
Education	5	5.55%
Jobless	31	34.44%
Retired	19	21.14%
Total	90	100%

Table 2.2: Fathers' Occupations

Students gave a wide range of occupations. 15,55% of fathers are self-employed, 6,66% are handicraftsmen, 3,33% are drivers, 13,33% are public service workers. As the Education section presents 5,55% which includes teachers, headmasters and Counsellors. 21,11% of them are retired. Whereas, jobless fathers scored a high average with 34,44 . This means that the

families living in rural areas are in an inconvenient economic status, because the majority of fathers work for themselves. As parents have a significant influence on their children's language learning, they could motivate their children as well as they could neglect them and prevent participating in their school life.

Jobs	Number of students	Percentage%
Employed	6	6.67%
Retired	3	3.33%
Housewife	81	90%
Total	90	100%

Table 2.3: Mothers' Occupations

As mentioned in the table above, the results show that 6.66% of mothers are employed, 3.33% are retired while 90% are housewives. Hence, these results are not very surprising in a community like Algeria, especially in a rural area like Sid Housni, where practically all women are housewives performing housework and caring for their children without having the right to work outside home, even if they have a good academic level.

Question 3: Do your parents visit your school and ask for your performance?

Objective: The aim behind this question is to see parental involvement in their children's learning process and their achievement in school as well as their behavior.

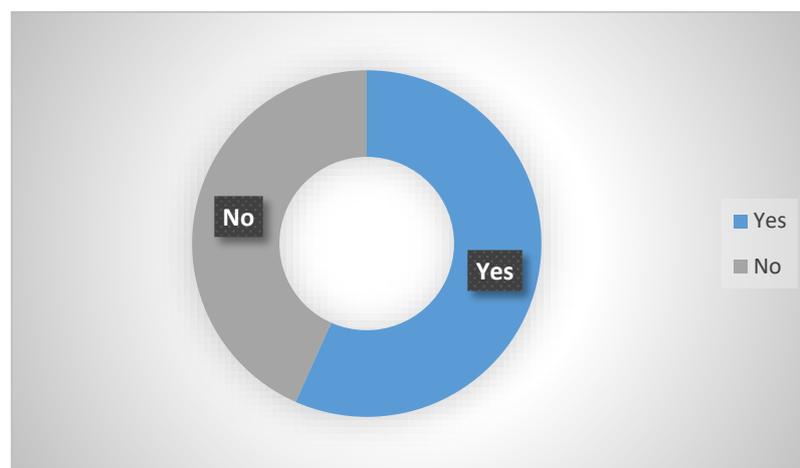


Figure 2.2: parental Involvement

Options	Number	Percentage
Parents visiting schools	51	56.56%
Parents who don't visit schools	39	43.44%
total	90	100%

Table 2.4: Parental School Involvement

We found that 56% of pupils have answered with yes for their parents' visit to their school. Whereas, 43% of them answered have negatively, this implies that people who live in rural areas are devoted and concerned in following their children's studies and achievement at school.

Question 4: Do you like learning English? If no, which foreign language you wish to learn?

Objective: The aim behind this question is to see if pupils are interested in learning English or any other foreign language and to detect to which language they are biased to.

Responses	Number of participants	Percentage
Yes	66	73.34%
No	24	26.66%
Total	90	100%

Table 2.5: Pupils' Interest in Learning English

The table above reveals that the majority of participants 73.33% like learning English as a foreign language. Only 26.66% state that they enjoy learning other foreign languages and gave alternative answers such as French, Spanish and German with diversified rates.

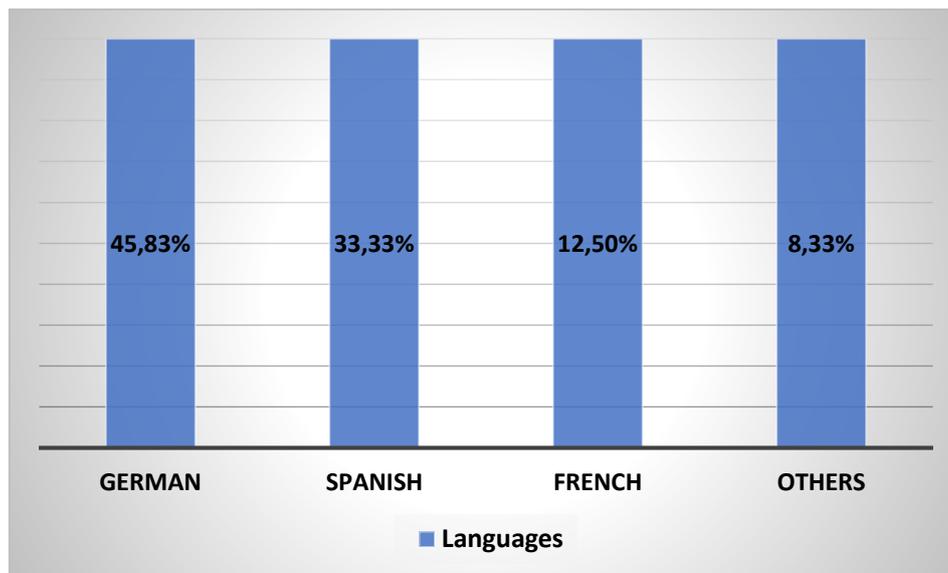


Figure 2.3: Pupils' Language Preference

Nearly 46% of pupils prefer learning German and 33.33 % chooses Spanish as the most likeable foreign languages. While only 12.50 % selects French as they have mentioned it is because they like their French teacher, and 8.33% of them choose languages other than the ones picked. Sometimes the teachers' role and interest in their pupils will attract their attention towards learning and make the language more likeable. It is not surprising that pupils love any language because of the teacher.

Question 5: Which skill you think you encounter difficulties to master French / English?

Objective: The purpose of this inquiry is to know which learning skill pupils seem to have and face challenges with during the process of learning a foreign language such as French and English.



Figure 2.4: Learning Skill Deficiency

As seen in Figure 5, the majority of the participants have difficulties dealing with the spoken language, as 70% of them state that they are unable to speak properly, which is most likely due to a lack of practice and communication with friends and classmates, as the majority have difficulties in speaking. 13.33% states they have problems with writing, which might be due to a lack of writing activities provided in the classroom, whereas 2,5% of pupils say they have problems with reading, which could be due to putting less efforts into reading texts and books in the classroom. The whole process is complicated, none of the skills are fully mastered or at least improved.

Question 6: When you are at home, what is the language that you usually use?

Objective: This question was asked to see which language or language variety is the most used by participants at home when they are interacting with their family members.

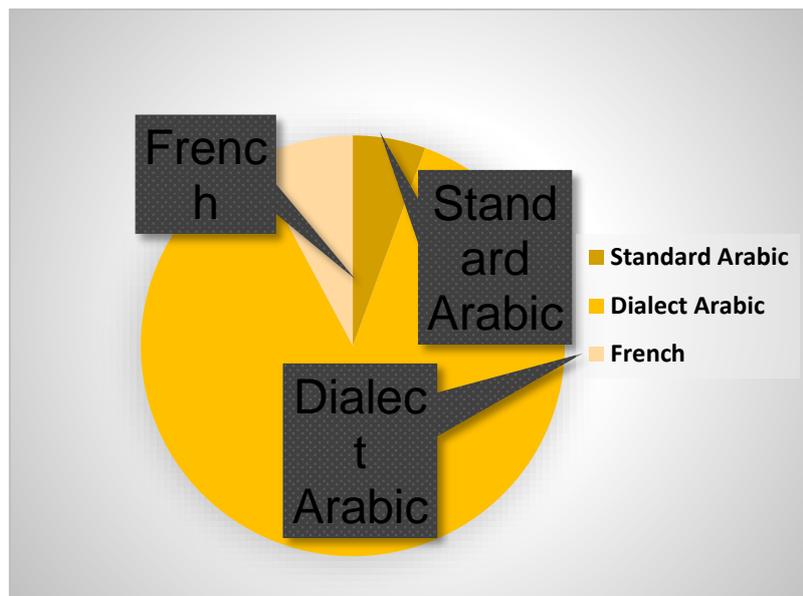


Figure 2.5: The Matrix Language at Home

As clarified the figure above, 86.66 percent of the pupils state that they speak the Arabic dialect, which is understandable since that it is their mother tongue. 5.55 percent says that they use standard Arabic, and 7.77 percent uses French. Expectedly no one chooses English, this means that the students are not exposed to English at home and hence are unable to benefit from its practice. That is, they only practice it in the classroom, which is insufficient for them to effectively master the foreign language. Pupils in rural areas appear to speak only in their native tongue, which is one of the detrimental effects of the environment on learners' achievement in foreign languages in general and English in particular.

Question 7: Do you go to the library?

Objective: This question aims at knowing whether pupils are motivated and interested in going to the libraries.

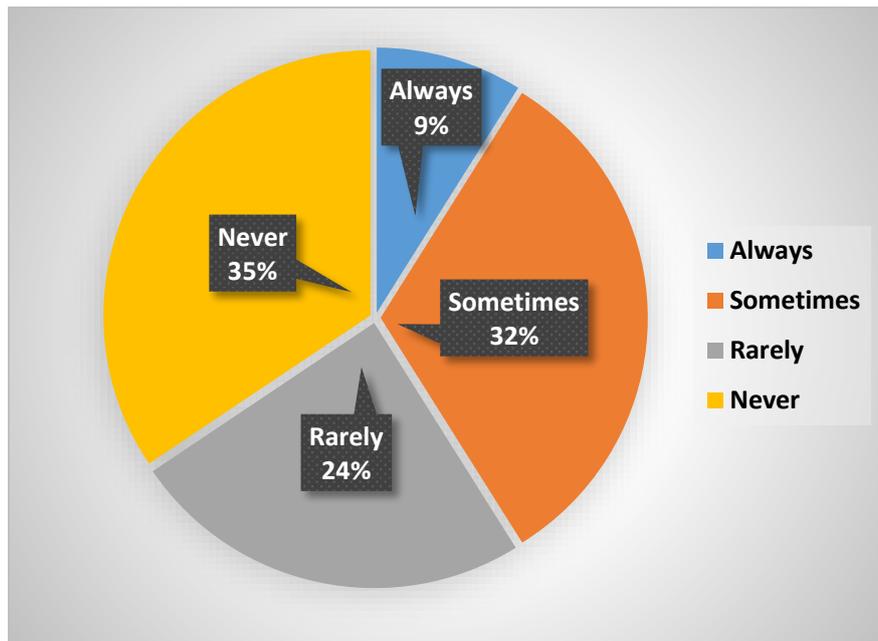


Figure 2.6: The Frequency of Library Visits

9% of pupils state that they always go to the library for various reasons such as reading books, revising for courses, or doing assignments. 32 percent indicate that they go to the library occasionally. 24% indicate that they rarely visit the library, while 35% claim they never go. This demonstrates that the majority of them are uninterested in learning or increasing their learning skills and only a few who are taking their studies seriously and eager to learn and acquire new skills.

Question 8: In which language do you usually read?

Objective: The goal of this question is to determine which language students are most interested in and enjoy reading.

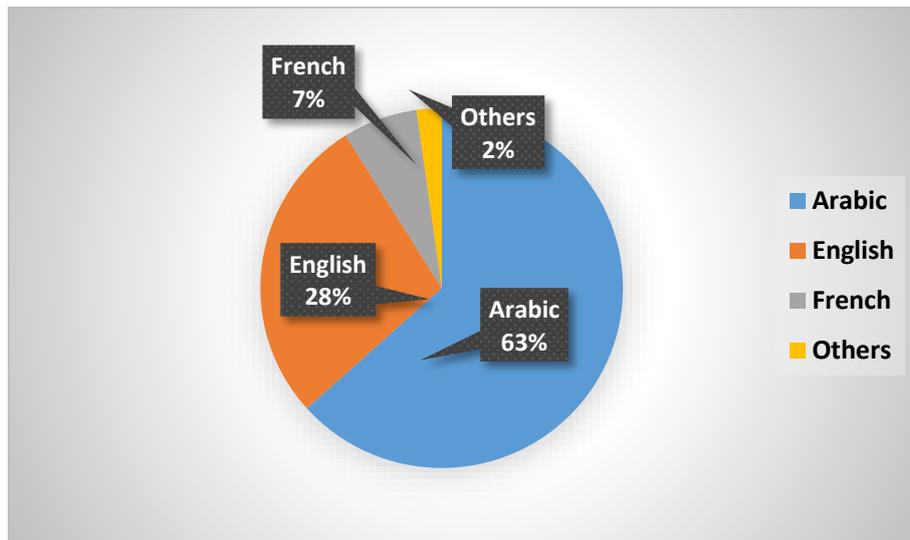


Figure 2.7: Languages Pupils use in Reading

As the graph shows, 63.33% of all respondents read in Arabic, 27.77% in English, and only 6.66% in French. A vast majority of pupils state that they read in Arabic since it is the language in which they are most comfortable and love reading. While students who have chosen English might be doing so to enhance their English skills, which is actually a very effective technique for them to make an achievement in their learning process. However, just a small percentage of participants have reported that reading in French was harder and less enjoyable to read. As a result, learning places a greater emphasis on English and Arabic in reading.

Question 9: Could learning a new language impact your life style?

Objective: This question was formulated to see whether foreign languages have an impact on learners' life style and if so, how that impact might be measured.

Respondents	Number of participants	Percentage
Yes	73	81.11%
No	17	8.89%
Total	90	100%

Table 2.6: The Impact of Foreign Languages on Life Style.

This question was answered positively by a large percentage of respondents 81.11 percent. We can assume that the process of learning a foreign language has had an impact on

the lives of the learners, which, according to them, has an impact on how they dress, think, and experience the world due to cultural differences. On the other hand, 18,89% of pupils respond negatively to this question, indicating that only a limited number of participants are unaffected by learning a new language and that it has no influence on their life style or how they think.

Question 10: What do you think about working females?

Objective: The goal of this question is to determine whether the stereotypes of rural thinking about women's right to work are constructed.

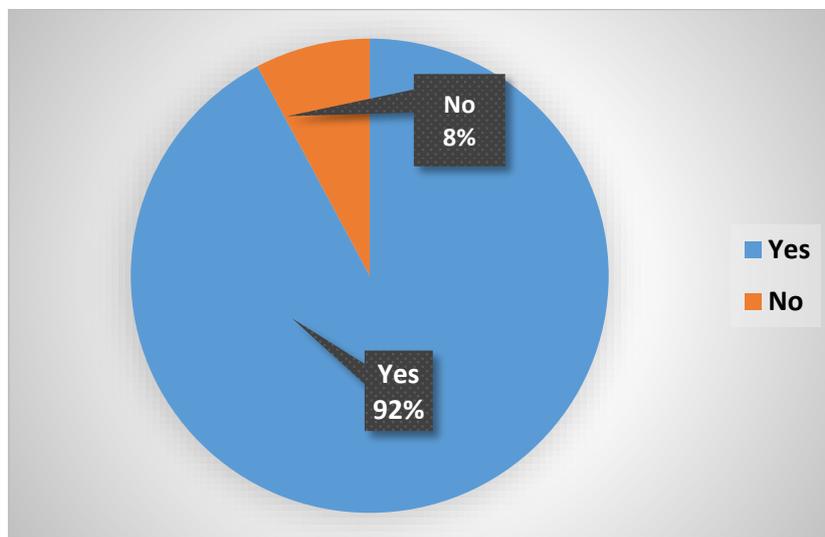


Figure 2.8: Informants view towards working females

92 percent of the participants were in favor of working women, in fact, they so support working women and saw them as strong and independent, according to certain comments, demonstrating that stereotypes about rural regions and how they think are incorrect. The remaining 8% are against this idea they claim that a woman should not work and should instead stay at home raising her children.

Question 11: What do you think of heterogeneous classrooms? (Classrooms with females / males only)

Objective: This question has an objective of knowing the attitudes of pupils towards mixed or single sex classrooms, which one they do prefer and suits them best.

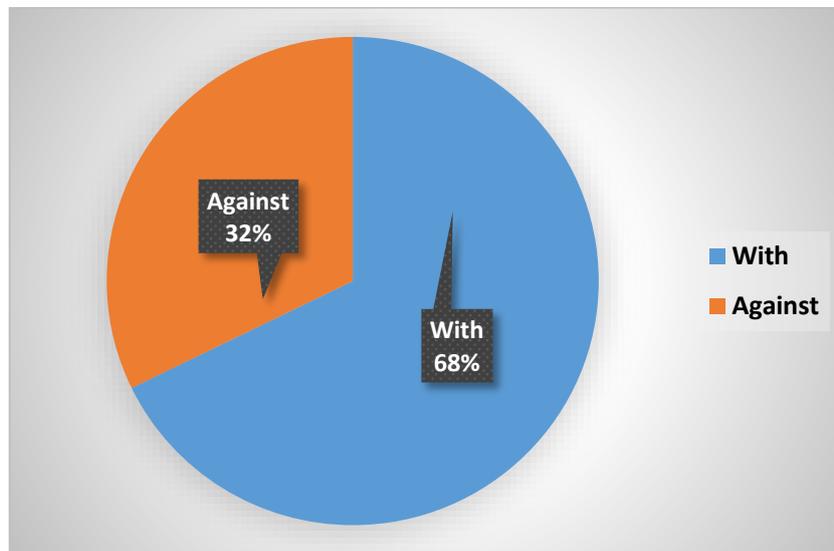


Figure 2.9: Pupils' Attitude towards Heterogeneous Classrooms

When asked if they support single-gender classes, 68 percent answers with yes, claiming that they want gender separation for a variety of reasons including a better concentration, being more comfortable which will improve their performance in class. Whereas, 32 percent says no, indicating that they are against heterogeneous classroom as they see themselves performing better in the existence of both genders in class

Question 11: When you pass your baccalaureate exam, will your parents allow you to study further than where you live?

Objective: the aim behind this question is to see if parents from rural areas allow their children to study away from home and to see how parents' decisions may affect their children schooling.

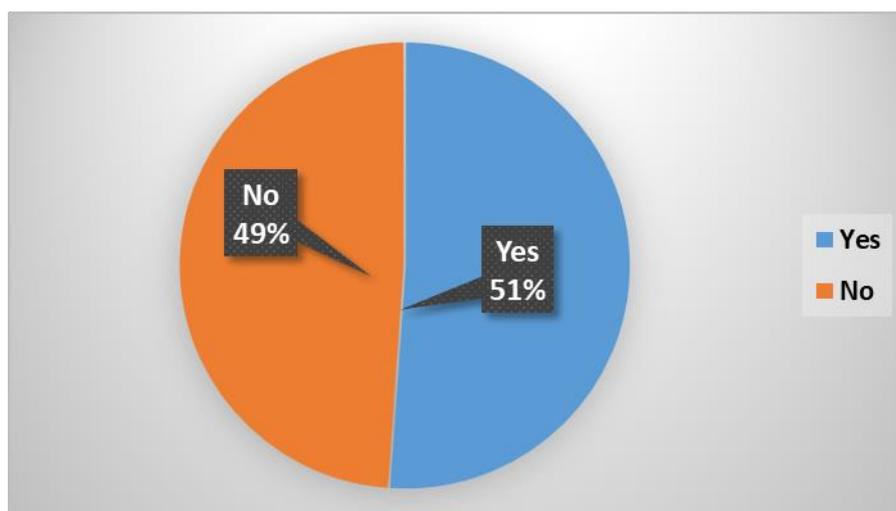


Figure 2.10: Parents' View on Studying away from home

Among the population investigated, 51,11% says that their parents will allow them to study further than where they live when they pass their baccalaureate, and nearly most of them were males, whose parents had no objection from displacing into an Urban city for educational purposes. The remaining respondents have answered negativity and provided few reasons for their parent's refusal. The rate of refusal is controversial in this case, it demonstrates many foibles and hurdles in the educational lives of pupils, especially females.

Reasons	Number	Percentage
Financial	9	20,45%
Conservative parents	18	40,90%
Over protective parents	12	27,27%
Old parents	5	11,36%

Table 2.7: Reasons for Parents' refusal

As table 7 reveals 20.45% of pupils have answered negatively because of the financial problems of their parents, it means either they are poor or they cannot afford the monthly allowance for their children, 11.36% states that they cannot go because of their old parents and that they have to stay home to take care of them. These are due to circumstances beyond the control of parents and children. On the other hand, 27,27% claims that their parents are over protective and will not allow them to go studying further from home because they want to keep

them close. The remaining 40,90% has conservative parents that will prevent them to study away from home simply for the reason that they are not open and flexible towards this idea.

Question 12: Do you feel shy when people ask you where you come from?

Objective: This question was formulated to verify pupils' attitudes towards their rural background residence and to highlight the social experiences which could have an effect on them.

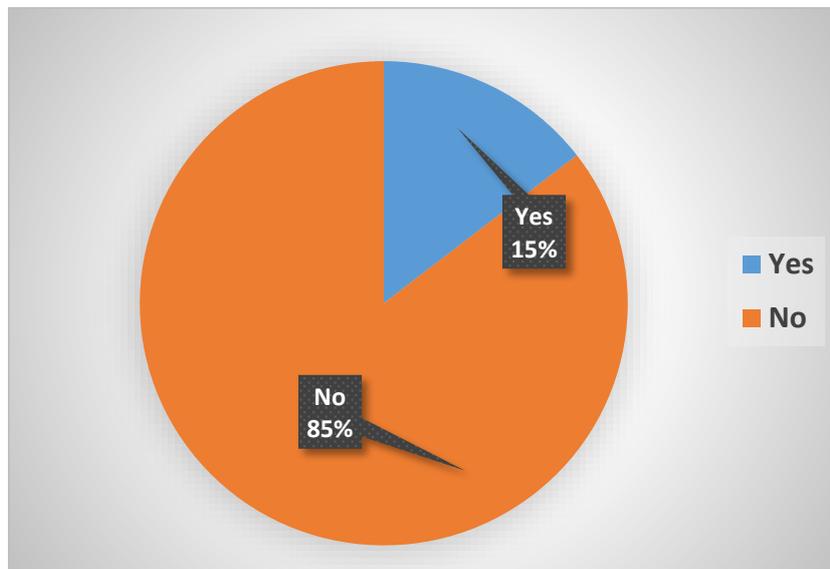


Figure 2.11: Participants' Vision vis-à-vis their Residence

14.55% of the pupils answer with yes, as they feel shy when being asked where they come from which is probably because they are afraid of the social judgment. As the majority of them 85,55% claims that they face no embarrassment when being asked about their background and where they live.

Question 13: How would you react if you were given the opportunity to live in England? Accept, hesitate or refuse.

Objective: The aim behind this question is to see the reaction of the learners' living in rural areas towards living abroad in a foreign country that has plenty of opportunities to offer.

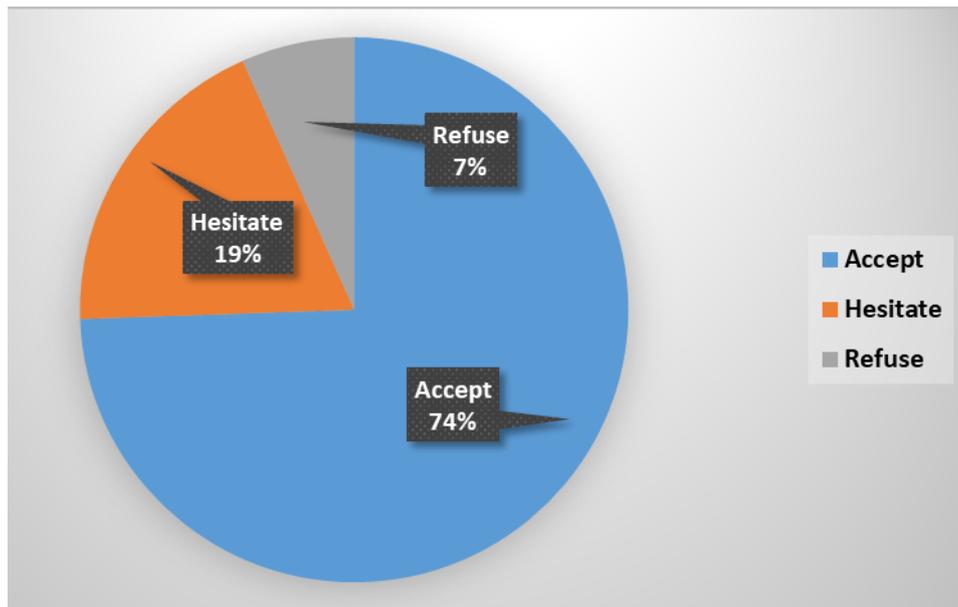


Figure 2.12: Pupils' Reaction towards Living Abroad

Through this direct question, we could arrive with the informants to understand their Standpoint on Traveling abroad, 74.44% of the participants affirm that they would accept if they have ever gotten the chance to go to England, 18,86 states that they would hesitate whether to stay or go. Whereas, 6.55% refuses this idea. As we can see, the majority of pupils show eagerness and excitement for moving to a European country. Considering their young age and relatively short experience, we may justify their curiosity and willingness to study and look for a professional life abroad, that they still have the stereotype of finding better opportunities in the European countries.

Question 14: Whenever taking any decision you refer to: religion principles, social judgment, cultural background, parental education or personal beliefs?

Objective: This question has an objective of knowing on which basis learners from rural areas take their decisions when it comes to real life situations.

Responses	Number of Pupils	Percentage
Religious principles	39	43,34%
Cultural background	22	24,45%
Parental education	12	13,33%
Social judgment	10	11,11%
Personal belief	7	7,77%

Table 8: Participants' Life Decisions

43% states that when it comes to taking life altering decisions they go back to their religions and convictions which indicates that a big portion of them is strongly religious. Whereas the second largest group estimated of 24.45% states that they reflect on their cultural background meaning that they are influenced by their beliefs, traditions and rules though it takes its basic principles from religion too. On the other hand, 13.33% claims that they base their decisions on how their parents react and decide vis-à-vis a certain topic. While 11.11% argues that they are to a certain extent interested only in how society would see and judge their choices. And as for the remaining group that represents 7.77% says that they decide basing on their personal beliefs and that they don't reflect on any of the previous. Which means most of them take their decisions based on external factors and not on what they truly want and believe in.

Question 13: In your family, do parents motivate females to: study, get married or travel abroad?

Objective: Through this item, we wanted to have an idea about learners' relationship with their parents and how do they contribute in their achievement in school.

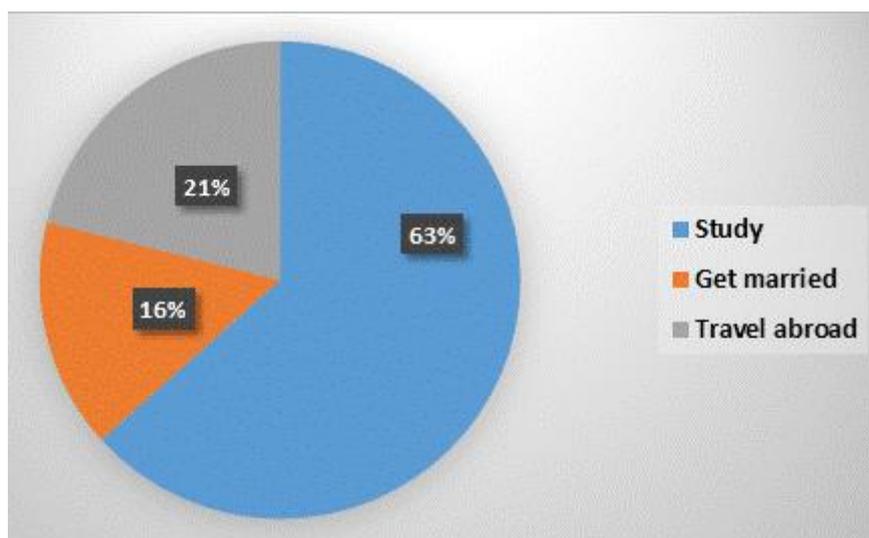


Figure 2.13: Parental Motivation

It is observable from the figure above, that the majority of the students 63.33% affirm that parents motivate females in their family to study and to perform well at school, in order to succeed in their studies. These parents are from the same category who visit their children school and follow their academic progress. 21.11% does not have any problems with their daughters travelling abroad to foreign countries to live or study to obtain a better career. 15.56% states that their parents and members of family are not open to the idea of girls traveling abroad or furthering their studies to work, as they believe that the greatest way for girls to live a decent life is to get married.

Question 14: What do you think of females who quit school and get married at a young age?

Objective: The aim behind this inquiry is to pick the mind of young pupils who will be fathers and mothers one day on the issue of early marriages.

Answers	Main answers	Number of respondents	Percentage
Answer 01	it's a free / personal choice	5	5,56%
Answer 02	A girl needs to live her youth	18	20%
Answer 03	Too young to handle responsibility	13	14,44%
Answer 04	Studies come first	29	32,23%

Answer 05	The girl should accept to be married	9	10%
Answer 06	Wrong, because the girl will be deprived from her rights in her teenage hood	12	13,33%
Answer 07	It's a good solution	4	4,44%
	Total	90	100%

Table 2.9: Informants' Perspective vis-à-vis teen Mariage

As clarified in the table above, answers are polarized according to some suggested possibilities. A significant number of the participants shows a high level of maturity as they declared that they are against teen marriage and for a girl quitting her studies to get married. 90% of them provided various reasons why a girl should not abandon her studies. 20% says a girl needs to live and enjoy her youth, 14,44% states that this age is too early for a girl to handle responsibilities. 32.23% affirms that studies comes first and should be females priority, 10% mentions that the girl should accept first to carry the whole responsibility of her decisions. 13.33% shows disapproval because the female will be deprived from her rights in her teenage hood. While 5,56% says it is a personal choice, it means the decision belongs to the girl and what she wants to do. Whereas 4,44% only agrees with the early marriage idea which makes it the lowest percentage among the group.

2.5 Interview

The interview was conducted and recorded based on the availability of the participants and after having their permission. The researchers have interviewed eight languages teachers, as they were enthusiastic and interested about our current research and stated that it was quite important in the linguistic field. They hoped that the highlighted findings would help to change or at least make a difference in rural areas. Another point to mention, and that it could be considered as one of the limitations that we faced doing this interview, is that some teachers were a little inexperienced or insecure and refused to be recorded, allowing us to take notes only.

Question 01: Have you worked before in urban schools? If yes, at what level the differences appear between rural and urban schools?

Respondents	Responses
Teacher 01	Yes I have worked in urban area before, there is a big difference between the two levels, pupils of cities the majority can speak, can react, can do a conversation easily, however pupils from country side have difficulties in pronunciation, understanding etc.
Teacher 02	Yes I have worked in urban schools before the differences appear in terms of surrounding environment, learning ability of using surrounding materials such as ICT's (Internet Data Show) which is something we do not have here
Teacher 03	Yes, I have taught in rural area, I noticed that the pupils are not very different from the city. There is a slight difference only regarding their oral expression and their apprehensive of the language
Teacher 04	Yes, I have. Only for two months. No big difference between them
Teacher 05	Yes, I have. The difference that I have noticed is that in rural areas, even though they have no means but they are more motivated to study, more polite and respectful to teachers. Whereas, in urban school it is not the case.
Teacher 06	Yes, I have worked there before. As there are many learners, we may find a wide range of levels from both rural and urban learners. The Differences are dependent on the learner's socioeconomic origin and background, as well as his gender and knowledge base.
Teacher 07	Absolutely. The main difference seems to be socio-linguistic i.e. rural learners have got a cultural obstacle in not knowing the textbook included items, patterns, and elements such as Sushi, Broadcast, android...
Teacher 08	No, I have not worked in urban areas before, but I assume differences appear in the pronunciation and enthusiasm to learning languages.

Question 02: Do you think the educational level of parents has an impact on pupils' learning process?

Respondents	Responses
Teacher 01	Yes, of course. The educational level of parents is very important and this is good for both teachers and students, parents will be able to follow their children and teachers and work in a good condition far away from problems.
Teacher 02	Yes, for sure. The education level of parents has great impact on their children outcome, by facilitating the learning process and giving them the benefit of educational role models and economic stability.
Teacher 03	Yes enormously, educated parents help their children to succeed their Studies
Teacher 04	I may say yes and no. It depends on many circumstances; such as the student ability and the school level too. I think teachers' level has more impact.
Teacher 05	Not necessarily, the student can improve himself by himself, we find some learners whose parents are illustrate but they themselves are excellent pupils, it also depends on the family situation.
Teacher 06	Certainly, I can affirm that the intellectual level of the parents is almost found in the Profile of the learner.
Teacher 07	It is very important, parents' level plays a very great role in increasing students level, when the parents are educated they can check and provide help to their children.
Teacher 08	Parents have a lot to do in what concerns children education. When parents are educated, they allow and set up a kind of soft instructive communicability. Knowledge is well-paved and delivered to the child. Parents can explain, modify, or correct knowledge.

Question 03: What is your role as a teacher to improve the educational outcomes for students in rural areas?

Respondents	Responses
Teacher01	To my modest experience I advise rural pupils to use YouTube, to read books and to check dictionaries, using some resources to improve their level of English.
Teacher 02	The role of teachers to improve the educational outcomes for students in Rural areas, teachers should put in mind that rural places including pupils who live in isolated places, farms, families that are poor or have financial problems have difficulties in learning that teacher should bear in mind
Teacher03	My job as a teacher to improve the language level, I have to master the language, master the class and listen to the students' needs
Teacher 04	My role is in providing students as much as possible with all the support s/he needs. Not only knowledge and content but also psychological and even financial when possible of course. You can't save them all. That's the rule.
Teacher 05	Motivating students, creating an enthusiastic environment, using tools learning tools like data show ...
Teacher 06	as a teacher it's more about the consciousness and making students more interested in learning the language
Teacher 07	Students suffer a lot from the lack of means, especially languages, so i work on helping them by using creative materials, Such as the ICTs, to maximize their learning abilities considering language
Teacher 08	As a teacher I have to design a remedial plan for low and moderate levelled students.

Question 04: what is the common problem that is faced by teachers in rural/ urban areas?

Respondents	Responses
Teacher 01	The common problem that is faced by rural / urban schools, that programs are not suitable for learners, they do not reflect our society and also each student has a different characteristic.
Teacher 02	Teachers face some issues such as; housing, transport, accommodation, taking care of pupils' needs and engaging in activities.

Teacher 03	The common problem that Teachers are currently dealing with is the extracurricular issues such as social network attraction, poor attendance, and psychological issues.
Teacher 04	Many problems, not one. For example when the teacher has no experience with rural people in general. As we know, the difference in mentality, life style, and sometimes even in dialect accent & intonation, all this can make it difficult for teachers to adapt when teaching in rural areas.
Teacher 05	Pupils' lack of interest and motivation towards learning languages is the biggest challenge for us teachers, how to motivate them and to make them eager to learn and acquire the language
Teacher 06	one of the problems is that pupils of rural areas are less interested in learning French language and have a negative view over it, we must give more importance to this because it hinders their learning
Teacher 07	The biggest problems faced by teachers in rural areas is the direct translation most pupils like to learn in their mother language and that is anti-pedagogic, because a language should be taught like it is.
Teacher 08	Intensify the Formative assessment.

Question 05: In your opinion which gender is more dominant in class and creates a better learning environment as a learner?

Respondents	Responses
Teacher 01	Personally, I think females are more dominant in class, energetic and creative, and only few boys can participate with the teacher during the lesson.
Teacher 02	It seems to me that males and females students tend to have different speaking styles in the classroom.... But females are usually the ones who always participate and interact with the teacher.
Teacher 03	In my opinion, this is not related to the sex of the student but to his level, to his love for the teacher, and for the subject
Teacher 04	For me gender has no dominant impact. When the lesson is well prepared, the teacher well organized, and the administration is cooperative enough, these three factors are more important than to look at the issue from the "gender" angle.

Teacher 05	Generally girls, they tend to be more interested and active but boys are desperate and not motivated thinking even they study they will not have jobs, they think about financial issues.
Teacher 06	Mostly girls are more active in classroom there are few boys who participate but mostly it is girls.
Teacher 07	Girls, of course they are always involved and create a better environment because they like learning, and show a hunger for studies and demonstrate their abilities on contrast boy are neglecting they do not care, and do not give much importance to their studies.
Teacher 08	When it comes to learning languages, females are males.

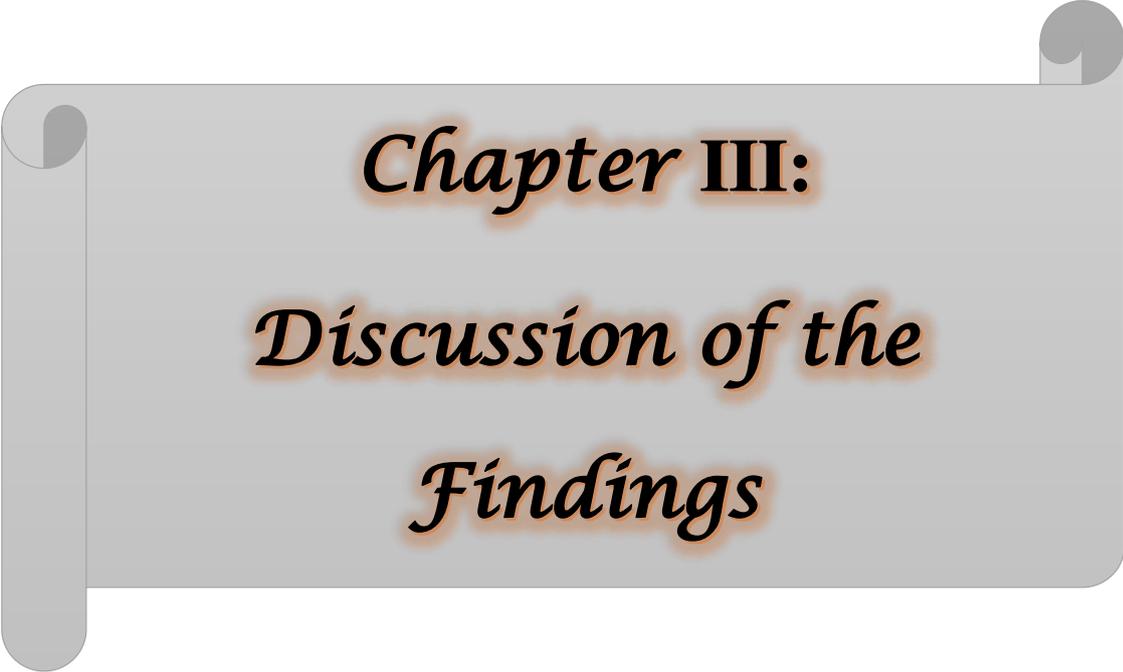
Question 06: Do you agree that parents have an effective role to increase their children's achievement in school?

Respondents	Responses
Teacher 01	Yes, I agree that parents have an effective role to increase the level of children in school, because we are only mentors and when we find a good student with good behaviors and ethics, it's very helpful for us to work in a good learning condition.
Teacher 02	Yes definitely.
Teacher 03	Yes, completely. Especially with some teachers, who lack professional conscience! Without parental intervention, success would be impossible.
Teacher 04	Of course they do, but not necessarily being educated. Parents' behavior r all along their children's academic career is more important than their level itself. A well-educated parent can still be careless and unaware, and vice versa.
Teacher 05	Certainly, family is essential in their children's achievement, especially when the house is calm and has a motivating environment.
Teacher 06	It is sure that parents' role is very important. Especially lately with the Covid Pandemic, most of the work is done at home with the supervision of parents.
Teacher 07	Parents they have a great role in their children's achievements in school, parents are like a guide to their children.

Teacher 08	Parents have a lot to do in what concerns children education. Parents can explain, modify, or correct their children's knowledge, as I stated in question Number two.
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2.6 Conclusion

The chapter represented the practical part of the research, it has dealt with the methodology of the given study, mainly, the effect of socio-cultural factors on language learning. In this chapter, we focused on the research design. We have analyzed our data provided out of the triangulation method that we have adopted, the questionnaire, interview and the observation. Thus, in the third chapter, we are going to interpret and discuss the factors affecting learning foreign languages with regard to convergence and divergence.



Chapter III:
Discussion of the
Findings

3.1 Introduction

Our study relied on a mixed approach to investigate how the socio-cultural background can be an influence on language learning. In the earlier stages of our research, we hypothesized that pupils' background and history could affect one's educational experience. This hypothesis will either be rejected or confirmed in this chapter. In addition, some recommendations and suggestions are presented at the aim of promoting some solutions to improve the educational situation of learners in rural areas (rigid communities).

3.2 Observation

Observation as a research tool, provides researchers with an insight to evaluate verbal and nonverbal expressions of pupils inside the classroom, describe interviewees how they interact with one another and verify what was missing in the questionnaire and the interview and even the usage of terms could be validated or rejected (Kawulich, 2005). There were 90 pupils on whom we made our endeavor. We created a non-participant observation and selected the aspects on which we should focus in order to keep the intervening variables from affecting our research goal. As non-participant observers, we tried to focus on the learners' knowledge in languages, teacher-pupil interaction, and classroom behavior, then we took notes based on that. There was redundancy for some factors which have noticed in almost all classrooms, that we be mentioned in the discussion. Actually, each research approach has advantages and drawbacks, which means that observation has disadvantages as well, especially when the researcher should be biased (Driscoll, 2011). In this reason, we have identified only the factors that are linked to our research objective.

Observed items	Interpretation
Poor vocabulary and pronunciation of foreign languages.	From this act we think that these pupils might not be using languages outside of school to practice their oral skills which makes it difficult for them to utter.
Wide usage of dialect Arabic among pupils to express themselves and discuss the topic.	We may assume that there is a significant absence of use of foreign languages. As a result, they use their mother tongue to fill in the gaps.
Teachers make adapted lessons to be more productive because the ones provided in the book aren't updated and sufficient.	Probably teachers noticed that pupils are not interested in what is in the book or because books are outdated so they decided to create more suitable content that meet their needs.
Teachers have to use Dialect Arabic to transmit the message and to male pupils internalize better.	Apparently teachers find it difficult to transmit a message or explain lessons in the target language so they use the Dialect Arabic to compensate the lack of foreign languages understanding.
Girls participate and interact more with teachers than boys.	We think that girls are more active in the classroom, because they tend to give more importance and try to show their potentials in order to prove that their gender is not a problem in learning.
Girls wear conservative clothes and rarely interact with boys.	The clothing style we may only presume that is due to the conservative environment that these girls grow up in and that this community is holding up to its values
Pupils interact with female teachers' more than male teachers.	We suppose that students interact better with female teachers because females are usually sensitive and have the ability to understand students' mental and emotional needs.

3.2.1 Discussion of the observation results

As already mentioned, using observation as a data collection tool served us with the data needed in order to reach our research objective. As the information provided via interviews and questionnaires is not always accurate or reliable. Often, participants don't know how to answer or they tend to provide the answers they could be of interest to the researcher. Therefore, we cannot simply ask them, we should observe them. In this case, we observed pupils' performance and behavior in the classroom, as well as the relationship between the teachers and the learners.

First, during foreign language classes, the first thing we noticed was a poor pronunciation and vocabulary among pupils' language which we hypothesized was due to the lack of practice outside school and not using it to interact with members of friends and family. This might lead to a permanent problem or disabilities in their learning process, because if you cannot speak and use language correctly you will not be able to communicate and transmit messages, knowledge and information, it will also create linguistic gaps when dealing with complex words or expressions. To illustrate, "treasure, night, though, beginning. Etc". Some teachers use simple English that is usually taught to youngsters such as; open the book, write down the following sentences, read the following texts, that it prevents them from improving themselves and maximize their English vocabulary. We have also encountered some pupils who are passive learners, which means they can grasp and internalize what's being said but struggle to express themselves when the teacher asks them during sessions. On one side, we noticed that pupils' mother tongue was more dominant than their L2. This could exhibit their limited vocabulary in the target language, as it also stymies their learning and makes them disadvantaged language learners because they will return to their mother tongue to fill in the gaps in their speech or to express themselves. Further, we noticed that some teachers use Arabic in the classroom to communicate, which is a big concern for third-year secondary students because they will develop this habit and use it regularly. On the other side, another challenge

in teaching is the text book, which is overloaded with flaws that most teachers no longer utilize since it is outdated, uninspiring, and not related to the Algerian context and culture. To illustrate, when it comes to outdated textbooks that have been used for years without adjusting the curriculum, new topics should be tackled. Such as, Corona virus, the war between Ukraine and Russia etc. This adjustment will provide meaningful exposure the language as it will encourage learners and help them develop their communicative competences and enhance positive attitudes toward language acquisition. Teachers use their own adapted lessons to overcome such obstacles, in which they try to bring updated text, articles, new activities, and some of them use videos and audio recordings to better educate the students. This requires additional efforts from teachers who are already doing their best to improve the educational outcomes of their students despite the circumstances. Moreover, during foreign language sessions we have noticed that most teachers feel compelled to use Arabic because of the noticeable comprehension weakness of their pupils. Some of them cannot or barely understand what the teacher is saying, so in order to help them understand teachers use direct translation and dialectal Arabic. Furthermore, another thing that was remarkable is that girls participate more than boys in classroom they talk, interact with teachers, create a good learning environment, give better feedback because of their practice at home; since girls in rural areas spend 90% of their time at home when they are not studying or we may say they give more importance to their studies than boys, who keep silent and rarely participate in class. In addition, one does not need to have a good eye in details to notice that the majority of girls in rural areas wear conservative clothes and veil which is related to religious, cultural and social factors. Growing up in a Muslim community in a rural area where the Arabism is most present, they strive to preserve the Arabic language which was transmitted through their parents and seek to keep it dominant and unharmed. At last, pupils interact with female teachers' more than male teachers. We assume that it may be due to various reasons such as women flexibility when

teaching they tend to be gentle and take it easy on students while male teachers are stricter and tend to do punishments whether verbal or in a form of home works and extra work to do.

3.2.2 Arabic as an intermediate language in EFL classes

Algeria has undergone great social, political and economic development to meet new challenges. The Ministry of education has introduced English as a foreign language after the independence of the country in 1962. The aim of implementing English was to substitute it with the colonial language which is French, developing the linguistic skills to keep up with science and technology in the world and covering the collaborative and communicative competences in which individuals are able to communicate with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, as they can avoid misconceptions and misunderstanding with them. Therefore, new curricula, textbooks and teaching materials were created to fulfill these aims.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a term that refers to acquiring and using English as a second and subordinate language, in a country whose first language is not English. It is mainly used to talk about learners who try to learn language in addition to their mother tongue. In Algeria, teachers of English find it challenging to depend only on English during classes as they keep referring to L1 in many aspects when explaining. In fact, the use of the mother tongue in teaching a foreign language has been a controversial issue for many years (Medgyes, 2001). Many scholars and researchers do not support the use of the first language in teaching and learning a foreign language. Thereby, Howatt (2004) has affirmed that mixing two languages would not help learners to reach their goal, which is fluency and communicative competences (social skills). Some teachers believe that the mother tongue should be used under certain circumstances, while others think that it should not be used at all. On one side, teachers have tried to use English as the matrix language in classroom. However, they have not received enough or any interaction from pupils as we have noticed that pupil are accustomed to getting explanation in Arabic, therefore even if the teacher tries to use mainly English, students ask for

a clarification in Arabic. For this reason, the teacher finds himself going back to L1 in order to fill the gaps between the two linguistic systems. On the other hand, for those who are against the use of the first language believe that using L1 impact pupils' language learning process negatively, since it reduces the learners' exposure towards L2 and reduces their chances for using the target language. Which would inevitably make English the embedded language in classrooms, without forgetting to mention French which pupils already have a strong negative attitude toward it.

3.2.3 Convergence/ Divergence dichotomy

We cannot disregard that wherever there is convergence, pupils way of thinking is affected strictly. Conversely, divergence in a speech community could create a positive rapport between participants and the world surrounding them. We have noticed that egocentrism and ethnocentrism are not similar. An egocentric individual could not be harmful and judgmental as much as an ethnocentric because the aforementioned cultural trait has a long term impact on learners' teachers and community as a whole. Teachers could have such a trait and it is indirectly transmitted to their students. Therefore, teachers' identity is of importance to prepare a generation which could embrace divergence and disregard convergence.

3.3 Discussion of the questionnaire results

To attempt an understanding of the impact of the social cultural background on the learner's identity, a questionnaire was designed as a data collection tool used in order to carry out this work which contained different questions addressed to our participants. The use of this tool was truly beneficial to reach the study objectives.

3.3.1 Dialectal Arabic cultural impact

We cannot disregard the fact that Arabic (L1) has a strong impact on foreign language learning. This impact is not only linguistic, but it seems to be cultural because each language

has its own culture, Arabic in this regard is still used among our participants to learn English/French. Many words are used as equivalents for the English words. This impact strongly affects the way pupils learn foreign codes as they unintentionally translate from English to Arabic by which the whole meaning or the linguistic context is misplaced or distracted. Speaking in second language while still thinking in the mother tongue may deviate the original meaning from its context leading to a misunderstanding or a dysfunctional communication. Many learners encounter this problem and cannot overcome it simply because they refuse the idea of accepting a new culture due to many factors such as; the fear of losing their national identity, becoming more open to other cultural ideologies . Learning English for instance, could bring with it this western culture along with its religion, traditions and norms even clothing and the latter is the dominant factor because the norms of English/French culture are to some extent contrary to the Arabic one. This issue will lead to further complications when dealing with complicated topics or when speaking to a native speaker of the target language. This issue also affects teachers when teaching a foreign language because they cannot change the mindset of the learners and at the same time they cannot separate the culture from the language, which will make them contradict themselves and use direct translation even try to use English to demonstrate the Arabic or Algerian culture that will create a gap in understanding certain terms and expressions in the (L2) Such as (Halloween, Santa Claus, Winston Churchill, Black Tuesday). Learning any language offers the opportunity of openness to the world and exploring new cultures. One cannot abandon his own identity however he may adjust to other languages and lifestyles.

3.3.2 Cultural perception of females' second shift

It is conventionally acknowledged that females' second shift had tremendous attention for years. Nowadays, females are quite interested in financial independence more than ever.

This perception is global, though it is still enclosed in rigid communities. Yet, in a rigid patriarchal society, the issue at hand is still controversial. Over the years women started working full time jobs in all kind of domains: education, military facilities, industry, administrations. This employment comes at a cost of having to do extra work at home after working for 8 hours especially if she is married, the kids need to be fed, put into a bath, check their homework, put them in bed, do the laundry and prepare the their lunch for the next day. To think of it, it's nearly impossible to do all this work in one day but almost all working women do it. Even with all these responsibilities, they have to do their work impeccably or they will be judged as impractical or unprofessional. Some even think that women should not work and stay home as house wives, this statement is foolish and shows a lot of ignorance. Women nowadays represent nearly half the economic force in Algeria we simply cannot make them stay home even if we want to because it will be fatal on all levels, economic, political, educational. Which means, the country will cease existing. A great example of women flexibility and ability is during the second world war where the British launched the "total war", where all men should fight the war, women were working in military factories, making all sorts of arms, ammunition and missiles and that's what gave them leverage during their clash with Nazi Germany. Germans did the same but they were late to act even so when women started working in arm making factories they made a losing war last longer than it was expected. In other words, people still think that females should stay home under the pretext that they are weak and cannot handle big responsibilities, while they have proven this wrong and have shown their strength and abilities through history. In simple words there cannot be a society that functions well without women

3.3.3 Single sex classes

Separating boys from girls at school was highlighted too due to the huge number of females in comparison to males. This gap created sort of sensitivity among our participants. Some male pupils are still sensitive towards learning alongside females (Belaid and Sarnou,

2020) thus they still prefer single sex classes, in order to have a better learning environment and can perform better under the pretext that mixed sex classes may lead to the distraction of male students by females which this may hinder their learning process. Another factor to mention, is that males are outnumbered by females and cannot participate in class because they are dominated by their females counterpart. Single sex classes were successful in some countries like Iraq, Syria, Egypt and in even in Algeria many years ago, where students had better results and there was no gender stereotyping in which learners feel free to express themselves and share their ideas without feeling exposed to the other gender.

3.4 Discussion of the interview results

Using a different research tool was quite helpful as it enabled us to confirm or disconfirm our participants' answers and to compensate for what we have missed in our questionnaire or what the questionnaire could not cover adequately. Interviewing can be a practical tool to collect data since it facilitates to obtain data based on the informant's priorities, opinions, and ideas.

The interview included six questions addressed to foreign languages teachers. The questions were designed to get information about the educational problems faced by teachers in rural areas and how to resolve that, teachers approached the issues from different perspectives that differ in terms of how they define, view and examine the given concepts.

3.4.1 Teacher Identity

Despite the fact that the concept of teachers' identity has received considerable attention in recent years, it is still a poorly defined concept with a challenging theoretical framework to build around it. Talking about identity from a personal perspective involves psychological, social, and cognitive concepts. Whereas, for teacher identity, as claimed by Miller (2008) is considered to be "*relational, negotiated, constructed, enacted, transforming and transitional*"

(p. 174). In the sense that identity is seen as an evolving process of change and resistance, Teachers gain experience and become better at managing professional and individual development over time. Their identity is shaped by personal beliefs and motivations, but also by roles, school based experiences, culture and sociopolitical context in which the teacher works and lives. Our research interview reflected the teachers' personality, and perspectives about education and their roles towards it.

In this vein, when asked in question three about the teachers' role to improve the educational outcomes in rural areas, the teachers' answers varied from one to another. However, they all casted in the same mold, which is the role of teacher in the classroom is of high importance. Teachers' role refers to what teachers do in the classroom as they are responsible for the pupils' level and performance in an EFL learning environment because s/he is the mentor and tutor for the learners. Regardless of the obstacles and factors they may face, they must always strive to innovate and come up with teaching methods that capture the learners' interest and easily reach their minds. Teachers have an enormous impact on students' school performance and achievement. They are the learners' peers who interact and spend the majority of the day in the classroom on a daily basis, even more than the time they spend with their own family.

Understanding the relationship between the teacher and the students in the EFL classroom can help to enhance the learners' competence and help them obtain good grades in class, while also making the teacher's job much easier. This relationship is created when teachers become friends, confidants or counselors of students by promoting a learning atmosphere in which the student feels welcome to ask whatever he needs and the teacher replies in a way that the student easily understands.

3.4.2 Parental Involvement

Many researchers highlight the critical significance that strong positive relationships between parents and schools have in children's growth and education (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009). Parental involvement refers to parents' participation and commitment for their children's school life. In which they are directly involved in their kids' education; they participate in their learning process and are also involved by the school and teachers. Being involved does not mean picking up or dropping off their children from school, or checking whether their homework's are done only, parental support in the education of pupils extends beyond the school building. Learners should be provided with a safe and healthy environment to learn properly because the house that is full of problems is chaotic and unsuitable for studying. Furthermore, parents can also get involved by means of follow-ups with their children's subject teachers to help identify where they are experiencing difficulties. In addition, it is conventionally assumed that educated parents set a good role model for their children,

Regarding the third question whether parents visit their children's school and ask for their performances. Pupils who answered positively were the ones who achieve better results in school. For this reason parental participation has a tremendous impact on the way their children behave, perceive and accomplish their learning process.

3.5 Recommendations and Suggestions

For future studies about our research several recommendations and suggestions are suggested to make the work more efficient and valid.

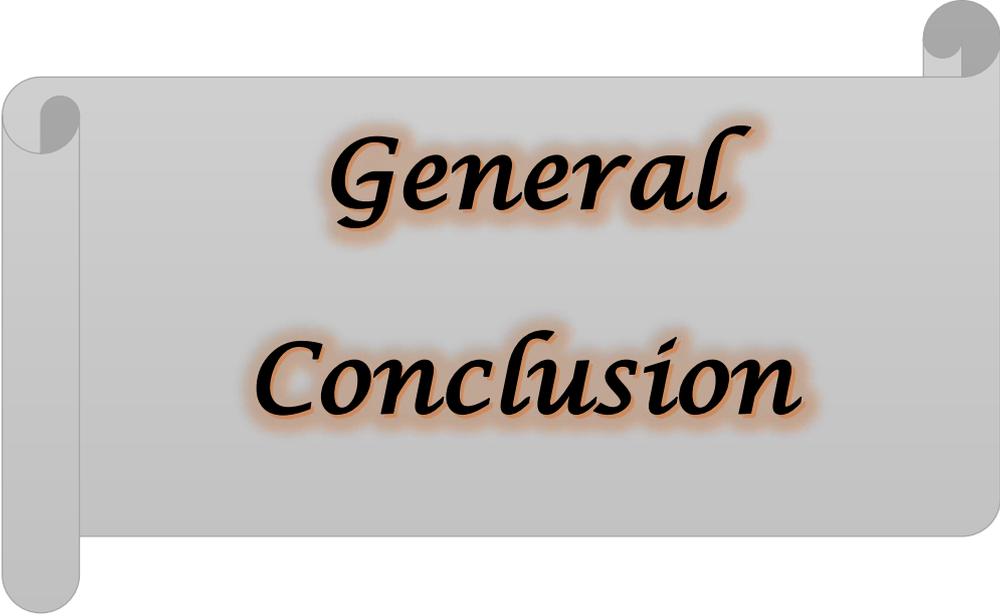
- First, this research was conducted to examine the influence of some of the socio-cultural factors on learners' identity. However, the factors that we focused on were mainly external thus, we highly recommend an investigation on other internal factors that could have an influence on the learners' identity.
- Second, the same topic of this research can be dealt with in any other Algerian city. The diversity of socio-cultural and economic backgrounds in the Algerian communities opens the door to researchers to conduct lots of studies in this respect.
- The instant curricula that the educational system is using is somehow considered to be outdated and goes back to old generations. In this respect, the educational system has to provide adjusted curricula that go along with the modern changes and meet the learners' needs.
- Teachers should adapt a different modernized teaching methods because sticking to one approach might create boredom and monotony among learners.
- Teachers have to encourage the students to speak L2 as much as possible since they are not exposed to English sufficiently.
- Providing supportive educational environment at school for those whose financial status is low by offering specific needed materials.
- Better communication among pupils and parents should be fostered.
- Efforts should be made by students in order to not allow their parents socioeconomic status, educational background, income and occupation influence their educational progress.

3.6 Limitations of the study

During the course of gathering information and seeking answers to the questions raised in this research we encountered some challenges in our path that should be taken into consideration. First, we faced problems with one of the school's administration as they did not seem to inform the teachers about our coming so they did not give us the opportunity to interview them and eventually we had to do our work in another high-school. Secondly, we also faced a problem with three teachers as they did not allow us to record them during our conversational interview which made it somehow difficult for us to take notes while speaking. Some teachers disregarded our presence and answered without interest. Also few of them did not answer all the questions that is why we have picked the six questions that were answered by all teachers. Concerning learners a lot of them did not provide answers to all questions although we explained all of them and gave them the freedom to choose which language they prefer using.

3.7 Conclusion

Our endeavor is an initiative to examine the impact of the socio cultural background on the learners identity and their educational process. This journey is overloaded with intervening variables that were controlled with attention to the social background, gender and parental involvement. Though our participants are descendant from rigid backgrounds, yet they are still open to flexibility and openness to the world. Generation Z, in this regard, is quite different from their families because of technology, they revealed their ethno-relative mindset vis-à-vis other horizons. In the nutshell, rigidity is somehow shadowed behind their behaviors, they are open indeed, but there are certain tasks that are still context bound.



*General
Conclusion*

General Conclusion

Sociolinguistic studies have always put focus on how language varies from one region to another or even among individuals or groups and thus, this research work is a set out in an attempt to examine and identify the extent to which learners from rural regions have been impacted by the socio-cultural background.

The classroom, the environment, the surroundings and the home as well have considerable influence upon the learners' identity and their language learning achievement. The investigation is built under four factors that are presumed to affect foreign language learning. The first factor is related to the fundamental aspects of life that are interlinked with achieving a proper language acquisition. The second factor is concerned with how starting to learn in an early or a late age impact learners' language perception. Moreover, the preceding factor shows how religion shapes learners' attitudes towards education because we have certain principles in our society especially in rural areas. As for the last factor it stands for gender which has a direct impact on learning and career chances as these opportunities and experiences may not be quiet the same for female and male learners.

In the present case we used three research instruments (questionnaire, interview, observation) to improve validity by tackling the same issue with several tools. Accordingly, this exploratory study consists of three main chapters: the general introduction is mainly focused on the overall framework of the research design. The first chapter provided a literature review that consisted of definitions and illustrations about the concepts that are related to the socio-cultural background influence on the process of developing a learner identity. As for the methodology part, second chapter dealt with the practical part of the research work, the case study was undertaken by 90 third year pupils and 8 teachers who are in charge of final classes. The researchers used a questionnaire and observation addressed to pupils, whereas a semi structured interview for the teachers. In order to meet the triangulation research criteria and to

collect both qualitative and quantitative valid and reliable data. The data collected was followed by an analysis along with an interpretation in a form of statistical data, graphs, and tables. In this respect, the last chapter revolved around the discussion of the findings and results besides the limitation that we have encountered during our endeavor. At last some suggested solutions that may help in pupils' identity construction and foreign languages development, in the secondary school of Laarousi Larbi and in rural areas in general.

The latter served our investigation by providing additional impacting factors like student-teacher relationship because a learner who maintains a solid relationship with his/her instructor and is provided with the required attention, guidance and information can learn easily. Moreover, parental school involvement tends to be highly beneficial as it increases learners' ability and attitudes towards education. Over the last decade, parents and teachers are supposed to collaborate more and more as partners in education to establish such partnerships that would inevitably help the learner. Our findings show that the youngster are more convergent than their elders and surroundings, since they tend to avoid traditional and cultural forms and instead they adopt new forms to create youth-specific speech and lifestyle.

Our endeavour is an attempt to solve a didactic issue from a sociolinguistic dimension. It is note-worthy to mention that our research methods helped us to find out that pupils from rigid areas are affected by their sociocultural background, their parental economic status and their surroundings as well, rigidity is somehow shadowed behind their behaviors, even though a great amount of the upcoming generations are trying to be open to change indeed, but there are certain tasks that are still context bound.

Finally, it is highly recommended that future studies would be carried on the impact the socio-cultural factors that hinder or assist learners' academic achievement and identity shaping upon learning foreign languages in rural areas. Rural students could be affected by some socio-cultural background and that should thrust researchers into looking for the influencing variables

for future studies. Divergence should be regarded as an opportunity to be flexible in a gendered world whereby females opt for second shift tasks, if it is considered from a narrowed perspective, then a future gap would arise in disfavour of females.

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Appendix A

Dear participants,

This survey is planned for an endeavor for a Master dissertation. Its purpose targets to investigate how the socio-cultural background may affect the students' language process. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire. Your cooperation is highly appreciated and strongly needed.

When answering, please put a tick for the selected answers.

- Gender:

Female Male

- Do You live in :

A rural area An urban area

- The professional situation of your parents :

	Father	Mother
Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Empolyed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mention it: Father....., Mother.....

- Do your parents visit your school and ask for your performance?

Yes No

- Do you like learning English?

Yes No

If no, which foreign language you wish to learn?

- Which skill you encounter difficulties to master French/English?

Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>

• When you are at home, what is the language that you usually use?

a-Standard Arabic b-Dialect Arabic c- French d-English

• Do you go to the library?

a- Always b-Sometimes c-Rarely d-Never

• In which language do you usually read?

a-Arabic b-French c-English d-Others

• Could learning a foreign language impact your lifestyle?

Yes No

• What do you think about working females?

.....
.....

• What do you think of heterogeneous classrooms? (Classrooms with females /males only?)

.....
.....

• When you pass your baccalaureate exam, will your parents allow you to study further than where you live?

Yes No

• Do you feel shy if people ask you where do you come from?

Yes No

• How would you react if you are given the opportunity to live in England?

A - Accept b- hesitate c-Refuse

• Whenever taking any decision you refer to :

Religious principles

Cultural background

Parental education

Personal belief

- In your family, do parents motivate females to

Study

Get married

Travel abroad

- What do you think of females who quit school and get married at a young age?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your collaboration.

Appendix B

- 1- Have you worked before in rural areas? If yes, at what level the differences appear?
- 2- Do you think the educational level of parents has an impact on pupils' learning process?
- 3- What is your role as a teacher of languages to improve the educational outcomes for students in rural areas?
- 4- What is the common problem that is faced by teachers in rural areas?
- 5- In your opinion which gender is more dominant in class and creates a better learning environment? Why?
- 6- Do you agree that parents have an effective role to increase their children's achievement at school?
- 7- For female teachers: did you face discrimination by male teachers based on gender not on professional experience?
- 8- What do you think about teen marriage? Students who quit school to get married?

Appendix C

Observation
class LP

1: Since there are few pupils ⁱⁿ the interaction with teacher is better they feel more at ease.

- LV:

When the classroom is bigger the interaction and participation is less

→ teacher using helping tools

To improve interesting like dictionaries among pupils like dictionaries, pupils interact better with the teacher when they are interested in the lesson

Teacher make adapted lessons to be more productive because the ones ^{provided} ~~written~~ in the book are not sufficient and sufficient

- poor vocabulary and pronunciation
(Poor usage of F.L)

- wide usage of Arabic language in class to express themselves and discuss the topic.

- Pupils interact with the teacher & keep silent.

- teacher has to use perfect Arabic to transmit the lesson message.

- teacher replies in Arabic when pupils use Arabic.

- Classroom is clean.

Second French class:

- Better usage of French but it is still limited.

- More girls than boys in both classes.

- Girls participate more than boys.

English class:

Résumé

Ce travail vise à étudier les effets potentiels des facteurs socioculturels sur l'apprentissage des langues étrangères en Algérie. Il évalue l'impact de ces facteurs sur les élèves de troisième année secondaire qui vivent dans des communautés rurales. Cette recherche était basée sur des approches qualitatives et quantitatives qui examinent l'essentiel des données collectées. Dans cette perspective, une méthode de triangulation est utilisée avec un échantillon de 90 élèves, classes finales et 8 enseignants de l'école secondaire de Laaroussi Larbi Sidi Housni. Les résultats ont révélés que les élèves issus de communautés rigides sont affectés par leur milieu socioculturel et la complexité héritée de leurs parents. La rigidité est derrière leurs attitudes, même si un conflit peut surgir entre la génération Z qui est ouverte au changement et l'ancienne génération qui se noie encore dans des traits convergents et l'ethnocentrisme. Dans cette veine, la divergence doit être considérée comme un aspect positif de la flexibilité et de l'ethnorélativisme

Mots-clés : Facteur socioculturel; communauté rigide; génération z; divergent; ethnocentrisme; ethnorélativisme.

المخلص

يهدف هذا العمل إلى التحقيق في الآثار المحتملة للعوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية على تعلم اللغات الأجنبية في الجزائر. وقيمت الدراسة أثر هذه العوامل على تلاميذ السنة الثالثة ثانوي الذين يعيشون في مجتمعات النطق الريفية. وقد استند هذا المسعى إلى اعتمادات نوعية وكمية تدرس البيانات التي تم جمعها. في هذا الاحتمال، يتم استخدام طريقة التثليث مع عينة من 90 تلميذاً، وفصول نهائية، و8 معلمين من ثانوية العروسي العربي سيدي حسني. وكشفت النتائج أن التلاميذ من المجتمعات الجامدة يتأثرون بخلفيتهم الاجتماعية والثقافية وتعقيدهم الموروث من الوالدين. إن الصلابة تتراجع وراء مواقفهم، على الرغم من أن الصدام قد ينشأ بين الجيل المفتوح للتغيير والجيل القديم الذي لا يزال غارقاً في السمات المتقاربة والمركزية العرقية. وفي هذا السياق، ينبغي النظر إلى الاختلاف على أنه جانب إيجابي نحو المرونة والنسبية العرقية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العامل الاجتماعي الثقافي؛ مجتمع جامد. جيل. متباعدة. المركزية العرقية؛ النسبية العرقية.