

The Sociolinguistic Situation in the south of Algeria and the Attitude Towards Foreign Language.

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The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria in general, was and still is the subject matter of discussion particularly among sociolinguists. This latter stretches back chiefly to both the complexity and the diversity of the Algerian speech network.

A primary aim of this research has been to compare the particular sociolinguistic practices into which learners are socialised *outside* their schools with the practices they encounter *inside* their schools.

This concern with understanding the links between learner's language practices in and out of school has been taken up by those interested in the comparative study of literacy practices. Like search on the attitude towards foreign languages, the study here has aimed to "understand more fully the social, cultural and historical links between the ways that learners are socialised into the activities of reading and writing in their home contexts and to use this knowledge to inform school-based instructional practices." (Barton 1991)

In his book 'Ideologie de l'enfermement' H.Tengour declared ;" En 1962, les Algeriens deviennent independants , mais ne se liberent pas. Le constat se realise au milieu d'une accumulation de frustration. De plus, la France est plus presente que jamais en chaque Algerien". In this respect, the issue of foreign languages in the south of Algeria is very critical, this fact is well illustrated in the different forms of '*La Haine des langues etrangeres*'.

M.Maalouf, also has a hand to confess the linguistic situation in Algeria in his book "Les Identites Meurtriers" once he said " ...vous pourriez lire dix gros volumes sur l'histoire de l'islam depuis les origines , vous ne comprendriez rien a ce qui se passe en Algerie , lisez trente pages sur la colonisation et la decolonisation, vous comprendrez beaucoup mieu".

One paramount feature worthy of remark in this respect ,is that the Algerian speaker is at least a bilingual. This latter fact is well crystallized in the speech of most Algerian speakers i.e.nobody fails to notice that the cross-cultural influence may also give rise to language shift; the abandonment of one native tongue in favour of another since it is daily practised in his different ways of communication. Amghar said in this respect ; in Al Moudjahid 1974 "... the Algerians speak two minutes in French ,thirty seconds in Arabic , then one minute in French and so on", sometimes the two languages are mixed to such point that there results a '*bizarre*' unintelligent language ,and one wonder if these are not themselves bizarre. Hence, the question that falls upon this issue is, what are the repercussions of bilingualism, multilingualism and its inevitable consequences like borrowing, code mixing, code switching, social diglossic practices on the individuals but in the south of Algeria? Put this another way ,what are the implicit governing forces or reasons that prompt southern to learn/hate foreign languages.

Basing our discussion - that will be analysed in further occasion -on a questionnaire done with first and second year students at the university of Adrar as a case study, about the use of the linguistic markers such as borrowings, loans of necessity and loans of convenience, we concluded a complete opposite results vis-à-

vis the north of Algeria; in which ninety percent 90/ of the total number of informants do not use much of the linguistic phenomena. In another context, we concluded that in a fortnight, for example, out of sixty students in the department of English just 1/3 of the total number say 'good morning' for salutation or greeting; the 2/3 say it in Adrarian way 'saa' which means 'salam' in M.S.A, and not 'sbah el khir' ,the fact that urged us to look for the tacit reasons behind such a behaviour. For this question, they told us that their Islamic background push them to interact in such a way.

In another questionnaire done with a drugstore clerk, we marked that eighty seven per cent 87/ of the prescriptions are written and explained in Arabic, because such network reject any foreign language mainly French.

In another questionnaire done with three kiosks in Adrar down town about the newspapers , surprisingly they informed us that the number of Arabic-written sold newspapers is much more higher than the French-written ones.

Hence, teaching foreign languages is a part of an unbalanced equation that bounds French and English as *enemy* languages. This issue stretches back to tricky reasons that themselves are worth points of request. Is it due to human material requirements? Or to internal motivation? Or to the social status of non-native languages?

We will try to discover on closer examination that these facts are inherently joints acts, and that they are just one level of an entire ladder of interfering actions.

It is not possible to imagine any systematic preparation of materials for teaching, for instance, could be undertaken without the speech network conditions ,'' Getting educated is a personal matter, in contrast, providing education is a social enterprise'' W.A.Bull.

The extent to which the second language is used in the system of education generally seems to stem the importance of its overall social role, this is not always the case for all Arabic-speaking countries to assign the same role to the principal foreign language that is taught.

In Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco; French for instance, is still used extensively as a medium in secondary schools for there are perhaps two reasons for their not using Arabic as fully as appears to be possible. Primo, they see some values in maintaining their link with French culture and feel that this is the best done by keeping it as a medium of instruction. Second, there may not be enough teachers trained to teach.

A Need for New Approaches to Meet New Challenges:

The object of a particular science, the material where the subject and its knowledge are made, language is above all a practice. A daily practice that fills every second of our lives, including the time of our dreams, speaking and writing; it is a social function that is manifested and known through its exercise. Yet, the paramount question under debate is how to meet the new challenges?

A series of questions are to be asked among any learner of a foreign language, English this time is the target language.

- What do students need to do with English?
- Which of the skills do they need to master and how well?
- Which genres do they need to master either for comprehension or production purposes?
- Which kind of English functions both socially and economically in the same rate?

English for specific purposes(ESP) is an exciting movement in English language education that is opening up rich opportunities for English teachers and researches in new professional domains. Johns.A.M and Dudley Evans.T(1991).

The growing demand for highly proficient speakers of specialized academic and workplace English in the south of Algeria is drawing increasingly large numbers of teachers into the ESP profession and awarding them higher salaries and prestige than were previously given to language instructors. For such latter reasons ESP is taught as tailor-made language package to specific communities of learners with highly specialized language needs far from 'la haine des langues etrangeres'

More generally, the attitude towards foreign languages becomes less aggressive within the recent industries and new technologies. Worldwide have essentially the same set of needs and the tourism industry for instance ,the same sets of products. A systematic approach to tolerate these languages would be beneficial for all involved.

Finally, we noted through this short sketch that the use of foreign languages, at least foreign words is like wearing beach clothes in church. Yet many people must and know that the contact between languages is something natural. 'Il faut aussi que les communautés dites majoritaires comprennent enfin que les langues son un bien commun et que la diversité doit être non seulement tolérée, mais aussi encouragée sans arrière pensée d'assimilation et d'accumulation' 'H.Tengour.That is to say, we think in Arabic, and we write in French.

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