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***The Impact of Socio-Cultural Factors on  
Learning English as a Foreign Language in  
Algerian Rural Secondary Schools***

**Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the  
Magister Degree in Linguistic Science And English language Teaching**

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# DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my sister Zahia without whom this thesis could have never been achieved.

To my dear parents, brothers and to my elder sister.

To my husband who has been very helpful.

I also dedicate it to all my pupils in Ibn-Ziad Secondary School and to all my friends.

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## ABSTRACT

The present thesis is a total of five chapters aiming at investigating the socio-cultural background of 3 AS pupils in learning English in some Algerian rural areas. The socio-cultural background of the pupils is at the very core of this study and thus success factors of learning English as a foreign language are examined from a socio-cultural vantage. The process of socialization, therefore, plays a considerable role in shaping the learners' own experience in different fields especially in that of F.L learning . It starts at home and extends to later stages of life as the individual steps out to the world of peers in the neighbourhood and at school. So, in all these social institutions , the learner is exposed to many experiences that may influence his learning either positively or negatively. First, at home , the family's economic and educational status affects the socialization of the learner by preparing him/her from the early days of childhood to meet the expectations of school life , in our case, the learning of foreign languages mainly English. Second, the impact of the surrounding environment and school on socialization is of primary importance since it is there where young learners pick up more and more social and cultural views that can hinder or enhance their learning.

Through a questionnaire administered to a hundred and eighty 3 AS pupils belonging to different streams of study and another to forty teachers of English , this work has been conducted.

The results of this study attempt to show that pupils living in culturally and economically impoverished environments tend to score low attainment levels in English. This failure is not only due to the home but also to a host of factors mainly the neighbourhood and school as well.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>F.L</b>	:	Foreign language
<b>A.S</b>	:	Année secondaire
<b>A.F</b>	:	Année fondamentale
<b>W.C</b>	:	Working class
<b>M.C</b>	:	Middle class
<b>R.C</b>	:	Restricted code
<b>E.C</b>	:	Elaborated code
<b>L2</b>	:	Second language
<b>SLA</b>	:	Second language acquisition
<b>C.P.H</b>	:	Critical period hypothesis
<b>T.L</b>	:	Target language
<b>ESL</b>	:	English as a second language
<b>F.D</b>	:	Field dependence
<b>F.I</b>	:	Field independence

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Aim of The Study**

The objective of this study is to shed light on the impact of socio-cultural factors on learning English as a foreign language in some rural Algerian secondary schools . In doing so, this study seeks to gain understanding about how the environmental factors –family , neighbourhood, and school – might affect the learners'viewpoints about the learning of foreign languages and thus their attainment in English particularly. In other words, it is an attempt to identify the role of socialization which from early childhood to later stages in life, is said to determine the individual's world view including that of school. This is done through an investigation of the social background of learners, their interests and future prospects, the education of parents, the socio- economic status of the family, the peer group pressure, the classroom atmosphere and how all these factors combine to determine the learners' English achievement.

## **Statement of The Problem**

In rural areas like the ones we are investigating, access to education has long been limited especially for the elder generation whose knowledge about the world of school in general and that of F.L learning in particular is too much narrow. So, being brought up in a society where the educational experience is somehow missed, young learners will undoubtedly face a series of hardships especially in F.L classes where a new way of speaking is used and a new culture is introduced. In addition to this impoverished cultural environment, many learners are brought up in poor families where the provision of facilities to successful learning is exclusively determined by limited finance.This is summarized by King.R (1969: 23) who states that:

The contribution of the family as a social determinant of educability is clearly a complex one .Two important aspects of its contribution seem to be:(a) its influence on the growth of measured intelligence  
(b) its socialisation of the child in terms of values, attitudes and norms of behaviour related to education.

So, being socialized in a culturally and materially impoverished family environment, young learners'handicap aggravates as they move outside the home where peers exert a strong pressure

upon each other as they are all part of a small society whose living conditions and ways of life are in more than one way similar. Allright and Bailey(1991:161) have stated that Gardener (1979) has conducted a study in which teachers were asked about their learners' motivation to learn a foreign language and has found out that learners' reluctance to use the target language: "...amounts to the potentially influential role of peer pressures in classroom language learning."

More interestingly, the status of English is not strongly defined by the educational system in that English occupies a low position on the school programme with a coefficient of 2 and only three learning sessions per week for almost all streams. This might lead to the appearance of some negative views among learners who once socialized in this atmosphere would consider the learning of English worthless especially that the other subject matters on the school curriculum receive higher coefficients and more learning sessions as well. As a result, learners would put more emphasis on these subject matters at the expense of English since whatever the mark they obtain in it , they are likely to succeed in the baccalaureat exam. This has been demonstrated by Elkailani and Mutawa (1989: 03) when they say : "...as in the Arab world, English has no official status ...the language remains superficial or even irrelevant to the majority of the population, especially in rural areas."

Therefore the problem for secondary school learners of English in rural areas can be summarized as follows : learners come to school with certain values, views and beliefs which they have accumulated at home and which many researchers have proved to be anti-academic, i.e, unable to answer the educational expectations of the school. Such a cultural background is relatively determined by the financial and educational status of the family in question and is more likely to develop as the child steps out to the open world of peers and neighbourhood where socialization continues. This has been recorded by the Early Leaving Report stated by King.R (op.cit: 10) :

children in different social groups may start their...school life with different sets of unspoken assumptions about....school life...but these ideas are picked up not only in the home but in the neighbourhood.

Seen in this light, the following question arises: are the family, neighbourhood and school variables influential upon the learners' English attainment in rural secondary schools or not?

## **Hypothesis**

The present research is based on two hypotheses:

The first one is that being brought up in an impoverished motivational environment which is constituted of the social and educational background of the family as well as its economic status, learners' academic progress has been recorded to be low. Hence, we hypothesize that being part of the school whole curriculum, the learning of English as a F.L in rural areas mainly in secondary schools is likely to be influenced negatively.

The second hypothesis is that learners' low attainment in English is due to the prevailing negative attitudes and social views which they have acquired as young children in their daily interaction at home, with peer groups at school and in the surrounding neighbourhood.

## **Methodological Procedure**

Many educationalists as well as researchers have highlighted the importance of socio-cultural factors in learners' academic achievement. They all believe that socialization bears a heavy responsibility in this respect in that it varies from one society to another according to the prevailing economic conditions. The individual is socialized into a socio-cultural being who is acted upon by some social and cultural constraints which are themselves dictated by economic causes. In a narrower sense, the learner's world view about school in general and English in particular is affected by the socio-cultural knowledge which he/she has acquired.

As the process of socialization is at the core of this study, it is going to be frequently mentioned throughout the two chapters which the thesis contains. The first one deals with the main approaches which researchers have adopted in investigating the impact of socio-cultural factors on educational attainment and gives a broad definition of the term socialization and its role in determining the individual's attitudes mainly those related to educational achievement. Then, more light is cast on the socio-linguistic theory of Basil Bernstein whose work has given rise to other socio-linguistic deprivation and difference theories which though different in terms of focus, they have all resorted to one interpretation about scholastic failure, that is of an economic sort. So, the variation of the learners' socio-cultural background rooted back to economic reasons. For example, the notion of success is approached differently from one society to another and even within the same social group. It builds up into a culture which elder generations pass over to younger ones in the light of the living socio-economic conditions. Some people consider success a matter of fate and destiny because of long years of

marginalization and social prejudice while others believe it to be a matter of challenging difficulties and seizing opportunities in a world of limitless possibilities. These cultures are revealed in the different speech codes spoken in daily communication and thus colour the thought of many adults who while bringing up their children would unconsciously socialize them either into active or passive individuals. In a very similar way, educational success including English as a school subject can be influenced by these accumulated views especially that a foreign language class requires risk-taking, problem solving, initiation, and more active behaviours. This leads us to the second chapter which deals with success factors in foreign language classrooms and how a great number of them is affected by socialization not only at home but also at school, inside the language class and the whole surrounding environment .

In addition to these two main chapters, a questionnaire is handed out to a population of a hundred and eighty (180) 3AS pupils belonging to literary, scientific and exact sciences streams. These pupils live in different villages: IBN-ZIAD, HAMMA-BOUZIANE, AIN-KARMA, ELMELHA, FARALLAH, and AIN-ELKEBIRA and they are all supposed to be brought up in families where the living conditions are difficult, access to education is limited and awareness of the importance of educability especially that of foreign languages is insufficient if not inexistent. This is in addition to the fact that they live in isolated areas which suffer from the lack of libraries, cultural clubs and even contact with outsiders.

A questionnaire is also administered to a number of 40 teachers for the purpose of providing additional information about the influence of socio-cultural factors upon the learners' attainment in English as well as the teachers' attempt to overcome this hindering situation.

Success or failure in learning a foreign language amounts to many factors, here in this thesis the argument runs twofold: socialization is an important process in the life of any individual as it plays a substantial role in orienting views and shaping attitudes towards many things.

This socialization is, in turn dependent on the economic situation of the whole society ( i.e., the standard of life which any family can afford to its members in the light of the possibilities available to get a job ). Therefore, a child who is socialized in a culturally and materially poor environment would be unable to answer the school expectations and might even develop negative attitudes towards educational issues, in our case, the learning of English as a foreign language.

In rural areas, many secondary schools have recorded a low success rate to which teachers have stood helpless in spite of the striving efforts they have made in order to better the pupils' final outcome. Hence, being aware of the impact of environmental factors ( i.e., the social and

cultural background as well as the family's living circumstances ) upon the learners' achievement in English, is extremely decisive. Teachers should be aware of the nature of the social milieu where learners come from so as to put hands on the impeding factors that lie beyond the pupils' constant failure to improve their performance in English. On the basis of this, the final chapter is an attempt to attract the teachers' attention to the importance of the influence of socio-cultural factors on learning English in rural areas and to make them aware of this hindering situation by giving suggestions and strategies that can bring better results.



# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **FOUNDATIONS ABOUT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND THE IMPACT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS**

### **1.1.Introduction**

The influence of socio-cultural factors upon school achievement has long been regarded as an important field in educational research with Bernstein's socio-linguistic theory at the heart of all works. Many studies have considered the relationship of education and environment as a crucial factor in investigating educational achievement and thus have listed a set of variables like the socio-economic status of the family, the school and the neighbourhood. Other researchers have emphasized four social settings: the classroom, the school as a whole, the peer group and outside the school. For Raven and Bruner (1980) there is a considerable relationship between home and school in that both of them exert an important influence upon the learners' academic progress.

More recent works have widened the scope of their study to investigate the processes of socialization from the early days of child rearing practices at home to the later stages of any individual's life. These investigations are a real attempt to show how sociological factors affect the process of socialization not only at home but also at school and the surrounding neighbourhood where it takes further dimensions. So, along these socializing institutions ( the home, the school, and the neighbourhood ), the individual's views and attitudes are correspondingly shaped under the influence of the prevailing socio-cultural constraints.

So far, the underlying assumption is that if the language variety in which the child is socialized as well as the culture it embodied are influenced by a set of socio-cultural factors, then, the individual's attitudes towards education in general and school subjects in particular can by no means escape the influence of these factors. Consequently, these attitudes will undoubtedly affect the learners' academic outcome including foreign language performance as well.

In the light of these views, three major approaches have emerged in the study of the relationship of environment and education or say the influence of the social structure with all its aspects upon school achievement. These approaches are: Demographic, Contextual, and Sub-cultural ones. While scant attention has been given to the two first approaches, the latter has received more interest in that it has offered explanations to what the previous ones have failed to answer. Yet, with reliance on the information provided by the demographic and contextual approaches, the sub-cultural one has opened the doors over a deep analysis of the intricate processes of socialization, how they are subject to the impact of socio-cultural factors and how they



themselves play a crucial role in determining the individuals' world view towards many issues especially those related to education and foreign language learning.

## **1.2. Approaches to Educational Achievement**

### **1.2.1. The Demographic Approach**

The underlying tenet of this approach is that children from poor environments such as working class families do worse at school than other middle-class children. Many researchers have recorded in their studies the fact that these children are underrepresented in selective schools and that many of them leave schools at a very early age.

Studies of Robinson et.al. (1968) and Fasold (1990) fall in one main interest. Learners from working class families are more likely to deteriorate in performance than middle class learners even within the same level of ability. Other instances about the importance of the social origin in school performance were recorded in Sweden, Ireland, Japan, U.S.A, and Great Britain. Demographic calculations about the correlations between school success, family size, income, and parents' education were considerably marked in all these countries.

In their analysis of 'deterioration' in some grammar schools over a period of five years, R.R.Dale and S.Griffith (1965) have focused on the relationship between the nature of the home and the pupils' school attainment, and have found that the home background of the pupils consists of many factors : parental education, family size, home facilities, parental attitudes and emotional disturbances. The authors' work started by an investigation about the occupations of the pupils' fathers who consisted of two groups : one of deteriorators and the other of improvers. The results were that thirty seven out of thirty nine of deteriorators belong to categories of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled manual working classes while the improvers do not go below skilled manual classes. Concerning parental education, the authors have found that amongst the thirty nine deteriorators, there was only one case of a father who was educated in a grammar school. Family size has also been reported to be influential in that the authors have found that 51 of deteriorators belonged to families where there were more than five children. Consequently, they came with the conclusion that school attainment is very much related to the size of the family and that the more members are in the family, the more likelihood to deteriorate at school.

Home facilities have also received a considerable analysis, 20 out of 39 homes of deteriorators were recorded to suffer from the lack of fire and in nine of these cases there was a quite important rate of interruption from other members of the family especially that of children. Always in the same study, the authors have examined the parents' educational background and

the results were that only one parent of all the deteriorators had attended a grammar school and thus reveals parental ignorance about school demands and expectations. The authors have concluded their research by stressing the cardinal importance of a good supporting home background for positive academic progress and by drawing attention to the fact that learners do not suffer from only one handicap at home but from a set of impeding factors .

In France, demographic studies have highlighted what the French called 'la famille éducatrice' where parents should have reached a school level beyond the obligatory one and tend to visit their children's schools constantly. So, what has been termed in Britain a 'social class' difference is only stated otherwise in France ; that is of the social distribution of 'les familles éducatrices' whose children were reported to do well at school because of the rich social and cultural background they come from. Though demographic studies have brought to surface the importance of the home background in school attainment whether social, cultural or economic, they do not say too much about how these factors work to provide either a negative or a positive school outcome. Thus, research has adopted a new approach, that is the contextual one.

Or as Craft.M (1970: 07) puts it : "demographic studies can tell us 'what' and 'how many' but for the 'how' and 'why' we need to look further afield".

### **1.2.2.The Contextual Approach**

This approach has raised the influence of neighbourhood, and the school upon the children's academic performance. The studies of this approach constitute an intermediate stage between demographic and sub-cultural ones in that a contextual study can be of a demographic or a sub-cultural nature. Hence, we can find studies which while focusing on a given neighbourhood are demographic in treatment while others investigate the influence of a given context like school upon the child's achievement but are of a sub-cultural sort because they emphasize the values and the norms of this institution rather than anything else.

Among the contextual studies which are demographic in essence, Wiseman (1967) has related school performance to neighbourhood factors such as: birth and mortality rate, population density, and provision of play areas . On the other end of the continuum, Douglas' studies (1968) were of a sub-cultural nature in that they have demonstrated how working class children of high ability were more likely to stay on in good secondary schools (good staff,good amenities...) rather than in poor ones. Though, Douglas has not given an explicit interpretation to this finding, the underlying idea is that working class children may have higher educational aspirations in middle

–class schools where the influence of peers is considerably important and the provision of amenities is remarkably significant.

Along the same flow of argument, other researchers have arrived at similar results in the higher suburbs where some W.C families were reported to be more influenced by the prevailing values of M.C families than those living in large cities. These W.C families are more ambitious about their children's education. Their migration to these areas reveals an underlying orientation, that is of, looking for better jobs, better social status, better homes and schools. In spite of the importance of these studies in analysing the impact of different contexts especially the school and the neighbourhood upon learners' performance, still more analysis is required for better understanding and that is why Craft. M (op.cit: 08) maintains that:

...we might be able to prove a connection between father's income or numbers of rooms at home and a child's school work...but this could hardly explain anything. What such predictors might indicate ...are the shadowy outlines of a neighbourhood, or a family's ideology or a value system.

What is more worthy of investigation now, is an inquiry of the intricate processes that foster attitudes, values, and ideas which fit the school demands and thus put the learner at a good position to learn successfully. In other words, it is a call for a broader analysis of socialization processes which have been highlighted by adherers to the sub-cultural approach.

### **1.2.3. The Sub-Cultural Approach**

The main tenet of this approach is to seek interpretations for the findings of demographic and contextual studies. The attempt is thus, a broad analysis of the system of values and beliefs which underly the social stratification of certain social groups especially in the well-known W.C and M.C groups and how these cultures relate to school achievement. In Britain, sub-cultural studies have emphasized on the difference of value orientations in both working class and middle class families. By value orientations, researchers refer to three main beliefs : attitude to time, activity and to individualism, which in turn , will govern the individuals' decision-making about different matters especially those related to education . In other words, an individual who is socialized into relying on oneself in doing any activity and by using time appropriately, would surely become more self-independent, active and hardly submit to failure.

In Bernstein's terms, working class children are oriented towards a less structured view of the world, the future is vague and seen passively. However, the question which one might ask here is: how does a social group develop this concept of value orientations and the other group does not? Attitudes and beliefs can be the outcome of the prevailing conditions of life. A working class member might develop fatalistic and passive views as a result of insecure jobs, poorly paid employment, or as a result of long years waiting on the housing list for instance. These limitations are real barriers to the development of more activist roles based on careful planning and perseverance.

In parallel with this, school success is very much related to these basic value orientations. A person who from early childhood is socialized into passive roles, submission to difficulties, dependence on others is more likely to fail at school where a classroom work demands initiation, active roles, and more importantly perseverance and planning so as to achieve better results. In order to see how these values are fostered and related to academic attainment, we must look further into the process of socialization, what is it and how it relates to school progress.

Socialization is a broad term which includes language, culture, views, values, beliefs, social norms and practices which the individual acquires and develops at home, with peers, at school and in different social institutions. For W. Wentworth (1980) as stated by Harrison (1990:56) :

Socialization can be thought of as the process of acquiring adult roles, internalizing the beliefs and values of society. Thus parents and other adults or other peers display in interaction with children the expected ways of thinking, feeling and acting.

This is expressed otherwise by Bernstein(1971:230) who says that socialization is:

The process whereby the biological is transformed into a specific cultural being ...socialization is a complex process of control whereby a particular moral, cognitive, affective awareness is evoked in the child and given a specific form and content.

Obviously, language is at the heart of all the socialization processes because it is the medium through which the child learns several values and beliefs. That is why research has long been

concerned with language socialization before it has broadened to include the hidden facts which any language carries, i.e., the social reality of language. Dell Hymes (1962) was the first anthropologist to call attention to the importance of language in personality development and to the necessity of collecting social and cultural information about child language socialization. He has declared that different cultures make different use of different ways of speaking (1962:298):

For children to become participating members of their society they must learn not only the correct structure of their language but how to use the structure appropriately to communicate. Acquisition of communicative skills is essentially a social phenomenon, necessarily involving social interaction.

So, there is a cultural variation in how people sequence their interaction, employ silence or gestures, interrupt or use extra-linguistic features. For example, in a F.L classroom, participation has been reported to be different especially where learners come from various social groups. In a detailed analysis of classroom participation, some Chinese students were found less initiating than other ethnic group individuals. The interpretation which researchers have offered is of a cultural reason, i.e, they are so because the Chinese tradition gives much importance to silence as a feature of respect and wisdom. However, this is not welcome at all in a F.L class where learners are supposed to be more active. So, from early childhood, the child is exposed not only to linguistic data but also to cultural and social information. The latter is transmitted via language, internalized as a set of values to be realized in a given social identity and demonstrated in different patterns of behaviour (Gumperz 1982). Socialization is, therefore, related to cultural transmission in that it takes place through language which is both a product of socialization and an integral part of it. So, language and culture act upon each other for the former is not only a part of culture but also a major medium which transmits that culture, whereas the latter is internalized under the form of ideas and thoughts. These thoughts orient the individual's decisions, determine his/her attitudes and organize thinking as well. In this respect and mentioned by Harrison (1990: 57), Vygotsky has suggested that it is:

...through speech, cultural forms are internalized and at the same time when socialized speech is turned inwards, higher cognitive functions originate. The medium of social interaction is taken over and internalized, reorganizing thinking.



Moreover, language carries in its words and even in its grammatical structures many cultural implications. In an extended study of the Hopi community, Sapir (1921) has found that concepts and beliefs about time for instance were coloured by the structure of the Hopi language . In other societies specific names of kinship relationships exist whereas in others do not. If these names are not lexically represented, though they are implicitly recognized, the main interpretation which researchers have suggested is that through a fewer linguistic representation, these concepts have little social and cultural value.

All this might extend to include other concepts especially those related to educational prospects in general and F.L teaching in particular. For instance, notions about F.L learning are seen differently from one society to another. In Algeria English is given a lower-rank position in comparison with French and it is labelled as a second foreign language in all the official documents. In other words, through this terminology, the language of our educational institution stresses more the learning of French at the expense of English and thus paves the way to the appearance of a F.L culture which favours French over all the other foreign languages. Hence, learners are socialized into attitudes which might belittle the importance of learning English. Though it is a general statement, Whorf (1921:83) has expressed this view when he says that:

The real world is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group ...we...experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.

Now, it is becoming more and more obvious that language socialization in all the social institutions implies not only a linguistic development but also a cultural backing which guides the individuals choices, interpretations, and behaviours. To put it otherwise, societies differ in language use as well as in the perception of things for what is seen in our society as a matter of conformity to destiny, it is considered as mere submission in another. Some people like the Navao, for example, believe that they are acted upon by the power of Gods, nature and fate, they feel that they have little control upon their lives and future while others see themselves as dominators of their lives and environment too. In bringing up their children, the latters put more emphasis upon matters of individualism, conquering nature and finding solutions to problems because the reigning belief is that the universe is guided by scientific laws. This is clearly seen in some European M.C groups where the world of logic, reason and scientific interpretations to different phenomena is realized in many linguistic structures. It is also adopted in various social

institutions including the family and the school. So, in a culture where active roles, criticism, and curiosity are encouraged, socialization is likely to foster more rational views which any school work demands. In contrast with this, the linguistic discourse of some social groups reveals a culture that runs counterpart with the classroom expectations.

In Britain, for instance, various studies have pointed out to the difference of socialization processes in both W.C and M.C families especially at the level of child care behaviours, mother child relationship, parents' views about education and more interestingly the values which each class fosters in favour of school success. This is clearly stated by King.R (op.cit:29) who has declared that:

The culture of the middle class home, its values, and attitudes are similar to that transmitted by the school, there is a good fit between them. There is a cultural continuity. Many working class families stand in poor continuity with the educational system and there may even be a cultural discontinuity in which conflict exists between values of the home and the school.

Differences, therefore, appear at the level of the early days of socialization where in some social groups, rearing up practices take the form of orders and commands. However, in others it takes the form of an encouragement of notions of curiosity and the need to know as well as using an explanatory speech that develops in children high levels of abstraction and critical sense. Passive behaviours in the former, take a further dimension as the individual learner steps out to the world of school where the culture of receiving without questioning reigns or as Martin Cortazzi has stated in Harrison.B (1990:61) has put it :

When we look at education systems and cultures around the world, we soon realize that many students have been socialized into an academic approach based on transmitted knowledge ...where to criticize...is culturally or politically unacceptable.

All in all, socialization plays an important role from the very beginning of rearing up practices and continues to later stages in the surrounding environment of the home and at school. It is demonstrated via language under the form of views, attitudes, beliefs and values. This constitutes the cultural heritage of any society, it regulates the lives of individuals, organizes thinking and determines choices. A secondary school learner cannot escape the influence of socialization as it

continues working to later stages of life. In England, for instance, many teenagers learn foreign languages reluctantly because they have been socialized from early childhood into xenophobic attitudes ,i.e, dislike of what is foreign. The impact of socialization on educational attainment has been subject to an interesting critical work of Basil Bernstein in his famous socio-linguistic theory.

### **1.3.The Socio- Linguistic Theory of Bernstein**

#### **1.3.1.The General Framework of the Theory**

In many of his essays on Social class ,Language and Socialization, Bernstein has recognized that his sociolinguistic thesis was an attempt to cast light on how symbolic systems are both realizations and regulations of the structure of social relationships. By changing from one social class to another, these symbolic systems carry different cultures which are themselves responsible of school success or failure. Following this argument, Bernstein has shifted his attention to focus on how these symbolic systems change within a given social structure .That is why he claims that (1971:157) :

Although, initially, the thesis appeared to be concerned with the problem of educability...the basic theoretical question ...was concerned with the fundamental structure and changes in the structure of cultural transmission.

So, with reliance on social class, Bernstein has quickly moved to the study of socialization processes in general and more specifically within the family. This is clearly stated when he says: (ibid:244) "...I have tried to show how the class system acts upon the deep structure of communication in the process of socialization". In so doing, he has focused on the differences in the social position and life styles of both W.C and M.C groups. According to him, the socio-economic conditions of these groups pave the way to the appearance of different communicative systems which he calls: Restricted and Elaborated Codes. The family, therefore, is the first social institution which plays a considerable role in the provision of such codes. The individual' s perception of the world , the values and the attitudes he\she develops, are acquired from his\her daily interaction within the members of the same family. So, interaction is done through different speech codes which some of them foster views that go hand in hand with the school demands while others do not.



In fact, the explanation which Bernstein has offered to general school performance and its distribution in low working class families is of a great interest to our study as it strengthens the ideas discussed earlier in the demographic, contextual and subcultural approaches about educational attainment. The socio-economic status of many families in rural areas is considerably similar to that of W.C ones ( low-ranking jobs, lack of education on the part of parents, low incomes, large families, reliance on fatalistic concepts in viewing the future...). Hence, the underlying argument is that being socialized in such socio-cultural conditions is likely to bring to surface the assumption that learners in those areas may face the same hardships at the level of general school demands and foreign language classroom expectations as well.

### **1.3.2. Language, social class and scholastic failure**

Bernstein's main concern has been with speech and more specifically with the influence of the contextual constraints upon it. While studying speech, one is obviously involved in the study of rules which control its use in different social contexts. These rules refer to the cultural system which determines the speech variant that an individual chooses to use in a given context and avoids in another. Hence, within the same society different codes appear under the heavy pressures of the existing social structure. Therefore, language is realized through two main speech codes upon which culture acts very strongly, and that is why Bernstein declares (ibid : 230) that : " Speech codes or forms symbolize the form of the social relationship, regulate the nature of the speech encounters and create for the speakers different orders of relevance and relation."

These varieties of language have been given the labels restricted and elaborated codes respectively. The former defined as a simple language with fewer subordinate clauses often relying on simple sentences while the latter was recorded to be richer, much more complex and defined as a less predictable type of language. In more details, the characteristics of the R.C as cited by King.R (op.cit:31) are :

- a- syntax is simple and rigid, there are few subordinate clauses.
- b- Few adverbs and adjectives are used.
- c- The speaker may choose from a group of idiomatic phrases, e.g. hello, how do you do ...
- d- There are few pauses and gaps in the flow may be filled with phrases that have no particular meaning but serve to promote , sympathetic circulatory speech, e.g. you know ,you see...
- e- Nuances of meaning are made by the tone of voice, by facial expressions...

Whereas the characteristics of the E.C are also summarized by King.R (ibid : 32) as follows :

- a- The structure is complex and includes many subordinate clauses.

- a- The structure is complex and includes many subordinate clauses.
- b- Many varied adjectives and adverbs are used.
- c- The construction of phrases is made by the speaker transmitting the message.
- d- There are frequent pauses .
- e- Nuances are expressed verbally.

The frequency of using one code at the expense of another differs from one family to another and more importantly from one social class to another, too. This is due to socialization as Bernstein(1971:173) explains in the following lines :

I must emphasize that because the code is restricted it does not mean that the speakers will at no time use elaborated speech variants. Only that the use of such variants will be unfrequent in the socialization of the child in his family.

It follows from this, that socialization has a great bearing on which of the speech variants the individual child is mostly oriented to use. Yet, this calls upon the concept of class system in order to elucidate better how a child within a given social group is socialized into a restricted code and not an elaborated one or vice versa. For this reason, Bernstein (ibid:163) maintains that :  
 “Without a shadow of doubt ...the most formative influence upon the procedures of socialization ... is social class.” Social class, therefore, is a determining factor in the process of socialization, for while all children have access to a R.C, social class determines the scope of the E.C available to each child.

In the same way, social class exerts an important effect upon the distribution of knowledge in that a small proportion of people has been given access to the principles of intellectual change whereas the rest has been socialized at a very limited level of context-dependent abilities. For Bernstein, this situation brings to surface two orders of meanings :  
 A universalistic system of meanings where operations and principles are made linguistically explicit, and a particularistic system of meanings where operations and principles are made linguistically implicit. The latter is more context-dependent and thus realized in a restricted speech variant, while the former is context-independent and realized via the elaborated speech variant.

Seen in this light, individuals who are involved in social relationships where meaning takes a particularistic form are more likely to realize communalized roles than individualized ones. As a result, they face more difficulties at school where meanings are universalistic and rely on more context-independent abilities. This is summarized in Bernstein's words ( ibid:173) when he says:

...the different focusing of experience through a restricted code creates a major problem of educability...where the school produces discontinuity between its symbolic orders and those of the child .

Once again, socialization is always there to account for which abilities the child develops and uses in later stages of school life. Joining the previous views on socialization and the important role it plays in shaping the individual's world view, Bernstein has put more emphasis on the way in which it proceeds along a set of interrelated contexts and which he has analytically divided into four: (1971:238)

- a- The regulative context – these are authority relationships where the child is made aware of the rules of the moral order and their various backings.
- b- The instructional context where the child learns about the objective nature of objects and persons and acquires skills of various kinds.
- c- The imaginative or innovating contexts where the child is encouraged to experiment and recreate his world on his own terms and in his own way.
- d- The interpersonal context where the child is made aware of affective states – his own and others.

These contexts of culture are developed initially in the family through the use of a restricted or an elaborated code. Therefore, in a positional family, the structure of communication is oriented towards the status rather than the person and his individual activities. The child seems to be always responding to patterns of obligations and his view of the world is less structured, it is rather based on fatalism and less interest in long term objectives. However, in a person-centered family, importance is given to individual differentiation and abstraction or as Bernstein (ibid:242) claims : “ Unlike positional families, the members would be making their roles rather than stepping into them .”

This applies well to educational settings where learners are expected to abstract and go beyond the actual information presented by teachers ,i.e, having the ability to assimilate, analyse,

rehearse, and adopt the adequate strategies required in any learning task. Though, these abilities are mental by essence, they have been found to be affected by social class distinction and all the socio-cultural implication it contains. As they are prerequisite for any successful school performance, these abilities have even been reported to be among the factors that affect the learning of a F.L as well.

### **1.3.3.Socialization, Decontextualized Language, and Foreign Language Aptitude**

At school, learners who come from person-centred families tend to answer the classroom demands positively because they have been socialized into contexts where status boundaries are blurred and high levels of abstraction are provided . Therefore, the ability to abstract and use the available linguistic input beyond the actual information provided by the teacher, can be traced back to the rate of decontextualized abilities developed in the early days of first language acquisition. So, context-independent abilities necessary to successful educational achievement are rooted back to the child's earlier socialization into specific speech codes. As the R.C variant is context-dependent, the abilities developed by the child are going to be in disfavour of the school demands.

Context-independent abilities or what is later on labelled as decontextualized language in SLA studies draw much upon the learners' socio-cultural background. They are also said to constitute an important part of the learners' later aptitude to learn a F.L or as L2 . This is seen in Skehan words (1989:33) when he claims that : “It is the social class linked group of factors which accounts for the aptitude-achievement set of relationships.” The argument becomes even stronger when he maintains that the development of decontextualized abilities in first language acquisition relates to social class factors and thus extends to influence the ability to learn a F.L later on . This is better elucidated when he concludes ( ibid : 34) that : “...these factors continue to exert an influence several years later even with the specific subjects of F.L study.”

Skehan's view relates strongly to Bernstein's statement on context-independent abilities necessary to educational attainment and thus those related to F.L achievement. Consequently, a child who is socialized in a positional family would be at a disadvantage to answer earlier and later school demands including F.L classroom expectations too. This is applicable to children in rural areas, who once socialized in families where conditions of life are very much similar to those of W.C groups, may not develop these decontextualized abilities necessary for later F.L learning.

## **1.4.Theories of Socio-Linguistic Deprivation**

### **1.4.1.Linguistic Deprivation theory**

It has been argued that children from lower working classes are less likely to do well at school in comparison with those of middle and upper classes. For example, Davie et.al.(1972:143) have found that : “...the chances of an unskilled manual worker’ s child being a poor reader at seven years are six times greater than those of a professional worker’ s child.”

So, according to this theory, children of deprived homes ,i.e, working class ones have acquired a variety which is deficient with regard to the standard one and thus are at a disadvantage at school where elaborated code is used. This version is generally referred to as Language Deficit Theory whereby the child is said to be linguistically deficient and hence deprived of something essential for his intellectual development. In other words, the socialization of the child in a linguistically deprived environment leads to educational failure. For Ginsburg (1977:315) :“Deprived environment retards children’ s speech, this inferior speech leads to deficient thought, and deficient speech and thought result in school failure.”

In addition to these foundations, Tough (1977) claims that school failure is to some extent a reflection of linguistic deprivation. After carrying out a work with sixty four children from both advantaged and disadvantaged homes, she came out with the conclusion that differences between the two groups were clearly recorded on all the linguistic features she investigated. In this way she meets with Halliday (1978:102) who claims that :“...the deficiency might lie in more than one : sounds, words , constructions and meanings.” Therefore, the linguistic characteristics of the variety spoken by W.C children, in Bernstein’s terms Restricted Code, produce differences in the children’ s interpretation of the world and their ability to organize their experience in addition to the assertion that restricted code is less adequate than elaborated code to deal with certain abstract concepts and modes of thinking. This is so because as mentioned earlier, restricted codes use less abstract words , and more extra –linguistic features such as shared assumptions and facial expressions. This is stated otherwise by Stubbs..M (1980:149) who says that “...differences in language cause differences in educational attainment ...because differences in language cause differences in intellectual ability.”

This view rooted back to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (1921-1940) which has reported that language bears an important influence on shaping different views of the world as well as on the cognitive development of individuals. According to Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (1921:op.cit:82):

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone ,nor alone in the world of social activity ...but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society...

However, this strong version of language deprivation ,i.e., language deficit theory was strongly criticized, even by Bernstein himself who in 1971 clarifies that his work does not mean that W.C language is totally deficient. In spite of this fact, many educationalists especially in the U.S.A have based their compensatory programmes on his first foundations, the Headstart Programmes in the U.S.A, the Educationally Deprived Areas Scheme and the Language Enrichment Programmes in the U.K. These programmes were designed to meet the W.C children needs of elaborated code and to provide them with the appropriate language of schools and thus to overcome their linguistic deficit.

#### **1.4.2.Cultural Deprivation Theory**

According to this theory, working class children are educationally disadvantaged because in their early days of socialization, they have been deprived of many elements of the middle class culture on which school work is based. Children reared up in families where exposure to various types of communication is insufficient may suffer in developing good communicative skills.

For this sake, mothers' talk with their children, has been subject to deep analysis especially for Bernstein and Robinson (1972). Middle class mothers were found to use an elaborated code which fosters cognitive development and favourable educational attitudes while low working class mothers were reported to use a restricted code which is based on shared assumptions that hinders the development of mental abilities, fosters fatalistic views and stresses the solidarity of the group.

After analysing mothers' speech, studies have shown that low working class mothers speak more often than middle class mothers for effective and role defining reasons. This is seen, for instance, in showing feelings to others and deciding what is wrong using commands or threats. The reverse was recorded in M.C mothers speech especially for what was labelled cognitive reasons such as exchanging ideas. In other words, middle class mothers express more readiness to answer 'why questions', explain consequences following the line, not only of a natural process of learning, but developing cognitive abilities by making use of personal appeals. Here again, the



acquisition of decontextualized language which is important in the development of later foreign language aptitude . A good example of this situation is postulated by Robinson.W (1972:176) who claims that:

By contrast, personal appeals invoke the consequences for specified individuals such as self, mother, sister...e.g. now you' ve broken that cup I am very angry, you will not take advice. You have to learn the hard way, upsetting every body. These appeals tend to combine specificity and generality: specific acts related to general consequences for specific people. There's also in this example an implicit higher level principle you should not make people angry.

It is through such interactions that cognitive abilities are developed and culture is transmitted. Again we are taken back to the Linguistic Deprivation Theory and how mothers' interaction with children influences both the children' s language, cognitive development and the attitudes favourable to school education as well. This proves better the difficulty of separating language and culture and thus the strong assumption that linguistic and cultural deprivation theories are mutually interdependent.

The development of positive educational attitudes are, therefore, related to the parents' educational background and to the socio-economic status of the family which themselves act upon the path which socialization takes. Recent research has shown that class differences exist even in parents' attitudes to use toys and plays .W.C mothers consider it as a way of keeping children calm while M.C mothers give it a greater value, that is of widening the child' s experience in an atmosphere similar to that of classrooms .

This environmentalistic view assumes that the early social and cultural environments of the family are crucial in school success. Therefore, children from impoverished houses fail because of a lack in their childhood experiences. The lack of such experiences leads to poor motivation, poor language development, poor mental abilities and thus unfamiliarity with values and expectations which the school considers important to success.

Deprivation theory with its linguistic and cultural versions reveals two important aspects: first, the fact that culture is reflected in social interactions, behaviours , beliefs, views and values. Second, language itself influences the social reality of any social group or as in Jeffcoate and

James's words(1981:03 ) "A child's use of language shapes his world, establishes his concepts of himself and others in that world..."

These views have been under heavy fire in that they have received large criticism and thus the emergence of a new sociolinguistic theory to explain school failure, that is of Linguistic and Cultural Difference Theory.

#### **1.4.3.Linguistic and Cultural Difference Theory**

Reactions to linguistic and cultural development theories and to the attempts of compensatory programmes of education have been firmly stated in many reports and analyses. In his famous paper on the Logic of Non- standard English ( 1972 ), Labov argues that the concept of deprivation is only a myth and that it is difference in the culture and language of social groups which causes problems at school and not deficiencies. For others, however, children from the so called impoverished homes are not deprived, they rather share a rich culture and language. They argue that there is no primitive language or deficient culture; a piece of language may appear deficient only if it is seen out of context or in the wrong context. Moreover Trudgill has reacted strongly to the deficit view and denied the existence of any sort of deprivation in language or culture. In his book, Sociolinguistic: An Introduction, (1975:54) , he claims that:

...there is no implication at all in any version of the Sapir- Whorf hypothesis on language might produce a world view that is in any way superior to that produced by another: if there are differences , then they are merely differences...  
there is therefore no reason for introducing value judgements ...

Trudgill continues his argument by calling back upon works of Labov , where working class children have proved to manipulate abstract concepts using a restricted code.The interview which Labov conducted with a black youth for the sake of arguing about the existence and the charecteristics of God demonstrates the discrepancies of the deficit theory .Other linguists have argued that language differences may have a certain impact upon thought processes by making some of them more difficult but not impossible.

Halliday (1978:8-35) has taken a more sophisticated position, he neither rejects Bernstein' s views nor Labov's ones. He claims that Bernstein and Labov are only apparent protagonists. Their work, however, is very complementary , the former started from social structure and the latter from linguistic structure:



“Bernstein has shown how the semiotic systems of the culture become differentially accessible to different social groups, Labov has shown how variation in the linguistic system is functional in expressing variations in social status and role.”

In his articles, Halliday (1978) has never ceased defending Bernstein’s views and elucidating the primary aim of his research work. He has even gone further in seeking a common point between Bernstein’s and Labov’s foundations in order to bridge the apparent gap between them. He states (ibid:101) that:

“Bernstein does not claim to be providing a total explanation of the causes of educational failure, he is offering an interpretation of one aspect of it , the fact that distribution of failure is not random but follows certain known and sadly predictable patterns...”

So, Halliday continued his work following Bernstein’s path and denies the language failure theory in both versions, the deficit version and the difference one as well. He argues that the way the problem is posed is wrong, educational failure has to be sought in social terms and not in linguistic ones. He, therefore, joins Bernstein when he said (ibid:105 ) that : “ education does not compensate for society”, and Labov when he urged researchers to look at the social and cultural obstacles that exacerbate learning. Halliday summarizes his position (op.cit:105) as follows:

“ The fault rests neither with language as a system ( the deficit version) , nor with language as institution (the difference version) , the explanation is a social one.”

In all Bernstein’s work, one surely finds that all the differences recorded were related to social class and that these differences , though linguistic at surface, are subcultural in nature. In other words, they are differences of evaluation, interpretation and orientation. No matter what linguistic forms have been analysed in mothers and children’ s speech to account for success or failure, emphasis has always been on the social functioning of language and the meaning which these functions demonstrate. Differences ,hence, are not mere linguistic ones, they rather arise from the importance accorded to a given socio-semantic set within a given social context at the expense of others.

This view goes beyond the well-known forms of language, morphology, syntax, or else to include meaning and social function. Language is no more a structure, it is a semiotic system, i.e., it is interpreted within the socio-cultural context in which it is spoken. Therefore, if these functions or areas of meaning are less emphasized by a given social group, the values generated will receive less importance respectively. When these values are highly stressed by the educational institution, school failure is likely to occur because the learners have been deprived of them from the early days of socialization. For Halliday, therefore, the solution lies in the widening of the school functional perspectives, that is to say, setting a new educational tradition that takes into consideration the learners' handicaps and works to overcome them so as to bridge the existing gap between the school expectations and the learners' cultural values.

More recently, studies about failure to learn some school subjects especially foreign languages have included the investigation not only of socialization at the family level but also at school and more particularly in language classrooms. Allwright (1996), M.J.Willes (1983), A.Furnham, S.Bochner(1980), Krashen (1981), Alptekin and Alptekin (1984) have widened the scope of their studies to investigate the role of the classroom, the teacher and the syllabus itself in developing positive attitudes and raising more interest among learners whose socio-cultural background may be an impeding factor towards successful learning.

### **1.5. Conclusion**

From the account above, it can be noted that school failure is very much related to social class which acts strongly in this respect. Learners coming from W.C families tend to have a low school attainment in comparison with those of M.C families. The former come from impoverished families characterized by a low educational level among the family members especially the parents, low incomes and bad living conditions whereas the latter come from highly educated families characterized by a small number of children and a decent standard of life. The gist of the argument is that being reared up in one of these environments is likely to produce different individuals with different speech variants and thus different cultures, views and attitudes. According to many socio-linguists and sociologists mainly Bernstein, language is affected by the socio-economic situation in which it is spoken and thus the cultural experience is influenced too. As he/she grows up in one of these environments, the individual learner is going to develop into a social being who acquires a set of experiences that may do either good or harm for his school work. The impact, therefore, extends to the surrounding environment including the school itself which, if it neglects information about the socio-cultural milieu of the pupils and does not find

out ways of dealing with their disabilities, will contribute more and more in their failure to learn successfully.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **SUCCESS FACTORS IN SECOND AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

One of the major conundrums in the field of second and foreign language learning is the question of differential success between individuals of culturally different groups and even of the same social group. In fact, there is a host of factors which are crucial in this respect and even uneasy to disassociate. Research has reported two main types : one consists of instructional and input variables while the other consists of the learners' characteristics such as age, language aptitude, personality, motivation, attitude, cognitive style and so on.

In this chapter, however, our focus tends to be on learners' characteristics taking the individual in a broader socio-linguistic definition, that is of a member of a given social group, realizing specific social roles and establishing specific social relationships through a specific semiotic construct-language- which carries and colours his world view, culture, and beliefs as well.

In doing so, our attempt draws upon Durkheim's famous work on suicide(1897) which though considered as a mere individual act, Durkheim was able to find its interpretation in sociology by putting the individual in his social context ,i.e., by looking at the social influences which might bear some social pressure upon the individual's views and attitudes. After a long research work, he came with the conclusion that the results he obtained were completely different especially when he had sought the causes of suicide aptitude of each society in the nature of societies themselves.

Following the lines of Durkheim, and Bernstein's foundations, our attempt is to seek a sociological interpretation for the learners' failure to get a good attainment in English. This is to be done via an investigation of the impact of socio-cultural factors upon the learners' individual differences especially those related to motivation, attitudes, personality, and others which though widely connected to the fields of psychology and cognitive psychology still have deeper interpretations in sociology.

#### **2.2. Learners' individual differences**

##### **2.2.1. Age**

It is undeniable that age is an important individual factor which accounts for differential success in foreign or second language learning in that the age factor has been subject to a good deal of controversy among researchers and educators. Some claim that younger learners are more successful than elders whereas others believe it to be the reverse bearing in mind that each trend has given a set of arguments to defend its viewpoint .

### **2.2.1.1. The Critical Period Hypothesis**

The hypothesis about the existence of a critical period rooted back to the neurologists Penfield and Roberts (1959) who argued that the ability of children to learn a language coincides with the plasticity of their brains which decreases as they grow older. Their position is justified by the fact that many children were found to be able to re-learn language after griveous damage in the left hemisphere while the case for adults was rare.

This view has been developed later on by Lenneberg (1967) with the term ‘lateralization’ which, as he thinks, develops to bring about a specialization of language function often located in the dominant hemisphere. Once the lateralization process is complete, the brain will lose the plasticity necessary for language learning. Lenneberg’s view has been challenged especially by the case of Genie, a girl who, after having lived eleven years and a half in total social isolation, was able to acquire language at the age of thirteen. In addition to this, the C.P.H was criticized by Seliger (1978) who claimed that damages in the same part of the brain have different results depending on the age of the patient. Seliger furthered his view by arguing that the process of lateralization and localization of language functions in specific parts of the left hemisphere is continuous during the individual’s lifetime, a fact which has prompted him to call for many critical periods.

### **2.2.1.2. The Cognitive Explanation**

It has been widely assumed that age is a predictor factor in second and foreign language attainment in that young learners are better than elders or vice versa. The gist of the cognitive argument usually runs towards the foundations of Piaget (1926) and his maturational stages in human cognitive development. In early childhood, Piaget has identified two stages, that of ego-centric speech whereby, the child’s talk resembles monologues and is often done without paying attention to who is listening and that of socialized speech whereby the child moves out of what Piaget calls the pre-operational stage into the concrete operational one around six and seven. At this age, children begin to consider relationships and to take the listeners’ views into account. In middle childhood, they develop a conscious awareness of language decentring during which they start to reflect on situations rather than on themselves. Hence, they will be able to think about what they and others say and also to segment language into units which is a crucial step in learning to read. It is the blossoming of this cognitive ability or awareness which creates an advantage in rate of acquisition for older children over younger ones. So, the ability to

manipulate abstract linguistic categories and to formulate rules and concepts increases in the period of adolescence when the formal operations stage of cognitive development begins. That is why Ellis (1985:108) claims that : “ One obvious difference between the young child and the adolescent or the adult is the ability of the latter to comprehend language as a formal system.”

Conversely, Rosanky (1975) has argued that cognitive development is rather a factor that accounts for the easiness which young learners find in learning languages. She assumes that the young child has not developed flexible thinking, he is rather self-centered and thus is more likely to learn automatically without knowing that he is acquiring a new language, i.e., the absence of meta-awareness. So, as the child has not developed social attitudes towards the use of one language at the expense of another, he is undoubtedly open to accept the learning of any language.

For Krashen (1987: 43), however, :“ age is not in itself a predictor of second language rate or attainment ...everything reduces down to the quantity of comprehensible input and the level of the affective filter.” By , comprehensible input, Krashen refers to the necessary conditions that enable the learner to move from one linguistic stage to another by understanding the meaning of utterances before acquiring their structure. In doing so, the learner would be in a position to use not only his linguistic competence but also his knowledge of the world, his decontextualized abilities, and the extra-linguistic features as well.

### **2.2.1.3.The Socio-Cultural Explanation**

The thrust of the argument here is that, while learning a F.L or a second language, adults might face more hurdles during the learning process than children whose emphatic capacity – the capacity to put oneself in some one’s shoes – is stronger ,i.e., children have not developed a full identity and thus are not afraid to appear ridiculous or even take risks to interact without paying attention to the mistakes they might produce. Generally, children are not hampered by the negative views held about the T.L which implies that they have a stronger integrative motivation.

This brings to surface the fact that children view the learning task with a low socio-affective filter,i.e., adults are at an offensive position because their identity as speakers of a first language is thoroughly established and their view of the world is coloured by the environment in which they have been living in, especially if it fosters negative attitudes



towards other languages and cultures. Consequently, adults may resist the socialization which is the end product of child language acquisition.

In more recent works, Brown (1980:109) has proposed another socio-cultural explanation to age differences, that is, of acculturation which, as he has defined is : “The ability of the learner to relate and respond easily to the foreign language culture.” In addition to this, Brown has identified four stages of acculturation:

- 1-Initial excitement and euphoria.
- 2-Culture shock leading to estrangement and hostility towards the target language culture .
- 3- Culture stress.
- 4-Assimilation or adaptation to the new culture.

He argues that the third stage is the most important one in that young children are socio-culturally resilient because they are less culture-bound than adults and hence are able to move through the stages of acculturation more quickly and acquire the second language more easily without being subjects to feelings of anomie or resistance.

### **2.2.2. Social-Psychological Factors**

#### **2.2.2.1.Motivation**

All researchers agree about the importance of motivation as a crucial factor in the process of second and foreign language learning . The applied linguist Pit Corder (1981:08) has said : “given motivation , it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to language data .” However, the questions which one might ask here are : what is motivation? Where does it come from? And how does it work with regard to language learning?

Generally speaking, motivation relates to the human inner motives which, based on some underlying needs, would drive the individual into a specific activity.

Psychologically speaking , these needs were classified by Maslow (1970 ) according to the individual’s age because at birth, the needs for food and warmth are of primary importance while later on, higher needs appear as the child grows up into a social being whose needs extend to include the identification of the self with a social group, in addition to the need for achievement, self-esteem, knowledge and exploration which all lead to social actualization.



In Social Psychology, these are the needs of the individual to establish social relationships with other members of the society in order to communicate his views and thoughts, to realize his self by investing his own creative and intellectual potential so as to occupy a respectable social status and realize some vocational goals.

In more recent studies, Deci et. al.(1991) claim that a motivated behaviour is based on three factors: 'Intentionality' (choice), 'affect' and 'effort'. By intentionality (choice), he refers to the processes which keep the mind in contact with the things of the world so that they could be thought about affectively, while affect refers to the emotional feelings and sensations that any one has towards something, and effort to the cognitive abilities invested in the activity chosen such as problem-solving, the creation of learning strategies, and so forth.

For Lier (1996:102):“ Motivation refers to the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect.” These choices , though individual in essence, are primarily made in the light of already existing social options. So, while selecting one of these options, the individual relies whether consciously or unconsciously on the processes of socialization and cultural membership to determine the reasons of his or her choice. In the field of education mainly F.L learning , learners' motivation is coloured by social and cultural shadows or as Leo-Van Lier ( ibid:102) has put it :

In education, motivation is organismic energy capital to be spent in the learning market, some of it we bring with us as genetic endowment ... some of it we borrow from adults and peers in the form of extrinsic stimuli and coercion.

Motivation ,therefore , can not escape the influence of the social and cultural values which the individual learns first at home , with peers , at school and in the surrounding environment of the area where he/she lives. Socialization in all its aspects, as we have seen earlier , is a continuous process which orients the learners' choices and determines their goals even in F.L learning whose social status in society is not only determined by people's views but also by the importance given to it by the political and educational systems, the way it is taught in classrooms and the material provided for its teaching. In his attempt in investigating a more specific F.L motivation, Gardener (1985) proposed the following equation:

Motivation = Effort+Desire to achieve a goal+Attitudes.

Motivation is thus made up of 'effort' which is not only a cognitive ability but consists also of some potentials such as the desire to please a teacher or parent, a high need to achieve, good study habits, social views and cultural values. In doing so, Gardner highlights the importance of how this effort is channeled in that it does not come out of scratch but is rather sustained by other factors especially the desire to achieve, which itself, is acted upon by a set of social attitudes.

Gardner, therefore, has developed a model of motivation based on the social milieu in which the individual is situated and where attitudes and expectations are formed in a way that either increases the motivational intensity or decreases it. For Skehan (1989:59): "Integrativeness and attitudes towards the learning situation are rooted in the social milieu and influence motivation which in turn influences achievement."

Meanwhile, we have been tracking and trailing the notion of motivation in language research, what is it? Where does it come from? And how does it work from a social perspective? Now, let us have a look at the different types of motivation which researchers have identified.

#### **2.2.2.1.1. Integrative And Instrumental Motivation**

The famous work of Gardner and Lambert (1959-1972) about motivation was largely influenced by Mowrer's views of L1 acquisition (1950). The fact that Mowrer has attributed success in acquiring the first language, to the child's desire for identity with the family first, and the whole society later on, has given Gardner and Lambert an insight towards investigating the learners' motives to learn a foreign or second language. So, they assume that the individuals' desire to identify with other people extends to include foreign people. Variation in the degree of this desire has been reported to be the result of social views about foreigners which are probably fostered under the influence of parents, the surrounding environment, the native culture, and even the educational and occupational demands.

Following this line of argument, research has been heavily dominated by a strong distinction between integrative orientation and instrumental orientation which originated in the work of the social-psychologist Gardner (op.cit- 1985). So, he suggests that those who identify positively with the T.L community are more willing to resemble the foreign people and to understand their culture and thus are said to be integratively motivated whereas those whose learning of the T.L is done for occupational aims like furthering a career, finding a job or meeting educational

demands are said to be instrumentally motivated. According to Gardner et.al. (1976:199) integrative motivation:

reflects a high level of drive on the part of the individual to acquire the language of a valued second language community in order to facilitate communication with that group.

Hence, integrative motivation has been reported to be more crucial and effective in F.L or L2 learning than instrumental motivation for it relates to long –term objectives and is deeply rooted in the personality of the learner, though in some societies instrumental motivation was found more influential .For example, in a social context where knowledge of a foreign language is indispensable for a university course or a prestigious occupation, an instrumental motivation is more likely to lead to high attainment.

So, irrespective of which type of motivation is more relevant to achievement in F.L and L2 learning, some researchers have proved that neither type is more effective than the other, yet each type can be less or more influential depending on the social context in which the learning process takes place. For instance, in a society where the learning of a F.L is favoured and consists an important part of its culture, learners are more advantageous to develop an integrative orientation from the early days of socialization.This is likely to engender in their personality a strong desire to identify with foreigners and understand their culture without being caught in troubles of anomie or alienation. Similarly, in a society where notions like achievement, challenging difficulties, taking initiatives and having long term objectives, are highly valued , learners will be more motivated to pursue the learning task whatever the difficulties they might encounter.This is so because these are the components which make up motivation – effort, affect, and attitude or as in Deci et.al’s terms, effort, affect and choice which are socially determined.

In Naiman et.al., The Good Language Learner (1978), the authors have considered affect as a crucial component in motivation :“ ..of the major factors making the learners persist in language learning was the development of an emotional bond to the language...”. This bond as they claim is stimulated by a set of external factors such as the prevailing beliefs and views held by the family or the society in which the language is being taught and extends also to include the

learning situational factors like teachers, contents, materials and so on. In fact, this is a good indication about the role which the contextual factors can play to enhance more interest in the learning activity.

In recent research, this has been widely investigated by Allwright and Bailey (1991) who have raised a new key term to refer to motivation, that is of, 'receptiveness' or 'openness' not only to the T.L and its culture but also to the teacher, the course content, the teaching material, the method and so forth. Hence, the learning context with all its components is central in motivation. This is better seen in Kelly's words (1976:324) who says: "To truly motivate the student the method should generate its own interest". Or as in Bailey's terms (op.cit:160):

If you ask people about the languages they have learned, then you are likely to arouse memories of particular teachers -perhaps the teacher who first captured their enthusiasm or of the teacher who effectively killed it off.

The teacher as a human being with all the socio-psychological knowledge he/ she has is more likely to understand the learning situation with all its components than any one else, and he/she is even more able to tackle all the problems which the learners may encounter including the socio-cultural background which is of great significance especially in areas where feelings of resistance to any new way of speaking or living is drastically strong .

Last but not least, in societies where the educational systems give high priority to foreign languages, learners would feel a more tangible need to learn effectively especially if the language being learnt occupies a high ranking position in the school curriculum and also in societal institutions. A dramatic fact which one can not neglect especially in our Algerian schools where the time allotted to the teaching of English does not go beyond 3 hours per week for almost all the streams and more drastically with a coefficient of 2 that demotivates the learners. Their minds are, therefore, pre-occupied with the other demanding subject matters whose coefficients reach 5/6 and contribute more in their success than English does.

### **2.2.2.1.2. Intrinsic Motivation VS Extrinsic Motivation**

The notion of 'intrinsic motivation' has been raised in educational research to show that there are learning behaviours which occur in the absence of apparent external stimuli and thus challenge the Skinnerian behavioural theory of operant learning .

Intrinsic motivation is said to be related to long-term success because it is guided by an inner interest in the task itself whereas 'Extrinsic motivation' is said to be related to short-term success as it is directed by external stimuli like parental approval, offer of reward, threat or punishment and so forth.

Deci et.al.(op-cit-1991) have defined intrinsic motivation as voluntary in nature and depending on affects and cognitions which accompany the learning activity and thus called it a non-derivative motivational force. So, according to Deci et. al., intrinsic motivation arises out of some psychological needs which are innate in the individual such as the need for competence, relatedness and autonomy .These needs are transformed by the individual into goals through cultural membership and once again one is caught in a social force, i.e., that of social and cultural patterns which determine the particular desirable route. In other words, the social milieu plays a considerable role in governing the transformation of universal motivation into terms of social relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Lier (op-cit: 108) states that:

Competence involves understanding how to attain various external and internal outcomes ...relatedness involves developing secure and satisfying connections with others in one' s social milieu and autonomy refers to be self-regulating in one' s own actions.

Here, one might call back the Vygotskian theory on how the socialized is internalized to re-organize and regulate thinking and also how cognition can not escape the influence of social pressures. It is in this light, that Deci et.al. have changed their position which viewed intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as antagonistic though they have not claimed for a positive relationship. Yet, this relationship has been proved to be stronger in that the innate is very much acted upon by the socio-cultural forces or as Lier ( ibid: 111) puts it :

Internal and external motivation are alike two forces which may well start out as being separate but which change coverage and intertwine even more closely until it may well become impossible to tell one from the other most of the time.

In language learning classrooms, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation intervene. Learners may participate to get a good grade, to make parents happy, or to gain a prestigious position (extrinsic motivation). At the same time, they may do so, because they enjoy the activity itself or because they find it challenging. Thus, they become more curious and persistent to get it done successfully (intrinsic motivation). Still, both can be traced back to a set of social and cultural beliefs, i.e., the socialized part which the individual learner has already internalized and which is now regulating his position vis a vis the learning situation. So, by investing the motivational energy which he/she has accumulated in the light of the prevailing social norms and cultural values, the learner would be able to define his/her position towards the language being learnt and the goals meant to be realized. If the society with all its institutions gives importance to education and emphasizes the learning of foreign languages, children would grow up into individuals who are educationally motivated and willing to go further afield.

#### **2.2.2.1.3.Social Motivation**

J.P.Pride said (1971: 22) : “The socio-linguist interested in language learning motivation had best be interested in the detailed aspirations of the language user.”

Thus, from a socio-linguistic vantage, the link between power or social prestige and instrumental motivation is very strong and so it is between solidarity with the people of the target language and integrative motivation .

So, in order to help the individual learner to learn a F.L or a second language,one has to discover the reference point from which learners start, i.e., their cultural environment and their cultural motivation. That is why motivation has to be regarded as a sub-cultural variable rather than a mere psychological one because the individual does not exist beyond his social group but in a society where he is socialized in a particular language, a particular culture and also a particular heritage of norms and traditions.



#### **2.2.2.2. Attitude**

Research on attitude in foreign and second language learning has often been hampered by the fact that motivation and attitude are not clearly distinguished. In their early work, Gardner and Lambert ( op.cit-1959-1972 ) did not distinguish between these two concepts and claimed that there is a linear relationship between them in that attitude influences motivation which in turn influences the learning outcome. For Gardner (1985) attitudes are a reaction to a referent and are inferred on the basis of the individual's beliefs or views about that referent .

Thus, the problem with attitudes is that they are not directly observed but are merely inferred from behaviours of the learners. Yet, research in this field was able to distinguish different attitudes the best known one is group-specific attitudes, i.e., attitudes towards the T.L and its culture which, if positive in nature, will foster a strong integrative motivation. Other general attitudes related more to L2 learning situations are attitudes towards the course, the material, the teacher and others. Attitudes are socially determined as Spolsky (1969:178) puts it :

...in a typical language learning situation, there are a number of people whose attitudes to each other can be significant : the learner, the teacher, the learners' peers and parents and the speakers of the language. Each relationship might well be shown to be a factor controlling the learner's motivation to acquire the language.

Let us then see how each attitude is influenced by a set of cultural and social pressures:

- 1- Parents : Learners may reflect the same attitudes of their parents towards the T.L. Gardner ( op.cit:1976 ) showed that Anglophone students learning French as a L2 in Montreal hold their parents attitudes towards French Canadians.
- 2- Peers : Friends are even more influential. In the U.S.A, for example, the study of certain languages such as French has at certain times been perceived as girls' subject making it difficult to boys to get involved effectively in the learning process.
- 3- Learning situation: learners may find the learning situation appealing to their interest depending on the kind of material and method used as well as the content.

It is obvious that learning a language may mean to learners losing their cultural identity. Thus, feelings of social insecurity might give birth to negative attitudes, which a positive learning situation, can modify into favourable ones.



Positive attitudes are likely to emerge if these three factors are carefully chosen on socio-cultural grounds in a way that invites the learners into a natural exploration of the cultural and linguistic worlds of the T.L without undermining their native one. In addition to the influential role of parents, peers and the learning situation in shaping attitudes towards learning a F.L, a third factor is worth mentioning here, that is , the teacher. The teacher's role is extremely significant as he possesses quite a great potential to foster positive attitudes, rise motivation, and above all render the learning situation efficient and interesting as well. So, another important influence is that of the teacher whose role is extremely significant in this respect:

4- Teacher : Combined with the learning situation, teachers can create more favourable attitudes among the learners, who might come to classrooms with negative views, orient them to use the best ways for successful learning and how to overcome hardships. Hence, a friendly rather than a threatening atmosphere is more likely to create a healthy learning situation.

In a recent study John .L.Clark (1987) emphasizes the fact that negative social attitudes towards F.L learning in Britain are the source of failure which most students face at school. These negative attitudes, as he postulates, grew out of a set of reasons the most important of which are : the lack of social awareness of the educational value of foreign languages and the British mentality which, because of an imperial past, has been accustomed to impose its culture and its language on others rather than attempting to accept the others' ones.

For Krashen (1985), attitudinal factors related to language success are those which contribute to a low affective filter because, as he thinks, attainment of learners varies according to the strength and level of affective filter ,i.e, learners whose attitudes are not optimal will look for a small input and thus will demonstrate a high and a strong filter while those whose attitudes are positive towards the language being learnt ,will look for a large input and thus will demonstrate a low affective filter.

### **2.2.2.3. Personality**

Learners vary considerably in a number of ways especially in personality which differs from one individual to another. In the literature on second language acquisition and foreign language learning , personality factors have received scant attention , yet some hints have described some

personality differences which may probably decrease or increase the likelihood of success in this respect.

According to Odlin.T (1989:131): “ personality factors may also account for the varying degrees of success that individuals have in approximating pronunciation patterns in the target language.”

In fact, it is a difficult task to distinguish personality factors because they interrelate with motivational factors. Initially, anxiety and empathy are two personality characteristics that have been widely recorded to interact with success in language learning. However, the identification of these characteristics presupposes an understanding of the individual as a member of a social group because the personality which any learner may have, is as much a reflection of the socio-linguistic norms in his native speech community as it is of an individual self. For instance, many studies have found that the behaviour of students in L2 classrooms often demonstrate certain behavioural traits in Japan like introversion at the expense of extroversion. This highlights the influence of the native language speech community on L2 behaviour and thus much of the individuals' personalities might mirror out the socio-cultural values of their community than the individuals themselves.

In addition , anxiety , empathy and other personality factors like introversion and extroversion, field-dependence and field-independence as well as risk-taking have been also found relevant to success in F.L learning and in L2 acquisition. A matter which is going to be clarified more in the following paragraphs.

#### **2.2.2.3.1.Anxiety**

In language learning literature, anxiety has long been seen as an impeding factor though it is not necessarily so in itself. After many years of investigation, researchers have come to distinguish between debilitating anxiety which hampers learning and facilitating anxiety which helps learners to do better . A learner with a debilitating anxiety would like to succeed but feels that whatever he does , he is more likely to fail bringing to mind that the solution is therefore by removing the sources of this debilitating anxiety so that he can work with what is called relaxed concentration.

Another distinction of anxiety is that of trait anxiety which is a personality feature and the less stable one. It is also called stage-fright because it is evoked by some temporary

circumstances. So, in language classes learners feel as if they are deprived of the linguistic tools that enable them to behave as normal individuals. Hence, state-anxiety is more likely to happen in F.L. classes where individuals face a language which they struggle to master. It also heightens in degree, where authoritative atmosphere reigns and where teachers adopt full control of form and content without tolerating mistakes.

Moreover, learning another language may imply acquiring a new world view and looking at things from a different angle. A fact which may lead to a feeling of resentment and threat rather than excitement. Learners, therefore, may be caught in a feeling of anomie –the feeling of being caught between two cultural groups and not belonging to either of them-(Schumann, 1978). Seen in this light, learning a foreign language can be a threat to the learners' sense of identity and also a source of humiliation since many of them would avoid participation because of fear of the teacher's reaction or peers' comments and thus would prefer to keep their self-esteem, self-confidence and to preserve their self-image, too. A good example about this point is illustrated by Allwright( op.cit: 175) who stated that some Algerian secondary school learners have been interviewed by Cherchalli (1988) and have given the following answers:

- 1- "When the teacher is giving explanations my heart beats strongly and I keep saying to myself It's going to be my turn now".
- 2- "I will never forget today and the shame I felt .Everything started when the English teacher asked me to read a few sentences on the black-board..."

So, there are many reasons that make the language classroom more anxiety-breeding, for, in addition to the teacher's behaviour and the peers' reaction, the socio-cultural backup which the learners bring to the classroom is also relevant. Hence, teachers should minimize the sources of this anxiety by establishing a more relaxing atmosphere whereby learners interact without feeling embarrassed or timid and by making them aware of the fact that mistakes are part of the learning process. As too much authority is likely to raise an avoidance strategy among learners who would not participate, teachers should be aware of the socio-cultural background of these learners who might come from authoritative families and thus may make the learning task more and more complex. In this respect, Jeffcoate et.al.(1981:21) state that :“ when authority is imposed ...a child learns only that safety depends on unquestioning obedience to rules...”

If the learner comes to school with such avoidance strategy as part of his personality, he is even more predisposed by an additional force which prevents him from questioning any unclear

pattern or even participating without fear especially in the F.L class which requires initiation , risk-taking, introversion and so forth.

To sum up, somewhere deep inside , learners may bring fear with them in their unconscious side (Freud,1962), as a result of previous rearing practices and social norms that oblige them unconsciously to adopt certain behaviours which might be in disfavour of the learning task.

#### **2.2.2.3.2. Empathy**

This is generally defined as the ability to put oneself in someone else's shoes (Giuora et.al.,1975:45). This ability stems basically from a personality which is open to others and able to adapt to different social situations. In language learning, the linguistic demands of competence and fluency need more power and strength to develop a native-like writing or speech. It is not easy at all to imitate the native speaker in writing or orally without being caught in embarrassment especially that any language carries a great deal of cultural information.

Such learners should have been brought up in families where boundary procedures are weak (Bernstein,1971-op.cit). Although it is an analytic interpretation , (Giuora, 1975- op.cit) meets with Bernstein when he speaks about language ego which, according to him develops with the general ego and creates more problems in L2 as the child grows up.

Language as many socio-linguists have claimed is a social construct which carries a cultural baggage passed on from one generation to another or as Pole puts it ( 1992: 593 ) :“ The acquisition of language and socio-cultural knowledge is integral to one another.” Now, the way this knowledge is acquired is deliberately different from one social group to another, and from one individual to another as well. Some acquisitions are based on shared assumptions leading to communalized roles and particularistic meanings generating, therefore, context-dependent abilities ( restricted codes ), whereas others are based on abstract assumptions leading to individual roles and universalistic meanings generating context-independent abilities (elaborated codes). Hence, for Giuora (1975, op.cit), learners who are more empathic are likely to have more permeability of language ego boundaries since they are able to draw a line between identity, and what the situation demands. In doing so, they can put themselves easily into new social roles, here the learning of a F.L , without damaging one's social identity.

### **2.2.2.3.3. Introversion And Extroversion**

It has become a common belief that extroverts are better language learners than introverts. However, what extroversion means is really a complex matter especially that researchers' results have been too much controversial on whether it correlates negatively or positively with success. Extroversion is a concept which refers to an outgoing, adventuresome, talkative and sociable person. As the learning of any language involves talking, seeking input via persistent practice, training and challenging difficulties, an extrovert person is therefore more prone to adjust himself to the demands of the learning task without fear, shyness, or anxiety since his outgoingness stands as a barrier in front of the impeding factors that might hinder his attainment. For Els Van.t et.al.(1984:122):

...Learning a second language is more effective when the language is practiced and, in so far as shy students may be less likely to practice it, they will attain less proficiency ...

Many studies have proved these assumptions, for instance, Strong (1983-1984) has found that learners' sociability and gregariousness relates positively with learners' proficiency especially in vocabulary and structural skills. For Krashen (1985), extroverts are more likely to maximize contact and the amount of the input received. In doing so, they would improve their level of proficiency better than introverts.

In contrast with these findings, other research works have recorded no positive correlation (Naiman et.al.,1978-op.cit) but rather negative ones as in Busch's study (1982) about Japanese learning English in Japan. A fact which was attributed later on to cultural reasons as Wong's study (1984) has revealed. In his study on the socio-cultural factors affecting students' participation in some Chinese foreign language classes, Wong (op-cit : 90) reported that even good learners avoid to participate because the Chinese culture emphasizes modesty and that among the factors that regulate classroom behaviour were:

- 1- "You should not demonstrate verbal success in English in front of your peers.
- 2-You should not answer the teacher voluntarily or enthusiastically in English..."

So, introversion here is clearly influenced by some cultural factors which learners display in their

behaviour in the language class.

In an important work about individual differences, Skehan (op-cit: 100) has stated an early study about personality features in which Eysenck has provided the following definitions of introverts and extroverts:

The typical extrovert is sociable, needs to have people to talk to...  
he craves excitement ... and is generally an impulsive individual ...  
the typical introvert ... is a quiet, retiring sort of person, introspective,  
...and distrusts the impulse of the moment . He does not like excitement...

This definition highlights two important assumptions :

The assumption that extroversion is related to gregariousness and that introversion is much more related to seriousness and order, a fact which has brought to surface a debate on the possibility that introversion interacts better with success in language learning than extroversion. Entwistle and Wilson (1977) suggested, therefore, that extroverts might have superior immediate recall but a poorer one after a long delay. Introverts were then predicted to have a higher academic achievement.

Despite these findings, extroversion has been recorded to correlate more with success in language learning because extrovert learners are sociable and willing to engage in practical activities. By being so, these learners benefit more than introvert ones especially that foreign language class requires more initiation and involvement.



#### **2.2.2.3.4. Risk-taking**

Successful language learners are willing to ask questions , to use the linguistic knowledge they have, and to initiate communication despite the mistakes they might commit. All these are risk-taking manners. In Ely's study a strong correlation was recorded between risk-taking behaviours and positive classroom participation. Ely (Op.cit:188) has defined risk-taking in the light of four behaviours:

the lack of hesitancy about using a newly encountered linguistic element, a willingness to use linguistic elements perceived to be complex or difficult, a tolerance of possible incorrectness or inexactitude in using the language, and an inclination to rehearse a new element silently before attempting to use it aloud.

Bebee (1983) relates risk-taking to the social setting and the individual while Mc-celland (1961) has developed a theory of achievement motivation which proposes that some learners perceive achievement on the basis of medium-risk tasks and respond to such challenges on the basis of a past history with such tasks. In contrast, other learners are attracted by low risk tasks which are easy to achieve, unmotivating and constitute therefore no accomplishment. This brings us again to achievement as a value and how it is regarded in any society. Some societies, as we have seen earlier, do not give importance to long-term objectives, the world for them is guided and everything is controlled by Gods. Some if not many of these doctrines are tangible in our schools for many pupils often give this typical answer whenever asked about their failure in learning English: " I do not understand it , Allah ghaleb!." What they believe in is their inability to learn English and not the fact that they can if they really want to. Moreover, they are not aware of the fact that the world is governed by a set of rules and laws which one tries to find out so that he fulfils his own objectives. The same applies to the individual learner in the language class, who once aware of his underlying capacities and the demanding strategies of the learning task , he would be more willing to take risks to attain a better proficiency level.

So, being socialized in a society where the child has been oriented towards dependency on others, easy outcomes without careful planning , submission to difficulties and reliance on passive views in explaining the occurrence of different phenomena, the learner would reflect in one way or another all these accumulated knowledge in his learning behaviour. In other



words, there is not a development of abilities and strategies which enable the individual to deal successfully with the learning tasks. This has been displayed otherwise by King.R (op.cit:26):

...middle class parents often take active steps to prepare their children for the pupil role, encouraging him to take part in things and ask questions  
...the working class is more often prepared to a passive pupil role.

In contrast with risk-taking, sensitivity to rejection stands as an exacerbating hurdle in the face of successful language learning. Naiman et. al. (op cit) proposed that such individuals are not active in class participation and often fear ridicule remarks and comments of their class-mates or those of teachers even they are mere corrections. In an extended study on how sensitivity to rejection correlates negatively with low attainment, Naiman et.al.(op.cit) have found that a good proportion of successful students learning French as a second language are those who enjoy discussing controversial topics like politics and religion.

#### **2.2.2.3.5. Cognitive Style: (Learning Style).**

There are various views about what is meant by cognitive style as well as the number of factors that affect it. Ausubell and Robinson (1969) have mentioned eighteen different styles. However, the most well-known learning style distinction is that of Field Independence and Field Dependence which is widely adopted in SLA and also that of Reflectivity and Impulsivity.

The cognitive style, therefore, cannot easily be separated from personality, it refers to the way an individual approaches the learning task or processes of information and it comes partly from the learners' nature, their personal experiences and partly from their socio-cultural background. The relationship between cognitive style and personality is very strong and it is difficult to speak about cognitive style without referring to some personality characteristics. It is in this respect that Witkin et.al. (1977: 10) say that: "...it can hardly be argued that cognitive style is strictly a matter of cognition only, it extends beyond the cognitive domain into other domains usually subsumed under personality".

So, F.I and F.D are developed in different socio-cultural environments. But, first let us have a look at what each of them is. A Field Independent learner is the one who perceives an item in a

field as discrete from the surrounding elements of the whole field. He is analytic and relies on an internal orientation and is thus more likely to have an intrinsic motivation whereas a Field Dependent learner tends to perceive globally and find it difficult to distinguish the components that make up the whole. He relies on an external orientation and is more likely to demonstrate an extrinsic motivation. In addition, Field Dependent individuals are person-oriented, interested in others and sensitive to them and that is why they are called Field sensitive individuals. They are also gregarious and outgoing. As a result of their social orientation, Field Dependent individuals seek contact with other people and engage in interaction which leads to a better communicative competence.

In parallel with this, Field Independent individuals are supposed to have a greater analytic and cognitive ability in that they succeed in dealing with fields, which though internal or external can be analysed, broken up and reassembled easily. However, from a Vygotskian angle, though Field Independent persons are more individualistic, the collective sense of the social is always present in them because the person does not grow from the social into the individual as it is for Piaget but from the individual into the social. It is the social which reorganizes thinking with all the underlying cultural values and considerations. Hence, a clear-cut distinction on which one is more relevant to positive language learning is difficult because culture is an important factor in this respect and the individual may shift from one style to another depending on the cultural expectations of the learning situation as well as the cultural reality of the individual and the social group in which he lives, too.

To look at the matter from another vantage, one could consider some of the qualities of the Field Dependent learners such as person-orientation and sensitivity which are themselves captured by other constructs such as extroversion and sociability. The same applies for Field Independent qualities such as the capacities to analyse which are themselves associated with the analytic learner identified by aptitude tests and aspects of high intelligence scores. Furthermore, empathy and Field Independence are related with success in L2 but empathy is thought to be Field Dependent.

Seen in this light, things are very much complicated though research has offered more support for a positive correlation between Field Independence and success in F.L or L2 learning (Chapelle and Roberts (1986), Hatch (1983), Naiman et. al. (1978), Hansen and Stanfield (1981), Genesee and Hamayan (1980)...). Since Field Independence is positively related

to success in language learning, Field Independence Persons seem to be influenced by the surrounding environment in which they have been socialized. For instance, authoritative societies are said to produce more Field Dependent individuals (Brown, 1980-op.cit) and thus the teachers' role would better extend to include the training of students into more Field Independence in an open and non-threatening classroom atmosphere. He also suggested that Field Independence may be important to performance tests and classroom learning. However, when it comes to communicative tasks, Field Dependence is more significant. Other researchers, believe that such a matter ,i.e., tendency to Field Independence or Field Dependence may be culture bound.

The language teacher , therefore, should be aware of these learning styles which carry much of the learners' cultural background because discrepancy between the teaching style and the learning style can lead to a style war and may have a negative impact on attitudes to learning.

### **2.3. Cultural Expectations In Language Classrooms**

#### **2.3.1. Cultural Differences And Students Participation**

Cultural differences in students' classrooms have been subject to a large investigation. For instance, Sato (1982) has studied this question in two university ESL classes. Her main concern was with the different turn-taking styles of Asians and non Asians learners. The variable which has received much attention was the number of self-selected turns ,i.e., the students'initiated turns which were not dependent on prior solicits. The result was that Asians as a group (Chinese, Japanese, and Korean) use a pattern of bidding for turns instead of speaking out only ( 38% turns were bid for Asians VS 18% by non-Asians), i.e., 38% of Asian learners are dependent on prior solicits while only 18% of non-Asians are not so. Thus in these classes, expectations of Asian students for appropriate turn-taking procedures can deny their possibilities for maintaining input.

Allwright and Bailey (1991-op.cit) pointed out the fact that some students are very competent in the T.L, yet they are reluctant to participate because they prefer to avoid the fact of standing out from the rest of the class or because they do not want to make the same errors for fear of any criticism. Such a phenomenon has been recorded in many Chinese classes

where the cultural value of modesty is strengthened. Therefore, what teachers need to be sensitive to, is an awareness of the cultural background of learners.

### **2.3.2. Students And Teachers Classroom Expectations**

Students come to classrooms with various cultural expectations concerning the lesson, the teacher, and to what is normal for a learning setting. In a F.L class, these perspectives stem primarily from invisible assumptions embedded in the cultural background of participants, i.e., teachers and learners whose cultural and educational experiences originate both from the socialization patterns of early childhood and from key stages in education. These expectations, as Nolasco.R and L.Arthur have claimed (1988:38), include : “cultural transmission, previous experience of learning and teaching, and ideas as to the status of English”.

Societies have different views and concepts about the teacher’s role, the learner’s position in class, the appropriate ways of learning, the lessons’ content, the way of speaking with teachers and dealing with learners problems, views about foreign language learning and strategies to success ...etc. In some societies, success in all the domains of life including F.L learning seem to be ordained by God. So, if learners come to classrooms with such fatalistic views, the teachers’ role is to encourage them to invest their hidden linguistic and cognitive potential. Other learners may come to classrooms with some prejudices about the T.L and even the T.L society . Hence, their cultural orientation could be an impeding factor to successful language learning. In this respect Fairclough (1992:06) says: “ language use reflects culture and it is impossible to disassociate the two in any real sense.”

So, if the student’s view of the world of foreign languages is negative or if his general world view is challenged by the foreign language lesson , the skill of the teacher is to ensure that it is not going to undermine his own view about his native language and culture. In other words, cultural confrontation should be alleged and teachers should keep an eye over the possibility of learners’ resort to defensive mechanisms of rejecting the F.L being learnt. Cummins( 1996 ) suggested a solution to this problem which he called additive approach to learning a foreign language. He claimed that learners should understand that they are not loosing their own language and culture , they are rather adding another knowledge and ability of a new language, the language teacher should look out as he added “ for ways of promoting positive feelings toward the L2 culture.”

Perspectives about the teachers' role also vary from one society to another. In many places of the World, the teacher is seen as the dominator, his knowledge is transmitted to learners and no place for communicative patterns is left whereas in other areas, learners acquire knowledge in an open field of verbal expression, innovation, creativity and active participation. These two views highlight the meaning of education as cultural transmission or as creativity and social change. The former is related to societies emphasizing solidarity, continuity, and group identity while the latter is associated with Western societies which put focus upon individualism, and personal experience. Indeed, both aspects receive a deal of consideration in all the world cultures but with different degrees of attention and thus the growing of several expectations which might influence ideas about teaching and learning.

What is prevalent in schools and especially in foreign language classes is the fact that learners seldom talk and it is the teacher who initiates conversation most of the time. But what is more drastic is that many learners might have been socialized in such roles at a very early age in classrooms interaction, at primary levels and even at the very early days of child-rearing practices especially in authoritative homes. If teachers expect learners to initiate conversation, to use their linguistic ability without being afraid of remarks and comments, they would rather take account firstly of how to socialize them into these styles which they probably lack. The learners' voice is not likely to be heard frequently especially that they will use a new medium of expression and more importantly that they cannot do so because factors of courtesy, respect to the teacher are engendered in their character and are part of the reasons underlying their reluctance to participation. Teachers, therefore, should be aware of the learners' cultural and educational backgrounds by improving their own cross-cultural skills.

## **2.4. Conclusion**

Success or failure in F.L learning depend on a host of factors and since the individual learner is part of a social group, his attitudes, motivation, personality and learning styles cannot escape the influence of the socio-cultural powers surrounding him. At home, in the neighbourhood and at school, the impact of these social institutions upon the learners' attainment is inevitable. This is so because as a social being, the learner acts in the light of the socio-cultural backing transmitted over to him under the form of speech acts, social roles, views and attitudes. Therefore, the learner may come to school with positive attitudes that heighten his motivation to learn English because the society in which he has been socialized is socially and culturally open over other cultures, it accepts the other and strengthens the importance of keeping and developing its own culture and language as well. There is no fear from being influenced by the cultural models embodied in the F.L being learnt and there is no kind of belittling it either. Seen in this light, learners come to classrooms with more immersion and empathy and more importantly with less anxiety. The latter is not only a stage fright but can be rooted back to the early days of socialization and continues to later stages of school life. So as a personality trait, the family as well as the surrounding environment play a considerable role in diminishing this anxiety which though psychological in nature, is under a heavy impact of social and cultural constraints. Hence, what a language class expects of its learners, is strongly related to how much positively a society prepares its individuals to answer these expectations. Efforts, therefore, should take a new direction, for instead of being overwhelmed by the idea of finishing the programmes, teachers should shift their attention to the deep reasons that keep their learners' attainment low especially in rural areas where the living and learning conditions are extremely hard. In one word, success factors in foreign language learning should be looked at from a new vantage, that is of, the social and cultural conditions surrounding not only the learning task as such but the learners' daily life as a whole.



## CHAPTER THREE

### Analysis of the questionnaire for pupils

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This questionnaire is designed first to investigate the social background of the pupils living in Ibn\_Ziad, Hamma\_Bouziane and Ain\_Karma, three villages situated some kms far from Constantine. Second, it also attempts to investigate the cultural values which the pupils have accumulated in their homes, in the neighbouring and school. Our attempt, therefore, is to shed light on the way these pupils might react to questions of education especially the English language and thus how good or bad they would do in it with regard to the social and cultural milieu(s) surrounding them.

#### **3.2. Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is devised to get a preliminary information about the pupils themselves, their parents' education and occupation, their viewpoints about learning English as a foreign language, their interests and expectations in addition to some information concerning their homes and school environment. The questionnaire consists of six sections with 34 questions requiring answers with yes/no or picking up the appropriate answer from a series of options, or open questions asking the subjects to give their opinion or to explain their choice.

##### **3.2.1 Section One: Background Information (Q1-Q7)**

In this section, the pupils are asked to indicate their sex ( Q1), and to specify the stream in which they are studying (Q2). In (Q3), they are required to specify how long they have been studying English and to describe their level of attainment in English in (Q4). After that, they are asked to give their parents educational background in (Q5) and (Q6). Finally, they are asked to state their parents' occupation in (Q7).

##### **3.2.2. Section Two: The Pupils' Viewpoints about English as a Foreign Language. (Q8- Q15)**

In this section, pupils are asked if they consider the learning of English very Important, important or not important at all (Q8) and to identify the reasons which lie beyond their learning of English by selecting their answers from a set of options (Q9). In (Q10), they are required to say whether they like the company of people who are interested in learning English or not and to say why if they answered negatively (Q11). In (Q12), they are asked to say whether in their peer group, there is the idea that learning English is a girls' subject or not and to explain why in case



they answered positively (Q13). Then, they are required to display whether the learning of English threatens their sense of identity (Q14) and to say why if they choose the positive answer (Q15).

### **3.2.3. Section Three: Pupils' Interests and Expectations (Q16-Q20).**

In this section, pupils are required to say whether education is important in one's life career or not (Q16) and to say why in case they choose the negative answer (Q17). In the following question (Q18), they are asked about their leisure time and how they pass it by selecting the appropriate answer from a set of options given before hand. Then, they are required to specify the language they often read through and how they get books, in questions (19) and (20) respectively.

### **3.2.4. Section Four: Home Environment and the Climate of Home-Opinion (Q21-Q27)**

In this section, pupils are asked whether in their families, there are people who know at least one foreign language or not (Q21) and to specify the languages used in communication at home by choosing the appropriate answer from a series of options given before hand (Q22).

In (Q23), they are required to identify the topics they often discuss with their parents and how often they talk in the presence of adults (Q24).

In (Q25), pupils are invited to speak about their parents' authority by specifying whether they have ever obliged them to do something they do not like or not and to state if their parents read novels, magazines, newspapers, other literature or none in (Q26). In (Q27) pupils are queried about the home conditions with regard to school work, whether they are interrupted by the lack of desks, books, or any other kind of interruption like children and TV sets.

### **3.2.5. Section Five: Parental Encouragement and Contact with the School (Q28-30)**

In this section, pupils are asked about their parents, whether they encourage the notion of individuality, personal decision-making, the learning of foreign languages and educability or any other notion (Q28). Then, they are required to state, whether their parents are in constant contact with the school or not (Q29). In the last question of this section, pupils are inquired about the issue of failure at school, and what is the reaction of their parents by saying whether they discuss the reasons of failure with them, with the school staff, ignore it thoroughly or behave in other ways (Q30).

### **3.2.6. Section Six : Classroom Environment (Q31. Q34)**

In this section, pupils are queried about whether their classrooms are over-crowded, semi-crowded or not crowded at all (Q31). Then, they are asked to state whether they ask their teacher

whenever they encounter difficulties (Q32) and to say why if they adhere to the negative answer and this is to be done by making a selection from the options given before hand (Q33). In (Q34), they are asked about the atmosphere that reigns in the English language class whether it is friendly, frustrating, boring or neutral.

### **3.3. Administration of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire was handed out to one hundred and eighty (180) pupils of 'Terminal Classes' (3AS) belonging to different streams: scientific, literary and exact sciences. All the pupils belong to the secondary school of Ibn-Ziad, a village situated 20 kms west of constantine. It is worthy to mention that this school does not only teach pupils from the main village but also those who come from other villages like Ain-Karma, Ben-Ashour, El-Melha and Farellah. The other subjects inquired belong to the secondary school of Hamma-bouziane a village situated some 07 Kms East of constantine. The questionnaire was answered in the presence of the researcher who took on his onus the responsibility of explaining the aim of the questionnaire as well as the questions so as to help the pupils understand and give appropriate answers.

It all took place in a vivid and friendly atmosphere with the researcher's main focus on drawing the pupils' attention to the fact of answering objectively and honestly. We really owe these pupils and feel thankful to the comprehension and co-operation they have showed to the point that we really sensed the efforts they have strived to avoid biased answers. In view of this fact, many of them insisted many times on repeating the explanation of some questions and even resorted to Arabic or French for more elucidation. A fact which one could not escape from in such circumstances and thus would feel rather compelled to mention for scientific honesty, i.e. , the pupils' resort to either French or Arabic as a means of understanding or answering.

### 3.4. Analysis of the results

#### 3.41. Section one: Background information

Q1 : Specify whether you are:

- Female.
- Male.

Sex	Nb.of pupils	%
Feminine	139	77.22
Masculine	41	22.77
Total	180	100

**Table 1: Pupils`sex**

The great majority of the population investigated is composed of girls (77.22%), an unescapable fact of a society where women constitute half the population or more, and a landmark of the social changes, which have occurred in the Algerian society from independence onwards. The education of girls has become, therefore, an initial priority of all the families even those living in the so-called rural areas where the mentality of people tend to favour the teaching of boys rather than girls. Only 22.77 % of the population investigated are boys. This certainly explains the overwhelming number of women interested in education mainly the learning of foreign languages, which is becoming a mark of prestige in the feminine world.

Q2: In which stream are you studying?

- a- Exact sciences.
- b- Scientific.
- c- Literary.
- d- Technical.
- e- Any other stream (please specify).....

Stream	Nb.of pupils	%
Literary	54	30
Scientific	109	60.55
Exact sciences	17	09.44
Total	180	100

**Table 2: Pupils` stream of study**

The majority of pupils (60.55%) belong to the scientific stream to which good pupils are generally oriented. As the Algerian educational system is based on selection, the pupils who get a mark from 12 to 14 are oriented to the scientific stream, while those who get more than 14 are oriented to exact sciences. Pupils who obtain 11-10 downwards to 8 tend to be oriented to literary streams whatever their level of achievement and whatever their interests. This fact has given rise to injustice and social prejudice for all those belonging to literary classes are disregarded by all the community even by the teachers and are often claimed to be unable to learn anything but to create problems and troubles.

This category of pupils constitutes 30% of the population investigated which is a quite interesting number if compared with that of exact sciences 09.44%. Normally, literary classes are more likely to benefit from English courses, for the time allotted to them is larger than that of other streams. However, these classes are belittled by a large proportion of the society whose ideas have been already shaped by the views of the teachers and the educational system which has itself created a solid foundation for the emergence of such social behaviours through the recommendations it made upon orientation, i.e., good pupils oriented for high-ranking streams such as the scientific ones and poor-level pupils for low-ranking streams such as the literary ones.

In so doing, pupils would suffer enormously from these social prejudices, which might put them at a position that hinders their general school attainment including English whatever the underlying capacities they might have. In other words, the streaming of classes is an impeding factor not only for literary classes but also for the other streams in that English receives little consideration by the pupils whose effort are focused upon other subject matters like mathematics, physics, philosophy, and so on.

Again, the educational system with all its regulations and conventions puts English at a lowest rank with a coefficient of two for almost all the classes including the literary ones and this contributes to the implementation of many social views and attitudes that consider English unimportant and hence, not worthy of interest and hard work, for many pupils pass the bac exam with 2/20 in English, so, why bother about it ?

**Q3:** How long have you been studying English?

Years	Nb. of pupils	%
5	96	53.33
6	69	38.33
7	15	08.33
Total	180	100%

**Table 3: Number of years of instruction in English**

Pupils attending the terminal classes should have been enrolled in English courses for five years from 8 AF to 3AS as the Algerian educational system has put it. Among the population inquired, 53.33% have benefitted from five years of English instruction. Whereas 38.33% and 08.33% have completed six and seven years respectively which means that these pupils must have repeated the bac exam once and twice; and thus would have made more profit from additional courses in English though this might also be an indication of their poor educational level in general and in English in particular.

**Q 4:** Is your English attainment:

- a- Good ?
- b- Average ?
- c- Low ?

Attainment	Nb.of pupils	%
Good	30	16.66
Average	65	36.11
Low	85	47.22
Total	180	100

**Table 4: pupils' English attainment.**

Pupils can specify their level of attainment in English via the marks they obtain in quizzes, tests and exams. In our case, only 16.66% claim to have a good English attainment, 36.11% average and 47.22% poor.

**Q 5:** What is your father’s educational background?

- a- University.
- b- Secondary.
- c- Intermediate.
- d- Primary
- e- None.

Educational background	Nb. Of pupils	%
University	07	03.88
Secondary	20	11.11
Intermediate	08	04.44
Primary	53	29.44
None	92	51.11
Total	180	100

**Table 5: Fathers’ educational background.**

The educational background of the pupils’ fathers varies considerably from university to secondary, from inter-mediate to primary and displays a high percentage for those having no educational level. As the table above indicates , fathers with a university degree constitute the lowest rate 03.88% which is a quite reasonable percentage in areas where life is crucially difficult except for those who have scrambled over the obstacles of poverty and deprivation which have unfortunately continued even after independence.

Many rural areas, including the ones investigated have continued to live in very harsh conditions beyond any kind of social or economic change. Secondary schools, for instance, were only built in 1990 and 1995 in Hamma-Bouziane and Ibn-Ziad respectively. Whereas pupils of Ain-Kerma and other districts still travel to pursue their studies either in Hamma or Ibn-Ziad and a great majority of them have been forced to leave schools because of such difficult living

conditions. If this is the case of today's children, their parents' level of education is far more critical. Only 11.11% of the pupils' fathers have attended secondary schools while 04.44% and 29.44% have intermediate and primary levels respectively. Fathers without any educational qualification constitute half the population investigated (51.11%), a number that reflects better the situation of education in general in these rural areas including the surrounding districts where life is far more rigorous. This would undoubtedly have pervasive effects upon the pupils' school attainment.

**Q6:** what is your mother's educational background ?

- a- University.
- b- Secondary.
- c- Intermediate.
- d- Primary.
- e- None.

Level of education	Nb. Of pupils	%
University	02	01.11
Secondary	15	08.33
Intermediate	11	06.11
Primary	19	10.55
None	133	73.88
Total	180	100

**Table 6: Mothers' educational background**

Only 01.11% of the pupils' mothers have a university degree, 08.33% secondary, 06.11% intermediate and 10.55% have a primary level, the remaining number (73.88%) have no educational qualification. Seen in this light, the great majority of mothers is illiterate and must have therefore a negative influence on the pupils' general academic attainment especially if we take into consideration the fact that mothers are generally said to be closer to their children and are more influential than fathers, who in an Algerian society usually believe that children's education is the "mothers' burden" or "the mothers' own business"!



**Q 7:** What is your parents' occupation?

- a- Father's occupation.....
- b- Mother s'occupation.....

According to the various numbers of answers given to part -a- of this question, we have classified the occupations of fathers first as follows:

- a1- Technicians and engineers holding a university degree.
- a2- Headmasters and teachers in both primary and secondary schools as well as pedagogic advisors.
- a3- Public services (clerks, nurses, policemen, and employees in administration).
- a4- Factory workmen.
- a5- Tradesmen.
- a6- Handicraftsmen (painters, carpenters, builders, mechanics and blacksmiths).
- a7- Car drivers.
- a8- Farmers.
- a9- Jobless.
- a10- Dead or retired.

Occupations	Nb.of occupations	%
a.1	07	03.88
a.2	13	07.22
a.3	04	02.22
a.4	30	16.66
a.5	13	07.22
a.6	15	08.33
a.7	16	08.88
a.8	04	02.22
a.9	18	10
a.10	60	33.33
Total	180	100

**Table 07: Fathers' occupation.**

Fathers' occupation as displayed on the table above, vary considerably from the highest ranking professions such as technicians and engineers (03.88%), to the middle ranking ones like teachers, headmasters and pedagogic advisors (07.22%), to workers in the public services (02.22) including clerks, nurses, policemen and so forth. However, at the first glance, one can notice that the highest score (33.33%) is that of retired or dead fathers; a number which reveals the socio-economic situation of many Algerian families and thus the children's low outcomes at schools. Then, comes factory workers (16.66%) whose low incomes do nothing in front of the high expensive living costs. The remaining occupations consist of free activities such as car drivers (08.88%), tradesmen (07.66%), handicraftsmen (08.33%) including painters, carpenters, blacksmiths, mechanics and so on. Farmers, however, have surprisingly scored a very low percentage (02.22%) in two areas where agriculture is said to be the most important activity. Yet, this can be attributed to the excessive use of fertile lands in the construction of houses as it is the case in Ibn-Ziad and the destruction of agricultural lands by cement and chemical processes as it is the case in Hamma-Bouziane. The remaining 10% represent jobless fathers and thus brings to surface the difficult socio-economic conditions surrounding the pupils' learning. All these professions and lack of jobs as well are an indication about the socio-linguistic profile and the socio-economic situation of these rural areas and therefore point out to how these jobs and lack of jobs combine to influence the pupils' educational attainment particularly in English.

As far as part- b- of the question is concerned, the number and quality of mothers' occupation are not as various as that of fathers; all the professions mentioned by the pupils are classified as follows:

b1- Teacher in primary and secondary schools, nurses and pedagogic advisors.

b2- Jobless.

Occupations	b1	b2	Total
Nb. of occupations	11	169	180
Percentage %	06.11	93.88	100

**Table 8: Mothers' occupation**

In areas like the ones we are investigating, mothers tend to be inactive for the reasons we mentioned earlier. 73.88% are illiterate (Table 06), hence, the score of active mothers is very limited for only 06.11% are teachers, headmasters and pedagogic advisors in both primary and secondary schools while 93.88% are house wives. This is inevitable in a society which, in spite of the new trends of modern life and the numerous attempts to educate women, still believes in the superiority of men and the idea that women's best place is the home. In view of this fact, women's interests and world views have become more and more restricted to the house activities, gossiping and other futilities at the expense of their children's education and even their own. This is stated by some pupils while answering (Q27) where many girls claimed that their mothers oblige them to share the responsibilities of washing and cooking though they have exams or home work.

The situation of mothers in this case coincides with the work of Susan Harding in her research on the socio-linguistic sub-cultures in rural Spain (1975). In these areas, the division of labour is very similar to our case study, for the majority of women were involved in a network of personal relation that have made them very keen at different modes of communication such as: gossiping, information-gathering through techniques of prying and second-guessing of thoughts commonly known as 'women's intuition'. Susan concluded her research work with the fact that the different social experiences of both men and women may lead them to the development of different communicative cultures which as Gumperz (1981) has claimed reflect the social identity of many people. This would inevitably exert an impact on the children's overall behaviour, including the school achievement bearing in mind that mothers, as it is in our case, are closer to children than any body else at home because of the social norms that put them at the heart of the 'educational responsibility'.

In addition to this, the lack of an educational experience on the part of mothers is likely to complicate matters, which means that 73.88% might ignore the requirements school makes upon the learners. In other words, the lack of academic culture on the part of parents in general and mothers in particular would certainly lead to confounding school results and make the pupils' task more difficult as they will find themselves deprived of any educational help at home.

### 3.4.2. Section two: Pupils' viewpoints about learning English as a foreign language

**Q 8:** Do you consider the learning of English:

- a- Very important?
- b- Important?
- c- Not important?

Pupils' viewpoints	Nb. of pupils	%
Very important	85	47.22
Important	40	22.22
Not important	55	30.55
Total	180	100

**Table 09: pupils' view points about learning English.**

47.22% of the population investigated consider the learning of English very important, 22.22% important whereas 30.55% regard it as not important. Combined with (a) and (b), 69.44% reveal a quite interesting score which reflects the pupils' awareness about the importance of English in areas often labelled as disadvantaged and known with low educational outcomes. This leads us to say that if provided with the lacking conditions such as the education of parents, good material conditions at homes and schools, and a rich cultural environment, pupils would be able to change the situation into a successful one.

**Q 09:** Are you learning English because:

- a- English is the language of science and technology?
- b- English helps you know about other people's culture?
- c- English is necessary to get a future job?
- d- English helps you in your future studies?
- e- English is part of the school program?
- f- Other reason (please specify).....

Reasons for learning English	Nb. of pupils	%
a	17	09.44
b	10	05.55
c	16	08.88
d	28	15.55
e	47	26.11
f	26	14.44
a + d	36	20
Total	180	100

**Table 10: pupils' reasons for learning English**

As shown in the table above, 26.11% of the whole population have no reason in mind to learn English but the compulsory fact that it is part of the school program (e). This means that the motivational intent of these pupils stems from a social pressure that is of the educational institution and not from a personal desire. This can be due to the lack of a motivational environment, which energises the pupils' behaviour towards the learning of English. Hence, the absence of a strong motivating factor may undoubtedly reduce the pupils' attainment in English. 09.44% of the pupils think that they are learning English because it is a language of science and technology (a).

15.55% state that their reason lies in the fact that English helps them in their future studies (d). These reasons (a+d) are chosen in combination by 20% of the population investigated; a number which reveals the pupils' awareness about the importance of English as a means of getting current information in all the scientific domains. This percentage becomes larger when 06.66% claim that they are learning English in order to know more about new inventions and research studies as many of them are published in English (f.1).

All these reasons (a+d, f.1, a, d) = (51.65%) reveal an instrumental motivation which, though considered important in urging the learners to get good results, is unable to account for a better achievement especially in a third world country like Algeria, where English is trying hardly to set itself as a strong alternative to French whose social position is far stronger because of many cultural and historical considerations.

Only 05.55% say that they are learning English because it helps them know about the culture of other people (b) which means that the majority of the pupils lack the integrative motivational desire to learn a F.L. This can be attributed again to the learners' restricted access to sources of motivational props such as parental encouragement to learning foreign languages, the poor surrounding cultural atmosphere which seldom prompts open-mindedness toward other cultures and the whole process of socialization which rarely entails in the children interest about others' beliefs. This can be attributed to the underlying feeling of anomy; the fear from loosing one's culture. So, being caught in a state of anomie, not caring about or belittling others' cultures can put the pupils at a disadvantage to benefit from an integrative motivation which stems from one's personality and tends to be more lasting and more effective in fostering interest and achievement as well. 08.88 % think that they are learning English because it helps then find a job (c). Once again, these pupils are instrumentally motivated and thus are at a critical position for they may or may not do well in English, because their reason is related to a long-term objective which can vanish on its route of fulfilment. But one should be careful, for teaching is becoming a source of securing ones' future and therefore a strong motivational factor especially for girls. The remaining 14.44% of the pupils suggest other reasons which are classified as follows:

f1- I am learning English in order to benefit from the knowledge of other people, in the field of science and technology.

f2- I am learning English because I am fond of learning foreign languages

f3- I am learning English because the English teacher makes me love it.

Other reasons	Nb. Of pupils	%
9.f.1	12	46.15
9.f.2	04	15.38
9.f.3	10	38.46
Total	26	100

**Table 11: Reasons suggested by pupils for learning English**

Again, The pupils' reasons for learning convert with those stated previously in (a) in that 46.15% claim that their reason stems from the importance of English at the international arena as a language of science and technology. 15.38% state that their motive stems from a personal interest in learning foreign languages. Whereas, 38.46% ascribe it to the role of their English teachers who have created in them such an interest. This highlights the importance of the school as a social setting and its role in developing more effective attitudes and raising the pupils' interests. Now, let us investigate these reasons with regard to the whole population:

f.1 Constitutes 06.66% of the whole population, f.2 constitutes 02.22 % whereas f.3 constitutes 05.55 %.

The conclusion which can be drawn from the pupils' answers is that 86.64 % are instrumentally motivated (options a, d, a+d, f.1, c, e). The first four options (a, d, a+d, f.1) which constitute 51.65 % of the whole population investigated, all meet in one reason that is of the importance of English as a means of getting current knowledge either for future studies or for general aims as it is the language of science and technology. In this respect, one could echo Halliday (1978) when he speaks about language as a social potential, for if English has not established itself in such a position at the universal scale with a great potential of reporting, analysing, describing ...etc; social groups all over the world, we would not be interested in it with such a degree as it is the case for other languages .

It is the social reality of English as a world language that has arisen in the pupils such a desire to learn it. Thus, a percentage of 51.65 % explains better the underlying meaning of the importance of English, which the pupils have spoken about in (Q9). However, this reason reveals long-term objectives which though important do not necessarily help the pupils to reach a good attainment. It reflects, rather, the ideal picture which they might have in mind about English .The 07.77 %= (b+f2) who are integratively motivated are more likely to learn English because their

motivation is rooted in a strong personality whose aims do not stretch over a specific period of time but are more lasting since they are characterised by willingness, open-mindedness, persistence, whatever the difficulties they might encounter. This is a very limited number if compared with the previous results (51.65%) and even with those who claim to learn English to get a future job (08.88%) or those who do so because it is part of the curriculum ( 26.11%) with a total of 34.99% = (c+e) and a total of 51.65% (options a+d, a, d). The pupils' lack of integrative motivation and even a strong instrumental one can be attributed to the lack of a



motivational environment which provides stronger reasons that enhance the learners to improve their attainment.

**Q10:** Do you like the company of people who are interested in learning English?

a- Yes

b- No

	Nb. Of pupils	%
Yes	106	58.88
No	74	41.11
Total	180	100

**Table 12: pupils' interest in the company of  
People who learn English**

58.88% declare that they like the company of people who are interested in learning English, whereas 41.11% confirm the opposite which means that half the population or more is aware of the sources and ways of getting additional information to improve their level of proficiency.

**Q11:** Whatever the answer, say why.

The pupils who like the company of people interested in learning English have given the following reasons, which we have classified as follows:

	Reasons	Nb. of pupils	%
11.a.1	I like the company of people interested in learning English in order to learn more about this language so that I improve my school results.	30	28.30
11.a.2	I like the company of people interested in learning English because I love this language and I find pleasure in learning it with these people who give me an opportunity to talk freely without the class room constraints.	18	16.98
11.a.3	I like the company of people interested in learning English in order to learn from them anything that helps me pass the English exams.	22	20.75
11.a.4	I like the company of people interested in learning English because this language is a mark of prestige and strong personality.	14	13.20
11.a.5	I like such a company to practise my oral English far from the teachers' control and avoid problems of communication when I travel abroad.	10	09.43
11.a.6	No answer	12	11.32
	Total	106	100

**Table 13: Pupils' reasons for liking the company of people interested in learning English.**

58.88% of the pupils who have answered the previous question positively think that they like the company of people interested in learning English because:

28.30% think that this companionship is important in that it helps them learn more about the English language and thus enables them to improve their school results (11.a.1). In parallel with this, 20.75% claim that they do so in order to learn from these people anything that helps them pass the English exams (11.a.3). A total of 49.05% reasons (11.a.1, 11.a.3) coincides better with the previous answers to Q09 where pupils seem to be instrumentally motivated.

Only 09.43% state that they like the company of people who are interested in learning English in order to practise their oral English and avoid problems of communication when they travel

abroad (11.a.5) while 16.98% do so because they like English and find pleasure in learning it with these people who provide them with opportunities to talk freely beyond any kind of embarrassment which they often meet at the classroom (11.a.2). The remaining (13.20%) state the reason of prestige and the strength of personality, which those people have and thus would accompany them to acquire a stronger personality and to gain a prestigious status (11.a.4). 11.32% of the pupils have abstained.

All these reasons can be categorized as follows :

First, the need to get good results in English exams (11.a.1, 11.a.3), which is the highest proportion (49.05%). Second, the need to improve one's oral proficiency far from the school constraints mainly anxiety (26.31%) in options (11.a.2, and 11.a.5).

Third, the need to gain a prestigious social status (13.20%) in (11.a.4).

The first category stands at the heart of all the reasons mentioned, which, in spite of the fact of giving a sight about the pupils' endeavour to improve their level, is not sufficient at all, especially if one knows that the status of English among the other subjects of the school program is not strong enough. In other words, a coefficient of 2 for almost all the streams does not invite the pupils to strive efforts as those striven in mathematics, physics, philosophy and so on. Many of them have passed the baccalaureate exam regardless of the results obtained in English, pupils with 3/20 have succeeded without any problem. So, who is to blame? Unhesitatingly, it is the educational policy which solves the pupils' maze since it is always there to compensate for their weakness in English! The other curriculum subjects which have higher coefficients would do it easily. So, why do we expect pupils to work more if the educational institution itself contributes in hindering the pupils' attainment consciously the same way the family having a poor educational experience does unconsciously!

The pupils who answered the same question(Q11) negatively (41.11%) have given the following reasons grouped under b:

	Reasons	Nb. of Pupils	%
11.b.1	Because I don't understand English and I feel more embarrassed in front of people who master it very well	25	33.78
11.b.2	I don't like these people because they tend to show off more than any one else.	13	17.56
11.b.3	Because these people have Western ideas and thoughts that might influence my personality negatively	16	21.62
11.b.4	Because I am not interested in learning English, my favourite language is Arabic.	11	14.86
11.b.5	No answer	09	12.16
	Total	74	100

**Table 14: Pupils' reasons for not liking the company of people interested in learning English.**

33.78% of those who answered negatively question (11) have justified their position by the reason that they do not understand English and feel embarrassed in front of people who are more knowledgeable than them. This can be due to the feeling of anxiety, which one may have when he/she is not proficient in the language being spoken or to some personal traits such as shyness, lack of confidence in ones' capacities and introversion which the child develops from early childhood through the process of socialization.

17.56% have selected the negative answer in that they do not like the company of people who are interested in learning English because they tend to show off too much. This is a reflection of some of the ideas which have appeared in our society especially in rural areas where the use of a foreign language is a strange matter whatever the intention of the speaker ,i.e., if a person is interested in learning a F.L and tries to use it in his|her daily speech only for the sake of practice,he|she will be directly condemned of showing off ! Such social behaviours are a result of ignorance which gives rise to negative attitudes and demotivates the young learners from improving their attainment in English if not kill in them any initiative to learn it.

The situation is far more complicated when 21.62% claim that they avoid the companionship of people interested in learning English, because these people have Western ideas and thoughts and thus would have a negative impact on the personality of others. This coincides with question (09) where only 05,55% state that they learn English to know about other peoples' culture.

14,86% state frankly that they are not interested in learning English at all and that Arabic is their favourite language and that is why they do not like the company of people interested in learning English. In fact, learning English does not prevent any one from keeping his native language and preferring Arabic is not a barrier towards learning English. Instead it is the lack of encouragement from both the home and the society which bears this load, i.e., the responsibility of fostering these negative social and cultural views which stand as a solid block towards establishing a healthy environment that accounts for effective learning of foreign languages mainly English.

12,16% of the pupils have abstained from answering the question.

**Q12:** Is there in your peer group the idea that learning English is a girls' subject?

-yes

-No

	Nb.of pupils	%
Yes	50	27.77
No	130	72.22
Total	180	100

**Table15:Pupils' views about considering the learning of English as a girls' subject**

Only 27.77% confirm that in their peer groups, there are friends who consider the learning of English as a girls' subject while 72.22% deny the existence of such an idea. In fact, this is a surprising score if we take into consideration the conditions of life in rural areas and the reigning social views that draws a strong line between what is feminine and what is masculine.

Many studies have shown that the world of learning foreign languages is dominated by women whose interest in learning them does not only stem from a personal need but it is also rooted in their deep nature which many scientific studies have mentioned ,i.e., the fact that the left hemisphere in women manipulates better matters of language than in men . All this combined with the fact that the social views that attribute the learning of foreign languages to women extend to even the United States, compel us to say that the pupils have not grasped well the meaning of the question and thus have not answered it adequately.

**Q13:** if yes, say why.

The pupils who answered the previous question positively were required to justify their answer and, therefore, have given the following reasons, grouped under –a-:

	Reasons	Nb	%
13.a.1	Because women generally prefer to speak a foreign language more than men do.	12	24
13.a.2	Because boys laugh at girls when they try to speak in English or French outside the classroom.	05	10
13.a.3	Because girls are more interested in learning foreign languages.	15	30
13.a.4	Because girls are attracted by the Western culture which is embodied in foreign languages whose use is becoming a fashion among them, they speak in English or French to show off	10	20
13.a.5	Because English senses soft and softness is a mark of feminism which boys avoid.	04	08
13.a.6	No answer	04	08
	Total	50	100

**Table 16: Reasons given by pupils for considering English as a girls' subject.**

24% of those who answered (Q12) positively justify their position by the fact that women generally prefer to speak in a foreign language rather than men. This view is similarly shared by 30% of the pupils who say that learning English is a girls' subject because they are more interested in foreign languages than boys. Again, this is stated otherwise by 20% of the pupils who justify their view by the fact that girls are attracted by the Western culture which is embodied in foreign languages whose use among girls is becoming a fashion and a way of showing off (13.a.4).

Similarly, yet not explicitly stated, a proportion of 10% claim that it is so because boys laugh at girls when they speak in English or French. The remaining (08%) say that being considered as a girls' subject, boys avoid learning English because it is a 'soft' language and thus carries a feminine feature, that is of softness. The common feature of all these answers is the presence of women which shows clearly the particularity of these rural areas, though it is not typical to them, where the social roles of both men and women differ considerably even in the field of learning foreign languages. Such social behaviours are likely to hinder the learning process of English not only among girls but also among boys who may feel an affiliation towards English and thus would retain under the social pressure of peer groups.

**Q14:** Does the learning of English as a foreign language threaten your sense of identity?

-Yes

-No

	Nb. of pupils	%
Yes	55	30.55
No	125	69.44
Total	180	100

**Table 17: Pupils' view about the threat of English to their sense of identity**

The majority of the population inquired (69.44%) declare that learning English as a foreign language does not threaten their sense of identity whereas 30.55% claim the opposite, a number which, though not considerable in comparison with the former one, sheds light on some of the prevailing attitudes which may influence the others negatively.



According to the Algerian philosopher Malek Ben-Nabi (1980 ), the growth of social behaviours and ideas comes out of a continuous struggle whereby the negative idea can take a superior position over the positive one and thus paves the way to the appearance of more and more negative attitudes. That is to say, the more a social group adheres to a given idea and works hardly to implement it, the less opportunity is left to the other to survive even if it is a positive one, i.e., the criterion is for the stronger and not the quality.

Seen in this philosophical trend, the pupils who think that the learning of English as a F.L does not threaten their sense of identity, can be influenced by those who believe it to be so especially in areas where communication with the outside world is limited and the progress in the living conditions is too slow.

**Q15:** If yes, say why.

30.55% of the pupils who think that learning English threatens their sense of identity have given the following reasons grouped under –a-:

	Reasons	Nb. of pupils	%
15.a.1	Because we will know about a new culture which may influence our personality.	07	12.72
15.a.2	Because it paves the way to the appearance of Western ideas and ideologies.	17	30.90
15.a.3	Because it makes us forget our native culture.	02	03.36
15.a.4	Because many young learners are not mature enough, they are attracted by everything that comes from the U.S.A and imitate it blindly.	21	38.18
15.a.5	Because it is a new kind of colonisation; cultural colonisation and cultural invasion which the U.S.A is using instead of the traditional one.	08	14.54
Total		55	100

**Table 18: Pupils' reasons to why the learning of English threaten their sense of identity.**

Almost all the pupils who answered the previous question positively have given one common reason which is the learning of a new culture. 12.72% are afraid of being influenced negatively while learning English as any language carries in its words a social and cultural identity. 30.90% think that such learning threatens their sense of identity because it paves the way to the appearance of Western ideologies. In a similar way, though expressed differently, 03.36% think that learning English makes them forget their native culture, and 38.18% believe that young learners are not mature enough to avoid the imitation of cultural models that come from the U.S.A.

Along the same lines, 14.54% assume that the learning of English is a threat to their identity because it is a new way of colonization or what they call cultural colonization and cultural invasion. Seen in this light, pupils are not ready to learn English and this proportion of pupils may well correspond to those in Q9 where 30.55% claimed that learning English is not important, and even corresponds better with the proportion of the pupils who in (Q11) avoid the companionship of people interested in learning English because the latter hold Western thoughts and views.

Apparently, it is the fear from a new culture that has arisen in the pupils such views. However, this can be interpreted in two ways. First, it can be due to the feeling of anomie or to the fact that these pupils are misled by an exaggerated zeal of keeping one's culture and resisting every thing coming from outside even the learning of a foreign language which is labelled as a new form of colonization. Indeed, these are mere prejudices and ethnocentric views conjured up by some social and historical considerations which view others as enemies and colonizers, or because of misinformation and ignorance about the real aims of learning foreign languages.

It is, therefore, worth recalling here, that it is the role of the family and the whole society especially the educational institution to draw a line in the sand, i.e., to broaden the cultural perception of children and elucidate the importance of foreign language learning, which in our case is almost inexistent! Parents as we have seen earlier are illiterate and are caught in grievous situations (low incomes, problem of housing,...etc.) which prevent them from looking at these issues, and secondary schools are recently built with a temporary staff that changes not only every year but even throughout the school year!

**3.4.3. Section three: Pupils' interests and future prospects.**

**Q16:** Do you think that education is important in one's life career?

-Yes

-No

	Nb.of pupils	%
Yes	115	63.88
No	65	36.11
Total	180	100

**Table 19: Pupils' view about the importance of education.**

The prosperity of any country depends on the level of education of its citizens and the scientific research conducted in its universities and centres of research. The importance of education for the development of any society is inevitable, a view which many people are aware of as it is the case in our investigation, for 63.88% claim that education is important in one's life career and thus for the whole country. On the contrary, 36.11% think that it is not important at all, a number which though smaller than the former gives an insight about the social changes happening at different levels. In other words, the degree of importance given to some cultural values and social convention is not stable in that it is determined in the economic conditions and the state of welfare in any society. This is deliberately displayed by the reasons given by the pupils in their answer to (Q17).

**Q17:** If no, say why.

	Reasons	Nb	%
17.a.1	Because in our country money is more important than education.	02	03.07
17.a.2	Because many educated people are marginalized and rich people are privileged even if they do not hold any diploma.	05	07.69
17.a.3	The quickest and easiest way to secure one's life is business and not education.	19	29.23
17.a.4	My father has very large lands of agriculture and I prefer working on farming rather than wasting time in schools and universities.	01	01.53
17.a.5	Many university graduates are jobless, I think education is a waste of time.	38	58.46
Total		65	100

**Table 20: Pupils' reasons for considering education unimportant in ones' life career.**

Money is the common factor that lies at the heart of all the reasons stated by the pupils to justify their negative answer to (Q16). So, according to 29.23%, education is not important in one's life career because business is the quickest and easiest way to secure a better future. Likewise, 58.46% perceive the matter from a socio-economic angle in that many university graduates are unemployed and even marginalized as 07.69% have declared in (17.a.2) while rich people are privileged though they have had no access to any educational experience. Again, this is stated overtly by 03.07% of the pupils who claim that in a society like ours money is more important than education, a view which is also shared by one pupil ( 1.53% ) who prefers to work on the agricultural lands that his father possesses rather than wasting time in schools and universities.

It is evident, therefore, that these views are solely due to a severe crisis which has played a crucial role in orienting the pupils' beliefs and adjusting them to the present needs of a materialistic society. Material determinism including the economic and social phases, is worthy to mention here, for social behaviours and cultural values can be determined by the material status which a society enjoys. In the light of these circumstances, one could not pretend and expect pupils to do well in English while the whole educational process is disregarded. In one word, peoples' attention is drawn by a dramatic situation which has put the focus on how to earn money to survive !

**Q18:** What do you do in your leisure time ?

- a- Read books.
- b- Watch films.
- c- Listen to songs.
- d- Go to internet centres.
- e- Sports.
- f- Any other activity ( please specify ).

Activities	Nb. of pupils	%
Read books	23	12.77
Watch films	75	41.66
Listen to songs	30	16.66
Go to internet centres	00	00
Sports	40	22.22
Other	12	06.65
Total	180	100

**Table 21: Pupils' activities in leisure time.**

How pupils spend their leisure time is an indicating factor about their interest, tendencies and even about how these activities relate to academic achievement mainly English. While reading books one can pass relaxing moment from which many benefits can be reaped such as developing the habit of reading, acquiring some reading strategies useful for the learning of any language or

simply broadening one's cultural perspective. More importantly and in a study from the pre-school stage right into the primary school, Davies.A (1982) stated that in a study of Wells (1975), children's attainment of literacy have been found to correlate with their parents habit of reading. This coincides deliberately with our case of study where only 12.77% pupils claim to read (Table18). The lack of a cultural home environment is likely to influence the pupils' orientation which seem to be captured by television, (41.66%), songs (16.66%) and sports (22.22%). In spite of the importance and the effectiveness of these activities (watching T.V, listening to songs) in the learning process of any foreign language mainly English, reading is almostly neglected despite the great importance it has with regard to literacy in general and F.L in particular. The remaining 06.66% have stated the following activities:

	Activities	Nb	%
18.f.1	Writing poems.	03	25
18.f.2	Helping my mother.	05	41.66
18.f.3	Drawing.	02	16.66
18.f.4	I speak to myself in English.	01	08.33
18.f.5	I watch the BBC World on T.V	01	08.33
Total		12	100

**Table 22: other activities mentioned by the pupils.**

The pupils who have not selected any of the options given to them but others in (Q18) have stated the following activities:

25% state that they write poems in their leisure time, while 16.66% draw and 41.66% help their mothers. The remaining two pupils say that they speak to themselves in English or watch the BBC World on TV with a percentage of 08.33% for each of them. These last two activities are very important to the learning of English but the number is too small to call for an effective impact ,i.e., 2 pupils out of 180.

**Q19 :** In which language do you often read ?

- a- Arabic.
- b- French.
- c- English.
- d- Any other language (please specify).

Languages	Nb.of pupils	%
Arabic	120	66.66
French	45	25.00
English	13	07.22
Other	02	01.11
Total	180	100

**Table 23: The language pupils often read through.**

The reading habit as we have mentioned earlier in (Q18) tells much about the cultural home environment on the one hand and it is also a prerequisite factor for the occurrence of effective language learning on the other. In this question, however, we are much more interested in the quality of the language used in reading and how it relates to the learning of English. Surprisingly, 66.66% of the pupils investigated declare to read in Arabic while only 12.77% state that they read in their leisure time. Yet, this percentage reveals the pupils' limited ability in foreign languages even in French which has scored only a minimum of 25.00% in spite of the strong social position it enjoys in the Algerian society. Only 07.22% read in English and 01.11% do so in German (Table20) which are very low rates in comparison with the whole population.

**Q20:** How do you get the books you read?

- a- You buy them yourself.
- b- You borrow them.
- c- You rely on what you find at home.
- d- Any other way (please specify).....



	Nb. of pupils	%
You buy them yourself.	20	11.11
You borrow them.	62	34.44
You rely on what you find at home.	98	54.44
Any other way.	00	00
Total	180	100

**Table 24: Pupils' ways of getting books.**

The way pupils get books can tell us about how active or passive they are in their daily attempts to enrich their knowledge and develop their mental abilities. Among the population investigated 45.55% (a+b) rely on themselves in getting books either by buying or borrowing them. These learners seem to be more active than the 54.44% of those who rely on what they find at home bearing in mind that they come from families where the majority of parents are illiterate (Q5 and Q6) and thus the availability of books at homes can be limited. All these findings cast doubt on the percentage of pupils (54.44%) who say that they rely on what is available at home as far as books are concerned especially that they are surrounded by a culturally impoverished environment. So, it is not exaggerating if one concludes that the pupils' interest in reading as such is tremendously missed in areas where people's concerns about life are guided by a set of social, cultural and economic conditions.

#### **3.4.4. Section four: Home environment and the climate of home opinion.**

**Q21:** Is there in your family people who know at least one foreign language?

-Yes.

-No.

	Nb. of pupils	%
Yes	103	57.22
No	77	42.77
Total	180	100

**Table 25: people who know at least one F.L in the pupils' families.**

Being reared up in a family where more than one language is known, is a conducive feature to efficient foreign language learning. One of the subjects interviewed by N. Naiman et.al.(1978) claimed that his bilingual upbringing gave him an insight into the nature of language and a general mental flexibility. He felt he had acquired a positive attitude towards languages. So, having members in the family with a command of at least one foreign language is likely to raise interest and foster positive attitudes towards language learning. In our investigation, 57.22% of the pupils inquired say that in their families, there are people who know one foreign language at least, a quite precious rate if compared with those who deny the presence of such people (42.77%).

Yet, knowing a language does not necessarily imply using it in daily communication or in writing. There are many social constraints which prevent people from putting this knowledge into practice especially in areas like the ones we have investigated and where communicating in a foreign language is usually misinterpreted and related to matters of showing off, feminine character or even to accusing people of holding Western ideologies (Q11,12,13,14). Hence, a number of 57.22% of pupils who claim that in their families there are persons who know at least one foreign language does not make too much sense for they will find themselves unable to benefit from these dormant capacities. Pupils' readiness to learn English, therefore, is under the mercy of a set of social and cultural views which exert a negative influence on their level of attainment. This is well demonstrated by 62.50% teachers who claim that negative attitudes throughout the whole society are among the most impeding factors to learning (Q11 ). This situation is going to be clarified better in the following question about the language frequently used in communication at home.

**Q22:** What are the languages you often communicate with at home?

- a- Standard Arabic.
- b- Dialectal Arabic.
- c- French
- d- English.
- e- Any other language (please specify).

Languages	N.b of pupils	%
Standard Arabic	00	00
Dialectal Arabic	168	93.33
French	12	06.66
English	00	00
Any other language	00	00
Total	180	100

**Table 26: The languages often used in communication at home.**

Exposure to more than one language at home or in the neighbourhood constitutes a stimulating cultural environment from which children benefit enormously especially if these languages are frequently used in communication. A great majority of the pupils (93.33%) say that communication at home is often realized through dialectal Arabic while a minority (06.66%) state that Standard Arabic is the language used in home interaction. So, in rural areas where people are said to be more conservative than anywhere else, communication is often done through the medium of dialectal Arabic even though many of them have access to another language as it is displayed in (Q21) but things seem to be governed by many social and cultural considerations as we have explained previously.

**23:** What kind of topics do you often discuss with your parents?

- a- your studies.
- b- Your personal problems.
- c- Scientific subjects.
- d- Any other subject (please specify).
- e- None.

Topics	Nb. of pupils	%
Your studies.	47	26.11
Your personal problems.	08	04.44
Scientific subjects.	10	05.55
Other subjects.	33	18.33
None.	82	45.55
Total	180	100

**Table 27: Topics often discussed with parents.**

Talking to children has been widely considered among the crucial factors in developing their linguistic and mental abilities as well as preparing them to school demands. In this respect, parental tasks extend vigorously along time to include broader topics which have a great bearing upon the children's personality development and academic progress. Societies as well as families vary markedly in the scope and nature of parents-children communication which is governed by a set of social and cultural values.

In areas investigated in this study, communication seems to be very limited in that 45.55% of the pupils state that they do not communicate with parents at all; one pupil has stated: "I never talk to my father, I only obey his orders", whereas another has added "my father is always outside, I rarely meet him, and if I do, I will avoid talking to him because he is always nervous especially after having been fired from work". It is evident from these quotations that the socio-economic conditions as well as the cultural views stand as real barriers to communication between children and fathers. Parents especially fathers act like kings and nobody can talk in their presence or even say a word; sometimes it is because of the mentality that puts them at a superior position or merely because their minds are overwhelmed by the hard living conditions. So, whatever the reason here, it prevents them from fulfilling an important social role, that is, of being close to their children, knowing their preoccupations or simply exchanging views with them.

Among the topics discussed with parents, a minority 26.11% speak with parents about studies, 04.44% about personal problems and 05.55% about scientific topics. Again, the role of literacy is very obvious for the majority of fathers are illiterate (Q6).

The remaining pupils 18.33% state that they talk with their parents about the following topics which are given below and grouped under –d-,i.e., the free option.

	Topics	Nb	%
23.d.1	We speak about problems of farming.	02	06.06
23.d.2	We speak about family problems.	16	48.48
23.d.3	We of ten talk about weddings and the high expensive costs of these ceremonies .	15	45.45
Total		33	100

**Table 28: Other topics discussed between parents and children.**

Among the thirty three pupils who have given answers other than those given in (a,b,c: Q23), 06.06% claim that they discuss problems of farming with their parents, 48.48% state that they discuss family problems while 45.45% declare that they talk with their parents about weddings and the high expensive costs of these ceremonies, and this is stated by girls who seem more interested in such topics . Seemingly the pupils’ world view is somehow narrow in that it is restricted to traditional events like weddings and daily activities like farming ; it does not extend to include wider subjects whereby the child develops a decontextualized ability that enables him to answer effectively to the present sophisticated demands of the school in particular and that of a modern life in general . Topics of education or learning foreign Languages are not stated at all. Even the pupils’ interests are not mentioned in any of these communicative interactions ;a fact which reveals the status of communication at home and the nature of topics which are coloured by the specificities and particularities of social groups living in these rural areas .

**Q24 :** How often do you talk in the presence of adults ?.

- a-Frequently.
- b-Sometimes.
- c-Never.

Options	Nb. of pupils	%
Frequently	24	13.33
Sometimes	52	28.88
Never	104	57.77
Total	180	100

**Table 29: Pupils' frequency of talking in the presence of adults.**

The process of socialization differs from one culture to another. Many pupils came to school with different views and behaviours about what a classroom is , who speaks , what to speak , when to speak .etc. Having certain personality traits like courtesy and silence in the presence of elders mirrors the social identity of any individual in any social group.

Since cultures differ with respect to socialization and more particularly regarding language socialization, we can expect wide variation in cultural concepts, beliefs, attitudes and knowledge which learners bring with them to classrooms. What is of vital importance here, is the learners' beliefs, attitudes and expectations of language behaviour , language learning and use. Therefore, it is not startling at all if only 13.33 % of the population investigated claim to speak in the presence of adults, and 57.77 % never do so for in a rural society , people are too much demanding on matters of politeness and respect which result most of the time in a serene silence that though important may create many personality troubles. For example, pupils may develop an avoidance strategy as they are always told to avoid speaking, arguing, asking questions or expressing their views in the presence of elders. Meanwhile, no one can deny the importance of developing a sense of respect, but the question which one might raise here, is how does this personality feature influence the pupils' participation in the F.L classroom and thus affects their attainment as well? Expectations of a foreign language classroom are numerous and having such an avoidance feature in character may bring to surface traits of timidity which will do more harm to the learners' final outcome than good. Moreover, teachers are highly estimated and are often referred to as 'cheikh' , a term which is used traditionally to call teachers of the 'quran' and thus displays the great appreciated role attributed to teachers. This is far more demonstrated by a total of 28.88% who claim to speak in the presence of adults sometimes.

Pupils, as mentioned earlier, have not developed the habit of talking to elders especially with the teacher who is viewed as ideal and who as a teacher of English stands at a highest ideal position since he possesses what the pupils do not know. So, coming to school with an ideal view about the teacher may increase the pupils' resort to silence in a language classroom where active

participation is likely to lead to more understanding and more progress in attainment. In fact , there is an increasing recognition among teachers that teaching in rural areas is easily conducted compared to towns in terms of discipline problems but more difficult in terms of communication and participation in the classroom. For instance, activities requiring speaking to the teacher and demonstrating one's views or abilities in public are avoided by the pupils.

In rural schools, pupils rather immerse in a harsh silence whatever the teachers' attempts to involve them in language activities and to familiarize them with the situation (teachers' questionnaire: (Q20) ). So in spite of the fact that these personality traits are useful in a teaching-learning process , they turn to be more hindering in a language class which requires more extroversion , risk-taking and continuous practice to develop one's abilities and attainment .

**Q25:**Have your parents ever obliged you to do something you do not like ?

- Yes.

- No.

	Nb	%
Yes	92	51.11
No	88	48.88
Total	180	100

**Table 30: Parents' authority with children .**

In probing the importance of the home motivational environment to the school child , studies have gone beyond the scope of material facilities to include a greater consideration of value orientations and basic attitudes to notions of achievement, time, self-reliance, individualism, decision making and so on. The scope given to children to act and express their inner-self is oriented by many social constraints and cultural considerations which the family sets forth either explicitly or implicitly. We all know that from the very early practices of child rearing onwards , parents' speech varies between what is called " Do's and don'ts" which develop into a set of social behaviours and may result in more passivity than innovation, and creativity.

In a society like ours, especially in rural areas, one cannot wink the eye at many social practices, like the authority of elders which though disappearing, is still working. Children are not given the least proportion of freedom to work out their cognitive abilities and to explore the



world by themselves. Orders seem to be the keystone to all the problems encountered, a prevailing tradition which continues at school with the idealized position of the teacher who, most of the time, exerts a full control over the classes .

51.11% of the pupils declare that they have been obliged by their parents to do things they do not like and 48.88% claim the opposite. So, pupils without such an initiative to use their cognitive and decontextualized abilities to meet the cultural expectations of a foreign language class and to adjust to different learning situations will be at a great offensive. Successful language learning is unlikely to happen because of these authoritative social practices mainly the verbal ones which end into serious troubles . Robinson (1972) had found that low working class mothers use more commands than middle class mothers as they also tend to avoid answers to their children’s why questions. In doing so, knowledge about the world in general is not accumulated correctly and subjects like foreign language learning will suffer as well. There would be a great mismatch between the socio-cultural knowledge accumulated in passive ways and expectations of the outside world mainly that of the language class. Robinson (ibid:179) says: “the relative absence of analogies or specifications of similarities and differences, or appeals to categorization for why questions, reduces the chances of knowledge becoming organized, coordinate, super-ordinate and sub-ordinate groupings are less likely to happen...”

**Q26 :** Do your parents read :

- a-Novels?
- b-Magazines?
- c-Newspapers?
- d-Other? (Please specify)
- e-None.

Options	Nb	%
Novels	16	08.88
Magazines	10	05.55
Newspapers	57	31.66
Other	00	00
None	97	53.88
Total	180	100

**Table31 : Parents’ readings .**

The habit of reading for pupils and their parents is of primary importance in the efficiency of learning for the availability of books at home has been recorded as a positive correlational factor with academic progress . In view of this fact, more light is shed upon this aspect in modern educational research with much more focus on how parents involve their children in the reading process. In his introduction on language and learning , Davie .A (1982:xi ) reported that in a study done by Wells, this latter has found that “ children...who do best at reading at age 7 are those whose parents talk most to them and who are themselves interested in reading.”

In our investigation, only 08.88 % of parents read novels, a rate which correlates with the educational background of these parents as seen in Q06. Such a poor cultural environment is an obvious impediment not only to the learning of English but also to the whole school work mainly the reading activity which is an important factor in any academic success. 05.55% and 31.66% of parents are readers of magazines and newspapers respectively, while 53.88 % of the pupils' parents are claimed not to read at all, a percentage which corresponds to the rate of illiteracy among parents as displayed in section one. Such a poor level of reading contributes negatively in generating poor learners not only in English but also in other subject matters of the school curriculum .

**Q 27:** In doing your home work , are you interrupted by :

- a- The presence of other members like children?
- b- The presence of a T.V set?
- c- Bad material conditions ( no heating , no desk , no home library , no special room for doing home work .....)?
- d- Any other ? (please specify).....
- e- None.

	Nb	%
a	88	48.88
b	30	16.66
c	40	22.22
d	18	12.22
e	04	02.22
Total	180	100

**Table 32 : Conditions of carrying out home works**

Size of the family, bad material conditions at home and the lack of a comfortable atmosphere have much to do with educational attainment. One of the most obvious differences between social classes lies in the facilities or handicaps which help or hinder the pupils while doing homework. This provision is a reflection of parents' attitudes towards education which are determined by limitations of finance and cultural values as well. Therefore, the socio-economic status of the family combined with the surrounding cultural environment indicate whether the pupil is at an advantage or a disadvantage to successful learning .

Approximatively, half the population investigated (48.88%) demonstrates that it is interrupted by the presence of members like children while doing homework. 16.66%, by the presence of a T.V set, and 22.22 % by the lack of good material conditions such as a home library, heating , a special room for doing homework and so on. All these interrupting factors would hinder not only the learning of English but also the whole academic progress of the pupils. For Craft. M (op.cit: 77)

“ Not only is a large family more likely to draw near the poverty line, and therefore be unable to pay for facilities such as comfort of fire for homework, but also interruption by other children in the family may help substantially towards deterioration”. 12,22% claim to be interrupted by their mothers in that they help them in the home activities though they are in a period of exams (option. d) and only 02.22 % state that they are not interrupted at all.

### **3.4.5. Section five: Parental encouragement and contact with the school.**

**Q28:** do your parents encourage :

- a- The notion of success and educability.?
- b- The notion of learning foreign languages.?
- c- The notion of individuality.?
- d- The notion of personal decision-making.?
- e- Other (please specify).....

	Nb. of pupils	%
The notion of success and educability.	85	47.22
The notion of learning foreign languages.	50	27.77
The notion of individuality.	20	11.11
The notion of personal decision-making.	23	12.77
Other.	02	01.11
Total	180	100

**Table 33: Notions encouraged by parents.**

In a society like our own, many people are very ambitious about the future of their children for now schools are becoming more and more crowded even in rural areas where the educational background of parents and the good living conditions are relatively limited. However, the point which usually escapes attention is that hoping for our children to succeed is something and striving efforts to make this dream come true is something else.

Educational success is a result of a combination of demographic, contextual and sub-cultural factors. 47.22% of the Parents are claimed to encourage notions of educability and success while 27.77% are said to encourage foreign language learning. Such considerable numbers do not reflect the deep reality which many people still envisage in imaginary terms ,i.e, it is rather a hope which many parents have in minds and cannot realize with folding arms. It is commonly known that many parents do not ask about their children's school results until the end of the school year. They do not speak to them or try to know about their problems and preoccupations but they expect them to succeed as if success comes out of scratch. It is so in our case for in (Q24) many fathers do not talk to their children. Therefore, we deduce that parents' encouragements to education are mere wishes that can never be realized in such circumstances. They must be embodied in terms of real practices and advocations.

Only 11.11% and 12.77% of parents encourage the notions of individuality and personal decision-making respectively. These low scores do not reveal that parents really encourage notions of education and foreign language learning. If they do so in the real meaning of the word,

they should have left a large scope to matters of individuality and personal decision-making because educational success needs more self-reliance, dedication, persistence, self-confidence, and more interestingly, interest in what one chooses. So, pupils who in question (25) declared that they have been obliged by their parents to do things which they do not like, support well the supposition that parents are not aware of the underlying demands of education. They are just ambitious to see their children succeed at school but they are not knowledgeable enough to apply it in reality because of ignorance (Q5, Q6). Only 01.11% declare that their parents encourage ambition and gift. Again it is a number that stands as a proof of the interpretations we gave previously for he who is interested in education should be ambitious and encourage gift and talent, which is not the case here. In other words, parents are caught in a very beautiful dream, that is of, educational success but have not the means to make it real.

**Q29:** Are your parents in constant contact with the school ?

- Yes.
- No.

	Nb.of pupils	%
Yes	34	18.88
No	146	81.11
Total	180	100

**Table 34: Parents' contact with the school.**

Only 18.88% of the pupils' parents are in constant contact with the school, whereas 81.11% do not consult the school at all; a quite impressionable number about the real contradictory world of a society indulging in a sea of wishes, if one may say so, and waiting for success to come in a Trojan horse. The French have coined the term «la famille éduco-gène» to describe families providing for their children an educative environment, particularly, the support they pay to intellectual pressures which go in the same directions as those exerted by the school so as to bridge any gap that may exist. In this respect Craft..M (op.cit:44) claims that : “ the climate of opinion in the home will be educationally favorable by such elementary criteria as willingness to visit the school and talk with teachers and a knowledgeable approach to educational facilities”. A fact which is missed throughout our society especially in the areas we have investigated. Pupils say that their parents encourage educational success and foreign language learning (Q28: a+b) while the proportion of parents who contact the school does not go beyond 18.88%. Again it is a

number which proves better that parents are fully unaware of the good conditions for school success and are preoccupied by the difficult living circumstances as the jobs they occupy (Q 07) do not afford a decent standard of living. In one word, the socio-economic and the cultural factors are again the reasons which lie beyond this undesirable situation.

**Q 30:** In case of failure do your parents :

a- discuss the reasons of failure with your teacher ?

b- Discuss the reasons of failure with you ?

c- Ignore it ?

d- Other reaction ( please specify).....

Options	Nb. of pupils	%
Discuss the reasons of your failure with your teacher.	15	08.33
Discuss the reasons of failure with you.	47	26.11
Ignore it.	85	47.22
Other reaction.	33	18.33
Total	180	100

**Table 35: Parents' reaction to pupils' failure.**

08.33% of the pupils declare that their parents discuss the reasons of failure with teachers, 26.11% discuss the matter with the pupils themselves while 47.22% of the parents (c) are reported to ignore it at all. The remaining 18.33% of the pupils' parents react differently as depicted by the pupils who claim that these behaviours vary from aggressivity which takes the form of physical or moral punishment, to care and understanding in rare cases. These results are grouped under -d- in the following table :

	Other reactions	Nb.of pupils	%
31.d.1	Moral punishment ( anger, insults, not talking to me , or give up some of the usual rewards such as money , or anything they used to give in addition to threats such as menacing me to give up school in case of not improving my results.	18	54.54
31.d.2	Physical punishment : isolating me in a room or beating me.	09	27.27
31.d.3	Care and comprehension by encouraging me to do better and to believe in my capacities.	06	18.18
Total		33	100

**Table 36:Other reactions to pupils' failure.**

Among the thirty three pupils who have stated other reactions than those included in the questionnaire, a proportion of 54.54% claimed that their parents punish them morally in case they fail at school. These punishments take the form of threats, insults, anger, and give up usual rewards. 27.27% state that the situation is more grievous than the previous one. Now, punishment takes a further dimension, that is a physical one. Some pupils claim that they are isolated in rooms or beaten, which means that these parents (31.d.1, 31.d.2) do not look for the reasons of failure to remedy the situation but worsen it more than it is. In doing so, they join parents who in option -d- ignore it totally and do not try to find out the causes that have led to negative school results. Therefore, one can say and with regard to the whole population investigated, that 41.22% ( option c ), 54.54 % ( option d1), and 27.27% ( option d2) of the pupils' parents do not treat their children's failure appropriately and thus contribute in decreasing their level of attainment in all the subject matters on the curriculum including English. This is again attributed to the lack of educational experience on the part of parents and to the hard living conditions that affect peoples' behaviour and shape many of their views and reactions.



**3.4.6. Section six : Classroom Environment :**

**Q 31:** Is the classroom you study in :

- a- Over-crowded.?
- b- Semi-crowded.?
- c- Not crowded.?

Options	Nb.of pupils	%
Over-crowded.	180	100
Semi-crowded.	00	00
Not crowded.	00	00
Total	180	100

**Table 37: Classrooms' crowdedness.**

Over-crowded classes reflect the socio-economic situation of the whole community, the overgrowing number of the population and the lack of material support to build more schools to overcome this huge surplus of pupils constitutes a real barrier to effective learning in general and language learning in particular. In our questionnaire, all the pupils claim that they study in over-crowded classes, a percentage which reveals a tragic reality for no teacher on earth with the highest qualifications that one could display, will be able to control such classes, pay attention to all the pupils, find out the learning difficulties each pupil encounters and deal with the particularities of each individual in the classroom. Studying English in such large classes is one of the most crucial problems teachers encounter as many of them have pointed out in (Q10 ).

**32:** Do you ask your English teacher whenever you come across a difficult item in English?

- Yes.
- No.

	Nb	%
Yes	68	37.77
No	112	62.22
Total	180	100

**Table 38: Pupils' reaction to problems of understanding.**

Taking the initiative in asking questions reflects the pupils' motivation as well as their ability to cope with problems of learning. A majority (62.22%) of the population investigated state that they do not ask their teacher of English whenever they come across a difficult English item whereas 37.77 % claim to do so. This state of retention in participation shows well how the learning of English is going on in our schools especially in rural zones. If one goes back to Q24, he may find an interpretation to this avoidance strategy for 57.77% of the pupils claimed that they never talk in the presence of adults. So, learners come to the language classroom with a set of cultural values that lay in the back of their minds and which are reflected unconsciously in a bunch of behaviours and attitudes. Resorting to silence, avoiding participation or asking questions for more understanding can be rooted back in the accumulated knowledge which children have been socialized in from early childhood. Yet, the situation gets even more difficult when the language being learnt is new for the pupils and the learning process takes place in overcrowded classes, with different individuals whose impact on each other can be negative. As they are all adolescents, fear from marginal comments or being caught in embarrassed situations in front of the classmates and the teacher, may oblige them to keep quiet at the expense of understanding, a matter which is more elucidated in the following question by the pupils themselves.

**Q33:** If no, is it because :

- a- you can't express yourself in public .?
- b- you fear your teacher's reaction.?
- c- You fear being laughed at.?
- d- You don't care about learning English.?
- e- Other reasons ( please specify ).

Options	Nb. Of pupils	%
You can not express yourself in public.	53	47.32
You fear your teacher's reaction.	20	17.85
You fear being laughed at.	18	16.07
You do not care about learning English.	10	08.92
Other reasons.	11	09.82
Total	112	100

**Table 39: Pupils' reasons for not seeking comprehension.**

The pupils who answered the previous question negatively have justified their answer as follows :

47.32% do so because they can't express themselves in public, a problem which many pupils face as a result of the lack of the linguistic equipment of the language being learnt (language anxiety) or because of the socialization process especially when one goes back to Q24 where 57.77% of the pupils claim that they never talk in the presence of adults. Hence, these pupils may come to school with some cultural values, which have developed into attitudes which are not in favour of the language class expectations. 17.85% fear the teacher's reaction while 16.07% fear being laughed at. 08.92% claim that they do not care about learning English while the remaining (09.82) have given the following reasons grouped under –e-:

	Reasons	Nb.of pupils	%
e.1	The teacher does not encourage us when we make mistakes.	09	81.81
e.2	The teacher does not care about us.	01	09.09
e.3	I hate the teacher and I don't speak or even listen to him.	01	09.09
Total		11	100

**Table 40: Other reasons for not seeking comprehension.**

The pupils who have given other reasons for not seeking comprehension in case they come across difficult items in the English language class constitute 19.80 % out of the whole population i.e, 11 pupils, whose reasons are classified as follows:

09 pupils say that they do not do so because their teacher do not encourage them when they make mistakes, a fact which teachers should be aware of for tolerating mistakes and correcting them beyond any kind of threat or rigidity can change the learners' outcome into a more positive one.

01has stated that he does not ask questions if he does not understand because the teacher does not care about the pupils while another pupil says that he does not do so because he hates the English teacher. Combined with the previous answers given in (Q33 : options a,b,c,d), one can conclude that the pupils are very much sensitive because of the underlying socio-cultural knowledge they have accumulated and thus teachers should take into consideration this factor so as to put their hands on these impeding factors and to overcome them.

**Q34:** What kind of atmosphere reigns in the classroom?

- a- Friendly.
- b- Frustrating.
- c- Boring.
- d- Neutral.

	Nb	%
Friendly	15	08.33
Frustrating	24	13.33
Boring	36	20
Neutral	105	58.33
Total	180	100

**Table 41: The atmosphere in the classroom.**

Providing a healthy classroom atmosphere is important in any classroom learning. Pupils come to school with cultural backgrounds that may either go hand in hand with the classroom expectations or may not go with them at all. Hence, the teacher's role is significant because it is he who creates interest in the language being learnt via what he does and what he says. All this cannot be realized unless the teacher is acute not only in the language he teaches but also in sociology and psychology. This is so because he is dealing with individuals whose cultural background may run counter to that of the classroom. Such a duty requires an atmosphere where the learners feel no kind of threat or fear. They should be put in a relaxed situation similar to that of daily communication with the teacher controlling from a far to avoid feelings of anxiety, disinterest, alienation and the like. In our case, 13.33% of the pupils contend that the classroom atmosphere is frustrating and 20% consider it boring. This is really a regrettable situation for learners cannot reap good results from learning in circumstances where rigid control and boredom reign. 58.33 % state that it is neutral, which means that the learning task is done mechanically as any other work and thus pupils cannot benefit appropriately from the linguistic data presented. A foreign language learning demands more active roles, risk-taking, communicating the linguistic structures being learnt with a great interest ; a fact which cannot be reached in these conditions. Unfortunately, only 08.33% of the pupils claim that the classroom atmosphere is friendly, a number which is too far from being big enough to call for a glimmer of hope that may change the situation in the near future.

### **3.5.conclusion:**

This questionnaire has investigated a population of 180 3AS pupils belonging to different streams, learning English as a F.L in some Algerian rural secondary schools.

Its aim was to shed light on the impact of socio-cultural factors on learning English in these areas mainly the influence of three important social institutions which are : the home, the neighbourhood and the school.

The analysis of the results has revealed that the majority of the pupils come from uneducated families for 51.11% of them claim that their fathers have no educational background, 03.88% have a university degree and only 04.44% have an intermediate level( Q05). The situation for mothers is much more difficult for 73.88% are said to have no educational level (Q06). In the light of these results, parents' occupations have also been described by the pupils as low ranking ones. Only 03.88% are technicians, 07.22% are teachers while the rest vary between farmers, factory men, car drivers, blacksmiths, builders, mechanics or jobless. Following the same trend, 93.88% of mothers are housewives, a matter which reveals better the home cultural environment where these pupils live.

Concerning the pupils viewpoints about the learning of English as a F.L, it has been recorded that many of them are conscious about the importance of this language in that 47.22% think that learning English is very important, 20.22% important while, 30.55% consider it not important (Q08). In fact, these numbers bring to surface many considerations. If 47.22% think that learning English is very important, and 22.22% thinking it to be important, there is a host of impeding factors ( poor cultural environment, overcrowdedness of classes, lack of good teaching material...) in addition to 30.55% of other informants who think that English is not important to learn.

This means that the situation is far from being positive especially if one bears in mind that the pupils who claim that learning English is important, may face other hindering factors and thus cannot achieve a good attainment.

This importance given to learning English may also stem from the pupils' need to pass exams, get a future job or pursue further studies (Q09). A matter which reveals an underlying instrumental motivation that is quickly lasting. This motivation itself, is culturally and socially influenced for the common scio-cultural norm in that English is classified at a second rank position after French and the last in comparison with the other subject matters on the school curriculum.

As the role of peers is extremely important in influencing one another, hints about this influence have been recorded throughout the questionnaire especially when 27.77% claim that in that their group, there are pupils who consider the learning of English as a girls' subject and that they are

even laughed at when they try to speak this language (Q13). Though it is a small rate, this may spread over and over especially that learners at this school stage are adolescents and are too sensitive to such remarks. The result may take the form of an avoidance strategy which the learners adopt to avoid ridicule comments.

As far as the influence of the home cultural environment on learners is concerned, only a minority of pupils 12.77% claim to read (Q18). A behaviour which learners have developed in culturally poor families for in (Q26), 53.88% of the pupils' parents never read. Pupils who are interested in watching the BBC , speaking other languages or listening to English songs are rare.

In addition to this, the rate of reading in French, which is the first foreign language in our society, is vry low. Among 180 pupils, only 25% read in French which is supposed to be very helpful (Q19).

The other conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of this questionnaire is the absence of a healthy cultural environment at home. As the level of education is extremely limited, communication at home is often done in dialectal Arabic as 93.33% of the pupils have declared (Q22). Pupils, therefore, are deprived of a rich source of learning, that is of, exposure to at least one foreign language. Such an exposure is likely to help them to acquire an openness and affiliation towards other peoples' culture and to develop positive attitudes as well.

Communication at home especially with parents is also worthy to be mentioned. If learners are brought up in an open environment where they exchange views without threat or fear, they are going to develop positive personality features that are strongly related to success in F.L learning such as: taking risk, initiating participation, willingness to practise the language abilities acquired, and courage to ask questions without being afraid of the teacher or friends' remarks. However, in Q24, 28.88% of the pupils claim that they sometimes talk in the presence of adults while 57.77% never do so. Moreover, in Q23, 45.55% of the pupils state that they never discuss with their parents. All this can influence the pupils' later behaviour at school especially in language classes where communicative activities seem to be overwhelming. The teacher may symbolize the father, i.e, the authority and the pupil may resort to silence and avoid participation. This is the result of previous accumulated knowledge based on the strong social meaning attributed to any elder person who symbolizes authority. Hence, learners brought up in these milieus may come to the language classes with some social roles that they have acquired at home but are not in favour of the expectation of a F.L class at all.

In combination with all that, many pupils as it is displayed in Q27, suffer from the lack of good learning conditions at home ( lack of books, lack of rooms where to do homework, presence of T.V sets, and other children while revising...).



Parents' contact with the school is limited for only 18.88% of the pupils' parents are reported to do so(Q29). Their interest in their children's success is also weak in that 47.22% of the learners' parents ignore school failure (Q30). A number which reveals the parents' disinterest in their children's school work in general, and therefore total neglect of their children's English attainment. The classroom environment is also of great importance in that teachers can change negative attitudes and foster strong motivations. However, in overcrowded classes as the pupils have claimed in the (Q31), teachers' task becomes somehow impossible.

This overcrowdedness has itself contributed negatively on the learners. As the majority of them come with certain behaviours that are not in favour to language classrooms, 62.22% do not seek information and prefer not to ask the teacher (Q32). They find it difficult as they say to express themselves in public, here overcrowded classes of boys and girls, or fear the teacher reaction or simply the peers' remarks. All this is the result of a fear developed in authoritative families which are said to produce field dependent learners who themselves have been recorded to do less in F.L learning. Finally and concerning the classroom atmosphere, 20% of the learners claim that it is boring, 58.33% neutral, 13.33% frustrating, and only 08.33% friendly, which means that the pupils do not benefit from a relaxed atmosphere that can help them to learn English successfully.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS.**

#### **4.1.Introduction**

Since the teachers' role in the teaching-learning process is vital, this questionnaire aimed at investigating the way teachers approach their work from a socio-cultural vantage. Linguistics is not the only area from which the teacher called up for knowledge but sociology, psychology, and socio-psychology are becoming an affluent source of information from which the teachers can reap many benefits so as to be able to cope with the demanding needs of the learning-teaching situation.

Put more simply, what are the teachers' views about the importance of the learners' socio-cultural background and how does the latter influence the learning of English as a foreign language. This is done through an investigation of the teachers' viewpoints regarding the impact of the home environment, the neighbouring environment including that of schools and all the possible cultural and social differences which might impede learning.

#### **4.2.Description of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed to gather preliminary information about the teachers, their concern with the influence of the socio-cultural factors on learning English as a foreign language and whether or not they take them into account and try to overcome the learning problems which are due to these factors. The questionnaire is composed of 27 questions and divided into 4 sections. It consists of two types of questions:

Closed questions which require the teachers to answer by 'yes' or 'no' or to pick up the right answer from a set of options and of open questions which require them to state personal views and justifications.

##### **4.2.1.Section One: Preliminary Information: ( Questions 01- 07 )**

In this section, teachers were asked about the number of years they have been teaching English (Q1) and to state whether or not they have undertaken any sort of training before they started teaching (Q2), and to say in case they answered positively whether or not this training highlighted the importance of the socio-cultural factors in the learning process (Q3).

Then, they were asked to explain in a few lines how the socio-cultural factors are related to language learning (Q4) and to identify the area in which they have been teaching (Q5).

In (Q6), they were required to say if the learning of English in towns is similar to, or different from that in villages in terms of success and failure and to justify their position if they adhere to the second view (Q7).

#### **4.2.2. Section Two: Teachers' Viewpoints about the Influence of the Home Environment on Learning English as a F.L ( Questions 08-12 ).**

In this section, teachers were required to state whether they think that the home environment influences the pupils' readiness to learn English or not (Q8) and to specify if the influence lies in the attitudes held by the members of the family regarding English as a foreign language, the educational background of parents, the availability of good material conditions or all three together in case they answered the previous question positively (Q9). Then, they were asked to say whether or not they think that the learners' behaviour is affected by the standards a family puts for rearing up its children (Q10) and to specify which standards have a positive influence on the learners' later behaviour in the language classroom by selecting the appropriate answer from a set of options given beforehand (Q11). Finally (Q12) they were required to justify their view in case they choose option – b-.

#### **4.2.3. Section Three: Teachers' Concern with the Pupils' Neighbourhood and its Impact on their English Attainment.( Questions 13-17 )**

In this section, teachers were required to state whether or not they try to know about the learners' social environment (Q13) and to explain why, in case they give a negative answer (Q14). After that, they were invited to speak about the environmental factors which they consider important in raising learners' interest in learning English by making a choice of the appropriate answer from the given options (Q15) while in question (16) they were asked to state whether or not in their teaching career they have noticed that English is a girls' preference and to give their opinion about the girls' attainment in English, whether it is better than that of boys, similar or worse, in question (17).

#### **4.2.4. Section Four: Classroom Environment and Parents-School Contact**

##### **(Questions 18-27)**

In this section, teachers were asked if their pupils' participation in the English language class is influenced by the large number of learners in the classroom, timidity and tendency towards introversion, both or any other (Q18). In question (19), they were asked about the way they deal with the pupils' learning mistakes, if they correct every error, draw the learners' attention to them indirectly or use any other way. Then, they were asked about the pupils' reaction to problems of learning, if they ask more questions to understand, ignore them or any other reaction (Q20) and to specify in case they select option -b- whether the pupils' ignorance to learning difficulties is due to lack of interest, fear from the teachers' or peers' reaction or any other reason (Q21).

In the following question (Q22), teachers were asked whether their pupils work in a cooperative or competitive environment or both and to specify the ways they use to raise their learners' interest and motivation to learn English by selecting the appropriate answer from a set of options given beforehand (Q23). In (Q24), they were required to say what audio-visual aids are available in their schools if they select option (c) of the previous question. In question (Q25), teachers were asked about the atmosphere they create in the classroom, whether it is friendly, neutral or any other. Finally, they were required to say whether or not they manage to meet the pupils' parents (Q26) and give reasons if they answer negatively (Q27).

#### **4.3. Administration of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire was handed out to 50 teachers of English in a number of secondary schools in Hamma-Bouziane, Ibn-Ziad, Didouche Mourad, and in Constantine. However, only 45 teachers have returned their questionnaire and five of them were not answered fully, a matter that has impelled us not to take them into account. In the light of these circumstances only 40 teachers have co-operated with our work and we feel really thankful to them and to their comprehension.

The teachers were given time to answer the questionnaires for approximately 15 days so that to be free of any constraint that may prevent them from answering as appropriately as they wanted to. They have been given an introduction whereby the purpose of the questionnaire was explained clearly and where they were also required to answer honestly and to write what they think it is accurate and correct.

#### **4.4. Analysis of the results**

##### **4.4.1. Section one: Preliminary information.**

**Q1:** How long have you been teaching English?

Nb.of years.	Nb.of teachers.	%
03-----05	16	40
10-----17	18	45
18-----19	06	15
Total	40	100

**Table 42: Teaching Experience.**

From the table above, we find that 45% of the teachers have spent from 10 to 17 years in teaching English, a number which implies that they have been following the traditional way of teaching English that stresses the importance of grammatical accuracy without paying attention to the cultural and social factors which many recent studies have started to take into consideration in foreign language teaching.

The individual learner is subject to different influences as long as he grows up and develops into a social human being including his world view about other peoples' cultures and languages. 15% of the teachers have also been teaching from 18 to 19 years and thus join the previous ones in viewing the learning-teaching process, i.e., focusing on the linguistic attainment and ignoring the surrounding conditions which might be hindering.

Only 40% of teachers declare that they have been teaching for 3-5 years. Though this score reveals an awareness about the new trends in the field of foreign language teaching, it is insufficient as approximately the same number in the following question claim that they have undergone no training before indulging into teaching.

**Q2:** Have you been trained before you started teaching?

a- Yes.

b- No.

	Nb.of teachers	%
Yes	21	52.5
No	19	47.5
Total	40	100

**Table 43: Teachers' training.**

52.5% of the population inquired have been trained before they started teaching, a number which correlates with the teachers who have taught for more than 10 years (45%+15%). It is obvious then, that these teachers have graduated when the Algerian educational system used to train secondary school teachers before they began work on the ground. However, this training had stopped later on as great numbers of students have enrolled in Foreign Language Departments, and demands of schools for foreign language staff has decreased too. This proportion of trained teachers though important in rate does not reveal an awareness of the new demands and needs in the world of F.L teaching because the prevailing pedagogy in their time was purely linguistic.

The remaining (47.5%) state that they have not been trained which means that they are also unaware of how to deal with the socio-cultural challenges that may impede learning on the ground.

**Q3:** If yes, did this training highlight the influence of the socio-cultural factors on learning English as a F.L?

a- Yes.

b- No.

	Nb.of teachers	%
Yes	04	19.04
No	17	80.95
Total	21	100

**Table 44: The training period and its focus on the socio-cultural factors.**

Among the teachers who answered Q2 positively, only 19.04% claim that the training which they have undertaken emphasized the importance of the socio-cultural factors and its influence on learning English. This brings again to surface the previous interpretation which says that training courses often focused on what is purely linguistic especially that 80.95% state that their training did not highlight such a matter at all.

**Q4:** Whatever the answer you choose, explain in a few lines how the socio-cultural factors are related to language learning .

Teachers have given various answers to this question which, though general, Provides us with important information about their knowledge in this respect and how much they care about it. All the explanations given by the teachers are classified as follows:

	Reasons	Nb.of teachers	%
4.a	A sound knowledge about the learners' social environment helps the teacher detect some of the learning problems especially if the pupil comes from a poor and uneducated family.	15	50
4.b	A language teacher should widen his linguistic knowledge to include hints in pedagogy, sociology and psychology so as to be able to know about the causes that exasperate language learning especially those related to attitudes and views .	06	20
4.c	Some learners may come to school with a set of complexes and behaviours that are not favourable to the teaching –learning situation, a knowledgeable teacher should find out these hidden hindrers and try to remedy them.	08	26.66
4.d	A keen teacher does not start with the teaching of rules, a farmer prepares the land before putting the seeds down and so is the teacher or more, he lear,ns first about the socio-cultural background not only of the individual learner but everything surrounding the learning situation so as to reap good final results.	01	01
Total		30	100

**Table 45: Teachers' views about the impact of the socio-cultural factors on learning English.**

As mentioned above, all the explanations vary in language but fall in one idea that is of paying attention to the milieu where the pupil comes from, changing negative attitudes and creating more interest in order to provide a healthy ground where the language skills can be learnt successfully. Ignoring these factors, as many teachers have declared along the whole questionnaire, is disencouraging especially that many of them are confronted to obligations of time and long syllabuses.

There are 10 abstentions. These teachers have not answered the question for lack of information or merely because they do not see the relationship between the socio-cultural factors and language learning.



**Q5:** Have you taught English in:

- a- A town?
- b- A village?
- c- Both?

	Nb.of teachers	%
A town	07	17.5
A village	08	20
Both	25	62.5
Total	40	100

**Table 46: Teaching areas.**

As it is shown on the table above, 62.5% of the teachers have taught English in both towns and villages, a fact which enables them to draw a full and a fair comparison between those areas in terms of success and failure.

17.5% is the percentage of those who have worked in towns and only 20 % have taught in villages .

**Q6:** If you choose option –c- of the previous question , how did you find the teaching of English in towns and villages?

- a- Similar in terms of success and failure.
- b- Different in terms of success and failure.
- c-Any other view (please specify).....

	Nb.of teachers	%
a	02	08
b	23	92
c	00	00
Total	25	100

**Table 47: Teachers' views about the learners' attainment in villages and towns.**

A great majority of the teachers who taught English in both villages and towns claim that it is different in terms of success and failure (92%) while only two teachers have stated that it is similar. Since the two teaching situations are different not only in the individual learners involved but in a host of factors ,i.e, the home environment, the school environment, and the surrounding conditions, teachers who opted for answer -b- were required to justify their view in the following question.

**Q7:** If you choose -b- explain where the difference lies.

All the teachers who have selected option -b- have justified their view by a set of explanations which are classified in the table below under : b1, b2, b3, b4, b5 and b6.

	Explanations	Nb.of teachers	%
7.b.1	Pupils' attainment is lower in villages than that in towns because these pupils suffer from hard living conditions. Their minds are preoccupied by thoughts of how to earn money, to buy books and help their parents, they are deprived of the least appropriate conditions which any learner needs.	03	12
7.b.2	I taught English in Didouche Mourad , in Hih Elmeki, and in Benbadis schools and each time I discover the pupils' different approach and acceptance to English which increases more in towns where the educational level of families is higher than that in villages.	01	04
7.b.3	In town , pupils generally come from educated families with higher aspirations and good school orientations especially those related to foreign language learning, something which many pupils in villages lack.	06	24
7.b.4	In villages, pupils tend to be calm and seldom talk while those in towns are more curious and initiate conversation without fear which means that they are more actively involved in language classroom activities than the previous ones.	07	28
7.b.5	Generally, a stable teaching staff is more likely to afford a continuous evaluation of the learners' attainment, a matter which is rare in villages where the teachers do not only change every year but also within the same school year.	06	24
7.b.6	Culturally speaking , the atmosphere in villages is not rich, there is a scarcity in libraries, cultural centres and also a lack of contact with bilingual people. Schools are not well-equipped and all this makes the pupils' attainment in English lower.	02	08
Total		25	100

**Table 48 : Teachers' views about the difference of Teaching English in towns and villages.**

Three teachers (7.b.1) adhere to the fact that teaching English in towns is different from that in villages in terms of success and failure because pupils in towns do not confront the same hardships as those in villages whose minds are overwhelmed by thoughts about the ways they could use to help their parents. So, according to these teachers, a healthy learning environment is the one where the pupils benefit from good care either morally or materially.

Seven teachers (7-b-4) justify their position by saying that pupils in villages tend to be calmer and seldom talk whereas those in towns are more initiating, a fact which puts them at an advantage as foreign language class activities need more initiation and risk-taking (Ely, 1986). Hence, pupils' behaviour is influenced by matters of respect and courtesy which are highly qualified in rural areas and thus result in more calmness and silence. This, however, does not serve the requirements of a foreign language class which call upon more self-initiation, courage, empathy, self-esteem and training one's linguistic abilities without fear or anxiety.

Six teachers (7-b-3) argue that the difference lies in the fact that pupils in towns generally come from educated families where notions of success, educability and foreign language learning are fostered and thus positive values and orientations grow up in harmony with the school expectations. Therefore, learners in such environments would develop more positive attitudes *viv a vis* F.L learning and become better motivated than those in rural areas. In other words, developing positive attitudes leads to high motivation which prepares the ground to a better language performance.

Six other teachers (7-b-5) say that pupils' low performance in English in villages is due to the changing staff which means that there is not a continuous assessment of the pupils' language development as many teachers come and leave within the same school year. In contrast, pupils in towns are in a better position as more experienced teachers are generally in towns and the change of staff rarely happens, a view that is almost shared by two other teachers who in (7-b-6) state that schools in towns are better equipped and that the cultural environment in villages is impoverished.

One teacher (7-b-2) argues that his experience in three secondary schools has enabled him to come to the conclusion that the family's educational level is a determining factor in the way learners approach and accept English and thus joins the teachers view in (7-b-3).

**4.4.2. Section Two: Teachers' Viewpoints on the Influence of the Home Environment on Learning English as a F.L ( Questions 08-13).**

**Q8:** Do you think that the home environment affects the pupils' readiness to learn English?

a- Yes.

b- No.

	Nb.of teachers	%
Yes	38	95
No	02	05
Total	40	100

**Table49: The influence of the home on learning English.**

The great majority of the teachers ( 95% ) claim that the learners' readiness to learn English is affected by the home environment where the child is reared up. It has been said that the child's socialization at home (Bernstein, 1970 ) is an important phase in the development of the individual's language, personality and world's view as well. The influence of the home extends to include the pupils' readiness to learn a foreign language and this is done via many ways. For example, parents holding a high educational level are more likely to create a richer cultural atmosphere by providing books, and all sources of information as computers and electronic games that develop and widen the child's mental abilities. They are more open to the worlds' cultures and languages and thus foster in their children a sense of tolerance and acceptance of the other without undermining their own . Only 05% of the teachers have declared that the home environment is uninfluential. Therefore, only teachers who have claimed for the impact of the home milieu are required to specify the factors which are more influential in this respect.

**Q9** : If yes, are pupils affected by:

- a- The attitudes held about the learning of foreign languages?
- b- The educational background of parents?
- c- The availability of good material conditions?
- d- Any other ( please specify ).....

	Nb.of teachers	%
a+b+c	26	68.42
b	07	18.42
c	05	13.15
d	No answer	00
Total	38	100

**Table 50: The home most influential factors on learners' readiness to learn English.**

The majority of the teachers who answered the previous question positively have given much consideration to the influence of attitudes held about the learning of foreign languages, the educational background of parents and the availability of good material conditions (68.42%), a score which highlights the difficulty of separating these factors from each other as they all intervene together and interplay to affect the pupils' readiness to learn a F.L, while 18.42% have restricted the impact to the educational level of parents and 13.15% believe that the availability of good material conditions is more influential in this respect.

These views have profound hints in the literature of education and are supported by many researchers like Bruner and Raven (1980) who, after having gathered various information from different grounds in different cities in England, have come with important results that put the home at the heart of all the influences not only on the children's language progress but also upon their educational attainment including foreign language learning.

**Q10:** Do you think that learners' behaviour is affected by the standards which a family puts for rearing up her children?

a- yes.

b- No.

	Nb.of teachers	%
Yes	30	75
No	10	25
Total	40	100

**Table 51: The impact of the family's standards of education on pupils' behaviour.**

A majority of 90% of the teachers claim that the learners' behaviour is affected by the standards a family puts for rearing up its children while a small minority (10%) state the opposite. This highlights again the significance of the home's role in orienting and shaping the individuals' behaviour from early childhood.

**Q11:** If yes, what are the standards which have a positive influence on the child's later behaviour in the language classroom?

a- The scope given to the child to communicate his views without constraints.

b- Authority and continuous control.

c- Any other ( please specify ).....



	Nb.of teachers	%
a	17	56.66
b	13	43.33
c	No answer	00
Total	30	100

**Table 52: The standards influencing the pupils' later behaviour.**

56.66% of the teachers think that the standard which has a strong positive impact on the learners' later behaviour in the language class-room is the scope given to the child to communicate his views without constraints. This coincides with many educational findings (Robinson, op.cit) where middle class children were reported to be educated in a way that goes hand in hand with the school expectations especially those related to the development of abstract notions, decontextualized abilities and more interestingly feelings of exploration, the need to know, curiosity, self-independence and persistence without fear or hesitation.

All these features are extremely important in a foreign language class where learners are supposed to be more adventurous to benefit as much as possible from the linguistic input provided by the teacher. But if learners have not developed such abilities and notions, which is the case in many families where severe control reigns, they will develop a passive character which hinders learning .

43.33% of the teachers claim that it is rather authority and continuous control which have a positive influence on the learners' later behaviour in the classroom. This percentage which is slightly smaller than the previous one brings to surface a significant question that is of the teacher- centered approach and the learner-centered approach in F.L learning. It seems that these teachers are adherers to the former approach and that is why they have opted for the view of authority and control.

However exerting full control in a foreign language class is not welcomed by many researchers and this is what teachers should avoid especially if learners come to school with the traditional assumption that it is the teacher's whole task to present the lesson, to ask questions and correct mistakes and that they are mere receivers of knowledge and he is the

ideal transmitter. In fact, the teachers' language is the only input available in foreign language classes but learners ought to be at the centre of the learning process to ensure a good training of the language abilities they have at their disposal and to eliminate all the impeding factors such as anxiety, timidity and the like.

**Q12:** If you choose –b- justify your answer.

The justifications given by the teachers who have opted for answer –b- are tabulated as follows:

	Reasons	Nb.of teachers	%
	Classes are overcrowded and pupils who are socialized into respecting orders and authority would facilitate the teachers' task especially in a F.L lesson which requires more attention to grasp the new language skills .	08	61.53
	Pupils who are used to speak out their views without constraints may interrupt the presentation of all the language skills supposed to be covered especially that the time allotted to English lessons is short.	04	30.76
	It is the shortage of time and length of the programme which make us prefer quiet learners though the F.L lesson needs learners who tend to be initiators of communication.	01	07.69
	Total	13	100

**Table 53 : Teachers' reasons for preferring learners socialized under authority and continuous control.**

Teachers who think that authority and continuous control in educating children at home has a positive impact on their later language classroom behaviour have justified their answer by the fact that classes are overcrowded and need order so as to ensure better understanding (61.53%).

Others have said that time allotted to English sessions is short while the programme is long and thus pupils who are used to free communication would inhibit the coverage of all the units (30.76%). So, pupils who are brought up in homes where authority and control are exerted tend to develop a sense of conformity to the established order of the classroom and

facilitate the teachers' role to cover the lessons beyond any kind of interruption though it is favourable in language lessons.

One teacher (07.69%) has stated that pupils who come to classes with the desire to speak, to ask questions and to practise the language abilities they have acquired are generally good learners but the shortage of time obliges us, as he added, to cut down this behavioural potential. Hence, teachers' preference to option -b- stems from a disciplinary angle ,i.e., the belief that well-disciplined learners are those who have been socialized into respect of order and authority and thus would not create troubles in classes especially where the number of pupils is large.

However, developing full conformity without any sense of criticism or questioning is more likely to foster passive behaviours which impede learning rather than encourage it.

**4.4.3. Section Three: Teachers' Concern with the Pupils' Neighbourhood and its Impact on their English Attainment.( Questions 13-17 ).**

**Q13:** Do you try to know about the social environment of your pupils?

- a- Yes.
- b- No.

	Nb.of teachers	%
Yes	12	30
No	28	70
Total	40	100

**Table 54: Teachers' concern with the pupils' social environment.**

Knowing about the social environment where pupils live is very important because it enables the teacher to identify a lot of learning problems especially those related to attitudes and views which might be hinderers of learning rather than facilitators.

In spite of this, only 30% of the teachers state that they try to know about the learners' social environment while 70% do not do so. We all know that the learner is a member of a social group ,i.e., the family first where his views about the world are internalized (Vygotsky, op.cit

) and developed as he steps out to the world of adults, peers and the whole society including its demands, social conventions, values and so forth. He is the result of a moulding process where his own traces can be hardly detected and is therefore socially determined (Engels, 1970 ). The learner realizes his views into attitudes and actions either consciously or unconsciously merely because the social norms want him to do so. As part of the society's activities and one of its general expectations, the teaching of foreign languages differs from one society to another for some people encourage it and provide large sums of money to develop it.

Here, it is the good will of the political systems to implement a successful tradition of teaching foreign languages with the cooperation of educationalists and specialists too. In other words, such political commitments pave the way to the emergence of a social necessity to learn languages and make people aware of its importance. In doing so, favourable attitudes may develop and the learning of foreign languages will be at the heart of all the society's concerns. In contrast with this, other societies may regard foreign language learning as a sort of losing one's cultural heritage or devalue its importance because of ignorance or because the foreign language holds an inferior position on the social scale. As a consequence, individuals may approach the matter negatively, develop negative attitudes and may even feel reluctant and careless about it. At school, a teacher who ignores this fact would be speaking in the air as his pupils' minds have not been explored to cut down the roots of such undermining views before indulging into learning. Such a teacher is like the doctor who prescribes treatment before diagnosing the illness! So, it is considerably important to be aware of this environmental factor by keeping a close watch on the pupils' social environment before introducing any language course. That is why teachers who answered the previous question negatively were required to justify their position.

**Q14:** If no, explain why.

	Reasons	Nb. of teachers	%
14.a	I do not try to know about the pupils' social environment because I do not have enough time to do so especially that I meet them twice or three times per week.	18	64.28
14.b	I do not try to know about the pupils' social background because the programme of English is very long and must be covered in three or two hours per week. In such conditions I could never think about this matter at all.	02	07.14
14.c	It is unfair to ask teachers to pay attention to the pupils' social environment where the number of pupils surpasses imagination. The educational system itself worsens the situation as it gives English a low coefficient of 2 and very short hours on the school programme. The social environment of learners is important to know about but we must look further afield.	08	28.57
Total		28	100

**Table 55: Teachers' reasons for not asking about the pupils' social environment.**

Teachers who answered the previous question negatively have justified their position by the fact that they have not got enough time to know about the pupils' social environment as they meet them only twice or three times per week ( 64.28% ). Two teachers state that they are preoccupied by the idea of finishing the programme and thus could never think about this matter at all( 07.14% ). Eight teachers (28.57%) say that it is not fair to ask the teacher to pay attention to such a matter in classes where the number of pupils surpasses imagination ( 40 pupils per class and more). They added that the educational institution itself is complicating things as it gives a coefficient of 2 to English with short hours along the week . Hence, it is not only the pupils' social environment which must be taken into account but we must look further afield.

It is clear from these answers that the conditions surrounding the teaching situation itself play a considerable role in determining not only the pupils' attitudes but also the teachers' behaviour. So, under the pressure of short hours, long syllabuses, and large classes, the teacher would miss the opportunity to know about his learners' social environment. Whether the pupils' social background is in favour or in disfavour of the learning situation, the latter has

become worse because the educational tradition puts English at an inferior position with regard to the other subject matters on the school curriculum.

**Q15:** What environmental factors do you consider more important in raising the learners' interest in learning English?

- a- The companionship of people who are interested in learning foreign languages.
- b- The availability of cultural clubs, internet centres and libraries.
- c- Any other ( please specify ).....

	Nb.of teachers	%
a	24	60
b	09	22.5
c	07	17.5
Total	40	100

**Table 56: The environmental factors influencing pupils' interest in learning English.**

60% of teachers state that the companionship of people who are interested in foreign language learning is a way of raising interest among learners not only in English but also in other languages because being exposed to a rich linguistic environment where more than one language is spoken is likely to raise motivation and create positive attitudes ( Naiman et. al, 1978). This score coincides well with the pupils' answers to question 10 ( pupils' questionnaire ) where 58.88% claim that the lack of this factor make them unable to improve their performance as the opportunity to practise the language they learn is very restricted ,i.e., insufficient hours at school.

22.5% of the teachers say that the availability of cultural clubs, internet centres and libraries constitute the environmental factor which contributes more in raising the pupils' interest in learning English because in areas where books, dictionaries, tapes, video-tapes and good material are available, learners could easily benefit from different sources of information related to F.L learning and even make contact with English speaking people all over the world as the internet services are becoming tremendously useful in this respect.

The remaining seven teachers (17.5%) have given other factors which are grouped in the following table:

	Factors	Nb.of teachers	%
15.c.1	Reading	01	14.28
15.c.2	Meeting English people	01	14.28
15.c.3	Changing the school books which are no more valid as they do not raise the pupils' interest.	02	28.57
15.c.4	Raising the coefficient of English.	03	42.85
Total		07	100

**Table 57 : Other factors influencing the pupils' interest in learning English**

In spite of the importance of the factors mentioned by these teachers, it seems that some of them have gone beyond the core of the question. For instance, no one can ignore the significance of reading in developing ones' linguistic competence but it is not an environmental factor, it is rather a language habit which many learners are deprived of because of the lack of books, lack of interest or simply because they were not reared up in families where reading is encouraged from early childhood.

Meeting English people is a crucial environmental factor but it is hard to realize only via the internet which we have mentioned earlier and which is rare if not inexistent especially in rural areas.

The other teachers who speak about changing the school text books and raising the coefficient are quite fairly right because these two factors are at the heart of the educational system which, as an important social institution, can create a more efficient learning environment .



**Q16:** During your teaching career, have you ever noticed that learning English is a girls' preference?

a- Yes.

b- No.

	Nb.of teachers	%
Yes	25	62.5
No	15	37.5
Total	40	100

**Table 58: Girls' preference to learning English.**

A majority of 62.5% teachers declare that learning English is a girls' preference while 37.5 % do not think so. It is known that learning foreign languages is more widely spread among women than men and this coincides with some scientific findings which claim that the man's right hemisphere is specialized in what is manual observable, and concrete while the left one is specialized in what is abstract like language skills, expressing feelings, emotions and the like. What happens, therefore, is a natural quick evolution of the right hemisphere for boys at the expense of the left one while for girls things develop in parallel and thus make them more keen in learning foreign languages. This biological constraint combined with some social views that attribute everything soft to the feminine world has contributed to the appearance of such attitudes ,i.e., restricting the learning of foreign languages to this category and thus creates a kind of social obligation which makes boys avoid this subject and neglect it.( Allwright et.al, 1991).

**Q17:** Whatever your answer , how do you find the girls' attainment in English?

a- Better than boys.

b- worse than boys.

b- Similar to boys.

	Nb. of teachers	%
Better than boys.	34	85
Worse than boys.	00	00
Similar to boys.	06	15
Total	40	100

**Table 59: Girls' attainment in English.**

Though 37.5% of the teachers have stated that learning English is not a girls' preference, a majority of 85% confirm that girls' attainment is better than that of boys which means that girls are fully immersed in language learning and this intensifies more the previous view held by 62.5% of the teachers. No teacher has stated that boys are better than girls in attainment while 15% have claimed that they are both similar. These scores reveal an important fact that is of the strong impact of the prevailing social views on learners for now in numbers one can see clearly how the boys' final outcome is lower than that of girls especially in a society which draws a strong line on what is properly a masculine vocation and what is typically a feminine interest.

#### **4.4.4. Section Four: Classroom Environment and Teachers-Parents Contact**

**(Questions 18- 27).**

**Q18:** Is your pupils' participation influenced by:

- a- The large number of pupils in the classroom?
- b- Timidity and tendency towards introversion?
- c- Any other ( please specify ).....

	NB	%
a	16	40
b	11	27.5
a+b	04	10
c	09	22.5
Total	40	100

**Table 60: Factors influencing pupils' participation.**

40% of the teachers state that the pupils' performance is influenced by the large number of learners per class. It is clear from this answer that overcrowding is a real barrier that has been mentioned frequently throughout this questionnaire and that the teachers' duty is becoming hard to fulfil especially in a foreign language class where language skills need more practice and training. 27.5% of the teachers state that learners' performance is influenced by some personality features like timidity and tendency towards introversion. The number is even greater when 10 % of the teachers claim that the pupils' performance is affected by both factors, i.e., overcrowding and personality features. If classes are overcrowded, the teacher cannot pay attention to all the learners, predict their weaknesses, remedy their work or listen to all of them bearing in mind that English lessons stretch only on three hours per week with a long programme to finish. 22.5% of the teachers state that learners' resort to silence, makes the situation more difficult for the teacher cannot evaluate the pupils' level unless using written tests. A matter which teachers think rooted back to how the child has been reared up and it aggravates more especially in a F.L class where the learners lack the linguistic tools to make themselves appear strong and confident .

**Q19:** How do you deal with your pupils mistakes?

- a- Correct every mistake.
- b- Draw the pupils attention to mistakes indirectly.
- c- Any other way ( please specify ).....

	Nb.of teachers	%
Correct every mistake.	17	42.5
Draw the pupils' attention to mistakes indirectly.	12	30
Any other.	11	27.5
Total	40	100

**Table 61: Teachers' reaction to pupils' mistakes.**

42.5 % of the teachers say that they correct every mistake made by pupils which means that they exert a full control over the language class activities. In fact, teachers' behaviour reveals a good will that is of asserting successful learning. However, they can be doing harm to the learning situation, as being all the time under heavy control, learners might retire from participation. Learning in a relaxed atmosphere where teachers –learners' roles are not based on the traditional dyads of questioning , answering and correcting is likely to pave

the way to less anxiety which many learners suffer from in language classes. 30 % of the teachers state that they draw the pupils' attention to mistakes indirectly and thus may be providing a healthier learning environment where learners can communicate without being constrained or caught in embarrassment as many of them state in the questionnaire that they do not participate because of the fear of teachers' remarks, or peers' comments.

11 teachers with a percentage of 27.5 % join this trend when they claim that they encourage pupils to correct each other and explain to them that mistakes are part of the learning process so as to kill anxiety and to make them work in a more cooperative environment.

**Q20:** What is your pupils' reaction to difficult items?

- a- Asking questions.
- b- Ignoring difficulties.
- c- Any other reaction.( please specify).....

	Nb.of teachers	%
Asking questions.	07	17.5
Ignoring difficulties.	30	75
Any other reaction.	03	07.5
Total	40	100

**Table 62: Pupils' reaction to learning problems.**

The majority of the pupils do not care about the difficulties they encounter in learning as 75% of the teachers have chosen option –b- while 17.5% stated that their pupils ask questions to understand . The other two teachers have declared that their pupils feel lost and that is why they do not want to be subjects to the teachers or the peers' remarks. One teacher states that his pupils resort to their predicting abilities in such cases.

**Q21:** If they ignore difficulties, is it because of:

- a- Lack of interest?
- b- fear from the teacher's reaction?
- c- Fear from the peers' comments?
- d- Any other reason ( please specify )

	Nb. of teachers	%
a	08	26.66
b+c	13	43.33
d	09	30
Total	30	100

**Table 63: Reasons for pupils' ignorance to learning difficulties.**

26.66 % of the teachers who selected option -b- have explained their pupils' ignorance of difficult items by the lack of interest while 43.33 % claim that the pupils do so because of fear from both the teachers' reaction and peers' comments. This score highlights the importance of the teachers' role in putting an end to those fears to ensure a more secure social environment where mistakes are corrected collectively and difficulties are overcome gradually without any fear.

Nine other teachers (30%) say that pupils do not ask questions about difficult items because they feel ashamed and cannot confess their misunderstanding in public, a fact which coincides with the pupils' answers to Q35: ( pupils' questionnaire ) when 47.32% stated that they cannot express themselves in public.

**Q22:** Do your pupils work in:

- a- A co-operative learning environment?
- b- A competitive learning environment?
- c- Both?



	Nb.of teachers.	%
a	10	27.77
b	18	50
c	08	22.22
Total	36	100

**Table 64: Classroom learning environment.**

To feel free of the peers' pressure is an important factor in establishing a relaxed atmosphere where the learners can cooperate without being caught in embarrassment or subjected to marginal comments. However, only 27.77 % of the teachers claim that their pupils work in a co-operative learning environment which means that they are deprived of an important social value, that is of cooperation. Teachers should encourage the sense of co-operation among the pupils so that they cut down feelings of fear and hesitation and pave the way to more understanding between the members of the same social group. These members, would feel more secure and involved in the learning task and thus strive additional efforts to improve their language proficiency. Unlike co-operation, competitive relationships in the language class are welcomed especially in group work activities and that is why 50% stated that pupils work in a competitive atmosphere. 22.22% of the teachers claim that the relationship which exists between learners is both co-operative and competitive depending on the activity involved as some of them have explained. There were four abstentions.

**Q23:** What are the ways you use to raise your pupils' interest to learn English?

- a- Speaking about the culture of English speaking people.
- b- Speaking about the importance of English as a F.L.
- c- Making use of audio-visual aids.
- d- Rewarding good pupils.
- e- Other ways ( please specify).....

	Nb.of teachers	%
a	10	25
b	08	20
a+b	11	27.5
c	08	20
d	03	07.5
e	00	00
Total	40	100

**Table 65: Teachers' ways to raise pupils' interest to learn English.**

The lack of interest is one of the major causes that decrease the pupils' outcome in language classes either because of the prevailing negative views held about the language being learnt or because of ignorance, lack of good teaching material or else. Therefore, the responsibility of the teacher to create interest is extremely important as his role is much more of a facilitator rather than a scrutinizer, he can change the learners' disinterest into interest by putting his hands on the real causes that lie behind it. For example, a teacher who tries to gain a sound knowledge about the cultural milieu surrounding the teaching situation, the social environment from which learners come, the needs and goals of the whole society regarding the language being learnt and its impact on the learners' attitudes, is undoubtedly bound to find out the causes of disinterest and remedy them. In fact, there are various ways which teachers can use to motivate learners and break the ice that freezes the learners' minds. In our case, 20% of the teachers stated that they speak about the importance of English as a foreign language and 25% said that they speak about the culture of English speaking people.

However, this needs good teaching material to catch the pupils' attention for speaking about the English culture without using supporting aids is not very much helpful especially that only 20 % of the teachers claim to use audio-visual aids to create interest in their classrooms. The remaining 07.5 % confirm that they attempt to raise interest by rewarding good pupils from their pockets as they have added. At the end of each term, teachers buy some books and presents to pupils who do well in English especially those who improve their level of attainment.



**Q24:** If you choose -c- what audio-visual aids are available in your school?

- a- Radio.
- b- Video.
- c- Pictures/ photos.
- d- Any other ( please specify ).....

	Nb.of teachers	%
Radio	03	37.5
Video	00	00
Pictures/Photos	5	62.5
Any other	00	00
Total	08	100

**Table 66: Audio-visual aids available at schools.**

No one can ignore the importance of audio-visual aids in raising interest and creating motivation because they urge learners to make use of the language they have acquired and provide them with a strong desire to improve their level. The use of audio-visual aids can change the negative attitudes which pupils might have against the target language. Unfortunately, only 20 % ( Table 65, option c) make use of audio-visual aids and this is due to the scarcity of these aids at school since 3 teachers (Table 66, option a) claim that what is available in their schools are radios while the rest ( Table 66, option c) resort to pictures and photos. Seen in this light, pupils are deprived of an important source of motivation and are left with the teacher and the school book which itself has been judged by the teachers as being invalid and seldom stimulates the pupils' interest.

**Q25:** Is the atmosphere you create in the classroom:

- a- Friendly?
- b- Neutral?
- c-Any other( please specify).....

	Nb.of teachers	%
Friendly	31	77.5
Neutral	09	22.5
Any other	00	00
Total	40	100

**Table 67: classroom atmosphere.**

77.5% of the teachers have stated that the atmosphere they create in their classes is friendly and therefore are establishing a good learning ground where feelings of anxiety and hesitation are suppressed and active learning is urged. Yet, in the pupils' questionnaire many learners confirmed that the learning atmosphere is mostly neutral and this may be explained by the fact that classes are overcrowded and what teachers are revealing here is the ideal view about what the situation should be rather than what it really is. 22.5% of the teachers overtly confess that the reigning atmosphere in their language classes is neutral, a matter which can be explained again by overcrowding, length of the programme and shortage of time.

**Q26:** Do you manage to meet some of the pupils' parents?

a- Yes.

b- No.

	Nb.of teachers	%
Yes	14	41.17
No	20	58.82
Total	34	100

**Table 68: Teachers' meetings with pupils' parent**

To know about the learners' parents help the teachers to get more information about the social environment where the learner lives on the one hand, and create an occasion to sensitize parents about their children's learning problems and how to solve them on the other. However, only 41.17% of the teachers state that they manage to meet the pupils' parents while 58.82% do not do so. There are six abstentions.

**Q27:** In case you select -b-, justify your answer.

Not all the teachers who answered the previous question negatively have justified their position. Only 18 teachers have given the reasons which lie beyond their choice and 2 others have abstained. The reasons are classified in the table below under -b-:

	Reasons	Nb.of teachers	%
27.b.1	It is impossible to meet the pupils' parents because of the lack of time.	05	27.77
27.b.2	The teacher himself lives in extremely difficult conditions and works in very bad circumstances which make this factor the least of his worries.	04	22.22
27.b.3	Overcrowding of classes makes the teachers and parents' contact out of reach.	09	50
Total		18	100

**Table 69: Teachers' reasons for not meeting the pupils' parents.**

It seems that the teachers' reasons for not contacting the pupils' parents stem from deep social constraints since the social reality not only of the school but also of the teacher himself stands as a strong barrier in the face of implementing an efficient teachers-parents relationship. Being at the mercy of all these confining social factors 50% teachers say that

under the pressure of crowded classes, they cannot contact all the pupils' parents while 27.77% do not because of the lack of time. The remaining 22.22% say that the teachers' hard living and working conditions compel them to neglect this issue.

#### **4.5. Conclusion:**

This questionnaire has aimed at investigating whether the teachers are aware of the influence of the socio-cultural factors on pupils learning English as a foreign language and if they attempt to know about the learners' general social environment and how much successfully they manage to deal with them on the ground.

The analysis of the results have revealed that the majority of the teachers are aware of this issue for 95% of them claim that the home social environment affects the pupils' readiness to learn English (Q08) and (92%) have confirmed that the teaching of this language in villages and towns is different in terms of success and failure (Q6) basing their views on a set of social and cultural arguments and also on their teaching experience in these areas (07). However, being aware of these facts is something and trying to deal with them in reality is something else especially that the majority of the teachers training courses were entirely linguistic (Q03) and the teaching conditions on the ground are confining (Questions 14,18,27).

For instance, concerning the impact of the home environment on learners' readiness to learn English, 95% of the teachers claim that it is very influential (Q08) for according to 68.42% a child who is socialized into an open view over the world's cultures and languages under the umbrella of an educated family and surrounded by good material and moral care is likely to develop positive attitudes, and succeed in improving his linguistic abilities (Q09). This impact extends to include the standards which a family puts for rearing up its children, i.e., the role of the family in influencing the pupils' later behaviour in the language classroom especially those related to matters of risk-taking, self-confidence, the need to know, activism, curiosity, initiating activities and so on (Q11). But when it comes to reality, only 30% of the teachers state that they try to know about the learners' social milieu (Q13) and have justified their position by conditions of work such as the shortage of time and large classes (Q14).

Moreover, teachers seem to lack an important opportunity to create a relaxing social setting in classrooms though 77.5% claim that they try to create a friendly atmosphere (Q25). It is so because many of them have declared that they exert full control over the class activities (Q19) as 42.5% of the teachers have claimed to correct every mistake produced by the learners

and thus may be creating more anxiety, fear, and hesitation. Establishing such social relationships may affect the pupils' attainment.

The pupils would prefer to adopt an avoidance strategy though the teachers' aim is not to do so. This is more aggravated when only 20% of the teachers claim to use audio-visual aids which many schools cannot afford to. So, combined with the impoverished cultural environment at homes and in the neighbourhood, the school as a social and educational institution stands helpless and adds more and more hurdles for having a low coefficient on the educational scale and short hours along the school time table as some teachers stated, English is pictured not only in the pupils' minds but also in the whole society as worthless.

The culture which the educational system is implementing is not in favour of an efficient learning both in towns and villages. However, the situation of the latter is worse for the living conditions are harder and the level of education is lower as many teachers have revealed throughout the questionnaire.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that throughout this questionnaire one can notice that the impact of the socio-cultural factors on learners' attainment in English is inevitable and that the influence extends to touch the teachers, who though aware of the impeding learning factors are confined to neglect them under the pressure of other social constraints. For example, 58.82% do not contact the pupils' parents (Q26) because of the great number of learners per classe, and which the successive governments have failed to solve.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

#### 5.1. Introduction

The results of the pupils' questionnaire have shown that the majority of the pupils come from families where the educational level is very low and the living conditions are extremely hard. The surrounding environment's lack of any source of cultural information, the school's lack of good teaching materials and the classrooms overcrowding contribute to the lowering of the pupils' attainment in English.

In these circumstances, the learning of English in rural secondary schools becomes a difficult task not only for the teachers but also for the pupils themselves. They have been brought up in an atmosphere where illiteracy and poverty reign. Their views about the world of foreign language learning are coloured by fears of being assimilated with the culture of the language being learnt or losing their own identity. So, from their social environment, learners have developed some personality traits and adopted some social behaviours which are in disfavour of the expectations of a F.L. class. Many of them do not initiate conversation, do not seek more comprehension and prefer not to speak in public so as not to be laughed at or simply because of fear of the teacher's reaction, though this latter is tolerant to mistakes. These pupils are overwhelmed by an underlying fear which is not only due to the lack of linguistic tools but to an early personality feature that they have acquired from the first days of socialization at home, that is, of high courtesy to elders and full control exerted on them. This has been well illustrated by many pupils who claim in the questionnaire that they never talk in the presence of adults.

At home where no foreign language is known or even mastered by at least one family member, the task of learners becomes more and more difficult for having an experience about the world of F.L. learning is substantially important for beginners and young learners. So, if learners are exposed to this experience which is not the case in rural areas, they will reap great benefits, develop more positive attitudes, and have a stronger motivation to learn any language. The home cultural atmosphere does not only include a knowledge about the world of foreign languages but extends to include the availability of books, magazines and good home work conditions; something which is missed in the majority of the pupils' homes. That is why

Craft (1970) says: "The provision of books in the home proved a significant factor for academic success."

In spite of these confining conditions, learners have shown an awareness about the importance of English. In fact, this is a good indicator of the social changes happening recently in those areas, but it has not contributed well to the development of their level of attainment because of the socio-cultural circumstances at home in the surrounding environment and even at school. So, the role of the family from the early days of child rearing practices till the later stages of school life, is considerably vital as well as that of the neighbourhood. Parents are responsible for the kind of attitudes which the learners acquire, the type of motivation they develop and even of the learning strategies they adopt. For example, a child who has been socialized into accepting everything without questioning or in an authoritative family where discussion and expression of one's own views is unaccepted, can develop an avoidance strategy everywhere he goes and mainly at school.

Outside the home, parents can also play an important role. As the child steps out to the world of peers and other adults, he will face new challenges, i.e., views and ideas that can influence him negatively. However, in a family where ideas are exchanged freely and criticized beyond any kind of rigid comments and threats, the learner would grow up in a healthier environment that goes hand in hand with the school expectations especially the foreign language class requirements.

The role of parents cannot be carried positively unless the school sets a strong relationship between the home and especially teachers. All this, is going to be examined in the following lines about the role of the three social agencies (the home, the neighbourhood, and the school) in developing the learners' attainment in English.

## **5.2. The role of the home**

The role of the home in shaping the pupils' views about the world of foreign languages, in creating positive attitudes and fostering appropriate motivations is undoubtedly of great importance. Educated parents are, in this respect, more aware of the requirements of a school life in general and that of a foreign language class in particular. Their influential role should start at the very early days of socialization.

It is more beneficial at this period because in early childhood, social views, attitudes and motivation can be easily shaped and properly enhanced. The learner, therefore, would be prepared to meet academic prospects mainly those of learning English as a F.L beyond any external social pressures that may falsify his orientations. This has been mentioned strongly by Craft (ibid) when he says that: "Paternal pressure is more crucial during the early years when attitudes towards school are being formed."



So, in families where a cultured stimulating environment is provided, a mature interest in school work can be raised as well as verbal facility and habits of thought. If books and good home learning conditions are available, learners' position vis à vis English as a F.L would be more favourable especially if, at least, one foreign language is known. Therefore, it is worthy to mention that being exposed to any foreign language at home, though not spoken all the time, is likely to engender appropriate aspirations, raise more interest and create more positive attitudes. In Naiman et.al. interviews (1978) with language learners, results have shown that the majority of good language learners come from educated families where at least a member of the same family knows a foreign language. This is not to say that learners from illiterate families cannot afford for a successful learning in English but the results highlight the importance of literacy in changing negative views and setting a healthier cultural background for learners from the very beginning of school life.

Since the individual learner is a social being that can by no means escape the influence of the world of peers and adults outside the home, the parents' role becomes more and more important. It should extend to include duties. Along the questionnaire, many pupils have claimed that the relationship with their parents is not strong. They never talk to them and if they do, the topics raised in discussions do not treat school work, abstract notions or personal problems and interests. Some pupils have justified this situation by the parents' main concern with how to earn money to answer the home demands while the majority of these parents do not talk with their children about topics related to the development of mental abilities, because of ignorance. Hence, social pressures outside the home need to be examined carefully.

Talking to children should also occur in open discussions where they are given the opportunity to use their decontextualized abilities. Gardner et.al (1972) have conducted a survey in which teachers of native American children were inquired about the levels of their learners' motivation. The results were the teachers main view that the learners' motivation starts high in the first grades then it lowers as they pass to later grades. Gardner explains this change by the pressure of peers whose influence in such cases is inevitable. This is to show how important the role of parents is in following their children's development and change through time. A learner may well come from an educated family where all the living and learning conditions are good, but he can not escape the social pressures and prejudices of the outside world. He rather needs an atmosphere where he exchanges views about his daily life in general and his school one in particular beyond the traditional standards of severe remarks and punishment. In such a way, parents can set up a close relationship with their children and keep watch on their personal development especially that related to school work and the learning of English.

### **5.3. The role of the neighbourhood**

It has long been held that the individual mirrors out the identity of the social group he lives in, acquires its language and adopts its views and beliefs. Environmentalists have argued that it is difficult for the human being to escape the influence of the surrounding neighbourhood. We use some speaking patterns instead of others in the different social roles we realize simply because our social norms guide us to do so unconsciously most of the time. Communities differ in perceiving various matters, notions and conceptions because of a set of socio-cultural values. For example, some people encourage the learning of foreign languages whereas others do not do so as it is the case in the British society. In England, there is not a deep social awareness of the practical or the educational value of foreign language learning in schools, a matter which is caused by the widespread belief that English is spoken everywhere and there is no need to study another language. So, these socio-cultural views can engender more negative attitudes among learners who, in many English schools have reached very low scores in F.L exams. If this is the impact of the neighbourhood views on British learners, the situation in rural Algerian secondary schools is more complicated since the problem is two edged:

First, the location of the school in an area where the living conditions are extremely hard, do not help the learners to study English successfully. The scarcity of libraries, cultural clubs and centres, the limited contact with other people and the lack of cultural exchanges have contributed hand in hand to the existing mentality and to the worsening of the situation.

Second, the high level of illiteracy among the old generation has made it difficult to youngsters to answer the demands of a new modern school life where the learning of foreign languages has become obligatory. Learners, as the questionnaire has indicated, come from illiterate families to meet other challenges of another illiterate surrounding environment. They may develop more negative attitudes since the neighbourhood does not only, in such a case, strengthen the already existing negative attitudes but can also change the positive ones into negative ones, a matter which the family and the school should be aware of and set up measures to counteract it.

Another important example of the role of the neighbourhood has been recorded in many American schools where the learning of some foreign languages like French has long been associated with girls' interests and thus making it difficult for boys to learn it. If a boy is fond of this language and wants to reach a proficient level in it, he will be associated with girls and suffer from the humorous remarks of his classmates. All this highlights better the role of the outside world in shaping and changing views and thus, the important responsibility of the home and the school in putting an end to these social constraints and creating a healthier

environment that allow learners to study English more successfully.

#### **5.4. The role of the school**

When we speak about the role of the school in improving the pupils' academic outcome, we undoubtedly call upon the teacher who, in our case of study, works in difficult conditions especially that of overcrowding of classes and the lack of good teaching material.

This is not to find excuses for teachers, who throughout the questionnaire, have shown little interest in the importance of the socio-cultural factors in learning English as a F.L but to give a clearcut picture of how the teaching of English is carried out in these rural secondary schools. Situated in villages where communication with outsiders is extremely limited, schools in rural areas suffer, not only from the unstable status of teachers who often leave for towns seeking better living and teaching conditions but also from a tremendous lack of good teaching material. So, the provision of audio-visual aids at schools hand in hand with textbooks is one way of keeping teachers work in appropriate conditions. Moreover, it is a way to make the teaching-learning process vital by creating interest and raising motivation among learners and thus helping them to achieve better levels of attainment. For instance, auditory media like radios, tape recorders and language laboratories offer learners the opportunity to hear native speakers involving repetitions, correcting pronunciation, understanding spoken texts and having the opportunity to have their own tapes to practise the language outside the classroom.

Language laboratories are also important in any foreign language learning but they are available only at advanced levels of language learning at universities. In fact, the use of laboratories at earlier stages in secondary schools can do more for learners because they create more interest between learners, make them more involved in the language being learnt and above all take them to another world of learning foreign languages that is different from the traditional one of teacher-centred learning. This is more likely to raise the pupils' motivation and immersion because human beings are attracted to every thing new, vital and which occurs in a relaxed environment beyond any kind of rigid control or routine.

The use of audio-visual and visual media in language classrooms is also beneficial. They make the foreign language learning more lively and more successful. Flaschcards and filmstrips help the learners in understanding better the linguistic data presented auditorily. Language is not merely a verbal behaviour, it has other paralinguistic features ( gestures, facial expressions) that help learners to determine the meaning and explore the linguistic data available more easily.

Further, language is a social behaviour that can not be understood beyond its social context and components. It has a number of factors: participants, and the context of the situation, which, if seen in a projected filmstrip, would help the learners immerse more in the learning task and reap many benefits.

In addition to the use of these media at schools, teachers in those areas, i.e., rural areas should organize meetings with other urban schools to exchange views, documents and books so as to put hands on the hindering factors and to find out the appropriate solutions. Meetings between pupils of urban and rural schools is one of the solutions that can be helpful in this respect. Learners can benefit from each other and this can be done first by organizing collective lessons presented by different teachers, and second by encouraging pupils to work in both a competitive and collective way. At the end of the term, teachers can organize groups of pupils from both areas and hold exams that are finally rewarded not only by evaluating the learners' work but by giving them rewards like dictionaries, tapes, books or organizing trips where the language used in conversations should be English so that the pupils would feel another need to practise the language, that is of entertaining, asking for information and exchanging views with the help of a teacher who accompanies them. In this way, the learners will learn not under the need of passing exams but of enjoying one's life in a new medium of communication and in a very relaxing atmosphere without fear of making mistakes or of the peers' comments since they have been trained to work collectively from the very beginning.

The teacher is not only a source of linguistic information, he is also a motivator, a facilitator and a creator of positive attitudes. The linguistic information should not be the main concern of the language teacher. He should widen his task so as to know more about the individual learner, a matter which the majority of teachers in the questionnaire seldom or never do. So, the teacher's focus should shift from a mere presentation of language material to the learner as a social person. In order to realize this task, the language teacher should have access to two main types of information concerning the pupils: psychological factors and social factors which are strongly interrelated and cannot easily be separated.

#### **5.4.1. Psychological factors**

The first type of psychological information that the teacher should be aware of is that of "affective factors", which gather under its umbrella various names like: motivation, attitudes and personality which itself gathers under its own umbrella factors of empathy, self-esteem, extroversion, introversion, risk-taking, and so on.

Since many studies have shown how these factors correlate with language learning either

positively or negatively, the language teacher should be aware of these influences. For example, a teacher who succeeds in changing negative attitudes into positive ones can lead to more learning rather than long hours of exercises as Champeau de lopez (1989-) has portrayed it. Another important source of psychological information to the teacher is that of the pupils' learning styles.

Many research works have found that different individuals make use of different learning styles and that the individual himself may use different styles too. In fact, the factor which has been frequently studied, in this respect, is Field Dependence and Field Independence. A field independent person is said to be more successful in learning any language whereas a Field Dependent one may face more intriguing difficulties.

Hence, language teachers should be aware of these positive and negative correlations and more importantly of the reasons that cause a person to be Field Dependent and not Field Independent. For instance, many studies especially that of Allwright (1980) have found that Field Independence and Field Dependence are themselves affected by the surrounding social environment. Authoritative families are said to produce more Field Dependent persons in this respect.

Therefore, since Field Independence is positively related to success to language learning, it is the teacher's task to know more about these learners and to train them to be more Field Independent in an open, relaxing and non-threatening classroom environment.

#### **5.4.2.Social factors**

social factors are another vital source of information to the teacher. He should not only be aware of the social and cultural environment surrounding the language being taught but also of the learners' socio-cultural background that affects learning. The individual learner has grown up in a social group whose views and ideas about F.L learning may differ from that of the school. Psychological factors like attitudes are already shaped as well as personality. They are all under the heavy impact of a set of social and cultural values which are transmitted over from one generation to another and which are themselves affected by the socio-economic conditions of the whole society.

All this can be done by organizing sessions with small groups of learners before the presentation of any language material. Parents are also a good source of information and an important collaborator since the teacher alone cannot do everything alone. Since the questionnaires' results have revealed that the majority of parents are illiterate, the teacher's role becomes more and more crucial. If close contacts and good relationships are established



and maintained with parents , many of the social and cultural hinderings may melt over time. The responsibility of the teacher is to change the prevailing negative views not only in the classroom but to tackle the problem from its deep roots ,i.e., the home.

### **5.5.Conclusion**

Social pressures as well as cultural considerations can influence the learners' final outcome in English either positively or negatively. Throughout , the questionnaire, the majority of pupils inquired have claimed that they have a low attainment in English. They all live in rural areas where the socio-economic conditions are bad and educational background is limited. Hence, in such a situation, it is difficult to find a healthy cultural environment that helps the pupils to answer the F.L class requirements as it has been shown in the questionnaire. The suggestions included above aim at raising the teachers' concern with this socio-cultural part which seems to be almost neglected. Teachers , therefore, should be trained not only in the field of linguistics and pure language teaching but also in the fields of sociology and psychology where the learner is looked at as a social being having its own socio-cultural heritage which is passed over to him via the language of his community. Teachers should be aware of the fact that these socio-cultural values and beliefs of the learner are embodied in different social roles, social behaviours and even speech acts which can act either positively or negatively on his inner psychological self. The psychology of the human being is very much related to his sociology just as language is also related to these fields. Hence, foreign language learning cannot occur beyond the impact of socio-cultural factors and this is what teachers should take into account so as to overcome the hindering possible factors.

## General Conclusion

The principal view on which this study is based is that learning English as a F.L in rural secondary schools is affected by a set of socio-cultural factors, and that learners' attainment in English in these areas is affected by : the home, the neighbourhood, and the school itself.

These three social institutions are interdependent and their role is considerably influential in that each one of them is an educative environment and thus exerts a socio-cultural influence upon the learners' views, thoughts, personalities, attitudes, motivations, expectations, and so forth.

The learners' constant failure to learn English successfully has long been studied in relation to factors of motivation, attitudes, and interest but it has not been looked at in its socio-cultural context. The learner is a social being who cannot escape the influence of the surrounding environment with all its constituents, i.e., the people he lives with at home or outside, the languages spoken, the social norms and the cultural values of the social group he is in touch with and its socio-economic conditions as well. So any learner is a social being who is exposed to all these influences which have later effects on his learning of English as a foreign language.

Now that the learner is considered as a social being whose inner psychological self is acted upon by different socio-cultural factors, the learning of any foreign language, which itself is a social behaviour, is going to be affected as well.

Seen in this light, socialization is going to be the principal socio-cultural factor that runs throughout the three institutions: the home, the neighbourhood, and the school. Before coming to school, the child is reared up at home where several sets of rearing up practices are used. This differs from one family to another depending on the parents' level of education, the reigning socio-cultural beliefs, views and values, in addition of course to the family's living conditions. If the family's rearing up practices go hand in hand with the school's expectations, the child will undoubtedly answer the demands of the school positively. In our case, in families where parents have received quite a good deal of education at schools, they will be more knowledgeable about what a school life looks like, what it needs, how to deal with homework, and more importantly how to develop in them the abilities which are necessary to their learning such as context independent abilities. These abilities are acquired from early childhood and are of great importance to language learning. Educated parents can provide an atmosphere similar to that of a language classroom by encouraging their children to question, analyse, use abstractions, and so forth. Attitudes and motivations are also under a heavy socio-cultural pressure. If the child comes from a family where the cultural environment is very rich, he may not find too many difficulties when he comes to school. In a family where people are open to the outside world, encourage the exploration of other peoples' cultures and languages without being afraid of



loosing one's own culture, the learner child will be at a great advantage in that he accepts the learning of any language and longs for exploring it and improving his level too. This is going to be more beneficial, if in the social group he lives in, there are people who master the language being learnt because they constitute an additional linguistic support in that he can practise his language and seek more information. The learners' personality is also of cardinal importance to F.L learning since the learner can develop some personality traits which are related either positively or negatively to language learning. Features of empathy, risk-taking, anxiety, introversion, extroversion are the result of the previous social life. A child who is brought up in an authoritative family can develop some personality traits which are not welcome in a language class. He may develop fear and anxiety as he may also develop a strategy of silence to avoid punishment or embarrassment whereas a language class requires courage, risk-taking, extroversion and so on.

All these influences are not only found in the home, they become more numerous as the child steps out to the world of peers in the neighbourhood and at school. At school, for example, many pupils will face other serious hindering factors. If they come with some home handicaps like the lack of a rich cultural environment and poor living conditions, the lack of good teaching material at school and the over crowding of classes are going to make the learning difficult to them. This is because of a socio-economic reality which many rural secondary schools suffer from. In addition, some teachers, and as a result of these conditions (teachers' questionnaire), have become interested in finishing the programme without paying attention to the pupils' social background and without trying to look for the hindering factors that lie behind the learners' failure to learn English successfully. So, within a short period of time allotted to them, teachers have become overwhelmed by the idea of ending the programme and this leads us to speak about a regrettable social fact, that is, of the status of English on the school curriculum. English occupies a low position by being given a coefficient of two for almost all streams of study and thus, it is made less important in the eyes of the pupils. In doing so, the educational institution has contributed unconsciously to the appearance of a new socio-cultural view, that is of the unimportance of English at school, because learners are aware of the fact that the subject matters which receive higher coefficients are those which lead to school success.

Finally, we hope that this work has shed light on the importance of the impact of socio-cultural factors on learning English in rural secondary schools. We also hope that further studies will be done in this respect to back up the findings of this study so as to help teachers to work in better appropriate conditions and for the sake of improving the learning of English as a F.L in our schools in general and in rural areas in particular.

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## APPENDIX

### Pupils' Questionnaire

#### Section one: Background Information

**Q1:** Specify whether you are :

- a- Male.
- b- Female.

**Q2:** In which stream are you studying ?

- a- Exact sciences.
- b- Scientific.
- c- Literary.
- d- Technical.
- e- Any other stream ( please specify).....

**Q3:** How long have you been studying English ?

.....

**Q4:** Is your English attainment :

- a- Good ?
- b- Average ?
- c- Low ?

**Q5:** What is your father's educational background ?

- a- University.
- b- Secondary.
- c- Intermediate.
- d- Primary.
- e- None.

**Q6:** What is your mother's educational background ?

- a- University.
- b- Secondary.
- c- Intermediate.
- d- Primary.
- e- None.

**Q7:** What is your parents' occupation ?

a- Father's occupation.....

b- Mother's occupation.....

**Section Two: Pupils' viewpoints about learning English as a foreign language**

**Q8:** Do you consider the learning of English :

a- Very important ?

b- Important ?

c- Not important ?

**Q9:** Are you learning English because :

a- English is the language of science and technology ?

b- English helps you know about other peoples' culture ?

c- English is necessary to get a future job ?

d- English helps you in your future studies ?

e- English is part of the school program ?

f- Other reason ( please specify) .....

**Q10:** Do you like the company of people who are interested in learning English ?

a- Yes

b- No

**Q11:** Whatever the answer, say why.

**Q12:** Is there in your peer group the idea that learning English is a girls' subject ?

a-Yes

b-No

**Q13:** If yes, say why.

**Q14:** Does the learning of English as a foreign language threaten your sense of identity ?

a-Yes

b-No

**Q15:** If yes, say why.



### Section Three: Pupils' interest and future prospects

**Q16:** Do you think that education is important in ones life career ?

- a- Yes
- b- No

**Q17:** If no, say why.

.....

**Q18:** What do you do in your leisure time ?

- a- Read books.
- b- Wath films.
- c- Listen to songs.
- d- Go to internet centres.
- e- Sports
- f- Any other activity ( please specify).....

**Q19:** In which language do you often read ?

- a- Arabic.
- b- French.
- c- English.
- d- Any other language ( please specify).....

**Q20:** How do you get the books you read ?

- a- You buy them yourself.
- b- You borrow them.
- c- You rely on what you find at home.
- d- Any other way ( please specify) .....

### Section Four: Home environment and the climate of home opinion

**Q21:** Is there in your family people who at least know one foreign language ?

- a-Yes
- b-No

**Q22:** What are the languages you often communicate with at home?

- a- Standard Arabic.
- b- Dialectal Arabic.
- c- French.
- d- English.
- e- Any other language ( please specify).....

**Q23:** What kind of topics do you often discuss with your parents ?

- a- Your studies.
- b- Your personal problems.
- c- Scientific subjects.
- d- Any other subject ( please specify).....
- e- None.

**Q24:** How often do you talk in the presence of adults ?

- a- Frequently.
- b- Sometimes.
- c- Never.

**Q25:** Have your parents ever obliged you to do something you do not like ?

- a- Yes
- b- No

**Q26:** Do your parents read :

- a- Novels.
- b- Magazines.
- c- Newspapers.
- d- Other ( please specify).....
- e- None.

**Q27:** In doing your homework, are you interrupted by:

- a- The presence of other members like children ?
- b- The presence of a T.V set ?
- c- Bad material conditions ( no heating, no desk, no home library, no special room for doing homework.....) ?
- d- Any other ( please specify ).....
- e- None.

**Section Five: Parental encouragement and contact with the school**

**Q28:** Do your parents encourage :

- a- The notion of success and educability?
- b- The notion of learning foreign languages?
- c- The notion of individuality?
- d- The notion of personal decision- making?
- e- Other ( please specify).....

**Q29:** Are your parents in constant contact with the school ?

a- Yes

b- No

**Q30:** In case of failure, do your parents:

a- Discuss the reasons of failure with your teacher ?

b- Discuss the reasons of failure with you ?

c- Ignore about it ?

d- Other reaction ( please specify).....

### **Section Six: Classroom environment**

**Q31:** Is the classroom you study in:

a- Over-crowded ?

b- Semi-crowded ?

c- Not crowded ?

**Q32:** Do you ask your teacher whenever you come across a difficult item in English?

a-Yes

c- No

**Q33:** If no, is it because :

a- You can't express yourself in public ?

b- You fear from your teacher's reaction ?

c- You fear from being laughed at ?

d- You don't care about learning English ?

e- Other reason (please specify).....

**Q34:** What kind of atmosphere reigns in the classroom?

a- Friendly .

b- Frustrating.

c- Boring.

d- Neutral.

## Teachers' Questionnaire

### Section one: Preliminary information

**Q1:** How long have you been teaching English? .....

**Q2:** Have you been trained before you started teaching?

a- Yes

c- No

**Q3:** If yes, did this training highlight the influence of the socio-cultural factors on learning English as a F.L?

a- Yes

c- No

**Q4:** Whatever the answer you choose, explain in a few lines how the socio-cultural factors are related to language learning : .....

**Q5:** Have you taught English in :

a- A town?

b- A village?

c- Both?

**Q6:** If you choose option -c- of the previous question, how did you find the teaching of English in towns and villages?

a- Similar in terms of success and failure.

b- Different in terms of success and failure.

c- Any other view ( please specify) .....

**Q7:** If you choose -b- explain where the difference lies: .....

.....  
.....  
.....

### Section Two: Teachers' viewpoints on the influence of the home environment on learning English as a F.L

**Q8:** Do you think that the home environment affects the pupils' readiness to learn English?

a- Yes

b- No

**Q9:** If yes, are pupils affected by :

- a- The attitudes hold about the learning of foreign languages?
- b- The educational background of parents ?
- c- The availability of good material conditions?
- d- Any other ( please specify).....

**Q10:** Do you think that learners' behaviour is affected by the standards which a family puts for rearing up her children?

- a-Yes
- b- No

**Q11:** If yes, what are the standards which have a positive influence on the child's later behaviour in the language classroom?

- a- The scope given to the child to communicate his views without constraints.
- b- Authority and continuous control.
- c- Any other ( please specify).....

**Q12:** If you choose -b- justify your answer.

.....

.....

.....

**Section Three: Teachers' concern with the pupils' neighbourhood and its impact on their English attainment.**

**Q13:** Do you try to know about the social environment of your pupils?

- a-Yes
- c- No

**Q14:** If no, explain why : .....

.....

.....

**Q15:** What environmental factors do you consider more important in raising the learners' interest in learning English?

- a- The companionship of people who are interested in learning foreign languages.
- b- The availability of cultural clubs, internet centres and libraries.
- c- Any other ( please specify).....

**Q16:** During your teaching career, have you ever noticed that learning English is a girls' preference?

- a- Yes
- b- No

**Q17:** Whatever your answer, how do you find the girls' attainment in English?

- a- Better than boys.
- b- Worse than boys.
- b- Similar to boys.

**Section Four: Classroom environment and teachers- parents contact**

**Q18:** Is your pupils' participation influenced by :

- a- The large number of pupils in the classroom?
- b- Timidity and tendency towards introversion?
- c- Any other ( please specify).....

**Q19:** How do you deal with your pupils' mistakes?

- a- Correct every mistake.
- b- Draw the pupils' attention to mistakes indirectly.
- c- Any other way ( please specify).....

**Q20:** What is your pupils' reaction to difficult items?

- a- Asking questions.
- b- Ignoring difficulties.
- c- Any other reaction ( please specify).....

**Q21:** If they ignore about difficulties, is it because of :

- a- Lack of interest?
- c- Fear from the teacher's reaction ?
- d- Fear from the peers' comments ?
- e- Any other reason ( please specify).....

**Q22 :** Do your pupils work in a :

- a- A co-operative learning environment?
- b- A competitive learning environment?
- c- Both?

**Q23:** What are the ways you use to raise your pupils' interest to learn English?

- a- Speaking about the culture of English speaking people.
- b- Speaking about the importance of English as a F.L.
- c- Making use of audio-visual aids.
- d- Rewarding good pupils.
- e- Other ways ( please specify).....

**Q24:** If you choose –c- what audio-visual aids are available at your school?

- a- Radio.
- b- Video.
- c- Pictures/ Photos.
- d- Any other ( please specify).....

**Q25:** Is the atmosphere you creat in the classroom

- a- Friendly?
- b- Neutral?
- c- Any other (please specify).....

**Q26:** Do you manage to meet some of the pupils' parents?

- a- Yes.
- b- No

**Q27:** In case you select –b-, justify you answer.



## **L'IMPACT DES FACTEURS SOCIO-CULTURELS SUR L'APPRENTISSAGE DE L'ANGLAIS COMME LANGUE ETRANGERE DANS LES LYCEES SITUES DANS LES ZONES RURALES**

La présente thèse est un ensemble de cinq chapitres, dont l'objectif est de rechercher l'impact de l'environnement socioculturel sur l'apprentissage de l'anglais au niveau de la troisième année secondaire dans les zones rurales Algériennes .

En effet l'environnement socioculturel des apprenants est à la base de cette étude et de ce fait , les facteurs de réussite de l'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère seront examinés de ce point de vue .

Le processus de socialisation joue un rôle considérable dans la constitution de la personnalité de l'apprenant sous tous ses aspects surtout dans l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère . Ce processus débute à la maison et s'étend sur toutes les phases de la vie de l'apprenant lorsque celui-ci entre en contact avec l'environnement extérieur et l'école , ou il est exposé à plusieurs expériences qui influencent positivement ou négativement cet apprentissage :

Premièrement , à la maison , le niveau économique et éducatif de la famille influence la socialisation de l'apprenant en le préparant depuis les premières années de son enfance aux exigences de sa future scolarité .

Deuxièmement , l'impact de son environnement immédiat et de l'école sur la socialisation est primordial puisque l'apprenant est en contact direct avec les idées sociales et culturelles qui peuvent être un atout ou un obstacle à cette apprentissage .

Ce travail s'est effectué à partir d'un premier questionnaire administrés à 180 élèves de troisième année secondaire appartenant à différentes filières et d'un second questionnaire remis à une quarantaine de professeurs d'anglais .

Les résultats de cette étude tentent de démontrer que le niveau des apprenants de l'anglais vivant dans un environnement économique-culturel pauvre tend à être faible .Cependant cet échec n'est pas du à un facteur familial seul mais aussi à ceux de l'environnement et de l'école .