

Beni Snous Speakers' Linguistic Accommodation in an Urban Contact Context

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Abstract: Within a rural-urban contact context, the present paper investigates linguistic accommodation of rural speakers (originally from Beni Snous valley, south-west of Tlemcen-Algeria) being in frequent and regular contact with urban speakers in the neighbouring city of Tlemcen. Gender marker is the selected linguistic variable which is used to address a female person. This variable has a reduced form [-i] and a neutralised form \emptyset in the speech of Tlemcen speakers. However, Beni Bahdel speakers tend to diphthongise it by adding the suffixes [-ij] and [-ej]. Thus, the aim is to examine whether these rural commuters to the city of Tlemcen have accommodated their speech to the input variant forms [-i] and gender neutralisation \emptyset or they still maintain their native variant form. By means of quantitative and qualitative methods, data analysis has revealed that linguistic accommodation has been attested in the speech of these speakers. Some social factors dictate the accommodative behaviour of these rural speakers to urban speech, as women are likely to maintain their native speech while men are prone to accommodate their speech. Such linguistic behaviour is reinforced by social-psychological factors towards both their native speech and urban speech.

Keywords: Linguistic Accommodation/Non-Accommodation, Diphthongisation, Urban/Rural Speech, Attitudes

1. Introduction

When talking about linguistic variation, there is no doubt that we are referring to the ways language differs among individuals in a given speech community under a number of circumstances. Looking for the possible factors involved, the field has been considered from different angles, contact being one of them. From a sociolinguistic point of view, the term contact covers languages or dialects in contact. As far as contact between dialects is concerned in this paper, Trudgill [28] states in his theoretical framework of dialect contact that in a situation where speakers of different but mutually intelligible varieties of the same language come together, usually the process of accommodation takes place whereby speakers accommodate to each other linguistically by reducing the existing differences between their speech patterns and adopting features from each other's speech. Thus, the primary objective of this paper is to investigate language variation and change as viewed through dialect contact and accommodation lenses. As Beni Bahdel (BB henceforth) villagers commute or stay temporarily in the

neighbouring city of Tlemcen, they are in frequent contact with urban speech. One of the most important findings in dialect contact studies is that accommodation towards a particular variety is motivated by the speakers' favourable attitudinal orientations towards that variety itself, towards its speakers and more particularly towards the accommodated linguistic features of that variety.

As just mentioned, it is essential to trace intersecting patterns with linguistic accommodation such as the demographic parameters of speakers, as well as their attitudes towards the forms used and their speakers. Involving these factors might be vital in explaining the linguistic behaviour of speakers. Therefore, the following questions are set out to either prove or disprove this process among BB speakers in an urban setting in the adjacent city of Tlemcen.

1. In an urban context, does linguistic accommodation occur in the speech of BB rural speakers?
2. If accommodation is attested, which linguistic forms are adopted and which are not?
3. Do men and women accommodate their speech in the

same rates? Do they adopt or maintain the same linguistic features?

4. Is the speakers' linguistic behaviour that is reflected in either accommodation or non-accommodation governed by their attitudes towards their native speech as well as urban speech?

Following Trudgill's [28] assumption, the suggested hypothesis is that some form of linguistic accommodation might have occurred in the speech of these commuters and short term residents as they are in contact with speakers of urban cities as a result of their mobility.

Attitudes are important in understanding the speakers' linguistic behaviour. It is expected that if accommodation occurs, it will pertain to attitudinal orientations of speakers. Their linguistic behaviour, which is reflected in accommodation or non-accommodation, corresponds with their attitudinal orientations towards their native speech as well as the urban one they are exposed to.

2. Context of Contact in this Study

Algerian Arabic, often called *Darija* or *Ammiyya*, is considered as a dialect among the various colloquial dialects of the Arabic language. It includes various regional dialects spoken in most parts of the Algerian territory, which are more of different accents than different dialects (Benali, [4]). Algerian Arabic stands as the major element of identity from region to region. It changes from place to place and from town to town. Even two towns or two villages near one another may not speak the same accent.

Zooming in further the built up picture of dialect contact in an Algerian mould, the context of this study was set in one of the myriad of Algerian villages located in the vicinity of big towns and cities. It is a small ex-Berberophone area called the valley of Beni Snous, situated on the Algero-Moroccan confines, approximately forty-five kilometres south-west of Tlemcen. Consolidated in small sub communities, the valley of Beni Snous cradles thirteen villages located along water courses. Among these sub communities, Beni Bahdel was chosen as a fieldwork mainly because of its inhabitants' permanent mobility to the urban area of Tlemcen and the linguistic variability that characterises their speech. One of the main markers of the local varieties spoken in the valley is the diversity in addressing feminine gender. As will be mentioned in section 4.2, gender marker is the selected linguistic variable as variant forms are available in the speech of Beni Snous villagers. Among them, BB native speakers diphthongise gender marker by adding the suffix [-ij/-ej] to verbs conjugated in all Arabic tenses. Diphthongisation of gender marker among BB natives is almost unique in the valley and even in the vicinity of Tlemcen. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate the linguistic accommodation of this linguistic feature as its speakers move out of the local context, i.e. when they are outside their home village and in contact with speakers of Tlemcen urban city.

3. Methodology

Using both qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain full understanding of BB speakers' linguistic behaviour, the present paper is an investigation standing at the crossroads of two subfields: it is a sociolinguistic study of dialect contact; a variationist study of language variation and change where the Labovian approach is applied to show the interplay of the linguistic and social structures; and a social-psychological investigation to reveal the extent to which the speakers' linguistic behaviour is affected by their attitudes.

Thus, to address the aforementioned questions, a group of BB mobile speakers, commuting from their village to the neighbouring city of Tlemcen or staying there temporarily (for a few days, weeks, or months before returning home), was selected. These speakers are in regular contact with people outside their village because they work or study in Tlemcen. This latter is characterised by a high variability in the speech of its inhabitants as it is considered to be a heterogeneous speech community due to the mass migration from the neighbouring rural villages (Dendane, [10]). Different linguistic forms of the standard variable (i:na) are used in Tlemcen speech community among which the following three variant forms are subject to this investigation: the reduced form [-i] like in [kuli] 'eat', the neutralised form Ø which denotes the absence of gender marker when addressing females such as [Kul] 'eat', and diphthongisation as a third variant form used by BB native speakers like in [kuli:j] 'eat'.

Thus, twelve male and female speakers were interviewed via asking them questions in order to obtain the targeted linguistic feature. Compared with other variables, gender marker was difficult to elicit mainly because it does not occur frequently in the speakers' speech. Moreover, as it occurs with imperfective, perfective, and imperative verbs, it needs face-to-face interaction with a speaker asking or talking to a woman and this was almost impossible to achieve because it takes much time with speakers. Elicitation via pictures also proved to be useless. Thus, as mentioned above, direct questions were included in the interview questionnaire to elicit this variable and get more tokens. The number of tokens realised swung between ten as a minimal number and eighteen as a maximum number elicited from each speaker.

To elucidate the speakers' attitudinal information, the direct method was applied as it is a straightforward measure that is widely used by researchers in the field of language attitudes investigations. It is mainly processed through overt questioning by asking the informants questions in a written form via administering a self-reported questionnaire at the end of each interview. Finally, the research method applied is essentially a combination of both quantitative and qualitative along with the research instruments used to collect data. These are mainly the sociolinguistic interview, and the attitudes questionnaire.

4. Literature Review

4.1. Mobility, Dialect Contact and Accommodation

Contact between different groups of people is the ultimate consequence of regional and social mobility. Such contact is extreme and can be in various forms such as those resulting from: colonisation, forced labour movements, and long distance mass migration (Britain [7]) and this occurs at a national or international level. They generally lead to important and abrupt linguistic changes (Britain [7]). As opposed to extreme contact, interdialect contact is another form that occurs at a local level as a result of people travelling regularly between their places of work or study and their homes, i.e. commuting, or staying temporarily there before returning home. These are referred to as short-term residents. In this type of contact, linguistic changes, according to Britain [7], can be similar to those forms of extreme contact or less dramatic.

In very recent times, it has become very clear that mobility has had an effect on modern-day society. As just mentioned before, mobility at intranational or transnational levels involve mass migration of families or individuals seeking work and socio-economic progress (Milroy [24]). At a more local level, as explained by Britain [7], it includes those mobile individuals from many communities who move frequently because of their daily lives' humdrum business. Mobility can also take the form of migration at this too local level as members from a given area move to another neighbouring one. Such internal population mobility under the form of internal migration occurs in contemporary speech communities under four types: urban-to-urban, and this is frequent in the Algerian society where people move permanently from a city to another city for many reasons: urban-to-rural, and this is less frequent than the first, but exists under forceful circumstances: rural-to-urban, which is the widely noticed type as mass of population exodus move permanently from rural areas to urban cities: rural-to-rural, if compared with urban-to-rural, it occurs more often than this latter.

Accordingly, Mobility with all its different forms, might lead individuals of different dialects (but of the same language) to permanent contact. The effects of such contact have been widely investigated since the publication of Trudgill's *'Dialects in Contact'* book. Within Trudgill's dialect contact framework, when different but mutually intelligible dialects of the same language come into contact, linguistic accommodation takes place (Trudgill [28]; Britain and Trudgill [6]). Accommodation is originally the interest of social psychology, but Trudgill [28] has extended it to cover the field of contact dialectology to explain dialects that are in contact and the formation of new dialects. The relationship between dialect contact and accommodation is understood in Trudgill's concepts of short-term accommodation and long-term accommodation: the second being the result of repeated acts of the first (Trudgill [28]; Britain [7]). Short-term accommodation is the result of temporary contact as speakers respond to their interlocutors in a particular situation and it

does not affect the speaker's speech permanently. If this short-term accommodation takes place frequently and becomes routinized over a long period of time, speech modifications and adjustments may become permanent and results in long-term accommodation, without taking into account the interlocutor or the setting (Trudgill [28]). Auer and Hinskens [3] argue that long-term accommodation is the key to change on a larger social scale.

Issues and mechanisms of linguistic variation and change discussed in Trudgill's seminal work were particularly relevant to the effects of mobility and migration in contemporary speech communities (Milroy [24]). Thus, the ever-growing number of migrants and displaced persons in these communities prompt researchers to investigate the linguistic consequences at various levels (phonological, grammatical, and syntactic) of international and transnational migration, and mobility (Milroy [24]). Most of the sociolinguistic studies, which have investigated speakers' linguistic behaviour in relation to factors such as mobility, migration and urbanisation at a local level, were conducted in urban cities and centred on rural migrants in these cities. Therefore, the present paper is similar to those former studies as it is set in an urban context to investigate the linguistic behaviour of BB rural speakers who are in contact with urban speakers as a result of their mobility outside the valley.

4.2. On Gender Markers in Arabic

Compared with Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic, gender distinction is made by adding the suffixes (-i:na), (-i:), and (-i) to the second person feminine singular of the perfective, imperative, and imperfective verbs respectively. This gender marker is still retained in Gulf Arabic such as the dialectal varieties of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman but with the elision of final /a/ so that the last letter is kept alone (Watson [29]). The following example is stated to show this description: Classical Arabic: the verb /taʔkuli:na/ 'you eat' /kuli:/ 'eat' /ʔakalti/ 'you ate' is articulated [tak^wli:n] [kuli:-] [ʔakalti] and [kalti] in most Arabian Gulf states.

However, in the Arab North African countries like Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania, and Morocco, it is reduced to the form [-i] (perfective, imperfective, and imperative) to distinguish women from men. In Algeria, gender distinction in verbs does exist as males and females are addressed differently. This is true for Bedouin dialects which keep gender distinction in the second person feminine singular of the verb, but sedentary dialects do not and so that are characterised by the drop of the feminine marker [-i] in the second person feminine singular. In Algiers Arabic, speakers do make a distinction between men and women when addressing them. As illustrated by Boucherit [5], the perfective verb forms [ktəb] and [ktəbi] 'you have written' are used in the second person singular masculine and feminine respectively. Thus, the imperfective and imperative forms would be [tektəb] 'you write', [ktəb] 'write' for the masculine and [təktəbi] 'you write', [kktəbi] 'write'. However, in Tlemcen Arabic, no gender distinction is

attested and hence, is completely dropped \emptyset (Dendane [9]). Therefore, the aforementioned Classical Arabic example is realised: [tek^wl] ‘you eat’, [kul] ‘eat’, and [kli:t] ‘you ate’.

In the valley of Beni Snous, gender marker is realised differently in many areas and villages (Kherbache [19]). For example, the neutral realisation of gender marker \emptyset in Tlemcen Arabic is similar to the local dialectal variety of Beni Hammou (a village in Beni Snous valley). Since it is attached as a suffix in a number of verbs when addressing the second person singular feminine, it is realised differently among speakers. In Beni Hammou Arabic, no distinction is made between males and females when addressing them and hence, has \emptyset variant. In Beni Achir Arabic and Mazzer Arabic¹, the variant [-i] is present in the speech of their speakers. However, in the speech of BB speakers, the diphthong [-ej] is used when it occurs in the environment of an emphatic consonant for example [ʕtɛj ni] ‘give me’ and [-ij] when it occurs in the environment of a plain consonant like in [mæddij li] ‘give me’.

According to Marçais [22], the Arabic diphthongs, /aw, aj/ are kept in Bedouin dialects. In sedentary ones, they are substituted by [i:], [u:] in the environment of plain consonants and [e:], [o:] in the environment of emphatics /t, ʕ, ʔ, d/ and the pseudo-emphatics /q, r, x, ɣ/ respectively. For example, /mawʕa/ → [mu:ʕa]: ‘wave’: /aw/ becomes [u:] as it is preceded by the plain consonant /m/.

/ʔajb/ → [ʔi:b]: ‘whiteness of hair’: /aj/ becomes [i:] as it is preceded by the plain consonant /ʔ/. /ʕawʔa/ → [ʕo:ʔa]: ‘hit’: /aw/ becomes [o:] as it is preceded by the emphatic consonant /ʕ/.

/dajf/ → [de:f]: ‘guest’: /aj/ becomes [e:] as it is preceded by the emphatic /d/.

The current data have revealed some linguistic aspects of the spoken varieties in Beni Snous valley. For example, in Mazzer Arabic whose speakers, though they left the nomadic style of living, their speech still contains this characteristic of Bedouin dialects. In this paper, this type of diphthongs associated with nouns is not subject to examination. The main concern is with the realisation of the type of diphthongs articulated in verbs found in the speech of BB speakers who are particularly subject to utter diphthongs only in verbs rather nouns. Diphthongisation in Beni Bahdel dialectal Arabic, as found in nouns, is also found in verbs conjugated in the perfective [ʔritij], imperfective [təʔrij], and imperative [ʔrij] ‘you bought, you buy, and buy respectively’.

As the main concern in this paper is to examine linguistic accommodation to explain variation and change in accordance with social constraints and not linguistic constraints, the occurrences of the diphthongs [-ij] and [-ej] in different linguistic environments, i.e. plain and emphatic consonants respectively are counted as one variant. Thus, throughout this paper both realisations are referred to as one variant [-ij/-ej] because the number of tokens realised by speakers was relatively small and for this reason, all [-ij]-[-ej] occurrences were counted and referred to as: [-ij/-ej].

5. Results and Discussion

The distributions of gender marker variant forms among the informants as well as their attitudes are dealt with by using quantitative methods to represent them via bar graphs and pie charts. Qualitative methods are also used in order to analyse both the linguistic and attitudinal behaviour and reveal the social and psychological constraints governing them.

5.1. Linguistic Accommodation of Gender Marker

One of the main markers of the local varieties spoken in the valley is the diversity in addressing feminine gender. Therefore, as already indicated, BB natives have a gender distinction in the second person feminine singular which is, probably, not found elsewhere throughout the Algerian territory. They diphthongise gender marker by adding the suffix [-ij/-ej] to perfective, imperfective, and imperative verbs. The variant forms of the standard variable (i:na) that is subject to investigation in this paper are: [-i]- \emptyset [-ij/-ej]. Thus, the aim is to reveal whether BB speakers retain their native form [-ij/-ej] or they adopt the new forms [-i] and \emptyset .

Because the researcher was aware of the specific feature under study and in order not to influence the speakers during the interviews, she consciously maintained her own original speech and did not modify it, i.e. did not converge to any of the interviewees’ native speech features. As far as gender marker as a sociolinguistic variable is concerned, neutralisation is a linguistic feature that characterises the researcher’s original speech. The following table shows the speakers’ accommodative behaviour statistically.

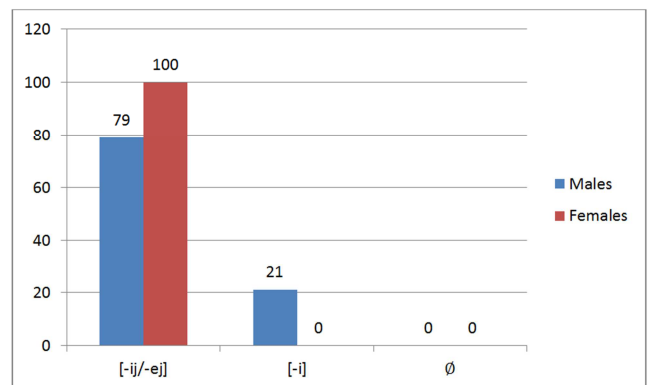


Figure 1. Use of gender marker among BB speakers by gender.

No accommodation has been attested in the speech of both male and female BB speakers to the neutralised form of gender marker \emptyset that characterises the speech of Tlemcen natives. However, and as the bar graph shows, the speakers have shown variation in the use of their native diphthongs [-ij/-ej] and Tlemcen [-i] gender marker.

Studies have proved that variation in language use according to the variable of gender is universal (Al-Wer [2]). Earlier scholars in their investigations on the relationship between gender and linguistic variation proved that men and women differ in their speech in different ways: Labov’s [21]

¹ Mazzer and Beni Achir are two villages in Beni Snous valley.

study has shown that men and women's speech differs in style and that women's speech contains more standard forms than men's. The Milroys [23] state a number of differences among which we mention that on a stylistic continuum, women are careful in their speech and men are casual. In addition, women are likely to use prestige norms whereas men use vernacular norms.

Investigations on this social variable in the Arabic-speaking world have proved the assumptions of its universality. After comparing studies from both Arab and Western societies, Chambers [8] claims that the diverging socio-cultural structure of the Arab world and the Western world does not necessarily lead to divergent gender behaviour. They are rather similar in that women use more standard forms than men do in the same social group in both worlds. This behaviour is associated with women's verbal ability which apparently, according to him, overrides the socio-cultural differences (Chambers [8]).

However, other studies on gender differences in the Arabic-speaking world show the reverse. For example, Abdel-jawad's [1] study of Amman and Sallam's [27] study in Cairo, have shown that men use the standard variant more than women do; a result that contrasts with the Western societies where women are found to use standard forms more than men do.

Therefore, the present paper is, certainly, worth a question in relation to the gender variable: Do the general reached findings on gender differences apply to the present study? Do BB men and women behave the same way as other men and women across the world? More particularly, are BB women really innovative or conservative in their linguistic behaviour? Among other issues, this paper aims at investigating the patterns of gender differentiation among BB speakers.

Women in this investigation are significant much more in non-accommodation than accommodation. Accommodation to [-i] has occurred at high percentages among males (21%), while non-accommodation has been revealed among females who strongly favour the use of their native gender marker. This divergent linguistic behaviour of men and women reflected in adoption of new forms and maintenance of original speech respectively can be partly attributed to the innate conservatism in the valley with some women having less exposure to the outside world; a fact that has led many of them to maintain their original linguistic features. Though women's present day living in the valley has changed for the better, their accommodation behaviour cannot be attributed to it. They have demonstrated an openness to change in the way of living and some of them have become more exposed to the outside world as they left the tradition of farming, raising cattle, and crafting and experienced opportunities of studying and working.

Even though present-day living is not like times long ago, women's frustration still exists. Though they are in regular contact with other people outside the valley and seem not to be conservative in their style of dress for example, they are, indeed, so in the way they speak, i.e. they maintain their original linguistic forms and features. A short discussion with

some female speakers has revealed the causes of females' speech maintenance in urban context; the feelings of affiliation to their origins and their strong attachment to their dwelling places determine their linguistic behaviour which is reflected in non-accommodation to urban speech and maintenance of native speech. Their conservative behaviour in non-accommodation reflects their disinterest in the outside world represented in this investigation in urban lifestyle in the adjacent city of Tlemcen. Furthermore, this very behaviour reflects their rural-oriented lifestyle as well as the pro-tribalism character that is still deeply rooted in the area.

In times past, not very long ago, women in the whole valley did not have the chance to attend schools, to utter a word in a family gathering, or to take decisions. Moreover, they were forced to be married at a very young age and take the family responsibilities. Their role as existing human beings in the tribal sense was confined to their private role within family space looking after its members as housewives and raising children. On the contrary, men are engaged in public life living in the outside world that is totally different from the inside world (i.e. within the family). This past picture still has far-reaching consequences: for example, during data collection, it was impossible to come across old women as a category of female speakers having external contact via commuting or travelling regularly outside the valley for work. The number of those working outside can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

5.2. *Speakers' Attitudinal Orientations*

Proponents of the accommodation theory like Gardner and Lambert [11]; Giles [13]; Giles and Smith [14]; Giles et al. [15], argue that attitudinal orientations play a great role in speakers' tendency to modify their speech. If an individual wants to gain the approval of his interlocutor, he will converge linguistically to his variety and reduce the linguistic differences: but if he wants to distance himself from that interlocutor, he will diverge by maintaining his original variety. To relate dialect contact and linguistic accommodation as its ultimate consequence with attitudes, Trudgill [28] states that:

In face-to-face interaction [...] speakers accommodate to each other linguistically by reducing dissimilarities between their speech patterns and adopting features from each other's speech. If a speaker accommodates frequently enough to a particular accent or dialect, --then the accommodation may in time become permanent, particularly if attitudinal factors are favourable.

Thus, three fundamental questions were designed to reveal speakers' attitudes towards their native speech when speaking to foreigners outside the valley as well as urban speech. These questions were structured in the following way:

1. How do you feel about your local variety when you speak to people in urban cities?
2. Do you think that in order to integrate with people in the urban cities and towns one has to change the way they speak?
3. Do you like the way people speak in urban cities?

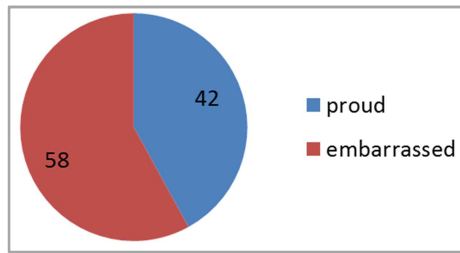


Figure 2. Speakers' responses to question 1.

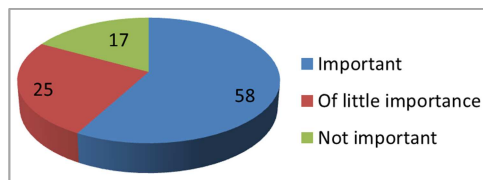


Figure 3. Speakers' responses to question 2.

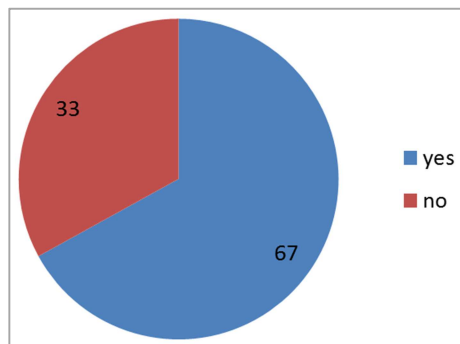


Figure 4. Speakers' responses to question 3.

As figure 2 shows, most of BB speakers (58%) feel embarrassed when interacting with speakers in Tlemcen and hence avoid their local dialectal variety in such situations. Some of these speakers are convinced that the way they speak might reveal their regional origins and even push people to mock them. Thus, they have shown negative attitudes to their native speech considering it as a source of stigma which might hinder their social integration in urban cities.

The results illustrated in figure 3, show that almost all speakers agree on that modification of one's way of speaking in urban cities is important (58%), while 25% of the speakers state that it is of little importance. Very few of them state that it is of no importance at all (17%). These commuters and short-term residents, and after a considerable time spent in Tlemcen city, think that there is a necessity to be aware of the way one speaks in these urban locations. They see the social integration with urban people necessitates converging linguistically with them as a basic element to gain social approval in order to achieve their professional and educational goals. This can be fulfilled by proving oneself in the task he or she is implementing. They consider speech modifications as one of the most important keys for someone to achieve their goals and gain a social position among those urban people. However, some other speakers who are mainly females show the opposite and state firmly that there is no

necessity to modify speech under any circumstances. The following statements were extracted from a female interviewee when asking her: "Do you think that in order to integrate with people in the urban cities and towns one has to change the way they speak?"

-[wə ʃla: ʃ xa ʃ jana lli nbeddel hqarti. ʃla: ʃ maʃi huma?]

'Why is it me who must change the way I speak? Why not them?'

- [lijjəh ma ʃandi ʔa ʃ l bəʃ nah qar haqra maʃi djali]

'Why? Am I with no origins to speak a speech that is not mine?'

The female's response to the aforementioned question entails many issues: chief of them is the question of origins. Her answer reveals the feelings of affiliation to her origins. She shows how strongly she is attached to her area and her native speech. On the part of male speakers, they admit that they do change the way they speak whenever they are outside their home village and confess that most of the time features of their original local varieties reveal their origins especially if they are widely different to be noticed. They are of gender marker diphthongisation that characterises their speech, and consider it as a detector of their rural origins as soon as they introduce them in their speech, and thus they feel obliged to avoid them in order to be safe from their colleagues' comments and scorn. A female speaker reports that her short-term residence in Tlemcen for approximately six years permitted her to understand the social behaviour of speakers of this urban city and how easy they form stereotypes on mere backgrounds which include an individual's verbal or non-verbal behaviour: ways of speaking, walking, laughing, gestures and alike. According to her, everything is usually scrutinized by people who work with her. She further claims that because of these stereotypes one should select his or her words. Common words, often associated with people outside Tlemcen, are for example, [ʃrubijja], [ʃrijbijja], and [kavijja] that all denote a rural inexperienced woman. It is, therefore, under these social pressures BB rural male speakers are forced to change their linguistic behaviour as opposed to females who show the extreme opposite of these claims and state that they stick to the way they speak.

Whatever the reason that pushes these speakers to adopt new features from urban speech, their attitudes are converging towards positive trends favouring urban speech and negative trends devaluing it. This is clearly noticed from the above figure 4. These speakers in a significant majority evaluate urban speech positively (67%) while 33% of them evaluate it negatively. In fact, though they evaluate Tlemcen speech positively, they have not adopted Tlemcen native gender marker Ø which indicates that it is highly disfavoured. In fact, non-accommodation of this variant form stems from the fact that in the valley there is a group called Beni Hammou which has the same gender marker as Tlemcen natives. Thus, this form is conceptualised in a negative sense by all the inhabitants of the valley, so that it would be a source of shame to address women the same way like men because they are not socially equal and that women should be treated differently from men. These false views lead these

speakers to strongly disagree with the way these speakers address women and do not adopt it as a form found in Tlemcen native speech.

It is clear from the above illustrative figures that a possible reinforcement of the speakers' use of certain linguistic features to the rejection of others stems from their attitudes towards the dialectal varieties spoken outside the valley. Much of the impetus for accommodation comes from the socio-psychological factors which lie in the desire of those speakers (working or studying outside the valley) to remove dissimilarities found in their speech. This was achieved by avoiding forms of their native speech and adopting their interlocutors' ones. In addition, speakers in their attitudinal self-report have devalued their own speech and, in contrary, have valued neighbouring speech of Tlemcen urban city.

Accordingly, there is strong evidence to assert that these speakers are negatively oriented towards their local dialectal variety and positively oriented towards urban speech, and this attitudinal behaviour explains their linguistic behaviour reflected in accommodation to the variant form [-i] and avoidance of the use of their original [-ij/-ej]. According to Labov [21], such behaviour is explained as linguistic self-hatred when speakers show overt attitudes towards their native speech. Linguistic self-hatred is, indeed, found among BB group of speakers as they have shown negative attitudes overtly towards their native dialectal variety. Moreover, this behaviour motivates other types of linguistic behaviour such as the attested linguistic accommodation in BB speech to non-native features of other dialectal varieties.

5.3. Evidence for Simplification as a Dialect Contact Outcome

Contact-induced linguistic change has been the major topic debated among linguists. Contact and change are the extreme terms in this process: the first makes a fresh start of the second, while the second makes the far end of the story of the linguistic heterogeneity of two different but mutually intelligible dialects when they come into contact (Trudgill [28]). Usually, linguistic heterogeneity undergoes koineisation², which can be defined as: "structural convergence between closely related linguistic systems, eventually leading to the stabilisation of some compromise variety" Hinskens et al. [16]. This process is composed of a series of processes of linguistic accommodation which occurs first and can become routinized and permanent as a consequence of long-term contact (Britain and Trudgill, [6]). A combination of four processes gives birth to a koine form. Trudgill [28] refers to them as mixing, levelling, simplification, and reallocation.

Simplification involves "an increase in regularity" (Mühlhäusler, [25]). It might also involve a reduction in the number of grammatical categories such as gender morphologically marked cases, simplified morphophonemics

and a reduction in the number of phonemes (Kerswill and Williams [18]). To illustrate simplification, Jahr [17] shows the grammatical simplification of Bergen³ dialect in comparison with other Norwegian dialects. Bergen forms that are grammatically simplified are:

- Monophthongs instead of diphthongs.

- Two grammatical genders instead of three.

- The absence of plural endings in adjectives.

- Analytical means replacing the genitive case when expressing possession (*mannen sin att, lit 'man- the his hat = 'the man's hat'*)

In the present paper, the accommodating behaviour of BB speakers in an urban contact context has yielded simplification process. Gender distinction realised in their speech as diphthongs -ij and -ej (depending on the environment of either plain or emphatic consonants respectively) in the second person feminine singular is being replaced with the reduced form [-i]; a variant that is overwhelming the speech community of Tlemcen. Based on the quantitative data which indicate that a certain amount of linguistic accommodation was attested, it is therefore the process of simplification that is taking place among these speakers as the diphthong -ij/-ej is monophthongised to the form [-i].

6. Conclusion

As the speakers' linguistic accommodation was exposed with respect to the retention or reduction of their native regional form, the results indicate that the linguistic behaviour of BB speakers outside their dwelling places is determined by a number of social and social-psychological factors. External contact that these speakers are exposed is of decisive influence and makes linguistic accommodation more likely to occur among speakers who are in regular contact with speakers of the urban areas. Gender has proved to be significant in this investigation; women are significant much more in non-accommodation than accommodation. Compared to men, they have shown very conservative linguistic behaviour outside the valley. Such behaviour in non-accommodation and hence maintenance, reflects their disinterest in the urban lifestyle in the adjacent towns and cities. Conversely, this very behaviour reflects their rural-oriented lifestyle as well as the pro-tribalism character that is still deeply rooted in the area.

The possible and inevitable mechanisms of linguistic change that are usually the ultimate consequences of long-term contact and accommodation are by far the most important. Thus, the attested accommodation among speakers has and is contributing to change in progress. This process implies a gradual increase or decrease in the frequency of the use of a linguistic feature which can be explained by researchers as a change in progress. Simplification, as an indicator of such change, entails the phenomenon of simplifying BB gender marker diphthongs [-ij] and [-ej] to

²Koine is the form of a variety that is the final outcome of koineisation which is a contact-induced process that leads to change (Kerswill and Williams [18]).

³Bergen is a city situated in Hordaland on the west coast of Norway.

the monophthong [-i]. Quantitative data have shown that this form is reduced by its native speakers and hence simplified to the form [-i] that is widely used in the vicinity of Tlemcen.

The social-psychological factors are presented in this investigation through eliciting the speakers' beliefs and opinions about their native speech and urban speech. Attitudes are revealed to be related to strong stereotyping and negative attitudes may have played a fundamental role in the rejection of native linguistic forms. However, positive attitudes towards urban speech determine their adoption of the new form of gender marker [-i] in their speech. These held positive and negative attitudes towards native speech and urban speech appear to have an influence on the trajectory of the individuals' linguistic behaviour that can be able to trigger accommodation or non-accommodation to particular features of the input urban varieties whose speakers are in permanent contact with.

As this paper is brought to an end, it is necessary to conclude that long-term contact as a consequence of the speakers' increased mobility outside the valley towards urban cities that governs their linguistic behaviour and makes accommodation likely to occur. Accommodation is strongly related with speakers' attitudes towards the speakers they are in contact with and their speech.

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