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SOCIAL NORM AND INDIVIDUAL STRATEGY IN CONVERSATION OPENING, MAINTAINING AND CLOSING IN ALGERIAN ARABIC –A PRAGMATIC STUDY-

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Abstract

The area of study investigated here has to do with how Algerians begin, maintain and close a conversation in Arabic, and how this is representative of their cultural identity. Two major interrelated traits of that culture are : family and religion. Hence, speakers are often going to make use of kin-terms and religious terms- cf. the third chapter in particular-.

The rules which will be used can be stable or flexible. They are also grammatical and social, psychological and aesthetic : skilled speakers are going to be able to keep a conversation going, to achieve good conversational entries – and closings -, and hence guarantee the continuity – and the enjoyment – of the conversation, which is often the underlying aim of Algerian conversationalists. Our study, definitely, is going to be a multi-functional one.

Beside describing the relatively fixed rules of sociolinguistic behaviour, the purpose of the present study will also concern the creative abilities of conversationalists in applying, adapting, and evaluating the speaking rules depending on the particularity of the social situation, on the specificity of the speaker's goal and on the kind of relationship – complementarity, opposition, precedence – the rules themselves are believed to hold with one another. Such a description of the rules and of the individual strategies for applying them will concern the chapters devoted to conversational opening, maintaining and closing in Algeria, while the two first theoretical chapters are necessary for a better understanding of the above – mentioned ones which make up the basic structure of conversation.

In the title of the present thesis, Social Norm is opposed to Individual Strategy. It is noticeable that there seems to be more Social Norm with Conversation Ending –chapter 5-, and even more Social Norm with Conversation Opening –chapter 3-; while Conversation Maintaining –chapter 4- appears to be more a matter of Individual Strategy. The reason for such a contrast could be that Conversation Opening and Conversation Closing are more ritualistic, and hence obey more fixed rules of social behaviour.

Such a description of the speaking rules and of the individual strategies for applying them is made even more complex because the Algerian speech community itself, its norms and values are nowadays in a state of flux. Beside this major theme of the thesis - i.e. rules vs. strategies -, a second, minor theme will then be running concurrently : it is a tentative description of a culture in the process of change.

Key words

Discourse – Conversation – Pragmatics – Politeness – Culture – Speech-community – Social norm – Individual strategy – Speaking rules – Ideology – Meaning.

Résumé

Le champ d'investigation de cette étude concerne la manière dont les Algériens débutent, maintiennent et mettent fin à une conversation en arabe, et comment cela reflète leur identité culturelle. "Famille" et "Religion" représentent deux caractéristiques essentielles, reliées l'une à l'autre, de cette culture. Par conséquent les termes de parenté et les termes religieux vont être souvent utilisés – cf. le troisième chapitre en particulier -.

Les règles qui seront utilisées peuvent être stables ou flexibles. Elles sont aussi grammaticales et sociales, psychologiques et esthétiques : les interlocuteurs doués vont se montrer capables d'assurer une continuité à la conversation, d'en assurer l'ouverture   – et la clôture – avec succès, et par là-même garantir sa continuité – ainsi que son plaisir –, qui sont souvent le but inavoué des interlocuteurs algériens.

Il ne fait aucun doute que notre étude va être multifonctionnelle. En plus d'une description des règles plus ou moins rigides régissant la conduite sociolinguistique, le but de cette étude va aussi concerner les capacités créatrices des interactants quand ils appliquent, adaptent et évaluent les règles de conduite verbale selon la particularité de la situation sociale, la spécificité du but de chaque intervenant, et le type de rapport   – complémentarité, opposition, précédence – que les règles elles-mêmes sont supposées avoir l'une envers l'autre. Une telle description des règles et des stratégies individuelles pour leur application va concerner les chapitres consacrés à l'ouverture, le maintien et la clôture de la conversation en Algérie, tandis que les deux premiers chapitres, théoriques, sont nécessaires pour une meilleure compréhension des chapitres cités plus haut, et qui constituent en fait la structure de base de la conversation.

Le titre de la présente thèse comporte une opposition entre *Norme Sociale*, d'une part, et *Stratégie Individuelle*, d'autre part. On peut remarquer que le cinquième chapitre, traitant de la clôture de la conversation, semble plus obéir à la Norme Sociale, cette dernière étant encore plus présente avec le troisième chapitre qui traite de l'ouverture de la conversation ;

tandis que le quatrième chapitre, qui concerne le maintien de la conversation, semble relever plutôt de la Stratégie Individuelle. Cette divergence pourrait s'expliquer par le fait que l'ouverture et la clôture de la conversation – deuxième et quatrième chapitres – ont plus un caractère rituel, et, par voie de conséquence, obéissent plus à des règles rigides de conduite sociale.

Cette description des règles de conduite verbale et des stratégies individuelles de leur application est d'autant plus complexe que la communauté linguistique algérienne elle-même, ses normes et ses valeurs, sont aujourd'hui dans un état de fluctuation. En plus de ce thème majeur de la thèse – où règles et stratégies s'affrontent -, un second thème, de moindre importance, fera son chemin en parallèle : il s'agit d'une esquisse de description d'une culture en pleine métamorphose.

Mots clés : Analyse du discours – Conversation – Pragmatique – Politesse – Culture – Communauté linguistique – Stratégie individuelle – Norme sociale – Règles verbales – Idéologie – Sens.

مــلــخـــص

يتعلق مجال الدراسة هنا و التي يتمحور حولها هذا البحث، بالكيفية التي يستهل و يواصل و يختم بها الجزائريون محادثة باللغة العربية و كذا الطريقة المتبعة في التعريف بهويتهم الثقافية، حيث نجد ميزتان متلازمتان تتعلقان بهذه الثقافة و هما كالآتي : الأسرة و الدين، و من ثم غالبا ما يلجأ المتحدثون إلى استعمال المصطلحات المتماثلة و المصطلحات ذات الصلة بالدين الخاصة بالفصل الثالث على وجه الخصوص. و من ممكن أن تتميز القواعد، المزمع استعمالها، بالثبات و بقابلية التكيف إذ هي أيضا ذات طبيعة نحوية و اجتماعية و نفسية و جمالية حيث سيكون بوسع المتحدثين الماهرين الحفاظ على استمرار المحادثة و كذا تحقيق مداخل و خواتيم محادثية جيدة و بالتالي ضمان استمرارية و متعة المحادثة و التي غالبا ما تعدّ الهدف الضمني للمتحدثين الجزائريين. و عليه فدراستنا على وشك أن تصبح، بلا ريب، دراسة متعددة الوظائف.

و علاوة على وصف القواعد الثابتة بصفة نسبية و المتعلقة بالسلوك الاجتماعي اللغوي، ستتعلق الغاية من هذه الدراسة بالقدرات الإبداعية للمحدثين من خلال تطبيق مبدأ تكييف و تقييم القواعد الخاصة باللغة الشفوية التي تتوقف على خاصية الحالة الاجتماعية و القائمة على الطابع المتميز للهدف الذي يصبو إليه المتحدث و على طبيعة الصلة القائمة بين كل من التكامل و المقابلة و الأسبقية حيث من المعتقد أن تكون القواعد، في حد ذاتها، متلائمة مع بعضها البعض.

و سيتعلق مثل هذا الوصف الخاص بالقواعد و كذا الإستراتيجيات الفردية الهادفة لتطبيقها، بالفصول المخصصة لاستهلال و استمرار و ختام المحدث الجزائري، في حين أن الفصلين النظريين الأولين ضروريين لأجل فهم أحسن لتلك القواعد المذكورة أعلاه و التي تشكل البنية القاعدية للمحادثة. أما عنوان هذه الأطروحة فيتعلق بمقابلة المعيار الاجتماعي بالإستراتيجية الفردية. و تجدر الإشارة إلى أن هناك تواجد أكثر للمعيار الاجتماعي و الخاص باختتام المحادثة ضمن الفصل الخامس و تواجد أكثر للمعيار الاجتماعي و المتعلق باستهلال المحادثة ضمن الفصل الثالث. بينما يبدو الاستمرار في المحادثة على شكل موضوع خاص بالإستراتيجية الفردية متواجدا أكثر ضمن الفصل الرابع. و قد بتمثل سبب إحداث مثل هذا التباين في كون كل من عمليتي استهلال المحادثة و اختتامها يغلب عليهما الطابع الطقسي أكثر و من ثم فهما تخضعان لقواعد سلوك اجتماعي أكثر ثباتا. و يتسم مثل هذا الوصف الخاص بقواعد اللغة الشفوية و

الإستراتيجيات الفردية الهادفة لتطبيقها بالتعقيد أيضا لأن جمهور المخاطبين الجزائريين، في حد ذاته، و كذا المعايير و القيم التي يرتكز عليها هي في حالة تغير متواصل. و زيادة على هذا الموضوع الجوهري المتضمن في الأطروحة أي عملية مقابلة القواعد بالإستراتيجيات، هناك موضوع ثانوي سيشرع في تناوله بعدئذ و المتمثل في محاولة تقديم وصف عن ثقافة هي في طور التغير.

الكلمات المفتاحية : عمليات تحليل الخطاب – محادثة – المذهب الدرائعي – اللباقة – الثقافة – المجتمع الخطابي – الإستراتيجية الفردية – المعيار الاجتماعي – قواعد الكلام – الاديولوجية – المضمون.

ملخــص)المنول الأول(

يتناول هذا البحث كيفية بدء الجزائريين و استمرارهم و إتمامهم للحديث باللغة العربية و كيف أن هذا يمثل هويتهم الثقفية. و بما أن العربية هي من دون شك اللغة الأساسية في الجزائر، فإن الثقافة و الحضارة التي تمثلها أصبحت جزءا لا يتجزأ من غالبية الجزائريين. هناك خاصيتان مترابطتان أساسيان لهذه الثقافة : العائلة و الدين ، و الأمة الإسلامية تعد في الإسلام العائلة الكبرى. و عليه، فإن مستعملي اللغة كثيرا ما يلجؤن إلى استخدام الألفاظ العشيرية و الدينية في حديثهم اليومي / أرجع إلى الفصل الثالث على وجه الخصوص.

بالتأكيد ، سوف تكون دراستنا متعددة الوظائف، و بالتطابق ، فإن قواعد السلوك الخطابي تكون نحوية و اجتماعية و نفسية و جمالية : فالمتكلمون الماهرون قادرون على تمديد الحديث و الإتيان بالألفاظ الاستهلالية و الختامية الملائمة و بالتالي يضمنون استمرارية و متعة الحديث الذي هو هدف المخاطبين أو المتحدثين الجزائريين. و يتوقف الحديث الناجح على البدايات الموفقة ، و البدايات الموفقة نعتمد كثيرا على ما يفعله المتكلم بالقواعد الموجودة و على خياله الشخصي و على مراقبته النسبية للحديث، و المشاركين فيه. و تبدأ إستراتيجية الكلامية بالفعل قبل

بدء الحديث عندما يستقر رأيه حول الموضوع و مغزاه من خلال فحص أولي و تخمين حول مواقف المشاركين فيه.

و إلى جانب وصف القواعد الثابتة نسبيا للسلوك الاجتماعي اللغوي، فإن الهدف من هذا البحث يُعنى كذلك بالقدرات الخلاقة للمحدثين في تطبيق القواعد الكلامية و تبنيها و تقييمها وفق خصوصية الوصفية الاجتماعية و هدف المحدّث و نوعية العلاقة التي تقيمها القواعد نفسها مع بعضها البعض سواء كانت تكاملية ، خلاقية أو تصديرية. إن هذا الوصف للقواعد و الإستراتيجيات الفردية لتطبيقها يهص الفصول المتعلقة بافتتاح الحديث و استمراريته و اختتامه في الجزائر. و في حين أن الفصل الثاني يعد بمثابة جرد للحديث ، فالفصل الأول الذي يتحدث عن التواصل بصفة عامة، يكتسيان أهمية كبيرة لفهم أحسن للعناصر السابقة الذكر التي تكون البنية الأساسية للحديث.

في عنوان هذه الأطروحة ، جاء مصطلح "المعيار الاجتماعي" مقابلا "للإستراتيجية الفردية" و من الملاحظ أن هناك حضورا أكبر للمعيار الاجتماعي عند اختتام الحديث -الفصل الخامس- ، و عند استهلاك الحديث -الفصل الثالث- في حين أن استمرارية الحديث -الفصل الرابع- تبدو أنها مسألة إستراتيجية فردية. و يعود سبب هذا التضارب إلى أن افتتاح الحديث و اختتام الحديث من الأمور الطقسية الشعائرية التي تخضع إلى القواعد الثابتة للسلوك الاجتماعي.

إن هذا الوصف للقواعد الكلامية و الإستراتيجيات الفردية بغية تطبيقها أصبح أمر معقدا للغاية لأن المجتمع اللغوي الجزائري نفسه ، بمعاييره و قيمه هو الآن في حالة انصهار و تمخض. و بالإضافة إلى هذا المحور الأساسي للأطروحة ، أي القوانين الثابتة مقابل الإستراتيجيات الفردية المتغيرة لتطبيقها، فإن محورا ثانيا قد تزامن و هذا المبتغى الأساسي : إنه عبارة عن محاولة وصف لثقافة في طريق التغير.

FIGURES AND ABBREVIATIONS

FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

1 / "H" :   High

2 / "L" :   Low

3 / nb. :   Number

4 / C.A.:   Conversation Analysis

5 / T.R.P.:   Transition Relevance Place

6 / F.T.A.:   Face-Threatening Act

READING CONVENTIONS

The following IPA –International Phonetic Alphabet- symbols are used for the representation of the pronunciation of Arabic examples of conversation opening, maintaining and closing all through the thesis and in the following appendix. Comments about the transcripts are available in the third and final point within the General Conclusion.

CONSONANTS

Arabic character	Phonetic transcription	Phonetic identification
أ	/ʔ/	Glottal stop
ب	/b/	Voiced bilabial plosive
ت	/t/	Voiceless alveolar plosive
ج	/ʒ/	Voiced palato-alveolar fricative
ح	/ħ/	Voiceless pharyngal fricative
خ	/x/	Voiceless velar fricative
د	/d/	Voiced alveolar plosive
ذ	/ð/	Voiced dental fricative
ر	/r/	Voiceless alveolar rolled
ز	/z/	Voiced alveolar fricative
س	/s/	Voiceless alveolar fricative
ش	/ʃ/	Voiceless palato-alveolar fricative
ع	/ʕ/	Voiced pharyngal fricative
غ	/ʁ/	Voiced uvular fricative
ف	/F/	Voiceless labio-dental fricative
ق	/q/	Voiceless uvular plosive
ك	/k/	Voiceless velar plosive

Arabic character	Phonetic transcription	Phonetic identification
ل	/l/	**Voiced lateral fricative**
م	/m/	**Voiced bi-labial nasal**
ن	/n/	**Voiced alveolar nasal**
هـ	/h/	**Voiceless glottal fricative**
ي	/j/	**Voiced palatal fricative**

VOWELS

In written Arabic, and when indicated, vowels are represented by diacritics above or below the consonant, as for example :

بَ　　　: /ba/

بُ　　　: /bu/

بِ　　　: /bi/

In Algerian Arabic, the following vowels are used, some with their longer counterparts :

/ i / : Front, close, spread

/ e / : Front, half close, spread

/ a / : Front, open, spread

/ ɑ / : Back, open, rounded

/ ɔ/ : Back, half open, rounded

/ u / : Back, close, rounded

/∂ / : Central, between half close and half open, neutral.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1/ PREAMBLE

The search for self-identity is becoming nowadays a world problem. Its revival can be partly explained by the end of colonialism and authoritarianism, and by the rapid expansion of democracy throughout the world. A widely shared ([1]) principle today is the right of the people to decide for themselves.

If on the theoretical level there is universal agreement about such a principle, on the practical side differences of view often appear, which mainly concern the borderline –if any- between a territory and another, a social-ethnic group and another, a language –culture- and another.

Disagreements and difficulties arise because of the lack of correspondence between natural, political and human boundaries. In Africa, which is a well-known example, the colonial boundary and the political decision have prevailed after the independence at the expense of the ethno-linguistic aspect. The same people, tribes, were divided by artificial political boundaries. The concept of boundary itself seems to be alien to many Africans. The problem we are confronted with is how to define and to delimit a speech-community, taking into account the complexity of the political, ethnological, and linguistic aspects of the people. Since African speech-communities are still largely unstable, it is no easy task to describe them objectively. Algeria can be taken as an example embodying the whole of the continent.

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[1]) "Widely shared" in official texts and organisations, as well as in the minds of the people.

2/ Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to show how language use in general and conversational behaviour in particular, obey two kinds of principles which seem to contrast with one another : the stability aspect of language implying shared fixed rules and predictability of individual's sociolinguistic behaviour on the one hand, and on the other hand the flexibility aspect of language implying that the rules themselves can be fluctuating, indeterminate or in the process of change, and that the conversationalists may interpret them differently or even decide to flout them for one reason or another. In such a case, appeal is made to the individual verbal skill, imagination and creativity of every interactant. Here, the sociolinguistic behaviour is likely to vary from one individual to another and to be largely unpredictable. This unconscious knowledge of variable rules can be considered as part of a speaker's communicative competence which includes cognitive processes and shared knowledge ([1]).

3/ Statement of the problem

The above mentioned criteria for language use -i.e. stability vs. flexibility- correspond to two other principles of human communication in general : social norm vs. personal strategy. The problem here is to evaluate how these two principles relate with one another –peaceful or conflictual coexistence-, and when, how

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[1]) Our purpose in this study obviously does not include the debate, which is a matter of social theory, between "order theorists, who argue that social norms and categories pre-exist, and individual behaviour and conflict or action theorists, who see human interaction as constitutive of social reality", cf. J. Gumperz, 1982:26.

and why one happens to prevail upon the other. These questions are going to find different kinds of answers throughout the thesis. Still it can be stated beforehand that though both social norm and personal strategy are going to be present in the different chapters and stages of the structure of conversation, the former imposes itself more in conversation opening –and more particularly with kin terms of address- while the latter seems to prevail in conversation maintaining. In leave-taking, these two criteria for conversational behaviour apparently balance out one another.

4/ Hypotheses

The whole of the study is based on the following assumptions or hypotheses : that the members of the same speech community share the same knowledge or appropriateness rules or communicative competence ; that no speech community is fully homogeneous ([1]) ; that its members never apply this abstract communicative knowledge in exactly the same way ; that individual differences in applying the shared speaking rules are partly determined by individuals' differences in emphasis of what should be the determining factor of the Algerian identity : language, ethnic group, religion, shared past, ideology or society project, i.e. which "world-s", way of life and way of thinking the Algerians believe themselves to belong to –Arabic, Islamic, Berber, African, Euro-American-.

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[1]) In the known world of today, "individuals are freer to alter their social personae with circumstances". Even "what on the surface seemed like a relatively homogeneous, isolated and therefore presumably stable Norwegian community revealed fundamental differences in social values among individual residents, all of whom were born and bred in the locality" –cf. J. Gumperz, 1982:26-27-.

5/ The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria

The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria can be referred to as multilingual and polyglossic. On the linguistic level, standard Arabic and French are "High" (H) languages, while colloquial Arabic, together with Berber languages, have a "Low" (L) status. On the social-ethnic level, a major division can be made between Arabs and non-Arabs or Berbers, who form minority groups and speak similar languages or varieties of the same language.

Languages in a multilingual speech community may coexist peacefully, with little or no tension, everyone serving the purposes of its users in a specific area of social life. Languages, in this case, complete one another and appear to be in complementary distribution. Thus :

- Standard Arabic (based on classical Arabic) is used for religion and many other formal situations.

- Algerian Arabic as a vernacular is mainly spoken, in many daily life situations, by the majority of the people.

- Berber languages : are minority groups' languages, limited mainly to the home, but more and more used outside.

- French : is often used for scientific and intellectual topics but also for ordinary conversation.

- Finally, and in most daily life situations, code switching between any two or more of these languages is used. It is probably more used than any one of them alone.

From the above linguistic map, one should not consider, necessarily, Standard Arabic users in Algeria as advocates of Islam, Berber speakers as autonomy seekers, French speakers as

western minded people. Only Algerian Arabic might be attributed no connotation, except that of having a lower status. But of course, reality is much more complex. Up to here, our description of the socio-linguistic situation in Algeria has been a static and a simplified one. But from a more dynamic and detailed approach, both the linguistic and social-ethnic realities are different.

Ethnically first, and due to the many non-Arab invasions, several races are present in Algeria. The situation is further complicated by mixed marriages, especially in urban areas, between communities which in the end have become only one people, with on the one hand, the Andalousian contribution of the Muslims who were expelled from Spain by the end of the fifteenth century, and on the other hand the Ottoman contribution of the Turks of Albania who were last to arrive. The concept of race, then is not always a neat one. It is stated from a political point of view in the following way by the Algerian daily newspaper "Le Quotidien d'Oran", 26-04-2001, p. 12 :

> *Every citizen is highly required to denounce the lies*
> *whose form is silence and which have hidden for*
> *many centuries the Berber –or Amazigh- gene which*
> *flows in the blood of every Algerian ; the Arab and the*
> *Ottoman married the Berber ancestor. The latter gave*
> *birth to the Algerians of today who have so much*
> *difficulty about facing these facts ([1]).*

This confusion in races does not necessarily disappear with

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[1]) This is my own translation of the following original version in French :
"Dénoncer les mensonges par omission qui ont caché, en fait durant des siècles, le gène berbère, amazigh, qui coule dans les veines de chaque Algérien, est une exigence citoyenne et impérative, l'Arabe et l'Ottoman ayant épousé l'aïeule amazighe qui a donné naissance à cet Algérien que nous sommes et que nous assumons si mal."

language use since the language one uses does not always reveal his identity –race-. For example, a Berber language might be used by an Arab (^{1}), and a Berber might not even know his ethnic mother-tongue (^{2}). This ethno-linguistic confusion is also going to appear on a higher level : the cultural one, since somebody's culture is what he thinks he is, he belongs to, but also what others –social-political organisations, mass-media, government- "decide" he is, and in a third step, what he chooses to be, to belong to ; which social groups, ideas, he is identifying with. Somebody's culture, identity, is often the interaction, the conflict, the tension, between these three influential dimensions.

Such a definition of culture is probably valid in many parts of the world since multilingualism and cultural pluralism is the rule. It seems to apply well to the Algerian context. In Algeria, some people consider themselves as Arabs, some others as Berbers, and some others –probably the majority of them- as a mixture of both ; while at the same time, they consider themselves more Arab than Berbers, because of Islam as a unifying third factor : the average Algerian man chooses to be simply (^{3}) a Muslim, the latter word being closely linked, fused in his mind, with the term "Arab", via the Arabic language, culture and civilisation he belongs to.

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[1]) For example, having a Berber as a colleague or as a neighbour, especially traditional neighbours, with whom they form a kind of "extended family".

[2]) For example, when brought up in a non-Berber area or even abroad, especially when the parents do not use –much- the Berber language with their children.

[3]) "Simply" is also referring here to a relief : the end of the troublesome quest for one's own identity, implying peace of mind and social peace ; the term "Muslim" confirms this view since it includes morphologically the idea of peace.

An exemplification about the fusion of the terms "Arab" and Muslim" in the Algerian mind takes the form of a story, an authentic one : an attempt was made to get an old Chawi Berber to criticise the Arabs for "colonising" Algeria. After he recognised the fact, he "justified" it with the following : "But they brought Islam to us". This attitude is exceptional at a time when minority groups are looking for their own roots and claiming autonomy or even independence.

The same view is expressed on a more intellectual level by Ibn-Badis, the most important pre-independence figure in political Islam. His saying, which still constitutes the basis of the Algerian identity, is known and sung by all young Algerians. It says : "ʃaˁbu ∂l ʒazaaʔiri muslimun wa ila ∂l ˁuruubati jantasib : the Algerian people is Muslim, and belongs to the Arab world".

Today, a third characteristic is officially recognised and is added to the Algerian identity : it is its Berber dimension, which is not taboo anymore. This newly added feature is a way to readjust, to reconstruct one's own identity, to bring it up to date. In the case of multilingualism and multiculturism, cultural identity is defined dynamically as a fluctuating and negotiated concept, since it is composed of several complementary or conflicting features, we either keep in balance or we favour one at the expense of the others. The individual in such communities as the Algerian one can easily belong to groups and sub-groups –Arabs, Berbers, Muslims, and even the laity-, which are different linguistically, ethnically, culturally, but which share deep similarities –religion is a strong example-.

Algeria is definitely a good example of a culture which is in the

process of –trans- formation. The Algerian sociolinguistic situation is conflictual and stable at the same time : languages, cultures and ideologies are competing, under the stabilising factor of Islam. But since Islam itself is interpreted differently ([1]), the Algerian speech community ([2]) remains somehow heterogeneous, every group trying to impose their own view about the society project for Algeria. Even violence can be used to achieve such a goal, as was observed in the last decade, and in the social uprisings of the beginning of the new century.

In the same way as somebody's identity is a smooth continuum of cultural features, social groups also form a continuum on the linguistic, ethnic, and cultural levels. Alexandre Adler expresses the same view in the Algerian daily newspaper "Le Quotidien d'Oran", 17-05-2001, p:15 :

It is a fact that, in Tizi-Ouzou, Arabic is hardly used,
and in El-Oued, right in the middle of southern
Sahara, the purity of Yemen Arabic is well preserved,
but in between these two poles, transitions are so
smooth and imperceptible ; the Chawis-Berbers of
Aures mountains –live their Arabic identity differently
from the Kabylians-Berbers of Djurdjura mountains-.
What is meant here is that the Chawis give
themselves up more readily to bilingualism… ([3]).

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[1]) For example, some Algerians argue that religion is independent from politics, it is an individual problem ; while for others religion is politics, is an individual and a social-political matter.

[2]) By "speech-community" is loosely meant a group of people living together and sharing linguistic and social-cultural similarities, including historical past, religion, ideology, values, beliefs, way of thinking, and so on.

[3]) This is my own translation of the following original version in French : " Certes, à Tizi-Ouzou, on ne parle guère l'arabe, et à El-Oued, au coeur du sud saharien, on conserve la pureté du parler yéménite, mais entre ces deux pôles, que de transitions douces et

Bilingualism is referring here to the use of Arabic and Chawi, either separately –in different registers-, or simultaneously –code-switching-.

To summarise and simplify the matter, let's take as a hypothesis that the average Algerian man meant to be representative of the whole Algerian speech community ([1]) is ethnically –and linguistically- an arabo-berber whose religion is Islam. This, on the one hand, leads to include him into the arabo-islamic world –because, as noted earlier, of the prevailing character of Islam and its necessary link with the term Arab- ; while on the other hand, and because of a more recent past –french colonisation-, the Algerians are still affected, consciously or not, by the west European, and mainly the French culture and language.

6/ The target population

The above definition of the average Algerian man is theoretical, while now, and more concretely this time, we must select a portion of the Algerian population and study how they open, maintain and close conversations. But since the Algerian speech-community is somehow heterogeneous –as we explained earlier- and unstable, the choice of a target population will be difficult. The lack of social stability began in fact in 1954 with the war of Independence. For

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imperceptibles ; les Chawis des Aurès vivent autrement leur identité arabe que les Kabyles – entendez par là que les Chawis s'adonnent davantage au bilinguisme -..."

[1]) The Algerian speech community definitely includes the most extremist minority group, i.e. the Kabyles, who, though violently claiming their berber identity, still refuse to split from the rest of Algeria. Speech community is defined by mutual intelligibility – common language, which in this case is Arabic-, but more importantly here by what the people believe themselves to belong to.

security reasons, many people were obliged to move from one region to another. While after the independence, and for economical reasons, there was a great geographical and occupational mobility of the population, mainly from the poorer countryside areas to the "attracting" urban centres. And finally, from the 80's onwards, and for security reasons again –the violent uprisings we hinted at earlier-, many people, especially in the rural areas, have been obliged to move from one place to another.

This unstable aspect of the population correspondingly exists on the cultural level where values also are fluctuating, conflicting. The lack of social and cultural stability is an additional reason why today in Algeria self identity has become a national problem – cf. the abstract-. Nevertheless, and since some kind of stability is necessary for any study, one of the most stable portions of population in Algeria is the urban nobility of traditional towns, Constantine, from which I originate, being a well-known example. However, it is worth pointing out that big towns have suffered from the independence onwards a big rural exodus.

Within the population of Constantine, the traditional parameters of age and sex can be relevant. For example, and as far as age is concerned, the elderly are going to be less concerned with the ongoing changes in, say, terms of address, or forms of greetings, because they have a narrower and a static repertoire. While for gender, males are going more readily to adopt, use and spread the new form of address, of greeting, of leave-taking.

7/ The method

Conversation Analysis –CA- is going to be used as a methodology. To analyse conversation opening, maintaining and

closing, the ethnomethodologist ([1]) approach is going to be used, based on close observation of how people behave, how they cooperate, how participants organise themselves to take turns at talk. This is the conventional, formulaic aspect of language use where the rules of linguistic behaviour are clearly defined and applied, as in discussions with a chairman, in debates, or in rituals. These are patterns which recur over a wide range of natural data ([2]), and which are defined by the social constraints or norms of politeness, face-preserving, and so on. Talk is relatively tightly structured such as in the interaction between doctors and patients. Here, we can predict who will speak when, who will ask, who will answer, who will interrupt, who will open and close the talk –cf. Sinclair and Coulthard's model –1975-. It is also referred to as the polite consensus –collaborative model.

On the other hand, the ethnomethodologist approach is also concerned with the close observation of how speakers engage in <u>strategic</u> acts of politeness, face-preservation, and so on. Here, messages differ with persons, and we shall have to explain how and why. Individuals differ systematically in their "message design logics" : some employ expressive approaches, some use conventional approaches, and some take rhetorical approaches. There is far more variation than can be accounted for by, say, politeness theory. A typical example for this individual variation is conversation, especially casual conversation, and speech-act theory in particular, which analyses interpersonal communication,

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[1]) Such terms as "Conversation Analysis" and " ethnomethodology" are explained in detail in the first and the second chapters.

[2]) Much of the data is about naturally occurring instances from spoken language, though reliance sometimes might be on intuitions, introspection and invented examples, e.g. when trying to describe a speaker's intentions, which is an important and difficult matter.

a communicative activity, with reference to the intentions of the speaker while speaking –the illocutionary force of his utterances-, and the effects he achieves on his listener –the perlocutionary effect of his utterances-. Here, we can hardly predict who will speak when, because of available choices to the speaker, which imply variability, negotiability, and adaptability.

Variability –or variation- is defined by Hymes –1974- as "a clue and a key in the study of language as a mode of action". The range of possible choices is not fixed ; it is constantly changing. Negotiability means that choices are not mechanically made according to fixed, strict rules, but in relation with highly flexible principles and strategies, with constraints to make the right choice. While adaptability is the choice to satisfy the basic communicative needs –need to communicate with success, or with failure, or even need to miscommunicate-.

These two aspects of language use –stability vs. flexibility- are two extremes which we oppose for the sake of theoretical analysis only ; while in real-life situations they happen to overlap, to fuse. However, it is often the case that in a given situation one prevails upon the other up to some degree. We shall see how in the following chapters.

We can summarise and say that ethnomethodology (1) is a continually developing sociological – though also anthropological and psychological – field of inquiry. Its research methodologies are eclectic, at times arbitrary, relying on a mixture of ethnographic

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[1]) Ethnomethodology has itself exerted significant influence on C.A., whose main work is directed to the sequential analysis of interactive talk – cf. Bilmes, 1986 ; Clayman & Maynard, 1994 ; Boden, 1994-.

field work, audio – and video – recordings, experimentations, field notes, transcriptions and first – hand observations – cf. Garfinkel, 1967, 1974 ; Heritage, 1984 ; Pollner, 1987 ; Hilbert, 1992 ; Bilmes, 1993 -. It has mainly been interested in the study of adjacency-pairs, turn-taking, conversational opening and closing, topic change, and strategic acts of politeness, which are thoroughly dealt with in the present thesis.

CHAPTER I

PRAGMATICS

Today, pragmatics seems to be a large, loose, and somehow disorganised field of inquiry, which has then become multidisciplinary. Researchers in an increasing number of disciplines are using pragmatic notions and concepts in their contribution to our understanding of human verbal –and non-verbal- communication. Such diversity could be explained by the complexities of language use and human communication.

Pragmatics can be briefly defined as "the cognitive, social and cultural study of language use and communication" – (Verschueren, J., 1995:1)-. Before we deal with language use and linguistic communication –i.e. linguistic pragmatics-, let us first explain the new interest for communication in general, i.e. the importance of communication today, and the types of communication.

1.1. THE NEW INTEREST FOR COMMUNICATION

In the last 30 years, the sciences where communication is involved have progressed considerably. Though the concept of communication is very much used, its meaning remains loose or ambiguous because of its multidimentional characteristic. It can mean one thing or another. It has always been so in the past, but today, new and more complex meanings are added to the term communication due to the appearance of modern technologies and professional practices.

1.1.1. The importance of communication today

Historically, the study of communication has been adapted to try and solve practical problems of everyday life since antiquity. Medical semiotics in Greece helped physicians to recognize illnesses on the basis of their signs or symptoms. The art of divination practised by the Romans aimed at the prediction of future events through the interpretation of omens. Medieval heraldry regulated the design of coats of arms to enable knights to recognize each other. The Enlightenment investigated ways of presentation which could be expected to achieve desired effects in the various genres of the Arts. The crypto-analysis of the Baroque period made great efforts to decode texts written in unknown characters and languages. Romantic philology attributed historical documents to particular authors and epochs, and tried to distinguish originals from copies. Craft and industry have endeavoured to standardise and protect legally guild signs, corporate symbols and trademarks.

In modern times, communication has become a fashionable concept in different activities, particularly within the powerful poles of media and politics. New technologies in the world of the media have appeared, where the stress is put on "more communication and more rapid communication". It is also the case in the field of management. The "global village" has succeeded the "Gutenberg era" characterised by the typographic and alphabetical system. That insistence on

communicating seems to be a decisive factor as far as efficiency of interaction is concerned, especially in the development of mass communication networks.

A frightening example of the prevailing state of mind in present times and of a misuse of communication is provided by S. Tchakhotiv (1952) whose very title suggests "the raping of crowds by propaganda". That was followed by works having to do with information theory, or with communicative metaphor –cf. J.L. Morgan, 1990- inspired from studies by C.E. Shannon and W. Weaver. It is also worth mentioning here the empirical applications in functional sociology which is much interested in the world of management.

Among others, H. Mintzberg (1989) has emphasized the importance of communication in the field of management, though its use as far as efficiency, rationality and organisation are concerned has been criticised by many others. Among the shortcomings, one can mention the waste of time and of money, as well as the large amount of useless written documents. Some members of staff also complain that too much time is devoted to useless meetings.

Such complaints and criticisms have also concerned the fields of politics, pedagogy, media, where insistence has been made about the necessity to shorten the linguistic expression and to readjust the messages according to the type of goals and objectives. One must bear in mind that communication is a socially built phenomenon, which depends on a dynamic

and complex changing environment, far away from the Gutenberg era.

It can easily be claimed that the ideas of M. Mc Luhan (1962, 1994) allow a larger and more doubtful perception of the media. Such a critical point of view, which is also shared by the individuals themselves towards the media, can be summarised by the statement that "the medium is the message".

There is no doubt today that communication is booming in the world, together with the ever-growing flow of telecommunicated messages and advertisements. Many researchers from different disciplines have been working together in their study of communicational practices. Communication has been analysed from its different aspects as for example the personal, the interpersonal, the professional and the institutional ones, bearing in mind what they have in common, but also what is specific to everyone. The study of thinking, speaking and language is a new approach for finding answers to questions about human behaviour in relation with human organised communication.

1.1.2. Views about communication

In recent years, studies on communication have concentrated on the analysis of patterned human communication in all its sensory modes, i.e. hearing, sight, taste, touch and smell. "Semiotic" studies in this sense vary in the degree to which they have progressed : a particular

contribution in such studies has been made by anthropologists, linguists, psychologists and sociologists. The branch of the subject which has received most study is the vocal-auditory mode, primarily through the subjects of phonetics and linguistics. The following studies are also gaining more and more importance : the study of visual communication know as kinesics ; the study of touch behaviour –and associated phenomena, such as body orientation and distance between people- often called proxemics ; while gustatory –taste- and olfactory –smell- systems of communication have received more study in relation to animal communication.

Particularly in Europe, semiotic analysis has developed as part of an attempt to analyse all aspects of communication as systems of signals –semiotic systems-, such as music, eating, clothes, dance, as well as language. In this area, the French writer, R. Barthes (1964-1988) has exercised particular influence. The extension of the subject to the analysis of animal systems of communication is known as zoosemiotics.

Among the types of communication theories, it is also worth mentioning the school of Palo Alto (1988) and its reactions against the mechanistic view, as well as the school of California and its criticism of the computer –based approach ; while P. Watzalawick (1978) is known for his insistence on the distinction misinformation /communica-tion. The concept of "reality" should be conceived as a system of exchanges whose function is to transmit symbols to man

and to ensure the propagation of the norms which regulate the community or the group. So, any communicative behaviour and attitude can only be understood within a given culture.

No communication, human exchange or relation can be isolated ; they become fully meaningful only when reinforced and confirmed by a communication system which is fed, as in natural life, by a permanent network of actions, reactions, interactions, retroactions. A particular kind of communication which is as meaningful as language is "silent language" – cf. T. Hall, 1959-. Among the functions of silence communication in different cultures, we can mention its influence on the difficulty in establishing a relationship or in achieving a good conversation.

Another important view about communication is brought about by L. Sfez (1993) for whom communication is mainly talked about in non-communicative societies whose cohesion is questioned, whose values become loose, where over-used, "old-fashioned" symbols cannot be a factor of unification anymore. Sfez has shown the importance of symbols, based on the idea of unification, as for example God, History, Nation, Freedom. He concludes with the paradox that "techno-communications", though meant to facilitate human exchanges, have weakened communication.

Another important philosophical approach to communication is represented by J. Habermas (1984) who

stresses the relevance of the ideas expressed by Parsons (1970) in the building of a sociology of speech act. According to Habermas, it is necessary to consider no more action and interaction as producing effects, since they must be viewed instead as part of a network of symbolic exchanges and of linguistic contexts. P. Pharo –2004- is expressing similar ideas since for him the study of utterances enables us to have access to the double perspective of the world : the objective and referential side, and the subjective or rather pragmatic side which we use to show the things we are talking about. Referring to communication, Habermas uses the terms : objective, inter-subjective and expressive action, to describe respectively truth telling, moral righteousness and sincerity. This is the social dimension of communication, which then determines language, implicit meanings and preconceived ideas.

1.1.3. Linguistic communication

According to Goffman (1976) all kinds of communication – including linguistic communication- share some universal characteristics. Though the latter are claimed to exist in all types of communication and in all languages, they would vary somehow from one language to another and from one channel of communication to another. These characteristics determine how the system works, and hence can be referred to as defining features or function rules or constraints. They help describe different kinds of discourse in a systematic way.

Goffman distinguished two types of communication constraints : system constraints and ritual constraints, interacting with one another in everyday discourse. Social constraints help make human communication smoother, fluid, and will vary to some extent from one language – culture- to another –examples are provided below-. On the other hand, system constraints are determining characteristics and conditions for all communication systems. For example, they may have to do, in the study of conversation, with its necessary order and structure : a conversation usually has an opening stage, whose very beginning is often a greeting. A conversation often needs to be sustained, for example by the introduction of new topics in an appropriate way. Finally, a conversation must have a closing stage, which is itself often preceded or signalled by a pre-closing one. Such universal system constraints of human communication as order and structure can be used as a framework to describe classroom discourse –the openings, how teachers organise who talks when-, or telephone conversations ; they also apply to the written form of language as discourse, i.e. to written texts.

Interacting with the system constraints, ritual –or social- constraints refer to the social markers that allow communication to flow in an appropriate way. They smooth social interaction by lubricating the social wheels. Examples

can be taken from alleged universal politeness attitudes ([1]) as described by Brown and Levinson (1987) with the principle of positive face –referring to the desire to be appreciated as a social person-, and negative face –the desire to see one's action unimpeded by others-. For example, if we greet someone, we expect that our greeting will be welcome and that we will be greeted in return. When we contribute to a conversation, we expect that our contribution will be valued. We expect to receive our fair share of talk and will, in return, allocate a fair share of turns to others. When we move to join an ongoing conversation, we expect to be integrated as a full member. When a speaker's message is not clearly understood, the listeners are not expected to point out the faults ; rather, they are expected to give the speaker some cues so that he can repair the trouble himself. Ritual constraints govern communication of all social groups, but the ways they operate vary from group to group.

System constraints and ritual constraints in interaction are particularly important in cross-cultural situations where conversational interactions can easily go awry. For example, if a greeting is not returned, one is going to ask himself the following questions : didn't the person see me ? Was it inappropriate to greet him ? Is he angry with me ? Following the greeting, the conversational opening also must be given

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[1]) This hypothesis was criticised by some pragmaticians as being local and ethnocentric.

its appropriate cultural norm, i.e. its length. For example, the Americans are often seen as rude and uncaring because their opening greetings are fairly short. Closings also differ from one culture –language- to another. In some languages, every person in the group must be spoken to in the closing. In other social groups, one can take leave with mainly non-verbal signals. If the cultural norms of opening and closing are not respected, one can easily appear as rude, angry, or boring, self-centred.

The same differences –and risk- exist in the written discourse of academic papers of international students. Some foreign students writing theses in English begin with a listing of every piece of research previously undertaken, while the American academic advisors would often prefer thar the students insist on ideas, questions, and evaluation of the solutions as background to the new research.

In fact, it is differences in pragmatic competence which can be problematic in cross-cultural discourse. When considering English as an international language, it is likely to be pragmatic failure which affects communication, rather than the grammatical and lexical features commonly taken as being problematic. Furthermore, it is possible to have achieved a very high level of linguistic proficiency, while having a relatively low level of sociopragmatic proficiency. This can result in what may be considered as an inappropriate, incomprehensible or even offensive use of language. We can take as a first example a Canadian boss

and a Greek secretary and consider how –and why- the two variables of power and politeness –face- are not evaluated in the same way by the two parties in their role relationship, i.e. their rights and obligations. They have not yet negotiated a shared set of norms : while allowing options –or giving the appearance of allowing options- is absolutely central to western notions of politeness, the secretary acknowledges and accepts the power difference between herself and her boss. To her, the Canadian boss seems insincere when he requests her to do something for him because as far as she is concerned, the power relationship admits no options. Obviously, neither party is fully interculturally competent. Still, we have to remember that in any intercultural encounter, it is not only cultures, but also persons that are in contact. They may go through a process of negotiation. They may use personal strategy in engaging in a process of mutual accommodation. Searching for common ground, they may gradually develop a cross-cultural competence.

The second example of failure in pragmatic competence is about a British visitor and a Korean hotel concierge. What the latter said to him, i.e.: "I think you had better wait in your room" –though she was demonstrating solicitousness for the guest- would, in a comparable British context, typically be used to indicate a recommendation made by a speaker with some authority or power over the hearer by virtue of status or knowledge. In this particular event, the hotel guest is typically regarded as being superior in status to a hotel

employee. **Within a Western –Anglo-American- context, it is generally inappropriate for a subordinate to make a recommendation to a superordinate, even when the proposed act is for the benefit of the latter –i.e. even if the speaker is demonstrating solicitousness towards the hearer-. What is missing here is the politeness principle of avoiding imposition and allowing choice, especially in highly conventionalised usage, as it is common in service encounters.**

In the above two examples, problems have occurred in inter-cultural communication because of differences between parties : in their definition of the communicative event itself, in their understanding of their rights and obligations as interactants, in their perception of relative status and social distance, and finally in their interpretation of specific linguistic forms. Such differences can be related to differences in subjective culture, that is, intangible attitudes, values, and feelings which largely determine verbal interaction, and which help explain the nature of pragmatics, our following topic.

1.2. NATURE AND SCOPE OF PRAGMATICS

Pragmatics can be defined briefly as the cognitive, social and cultural study of language and communication. To understand what that means, we shall, in what follows, raise and discuss some of the key issues about pragmatics, namely : historical considerations about pragmatics as a wide and highly interdisciplinary field of inquiry ; problems related

to the delimitation of this field ; definition of pragmatics as a different perspective on language or as an additional component of a linguistic theory.

1.2.1. The origins of pragmatics

The word "pragmatic" is derived from the Greek "pragma", meaning "deed". In everyday usage, "pragmatic" means something like "practical" or "realistic". The "technical" usage examined in this chapter is not unrelated : pragmatics is the field of inquiry that deals with how language can be used to do things and mean things in real-world situations.

D. Cameroun (2001:68) is providing the following examples to show the possible difference between "to say" and "to mean" : in freezing rain, an appropriate answer to the question : "lovely day, isn't it ? would be : "gorgeous", rather than : "no, it's horrible" ; while an appropriate answer to the question : "have you got a light ?" would be to hand them a cigarette lighter, rather than to answer simply : "yes".

Historically, if we concentrate again on the very term "pragmatics", we inevitably start from its classical definition by Morris (1938) as the study of the relationship between signs and their interpreters. Though the concerns that constitute the scope of pragmatics have a much longer history, pragmatics –as a notion- was born from an extremely ambitious project. Morris was attempting to produce a unified and consistent theory of signs, which would include everything of interest to be said about signs by linguists,

logicians, philosophers, biologists, psychologists, anthropologists, psychopathologists, aestheticians or sociologists. He proposed the following definition of the field :

> *In terms of the three correlates –sign vehicle, designatum, interpreter- of the triadic relation of semiosis, a number of other dyadic relations may be abstracted for study. One may study the relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable. This relation will be called the semantical dimension of semiosis…; the study of this dimension will be called semantics. Or the subject of study may be the relation of signs to interpreters. This relation will be called the pragmatical dimension of semiosis…, and the study of this dimension will be named pragmatics.*
> *(Morris 1938:6)*

Morris' ambitious goals did not just reflect his personal ambitions. They were part of a new movement which tried to combine philosophical and scientific aspects in its approach. It attempted to understand all of human reasoning and behaviour. Bronowski's following observation could easily apply to this movement : "That is the essence of science : ask an impertinent question, and you are on the way to the pertinent answer." (1973:153). Impertinent questions are going to be asked in pragmatics, according to the following definition :

> *By "pragmatics" is designated the science of the relation of signs to their interpreters… Since most, if not all, signs have as their interpreters living organisms, it is a sufficiently accurate characterisation of pragmatics to say that it deals with the biotic aspects of semiosis, that is, with all the psychological, biological, and sociological phenomena which occur in the functioning of signs.*
> *(Morris, op. cit.:30).*

In our attempt to explore briefly the background of the field of pragmatics, we notice that the scholars' attitude toward pragmatics has been the result of theoretical studies in mainstream theoretical linguistics. Such attitude was mainly motivated by the structural and generative transformational linguistic theories. In the first half of the 20th century, linguists were preoccupied with the phoneme, the morpheme, the immediate constituents, and the various methodological operations. They largely ignored the birth of pragmatics. Further developments in linguistics in the 1940's and 1950's confirmed this fact.

At the beginning, the generative-transformational theory, which is considered another revolution in linguistics, excluded the semantic component from the grammar probably because Chomsky himself was still under the influence of structural linguistics in which he grew and was educated (cf. Chomsky, 1957). The incorporation of a semantic component as planned by Katz and Fodor (1963) in the organisation of grammar by Chomsky (1965) officialised the status of semantics as a main component of grammar. This theory will have a considerable impact on the development of pragmatics thanks to its theoretical aspects about language and linguistics and the new concepts it introduced.

In Chomsky's Standard Theory (1965), and following the competence /performance dichotomy, insistence is made on the central role of syntax in the grammar of language. The

search for universal and abstract principles has encouraged many scholars to disregard performance, which is generally associated with language use and function, in the description of language. Meaning problems were either neglected –by structural linguistics- or put aside –by philosophical theories on semantic issues- into the waste-basket as called by Bar-Hillel (1971:405). This situation is well described by Yule (1996:405). He remarked that :

> *The emphasis has been on discovering some of the abstract principles that lie at the very core of language. By placing investigation on the abstract, potentially universal, features of language in the center of their work tables, linguists and philosophers were tempted to push any notes they had on everyday language use to the edges. As tables got crowded, many of those notes on ordinary language use began to be knocked off and ended up in the waste-basket.*

Semantics and pragmatics were considered as two waste-baskets. Any item which did not fit in the syntactic component ended up in the semantic waste-basket. In other words, semantics was viewed as the waste-basket of syntax. As the semantic waste-basket was filled out, linguists turned to the other basket to drop more notes in it, especially the "unaccounted for" issues within the semantic theory. In this regard, Mey (2001:2) notes that :

> *The semantic waste-basket being filled to the brim, another waste-basket had to be created to catch the overflow. As time went by, the linguists dropped more and more of their unresolved questions into this new, pragmatic basket, which became a not-too-tidy collection of rather heterogeneous problems, many of which kept bothering the linguists.*

Within this context and in a more explicit language, Horn (1988:114) identifies those things which belong to pragmatics as he says :

> If a phenomenon ca be shown to be ill-behaved and variable to be treated coherently within the syntactic or semantic component, and if it doesn't seem to be quite arbitrary enough for the lexicon or quite phonological enough for the phonology, it must be pragmatic.

By the late 1960's, there was a conflict between the generative syntacticians and the generative semanticists. The latter were dissatisfied with the central role given to syntax by Chomsky in the grammar of language. They proposed instead a semantics-based model. Chomsky's reaction was to modify his syntactic model by extending it to include a role for surface structure in determining the meaning of the sentence.

A second influential development in that period was the publication of important books and articles on the philosophy of language such as Austin's (1962) and Searle (1969). A third significant development was the introduction of the concept of "communicative competence" by Hymes (1972) contrasting with the purely grammatical competence as proposed by Chomsky (1965) earlier. The above three developments may be viewed as a kind of shift from theoretical grammar to the language user. Leech (1983) notes that the development of modern pragmatics was "a wave-by-wave expansion of linguists from a narrow discipline dealing with the physical data of speech to a broad discipline taking in form, meaning, and context" (1983:2). Nevertheless, there is no doubt that

philosophy has had a determining influence on the birth and growth of pragmatics. Mey (2001:22) correctly affirms that :

> *It was not the linguists who were the first to discover and explain the terra incognita of pragmatics, but the philosophers, whose reflection on language had a significant impact on the development of modern linguistics, especially pragmatics.*

1.2.2. The development of pragmatics

When concerned with the early beginnings of pragmatics, we need to investigate the linguistic and philosophical background of this field. It has already been argued that pragmatics grew within philosophy, and its emergence as an independent field was, for some time, delayed by the influence of some linguistic theories, especially the generative-transformational theory. Finally, this field was freed from the influence of this theory.

Pragmatics was defined by Morris (1938) as a branch of semiotics, the study of signs (cf. Givon, 1989:9-25, for discussion of its earlier roots). Morris (p. 81) viewed semiosis –the process in which something functions as a sign- as having four parts : a sign vehicle is that which acts as a sign ; a designatum is that to which the sign refers ; an interpretant is the effect by virtue of which the sign vehicle is a sign ; an interpreter is the organism upon whom the sign has an effect. In other words, something is a sign of a designatum for an interpreter to the degree that the interpreter takes account of the designatum in virtue of the presence of the sign (p. 82). In Morris's own terms : "semiosis is … a mediated-taking-

account-of. The mediators are sign vehicles ; the takings-account-of are interpretants ; the agents of the process are interpreters ; what is taken account of are designata" (ibid).

Besides the definition of different aspects of the semiosis process, Morris identified three ways of studying signs : syntax is the study of formal relations of signs to one another, semantics is the study of how signs are related to the objects to which they apply –their designata-, pragmatics is the study of the relation of signs to interpreters. Thus, pragmatics is the study of how interpreters engage in the "taking-account-of" designata –the construction of interpretants- of sign-vehicles. Contemporary discussions of pragmatics –although not viewed within the behaviourist framework of Morris- all take the relationship of signs to their users to be central to pragmatics.

When C. Morris proposed his famous trichotomy of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, he defined the last as "the study of the relation of signs to interpreters" (1938:6), but he soon generalised this to "the relation of sign to their users" (1938:29). One year later, R. Carnap proposed to "call pragmatics the field of all those investigations which take into consideration… the action, state and environment of a man who speaks or hears a linguistic sign" (1939:4). This tradition continues ; both linguists and philosophers –see Gazdar, 1979 ; Bach and Harnish, 1979- have taken the term pragmatics to cover the study of language use in relation to context, and in particular the study of linguistic

communication.

Though philosophy has sometimes had a negative influence on the study of language –in particular the methodology imposed on grammar-, it has largely contributed to the development of the study of meaning in semantics first and in pragmatics later on. Reference here can be made first to the Greek and the Roman philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, St Augustine and others who studied language as a tool to serve them in their philosophical debates and discussions. Language occupied a central position in those debates. Therefore , the philosophers' interest in language was specifically directed to the meaning as structured by the language units and the way these units were organised logically and effectively to express the philosophical views. The writings of the Greek and Roman philosophers are full of grammatical and semantic terms and concepts and even linguistic patterns (Robins, 1971). More recently, some 20th century philosophers such as Russell (1919), Wittgenstein (1953), Carnap (1947), Quine (1956) Ryle (1949) and Strawson (1950), among others, have also contributed to the study of meaning and have laid the grounds for the establishment of pragmatics.

Since Morris's theory of signs was to try and represent a theoretical structure, specialists in other fields as linguistics, logic, philosophy, psychology, biology, anthropology, aesthetics and sociology could incorporate any interesting ideas about signs. It follows that the above mentioned

disciplines have had their share in the shaping of pragmatics as we know it today. For example, Morris's discovery of the language user was not an isolated development. It existed in parallel and in a direct link with the discovery of the human actor in relation to language and cultural and social behaviour as for example in the work of Mead (1937), Malinowski (1935), Boas (1930) and Sapir (1929). The interdisciplinarity of such topics is so fundamental that any attempt to separate such disciplines with neat boundaries is likely to oversimplify any survey of the history of pragmatics ([1]).

The above key idea of interdisciplinarity of subjects is one of the definitions of pragmatics as a field of inquiry. As a consequence, and as stated earlier at the beginning of the chapter, we shall be confronted with the problem of the delimitation of this field, i.e. with the very definition of pragmatics, for example as a different perspective on language or as an additional component of a linguistic theory. Tentative answers will be provided in the following point, which discusses different views about pragmatics.

1.2.3. Views about pragmatics

As far as the philosophical aspect of pragmatics is concerned, it is worth emphasizing again the long contribution of philosophers of language to the field of

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[1]) Yet, there is the necessity to give names or labels to such disciplines.

pragmatics, such as Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). It was only later that R. Lakoff (1989) and Ross (1972) decided to develop this field. There is no exaggeration, then, to argue that pragmatics grew and developed first in the territory of philosophy before it became a discipline.

According to the philosophical classification made by C. Morris, R. Carnap and C. Peirce, pragmatics is listed next to semantics and syntax. This classification is obviously incompatible with the linguistic classification in which pragmatics has no place in the theory of grammar. Levinson (1983) wanted to incorporate pragmatics, as a separate component, in a general linguistic theory. The structuralists seem to share the same view, but the generative grammarians insist on excluding pragmatics. Initially, Chomsky recognized only one type of competence, namely grammatical competence. But following the developments in linguistic in the late 1960's and early 1970's, he started to talk about what he calls "pragmatic competence". He recognized its validity in the following terms :

> *For purposes of inquiry and exposition, we may proceed to distinguish "grammatical competence" from "pragmatic competence", restricting the first to the knowledge of form and meaning and the second to knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use, in conformity with various purposes. Thus we may think of language as an instrument that can be put to use. The grammar of the language characterises the instrument, determining intrinsic physical and semantic properties of every sentence. The grammar thus expresses grammatical competence. A system of rules and principles constituting pragmatic*

*competence determines how the tool can effectively be
put to use (Chomsky, 1980:224).*

According to Chomsky, pragmatic competence "places language in the institutional setting of its use, relating intentions and purposes to the linguistic means at hand" (1980:225). Chomsky's position about the status of pragmatics in the theory of grammar or competence is very clear. Using his classical distinction between competence and performance as well as his distinction between the ordinary and technical meanings of the term "competence", he rejects any role for pragmatics in his linguistic theory of competence. He states that :

*If we are using the term "competence" in my technical
sense, then pragmatics is not part of linguistic
competence… If we are using the term "competence" in
its ordinary English sense, then I suppose one might
say that pragmatics is part of linguistic competence
(1999:401).*

Although many "pragmatic" books and articles have been written recently, there seems to be no total agreement among pragmatists "as to how to do pragmatics, or as to what pragmatics is, or how to define it, or even as to what pragmatics is not" (Mey, 1998:716). It is worth noting again that pragmaticians are scholars with widely divergent backgrounds but with converging interests in the use and functioning of language, with different topics, traditions and methods which, together, make up the field of pragmatics, in its broadest sense. For example, some of them regard pragmatics as a wider perspective on the other linguistic

disciplines : Leech (1983) has a rhetorical approach to pragmatics ([1]) ; Dascal (1983) analyses the field from the point of the philosophy of language ; Green (1989) puts the emphasis on textual pragmatics and more formal aspects of pragmatics ([2]) ; Blakemore (1992) takes a cognitive approach to pragmatics ; Mey (1993) approaches the subject form a social point of view ; pragmatics is "the societally necessary and consciously interactive dimension of the study of language" (1993:315) ; while Thomas (1995) argues for a social, psychological, and cognitive approach to pragmatics.

Pragmatics is another broad approach to discourse. It deals with three main concepts : communication, meaning and context, which we study below with some detail. These concepts are themselves extremely vast. It follows that pragmatics faces definitional dilemmas similar to those faced by discourse analysis.

The first concept, i.e. the topic of communication in general, including linguistic communication, his already been treated with some length from the beginning of the chapter. We only need to add that the pragmatic aspect of theoretical semiotics was developed by the pragmatist founder of

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[1]) Leech intends to reconcile grammar –including, according to him, phonology, syntax and semantics- and rhetoric. In his view, pragmatics deals with communication as problem-solving and is, therefore, goal-directed and evaluative.

[2]) Green (1989:2) sees pragmatics as located "at the intersection of a number of fields within and outside of cognitive science : not only linguistics, cognitive, cultural anthropology, and philosophy…, but also sociology… and rhetoric contribute to its domain".

semiotics, the philosopher C.S. Peirce, and further explored by C. Morris (1901-1979). They defined the theory of signs as the study of signs of any kind. Peirce (1982) wanted to define semiotics basically as a science of man, while Morris included sign processes by organisms in general. Morris's (1938) pragmatics is defined as the study of the relation of signs to their interpreters ; it is the branch of semiotics which studies the origin, the uses and the effects of signs, "the relations of signs to their users" (Morris, 1938:29). These relations between sign vehicles and their interpreters have been given various explanations in the semiotic research of the second half of the 20th century.

The second main concept pragmatics deals with is meaning. As far as meaning is concerned, there is the belief that semantics and pragmatics complement each other, cf. Leech's (1983) complementarism. When we study the roots and development of pragmatics, we need know about the status of the related semantic component in the theory of grammar. When Katz and Fodor (1963) incorporated a semantic component in Chomsky's grammar (1965), semantics became a core component of the system of language. This was to have an influence, later on, on the development of pragmatics. Leech (1983) explains the transition in the following way :

This characterisation was only the last stage of a wave-by-wave expansion of linguists from a narrow discipline dealing with the physical data of speech to

a broad discipline taking in form, meaning, and
context (Leech, 1983:2).

While semantics deals with the meaning of linguistic units –words and sentences-, pragmatics is interested in the meaning conveyed, negotiated, and interpreted by the participants in the process of communication. From a pragmatic point of view, meaning is not considered as a stable entity corresponding to a fixed linguistic form ; rather, it is dynamically generated and sustained in the process of using language. It always requires world knowledge, contextual information and shared background knowledge and presuppositions. Words and sentences are often produced with many different interpretations. This is due to what Verschueren (1998:5) refers to as the gradable accessibility of meaning. This notion, which is similar to Giora's (1997, 1999) "graded salience hypothesis", is illustrated by a newspaper article, whose title contains the phrase "mental midwives". Its meaning cannot really be understood until the article has been read –it tells the story of patients in a mental hospital assisting a fellow patient giving birth to a child-.

Grice's view (1989:359) suggests a tidy division of the study of meaning : semantics accounts for what is said, general pragmatic principles account for conversational implicatures –cf. below-. There is an intuitive distinction between conveying something directly and suggesting or hinting it. However, together with Grice, P. Hawley (2002:972)

believes in the "priority of the literal", since, apparently, understanding what is implicated seems to require first understanding what is said ([1]). For Levinson (2000:172), however, semantics is not prior to pragmatics ; semantic and pragmatic processes are distinct but interwoven.

The conclusion from these different views about the relationship between semantic meaning and pragmatic meaning is that things are not as simple as they appear to be. The distinction between what is said and what is implicated does not imply a clean separation between semantics and pragmatics. Among the reasons, we have the possibility that what is said may contain no semantically determined elements for the right understanding of an utterance, as for example with malapropism –cf. Davidson, 1986-, metaphors and slips of the tongue, which usually are easily "disambiguated". The content of an utterance is, on some occasions, unrelated or only distantly related to the semantic features of the words uttered. An example of slip of the tongue is when someone says : "a bunch of new looks", where what is spoken about is books without using the word "books". The word "look" is used, but what is said does not depend on the meaning of "look". An example of metaphor is : "the sea is glass" on a calm day, where the same sentence can be used non-metaphorically to say something false. It implies that what is said when one speaks metaphorically can

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[1]) A similar view is also shared, for example, by Recanati (1993).

be very different from the ordinary, conventional meaning of the words one is using and how they are put together.

We have situated meaning as being at the heart of both semantics and pragmatics. While semantics focuses on context-independent meaning, i.e. on literal meaning or on what is said, pragmatics goes beyond this conception of meaning and concentrates on what is meant, i.e. on utterance meaning and on speaker-intended meaning. These meanings are communicated through conventional implicatures and indirect speech acts –cf. below-. They are types of context-dependent meaning. Context, which is at the heart of pragmatics, is our following point.

The third main concept pragmatics deals with is context. As far as context is concerned, there has been first a connection between linguistic structure and social context. For example, anthropological linguistics, from B. Malinowski onwards, has underlined the cultural context of discourse as essential to meaning. This view was further emphasized with the emergence of the ethnography of speaking in anthropology, and with conversation analysis as a way to analyse the nature of context. Other disciplines such as linguistics, philosophy, anthropology, psychology and artificial intelligence have also contributed to the study of different aspects of context.

The importance of context for meaning is emphasized in the following words of Fish (1980) :

*It is impossible even to think of a sentence
independently of context, and when we are asked to
consider a sentence for which no context has been
specified, we will automatically hear it in the context
in which it has been most often encountered (Fish,
1980:310).*

When defined in such general terms, context is referring to the –limited- totality of the experience, knowledge, beliefs, and suppositions that are shared by the speaker and the listener, i.e. "common ground" (cf. Clark, 1992). Context can be even more abstract, imaginative, fictitious, as comes out from the following remarks of Auster (1995:140) :

*The text is no more than a springboard for the
imagination. "Once upon a time there was a girl who
lived with her mother in a house at the edge of a large
wood". You don't know what the girl looks like, you
don't know what colour the house is, you don't know if
the mother is tall or short, fat or thin, you know next to
nothing. But the mind won't allow these things to
remain blank ; it fills in the details itself. It creates
images based on its own memories and experiences –
which is why these stories… resonate so deeply
inside us-.*

Such a broad definition of context is also suggested by Lyons (1995:292), for whom "the linguist's account of the interpretation of utterances must… draw upon… the theories and findings of the social sciences in general."

A narrower, less abstract definition of context would be an interactional, a conversational one where context is defined as being continually developed with each successive action (cf. Heritage, 1984:242). In this case, context has a double

definition : First, the usual meaning of context (^{l}) utterances depend on for meaning –they are context-shaped-; second, each utterance –or action- will function to renew context, where "renewal" is meant as one or more of the processes of maintaining, adjusting, altering context. Coparticipants jointly construct, negotiate or achieve a common context, which is viewed in this case as a dynamic process.

When viewed in such a way, i.e. dynamically, the concept of context remains difficult to define and study, because on the one hand it is constantly renewing itself, and on the other hand it can expand from a speech situation to the whole universe. The latter is called "world knowledge", which together with "knowledge of language", constitute the two principal dimensions of context –cf. Harris (1988)-. Referring to "world knowledge", Leech (1981:69) notes that the study of interpretation in context involves encyclopaedic knowledge of the world –which, he concedes, cannot be practically included in the study of semantics. He gives the following example : "It is relevant to the interpretation of the sentence : "Shall I put the sweater on ?" to know whether anyone has yet invented a sweater warmed by an electric current". Even a simple sentence like "the cat is on the mat" can hardly be considered as having a context-independent meaning or a logical form as called by many semanticists. It requires "a minimal... set of

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^{l}) By usual meaning of context is meant the social features of a speech situation such as role-relationship, time, place and topic (cf. Gumperz, 1992).

background conditions, e.g., that the earth's gravitational field is in effect, that the mat is lying flat, that the mat is a standard –normal size- mat, and so on" cf. Akman (2000:14)-.

Though context is very much needed and used, it remains a difficult concept to define. Asher (1994:731) is expressing a similar idea with the following words : "Context is one of those linguistic terms which is constantly used in all kinds of context but never explained".

A first way to define and study pragmatics was on the basis of three of its main concepts, i.e. communication, meaning and context. A second possibility could be by opposing, as suggested by Levinson (1983), continental and Anglo-American pragmatics, though non-western traditions and concepts might also be included. Anglo-American pragmatics seems to be more linguistics oriented and limited to "simpler" topics such as presuppositions and speech acts, which can easily be included into interdisciplinary fields such as sociolinguistics ; while the continental tradition is closer to the early definition of pragmatics by Morris (1938), an American.... But the distinction is rather a theoretical one since the two traditions are not developing separately ; on the other hand, they do not and cannot violate the idea of science as a universal form of knowledge. Finally, a third alternative for the definition and study of pragmatics could be through the description of some of its main topics, such as speech-act theory, cooperative principle, politeness or face, deixis, and implicature. We shall briefly consider them below.

The basic idea with the notion of a "speech-act" is that when we say something, we are always also doing something. This point was made by the philosopher J. Austin in his influential book : "How to do things with words" (1962) ([1]). Austin distinguished first "performatives", those utterances which perform a particular action in and of themselves, as for example when apologizing or when promising : the utterance "I apologize" is itself an apology, and "I promise" means a promise has been made.

Two remarks can be made about such performative utterances : first, they ca only be used in the first person and in the present tense, excluding such utterances as "I apologized yesterday" or "I know he is now apologizing" because the speaker is not making an apology. The second remark is that utterances of this kind cannot be true or false, excluding the response "no you don't" to the statement "I apologize" since the latter utterance is itself an apology ([2]).

Austin distinguished another kind of utterances he called constatives. They are proposition-making utterances. Later on, such utterances are also considered by Austin as the performance of some act by the speaker. For example, the utterance "it's raining" does contain a proposition which may be true or false ; but we also have to determine what the speaker intends to do by uttering it, and how it is supposed

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[1]) This book is based on lectures given in the 1950's.
[2]) Still, one can evaluate the degree of sincerity of an apology…

to be taken by the hearer. It may be limited to the statement of a fact about the world, or it could be functioning as an indirect request for an umbrella. There is of course the possibility that such utterances stand for both proposition making and action performing. Accordingly, speech acts or actions performed by using language are classified as locution or locutionary meaning –i.e. the actual words a speaker utters-, illocution or illocutionary meaning –i.e. the "force" or the utterance, what is meant by the speaker, as for example an assertion, a request, an apology, or a promise-, and perlocution or perlocutionary meaning –i.e. the effect on the hearer and his reaction, as for example providing an umbrella-. More attention has been focused on the question of how we decide on the illocutionary force of a given utterance. That force is explicit with performatives such as "I promise you", "I bet you" or "I apologize" ([1]), and even with such constructions as "I'm asking you...", "I remind you...", or "I order you...".

In such cases where the illocutionary force of the speaker is not explicit, the implicit meaning is to be found in the utterance itself thanks to context, and among the –limited- range of possible meanings or interpretations of an utterance. J. Thomas (1995:23) gives the example of someone saying to an acquaintance : "how are things, Scott ?", where the right interpretation can only be within a few possibilities depending

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[1]) In such examples, the verb names the act it is used to perform.

on context, such as : an inquiry about Scott's health, a question about what he has been doing recently, or a formulaic greeting requiring no real answer.

Searle (1969) has a more philosophical and introspective approach to speech acts in general, and to speaker's intention and state of mind in particular. He put forward the existence of shared rules and conditions for people's ability to identify the illocutionary force of utterances. Among the difficulties or criticisms of Searle's view is how to evaluate the sincerity condition in, for example, a speaker's apology, how much is it relevant that an apology was issued sincerely, and whether the recipient privately believes it to be sincere. An additional criticism is that answers to such questions are likely to vary from one individual to another and from one speech community to another. There is a cross-cultural variation both in the range of speech acts that are recognized and the conditions that apply to their performance in different societies –and even within the same society, cf. M. Kreckel (1981).

The second important pragmatic topic which helps define the field of pragmatics is the cooperative principle. The originator of this idea is another language philosopher, P. Grice (1975), who suggested that when people interact with one another, a cooperative principle is put into practice. This principle is "to make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are

engaged" (1975:45). The cooperative principle is divided into four maxims : quantity – make your contribution as informative as is required- ; quality – do not say what you believe to be false- ; relation –be relevant- ; and manner – avoid obscurity and ambiguity-. Though expressed with the imperative, these maxims are not rules that conversationalists are required to obey. Rather, they are rational and logical principles to be observed for a coherent and efficient communication of meaning. By cooperation between interactants, Grice is only referring to the kind and degree of cooperation that is necessary for people to make sense of one another's contributions.

Even in conflictual speech situations when people are not fully cooperative, they still behave on the basis of similar assumptions about communication. In some other occasions, interactants may decide to flout some of Grice's four maxims, to be uninformative, evasive, irrelevant or obscure. Still, their incongruous behaviour is itself intended to be meaningful, and is going to be inferred as meaningful by the recipient –cf. "implicature" below-.

The problem of making meaning clear is usually considered to be the responsibility of the speaker. The maxims themselves focus on speakers' behaviour rather than on hearers'. Usually, the speaker leaves the hearer with little –if any- interpretive work to do. Still, it is also true that the Gricean approach gives hearers an active role in the production of meaning through inference. Extreme examples

are the "unusual" or "deviant" cases of indirectness and inexplicitness where an extra effort is required from the recipient for the right understanding of the intended meaning.

As with speech acts –cf. above-, norm and order with the cooperative principle may vary both individually and inter-culturally. The problem we are raising here is the individual, cultural and sub-cultural differences in pragmatic behaviour –and the subsequent misunderstandings they may cause-. For example, speaking in an obscure or ambiguous manner may be highly valued in some speech communities, while in some others, the major rule of the necessity to save collective agreement –and hence use indirectness- may prevail upon the smaller rule of speaking explicitly and avoiding confusion –cf. Clancy, 1986-. Indirectness is an important aspect and strategy of politeness. The latter affects the application of the cooperation principle and therefore is another important topic in pragmatics.

A well-known, allegedly universal, account of politeness is given by P. Brown and S. Levinson (1987). The assumption is that all people have an attribute they call "face", a sociological notion to account for politeness in behaviour, borrowed from the work of the sociologist E. Goffman (1967). Face means :

> The positive social value a person effectively claims
> for himself by the line others assume he has taken
> during a particular contact. Face is an image of self
> delineated in terms of approved social attributes…
> Goffman (1967:5)

In other words, face mans self-esteem, social standing,

public self-image, which every individual claims and wants others to respect. There as two kinds of face : "positive face", i.e. the desire to be liked and approved of by others ; and "negative face", i.e. the desire to be unimpeded in one's actions.

In some communities –Malagasy Republic- speakers "hide" the meaning in the rare and misleading words they utter, and hearers have the task of extracting it –cf. Ochs, 1988-. This is what Ting-Toomey (1999) refers to as a "high context" culture.

While interacting in conversation, interlocutors threaten each other's and their own face quite often. Most of the speech acts speakers perform are potentially face-threatening. What may constitute a threat to the negative face is the following acts : orders, requests, suggestions, advice, reminders, threats, warnings, offers, anger, lust ; while what may threaten the positive face is : expressions of disapproval, criticism, contempt, complaint, accusation, insult, disagreement, interruption. There are linguistic devices and strategies people use to minimize threats to face : "positive politeness" involves using language to signal liking and approval as for example showing interest, claiming common ground, seeking agreement or giving sympathy ; while "negative politeness" involves using language to minimise imposition as for example being indirect, begging forgiveness or giving deference.

The assumption with the concept of face is that all

speakers are rational and that they all have face which they want to maintain, as well as maintaining the addressee's face. But in practice, situations can be unstable, complex, as when two rules of behaviour are conflicting. An example is when a speaker has the desire to minimise the face threat for his interlocutor -for example by being indirect in his request-, and at the same time he feels the need to perform the face-threatening act with maximum efficiency, avoiding ambiguity. The skilful speaker will be able and find a compromise satisfying these two needs.

Another example of difficult situation is the cross-cultural ones, since the cultural norms of "polite" behaviour differ from one community to another. What varies is the judgements about the degree of threat associated with a certain act. Such judgements depend themselves on, for example, whether the social relations are hierarchical or asymmetrical, or on how much emphasis is placed on social distance. Such variables are likely to differ in value or importance from one cultural context to another. Different acts are face-threatening acts in different cultures, and to a different degree. For example, some cultures use only negative politeness, and hence "are perceived as stand-offish, for example the British in the eyes of the Americans… In positive politeness cultures, impositions are thought of as small, so are social distance and relative power" –cf. Jaszczolt, 2002:326-.

Besides the cultural context, another kind of context is

very important for the determination of meaning : it is deixis, another basic topic of pragmatics. The name comes from the Greek word "deixis" which means "pointing". As a linguistic term, it means "identification by pointing". Deictic terms are linguistic markers that have a "pointing" function in a given discourse context. They are essential for meaning. Deictics are terms that we cannot interpret without an immediate context. They are used to refer to ourselves, to others, and to objects in our environment. They are used to locate actions in a given time, and can show social relationships –the social location of individuals in relation to others-. They are also used to locate parts of a text in relation to other parts.

Deictic expressions are typically pronouns, demonstratives –"this /that", "these /those"-, certain time and place adverbs –e.g. "here and now"-, some verbs of motion –e.g. "come /go"-, and even tenses. In fact, all languages have expressions that link an utterance to a time and space context and that help to determine reference. It is words whose meanings cannot be given in a precise way in a dictionary because they are dependent on context for interpretation.

Levinson (1983) identified five major types of deictic markers : person, place, time, discourse, and social. Person deixis refers to the role of participants in the speech event, such as speaker, addressee, other entities. It "introduces an ineradicable subjectivity into the semantic structure of natural languages" (Lyons, 1977:646). Person deixis can only

be understood with a previous knowledge of the roles of the speaker, the recipient, and hearers who are not addressees or targets. We also notice that plural numbers differ in meaning when applied the first and the third person. For example, in the first, it does not mean a simple multiplication of the speakers. Also, "we" can be inclusive or exclusive of the addressee. Finally, pronoun systems differ from language to language because other features may be added, such as dual number, gender, social status and social distance.

In time deixis, the speaker's "now" –coding time- happens to be different from the receiving time, as in the following example of a letter : "you know the whole truth now. I knew it a week ago, so I wrote this letter". We also notice that terms such as "today", "tomorrow" and "yesterday" refer either to the whole day –the days of the week-, or to a moment –an event in it-. Finally, such terms differ from language to language : Japanese has three back from "today" and two ahead.

Place deixis specifies the location relative to the speaker and the addressee. "Here" ca mean the town, the room or the exact point. "This" and "that" can refer to emotional closeness –empathy- and distance. This is called empathetic deixis. In some cultures, demonstratives refer to distance from the speaker, but also to distance close to the addressee, to the audience and even to absent persons (cf. Levinson, 1983:81). Other variables such as direction –above /below- or visible-non-visible to the speaker may be used (cf. Pederson et al.,

1998).

Social deixis concerns social relationship between participants, their status and relations to the topic. Devices used for this purpose include varying forms of address, pronouns of politeness –tu/vous-, kinship terms and honorifics, depending on the level of formality.

Finally, discourse deixis is a device enabling us to refer to portions of discourse, as in : "in the last paragraph", "this story". It is also used in initial position in a sentence, as with : "therefore", "in conclusion", "anyway", where the reference is relative to the utterance. Some topic markers, such as the Japanese –wa, have a discourse- deictic function, relating the topic to the previous discourse.

A fifth important pragmatic topic which helps define the field of pragmatics is the notion of implicature. The originator of this idea is the language philosopher P. Grice (1975). He began with a theoretical distinction between saying and implicating, which derives from the intuitive distinction between conveying something literally and directly, and merely suggesting or hinting it. The belief is that, in some way, what is implicated depends on what is said, since the hearer in a conversation needs to use what is said to determine what is implicated.

P. Hawley (2002:969) is giving the example of a room getting darker because the sun is setting. A direct way of asking for the light to be turned on could be : "I want you to

turn on the light". More indirectly, using hints or suggestions, I may say : "It's getting dark in here", or "I can't see you anymore !". The difference here is between rudeness and politeness. But there is another difference : when something is said literally and directly, understanding the words implies understanding the speaker. But in hinting or suggesting, the words alone do not tell what is meant.

Grice's well-known example is about a philosophy professor writing a job recommendation letter on behalf of one of his students. The professor writes : "The candidate is prompt and has excellent penmanship", and nothing more, i.e. no reference to the philosophical abilities of the candidate. Clearly, what is said literally is different from what is conveyed, which is that the candidate is bad at philosophy.

The distinction between what is said and what is implicated is best revealed in conversational implicature, because hearers presume that speakers are rational and cooperative. Hence, hearers draw conclusions about what a speaker is implicating. As Grice puts it :

> *What is conversationally implicated is what is*
> *required that one assume a speaker to think in order*
> *to preserve the assumption that he is observing the*
> *Cooperative Principle (and perhaps some*
> *conversational maxims as well). (Grice, 1989:86)*

A first condition on implicature is its dependence on what is said : what is implicated is calculated by the hearer from what is said, but together with other features of the context of utterances. Grice adds a further condition on conversational

implicature : the speaker must believe that hearers are in a position to recognize the implicature. In Grice's own words :

> *The presence of a conversational implicature must be capable of being worked out ; for even if it can in fact be intuitively grasped, unless the intuition is replaceable by an argument, the implicature (if present at all) will not count as a conversational implicature ; it will be a conventional implicature*
> *(Grice, 1989:31)*

The latter implicature is associated with particular words such as "but", "therefore" , "manage", in such sentences as : "Fido is a dog, but /and he is quite intelligent". It is intuitively plausible that the meaning of contrast inherent in "but" is relevant for the semantics in the previous example. The difference, at times ambiguous, between what is said – semantics- and what is implied –pragmatics-, as well as between conversational and conventional implicature is explained and clarified in the following way :

> *The difference between "conventional" and "conversational" implicatures at the level of sentences lies in the nature of the conventions involved. Both are semantic conventions, but only the former are first-order conventions. The contrastive implication is part of the meaning of "but". The nonuniversal implication is no part of the meaning of "some". W.A. Davis*
> *(1998:157)*

Another condition for conversational implicature to work efficiently is that interlocutors share some background knowledge. When they don't, some kinds of unintentional implicature ([1]) are more likely to occur as in cross-cultural

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[1]) Such situations exceptionally may also happen within the same

contexts. The message can be misconstrued since the addressee does not share the same common ground –as in cross-cultural situations-, but also because no addressee has a direct access to the speaker's intentions. This opens the debate about whether meaning in such cases is only a speaker's responsibility and perspective, or a hearer's too. We shall know more about this point in the following chapter dealing with the analysis of conversation.

As a conclusion, it will probably be interesting in the following chapters to see whether the general concepts of semiotics and pragmatics dealt with in the present chapter will apply, and how, to communication in Algerian contexts. We shall also be able to evaluate their degree of universality, or how much language specific they are.

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culture though interlocutors have the same kind of common ground.

CHAPTER II

CONVERSATION

AND

THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

The study of language as conversation is a very recent approach. Historically, language has been defined and studied in different ways. Such a wide range of views about language is made possible because of its vastness and its complexity as an independent subject – as a system – on the one hand, and also because of its actual links with quite a few other subjects like philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology, semiology, etc., on the other hand. Every time one aspect of language or another has taken precedence. In the following, we consider the different shifts of emphasis during the twentieth century.

II.1. RECENT APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

II.1.1. Language as "sentence"

During the first half of the twentieth century, the basic and largest unit of language was the sentence defined as a syntactic unit bigger than the clause, the phrase and the word, while the ultimate constituent was the morpheme. This "will lead historians of twentieth century linguistics to say that... the first half of the century was distinguished by a drive for the autonomy of language as an object of study and a focus upon description of structure..."- Dell Hymes, 1964:11 -. Such a view applies to both Bloomfieldian and Chomskyan linguistics ([1]), though the former would refer to

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[1]) For De Saussure too – 1966 [1916] : 124 -, the sentence was "the ideal type of syntagma, but it belongs to speaking [parole], not to language [langue]."

the sentence as utterance, i.e. concrete realisation of a sentence.

For Bloomfield –1933 : 170 f.f.-, the sentence was "an independent form not included in any larger linguistic form" ; "perhaps all languages distinguish" "sentence types". Bloomfield argued that linguistics is only concerned with those phonological, lexical and syntactic features which the utterances share. For a whole generation, American linguists mainly concentrated on phonological and morphological problems : on the very existence of the phoneme and the validity of unique phonemic descriptions ; on discovery procedures for isolating phonemes and morpheme in newly described languages ; on the identification of morpheme boundaries and word classes, etc. ([1])

Later on, with Chomsky, the linguistic concern is again with the formal features of language, but this time the interest is directed towards the study of sentence-structure :

> *The fundamental aim in the linguistic analysis of a*
> *language is to separate the grammatical sequences*
> *which are sentences of L from the ungrammatical*
> *sequences which are not sentences of L and to study*
> *the structure of the grammatical sequences*
> *–N. Chomsky, 1957:14-.*

For Chomsky –1965:34-, the sentence was a main "notion that must be defined by general linguistic theory", and the unit to which "a descriptively adequate grammar... assigns

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[1]) This view is itself a rigorous, formal response to the impressionistic, semantically based parsing of traditional grammarians.

structural descriptions... in accordance with the linguistic competence of the native speaker".

But what is new with Chomsky as opposed to earlier linguists who also concentrated on formal aspects of language is his exclusion of utterances-collections of speech, or writing – as a source of examples. In Chomsky's view, such a corpus would be inadequate because on the one hand it does not take into account the infinity aspects of language – the potential sentences of the future – and on the other hand because of inevitable performance limitations and errors caused by

such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest and errors – random or characteristic – in applying knowledge of the language in actual performance – N. Chomsky, 1965:3-.

Performance being unworthy studying, the new definition of language and new aim of linguistics becomes competence, the underlying knowledge of the ideal speaker-hearer, usually the linguist himself who proceeds by introspection, checking the correctness, i.e. the grammaticality of potential sentences against his intuitions.

This overemphasis on grammaticality at the expense of meaning is another important characteristic of the linguistics of the first half of the 20th century. Bloomfield first led linguistics away from any consideration of meaning and concentrated, as explained earlier, on form and substance. The alleged justification for such a neglect of meaning was

that linguists "cannot define meanings, but must appeal for this to students of other sciences or to common knowledge" – L. Bloomfield, 1933:44-. As far as Chomskyan linguistics is concerned, the prevalence of grammaticality and its independence from meaningfulness led to such odd - grammatical but meaningless ? – sentences as Chomsky's : "colourless green ideas sleep furiously", or Bertrand Russel's : "Quadruplicity drinks procrastination", or Gilbert Ryle's : "Thursday is in bed with Friday". It is a fact that between 1930 and the end of the 1950's, linguistic semantics was largely neglected. Additional reasons for this have to do with the inherently subjective aspect of the study of meaning, which remains then, at least temporarily, beyond the scope of science.

The criticism of sentence grammars will concern some of their essential aspects we have explained so far : The precedence of grammar, the sentence as the largest unit, and the neglect of meaning. The first criticism is about samples of language which can hardly he handled by grammar. There are grammatically defective expressions such as sentence fragments, independent subordinate clauses like : "If you could help me". Other examples can be irregular wh. questions : "How about coffee" ; non-sentences like : "next slide please" ; or elliptical constructions of different kinds like : "Want a drink".

Other kinds of sentence fragments or expressions where grammar becomes somehow deficient are the short phrases :

"Sorry" ; "Beg your pardon" ; or : "Thank you", which can be analysed as the result of – situational – ellipsis – Quirk et al. 1985:11-38-. While other expressions, though having a constituent structure, are not necessarily generated by the grammar, as for example : "You know", or "I mean" : they are a fixed combination of noun and verb which must be analysed as discourse markers – see Stenström 1990 -.

Some one-word expressions are difficult to describe in grammatical terms. Many of them would belong to what Fillmore et al. call class of "extra-grammatical idioms" – Fillmore et al. 1988:505-. In "thanks", for example, it is not clear what elements have been omitted since "thanks" can be expanded in one way : "I owe you my thanks", or another : "I give you thanks" – Quirk et al. 1985:12-34-. "Thanks" then is grammatically rather like "hello" which does not fit into a syntactic analysis.

Other one-word formulas such as "well", "now", which help organise discourse and function as conversational openers, are also difficult to analyse grammatically. They can be analysed neither as elliptical structures nor as special parts of speech. Similarly, Haggo and Kuiper –1983:541- notice the syntactic indeterminacy of single-word expletives like "damn" and "bother". They also point to whole sentence which can be syntactically indeterminate –1983:543F- as for example : "There you are"- a formula used when giving somebody something -, or the adverbial phrases : "as it were", "so to speak", or "If I may say so".

Other examples where grammatical explanation seems inadequate are sentences which are essentially functional units and derive their meaning or value not from the grammatical form but from the speech community's rules of interpretation. For example in English, a sentence which is interrogative in form, may be a request, or a command, or a statement ; while a request may be expressed by a sentence whose form is interrogative, or declarative or imperative. For example, the utterance : "is that your coat on the floor ?" is a question in syntax but a command as far as social meaning is concerned. Obviously, there is a lack of fit between grammar and discourse. While the utterance "what about this one ?", when followed by a pause, is a question eliciting a verbal response ; but when followed by no pause, it becomes a starter, a way to draw attention or to provide information. It is all a matter of tactics.

The second criticism of sentence-grammars will concern the size of the basic unit : the sentence, which is to be extended by the following schools to a whole text, taking into account the linguistic context ; while the third weakness will concern the neglect of meaning, and hence the necessity of taking into account the social-cultural context of a given utterance, i.e. who produced it, to whom, where, when, etc... These two aspects – text and context – are going to be further discussed below, taking into account the relativity or their cultural dimension.

II.1.2. Language as text and context

In the fifties and sixties it was clear that structuralist –Bloomfieldian- and generative –Chomskyan– linguistics were not taking into account linguistic problems above the sentence –e.g. co-reference, sentence connectives, topic-comment relation and corrections of interpretations resulting from information given in the ensuing part of the discourse– as well as other –pragmatic– problems – e.g. presuppositions. This weakness has led many linguists to criticise this too restricted a modal of language. The latter is reduced in its definition to a system of signs, while the speaker is limited to an abstract automaton.

Firth -1956–, followed by T.F. Mitchell -1975- was the first one to insist on the study of the total verbal process in its context of situation. He argued for a text – based description of language. In the late 1960's, Ross, Mc Cawley and G. Lakoff began arguing that one cannot in fact describe grammar in isolation from meaning. By 1972, Robin Lakoff was claiming –p. 16- that :

> *in order to predict correctly the applicability of many rules one must be able to refer to assumptions about the social context of an utterance, as well as to other implicit assumptions made by the participants in a discourse.*

II.1.2.1. Language as text

Before it was extended to social context, the sentence was first made part of a larger linguistic unit : The text, which was found to have a structure, and which was studied from

different points of view (¹). First, from a comparative or contrastive stylistic or rhetoric angle : Kaplan –1966- distinguished different types of textual progression corresponding to different cultures ; for example, the English text was interpreted as mainly linear and hierarchical, while the Semitic one –Arabic and Hebrew- was characterised by parallelism. The oriental text was said to have "indirection" as a characteristic, while the Russian and Romance texts had digression as a main feature.

Comparatively, there seems to be differences in textual structure, as for example the acceptability in Japanese texts which from a "western" point of view would be perceived as the abrupt insertion of irrelevant matter –see Hinds 1983-. A second example is about certain features of word-order and use of conjunctions typical of Indian languages. Such features are even transposed into written Indian English –c.f. Kachru 1987-.

Differences can even exist within languages which belong to the same family. For example, parenthetical information and digression are more used in German academic texts than in their English counter parts. On the other hand, English writers seem to use topic sentences at the beginning of

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¹) Definitions of "text", its basic and fundamental features, and its relation with language vary from the traditional view of texts as principally formal, primarily macro-grammatical pattern and rhetorical structures, to the expressivistic view of texts as produced creatively by individuals, whose search for meaning overshadows form and other text features.

paragraphs while German writers would use a bridging sentence between paragraphs.

Such views happen to be contradicted by others. For example, Bar Lev –1986- rather talks of "fluidity" in Arabic texts –i.e. non-hierarchical progression with a preference for connexion with "and", "but", and "so"-, and attributes parallelism to Chinese and Vietnamese. The latter characteristic is said to be a property of Arabic by Aziz –1988- for whom the Arabic text has a preference for the theme-repetition pattern and hence differs from English. On the other hand, Mohan and Lo –1985- found no marked differences between Chinese and English texts.

In what has preceded, we have studied "text" from a stylistic or rhetoric angle. Now, we study it from a purely formal, macro-grammatical point of view, often referred to as "Textlinguistics". Textlinguistics is the branch of linguistics in which the methods of linguistic analysis are extended to the level of the text. The assumption here is that written –and spoken ([1])- texts are the minimal free unit of language.

In textlinguistics, texts are treated as purely linguistic objects. Sentences combine to form texts, and the relations between sentences are aspects of grammatical cohesion ([2]). In

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[1]) The expression "Spoken text" is better represented by the looser term "discourse" which we shall be using mainly with reference to spoken language, i.e. in the following point about social-cultural-context.

[2]) While in the following point about social-cultural-context, i.e.

well formed written texts, the structuring of sentences has implications for units such as paragraphs, and for the progression of whole texts ; as there are grammatical links between the clauses and sentences of a text known as cohesion, such as reference, substitution, pronominalisation, ellipsis, conjunction, etc –see Halliday and Hasan :1976; Hasan:1971-.

As to the question how or why a text was created, it has no importance. What matters in a text is to explain why it is well or ill formed, just as sentence grammars try to explain why a sentence is grammatical or ungrammatical –Van Dijk, 1972, 1977-. In this tradition, texts are assumed to be complete in themselves, independent of surrounding events.

Usually, we think of texts as written records. When they represent spoken language like conversations, speeches, or story-tellings, they become more abstract and formal, i.e. "perfect" compared to the latter. With written texts, some of the problems associated with spontaneous spoken language disappear as for example simultaneous talk, ill-formed utterances, and what Chomsky would refer to as performance limitations. The vast majority of everyday colloquial texts are made up of a mixture of sentences, sentence-fragments and ready-made locutions.

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discourse, we shall see that utterances combine to form discourse, and the relations between utterances are aspects of discourse coherence.

However, this defect in the definition of text when the latter represents spoken colloquial language will decrease with the introduction of the concept of –social-cultural-context. This contextual approach describes utterance-relatedness and notes phenomena in utterances whose complete description requires reference to the social context ; as opposed to the textual approach we have described so far, and which proceeds from the idea of the text as an entire unit in which smaller units are somehow connected.

II.1.2.2. Language as context

The concept of context of situation originates from Bronislaw Malinowski. In his article : "The problem of meaning in primitive languages" –1923- he studied the interaction between culture and meaning. As an anthropologist and ethnographer he was interested in how discourse functions in a particular situation.

From his research on particular languages and cultures, he concluded that one cannot understand the meaning of utterances without taking into account the social-cultural situation in which they are uttered. An utterance has no meaning except in the context of situation. Such a view can be referred to as a pragmatic –and hence as a contemporary-one.

Another important concept associated with Malinowski, is the notion of "phatic communion", or "empty talk", a kind of verbal interaction whose primary aim is to socialise, to

respect social-cultural rules of behaviour when silence is not welcome. Such a concept is also valid in present-day studies since it belongs to the contemporary definition and description of language as a "mode of action" –which we study in more detail in the following point about language as conversation-.

As noted earlier, and following Malinowski, Firth was among the very first ones to stress the importance of meaning in the study of language. For him, language was only meaningful in its context of situation. According to Firth, the linguistic description must begin with the gathering of a set of contextually defined homogeneous texts ; while the aim of such a description is to explain how the sentences or utterances are meaningful in their contexts. Unfortunately, Firth did not do so himself. He rather concentrated on phonology, and also on lexis since the concept of "collocation" originated with his theory.

Firthian linguistics or the British School of linguistics around the middle of the 20th century contrasted with the American Bloomfieldians and with the European Saussureans. It was based on Malinowski's ideas on language as meaning, as part of the social process, where context plays a crucial role and is itself included into the context of culture. Firth was advocating the study of language as embedded in society and culture, while at the same time mainstream linguistics was limiting language to a unified system to be studied in isolation from social factors.

In the period following Firth, Harris was first to attempt to study supra-sentential structure ; he provided the necessary tools for describing connected pieces of writing or talking in two works in 1952 and 1968. But it was his notion of transformation which was given importance –later on with Chomsky- rather than his discourse analysis which did not gain much attention.

Discourse analysis –and the social-cultural meaning of language- was definitely to gain much more attention and emphasis later in the 1970's when the definition of language shifted to its use in social situations. Dell Hymes –1964:11- summarised the situation as follows :

> *… the second half of the century was distinguished by a concern for the integration of language in social-cultural context and a focus upon the analysis of function.*

Two new approaches to the study of language appeared : the functional or situational approach first with for example Gumperz and Hymes –1972-, Blom and Gumperz –1972-, and Gumperz –1982-, followed by the conversational approach with for example Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks –1977-. The latter approach is to be studied later when we deal with "Language as conversation"; while the former approach belongs to the point we are making now, i.e. "Language as context", and hence immediately needs further explanation.

The functional or situational approach can be traced back

to Hymes's concept of communicative competence –1966- later modified by himself –1974- and then by Gumperz –1982-. This new concept of communicative competence can be defined in general terms as a speaker's knowledge which enables him to use language appropriately in a given social situation in a given speech–community. It is in fact an extension of Chomsky's purely grammatical competence to include the social-cultural rules, the speaking rules native speakers have in wind. Speaking appropriately implies for example whether one is to speak or to remain silent, what to say, to whom, and how to say it in a given situation. As Hannertz puts it : " It is not enough for a person to be able to produce grammatical sentences ; one must also know when they are contextually appropriate –Hannertz, 1973:235-248-. Grammaticality is not enough for language to be correct, as in the following example from Labov –1970,24- :

A : What is your name ?

B : Well, let's say you might have thought you had something from before, but you haven't got it anymore.

A : I'm going to call you Dean.

Another example is from Albert –1972- who notices a frequent use of ungrammatical but appropriate utterances among the Burundi in some specific situations : because of his lower status, a peasant may feel obliged to make "a rhetorical fool of himself", though in other circumstances he "may show himself an able speaker". On the other hand, and

as far as social meaning (¹) is concerned, John Gumperz points out that, though native speakers of the same language share the same grammatical knowledge, they may contextualise what is said differently, and hence produce and understand quite different messages. What appears to be one speech community is in fact two or more, each sharing the same linguistic varieties but having different rules for their use. Nessa Wolfson even talks about "communicative interference" :

> *The sort of miscommunication which occurs when*
> *people transfer the rules of their own native speech*
> *communities to what seems to them to be a*
> *corresponding situation in a new speech community*
> *may be termed communicative interference*
> *–Wolfson, 1982:2-.*

After it has extended Chomsky's grammatical competence, communicative competence itself is to be extended by Hymes –1974, 1987- to cover a speaker's expectations of who is or is not to speak in certain settings, what non-verbal behaviours are appropriate in different contexts, how to ask for and give information, how to request, how to offer or decline, what the routines for turn-taking are in conversation, etc. The same kind of re-definition of communicative competence is stated by Gumperz –1982a, p. 209- where is included "the knowledge of linguistic and related communicative conventions that speakers must have to create and sustain

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[1]) Social meaning, as opposed to referential meaning, involves "the social values implied when an utterance is used in a certain context" –Gumperz, 1971, p. 285-.

conversational cooperation."

The term "conversation" –in relation with the definition and the study of language- is appearing more and more in the functional or situational approach –i.e. with Hymes and Gumperz in particular-. It is going to hold a central place in the conversational approach which we study now.

II.1.3. Language as conversation

Before we contrast this new definition of language as conversation with the previous one, i.e. language as text and context, we have first to state their similarities since they share more common points than they have differences.

The first similarity they have, as mentioned earlier, is the way they depart from the traditional definition of language as sentence or utterance. With discourse analysis, i.e. Textlinguistics and conversational analysis ([1]), the field of research in linguistics has been modified and amplified ; from isolated words or sentences, the interest has shifted to texts in contexts. This was the beginning of a new approach to language as verbal communication, which was interpreted as a form of social interaction. This new approach to language as a form of social interaction encouraged empirical research in spoken everyday language, its rules, and conventions. For example, Labov's insistence on empirical research was

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[1]) Many authors are using the concept of Textlinguistics to refer to written and spoken texts as the minimal free unit of language ; while others prefer using the term discourse which is an umbrella term, looser and less obliging.

formulated as follows :

> *"The penalties for ignoring data from the speech community are a growing sense of frustration, a proliferation of moot questions, and a conviction that linguistics is a game in which each theorist chooses the solution that fits his taste or intuition. I do not believe that we need at this point a new "theory of language"; rather, we need a new way of doing linguistics". –1970:85-.*

The second important similarity the two above mentioned views have – and which mainstream linguistics is lacking –is the following recurrent feature : an orientation towards meaning, or what is usually called "communication" in general, and successful communication in particular, its conditions, hypotheses, strategy, intention, presupposition, background knowledge, and even meta-communicative signals.

After we have mentioned some of their similarities, let's now look at what may make conversational analysis and the situational or functional view different. Here we are referring to Levinson's –1983- distinction –though a controversial one-between discourse analysis -including Textlinguistics- and approaches such as conversational analysis and dialogical analysis, which are closely related to ethnomethodology.

Ethnomethodology, which was initiated by Garfinkel –see Garfinkel 1967- was socially oriented ([1]), as opposed to the

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[1]) Ethnomethodologists were mainly American sociologists, though

functional approach which was anthropologically oriented –c.f. Gumperz & Hymes eds. 1972 ; Hymes 1974 ; Gumperz 1982-, and provided detailed structural descriptions of stable, regular, well defined and often ritualised, formal events or situations of communication, such as greetings –Irvine 1974-, ritual encounters –Salmond 1974-, chanting –Sherzer 1974-, ritual insults –Labov 1972-; while those ethnographers of speaking "who have dealt with conversation have studied not its structure, but factors affecting the choice of code or style – c.f. Blom and Gumperz 1972 ; Gumperz 1964 ; Geertz 1960-. Here, the emphasis was on variation, within and across speech-communities or networks, in ways of speaking or in styles under the influence of cultural factors. The interest in variation is not limited to language form, but has also to do with language function. The ethnography of communication is most concerned with the functions of language at a societal level, such as its function in creating or reinforcing boundaries which unify members of one speech community while excluding outsiders from intra-group communication.

By contrast, ethnomethodologists devote more attention to observing the conversational behaviour and cooperation of people in the management of discourse, their intersubjectivity and interpersonal meaning, rather than to theorizing and building elaborate models of structure –c.f. Levinson

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anthropologists and psychologists have also made valuable contributions.

1983:286-. They have concentrated on such areas of the study of conversation as adjacency-pairs, turn-taking, conversational opening and closing, topical introduction and change, politeness strategies, face-preservation, and so on. Real data and mere observation are basically used. Emphasis is here on the emergent aspects of interaction over the institutionalised ones, on the improvisational moment-by-moment social use of language in very informal situations of communication –and in relatively small units of communication- as for example telephone calls and small talk at the dinner table –c.f. Sacks, et al., 1974 ; Schenkein, 1978 ; West & Zimmerman, 1982- ; sequencing in conversational openings –Schegloff, 1968- ; telephone conversations –Goddard, 1977-; Service encounters –Merrit, 1976- ; or rules for the use of terms of address as they relate to cultural context or socio-political tendencies –Bates & Benigni, 1975 ; Brown & Gilman, 1960-.

Ethnomethodologists have also focused on strategies for conversational interaction as for example turn-taking, including timing factors –c.f. Crown & Feldstein, 1985-, and conventions for talking one at a time –c.f. Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974-, versus simultaneous talk –c.f. Reisman, 1974-. Currently, the focus of study is on speech rather than on non-verbal behaviour in interaction.

The focus of study today is also on context, a difficult yet

essential notion ([1]), which is approached from a highly dynamic angle and which is becoming a major instrument for theory formation in pragmatics –see Auer & di Luzio eds. 1992 ; Duranti & Goodwin eds. 1992-. It has been noticed that correct interpretations of context are essential to the communication of information and to a recipient's understanding of a speaker's intention. Sources of intercultural miscommunication have been traced to differences in value systems, in norms and in ideologies of cultural groups. Every speech-community has its own rules for interpreting the message conveyed both verbally and non-verbally, which implies that the same "performance" or linguistic realisation may have different values in different communities. One of the consequences is that conversations which involve people from different cultural backgrounds can more easily go wrong than those that involve people who share the same cultural background. Gumperz –1982:14- expresses the same idea in the following way :

> *Many of the meanings and understandings, at the*
> *level of ongoing processes of interpretation of*
> *speaker's intent, depend upon culturally specific*
> *conventions, so that much of the meaning in any*
> *encounter is indirect and implicit. The ability to expose*
> *enough of the implicit meaning to make for a*
> *satisfactory encounter between strangers or culturally*

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[1]) Linguists have often been puzzled by the difficulty of systematising context –c.f. Katz and Fodor:1964 ; Leech:1974 ; Lyons:1968-. Among the difficulties is the lack of stability of context since it is often interactively constructed in the course of verbal communication.

different speakers requires communicative flexibility.

A major difficulty in defining context concerns its limits. Conversational analysis usually restricts context to a particular text. It is a talk-intrinsic view of context –see Schegloff 1987 ; Mandelbaum 1990/91-, while "ethnographers" have a larger view of context – talk – extrinsic – which includes reactions to spoken events as well as the events themselves, i.e. metacommunication –see Duranti & Goodwin eds. 1992-. Such an approach takes more into account the fact that language behaviour is a culture dependent activity, and that such concepts as silence ([1]), sincerity, politeness ([2]), command ([3]), or even rationality may differ considerably from one society-culture – to another.

Taking into account culture in the study of language use becomes even more difficult if culture is viewed and defined as conflict-oriented – as opposed to the consensus-oriented ethnography more closely associated with the Hymesian

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[1]) In some cultures, silence has a more acceptable role than in others : For example, longer silences in conversation seem to be tolerated among the Finns ; while the "thinking time" before responding seems quite long among the Japanese.

[2]) For example, an absence of stereotyped verbal greeting was noted in some societies. While Herbert –1985, 1989, 1990- traces differences in the patterns of compliment responses given by white middle class American and white middle class South-Africans to differences in social relations and ideologies in these two societies.

[3]) For example, Rosaldo –1982- noted that there is nothing forceful or rude about direct, straightforward commands among the Ilongot tribe of the Philippines. Actually, they are much more in use than requests phrased more indirectly, and then are basic for creating and maintaining important relationships.

tradition ([1]). According to the former view, "identity is not a fixed "thing", it is negotiated, open, shifting, ambiguous, the result of culturally available meanings and the open-ended, power-laden enactments of those meanings in everyday situations" –Kondo, 1990:24-.

Actually, the two above views on culture and identity do not necessarily reject one another. They may even coexist, as for example in the case of Algeria –c.f. the general Introduction- : because of social-cultural conflicts, a third dimension –i.e. the Berber feature- has been lately added to the official definition of the Algerian identity, which was limited before to the consensual unifying factor of religion ([2]), followed by its inevitable "Arabic" character.

Before we study the cultural implications of conversation, we shall first describe it as a basic universal phenomenon holding an essential place in the definition and study of language, and then explain its –probably universal- important characteristic as the concepts of structure, adjacency-pair, turn-taking, topic, and finally its deep-rooted cultural aspect –the case of Algeria in particular-.

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[1]) Of course, in this tradition, diversity is also taken into account, and emphasis is put on the speech-community as an organisation of diversity, on the multiple voices within a community

[2]) But even religion, which is a stabilising factor, may become a source of social conflict when given different or opposed interpretations.

II.2. MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF CONVERSATION

II.2.1. The importance of conversation

The importance and universal character of conversation was early emphasised by Goffman –1964- who observed that the social situation is the basic unit or scene in which everyday life in general and conversation in particular take place. Speech situation is usually defined by the setting -place and time of discourse- and the topic, which must be appropriate in congruent situations, and by the role – relationship, i.e. the status of participants in relation with one another and the consequent determination of individual rights and obligations as far as social-linguistic behaviour is concerned. It is possible to consider and study speech-situations as a self-sufficient unit or not depending on the definition of context as narrow or not –c.f. above-

When context is defined in a narrower way, it can be argued that, in many ways, what happens in an ordinary social situation has a life of its own, and that such a situation is –partially at least- a bounded social scene. Participants' behaviour is –partially at least- independent from outer factors. Within speech-situations, people seem to have a certain freedom of action, some room for improvisation. Conversations are usually enjoyable because their content is unpredictable to a large extent. While on the other hand, when context is broadened, it can be argued that speech-situations are in some way influenced by the wider world, by

general societal processes, by broad patterns of language and culture in the society at large, as for example the economy, the labour market, social conventions, shared experience of participants as race, ethnic group, gender, religion, and so forth. An intermediary position between the two views on situation and context, closer to reality, would be to consider that speech situations are not so much governed, but are rather influenced by societal rules, patterns and interests –as opposed to purely linguistic rules which determine or predict performance-.

So far, we have explained the importance of conversation as a basic unit of language use. Now, we explain the importance of conversation as a universal unit of language use.

Being universal to human societies, conversation is likely to be a basic representation of language use. Other forms of language such as writing play a less important role since entire societies, as well as groups within literate societies, mainly rely on speaking. Speaking in relation with conversation is limited itself here to its oldest, commonest and basic variety : face-to-face interaction, as opposed to other forms of verbal activity which either depend on technology –radio, telephone, television, recordings, …- or are characteristic of specific and occasional situations –audiences, debates, lectures, courts, …-. As Charles Fillmore –1981:152- puts it :

The language of face-to-face conversation is the basic and primary use of language, all others being best described in terms of their manner of deviation from that base.

Moreover, face-to-face conversation does not require special training or skills, while for example many people find it difficult to lecture, to tell jokes or stories. On the other hand, face-to-face conversation is also the universal basic setting for children's acquisition of their first language in both literate and illiterate societies. Indeed, face-to-face conversation is the cradle of language use on a world level.

The universal aspect of conversation was systematised by Goffman –1976- and by Grice –1975-. Goffman, in his study of human communication, postulated the existence of a set of universal constraints applicable to all types of communication and to all languages. Languages, of course, will differ in exactly how the constraints are going to apply. Goffman distinguished two types of communication constraints : "system constraints" ([1]), which are required for all communication systems, and "ritual constraints" ([2]), i.e. the social constraints that smooth social interaction. Together, they provide a systematic framework for the

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[1]) Examples of system constraints later investigated by such researchers as Jefferson, Sacks, and Schegloff, have to do with the ways we open and close conversations, how conversational turn-taking is achieved, what are the repair-mechanisms available to conversationalists, how topics are introduced and disappear, etc.

[2]) Ritual constraints is for example when we want to show ourselves as worthwhile and competent, and also to show that we value out interactors as people of social accomplishment.

theoretical and practical description of discourse, and will be examined in more detail in the following chapters.

Grice, on the other hand, summarised this universal aspect of conversation in his Cooperative Principle as a criterion for effective communication. Cooperative participants ([1]) are expected to observe four major norms of cooperation : relevance, truthfulness, quantity, and clarity ([2]). Goffman and Grice's ideas about the systematic and rule-governed aspect of discourse are examined in more detail in what follows.

II.2.2. The structure of conversation

Conversations are structured in their social as well as in their linguistic aspects. By social aspect is meant the individuals in and around a conversation –c.f. Clark, 1996:14-. They can be divided first into participants –those who are actually participating in the conversation- and non-participants. Participants may divide into speaker and addressees on the one hand, and side participants on the other, i.e. those taking part in the conversation but not currently being addressed. Finally, all other listeners are over

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[1]) This principle mainly applies to two-party conversations. As will be seen later with Algerian examples, and as noticed by Kasermann and Altorfer –1989-, Grice's maxims may break down when dealing with conversations including more than two participants.

[2]) Relevance is to make a contribution relevant to the topic. Truthfulness is usually to say only what we believe to be true. Quantity means to be brief, while our message remains clear. Clarity means that our message should be constructed in an orderly way.

hearers, and subdivide into bystanders –those who are openly present but not part of the conversation-, and eavesdroppers – those who listen in without the speaker's awareness, as shown in the following table.

○ Speaker	○ Addressee	○ Side participant	○ Bystander	
All participants				
All listeners				○ Eavesdropper

Table 1 : The social structure of conversation
Cf. Clark, 1996:14.

But of course such a theoretical description need not always be a mirror of reality, of the raw data of real-life conversation, because the border-line between the above mentioned categories of existing "members" in a conversation is flexible in the continuum of speech, nor is it always easy to deal with participants and over hearers at the same time –c.f. Clark and Schaefer, 1992-.

As to their linguistic aspect, conversations are structured insofar as they usually subdivide into major stages such as conversation opening, conversation closing, or conversation maintaining –which form the core of our present study-. They are identifiable not so much by their content but rather by their form. For example, conversations generally begin with an exchange of greetings –the English "Hello" or "how do you do", or other special ritualistic forms between intimates-.

Variation in forms will partly depend on context in general, and cultural context in particular, which will also determine such matters as who is to speak first, which address term and variety of language to use, etc. On the other hand, conversations generally end with a "Goodbye", but which is usually preceded by a pre-closing stage to make sure that the conversation has come to an end. Such pre-closing markers can be represented by such English expressions as "well", "I think that's all", or a brief summary of some earlier agreement, or a personal exchange like "my regards to…". Kinesic features can also be used. If a new topic is to be introduced after the closing stage, a repair mechanism or device will be used, having the form : "By the way", or "incidentally", or "I forgot to tell you". Each step is governed by tacit agreements or conventions which cannot be breached without cost or exceptional reason. As M.L. Geis –1995:186- puts it, there is "some evidence that conversations are sequentially organised, or, at least, that we can impose a sequential organisation on them".

Speech can be fully or partly planned or unplanned –c.f. Ochs, 1979-. It can range from fully planned -for example to welcome a visiting head of state-, to fully unplanned –i.e. casual conversation or talk which is not thought out before it is expressed-. The structure of everyday life conversation is everytime renewed by the creativity, the strategy and the intention of individual speakers, as opposed to more conventional and hence more structured types of discourse

like for example rituals –situated at the other end of a continuum of structured verbal exchanges- in which each participant's behaviour is completely specified in advance. Next to rituals we have debates, in which the two contrasting sides are allotted turns and times in advance.

In between debates and casual conversations, we have discussions led by a chairperson who selects who is to speak next, as regulated by parliamentary rules. An example for this is the class-room situation where the teacher has special rights. He may be said to "own" the conversation, whereas ordinary conversations may be said to be shared. You own a conversation when you control such matters as topic selection, turn-taking, and even beginnings and endings of conversation. As Coulthard –1977:101- says :

> *Verbal interaction inside the classroom differs markedly from desultory conversation in that its main purpose is to instruct and inform, and this difference is reflected in the structure of the discourse. In conversation, topic changes are unpredictable and incontrollable, for... a speaker can even talk "on topic" without talking on the topic intended by the previous speaker. Inside the classroom it is one of the functions of the teacher to choose the topic, decide how it will be subdivided into smaller units, and cope with digressions and misunderstandings.*

Compared with the other types of discourse, casual conversations in natural settings apparently seem less structured because of their spontaneous and unpredictable character : There is no topic selection in advance, no specification of who is to speak and for how long, no fixed time for beginning and ending the conversation, etc. Being

unpredictable and spontaneous, natural conversational data can even seem chaotic because of back channel, utterance fragmentation, completion and overlap –from listener-, repetition, deletion of subject and referent, etc. Clark –1996:127- gives the following example :

- A and B are discussing domestic pets –

A : Well, of course, people who go to the vet's are

B : Mm

A : Interested in the cats and dogs, ain't they ?

B : Yeah, but the people that first have pets Kit-pets er don't realise what's involved, do they ?

A : care Well it sorts them Out, you know, those that don't care that's it so... but

B : Mm Mm

A : If you wanna, you know, somebody that's keen on having a pet

B : Mm Mm

A : and want it in good order.

B : Done... done properly, that's right, yeah.

-Lawley data 1987-

Because of such a messy look, the raw data of conversation are often "cleaned up" or idealised ([1]) in

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[1]) "Idealisation" also concerns the speech-situation itself whose conversational data are usually assumed as "deriving from verbal

transcripts. Nevertheless, the structural and organisational aspect of unplanned speech or conversation will be expressed in a much neater and clearer way by the following two basic examples of structure in conversation : adjacency-pair on the one hand often used for opening and closing conversations, and turn-taking on the other, used throughout the whole conversation.

II.2.2.1. Adjacency pair

What is basic in a structure is the idea of unit, and adjacency pair seems to be the basic structural unit in conversation, one of the central concepts in research in conversational analysis, and an important organisational, normative device used in conversation. Adjacency pairs are turns at talk which co-occur and are more closely related than others. They are mutually dependent sequences of utterances produced by two successive speakers, where the second pair – part is conditionally relevant given a first one. The first part of a pair predicts the occurrence of the second. "Given a question, regularly enough an answer will follow" –c.f. Sacks 1967-. The "first pair-part" of the first speaker constrains the second speaker to provide a response in the "second pair-part" –c.f. Schegloff and Sacks, 1973-.

Some adjacency pairs are completely ritualised or

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interaction in socially and linguistically homogeneous groups. It is also taken for granted that conversational involvement exists, that interlocutors are cooperating, and that interpretive conventions are shared." C.f. Gumperz, 1982:4.

formulaic with identical first and second parts, as greetings –Hello-Hello-, while others are less tightly constrained and leave room for options, choice and individual strategy in the second pair-part, as for example, invitation, request or offer leading to acceptance or refusal ; complaint or accusation leading to apology, justification or some kind of rejection ; compliment leading to acceptance or rejection, etc.

Options in the second member of the pair allow for continuity and exchange in the conversation through a kind of linear chaining effect ([1]) : From a question to an answer, from an answer to a comment, from a comment to an acknowledgement, and so on. That is how the adjacency pair concept, with its ideas of pairing and chaining, holds a central position in the structure of conversation in general, and in conversational openings and closings in particular. However, real-life conversations can show more complexities and may diverge from such a standard-idealised-view.

The first example of complexity and divergence is when following the production of a first pair-part, the second one does not occur, as for example when one does not respond to a question, or does not offer a comment when one is solicited, or does not acknowledge a request. This exception, or violation, to the rule is still meaningful because an inference will be drawn when for instance one does not return a

[1]) This chaining device can in theory be used indefinitely, and is characteristic of some types of verbal interaction as doctor/patient interviews.

greeting : it may be taken as a sign of rudeness ; not providing an answer to a question may be taken as indicative of evasiveness ; while not reacting to an accusation may be taken as a tacit admission of guilt.

The second example of complexity of structure and divergence from the norm is when the second speaker produces not a second pair-part but another first pair-part, as for example when a question is followed by another question, rather than an answer. The reason can be simple as when one could not hear the question or could not understand it. But the reason is often a strategic one when the user is avoiding giving a clear answer to a question in order to get more thinking time, or when he does not want to commit himself until he knows more. He may mean to say : "If you answer my question, I shall answer yours". For example, the following question : "Can I borrow your car ?" may be followed by another question : "For how long do you need it ?" The structure here, as opposed to the above ones, is not linear. It is a case of embedding , where one pair occurs inside another. Schegloff –1972 ; 1990- calls these embedded pairs "insertion sequences". Insertion sequences postpone a second pair-part's production, but they do not negate its relevance -c.f. Levinson, 1983:304-306- If eventually the second speaker does not produce an answer, the questioner can complain about the lack of answer, which ought to occur, as in linear cases. Wootton –1975:70- gives the following example of a sequence used in a conversation between a

patient and a therapist :

- Patient : I'm a nurse, but my husband won't let me work.

- Therapist : How old are you ?

- Patient : Thirty-one this December.

- Therapist : What do you mean, he won't let you work ?

The third example of complexity in structure and divergence from the norm is the suggestion that the basic unit of verbal interaction is composed of three parts, as in Goffman's –1976:69- following example :

A : "Would you pass the milk ?"

B : "Here".

A : "Thanks".

A is first making a request which, in a second move, is fulfilled by B. In an optional third move, A acknowledges B's response and closes the interactional exchange ([1]).

The three parts of the conversational exchange are sometimes referred to as "initiation", "response" and "feedback". According to this view, verbal exchange would be incomplete if some form of feedback was missing –c.f. Stubbs, 1983-. Tsui –1989:561- holds a similar view in favour of a three-part-exchange : "a potentially three-part-exchange, which may contain non verbal component parts, is more adequate than an adjacency pair as a basic unit of

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[1]) According to Goffman, the "offender" –i.e. the person who makes a request – is somehow obliged to show appreciation after the ritual equilibrium has been restored by the granting of the request -Goffman 1976:69-.

conversational organisation". As noted earlier, the possible addition of a third part in a basic verbal exchange can be a matter of individual choice, and sometimes more generally of individual culture. Goffman's notion of "footing" can be applied to what happens when one speaker completes another speaker's utterance. Participants manage this in three-part sequences, in the third turn of which the original speaker accepts or rejects the content of the footing -though a zero-entry in the third turn remains possible-. Completion as defined by Lerner –1991- is both sentential and syntactic : as a whole, it is produced by two speakers, while its meaning depends on its syntactic relation with the preceding utterance. It can be used, in the Algerian context, as a strategic means for conversation maintaining –cf. chapter 3-.

The following fourth example of structural complexity in conversation originates in the English culture from English speakers who want to avoid potentially embarrassing or annoying situations. If is a fact that invitations, for instance, can be accepted or declined ; that requests can be granted or rejected. To avoid such alternatives –i.e. to avoid exposing themselves to a possible rejection–, native-speakers usually produce what Sacks calls a "pre-sequence", another pair which softens the possible refusal of their invitation. Very often, the "pre-sequence" phase is about the possible availability of someone for attending a particular event, and usually takes the following form :

Pre-invitation ⎪ A : "What are you doing tonight ?"

> B : "We are going out. Why ?"
>
> A : "Oh, I was just going to say..." ([1])

Elaborate structures for politeness are more often used and are more appropriate –than for example the bald "No" answer-, especially between acquaintances in semi-formal situations. Such native speakers of English usually precede disagreement second pair-parts with partial agreement –"Yes, but..."-, and with softeners ([2]) –"I'm afraid...", c.f. Pearson, 1986-. Usually, responses which "agree" with the first pair-part are produced in a straightforward way, while those which somehow "disagree" are preceded by hesitation, discourse markers as : "Well...", and are followed by explanations about the speaker's response –c.f. Pomerantz : 1984 ; Sacks : 1987 ; Schegloff : 1988b-. This is often an opportunity for the first speaker to reconsider or rephrase the original first pair-part, and make the disagreement or rejection softer –c.f. Davidson : 1984-.

It can be concluded that adjacency pairs are important not only as a basic unit for the structure of conversation, but also as a means speakers use for establishing and maintaining mutual understanding of one another's behaviour. In this

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[1]) While in the Algerian context, asking for somebody's programme in a straightforward way may be perceived as intrusive and face-threatening.

[2]) While in the Algerian context, bald disagreement seems to be more used and more acceptable, and does not seem to lead to quite an embarrassing situation. Hence the proverb : <u>hih jaqdi u laa jaqdi</u> : "both "yes" and "no" are positive.

way, they also help reveal a community's culture and identity. The latter are also revealed by a broader aspect of conversational structure where adjacency pair is included : this broader aspect, which is our following point, is turn-taking.

II.2.2.2. Turn-taking

What is noticeable in ordinary conversation is the smooth and easy character of turn-taking. Despite its apparent simplicity, turn-taking in conversation is indeed a very complex phenomenon. What makes it look that simple is in fact the existence of relatively simple rules it obeys, and the skill of the conversationalists ([1]) in applying these rules. An example of such efficiency in conversation is the insignificant portion of overlaps and gaps between different speakers' turns –which are generally measured in fractions of a second-, though there is no pre-allocation of turn as opposed to ceremonials or formal debates. The immediate question which comes to mind is about the nature of the rules governing conversational behaviour. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson –1974- noticed some very simple rules which could apply recursively at all Transition Relevance Places ([2])

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[1]) A high degree of skill is required to be able to take one's turn at the very moment a speaker has reached a potential completion of turn. Another tactic is to complete the speaker's own utterance.

[2]) Duncan –1973, 1974- suggests that potential turn-shifts can be recognised grammatically –by the completion of a grammatical clause-, paralinguistically –by a fall in pitch or loudness-, or kinesicly –by an ending or a relaxation of a hand movement-. These three cues for speaker change may of course combine.

–T.R.P's- in the following order :

1. **The next turn goes to the person addressed by the current speaker, who will direct his eye gaze to the selected next speaker. This is an effective technique for speaker selection in face-to-face interaction, because conversants assume that when a speaker addresses or focuses his gaze on a participant at the end of an utterance, it is because the speaker wants and/or expects that participant to make the next contribution to the conversation.**

2. **The next turn goes to the person who speaks first, since someone who has taken a turn is not expected to be interrupted. Here again, a high degree of individual skill is required. A difficulty is when two or more conversants take the same turn at the same time. We can imagine as a "wise" solution that they interrupt "their" turn and negotiate first before agreeing about who is to speak next.**

3. **The next turn goes to the current speaker, if he resumes before anyone else speaks.**

Here also, and especially if the group of participants is larger, there can be a conflict, simultaneous talk if everybody was eager to take the floor immediately. A battle for the turn may occur, ending in a negotiated agreement, or even in a complete disagreement, which may put an end to the conversation itself.

Slowing of tempo and vowel elongation can be additional signals.

Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson –ibid- also noticed the meaningful and orderly character of silence within conversation. They classified it into the following types : brief gaps –or inter-turn silences- allowing a new turn at talk ; longer gaps when the same speaker resumes talking because no addressee has taken the floor ; intra-turn pauses not to be talked in by others, where only the same speaker can continue ; and finally extended intentional silences or lapses at transition places where somebody's right to take a turn at talk is not fulfilled, whatever the reason or personal attitude.

Besides the rules mentioned above, there are also general principles which govern the method for talking, and which conversants are aware of and usually put into practice. They can be summarised as follows :

1. Only one person speaks at a time –so that he or she can be heard-. On the other hand, that speaker is recognised as the one with the right turn at talk –i.e. he is not out of turn-.
2. Each participant should have a chance to talk.
3. For reasons of efficiency, the gaps between turns should be brief.
4. The order of speakers, and how much they talk, should not be fixed in advance.
5. There must be agreed upon norms for deciding who is to speak, when, for how long, and about what.

The above general principles imply that there are ready-made rules structuring conversation and coordinating turns

at talk, but they also imply that there are choices : speakers may want to flout or exploit the rules for their own devious purposes. Two or three participants could conspire to exclude the rest by addressing only each other. A speaker may be reluctant to relinquish his turn and may do anything to keep it : avoiding eye contact with listeners, stringing utterances together ; avoiding adjacency-pairs that require others to speak ; dominant speakers ([1]) can take more turns. The latter case can be a matter of gender ([2]), which itself can be a matter of individual culture.

In relation with turn-taking, some traits of conversation seem to be universal, while some others are culture-specific ([3]). What is apparently universal -as said earlier- is for example that conversations usually begin with a greeting ([4]), whose form is often the adjacency-pair ; that they usually

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[1]) An easy technique is to use what Sacks calls "an utterance incompletor" such as "but", "and", "however", which make a potentially complete sentence incomplete. Another tactic for keeping the floor is by speaking more loudly, more quickly and in a higher pitch.

[2]) In general, males are known as more garrulous speakers than females.

[3]) Though "no one is able now to say what is universal or what is culturally specific" –c.f. Gumperz and Hymes eds : 1972:347-. Brown and Levinson –1987:61- are claiming some universals for politeness, in particular the notion of "negative face" –i.e. freedom of action and freedom from imposition –and "positive face" –i.e. the self-image must be appreciated and approved of-.

[4]) Notable exceptions concern the type of conversation on the one hand –for instance telephone conversations and conversations between strangers usually begin with no greeting-, and the type of culture on the other hand –an absence of stereotyped verbal greeting in some societies was noticed, c.f. Gumperz and Hymes eds. 1972:347-.

end with closing pairs often preceded by a pre-closing stage ; That they are sustained and coordinated by turn-switching or by other devices as back-channel responses, which consist in English of vocalisations such as "mm", "uh huh", and short words and phrases such as "yes, no, right, sure" –see Yngve : 1970- ([1]).

On the other hand, some other traits of conversation in relation with turn-taking are culture-specific. For example silence and its duration are differently evaluated in different cultures ([2]); in Algeria, keeping the talk going is a major rule to be applied even at the expense of another important rule –though smaller- : the one about face-preserving, where one's talk is inadequate, or as an extreme possibility, when one, in his desire to change the social distance or the role-relationship, adopts a challenging, a face-threatening verbal behaviour towards other participants just for the sake of getting them to react and hence unconsciously get involved in the conversation.

An extreme example of the cultural specific character of turn-taking in ordinary conversation –making it similar with debates and ceremonials-, is among the Burundi, where "the order in which individuals speak in a group is strictly determined by seniority of rank" –c.f. Albert: 1972-, until everybody has taken a turn. While in telephone conversation

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[1]) Back-channel realisations vary a lot from one culture to another.
[2]) For example, Finns and Japanese accept longer silences in general, and as a norm in turn-taking.

opening in Japan, it is the caller who speaks first and identifies himself.

So far, we have described turn-taking as an important structuring factor of conversation, and also as an important device for personal strategy. In its first-mentioned function, turn-taking, often in the form of ready-made adjacency-pairs, is essential in conversational opening -e.g. greeting-, and in conversational closings-often preceded by strategic pre-closing formulas-.

As far as conversation maintaining is concerned, we notice first that a topic may exhaust itself. With unwanted breakdowns in conversation, speakers may attempt to fill the silence, to resume the conversation, for example in the form it started, i.e. the summons-answer sequence –c.f. chapter 3-. Usually the summoner, who must have a high verbal skill, is obligated to provide a new topic of conversation, and is expected to be successful in getting the conversation resumed ([1]). Topic, a difficult, yet essential notion in conversation, is going to be analysed in the following point.

II.2.2.3. Topic

As just indicated, topic shifts usually occur in the vicinity of silences within conversation ([2]). This has been observed as

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[1]) While in telephone conversations, the caller is usually to provide a topic. If he does not, the party called is likely to feel somewhat bewildered.

[2]) It is also noticeable that when the feedback –nods of approval or other gestures of listeners, "mhm"s and "yes"s, and other

a regular feature of casual conversation –see Maynard 1980-. But if we move back to the beginning of conversation, the following questions about topic will be necessarily asked : How topics are opened, developed, changed and closed. Besides, the fundamental and most difficult question is : What is a topic ? Such question can be answered in many different ways.

Clark –1996:132- distinguishes the following views about topic : on a formal level, topic is defined as "stretches of talk bounded by certain topic and/or transactional markers, such as lexical ones –"by the way", "to change the subject"-, or phonological ones –changes in pitch-". The second view about topic is a semantic one, where we try to express the content of different segments of talk according to single-word or phrasal titles –e.g. "holidays", "buying a house"-. A third possibility is to "use interactive criteria and say that something is only a topic if more than one speaker makes an utterance relevant to it". Finally, a pragmatic approach would say that " topics end where chains of lexical cohesion peter out".

Such a diversity of views about topic is revealing of the difficulty in attempting to define it. Among the reasons for

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empathetic signals indicating to a speaker that the floor is still his and the topic is of interest- ceases, both turn and topic are likely to change –see Schiffrin, 1987-.

such a difficulty, and with reference to Clark's third definition, is the possible distinction between a full topic -talked about by a majority of speakers throughout a whole or a long part of a conversation-, and a sub-topic –"if more than one speaker"- may be just two –"makes an utterance relevant to it"-.

Another reason for the difficulty in defining topic in ordinary conversation is that topics are not blocks of talk about a topic ; they are not fixed in advance ; rather, they are spontaneous and flexible, fluctuate and change, appear, disappear and re-appear ; they seem to form a continuum throughout and in many fluid and successful conversations. Every time they are given a new print, a new orientation by one speaker or another ; they all participate in the negotiation of topic-s-([1]) while conversing. While a topic is talked about, a "new" one is in sight, gradually develops, and gradually fades away, giving birth to a "new" one. The point is that there might be single or multiple versions of a conversation topic. Topics in a conversation are dynamic and are negotiated as a conversation progresses. For this reason, we cannot really say that a discourse has a topic ; only speakers and writers do.

When the conversation is fluid –as most Algerian verbal exchanges are-, the topic changes in the discourse by gradual

[1]) In such informal conversations, and because of such fluidity and fluctuation in topic, one can hardly make a topic out of an other.

drift as opposed to abrupt change –c.f. Hudson 1999:136-. In the words of Harvey Sacks, one of the founders of Conversation Analysis :

> *A general feature for topical organisation is movement from topic to topic, not by a topic-close followed by a topic-beginning, but by a stepwise move, which involves linking up whatever is being introduced to what has just been talked about, such that, as far as anybody knows, a new topic has not been started, though we're far from wherever we began.*
> *–Quoted from Sacks' lecture notes in Schiffrin 1994:261-.*

A third reason why topic is difficult to define is the possible differentiation between a conversant's personal topic and the topic of conversation. Brown and Yule -1983:89-90- explain this possible divergence this way :

> *Some elements in a speaker's personal topic do not become salient elements in the conversation if neither the other participant nor the speaker himself mentions them again… Characterising the individual speaker's topic as "what I think we are talking about" incorporate both that element which the conversational analyst tends to abstract as the " topic of conversation" for the participants –"what we are talking about"- and the individual speaker's version – "I think"-, as he makes a conversational contribution. That speakers do introduce what they want to say via some form of personal reference has a noticeable effect on the structure of contributions in conversational discourse…*
> *From what we have proposed as speakers' topics in conversational discourse, it must occasionally happen that there are at least two versions of "what I think we are talking about" which are potentially incompatible. It is a noticeable feature of co-operative conversational discourse, however, that this potential incompatibility rarely leads to conflict over the topic of conversation. What typically happens is that, in the negotiation*

*process, one speaker realises that his version is
incompatible with what the other appears to be
talking about and makes his contributions compatible
with "what I think you –not we- are talking about".*

From this description, we understand that different speakers can have different views about what is actually talked about (¹). They may even compete (²) to develop the topic their own way. The notion of topic remains then a confused one.

A final difficulty in defining topic is when there seems to be none in a conversation (³) though people are conversing. Language here is a very important means of establishing and maintaining relationships with other people. This widespread phenomenon and maybe universal feature of language is known as "phatic communion" –c.f. Malinowski, op. cit.- or empty talk. Language is used to socialise, to talk just for the sake of talking. Language is used to avoid unwanted silence, to fulfil politeness rules. Well known examples of "appropriate topics" are conversations or small talks about weather, or health, or jokes telling. What is talked about or the words

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¹) For example, successive speakers may talk relevantly in relation with the last utterance, but everyone is talking on a different topic.

²) A person may attempt to get the topic changed before it is exhausted, but such attempt is likely to be resisted by the other conversationalists –especially if they form a majority- because it would stand for an interruption, for a violation of a speaking rule.

³) A variety of "no topic" is when the latter is purposefully and strategically made ambiguous by the speaker –e.g. a euphemism, cf. Lakoff, 1973c- in a Kind of "negative face" politeness, i.e. in order to offer options –and show respect- to the addressee. In the last resort, the latter has also the option of declining to acknowledge the nature of the topic, choose a new orientation to the discussion, or even change the topic altogether, without embarrassing his interlocutor.

which are used is less important than the very fact of speaking.

Even if phatic communion, and politeness in general, are universal concepts, the way they are realised will vary considerably from one culture to another. Individual variation within the same cultural community is also possible (¹). Depending on cultures, and also depending on individuals, a speaker's linguistic behaviour in general, and his use of polite expressions in particular, can be determined or influenced by social conventions, or by interactional strategy –c.f. Ide, 1989:223-. Such necessary relationship between language as conversation on the one hand, and culture on the other hand, will be dealt with in the following point. Examples will be taken from different parts of the world, and from Algeria in particular.

II.2.3. The cultural aspects of conversation

The relationship between conversation and culture are so tight and so numerous that they can never be exhausted in a given study. We shall then limit ourselves to some well-known basic cultural concepts which affect language use, and which vary from one community –individual (²)- to

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[1]) G.M. Green –1989:145- observes that "it is important to note that, within a culture, individual speakers may also vary somewhat in employing conversational devices to execute politeness strategies. Speakers may differ in their respective estimation of the social distance between them. In addition, speakers apply the various politeness strategies and tactics in different ways according to their desire to change that social distance".

[2]) The difficulty with individual variation, i.e. individual unpredictability,

another, such as politeness, together with paralinguistic or kinesic and proxemic aspects.

As said earlier, examples will be taken from different parts of the world, and from Algeria in particular. They will show that the rules and the norms about when, how and how often speech should be used in social interaction may vary widely between one society and another. Such studies of cross-cultural differences in communicative norms are often referred to as the ethnography of speaking.

The relationship between language and culture can be traced back to B. Malinowski, to F. Boas in the USA by the end of the nineteenth century, and then to his followers : the anthropologists and linguists Kroeber, Sapir and Bloomfield whose influence on modern linguistics is undeniable. Later on, the necessary interlink between language and culture was emphasized by Dell Hymes, and explained by Nessa Wolfson – 1981:1- as follows :

> *From the point of view of language learning and*
> *intercultural communication, it is important to*
> *recognise that the individual who wishes to learn a*
> *new language must, in addition to acquiring a new*

is explained by Gumperz and Roberts –1980:3- in the following way :
"The conventions of language use operate within such a great range of situations and have to take into account so many variables. There is no neat equation between type of interaction and the conventions which an individual might use. Every piece of good communication depends upon the response and feedback which participants elicit from each other in the course of the conversation itself and so every speaker has to develop his own strategies for interpreting and responding appropriately".

> *vocabulary and a new set of phonological and*
> *syntactic rules, learn what Dell Hymes –1972- calls*
> *the rules of speaking : the patterns of sociolinguistic*
> *behaviour of the target language.*

As to the definition of culture, Haviland –1974:264- proposes the following one :

> *Culture is not observable behaviour of a group of*
> *people, but an abstraction derived from it. Culture is a*
> *set or rules or standards which, when acted upon by*
> *members of a society, produce behaviour that falls*
> *within the range of variance that members consider*
> *proper and acceptable.*

While for such anthropologists as Geertz –1973- and Douglas –1970-, cultures are systems of symbols, and language is only one of the symbolic systems in this network. It follows from this definition that knowledge of the cultural context is necessary for interpreting correctly the meaning of linguistic behaviour. It is a fact that "language-behaviour" is a culture-dependent activity –cf. Lyons, 1996:291-.

Gumperz and Cook –Gumperz –1982:14- explain the importance of the shared cultural background as follows :

> *Many of the meanings and understandings, at the*
> *level of ongoing processes of interpretation of*
> *speaker's intent, depend upon culturally specific*
> *conventions, so that much of the meaning in any*
> *encounter is indirect and implicit. The ability to expose*
> *enough of the implicit meaning to make for a*
> *satisfactory encounter between strangers or culturally*
> *different speakers requires communicative flexibility.*

In cross- cultural exchanges, conversations can easily go wrong, and serious breakdowns in communication may occur because of the lack of shared background knowledge,

assumptions and expectations. Gumperz –1982a:1- cites the following conversation recorded in a small office, characteristic of the American –western- way of life, way of thinking, and way of speaking :

A : Are you gonna be here for ten minutes ?

B : Go ahead and take your break. Take longer if you want to.

A : I'll just be outside on the porch. Call me if you need me.

B : O.K., don't worry.

Such a typical verbal exchange "raises further problems as to the nature of knowledge involved in A's and B's ability to see beyond surface content and to understand such indirect messages" –ibid:2-.

A first example of how cultural norms and conventions affect linguistic behaviour is politeness in general, and complimenting in particular. Politeness is assumed to be a universal cultural concept with some practical cross-cultural validity. Brown and Levinson –1987:61- have further extended Grice's [1] and Goffman's [1] –1967- ideas into a

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[1]) For example, Grice's theory of indirect speech-act or "implicature" –1975:51-3-, or Grice's –ibid:45- "cooperative principle" for ideal exchanges : "make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged". But of course there are instances of violations of maxims, of non-cooperative communication, sometimes called "crosstalk", in which participants intentionally distort communication and the clarity of the message.

general theory of "politeness", which itself depends on the concept of "face" :

> *Face is something that is emotionally invested, and*
> *that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must*
> *be constantly attended to in interaction. In general,*
> *people cooperate – and assume each other's*
> *cooperation – in maintaining face in interaction, such*
> *cooperation being based on the mutual vulnerability of*
> *face. That is, normally everyone's face depends on*
> *everyone else's being maintained, and since people*
> *can be expected to defend their faces if threatened,*
> *and in defending their own to threaten others' faces, it*
> *is in general in every participant's best interest to*
> *maintain each other's face.*

The argument is that, universally, people have on the one hand the desire to be appreciated and approved of by others –positive face needs-, and, on the other hand, to be unimpeded in one's actions –negative face needs [2]-. Since those two kinds of needs happen to be conflictual [3], people often make use of politeness strategies to try and balance their own face needs against those of others, depending for example on distance with interlocutors, on difference in status, on personal intention, or on how the whole situation is evaluated.

One practical aspect of the general concept of politeness,

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[1]) Goffman –1967:5- refers to the origin of face in "the line others assume [a person] has taken". It is "an image".

[2]) As for example the indirect meaning of "can you", which is motivated by the principle that it is polite to respect the hearer's autonomy and freedom. The hearer is given a chance to refuse to comply.

[3]) For example, a professor's freedom of action in evaluating students may be face-threatening to the latter, who may react by a face-repairing device, which itself could be face-threatening.

which also includes the idea of "face", is complimenting, i.e. compliment giving and responding behaviour. When, how much and how complimenting is used is going to vary from one society to another depending on how it is valued in a given culture. As a result, inter-cultural miscommunication may occur when people with different life experiences and different cultural patterns of communication interact with one another ([1]). For example, Wolfson –1992:205- points out that what members of particular cultural groups thank or apologise for, or compliment on, usually reflects values because, in performing those speech acts, people are often implicitly assessing the behaviour, possessions, accomplishments, character, or appearance of others.

Wolfson –ibid:212- observed the high frequency of complimenting among middle-class Americans of equal status such as friends, co-workers, and acquaintances. She explains that they compliment frequently because they

> *live in a complex and open society in which*
> *individuals are members not of a single network in*
> *which their own place is well defined, but rather*
> *belong to a number of networks, both overlapping and*
> *non-overlapping, in which they must continually*
> *negotiate their roles and relationships with one*
> *another.*

Herbert –1985, 1989, 1990- has another view and

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[1] **) Wolfson –1983- gives the example of Former U.S. president Carter who complimented in France a French official on the fine job he was doing. Carter's remarks were later on interpreted by the French media as interference in French affairs.**

considers that Americans compliment frequently in order to negotiate social relations, and frequently reject compliments to avoid the implication that they are superior to their interlocutors. This pattern is conform to the social structure and to the ideology of the American democracy. But viewed from a different society, culture and ideology –including the Algerian one-, the high frequency with which Americans compliment is regarded as "effusive, insincere, and possibly motivated by ulterior considerations" –Wolfson, 1989:23-.

By contrast, Herbert –ibid- explains that South Africans do not compliment much but easily accept compliments in order to keep subordinates at distance –they allow the compliments to imply that they are superior to their interlocutors-. This pattern is also conform to the social structure and to the ideology of "institutionalised social inequality publicly enunciated in South Africa" –1989:43-.

Complimenting in Algeria is going to prove different from the preceding cases, since Algerians usually do not compliment much, and do not like much to receive compliments. This "negative" attitude towards complimenting is partly justified by the structure of the society where there are strong attempts to keep males and females separate in social life activities. These attempts and attitudes are themselves dictated by Islamic principles. Men complimenting women –or the other way round- would be very exceptional and is made even more improbable because of the strong sexual connotation which it may imply –in case the

compliment is for example on physical appearance, dress, or even character or behaviour-. Another limiting factor to complimenting is the fact that it is more a feminine than a masculine attitude, i.e. women would compliment one another.

An even more important reason for such "negative" attitude towards complimenting in Algeria, has to do with ideology, i.e. the widespread and deeply rooted belief among Algerians in the evil-eye. This belief is even stronger since it is backed up by the most well-known verses of the Koran, i.e. the very last ones. An evidence for such a strong belief is the fashionable and exaggerated habit today to associate any personal harm –physical, mental, conjugal, social or professional- with the evil-eye as the cause, and follow the official religious therapy known as <u>roqja</u>. The latter consists in the recitation of well-known verses of the Koran by a man of religion.

Anticipating such problems, many people avoid complimenting in order to avoid being considered as a potential source of harm. But absence of compliment is no solution either when the interlocutor is expecting it -for example for a new house, a new car, a better job-, because this can easily be interpreted as a mark of envy, jealousy. When complimenting still occurs, the situation becomes an embarrassing, a problematic one for both speaker and addressee. Everyone of them is going to face the situation his own way. The rules for verbal behaviour in reaction to a

compliment are somehow indeterminate and may even clash. For example the addressee's need for politeness and cooperation with the complimenter can hardly be reconciled with the threat –evil-eye- the addressee feels is coming from the speaker.

A similar conflict in compliment giving and receiving people have to resolve by individual strategy is the conflict between the alleged universal conversational principles of agreeing with the complimenter on the one hand, and at the same time avoid self-praise on the other hand. That is why both acceptance and rejection –or any intermediate attitude- are likely to be unsatisfactory. Individual improvisation and verbal skill, together with appropriate para-linguistic and kinesic features, are the key for a successful complimenting and for a suitable verbal reaction to the embarrassing situation by both the complimenter and the addressee.

Let us study the compliment giving and receiving situation from the complimenter's point of view first. The initiator of the compliment –when the compliment is required or expected- has as a first and a safer possibility the choice of using the first part of a standard and conventional adjacency pair specific to ordinary and publicly know social events as weddings, marriage, new born babies. The adjacency pair in question is composed of the following summons and answer :

Summons : <u>kull∂ʃ m∂bruuk</u> : "Everything is prosperous"

Answer   : <u>ibaar∂k fiik</u> : "-God gives- prosperity to you".

This classical way of complimenting is less problematic because it is standard, mechanical as a routine adjacency pair ([1]), and obligatory. Moreover, it does not specifically mention the object of the compliment. This no naming or indirect speech is itself a way to avoid the evil-eye ([2]), and hence make the situation less embarrassing.

When complimenting is not really obligatory –though it might be somehow expected, as for example complimenting someone for their small child-, taking the initiative of complimenting involves some kind of risk –evil-eye-. In such cases, the speaker, subconsciously feeling guilty, has at his disposal some repair mechanisms for improving psychologically the situation. A first technique would be to add immediately to the compliment the "protecting" religious expression :

əllaah ibaarək : "God gives prosperity",

which is to be repeated several times ([3]) as a way to show

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[1]) Even in very rare cases where the addressee can't immediately realise the object of the compliment, he would still automatically produce the second pair part before he can remember –or he is reminded of- the object of the compliment.

[2]) The magical power of words is an important characteristic of the Algerian culture. We have already mentioned above the example of roqja or religious therapy just with Koranic verses. An other example is such words as "cancer" which are hardly –or never- pronounced by some people who systematically use expressions like : "the ugly disease" instead.

[3]) In the Arabic culture in general, repetition usually has a positive connotation standing for something fruitful, pedagogical –as opposed to the western monotony associated with repetition-. Hence the Arabic proverb :

one's own awareness of one's own guilt and of the "risk" –for the small child-, and to show also one's own will to fight that risk. For even more safety reasons, this "protecting" religious expression can even be meant to anticipate the "danger" when put before the compliment, as for example in :

∂llaah ibaar∂k w∂ld∂k bsaħtu :

"God gives prosperity, your child is in a good health" ([1]).
The corresponding usual answer is :

iʕaiʃ∂k : "God keeps you alive",

which is a kind of neutral thanking or acknowledgement.

Another repair technique the complimenter can use is, especially when the addressee has no quick response or feels embarrassed, to switch immediately to another –related- topic, as for example asking about the healthy child's –c.f. above example- sleeping habits or performance at school ; or asking or commenting about the circumstances –time, place, cost- of the buying of the object of compliment. The complimenter is making a response to the compliment less conspicuously absent by providing another speech act immediately after the compliment.

Now, viewed from the addressee's angle, the situation following a compliment is even more uncomfortable because

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fi ∂liʕaada ifaada : "repetition is fruitful".

[1]) It is obvious that such an utterance has been stripped of its religious element –i.e. reference to the source of divine favour-. It has become just a conventional speech –act of well wishing, in which the favour of the speaker only is being indicated.

of his belief in an immanent danger around him. A possible way to "escape" is to change the topic –and hence the situation- into a related one as described above with the second repair technique of the speaker, by providing further information about the object of compliment or making a comment about it. Another possibility for the addressee to resolve the conflict is a noticeable or conspicuous absence of a response to the compliment, to be interpreted in one way or another depending for example on face expression. A strong probability is to interpret this no acknowledgement as an embarrassment, an unwillingness to engage and, therefore, as face-threatening. This probability is confirmed in some occasions with some people who, when complimented (¹) in Arabic, would offer no response, but would silently recite the well-known "protecting" verses from the holy book –this silent verbal activity is revealed by their prolonged silence in the conversation, or by their silent lip movement-; but when complimented in French, and while conversing, you would see them "secretly" try and touch the wooden object –table, chair- near them in conformity with their cultural system and with the French saying : <u>je touche du bois</u> : "I touch wood", which stands for an appeal to God for protection against the evil-eye (²).

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¹) Such compliments as : <u>rak ∂sᵇart</u> : "You look younger –don't you ?- or : <u>rak ∂sm∂nt</u> : "you have put on weight –haven't you ?-

²) This example shows on the one hand that there may be no one-to-one correspondence between a given language and a given culture; on the other hand, it also shows that in the Algerian

A third possible strategy for getting rid of the evil-eye is... by getting rid of the object of compliment itself : the complimenter is, when possible, given what he complimented on ([1]). The owner's or host's "surface" motivation is generosity –a characteristic of the Algerian society-, but probably there is a deeper, subconscious motivation...

Up till now, we have described techniques or strategies the addressee uses to protect himself against the evil-eye. But in extreme cases, he may adopt a more offensive attitude and defend himself by transferring –again via the magic of words ([2])- the danger back to the complimenter's side. This tactics is achieved through the addressee's use in conversation –following the compliment- of one form or another of the magical number "five" : x∂msa ([3]). The verbal skill of the addressee will be, following the compliment, to improvise appropriate, coherent sentences containing the word five or other forms deriving from it whose shared abstract root

culture, religion and superstition are very close to one another.

[1]) A typical example is the giving of some extra food to take away to a visitor after he has had his meal, and after he has been praising or complimenting indirectly the hostess's cooking skills by telling again and again his appreciation of the food.

[2]) "Magical language also has its pragmatics. Just as the meaning of a word, sentence, or phrase is the effective change brought about by the utterance within the context of situation in which it is wedded, so the meaning of magical spells is the effect their words have within the ritual context of their utterance". –Lopez, 1990:362 ; quoting Malinowski, 1965:214-.

[3]) In the Algerian culture, the number five is believed to have the power of keeping away the evil eye of greedy or jealous people. Symbolically, some people hang a figure of an open hand above the front door of their house or shop.

morpheme is the consonants : <u>x..m..s</u> ([1]).

 As an example, and following a visitor's compliment on a small child, the mother may reacy to the "threat" by saying :

  <u>dork fi ʕomru x∂msa, wa ∂zzaad b∂l xmiis, wa x∂msa</u>
   <u>wa ∂lxmuus ʕliih</u> :

 "he is now 5 -years or months-old, was born on a
  Thursday, and five and the fives on him".

 The last clause, i.e.: "Five and the fives on him", is a ready-made expression produced to protect the object of compliment –usually an individual, a small child- even in the presence of the complimenter ; while in his absence, the following expression or spell is used :

  <u>xamsa fi ʕeiniih</u> : "Five in his eyes" ([2]),

often produced with the presentation of the speaker's hand with its five fingers clearly separated. This ritual is meant to transfer symbolically the "evil" from the object of the compliment –something or someone- to the complimenter himself. Such a hostile initiative is made possible because of the absence of the complimenter. In his presence, one can still mean that spell in a non-verbal way just by secretely

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[1]) A typical example is that the number five itself : <u>x∂msa</u> also stands for a female first name, though extension has been made to males with such names as <u>xmiisi</u> or <u>buxmiis</u>.

[2]) Here, the number five is probably referring to the five fingers of a hand meant to destroy the sight of the complimenter, and hence destroy the very origin of harm –evil-eye-. On the other hand, Tambiah –1968:193- says that "it is a common view, also shared by Malinowski, that a magical spell is identifiable by its insistent use of imperatives."

moving and opening one's hand in the direction of the complimenter's face. The five fingers obviously stand for the number five.

From the above example, we understand that human communication is much wider and richer than mere verbal interaction. Kinesic and proxemic features which accompany verbal communication can be as important as words, and sometimes replace them altogether for a conversant's achievement of a specific goal, as shown in the previous examples. The learning of such features can be very necessary for a correct and efficient intercultural communication, and hence avoid miscommunication, misunderstandings and even conflicts between individuals and between nations.

Since conversational behaviour also obeys paralinguistic, kinesic and proxemic rules or norms, we look now at this other culture specific aspect of human communication. As a first remark, it is worth noticing that what is achieved verbally in a culture might be performed or signified non-verbally in another. Lakoff and Johnson –1980:5- explain it this way :

> *Imagine a culture where an argument is viewed as a dance, the participants are seen as performers, and the goal is to perform in a balanced and aesthetically pleasing way. In such a culture, people would view arguments differently, experience them differently, carry them out differently and talk about them differently.*

The second remark worth making is that verbal and non-

verbal aspects of conversation interact with one another. The verbal, prosodic, paralinguistic and kinesic channels all play distinctive and interacting roles. Utterances in verbal exchanges are interpreted not only on the basis of background knowledge, but also in the light of the accompanying prosodic, paralinguistic and kinesic signals. For example, "well done" is usually said as a compliment, but when said sarcastically the accompanying behaviour will probably differ.

According to Trower, Bryant and Argyle –1978:42-, these two channels –verbal and non-verbal- of human communication are used separately, each one with its own function : "In human social behaviour it looks as if the non-verbal channel is used for negotiating inter-personal attitudes while the verbal channel is used primarily for conveying information [1]". By non-verbal channel is meant the kinesic features –face and body expressions as winking, frowning, smiling, posture, nodding, shrugging- and the proxemic features –interpersonal distance-, together with prosody [2] and paralanguage [3].

The non-verbal channel is also useful in strategic

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[1]) This view is probably too simplistic since language is a subtle medium and can transmit information of both a semantic and social nature, often simultaneously.

[2]) By "prosody" is meant intonation, rhythm and pauses in speech whose position and function are linguistically determined.

[3]) By "paralanguage" is meant vocal behaviours accompanying speech such as "um", "ah", laughing, crying, yawning, and even silence which takes up as much time as the speech itself.

conversational matters insofar as it can be kept vague and flexible : "People need not reveal clearly nor commit themselves to what they think about each other" –c.f. Argyle, Alkema and Gilmour, 1971:400-. It follows that non-verbal features of conversation may vary from one individual to another, but always within the shared norms of a given culture. While from one cultural community to another, the norms themselves of non-verbal behaviour are going to vary. Let us consider some examples.

As a first example, let us see how kinesic features are used for regulating turn-talking in conversation –together with verbal and intonational features-. In an American –western- culture, turns are given and gained partly through body language features such as inhalation and head movement as a turn-seeking signal, eye contact ([1]), gesticulation, implying that the speaker is more or less sensitive to such appeals.

In an Algerian context and in most casual conversations ([2]), such features, if used, would not have much effect for achieving the goal of taking the floor. Eye-gaze, for example,

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[1]) The speaker usually avoids eye-contact in order to keep the floor, and a shift of eye-gaze to the selected next speaker is an effective technique for speaker selection in face-to-face environment. Clark –1996:322- expresses the same idea : "speakers tend to gaze away from their listeners during their turn and to gaze back as they finish it, whereas listeners tend to gaze at the speaker throughout his turn".

[2]) Even formal conversations may turn informal when voices rise higher as differences of opinion are defined and defended.

cannot be a criterion for turn-shift since Algerians like "Arabs confront each other more directly –face-to-face- when conversing... look each other more squarely in the eye..." c.f. Watson and Graves, 1966:976-977-. Turn shift is then realised differently. Before we explain how, we notice first that turn at talk in Algeria and in multi-parti and high involvement casual conversation –c.f. Tannen, 1979- is hardly given or yielded : rather, it is more often negotiated and even imposed on the first speaker. Speakers might not even listen to one another : they want to "grab the floor" or interrupt each other. That is why sometimes when the hearer is not very talkative –which is rare and not highly regarded ([1])- the conversation may take the form of a monologue, because on the one hand Algerians in general are loquacious, and on the other hand silence in the Algerian culture is to be avoided.

A major cultural rule of conversation is to keep the talk going, even if at the expense of another rule : For example the rule about face preservation or avoidance of unconsidered talk or trivial matters. For achieving such a goal, and among the techniques which can be used, is the creation of a big controversy about a small problem or a detail. Another strategy is to put the hearer's face at risk ([2]), so that the latter reacts verbally to threaten back the speaker's face.

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[1]) Like all Arabs and Mediterranean people, the Algerians are known as "talkative" people both verbally and non-verbally –body language use-.

[2]) For example by purposefully contradicting him, or by insisting on embarrassing matters. It is a technique of provocation.

In Algerian casual conversations, it is simultaneous talk – rather than eye-gaze- which is often an indicator for a possible turn-switch. At "transition relevance places" –c.f. Sacks et al. 1974-, a floor negotiation process takes place, proving the existence of floor at a cognitive level. This negotiation about floor explains why only certain "transition relevance places" become actual transition places. The first speaker tries to keep the floor during the simultaneous talk, but if –as often happens- the second speaker insists and keeps on talking at the same time, the first speaker may abandon his turn ([1]),or he may try again to take the floor at another T.R.P. –Transition Relevance Place-. If not, he would be breaking conversational rules, and the conversation itself would turn awry ([2]). Taking one's turn in a casual conversation can be a challenge, a kind of "take you turn if you can" ([3]). Still if you do not attempt to –or cannot- take a turn, you are paradoxically "accused" of remaining silent. This concerns a minority of people whose turn-taking skills in conversation are poor.

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[1]) Simultaneous talk or overlapping speech cannot be tolerated, and hence cannot last, for more than very few seconds –four or five- since very often the two parts cannot be attended to well enough.

[2]) In that case, the second speaker –who attempted and failed to take a turn– would withdraw -momentarily- from the conversation, blaming the other participants with the well-known-expression :
     tahdru ki bni mzaab : "you talk like the M'zab people", i.e. simultaneous talk attributed –wrongly ?- to the Berbers of Ghardaïa in the south of Algeria.

[3]) Algerians are known as garrulous and argumentative speakers ; hence the often used expression : ma ∂ttajarʃ mˁaah K∂lma : "you can't have a say with him".

Participants' eagerness to claim and take the floor and their unwillingness to relinquish it –for the reasons explained above- will have as a result a much more frequent use of simultaneous talk and of loud voice ([1]). Another possible consequence is the division of conversation into smaller conversations within smaller groups, before the larger conversation is possibly resumed. In this way, more chance is given to every conversant to participate actively in the verbal exchange. This back and forth process of bigger and smaller conversations can be viewed as a repair mechanism to conversation –when it may be blocked or turn awry-, and as a personal strategy for –re- gaining face in conversation –when a participant could not achieve a turn at talk and hence remained silent-. But at the same time and on a formal level, the question is whether we are in presence of one conversation –a complex type composed of one major conversation with one major topic, and smaller interrupting conversations-, or more.

The type of conversation we are describing here obviously does not fit into the classical polite consensus –collaborative model represented by the Sinclair and Coulthard system ([2])

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[1]) Such conversational characteristics are also shared, for example, by the Japanese –cf. Hayashi, 1996:193- whose conversation is referred as a "noisy, cluttering and hyperactive" activity.

[2]) Sinclair and Coulthard's model is very useful for analysing patterns of interaction where talk is relatively tightly structured, such as between doctors and patients –cf. Coulthard and Ashby, 1975-; but all sorts of complications arise when we try to apply the model to talk in more informal, casual, and spontaneous contexts

–1972- since the participants here often argue, try to assert themselves, do not always bother to be polite, create unnecessary obstacles, demand a reason for the question being asked, are reluctant to relinquish the floor, and so on. This kind of conversational behaviour, widespread in casual conversation, can be referred to as a "competitive" or a "challenging "one, as opposed to the "cooperative" or the "supporting" one characteristic or formal or semi-formal situations. Still as observed earlier, formal situations can easily and gradually turn informal. Such a cultural conception of conversation, including the Arabic kinesic norms –and the proxemic ones, which we study next-, is often interpreted as aggressive and over –friendly by Americans- c.f. Coulthard, 1977:49-.

Since eye-gazing is practically continuous between speaker and addressee, it has then no particular function in turn-taking. Beside simultaneous talk ([1]) –which we have studied above-, another technique for taking the floor is the proxemic feature of touch ([2]), deriving itself from the habit the

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among equals.

[1]) We do not necessarily agree with Markel –1975- who suggests that in simultaneous speech, the first interlocutor still holds the floor ; only when the second interlocutor starts solo speaking does a change of turn take place.

[2] As Shirley Weitz –1974- has noted, touch is the logical end of proxemics ; it is the zero-point of Hall's –1959- intimate distance –0-18 inches-, as compared with personal distance –18-48 inches-, social distance –4-12 feet-, and public distance –12 feet or more-. "The flow and shift of distance between people as they interact with each other is part and parcel of the communicative process", -c.f. Hall, ibid:180-.

Arabs in general have to "sit closer to each other,... to touch each other", c.f. Watson and Graves, ibid-. By touching the speaker, a pre-turn-taking attempt is made consisting in attracting the speaker's attention so that he relinquishes his turn. As compared with other non-verbal features –e.g. eye-gaze-, "touch signals intensity in a special way. Someone can look at you without you looking back, but touch is necessarily connection" –cf. La France and Mayo, 1978:70-. In the Algerian context, it is usually a hand touching the speaker's arm or hand or knee, and the touch lasts or is repeated with more and more pressure as long as the current speaker does not relinquish his speaking turn ([1]). This way of taking a turn in conversation is limited to males or females separately, with an equal status, and with some degree of acquaintance.

Differences in cultural norms of behaviour of the types mentioned above can often lead, in cross-cultural communication, to misunderstanding, discomfort, tension, friction and even hostility ([2]). In case of Arabs and Americans conversing together, we can imagine the former advancing and the latter retreating ; the former accused of being over-friendly and aggressive, and the latter of being cold and

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[1]) As usual, violations of rationality –though rationality itself can be culture-specific- and of cooperativeness, failure to apply the conventions -for example of politeness- when expected, may cause serious troubles or even breakdowns in communication.

[2]) Usually norm-breaking is accepted when known as the performance of someone who does not share the same norms. But even people from the same cultural community may have different estimates of the speaking rules...

impolite. Even when the cultures concerned are not very different, difficulties can arise. Northern Europeans, for instance, often feel that Americans are noisy and dominating simply because the norms for how loudly and how much one talks differ between the two areas.

This second chapter was partly concerned with different definitions of language from a historical point of view. Every time, one basic unit of language was selected. Its size has become wider and wider as the linguist attempted again and again to capture the whole of meaning. In the quest for this essential yet difficult notion of meaning, a larger including concept was taken into account : it is context, which goes beyond language per se –the linguistic context of mainstream linguistics- to include other subjects like social psychology, semiology, pragmatics, ethnomethodology,... Such studies of language and meaning are even more difficult because they are interdisciplinary studies, and also because context itself _as explained in this chapter- is difficult to define and to limit.

Finally, another extension in the attempt to capture meaning is the inclusion into context of a new and essential notion : the speaker's intention –another difficult concept-. The latter is not to be studied alone, but –and this is a further extension of context- in relation with many other social, psychological, cultural, or even political factors, including the whole of the hearer's attitude and behaviour.

All such new and important aspects of language use in general, and of conversation in particular, are going to be witnessed and exemplified in the following chapters about the structure of conversation in Algerian Arabic. The key notions of conversational structure mentioned in this first chapter – such as adjacency pair, turn-taking, or topic -will be described in the following chapters in their Algerian context, i.e. they will be given a specific cultural dimension.

CHAPTER III

CONVERSATION OPENING

One way to know about somebody's identity in Algeria today has to do with how one may begin a conversation. Among the major ways to get a conversation started is the use of kinship terms and the use of religious expressions, family and religion being two very important domains of Algerian social life.

Religion and family, both nuclear and extended, are so important in Algerians' minds that originally kin terms happen quite often to be used for strangers, for any member of the speech community ([1]), so that it is possible to regard the Algerian-Islamic-speech community as an even more extended family.

The study of religious expressions and of kin terms as conversational openers will of course go beyond the merely religious of genealogical formal analysis to take into account social, cultural and linguistic context, as well as social diversity, in the use of terms or expressions. This functional method emphasises variation and alternation, and the aim is to predict for example if/how one is going to greet, or "who will be called what".

The reasons for variation in ways of greeting and in kinship terminology can be dialect differences –alternate terms or expressions-, or the choice of using one language or

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[1]) Not only the Algerian speech community, but also the broader Islamic one, because of the well known and often repeated coranic citation that all Muslims are <u>brothers</u>.

another ; while alternation is for example when first names may alternate with nicknames, or with no naming -∅-. There can be uncertainty among the options. A fundamental case for alternation is the notion of metaphoric alternation in ways of speaking in general and in kin terms of address in particular, when for example such terms as <u>father</u>, <u>mother</u> or <u>uncle</u> do not refer to family ties.

The above –mentioned use of language- i.e. metaphoric alternation- can be referred to as a rule-governed creativity – cf. Chomsky 1966,1968-. Once again, these two important aspects of language –rule vs. creativity, stability vs. flexibility- contrast with one another. The notion itself of "rule" becomes confused, indeterminate, or at least can be attributed different conceptions, especially when a speech-community is not fully homogeneous, or during the process of language –and culture- change.

Choices of terms will depend on social features of speaker and hearer –the religious/ethnic identity-, and on features of context –formality, coresidence in extended family, intimacy, composition of audience, presence or absence or the one referred to, age, sex, place, relative status (¹), and most difficult of all, the speaker's intention (²). There can be ambiguity depending on intention –and hence the same

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¹) Sources of status are education, wealth, occupation, categorical membership in kin groups, and personal characteristics.
²) What is meant here is not "manifest" content, but rather "latent" content, including intent and state of mind of the speaker.

problem of identifying clearly the speaking rules-, as there can even be communication problems arising from the fact that speakers of the same language may have different socio-linguistic rule systems and thus may misread each other's intentions. A shared language does not necessarily mean a shared set of socio-linguistic rules, especially in multilingual or in somehow heterogeneous speech-communities like Algeria.

All the above theoretical remarks about the use of kin-terms –and religious expressions- in conversation opening will first find their practical realisations in the description of some aspects of the kinship system in Algerian Arabic. Before we study how kin terms are used socially for conversation opening, let us first describe their purely linguistic context of use and see how it affects their social meaning. We consider first the definite particle preceding them, and then their possessive suffixation.

The definite particle in Algerian Arabic is realised in two ways : first by doubling the first phoneme of the noun, and insertion, in discourse, of a schwa, e.g.:

<u>d</u>aar   :   "house"

ə<u>dd</u>aar   :   "the house", or "the household",

                         and "the female-parent" in particular.

This is true of all the nouns which contain a stem beginning with :

/t/, /d/, /r/, /s/, /z/, /l/, /n/, /ʃ/.

The definite particle can also be realised by the insertion of an extra /l/ at the beginning of all the noun forms which contain a stem beginning with any phoneme other than those listed above. In the Algerian kinship system, the form a noun –definite /indefinite- is important in so far as it is one of the criteria for distinguishing kin use from non-kin use.

TABLE 2 . The plain possessive suffixation in Algerian Arabic

Masc.	Fem.	Plur.
1st per. i/ja	**i/ja**	**na**
e.g. <u>mart-i</u> : "my wife" <u>xu-ja</u> : "my brother"	<u>raʒ-i</u> : "my husband" <u>xu-ja</u> : "my brother"	<u>mm-na</u> : "our mother"
2nd per. (∂)k	**(∂)k**	**kum**
e.g. <u>mart-∂k</u> : "your wife"	<u>xu-k</u> : "your brother"	<u>mm-kum</u> : "your mother"
3rd per. u/h	**ha**	**hum**
e.g. <u>w∂ld-u</u> : "his son" <u>baba–h</u> : "his father"	<u>b∂nt-ha</u> : "her daughter"	<u>mm-hum</u> : "their mother"

The above possessive particles can alternatively be preceded by the stem <u>ntaʕ-</u>. If so the noun necessarily takes the definite article, e.g. :

   <u>rɑʒl</u> : 'man' ;   <u>∂rrɑʒl</u> : 'the man'

   <u>rɑʒl-ha</u> : 'her husband' ;   <u>∂rrɑʒl ntaʕ-ha</u> : 'her husband'

However, with kin terms, there is not always a free use of either of the possessive forms. In some cases, use of one or the other will cause a change in meaning –e.g. kin use/non-kin use of a term-, add a connotation, or indicate a particular register –degree of formality-.

III.1. KIN-BASED CONVERSATIONAL STARTERS

The choice of kin terms as conversational openers is further justified by their possible use as terms of address –as opposed to their referential use-. Actually, they may even be considered as stronger conversational openers than greetings –cf. the comparison with religious greetings in particular below-.

Other reasons for selecting kin terms as an important example for conversation opening have to do with the following arguments : First, their frequency of use, because of the importance in the Algerian culture of family ties. Second, their extended use –i.e. their spread non-kin use added to their kin use –because- and as explained earlier –in the Algerian and Islamic culture, the whole speech community is considered as a kind of extended family. Third, the description of kin terms and their use is a way of knowing more about a culture, which is in fact the second aim of the present thesis –cf. the General Introduction-.

A previously mentioned argument for taking kin terms as conversation openers is because they imply at least a start – and often a beginning- of a conversation since, following the summons and the answer, the summoner must take a second turn at talk. This necessity –i.e. second turn at talk– becomes a probability for the answerer. When compared with greetings as potential conversational openers –and the Islamic greeting in particular-, the situation is not the same since in the latter

there is the possibility of no further extension of the summons and answer into a beginning of conversation if for personal reasons the summoner and/or the addressee take such a decision (¹).

III.1.1. Male-Parent forms

The main terms used to refer to male parent are :

<u>beba</u>- , <u>bui</u>- , <u>a∫∫aj∂b</u>

The term <u>beba</u> "my father" does not take the possessive particle. Still, young children, when they address for the first time their father, frequently over-generalise the grammatical rule of possessive suffixation and produce <u>*beba-ja</u>.

This form <u>beba</u>- is used by both boys and girls to address their father. When the summoner is a young male, the father as a spread alternative, is going to answer by using the same form, preceded by the particle <u>a</u>, so that we have the following adjacency pair (²) :

<u>beba</u>   : "my father"

<u>a beba</u> : "O my father".

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¹) Such a decision can be taken if for example the interlocutors greet one another not so much for socialising but just to fulfil a religious rule ; or if the answerer does not use the full form of the Islamic greeting when answering, implying then the possibility/probability that he is not eager to go further in the verbal exchange.

²) Adjacency pair is defined as a single stimulus -plus- response sequence used in initiating, maintaining and closing conversations –e.g. the conventions of greeting, leave-taking, topic changing-.

When the summoner is a young female, the father may reciprocate in the same way –i.e. <u>a beba</u> – to express back the affection which all Arabic kin terms convey ; or, to show even more affection towards daughters (¹), he may use the alternate <u>a mma</u> which is more affectionate than its male counterpart. This time, the adjacency pair would be :

<u>beba</u>   : "my father"

<u>a mma</u> : "O my mother".

Girls use the same form indifferently in the home or outside –and use the same stem with the other possessive particles-. But boys restrict this form to the home mainly, because outside, and especially in the presence of friends or in informal situations, use of it would appear old-fashioned, childish or even effeminate. Outside, they can only use it when there is no third party, just the addresser –the boy-, and the addressee –the father-. But since "being alone" can be a matter of degree, we can imagine the boy's strategy in evaluating first how alone they are, then in deciding whether to use this form or not, and finally with which degree of loudness of the voice –he may even need to whisper-. Non-use of this form, i.e. no naming or $\varnothing$, is an outcome of linguistic insecurity or of uncertainty among the options. When the boy considers there is no chance to be unheard, this $\varnothing$ option becomes obligatory because choices are very limited : the

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[1]) We take for granted that people in general, and parents in particular, show more affection towards girls than boys.

alternate a∫∫aj∂b can only be used referentially because it conveys the negative connotation of old age and hence would be disrespectful to the father ; while the other alternate bui- is also ruled out because it is an affectionate term mainly used by women referentially. As a solution to attract his father's attention, gesture or interjection an be used. The situation can become very embarrassing for the boy, and individual creativity is very much required.

To answer the question and predict "who will be called what", let us summarise the conditions under which such pairs may occur : there is first the clear factor of sex. Second, there is the condition of place, which is generally the intimacy of the home where the audience is composed of close relatives only –as opposed to public places-. Third, and about the age factor, the question would be : up to what age such pairs can be used ? We can hardly have a precise answer. It will depend on so many other factors specific to every family, on their whole life-history. Finally, the fourth variable is going to be on the one hand the father's pre-dispositions for feelings and emotions, and on the other hand his willingness to express them out –men in general are not expected to show much of their emotive states-.

The situations we have just described confirm that human communication is not governed by fixed social rules ; it is a two-step process in which the speaker first takes in stimuli from the outside environment, evaluating and selecting from among them in the light of his own cultural background,

personal history and what he knows about his interlocutors. He then decides on the norms that apply to the situation at hand. These norms determine the speaker's selection from among the communicative options available for encoding his intent.

Another example of variation ([1]) and of social diversity in the use of terms is the morphologically related words as for example :

<u>baba-k</u> ∕, <u>-ha</u>∕ , <u>-h</u>∕ ;

These words have the same stem, but with different possessive particles. They are used to refer to the father of another. Unlike <u>beba</u> when used by a male in particular, these words have no restriction of use and no particular nuances of meaning, whether it is a male or a female speaker, or whether it is home speech or outside speech. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, some kinship terms can be extended to affinals and strangers, and still convey some degree of affection ; <u>bui-ja</u> for example, and as a diminutive, is more affectionate than <u>beba</u> which is somehow neutral.

While the term <u>beba</u> can have a kin use in an address form for conversation opening, its alternates <u>bui-</u> and ∂ʃʃaj∂**b** cannot. Instead, they can be used in a non-kin way to address an old man either affectionately - <u>bui-ja</u> - or not - ∂ʃʃ**aj**∂**b** -.

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[1]) As in phonology, variation is about the restrictions on the recurrence of a given form, and in what environment does a given form occur.

beba is also used in a non-kin sense as a summons to call the attention of an old man, older than the addresser, and is usually preceded by the vocative particle a. The form then is invariably a beba, and is always singular. If there is more than one person addressed, other forms for drawing the addressees' attention can be used meaning "listen", "look", in their plural forms. These latter forms do not carry any affection or respect, and may be considered as impolite especially if the addresser is younger.

beba is also used in address when followed by a proper name. The person addressed to is usually an old parents' friend or neighbour. In address form, beba X can be preceded and /or followed by the vocative particle a, e.g. (a) beba ʕumar (a).

beba as a non-kin term is falling into disuse and is being replaced by the younger generation with ʕammi "my –paternal- uncle", in the address form, with the same meaning and structure, by boys and girls ([1]).

III.1.2. Female parent forms

There are more variations in address terms for mother than for father, perhaps because the male parent stands for respect and authority, while the female parent is associated

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[1]) From "father" to "uncle" : this decline in kin terms of address may be explained by the family ties in Algeria becoming looser and looser, especially in big cities, due to modernisation and western influence through mass-media.

with "stronger connotations", whether positive –e.g. derived from affection-, or negative –e.g. derived from taboos on the female sex-.

The main terms used to refer to female parent are :

<u>mm-</u> , <u>mmimt-</u> , <u>mmim-</u> , <u>ləʕ∡uz</u>.

<u>mm-</u> : <u>mma</u> "my mother", first person singular, with an irregular possessive suffix <u>a</u>, is used by both boys and girls to address their mother, and is optionally preceded by the vocative particle <u>a</u>. The following form <u>–a-mma</u> can be used. When the summoner is a young male, the mother, as a possible alternative, may answer by using the male form <u>a beba</u>, so that we have the following adjacency pair :

<u>mma</u>

<u>a beba</u>

Though a male form, <u>a beba</u> expresses back the affection that all Arabic kin terms convey. But since women in general and mothers in particular are more affectionate and express more readily their emotional states, a more typical and more affectionate answer would be the reciprocation of the summons, so that we have the following adjacency pair :

<u>a mma</u>

When the summoner is a young female, the mother has a much narrower choice : maximum affection is likely to be expressed because of the female character of both interlocutors, and the adjacency pair is going to be :

<u>mma</u>

<u>a mma</u>

If we were to quantify affection in the same adjacency pair –i.e. <u>mma</u>/<u>a mma</u>- which happens to be used by the mother with both male and female addresser, we would say that the second pair part when used towards boys is more affectionate, first because the mother answering a son has also the choice of using the less affectionate form <u>a beba</u> ; second because affection towards girls is somehow natural, "automatic", and hence less meaningful.

To answer the question and predict "who will be called what", let us summarise the conditions under which such pairs may occur : there is first the clear factor of sex. Second, there is the factor of place which is not limited to the home, nor is the audience limited to very close relatives, because, as said earlier, women more readily express out their emotional states without much regard to limitations of social context, nor to children's age, though the above adjacency pairs are used much later with girls than with boys : it is a fact that boys, from puberty onwards, start rejecting the mother's second pair part because they consider they "are not children anymore". Even their own first pair part might be questioned, and replaced by non-affectionate terms like <u>ləʕʐuz</u> : "the old woman".

Outside the home, the use of the form <u>mma</u> when among friends or in informal situations would sound old fashioned, childish, or even effeminate. The general feeling in the

Algerian culture is that affection is not to be displayed in public places, especially from males. They would use instead the form ləʕӡuz -see below-. The question here is to know when a boy is going to switch outside the home from mma to ləʕӡuz ? This will depend not just on age –adolescence- but also on many other social, cultural and psychological factors like family environment or personal characteristics.

As far as female adults are concerned, women use the same form indifferently in the home or outside, and can use the same stem mm- with the other possessive particles, e.g. :

<div align="center">

mmu ;   mmkum ;   mmha :

'his mother" ; your –plur.- mother ; her mother".

</div>

The form mma can also be used in a non-kin sense for calling the attention of a woman, whether old or not, but usually older than the addresser and wearing traditional Algerian clothing ([1]). This form is always preceded by the vocative particle a. When the woman is old ([2]), the diminutive a mmimti, from the same root as mma, is preferred, especially by the female addresser and children. Affection more than respect or politeness is conveyed.

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[1]) Usually wearing a mlaja –kind of black gown- and a white veil on the face, making it difficult to guess the age.

[2]) This time, we can tell the age because old women, say above sixty, usually unveil their faces because their beauty has faded away. They do so in accordance with another rule in the Algerian culture and the Islamic law : a woman is to show her beauty to her husband only.

__mma__ followed by a proper name may be used. The person addressed is usually an old parents' friend or neighbour. In address form, __mma X__ can be preceded, but not followed by __a__, because most Algerian girls' first names end with __a__. For ease of pronunciation, one would avoid saying, e.g. *__(a)mma ʕiʃaa__.

__mmimt-__ :

From the same root as __mm__-, this is a diminutive form. Most diminutives belong to women's speech, and the affectionate nuance is most appropriately expressed in address form, which restricts their use to the first person singular.

However, __mmimti__ "my little mother" is generally restricted to a non-kin use and is used by boys and girls to address an old and poor woman, with a nuance of sympathy and affection. The corresponding first person plural form __mmimatna__ is extremely rare.

__mmim-__ :

This form is also derived from the same root as __mm__-. The affectionate connotation it conveys is stronger than __mm__- and __mmimt-__. Its use is restricted to highly emotional situations.

There are only two words derived from this stem : __mmima__ and __l∂mmima__. Both are in the first person singular and as for __mma__ "my mother", the first person singular possessive particle __a__ is irregular. On the other hand, the same stem does not take the other possessive particles, *__mmimu__-, __mmimkum__-, etc

mmim-, used only in the first person singular and in kin sense, fills the gap left by mmimt- which, when in first person singular, does not have a kin use –see above-.

mmima "my little mother" is restricted to address. It is used by girls and young children on the one hand, and can appear in the language of adolescent males on the other hand. When used by girls and very young children, say below 7, this word conveys the normal affection inherent in all kin terms, particularly in diminutives ; while it takes a special connotation –emotional, compassionate- when used by elder boys. Indeed the latter restrict the usage of this word to situations of stress and hardship, when the whole family is involved.

ləmmima :

This word can have a restricted use or an extended one. The extended use corresponds to that of mmimti, i.e. is used by both boys and girls to address a very old and poor woman, with a nuance of sympathy and affection. However, the affection conveyed is stronger. Both forms are preceded by the vocative particle a.

In address and in a more restricted use, ləmmima can be used to address the mother of someone. A boy or a girl may address a woman, particularly a friend's mother, as ləmmima when she has recently lost her child, especially when tragically, e.g. in an accident. The speaker may be said to be substituting himself for her child as a mark of sympathy. In a

typical situation, he would say :

ma t∂bki∫ a l∂mmima : "do not weep mother dear".
The sad connotation of this term is also reflected in the typical expression :

ki –lakan-taxti l∂mmima… : "without the mother…"
A nostalgic undertone is conveyed by the speaker who already can foresee the future disappearance of the mother. This form is in fact mostly used where the mother is dead, and the speaker recalls memories of her. Users of this form are mainly girls and singers : girls when in times of hardship may address their mother beyond the grave ([1]) and complain about being left alone ; the same term referring to mother is an important theme in Algerian songs, where the singer addresses directly and glorifies the generic term. Both cases are examples of a one-party conversation but where the second party is believed to be present and to hear us, though passive. The ideal use of this form is in poetry.

III.1.3. Spouse forms

We shall restrict our description to modern couples, say below fifty, because the traditional kin system of addressing each other is falling into disuse. Traditional usage is also more complex in that the choice of terms is wider and depends on more variables.

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[1]) In the Algerian culture and religion, dead people are believed to hear us when we address them.

An important innovation introduced by young couples which facilitates and simplifies communication is the possibility for man and wife of addressing each other by their personal names. In address, there is an exclusive use of personal names without regard to degree of kinship, closeness of friendship to the family, family tradition, sex and age, of the people that may be present –hearer or audience-. All these factors are important with older and more traditional couples' use of terms to address each other, and show that change is taking place. But a change might not spread everywhere, and might not last for a long time. Moreover, what is considered as traditional, old-fashioned and disappearing can become the rule again, for example the will of young islamists ([1]) today to go back to Arabo-Islamic traditions in every field of social life.

We shall briefly look at the variations in use of personal names when the are used in address form, and consider other forms of address in the husband-wife relationship. As in most cases in address, the vocative particle <u>a</u> is used, generally in initial position.

A woman and her husband can address each other by their nicknames, their first names, or by their family names. It is the rule that everybody has a nickname used by members of the nuclear family and by close friends.

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[1]) We mean in fact the majority of the Algerian people in the last decade of the twentieth century, when general elections were won by the former Islamic political Party –F.I.S.- in 1988.

It is usual that a newly married woman adopts her husband's nickname for address. This is seen as a way of identifying with her new family, and meets the social belief that daughters, by marrying, enter into a new family ([1]). But today, as women have more education, especially in urban areas, more freedom and more rights, it is not unusual that a newly married woman addresses her husband by his first name as a way to keep distinct –and distant- from his family. For the same reasons, the tendency for a man is to use his wife's first name. A certain degree of formality and is thus introduced in the relationship between a man/wife and his/her in-laws.

A third possibility, used equally by both man and wife, is to use each other's family name, or each other's father –in-law's first name, preceded by w∂ld or b∂n "son of", or by b∂nt "daughter of". This is seen as an indication of respect for and dependence on kin elders, and on the desire for developing strong ties between the two families. Marriage is often considered as a union between two families, but where the daughter –in- law remains an alien, especially when she lives with her in-laws- extended family-. Two features make her status lower : That of being a woman ([2]), and that of

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[1]) This reminds us of the well-known story about someone who, after he answered a question by numbering all his children, was finally asked not to mention the females, because "they are sheep of others", - sˁaja (∂)ntaˁ ∂lɤiir -.

[2]) In reference, the status of married women is even lower, cf. the expression about one's own wife : l∂mra, ħaʃak. : "the woman, I am sorry – for using this term in front of you".

"belonging" to a new family.

Actually, reasons for getting a son married have also to do with old age of his mother and hence the need for a daughter-in-law to take care of everything –every one- at home, especially when all his daughters have already been married. Her lower status is noticeable through the ways she is addressed to, and the ways she addresses her in-laws, mainly her husband's father and mother. One way they may address her is by using no address term at all -∅- ; or worse by using interjections like "eh ! euh !" just to attract her attention ; and even worse by using somehow pejorative expressions meaning "look, listen". While the way she addresses them is traditionally <u>sidi</u> and <u>lalla</u> "my respectful one" or "my Lord/Lady", respectively masculine and feminine.

<u>sidi</u> and <u>lalla</u> are good examples of language and culture in change, of conflicting social-linguistic rules, and of uncertainty about how one is to use such terms. We notice first their gradual disappearance in kin use when referring to elder brother/sister, because today the age factor has much decreased in importance as far as kin status is concerned ; it follows that elder brother/sister have no more the parents' status ([1]). Second, we also notice the gradual disappearance of the kin use of such terms –and more particularly the first

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[1]) After the parents' death –the father's in particular-, the rule was that full, "parental" authority was given to the elder brother/sister to manage all sorts of family problems.

one ([1])- when referring to in-laws because today daughters in-law and women-wives- in general are more educated and live more and more in nuclear families ; hence they become more and more independent psychologically and materially from their in-laws.

Finally, and as a third reason for the gradual disappearance of the terms <u>sidi</u> and <u>lalla</u> in kin use, there is today a re-birth of the non kin, religious use of the masculine term <u>sidi</u> referring exclusively to the one God. This new use is spreading very rapidly, corresponding to the rebirth of Islam after the Independence –1962-, and more recently –from the 1990's onwards- to the islamist wave which shook Algeria. This new and very limited use ([2]) of the term <u>sidi</u> goes against its previous use which in fact goes back to the slave-master situation prevailing in pre-independence Algeria with some noble families; Today, it is the same kind of relationship –i.e. master-slave-, but at the only level of God-Man, the generic term ʕ<u>abd</u> "man" meaning itself slave in Arabic.

This diversity of use of the same term, namely <u>sidi</u>, due to

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[1]) Mainly the first one, -i.e. <u>sidi</u>, because, as we see below, being masculine, its use would overlap with the reference to God, our unique "Lord"; while the second one : <u>lalla</u>, would overlap with the names of prophet Mohammed's wives and daughters, e.g. <u>lalla fatima – bant ∂rrasul</u> – "Lady Fatima – the Messenger's daughter"-.

[2]) Limited to God and His prophets, and also often limited to the collective form : <u>sidna-∂llah</u>- : "our Lord" ; <u>sidna muħamm∂d</u> : "our master Mohammed", emphasizing the cohesion and uniformity of the Islamic speech community.

differences in age and in cultural and religious values, is going to bring about, as said earlier, conflicting social-linguistic rules and hesitation about its correct use. Awkward situations may occur : For example when someone is addressed to as <u>sidi X</u>, he may immediately react with <u>sidna ∂llah – wa ∂ℏna ʕbadu</u> - : "our Lord is Allah – and we are His slaves"-, which in fact is not an answer, but rather an invitation for the addresser to reformulate his address form or his summons. This interrupting directive may even be formulated by a third party –audience- who may feel they have enough authority –e.g. a clergy man, someone older or more educated- to intervene. People belonging to the same speech community may indeed have different social-linguistic rules, especially when the speech community itself is unstable, or has identity problems its members disagree about.

Besides personal names, other ways are available for husband and wife to address one another. We analyse the following alternative because it is typical to the Algerian culture. Its masculine form is <u>mul ∂ddar</u>, from the sense of d∂r : "house", and that of <u>mul</u> : "owner –masc- of" or "responsible for". Its feminine form is correspondingly <u>mulaat ∂ddar</u> : "the owner/responsible –femin.- of the house". As far as frequency of use is concerned, and in address, the feminine form is much more used because the concepts of home and wife are closely associated and even fused in the

Algerian mind (¹).That is why <u>mulaat ∂ddar</u> : "the owner- femin.- of the house" can even be reduced to <u>∂ddar</u> "the house" as a kin term and still refers to a married woman, optionally together with her children, as for example : <u>∂ddar rahi Ӡeiza</u> : "my wife/mother is passing by", implying "mind your language".

The expression <u>mulaat ∂ddar</u> is generally used when a wife is in her home. In address form by the husband, this expression is preceded by the vocative particle <u>a</u>, and is always meant jocularly. In this use and sense, it can be replaced by <u>a l∂mʕalma</u> "the boss" –femin.-.

Use of the same expression by a stranger does not so much refer to marital status nor to ownership (²), but rather to her function within the house hold as the person responsible for its internal organisation, and as the person entitled to deal with outside relations –in the absence of her husband-. The primacy of function over objective kin relationships, and the organisation of Algerian families cause <u>mulaat ∂ddar</u> quite often to be the husband's mother. Typical users of this expression are door-to-door salesmen or representatives of various companies or organisations, e.g.

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¹) That is why only the wife cannot use <u>∂ddar</u> to refer to her nuclear family, neither individually nor as a whole unit. This confirms the central reference of <u>∂ddar</u> to wife.

²) There cannot be ambiguity with the literal meaning of the expression because women generally do not own property in Algeria.

electricity board, Police. Such persons would ask when the door opens :

weini mulaat ∂ddɑr ? "where is the house keeper ?"

The masculine mul ∂ddɑr addressed to a man by his wife is also limited to the house of the husband. Restriction of use to the house makes the kin-use distinct from the literal meaning of the expression mul ∂ddɑr : "The owner of the house". As said earlier, the masculine form is far less used than its feminine counterpart, and is often meant ironically as a gentle criticism of the husband's –lack of- responsibility, as for example in : a mul ∂ddɑr, weinu ∂l xubz ? : "why haven't you bought bread ?"

III.1.4. Offspring forms

We saw with the parents forms that the possessive particle is obligatory with mm-, and is missing with beba- in the first pers. sing. In offspring forms, however, the stems of the words :   w∂ldi,   b∂nti ,   bnati ,   uladi :

"my son, my daughter, my daughters, my children"

are words in their own rights :

w∂ld, b∂nt , bnat , ulad .

If a personal relationship is specified, these words remain kin terms. The personal relationship may take the form of another possessive particle : ntaʕ-, followed by a personal pronoun, e.g. in :

<u>lulad nta↑u</u>   : "his children",

<u>lƏbnat ntaʕak</u>   : "your –sing.- daughters",

or it may take the form of a proper noun, as in :

<u>wƏld muђammƏd</u> : "the son of Mohamed"

<u>bƏnt ʕli</u>   : "the daughter of Ali"

If no personal relationship is specified, the words become non-kin terms and mean respectively "boy, girl, girls, children".

When they have a non-kin use, the words <u>wƏld</u>, <u>bƏnt</u> , <u>bnat</u> and <u>ulad</u> can be used as terms of address, and are usually followed by a possessive particle and preceded by the vocative particle <u>a</u>. The personal relationship indicated by the possessive suffix gives the words a nuance of affection, which varies according to whether the addresser is a woman or a man. <u>tful / tufla</u> is the non-affectionate equivalent of <u>wƏld /</u> <u>bƏnt</u> and can be used in address.

The relationship of the offspring forms with one another, some of which have already been discussed, is shown in the following diagram. The terms that are newly introduced are mentioned for the sake of completeness and comparison with one another as well as with their kin-use –cf. the diagram of the same terms in kin use in the following pages-.

Non-kin use :	Affectionate speech	Non-affectionate speech

Men's speech	w∂ldi
	      uladi
	b∂nti
		tful
		      ulad
		tufla

Women' speech	ulidi
	      ulidati
	bniti
		w∂ldi
		      uladi
		b∂nti

Table 3 : The offspring forms in Algerian Arabic

What is to be deduced from the above diagram, and also from its comparison with the following one –Table 4, p. 156-, is first the sharp distinction between men's and women's speech. The second important remark is that the same term may convey different degrees of affection depending on male or female addresser. Third, affection itself is a matter of degree, a kind of continuum, not so much an either/or matter.

The forms that end with a possessive particle and are affectionate can also be used in a kin sense in address. However, the degree of affection, if still conveyed, is not the same, depending on the sex of the addresser.

In a kin use, the terms used to address male off springs are :

Singular	w∂ld-	ulid-	ulij∂d-	tful
plural	ulad-	ulidat-	ulijdat-	drari

Table 4 : Kin terms for addressing male offsprings

w∂ld- , e.g. the first pers. sing. w∂ldi : "my son", is used by both men and women in addressing their son ; the form a

w∂ldi : "O my son", is used. However, this form is more common with men than with women, the latter preferring diminutives –see table 3, p. 156- which are characteristic of women's speech.

ulid- , e.g. ulidi : "my son", is a diminutive, from the same root as w∂ld-. This form is peculiar in being used particularly by women in addressing their son. This diminutive form as used by women does not have the nuance of affection which the diminutive forms of other kinship terms have, such as ʕmimti : "auntie" or mmimti : "mummy". Exceptionally, a man may use the form ulidi either to sympathise with his son –e.g. following a failure at school-, or for mockery –e.g. when hinting at a lack of manhood on the part of the child-. In both cases, the father may be said to be assuming women's speech for a special communicative purpose.

Another case where a man may use the address form ulidi for a special communicative purpose is this time when comforting an adult after a sad event, as for example in :

a ulidi ∂dd∂nja ɣaddara : "poor you, life is really treacherous", or when addressing an alleged faulty adult in a kind of smooth criticism, as for example in :

a ulidi maʃ hak : "I am afraid it is not the right way to do it". In this example, the reaction of the listener is likely to be unpredictable because it depends on how he may interpret the situation, on what he considers is the essential feature within the term ulidi : is it affection –which implies a positive connotation, a "supporting" move-, or younger age,

i.e. denial of adulthood –which implies a negative connotation, a "challenging" move-. In the latter case, there is a kind of metaphorical switching consisting in treating the addressee as though his social features were different, implying a kind of hostile intent towards him (¹).

ulij∂d-, is a second diminutive also from the same root as w∂ld-. In contrast to w∂ld- and ulid-, it has a strong affectionate connotation and is mostly restricted to women's speech and to address ; therefore, it is mainly heard with the first pers. sing. possessive particle : a ulijdi : "my little son".

tful, refers particularly o a young boy, or to a baby boy for sex differentiation. It contrasts with w∂ld- in being appropriate only to informal discourse. It is used by women or men in addressing a son, when the emphasis of the addresser is mainly on sex difference. As an example, it can be used as a term of address for pleasing a young boy –e.g. to get him to do something boys are expected to do-, or for teasing the addressee –e.g. when addressing a girl who has a mannish behaviour-. The main use of this term remains for sex differentiation.

tfuj∂l "little boy", and tfujla "little girl" are the corresponding diminutive forms of tful . They are restricted

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¹) A similar kind of situation was described by S.M. Ervin-Tripp –1969-, where a policeman addressed Dr Poussaint, a black physician, with the term boy. The policeman's message was quite precise : "blacks are wrong to claim adult status or occupational rank. You are children."

to women's speech and convey affection in the same way respectively as <u>ulidi</u> and <u>bniti</u> –cf. the diagram above- with which they are in free variation. The plain possessive form, e.g. *<u>tuflu</u> 'his son" is not used. <u>tful</u> .may also be glossed as "little boy" so that it has the meaning of son only when a personal particle, <u>ntaʕ</u> , is attached to it.

<u>ulad-</u> , is formally the plural of <u>w∂ld</u>, and refers to off spring, always provided that at least one male child is included. It is used by men and women in address, with men as main users ; Its diminutive form –see below- is peculiar to women's speech.

<u>ulad-∂k</u>/ <u>ulad-u</u> , etc. : similarly the same stem with the other possessive particles, is used to refer to the sons of another.

<u>ulidat-</u>, is the morphological plural corresponding to the diminutives <u>ulid-</u> and <u>ulij∂d-</u> ; but it is used in the same conditions as <u>ulid-</u> only, i.e. particularly by women, and does not carry affection. However, when used by men, the two forms <u>ulid-</u> and <u>ulidat-</u> are restricted to address and do carry affection.

<u>dkura</u>, unlike <u>ulad-</u>, refers to boys only and is similarly used by men and women but rarely in address where the form <u>ulad-</u> is used instead. Use of <u>dkura</u> in address implies that the emphasis of the addresser is on sex difference with the intention of pleasing young males. If there is a female audience, the intention is also to displease young females.

While w∂ld and tful contrast as to level of formality, dkura is appropriate both to formal and informal discourse, no doubt because of its possible use in distinguishing children – all boys- from children –including at least one boy-.

dkura may also be glossed as "-little-boys" so that it has the meaning of sons only when a personal particle, ntaʕ -, is attached to it. The plain possessive form is not used.

dkar, which is morphologically the singular form of dkura, can only refer to animals for sex differentiation. The plural form dkura "males" can be used for either human beings or animals.

drari , has a similar use as ulad- -see above-, i.e. is used by men and women in address, provided that at least one male child is included. But while ulad- is neutral, drari is often connotative, implying at least a lower status of the addressee. Its singular form d∂r : "son", though rarely used in address is even more pejorative. It is mainly used as an insult of a male adult.

The kinship terms we have studied so far mainly concern male offspring. Female offspring forms are the following :

singular : b∂nt- , bnit- , bnijt- , tufla .

plural :   bnat- , bnitat- .

b∂nt- , e.g. the first pers. sing. b∂nti "my daughter", is used by both men and women to refer to their daughters ; in addressing her, the form a b∂nti "O my daughter" is used. This non-affectionate form is less used by women, who prefer

diminutives –see below-.

b∂nt-∂k /, -u/, etc. : similarly the same stem with the other possessive particles, is used to refer to the daughters of another/. The main users are men.

bnit- , e.g. bniti "my daughter" is a diminutive, from the same root as b∂nt- . This form behaves in the same way as its masculine counterpart w∂ld- as far as affection/non-affection and men/women's speech are concerned.

bnijt- is a second diminutive also from the same root as b∂nt- . Its use corresponds to that of its masculine counterpart ulij∂d-.

tufla , refers particularly to a young girl, or to a baby-girl for sex differentiation. Referring to a newly born baby, one would ask :

tful walla tufla ? : "is it a boy or a girl ?"

Use of tufla is appropriate both to formal and informal discourse, i.e. corresponds to both its formal masculine counterpart w∂ld-, and to the informal tful which is its morphological masculine. It is used by women and men in addressing a daughter when the emphasis of the addresser is mainly on sex difference for one reason or another, usually either for pleasing the young girl –e.g. to get her to do something girls are expected to do-, or for teasing the addressee –e.g. when addressing a boy who is effeminate-. In every case, the main use of this term remains for sex differentiation.

The plain possessive form, –e.g. *tuflatu "his daughter", is not used. tufla may also be glossed as "little girl" so that it has the meaning of daughter only when a personal particle, nta∩-, follows.

bnat- , is morphologically the plural of b∂nt- , but refers to offspring only when it is followed by a possessive particle, – e.g. bnati or l∂bnat nta∩i : "my daughters". When no personal relationship is specified, bnat is glossed as "little girls", cf. tufla as "little girl", tful as "little boy", dkura as "little boys", drari "little sons" and ulad as "children" –including at least one male-.

The form bnat- is used by both men and women in address, but when it refers to offspring, women prefer the diminutive form –see below-.

bnat∂k/, -u/, etc : similarly, the same stem with the other possessive particles is used to refer to the daughter of another.

bnitat- , is the morphological plural of the diminutives bnit- and bnijt-, but it is used in the same conditions as bnit- only, i.e. particularly by women and does not carry affection. However, when used by men, the two forms bnit- and bnitat – are restricted to address and do carry affection.

The following diagram represents the terms that are relevant for the distinction affectionate/non-affectionate speech. The other variable is men/women's speech.

Some of the terms listed below are also used in a non-kin sense, cf. Table 5, p. 163-.

Kin use :	Affectionate speech	Non-affectionate speech
Men's speech	ulidi ulidati bniti	w∂ldi uladi b∂nti
Women's speech	ulijdi ulijdati bnijti	ulidi ulidati bniti

Table 5 : The –non- affectionate use of kin terms

Beside their description as potential conversational openers, it would be interesting to use the kin terms we have just analysed as a means for discovering both the cultural system of a speech community –which is the secondary aim of the present thesis- and some aspects of the functioning of Algerian Arabic as a system of linguistic and communicative rules –functional analysis-. This system will leak at places and will show some arbitrary aspects.

In the previous sections, form and meaning of grammatically and semantically related words have been examined, and unusual and unexpected relationships have been pointed out. Now, we shall briefly look at some of the arbitrary aspects of the language where grammatically and semantically related words will be seen to fit into some structures, but not into others. Language seems to offer each lexical item a reduced and specific structural possibility of occurrence-collocation-.

Arbitrariness of occurrence concerns not only the bond between the phonetic shape of a word and its meaning –De Saussure-, but also, more significantly, the nature itself of the semantic structure of a language. This is dependent in each case on the language-community in question and, therefore, is bound to be arbitrary. As Bolinger says – 1975:23- :

> *Arbitrariness comes from having to code a whole universe of meanings. The main problem with such vast quantities is to find not resemblances but differences...*

Individual idiosyncrasies make generalisations in classification of lexical items more difficult, as shown by the following examples :

xt∂k : "your –sing- sister", and mmuk : " your –sing- mother" can have two textual meanings when they appear as cohesive ties in a discourse or text : anaphorical and cataphorical.

When it refers back in the text, xt∂k ∕ mmuk does not convey any ill-intention or pejorative connotation on the part of the speaker, –e.g.

Q. : waʃkun ∂lli gallak ? "Who told you ?"

A. : xt∂k "your sister".

When it refers forward in the text, xt∂k ∕ mmuk conveys sexual undertones deliberately meant by the addresser. With male speakers, there is a complete deletion of what is implied, i.e. xt∂k ∕ mmuk is the topic, and the comment is completely

deleted. With female speakers, the deletion is partial and takes the following form :

mmuk, ʃ∂ftha… literally "have you seen your mother…"

In both cases –male and female speakers- the hearer will understand that some kind of insult is directed to him through the female part of his family ; this type of insult implies invariably that his mother ∕ sister is indulging in some kind of degrading sexual relationship.

An important consequence of this pejorative connotation is that, for appropriate use of language, the anaphorical use of xt∂k ∕ mmuk is avoided, so that no offending ambiguity can arise in the mind of the addressee. This of course depends on the susceptibilities of the hearer, and on the intentions of the speaker.

In the following example, dealing with symmetry of use, X will stand for a girl's name, and Y for a boy's.

Referring to a male agent, one can say :

∂zzuw∂↗mʕaha ∕ mʕa X   "he married her ∕ X"

∂zzuwa↗biha ∕ b X   "he married her ∕ X" .

Here, both forms ca be said to be neutral, i.e. the speaker is reporting or stating a plain fact, that of the marriage of Y, with the further identification of the wife.

Referring to a female agent, while the form :

∂zzuw↗at mʕah ∕ mʕa Y   "she married him ∕ Y"

is seen as perfectly acceptable, i.e. neutral –cf. male agent-, the form :

∂zzuwắt bih / b Y ,

which does not necessarily imply a marital relationship, carries mainly the connotation that the woman agent is a shrew. In fact, when using this from the speaker's intention is not to give information about the civil status and identity of the person(s) talked about ; rather the speaker is emphasizing the unusual balance of power to the woman's advantage (¹), possibly within a couple. This power may be based on wealth, education or just character.

Thus a striking feature of the above pairs of forms concerns the grammatical and semantic symmetry of each one of them. While both types of symmetry are retained with the prepositional particle mʕa- "with", independently from the sex of the agent referred to, only the grammatical symmetry is retained with the use of b- "with", since, as was pointed out above, the expression where the latter preposition is used takes a completely different meaning when the agent referred to is a woman.

Thus one cannot but emphasize the importance of appropriate use of language, of context and collocation –which is not always reflected in the syntactic structure of

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¹) Algeria, like most arabo-islamic speech-communities, has a patrilineal system where the father represents the traditional authority.

language-. Moreover, the preceding example lends support to the concluding one which shows again the vital role played by socio-cultural factors in their interaction with the structure of language.

In kin-use, when they refer to proper names or to personal pronouns, w∂ld and b∂n : "son of" are synonymous and interchangeable, –e.g. :

w∂ld muhamm∂d or b∂n muhamm∂d "son of Mohammed"

w∂ldu or bnu "his son"

The feminine counterpart of b∂n and w∂ld is b∂nt , "daughter of" and behaves on the same pattern as the above examples :

b∂nt muhamm∂d "daughter of Mohammed"

b∂ntu "his daughter "

But the collocation –co-occurrence- of w∂ld and b∂n with ʕamm- "paternal uncle" gives two expressions with two different meanings, e.g. in the first pers. sing. :

w∂ld ʕammi "my first cousin"

b∂n ʕammi "my second cousin"

The second expression is mostly used in rural areas, where ties of extended family relationships are still strong, and is an inclusive term for the kin ties resulting from inter-family marriage.

The feminine counterpart b∂nt ʕammi, though morphologically the feminine counterpart of b∂n and not of

w∂ld, can only have the meaning of first cousin –presumably because married girls when distantly related are scarcely met or talked about ; they belong to their new family, that of procreation. One could cite many other instances of language behaviour where understanding of the interaction between sociological significance and linguistic patterns is vital if there is to be any possibility of communicative understanding.

III.1.5. Sibling forms

As kin terms, the form xuja : "my brother" and xti : "my sister", whose plurals are respectively xuti : "my brothers" and xwatati : "my sisters", are mainly used referentially since in the culture of the people affection is seldom displayed among brothers and sisters. xuti : "my brothers", though morphologically masculine, may function socially as a super-ordinate or a generic term to include the female part since talking about one's sisters is often taboo in the Algerian culture. Here again, we can see how cultural values and rules of behaviour may become primordial and depart from language as an abstract and fixed system of rules.

The broader use of xuti : "my brothers", including sisters, is probably a reason why xwatati : "my sisters" does not appear in the exclamation form when used in a non-kin sense, while the other forms do. Their use is restricted to peer groups and is preceded by the vocative particle a or ja ; it can be translated as "my God !" We have then the following forms:

a xuja : "my God !", used by both men and women.

> **a xti** : "my God !", restricted women. Its use by a man would seem effeminate.
>
> **a xuti** : "my God !", can be used by both sexes (¹) to a group of their peers without regard to sex differentiation.

The second kind of non-kin use of the sibling forms is when they are used as terms of address, and hence as potential conversational openers, preceded as indicated earlier by the vocative particle **a** or **ja**. Is such a case, they lose their possessive suffix and take the definite article. Their main use is in the singular. The resulting forms are ⌊ **?ax**, ⌊ **?uxt** , and ⌊ **xu**. The first two are formal –High- and mean respectively "the brother" and "the sister". They show respect and solidarity. Their use is restricted to the domains of politics –members of the same political party, especially the National Liberation Front or F.L.N of the former one -party regime-, of religion –since by Islamic law Muslims are "brothers", and since the Koran is in "H"-, and of communication with the Arabic and Islamic worlds –where the "H" form of Arabic is often used as a kind of lingua-franca (²)-. These two forms –i.e. ⌊ **?ax** and ⌊ **?uxt** , may be followed by the name of the addressee-, usually by his surname. The use of the surname, instead of the first name, confirms the

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¹) Still, there is a phonological difference since women have the tendency to diphthongise some vowels, and here would pronounce <u>xaut-</u>.

²) It is a know fact that some "L" forms of Arabic are to some degree mutually unintelligible.

formal use of these two words.

Outside the three domains mentioned above -i.e. politics, religion and arabo-islamic world-, the two formal forms ⌋ **?ax**, and ⌋ **?uxt** are likely to have an ironical use as forms of address. Use of "H" in that case would stand for distance excluding solidarity ([1]). That is why such address forms, as attention getting devices, are often followed by some reproach or complaint about the addressee. An example of a standard kind of situation could be the speaker's following disagreement with the verbal or non-verbal behaviour of the addressee :

Ja ∂l ?ax me∫ hak : "Dear sir, this is not the right way to say/do it".

Irony here is achieved by pretending to allocate a higher status requiring respect -i.e. the very use of "H"- to someone who actually -and in the speaker's mind- does not deserve it or does not fulfil the required conditions for it ([2]). The message is clear since what usually follows the term of address is, as stated earlier, a kind of gentle criticism to the addressee. A more concrete example could be a situation where a customer would not respect people waiting for their turn and jump the queue.

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[1]) Usually, "H" forms of Arabic stand for distance or respect <u>and</u> solidarity –because of the strong religious implication of "H" about the concept of brotherhood in Islam-.

[2]) Here again, we have an example of language itself being content -i.e. the way we say something no matter what we actually say-.

For both of the formal forms ⌐ **?ax**, and ⌐ **?uxt**, age is not a relevant feature, i.e. they can be used in address to any adult, whether old or not. However, this does not apply to the third form ⌐ **xu**, which is also different in being informal in style and male-restricted in use. The use of ⌐**xu** : "the brother" is confined to peer-groups and to male speakers. It is restricted to address and can be followed and/or preceded by **a**. It cannot co-occur with a proper name, which confirms its informal use –Low-.

There is no corresponding non-kin feminine form to ⌐**xu**. **xut** without article means "sister of" –as **xu** means "brother of"-, and therefore is necessarily exclusively a kin term, –e.g. :

> **xut saħbu**   :   "The sister of his friend".
>
> **xut Ӣddi** :   "My grand-father's sister".

Terms for informal address to a young woman by her peers remain uncertain and complicated, especially if the addresser is a man. Variation of use will depend on personal idiosyncrasies. It is difficult to decide on a general term of informal address for a "standard situation". One is left with the extremes of formal address, i.e. ⌐**?uxt**, and of the pejoratively familiar, especially when used by a man to a woman, phrases meaning "listen" or "look".

Such limitations in the linguistic choices and such a narrow range in variation will imply difficulty, even for the native speaker, to behave correctly and appropriately in a given speech-situation; Success in behaviour will vary from

one conversant to another depending on one's own verbal skill and creativity power.

Language use, then, is not always a stable system of readily available fixed rules of behaviour, fitting any kind of situation. Rather, it is flexible enough so that the imaginative native speaker has the possibility to adapt it to always new situations of everyday life.

The sub-chapter we have just dealt with -kin terms of address as conversational openers- is closely linked to the following one, i.e. religious terms of address as conversational openers, since family, in the Algerian culture, is seen as an epitome of the whole society, of the whole Islamic speech community, Muslims considering themselves, by Islamic law, as brothers. In Algerian Arabic, originally kin terms corresponding to "father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, paternal and maternal uncle", easily happen to refer to neighbours, acquaintances, and even strangers.

Some of these terms –like the pair <u>sidi</u> / <u>lalla</u> we studied earlier –even happen to lose gradually their original kin use and to be mainly limited to their new religious use ([1]). During this transition period and the spread of this social-cultural change ([2]), awkward, incongruent situations may occur

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[1]) "New" by reference to the previous period of the colonisation of Algeria –1830-1962- but not by reference to the history of Islam.
[2]) As explained by Hymes –1974:75- : "In the study of language as a mode of action, variation is a clue and a key. The range of possible choices is not static, fixed, it is constantly changing", especially in unstable or rapidly changing speech communities like Algeria.

because of indeterminacy of the speaking rules, implying a kind of social-linguistic uncertainty and insecurity, personal hesitation and interpretation of speech situations.

III.2. ISLAM BASED CONVERSATIONAL STARTERS : THE ISLAMIC GREETING

The strong link between greeting and conversation is expressed in the following way by H.H. Clark : "Establishing a joint commitment to talk often requires a greeting, the social process of making acquaintance or reacquaintance… Greeting is the orientation to the possibility of conversing". –H.H. Clark, 1996:334-.

The importance of greeting as a potential and primordial conversational starter is further emphasized by Spolsky in the following statement :

> *The most common kinds of politeness formulas are involved with greetings. Greetings are the basic oil of social relations. To fail to greet someone who expects to be greeted signals either some unusual distraction or a desire to insult the person. Each social group has its own set of rules about who should be greeted, who should greet first, and what is an appropriate form of greeting. –B. Spolsky, 1998:20-.*

Among the many ways to greet one another, and possibly begin a conversation, the Algerians today very often choose the "official" one ([1]) which all Muslims are expected to use. This Islamic greeting which is as old as the religion itself has been given a new revival from the independence –1962- onwards, at the expense of other forms, as a reaction against colonialism, and as a way to recover one's own identity.

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[1]) "Official" because indicated and used in the two major sources of Islam i.e. the Holy Book –the Koran- and the ħadiiθ –the prophet's behaviour and sayings-. Moreover, in the Algerian Constitution, Islam is stated as the official religion of the country.

Later on, in the last decade of the twentieth century, with the new wave of democracy and under the leadership of the newly created –march 1989- Islamic political party –"F.I.S.", i.e. Islamic Salvation Front-, the Muslims' greeting was reinforced and spread very rapidly to cover nearly all the domains of social life. The majority of the Algerians were using it by full religious conviction –cf. the elections won by the F.I.S. in June 1990 and in December 1991-, while the remaining others switched to it by feelings of insecurity –cf. the dramatic social uprisings of the 1990's, preceded in October 1988 by the most intense rioting Algeria has known since its independence in 1962-.

III.2.1. Analysis from the speaker's view

III.2.1.1. Definition and use of the Islamic greeting

The islamic greeting takes the form of the following adjacency pair, composed of a summons and an answer :

Summons : ∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum : "Peace ([1]) with you" –plural-

answer : -wa- ʕaleikum ∂ssalaam : "and peace with you" –plural-, with the following phrases as optional additions to the answer :

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[1]) salaam, translated "Peace", has a much wider signification. It includes :
  1/ A sense of security and permanence, which is unknown in this life.
  2/ Soundness, freedom from defects, perfection, as in the word saliim.
  3/ Preservation, salvation, deliverance, as in the word sallama.
  4/ Salutation, accord with those around us.
  5/ Resignation, in the sense that we are satisfied and not discontented.
  6/ The ordinary meaning of peace, i.e. freedom from any jarring element.
  All these shades of meaning are implied in the word islaam : "Islam".

<u>wa raħmatu ∂llaahi</u> : "And the mercy of God –with you"

<u>taʕaala</u>   : "The Highest"

<u>wa barakaatu</u>   : "And His prosperity –with you-".

There are possible additions with the answer because Muslims as recipients are advised when greeted to reciprocate in a better way, i.e. with –some of- the above additions. Otherwise, they can limit themselves to the same form as in the summons, which they only reverse –see above-. This instruction originates from the second source of Islam, i.e. the Prophet's behaviour and sayings –<u>ħadiiθ</u>-, the first source being the Holy Book itself -the Koran-.

This theoretical description of the Islamic greeting corresponds to standard situations obeying fixed , written rules, where the above adjacency pair occurs. The term <u>standard</u> here implies some degree of idealisation and artificiality as existing for example in film sequences. In such a case, the same rules regulating the use of such a pair are respected by everybody no matter the specificity of the social context, so that the same form of greeting is going to be repeated exactly in the same way again and again. Here, of course, one can easily predict who will speak, how and when, because the situation is fully conventional, formulaic ; while in real life, the situation can be different, and exact or detailed prediction of the linguistic behaviour of interlocutors is not always possible.

In the first case –standard situation-, it is a kind of

formal encounter which is institutionalised and well- defined. Its social-linguistic description is easy, but uninteresting. The task here is to determine people's knowledge of forms of address, and their possible and appropriate use, which is clearly distinct from the task of studying how people, in real situations and in real time, modify the standard form or make other choice –alternative realisations-, including the no choice possibility –Ø- in case for example of hesitation or uncertainty in the conversant's definition and interpretation of the situation.

What makes theoretically "similar" situations somehow different and complex on a practical level is the intervening and changing variables ([1]) of sex, proxemics –relative distance between interlocutors-, relative status of every one, speed of delivery, personal discourse strategy and intention, as well as the possibility for rules to conflict –detailed examples will be provided-, obliging the conversant to interpret the situation his own personal way, and then apply his "invented" appropriate rules ; nor are we to forget the possibility for any interlocutor to understand wrongly the whole situation -for example to be mistaken about somebody's intention or identity, and eventually the necessity for him to use

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[1]) Although the term variable as used by Labov, applies primarily to pronunciation phenomena, similar types of socially determined variation have also been found in morphology and syntax and in the lexicon, with the condition that these alternates are referentially equivalent, i.e. they share the same or similar dictionary meanings.

remediation or repair rules-.

Before we exemplify in detail changes in the variables of the same kind of situation, let us first define further the standard form of the Islamic greeting. Linguistically, we notice first that it (is) has an "H" or "High" form -i.e. the classical and standard Arabic form- in morphology and in pronunciation, characterised by the full form or words : no affix simplification, and no vowel reduction or deletion ([1]) are possible, even –as is the case here- when classical Arabic is only spoken. It is a fact that the classical variety of Arabic is mainly written. It is essentially Koran – and glorious past poetry- Arabic. When spoken, the situation must be very formal ; but depending on the degree of formality, much simplification usually occurs at different linguistic levels. On the other hand, and when the degree of formality is lower, this form is often used together with other –L, i.e. "Low" or colloquial- forms of Arabic. The giving of examples is no easy task because in reality and very often no clear boundary separates one variety of Arabic from another. They all exist in a kind of continuum. Still, we propose the following examples, different in form and context, similar in linguistic

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[1]) Agglutination and inflection are important morphological characteristics of the Arabic language. Arabic roots –which are abstract and essential morphemes- are composed of consonants to which vowels are added in order to form words, as for example :

q...t...l : idea of killing
qitaal : "fight" –noun-.
jaqtuluuhu : "They will kill him"
qutilat : "She was killed".

meaning :

1/ **Pure "H" Form :** <u>qaala jaqtulu ∂rraʒula ∂lla∂ii xaraʒa min beitihi:</u>
-mainly written- **"He said he would kill the man who came out of his home".**

2/ **Spoken "H" Form :** <u>qaal jaqtul ∂rraʒul lla∂i xaraʒ min beitih</u>
   -less formal, simplified-

3/ **Simplified "H":** <u>gel jugt∂l ∂rraʒl lli xraʒ m∂n daru</u>.
   -with "L" –

The first characteristic of the adjacency pair we are studying was that it undergoes no simplification though it is in spoken "H". This is a kind of paradox, the second element of which is that in both summons and answer the plural form is used though the addresser or the recipient might be one person only. In this way even more deference is provided to this greeting form. It is worth noticing that outside the Algerian context, and in both very formal situations –as for example in films relating to the glorious past of the Arabs-, and among highly educated people, the following singular forms can be used :

<u>∂ssalaamu ʕaleika</u> : "Peace with you" – sing, masc.-

and   <u>∂ssalaamu ʕaleikii</u> : "Peace with you" – sing, fem.-

and even the dual : <u>∂ssalaamu ʕaleikumaa</u> : "Peace with you" – two-.

On the purely linguistic level, we can see there is some rigidity of the adjacency-pair in question. While on the social-linguistic level, there is flexibility because of the optional linguistic additions –see above- in the second pair-part, leaving the hearer with a wider range of choice when

answering, i.e. in a shorter or in a longer way, in addition to other –para-linguistic- choices. His decision and answer will depend on how he views the whole situation, on the summoner's attitude, on intention, on many verbal and non-verbal variables which determine –the beginning of- a conversation.

After we have studied the standard form of the Islamic greeting, let us now consider changes in the variables in the same kind of situation.

Indeed, the very first variable concerns the very preparation of the conversation, i.e. its non-verbal preliminaries. Potential conversation begins with eye-contact which sometimes occurs involuntarily ([1]) and which determines the first condition for conversation : interlocutors' availability. Eye-contact ([2]) is a kind of non-verbal summons / answer, corresponding to the telephone's "hello – hello", though here the summons and the answer occur at the same times ([3]). For every participant, eye-contact is both a summons and an answer, obliging the participants very often to proceed to the second step or potential beginning of a

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[1]) A very expressive proverb in the popular culture in Algeria says : ∂lʕein fǝrraja : "the eye looks where it should not", blaming and at the same time forgiving the individual, but not his act...

[2]) The Arabs in general, and the Algerians in particular, are well-known for looking durably into each other's eyes before and while conversing.

[3]) If not, anyone of the participants has the possibility to avoid the other's look, and hence to avoid having a verbal interaction with them.

conversation, i.e. the formal greeting, clearing the path to a possible third stage, i.e. the conversation proper.

If we were to summarise all those stages from a "popular" point of view this time –and understand better the cultural deep motivations of the Algerian people-, we would repeat that conversation begins with eye-contact –cf. the above mentioned proverb ∂l ʕein ferraja-, obliging potential interlocutors to greet one another ; and then, in a third stage, what we have called conversation proper will occur, symbolised by the following popular saying : salam ẓab kalam : "greeting brings about speech", i.e. conversation. The addresser's attitude usually expressed by such a proverb is a pessimistic impression about the outcome of a potential conversation –and hence the need to avoid starting it at all-. Since different cultures happen to have some similarities – cultural universals ?-, the same kind of story is reported about conversational oaks which may grow out of conversational acorns. One of its versions begins with the sitting of a man beside another on a train –this preliminary stage is to be compared with the eye-contact, or with the summons/answer at the very beginning of a telephone conversation-. Next is the asking of the younger one for the time –this may correspond to the greeting form we described, a kind of linguistic summons/answer, testing the recipient's degree of availability for a possible conversation-. And since the two of them happened to be Jews, and the younger one

was a stranger in the city where they arrived, the older one asked him to his home, where he met his daughter and finally married her.

The three introductory steps for conversation that we mentioned earlier are likely to occur in many corresponding or appropriate social situations in Algeria ([1]) because the Islamic greeting obeys not only the strength of politeness rules which are still valid and respected in Algeria and which other forms of greeting have, but it also obeys the power of religious rules, religion itself being given today a new revival both in Algeria as explained earlier, and in many parts of the world.

Evidence for the powerful aspect of religious politeness rules is the much publicised diplomatic "incident" between the Algerian head of state Bouteflika and the former Israeli Prime Minister Barak in 1998 at the funeral of king Hassan of Morocco. The two countries having no diplomatic relations, the Algerian President was much criticised inside and outside Algeria for being "sociable" with the Arabs' "worst enemy". Bouteflika's reply to the Islamic political parties and to the Arabic public opinion in general was based on... religious grounds ; he put forward official religious arguments and

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[1]) Here, we are not limiting ourselves to the socio-linguistic behaviour of one group of people in one city -i.e. Constantine- in Algeria, but extension is made to the whole Arabic and even Islamic world where this behaviour exists in a surprisingly uniform way and can be analysed on the different levels of study.

sayings –see above- to explain but also to justify his "initiative" –short conversation- with Barak. Here, we notice the power and the prevalence of religious written rules over political –"no diplomatic relations"- and emotional –"worst enemy"- rules or considerations. This is also an example of rules conflicting, implying individual dilemma in social-linguistic behaviour, which we study in more detail later in this chapter.

On the basis of the facts reported by the President about that incident, and with some help from our own imagination, we can try and reproduce the different formal steps of that short conversation, beginning with and emphasizing the para-linguistic preliminaries for the conversation. First was the walking in front of one another, then, when the distance between them became shorter, there was a persistent reciprocal look standing for availability for a mutual greeting. We can imagine this eye-contact was accompanied with a non-frowning face, may be with a little smile, emphasizing their availability for one another. Up to this point, we can say that in theory the conditions were met for the third step, -i.e. the greeting proper-, to take place ; and in practice, it did indeed. We mean to say that the event could have been predicted by someone familiar with such situations and such people, but probably nobody could guarantee the occurrence of such event, because human behaviour will always remain

somehow unpredictable (^{1}), though regulated by rules.

The third step of this example about conversation opening, which is the verbal greeting proper, was accompanied with or followed by, a corresponding non-verbal greeting : the hand-shake, i.e. a physical contact expressing and confirming some warmth, some positive predispositions in the interlocutors' attitude, and which is typical to Mediterranean people. Finally was the fourth step, i.e. the brief conversation, where words and ideas were exchanged about the relations between the two countries, and of course about the Palestinian problem, as reported by the President.

We study furthermore this form of greeting by considering this time how it can reveal the attitude of both summoner and answerer. Being very ritualistic since it is an "H" and a religious form, the Islamic way of greeting would be expected to be neutral, "frozen", to convey no connotation, no personal attitude or strategy.

Despite this conventional and formulaic aspect, participants sometimes choose to mean or to imply one thing or another by means of greeting. They can do so thanks to two reasons at least : the first one concerns the recipient only and the possibilities he has to lengthen or to shorten his answer –we shall be commenting on that later in this

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^{1}) That was also Bloomfield's view, which he justified by the lack of knowledge human beings have about things in general, and about themselves in particular.

chapter-. While the second reason has to do with this greeting form as such without reference to any specific situation, and what kinds of implications can be derived from if by any native-speaker or member of the speech-community.

III.2.1.2. The implications of the Islamic greeting

The most obvious and most shared implication is that of respect conferred to this greeting by both its "H" form on the one hand, and its plural form on the other hand even when addressing one single individual. "H" is the variety most appropriate for deference. It defines context ([1]) and makes it formal. But formality in real situations is a more complex matter : because of their cultural specificities, Algerian socio-linguistic situations do not always fit into the neat either/or, the clear-cut situation-types labelled as formal/familiar, affectionate/contemptuous, or respectful/rejecting. The question is to evaluate whether such greeting situations are really formal, and if so to what extent. In fact, the degree of formality will depend much on other factors, for example role-relationship, whether the participants are strangers, acquaintances, friends or relatives. It can also depend on whether the greeting is the very first one in a given day. For example, if in the morning, it is likely to be very formal, as opposed to the mere phatic communion of the later greeting

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[1]) The opposite is also correct since in some other situations it is context which determines usage.

between the same participants (¹), in which case the greeting is less and less formal and becomes more and more mechanical (²).

We can summarise now and say that this "H" greeting when taken on its own is formal –theoretically it makes the situation formal-. But when put into context, it can correspond to different degrees of formality, from very formal –when for example participants are strangers- to the lesser degree of formality, a kind of familiar form –when for example the participants are close friends or relatives-.

We have analysed the first and probably most important implication that can be derived from the Islamic greeting when taken on its own, i.e. respect. The second possible implication, also deriving from its being an "H" form, is the one of social distance, that can even become a negative connotation, a kind of repellent or rejecting attitude. This is a plausible implication only when we define this "H" greeting in relation with other forms –"L" forms- available to any member of the community. These alternative "L" forms –which we study later in this chapter- are by definition familiar forms

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¹) We shall see later in this chapter that the Islamic way of greeting happens to be a matter of automatic repetition within the same people and within the same day.

²) A linguistic clue for distinguishing formal from less formal greeting is the speed of delivery likely to be slower with the first –formal- greeting and then gradually decreasing. A phonological consequence will be the shortening or even the omission of some vowels. Another clue is that this greeting will be given a simpler and simpler form both in the summons and the answer till it becomes salem/salem.

since in colloquial Arabic. They define the situation and make it less formal (¹). On the practical level of real-life situations, the individual's "choice" of one form of greeting or another will depend on his own attitude and social-cultural beliefs, but also on other social factors defining a particular situation –see below-.

The third possible implication from the same greeting form seems to contrast with the preceding ones since it presupposes an absence of social distance though we are in presence of an "H" form. The implication this time is that of affection and/or solidarity (²) mainly on the part of the initiator, i.e. the addresser. In selecting this form of address, he is revealing his own identity, an arabo-islamic one ; he is identifying with the whole speech-community, and with the addressees in particular ; he is expressing solidarity and religious affinity –in this case Islamic brotherhood-. Here again, we are referring to the above mentioned specificities of the Algerian/Arabo-islamic cultural values determining verbal behaviour. On the practical level of concrete situations, this language behaviour can be more complex and less predictable because other social factors need to be taken into account, and also because a language form can be used only for safety reasons, for hiding one's own real identity and

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[1]) Use of "less/more formal" instead of familiar, is justified on the one hand by formality being a matter of degree, and on the other hand by the principle that any form of greeting is formal to some extent.

[2]) Absence of social distance can also be contemptuous in other speech-communities, cf. the "tu/vous" dichotomy.

beliefs, in a word for manipulating relationships and achieving particular goals –cf. the social uprisings in Algeria in the General Introduction-. More detailed description of such real-life situations will of course require consideration of facial and paralinguistic accompaniment.

As a conclusion about this greeting form and its different implications from the speaker's view, we can say that since Algeria is socially and culturally diverse and changing –and all speech-communities are diverse when studied in detail-, this diversity serves important communicative functions in signalling inter-speaker attitudes and in providing information about speakers' social identities.

III.2.2. Analysis from the answerer's view

III.2.2.1. Definition and use of the Islamic greeting

In what has preceded, our main concern was with the addresser's attitude, the choice he has first to greet or not, then the choice of the form of greeting, limited here to "H" and "L' forms of Arabic. If "H" is selected, we need to know which implication among the three ones mentioned above is meant or intended by the speaker.

What follows concern this time the recipient only ; it has to do with the implications he may mean and which derive from the choice he has –in the second pair-part of the Islamic adjacency pair mentioned earlier- to lengthen or shorten his answer, as it is likely to occur in a standard, congruent situation. For the time being, we are leaving aside other

–secondary- possible alternatives as the choice of no answer -∅-, or the choice of an answer which does not collocate with the first pair-part of the Islamic adjacency pair.

Among other socio-linguistic factors, the length of the recipient's answer is going to reveal his attitude and social identity, as well as his willingness for beginning a conversation. We have already mentioned the different optional additions the answerer can reply with and whose social meaning can be evaluated according to two kinds of conversational rules : the purely religious one, which is written, official and uniform since it concerns the whole Islamic speech-community and derives from the prophet's instructions ([1]), and a "local" one which is about social conventions, how this religious rule is actually applied – modified, interpreted- in accordance with cultural traits specific to every Islamic country, region, or sub-region.

III.2.2.2. The rules of the Islamic greeting

From the first -i.e. religious- rule, we understand that the more the recipient lengthens his answer, the better he is behaving, i.e. he is signalling an absence of social distance though using "H", and showing personal predispositions for further talk. This idea is reinforced by the fact that the hearer's lengthening of the greeting-together with politeness rules –obliges the speaker to slown down his pace- in case

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[1]) This rule, as explained earlier, obliges Muslims, when greeted, to greet back in a better way, or to give back the same greeting form.

they meet while walking – and even to stop walking in order to hear the whole hearer's answer, giving more opportunity for conversation to take place. While if the recipient does not lengthen his answer but just "gives it back" as he received it, he is this time expressing a kind of neutral attitude as to his state of mind or identity or availability for further talk. The adjacency pair would be as stated earlier :

S : ∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum : "Peace with you"

A : -wa- ʕaleikum ∂ssalaam "-and- Peace with you"

On the other hand, the second, "local" rule has other norms ([1]) as to the relationship between length of the answer and its corresponding social-meaning or implication. This time, what is considered as a neutral answer is not just the equivalent of the summons, but a shortened form of it, i.e. :

S : ∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum : "Peace with you"

A : ... ∂ssalaam   : "Peace ...",

where there is omission of the "understood" element ([2]). While the same answer without omission –which is considered as neutral according to the first rule- would be considered by the second one, as a "warmer", a more sociable greeting, a

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[1]) What is "normal", i.e. in agreement with the social-cultural norms, patterns of behaviour, could be considered as a contradiction or a paradox in other cultures. But even within the same culture, rules of behaviour may conflict as is the case here for the two rules we are discussing.

[2]) "Understood" element, because syntactically meant by the speaker and understood by the hearer, as in the "deep structure" of a Transformational Generative Grammar.

pre-invitation for further talk ; and as the answer becomes longer, the pre-invitation gradually turns into explicit invitation for the transformation of a mere start into a beginning of a conversation. The above hypotheses are reinforced by the following argument : the longer the answer, the more it obliges, by way of politeness rules, the summoner to slow down his pace –and even keep standing up- and expose himself to the whole answer. Psychologically, he is at the same time preparing himself for a possible conversation "imposed" by the answerer.

Both the rules we have just described and which determine the communicative meaning of the Islamic greeting in Algeria in general and in Constantine in particular, exist in the mind of the average Algerian speaker ; but the one which seems to prevail in practice is the second one, the one we have referred to as "secondary, local, tacit". This apparent paradox -i.e. rules conflicting- might be explained by the spread of illiteracy within the elderly who themselves transmit their "conventions" –the rules they agree about- to the following generations. The latter will be –and indeed are- confronted today with two "schools" : the conventions of the older generations, and the rules they learn –from the Independence onwards- from schools and mosks about Islam in general and the Islamic greeting in particular. For the time being, the first view of rule is still prevailing. Younger people are using more and more the Islamic greeting, but in accordance with local or traditional norms. On the other

hand, older people's use is more static, stable : they carry on using the Islamic greeting their own way besides other –"L"- forms of greeting which are also well established, and which we study and compare with the "H" form later in this chapter.

The above description about how the same form of greeting may linguistically and socially differ from one situation to another illustrates a very important aspect of language use : its flexibility, i.e. individual choices within rules. The rules are for example the obligation to greet –politeness rule-, the obligation, often, to use the Islamic greeting –religious rule- ; in this case, the recipient must answer, and must use the second pair-part of the religious greeting and no other form. When the answer is fairly long, and the speed of delivery rather slow, the summoner must slow down his pace, and eventually embark into a possible discourse topic.

III.2.2.3. Rules and strategies

Within the rules we have just mentioned, choices can be made depending on the verbal skill of participants, on intentions and goals which determine individual strategies, on the illocutionary and perlocutionary aspects of the speech–acts. For example, one may avoid somebody's look with the intention of avoiding to greet them ; or one may wait for someone to see him and in this way oblige him –for some reason, for example struggles for dominance- to be the

summoner ([1]). As one may want to lengthen his answer, obliging the summoner to respect the rule about the obligation to listen, and hence –goal- paving the way for a probable beginning of conversation. One may also consciously refuse to apply certain cooperative principles which govern the efficiency and normal acceptability of conversations.

Conversational behaviour does not always fit into the polite collaborative-consensus model that the Sinclair and Coulthard system ([2]) represents. A participant may even use the principle of adaptability ([3]) in a very specific, challenging negative way, i.e. for communication failure, non-communication, or even miscommunication. For example, one may refuse altogether to respond to a greeting stimulus : the problem here is not so much about the breaking of a politeness rule, but a straightforward refusal to fit into a suggested –Arabic, Islamic, Middle-Eastern ?- identity. As one may, <u>for the same reasons</u>, decide to greet back, but by

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[1]) Especially if he is older, age being the most important criterion for higher status before profession and wealth respectively, in the Algerian culture.

[2]) The Sinclair & Coulthard model is very useful for analysing patterns of interaction where talk is relatively tightly structured, such as between doctors and patients –see Coulthard and Ashby 1975-, but all sorts of complications arise when we try to apply the model to talk in spontaneous contexts.

[3]) It is one of the three notions very much needed to understand the "making of choices". It is the property of language which enables human beings to make negotiable choices from the variable range of possibilities in such a way as to satisfy specific communicative needs.

using, instead of the expected second pair-part of the Islamic adjacency pair, an other –"L", French, Berber ?- form ([1]) which cannot collocate with it. The recipient's answer clearly signifies intention and attitude, moral and evaluative inferences. He is not so much violating the cooperativeness or the availability principle ; rather, he is stating his difference, his belonging to different norms and values, culture and identity. As explained in the General Introduction, the Algerian identity becomes diverse and changing at times. It happens to be a site of everyday contests and struggles, as has been the case by the end of the twentieth century. It is not a fixed "thing", it is negotiated, open, drifting, ambiguous.

In such situations, the notion of variability –a clue and a key for understanding the making of choices- has an even wider meaning, because the range of possible choices is not just wider : it is constantly changing, synchronically, but also diachronically as the Algerian speech community itself is changing constantly and rapidly from the 1980's onwards, and hence the problem of identity which is still up to date –cf. the General Introduction-.

The above examples are challenging kinds of behaviour, departures from the norm. But in unstable speech-

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[1]) Such exceptional aspects of social-linguistic behaviour become commonplace in very tense social turmoils when minority groups, though Muslims, and in their demands for officialisation of their Berber status, become hostile and even aggressive towards what is Arab or Islamic. An example is their possible refusal to identify anymore with the Islamic greeting pair.

communities defined as an organisation of diversity, norms are multiple as voices are within the same community of discourse. What happens in this case is a conflict of norms or values. Every individual interprets situations his own way, and then decides about verbal behaviour. Hesitation is of course likely to occur, and will inevitably slow down one's response when presented with a stimulus. The time required for some action or response to occur is measured and is one commonly used behavioural variable in psychological research.

A similar kind of situation, involving even more individual hesitation, is this time when conflicting rules make the situation incongruent. An example in the course of a conversation is the necessity on the one hand for talk to be kept going, and on the other hand for face to be preserved, and not put at risk by unconsidered talk ; while examples in conversational openings, and in the Islamic greeting in particular, could be about the question : who is to greet first, the general rule being that it is the one with a lower status.

Before we further consider rule conflicts and incongruencies, let us first describe the ideal situation ([1]), where essential parameters determining the greeting process are age and proxemics ([2]) : ideally, this form of greetings

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[1]) Again this idea of ideal, standard situation Chomsky and others were so much preoccupied with, an essential tool for any scientific inquiry –cf. the General Introduction-.

[2]) It is the study of culture – specific variations in posture, distance and tactile contact in human communication.

occurs in situations where the summoner is younger and walking, and where the recipient is older and immobile. Here, behaviour is strictly determined : the first one is to greet first. But real and spontaneous situations can be more complex, as for example when the above parameters are reversed. In this case, an unusually longer eye contact may take place, standing for hesitation, the outcome of which can only be uncertain, indeterminate and changing from one situation – depending on character, age difference, distance, role relationship- to another. No matter who greets first, that would not adequately fit in the situation. Alternative –more appropriate ?- solutions would be no greeting at all, or appeal to another –"L"- form of greeting. In the following, we study the latter forms on their own and in how they may collocate with the Islamic greeting.

III.2.3. Other –"L"– forms of greeting

III.2.3.1. Their historical evolution

We need first to stress again the historical evolution of the Arabic greeting forms in Algeria. "L" forms of greeting were preponderant before the Independence –1962-, and then were gradually replaced by the growing Islamic greeting, especially from the 1980's onwards, corresponding to the new wave of democracy and to the creation of a powerful and popular Islamic political party called F.I.S. –Salvation Islamic Front-. Authentic and original traditions of Islam concerning all aspects of social life were revived, among them the way

muslims are supposed to greet one another, according to what we have called written, official rules, as opposed to traditional, tacit rules. This opposition between "H" and "L" is based on their relative and competing status from a social-historical point of view.

A second way "H" and "L" greetings contrast with one another has to do with the factor of time, i.e. the question : when they can be used. There are mainly two "L" forms, one to be used in the morning, the other one in the afternoon and evening : <u>sbaħ ∂l xir</u> : "good morning"

<u>masa ∂l xir</u> : "good afternoon / evening".

The same form is used back as an answer by the recipient. The "H" form, which is composed of two different parts –summons / answer-, has no limited or specific time ; it can be used at any moment. Since on the other hand it is expanding more and more at the expense of other forms, we can deduce, theoretically at least, that the "H" greeting is more used than other ways. This view is confirmed by the following third opposition between "H" and "L" forms : it is about the repetitive aspect, which only concerns the "H" form. What is meant here is that the "H" form can be, and indeed is, used again and again by the same people as often as they see one another during the same day. It can be as short as a few minutes separation between a greeting and a following one. This is typical to some people –who are stricter about religion- in some places -official places like administration in

general-. A typical example in Constantine is the Emir Abdelkader University for Islamic studies : there, employees and the staff see one another several times every day, in corridors, in offices, when walking up and down the stairs. Every time the same kind of greeting is used. This also applies to lecturer and students when they meet inside that university or in the vicinity. But outside, everybody's behaviour is likely to be less formal, less ritualistic, i.e. implying on the one hand a parallel use of other forms of greeting, "L" forms in particular, and on the other hand implying a less mechanically repetitive use of the "H" form. It will probably be so because of the determining factor of place.

III.2.3.2. Their contrast with the "H" form

Though very much opposed –formal vs. colloquial ([1]), "H" and "L" forms do not always exclude one another. We have just said that they may alternate with one another –in the same situation, people use one or the other, though more one, i.e. "H", than the other ([2])-. The situation becomes paradoxical when we "discover" that these two divergent ways of greeting even happen to collocate and form a kind of intermediate form-s- of greeting between formal and

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[1]) This socio-linguistic distinction also exists on the purely kinesic level, where the "H" form can hardly be accompanied with a smile, even among friends, while the "L" form can, and often is, while greeting one another.

[2]) More "H" is used, as explained earlier, because of the spread of Political Islam -cf. F.I.S.- limiting "L" use essentially to home and neighbourhood, where "H" can also intrude and encroach upon the traditional domains of "L" via school and television –see below-

colloquial. It happens in initially formal situations, where as said earlier, "H" on its own is the rule, especially among strangers or superficial acquaintances. Then, with time and repeated encounters, the situation usually becomes less and less formal ([1]). To this transitional stage of human communication will correspond an intermediate –between formal and informal- form of greeting composed of different types of alternation of "H" and "L" summonses and answers, cf. the three examples below. We also notice the possibility for a summons or an answer to be doubled, i.e. to be composed of both an "H" and an "L" form with the same speaker. On the other hand, this double use may be discontinuous or not, i.e. its two forms may or may not follow one another. A final remark is about the third example where the recipient's second -"L"- answer <u>sbaħ ∂l xiir</u> may be analysed as either/both an answer or/and a summons, depending on the recipient's intention, but also on the availability and the cooperativeness or the interlocutor, who may or may not answer

The interlocutor may cooperate and respond for politeness or "negative face" reasons, or just because he too would like the situation to become less formal. The other possibility is for the interlocutor to refuse to cooperate simply because he wants the situation to remain formal, or because he has

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[1]) In fact, it depends on the will of the interlocutors. One may –want to- keep the situation formal for a longer time than another.

decided to limit himself to the strictly religious –"H"- form of greeting and only respect religious values and principles. In real-life situations, and in the mind of an interactant, these two norms or references for socio-linguistic behaviour -i.e. "face" of general politeness rules vs. strictly religious rules- often coexist and conflict, putting conversationalists into a dilemma about what should be the correct or the appropriate decision and behaviour.

As opposed to the standard use of "H" greeting, where it is essentially the recipient who can decide –by using additional options in his response- for a beginning of conversation, the intermediate form of greeting allows any of the participants to initiate the transitional stage of human communication, by adding an "L" form to the previous "H". As a practical example, the interlocutors could be a new teacher and a door-man or an employee in the same department.

When the transitional stage of verbal communication is reached, the intermediate –"H" + "L"- form of greeting could take any of the following three possible structures :

1.   S.:   <u>ǝssalaamu ʕaleikum</u>   ("H") :   "Peace with you"

        <u>sbaħ ǝl xiir</u>   ("L") :   "Good morning"

    A.:   <u>ʕaleikum ǝssalaam</u>   ("H") :   "Peace with you"

        <u>sbaħ ǝn nuur</u>   ("L") :   "Bright morning"

2.   S.:   <u>ǝssalaamu ʕaleikum</u>   ("H") :   "Peace with you"

    A.:   <u>ʕaleikum ǝssalaam</u>   ("H") :   "Peace with you"

	S.:	<u>masa ∂l xiir</u>	("L") :	"Good after-noon"
	A.:	<u>masa ∂l xiir</u>	("L") :	"Good after-noon"
3.	S.:	<u>∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum</u>	("H") :	"Peace with you"
	A.:	<u>ʕaleikum ∂ssalaam</u>	("H") :	"Peace with you"
		<u>sbaħ ∂l xiir</u> (summons ?)	("L") :	"Good morning"
	A.:	<u>sbaħ∂l xiir</u> (answer)	("L") :	" Good morning"

This intermediary stage of the greeting process through time and encounters is in fact a transition-stage, a preparatory step for a more personal interaction. It can be considered as a start, paving the way for a future beginning of a conversation. Its success will depend much on the character, attitude, and verbal skill of the interlocutors.

If successfully achieved, this stage may be followed by another one ([1]), where ultimately "L" alone is used, but only when our two interlocutors are themselves alone –no third party or audience- so that the situation remains informal, the occupational status having become unimportant. It is not a status-marked situation any more.

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[1]) We are here raising the problem of the relationship between social-linguistic facts and logic : they do not always correspond. As said earlier human behaviour will always remain somehow unpredictable.

In conclusion, we go back again to historical considerations and try to foresee the future. We have seen previously how, after the Independence –1962- the Islamic form of greeting gained ground as belonging to the whole process of recovering one's own national-linguistic and religious –identity. This process was accelerated from the 1980's onwards, due to more democracy and to very influential Islamic political parties, the F.I.S. in particular. After this party was dissolved –1992- violent social uprisings broke out in Algeria. Nowadays, with the government's policy of National Reconciliation, the Algerian social and political life is stabilising. Still, the conflict about national identity – society project- is going on, but this time on a more pacific level : that of school and education programmes. Despite many attempts to reach a compromise, views are still far apart about such sensitive matters.

Schools, then –together with mosks- continue to teach religious rules, among them the Islamic greeting ; while at home and before the age of six, children were –and still are- taught "L" forms of greeting by their grand-parents and neighbours. As they grow older, we can see them switching more and more to the "H" form, the influence of school –and also of mosks and T.V. programmes, especially during the holy month of fasting- becoming stronger and stronger.

CHAPTER IV

CONVERSATION MAINTAINING

When the flow of speech in a conversation is fluid, there is no need for any conversation maintaining device. Typical examples are "familiar" conversations about debatable and passionate topics as politics and sports. But when the situation is rather formal, break-downs in conversation are likely to occur, and participants usually "prepare" techniques for preventing them, in accordance with the shared cultural principle that silence is to be avoided.

At a given point in the course of such conversations, when there is a –threat of a- breakdown in the verbal exchange ([1]), the following stage, which is not always easy to predict, can be either conversation ending or conversation maintaining. The outcome will depend on the conversants' will and verbal skill, on their negotiated "tacit" agreement ([2]), but also on general context.

An important element of context is the factor of place : if a three or four second silence is occurring in the street, or by the door before leaving somebody's home, the outcome is likely to be conversation ending ; while if it is occurring inside a home before the "required" visit time is over, a conversation maintaining device is likely to be used.

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[1]) Such threats are more specific to men than to women, who are generally and naturally more voluble and loquacious.

[2]) As H. H. Clark –1996, p. 341- put it, conversations "depend on the joint commitment and actions of the participants. Conversations take the course they do, not because they follow a prescribed scheme, but because they follow general principles of joint action".

IV.I. TRADITIONAL DEVICES FOR CONVERSATION MAINTAINING

IV.1.1. The use of religion

Among the devices for maintaining conversation, religion is again a widely spread means. Its repeated use in conversation obeys two main factors : a static or permanent one first since reference to religion in conversation reflects widely spread religious beliefs which are deeply rooted in the culture of the people. On the other hand, religion is also used dynamically, in an individual's strategy to achieve one's goal or intention –illocutionary force of the speaker and perlocutionary effect on the hearer-. For example, and as will be seen below, religious statements can be used as a means to take a turn at talk, to get the hearer to agree or be patient, to put an end to a conversation, or to keep it going.

The importance of religion in the culture of the people is going to be reflected in how they generally organise a conversation, and how they maintain it in particular. For this purpose, different techniques are going to be used, where religion is somehow involved, and where religion might become involved ([1]).

Conversation resuming techniques –following a usually unwanted breakdown in conversation- are often chosen by a

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[1]) Many of the topics of everyday life conversation have to do with religion, while quite a few others happen to be linked up with or even transformed altogether into religious topics by participants who often express the –their- religious view about a given topic they are discussing or a given event they have experienced.

speaker into the form of a stimulus-response adjacency pair – or of an unfinished expression-, especially one having to do with religion, in order to "oblige" the –reluctant- recipient to be available, to respond, and hence commit himself to participate eventually in the conversation. Though directed and limited by the general speaking rules and values of the whole speech community, a participant's behaviour also obeys his own personal attitude, strategy and intention, as will be seen in the following examples. We first take examples of conversation resuming where religion is fully and directly involved.

IV.1.1.1. The full use of religion

A) THE CALL FOR PRAYER

The first example of full use of religion is the five daily public calls for prayer from a neighbouring mosk ([1]), usually with the use of loud-speakers. The muezzin's voice is an external stimulus whose answer from hearers is twofold : a first answer at the beginning of the call, and another at its end, with a solemn silence in between devoted to a deep and careful listening to the holy call. The two part answer is usually produced collectively, in chorus ([2]), and takes the two

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[1]) From the Independence –1962- onwards, new mosks have been built by the government. In the 1980's, even more mosks appeared in a shorter time thanks to local initiatives of the former religious Party –F.I.S.- and to the financial contribution of mere citizens.

[2]) The louder the voices are, the better the preparation for resuming –or beginning- a conversation is. It is within this range that individual attitude and behaviour is variable and decisive as to the outcome of the social encounter.

following forms :

 First answer : s̲a̲d̲aqa ∂llɑhu ∂l ʕa∂im : "Almighty God is right"

 Second answer : l̲a̲ i̲l̲a̲h̲a̲ i̲l̲l̲a̲ ∂ll̲ɑ̲h̲ : "There is no God but Allah".

    The whole of the situation can also be analysed in terms of a couple of adjacency pairs : the first one, occurring at the beginning of the call, would have the following form :

 Summons : ∂ll̲ɑ̲h̲u̲ a̲k̲b̲a̲r̲ :   "God is the Greatest"

 Answer   : s̲a̲d̲aqa ∂lll̲ɑ̲hu ∂l ʕa∂im : "Almighty God is right"

    The second adjacency pair, occurring at the end of the call, would have the following form :

    Summons : l̲a̲ i̲l̲a̲h̲a̲ i̲l̲l̲a̲ ∂ll̲ɑ̲h̲ : "There is no God but Allah"

    Answer   : l̲a̲ i̲l̲a̲h̲a̲ i̲l̲l̲a̲ ∂ll̲ɑ̲h̲ : "There is no God but Allah"

    The above adjacency pairs are not usual or standard ones, though they are typical to a language, a culture, a religion. Being complex examples, they can be analysed and interpreted in a different way : For example, the whole call for prayer can be considered as one single summons, and the two above answers reduced to only one unit, which would be composed of two non-adjacent elements separated by the middle part of the summons itself. It is also possible to consider the answer-s- as a case of inner speech. On the other hand, what is also noticeable is that the sommoner –the muezzin- and the answerers are anonymous and far distant from one another.

Paradoxically, besides its effect of getting a conversation resumed in case of heavy silence among conversants, the public call for prayer has also the effect of interrupting the on-going subject of conversation, and, after about a half minute pause devoted to a respectful listening to the muezzin, the conversation re-starts, but quite often with a new topic, a religious one this time. What is typically talked about when the conversation resumes is for example how much the prayer time is going forward or backward ([1]); or it can be about everybody's bodily readiness for prayer -i.e. the ablutions-; or the possibility for praying collectively and where ([2]).

B) THE CORANIC CITATIONS

The above first example of religion as a means for conversation resuming can be extended to similar situations where verses of the Koran are recited, for example on television or on the radio ([3]), especially during the holy months of fasting and other religious holidays or celebrations. Whenever the Koran is recited, the hearer is to respond in two stages as explained above -i.e. at the beginning and at the end of the citation-, but this time with the same

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[1]) Times for prayer are not static, but move forward or backward all through the year depending on sun positions.

[2]) Collective prayer –especially in a mosk- is more advantageous because more rewarded by God, according to Islamic Law.

[3]) As a typical example, some taxi drivers put on coranic tapes instead of music, paving the way for a religious beginning or maintaining of conversation with their passengers.

expression :

s̲adaqa ∂llahu ∂l ʕa∂im : "Almighty God is right"

When the coranic recitation and the second response are over, a topical change is likely to occur where religion in general and prayer in particular usually become the heart of the matter as explained earlier.

The above descriptions correspond to the general frame of standard, theoretical situations determined by general rules of behaviour people belonging to the same speech-community share. But when it comes to practice, individual characteristics –personal attitude, intention- will interfere and influence, define or redefine the standard situation.

IV.1.1.2. Social norm and individual behaviour

A) THE INDIVIDUAL VARIATION

The social-cultural rules of behaviour, having to do with religion here, are widely and evenly known, agreed upon and put into practice ([1]) by the great majority of the members of the speech-community. But the way –the intensity, the eagerness, the form- they are applied is variable, a matter of choice. It depends on one's own interpretation of the speaking rules, one's own attitude, verbal skill, intention and strategy in conversation.

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[1]) These rules are generally put into practice except in moments of individual conflict or loss of self-control, or in periods of social, linguistic, ethnic or political tensions where such rules are suspended while others will prevail at the moment.

For example, and as a reaction to a public call for prayer, the recipient may respond immediately and loudly, expressing then his apparently deep religious beliefs publicly, inviting or encouraging the audience to do the same and answer in chorus with him, and finally showing his predisposition and will for –further- conversation ([1]); as he may have a less committing, a more neutral attitude by answering the public call with different degrees of audibility of his voice, signifying a lesser readiness for conversation. More distance with the other participants –and hence more reluctance for having a conversation- can be indicated just by a silent but visible lip –movement answer. Even mere silence with no lip-movement, though somehow ambiguous, i.e. a matter for interpretation, is a possible and an acceptable answer since it can have as one of its possible interpretations inner-speech. The latter is a widely used device in the culture we are describing, especially when religion is involved ([2]). The answer is still within a socio-linguistically safe or at least defendable position or attitude, though it does not really represent the norm ([3]). Similarly, the other participants beside him evaluate one another's

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[1]) This example shows again the illocutionary force and the perlocutionary effect of a speech-act.

[2]) Islam as a religion is, and is understood by participants as, a direct link between the Slave and his Master with no intermediary, as opposed to Christianity, i.e. the Church and its own hierarchy ; hence, the possibility –necessity- in Islam of inner speech, speech with oneself, with God.

[3]) "Norm" here does not necessarily refer to written religious rules, but rather to general rules of "good" behaviour tacitly agreed upon – and often applied- by the majority of the members of the community.

behaviour and attitude and decide or act accordingly. This is another example of negotiated speech acts in conversation where participants take initiatives, expect others to take them, evaluate the situation and comply with one another to some degree.

B) *THE INDIVIDUAL VERBAL STRATEGY*

A second example of conversation maintaining showing again the importance of religion and its use in individuals' verbal strategy is the following idiomatic adjacency pair :

Summons : <u>salli ʕla muħamm∂d</u> : "Pray on Mohammed".

Answer: ∂<u>ssl∂t ʕlih w∂ssalam</u> : "Prayer and Peace on Him".

This time, the adjacency pair is a neat one : it has a standard and stereotyped form, with no variation, and is likely to be used as such by any conversants in lots of situations. Though in the singular form, it is not limited to the addressee only, but is meant for the whole audience because everyone exposed to such a solemn and sententious stimulus is   –expected- to answer mechanically, ritualistically. That is why such an answer is often produced simultaneously, in chorus.

A third example of conversation maintaining where religion is also involved and where the speaker's verbal strategy is more subtle is embodied by another idiomatic adjacency pair whose form is as follows :

Summons : ∂<u>nʕal ∂ʃʃiit∂n</u> : "Curse Satan".

Answer : <u>∂llɑh inaʕlu u jaxzih</u> : "May God curse and humiliate him."

As with the previous example, the speaker's intention here is to make a pause into a heated debate which might otherwise degenerate and come to an end, and have it restarted on a quieter basis. But what is new and subtle here is how this attempt for conversation resuming ([1]) is made more successful : the first argument is the speaker's blame for friction and antagonism in the course of the conversation on Satan, the "absent" Evil, and not on anyone of the present participants –cf. the summons-; while the second argument is the easy and inevitable confirmation of that belief –cf. the answer- by both the addressee and the audience ([2]). As often is the case in the arabo-islamic culture, Satan as a scapegoat is believed to be the first cause of conflicts and quarrels between people, and the explanation of many human errors and weaknesses ([3]).

Actually, the speaker's strategy in using such stimuli is on

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[1]) This is a particular kind of conversation resuming because it is in fact anticipating a probable end of conversation due to complete disagreement among the conversants. This strategy aims at re-orientating the course of the conversation. As Goffman –1967:12- puts it : "Ordinarily, maintenance of face is a condition of interaction" –though sometimes it may become its objective-.

[2]) The audience in general, and the addressee in particular, are both eager and obliged to agree and accuse Satan as the source of their conflicts : they are eager to agree so that they have no guilt feeling but rather relief and peace of mind ; as they are also obliged to agree because they must provide the second pair part of the adjacency pair and hence respect an important cultural and religious rule of verbal behaviour.

[3]) What people usually have in mind in such cases is the very first sin in life with Adam and Eve's eating of the apple.

the one hand to attract everybody's attention (¹) –and possibly get them involved in the conversation-, and on the other hand to have a complete two or three second silence as a repair or remedy to an over-emotional or a highly conflictual conversation. Following this solemn silence respectful of the memory and of the name of the prophet, the summoner is magically in control of the whole situation : after he has managed to have a brief relief -i.e. silence itself- within a stormy conversation (²), he is now the only one entitled to take the next turn at talk, either by resuming the same topic but on a wiser basis (³), or by proceeding, after a brief moral or religious transition, to a topical change.

As a matter of fact, some speakers over-use such a device (⁴), which becomes just a means for turn-taking in conversation. To this extent, it is a pre-ticket, comparable in English to the children's : "Mum, you know what ?", which is an attempt to have a right to talk. But the Arabic pre-ticket is a much more powerful and authoritative one, not only because addressed by adults, but also –and more

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¹) Even the attention of those who were not participating in the conversation, or who were having another one in parallel.

²) Stormy conversations are not exceptional in the Algerian context. Conflicting ideas and opinions can even be artificially created just for the purpose of avoiding silence. This strategic rule of social behaviour happens then to prevail upon another important one : the face preserving or politeness rule.

³) Wiser basis because the name of the prophet especially when mentioned in such idiomatic expressions has the magical effect of relaxation on people.

⁴) They even happen to use it systematically and characteristically, nearly every time they want to take a turn at talk.

importantly- because of the strong influence of Islamic ideas –here the mentioning of the name of the Prophet in the summons- on the minds of the recipients, and also because of the magical power of classical Arabic –and of coranic citations and religious expressions in "H"- in people's beliefs ([1]).

Such examples appear to be a good representation of illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect in a multi-party speech act where besides speaker, addressee and audience, we also have outsiders : those having a separate or parallel conversation, but who become participants of the same – larger- speech-situation because –as explained above- of the magical power of a language, when the latter symbolises widely spread and deeply rooted religious beliefs and cultural values.

III.1.1.3. The partial use of religion

A) HEALTH AS A RELIGIOUS TOPIC

A third example of conversation maintaining where religion is ultimately involved is when participants, in the course of a conversation and after a heavy silence, start asking about one another's health. In the culture of the people, health is an important topic since it is very often

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[1]) For example, the coranic verses are believed to cure mental disorders and improve one's future. For this purpose and on this basis, many people are attracted by some fashionable ritual ceremonies, the orthodox one called roqja , which is admitted as legal in Islam and was even practised by the prophet himself.

talked about and is referred to by quite a few proverbs. The topic of health is also important as an efficient device in the technique of conversation, not only in conversation opening with the usual greetings –which is widely spread in the world-, but also as a conversation resumer or as an indicator of conversation ending. It is in conversation maintaining that the topic of health is often transformed into religious considerations ([1]), from the simple belief that health –like many other things- is God-given.

In the course of a conversation, whenever there is an embarrassing breakdown, an easy and much used solution is to re-start the conversation in much the same way as it actually started ([2]) -i.e. when the participants first met, just following the usual greetings-. The re-start conversation resuming usually takes the following form of an adjacency pair, when for example B is paying a visit to A :

A's Summons : <u>mmala rakum laa baas</u> ? : "So you're alright ?"

B's Answer :   <u>laa baas</u> …   : " Alright…"

The same adjacency pair is also used in conversation opening, but without the very first word A is newly

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[1]) We have already pointed out that many topics happen to be linked up with or even transformed into religious topics by conversants.

[2]) While more skilled speakers will be able to predict the coming of a breakdown in conversation and prevent its occurrence beforehand.
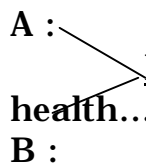
introducing, i.e. <u>mmala</u> : "so..."

The above adjacency pair is usually followed by a prelude to a topical change –from health to religion- which can be spoken either by A or by B or by both together in chorus, in the following third expression :

A :

B :   <u>∂l ħamdu lillah</u> : "Thanks God"

When the latter expression is added to the above adjacency pair, the whole of them -i.e. the three expressions together- are a typical example of conversation pre-ending – cf. the chapter about conversation ending-. In this case, they are likely to be followed by the conversation ending proper, i.e. the appropriate leave-taking expressions.

The three expressions together can also be a typical example of conversation opening, preceded in this case by the greeting expressions and followed by the appropriate or the selected topic of conversation. While if a fourth expression is added, by A –or/and by B-, the four expressions together become a typical example of conversation maintaining with health as a topic :

A :

<u>hat tkun ∂ssaħħa bark</u>... : "Let's just hope for health..."

B :

The transition from health to a probable religious topic is easily achieved by typical expressions like the following comment about health any speaker can make, in the fifth

expression :

A
— <u>∂lli ʕtah rabbi saħtu…</u> : "When God gives someone a good health…"
B
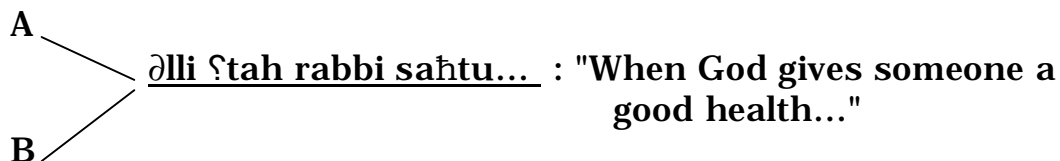
From the above three examples of conversation maintaining, three noticeable facts characteristic of the culture we are describing need be pointed out. The first one is the overlap between the different parts of conversation, i.e. conversation opening, maintaining and pre-closing when they are taken in isolation and compared without context –cf. the above four first expressions-. Their similarities are so strong that a foreign observer can easily confuse them. But of course from within the culture, they are felt to be very different.

A second noticeable fact is the possibility or re-using again and again the same kind of conversation resuming device –about health and ultimately about religion- within the same conversation or the same encounter, without sounding odd or inappropriate, and without implying any kind of monotony. Repetition is in fact typical to the culture we are describing, and typical to the Arabic culture in general. From the above third example of conversation maintaining, we can deduce that the way people organise and structure conversation, i.e. their view on conversation, reflects a broader cultural view : the Arabic one, which considers the world as cyclical, based on repetition –as opposed to the linearity of the western world.

A third noticeable fact is about the opposition and the

quantification of linguistic meaning an social meaning : when asking about health in conversation maintaining –more than in conversation opening- the content or meaning is very much social. The aim is to keep the conversation going, to socialise, to be polite and avoid silence –phatic communion-. The prevalence of social meaning and the total absence of linguistic –locutionary- meaning is indicated by the repeated use of the same adjacency pair in the same conversation or encounter every time there is a –threat of- breakdown in conversation, and also by B's invariable answer <u>laa baas</u> … : "-I'm- alright", though a few minutes- or even a few seconds- earlier, he might have been complaining about personal –health !- problems…

b) Man's weakness as a religious topic

A fourth example of conversation maintaining where religion is somehow involved is the following adjacency pair, also typical to the culture we are describing.

Summons : <u>wa∫ kunt raj∂h ∂ngul ?</u> : "What was I about to say ?"

Answer 1 : <u>xjar ∂lqul laa ilaha illa ∂llah</u> : "The best thing to say is there is no God but Allah"

Another alternative answer with the same basic linguistic and social content, though in a more direct form ([1]), is the following :

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[1]) Here, the answerer is directly addressing the summoner using the imperative form. The situation then can only be familiar –among friends, relatives or colleagues-.

Answer 2 : ∫ahh∂d w∂staʁfar : "Proclaim your faith, and show repentance".

This fourth example of conversation maintaining shows on the one hand the negative importance of silence as a major cause for deficiency in conversation, and on the other hand the positive importance of religion as a major factor contributing to the reparation of such a defect. In the culture of the people, silence within a conversation is so much to be avoided that participants try very hard to be imaginative, even provocative towards their interlocutors, in their attempts to get the conversation resumed. They do so in order to respect a stronger rule of social-linguistic behaviour -i.e. avoid silence "at any cost"- though sometimes at the expense of –or while breaching- smaller rules, a politeness rule, a face preserving rule, for example the purposeful creation of a controversy by adopting a provocative attitude towards an addressee.

How participants sometimes need to do be imaginative and even provocative in order to achieve such an aim ? The summons in this fourth example is a good representation of the imaginative aspect of somebody's strategy for conversation maintaining : having nothing to say, being short of words, a possible solution for a participant could be just to imagine he had something to say, but can't remember any more what it was about. The question he is asking, depending very much on kinesic and proxemic features, is in general meant both for himself in a kind of soliloquy, and for the

audience (^{1}), who are invited –indirect summons- to respond. But since no one   –neither the speaker nor the audience- can answer a fictitious question, the "socialising" answer (^{2}), from the speaker himself but much more often from the cooperative audience, will take the form of a stereotyped comment about the question, with a strongly religious connotation, paving the way for a religious topic of conversation (^{3}).

The reaction of the audience, once again, can only be understood by reference to a deep knowledge of the culture of the people : here in the response, the tacit element is people's strong belief that oblivion or lack of memory, like many other weaknesses in human behaviour, is caused by Satan. That's why the speaker –was pretending he- couldn't remember what he was about to say ; and that's why the audience / recipients are asking him to get rid of the devil just by

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^{1}) We are using <u>audience</u> and not <u>recipient</u> because nobody is clearly and directly addressed. Consequently, a possible reaction of the audience is to express no linguistic response to the covert summons, which would stand for unwillingness to cooperate. In that case, the speaker still has the soliloquy option as a way out or solution for preserving his own face.

^{2}) The answer, together with its corresponding question, obey a social-cultural rule, and mainly have a social meaning : to break silence first, and then to prepare for a re-start of the conversation.

^{3}) The religious connotation and topic are indicated by the religious content –meaning- of this stereotyped answer but also by its phonological form : the prestigious "H" -i.e. religious- form <u>q</u> is substituted in the answer for its corresponding "L" form <u>g</u> in the question, respectively in ∂l<u>q</u>ul and ∂n<u>g</u>ul, which refer both to talking.

referring and appealing to God (¹), so that he can remember again. From outside the Algerian culture, the above explanation of that fourth example of conversation maintaining would be viewed as applying to some characters performing on a stage ; but in the Algerian context, that was a description of a usual and typical real-life situation. The very concepts of fiction and reality obviously have a different significance and use in different cultural systems.

We have explained so far how a conversant needs to be imaginative in order to achieve a rule dictated aim : the restarting of a conversation. We see now, for the same purpose, how he may also need-choose- to be more or less provocative with the other participants, since a conversation or a speech act is a joint action. His character, his strategy and his own evaluation of the whole situation will determine whether to be provocative or not, and to what extent.

Being provocative is defined here as putting pressure on the interlocutor, as intended failure to respect the politeness principle of positive or negative face –smaller rule-, as putting the interlocutor in different degrees of discomfort, so as to have them react verbally and get them involved into the conversation resuming process. This tactics is achieved in practice by directly addressing the recipient this time (²), with

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¹) Appealing to God, as very often is the case, and as explained below, takes a classical Arabic form, which confirms once again the magical power of this prestigious variety of Arabic.

²) In the above adjacency pair, we explained that the second pair-part

the use of alternative forms of the same question :

waʃ kunt rajaħ ∂ngul ? : "What was I about to say ?"

This question is the first pair-part of the adjacency pair of the fourth example of conversation maintaining, cf. above. Examples of alternative forms ([1]), with a gradually increasing degree of pressure on the addressee, can be the following :

Summons 2 : waʃ kunt ∂ngul ? : " What was I saying ?"

Summons 3 : waʃ kunt ∂tgul ?   : " What were you saying ?"

Summons 4 : waʃ kunt rajaħ ∂tgul ? : " What were you about to say ?"

The above summonses are all here directly addressed to the hearer. In the first summons -i.e. summons 2-, the hearer is invited to remedy to the speaker's –fictitious- lack of memory. Usually, the hearer can do so easily, and hence contribute to the re-starting of the conversation. If he can't – because he couldn't remember what the speaker was saying, or because the speaker didn't say anything or didn't say

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–answer- does not automatically occur, because the summons is only indirectly expressed. It all depends on the degree of cooperativeness of the interlocutors. At this stage, the speaker is only testing, evaluating their reactions.

[1]) The existence of alternative forms, and the speaker's choice of one or the other, is an evidence for the existence of rules of linguistic behaviour on the one hand, and of a limited freedom of choice for conversants on the other hand –including the possibility of breaching the rules, or of making choices among competing or conflicting rules-. In the study of language use, variation is a clue and a key indeed.

much-, the hearer can always resort to the same stereotyped answer as a cooperative way out :

Answer : <u>xjaar ∂lqul la ilaha illa ∂llαh</u> : "The best thing to say is there is no God but Allah"

In the second summons -i.e. summons 3-, more pressure is put on the hearer because he has to recall –and repeat- what he was saying in the conversation, including the possibility that he didn't say much. The easy answer for the unskilled speaker is again the same stereotyped form.

The third summons -i.e. summons 4- is even more "difficult", awkward to the hearer because this time it refers to his future behaviour, and probably imaginary intention to say something , according to the speaker's "intuition" based on vague –or even invented- kinesic features of the hearer. The latter often doubts, hesitates, and has difficulty answering in a personal way, unless he is quick, skilful and imaginative. For example, he may adopt the same kind of strategy as the speaker and reply :

<u>m∂n ʕand∂k...</u> :   "From you".

In this case the situation is reversed by the answerer who in his turn invites the speaker to be the initiator of conversation resuming, to take the first turn at talk. This is another evidence supporting the view that speech-acts are negotiated joint actions where interlocutors often happen implicitly or explicitly to compete, to exert varying degrees of strength, pressure and influence on one another, to –try to-

convince each other. In behaving in such a way, they may of course fail or succeed, depending on their own verbal and psychological skill, but also on the hearer's, his own attitude and intention.

Another example of an interlocutor's creativity in his intention and attempt to achieve a personal aim in conversation resuming is with another alternative form of the stereotyped answer we studied earlier in the adjacency pair ([1]) :

Summons : <u>waʃ kunt rajaħ ∂ngul</u> ? : " What was I about to say ?"

Answer : <u>xjar ∂lqul la ilaha illa ∂ll∂h</u> : "The best thing to say in there is no God but Allah".

Before we study this new alternative form, let's first summarise how the above adjacency pair has been described.

We explained that the strong probability -i.e. the norm- is that the audience react cooperatively and produce the whole of the second part of the above adjacency pair, as expected by the summoner. But since they are only addressed indirectly – and if besides they are not eager to show their availability and cooperativeness-, a weaker probability would be no

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[1]) This other alternative is an example of departure from the norm –the norm being here the standard stereotyped answer mechanically used by the majority of the people- that only creative and skilled speakers can "invent" spontaneously in a specific situation and use.

verbal reaction from the audience ([1]). In such a case, a face-saving device ([2]) would be for the speaker to respond himself to his summons. A posteriori –since nobody answered- he is defining now his linguistic behaviour as a soliloquy from the very beginning of the adjacency pair ([3]). That is how he adjusts himself to the new situation, to the lack of reaction from the audience : by re-defining the situation.

After we have summarised how the adjacency pair in question has been described so far -i.e. its standard form, and the variations of both of its first and second pair parts-, we now mention and explain a new alternative form for its second pair part. This time, the answer is produced neither by the audience alone, nor by the speaker alone, but by both of them simultaneously : when the speaker realises that his invitation to the audience for completing the turn has failed, he produces a second summons –which is also an answer

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[1]) Usually, a clear distinction is made in a conversation between the following three parties : speaker, hearer, and audience. But here since the speaker is partly talking to himself and partly talking -indirectly- to the other participants –who may or may not react-, the status of the latter is not clearly defined nor clearly definable. The whole situation, the speaking rules and everybody's attitude are largely a matter of individual interpretation.

[2]) Face-saving is an attempt to repair a damage caused to someone in a conversation. An example is when a customer is first told that the hotel is booked up today –damage-, but that he can have a room the day after –face-saving-.

[3]) We can see that adjacency pairs in real-life situations can depart a lot from the simple standard norm, depending on the whole of the speech situation and its interpretation by participants, on culture, on personal attitude, intention and strategy, and on confrontation between conversants. This also shows the flexibility aspect of the speaking rules.

since he is at the same time responding to himself-, but this time he uses only half of this summons / answer, the first half, i.e. :

Answer
> xjaar ∂lquul … : "The best thing to say …,
Summons

followed by a one or two second pause. This half answer is at the same time a second stimulus –since the first one was not efficient-, an appeal to the audience for a collaborative completion of the answer with its second half, i.e. :

Answer : <u>la ilaha illa ∂ll∂h</u> : "There is no God but Allah"

We can consider that we are in presence of two complex and overlapping adjacency pairs, whose form can be represented as follows :

1st pair : Speaker's summons : <u>wa∫ kunt rajah ∂ngul</u> ? :

"What was I about to say ?"

Speaker's answer : <u>xjar ∂lqul …</u>: "The best thing to say –is-
…

2nd pair : Speaker's summons :

Audience/Speaker's answer : <u>la ilaha illa ∂ll∂h</u> :

"There   is no God
but Allah".

This time, even more pressure is exerted on the audience to get them involved in the process of conversation resuming. They –audience/hearers- are strongly expected this time to

respond, because on the one hand the summons is doubled, and on the other hand religion is implicitly involved by the speaker in his second summons. If still they do not respond, they would be considered as showing an aggressive attitude, as violating two speaking rules : one about politeness and socialising, and the other one, even more serious, is about religion and its non-respect ([1]). The speaker's behaviour, as a face-saving device, would be to continue alone and complete the second part of the expression. Nevertheless, that would still mean he failed in his attempt to resume the conversation.

The above technique used here for keeping the floor, for conversation maintaining, and which consists in a speaker completing another speaker's utterance, is referred to as footing –cf. Levinson, 1988:201-203 ; Sacks, 1992-. In the present example, participants manage it in two-part sequences, though it may be composed, as we shall see it in the second part of this chapter with proverbs, of three-part sequences –cf. C. Antaki, F. Diaz, A.F. Collins, 1996:151-171-. In that case, and in the third turn, the original speaker accepts or rejects the completion as something he would have said, including the zero third part. Whatever the case, completion is seen as a device for collaboration and joint talking. It is not a word-search from the original speaker, but

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[1]) By non-respect of religion is meant here the hearer's refusal to complete a religious idiomatic expression whose second part is actually the first pillar of Islam, i.e. Declaration of Faith.

a covert appeal motivating another participant to talk. This technique of footing is going to be more used in the following part of this chapter about proverbs, which, together with religion, represent a typical aspect of the culture we are describing, and an important means for conversation maintaining.

We have previously stressed the importance of both proverbs and religion in the representation of a culture and in the re-starting of a conversation. Moreover these typical aspects of the culture we are describing happen to be related with one another, insofar as many proverbs have an "H"-like form and hence appear to have a religious connotation in form, and often in content. The content of proverbs in general has to do with wisdom, respect of the past, of elders and ancestors : this is also what religion is about.

IV.1.2. The use of Proverbs

Proverbs are very much used and appreciated by people. They summarise in a few words a whole situation, and often have the indirect meaning of allusion and innuendo. Though learnt and used mechanically, they still leave much room for a speaker's skill and strategy. They can for example –be meant to- be ambiguous, and apply sarcastically to the hearer/audience themselves. In what follows, we shall distinguish two main uses of proverbs in conversation maintaining : first, we describe how the proverbs themselves are announced, and then we see how footing occurs with

proverbs.

IV.1.2.1. Proverb Announcing

A) *THE STANDARD ADJACENCY PAIR FORM*

In the course of a conversation, when a breakdown -i.e. silence- occurs , use of proverbs can be a remedy, a repair. They can be considered as a response from the recipients to the following expression. The latter stands for an indirect stimulus (¹) from the speaker :

Summons : <u>hada huwa ∂lli gallu…</u> : "It's like the one who said…"

Answer : a proverb.

The summons is in principle announcing any proverb from any participant, including two specific –and rare- cases : the first one is the zero answer in case the recipients are unwilling or unable to answer with a proverb. After a three or four second pause following the summons, the solution for the summoner will be to answer himself with a proverb (²),

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[1]) The speaker is indirectly addressing and motivating the other participants. The efficiency of indirectness of speech depends much on social and paralinguistic factors as eye gaze, distance, face and body attitude. It also depends on the psychological pressure –illocutionary force- the speaker is exerting on the conversants, and on the cooperativeness and verbal skill of the latter.

[2]) The summoner becoming himself the answerer, though sounding somehow odd from a foreign eye, can be commonplace in the culture we are dealing with where inner-speech and soliloquy are quite common, particularly because of the social factor of religion -as described earlier-, and also because of the spread linguistic habit of indirectness of speech.

and then transform the re-start into a re-beginning of conversation whose topic will be about the proverb in question. The second specific case is when the recipient is potentially –psychologically- available, but unable –not unwilling- to provide a proverb as an answer. This is a "weakness" characteristic of unskilled or unimaginative conversants. Still they can take as an easy alternative and solution the safer and consensual religious expression we dealt with earlier in conversation maintaining ([1]) :

Summons : <u>hada huwa ∂lli gallu...</u> : "It's like the one who said..."

Answer : <u>xjar ∂lqul la ilaha illa ∂ll∂h</u> : "The best thing to say is there is no God but Allah".

This religious answer is in principle a prelude to a religious topic of conversation.

B) OTHER FORMS

Besides the above two exceptional cases, the recipient has at his disposal a range of proverbs so wide and so varied that he usually can select one to fit into the situation, for example into what has been talked about so far. Another possible choice is to take a proverb which is so general in scope that it

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[1]) We notice again that even poorly performative or poorly creative speakers have available meaningful choices, implying here that their non-answer is likely to be interpreted as unwillingness rather than inability to collaborate verbally, because ultimately they can always resort to the standard religious expression as an answer.

could suit nearly any kind of situation, any kind of conversation. Let's now take examples of such kinds of proverbs, whose division into two parts will be useful in the following topic about footing.

Proverb nb. 1 : <u>bin ʕrab / bin tork</u> : "between Arabs/between Turks"

Proverb nb. 2 : <u>∂lli dorb∂ttu j∂ddu/ma tuʕu</u> :

"The one slapped by his own hand/should not complain".

Proverb nb. 3 : <u>ma ndir ∂lxir/ma iw∂llili ʃar</u> :

"I'll do no good/so that it does't turn harmful to me"

Proverb nb. 4 : <u>ma dar∂t j∂ddi/ma ixaf qalbi</u> :

"-Since- my hand did nothing –wrong-/my heart should have no fear"

Proverb nb. 5 : <u>∂lfum ∂lmaɣluq/ma ∂dduxlu d∂bbana</u> :

"When a mouth is shut/no fly can penetrate it".

Proverb nb. 6 : <u>ʕuz ʕla wad b∂hb∂r/u madʕuz∂ʃ ʕla wad sakuti</u> :

"Cross-safely a turbulent river/but beware of the silent one"

The above well-known proverbs can be given the following interpretation or meaning : The first one means that one should not interfere into other people's business, especially when they belong together and hence are likely to become

reconciled soo. The second proverb is about someone responsible for his own failure : he can blame nobody, and should not complain. The third proverb is about ungrateful people : they don't thank you ; they even harm you in return. So, one is to avoid doing any good to any body. The fourth proverb refers to people who have a clear conscience because they have done nothing wrong. The fifth one is a praise of taciturn people whose silence protects them from any harm ; while the last proverb means just the opposite : talkative, even offensive people are preferable to   –more reliable than- the silent ones.

We can now summarise the technique of proverb announcing in conversation maintaining. It is composed of an adjacency pair whose summons has a fixed and unfinished form, which the speaker expects to be completed with a proverb from any participant –or in the last resort from himself-. The speaker's subtle strategy is to "oblige" –here, the "negative face" rule is breached, cf. the first chapter- the recipient to answer, to break the psychological barrier of silence, and hence commit himself to further participate in –a new- conversation.

The speaker's strategy is also –here, the "positive face" rule is respected- to "provide" him with options, alternatives, with a free choice of any proverb about any topic of conversation. It can be related to the previous conversation,

or it can be quite a new topic. The choice is unpredictable, and depends much on the recipient's personal skill and imagination. If the latter are missing, the answerer is still left with one easy alternative : the mechanical use of the stereotyped religious expression we mentioned earlier, pre-announcing a religious topic. Finally, there is the option of zero answer, which, as we explained, is somehow ambiguous and can be a matter of individual interpretation. In any case, the solution for the initiator of the summons is to answer –to-himself with a proverb. This is the inner-speech and soliloquy aspect of the culture in question.

The adjacency pair standing for proverb announcing in conversation maintaining can be represented as follows. Its answer is four fold, gradually decreasing in social correctness -i.e. appropriateness, conformity with people's expectations-, and in probability or frequency of occurrence :

- Indirect Summons ([1]) : <u>hada huwa ∂lli gallu…</u>:

"It's like the one who said…"

- Alternative answers	1. a proverb	f rom
participants	2. The religious expression	
	3. Zero	answer

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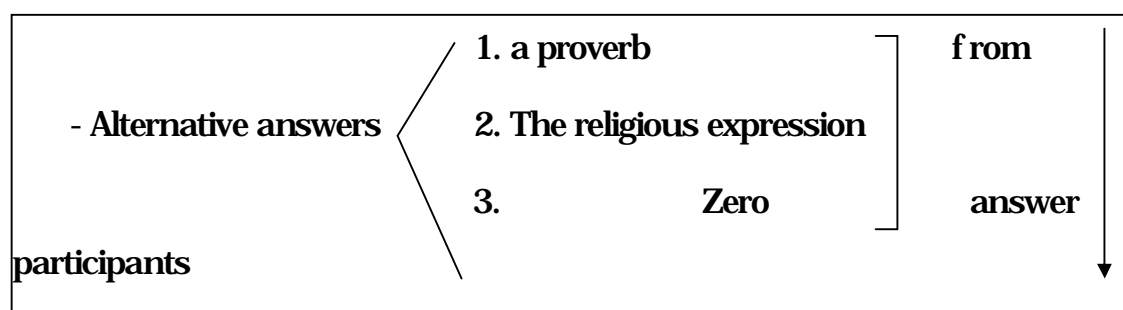
[1]) As explained earlier, there are different degrees of indirectness of the summons, depending much on paralinguistic, kinesic and proxemic features.

4. Summoner's answer

Table 6 : Proverb announcing as conversation maintaining

C) *THE AMBIGUOUS FORMS*

A final and important aspect in proverb announcing as a means for resuming a conversation is ambiguity. We have already explained the ambiguity of the zero answer, as we have hinted at the ambiguity of the status of other participants as hearer-s- or as audience in relation with a speaker using an indirect speech. It is the status of hearer or audience depending on the situation, and more particularly on the speaker's non-verbal features : for example if he is quite near and gazing at them, he is addressing hearers, and hence putting more pressure on them so that they respond ; but it also depends on the participants' attitude, choice, i.e. what they consider or want themselves to be. f course participants can easily move from one status to the other –with varying intermediate positions- depending on character, attitude or strategy of the moment.

D) *FOOTING*

Before we move on to proverb footing as a means for resuming a conversation, it is worth noticing first that footing ([1]) also exists with proverb announcing since the speaker is

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[1]) Goffman's –1981- notion of footing or Lerner's –1992- notion of completion –cf. chapter 1- refers to three-part sequences where one speaker completes another speaker's utterance ; in the third

behaving as if he was about to answer his own summons with a proverb though he is actually motivating the others and expecting them to proceed to the necessary completion. After they have answered and fulfilled his expectations, and whatever the proverb they have used, he can –he does- take a third turn at talk- following the summons and the answer – where he can only ratify or confirm the answerer's proverb as the one he was expecting –though of course he could not predict it- with expressions like :

Third turn at talk :   <u>hadak huwa !</u> : "That's it !"

<u>jaʕtik ∂ssaħħa !</u>   :   "Thanks a lot !"

IV.1.2.2. Proverb Footing

A) COMPARISON WITH PROVERB ANNOUNCEMENT

In proverb footing, as opposed to proverb announcing, there is no pause, no room for imagination, creativity or choice on the part of the recipient. His linguistic behaviour is all mechanical since it only consists in reacting immediately to a speaker's production of half a proverb –stimulus or summons- by uttering its second part –response or answer-. Proverbs –like the ones we mentioned earlier- are so appreciated and so well known   -like some coranic verses or religious expressions– that one can hardly resist telling unconsciously their second part   -sometimes in

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turn, the original speaker accepts or rejects the content of the footing.

chorus with the speaker– whenever the first part has been produced. The speaker's strategy for resuming conversation is based this time on this spontaneous reflex or instinct the hearer can hardly control, and which commits him to further conversation ([1]).

The technique of proverb footing, as compared with proverb announcing, is then likely to be more successful, more efficient in getting a conversation re-started. The topic, as usual, will be about the content of the proverb itself, and how it applies either retrospectively to the previous topic or conversation –anaphora-, or how it might be applied by participants to any examples to be raised or selected in the following conversation –cataphora-.

B) DEFINITION OF PROVERB FOOTING

Before we consider practical examples showing how some completions manage to keep the floor, let's first go further in explaining the concept of "footing". The notion of "footing", as explained earlier and as used by Goffman –1981- refers to what happens when one speaker completes what another speaker is saying. Participants manage this in two or three-part sequences. The form of the two first sequences is in fact a sentence which as a whole is produced by two speakers,

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[1]) Exceptionally, and in case of zero answer from the audience, the speaker is going to complete himself the proverb. But the zero answer here –as opposed to proverb announcing- would stand not only for unavailability and uncooperativeness, but also for an unfriendly and hostile attitude on the part of the participants, since they are expected to know such proverbs.

and whose meaning depends on the syntactic relation between its two parts. In the third turn, the original speaker accepts or rejects the propositional content of the completion. The acceptance or rejection takes the form of linguistic or non-linguistic marks of appreciations, including the inevitable zero-appreciation turn which can be interpreted in one way or another depending on context, or which can remain ambiguous.

In the case of proverbs, there is no possibility for the original speaker to reject the offered completing clause since the whole utterance is an invariable and well-known proverb. The completion is always correct and welcome ([1]). On the other hand, there is no syntactic binding and not even a pause between the two parts since the second speaker only –and spontaneously- reacts with assurance. There can be no inaccurate prediction of what should be said. That is why the second sequence is often told collectively, produced in chorus ([2]) -joint footing or joint voice-. There is a warm reaction –and probably a successful resuming of the conversation- because

[1]) This welcome is often made explicit in a potential third sequence of the completion where the original speaker ratifies the second speaker's completion and rewards him verbally not so much for completing correctly but for collaborating in conversation resuming –cf. the enthusiastic ratifying expressions in " proverb announcing" we have just mentioned.

[2]) The number of speakers involved together in the same response, and the consequent solidarity and loudness of voice will be a guarantee for rejection of silence and hence for cooperativeness in further talk. Completion is here indeed a device for collaboration, joint telling and conversation resuming –cf. Sacks, cited in Levinson, 1988:202 ; see also Sacks, 1992 ; Lerner, 1992-.

on the one hand the completer's reaction is an easy one : he is not speaking for himself, nor is he thinking, imagining or selecting an appropriate answer ; no skill is required from him. On the other hand, the original speaker is addressing – though indirectly- the other participants who definitely here take the status of "hearer" as opposed to "audience" ([1]), which implies more obligation to answer ; while in proverb announcing, participants had more freedom of choice, and could strategically switch from one status to another -for example they could adopt the audience status just to "justify" their non-response to the speaker's indirect summons-.

That was the first difference between proverb announcing and proverb footing : it concerns individual strategy. A second difference between the two situations will be about the status or function of the proverb itself : it was an answer in the first situation -i.e. in proverb announcing-, and it becomes partly a summons –its first part by a first speaker-, and partly an answer –its second part by a second speaker-s- -in the second situation- i.e. in proverb footing-.

C) THE CUTTING POINT WITHIN PROVERB FORMS

The question which deserves being asked here, and which we already raised in proverb announcing, is about the dividing line between the two parts of every proverb, or between the two turns at talk. It is at

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[1]) cf. Levinson's -1988:201-203- distinction of status as author, relayer, and spokesperson ; or Goffman's –1981- distinction of status as author, animator, and principal.

the point where a potential pause is possible. This one or two second pause is going to serve two purposes : a linguistic, i.e. syntactic one, which is the separation of the sentence – proverb- into two distinct clauses, and a social –psychological one, where the speaker is giving an opportunity to the hearer –and is strongly motivating him- to complete the proverb. The speaker is signifying his end of turn at talk, and is signalling with insistence to hearers to take theirs.

Among the two above purposes, the social one is probably more important since

> *what people complete is better understood not so much as the bland "rest of the sentence", syntactically defined, but rather as the projectable structure of a turn which has some kind of compound format. Hence completions come at points like the "then" clause of an "if-then" pair… –C. Antaki, F. Diaz, A.F. Collins, 1996:162-.*

This view is also shared by Lerner –1991- for whom the purely syntactical reading of what happens in completions is too flat ; and what is completed can also be a projectable structure like a part of a list.

Finally, there can be a third point in the sequence where the original speaker does not so much ratify the completion – since as explained it can't be inaccurate- but rather appreciates and "rewards" the second speaker for collaborating and participating in –a new- conversation. Fort this purpose the third turn expressions used in proverb announcing can also apply here :

Third turn at talk :   <u>hadak huwa !</u> : "That's it !"

<u>jaʕtik ∂ssaħħa !</u>   : "Thanks a lot !"

Let's explain further the two last proverbs, because on the one hand they are about how talking –as opposed to silence (¹)- is evaluated in this culture, and on the other hand because they show how subtle a speaker's attitude and strategy can be. The first saying has the following form when used in proverb footing :

Summons : <u>Ӡuz ʕla wad b∂hb∂r…</u>: "Cross -safely- a turbulent river…"

Answer : u mad<u>Ӡuz∂ʃ ʕla wad sakuti</u> : "but beware of the silent one".

The subtlety (²) –and the ambiguity- with this proverb is the possibility that the summoner is indirectly criticising the interlocutor's previous silence, or his/their taciturnity, and at the same time "obliging" the latter to participate into their own self-criticism. The answerer has the possibility to "retaliate" by producing the first part of the opposite proverb, i.e. :

Summons : <u>∂lfum ∂lmaɣluq…</u> : "When a mouth is shut…"

Answer   : <u>ma ∂dduxlu d∂bbana</u> : "No fly can penetrate it".

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¹) As often happens, and in order to get a conversation re-started, silence itself may become a topic.

²) Subtlety, indirectness and ambiguity as a speaker's attitude and strategy in a given culture are also embodied in the following well-known proverb :
<u>∂l hadra ʕlija…</u> : "The talk is meant for me…"
<u>wa ∂lmaʕna ʕla Ӡarti</u> : "though it is about my neighbour".

Though opposed, the two above proverbs are not really contradictory. They can be summarised as follow : Loquacity is preferable to silence, but the more you speak, the more you run the risk of getting yourself into trouble.

Other strategies are available for skilled speakers in the use of proverbs as a means for conversation resuming, as for example a speaker's simulated hesitation while beginning a proverb, which stands for an alleged lack of memory and for a call for "help" from the other participants. As he may also purposefully reverse a proverb and expect the others to put in the right word-order.

A final example, about talking again, is for a speaker to begin with the usual first half of the proverb, and then transform its second part into a question directly addressed to the hearer, as in :

Pre-summons : <u>kanu igulu ʕiiʃ tasmaʕ</u> : "They used to say : The more you live the more you hear –about strange things happening-"

Summons : <u>weʃ ʕadu igulu dork ?</u> : "What do they say now ?"

Answer : <u>ʕadu igulu ʕiiʃ tʃuuf</u> : "Now they say : the more you live, the more you see –strange things happening-"

The standard, unmodified form of the proverb is composed of the above pre-summons as a first part, and of the above answer as the second part, while its intended meaning is about the gradual spread from the past to the present time of

negative events or misconducts of one sort or another. They used to be rare in the past, that's why we only heard of them, we didn't witness them ; while today they have become so common that anybody has the opportunity to notice them.

We can now conclude and say that proverbs as a means for conversation resuming is a good illustration of a speech-act which sometimes conflictually unites two –or more- interlocutors : It is noticeable that gradually through the chapter, from proverb announcing to proverb footing, the speaker's insistence, pressure, i.e. illocutionary force, increases : the perlocutionary effect on the hearer is stronger, and hence the latter's freedom of choice decreases. At the beginning -i.e. in proverb announcing- the speaker was only indirectly addressing the others. The latter then, didn't necessarily feel "obliged" to respond.

Moreover, they had the choice and the possibility to consider themselves as having an audience –as opposed to a hearer- status, and to let the speaker respond to himself by providing a proverb ; while later –in proverb completion- the speaker's form of address is less indirect and conveys more pressure –since for example the recipients felt even obliged to join in a self- criticism !-, until it definitely becomes a direct form of address, a direct question to the other participants who this time can only have and accept the status of hearer, and act accordingly. Though very limited in his choice of behaviour by the speaker's act-ion-, the skilled hearer –as described earlier- can still "retaliate", for example by

producing a counter- proverb praising silence.

IV.2. ISLAMIC VERBAL REACTIONS TO EVENTS

In the preceding chapters, we explained that conversation in Algeria is highly valued. It is also something easy to get at, because of the Mediterranean temper, and also because of the essentially arabo-islamic culture of the Algerian people. The latter argument is so deep-seated that it regules the whole life of the people, and is a determining factor in many social-linguistic facts and situations.

Indeed, there seems to be an Islamic point of view –embodied by formulaic expressions, proverbs or citations from the Koran or the Hadith- for every event. This can only help break silence and resume conversation. The event here is going to be referred to as a stimulus variable, whose reaction is taken from a series of Islamic expressions ([1]).

Individual behaviour is likely to be predictable since the social situations we are going to describe as well as their corresponding religious expressions are quite spread. The latter, though in "H" -i.e. theoretically meant for literate people only- have become familiar to every individual because of their repetitive use in daily life situations, but also in schools, mosks and mass media. Moreover, many of these expressions also belong to the politeness system of rules.

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[1] **) They are usually in "H", but "H" here does not stand for formality and distance, but rather for solidarity –the Islamic one- and hence helps socialise through conversation more easily.**

IV.2.1. Non linguistic events as stimuli for conversation resuming

We are going to distinguish different kinds of situations, depending on the kind of non verbal stimulus : it can be a reaction of the body –like coughing and sitting- or another event embodied by the availability or appearance in a given speech situation of a specific person or object, or the occurrence of any other event. Every time, there is an Islamic point of view which can be expressed by a participant as a means to re-start a conversational interaction.

IV.2.1.1. Eating and drinking

In a first kind of situation and example, we consider the basic biological functions, whose importance is also cultural : eating and drinking are easily asked for as they are easily given to neighbours, strangers or travellers –especially during family or religious celebrations as for example during the whole of the fasting month-. The sharing of food has a particular symbolic importance expressed by the following idiomatic expression :

<u>kliit ∂l m∂lħ</u>   : " I have eaten the –their- salt" ,

implying that there can only be friendship, brotherhood and confidence between the speaker and those who gave him food (¹).

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[1]) Elsewhere in Algeria, and in the Arabic world, dates and milk are

A) THE ISLAMIC FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS

According to Islamic rules, such events as eating and drinking must be preceded by the following formulaic expression :

<u>bism illah</u> :   " In the name of God " ([1]).

This is a linguistic reaction to the presence of food or drink, and to the intention of the speaker to make an immediate use of it. The conveyed communicative meaning is the expression of an Islamic identity, of a politeness rule, and possibly a speaker's pre-signal to the audience for his predisposition for resuming conversation. It can only be a pre-signal for further conversation because what follows immediately is the eating activity itself where silence is usually the rule ([2]), though interrupted occasionally by short comments having to do with food in general. We can see that conversation resuming can be planned long in advance.

The above hypothesis that the Islamic expression and

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used for the same kind of purpose. But every time we notice that what is offered is something simple, cheap and rapidly consumed. This is a confirmation of the essentially symbolic aspect of the socialising process described above.

[1]) This expression actually has a much wider range of application since its use is recommended before initiating any kind of activity, whether verbal or non-verbal.

[2]) This is another example of conflicting rules –and cultures- and the individual's dilemma for social behaviour and self-identity : the Islamic rule of silence while eating as a preparation for further talk, and the western need to talk and socialise while eating.

speech act <u>bism illah</u> : " In the name of God " can have the illocutionary force of the speaker's predisposition for resuming conversation (¹) is not just possible : it becomes quite plausible if this formulaic expression has been produced with a loud voice, so that every member of the audience notices the pre-signal and keeps it in mind. It is also a pre-signal because it is followed , when eating or drinking is over, by the corresponding second part of the pair, produced by the same speaker, and which is, as we see below, a more explicit signal for his availability for further conversation. This second pair part is :

<div align="center">

∂l ḥamdu lillah : "Praise be to God".

</div>

The two above expressions are a ceremonial preparation for more conversation since they are linguistic indications about the speaker's availability for conversation on the one hand, and since they are breaking the psychological barrier of silence on the other hand. They can be considered as a one-party conversation, an adjacency-pair (²), which is a gradual preparation for a multi-party conversation.

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¹) This hypothesis is further reinforced by the following possibility : the speaker's own asking for drinking not so much for thirst reasons, but as an indirect means and an individual strategy for attempting to get the conversation re-started.

2) It would be a peculiar kind of adjacency-pair since its two parts can be separated by a long interval of time –the eating time- and are usually produced by the same speaker. On the other hand, one part of the pair could exceptionally stand without the other, when for example one part is produced silently, a kind of inner speech - cf. IV.1.1.1.a., p. 206-207-.

The transition to the multi-party conversation is when the second part of the above pair becomes the first-part – stimulus- of a second adjacency-pair, since the hearer is strongly expected to answer –response- by the following expression :

saħħa liik : "-God's- health to you",

which is then the second part of the second pair.

Finally, the preparation for resuming the conversation is over when the above second part becomes itself the first-part –stimulus- of a third pair, whose second part is the following from the very first speaker ([1]), with its possible two forms :

ibar∂k fiik : "-God's- prosperity to you",

iʕaiʃ∂k : "-God's- long life to you".

Now that its resuming phase has been achieved successfully in accordance with social-cultural rules, formulaic language and conventional expressions, the conversation proper can easily be re-started with quite predictable topics as food quality, availability or price, or a religious topic as praising God for his bounties and for the commodities of daily life.

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[1]) This series of expressions –which are compulsory, but which can be produced loudly or silently-, can be analysed differently from the traditional classification of speech-act into adjacency-pairs ; for example, it can be considered as a whole sequence we can hardly divide since some expressions are both a response –since they refer back- and a stimulus -since they also refer forward- at the same time.

This kind of conversational situation can easily be made less abstract and correspond for example to some usual gathering of people –marriage, death- where somebody has guests sitting together but not acquainted with one another. Still, conversation is to take place among Arabs, Muslims and Mediterraneans.

B) PARTICIPANTS' INTENTIONS AND STRATEGIES

Now, we analyse the same preparatory steps for conversation resuming with a focus this time on participants' intentions and strategies. The latter can only be understood by reference first to the general hypothesis we have just formulated again, and which is about conversation –as opposed to silence- being viewed by interlocutors as a social-cultural necessity. This principle derives essentially from the Arabic, Islamic and Mediterranean character of the people.

We suppose then that every participant's intention is to keep the conversation going. Obviously, individual intention is going to vary depending on role-relationship and on social factors as status, age, occupation or wealth (1). On the other hand, individual intention also depends on personal skills and capacities, i.e. the linguistic and psychological means for carrying out one's intentions, and which define a good talker.

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[1]) Here, the other interesting point which requires another study concerns the following questions : who is to try first to resume a conversation ? Who is to eat/drink first, and who is to pronounce –loudly- the ceremonial expressions as an attempt to get a conversation re-started ?

We explained that eating/drinking are often external, non-verbal stimuli for conversation maintaining. But an "impatient" talker in a gathering would not wait for food to be served. He would immediately ask for some water to drink ([1]) to anticipate a re-starting of the conversation, i.e. he would ask for water just to break silence –psychological barrier- and to get the audience to speak by reciprocating to his ceremonial end –of- drink expression. Ultimately, as we saw, he is the last one to reciprocate.

Once the preparation for further conversation has been decided –though intention is often unconscious- and put into practice, what follows is largely mechanical, predictable social-linguistic behaviour because regulated by rigid ritualistic rules ([2]). But in between the rules, there is room for some individual meaningful choices ([3]). For example, before and after eating or drinking, a participant may choose to remain silent, i.e. not to produce the ritual expressions. Silence here

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[1]) Water can be a better example than food because besides being more readily available, the lapse of time between the speaker's initial –before drinking- and final –after drinking- ceremonial expressions is very short, which makes the speaker's stimulus stronger, and the audience's response "warmer", so that conversation is more likely to resume.

[2]) The situation here is comparable with debates or ceremonies which are probably the most extreme transformation of conversation, most extreme in fully fixing the most important, and perhaps nearly all, of the parameters that conversation allows to vary.

[3]) Whenever a rule is applied, it is done so "for another first time" –Garfinkel, 1967:9-. Furthermore, rules in themselves are insufficient to determine or explain verbal or non-verbal action : they must be adapted for each and every occasion of their use.

is ambiguous : it can be interpreted as silent speech –talking to oneself, inner speech, especially with lip movement-. In this case, there is no breaching of the social-religious rule, but there is the implication –implicature ([1])- that the participant is not prepared for having a conversation anymore. His attitude can be interpreted as the breaching of the smaller social-linguistic rule about socialising ([2]). In return, the recipient's attitude will vary depending on how the situation is to be evaluated and interpreted. He may adopt the speaker's attitude and remain silent, or he may use back the appropriate formula, obliging this time the speaker to answer back and hence give a new chance for a re-starting of the conversation.

On the other hand, silence can also be interpreted as non-speech, especially when there is no lip-movement. In this case, the speaker will have breached both of the two above rules –the religious and the politeness ones-, and hence will appear to be uncooperative and even opposed to any attempt for resuming the conversation.

The above description concerns speech-situations

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[1]) Here, silence itself can be considered as a specific type of implicature in this specific context of a specific culture. In broader terms, implicature, a term derived from the work of the philosopher H.P. Grice, refers to the implications which can be deduced from the form of an utterance on the basis of certain co-operative principles which govern the efficiency and normal acceptability of conversations.

[2]) As with purely linguistic –syntactic- rules, there is a hierarchy within the speaking rules, some being more important than others – degree of grammaticality vs. degree of appropriateness-.

characterised by individual hesitation, indecisiveness and interpretation. They can be seen as a departure from the ideal norm. The interactants seem to have some problem to solve. In such situations, though the expressions used are ceremonial and in "H", there is room for personal strategies, and the outcome is indeterminate. Social linguistic behaviour is not always fully predictable, and hence is more interesting to study. Moreover, such situations are quite spread and seem to be closer to reality ([1]).

On the other hand, the corresponding conventional, standard, ideal situations, obeying the norm of the polite consensus- collaborative model of Sinclair and Coulthard –1975- can be summarised as follows : a group of people, sitting together but unacquainted with one another, are somebody's guests for a meal ([2]). Food –or drink- are going to be the non-verbal stimulus variable, whose reaction is going to be the following series of verbal Islamic expressions or citations which can get a conversation re-started ([3]).

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[1]) Reference here is not made to extreme examples where speakers argue, try to assert themselves, insult each other, ignore each others, refuse to do what they are asked to do, don't bother to be polite, create unnecessary obstacles, and so on.

[2]) Conversation is likely to be more fluid after the meal because, as we explained, of the preparatory ritual expressions exchanged at the end of the meal, but also because while eating, talking is not allowed by cultural and religious rules.

[3]) This reminds us of Bloomfield's –1933- "Jack and Jill" story, beginning with Jill's seeing of an apple on a tree –very first, non-linguistic stimulus-, and ending up with Jill's eating of the apple –final, non-linguistic response-, with, in between, other linguistic and non-linguistic stimuli and responses we can imagine.

Speaker "A" :　1. <u>bism illah</u>　　　:　" In the name of God".

2. <u>∂l ħamdu lillah</u> : "Praise be to God".

Speaker "B" :　3. <u>saħħa liik</u>　　: "-God's- health to you".

Speaker "A" :　4. <u>ibaar∂k fiik</u>　: "-God's- prosperity to you".

<u>iʕaiʃ∂k</u>　　　　: "-God's- long life to you".

<u>jarħam waldiik</u> : "-God's- mercy to your parents".

Such conventional, ritualistic expressions sub-divide themselves into stimuli and responses, where a response –expression nb. 3 above- can become itself a stimulus for a following response –any one of the three expressions of 4-. The same expressions seem to exist into adjacency pairs, but where a pair-part –expression 2- can belong t two pairs, i.e. where pairs may overlap. The third remark or "anomaly" is about the first pair –expression 1 and 2- which is produced by the same speaker –"A"-, while the traditional view about adjacency pairs implies two speakers : a stimulus and a response.

Such traditional, standard pairs of utterances in talk, often mutually dependent, are usual means for maintaining conversations ; but they do not always fit nicely into the linguistic and cultural patterns of other societies. In Algeria, such so called adjacency pairs (¹) can take different and much

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[1]) Instead of "adjacency pairs", one may also talk here about a series of stimuli and responses, which can be linguistic or non-linguistic, more or less directly addressed to the recipient. We also notice that some of them –first and second expressions- may also take the form of a one-party conversation –soliloquy- since even when

more complex forms : we noticed earlier that they may overlap. Secondly, they can be produced by the same speaker. Third, the two pair-parts can be separated by a certain amount of time –the time for eating/drinking-. Since produced –loudly- by the same speaker, they may be considered as indirect speech, as a double stimulus which insists on one's own availability and willingness for conversation, and thus which also insists by means of verbal and non-verbal attention-getting devices on the hearer's positive response and cooperation ([1]). The speaker's aim is at least to evaluate and test the recipient's attitude. The communicative meaning of the speaker's pair is to be understood as just explained, but under the following conditions :

- It ought to be produced with an audible voice ([2]) –cf. the opposite case treated earlier-.

- The lapse of time between the two parts must be shorter –the time for a drink, or for eating a cake-, so that the effect of the two parts is stronger on the recipient. But in fact, the second part of the pair alone is usually enough a stimulus –but only when the first condition is

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alone, one has to utter such expressions, which, then, can hardly be considered as stimuli and responses any more.

[1]) This pragmatic scheme fits well into the definition of speech-act, which emphasises on speaker's choices and constraints, intention and its effect on the hearer.

[2]) "Audibility" is of course a matter of degree to be controlled and meant by the speaker, and to be "understood" –quantified, evaluated, decoded- by the hearer.

met- for the hearer to respond positively.

A fourth and final remark or "anomaly" is the problem of "one-party conversation" as occurring in the same pair –first and second expressions-. The question we could ask is : whom is the speaker addressing ? God ? Himself ? Or the audience indirectly as explained earlier, using verbal and non-verbal attention getting devices, a double stimulus to the audience, a double message about his own attitude, and the attitude he is expecting from the recipients. The last alternative –indirect speech to the audience- is the most interesting hypothesis as far as conversation resuming is concerned.

As noticed earlier with adjacency pairs, this seemingly "one-party conversation" ([1]) does not fit well into the traditional definition of conversation as a "minimally two-party" activity, because of cultural variations. The prevailing factor in the Algerian culture is religion. That is why many ready-made and daily-life expressions are in "H" –the "language" of the Koran- and they often include references to God. They regulate the social life of the people in the form of

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[1]) "One-party" conversation –usually beginning with the first expression <u>bism illah</u> : "In the name of God", is actually spread in the Algerian social and religious life. It takes the form of silent –inner-speech or lip-movement, as for example in prayer –which can be loud as for men or silent as with women-. Following the collective prayer, there can be lip-movement of people coming out of mosks. The same kind of behaviour is required when entering the cemetery –"talking" to the dead, to God, and asking for mercy for the dead-, or when responding –lip-movement at least- to the muezzin, and so on.

series of linguistic and non-linguistic stimuli and responses which often constitute an adequate preparation for renewing conversation. We shall be considering some more of them in the following pages. Before, and as a first conclusion, we make a final remark about the very first expression : <u>bism illah</u> : " In the name of God ". This form that we have defined as an opening formula for eating/drinking –and eventually for socialising and conversation maintaining- has an extended use to other fields of social life. It can –should- actually be used before initiating any event : linguistic event as for example before taking the floor, before answering a question or before reading –especially the Koran ([1])-, and of course before praying ([2]); or non-linguistic event as for example before sitting down, before standing up, entering a home, driving a car, and so on. Such examples, once again, show that the prevailing aspect of the Algerian culture is Islam.

IV.2.1.2. Sneezing

After "eating" and "drinking", we take other examples of standard bodily reactions which can be interpreted as a non-verbal stimulus for the speaker's first, an then for the recipient's ([3]) ritualistic verbal reaction. Both of the stimulus

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[1]) In which case a fuller form is used : <u>bism illah ∂rraħman ∂rraħiim</u> : "In the name of God Most Gracious, most Merciful".

[2]) Praying -i.e. the five daily prayers- is in fact both a verbal activity –repetition of God's words- and a non-verbal one –the kinetic accompaniment-.

[3]) The term "recipient" does not imply that we are in presence of a classical, standard case of adjacency-pair as it happens with

and the reactions may stand for a preparatory step –pre conversation maintaining- towards a possible resuming of the conversation. The second example we consider is sneezing.

A) THE ISLAMIC FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS

The following ceremonial "H" expressions are going to be used after sneezing, and in a standard situation :

Speaker "A" –sneezer- :

1. ∂lħaq wa ∂l ħamdu lillah: "Truth and Praise be to God"

Speaker "B" : 2. raħmuk ∂llah : "God bless you"

Speaker "A" : 3. : ʕaʑak ∂llah : "God rewards you"

As with the preceding examples of "eating" and "drinking", such kinetic features can be unintentional –spontaneous biological reactions- or not ([1]). Whether we are in presence of one or the other is not always clear. One would need to know everything about the whole situation, and about the speaker in particular –his way of thinking, attitude, and even his life-history-. Actually, human behaviour cannot always be

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ordinary greetings, since in the expressions below, speaker "A", at the very beginning, is not addressing speaker "B", but himself, his conscience, or God. But maybe indirectly, communicatively or unconsciously, he is…. The same analysis applies to other cases of conversation resuming, beginning with a soliloquy made of religious expressions, before it possibly expands into a multi-party conversation.

[1]) This possibly intentional bodily reaction is to be compared with the similar strategy of wilfully provoking the hearer for the same purpose of avoiding silence and maintaining conversation.

predicted in advance. The speaker himself happens to hesitate about which behaviour to adopt. That is why we often need to idealise, i.e. to simplify and study standard situations through objectively or scientifically deduced schemes. Still, we also need to focus, whenever possible, as ethnomethodology does, on "a member's knowledge of his ordinary affairs, of his own organised enterprises, where that knowledge is treated by us as part of the same setting that it also makes observable"   –Garfinkel 1974:17-. We are not to limit ourselves to

rational properties of practical activities... assessed,
recognised, categorised, described by using a rule or
standard obtained outside actual settings within
which such properties are recognised, used, produced
and talked about by settings' members

–Garfinkel, 1967:33-.

A factor which may help understand a speaker's intentions is the loudness of his bodily reaction and of his verbal reaction to it ; as the hearer's attitude can be evaluated with reference to the degree of loudness of his verbal response. For both of them, the louder ([1]), the more predispositions and willingness for further conversation. Loudness itself is a matter of degree, corresponding to different degrees of predisposition for conversation.

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[1]) Loudness associated of course with other para-linguistic or kinesic features as intonation and face expression.

B) PARTICIPANTS' INTENTIONS AND STRATEGIES

When expressed loudly, the double stimulus, i.e. sneezing followed by expression nb. 1, is clearer : it is a stronger indication of the speaker's availability, and a stronger invitation to the hearer, for resuming conversation ([1]). Conversation has in fact potentially been resumed with the meaningful breaking of silence by the double stimulus. It is the same tactics which was used in the preceding example of "eating" and "drinking", where the double stimulus of the speaker was totally verbal, while here it is non-verbal – sneezing- followed by a verbal stimulus –expression nb. 1 above-. The speaker's double stimulus is likely to have a strong effect on the hearer and get him to cooperate, to react positively, i.e. by using expression nb. 2, with a loud, or at least and audible voice.

When the degree of loudness of the double stimulus, especially that of the second –verbal- stimulus of the speaker, corresponding to expression nb. 1, is lower, the attitude of the speaker is neutral, or he is not revealing it. The hearer in this case has more freedom of choice for interpreting the situation his own way. He is to decide whether to encourage conversation resuming or not, by reciprocating –use of

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[1]) A persistent and skilled speaker could even turn sneezing into an even stronger stimulus by performing it again and again till sneezing itself becomes a topic for conversation –as silence is handled by turning the silence into a topic when there are breakdowns or long gaps in a conversation.

expression nb. 2- or not, and with which degree of loudness. Remaining silent as a first possible attitude would be a clear indication for uncooperativeness, unwillingness to resume the conversation.

The second possibility which is to use expression nb. 2 with a loud voice, would be a strong invitation for further talk ; while in between, i.e. when the same expression is produced but with a lower voice, that would equate the attitude of the speaker, i.e. a neutral position is reciprocated, the outcome of which is indeterminate –i.e. a conversation will follow or not depending on other factors (^{1})-. For some reasons (^{2}), the participants are here rejecting on one another the responsibility for deciding about resuming the conversation.

Finally and as a third possibility, when the degree of loudness of the speaker's expression nb. 1 is close to zero (^{3}) -∅-, he is clearly signifying that conversation is not to resume. The hearer then is likely not to answer (^{4}). Silence here is

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[1]) Other factors like attitude of other interactants, or occurrence of a non-linguistic event.

[2]) Reasons may for example have to do with conflicting social-cultural rules about who is to resume a conversation, in relation with such parameters as age, sex, degree of literacy, of wealth, occupation or lineage.

[3]) Immediately preceding this verbal expression, sneezing itself may correspondingly be made "low", silent, hardly audible, voluntarily or unconsciously.

[4]) In practice, and exceptionally, the hearer may still decide to react verbally –expression nb. 2- in response to the slightest stimulus, and thus reveal his attitude or intention, which can be for example eagerness to please, or ironical criticism, the latter being accompanied with paralinguistic and kinesic features as

clearly meaningful and can take two forms : if can be accompanied with lip-movement corresponding to silent production of expression nb. 1. It is a clear indication of the religious attitude of the speaker –he is respecting a religious rule-, but it is also an indication of his anti-social attitude – his failure to apply the conventions of politeness-. On the other hand, silence might not be accompanied by lip-movement. In this case, the hearer's silence stands for a double criticism, corresponding to the "sneezer's" breaching of two rules : a purely religious one –no lip-movement, which is usually interpreted as a total absence of expression nb. 1 (^{1})-, and a social, conversational one –no loud production of the same expression, and hence no eagerness for further talk-.

From the above examples of conversation maintaining, we can deduce that there are social-cultural rules regulating linguistic behaviour in general and conversation maintaining in particular in given speech-situations, the standard ones in particular. In this case, linguistic behaviour is predictable. But it is hardly predictable when there is freedom of choice, alternative individual decisions ; when interactants intentionally refuse to obey the rules or question them ; when

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intonation and face-expression.

[1]) We take it for granted, intuitively and on the basis of observation and experience, that in the Algerian culture, inner speech implies lip-movement. Consequently, no lip-movement is usually understood by the hearer as non-speech, as total absence of speech.

the latter are conflicting or hierarchical (^{1}), or happen to be indeterminate in awkward, incongruent, non-standard or modern-life situations, especially in an unstable and rapidly changing speech-community like Algeria. For example there are purely religious rules of politeness for conversation opening or maintaining, as there are non-religious ones. Their social meanings are obviously different, but they also happen to conflict with one another. On the other hand, these rules can't take into account all types of speech-situations, especially the new westernised ones, which then can become a matter of personal interpretation. The choice for individual social-linguistic behaviour becomes even wider, but yet more difficult.

IV.2.1.3. Sighing and yawning

The third kind of example of bodily stimulus variable, whose reaction is also going to be a series of verbal Islamic expressions, is sighing and yawning. The latter are often themselves reactions to a partly unconscious social-psychological stimulus (^{2}), which is the need for breaking

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[1]) This also applies to purely coranic "rules" where for example the status of women or children, or the importance of wealth, is "contradictory", diversely treated from one verse of the Koran to another. This is a crucial problem, and can become a source of violent conflicts in the Islamic speech-community –cf. the on-going social troubles in Algeria- and at the same time a means for resuming conversation with controversy and polemic –cf. the following pages-.

[2]) The chain of linguistic and non-linguistic stimuli and responses goes back very far in the past –cf. Bloomfield, 1933- : if we knew all the causes, we would predict any event.

silence and get a conversation re-started, because silence itself, in the Algerian cultural system, is to be avoided ; it is a sign of social-psychological discomfort, which such bodily reactions as sighing and yawning try to overcome.

We are leaving aside mechanical reactions of the body -sighing, yawning- due to bodily disorders only, as tiredness, relief, reaction to sad events or to lack of sleep, as opposed to the pragmatic, ethnomethodological ([1]) functions of language we are concentrating upon. There is disorder and discomfort when there is the problem of silence. Bodily reaction is an attempt for a solution, is a problem-solving method, is a more or less conscious stimulus for conversation maintaining, rather than a mere reaction to biological signals. That attempt for conversation maintaining is supported and facilitated by the most deeply rooted cultural similarity the Algerians share : religion, which exerts a constraining and determining influence on verbal and non-verbal action.

A) THE ISLAMIC FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS

Following somebody's sighing or yawning –and more after sighing than yawning-, the following stereotyped religious

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[1]) At core, ethnomethodology is concerned with social action, with intersubjectivity, and with linguistic communication –topics that lie at the heart of pragmatics-. Ethnomethodology, as Garfinkel –1967:185- puts it, is "concerned with the question of how, over the temporal course of their actual engagements, and "knowing" the society only from within, members produce stable, accountable practical activities, i.e. social structures of everyday activities".

expressions are used by the sigher or yawner as a one-party conversation attempt to get a multi-party conversation re-started. The expressions below are followed by no second pair part from any participant :

1. <u>∂staɤfiru ∂llah</u>   : "I ask for God's mercy"

2. <u>wa ∂ʃhadu ∂n laa ilaaha illa ∂llah</u> : "And I witness that there is no God but Allah"

3. <u>wa ∂ʃhadu ∂nna muħamm∂d rasuul ∂llah</u> :

"And I witness that Mohammed is His Messenger".

Since the above expressions are a soliloquy or a solo speech, and in order to have the conversation resumed, the audience may respond ([1]), for instance, by commenting on the first expression. A first example of commonplace comment would be the use of the well-known coranic expression ([2]) :

4. <u>∂llahu ɤafuur raħiim</u> : "God is oft-forgiving, most

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[1]) What we are describing is virtual, potential standard situations and behaviours, which obey definite rules. But in actual situations of occurrence, "norms" and "rules" are flexible, interpretative resources that participants –most often tacitly- "orient to" in order to understand and recognise meaningful –and deviant- behaviour, and in order to make their own individual choices. This view is mainly held by Garfinkel –1967-, and goes against T. Parsons's idea –1937- that rules mechanically "cause" or "explain" behaviour.

[2]) This expression as the three following ones recur again and again in the Koran where they are often used together by pair, every pair-part contrasting with the other. Participants use one or the other to back or contrast their opinions, using religious controversy to resume a conversation.

merciful" which itself could be followed by someone else's contrasting comment that God is also –another well-known coranic expression- :

5. -ᴧllᴧhu- ʃadiid ᴧl ʕiqaab : "-God is- strict in punishment".

A second example of similar commonplace comment on the first expression would be the use of another well-known coranic expression :

6. juɤfiru li man jaʃaa : "He –God- forgives whom he wills". which itself could be followed by someone else's citation of the contrasting ([1]) coranic expression :

7. juʕa<mark>ðð</mark>ibu man jaʃaa : "He –God- punishes whom he wills".

The audience, if cooperative, may also respond by commenting on the speaker's second and third expressions together, which constitute in fact the first pillar of Islam : Declaration of faith. A commonplace comment stressing the importance of this first pillar would be :

xjaar ᴧl quul : "-This is the –best- thing one could- say".

In theory, the latter comment is quite predictable since actually it collocates with the speaker's second and third expressions, and mainly with their reduced form, i.e. the second part of the second expression, which is :

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[1]) Contrast and controversy are "intelligent" means skilled speakers use for maintaining a conversation.

<u>laa ilaaha illa ∂ll∂h</u> : "There is no God but Allah" ([1]).

The collocation is so strong that, conversely, the above reduced expression is spontaneously produced by a recipient or collectively as a response to a speaker's stimulus :

<u>xjaar ∂l quul…</u> : "The best thing one could say…".

This could be a strategy to get the audience involved into the conversation resuming process : the speaker would use the above unfinished expression with the suitable intonation, and make a pause. The recipient is likely to –feel obliged to- respond immediately and mechanically by completing the collocation with :

<u>laa ilaaha illa ∂ll∂h</u> : "There is no God but Allah",

fulfilling then a politeness rule as well as a basic religious obligation ([2]). The two parts of the collocation seem to form a pair to be produced either by one speaker only depending on context -for example when occurring within a whole turn of talk-, or by two interactants, everyone using one pair-part as just described. The latter case would be a better example – and a "better" strategy, i.e. more efficient because more

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[1]) This second part of the second expression is a reduced form of expression nb. 2, but it can also be considered as embodying the three expressions together because on the one hand it is most important semantically and religiously –since in Islam polytheism is the worst sin God cannot forgive-, an on the other hand –and consequently- this reduced form is much more used than the three expressions it represents.

[2]) The basic religious obligation, namely Declaration of Faith, is often used in different kinds of social situations, including the daily prayers.

explicit- of an attempt to resume conversation.

B) PARTICIPANTS' INTENTIONS AND STRATEGIES

We have explained that the following preparatory steps can be used for the purpose of conversation maintaining : first, silence is broken by non-speech-sounds, by more or less intentional reactions of the body as sighing and yawning. Intent, or the degree of conscious intention, could be measured by the degree of loudness of the sighing or yawning itself, and the degree of loudness of the three following religious expressions ([1]). The louder, the more explicit the message is about the speaker's availability for conversation, and the speaker's "invitation" to the hearer for "joining in". Tough loudness is a continuum, we simplify and divide it here into three degrees which we study below.

To the lowest degree of loudness corresponds silent or inner speech, which is characterised in the Algerian culture by lip-movement. Our interlocutor is behaving verbally and non-verbally as if he was alone. His attitude is understood as hostile to conversation since his choice is only to address himself, his conscience, God. He is only performing a religious duty. Religion here is an end in itself, not a means for resuming conversation.

A medium degree of loudness can be interpreted as

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[1]) We take it for granted, as a logical probability, that the same degree of loudness concerns both bodily - sighing and yawning- and verbal reactions.

expressing a neutral attitude, as a weaker availability and invitation for conversation. It can be a strategic exploration and testing of the unknown attitude of the audience (^{1}), before revealing one's own. The initiative and commitment for resuming the conversation is left to the hearer.

When the degree of loudness is even higher, the conveyed message is clearer : the speaker is strongly signifying his availability and willingness for further conversation, and, on the other hand, he is indirectly putting pressure on the hearer/audience so that the latter feel obliged to respond and further participate in a verbal interaction.

In such situations, we learn about the overall cultural system of a speech-community : the fixed socio-linguistic rules of behaviour –implying predictability of behaviour-, but we also learn about how these rules are interpreted and applied individually in every kind of situation –the flexibility aspect of rules and the creative power, the verbal strategy of interactants, implying some kind of unpredictability of behaviour-.The latter case is more difficult –yet more interesting- to study because of the difficulties involved in formulating the behavioural variables in a specific way- for example how to handle the notions of presupposition,

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[1]) No matter the degree of loudness, the speaker is in no case addressing any participant directly. That's why, when he is addressing them   –indirectly, i.e. when the degree of loudness is higher-, "hearer" and "audience", usually distinct from one another, become fused in specific situations of a specific culture.

intention, allusion, intonation or loudness as they characterise collusive communication, one-party conversation or indirect speech as is the case here-. Such notions, though not always present nor taken into account in standard, theoretical situations, are actually important characteristics of everyday-life encounters, as we have noticed earlier with greeting, but also here with conversation maintaining, and sneezing, sighing or yawning in particular. Moreover, such notions are very much revealing of some specific aspects of the Algerian culture, for example the importance and the spread of one-party conversation –islamic expressions- on its own right first as Islam is spreading and strengthening in Algeria, but also as a means, as a preparation for a more conventional multi-party conversation.

The Islamic expressions themselves are widely used and represent conversation –maintaining responses not only to spontaneous or provoked bodily reactions –as we have seen with eating, drinking, sneezing, sighing or yawning-, but also to any natural or provoked event which may happen and which we can see or hear. Conversely, the same kind of expressions can also be used –or function- as stimuli for conversation maintaining. In what follows, we analyse the latter possibility.

IV.2.2. Linguistic events as stimuli for conversation resuming

IV.2.2.1. The basic Islamic expression

A) ITS EXTENDED USE

We begin with an expression we have already studied, but only in its restricted and most spread use :

<u>bism illaah</u>　　: " In the name of God ",

which is essentially used before eating or drinking. In its extended or inclusive use, this Islamic expression and rule must precede any human act, whether verbal -for example before a speaker takes the floor, uses a turn in talk or begins praying or reading-, or non-verbal -for example before sitting down, standing up, driving, entering a flat or taking a baby into one's arms-. Its use is more systematic, first in formal and artificial situations –in some T-V. talks or films-, then when in presence of a third party –audience-, and finally when it should be said in a loud, audible voice. The above three characteristics or conditions for the occurrence of this expression are inter-linked and complementary : if there is no loud voice, it is probably because there is no third party, and hence no formal situation.

It is always useful and much revealing to compare individual behaviour when one is alone talking to oneself, and when one is before an audience. When on his own, he might not produce this expression at all –that would be a case of careless behaviour-, or more probably he would say it but with a lower voice, a whisper, lip-movement, or just inner speech.

This above variation in verbal behaviour confirms the suspicion that the speaker, when apparently talking to himself in presence of interactants, is in fact indirectly addressing the audience to whom he is conveying the following message : his own intention and will for a verbal interaction on the one hand, and his "invitation" to the hearer to cooperate and respond his own way on the other hand. Whether the conversation will resume or not is another matter. We are limiting ourselves here to conversation maintaining defined as silence-breaking, as talking to oneself by using religious expressions, and hence providing an opportunity for a multi-party conversation to resume. This is the objective of skilled speakers.

We are always considering "standard" situations where unacquainted guests are gathered, for example in a ceremony or for a meal. In such situations, conversation is a cultural necessity, and religion -religious expressions- is a means for maintaining conversation, for socialising and interacting ([1]). Such religious expressions are well-known and much used by most people as members of the same speech-community and the same religion, no matter the degree of religious belief –which is a different matter-, nor the degree of literacy –since

[1]) Socialising and interacting is a religious and cultural requirement based on the well-known Islamic principle of solidarity, as for example the usual reference to Muslims as "Brothers", as "parts of the same building"; the requirement for Muslims to touch one another with shoulders and feet in rows during the collective mosk prayers ; the obligation for a Muslim to try and put an end to any evil, by reacting against it either physically or verbally, or at least with the "heart" –silent disapproval of it-.

often repeated in mosks and on T-V.-.

B) *THE PREPARATORY STEPS FOR CONVERSATION MAINTAINING*

A typical example ([1]) where the above – mentioned basic Islamic expression can occur is in the following context, where the following preparatory steps can be used towards a probable resuming of conversation. At the very beginning is somebody entering a room where people are gathered and where there is a breakdown in conversation. On the door-step, and while facing the audience ([2]) and possibly taking off his shoes, he may "talk to himself" and produce the required ritualistic Islamic expression :

bism illaah : " In the name of God ".

His intention for conversation is revealed first by his decision to use such expression in an audible way and break silence. This intention or attitude is measured by the degree of loudness of his voice. The first signal to the audience, which has the indirect form of an audible one-party conversation, is immediately followed ([3]), and is strongly consolidated, by the second preparatory step –the greeting which takes the direct form of a multi-party verbal and non-

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[1]) By "typical" situation is meant an ideal, a standard situation which would be representative of all possible concrete situations, necessarily similar with one another. Yet ultimately, every real situation is unique.

[2]) We see here again the importance of proxemic features -postures, distance- and kinesic features –face and body expressions- in human communication.

[3]) When the speaker is on his way from the door step to the sitting place.

verbal –handshake- exchange, imposed by the speaker when he uses the first pair-part of the adjacency pair ([1]) :

Summons : ∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum : "Peace with you"

Answer : -wa- ʕaleikum ∂ssalaam : "And- Peace with you"

The answer might be followed by one or more of the optional additions :

wa raħmatu ∂llɑhi : "And the mercy of God –with you-"

taʕaala : "The Highest"

wa barakaatu : "And His prosperity –with you-"

The answerer's predispositions for talk can be measured by the maximum use of the above optional expressions ; while the speaker's predispositions for talk were indicated by his use, and by his audible use, of the "less obligatory" ([2]) first expression while entering the room, i.e. the soliloquy :

bism illaah   : " In the name of God ".

In both cases –speaker's and hearer's-, the interactants have a choice of behaviour and hence have more possibilities to express their goals and reveal their intentions and

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[1]) In this second step, this expression or rule has a much higher probability of concrete occurrence than the first one, because it is more known, more respected and more used, and also because as an adjacency pair it is necessarily audible since used as a summons and answer by two interlocutors.

[2]) In theory, this expression or rule is obligatory since indicated by one of the two official sources of Islam, i.e. the Koran and the Hadith. But in practice, and in the mind of the people, this rule becomes more flexible, "less obligatory", and hence less used because less known or less valued. Of course, we are more interested in the second case, i.e. people's knowledge, evaluation and relative practice of a rule.

attitudes. What is interesting and much revealing about attitudes is when there is variation, when there are choices, as opposed to mechanical, ritualistic rules to be applied as such anonymously, by anybody.

We have explained so far the two first preparatory steps towards conversation maintaining embodied by two Islamic expressions : the first one produced on its own ([1]), for example just when entering a room and before a silent audience, i.e. :

> bism illaah   : " In the name of God " ;

while the second one is the greeting adjacency pair produced when the speaker is about to take a seat beside other people. Its form is the following :

Speaker : <u>∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum</u> : "Peace with you"

Answerer : <u>-wa- ʕaleikum ∂ssalaam</u> : "And- Peace with you".

If the hearer's intention is to socialise and get the conversation re-started, he will add optional elements to his answer –as explained previously-. If the speaker's intention is

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[1]) In highly formal situations as for example in purely religious contexts –mosks, T-V. preachings-, or in official ones –presidential speech-, the above expression is usually extended to include one or more of the following optional forms :
1/ <u>∂rraħmaan ∂rrahiim</u> : "Most gracious, most merciful"
2/ <u>wa ∂ssalaat wa ∂ssalaam ʕala ?aʃraf ∂lmursaliin</u> : "And prayer and peace on the noblest of all the messengers".
3/ <u>wa ∂lħamdu lillaahi rabbi ∂lʕaalamiin</u> : "And praise be to God, Lord of the worlds".

to socialise and to have a verbal interaction, a third preparatory step might be used to reaffirm his intention – illocutionary force- and reinforce his pressure on the hearer/audience –perlocutionary effect- to get them to cooperate with him for a successful re-starting of the verbal interaction.

The form this third step will take is similar to the first one –see above-, except that its context or social meaning is "heavier", more insistent, because first it is a repetition ([1]) of the first step expression -i.e. <u>bism illaah</u> : " In the name of God"-, and also because it is produced when the speaker is much closer to the audience, i.e. while sitting down among them. This proxemic feature makes the speaker's message clearer and more influential because more audible, and because of the close physical proximity of the interactants.

A speaker's ability and skill can be tested on the basis of his verbal strategy in achieving efficiently the three preparatory steps described earlier, and on the impact he realises on the hearer/audience. At the very beginning is the speaker's –limited- choice to use such expressions. We have explained that some of them are more compulsory – the second step, i.e. the greeting forms- than others –the expression used both in the first and in the third step-. The importance of such Islamic expressions is not so much

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[1]) Repetition in the Algerian culture is a widely accepted and used means for conveying social or indirect meaning. It usually has a positive character in the Arabic culture as a whole.

religion per se ; rather, they mainly have a social importance as a means for breaking silence and as a preparation for resuming conversation.

The second meaningful choice of the participants towards conversation resuming is the use of the full forms of such expressions, i.e. the obligatory short form followed by some optional forms. The third meaningful choice, from the speaker, is to use overt instead of covert speech, and to prefer and adopt a higher degree of loudness of voice. The fourth meaningful choice, from the speaker again, is his repeated use –three times within a few seconds- of Islamic expressions, and his use of the same expression twice.

What has been described so far is a "typical" situation, i.e. an ideal, a standard one representative of all possible concrete situations, necessarily similar with one another. But at the same time, every real-life situation is unique because it has its own specificities and complexities, and also because it implies other features –social, psychological and paralinguistic ones- which can be very important in determining conversation maintaining, i.e. its preparation, its characteristics and its successful achievement. Such features defining the whole speech situation may have to do with the number of participants, their age, sex, occupation, social status, role-relationship or topic –wedding, death-, kinesic features –body expression-, proxemic features –posture, distance, tactile contact-, and so on.

IV.2.2.2. Other Islamic expressions

We have just described how Islamic expressions are often used for conversation–maintaining. We have seen how such expressions can be used as a linguistic response to the non-verbal stimulus of a body-reaction like yawning, eating, sneezing or sitting. Now, we study how other Islamic expressions can be used as a linguistic response to other non-linguistic events –stimuli-, as for example the availability or appearance of a specific person, object, or event. Very often, there is an Islamic point of view which can be expressed by a participant as a means to resume a conversational interaction. It is often a strategy for maintaining a conversation, and at the same time it is a fulfilment of a cultural rule –to socialise, to be polite, to express one's Islamic identity-.

The individual strategy can be passive, i.e. wait for an event to happen and then take the opportunity for commenting upon it with the appropriate, the corresponding Islamic expression ; the individual strategy can also be active, i.e. cause purposefully an event to happen in order to comment upon it from a religious point of view with the underlying aim of getting a conversation re-started.

Quite often, this event is associated in the mind –and in the mouth- of people with a well-known coranic citation about it. This citation can be unequivocal and hence imply agreement among the participants, or equivocal and hence imply controversy –and hot debate- among the participants.

Controversy usually results either from different possible interpretations of the coranic citation, or from the coexistence of two contrasting coranic citations. Partly because of its easily debatable and often passionate character all through its verses, the Koran –or religion in general- is a preferred and a privileged topic of conversation for many interlocutors. The other reason we mentioned earlier is because Islam seems to have a point of view about any event, any aspect of social life.

A) WATER AS AN EXAMPLE

The first kind of example is about water, in the same kind of situation –ideal, standard, typical-. In a more or less conscious attempt to begin a conversation, a guest may ask for water ([1]). This is an opportunity, as described earlier, first to break silence –the asking for water-, then, it is an opportunity for using the obligatory ([2]) Islamic adjacency pair in solo : the first pair-part before drinking, and the second pair-part when drinking is over. The one-party pair is as follows :

1 / **bism illaah** : " In the name of God"

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[1]) Besides its vital role for life in general, water is even more important in the Arabic world because of its scarcity, but also because of its symbolic value in Islam –cf. below-. That is why it can be an important topic and means for conversation maintaining.

[2]) In practical use, some rules are more important, more obligatory than others : for example, the speaker's solo adjacency pair is "less obligatory" because it can be produced silently –since addressed to one's conscience, or to God-, which implies it might not be produced at all. But if produced loudly, the response from the audience is "more obligatory", and the speaker's final answer is "even more obligatory", cf. the following lines.

Speaker "A":   ∂rraħmaan   :   "-Most   gracious-" optional

                ∂rraħiim   : "-Most merciful-"

          2/ ∂l ħamdu lillaah : "Praise be to God"

Under the stimulating factors of loudness of voice and use of optional phrases within the above expression nb. 1, the expression nb. 2 –which is a second pair-part-, becomes itself an indirect summons, a stimulus to be answered by the audience. It becomes a first pair-part of a new adjacency pair, whose second part is produced by the audience individually ([1]). This second pair is a multi-party pair, and has the following form :

Speaker "A" : ∂l ħamdu lillaah : "Praise be to God".

Audience   : saħħa liik : "-God's- health to you".

Here again, the second part –of this second pair- will become itself, inevitably this time, a first part of a new –third- pair ([2]) when its function switches from response to

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[1]) Individuals in an audience usually answer in chorus, warming up the atmosphere and hence facilitating conversation resuming. It is noticeable that the same "stimulating" and "warming up" operation can be repeated again and again with any new drinker.

[2]) As noted earlier, the classification of such expressions into pairs is somehow arbitrary and need not be universal. They seem to form a sequence or a continuum of interdependent parts. The continuum itself need not be completed, in case for example there is no audience, or there is no cooperation from the audience for one reason or another.

stimulus. The third adjacency pair is going to have the following form :

Audience : <u>saħħa liik</u> : "-God's- health to you".

Speaker "A" : <u>ibaar∂k fiik</u> : "-God's- prosperity to you".

All the above religious expressions may function as preparatory steps for resuming conversation. If successfully achieved, this preparation can easily be turned into a rebeginning of conversation, where the non-verbal stimulus itself, the "means" for further conversation, i.e. water, can easily become an appropriate, a typical topic for conversation. This topic is usually approached first from a religious point of view, then from a social point of view, back again to a religious point of view, and so on.

The corresponding religious verbal response to the non-verbal stimulus variable of water is likely to be the well-known coranic verse :

<u>wa Ⱬáʕalna min ∂lmaa kulla ∫eiin ħaj</u> :

"And with water we gave life to everything".

This verse recited by any participant ([1]) whenever any

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[1]) For example the most eager to begin a conversation, or the higher

water is in sight, available, is often an adequate introduction to a whole debate among interlocutors about the importance of water in religion and in life. Comments are likely to be consensual. But they may become contradictory ([1]) when the same topic i.e. water – is dealt with later on from a social point of view, for example the reasons for its scarcity in Algeria.

B) CHILDREN AS AN EXAMPLE

Water was our first example of conversation maintaining by means of a non-verbal stimulus having to do with religion. A second example typical to the Algerian culture is small children. Their availability ([2]), together with their emotional load can make conversation resuming easier. They generally stand for weakness and innocence and as such are believed to be more exposed to danger ([3]).

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in rank in relation with the factors of age, education or religious background.

[1]) Contradictory arguments are more appreciated –and sometimes are artificially created- because they last longer and keep the conversation going.

[2]) Religious rules and cultural beliefs are important reasons for the high number of children in Algerian families, despite the parents' low incomes and a high cost of living.

[3]) The danger small children are to be protected from is two-fold : extra-earth evil and adults' evil –cf. the following lines-. Such superstitions and religious beliefs are characteristic of the Algerian culture.

As a mark of sympathy for the weak, the adults are going to express their solidarity by making unanimous comments having to do with religion. A typical example would be :

∂ll∂h ibaar∂k : "God's prosperity -to the child-",

invoking God's protection to the child, and, ironically, God's protection to the child from the speaker himself, from his evil eye ([1]). This adults' public self-criticism, as opposed to their praise of children, is a much used strategy for resuming a conversation in the presence of one or more children. It is an opportunity for expressing one's own view about such oppositions as good and bad, child and adult, heaven and earth, fate and free will, and so on. This cynical view about oneself as an adult goes as far as to explain God's bounty -i.e. adults' survival from God's "reprisal" –by the innocence of both children and … animals. As with the previous example of water and drought in Algeria, there is a justification of destructive natural events as flood, earth-quake, fire or war –God's will- by human –adults'- misconduct and wickedness ([2]).

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[1]) In the Algerian culture, religion and superstition often happen to fuse.

[2]) Such examples show how correct language use in general, and appropriate conversation resuming in particular, depend much

This is the kind of topic a conversation can be about where children's presence is the source of an appropriate resuming of conversation. But the same topic, i.e. children, can be viewed from another angle : from a less consensual, a more controversial point of view, expressed by other well-known Islamic –coranic- expressions (¹) where the term <u>children</u> is associated this time with the term <u>wealth.</u>

Expression nb. 1 : <u>∂lmaal wa ∂lbanuun ziinatu ∂lħajaat</u> :

"Wealth and children are the beauty of life".

Expression nb. 2 :

<u>ba**ʕ∂ min** ∂mwaalukum wa ∂wlaadukum fitnatun lakum</u> :

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not just on purely linguistic –syntactic- rules, but on the knowledge and even internalisation of the "speaking rules", of native speakers' values and beliefs, i.e. the necessity for "knowing the society from within, from an ethnomethodological point of view" –cf. Garfinkel 1967:185-. A western researcher would need a large amount of decentration since values, beliefs, world views and thought patterns –and how they affect language and language use- can be very different from euro-american ones.

[1]) Actually the following expressions can be used as remedial means, as repair devices to breakdowns within an on-going conversation. Their controversial aspect makes the conversation more passionate and helps keep the talk going.

"Some of your wealth and of your offspring are adversity to you".

As often is the case, controversy is an ultimate means for getting a conversation re-started. Controversy is chosen in the last resort because its initiator, usually the host, runs the risk in a debatable religious topic among Mediterraneans of turning the conversation into a quarrel. The choice will be individual. It depends on psychological features, on personal evaluation of what should be considered as a more important social-cultural rule : to avoid conflicts among guests, or to avoid breakdowns in a conversation.

In practical situations, the host ([1]) may produce expression nb. 1 whenever a child is –made, by the host-present, which might be followed by a guest's production of expression nb. 2. Then, the conversation can resume, made of evaluative comments from participants about the relative validity of every expression as related with the other one, and when put for example into its historical religious context. Another alternative is the host's

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[1]) Actually in the Algerian culture, success of conversation is the host's responsibility. That is why, when having guests, people often invite friends or relatives who have in-born verbal capacities for the purpose of socialising : getting a conversation started, keeping it going, and ending it up successfully. Indeed, conversation is an art.

production, again in a child's presence, of both expressions simultaneously, and his asking to the audience for their personal evaluation of every one of them. This option is justified when the host realises intuitively that his guests are somehow passive as far as conversation making is concerned.

C) DEATH AS AN EXAMPLE

A third example of non-verbal stimulus requiring as a response an Islamic –coranic- expression is this time an abstract event or concept : death ([1]). This time, responsibility for resuming the conversation is not with the host, but with the guest ([2]), who is to comfort the relatives of the dead person, no matter the "real degree of affliction" ([3]).

In this third example, which is also about how people react to death, the factor of sex is going to have more

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[1]) Obviously, death is taken as an example not because of frequency reasons, but as a way to study conversation resuming in relation with a particular kind of silence, and also as a way to describe a culture through people's social-linguistic reactions to death.

[2]) They are not really guests because usually people learn about somebody's death indirectly ; it is a mouth-to-ear transmission of the message. But the celebration of the fortieth day following someone's death has the official aspect of formal invitation.

[3]) The tradition in pre-independence Algeria was to hire specialist female mourners who would praise the dead person.

importance in determining the verbal behaviour of interlocutors. Women, separated from men, are more emotional and incapable of conversation. Their emotional state is accentuated by their competitive "performance" as mourners. Collective bitter semi-verbal crying and complete silence are going to alternate ([1]). Crying is every time resumed with the arrival of any new comer. Density in crying is proportional to the status of the new comer, and to their degree of relatedness with the dead person.

As compared with women, men's behaviour is completely different : it is limited to a "one-party" conversation, i.e. the visitors'. The latter, being less affected –because less concerned by the sad event- are psychologically more prepared for conversation. Their resuming of it inevitably takes the form of stereotyped and often repeated Islamic expressions necessarily in "H", meant to lessen pain by stressing the power of God and Destiny. Invariably, such expressions take the following forms :

inna lillaahi wa inna ileihi raaʔʕuun :

"We belong to God and to Him we shall return".

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[1]) This situation is to be compared with laughter in conversation, which, as suggested by Schenkein –1972-, plays an important role in communication –as a back-channel-.

or : <u>kullu nafsin daa?iqatu ∂lmaut</u> :

"Every soul will taste death".

or : <u>∂lbaraaka fii ruuskum</u> :

"Prosperity is with you",

meaning to say that life goes on, with those who are still alive.

Such "H" expressions are usually followed by a more familiar one-way conversation in "L", where visitors are going to "agree" that real life is beyond the grave, when everybody is rewarded or punished according to personal deeds on earth.

What is worth noticing with these examples about death is first the importance of sex as a determining factor in verbal behaviour. The second important remark is about the hosts or the relatives of the dead person behaving much of the time as hearers only, while visitors are behaving as speakers and hearers with one another, but as speakers only when addressing the hosts ([1]). The third noticeable fact is the repetitive use of the same

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[1]) While producing and repeating ready-made comforting Islamic expressions, sympathisers may even, in a kind of competitive talk, interrupt one another to show agreement, or supply corroboration, or finish off what the speaker was going to say. In this particular style of supportive discourse, everyone participates to produce a kind of joint monologue.

Islamic expressions by the same speaker-s on the one hand, and by any new visitor on the other hand, so that "conversation", or rather talking as opposed to silence, is maintained again and again. Repetition here is proportional to the number of the new comers, and to the degree of distress within the relatives of the dead person. If the two latter factors –number and degree- are relatively high, the "conversation" is going to be re-started similarly and mechanically again and again. If they are low, a more familiar kind of conversation is going to follow, as mentioned earlier.

Adequate topics for conversation are going to be about death, but not any more as an abstract divine concept –cf. the above Islamic expressions- but as an earthly death which is categorised and contextualised in the Algerian social environment. In the Algerian context, and as a way to lessen pain, "natural" death is often contrasted with violent death –cf. the General Introduction : the bloody uprisings in Algeria in the last decade-.

Because of the existence of contrasting views and interpretations in Islam about death and other topics, controversy –and even provocation- about religious matters is much used as a means or strategy for conversation maintaining. Such situations often occur

partly because religion is a main topic in the Algerian society and an essential characteristic of the Algerian culture, and also because many non-religious topics are often and easily turned in the course of a conversation into a religious debate -i.e. the expression of individual Islamic views about situations, events, activities, or behaviours-.

All through the chapter, we have provided different examples supporting the view that Islamic expressions together with proverbs are very important means for maintaining conversation. Such examples, as explained earlier, are not exceptional. They are rather much revealing of the culture of a community. Conversely, the knowledge of a people's culture is very necessary for achieving correct conversation maintaining. Correctness here is referred to from an ethnomethodological and a pragmatic point of view, where attempt should be made to take into account the ever-widening field of context –talk-extrinsic view of context- which includes reactions to spoken events as well as the events themselves, metacommunication, and so forth. This extended view of context is going to be taken more into account in the following chapter and include more kinesic and proxemic features.

CHAPTER V

CONVERSATION ENDING

Before we describe how Algerians usually end up a conversation, we first define leave-taking by comparing it with greeting –which we dealt with earlier in the second chapter- on a cross-cultural level first, and then within the Algerian context.

On a cross-cultural level, the very existence of two separate terms or expressions-<u>greeting</u> on the one hand and <u>leave-taking</u> on the other hand – in the English language, and hence in the Anglo-Saxon or Euro-American culture implies the existence of two different concepts applying to phatic communion or politeness behaviour of people respectively on arrival –when meeting- and on departure –when leaving-. We know by experience that such concepts need not be universal, and need not have the same value or importance in different cultures ([1]). In the Algerian-Arabic, Islamic-culture, the term greeting itself : <u>taħija</u>, has an extended meaning and may apply to both arrival and departure ([2]). While on a world level greeting seems to predominate ([3]), in Algeria, social variables as sex and place can determine the importance of one or the other as described below.

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[1]) No one is able now to say what is universal and what is culturally specific. For example, a total absence of stereotyped verbal greeting has been noticed in some societies, cf. Schegloff's "Sequencing in Conversation Openings", 1968.

[2]) An evidence for that is the fact that people, especially today, often use the same –islamic- expression, i.e. <u>∂ssalaam</u> : "Peace", for both greeting and leave-taking.

[3]) Its importance could be explained by its double function in fulfilling first a politeness rule, and maybe more importantly in getting a conversation started successfully.

In the Algerian context, conversation opening and closing are similar insofar as they are both largely ritualistic, obey fairly rigid rules and often contain ready-made Islamic expressions. To this extent, they are going to contrast with conversation maintaining which is less ritualistic, less rule - governed- and less predictable-, and which requires more individual verbal skill and strategy -cf. the preceding chapter about conversation maintaining-.

On the other hand, greeting and leave-taking are also different depending, as said earlier, on social variables as sex and place, though in general –as appears to be the case in the rest of the world- greeting seems to have a more important social function ([1]) as a determinant preamble to a successful conversation. Another noticeable difference between conversation opening and closing is the degree of their respective ceremonial aspect : in general, and especially among men and in public places in Algeria, leave-taking is less ritualistic -and even less obligatory- ([2]).

As with conversation maintaining, besides considering conversation closing proper -i.e. the closing statements themselves-, we also study in a second step the preparatory stages for it, i.e. the pre-closing phases.

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[1]) But as usual, and depending on general context and speaker's intention, noticeable exceptions are going to confirm the rule, cf. below.

[2]) Here again, we notice that some rules of socio-linguistic behaviour are flexible, leaving a wider range of choices to the participants.

V.1. THE CLOSING STATEMENTS

V.1.1. The Islamic leave-taking

One of the forms of leave-taking is very similar to the Islamic greeting we studied in conversation opening : in that case, it takes the form of the following adjacency pair :

Speaker "A" –leaver's summons- :

∂ssalaamu ⁵aleikum : "Peace with you"

Speaker "B" –answer- : ⁵aleikum ∂ssalaam : "Peace with you"

"B" 's answer, as we saw with conversation opening, can be followed by the following optional expressions :

wa raħmatu ∂llah : "And the mercy of God –with you-"

ta⁵aala : "The Highest"

wa barakaatu : "And His prosperity –with you-"

There are possible additions to the answer because Muslims as recipients are advised by Islamic law when greeted to reciprocate "in a better way", i.e. with –some of- the above additions ([1]). If not, they can limit themselves to the same form as in the summons, which they only reverse –see above-.

This standard –"H"- form of leave-taking has no restriction of time, place, sex or age. It can be used by anybody,

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[1]) This is another example of flexibility of the rules which govern language use. There is norm, but there is also individual strategy, i.e. what people do with those norms or rules.

anytime, anywhere. On the other hand, a summoner's use of its first pair-part obliges the recipient to answer, by using at least the element of the second pair-part which is obligatory –see above-. If only the latter is used, we understand that the recipient is only fulfilling a politeness duty. It is a kind of neutral attitude, which can be interpreted connotatively, especially if other –paralinguistic- factors as voice, intonation, tempo or body expressions indicate so. For example, the recipient could be showing his dissatisfaction with the summoner's use of this very form ([1]) of leave-taking instead or another one.

This kind of ambiguity about the implied meaning might be sorted out by other factors –personal character, kind of conversation which preceded, role –relationship-, i.e. the whole context. On the other hand, if the recipient also uses –some of- the optionally added expressions, his attitude is more enthusiastic, more warmful. He is showing more agreement with the summoner's use of this very Islamic expression before departing.

The same Islamic expression, when used in conversation opening and when used in conversation closing, does not

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[1]) Because of the national religious tragedy Algeria has gone through lately, simple words like Islam or Islamic, which used to have a positive connotation, have become suspicious in the mouth and in the mind of many Algerians, where they are easily equated with words having a negative connotation like islamist, referring to religious extremism, to terrorism, in Algeria and in the rest of the world.

convey the same implication, the same attitude of the speaker : the summoner's choice of this form in leave-taking is obeying a purely Islamic rule, and expressing purely Islamic considerations, as opposed to the use of the same expression in greeting where it is largely ritualistic, unmarked, somehow casual –though an "H" form-, automatic, and hence loses –some of- its religious aspect or meaning. This idea is confirmed by the wider use of this expression in greeting –even by people known as loose believers-, and its rarer use in leave-taking where the religious connotation remains strong. In the latter case, the religious identity of the summoner is significantly expressed because the above Islamic expression is less often used in leave taking –as opposed to greeting-, and because of the availability of other –more often used- forms of leave-taking.

The use of the Islamic greeting in leave-taking context ca be summarised as follows : we have seen in the preceding chapter that the Islamic greeting has become from the Independence onwards the most used greeting form among the Algerians. Because of its generalised and repetitive use, it has lost some of its formality and distance as well, though it remains an "H" form. On the other hand, we have just seen hat the same adjacency pair can also be used in leave-taking. But this time its frequency of use is lower, and its social functions and psychological implication are different. In conversation closing, the use of the first pair part of this adjacency pair is no more an automatic unmarked choice ; it

becomes a highly motivated one, with an implicitly communicated meaning : it becomes much more revealing of the –religious- identity claim of the summoner. On the other hand, the use of the shortened –obligatory- form, or of the complete one –including the optional forms- of the second pair part, becomes much more revealing of the identity and attitude of the answerer. But as mentioned earlier, ambiguity can always be present and can even resist personal interpretation and context. For example, a recipient may reciprocate by using an abbreviated form : …∂ssalaam : "Peace" of the minimally required obligatory answer : ʕaleikum ∂ssalaam : "Peace with you", which strictly speaking and from a "surface" point of view, would be rule-breaking and hence offending. But on the other hand, one may "imagine" that the missing –deleted- element of the expression was to some degree silently said, was meant, though not –quite-heard in real "performance".

Another example of ambiguity which is difficult to know about is when a participant, for example for security reasons, adopts, when departing, the Islamic greeting as a summons, or uses its full second pair part form as a response to a leaver. Such hidden attitudes and identities were commonplace a few years ago when social violence was culminating ; while today with the National Reconciliation Policy, with less violence an more democracy, personal attitudes and more freely expressed and revealed through the language or variety one uses, and also through the way –or

expressions- people greet one another.

Such an ethnomethodological study is no easy matter because we are describing change in language use "here and now" in a relatively unstable speech-community where values and identity happen to fluctuate within cultural struggles. Typical aspects of change in language use have to do with : when an expression appears, when it spreads, when its use decreases, and when ultimately it fades away.

Such a study is also complex because alternative expressions should be studied in parallel since they compete and influence one another : a form spreads or loses ground at the expense or to the advantage of another –or others-. For example, the Islamic greeting form was not used before the Independence war –1954- in leave-taking. Then, it was strongly introduced in the 1990's ([1]) ; while today it is losing of its importance. It has never really become a main form of leave-taking.

In greeting, the same Islamic expression was not much used before the Independence –1962-. Between 1962 and 1990, its use spread, but it is only after 1990 that it has become the main form of greeting, more often used by more people, especially the youth, i.e. the majority of the

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[1]) By the end of the twentieth century, and as explained in the General Introduction, Algeria has known dramatic social uprisings where thousands of people were killed in an obscure kind of civil war.

population (¹), with the help of television, school and mosk. On the other hand, non-islamic, traditional expressions of greeting are losing ground and tend to be limited to the home, to the elderly, and more to women than to men : their status and use are significantly decreasing, so that we can predict their gradual disappearance. They have nearly disappeared in greeting, but they still hold a strong position in leave-taking, as we see below.

We have just explained that in leave-taking, a summoner's use of the Islamic greeting is rarer. If he still makes this choice, he is probably claiming his religious identity, obliging the recipient to reveal his, with the possibility that any on of them might only be pretending -for example for security reasons, or just to please someone-. Beside this choice, a participant has at his disposal other alternatives –traditional, non-islamic ones- which are actually more used.

V.1.2. The traditional forms of leave–taking

The first non-islamic and very traditional form of leave-taking that we analyse is mainly limited to home, and is used differently by men and women. The first part of the adjacency pair is used by both of them, and has the following form :

Men and women's summons :

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¹) Though the percentage has recently decreased, still 50% of the Algerian population are under 20 years old, and 70% are under 30, according to very recent official statistic, from the CENEAP, cf. the Algerian daily newspaper *Liberté*, 09-01-2002, p. 3.

<u>bqau ͨala xiir</u> : "Stay-pl-with-God's Prosperity" ([1])

In the second pair-part, the answer varies according to the variable of sex as follows :

Men's answer   : <u>filamaan</u>   : "-Go- in safety" ([2])

Women's answer : <u>basslaama</u> : "-Go- in Peace".

The common area of use –summons- between men an women does not always exist in practice since women have the alternative of using a corresponding typically female adjacency pair. The summons of this second pair is composed of a modified form of the shared plural imperative <u>bqau</u> : "stay", which becomes the strictly female language <u>tbaqqau</u> : "stay-pl-", followed by <u>b∂sslaama</u> , which was used by women but as an answer in the first adjacency pair, cf. above. While in the answer of this second adjacency pair, a new ([3]) and also typically female linguistic element is introduced : <u>isalm∂k</u> : "Peace with you". Finally, all the linguistic elements of this second adjacency pair belong to female language. Their use

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[1]) Though such a form is referred to as "traditional" –since it is very old- and as non-islamic –since it is not indicated by any Islamic law nor does it contain any explicit reference to religion-, it still conveys the implied and understood meaning- in the conscience and the culture of the people –that such bounties as Prosperity, Safety or Peace– cf. below –are God- given. This is another evidence for the deeply religious aspect of the people.

[2]) In this example, men's answer : <u>filamaan</u> : "-Go- in safety", is in fact an abbreviated form of the full expression : <u>fi ͨamaan illaah</u> : "-Go- in <u>God's</u> safety", which some people use, cf. the following paragraphs.

[3]) New, though deriving from the same root or abstract morpheme : /…s..l..m../, standing for the concept of Peace or Safety ; in order to have words or sentences, vowels must be added in the slots.

by men would immediately sound odd or stand for effeminate language. This second, strictly female adjacency-pair takes then the following form :

<u>tbaqqau b∂sslaama</u> : "Stay in peace".

<u>isalm∂k</u>   : "Peace with you".

While men are limited to the first pair only, women may use the first or the second pair depending on many social variables : for example when addressing men, they can only use the first adjacency pair ; but when addressing other women, they can use either : for example, if women are addressing one another in the presence of men, the first adjacency pair will be used –with its female answer-; while if there is no male presence, the second adjacency pair will be used, because women in that case have more freedom to affirm their difference, their feminity, their more ritualistic tendency.

Women's ritualistic aspect in socio-linguistic behaviour is best revealed in conversation ending, especially when there is no male presence. Before we explain that with some detail, let us first describe men's corresponding behaviour when leaving someone's home ([1]), which is fairly quick and simple. It usually takes the form of the second –non-religious, traditional- leave –taking expression, i.e. :

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[1]) For the sake of gender comparison, <u>home</u> is a good example of place since it involves both men and women, while <u>street</u> for example essentially concerns men.

Summons : <u>bqau ʕala xiir</u> : "Stay-pl-with-God's-prosperity"

Answer : | <u>filamaan</u>   :   "-Go- in safety".

             | <u>b∂sslaama</u> :   "-Go- in peace".

The use of the first leave-taking expression, i.e. the Islamic –"H"_ one :

Summons : <u>∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum</u> : "Peace with you".

Answer : <u>-wa- ʕaleikum ∂ssalaam</u> : "-And- Peace with you", would sound very formal in a home –with relatives or even just acquaintances-, as opposed to other places and contexts –as for example abroad or in mosks, in the Islamic University, or even just in the street- where it would stand for politeness but maybe more essentially for religious, social or national solidarity ([1]), implying a lesser degree of formality ; while in a home, such a use would sound formal and stand for distance; hence it would become somehow inappropriate. Yet, a conversant may decide to take that "risk" if in his evaluation of conflicting social-linguistic rules, he considers that the prestigious "H" religious expression and rule should prevail over a mere "L" politeness form and rule, no matter the context since such a religious pair is believed to be context free, to be universal ([2]).

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[1]) The relation –or the distinction- between politeness and informativeness is not always clear.

[2]) The ultimate and declared aim of many islamists is that Islam is to be extended to the whole world, cf. the recent dramatic political events in the world –USA and Afghanistan-.

Such a view was widely spread in Algeria in the 1990's, with the climax of the islamist movement, but is today declining after a bloody period of social trouble. The Islamic greeting in leave-taking, which did not exist before 1990, has become fairly used by the end of the 20th century. But today the rule is again the non-islamic, traditional expressions much used in the home context.

Men's leave-taking, as described above, is fairly quick and simple : it is composed of the traditional politeness expression, which might be followed by another ready-made expression also contained in another adjacency pair, about the motive of the visit, as for example ([1]) :

Topic:	Health : Summons : <u>maʕandu ʃar</u> : "He will recover –hopefully-"
	Answer : <u>la jɑk ʃar</u> : "-God- preserves you from any evil"
	Congratulations : Summons : <u>kull∂ʃ m∂brok</u> : "-Let it be-all prosperous-for you-"
	Answer : <u>ibaar∂k fiik</u> : "-God's- prosperity to you".

Table 7 : Men's leave-taking

Though women happen to use the same expressions, their leave-taking is quite different from men. It is longer, more complex and more ceremonial. These are the steps a standard or typical end of conversation or leave-taking is composed of

[1]) We notice here that the second example –"congratulations"- ca also occur in conversation opening, while the first example –"health"- cannot.

in a home gathering among women. The whole ritual can take up to half of the whole conversation. The guest or visitor announces repeatedly her intention to leave though without standing up, expecting –and getting- the host to ask her with insistence to stay longer. Insistence usually takes the form of a religious oath :

<u>wallah tguʕdi –tziidi-</u> : "I swear by the name of God that you stay –longer-",

Which, if unfulfilled by the visitor, obliges its producer, i.e. the host, to fast three consecutive days ([1]).

Another context where women seem to have the same kind of socio-linguistic behaviour is when they are gathered for a meal : the guest must be asked to eat, must make pauses while eating, and must resume eating under oaths. Insistence from the host is going to decrease gradually until everybody understands intuitively than the meal ceremony is over. Insistence here takes the form of an idiomatic expression where God or the guest's dearest relative is mentioned ([2]), as for example in :

<u>wallah t∂:kli</u> : "I swear by the name of God that you eat –more".

<u>u ras babaak t∂:kli</u> : For your father's sake, eat –more-".

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[1]) This is so according to islamic law, though it is only used here as an artificial blackmail to put pressure on the visitor…and please her.

[2]) The "blackmail" here is the belief or superstition that something evil will happen to that dearest relative if the host's wish or invitation for eating is not fulfilled by the guest.

u ras uliid∂k –laʕziiz- t∂:kli : For your –dearest- son's

sake, eat –more-",

or even : u ras∂k t∂:kli : For your own sake, eat –more-".

After every "unsuccessful attempt" to leave, conversation will resume for some time. In a following series of steps, the same rituals happen again, with the only difference that attempts to depart are signified while standing up and no oath is made, implying a more sincere intention –and permission- to leave. As expected again, the leave-taker's desire is going to be rebuffed by the hosts or other guests who are going every time to deny the reasons for departure ([1]).

As happened before, after every "unsuccessful attempt" to leave, conversation will resume again for some time. It can be a recycling of the same conversation, or a topic change altogether. A typical example of new topic, having to do with stated reasons for leaving, is about time passing much more quickly than it used to : this is both a criticism of modern times where leisure is becoming scarce, and an indirect compliment –implicature- for one another's enjoyable company.

Finally, and in a third series of steps, after they have all agreed about the decision to leave, and while on their way to the outside door, both guests and hosts are going to make

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[1]) cf. a similar example of such events in "Leave if you can" –Fitch, 1990:91-, a leave-taking ritual among urban Colombians.

several pauses and have bits of conversation while standing up. Every decision for walking a few paces is a potential end of conversation ; but in practice conversation is resumed again and again, the longer pause for conversation being the last one by the outside door. The whole conversation might not be long, but its end can be indeed in this very context.

The description above applies best to home, but we can also see women performing the same kind of ritual, though with a lesser degree –less long a ritual or conversation, fewer pauses-, in other places like street : they would leave one another and immediately come back and finish ending the conversation or resume it, or would leave one another gradually till the separating distance –or the separating people or traffic- definitely put an end to their verbal exchange. We can even see them trying hard to read one another's message on the lips or face, or use paralinguistic or kinesic features. As typical examples of such features, women can use the hand to signify "Good bye", or hand and ear to mean further communication on the telephone ([1]).

The occurrence of such speech-events, in which individuals –women- attempt to leave, but ritualistically receive strong, and then gradually decreasing appeals to stay connected to others raises a broader cultural theme of the significance of interpersonal bonds over and above the desires

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[1]) Our aim was to describe conversation ending, but it seems here that conversation has no end…

of individuals. Situations will differ in the amount of freedom of choice allowed to speakers. Ritual events constitute extreme examples of determination. Greeting, leave-taking, and similar routines also seem strictly determined.

All the above examples concerning the traditional leave-taking in Algeria in general, and in Constantine in particular seem to be mechanically regulated, i.e. apparently leaving no choice of social-linguistic behaviour to any male or female participant ([1]). The only case of possible choice here is when men are addressing women : the latter can reply by using any one of the two possible answers of the first adjacency pair, i.e. filaman which is mainly used by men, or b∂sslaama which is limited to women. The remark is that the second one, being more feminine, sounds more sincere and more affectionate, and hence is more often used, especially when responding to youth. It is in such cases of shades of social meaning, or indirect, implicit meaning, that skilled speakers find room to express attitudes and intentions, which "intelligent" recipients understand immediately.

V.1.3. The newer forms of leave-taking

The first case of leave-taking we studied was the Islamic one, which is exactly the same form used in greeting, cf. the

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[1]) There is choice but outside this second case of leave-taking –which is about traditional, non-religious forms-, if for example a conversant chooses to use the first case of leave-taking , i.e. the Islamic one –which we studied earlier- with all its implications, as implied in the term "variation".

chapter about conversation opening. The second case was the non-islamic, the traditional forms, composed of two adjacency pairs, where the strictly feminine expression b∂sslaama : "-Go- in peace" is a women's answer in the first adjacency pair, and a women's summons –requiring a women's answer, i.e. isalm∂k : "Peace with you"- in the second adjacency pair.

In the following third case of leave-taking, a similar kind of permutation occurs : the expression filamaan : "-Go- in safety" used as a mainly men's answer in the first traditional adjacency pair, becomes both a stimulus and a response. This third case of leave-taking takes then the form of the following adjacency pair :

Summons :   filamaan : "-Go- in safety"

Answer :   filamaan : "-Go- in safety"

This familiar form is very much used, especially in the street and among friends, relatives or acquaintances. This relatively new form could be considered as deriving from, as a simplification by the younger generation of the first traditional, elderly pair where the same expression filamaan was only used as a response, and whose users are older people –and men in particular-; while this new form of adjacency pair is mainly used by younger people, and more by boys than girls. It is a kind of "L" form as compared with the religious –"H"- greeting, while the traditional greetings

would go somewhere in between in the formality scale ([1]).

Lower in the degree of formality than this third case of leave-taking –which is <u>filamaan</u>-, we finally have the fourth case. It is similar in form with the third one since everyone of them is composed of an adjacency pair whose parts are alike. In this fourth case of leave-taking, the same expression <u>saħħa</u> : "Health" is used both as a stimulus and as a response :

> Summons :   <u>saħħa</u> : "Health"
>
> Answer   :   <u>saħħa</u> : "Health"

This kind of intimate form mainly has an in-group use among close friends. It is essentially limited to adolescent male groups, and is even more recent than the preceding one.

Among the most representative forms of leave-taking ([2]), the following fifth example is worth mentioning because of its neutral, unmarked, safer aspect, unrevealing of its user's identity as far as attitude –towards Islam in particular- is concerned ([3]). The adjacency pair in question has the

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[1]) These degrees in registers, and in varieties of the same language, have been identified as points on a continuum from, say, Classical Arabic, through Standard Arabic, Modern Arabic, to Colloquial Arabic.

[2]) Most representative of the Algerian culture "here and now" since the Algerian speech-community is unstable and its values are changing and even conflicting, which affects, and is directly observable in, the ways of speaking of people, in particular in how they plan and organise conversation.

[3]) Using a "safer", or the expected "right" language, form of greeting or leave-taking was, and to a lesser extent still is, a vital issue,

following form with similar parts again :

Summons : <u>ja m∂n ʕaaʃ</u> : "-See you again- if still alive".

Answer : <u>ja m∂n ʕaaʃ</u> : "-See you again- if still alive".

Actually, the above example holds an intermediary position between religious and non-religious –and also between formal and familiar- forms of leave-taking, because of its indirect reference to God ([1]) and Destiny. For the same reason of safety, this form is often used as both a summons and an answer. But of course depending on social-political tensions, socio-linguistic context, or recipient's character and beliefs, other –atypical, incongruent- answers taken from other adjacency pairs might be purposefully used, among them the zero answer which, though not very much offending in leave-taking, will always remain somehow ambiguous to the summoner. It is worth noticing that ambiguity itself, i.e. no answer here, and for some personal strategic purpose, might be intended by the recipient himself.

Finally and to finish with the most representative forms of leave-taking, the following sixth example is also worth mentioning because of its being a response ([2]) to no specific

together with body features like the way you dress or whether you grow your beard. An example of possible dramatic consequence has been the loss of one's job.

[1]) Reference to God is implicit because most Algerians show a fatalistic, even a superstitious attitude towards events, especially the important ones having to do with life, death, or wealth.

[2]) Such form is better considered as a response rather than a summons because it occurs finally in the leave-taking process and stands for its user's decision to put a definite end to the conversation.

summons, including the zero -∅- option, so that in theory it is a second pair-part to no adjacency pair. It can be represented as follows :

Summons : …………..

Answer : <u>fi ?amaan illaah</u> : "-Go- in God's Security",

where the blanks in the summons can be filled in by one or another summons from another adjacency pair, depending on the whole context.

Actually, this response can collocate with quite a few possible stimuli because it holds an intermediary position –and hence is safer- in the formality scale : it is similar in its beginning with the "L" –informal, non-religious- form <u>filamaan</u>, but it also has an "H" –formal, religious- aspect in its end part through the term : <u>illaah</u> : God. In fact, the whole expression <u>fi ?amaan illaah</u> can be thought of linguistically as the "H" form from which the "L" <u>filamaan</u> derives, with a lexical and morphological simplification. Above this "H", we have of course the higher "H", i.e. the islamic greeting <u>salaam</u> ([1]).

These two latter forms : the top "H" <u>salaam</u> and the "L" <u>filamaan</u> can both collocate with the answer part we are studying, as can other forms, for example a traditional one as in the following pair :

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[1]) It is widely admitted today that the Arabic language is not just limited to an "H" and an "L" forms as described by Ferguson 1959a:325-340, but is rather a continuum of intermediate forms between "H" and "L".

Summons : <u>bqau ʕla xiir</u> : "Stay with-God's-prosperity"

Answer : <u>fi ?amaan illaah</u> : "-Go- in God's peace".

But of course though the speaking rules are often flexible enough and can leave a wide range of choice to a speaker to fulfil his speech-act, there are internalised constraints and limitations which he shares with all the members of the community and which he is expected to respect. For example, the answer we are studying definitely should not collocate with the summons : <u>saħħa</u> because they are very different : in formality –formal vs. intimate-, as in user's age –adult vs. adolescent-; still, in contexts of irony, insinuation or implication, or in highly conflictual situations, we can imagine their co-occurrence. That would be a conscious flouting of the rules to achieve a personal effect.

The above study of different forms of leave-taking is indeed a complex one when compared with the ethnomethodological neat description of clearly definable cases of adjacency pairs –cf. Schegloff, 1986-. In the Algerian context, and in practical use, the concept itself of adjacency pair becomes loose, flexible, a kind of continuum, since some pairs, and their respective parts, easily come to overlap and encroach upon one another under the pressure of social, political and cultural changes. On the other hand, Algerian conversants use such pairs –or their parts- in a varied and changing way in an attempt to affirm and/or impose one's own view about identity –illocutionary force and

perlocutionary effect-. As we have indicated, it can lead to ambiguity, to miscommunication or even to no communication.

V.1.4. How all the forms relate

Beyond a mere inventory and description of the different leave-taking forms, most revealing of all is to study them dynamically in relation with one another –synchronically-, and also through recent past time –diachronically- from the independence of Algeria –1962- up till now. A first example of relationship –between leave-taking forms- is how such expressions form a coherent system on the formality scale, which we hinted at earlier. On the top is the formal (¹) –"H"_ religious greeting, whose corresponding "L" could be the third case of leave-taking, i.e. the familiar adjacency pair <u>filamaan / filamaan</u>. While in between, and as semi-formal, could be inserted the second case of leave-taking, i.e. the traditional forms.

As far as degree of formality is concerned, we notice that the first traditional pair, whose answer or second part is

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[1]) Though classical Arabic –"H"- usually stands for formality, it can also express, sometimes simultaneously, solidarity. Both parameters can coexist without rejecting one another, cf. the "Vous/Vous" alternative form of address in French, and its Russian pronominal equivalent, in Friedrich, 1966. They are all examples of links of language as a system with social categories, with culture and even with ideology or world view. Both of leave-taking forms –or greetings- and pronouns of address are advantageous –and much revealing- because they are frequent, short, easily noted and obligatory.

filamaan –and which mainly has a male use- is closer in formality to the third case of leave-taking –cf. above- since the two of them include the expression **filamaan**. As a consequence, the first traditional pair, though classified as semi-formal, is actually more familiar than formal –and hence more used by men, who usually are less ceremonial-, while the second traditional pair, which mainly has a female, and even effeminate use, is more formal than familiar. At the other extreme –bottom- of the formality scale is the fourth case of leave-taking : the intimate, the in-group one, mainly used by adolescents.

After degree of formality and gender parameters, another case of relationships –between different leave-taking forms- also hinted at earlier is a purely formal linguistic one this time : we notice that different leave-taking forms may share a common linguistic element -for example **filamaan**, see above-; or they may be made up of a similar adjacency pair form -i.e. the two parts are the same-, as for the third and fourth cases, i.e. **filamaan / filamaan**, **saħħa / saħħa** ; or a pair-part may take the place of a summons in one adjacency pair and the place of an answer in an other, cf. how **b∂sslaama** is behaving or functioning in the two adjacency pairs of the traditional leave-taking –second case-.

As a final kind of relationships –between different leave-taking forms-, comparison could be made this time between conversation opening –greeting- and conversation closing -leave-taking-. We have noticed that the same religious

expression <u>salaam</u> is used in both, but very differently. The historical difference is that such an expression already existed in greeting though limited in use, but did not exist in leave-taking. Today, it is dominating in greeting, but remains hardly used in leave-taking, where the traditional –non-religious- forms have resisted it. The reasons for such a resistance can be explained as follows : first, leave-taking is a weaker rule, is less required than greeting in the Algerian culture. Second, since widely used in greeting, this religious expression has become casual –though an "H"-. It has become somehow neutral, empty of implied social meaning, nearly a mere expression of politeness.

This Islamic expression has less a religious connotation in greeting –where it remains a chiefly politeness rule- than in leave-taking where the speaker is consciously and intentionally expressing his religious identity on the one hand, and at the same time is exerting a successful influence on the recipient's answer : the latter then often feels obliged to use back the second pair-part of the islamic expression, in its full form –including the optional elements-, or just the obligatory form, and hence possibly reveals his attitude towards religion ([1]).

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[1]) Reality is of course often more complex, and no two "similar" situations are exactly similar. Examples of complexity in such situations is the possibility for any participant to be just pretending, to play a given role and hide his real or deep identity, because of –linguistic- insecurity, or only for pleasing one another –politeness rules obliging you to be "cooperative" and… lie !-.

The range of choice in leave-taking forms can even be wider since individuals often succeed, thanks to their creativity power, to invent and use new individual strategies, on the basis of new linguistic expressions or new combinations of available linguistic expressions, to express new intentions, and project new effects on the recipient. The range of possible intentions and effects can be very wide, and includes purposeful –or unintended- ambiguity from the speaker and free or open interpretation on the part of the hearer. An example here of creativity and widening choice is the creation and the spreading use of a new adjacency pair in leave-taking, whose first part or summons is the Islamic one, i.e. ∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum , but whose second part or answer, i.e. filamaan, is non-Islamic ([1]), taken from another pair : either the men's traditional form –second case of leave-taking-, or the third case of leave-taking –filamaan /filamaan-. This recent, semi-religious adjacency pair takes the following form :

> Summons : ∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum : "Peace with you"
>
> Answer   : filamaan   : "-Go- in safety".

Such part of pairs in principle are not expected to collocate.

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[1]) By non-Islamic is meant that it is not referring to religion –God- in the mind of its user. Here, a distinction must be made between linguistic meaning and social meaning : linguistically, the expression filamaan can be considered as religious since deriving from the full or deeper "H" form fi ?amaan illaah –cf. above-; but pragmatically there is no such a corresponding religious idea or implication in the mind of the native-speaker.

The initiative for their co-occurrence and co-use in the same pair is from the answerer.

In greeting, the same kind of situation, i.e. use of another pair-part as an answer to the Islamic summons, would be even more improbable because the Islamic greeting –with its two parts- is more required and more used ; it is more ritualistic in conversation opening. The replacement of its second part by the answerer would sound awkward, troublesome, and even offending to the speaker ; but on the other hand it could stand for the recipient's attitude : his dissatisfaction with the speaker's Islamic greeting, and his intention to invalidate or correct it –illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect-. Again, communicating –though with politeness expressions- can indeed become conflictual and lead to miscommunication, misconstrual or misunderstanding since apparently in such situations the two parties may happen to "complain" indirectly about one another's use of one politeness form instead of another.

In the kind of situations we are describing, which are typical of unstable and conflictual speech-communities, such a breaching of the norms, of the speaking rules, can be unintentional –when caused for example by mishearing, lack of attention, mechanical response or slip of the tongue –or not [1]. In the latter case, the answerer is consciously

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[1]) Such an "inappropriate" response may happen just because its user was expecting the occurrence of a more usual or congruent

transmitting a counter-message of disapproval or disagreement to the summoner about their respective cultural values, identity characteristics ([1]) and subsequent norms of speaking.

Such rivalry in competing individual beliefs and strategies –and in parts of adjacency pairs- is characteristic of unstable, conflict– oriented speech-communities. Social–cultural instability and complexity -as explained in the General Introduction- has as a consequence socio-linguistic fluctuation and change. Colonisation, the war of Independence and the late "civil war" of the 1990's are examples of social-cultural instability. As examples of socio-linguistic changes, we can mention the spread in post-independence Algeria of the Islamic greeting –in conversation opening- and its introduction in leave-taking, where it is decreasing now.

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summons, i.e. the one which collocates with the answer <u>filamaan</u>. This summons is either the same form as the answer –cf. third case of leave-taking-, or the male's traditional form –cf. second case of leave-taking. The summoner, of course, may "blame" in return the answerer for using an inappropriate –irrespectful ?- response. The situation becomes covertly ambiguous, conflictual, though people are "politely" greeting one another...

[1]) Identity is not just what we are, but also what we believe we are, and what we believe we should be. This complex, heterogeneous definition of identity, which applies well to the Algerian context, is also reflected in the mind of the individual, where it can become ambiguous, even "schizophrenic", and take the form of corresponding questions –and questionings- about self-identity - cf. the search for identity in the General Introduction-. For example, most Algerians are deeply Muslims, but at the same time they fear Islam because of the Algerian tragedy of the last decade, and also because of the latest international political events –U.S.A, Afghanistan, Iraq-.

The traditional forms of leave-taking –and some of them in greeting (¹)- are also decreasing with the factor of age –they are mainly used by older people, a minority-, while new, simpler forms have appeared –third and fourth cases of leave-taking-. Finally, the last adjacency pair we have studied is emerging. We can reasonably predict that as a compromise, i.e. as a semi-religious way of greeting, it may spread more and impose itself as a new norm, as a main alternative in leave-taking. For the time being, it remains limited in use –though gradually spreading- and hence limited in acceptability, appropriateness or correctness (²).

The study of expressions people use to open or to close a conversation is indeed more fruitful and more revealing when such expressions are studied dynamically in relation with one another, especially when the speech-community is unstable and changing. The expressions themselves will change : they come to existence, spread, decrease in use, or disappear altogether, because of one another, i.e. because they happen to alternate, conflict, complete, compete, encroach upon one

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¹) As for example the reciprocal <u>msalxiir</u> : "Good afternoon/evening", largely encroached upon by the Islamic greeting, as opposed to the reciprocal <u>sbaħ ∂lxiir</u> : "Good morning", which remains widely used.

²) Acceptability or correctness in language use is not always an either – or matter especially when we study change in language use, or rather language use in change, i.e. in the process of changing, through a relatively short period of time –second half of the twentieth century-. This is to be compared with theoretical linguistics and its possible concept of degrees in grammaticality -cf. Chomsky-.

another, as has just been described. They do so in parallel with, or because of, national socio-political changes, struggles and conflicts –islamism, regional ethno-linguistic uprisings-, and even international events –Palestine mainly-. It is because of such conflicts and struggles about cultural identity that the planned revision of the Algerian Constitution about such sensitive matters as Family and School could not be carried out, cf. the Algerian daily newspaper "Le Quotidien d'Oran", 14-01-2002, p. 5. Public debate itself, which is a necessary condition for constitutional changes, is nearly impossible because risky, since violently antagonistic views co-exist.

V.2. THE PRE-CLOSING STATEMENTS

When we compared conversation opening and conversation ending, we explained that the latter is generally less ritualistic, even less necessary ([1]), i.e. obeying a weaker socio-linguistic rule. On the other hand, such social variables as sex, age and place –home vs. street- can have a decisive influence. In general, language use, at the end or at the beginning of a conversation, is more ritualistic with women than with men, with older people than with the youth, in a home rather than in the street. Another determining factor is whether the expressions which are used have to do with

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[1]) Hint here is being made again at the relative degree of strength and relative degree of flexibility of some speaking rules –to be compared with the degree of grammaticality of some sentences in theoretical linguistics-.

religion or not. In the first case, language is going to be more ritualistic, and end of conversation more elaborate, i.e. it is likely to include a pre-closing stage.

Many social encounters are going to include a religious pre-closing stage since, as said earlier, most Algerians' social-linguistic behaviour is influenced by religion. The following are examples of fully or partly religious pre-closing statements where the conversants towards the end of the conversation often leave "the matter" into the hands of God who is to decide accordingly in the future ([1]). This ideological attitude is in accordance with the Algerians' fatalistic view of immanent divine action and justice in the world. Symbolically, and as a mark of respect towards God they have just been referring to, a solemn two or three second pause is usually observed at the end of the pre-closing statement. The next phase they move to will be the closing stage proper –when in the street for example-, or the opening of a new topic –when in a home for example-, since silence very often is inappropriate ([2]).

In the contexts we have approximatively described above ([3]),

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[1]) Of course, it all depends on the topic of the conversation, but in general, many conversations, and whatever the topic, often end with a reference to religion –God, Fate, Evil-, with a summary of the religious view about the topic or the event in question.

[2]) That would also be an example of conversation maintaining, which we studied in the third chapter.

[3]) As pointed out earlier in this paper, the notion of "context" is difficult to define accurately. To a large extent, context is actually indeterminate, cf. Jeff Coulter, 1996. On the other hand, context

the pre-closing stage of conversation usually takes the form of an adjacency pair where the summoner is indicating his intention to end up the conversation ([1]). After the hearer has provided the corresponding answer, the participant's behaviour becomes less mechanistic –and less predictable-: the following stage in the conversation will be more a matter of individual choice and decision to be taken very rapidly during the two or three second pause following the pre-closing stage.

As a first possibility, and in case the answerer agrees about the speaker's hint for ending the conversation, either of them can take the initiative for leave-taking, i.e. be the summoner in the closing stage of the conversation. The second possibility is when the answerer disagrees. In this case, the latter can either, for politeness reasons, let the summoner take the initiative for ending the conversation ([2]),

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is also complex because if it may determine usage, that usage may also define context, as for example with pronominal switching in Russian or in French, cf. Friedrich, 1966.

[1]) While if we compare with the English equivalent pre-closing "well, Okay...", we notice on the one hand that there is no adjacency pair, and on the other that the summoner in the pre-closing stage –the initiator of the idea to leave- is again the summoner in the closing stage : "Bye/Bye".

[2]) Socio-cultural constraints on behaviour often induce conversants, for face-saving reasons, to let other participants decide and end up a conversation because such an initiative can easily be associated with lack of sociability and even aggressiveness. Politeness, here represented by mere silence, is seen as directed at avoiding unwanted implications –rather than communicating implicatures-. Polite verbal behaviour here is better seen as motivated by a desire to avoid –mis-communication, cf. M. Jary, 1997.

or immediately introduce himself a new topic.

After we have described the general form religious pre-closing statements usually have, we consider now concrete examples and discuss what is specific with everyone. A first distinguishing factor is the degree of religion involved in such statements ([1]). For that purpose, we shall classify them into two categories : the partly religious ones and the fully religious ones.

V.2.1. The partly religious forms

In the partly religious forms, only the second pair-part of the pre-closing adjacency pair is referring to religion. Our first example is :

Summons : x∂llina n∫ufuuk : "Give us a chance to see you".

Answer   : ∂n ∫a ∂llah   : "If God wills".

Such a pre-closing stage happens towards the end of an encounter the speaker has been pleased with and would like it to happen again soon in the future.

Though this pair ([2]) is not very much used, it is much revealing and typical of the culture of its users, of their

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[1]) Religion is taken as a basic parameter because, as explained in different parts of this research work, it regulates the behaviour of the majority of the Algerian people.

[2]) By pair is mainly meant its first part since the second one often collocates with any summons referring to any event the summoner is looking forward to –corresponding to the English Amen-.

conception of politeness and their strategic and refined use of it : the summons is indeed –and in form- a subtle admixture of praise and criticism of the addressee ; while in social content it is mainly praising which is intended by the speaker.

Praising is embodied by the speaker's stated eagerness and pleasure to meet the addressee, whose self-worth –"positive face"- is reinforced by the speaker's use of the plural : "Let <u>us</u> see you", implying that many people are impatient to meet him –which of course is not necessarily true, but rather mere politeness, a matter of stylistic effect-. On the other hand –and in form as opposed to content or real intention-, the speaker's statement is also a criticism since apparently he is blaming his interlocutor for preventing him/them to see him, a criticism the interlocutor can only be pleased with since it represents in fact self-worth, a higher esteem, i.e. "positive face".

That first example of semi-religious pre-closing statements has been describing conversation ending, but at the same time an important aspect of a culture : politeness, and the different ways to express it. The following second example is also representative of a culture, its concept of politeness, and the strategies individuals use to put an end to a conversation ([1]).

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[1]) Conversation ending is in general more complex and difficult to achieve than conversation opening –greeting in particular- because in the Algerian culture, it is viewed somehow as a guilt, as standing for unwillingness or reluctance to socialise –further-;

This example is much more used, and takes the following form of an adjacency pair :

Summons : <u>mmaala labaas</u> : "So you are alright..."

Answer   : <u>labaas</u>   : "It is alright..."

Very often, this pair is followed by a third statement :

or/and { Summoner :
                      ∂l ħamdu lillaah : "Praise be to God",
            Answerer :
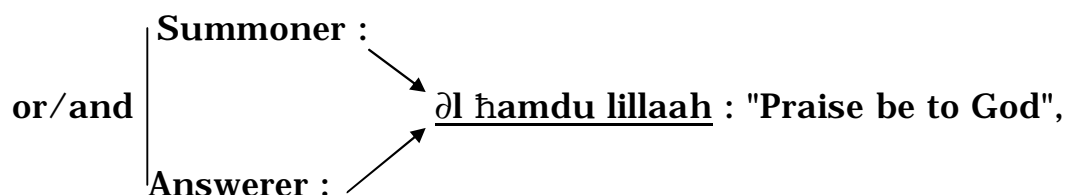
which can be produced individually by either of the summoner and the answerer, or by both of them in chorus. What is quite noticeable here is again how the same linguistic form or expression can hold different social functions and meanings depending on the speaker's intention and on its place in a social-linguistic context : it can occur in the course of a conversation and hence stand for a conversation maintaining device, or it can take place at the end of a conversation and hence stand for a pre-signal or hint for leave-taking. The question about which one –conversation maintaining or closing- is meant by the summoner will depend on socio-linguistic, paralinguistic, kinesic or proxemic features. We can compare as an example interlocutors who have met in the street with host and guests sitting round a table in a home.

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hence the necessity for very subtle strategies to avoid the impression of "negative face" on the part of the recipient.

This example of conversation ending can also be compared with conversation opening since the two of them are composed of two similar stages but in a different chronological order : conversation opening begins with greeting followed by an inquiry about one another's health, while conversation ending obeys a reverse order : it begins –pre-closing statement- with an inquiry about the recipient's health, followed by leave- taking expressions –closing stage-.

As usual, after God's name or God's properties have been mentioned –third statement- and in solemn respect of Him -cf. the first example- a two or three second pause will be made, an opportunity for any conversant to make up his mind and either proceed to conversation ending proper –closing stage- or introduce a new topic. In the latter case, an additional fourth expression will be rapidly used as an option and a transition to a new topic . That is how conversation ending and conversation maintaining may overlap, both linguistically –with the four statements we have described-, and psychologically –hesitation and rapid decision in the mind of the interlocutors-.

Now, as to predicting which choice –conversation ending or conversation maintaining, or remaining silent and let the other-s- decide- will be made and by whom, we would need to know the whole context, including what Bloomfield calls the

whole life-history of every conversant (¹). Hence behaviour is not always a matter of strict rules we obey ; it is often a matter of tendencies and expectations.

Our third and final example of semi-religious pre-closing stage of conversation is also revealing of a culture and of one of its main aspects : politeness. This example is about ostensible and non-ostensible invitations of the kind we dealt with in the preceding chapter, and which mainly concerns women. We explained that women when leaving a home are asked several times by the host to stay longer. The first invitations are serious, sincere, because they are reinforced by an oath :

> <u>wallah tguʕdi –tziidi-</u> : "I swear by the name of God that you stay –longer-"

When an invitation includes a solemn, often religious reference –an oath- and if the guest politely pretends to refuse the offer, she is "reminded" by the host of the harmful consequence : the host will be obliged, by the Islamic law, to fast three consecutive days. This polite religious "blackmail" is bound to work every time. It is used to achieve a very peculiar personal goal : pleasing the hearer, even against his own will...

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¹ **)** Reference here is made to Bloomfield –1933- "Jack and Jill" story, and the question of their linguistic and non-linguistic actions and reactions when an apple is in sight, while knowing that Jill is fond of apples...

The invitations are going to decrease gradually in insistence and in religious weight, until the last one-s-contains no religious reference any more, and usually takes the following form :

<u>zidi ∫uija</u>   :   "Stay a little bit longer",

meaning in fact : "you can leave now".

The forms which are intermediate in insistence –and in religious reference- could be represented by the following expressions :

<u>ɬa wⱫáh rabbi tzidi</u>   :   "For God's sake, stay more".

<u>uraas muhammad tguʕdi</u> : "For the Prophet's sake, stay more".

<u>uraas mula biit∂k tguʕdi</u> : "For your husband's sake, stay more".

<u>uraas uliidak l∂Ⱬiiz tguʕdi</u> : "For your dearest son's sake, stay more".

In the end, the invitation is clearly ostensible, and the recipient is just expected to put forward a "good" reason for leaving before she actually leaves with the appropriate closing stage expressions.

That was theoretically the general form of some rules of social–linguistic behaviour participants have in mind and agree about ; while in practice, and within the constraints of such rules, participants also have some possibility of choice

in applying the speaking rules which then, become flexible and can be applied in different ways by different interlocutors in different social contexts. It follows that linguistic behaviour in society obeys general tendencies rather than fixed and equally shared rules every member of a speech-community applies.

To support such assertions, we notice for example that women apply the speaking rules in a stricter way and make use of a wider range of possibilities ([1]) in the religion scale, beginning with highly religious –or formal- expressions –cf. the chronologically first- invitation-s- to stay longer-; but if we consider a particular woman in a concrete and specific speech-situation, the following questions may be asked : is she going to repeat the same kind of invitation ([2]) ? Which one, and how many times ? How many "intermediate" invitation is she going to use ? which ones ? and so on. Such questions can hardly be answered beforehand. Human behaviour remains largely unpredictable.

The examples about non-ostensible invitations we have just discussed are classified as semi-religious because they belong together into a scale of religion where the use and the

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[1]) We have already explained that leave-taking is a longer, more complex and more ritualistic process with women than with men.

[2]) Repetition is an important aspect of the culture we are describing, and of the Arabic culture in general. If can even define the Arabic view of the world as cyclical or circular, as opposed to the linear view of the western world. Such an opposition actually goes back to the Greeks –Heraclite vs. Parmenide-.

power of the latter- and hence of the speaker's seriousness of the invitation and of the hearer's obligation to fulfil it- are decreasing gradually. Now, we consider fully religious statements as belonging to a pre-closing stage of conversation.

V.2.2. The fully religious forms

As usual, we begin with a descriptive and classificatory approach –a static and theoretical one- before we consider concrete examples and individual attitudes. The following expressions are classified as fully religious because reference to the Divine is present in every expression whether on its own or as a pair-part. As a first consequence, a more formal form of Arabic will be used because of the very close link between Classical Arabic and Islam –cf. the General Introduction-. As a matter of fact, quite a few coranic expressions –as we shall see in the examples below- have become part of the everyday-life use of language, even by illiterate people. The second consequence of the reference to the Divine in the expressions below is the necessary pause which follows as a mark of deference to God, but also as a signal for ending the conversation –cf. the partly religious examples above-.

We study a first series of examples which are ready-made statements requiring no answer. The first one is :

<u>lakum diinukum wa lija diin</u> : "You have your religion, and I have mine".

This verse from the Koran was addressed by the Prophet to the non-believers. Its use today in ordinary conversation has no religious connotation anymore, but just stands for complete divergence in opinion between participants so that their debate must be put to an end. Apparently, this is a polite and skilful way to end up a conversation which might degenerate, since at the same time the speaker is still showing some respect to the opposite view. But the understood intention of the speaker is of course to re-affirm the superiority of his view –which he assimilates with the Prophet's- as opposed to the view of the "non-believers" he is addressing. This subtle and ultimate criticism of the other's view usually remains unanswered because the speaker is definitely signifying his intention to close the conversation, and also because of the necessary deferential pause following a reference to the Divine. The only face-saving device left to the hearer is to anticipate, quickly interrupt the speaker and loudly produce the second part of the verse ([1]). In this way, the second speaker -i.e. the completer- is symbolically substituting himself for the first one as the initiator of the prophet's saying. In "acting" in such a way, he symbolically classifies himself as belonging to the prophet's side, i.e. the "right" side.

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[1]) Loudly so that, even if the first speaker produces the whole of the verse, his voice can't be heard by the audience in its second part. This is a variety of conversational completion or footing we dealt with in some detail in the preceding chapter.

Through this first example, we discover again a culture and more particularly its concept of politeness (¹) and its symbols. We also come to know how participants say and mean things –implicature- how they make use of internalised and shared social, cultural and religious values and rules in order to achieve general or specific goals.

A typical example of General Goal is the conversational ability in "negotiating" with interlocutors ; it is also how much one succeeds in convincing and persuading them so that they have him in a higher esteem –positive face achievement-. Catherine Kerbart-Orecchioni, 1989:10, makes it clear that : "A verbal exchange is wholly built up by interactants who are all responsible for its development and its management. All conversational events give rise to ceaseless negotiations, whether explicit or implicit" –my own translation from French-. The same idea is developed by Hazael-Massieux-1989:29- who affirms that : "Every message is relevant" .

In the above example of fully religious pre-closing statements, such a general goal interactants aim at in conversation can be achieved by the use of two related strategies : the first one consists in the use of holy citations from the Koran or from the Prophet's sayings as strongly undeniable arguments in support of one's view since they always have force and authority and necessarily imply

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¹) Insistence is on the politeness aspect of culture because conversation opening, closing and maintaining is essentially a matter of politeness, and largely obeys politeness rules.

truthfulness. They also imply deep deference on the part of the recipients ([1]). Here again we notice the magical power of the "H" form of Arabic because of its close link with the Koran. Such a power happens to be used, and at times over-used, by some people not so much for religion sake, but to manipulate the audience ([2]), to achieve personal aims when communicating with others.

The second strategy, related to the first one, consists in being the last one to speak before ending the conversation. That also confers authority to the user because the decision to end up a conversation is usually taken by socially higher ranking people, where age is a determining factor. If the user does not fulfil such a condition, he is then breaching a politeness rule, but consciously, and in order to fulfil what he considers at the moment a more urgent goal to reach, i.e. face-saving in a conflictual speech-situation where conversants strongly disagree with one another and where everyone of them feels offended.

Being the last one to speak confers a higher authority and status to the user, though in reality he might have a rather lower status –in age, nobility or occupation-. He is somehow pretending or "performing", borrowing somebody else's

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[1]) Even those whose faith is weak, or who do not really practice Islam, obey the same rules of socio-linguistic behaviour.

[2]) That strategy was used at a wider scale in the 1990's when the majority of the Algerian people happened to be in favour of an Islamic Republic.

identity and behaving accordingly. Nevertheless, the user is leaving open the alternative of resuming the conversation, either on the same subject –but in a quieter debate- or with a new topic.

By contrast, in the following second example of a fully religious pre-closing stage in conversation, there is a complete and definite breakdown in the conversation because the pre-closing statement is this time much more hostile and aggressive to the "audience". By addressing them indirectly and by switching to Classical Arabic –cf. the pre-closing stage expression below-, the speaker is signifying distance to his interlocutors, who are then turned from an addressee status to an audience one.

Besides form, the speaker's dissatisfaction with his interlocutors is also expressed –in a more straightforward way- by the content of the following ready–made expression or saying he is using –cf. below-. No repair device and no conversation resuming are possible. Moreover, this pre-closing statement contains itself an element of an important closing expression, i.e. <u>salaam</u> : "peace". This second example takes the following form :

<u>iða xatabaka ∂lʓaahiluun faqul salaam</u> :

"If you are addressed by the ignorants, say good bye".

Being a very old, typically Arabic saying, with an "H" form, this expression is assimilated by many speakers to coranic verses. Depending on the individual, this citation can be used

as a preparation for leave-taking, or stand for leave-taking itself because of the closing element it contains -i.e. <u>∂ssalaam</u> : "peace". The decision is up to every individual, how he interprets, appreciates and evaluates the whole speech-situation ([1]). It may depend on how much he feels offended ([2]), and on other social and psychological factors we can hardly control and anticipate. Different speakers can have different attitudes and reactions in the same kind of context. Choice of one alternative –pre-closing- or the other -leave-taking- may also depend on which rule of linguistic behaviour should prevail in the speaker's mind in case some rules conflict : the "offence rule" asking for repair –and hence the choice of this expression as a closing retaliation statement ([3])-, or the politeness rule requiring a compromise– and hence the choice of this expression as a pre-closing statement to be followed by the leave-taking stage-.

Whether chosen as a closing or as a pre-closing stage, this

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[1]) Topic is, of course, a determining factor. If it is a sensitive one –like for example political Islam which is one of the main topics the Algerians have been discussing and strongly or violently disagreeing about from the 1980's up till now, views are going to diverge widely and hatred becomes commonplace in the society and even within families, cf. the late "civil war".

[2]) Democracy is only beginning in Algeria, and differences in opinion are often assimilated to lack of respect and may lead to individual and social conflicts –to mis-communication and to ...end of conversation-.

[3]) As Dr T. Zaboot –2001:90- puts it : "since social relationships obey ceaseless struggles of influence, and since the latter usually appear in verbal interactions, interactants in verbal exchanges try to act and exert their supremacy on one another" –my own translation from French-.

saying itself is a compromise because of its aggressive social content –it is in fact an offence- on the one hand, and its "polite" form on the other hand –since this expression has an indirect form of address, and is in "H" which, in people's minds, is associated with religion, poetry, education, i.e. politeness- ([1]).

The second example, just like the preceding one, indicates that, besides the existence and the constraints of fixed rules of speaking, real conversants in real-life situations often have some choice in deciding about the right and the "best" linguistic behaviour corresponding to their aims in conversation. They can adopt very subtle individual strategies conformable to the social-cultural values they believe in when attempting to have an effect on the hearer.

Our third example or ready-made statements ([2]) requiring no answer is even more used than the two preceding ones and confirms the view that the culture we are describing is conflict-oriented since conversations do not always have a "happy end". Such examples, then, are more revealing of the culture we are describing, which is, as said earlier, a second aim of the present thesis.

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[1]) Switching to an "H" form -i.e. a higher degree in formality- is also a strategic means to put –back- verbally aggressive interlocutors at a distance.

[2]) Ready-made statements are taken as examples of conversation ending because of quality and quantity reasons : as sayings, they represent more the culture we are describing ; on the other hand, they are likely to be more used by the members of the speech-community.

As far as personal strategy is concerned, once again an "H" expression is used as a softener of the aggressive content of the statement, whose form is as follows :

ħisbi ∂llah na؟n ∂l wakiil : "God, the Greatest Advocate, is my accountant".

The content or communicative meaning is definitely aggressive because the speaker's decision to let God decide and revenge him is based on the general belief that God's punishment is surer and harsher –while human beings usually forget and forgive in the long run-.

On the other hand, the hostility of the content of this statement is softened by its "H" form and its indirect form of address –cf. the previous example-. The degree in softening, and more particularly in indirectness and possibly in ambiguity, is even higher here because on the one hand the one-s- the speaker is blaming can be present –addressee and audience-, and on the other hand appeal is made to the Divine Judgment nobody can complain about or question. Just by his verbal skill and his imagination, the user of this statement is magically turning the whole speech-situation to his advantage : from the status of a victim –since he feels offended- he simply becomes a confident "observer" of God's punishment of his offender.

As far as the hearer's individual strategy is concerned, he can either remain silent and in this way may be signifying that the speaker's statement is not intended for him ; or he

may, as skilled speakers do, anticipate rapidly (^{1}) and produce in a kind of completion or footing the second part of the statement in question with a louder voice so as to be the last one to speak and hence take advantage and authority (^{2}) –cf. the preceding examples-. By so anticipating, he is also implying that he too is referring to God's Judgement, but of course with different expectations from the speaker's about this Judgement.

The above first three examples of this first series about one statement conversation pre-ending is showing an important social-cultural aspect : the difficulty and even the impossibility to communicate –miscommunication or no communication-. This important problem in communicating (^{3}) is itself a consequence of an unstable, a complex and conflictual society, a society –and a culture- in the process of change towards one society project –a modern and free one- or another –an Islamic one-, or a compromise somewhere in

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^{1}) Anticipation in such examples is relatively easy because "H" forms, which are formal, are usually produced in a slow delivery and with a careful pronunciation. Moreover, they are usually well-known and much used expressions, and hence can easily be anticipated.

^{2}) Advantage and authority because, as said earlier, the speech-situation, as the culture it belongs to, is often conflict oriented, and the initiative of ending up a conversation is often a matter of "borrowed" higher rank, pride and leadership. Moreover, these are examples of one statement pre-ending of conversation which leave no opportunity for the hearer/audience to reply and hence keep the conversation going.

^{3}) Miscommunication can even lead to physical violence, cf. the late "civil war" where even close relatives happened to kill one another.

between –cf. the General Introduction-.

Such divergent views on the kind of society and culture are still competing and nobody can tell yet which one will prevail. One must bear in mind that after long years of a one-party regime –and of a one way of thinking- Democracy is only beginning in Algeria. Differences in opinion are easily assimilated to lack of respect and often lead to individual and social conflicts –and to premature end of conversation-.

Later in this chapter, we shall see that the second series of examples also shows the same important aspect of the culture we are describing : its deep-rooted religious beliefs, and more particularly its total reliance on God's Justice and Destiny, but this time in a more peaceful way so that communication between participants is more friendly and fluid.

As a transition to the second series of examples, let us consider two more one-statement expressions –requiring no answer- which also express the omni-presence and omnipotence of God but in a fairly optimistic and relaxed atmosphere. These two synonymous expressions are :

 Kul ∫I b∂l m∂ktuub : "Everything is predestinated".

 ila ħab rabbi/∂llah : "If God wills".

As for the previous examples, such expressions can be the conclusion of nearly any topic of conversation, but this time the interlocutors apparently agree with one another about

some future event which the hearer in particular would like to happen. The speaker apparently has no objection, but the only problem he is raising is the future itself which only God controls.

That was a summary of speech-situation as they appear to be. But in reality, there can be hidden strategies, intentions, attitudes and meanings that participants know about to some degree, with the help of other parameters like gesture, face and body expressions or intonation. We mean to say that there can be a covert, a parallel communication we can only know about from inside the society, from inside the culture ([1]). It can be summarised as follows : Such expressions are in principle ambiguous as to the real intention of the speaker. They can only be disambiguated by full knowledge of the whole context-which is no easy task as explained earlier, since for example the speaker himself might not be fully aware of what he is exactly expressing ([2]) –see below-.

To simplify, we distinguish three main alternatives to explain the real intention of the speaker : First, he might be fully sincere and mean what he is saying. In this case, we expect him to be a deeply religious person who is never sure about the future, even the very probable or very near future,

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[1]) What is meant here is the implicit, the inter-subjective aspect of a culture.

[2]) He might for example express purposefully something ambiguous or indeterminate, test the hearer's reactions to it, and only then make up his mind as to which interpretation or version he meant.

since "God only knows". He is truly sympathising with the addressee, and would do his best for the achievement of the wish in question.

By contrast, and as a second alternative, the speaker is adopting a more neutral, a "safer" attitude. The use of such expressions is only mechanical, ritualistic. The user is not really committing himself. His strategy might be a kind of "wait and see" attitude, implying some ambiguity in his intention ([1]) and in how the latter should be perceived by the hearer. Hiding behind God's will, and at the same time expressing an ambiguous attitude, is psychologically and strategically a secure shelter.

In a third possibility, the speaker could be foreseeing –and even willing- the non-occurrence of the event in question. He might even have a share in its non-occurrence. The intention of the speaker can be again ambiguous, for the addressee at least, unless the whole context reveals some clues for interpreting the expression or speech-act correctly. In any case, the speaker's strategy is to anticipate the non-occurrence of the future event and put forward his "innocence" by "blaming" fate. As a consequence, this strategy has the effect of leaving the hearer powerless ([2]) because fate

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[1]) Here again, we notice that the importance of ambiguity is not limited to the theoretical description of language as an abstract system of rules –many sentences are ambiguous structurally-. Ambiguity is also used purposefully in speech-acts for achieving one goal or another.

[2]) Here, the hearer becomes –perlocutionary effect- verbally powerless,

is a deeply rooted belief in the Algerian culture and a pillar or Islam. This is another way to be polite specific to the culture we are describing, but where religion is used as a powerful "polite" means to achieve one's end, and to achieve... conversation ending.

So far, we have studied fully religious pre-closing statements requiring no answer. Now, we consider fully religious pre-closing statements which usually do require an answer. We select two widely used answers, together with some of the summons which precede them depending on context. The first series of summons, and their corresponding answer, is the following :

	- ∂nnaaf∂ʕ rabbi	: "God is the key"
Summons :	- xalliha l rabbi	: "Leave it to God"
	- idir ∂lha rabbi triig	: "God will pave the way for it"
	- wakkal ʕiih rabbi	: "God is your Advocate against him"

Answer :   - sobħanu   : "Praise be to God".

No matter the context, such expressions are all used by the summoner to sympathise with and comfort an apparently offended interlocutor who has just been complaining about someone or something. The means is again religion, i.e. God's Will and Justice which always prevail. The recipient's most

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i.e. with no argument since fate cannot be questioned, and hence speechless for a while in respect of God. Such a stage -i.e. silence and trouble- in a conversation can easily become a pre-end of conversation.

predictable reaction is <u>sobħanu</u> : "Praise be to God". This first option in the answer implies agreement with the summons, a kind of passive and fatalistic attitude towards events ruled by God's Law and Justice. Such a solemn moment is usually followed by a three or four second pause respectful to God, before leave-taking is fulfilled –if for example in the street or by a door-, or before embarking on a new topic –if for example in a home, where conversation is to be carried on-.

A second option in the answer, obeying a minor rule, as opposed to the preceding major rule, is mere silence, but of course a meaningful one. This time, the answerer is probably implying, by his silence, that man also has the power –and the duty- to decide for himself. He is expressing here a more active and less fatalistic attitude towards events, though remaining within the law of God ([1]). Man is to rely on God, but also on himself. Religious and cultural values and concepts can be a matter of controversy, implying more variation and freedom of choice in the attitude and behaviour of members of the same speech-community.

Let us now consider the second series of summons –and their corresponding answer- which are also fully religious pre-closing statements usually requiring an answer. We take the following examples depending on context :

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[1]) Actually, the two kinds of answer studied here correspond to the two main views in Islam about <u>maktuub</u> –what is "written", or Destiny- : a passive view and an active one, where the former seems to prevail in the mind of the people.

	1. <u>rabbi ikuw∂n ∂lxiir</u>	: "Let God bring good"
Summons :	2. <u>rabbi i∆bha f∂sswaab</u>	: "Let God make it right"
	3. <u>rabbi jost∂r</u>	: "Let God protect it"
	4. <u>rabbi iwaffaq</u>	: "Let God agree –with it-"

Answer :   - <u>in ∫a?a ∂llah</u> or <u>?amiin</u> : "if God wills" or "Amen"

As opposed to the first series, such expressions are mainly oriented towards the future with the hope that a given wish –the hearer's or someone else's, depending on context- becomes true. Such expression being less emotional and less conflictual, and meant for the Good of everybody- especially when they are context –free or within a wider or vague context, cf. below-, the hearer is likely to agree immediately and answer ritualistically, by using one of the two possible answers, which are similar is meaning. Silence here as a second–ary- alternative is highly improbable. It would stand for lack of faith, which is, as explained earlier, something nobody is expected to confess publicly.

Such expressions are also different in form : they can stand alone without context, as potential pre-closing statements used just to signify the speaker's suggestion or intention for ending the conversation, whatever the topic in question. The hearer is strongly expected to answer and provide the second part of the adjacency pair.

The second part of the adjacency pair, i.e. <u>in ∫a?a ∂ll∂h</u> : "if God wills" or <u>?amiin</u> : "Amen" can take a longer form if

optional elements are added, like :

<div style="text-align:center">

- <u>jaa rab-i-</u>   :   "Oh! –my- God",

</div>

or :   - <u>jaa rab ∂l ʕaalamiin</u> : "Oh! God of the two worlds".

The consequence in content or meaning is as follows : the longer the answer, the more solemn the moment, and the longer the pause respectful to God should be. But what remains difficult to know about and predict is the following : which form of the answer –shorter or longer, or even silence- will be selected ? How long the pause is going to be ? Who is to "interrupt" the pause first ? What form the next stage in conversation is going to have – leave-taking- ? conversation maintaining ?- Again, context is inevitable, though so hard to define with accuracy.

In conclusion, and from the study of all the above examples belonging to the first and second series of pre-closing statements, we notice again that speakers, though under the constraints of rules of behaviour, often have choices between one alternative and an other, between a "major" and a "minor" rule ([1]) ; they may –want to- hide their attitudes, hesitate ; they may –decide to- be indeterminate or ambiguous ; they may postpone their decision as to which

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[1]) For example, a conversant may consider as a priority not politeness anymore but to re-establish his self-esteem by continuing to argue, and hence refuse to respect the necessary silence and put an end to the conversation. Lakoff -1973:297- is considering the opposite situation where being polite is more important –than being clear and truthful-.

attitude to adopt, and so on.

Such complexities exist within standard or congruent situations where participants are fully cooperative –cf. Grice's Cooperative Principle-. The situation is even more complex when interlocutors do not fulfil Grice's maxims, violate them, flout –or exploit- them, opt out of them, or are faced with a clash between two maxims. We have noticed in the preceding chapter about conversation maintaining that speakers show even more personal verbal skill and strategy. We have seen they can "transform" conversation ending into conversation maintaining.

What has been described so far is some important verbal forms preceding leave-taking. But since we are dealing with a Mediterranean speech-community –and as explained int the General Introduction-, human communication is also going to be achieved non-verbally. A suggested area of study would be to compare and see how the two forms –the verbal and the non-verbal one- coexist, complete and reinforce one another. For the time being, we limit ourselves to a mere description of some important non-verbal forms of the pre-closing stage of conversation which would be characteristic of the culture in question.

V.2.3. The verbal and non verbal forms interacting

To understand –and partly predict- somebody's behaviour in everyday-life standard situations as in conversation ending, we need to know first the determining cultural values

and the rules of behaviour people believe in and put daily into practice. Within people's ideology, and as far as leave-taking is concerned, ending up a conversation and leaving one another is perceived somehow as a guilt. That is why interlocutors in general, and the leave taker in particular, feel the need to repair the "damage", for example by apologizing for leaving, or/and by "finding" an excuse for leaving, or/and by promising to see the recipient soon. This guilt feeling is also a deep motivation for the ceremonial aspect of leave-taking as a whole, whose very beginning is a pre-closing stage to make the whole process longer, smoother and less perceptible, and hence apparently more "free of error".

The pre-closing stage of conversation is usually achieved gradually from both a linguistic or para-linguistic point of view, and from a non-verbal one, which develop in parallel and interact upon one another. When they are cooperative, interactants are going to become less and less talkative and hence leave more and longer pauses between turns at talk, until a pause is so long –four or five seconds- that it can be assimilated to silence by any interlocutor, usually by the one who is –more- eager to leave.

If shorter pauses can be repaired by new turns at talk –this is conversation maintaining-, prolonged pauses, i.e. silence, are strategically created to be repaired by leave-taking, which is a minor "social error" than silence in the mind of the individual and in the culture of the people. Longer pauses are conversational signals for ending the

conversation. The final and longer one, i.e. silence, stands for a tacit agreement among the interactants to end up the conversation, and hence proceed to the leave-taking proper with the appropriate summons and answer. This is apparently the leaver's strategy and his evaluation of cultural values and of rules of behaviour as they may coexist peacefully or conflictually.

As often happens in unstable or conflictual speech-communities, interactants may become uncooperative. In the case of leave-taking, and for some reasons ([1]), a participant may resist the leaver's will to end up the conversation. Among the means for achieving such a goal is, as explained above, the avoidance of prolonged pauses, i.e. of silence ([2]).The whole situation then would become non-standard, awkward, incongruent. To remove tension and conflict, the leaver still has the possibility of using another politeness device ([3]) : that of postponing leave-taking for a while by suggesting, when in the street, to walk a few paces together into his interlocutor's direction. This "positive face" device should make it easier for the leaver to end up the conversation : he can now justify his departure by having to walk back the same distance alone. This need for justification is another evidence for the existence of a guilt aspect in leave-taking in the psychology

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[1]) An example is provided in the following pages.
[2]) The voluble character of the people usually makes such a goal easy to achieve.
[3]) The first politeness device was to –let the interactant- make the pre-closing stage longer.

and the culture of the people.

Such situations apply more to men meeting in the street. They are to be compared with women meeting typically in a home and "trying very hard to leave the host's place –cf. the preceding chapter-. There too, the extra collective walk from the room to the front door, and then from the front door to the guest's car for example, followed by the host's walk back home, can be a solution to the "problem" of leave-taking.

Such processes as conversation opening, maintaining and closing are usually more elaborate, longer and more complex with women than with men because women are naturally more talkative and more "complex" ([1]) than men. As an example, the strategic extra walk described above is more commonplace with women than with men, whether in a home or in the street. Men usually make it possible for leaving to occur earlier, though often with the help of other non-verbal features which are used for the same purpose : to make leave-taking smoother, gradual, and hence less guiltful, so that it becomes more acceptable socially and culturally.

The following non-verbal forms of pre-leave-taking will be essentially limited to kinesic and proxemic features which similarly are going to show a gradual aspect and become

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[1]) It is a widely shared belief –and a fact- that the world of women is a more complex one. Such a connotative complexity traces back to the religious belief about the origin of Eve –from Adam's curved rib- and is reflected for example in their social-linguistic behaviour as described throughout the present work.

more and more insistent as pre-signals for end of conversation. The kinesic features will mainly concern the visual activity. It has already been pointed out in the first chapter that the Arabs in general have the habit of looking straight into each other's eyes when conversing. Here, in conversation pre-ending, the gaze into the interlocutor's eye, which was fairly steady from the very beginning of the conversation, is going first to decrease in intensity and alternate more and more with gazes in other directions. The latter gradually become more and more important in frequency and in duration.

That was a standard situation of cooperativeness in pre-leave-taking though at the initiative of one or another of the interactants. It is just a suggestion, an invitation for agreeing on leaving. The other conversant-s- are all going to apply more and more the non-verbal features described above and contribute to the non-guilty aspect of leave-taking.

Another type of situations as hinted at earlier is when interactants become uncooperative and deny the pre-end of conversation. We have already mentioned a means for reaching such a goal, which is the avoidance of prolonged pauses, i.e. of silence, by taking new and prolonged turns at talk, or by summoning the recipient repetitively. Now we consider a typical motive for being uncooperative and refuse or delay the pre-end of conversation.

A conversant may openly resist the leave-taking norms

because on the one hand he has got a personal goal to achieve before leaving, and on the other hand he has difficulties in fulfilling this task : more concretely, he has got a point to make, but a psychological barrier (^{1}) goes counter to his will. In such situations, the point to be talked about is usually a sensitive one as for example complaining about the behaviour of the interlocutor's children, or borrowing some money from him ; while the psychological hindrance is due to the sensitiveness of the topic (^{2}) on the one hand, an also to the role-relationship to the status of the interlocutor who usually is someone held in a higher esteem as relatives or neighbours. The consequence is going to be hesitation and lengthening of the pre-end of conversation, whose outcome will be the speaker's ability –or failure- to achieve his aim, depending on one's own character and verbal skill, but also on the degree of cooperativeness of the interlocutor. In case of much difficulty, the latter may either put an end to the conversation, or allow the summoner to lengthen it for some more time : the latter case would be a kind of passive cooperativeness. He may even contribute to make the pre-leave-taking longer : that would be a kind of active

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^{1}) This psychological barrier is embodied by the specific cultural concept of ∂l ħaʃma, a kind of adult "shyness" due to respect of social-cultural values rather than inherent to one's character. The latter case is rather specific to children.

^{2}) It is usually a small point, not really a new topic for conversation – which would have implied it is a case for conversation maintaining…

cooperativeness or accommodation (¹). His cooperation can become even more active (²) if he "discovers" that his interlocutor is undergoing a communication problem and ultimately –and repeatedly- invites him to disclose the "difficult message".

During this gradual and complex communicative process, one interlocutor is encouraging the other to deliver the message in his possession, while the latter is –pretending to be- reluctant to transmit it. Upon renewed insistence, he is going to ration the flow of information and reveal it in small doses, requiring further insistence and questioning (³). Such situations are to be compared to those described by Besnier –1989 and 1994-. Their verbal ritual takes approximately the following shortened and simplified form :

S :	weʃ kaan	:	"What is the matter ?"
A :	walu	:	"Nothing".
S :	keina ḥaaẓa	:	"There is something".
A :	xalli bark	:	"Forget about it".
S :	gul bark	:	"Say it, no matter…"

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[1]) According to "Accommodation Theory" –Giles 1994-, we tend to "accommodate" our speech to the speech of the people we are talking to, in the hope that they will like us more for doing so. It is a way of reducing social distance, i.e. a strategy for protecting solidarity-face.

[2]) Depending on individuals, situations and cultures, the question is not always whether an interactant is cooperative or not, but rather how much one is cooperative, or what kind of cooperation does he offer.

[3]) We can see here the power of information as a commodity and how it can move its holder from a lower to a higher status.

A : <u>au ∂¶a…</u>   :   "It is about…".

S : …………………………

A : …………………………

The verbal exchange, usually in the form of adjacency pairs, is going to become more and more explicit and detailed as far as revealing information is concerned.

Together with the visual activity, other kinesic features including face and body ([1]) are also used to signify a potential end of conversation. If the situation is totally cooperative, the farewell intention is indicated by either of the interactants with the body only shifting away and away from the interlocutor's direction as the intention to leave becomes more insistent ; but the face –and the eyes- cannot follow such a move since it would be an offending position.

If one of the conversants is somehow reluctant to leave –implying then that there is a lesser degree of cooperativeness-, his body –and obviously his face- remain in the same direction facing the leaver. That would be interpreted as a conversation maintaining signal which would at least slow down the leave-taking process by influencing its initiator. The latter usually cooperates either by slowing down the turning of his body or even by readjusting it to face again to some degree his interlocutor. It is a flow and shift of body position

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[1]) The phonetician David Abercrombie claimed that "we speak with our vocal organs, but we converse with our entire bodies" –Abercrombie 1968-.

and direction between people as they are interacting.

The proxemic features ([1]) are going to develop in parallel with the kinesic ones. When the communication is cooperative, the distance, which is usually very short, a matter of centimetres in the Arabic culture –cf. Watson and Graves, 1966-, becomes longer and longer until the leave-taking forms are produced at the initiative of either of the participants. But when there is less cooperativeness, the distance is going to extend and to shrink alternatively ([2]) as the one reluctant to leave advances and the one eager to leave retracts. The latter will be in a physically –and psychologically- uncomfortable position since he is obliged to walk backwards –to signify his intention to leave- and at the same time keep contact with his interlocutor by facing him –in order to avoid offending him-.

Achieving such a goal is obviously a difficult task since the leaver is in fact attempting to fulfil two apparently contrasting objectives and applying two diverging rule of behaviour : one about leaving, and the other about face-saving. Underlying the leaver's complex type of behaviour is, as stated earlier, the ideological consideration of leave-taking as a necessary "evil".

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[1]) cf. the subject-matter of proxemics, Pocheptsov 1994.
[2]) As we saw in the first chapter, "the flow and shift of distance between people as they interact with each other is part and parcel of the communicative process" –Hall, 1959:180-.

We can now summarise and say that what is underlying leave-taking is the cultural belief that it is somehow guiltful. That is why a whole ritual can be set up to make this feeling less perceptible and the whole situation less uncomfortable. We have mentioned some of the means or strategies for achieving such a goal. We have also noticed that Grice's cooperative principle applies best to ideal exchanges –cf. Grice, 1975:45-, while in many social encounters –and in unstable societies in particular-, cooperativeness becomes a matter of degree and of individual decision. The latter will depend on many individual and social-cultural parameters as status, attitude, strategy, role-relationship, evaluation of the whole situation and interpretation of the social-cultural rules.

In case of leave-taking, someone may decide or not to show his intention to leave, an his interlocutor may or may not comply with it and act accordingly. This is the kind of dilemma or conflict which may take place in a conversant's mind, in a speech-situation and in the whole cultural system of a given speech-community, especially a conflict-oriented one. To understand –and predict- somebody's linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour, we need to know about him, but also about the society and the culture he belongs to. We are not referring here to the "material culture" of some anthropologists –the artefacts of the community, such as its pottery, its vehicles, or its clothing-, but to culture as a socially acquired knowledge :

> *As I see it, a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members… Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end-product of learning : knowledge, in a most general… sense of the term. -Goodenough 1957-.*

More concretely, culture refers to the structured set of historically derived explicit and implicit norms, values, attitudes, feelings and ideas that are shared and transmitted by the members of a society.

GENERAL

CONCLUSION

In the conclusion, we shall first explain the interest and usefulness of the present thesis in the field of research ; then, we shall summarise it and specify its purposes ; finally, we shall mention the difficulties in the writing of such theses, mainly the problem of the graphic representation of the supporting data examples all through the thesis and in the following appendix.

The present thesis is an attempt to study how Algerians in general begin, maintain and close a conversation in Algerian Arabic. Such a study appears to be both interesting and difficult because as a second aim it attempts to describe a culture which is both multiple –even conflictual at times- and in the process of a rapid change. The interest is that the examples of speech situations and of conversational interchanges we have described all through the thesis, as well as the ones contained in the following appendix, might not exist in exactly the same way in the very near future. They correspond to a very specific period of the history of Algeria –i.e. the 1990's- Known for its linguistic, social, ethnic, religious, cultural and ideological conflicts within the Algerian speech community –cf. the General Introduction-.

The study or description of such a community is interesting in itself –synchronically- but also in comparison with future states and future descriptions of the "same" community. Such contrastive studies could also involve a comparison with similar theses originating from other cities or regions of Algeria, as well as with the "similar" speech

communities of the neighbouring countries –Morocco and Tunisia-. Finally, contrastive studies could also be extended to the remaining countries of the Arabic –and Islamic- world. This is our suggestion about the interest and the usefulness of the present thesis, which is a perspective for its use in the field of academic research in the near future. By offering a number of suggestions for future research, the hope is to stimulate others to expand the range of inquiry, and in particular, to focus more sharply on conversational analysis as a mode to investigate new and fluctuating norms of language use in a changing cultural community.

In the second point of the conclusion, which is about summary and purposes of the present research work, we stress again that a major objective all through the thesis was to show that structure exists not just with language as an abstract system of rules –including phonology, semantics and mainly syntax-, but also with language as a system of human communication, where the speaking rules can be fairy stable –when they represent the agreed upon social values and norms of behaviour-, or changing –when they correspond to changing social values and norms of behaviour, especially in unstable or conflictual speech-communities-; and also when such rules correspond to the peculiarities of individual attitude and strategy, to the personal verbal skill of a given speaker-hearer in a given context.

In fact, and with special reference to Algeria, both speech-community and somebody's social identity in an encounter,

are often potentially multidimensional. As explained in the General Introduction, and particularly in Algeria, the community's and the individual's identities are constantly changing and fluctuating from a prevailing cultural factor –race, language, region, religion or ideology- to another. It follows that the rules of behaviour themselves may become indeterminate and even happen to clash. What is changing rapidly is not only the speech-community and its members –attitudes, norms, values-, but also –and consequently- the ways language-s- is –are- used for communication ([1]) in social contexts. The subject is both new and multidimensional, and hence interesting though difficult.

The search for system and structure at the discourse level is still evolving. Language use, and more particularly conversation opening, maintaining and closing, are just examples of areas of study where such social, cultural and ideological conflicts may occur. Such conflicts will exist in cross-cultural communication, but also in unstable speech-communities as Algeria by the end of the twentieth century.

Despite the apparent social and individual chaos in Algeria –cf. the kind of "civil war" of the 1990's and the search for one's identity in the General Introduction-, the goal of any inquiry remains the finding of the norm and the explanation of order within diversity. This is what we have attempted to

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[1]) Communication is here defined as an interlocking social, cognitive and linguistic enterprise.

do all through the present thesis. Such norms, order and systems as possible underlying representations of discourse can be summarised in a quotation from the translation of Italo Calvino's "Invisible Cities" –1974- :

> I have also thought of a model city from which I deduce all the others", Marco Polo answered. "It is a city made only of exceptions, exclusions, incongruities, contradictions. If such a city is the most improbable, by reducing the number of abnormal elements, we increase the probability that the city really exists.

In the third and final point of the conclusion, which is about difficulties in the writing of such theses, it should be pointed out that a major difficulty in the description of discourse is its graphic representation or transcription. The latter is necessarily limited to selected aspects of speaking and of one or more persons' behaviour and setting related with speaking. Thus, transcription should be distinguished from full description of some aspect of behaviour. For example, laughter might be transcribed as "ha ha ha" or as "laugh". But in the latter case, the notions of sequence and numbering included in "ha ha ha" are eliminated.

Transcripts today are limited to the verbal component, often excluding prosodic, paralinguistic and extralinguistic features. Very often, the intonation pattern of the speaker, the tempo and other characteristics of the spoken message are not indicated.

Linguists have a long tradition of interest in transcription : "The choice of symbols to represent speech sounds has been

a matter of debate for centuries" –Roach, 1992 : 200-. In the 1970's, however , there was a new interest among a group of sociologists –Sacks, Schgloff, Jefferson and Garfinkel- who concerned themselves with Conversation Analysis and have come to be known as ethnomethodologists. Their effort was to make transcripts of conversations as inclusive and detailed as possible.

Spoken discourse always involves an audible sequence of sounds which is encoded, among other means, by phonetic transcription. The representation may be either "broad" –minimal- or narrow –comprehensive-. The disadvantages of phonetic transcription are that special training is needed both to transcribe and to read the notations of the International Phonetic Alphabet –IPA-. Kelly & Local –1988:198- have pointed out another disadvantage of IPA : "It is not well suited to work on the systematics of conversation", because it does not provide enough phonetic detail.

Some basic principles for scientific use of transcription have been put forward as scientific hypotheses to be further tested, as Parsimony, Conventionality, Lexical integrity, Objectivity, One-to-one correspondence, Separation –cf. O'Connell & Kowal, 1994a:102ff-. For example, Separation refers to descriptions, explanations, commentaries, and interpretations which should be clearly distinguished from the transcription or phonological Features of spoken discourse.

The transcription system of Sacks et al., known as the Jeffersonian system, is well known within the ethnomethodological tradition. Zimmerman & West –1975:128- have emphasized this practical approach :

> *The transcript techniques and symbols were devised*
> *by G. Jefferson in the course of research undertaken*
> *with H. Sacks. Techniques are revised, symbols*
> *added or dropped as they seem useful to the work.*
> *There is no guarantee or suggestion that the symbols*
> *or transcripts alone would permit the doing of any*
> *unspecified research task ; they are properly used as*
> *an adjunct to the tape recorded materials.*

As the last sentence of the quotation indicates, researchers in the Jeffersonian tradition also emphasize the fact that transcripts are not the primary data but a derivative data base. For example, Button & Lee –1987:9- remind us :

> *Nor should it be thought that transcripts are the data*
> *of conversation analysis as such. The data is*
> *naturally occurring conversation as a feature of social*
> *life, and the use of tape –recordings and transcripts is*
> *a practical strategy for apprehending it, and making it*
> *available for extended analysis.*

The Jeffersonian system of transcription is going to be used in the following appendix, as it often appears in appendices of research publications.

Another difficulty in the writing of the present thesis was the problem of describing a culture in the process of change (1962-2000), which is the second aim of this research work. But since culture is changing, social norms and rules of behaviour are also changing and happen then to conflict and to compete, with individual speakers using their own personal strategies to impose their own norms and rules in accordance with their own views about the society project of Algeria –this was the primary aim of the thesis-. Our hope is that such aims have been –partly- achieved, and that a compromise will soon be reached among individuals, so that Algeria regains social stability… and peace.

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APPENDICES

To describe conversation as a system of communication, we are required to collect and transcribe natural conversational data, i.e. language produced by users in ordinary, everyday ways, though some communication specialists are working from videotaped data because non-verbal information such as eye gaze, body orientation, hand movements, and head tilt may serve as communication signals.

What follows is a written representation of some conversational exchanges. They have been selected as most representative of the structure of conversation in Algerian Arabic – conversation opening, maintaining and closing-, of the organisation and division of the community into clearly distinct social groups –the gender distinction in particular-, of the underlying cultural and ideological systems –fluctuating values and norms, the religious ones in particular, of social behaviour-, and of personal strategy –psychological and individual variation- affecting people's behaviour and interaction.

On the other hand, it should be worth noting again that the data extracts cited all through the thesis –including the following ones- have been selected as representative of large collections of data taken out of a substantial number of conversations.

The modal for transcription adopted here is borrowed, with minor modifications, from the one used by Sacks et al. –1974-. But since the verbal exchanges are in Arabic, their pronunciation is represented by IPA symbols, followed by a corresponding translation in English. On the other hand, the conventions used in transcripts are limited to the following :

The double oblique (//) indicates the point at which a current

speaker's talk is overlapped by the talk of another.

In front of two serially transcribed utterances, the double oblique indicates that they start simultaneously.

The equals sign (=) indicates "latching" –i.e. no interval between the end of a prior and start of a next piece of talk.

Colon(s) indicate that the prior syllable is prolonged. Multiple colons indicate a more prolonged syllable.

A double underscoring indicates various forms of stressing.

Numbers in parentheses indicate elapsed time in tenths of seconds. The device is used here between utterances for adjacent speakers.

Finally, the speakers are labelled using the letter H or G to indicate their status as Host or Guest.

APPENDIX 1 : Males Host /Guest Conversation opening

G :   ∂ssalaa:mu ʕaleikum   : "Peace with you".

H :   ʕaleikum ∂ssalaam wa // raħmatu ∂llah :

"Peace   with   you   and   //   God's

blessing"

G :   weʃ rakum ?   : "How are you" ?

H :   weʃ ħalkum ? la // baas ? : "How are you ? it's //alright ?

G :   bxiir.   : "It's alright"

H :

     // ∂lħamdu lillah   : "Thanks God".

G :

H :   ma ∂tnaħħiʃ s∂bbat∂k, ?au ∂lb∂rd= :

"Don't take off your shoes, it's cold."

G :   ma ʕliih∂ʃ   : "It doesn't matter".

H : = ljuum b∂rd ∂kbii:r =   : "It's very cold today."

G : = b∂ssaħ ∂nnu makaan∂ʃ   : "But there is no rain."

H :   haada ∂ʃʃi nta ʕ rabbi... : "This is God's business."

We notice here that a transition has been made towards an appropriate topic for conversation after everybody has been seated. In some situations, the first topic was about weather conditions - embodied by the terms ∂l b∂rd : "the cold", and ∂nnu : "the rain"-, while in some other situations, the conversation was first about God's Destiny and Justice – embodied by the expression ∂ʃʃi nta ʕrabbi... "God's business.".

APPENDIX 2 : Females Host /Guest Conversation opening

G : msa ∂lxii:r ʕliikum   : "Good afternoon"

H . msa ∂lxiir   : "Good afternoon"

G : weʃ rɑkum ? weʃ //ħalkum ?   : "How are you" ? How is//
                                      everything ?

H : la baas. wa ∂ntija bxiir ?   : "Alright. How about you ?"

G : la baas. ∂lhamdu//lillaah.   : "Alright. Thanks//God."

H :   ∂lhamdu lillaah=   : " Thanks God."

H : = ʒuzi ʕandna, marhba biik   : "Do come in, welcome to you."

G : ?iʕeiʃ∂k, ?ibaar∂k fiik   : "May God keep you alive
                                      and bring you prosperity."

Once seated, conversation opening resumed with the same kind of politeness ritual as follows :

H : weʃ rɑkum bukkul ?   : "How is everyone ?"

G . weʃ rahum lulaad ?   : "How are the children ?"

H : bxiir, wa ∂ntuma la baas ?   : "Alright, how about you ?"

G : bxiir, ∂lhamdu//lillaah.   : "Alright, thanks//God."

H : ∂lhamdu lillaah.   : "Thanks//God."
        (0.7)

G : ∂ʃkun ∂lli bqɑ bxiir fi ∂dd∂nja haadi ?   : "Who is still alright in
                                                  today's life ?"

H : ʁeir ∂lmij∂t fi qɑbru   : "Only the dead in the grave".

G : ja hasrɑ ʕla ∂dd∂nja…   : "Those were the good old

days…"

Once again, conversation opening ended with a transition towards an appropriate topic for conversation. In some situations, the first topic was a criticism of modern times as opposed to the

good old days, while in some other situations, the conversation was similarly about the dead having a better life than the living.

APPENDIX 3 : Males Host /Guest Conversation closing

G :   <u>hadak hua nrɔɔh</u>   : " I must go now."

H :   <u>mazaal//∂lhaal</u>   : "Itisn't late yet."

G :   <u>hadak hua waqt</u>   : "It's time."

H :   <u>ziid ∂ʃwija</u>   : "Stay a little bit more.

G :   <u>ham mazaalu lijaam</u>   :   "There   will   be   other opportunities".

H :   <u>waʃ z∂rb∂k</u> ?   : "Why are you in a hurry ?"

G :   <u>raħ ∂lhaal, waqt</u>=   : "It's getting late, it's time."

     =<u>ngul lkum filamaan</u>   : "I say good bye to you."

H :   <u>?a m∂n ʕaaʃ</u>   : "See you".

G :   <u>∂ssalaamu ʕaleikum</u>   : "Peace with you".

H :   <u>ʕaleikum ∂ssalaa:m</u>   : "Peace with you".

    It is noticeable that the first greeting-<u>filamaan</u> : "Go in God's safety", which is a traditional form of leave-taking, was produced by the guest while standing up in the same room, and the second one -<u>∂ssalaam</u> : "Peace"-, which is the purely Islamic formal greeting, was produced by the front door step just before actually leaving.

APPENDIX 4 : Females Host /Guest Conversation closing

G :   ∂s∂mħuli ∂nrɔɔh   : "Allow me to leave."

H :   wallah tguˤdi   : "For God's sake, do stay."

G :   maˤraf g∂ddaah f∂ssaaˤa=   : "I wonder what time it is."

H :   =mazaa:l ∂lhaal=   : "It isn't late."

H :   =ma ∂ʃbaˤnaʃ ∂lgaˤda   "It is such an enjoyable gathering…"

G :   ?i ˤajʃ∂k, b∂ssaħ lulaad w∂hhadhum: "Thanks, but the children
                                                are alone."

H :   mmˤaahum rabbi   : "God is with them."

H ://

G : //sɔbhaanu   : "Praise be to Him."

H :   ?am k∂bru ∂llaah//ibaar∂k   : "They must have grown
up,
                                         may God protect them."

G :   ∂llaah ibaar∂k   : "May God protect them."

G :   kif ik∂bru j∂kb∂r hamhum…   : "When they grow older, their
                                           problems become bigger."

H :   rabbi iˤaj∂ʃ //hum   : "May God keep them//alive."

G :   ?u j∂slaħhum, ?asl∂h w∂lla ? ∂ddi   : "And take them to the
                                         right path, or take them away.

   This ostensible attempt to leave is usually repeated several times with the same basic forms and expressions, and is every time ritualistically declined by the host. The difference is that such attempts

become gradually shorter and less insistent. At the end of every attempt, conversation resumes with a new topic, which in most situations had to do either with religion per se –God's Destiny-, or with children –their positive and negative aspects in Islam and society-.

Finally, it should be noted that serious intention –and attempt- to leave was mainly signified non-verbally by the guest's standing up a first time ; the average is that both parties agree implicitly that conversation has come to an end when a second standing up is performed by the guest –cf. males conversation closing, appendix 3-. Another difference from men's behaviour is that the conversation resuming process, with or without change of topic, is carried out while walking out, and may take quite a few minutes.

APPENDIX 5 : Males Host /Guest Conversation maintening

Following an apparently purposeful deep oral (¹) breathing out, an interlocutor, most of the time the host (²) himself, produces loudly enough the corresponding expressions :

H :   <u>∂staʁfiru ∂llaah</u>   . "I ask for Allah's mercy."

<u>waʃhadu ∂n laa ilaaha illa ∂llaah</u> : "And I declare there is no
God but Allah."

<u>waʃhadu ∂nnna muħamm∂d rasuul ∂llaah</u> : "And that Mohammed
is His messenger."

This is usually considered as an indirect summons, an attempt to resume the conversation by testing the availability and cooperativeness of the audience. Conversation resuming has continued the following way :

G :   <u>xjaar ∂lquul</u>   : "The best thing one can say."

H :   <u>xjaar ∂lquul//laa ilaaha illa ∂llaah</u>   : "The best one can say is
there's no God but Allah."

G :   <u>laa ilaaha illa ∂llaah</u>   : "There is no God but Allah."

G :   <u>g∂d ma nahmduuh ʔu n⊃ʃkr⊃h qliil</u>= :"We can never praise and
thank Him enough."

H :   =na<u>ˤm∂t rabbi waa:sˤa</u>   : "Allah's prosperity is very large."

G :   <u>g∂d m∂n ∂sma llard</u>=   : "As big as the distance between

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¹) Oral, implying louder, is more likely to attract the audience's attention and prepare for a probable resuming of the conversation.

²) The host is usually more responsible for the success –to keep the conversation going- or failure –silences within a conversation- of a verbal encounter.

the sky and the earth."

G : <u>laka, ma3aat∂ʃ rahm∂t rabbi</u>…: "If there was no God's mercy…"

H : <u>ʃuf nnaas kifaʃ ʕaiʃa</u>…   : "Look how people are living…"

H : <u>ma bqa laa xu wa laa 3aar</u>   : "There's no brother and no
                                                          neighbour anymore."

G : jalatif ʕla ∂lwaqt haada   : "God save us from the present
                                                          times."

     The topic which has followed had to do with social life problems in relation with the non application of religious rules of behaviour.

APPENDIX 6 : Females Host /Guest Conversation maintaining

H :   <u>maʕraf ʕaasǝr walla//mazaal</u>   : "I wonder if it is the

afternoon prayer time."

G :   <u>ma ǝsmaʕnaaʃ ladaan</u>   : "We haven't heard the muezzin."

H :   <u>luqaat ʕadu wra baʕdahum</u> : "Prayer times have become

very close."

G :   <u>hih, ǝnhaar ǝqsaar</u>   : "Yes, the days have become shorter."

G :   <u>makaanǝʃ gǝd ǝsslaat fi waqtha</u> : "There's nothing better than

praying in the right time."

H :   <u>ǝlli isibha//ma jguulǝʃ laala</u>   : "If one can afford it."

G :   ǝllah ʁalǝb, ǝllah jǝssǝmhǝnna : "Unfortunately, may Allah

forgive us."

H :   <u>ǝlhajaat wǝllaat fǝtna kbii:ra=</u> : "Life has become very hard to

live.

H :   <u>=rabbi iqaddǝrna</u>   : "May Allah give us the capacity."

The topic which has followed had to do with man's weaknesses in everyday life, which only Allah can correct and forgive.