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Language Ideologies in Morocco

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Language Ideologies in Morocco

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Honors Thesis

Anthropology Department

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This thesis is dedicated
to the late Professor John Burton,
who opened my eyes to anthropology.

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Abstract

The process of decolonization in Morocco has created new spaces for displaying national identity, most notably through the development of official policies regarding the acquisition, promotion, and performance of language in the public sphere. The flow of languages into the Moroccan linguistic mosaic has facilitated the transmission of beliefs *about* language as well. These beliefs are far from neutral, for each language possesses symbolic capital that grants access to explicitly demarcated domains of power. In this thesis, I examine the construction of national power that resides in discourses on multilingualism in Morocco. In the process, I uncover the sources of competing language ideologies through which beliefs about national identity are negotiated. I show that the project of establishing and maintaining power depends largely on the control of language reproduction. By focusing on forms of familial, ethnic, national, and religious power embedded in Morocco's languages, I locate the sites in which language ideologies are enacted and reveal the consequences of internalized linguistic imperialism.

1. Introduction

“The colonized’s mother tongue, that which is sustained by his feelings, emotions, and dreams, that in which his tenderness and wonder are expressed, thus that which holds the greatest emotional impact, is precisely the one which is the least valued. It has no stature in the country or in the concert of peoples. If he wants to obtain a job, make a place for himself, exist in the community and the world, he must first bow to the language of his masters.”¹

A central component of the colonial project rests upon the necessary subjugation of the colonized’s language. Power relations are performed and reinforced through the domination of the colonizer’s language in public spheres that control important resources. The establishment of a hierarchical language system secures the concentration of cultural, economic, and political capital among the foreign elite. Consequently, many nationalist independence movements in the 20th century have placed language rights high on their lists of grievances. Legitimate claims to nationhood are mediated through discourses calling for the recognition of a people’s language. For many new nation-states, this battle is still raging. The removal of colonial governments has not removed the colonizer’s influences on local languages.

In the former French protectorate of Morocco, many cultural rights were violated. Perhaps most significant was the open discrimination against Morocco’s native languages: multiple varieties of Arabic and Berber. French was made the official language of the public sphere, establishing its power in administration, education, and the government. Today, French is no longer the “official language” of Morocco, but it remains a language of power and social mobility. In the fast-flowing mixtures of Moroccan Arabic, French, and one or more variety of Berber that can find their way into a conversation on any street in Morocco, one can hear that

¹ Memmi, Albert. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.

these codes communicate more than the words they contain – they convey social status, power, and oppression.

In the first few years after Morocco declared independence in 1956, a policy known as “Arabization” was adopted to completely eradicate the presence of the French language in Morocco. Modern Standard Arabic, a pluricentric written standard used in all Arab League countries, replaced French in the government and in public administration, as well as in schools. Within a few years, however, Moroccans began to feel as though “French had been stolen from them.”² The absence of French cut them off from the rest of the Francophone world – and from job opportunities. After much political campaigning by anti-Arabization groups, French was reintroduced into certain domains of the public sphere, and today competes with Modern Standard Arabic in “official” discourses and with Moroccan Arabic in “familiar” discourses. Many Moroccans, however, take issue with the resurgence of French.

Meanwhile, the three major strands of Berber, Tamazight, Tashelhit, and Tarifit, which are spoken by over half of the Moroccan population, were not recognized by the government at all until 2011, when King Hassan II declared Tamazight an official language of Morocco after Arabic. This was done in an effort to appease growing tensions during the political upheaval of the Arab Spring. Recognize the language, many said, and you recognize the people who speak it. The problem with this move, however, is that the everyday understanding of what a language *is* significantly affects how its speakers are treated. In the case of Tamazight, the King’s establishment of the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture has only perpetuated the discrimination it seeks to dissolve by attempting to standardize the Tamazight language (by extension,

² Dominique Benbrahim, personal communication.

excluding certain regional varieties) and by codifying a written alphabet for this largely oral language. Moroccan Berbers have long felt oppressed by their Arab conquerors, and this frustration becomes apparent in Morocco's changing language policies.

The primary question that arises from all of this is: What is a language good for? How does language policy control power, opportunity, and social hierarchy? How does the lingering presence of the language of the colonizer affect Moroccans' perception of their own languages and, by extension, of themselves? How do Moroccans use each language differently, and how do they develop different value judgments of each one?

In this thesis, I assess the relationships between sociopolitically dominant and subdominant languages in the post-colonial context of Morocco. I examine the ways in which language diversity is dealt with by the post-independence government, focusing specifically on the interplay between multilingualism and national identity and how each language is valued differently. My aim is to reveal the social agents that control the reproduction of language ideologies and perpetuate linguistic hierarchies in Morocco in order to better understand how Moroccans navigate this multilingual landscape.

I explore these questions by examining diverse areas including: sociolinguistic theory; French colonial history; the psychological impacts of multilingualism; first- and second-language acquisition; educational reforms and structures of higher education; the role of Islam; the impact of foreign cinema, music, and television; current trends in Moroccan literature; Arabization politics; and the challenges of standardizing Morocco's oral languages as faced by the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture.

As for methodology, I rely on both scholarly research and independent fieldwork. Thanks to a generous grant from the Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts, I spent 8 weeks in Rabat and 2 weeks in Tangier in the summer of 2013, where I was fortunate to work in research libraries that contained valuable literature on Moroccan history and culture. I read extensively on linguistic diversity in Morocco and became acquainted with various scholars who specialize in this subject. I also acquired significant direct experience living in the midst of my research, by listening to conversations of different groups of Moroccans every day, and by engaging in some of these conversations. In addition, I conducted twelve interviews with colleagues, friends, and acquaintances, which provided me with a wealth of information concerning language judgments.

In the following chapter, I will locate the cultural roots of language ideologies that form the foundation upon which current language beliefs in Morocco are built. Chapters 3 and 4 examine the problematic assumptions of nation-state monolingualism, as well as the normalized distinction between language and dialect. Chapter 5 traces the political evolution of Morocco's sociolinguistic development. In Chapter 6, I engage in a critical analysis of the ideologies expressed by the twelve informants I interviewed for this research. Lastly, in Chapter 7 I map out several dimensions of Morocco's linguistic landscapes, revealing the sites in which the production and consumption of language ideologies occur.

2. The Role of Language in Nation-Building

“It is important to remember that nations are congealed histories. They are made up of stories that people tell about their past and thereby determine who they are. Histories in turn are based on memories organized into narratives. Whatever actually happened is far less important than how it is remembered.”³

In the words of John Breuilly, a nation must be “as independent as possible,” which requires the establishment of political sovereignty (Breuilly 1985: 3). The alignment of one nation with one state signifies, in our modern imagination, the achievement of completion. Completion, unity, oneness – it is not a coincidence that these seemingly political ideas carry spiritual undertones. As Benedict Anderson outlines, the nation is imagined as *sovereign* because “the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm” (Anderson 1983: 6). It is not that belief in the nation has wholly replaced religiosity, but aligning nationalism with the cultural system out of which it grew will illuminate the nature of the foundation upon which it is built. This is especially critical in the case of Morocco, where a local version of Islam is the unifying religious ideology. In this chapter, I locate the cultural roots of nationhood, focusing specifically on the role of language in nation-building.

Benedict Anderson argues that the origin of nationalist imagination is strongly tied to religion’s capacity to answer questions of death and suffering. Unlike secular institutions and progressive modes of thought that struggle to respond to arbitrary suffering, religion provides an

³ Suny 2001: 864

explanation. It rationalizes the erratic nature of misfortune and fatality, constructing theories of life after death in terms of punishment or reward.

In 18th century Europe, however, the rise of the Enlightenment and rationalist secularism increasingly competed with religious modes of thought. Previously unanswerable questions were rendered obsolete with the growth of scientific knowledge, dispelling imaginative responses to the causes of physical and emotional pain. Explaining the source did not remove the existence of suffering, but it did make mechanisms of comfort disappear:

Disintegration of paradise: nothing makes fatality more arbitrary. Absurdity of salvation: nothing makes another style of continuity more necessary. What was then required was a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning (Anderson 1983: 11).

This transition ushered in the possibility of the concept of a nation, a new form of “imagined community” (Anderson 1983). Unlike religious communities, which could theoretically expand endlessly under the watchful protection of God, nations were conceived as inherently limited and sovereign. These boundaries and hierarchies represented a new orientation, their walls made concrete by language.

Expansive religious communities such as Judaism, Christendom or the Islamic Ummah were imagined and constructed largely around a unifying sacred language and written script. In the case of Islam, the ideographs of Classical Arabic united the Muslim community regardless of the diversity of mutually unintelligible languages spoken by its members. Despite being unable to communicate orally, Muslims relied on a formal, written Arabic to build a community out of visual representations rather than speech signs. Latin served a similar function for the Christians

of Western Europe, as did Hebrew for the Jews. These were all the sacred languages of bilinguals.

Written language, therefore, provided access to the divine and the central beliefs of a religious community that bound it together. This led to a conflation of the holy message with the medium through which it was expressed. It was believed that the “unique sacredness” of these languages played a central role in group membership because a particular language indexed a corresponding imagination of God. Communities were imagined through the idea that the sign is *not* arbitrary. Language and its ideographs were not representations; they *were* reality.

This explains why the Qur’an resisted translation for centuries, because for many Muslims, “Allah’s truth was accessible only through the unsubstitutable true signs of *written* Arabic” (Anderson 1983: 14, emphasis added). The text itself is considered to be a miracle, literally dictated by God, evidenced by the fact that no one is capable of producing anything similar. This has led to the belief that the greatness of the Arabic language “flows from the inimitability of the holy text itself” (Calvet 1998: 21). Furthermore, as the “actual words of God,” Qur’anic Arabic is believed to be “outside the limits of space and time, i.e., to have existed ‘before’ time began with the creation of the world” (Ferguson 1959: 432).

These “classical Truth-languages,” as Anderson calls them – Hebrew, Arabic, Latin – derived their authority from God. Power was arranged in a centripetal, hierarchical order, trickling down from the divine to the powerful literati who transmitted the message of written scripture to the illiterate masses in oral form. The literate “bilingual intelligentsia” was believed to mediate not only between the vernacular and the Truth-language, but also between the earthly

and the divine (Anderson 1983: 15). Literacy at the time collapsed our modern distinction between “reading” and “translating,” for what was valued was not so much repeating what was recorded in text, but rather interpreting the *meaning* of texts for audiences who could not necessarily understand them (Errington 2008: 19).

This dynamic confined direct access to knowledge of the divine to a literate minority. When illiterate emperor Charlemagne called for a restructuring of the relationship between the clergy, the Bible, and the Christian masses, he was in effect attempting to guard “religious truth from the dangers of translation and distortion in any vernacular, ‘rustic’ manner” (Illich and Sanders 1988: 61). As an abstract *langue* protected from and immune to the linguistic evolution of spoken *parole*,⁴ Truth-languages were, like God, removed from earthly affairs and suspended in a state of permanence and infinity.

Such ideas began to lose strength as Renaissance humanists placed more and more faith in Man over God. Meanwhile, Europe’s “discovery” of other civilizations prompted a growing awareness of the existence of an undeniable human pluralism. After Galileo, the earth was no longer the center of the cosmic universe, and Europe was no longer the center of world. This realization significantly altered European assumptions about language. The development of colonial linguistics resulted in a revolutionary realization that great non-European civilizations, such as those of India and Egypt, were in fact far older than those of Europe.

⁴ Referring to Ferdinand de Saussure’s seminal work distinguishing abstract language from concrete speech acts in his *Course in General Linguistics* (1986).

The biblical myth of the Tower of Babel had led European intellectuals on a quest for *the* oldest language, which was assumed to be a “noble language” – that is, Latin, Greek or Hebrew (Calvet 1974: 17). This myth suggests that there was a pre-Babel period when “all the world spoke a single language and used the same words” (Genesis 11: 1-9). During the Renaissance, however, much controversy arose as various European intellectuals sought to prove that *their* language was the pre-Babel language in order to demonstrate the excellence of their own language and the inferiority of others’. Thus, “one of the first ways of dealing with multilingualism was to convert difference into inequality” (Calvet 1998: 20).

In 1549, a Frenchman by the name of Joachim du Bellay published his *Défense et illustration de la langue française*, in which he argued for equality of all languages due to their “single source and origin.” He then elevates “barbarian, vulgar French” to a language of elegance by tracing morphological similarities with Latin and Greek. Most significant in his treatise, however, is the acknowledgement that value cannot be derived exclusively from language, for it is “the sole artifice and industry of men” that certain languages have been “more carefully regulated” to become “richer” than others (Calvet 1998: 44). Excellence, then, comes not from the language alone but from its speakers. It should be noted, however, that du Bellay borrowed much from Sperone Speroni’s earlier treatise defending Italian. Indeed, du Bellay dedicates several chapters to demonstrate the superiority of France over Italy!

Now that contact with non-European peoples revealed that these “noble languages” were not as old as previously thought, linguistic science became a means for scholars to compete and attempt to demonstrate that their languages were the most closely related to the original language or, at the very least, to a noble language (Calvet 1974: 17). In this way, power of the divine was

redistributed among emerging national groups through language. This prompted European intellectuals to think of language less as “a continuity between an outside power and the human speaker,” but rather as “an internal field created and accomplished by language users among themselves” (Said 1978: 136).

As language was no longer thought to derive its value and power from God, it grew to be ‘owned’ by its speakers. For the first time, Truth-languages were “forced to mingle on equal ontological footing with a motley plebian crowd of vernacular rivals” (Anderson 1983: 70). This shifted the prior hierarchical relationship linking people to God through a written language to a horizontal relationship linking people to each other through a spoken vernacular. The growing popularity of humanism spread the idea of “nation-ness” and its link to “private-property-language” just as the “lexicographic revolution” in Europe convinced people that languages were “the personal property of quite specific groups” – their speakers and readers (Anderson 1983: 84). Furthermore, these groups increasingly imagined themselves *as communities*, and grew to feel “entitled to their autonomous place in a fraternity of equals” (ibid.).

As a result, the 18th century experienced an explosion of dictionary-writing, which legitimized vernaculars never before seen in “official” contexts. In passing from speech to written form, vernaculars increased their status by surpassing boundaries of time and space. Text, unlike speech, outlives the act of its creation and can cross great distances in bound form. Normalized, written language transcends time-bound social contexts and reflects the imagined community of nation-ness for it is “capable of functioning outside the constraints and without the assistance of the situation, and is suitable for transmitting and decoding by any sender and receiver, who may know nothing of one another” (Bourdieu 1991: 48). Before the year 1500, an

estimated 77 % of books printed in Western Europe were composed in Latin – because, quite simply, Latin was the only language taught – but 23% were already written in the vernacular (Febvre and Martin 1976: 356). Latin became increasingly replaced by vernaculars as the success of Gutenberg’s movable printing press contributed to a gradual fragmentation, pluralization, and territorialization of language communities (Anderson 1983: 19).

Novels and newspapers played a crucial role in what Anderson calls the “vernacularizing thrust of print capitalism” (Anderson 1983: 39). As the first mass-produced commodity of industrializing Europe, novels and daily newspapers provided the medium through which a new kind of imagined community – the nation – would emerge. They achieved this in several ways. Novels, for one, allowed an omniscient reader to witness multiple isolated events simultaneously, constructing the validity of a “homogenous, empty time” upon which nations are built (Anderson 1983: 26). Newspapers reinforced this concept by linking independent events in a juxtaposed print format, so that when vast amounts of strangers consume them simultaneously, the reader is aware that many others are doing exactly what he is also doing in that precise moment. Nations emerged from these textually-reinforced communities of timelessness and anonymity. Unlike other mass-produced products, books and newspapers were a unique commodity because of their limited market determined by language users.

During Europe’s 17th century economic decline, printers turned to the lower and middle classes for a new audience and began printing cheap books in the vernaculars. This critical move was propelled by three factors: the revival of pre-Christian classical literature, which removed much of the ecclesiastical weight previously associated with Latin; the Protestant Reformation; which owed much of its success to reaching new reading audiences among merchants and

women who were not educated in Latin; and finally, the slow growth of bourgeois vernaculars as instruments of communication in the court and administrative centralization (Anderson 1983: 40).

Due to the discovery of new worlds, the invention of printing, and the subsequent rise of industry and popular education, the concepts of nation and language have become “inextricably intertwined” (Haugen 1966: 927). Print languages laid the basis for national consciousness by creating “unified fields of exchange and communication below Latin [or other Truth-languages] and above the spoken vernaculars” (Anderson 1983: 44). Furthermore, print-capitalism stabilized language in a new way that stunted linguistic change in the permanence of books. This provided an intimate degree of continuity of voice between the deceased and the living in a linguistic community. Lastly, print-capitalism created languages for a new politico-cultural power structure that invited the establishment of the modern nation.

This powerful new orientation toward language and social organization was later exported to Europe’s colonial territories, a profound historical event that drastically changed the way colonized peoples valued their own languages. France, in particular, distributed the imagination of an ideal political order being “one nation, speaking one language, ruled by one state, within one bounded territory” in its colonies before it had even achieved these means itself⁵ (Irvine and Gal 2000: 63). In the following chapter, I will expand on the effects of this monolingual ideology.

⁵ In 1914, half of all French infantrymen did not speak standard French and often had trouble understanding the orders of their officers after mobilization.

3. The Myth of Monolingualism

Language difference was a central part of daily life in the colonies. This prompted European scholars to produce a multitude of texts about language, establishing ideologies that continue to function today as “common sense for thinking about human diversity and equality” (Errington 2008: 1). These colonial proto-linguists changed “time-bound human speech” into abstract language *objects* and shaped them into very real “objects of power,” making their speakers into “subjects of power” (Errington 2008: 3). It is critical to recognize, however, that these linguists were never “just linguists,” for their work was rooted in broader “practices of literacy” which sought to legitimize the “textual traditions of faith and civilization” and establish political dominion through language (Errington 2008: 6).

For many post-Enlightenment scholars such as these colonizer-linguists, languages were considered to be innate expressions of the spiritual and biological essences of man. They were “natural entities” unaffected by outside forces insofar as they were assumed to be “consequences of a variable human nature, not the creations of any self-conscious human intervention” (Irvine and Gal 2000: 50). The belief that language was an “organism of nature” and preceded political activity justified the grouping of people first and foremost in terms of their speech communities (Schleicher 1869: 20). Confronted by linguistic diversity, however, Western observers assumed disorder and an uncivilized past because it “failed to correspond to social and ethnic boundaries in the ways that Western ideologies led them to expect” (Irvine and Gal 2000: 64). Speaking

multiple languages was interpreted as an indication of having multiple loyalties and exhibiting evidence of impurity:

Assuming that a language ought to have a distinct territory and nation (or ethnic group or race) associated with it, scholars interpreted other kinds of language distributions as 'mixtures,' departures from some original linguistic and territorial purity. Assuming further that black Africans were essentially primitive and simple-minded people who knew no social organization more complex than the family group, these scholars explained African social hierarchy, multilingualism, and conversions to Islam in terms of conquering races from the north who supposedly brought Islam, the state, and some admixture of Caucasian blood and language to the region by force of arms and intellectual superiority (Irvine and Gal 2000: 53).

European assumptions about the "naturalness of monoglot conditions" helped colonizers frame linguistic diversity encountered in the colonies as a "problematic, Babel-like condition to be subjected to regulation" (Errington 2013: 24). The belief that there existed a primordial relationship between language and the "particular 'spirit' of a nation" gave way to the myth of monolingual normalcy (Irvine and Gal 2000: 51). This myth had very real consequences, for European scholars of language relied on this assumption to establish their linguistic-cum-cultural superiority and circulate the idea that multilingualism was a substandard model. These linguistic oppositions, used as evidence for a natural social structure, are in reality a "*re*-translation of a system of social differences" (Bourdieu 1991: 54). Such arguments about language reinforced the urban European bourgeoisie's claims to superiority over "primitive" Others who represented other continents, provinces, or social classes.

In reality, a singular, homogenous language is "as much imagined as is community" (Irvine and Gal 2000: 76). A language comes to be understood as homogenous only as a result of carefully orchestrated planning. Standardizing a language is not a functional process to enhance

communication across a political territory; it is a struggle for symbolic power to control the language of authority – a crucial move in the nationalist agenda. The struggle for control of “legitimate language” is in fact a struggle for the domination of the market (Bourdieu 1991: 49). In many places, including Morocco, several languages can and do coexist as a central component of national identity.

In 1959 the American linguist Charles Ferguson published his seminal article, “Diglossia,” in which he describes the stable relationship between two linguistic varieties in a given society. As in the case of Classical Arabic and spoken Arabic, they are separated into a ‘High’ and a ‘Low’ and demonstrate a clear, functional separation. Diglossia had, in fact, been written about extensively 30 years earlier by William Marçais, a French Arabist who worked as an educational administrator for many years in Algeria and Tunisia and who was highly recognized for his understanding of Marghrebi Arabic (Larcher 1999: 48). Ferguson defines diglossia as:

a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation (Ferguson 1959: 435).

In other words, diglossia represents a structured “linguistic division of labour” in bilingual (or multilingual) communities by delimiting each language to a particular social context (Eckert 1980: 1054). It is quite a widespread phenomenon, “well attested in both space (e.g., varieties of Tamil in the south of India) and time (e.g., Latin in Europe in the Middle Ages)”

(Wardhaugh 1986: 90). The superposed High variety (H) and the vernacular Low variety (L) coexist by retaining specific functions – where one is appropriate, the other is not and cannot be. Ferguson draws upon cases from four diglossic situations (German Switzerland, Egypt, Haiti, and Greece) to illustrate that H is typically reserved for formal, learned, public spheres – sermons, speeches, university lectures, news broadcasts, and poetry – while L is usually used in private, intimate domains, including instructions to servants, conversations with family and friends, soap operas, and folk literature. This situation is quite stable, for it permits a structured means of “reserving the vernacular for in-group use while speakers use the standard language for entrance into the wider society” (Eckert, *ibid.*). In order to better grasp the present “multi-glossic” situation in Morocco, let us briefly examine Ferguson’s article.

“Arabic diglossia,” Ferguson writes, “seems to reach as far back as our knowledge of Arabic goes” (Ferguson 1959: 429). Because of Classical Arabic’s enduring status as a Truth-language, the mother tongue of God, this High variety *cannot* devolve into a vernacular for everyday situations, despite the belief in the natural superiority of H and that it is “more beautiful, more expressive, more logical, better able to express important thought” and even that it possesses “divine sanction” (Ferguson 1959: 431, 437). Although such arguments are not objectively valid, they contain great truth in that they reflect fundamental beliefs of a particular community. Ferguson assesses the H/L distinction by examining and distinguishing between the forms’ literary heritages, methods of acquisition, standardized grammars, stability, and differences in H/L grammatical structures, lexicons, and phonologies.

Classical Arabic, as an H variety, is reinforced by the existence of a literary heritage – the Qur’an – held in high esteem by the Muslim community⁶. French, the language of Morocco’s ex-colonizers, also functions as a High variety⁷. The relative stability between these two H varieties in Morocco is due to the fact that they function in strictly demarcated spheres: Classical Arabic as the language of religion, French as the language of academia and commerce. Franco-Tunisian writer Albert Memmi eloquently questions the assumptions of French’s status in North African colonies:

Is the French language only a precise and efficient writing instrument? Or is it that miraculous chest in which are heaped up discoveries and victories, writers and moralists, philosophers and scholars, heroes and adventurers, in which the treasures of the intellect of the French soul are transformed into one single legend? (Memmi 110: 1957).

French nationalist sentiment manifests in a deep sense of pride in the French language, and this ideology has seeped into the colonial consciousness. As the language used in the formal contexts of education and international business, French fulfills the role that Moroccans – and many other Arabs – believe Classical Arabic cannot, as a strictly religious language. By contrast, the highly variable Arabic vernaculars do not possess an extensive body of literature – nor do Morocco’s variety of Berber languages – and are consequently confined to informal domains of life as L varieties.

A second critical difference between H and L are the methods by which children acquire them. Adults speak L to their children, who go on to speak L with other children. As a result, L is learned in the typical fashion of learning a first language. H, on the other hand, is acquired

⁶ The Qur’an - literally, “the recitation” – was originally transmitted in oral form until a manuscript was compiled.

⁷ English is increasingly competing as a third H variety in Morocco, which I will explore in detail in Chapter Six.

through formal education – either traditional Qur’anic schools, modern government schools, or private schooling. As a result, “the speaker is *at home* in L to a degree he almost never achieves in H” (Ferguson 1959: 432, italics added). Grammar is learned intrinsically through imitation for L, while it is explicitly taught in terms of strict rules for H. There exists a tradition of formal study of H’s standardized grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary, an exercise wholly absent for L, which often exhibits wide variations. This difference leads children to believe that their mother tongues do not have grammar, because they are not acquired in the formal contexts that H varieties often require to be learned. It would perhaps be more empowering – but dangerously subnationalist – for these children to approach the term “grammatical” using American linguist William Labov’s definition: “well-formed according to the consistent rules in the dialect of the speakers” (Pinker 1994: 31). As Ronald Wardhaugh writes, however, “the H variety is ‘taught,’ whereas the L variety is ‘learned’” (Wardhaugh 1986: 89).

Ferguson goes on to elaborate upon the stark differences in H and L’s grammatical structures, lexicons, and phonology, setting the stage for linguist Joshua Fishman’s later argument that it is not necessary for the two languages in a diglossic situation to be related. As soon as a functional difference exists between linguistic codes, diglossia emerges – as is the case with French in Morocco (Fishman 1967). Diglossia is an intriguing situation because it provides a clear performance of what is culturally determined as “formal” or “informal,” “public” or “private.” It also reveals deeply embedded assumptions of power.

French sociolinguist Louis-Jean Calvet is highly critical of the absence of any discussion of power in both Ferguson and Fishman’s articles. He explicitly differentiates the H variety as a language of *prestige*, while the L variety is one that is considered *inferior*. It is not enough, he

argues, to “analyze the differences between the linguistic forms involved in terms of prestige... and function,” because “if French has that prestige and those functions, this is for historical and sociological reasons which result from the form of power and the organization of society” (Calvet 1998: 29). France’s establishment of a protectorate in Morocco in 1912 produced linguistic consequences that remain today. The case of diglossia that Calvet describes in Tanzania, Mali, and Senegal parallels that of Morocco, where “access to power depends on mastery of the official language inherited from colonialism, but mastery of the dominant African language (whether or not it is viewed by the law as the only ‘natural’ language) confers another power” (Calvet, *ibid.*).

While French does represent a High variety in diglossic Morocco, it retains a critical advantage over the sanctified High variety of Classical Arabic in one critical way: French, unlike Classical Arabic, is *spoken*. Ferguson’s observation that “no segment of the speech community in diglossia regularly uses H as a medium of ordinary conversation, and any attempt to do so is felt to be either pedantic and artificial or else in some sense disloyal to the community” requires slight modification for Morocco’s case (Ferguson 1959: 435). In “Language Contact, Arabization Policy and Education in Morocco” (2002), Moha Ennaji sheds light on the particular case of Morocco:

A linguistic conflict exists between Classical/Standard Arabic and French, the two prestigious languages in the country. The predominance of French is manifested essentially in education, administration, industry, banking, and commerce. French has been maintained for instrumental purposes and for building contacts with the West in general. It is the vehicle of science, technology, and modern culture. The predominance of French implies that the chances of strengthening the place of Classical/Standard Arabic are reduced; as a matter of fact, it is still confined to restricted domains like formal traditional speeches, religious discourse, as well as literary and cultural aspects... The supremacy of French in the modern sector has not resulted in negative reactions by

Moroccans, most of whom believe that French-Standard Arabic bilingualism is the best option for the development of the country.

Class lines are drawn according to whether individuals speak French or Moroccan Darija (spoken vernacular) with peers and family. This distinction – often labeled in terms of “dialect” or “language” – requires further examination, for the very separation implies consolidation of political and economic power which, in the case of the French Protectorate, was placed in the French language where it still largely resides. In addition to the ex-colonial language continuing to retain power and devalue Morocco’s local languages, the colonialist assumption that multilingualism is a substandard and illegitimate model has seeped into national consciousness. One of my informants, a young man from Rabat named Mohammed Issa, disclosed his belief that Morocco’s identity is threatened by multilingualism as a result of colonialism:

“As for culture... we are looking for our identity. We are between two, three worlds. Darija, Tamazight, French. It’s a big problem, we are losing our identity. We are in a conflict. Moroccans are losing their identity. Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, we have the same problem, because of colonialism.”

The exported belief in the one-nation-one-language model may not be realistic - no country speaks one homogenous language - but as an ideology, it does have very real consequences.

4. Language or Dialect?

In *Arabisation et politique linguistique au Maghreb* (1983), Gilbert Guillaume writes,

In today's North Africa, three languages are used: Arabic, French, and the mother tongue. The first two are languages of culture, of writing. French is also used as a language for conversation. Nevertheless, the mother tongue, actually spoken in daily life, is always a dialect, Arabic or Berber. The mother tongue, save for some very rare exceptions, is never written down.

This passage contains several jarring issues revealing the problematic hierarchy that emerges in the naturalized separation between “language” and “dialect.” One, Guillaume states that the “mother tongue” does not possess “culture” – this is clearly not a linguistic observation, but a value judgment that denies folk culture’s legitimacy. Two, insisting that Arabic or Berber is “always a dialect” not only collapses the great diversity of Arabic varieties – of which Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic are considered languages – it also fails to elaborate on the many different forms of Berber. In Morocco alone, for instance, there exist three main Berber varieties known as Tamazight, Tashelhit, and Tarifit. Guillaume’s definition of “dialect” seems to be a language that is “actually spoken in daily life” and “never written down,” a description from which any mention of power is suspiciously absent.

The distinction between “language” and “dialect” is not determined linguistically, but socio-politically. Linguist Max Weinreich is credited with the famous saying that a language is simply a dialect with an army and a navy. In other words, a language is essentially a dialect that has been infused with power and prestige, typically through codification and imposition by a centralized state power. We can liken the distinction to that of a church and a cathedral – the two structures both function as places to gather and worship, but one of them is larger, richer, and

associated with a high-ranking bishop. Similarly, a language and what is ambiguously called a dialect both successfully serve as codes for communication, but one is tied to a political power. A codified language, like a cathedral, is about the recognition and reproduction of authority.

Einar Haugen's article *Dialect, Language, Nation* illustrates the manner by which the development of a vernacular (aka "dialect") into a language is intimately related to the development of writing and the growth of nationalism. As a social norm, Haugen writes, a dialect is "a language that is excluded from polite company... a language that did not succeed" (Haugen 1966: 925). This separation between different linguistic varieties is central to the establishment of state power. Local loyalties – represented by dialects – must not conflict with national unity, which is represented in a national standard language.

In order to establish models across time and space, it has become a "prerequisite for every self-respecting nation" to codify one of its vernaculars. The process of creating a written code for a historically oral language, however, requires standardization. Standardization, in turn, creates more challenges, for "to choose any one vernacular as a norm means to favor the group of people speaking that variety. It gives them prestige as norm-bearers and a headstart in the race for power and position" (Haugen 1966: 932).

To accept the imposition of one language is to consent to the forces that relegated the rest to the status of dialect. In fact, to even speak of it as a language is to "tacitly accept the *official* definition of the *official* language of a political unit" (Bourdieu 1991: 45). Unlike a dialect, an official language benefits from the "institutional conditions necessary for its generalized codification and imposition," which in turn help to "reinforce the authority which is the source of

its dominance” (ibid.). The “official language” is always a tool of the state, both in its creation and in its reproduction:

It is in the process of state formation that the conditions are created for the constitution of a unified linguistic market, dominated by the official language. Obligatory on official occasions and in official places (schools, public administrations, political institutions, etc.), this state language becomes the theoretical norm against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured. Ignorance is no excuse; this linguistic law has its body of jurists – the grammarians – and its agents of regulation and imposition – the teachers – who are empowering universally to subject the linguistic performance of speaking subjects to examination and to the legal sanction of academic qualification (Bourdieu 1991: 45).

The normalization of an official language therefore depends on a centralized government, which imposes this codified linguistic variety in a national education system. Language standardization and codification is not a functional process to enhance communication across political territory; it is a struggle for symbolic power to control the language of authority. As Bourdieu argues in *Language and Symbolic Power*, the struggle for control of “legitimate language” is in truth a struggle for domination of the market. This relationship between the school system and the labor market has been perhaps the largest driving force in marginalizing dialects and normalizing a politically-backed language hierarchy, that “invisible, silent violence” (Bourdieu 1991: 52).

The school system comprises a unified educational-linguistic market, which is linked to “educational qualifications nation-wide, independent (at least officially) of the social or regional characteristics of their bearers” (Bourdieu 1991: 49). The labor market, in turn, reinforces the importance of the standard language by requiring certain educational certificates – and, by extension, command of the standard language – in order to access jobs and social positions. It is history, not nature, that endows one language with prestige and not another. Multilingual

societies such as Morocco must be examined according to their social relationships and not their language relationships exclusively because, in the words of Penelope Eckert:

Diglossia does not arise; it is imposed from above in the form of an administrative, ritual or standard language. By virtue of its political and economic status, this language becomes requisite for access to power and mobility within the society. Therefore, diglossia cannot be socially or politically neutral... It is the availability of the high language to the masses (through free public education) that renders a language standard and thus democratic; but this does not render diglossia neutral... The very existence of a high implies a low, and the imposition of the standard language creates an immediate social opposition between the standard and the vernacular (Eckert 1980: 1056).

Languages, like people, are created with the potential to be recognized as equal. There is no “meaningful difference,” as Steven Pinker says, between a ‘dialect’ and a ‘language,’ and to call them as such is misleading. “Trifling differences between the dialect of the mainstream and the dialect of other groups, like ‘isn’t any’ versus ‘ain’t so’... are dignified as badges of ‘proper grammar’” (Pinker 1994: 28). But when one strata of a society monopolizes power to the extent that they retain the right to decide what constitutes “proper grammar,” then social hierarchies become normalized through language difference.

Morocco’s multilingual community lives within this “normatively constructed [and] ideologically articulated ‘standard’ language” ideology (Blommaert 2006: 243, following Silverstein 1996 and Silverstein 1998). Debates concerning the legitimacy of Darija or Tamazight as languages are a reflection of this ideology, compounded by their tradition of oral transmission. Without a written form, these languages are considered by some to be “undeveloped,” for they “have not been employed in all the functions that a language can perform” (Haugen 1966: 927). This is further complicated by the prevalent instruction of the

former colonizer's language(s)⁸ in the classroom alongside the official standard, Modern Standard Arabic.

In the course of my interviews with 12 different informants in June and July 2013, I posed questions that revealed many themes regarding the qualifications that differentiate a language from a dialect. According to my informants, languages are “older,” they are “the sources,” with “specific rules,” “history, prestige, standard rules, and needs to be learned,” possess “grammar, orthography, verbs, tenses,” have “a big culture behind it,” and are “written and official.” Furthermore, as one informant named Mohammed Issa pointed out, a language is considered to be “more vast” with the power to unite all people who speak it: “Arabic unites all Arabs. French unites all people who speak French. But Tamazight does not unite anyone.” Tamazight is therefore deemed to be a dialect because it divides Moroccans into Arabs and Berbers. This observation, however, was made by a self-identified Arab. Four of my five self-identified Berber informants insisted that Tamazight is a language.

This disagreement is critical, especially since it transfers into political policy-making such as language planning in Morocco's public education system. When asked to define a dialect, my informants stated that a dialect “has not got rules” or “grammar, orthography, tenses,” does not have an official register such as a dictionary, is spoken by a small number of people, cannot be written, is newer than a language, and contains elements of different language sources within it (i.e. loanwords). Regarding the absence of rules or grammar, one informant

⁸ While French is taught in Morocco's public school system beginning in the 6th grade, Spanish is taught intermittently as a second foreign language and is used more frequently in the northern coastal areas, especially in the city of Tangier. In terms of the scale of the speech communities, however, French remains much more dominant than Spanish.

named Hussein was especially adamant. When I challenged him by conjugating verbs in Darija and listing a series of possessive pronouns, Hussein acknowledged that “Yes, these are rules. There are some cases where there are rules, but there are some cases where there are no rules.” I asked him to share an example, which proved to be decidedly difficult: “Uh... like... uh... I have no idea now. Uh... no idea. No. I may be wrong... I’m just saying what I know...”

This exchange demonstrates the misleading assumptions that languages and dialects have inherent differences. As several informants mention in describing language, the only real difference is, in the words of Reda, whether it has “a big culture behind it.”

5. Tracing the History of Morocco's Sociolinguistic Complexity

“The French had a saying that when the Portuguese colonized they built churches; when the English colonized they built trading stations; and when the French colonized they built schools.”⁹

Leading Moroccan academic, linguist, political critic, and President of the International Institute for Languages and Cultures in Fez, Moha Ennaji characterizes the sociolinguistic context in Morocco as possessing both “sociocultural plurality and language tension or conflict” since not all of its languages fulfill all linguistic functions and are relegated to specific domains (Ennaji 2005:2). A brief history of Morocco will demonstrate that the country has never been homogenous, culturally or linguistically. As Moroccan feminist scholar Fatima Sadiqi states quite simply, “Morocco is a Berber, Arab, Muslim, Mediterranean and African country” (Sadiqi 2003: 17). It was never completely ‘Arabized’ or ‘Islamized.’ This has resulted in a rich multilingualism with complex, nuanced dynamics. In this chapter, I will attempt to outline the key developments in Moroccan history that has caused what Louis-Jean Calvet calls Morocco’s “multilingualism with minority dominant languages,” in which “the languages that are statistically dominant are in fact languages that are politically and culturally subordinate” (Calvet 1998: 40). Multilingualism is a central characteristic of Morocco and, for many Moroccans, “language loyalty constitutes a core value of their ethnocultural identity.” (Ennaji 2005:1)

Though many authors define “the Maghreb” as a region that emerged during the Arab-Islamic era beginning in 647 AD, I align myself with Moha Ennaji’s position that this politico-cultural community can be traced back to the Berber era prior to 215 BC (Ennaji 2005:9). When

⁹ Mumford, William Bryant. *Africans Learn to be French*. London: Evans Brothers, Ltd., 1937.

the Berbers first came to North Africa is unknown, but they are the oldest remaining inhabitants of this region. Many have intermarried with Arabs and adopted Islam, but isolated Berber communities still thrive from Egypt's Siwa Oasis to the Western Sahara.

Moroccan Berbers call themselves the Imazighen (s. Amazigh), which in their language means "free people." While the term 'berber' was sometimes seen as pejorative because of its original association with barbarians, it has recently been repurposed and acts as a unifying term for the diverse groups of indigenous peoples spread across North Africa. In Morocco, the three main ethnolinguistic groups include the Tarifit-speaking Rifis in the northern Rif mountains, the Tamazight-speaking Amazighis in the Middle Atlas, and the Tashelhit-speaking Chleuhs in the Anti-Atlas region of the south. Together, they speak what the Moroccan state calls Tamazight, an umbrella term that has emerged which actually includes these three main varieties.

While the Romans, Vandals, and Byzantines all ruled the northern coast of Africa, it was the arrival of the Arabs that had the most lasting consequences on these people and their languages. When Uqba Ibn Nafi of the Umayyad Caliphate led the first Arab invasion into Morocco in 681 AD, he brought with him Islam and Classical Arabic. Written language and literacy are important tenets of Islam, and as much of the Berber population converted, their ideas about the value of orality changed in relation to Muslim ideas of literacy (Sadiqi 2003:41).

Though relations between locals and invaders were initially tenuous, by 712 AD Islam was declared the official religion of both Arab and Berber ruling dynasties. Morocco's current constitution still defines Morocco as an Islamic monarchy (Sadiqi 2003:40). Over time, Arabic

became most prominent in the coastal areas, while Berber was increasingly – but not totally – limited to the rural and mountain regions (Ennaji 2002:10).

During this era, the main languages used were Classical Arabic, Colloquial Arabic, and Berber(s). An Islamic system of education was established, in which Qur’anic schools taught the Arabic language and the Holy Qur’an. The University of Qarawiyyine in Fes – which dates back to the 9th century and is considered by some to be the oldest university in the world – provided continuity for students educated in the Arabic language and Islamic studies. The language policy implemented by the Arabs enabled the efficient spread of Arabic and Islam. In fact, the “remarkable relation between Arabic and Islam, as mentioned in the Qur’an itself, made this spread and dominance of Arabic unavoidable” (Ennaji 2005: 10).

The Islamic Golden Age lasted until the Mongol invasion of Baghdad in 1258, which shattered the Muslim world and ushered in an era of “deep stagnation” (Ennaji 2005:11). Napoleon Bonaparte’s 1798 campaign in Egypt triggered the Nahda period (renaissance), a “mythical and religious” movement that lasted from 1845 to 1905 which sought to “modernize Islam and society” by engaging in important education reforms - varying from country to country. It encouraged this modernization through *al-ijtihad*, which Ennaji translates as “a re-interpretations of Islam taking into account modernity and social change” (Ennaji 2005: 12). Unlike its other Maghrebi neighbors of Algeria and Tunisia, Morocco was never occupied by the Ottoman Empire. Northern coastal cities were invaded and seized by Spain in 1860, but all of these – except for Ceuta and Melilla – were recovered by 1975 (Ennaji 2005: 12). Spanish is used intermittently in the north, mostly to interact with tourists, but the European colonial language that has left a much more profound impact is French.

When the French established the Protectorate of Morocco in 1912, they imposed French as the official language of instruction in schools and as the language of administration and media. In this colonial educational system, upper class Moroccan children were brought up in French schools as part of the efforts of the French rulers to train this new generation to take up low-level jobs in colonial administration. French became the language of social mobility controlled by a colonial power, and Classical Arabic became restricted as the primary medium for teaching Islamic thought. It is important to note that French was taught as a “first language” while Classical Arabic was taught as the “first foreign language” (Ennaji 2005:14).

The French school system taught Moroccans that they were French without citizenship or equal rights. France’s ‘civilizing mission’ (*mission civilisatrice*) allegedly justified its occupation of Morocco, with the French arguing that they were there to “modernize and develop” the region, assuming European superiority (Ennaji 2005:13). The truth, however, was that France aimed to extend French influence and protect France’s interests. Ennaji writes, “The French colonizers adopted the policy of educating and training an elite who would become culturally and linguistically alien to their own people, that is, who would be ‘pseudo-Europeans’” (Ennaji 2005:13, referring to Bidwell 1973). By working to construct the French language and culture as “the symbols of ‘civilization and advancement,’” the colonial authorities planted the idea that French was a “language of modernity and the vehicle for science” (Ennaji 2002:2). Meanwhile, Classical Arabic was confined to religious or traditional activities. Out of this separation emerged the widespread association with French as a “modern” language and Arabic as a “traditional” one.

Arabic was still taught in Qur'anic schools but colonial authorities almost destroyed this entire system in 1930. In an effort to “abolish the link” between speech communities in Morocco, the French colonizers devised a ‘divide and rule’ strategy (Ennaji 2002: 2). The *Dahir Berbere* (Berber Decree) of 1930 separated the Berbers from the Arabs by placing them into two different legal systems in an effort to ignite ethnolinguistic tensions to reinforce the colonial project. Under this decree, Berbers were ruled by *droit coutumier* (tribal law) and Arab cities were ruled by *sharia* (Islamic law). This decision was met with strong opposition from Arabs and Berbers who “expressed their unquestionable attachment to national unity and loyalty to their language and national identity.” (Ennaji 2002: 3) The *Dahir Berbere* effectively fueled the joining of Arab and Berber forces in the fight for Moroccan independence.

The national independence movement used the Arabic language and the struggle for its ‘revival’ as a central component of its argument for “the re-birth of traditional Islamic culture and national identity” (Sadiqi 2003: 47). Arabic was the unifying factor, the language of nationalism and Arab patriotism. As Alexander Elinson writes, “Standard Arabic” - unlike Tamazight or Darija - “was viewed as a viable ‘literary’ alternative to French and served to define Morocco as an Arab country against France” (Elinson 2013: 716). The marginalization of Arabic in Morocco’s education system was therefore an offense to Morocco’s national identity. Furthermore, most Moroccan children were deprived of an education altogether. The conservative Istiqlal (independence) party submitted a list of grievances to the U.N. to argue for Moroccan independence, which read:

All French children in Morocco went to school, but only one-tenth of Morocco’s two million native children had the opportunity to get an education. In the whole country only

about fifteen thousand Moroccan boys were managing to get as far as high school, and only three hundred and fifty to a university (Gunther 1957:79).

After Moroccan independence in 1956, Arabic was declared the official language and Islam the official religion of the state. French was made the “second language,” so that Classical/Standard Arabic was essentially used side by side with French (Ennaji 2002:6). In this French-Arabic bilingual education system, French still had “the lion’s share” in the high school and university curricula (Ennaji 2005:15). In the early 1960s, however, the Moroccan government launched the Arabization policy to revitalize Standard Arabic and consolidate its teaching in the Moroccan school system, as well as promote it in official state institutions and the media (Benitez Fernandez 2012:71). The aim was to eradicate the French language and achieve “cultural independence” from Morocco’s former colonizers (Boukous 2011:33). This Arabization policy, according to Charles Gallagher, was “a re-affirmation of a national identity which had been obscured for years under the French Protectorate” (Gallagher 1968:139). The popularity of this idea, however, masked an unfair cost:

To the illiterate masses [Arabization] was largely symbolic, since they had never learnt to read French or Classical Arabic, but they believed it would lead to greater equality of opportunity for them. In actual fact, this has not necessarily been the case, and a number of commentators have observed that a powerful motivation behind the policy is the pursuit and maintenance of power: the élite promote Arabization from virtuous ideological motives, but in the knowledge that French continues to be necessary for social and professional success, and thus ensure that their own children are educated bilingually (Marley 2005: 1489).

Indeed, some argue that - in addition to forcing Morocco into an unrealistic monolingual box - Arabization was intended to separate the elite from the middle and lower classes in order to “reduce competition for the prestigious and highly paid careers” guaranteed to French speakers (Kachoub 2012). By reducing the numbers of competent French speakers, an Arabized education

system would curtail the possibility of high unemployment and unequal access to job security. The results that followed attempted Arabization in the education system does suggest that there is some truth to this argument.

Arabized public education was implemented in three stages (Benitez Fernandez, 2012; Grandguillaume, 1983). In 1957 the Minister of Education, Mohamed El Fassi, began to Arabize primary schools. The following year, the Royal Commission for Education Reform started recruiting teachers from other Arab countries in order to alleviate the shortage of Arabic teachers. Decision-makers adopted a gradual implementation of Arabization, replacing French with Arabic in the public education system. Primary schools were targeted first, and were completely Arabized by the end of the 1960s (Ennaji 2002:7). The Arabization project received mixed feedback because many considered it to be “over-hasty” and yielding “low school standards” in Arabic, French, and the sciences (ibid.). In 1966 the new Minister of Education, Mohamed Benhima, declared that “Arabization in Morocco failed to improve the standards”; he argued that French should be kept for “instrumental purposes to meet the needs of modernity, science, and technology” (ibid.).

The Istiqlal party and other purist opposition parties reacted strongly to the “pause of Arabization” that followed, insisting that replacing French with Arabic in public institutions is “an inevitable step toward preserving the Moroccan cultural identity” (Ennaji 2002:7). It is important to note the omission of any discussion of Berber languages in this narrative of identity – it was Arabic, not Berber, that made Morocco “Moroccan.” Leaders of the Moroccan Trade Union also feared that the prevalence of French in public education was becoming a privilege reserved to an elite social class (ibid.). In response, decision-makers reinstated the Arabization

project in the late 1970s to appease social tensions. Between 1973 and 1975, Standard Arabic was introduced as the medium of instruction for literary subjects including philosophy, history, and geography (Benitez Fernandez, Jaap de Ruiters, and Tamer 2012: 84). The new Minister of Education Azzedine Laraki famously said, “Nous sommes condamnés a Arabiser” – we are condemned to Arabize (Grandguillaume 1983:86). Under Laraki’s leadership, the sciences, mathematics, and physics in primary and secondary school were Arabized between 1982 and 1988, and Standard Arabic was completely implemented in the spheres of education and administration (Benitez Fernandez, Jaap de Ruiters, and Tamer 2012: 84).

Despite some successes of this policy, one major setback remains: universities have never been subjected to any language policy (Benitez Fernandez, Jaap de Ruiters, and Tamer 2012: 84). French is still the medium of instruction at the university level, in the faculties of medicine, engineering, science, technology, business, and management. Moroccan students are often confronted with a linguistic barrier upon arriving at university, realizing that they have been educated in Arabic and cannot keep up with the French of the university setting. When the first Arabized science students reached the university level in 1991, student strikes at the University of Fez were rampant (Ennaji 2002:10). Except for faculties of Islamic studies, universities use French as the language of instruction because (1) the textbooks, academic references and course materials are predominantly in French, (2) there is a shortage of Moroccan professors with mastery of the Arabic language, and (3) the socioeconomic environment makes French popular because most of Morocco’s international trade partnerships are with France. As Moha Ennaji notes, however, these are the “official” reasons for not Arabizing higher education (Ennaji 2002:8). Furthermore, the economic sector has never been targeted in Arabization policies at all, revealing a major flaw in policy goals (Benitez Fernandez, Jaap de Ruiters, and Tamer 2012: 84).

Arabization continues to be debated today. The *Arabisants* advocate for total and rapid Arabization and the exclusion of French from all sectors in Morocco. They argue that “modern culture should be discarded simply because it disseminates Western values and thought” (Ennaji 2005: 2). This discourse is rooted in the independence movement against the French colonizers, when Arabic served to rally the masses. The strongest advocates of Arabization are members of the right-wing Istiqlal party and Muslim fundamentalists, some of whom believe that French is “a colonial linguistic invasion and that a secret war is waged against Arabic, the language of the Holy Qur’an” (*Al-Alam* newspaper, 1991). In this line of thinking, Classical Arabic “reflects Muslim tradition, beliefs, and values” while French contains “corrupt Western values” (Ennaji 2002:9). Local vernaculars, on the other hand, are thought of as either ethnically “divisive” or as embodying “authenticity, culture and identity” (Grandguillaume 1991:10).

The *Francisants* are French-educated Moroccans who hold a positive attitude toward French-Standard Arabic bilingualism. They argue that Arabisants celebrate “traditional ideas that perpetuate ‘backward’ and ‘irrational’ thinking in the country” (Ennaji 2005: 2). For the Francisants, French is especially necessary in the domains of science and technology because Arabic is “not fully prepared and modernized”¹⁰ and French is useful for “purposes of modernization, development, and openness to the world” (Ennaji 2002:9,6). They hold that some form of bilingualism will actually strengthen Arabization by adding French terminology – via translation or transferal – into Standard Arabic. Indeed, the late king of Morocco Hassan II was of the opinion that bilingualism is a prerequisite for the success of Arabization. In a 1978 speech in Ifrane, he stated that “If Arabization is a duty, bilingualism is a necessity.” Furthermore, the

¹⁰ To my knowledge, there is no standardized scientific vocabulary in Arabic to date.

ex-director of the Institute of Arabization in Rabat, Ahmad Lakhdar-Ghazal, argues that bilingualism is essential for making Standard Arabic a modern language. Arabic, he writes, “should ideally be modeled on French and follow its example as a language of modernity” (Lakhdar-Ghazal 1976:64).

This debate echoes the discourses surrounding bilingual dictionaries in 18th century Europe, where “equal ontological footing” is symbolized in side-by-side textual presentation (Anderson 1983: 70). In the effort to make Standard Arabic separate-and-equal to French, however, some fear that “French will always be predominant, and Standard Arabic marginalized” (Ennaji 2002:8). On that note, Brahim Chakrani’s 2013 study of language attitudes reveals that

... the higher their social class, the more likely respondents are to hold favourable attitudes towards French and the increasing use of English and move away from the local codes of MA [Moroccan Arabic], SA [Standard Arabic], and Berber. The impact of the ideology of modernity on Moroccan youth shows that the valorisation of Western languages, a product of the French colonial era, maintains a linguistically and socially asymmetrical position between speakers of local codes and those of foreign languages. Members of the Moroccan elite play the role of ‘ideology brokers’ (Jaffe 1999), whose linguistic practices, language attitudes, and ascription to the ideology of modernity serve to reinforce a system of privileges, class structure, and lines of power on the basis of linguistic segregation (Chakrani 2013:431).

But not all Moroccans subscribe to this ideology. Groups of Berber nationalists perceive Arabization as a threat to pre-Arab indigenous languages. Persistent marginalization has fueled the fight for increasing minority representation by demanding their language be used in schools, in the media and government. For many Berbers, the colonization by the French is secondary to the earlier colonization by the Arabs. Now, as Berbers have been written into Morocco’s narrative of national identity, their languages are becoming more visible. In 2001, King

Mohamed VI founded the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture (IRCAM) to “provide His Majesty with advice about the measures that are likely to preserve and promote the Amazigh culture in all its expressions” (Article 2 of the Royal Dahir for the Creation of IRCAM, 2008). Its central mission is to implement government policies that will “allow for the introduction of the Amazigh in the educational system and ensure the spread of its influence in the social, cultural, media, national, regional and local contexts” (ibid.).

One of IRCAM’s most prominent projects has been to standardize and codify Tamazight, the Amazigh’s language, which many Moroccans consider to be a dialect. An alphabet known as Neo-Tifinagh has been “invented,” based on a revitalized form of the 2,000-year-old Tifinagh alphabet still used by the Tuareg Berbers of the Sahara. In 2003, Tamazight was introduced in some elementary schools after some debate over whether Tifinagh, Arabic, or Latin-based scripts should be used to represent Tamazight (Larbi 2003). This move has been greeted with controversy, because Neo-Tifinagh is “contested by religious conservatives” who argue that Arabic should be the only written language of Morocco (“Amazigh language recognized,” 2011). In response to these arguments, Moroccan intellectual and Amazigh rights activist Ahmed Assid says:

We need to keep using the Tifinagh script, because it is a visual representation of the Amazigh identity that you see in institutions, on the street, in public spaces, and so on. If you replace this script with Arabic, we will only see the Arabic script, and that means at first sight our language will look like Arabic, which is something we can’t accept (ibid.).

Assid played an important role in the Berber recognition movements that gained momentum in Morocco as the Arab Spring swept across North Africa and the Middle East. In a clever move to appease tensions, His Majesty King Mohammed VI amended the Moroccan

constitution on June 17, 2011. The second paragraph of the preamble to this amended constitution now outlines the national identity of Morocco as the following:

Morocco is a sovereign Muslim State, committed to the ideals of openness, moderation, tolerance and dialogue to foster mutual understanding among all civilizations; A Nation whose unity is based on the fully endorsed diversity of its constituents: Arabic, Amazigh, Hassani, Sub-Saharan, African, Andalusian, Jewish and Mediterranean components.¹¹

Legal recognition is an enormous triumph for the 30 – 60% of Moroccans who identify as Amazigh.¹² Perhaps even more importantly, this new constitution promotes Tamazight to the status of “an official language of the State” alongside Arabic:

Article 5

Arabic remains the official language of the State.

The State works for the protection and for the development of the Arabic language, as well as the promotion of its use.

Likewise, Tamazight constitutes an official language of the State, being common patrimony of all Moroccans without exception.

An organic law defines the process of implementation of the official character of this language, as well as the modalities of its integration into teaching and into the priority domains of public life, so that it may be permitted in time to fulfill its function as an official language.

The State works for the preservation of Hassani, as an integral component of the Moroccan cultural unity, as well as the protection of the speakers [of it] and of the practical cultural expression of Morocco. Likewise, it sees to the coherence of linguistic policy and national culture and to the learning and mastery of the foreign languages of greatest use in the world, as tools of communication, of integration and of interaction by which society may know, and to be open to different cultures and to contemporary civilizations.

A National Council of Languages and of Moroccan Culture is created, charged with, notably, the protection and the development of the Arabic and Berber languages and of the diverse Moroccan cultural expression, which constitute one authentic patrimony and

¹¹ Jefri J. Ruchti’s official English translation (World Constitutions Illustrated).

¹² Over a millennium of intermarriages and no reliable census data have made these percentages highly contestable.

one source of contemporary inspiration. It brings together the institutions concerned in these domains. An organic law determines its attributions, composition and the modalities of its functioning.

This is the first time a North African country has given official status to an indigenous language. Algeria recognized Berber as a *national* language in 2001, but Arabic remains the sole *official* language of the Algerian state. Of course, the terms “national” and “official” are, like language and dialect, difficult to distinguish from one another due to their ambiguous, competitive connotations (Phillipson 1992: 41). Joshua Fishman addresses this, writing that “while the designation *national* tends to stand for past, present, or hoped for sociocultural authenticity in the ethnic realm... the designation *official* tends to be associated primarily with current political-operational needs” (Fishman 1972:215).

Since 2011, the Department of Education is required to make the teaching of Tamazight more widespread. The transition from legal recognition to social recognition, however, is not occurring instantaneously. Article 5 may have transformed Tamazight into *an* official state language, but in practice this language and its speakers continue to experience marginalization on many fronts. It is highly telling that the choice of “an” rather than “the” points to a subtle resistance on the part of the Moroccan state to completely acknowledge equality between Tamazight and Arabic.

6. Twelve Moroccan Voices

In his memoir, “Out of Place,” Edward Said writes:

Everyone lives in a given language; everyone’s experiences therefore are had, absorbed, and recalled in that language. The basic split in my life was the one between Arabic, my native language, and English, the language of my education and subsequent expression as a scholar and a teacher, and so trying to produce a narrative of one in the language of the other... has been a complicating task (Said 1999: xiii-xiv).

The power of language in constructing a self narrative - and, by extension, a national narrative - is explored by cultural psychologists such as Jerome Bruner (1986), Jens Brockmeier (2012), Arthur P. Bochner (1997), Donald E. Polkinghorne (1991), and Dan McAdams (2001). These perspectives are important for the purpose of this paper because of the fundamental way experience is constructed by means of a symbolic system, for these “webs of significance” reveal much about the humans who spun them (Geertz, 1973). Language is one of the most central symbolic systems in our cultural existence and using it to form narratives is, as Jens Brockmeier writes, “pivotal in binding the individual into a cultural world and in binding the meaning of this world into the individual’s mind” (Brockmeier 2012: 439).

In order to bridge academic discourse on multilingualism in Morocco with the subtle ways it is felt and performed, this chapter summarizes and analyzes the 12 interviews I conducted with Moroccan acquaintances, colleagues, and friends during an 8-week internship at the Center for Cross Cultural Learning in Rabat, Morocco during the summer of 2013. Four of the interviewees were colleagues. Three were friends of colleagues. One was a relative of the host family with whom I lived. One was a former student of Professor Said Bennis of Mohamed

V University, whom I met through a colleague. Two were family friends. One was a hairdresser in the neighborhood where I worked.

My first few weeks in Rabat, I established rapport with as many people as I could. Many acquaintances expressed enthusiasm for participating in my research, but securing interviews often became difficult because of the changes in personal schedules that take place during the Islamic month of Ramadan. Work hours change, restaurants and cafés close during the day, and the flow of daily routines centers around the sunset *iftar*, the meal which breaks the fast. As a result, finding appropriate locations and times to hold interviews was often challenging.

Six of the interviews took place in public spaces in the daytime, before the *iftar*. Of these, four were held at the Center for Cross Cultural Learning, one was held at a McDonald's,¹³ and one took place at the hairdresser's. These six included four women and two men. The other six interviews took place in the evening after *iftar*. The presence of food and drink established a much more informal atmosphere. A gendered difference emerged here as well, as the four of these interviews with men were held in cafés while the two with women took place in their respective homes. Overall, however, six of the informants were women and six were men. Four of them identified as ethnic Imazighen, the remaining eight as ethnic Arabs. Five of the interviews were conducted in French, which I subsequently translated into English in the transcriptions. One was conducted in equal parts French and English, with a considerable amount of codeswitching. The remaining interviews were done in English, a testament to my informants' language abilities as well as my own. Having grown up bilingual, I felt equally comfortable

¹³ During the month of Ramadan, restaurants close during the day. McDonald's is an intriguing exception. I will elaborate on this in the following chapter.

conducting the interviews in French or English. Due to the lexical and phonological differences between spoken Moroccan Arabic and the variety of spoken Arabic that I am most competent in - Egyptian - it would have been ineffective to conduct the interviews in Arabic. More importantly, my informants established a preference for one language to use together fairly early in our relationships, often expressing a desire to practice their English with me.

The interviews took the form of semi-structured recorded conversations guided by prepared questions. These recordings were subsequently transcribed. Throughout the course of these interviews, I sought to gain insight into the diversity of Moroccans' linguistic beliefs and ideologies. I relied on a series of open-ended questions designed to answer the overarching, broad question: "What is a language good for?" Many intriguing themes emerge. In this chapter, I explore informants' various beliefs surrounding the major languages used in Morocco, focusing in particular on themes of intra-national identity insofar as the different ways of "being Moroccan" are negotiated and performed through language.

To briefly reiterate, the four main languages used in Morocco are Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, or *Darija*; Classical/Standard Arabic, or *Fus'ha*; Berber, or *Tamazight*; and French. Spanish is spoken in the north of Morocco, and Hassani is an Arabic variety mainly spoken only in the (Moroccan) Western Sahara. Some may argue, as do many of my informants, that *Darija* and *Tamazight* are dialects. In stating that *Darija* and *Tamazight* are languages, I am establishing my position that a linguistic code need not be upheld by a political power and social prestige in order to be a fully-functional language. As I discussed earlier, the distinction between "language" and "dialect" is determined socio-politically. The diverging opinions of my informants, however, are nonetheless true insofar as these are the realities they define for

themselves. It is precisely this conflict of opinion regarding the boundaries between dialect and language and what these boundaries signify in the construction of Moroccan national identity that is of interest here, for various segments of Moroccan society are constructed, performed, and reinforced in a multilingual dimension, with spheres overlapping and negotiating their space with others.

I. “I speak dialectal Arabic, I read classical Arabic.”¹⁴

Arabic is far from monolithic. In Morocco alone, there are four distinct varieties of Arabic: Classical and Modern Standard Arabic are considered the high varieties, while Moroccan Arabic and Hassaneya are the low varieties. Classical Arabic is considered to be the highest variety of Arabic because it is the language in which the Qur’an was revealed and subsequently transmitted. Even prior to its formal codification in the 7th century, it had long been used for poetry, literature, and scholarship. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), although also codified and standardized, is considered to be a middle variety because it is a grammatically simplified form of Classical Arabic. Furthermore, MSA is described as “more flexible on the phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels” (Sadiqi 2003: 51). Due to these distinctions and the influence from French of Subject-Verb-Object word order - atypical in Classical Arabic - MSA has been coined as being “a relatively ‘modern’ version” of Classical Arabic (Sadiqi 2003: 47). Unlike Classical Arabic, which is used in the highly ritualized sphere of Islam and in formal structures of poetry, MSA functions alongside French as the medium for education, media, and administration. In short, it is the formal Arabic that is used outside of the Qur’an and other ancient texts. Fus’ha - which is used to refer to Classical/Qur’anic Arabic and Modern Standard

¹⁴ Kilito, Abdelfattah. *Je Parle Toutes les Langues, Mais en Arabe*. Casablanca: Sindbad, 2013. p 15

Arabic - is typically taught through rote memorization. Only the grammatically simplified MSA, however, is used creatively for modern purposes.

As Alexander Elinson explains, the terms Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic are in themselves an oversimplification, for “the registers of Arabic cannot be so clearly divided into high and low” (Elinson 2013: 726). Al-Sa’id Badawi’s *Mustawayat al-’Arabiyya al-Mu’asira fi Misr* overturns the prevalent notion that there is one, “pure” Arabic (Fus’ha) with “corrupt” spoken variants. Instead, he argues that Arabic is a continuum. In the case of Morocco, Abderrahim Youssi separates Arabic into three levels: Literary Arabic used for writing, Middle Moroccan Arabic as an “educated spoken register,” and Darija, which is “spoken by over 90 percent of the total population for intimate and informal, everyday like purposes” (Youssi 1995). It is significant to note that during interviews, many informants did not list Darija as one of the languages they speak, often stating “just Fus’ha.”

Only two of my informants - Badrdine and Leila - explicitly distinguished between Modern Standard Arabic and Classical Arabic, probably because they are both teachers of Arabic to foreigners and children, respectively. All other informants consistently referred to the high register as *Fus’ha* or Classical Arabic, and make no mention of the term Modern Standard Arabic, which is likely due to both of these varieties being codified and written as opposed to informal and spoken. As Fatima Sadiqi writes, each language in Morocco is used for specific functions, which “are largely determined by its status as oral or written” (Sadiqi 2003: 45). As emerges in Souad’s interview, Fus’ha is consistently considered a language on par with French and English because it is formally taught rather than informally acquired. Moroccan novelist and

literary critic Abdelfattah Kilito writes of this distinction in his most recent novel, *Je Parle Toutes les Langues, Mais en Arabe* (I Speak All Languages, but in Arabic):

We learned [Fus’ha] to read and to write, like French. In spite of the similarities between dialect Arabic and classical Arabic, there is a division of functions: dialectal Arabic is for quotidian exchanges, classical Arabic is tied to religion, politics, all that is noble, official, pompous. As a result, it is scary, and can easily be transformed into a dead, wooden language. We don’t speak it... it is forbidden to use it, under penalty of ridicule: no one would use it, for example, on a trip to the grocery store. It’s the language of the sacred, of poetry, of state speeches, of literature (Kilito 2013: 15, my translation).

My informants revealed other intriguing perspectives regarding Classical/Standard Arabic. First of all, it is of crucial importance that this variety does not privilege one Arab group over another because Classical/Standard Arabic has no “native” speakers, but is rather taught as “a kind of second language” (Bonfiglio 2010: 18). As James Milroy points out, a standardized national language such as Classical/Standard Arabic is seen as “a kind of neutrality, not only one of accent, but also one of character, because it is perceived as the absence of objectionable traits. This means that change and variation will then be equated with adverse characteristics” (Milroy 1999: 15). This purported neutrality, however, is used as an argument to justify the diglossic relationship between speaking and writing. A consequence of this is the internalization of the belief that the informally learned spoken vernacular possess “adverse characteristics” which are understood to be signs of deviance from the elevated standard form. As Thomas Paul Bonfiglio points writes in *Mother Tongues and Nations*:

As no single first language speaker or writer has full knowledge of all the rules of a given language, his or her knowledge is at best asymptomatic; approaching but never achieving full knowledge. Attempts at standardization are often purported to be value-neutral; this is, however, seldom the case (Bonfiglio 2010: 8).

Farah, the founder and director of the Center for Cross Cultural Learning, acknowledged the need for teachers of Arabic to explain to their students that “a reality of the Arab world is that no single Arab country speaks Fus’ha.” The belief in the superiority of Fus’ha over spoken varieties is then transferred into second language classrooms that often do not teach spoken Arabic to foreign students, which exports this linguistic hierarchy across national borders and inhibits foreign students’ ability to engage with Arabic-speaking communities in a socially appropriate way. However, Fus’ha is taught as a “second language” to Arab nationals as well, where Arabic teachers disseminate the argument that Fus’ha unifies the Arab world, while spoken varieties divide it. As Ferguson writes, “The proponents of H argue that H must be adopted [as the standard] because it connects the community with its glorious past or with the world community and because it is a naturally unifying factor as opposed to the divisive nature of the L dialects” (Ferguson 1959: 436). We see this in effect with Fus’ha, as it enables Morocco to strengthen solidarity with other contemporary Arab nation-states through a religious and linguistic Islamic *Ummah* (nation) as well as establish continuity with the achievements of the Islamic Golden Age, notably those of the Umayyad, Abassid, and Fatimid Caliphates.

The principal theme that emerged in my interviews is that the value of Classical Arabic is centrally tied to the concepts of beauty and complexity as qualities inversely correlated with functionality and economic utility. Informants collectively professed, as Hussein said, that “Classical Arabic, you know, we don’t use it here in Morocco. We just study it in school.” Of course, Classical Arabic *is* used in print media, but often in competition with French and, increasingly, English. Badrdine, an Arabic instructor at the Center for Cross Cultural Learning, told of how his father forbade him to declare a major in Islamic Studies, the only subject in university that is taught in Arabic: “He said if you opt for Islamic Studies I will force you to drop

out of school, because at that time in Islamic Studies there were thousands of people graduating and not finding a job.”

Oumaima, a university student majoring in education, echoes this sentiment, arguing that not only is studying Arabic “ridiculous a little bit,” it does not provide students with access to desired forms of knowledge: “... with all my regret, we don’t have good - *des ressources* - in Arabic. Even [switches to French:] the works in French or English are better than the works in Arabic... the sources of knowledge in general. [switches to English:] For examples, books of Emile Durkheim, or Freud, or Piaget, or Skinner. So all of this, more interesting people or scientists, they wrote in French or English... we don’t have something new, or something scientist *de valeur* [French: ‘of value’].” The functionality of Arabic is measured in terms of the resources it makes accessible to its speakers - which, Oumaima argues, are not desirable - “useless” even - as the texts she relies on in her studies are not written in Arabic. Indeed, according to UNESCO, 65% of yearly scientific publications appear in English while only 9.8% are published in French (Boukous 2011: 41).

When asked which language they esteem to be the most beautiful, however, all but two informants declare Fus’ha. The adjectives that surface most often include “rich,” “very beautiful,” “poetic,” “elegant,” “complicated,” “sweet like sugar,” and, quite simply, “the *best* language.” Its richness is supported by the extensive lexicon and abundance of synonyms for any one word, as Hussein insists that “if you take the word ‘lion’... into Arabic, you find that there are more than five hundred synonyms for this word.” *Fus’ha* grants access to religious and poetic expression, not job security. Informal, familiar usage renders language accessible, common, and therefore less prestigious. Fus’ha’s inaccessibility renders it beautiful.

The beauty of Fus’ha is upheld by its status as the language of Islam, as well as by a certain nostalgia for the Islamic Golden Age. When asked what adjectives come to mind when thinking of Fus’ha, answers overwhelmingly oscillated between these two themes: (1) “Allah,” “our religion,” “holy book,” “Qur’an,” followed by (2) “the times when Arabs were the world’s superpower,” and “pride in our history.” Its qualifiers stated in terms of beauty and wealth reinforce national power of Fus’ha for it serves as a medium for Moroccans to construct solidarity with the Arabs of the “heroic past” (Renan 1996: 53).

II. “Darija, it’s not a language. It’s just to make communication.”¹⁵

Darija holds a different form of national power. Being neither codified nor standardized, Darija is considered to be the “low” variety in Ferguson’s schemata of diglossia. It is spoken by the majority of the Moroccan population, making it an equalizing language among different classes, but nevertheless, “for both the masses and the intelligentsia, it is considered to be a debased form of Classical/Standard Arabic” due in large part to its extensive borrowings from French and Berber (Ennaji 2002: 5). Indeed, the theme of “mixture” emerged many times in my interviews. In fact, it is precisely this mixture that many informants rely on to argue that Darija cannot be a language, as Reda says, “It’s a dialect because it’s a mix of so many things, so many languages.” This harkens back to European assumptions about the “naturalness of monoglot conditions,” which helped colonizers frame linguistic diversity encountered in the colonies as a “problematic, Babel-like condition to be subjected to regulation” (Errington 2013: 24). My informants shared their impressions that this perceived language mixture makes Darija “free,”

¹⁵ Oumaima, personal communication.

“creative,” and devoid of any grammar - all qualities that contradict those of Fus’ha. Hanaa, a recent high school graduate, emphasized the individualistic, expressive value of Darija:

In Darija we can use any word you – we want. You know, just you can put letters together and then he come a word¹⁶.... it’s *frouha*... It’s like a crazy language. It’s like a puzzle. We can put letters together, and then we came with a word. We can’t do this in Fus’ha. In Fus’ha is just a... language, with specific rules. But Darija, no. We have no rules. We can do everything we want with the language.

Darija is framed as a medium for unrestricted expression where speakers are granted unlimited freedom. Farah even called Darija “the most relaxed of all the languages.” When speaking Darija, Farah says: “I could be using French, English, Arabic, Tamazight, Spanish, whatever word in it, and I just feel – I love it.” The most common adjectives informants used to describe Darija were “Moroccan,” “alive,” “easygoing,” “simple,” “cool,” and “so different from the other Arabic dialects” - all stark contrasts to the descriptions of Fus’ha. Informants appear to be projecting onto Darija their ideas of “Moroccan-ness” and emphasizing intra-national similarities in opposition to Arab countries across borders. In fact, Reda directly draws an evaluation of Moroccan society from his description of Darija:

I feel cool [speaking Darija] because it is so different from the other Arabic dialects. We are more different, more mixed, and we are more tolerant... we are totally different from the Middle East. We have a lot of diversity and we are tolerant.

The mixture of languages within Darija symbolizes the ethnic diversity and multicultural influences that my informants refer to in describing Morocco. Despite the view that language mixture symbolizes a “lost identity” and discredits Darija from being a “real language,” many

¹⁶ The phrase *he come a word* is a literal translation from the French *il arrive un mot*, meaning “a word comes” or “a word happens.”

informants also shared that this also made it easiest for them to express themselves (Rachid and Leila, respectively). In other words, multilingual codeswitching feels more “natural” (Oumaima). As the “lingua franca,” Darija challenges the social hierarchies that are solidified in the stratification of Moroccan multilingualism. As Farah said, Darija “makes you connect with everybody.” Horizontal relationships among co-nationals are performed in the oral exchange of Darija. Several informants expressed that because “all Moroccans speak Darija,” Morocco’s traditions are “best represented” in Darija. This effectively strengthens national sentiment, as Badrdine - the only one to insist that Darija is a “Goddamn language” - says, “Moroccan Arabic is the national language of Morocco vs. the national language of Algeria, etc... It’s in the process of becoming official, not compared to Standard, but national.” The use of “vs.” is essential here as it serves as a linguistic-cum-national boundary separating the “us” of Moroccans from the “them” of Algerians.

Perhaps the most intriguing theme that emerged in descriptions of Darija were those that were framed in terms of purity. To use Mary Douglas’ expression, Darija is often characterized as “a matter out of place” (Douglas, 1966). While many informants cited codeswitching as the primary reason for disqualifying Darija from holding the more prestigious title of “language,” several others also claimed that Darija can be textually “broken” or “damaged” if combined with French, but that it can actually be orally elevated by “mixing” it with Fus’ha. In contexts that threaten national identity, code switching can be interpreted as a form of pollution. One of my informants, a blind storyteller named Leila, is particularly adamant about “cleaning” Darija by mixing it with Fus’ha. She explains that when she tells stories, she consciously tries to mix Darija and Fus’ha by taking expressions and constructions from Classical Arabic and pronouncing them with a Moroccan accent, i.e. collapsing vowels:

Why do we use dialect? To communicate with the masses, non-intellectuals. So when I use Classical Arabic in my stories, it's a way to bring peoples closer together, to purify the ear of the one who listens to me. Especially children, to familiarize them with a cleaner, more elevated dialect Arabic. To make them like Classical Arabic, because most children don't like it. They find it difficult, with a lot of rules. I say no, Classical Arabic is beautiful, we just need to listen. So if I can capture children even for just 20 minutes, with my "Classical Arabic dialect," that's good.

Notions of uncleanness become associated with the class of speakers who have access to Darija. The "masses" of "non-intellectuals" are indexed in the use of Darija, so Leila, as a member of the upper class, experiences a loss of status in speaking Darija. By introducing what she calls a "Classical Arabic dialect," Leila feels that she is equalizing social classes, albeit with a slight air of *mission civilisatrice*. The imperial undertones of this are not accidental. In *Arabic, Self and Identity: A Study in Conflict and Displacement*, Yasir Suleiman writes:

Existing in a relationship of asymmetrical power allocation, the (ex-) colonized subject is prone to come under the influence of the dominant (ex-) colonial culture and, in the process, to regard himself as being a cut above those compatriots of his who had no access to this culture. In this paradigm, language and knowledge are not neutral, but they carry in them structures of power and forces of co-option which the (ex-) colonial subject finds difficult to resist and, once they are imbibed, finds even more difficult to dislodge psychologically (Suleiman 2011:100).

Of course, in this instance, the (ex-) colonials are not the French, but the Arabs and the "proper" Arabic language. More specifically, literacy acts as a force that displaces the value of oral languages, in this case Darija. Although Darija is not formally codified, Moroccans - along with Arabic speakers elsewhere - use it to communicate via Facebook, email, and in cell phone text messages. Due to keyboard limitations, it is often transcribed using Latin script, with numbers representing sounds that cannot be encompassed in Latin script. This is sometimes referred to as the "Arabic chat alphabet" or "Arabizi." Marketing agencies have begun to employ

this script in advertisements, which my informants had mixed feelings about. Opinions tended to shift depending on the generation. Simo, who was 24 at the time of this interview, said that “in Darija... we can send messages, but we use either Arabic letters or French letters. But with my Moroccan friends... I prefer, for Darija, the French letters.” Rachid, who is in his mid-thirties, expresses ambivalence:

I don't mind having them both [Latin and Arabic scripts], but I really like to have them. Because at the end of the day, they are what we speak as Moroccans. In the street and everything, that's what we speak. When you see something that you speak, it makes more sense than when you see like Fus'ha or French or English or something. So it's very... stronger, when you have the natural language.

This view echoes Ferguson's observation of “the proponents of L” who argue that “some variety of L must be adopted because it is closer to the real thinking and feeling of the people,” and that doing so would improve education and communication (Ferguson 1959: 437). It is important to note that both of these informants identify as Amazigh, and this may have a strong influence on their openness to scripts other than Arabic. Conversely, Leila - who does not identify as Amazigh - expressed very strong opposition to Arabizi:

The symbols, they are damaging the language. They are breaking the language. It's not Latin or Arabic letters, but numbers. It's mathematical letters! So when you write a language with another system... it transcribes a system with another system. So it destroys it! I don't like it... Arabic, write it in Arabic and French, write it in French! The future generation will think this is the norm. They won't know good things from bad things... Young people today will write Arabic in French and French in Arabic. It... destroys language! They don't help to develop the languages... We should keep the norm. I think we should keep the norm. So the films translated into dialect Arabic and the billboards written with numbers... this goes with modernity, yes, but they don't teach us anything. They don't give us anything more, they give us less. They devalue the language. So the youth won't learn how to speak better Arabic or French, they'll speak like nonsense. Perhaps my opinion is a bit archaic, but that's my opinion.

The rigidity of mutually exclusive categories that Leila insists upon is threatened by the cosmopolitanizing thrust of “modernity,” which she describes in very negative terms. The act of transcribing Darija with Latin script is compared to destruction, damage, regression, ignorance, devaluation, and nonsense. It is important to note that Leila is an upper-class francophone Moroccan, who previously claimed to “purify” Darija by “mixing” it with Fus’ha in oral performances. How can it be that Leila approves mixing Darija with Fus’ha but not with French, the language she speaks most often? The violation, it seems, is strictly relegated to the choice of graphemes in *written* contexts because this targets a larger audience. The print medium is powerful because unlike speech, it transcends the bounds of space and time.

French and Fus’ha compete as high varieties in Morocco for different reasons. Fus’ha possesses value by virtue of being elevated beyond the reach of the public, utilitarian realm. French, on the other hand, derives its value by facilitating access to an international job market. The essential difference between the two are their utility, and how this utility transfers into the oral realm (as does French) or does not (as with Fus’ha). Representing Darija - a “public” and “utilitarian” variety of Arabic that is deeply rooted in the “local” - in Latin script makes Darija more accessible and visible to “global” audiences. Leila is strongly opposed to this in all forms of media and advertising, as she explicitly argues that Darija is “a quotidian language – communication between people, but not on television. Television is the image of society!” To display the local variety on a stage that is seen by non-local audiences is judged inappropriate because it does not export the “image of society” that Leila identifies with: the “masses” of Morocco.

III. The “preservation” of Hassani, the language of the Western Sahara

Chapter 1, Article 5 of the amended constitution now reads:

The State works for the preservation of Hassani, as an integral component of the Moroccan cultural unity, as well as the protection of the speakers [of it] and of the practical cultural expression of Morocco.¹⁷

Hassani’s speech community is considerably smaller than Tamazight’s, which explains why the latter was granted status of “an official language of the State” while Hassani was not. However, the fact of mentioning the State’s “preservation” and “protection” of Hassani and its speakers alludes to Morocco’s claim to the Western Sahara to “emphasize Morocco’s territorial integrity” (Elinson 2013: 717).

Only one informant, Souad, could understand some Hassani because her father was a merchant who worked primarily in the south of Morocco. The rest admitted to having very little knowledge about Hassani. Descriptions relied heavily on the words “desert,” “very far,” “Sahara,” “south of Morocco,” “marginalization,” and one emphatic “no idea!” Hassani speakers are not as widely dispersed, as are speakers of Tamazight, which accounts for some of this uncertainty and lack of exposure. Reda, a filmmaker who travels frequently, was the only informant who had had first hand experience with Hassani-speakers. He told me, “it’s pure Arab. I know people who speak Hassaneya,¹⁸ they consider themselves pure Arabs, real Arabs. And Hassaneya is not Berber, it’s Arab. They call everyone to the north Berber.”

¹⁷ Jefri J. Ruchti’s official English translation of the draft text of the Constitution adopted at the Referendum of 1 July 2011.

¹⁸ Hassani and Hassaneya are used interchangeably.

This distinction is quite significant, as it reveals the subjective construction of ethnicity and boundaries that citizens create to separate the national community into smaller categories. Reda's comment, "They call everyone to the north Berber," points to Hassani's delegitimization of Middle and Northern Atlas Moroccans who identify as Arab. Hassani-speakers are characterized here as dismissive of Moroccans who have mixed Arab and Amazigh heritage. In recognizing Hassani as part of "the diverse Moroccan cultural expression," the Moroccan state is expanding its definition of national identity as one in which multiple languages constitute "one authentic patrimony" (Ruchti 2011).

IV. "I am not Amazigh, I am Moroccan... unfortunately, Moroccans are not Arabs."¹⁹

Morocco's Berber languages - Tamazight, Tashelhit, and Tarifit - are at the heart of a script controversy since the King's 2011 decree elevated Tamazight to the status of "an official language of the State, being common patrimony of *all Moroccans* without exception" (Ruchti 2011, emphasis added). For many within the Moroccan Berber community, Arabization policies have been perceived as a threat to pre-Arab indigenous languages. Persistent marginalization has fueled the fight for increasing minority representation by demanding their language be used in schools, in the media and government. While historians agree that Moroccans have a "predominantly Berber origin" and many Berber dynasties ruled Morocco (i.e. the Barghwatas, the Almohads, and the Almoravids), the Berber face of Morocco has long been hidden beneath an Arab mask (Sadiqi 2003:45).

¹⁹ Leila, personal communication.

In 1991, however, the Agadir Charter for Linguistic and Cultural Rights laid out that “Morocco’s cultural identity was a plural one, whose oldest and most deep-rooted components were the Amazighi language, literature, and arts” (Maddy-Wietzman 2011:118). This charter publicly condemned the marginalization of Berbers at the hand of the Moroccan state, criticizing it for representing Amazigh language and culture as “symbolic products of the disadvantaged rural world” (ibid). It proceeded to demand two things: (1) the recognition of Tamazight as a national language alongside Arabic, and (2) the “complete development” of Tamazight, including increased visibility in the media and education system.

Since then, growing Amazigh activism has pushed the Moroccan government to implement official policies promoting Berber linguistic and cultural rights. This constitutes a considerable shift in attitude since the days of Morocco’s law on the Civil Registry banning Berber Moroccans from giving their children Berber names because these were thought to lack “Moroccan character” (Human Rights Watch, 2009). This ban was lifted in April 2013.

In August 1994, the late King Hassan II publicly advocated for the teaching of Berber in primary schools, issuing a public statement that “the three dialects are part of the components of our authenticity... It is essential, at least at the primary level, to provide slots for the teaching of our dialects” (Benitez Fernandez, De Ruiter, & Tamer 2012:85). Indeed, several informants echo this argument, mentioning the role of Tamazight as being “a part of a whole.” Note, however, the decision to use the term “dialect.” It was not until 2003, under the leadership of King Mohamed VI, that 317 primary schools began teaching first-year classes in Berber (Usher 2003). “Tamazight TV,” a government-owned news channel broadcasted in the three Berber varieties, has also been introduced as one of the eight national channels.

On October 17, 2001, King Mohamed VI created IRCAM, the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture, whose major project has been to revitalize Amazigh languages. Public discourse often presents Tamazight as a strictly oral language, when in fact it possesses a very old script called Tifinagh which has been used and lost many times throughout Berber history due to displacements and political oppression. IRCAM's director, Ahmed Boukous, elaborates:

... the Amazighophone communities have since High Antiquity used a specific writing, Libyc or Tifinagh, one of the first phonogrammatic writings of humanity. Similarly, these communities have borrowed the writing systems of the communities with which they have been in contact, depending on historical circumstances" (Boukous 2011: 211).

IRCAM's efforts to codify Tamazight into a written standard has resulted in what is now referred to as Neo-Tifinagh, a standardized national variety that collapses the orally diverse group of Tamazight, Tarifit, and Tashelhit into one written form. The term "Tamazight" now serves as an umbrella term, encompassing these three main Berber varieties. Despite having similar morpho-syntactic structures, each of the three varieties possess different lexicons and phonologies and are therefore not always mutually intelligible - in which case, Darija is used. In general, Tamazight is still more widely used in rural areas, where it serves as the medium within the domain of the family and in the street.

All of my informants resided in the urban center of Rabat, so their perspectives do not encompass those living in the more rural communities of Morocco. Three years after the Constitution was altered to include Tamazight as an official national language of Morocco, many Moroccans - Arab and Berber alike - still express doubt that this move will constructively address the marginalization of Berber Moroccans. Of course, this move is fundamentally

reorienting Morocco's construction of boundaries, notably those of ethnic difference within national identity. It is particularly interesting to see the ways in which Tamazight is discussed in racialized ethnic terms, with frequent mention of "origins," "roots," "descent," "the past," "mixed," and "something in our blood."

Max Weber (1968:389) defines ethnic groups as those that "entertain a subjective belief in their common descent," highlighting that "it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists." Though ethnic communities may be *imagined*, they are not *false*, for perceptions define the very boundaries of collective identity (Nagel 1994). I would argue that the way Moroccans imagine their "Berberness" or "Arabness" is in a period of transition as the increased visibility of Tamazight in the public sphere is reshaping discourses on Moroccan identity. Ethnicity may be "primarily processual rather than inherited" (Lepri 2006:70), but it is presented as a natural, timeless category in national rhetoric.

Simo, a 24-year-old born and raised in an Amazigh village, exposes the process of self-identification: "My mother is of Amazighi origins. Plus, even though my father is Arab, I only met my father's family once. They live in the Sahara, it's very far... So now, I feel that I am more Amazigh than Arab." While Simo's acknowledges his mixed heritage, the emotive aspects of his upbringing cause him to favor one identity over the other. Both Simo and Fatima, a Chleuh (Tashelhit-speaking Berber) informant, admitted that hearing their Berber makes them cry. Notice the striking parallelism between these two statements:

Simo: "When I hear Tamazight music, I cry. It's my mother."

Farah: "When I listen to Tashelhit now, I cry. I remember my parents."

For Simo and Fatima, their “mother tongue” strongly evokes the family (especially “mother’s tenderness”), the beauty of the Atlas region, and childhood memories. The feminization of Tamazight, Berbers, and rural landscapes is a recurring theme that contributes to understandings of “origins” - notably birthplaces - as important components of ethnic identity. As Fatima says, “Tamazight is my roots, my parents, my culture, my land.” Fatima Sadiqi (2003) and Moha Ennaji (2005) point out that “mother tongues” are marginalized in Morocco for “they are not treated as full-fledged languages, and their status is reminiscent of woman’s social status” (Ennaji 2005: 230).

The King’s decision to recognize Tamazight in the Moroccan constitution during the ethnic tensions of the Arab Spring demonstrates brilliant politics, for Tamazight’s highly emotional power establishes a foundation for strong subnationalist sentiment. My informants shared perspectives that revealed conflicting narratives regarding the construction of ethnic and linguistic identity. For the self-identified Arabs, Tamazight belongs to all Moroccans - as stated in the new constitution. They describe it with words like “rural,” “nature,” “outside,” and “distant,” equating it to an impersonal, extractable natural resource available to all co-nationals. Inherent in this perception is what several informants express explicitly, namely that - in the words of Mohammed Issa - Tamazight is “not used.” Tamazight, like ore, exists “outside,” ever accessible for those with power to take it out of its context for some profit. Farah’s comment provides a good example:

Tamazight is a language of Moroccans, not only the people who are ‘originally’ Amazigh. This isn’t about apartheid politics. To me, I think it is my language, and I have the same right as someone whose father or mother is Amazigh.

For the self-identified Berbers, on the other hand, Tamazight is inherited and not appropriate for wider, non-Berber audiences. This stance is likely a result of (1) imposed, written languages influencing the way Berbers value (and devalue) their Tamazight, (2) the low economic capital of Tamazight in the job market, and (3) purposeful Amazighi retention of Tamazight from the Arabs, who for a long time were seen as colonizers. In addition to words such as “family,” “roots,” “the country,” and “identity,” these informants also mention “racism,” “inequality” and “marginalization.” Albert Memmi, a Tunisian Jew of Berber ancestry, wrote during the Tunisian independence movement that:

The colonized’s mother tongue, that which is sustained by his feelings, emotions, and dreams, that in which his tenderness and wonder are expressed, thus that which holds the greatest emotional impact, is precisely the one which is the least valued. It has no statue in the country or in the concert of peoples. If he wants to obtain a job, make a place for himself, exist in the community and the world, he must first bow to the language of his masters (Memmi 1967:107).

Indeed, for the Berbers of Morocco, this can be applied to Arabic as well as French, even English. The official codification of Tamazight into Neo-Tifinagh, however, is changing the younger generation’s understanding of Tamazight. Formal transmission in classroom settings is elevating it to more equal footing with Morocco’s other formally taught, written languages. Twenty-year-old Oumaima says that “Tamazight, it’s official language here in Morocco, and so we have to write it, we have to conjugate verbs like Arabic.” Explicit grammar instruction constitutes a key difference in the way Moroccan languages are acquired and subsequently valued differently, notably in deciding upon the power-laden terms ‘language’ or ‘dialect.’ Of my twelve informants, only three defined Tamazight as a dialect. One of these - Fatima - is in

fact Berber herself. A very telling exchange took place between her and her daughter, Hanaan, during the interview.

Fatima: ... for me, it's a dialect. It's not a language, it's a dialect. But they decided to make it a principal language in Morocco. It's mixed between French, English, and Arabic. How is that a language?!

Hanaan: But *Maman*, Berber existed before the French came. It is a language!

Fatima: Berbers came from Al-Sham [Syria] in the beginning. *They* were the real Arabs.

The conflict lies in the competition over 'purity' v. 'origin' as possessors of higher symbolic capital in ethnic identity construction. As discussed earlier regarding Darija, the mixture of languages - 'impurity' - is cited as a primary reason for labeling Tamazight a dialect. Hanaan, however, calls upon an alternative source of deriving authority: 'origin.' Fatima responds by tracing the history of Berbers even further than Hanaan had attempted to do. Fatima qualifies the legitimacy of Berbers by stating that, because they arrived in Morocco from Syria²⁰ before the Muslim conquerors did, Berbers are "the real Arabs." Origins constitute an important aspect of nationality for Berber Moroccans, as it rivals the Arab newcomers. Reda aptly points out the irony of Morocco's title as an Arab country: "In Morocco, we always call ourselves an Arab country. But we are not an Arab country, we are mixed between Arab... and Berber."

In 2007, the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which accelerated Moroccan activists' efforts to push for full implementation of Tifinagh in the public sphere. Morocco is the first North African country to have officially recognized its indigenous languages, but my informants expressed polarizing perspectives on the government's strategies to codify Tamazight. Overall, self-identified Berbers argued that while "it gives us

²⁰ This is highly contestable, since western North Africa is believed to have been settled by Berbers as early as 10,000 B.C (Ilahiane 2006:112).

more rights,” they believe Tifinagh script was chosen by the government “to complicate things” (Fatima and Hussein, respectively). All four of my Berber informants shared that they would prefer for the script to resemble Arabic more, because “Tifinagh is very complicated” and “Latin words or Arabic words are easier than Tifinagh.” Fatima, who was the only Berber informant to deny Tamazight the status of language, argued that “Arabic is enough... because [it is] the language of our religion.” Even Rachid, who engages in Amazigh activism, said that this “new system” will only “marginalize the language much more than it was before because you simply make it local, you make it regional, you don’t make it universal.” Amazighi activism is divided on this issue, as Rachid reveals that “some activists were really into this idea of having its *own* identity, its *own* symbols” but, in his opinion, “they killed it.” The disagreement is fundamentally nationalist: should the Berbers emphasize their similarity or their difference? This debate is amplified by the script controversy of Tifinagh which, unlike Arabic, is written left to right, a characteristic of European languages. Badrdine commented on this saying, “The Amazighis want to show that they are modern because their language goes left to right, like French or English.”

My self-identified Arab informants also acknowledged, as Mohammed Issa said, that Tifinagh is “more political than functional.” Overall, however, they express approval of Tifinagh revitalization because, in the words of Badrdine, “It accomplished the Moroccan identity because it complements it as a major constituent of the cultural heritage of Moroccans, or Morocco as a whole.” Farah echoes this sentiment in equally ideological terms, saying that Tifinagh is linked to Berber folklore and craft, for “a language is part of a culture, part of a whole.” Unlike my Berber informants, it is clear that for my Arab informants, the grapheme of Tifinagh is *not* arbitrary but rather represents, as Farah insists, “the *character* of Tamazight.” This harkens back to Irvine and Gal’s observation that the belief in a primordial relationship between language and

the “particular ‘spirit’ of a nation” gave way to the myth of monolingual normalcy (Irvine and Gal 2000: 51). Arab Moroccans evidently do not experience Tifinagh in the same way, as my Arab informants rely on a much more symbolic argument than did my Berber informants, who criticized the limited functionality of Tifinagh. It may simply be that these informants are not so radical. In *Revue Tifinagh*, an academic French language journal founded in 1993 that published research on Amazighi language, literature and linguistics, Mohamed Boudhan writes: “He who truly loves Amazigh culture must first love the mother of this culture, which is the amazighe language” (1995: 53). This love of language evidently does not always translate into love of script.

As Fishman outlines in *Language and Nationalism*, language provides the link to a glorious past, a link to authenticity: “the mother tongue itself is an aspect of the soul” (Fishman 1972: 46). The Amazighis are considered to be “the real Moroccans,” for their language was spoken by the people long before the first Muslim invasion and subsequent Arab conquest. As a result, they are seen as embodying tradition and continuity in Morocco’s national imagination. The Amazighi’s language is therefore an instrument of deeply nationalistic power, for it transforms Tamazight into an icon of another equally Moroccan “glorious past.” Industrial urban life depends on widespread literacy of the vernacular to coordinate the labor force. For this reason, Tamazight codification does not yet possess economic capital but rather represents “a diversity that gives unity, not partition” (Leila). Furthermore, it possesses symbolic capital that builds solidarity among the different Berber groups (Amazigh, Chleuh, and Rif). Rachid, who is Amazigh, explains:

... if you go, for instance, to a hanout [shop] and you talk Berber, you talk Tamazight, you will be served quickly and the guy will laugh at you and be kind to you. But if you

speaking Darija he will just serve you like any other people... Because most grocery stores are Chleuh, from the south, Tashelhit-speaking. If you say madzakkin [how are you?], they would serve you as quick as they can with a smile.

Fatima, who is Chleuh, confirms this comment when she revealed to me that all the small grocers in her neighborhood give her discounts on account of her Tashelhit accent. The power of Tamazight, it seems, may not reside in economic strength or international recognition, but rather in its ability to embody authenticity and serve as a site of resistance against Arabic.

V. “For the Maghrebian, French is not, strictly speaking a foreign language, not really.”²¹

Moroccan linguist and political activist Moha Ennaji writes that:

For all practical purposes, French is used as a second language. The longstanding French colonial policy to spread French language and culture in Morocco has resulted in the firm consolidation of French in vital areas like governments, education, the private sector, and the media. Despite being a colonial language, French is still widely appreciated by both the ruling elite and the population (Ennaji 6: cf Chami 1987; Elbiad 1991).

Indeed, despite some disapproval of the lasting predominance of French, Morocco has maintained its ex-colonizer’s language for the purpose of “building contacts with the West” (Ennaji 2002: 5). Ennaji calls it the “vehicle of science, technology, and modern culture,” which seems fitting considering its high visibility in education, administration, industry, banking, and commerce. Morocco is also an active member of the International Organization of “La Francophonie,” which celebrates the “shared linguistic space” held by French around the world with a declared mission of “promoting the French language” as well as “peace, democracy,

²¹ Kilito 2013: 19

human rights” and “sustainable development²².” Souad, a hairdresser from the medina, aptly points out that French is enforced in a top-down manner because the elite who run the country speak French better than Arabic. Publishing government forms and legal documents in French facilitates management for ministers, but places unfair pressure on Moroccans who have not had the privilege of a private, French-based education. Souad displays sharp awareness of this imposed linguistic hierarchy:

It’s the global market that imposes languages. One day we’ll be strong in the economy, and we will be the ones who will impose our language on others. We’ll say, “In job interviews, you must speak Arabic!”

Some of my informants argue that the strength of French in Morocco implies the weakening of Fus’ha, which continues to be restricted to “traditional,” “religious,” and “cultural” domains. Others, however, posit that French-Standard Arabic bilingualism is the best option for the development of the country. The most telling theme that emerges in my interviews is the presence of a distinctive French linguistic persona, one that is divided on the basis of the process of acquisition. In general, French is considered to be the language of the educated, wealthy elite. A difference lies, however, in whether or not you “grow up in a family that *speaks* French” or you “grow up in a family that *studied* French” (Badrine).

Those that grow up speaking French at home with their parents tend to benefit from having a “good accent,” which translates into very tangible economic rewards, as one acquaintance told me that his Parisian accent gives him considerable advantage in any job interview in Morocco. These francophone Moroccans are sometimes criticized for using their

²² <http://www.francophonie.org/-Qu-est-ce-que-la-Francophonie-.html>

French to demonstrate that they “belong to a certain social rank... just to show off” (Hussein). Most of my informants recognized, however, that Moroccans educated in private schools simply feel more comfortable speaking French, and that is deemed acceptable.

Others, however, acquire French in public schools and do not develop the same French linguistic persona as those who acquire French from their parents. Rachid says it perfectly: “There is French, and there is *French*.” The French of the Moroccan public school system acts as an equalizing variety of French, as it is officially accessible to all, but the French of the elite challenge this by exacerbating class differences with their quasi-“native” accent. This dichotomy has the effect of normalizing French as the medium in which economic capital is mediated - and Moroccans across the class spectrum engage in this exchange of symbolic capital. As Mohammed Issa explains, “We use French to be professional, at work and in communication. It gives weight... even though I am against this... unfortunately, when you speak French well, it makes you more valued.”

Hussein and Hanaa illustrate the sensation of instant status shifting that occurs when they use French. For Hussein, speaking French must be done “within the French culture,” which dictates that you “put yourself - like, inside a certain atmosphere in which you use the language and culture interchangeably... You don’t feel French, but you - not 100 percent - but you find yourself thinking in a French way.” Speaking French clearly defines Hussein’s experiences in a markedly different way than were he to speak Darija, as he expresses the need to embody the “French culture.” Similarly, Hanaa admits that her French persona seems like a completely different person: “I don’t feel the same... I feel just, like... another Hanaa who is speaking when I speak French.”

For some, like Hanaa, this status performance through French feels somewhat artificial. In light of the lasting colonial discourse which dictates that, in the words of Souad, “rich people speak a lot of French, and poor people speak Darija,” it is understandable that Hanaa - who comes from a low income family - feels out of place in her French persona. For others, however, the shift in status is welcomed warmly. Leila discloses that when she speaks “correct” French, “people consider [her] to be an intellectual.” This is a very common postcolonial phenomenon. In his acclaimed postcolonial critique *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Franz Fanon examines the psychopathology of colonialism, writing that:

Every colonized people finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing (colonizing) nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards [and fluency in mother country's language] (Fanon 1986:18).

It may come as no surprise, then, that the words my informants used to describe French included “civilization,” “colonization,” “professional,” “more valued,” “very strict,” “the elite,” “etiquette,” “elegant,” “prestige,” “class,” “the aristocracy,” “social climbing,” “foreigners,” “theater,” “literature,” “novels,” and “Moroccan immigrants in France.” Different words for prestige emerge conflated with written forms of language, indexing an association of text - as opposed to orality - with a high value. As the language of both the upper class and the “outer class” - foreigners - French effectively collapses the distinction between the national and transnational elite. The possession of a particular variety of French makes them one and the same. In this way, French is, as Rachid says, a “foreign language that *became* Moroccan.”

The French language now serves as a medium for discussion of topics that are deemed inappropriate in conservative circles of Moroccan society. It is as though codeswitching to

French projects the impurity of the subject matter onto an outside space. Reda, for instance, explained to me that, “certain subjects you *have* to speak French. Partying, women, *hshouma* [shameful] things... If you say it in Arabic, you don’t feel good. But if you say it in French, it’s more acceptable.” Similarly, Badrdine asserts that swearing is more excusable in French, because “language plays a role in personality,” elaborating that he acts in a different way when he speaks a different language. Simo and Leila both insist that French words are important for establishing romantic interest and intimacy. When Simo is with his “dudes,” he speaks Darija with them. However, “when we meet girls,” he says, “we can mix in a bit of French! In middle and high school, it means you are modern and open-spirited. That’s what girls think.” The symbolic capital of French as a language of romance has tangible consequences in courting. Leila reveals an added social class element, condemning Arabic pet names of being “heavy” and insisting on French pet names: “Me, when I say to my husband, “my love,” I don’t say directly “habib.” No, I say “mon amour” in French, “cherie,” “mon joujou”... I would never say “habib,” it’s heavy!” Romance, intimacy, swearing, partying, and “shameful” things are relegated to French because of associations with characteristics of French nationals.

These ideologies also result in huge consequences in the school system, and not only in the acquisition of languages. Farah, who was educated in a French mission school, tells of her confusion learning about “Our ancestors, the Gauls.”²³ In her after-school Arabic tutoring sessions, by contrast, she would learn about the original inhabitants of Morocco, “our ancestors, the Berbers.” Farah exclaims, “I grew up at some point thinking that ‘les Gaulois’ was the French word for ‘al Berber’, the Arabic word. I mean, how can you explain to me that these are

²³ Phrase coined by French historian Ernest Lavisse.

my ancestors and these are my ancestors? I thought it was the same people!” Albert Memmi touches upon this phenomenon in *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1967):

The memory which is assigned to him is certainly not that of his people. The history which is taught him is not his own. He knows who Colbert or Cromwell was, but he learns nothing about Khaznadar; he knows about Joan of Arc, but not about El Kahena. Everything seems to have taken place outside his country (Memmi 1967:105).

This, in turn, has the effect of essentially orientalizing Moroccans, posing them on a stage of ahistorical nonprogress. Furthermore, it demonstrates the ‘crisis’ that Farah describes, which articulates that “your French part is better than your Moroccan part.” To effectively illustrate the subtle ways hierarchies can be imposed and rejected, I share Farah’s story of a rebellious experience in her French mission high school:

When I was fourteen years old, I wanted to rebel against all the French system... I went in [to retrieve my diploma] and there was a “surveillant general” – I don’t know how to say this in English, because it’s a very different system. Anyway, I had to sign. I got there, and I decided to sign in Arabic. And his reaction was the worst, because he said, “You cannot sign like this.” When you are a teenager, you already have problems. Imagine that you already have an identity crisis. I decided to speak Arabic in the school with my peers. Darija. It was a decision made. Why not? It’s our language. During the break, I have the right to speak whatever I want. When I signed, he said, “This is not a signature. What is this graboullis [scribble]?” I said, “It’s my signature in Arabic.” He said, “You can’t do it.” And I said, “Well you can refuse it. I don’t want the diploma.” I told everyone behind me to sign in Arabic. And they did. Many, many of them – not everyone – but many of us signed in Arabic. To me, this was very revealing. This guy, sitting there,

was a colonizer more than anything else. This was like... I will not study French. I will not go to France to study, and I will not study French. I want to do something else.

It was the click that made me feel that – not that I hate the language, not at all. But I hated the whole thing, and I felt really... the oppression. I got accepted to La Sorbonne with a grant to study Arabic. At La Sorbonne! And I refused to go... I wanted to study Arabic in the Arab world. When I went in to get my dossier from the French mission, they sent it to an office in Rabat and decided not to give it to me because I decided not to study in France. For them, this was suicidal, to go to the Arabic department in Morocco. That same “surveillant general” said, “Your parents have wasted their money to send you to the best school system and now you are going to ruin it by going to a Moroccan university.” He wasn’t the only one. And my Arabic teacher then started laughing at me. He said, “You think you’re going to pass the exams?” He started laughing at me. Even if I have to do my first year ten times in my life, I will do it.

My mom was like, oh my god. She was so scared because she knew it was her influence. But I did it. I had an ulcer. I got sick. I lost twenty pounds that year. The first year was the most difficult ever. Second year was still difficult. By the third year, I was fine. It was a lot of work, which is not the case of people who go to the university in Morocco, especially the Arabic department. They study for the exams. People said, why is she studying in between? And then I got my bachelor’s degree with “Mention Bien,” which is very good. My crisis was the fact that... Everything that was “you” was being denied. And when you’re a teenager, that’s when you rebel anyway. It could have been something else, I don’t know.

*

Farah's story is exceptional, as she later confided that "there is no one in the history of the French mission of Morocco who has done this." The experience, however, is not unique. Many Moroccan students face extenuating difficulties upon arriving at university, largely because they have spent their whole lives being socialized - culturally and academically - with a linguistic code that does not transfer. Two other informants, Badrdine and Mohammed Issa, also commented on the language-based challenges of transitioning from secondary school to university. After explaining, Mohammed Issa exclaimed, "it's so hard to switch [from Arabic to French], you have to be a genius!" He experienced difficulty most notably with math and science, which is taught in Arabic in secondary school but in French at the university level. Badrdine, who majored in English Studies and therefore transitioned into English rather than French, admitted that "[he] was just watching, not taking notes, it was a disaster." He eventually had to repeat his first year. Upon graduating, Badrdine took a year before searching for employment to perfect his American accent, in hopes of travelling to the U.S. to work. His efforts are commendable:

I was recording TV shows like Oprah, Jerry Springer, MTV shows, Dismissed. I was watching it because I had something in mind. I was repeating words, sentences, phrases, ten, twenty, thirty times to get the accent... the American one is cool.

Badrdine and Farah's extra personal efforts demonstrate the difficulty overcoming the structural barriers of language difference in the Moroccan education system, which are far from resolved. Abdelali Bentahila's 1983 book *Language Attitudes among Arabic-French Bilinguals in Morocco* analyzed data from 432 Moroccan subjects between the ages of 17 to late 30s who

had had a bilingual French-Arabic education. He argued that there exists a communication gap between language planning officials and students, which contributes to repeated shortcomings in education policies and language planning. Not much has changed since in terms of this language rift between secondary schooling and universities. This structural barrier poses challenges for Moroccan youth educated in the Arabic-taught public school system, effectively limiting their possibilities for success in higher education

VI. “Spanish is not really a language; it’s really French transformed.”²⁴

Spain and Morocco have a long, intertwined history. Still spoken in the northern areas formerly occupied by Spain during the protectorate years, Spanish has not been retained in Morocco to nearly the same degree that French has been. In Morocco’s postcolonial linguistic climate, Spanish has declined to the status of minor foreign language. However, it is still present and maintained largely as a result of Morocco’s economic relationship with Spain.

It is interesting to note that despite Spanish being the language of another ex-colonizer of Morocco, informants did not express similar beliefs regarding Spanish - many even doubted its status as a language at all. Reda considers Spanish to be “more of a spoken language,” and Fatima outright denied its status as language, saying that it’s “really French transformed.” She elaborated, condemning Fus’ha to the status of dialect because “a dialect, you find a lot of languages in it. Like Spanish! It has Arabic, it has French... when you understand French you

²⁴ Fatima, personal communication.

can understand Spanish.” Again, these comments regarding orality and mixture parallel previous statements about Darija, suggesting an overall lower prestige factor for Spanish.

VII. “I don’t speak English to show that I am civilized. Civilization is not a language.”²⁵

The relatively recent infiltration of English into Morocco has led some Moroccans to question the status of French as their principal medium of communication with the international community. In Morocco, English is increasingly popular in the fields of education, international trade, and scientific research (Ennaji 2002: 6). Initially introduced by American soldiers when Morocco harbored American bases in the 1940s and the 1950s, English enjoys a prestigious status in Morocco because it is believed to carry no colonial overtones (Ennaji 2005:16). This important distinction, compounded with the more informal methods of English language teaching, have led to the prevalent stereotype that - as many of my informants stated - English is “easy,” both to learn and to speak. Furthermore, English is not as strongly associated with specific nation-states and corresponding linguistic personae, unlike French or spoken variants of Arabic, as Hanaa reveals: “I don’t feel different when I speak English, but I feel different when I speak French. And I feel different when I speak, like I said, Egyptian or other Arabic languages.”

The most often cited words used to characterize English were, indeed, “easy,” “open,” and “accessible,” as well as “the number one language of the world,” “the greatness of [the U.S. and the U.K.],” “conquest around the world,” “civilization,” “music,” “poetry,” “literature,” and “Shakespeare.” Despite the mention of civilization and conquest, English was never experienced

²⁵ Hussein, personal communication.

as a colonizer language in Morocco but rather as one that was interpreted as accessible to all. As Souad says, “Before it was for rich people. Now, everyone must speak English.”

The primary theme that emerged from these interviews suggests a growing competition between French and English. Reda refers to “a new elite, a much better elite, who speak English.” The future, he argues, “is English, not French.” My informants describe English in these two ways, locating the source of its value in its international functionality - “*everyone* speaks and understands English” - as well as its expected growth in the future - “English will maintain its position forever” (Mohammed Issa and Badrdine, respectively). Oumaima reveals that if she were to change the system, she would change it to English, not to French, because “the newest methods in education or in scientist, it’s in English, it’s not in French. So we have to read or to learn from the source.”

Reda, Badrdine and Rachid are much more certain about the imminent displacement of French in favor of English in Morocco. Reda says he is “sure,” for it is “just a matter of time.” Badrdine, who majored in English studies and admits to having a soft spot for the English language, argues that English is “a more universal language than French,” so French can’t even really compete. Rachid take the argument a step further, remarking that the popularity of English is due to the growing accessibility of technology: “Now, young people are using more English than French. Technology is based basically on English... I think the functionality of English is much more than French so young people are attracted to English and it’s growing in the universities.”

There is a lot to be said about the new technological imperialism that imposes English through limited options on computer keyboards, phone keypads, and the like. By restricting the medium through which language can be expressed and shared, transnational companies are not only contributing to the pervasive spread of English and Latin script, but are also changing the face of Darija. Additionally, the popularity of English language entertainment is contributing to the growth of Darija transcriptions in Arabizi. Fatima Sadiqi (1991) elaborates that English has increasingly been actively promoted by public and private educational institutions, mass media, and the tourism industry. Television channels, radio stations, and the film industry are especially liable to use English to appeal to the “international youth culture” (Fishman 1977: 118), as Sadiqi notes that English is acquiring a “snob appeal” due to the indexicality of the English language and cosmopolitanism. “Pop songs on international hit parades, usually delivered in English,” Sadiqi writes, “are often used as a means to teach vocabulary, and students seem to enjoy this very much” (Sadiqi 1991: 104).

Indeed, the popularity of American music and cinema is not a negligible factor in assessing the forces that spread this “new linguistic order” of the English language (Fishman 1998: 28). Almost half of my informants admitted to preferring American movies and songs. Oumaima enjoys listening to Demi Lovato, the Jonas Brothers, Selena Gomez and “a little bit [of] Justin Bieber, but I don’t like [him] *so* much.” Rachid watches movies predominantly in English, he says, because he prefers to “watch the film from its source, no subtitles.” There is a certain element of pride in being able to understand English well enough to not need subtitles, but also a reticence from translations into Arabic, which would be represented in Standard Arabic, giving the film a more formal tone.

Of most interest to understanding Moroccan ideologies regarding second language acquisition, however, is the clear acknowledgment that informants actively use media as a tool for language improvement. Hanaa, who recently graduated high school, prefers English to French and even writes in her personal diary using English. While she did have formal lessons at an American Language Center (of which there are ten in Morocco), Hanaa says that she learned most of it by way of movies and songs. The English language as a medium for transferring creative, artistic expression also leads to, as Ahmed Boukous writes, the transfer of “the cultural universe that has generated it by participating in the restructuring of the cultural model that imports it” (Boukous 2011: 41). Associations of the English language with “openness” - similar to aforementioned associations of the French language with romance - leads to interesting assumptions about what is culturally acceptable when speaking English, as Hussein reveals:

Like, you cannot say in Moroccan Arabic, “This is stupid. What you are saying is stupid.” But in English it is normal to say, “This is a stupid question!” I can say this in English because I take the word “stupid” within the English culture, and it doesn’t hurt... But in Arabic if you translate the word “stupid” and you say it in Moroccan Arabic, it hurts! It doesn’t get the same meaning.

In his English linguistic persona, Hussein feels more entitled to use expressions that would be considered rude in his Moroccan Arabic persona. Like with French, English becomes an external space upon which unacceptable behavior becomes reinterpreted as more permissible. This, in turn, solidifies beliefs about what “Moroccan” means in opposition.

7. Mapping the Linguistic Landscapes

“If only the mother tongue was allowed some influence on current social life, or was used across the counters of government offices, or directed the postal service; but this is not the case. The entire bureaucracy, the entire court system, all industry hears and uses the colonizer’s language. Likewise, highway markings, railroad signs, street signs and receipts make the colonized feel like a foreigner in his own country.”²⁶

The term “linguistic landscape” was coined in the seminal work of Landry and Bourhis (1997), which examined the ways language represented in the public domain reveals much about people’s language attitudes, especially in linguistically contested regions. They identify prominent elements of the linguistic landscape as “public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings” (Landry and Bourhis 1997: 25). Subsequent scholars have contributed in diverse ways to what Durk Gorter calls “a new approach to multilingualism,” which is still being developed (Gorter 2006).

In their introduction to *Linguistic Landscape: Expanding the Scenery* (2009), Elana Shohamy and Durk Gorter define linguistic landscape (LL) as “language in the environment, words and images displayed and exposed in public spaces” (Shohamy and Gorter 2009:1). Language has essentially two different lives, they argue, for it is both “used by people, spoken and heard,” as well as “represented and displayed” for functional and symbolic purposes alike (ibid.). Representations of sounds and images displayed publicly constitute a kind of “linguistic revolution” because the rules of the public space often defy the “official” declared policies (Shohamy and Gorter 2009:3). As Landry and Bourhis distinguish, there is a difference between

²⁶ Memmi, Albert. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.

private and government signs, each possessing different kinds of power. Private signs, for instance, include “commercial signs on storefronts and business institutions (e.g. retail stores and banks), commercial advertising on billboards, and advertising signs displayed in public transport and on private vehicles” (Landry and Bourhis 1997: 26).

Other scholars take interest in situating the representation and display of language within a much broader context. Adam Jaworski and Crispin Thurlow write in *Semiotic Landscapes: Language, Image, Space* (2010) that “the interplay between language, visual discourse, and the spatial practices and dimensions of culture” - in addition to the semiotic use of space and place - are shaped by “economic and political reorderings of post-industrial or advanced capitalism, intense patterns of human mobility, the mediatization of social life, and transnational flows of information, ideas and ideologies” (Jaworski and Thurlow 2010: 1). In other words, language is but one symbolic system that constructs a place - there are also “visual images, nonverbal communication, architecture and the built environment” (ibid., p. 2). Rather than focus on linguistic landscapes, Jaworski and Thurlow instead describe “semiotic landscapes” as “any (public) space with visible inscription made through deliberate human intervention and meaning making” (ibid.).

What unites these various scholars, however, is the understanding that the public display of a symbolic system - such as language - contains, produces, and reinforces power. Florian Coulmas argues, along with Roy Harris (1986), that from its inception, it is likely that writing was *communicative* rather than *private* for “some of its earliest functions are bound to public display (Coulmas 2009: 13). Language in the public space is of particular interest for understanding multilingualism, as Shohamy and Gorter point out that “language displayed in

public texts” serve as “sources for language learning” (Shohamy and Gorter 2009:3). Taking examples from ancient inscriptions, Coulmas links the beginning of writing with the beginning of urbanization, which together led to the emergence of the public sphere:

The first text that was put on view in open space was the seed of the public sphere, defined by Habermas (1991: 176) as a virtual or imaginary community “made up of private people gathered together as a public and articulating the needs of society with the state (Coulmas 2009: 13).

As such, LL research usually focuses on urban environments, where “complex forms of co-existence and interaction” require mediums of communication that, unlike speech, transcend the bounds of time and space (ibid.). As we will see with Tamazight, however, the prominence of written language in a public space does not always correlate with the “vitality of its speakers” (Jaworski and Thurlow 2010: 11). Representations of Darija are controversial, especially since they challenge the spoken medium through which it is usually performed in the public sphere. French, on the other hand, exercises power in a top-down manner. The visibility of a particular script on signs is an indicator of many overlapping forms of negotiating different kinds of power.

Aneta Pavlenko’s 2009 article “Language Conflict in Post-Soviet Linguistic Landscapes” emphasizes the importance of interpreting the diachronic “shift-in-progress” of linguistic landscapes in postcolonial states, which is valuable for studying Morocco since the post-constitutional amendment atmosphere is significantly altering the urban landscape. Pavlenko presents five important methodological processes regarding the evolution of public displays of language: (1) *language erasure*, the “deliberate removal of signage in a particular language”; (2) *language replacement*, where “a new language takes over the functions of a language that had

been eliminated”; (3) *language upgrading and downgrading*, a “change of language status in the public signage”; (4) *language regulation*, involving signs that “attempt to manipulate language choice and use through content”; and (5) *transgressive signs*, which “violate or subvert official norms in the choice of either script or language.” Pavlenko acknowledges the phenomenon of transgression is still “poorly understood” (Pavlenko 2009: 267).

In Morocco, three of these phenomena are particularly relevant: language upgrading, language regulation, and transgressive signs. During my time in Rabat, I photographed several potent examples of signs that reflect particular ideologies, carry functional as well as semiotic purposes, and legitimize rights for certain segments of the population. Furthermore, it is important to note that despite the discrepancies between, as Pavlenko aptly puts it, “language choices in public signage and actual language *practices*,” the linguistic landscape is nonetheless changing public perception of the languages used in Morocco (Pavlenko 2009: 270, emphasis added). By assessing these variations, we can expose the differences between “official” top-down language policies - reflected in signs on government buildings, for instance - and their impacts on individuals, which can be observed in bottom-up signs such as street posters (Cenoz and Gorter 2006: 68). These nuances are tremendously important for navigating the multilingual landscape of Morocco in order to “contextualize the public space within issues of identity and language policy of nations,” for a linguistic landscape is not a “neutral phenomenon but needs to be contextualized in a contested sphere of the ‘free’ space that ‘belongs to all’” (Shohamy and Gorter 2009: 4).

The Transgressive Sign: Arabizi

In “Darija and Changing Writing Practices in Morocco” (2013), Alexander E. Elinson argues that Morocco’s linguistic landscape has changed tremendously as a result of social, political, and technological changes in the last thirty years. “In print media, advertising, music, fictional writing, and literary translation,” Elinson writes, “darija is increasingly written in a variety of ways that point to a shift in perceptions of darija and in its linguistic role and potential uses in daily Moroccan life” (Elinson 2013: 715). This is not part of an organized movement, but is rather being propelled by a variety of actors, both local and foreign. These changes are reverberating in the press, literature, and media, especially advertising.



Figure 1. Ads promoting a Ramadan television series, *Mina*. Rabat, 2013.

The ads in Figure 1 are composed in Arabizi, using Latin script and numbers to write Darija. They contain messages referring to the various characters on *Mina*, a Moroccan television series that was aired during the month of Ramadan in summer 2013. The ads were posted all along Avenue Mohammed V, one of the central avenues in the popular part of downtown Rabat where many shops and businesses are located. This avenue is located perpendicular to one of the main entrances to the *medina*, the heart of the old city which predates the newer Protectorate-era parts of Rabat. The location, script, and purpose of these posters effectively target a young, middle-class Moroccan audience. As Brahim Chakrani writes in “Covert Language Attitudes: A New Outlook on the Sociolinguistic Space of Morocco”, these posters are solidifying the associations of Darija with “local identity” and “cultural authenticity” (Chakrani 2011: 168). They do this by (1) employing a “local” code (Darija) to refer to (2) a “local” show embedded in the cultural and religious site-specific representations of Ramadan in Morocco (*Mina*), displayed in a part of the city that (3) indexes pre-Protectorate Moroccan “cultural authenticity” (the medina). The meta-messages are superposed on three levels: code, content, and location.

The choice of Arabizi therefore constitutes a transgressive sign, for it subverts the norms in the choice of Standard Arabic or French in written media, instead attempting to align itself with what Charles Ferguson calls “the real thinking and feeling of the people” (Ferguson 1959: 437). In the words of Souad, “[Darija transcriptions] will reach all the categories of people [and] they will understand better.” By using Latin script to express messages in Darija to promote a local television series that represents Moroccan culture in a popular neighborhood, the *Mina* posters possess both functional as well as symbolic value. In terms of symbolism, they construct a site of resistance by placing Darija on equal footing with Latin script languages, emphasizing

modernity and technological fluency. This is reminiscent of the explosion of dictionaries in 18th century Europe, which legitimized vernaculars and elevated the status of their speaking communities. In terms of functionality, they alleviate the pressure that many young Moroccans feel is imposed on them with the formal Arabic script. Even Hussein, one of my informants in his early thirties, admits to struggling with Arabic script: “It’s harder... I can use Latin words easier than Arabic. It’s not our fault, it’s the fault of the government! We should have been taught this stuff as kids.” Several other informants expressed similar resentment toward the public education system for failing to teach them to type Arabic script on keyboards.

Beginning in the 1970s and accelerating in the 2000s, the growth of new technologies such as e-mail and texting have boosted the creative use of Darija in written contexts (Elinson 2013: 717). Despite the keyboard limitations that often restrict the choice of script, Moroccans are evidently using Arabizi in a way that challenges the perceived Westernization of the growing visibility of Latin script in the public sphere. As Mohammed Issa told me in his interview, “Darija changes. New words are always penetrating into our language. It’s alive, it develops, it changes.” As we see in the case of the *Mina* posters, Arabizi is in fact an icon of the changing public face of Latin script and the adaptive strength of Darija. By displaying it to communicate a Moroccan message to a Moroccan audience in a Moroccan neighborhood, these posters are promoting the adoption of the Latin script as a viable authentic and national alternative to Arabic. One of my informants, Badrdine, addresses the nuances in the script debate:

... it’s still very problematic. You cannot have one way of seeing this type of propaganda, for example billboards, saying we all like it or we all don’t like it. So you can have separate views, I think two different groups: those for and those against. Those for because they say we are Morocco, closer to Europe, closer to U.S., we have tourists and

just make it not only to Moroccans but also to people around who don't speak the language. But those who are against say we are in an Arab country so why don't we keep things Arabized, and everything should be Arabized instead of making it easier for other people to learn our language.

Badrdine's comment sheds light on the highly divisive nature of the changing landscape of Darija. A 2011 *Arab News* article entitled "Arabizi is destroying the Arabic language" exposes views of university students as well as teachers and business executives who echo Badrdine's observation (Ghanem 2011, Arab News). 21-year-old Miral Dibawy admits that, while Arabizi is "easier when typing on the internet and sending text messages," she also feels that relying on this script has weakened her writing proficiency in Modern Standard Arabic: "I was so addicted to this language when chatting and sending texts to my friends. When it came to a research paper, I was finding it hard to write in Arabic. I had to write in Arabizi first and then translated it into Arabic." University student Dina Jamal, on the other hand, speaks out against Arabizi, arguing for it to be used sparingly because of this weakening effect: "I do not care if Arabizi is modern or elegant, all I care about is protecting my mother language," adding that Arabizi is permissible in electronic communication but not elsewhere. This suggests a possible new dimension of linguistic landscape - virtual landscapes - with specific social rules that affect other realms of participants' linguistic lives.

The Darija debate is increasingly visible in the domains of electronic media, but it is also taking place in the contexts of the press, as well as of literature using Arabic script. Beginning in the late 1970s, a number of Darija newspapers and magazines began to appear. *Akhbar al-Suq* (Marketplace News) featured political cartoons and short articles, with the intention to "chronicle the lives of the 'little people,' speaking the language of the lumpenproletariat" (Elinson 2013: 718). *Khbar Bladna* (Our Country's News) was launched in 2002 with the stated purposes of

“delivering important information to Moroccans in an easily accessible language” and “helping to reduce illiteracy” (ibid.). The most high-profile publication, *Nishan* (Straight Up), was launched in 2006 and within three years of circulation rose to be Morocco’s top-selling weekly magazine. Its controversial topics ranging from sex, prostitution, drug use, government corruption, the monarchy, and religion attracted a large audience, but due to financial struggles and pressure from the government, *Nishan* was forced to cease publication in 2010 (ibid.).

The use of Darija in magazines and newspapers speaks to a wide popular audience, but the increasing use of Darija in novels suggests a concentrated effort to give it a ‘prestige’ factor by placing it within the medium traditionally dominated by Fus’ha. Like the *Mina* posters, this also constitutes a kind of transgressive sign, for the domain of literature in Morocco is usually dominated by foreign (European and Arab) writers. Regarding this phenomenon, Abdelfattah Kilito writes,

We know nothing of Moroccan literature, ancient or modern... We live on the idea that our native language is bastardized, degenerate, unworthy of literature, of writing. Granted, at home, we learned songs, stories, riddles, nursery rhymes, proverbs, maxims and idioms, but was this literature? It did not cross our minds, the question was not even asked... It was as though a proper literature was an incongruity or that Moroccans were incapable of producing one. (Kilito 2013:45)

These reflections parallel the comments my informants made regarding the value of Darija as a strictly oral means of communication, a “dialect” incapable of fulfilling higher functions - but this is clearly not the case. Alexander Elinson sheds light on the history of transcribing Darija, revealing that the debate can actually be traced quite far back:

Since the medieval period, Arab grammarians and literary critics have discussed the efficacy and permissibility of writing in colloquial Arabic. The appearance and subsequent writing of the strophic *muwashshah* and *zajal* lyric forms in 11th century Muslim Spain was initially met with resistance, or at least ambivalence, but by the 14th century these forms came to be widely praised and duly recorded in literary anthologies and histories. However, the debate surrounding what constitutes acceptable written literary expression continued (Elinson 2013: 717).

Judging from Morocco's ever-changing linguistic landscape and the increasingly globalized forces that contribute to its transformations, the debate will likely continue. Notions of class play a central role in this debate, for Darija as a language of "the people" holds less political and economic power than does French, the language of "the elite." The following sign will demonstrate one of the ways French is used in the linguistic landscape in a top-down manner that indexes political, legal, and secular power in the public space.

Language Regulation: French

During Ramadan, it is illegal for Muslim Moroccans to eat, drink, or smoke in public. Article 222 of the Moroccan Penal Code states that "anyone who is known for belonging to the religion of Islam and ostensibly breaks the fast in public during the time of fasting in Ramadan, without the reasons permitted by this religion risks between 1 and 6 months in prison and a fine."²⁷ Throughout the month of Ramadan, restaurants and cafés change their hours accordingly, opening only at the hour of the sunset *iftar* meal which breaks the fast. The only exception, as far as I experienced in the capital of Rabat, is McDonald's. Since 1992, McDonald's Morocco is a "100% Moroccan enterprise," - managed, staffed, and sourced locally - according to their

²⁷ Dahir n° 1-59-413

website²⁸. This sign was posted outside the door of the McDonald's in Agdal, a newer part of the city that was built during the Protectorate era. It is presently one of the wealthiest neighborhoods of Rabat, inhabited by many expatriates - mostly French - and the Moroccan elite. Located along the central shopping area of Avenue Fal Ould Oumeir, this establishment is commonly frequented by the upper-class residents of Agdal. The sign reads:



*McDo Ramadan Hours
7 days a week
10:30 am - 3:00 am*

*Dear customers,
the McDonald's Morocco family
wishes you a Blessed Ramadan*

*For on-site consumption
we wish to remind you that
eating in a public place
during the days of Ramadan
is governed by the laws
of the kingdom.*

*For your own comfort,
please inquire about
the provisions of these laws
to avoid any inconvenience.*

Thank you for understanding.

Figure 2. Notice to McDonald's customers regarding Ramadan laws. Rabat, 2013.

The neighborhood, clientele, and choice of language on this poster speak to a cosmopolitan elite class. The wording is polite, non-threatening, and does not explicitly mention the penalties involved for transgression. It does not even refer to the prohibition as a “ban” but

²⁸ <http://www.mcdonalds.ma/mcdonalds-maroc-0>

merely as being “governed” by the laws of the state, implying normalized rather than imposed power. It assumes a foreign, non-Muslim audience who would be unfamiliar with the fasting rituals of Ramadan. The tone suggests an audience holding as much power - if not more - than the writers who composed the poster, evidenced by words such as “comfort,” “convenience,” and “understanding.”

This is a striking example of Pavlenko’s language regulation, for it imposes French - *with no Arabic translation!* - as its chosen medium through which to navigate the space of McDonalds in negotiation with the public place of the street. The content of the sign - a legal disclaimer directed to out-group members - strengthens the power of its message by using a language that functions as an icon of political and economic power, secularism, and modernity in Morocco. This effectively discourages Moroccans who may not have a solid grasp of French from entering the establishment, while encouraging foreigners and non-Muslims to enter the space. A 2013 Morocco World News news article entitled “Eating in Public during Ramadan: the Moroccan Schizophrenia” elaborates on the association between French speakers and secularism that becomes an especially sensitive topic during the religious performance of daily fasting:

French-Moroccans are often seen as faithless people, or Muslims who have given up religion and do not respect it as tradition as the rest of the Moroccans. Because of this prejudice some Moroccans have towards the French-Moroccans, they would criticize them for eating in public but wouldn’t act further regarding the matter (Amarir 2013, Morocco World News).

My informants confirmed this comment when I shared a story that I will share here now. One Saturday morning, I arrived at the Agdal McDonald’s to make use of the free wifi. Standing outside the door were two teenage girls conversing in a mixture of Darija and French. A guard

emerged from inside to tell the three of us that McDonald's was not open yet, and to be patient for just a few minutes. He spoke to us in Darija, but the girls replied to him in French to say that they "don't speak Arabic." When I told Reda about this interaction, he replied:

I'm sure they do speak Arabic... they just want to show off. He's only a security guard. He's nothing. They are coming there to break the fast. I'm sure the father and the mother don't fast. Most of the elite, they don't do the Ramadan.

In this linguistic exchange, denying competency in Darija and insisting upon French reflects the very message embedded in the sign posted on the McDonald's door: that the French language indexes a distance from the religious and traditional performances of Moroccan culture, while promoting an identity of secular cosmopolitanism. In the specific cultural space of McDonald's in Agdal during Ramadan, speaking French implies that one is not a practicing Muslim, which in turn increases the likelihood of being served food without drawing attention.

Language Upgrading: Tamazight

The Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture (IRCAM) is an academic institution dedicated to the protection and promotion of the Amazigh culture and languages. It was founded in 2001 by King Mohammed VI as a result of increasing pressure from Amazigh activists. The king's mother, being Amazigh herself, is thought to have played an influential role in pushing for the establishment of IRCAM. In the years since, IRCAM has done substantial work to develop Tamazight into a language suitable for all functions, in addition to launching Amazigh empowerment events, educational campaigns, and multiple publications.

The increased visibility of Tamazight in Morocco's linguistic landscape since the 2011 amendments to the Constitution raises some very interesting questions, namely regarding the effectiveness of IRCAM's efforts and who is actually benefiting. In *Revitalizing the Amazigh Language: Stakes, Challenges, and Strategies* (2011), IRCAM director Ahmed Boukous analyzes the process of revitalizing Tamazight from the status of an endangered indigenous language to an official national language. The main issue, he writes, is the extent to which "the undertaking of the language policy promoting Amazigh can trigger a reversal language shift phenomenon" (back cover). With legal and financial support from the government, IRCAM has played a pivotal role in boosting Tamazight education in primary schools, pushing for more economic opportunities and greater equality for Amazigh Moroccans, and promoting higher visibility of Tamazight in the public sphere. This is a unique expression of language upgrading in action. Regarding this orchestrated language planning and the embedded quest to equalize opportunities, Ahmed Boukous writes that:

... languages are subject to an intense symbolic competition in the Moroccan language market. Because of the force of the laws governing this market, the position of minoritization occupied by the weak languages, namely Colloquial Arabic and Amazigh, objectively reduces them to the terms of an unequal exchange with the strong languages, namely Standard Arabic and French. (Boukous 2011: 241)



Figure 3. Official sign of the Royal Institute of the Amazigh Culture. Rabat, 2013.

The most highly political of all the signs in this chapter, Figure 3 reveals IRCAM’s concentrated efforts to subject Tamazight to language upgrading. Through the visual placement of Tifinagh script in the same space as the literary and powerful Latin and Arabic scripts, this IRCAM sign seeks to elevate the symbolic capital of Tifinagh with material capital symbolized in Latin and Arabic scripts. There is a strong discrepancy present, however, in the linguistic equality presented in the sign and the actual, lived experience of Amazigh Moroccans. Rachid shares his opinions on the successes and failures of this initiative:

So they developed this language, this language that is, uh... what do you call it, a no-man’s language? So the ‘IRCAM-ic’ language, that’s the language they use in their TV channel, so it does *not* reflect my language. It’s a combination, an invention of new terms, and it’s... I don’t know, it doesn’t reflect any of the three languages. I mean, sometimes you hear, wow, there is an expression of *my* language. But it’s confusing. Personally, it’s confusing for me. It’s not a natural language. I mean, it may work with years, but so far, it’s not my cup of tea, Amazighi TV.

The “IRCAM-ic” language, as Rachid calls it, is the revitalized and standardized Tamazight that IRCAM has developed and promoted in print media, radio, and television. Of the

8 public national channels of Morocco, only one - Tamazight TV - is broadcasted in Tamazight. A Fergusonian H/L diglossia has emerged within this channel between the “natural” spoken form of Tamazight used in dialogues on soaps and series, while the “IRCAM-ic” standardized form of Tamazight is used to deliver the news. There is considerable value in promoting Tamazight on television, Rachid says, because “some of them are not educated in the village, so the only channel they understand is the Tamazight channel.” It is also through television that many Amazigh villagers learn Darija.

Meanwhile, Tamazight TV’s website is written in Fus’ha using Arabic script, which speaks to the virtual absence of members of the speaking community who are proficient in Tifinagh script. Additionally, the presence of Tamazight in mostly public and some private radio stations has been met with mixed success, as even Ahmed Boukous admits that “its presence in audiovisual media is rather weak for the time being, and it is even less significant in the written press” (Boukous 2011: 241). Indeed, *Le Monde Amazigh* (The Amazigh World), an online Moroccan newspaper, uses Fus’ha and the Arabic script to write about Amazigh issues.

What this reveals about the function of Tamazight and its Tifinagh script in Morocco’s linguistic landscape is that speakers are replicating the diglossic relationship between spoken Darija and written Fus’ha. The efforts to elevate the status of Tamazight by means of codification seems to target a non-Amazigh audience by representing Tamazight visually in the shared public space. The effect of this is that Tifinagh emerges as a political icon for the public recognition of the growing Amazigh population in urban areas. However, very few of these Amazigh city-dwellers can actually read the Tifinagh script, having relied when necessary on

Arabic script to codify Tamazight. Hussein, one of my Amazigh informants, made a very valuable point regarding this script controversy, saying:

The problem with identity has nothing to do with the writing. Identity is within speaking and within preserving the culture of the Amazigh people. My parents and grandparents, they were illiterate, and they lived within Amazigh culture, and everything was okay. They did not have to write Tifinagh, they wrote in Arabic. So Tifinagh I think is just complicating things.

This echoes the telling division in my informants' views regarding Tifinagh. Those who identified as Arab and not Tamazight-speaking expressed much more positive sentiment toward Tifinagh as proof of equal rights than did those who identified as Amazigh and Tamazight/Tarifit/ Tashelhit-speaking. The presence of Tifinagh in the Moroccan linguistic landscape is presently highly symbolic rather than functional, representing political recognition with some growing cultural recognition but very little economic empowerment as of yet. Two of my youngest Arab informants, Oumaima and Hanaa, expressed views that speak to these changes in ideology. When asked about Tamazight, Oumaima replied, "it's the official language here in Morocco, and so we have to write it, we have to conjugate verbs like Arabic." Having been educated in a school system that teaches Tamazight formally in the classroom in the same way Arabic is taught, Oumaima places considerably more value in Tamazight than does Hanaa, who dismisses Tifinagh saying, "I'm *not* agree. Because in the *whole* world, no one speaks Tamazight!"

The irony of IRCAM's efforts to codify Tamazight is that the majority of the population it seeks to empower presently can't and don't *want* to read it. A 2004 survey conducted by Morocco's High Commission for Planning reveals illiteracy rates nearing 50 percent, with even

higher rates for women and those in rural areas (Boukous 2011: 25). As a result, most Moroccans are effectively “alienated not only from the halls of power but also from full employment and, in general, from daily official business (e.g., in governmental offices or courts of law)” (Elington 2013: 716). Unless IRCAM finds a way to provide better economic opportunities for people possessing proficiency in standardized Tamazight, it seems unlikely that this new variety of Tamazight will successfully permeate formal institutions of power. Language is a tool that grants access to specific resources: social, religious, economic, legal, etc. Given that Moroccan youth currently view Amazigh languages as “locally restricted and restricting languages with less potential to advance their future career,” it looks as though the linguistic landscapes will continue to represent Tamazight as a national symbol of “cultural authenticity” (Chakrani 2011: 168).

Conclusion

In this thesis, I explored the history of linguistic imperialism in Morocco and analyzed the relationships performed between sociopolitically dominant and subdominant languages. I examined the ways Morocco's post-independence government has dealt with language diversity, focusing on the deliberate framing of multilingualism as a central component of national identity. By way of integrating a theoretical framework rooted in linguistic anthropology with my own independent fieldwork, I exposed some of the social agents that control the reproduction of language ideologies and perpetuate linguistic hierarchies in Morocco.

So what, in the end, *is* a language good for? In Morocco, it is clear that languages represent far more than simply means of communication. They are potent symbols that stand for family, nation, state, and God. These symbols are manipulated by the national government in an effort to control power, opportunity, and social hierarchies. A system that concentrates symbolic capital within certain languages – necessarily excluding others - consolidates privilege and access to tangible cultural, economic, and political resources. Individuals, however, engage in creative means of resistance to challenge these imposed ideologies. Authors, television producers, musicians, and others who represent language differently in their creative works all contribute to the evolution of competing language ideologies insofar as they create opportunities for new uses of language. Furthermore, the increased availability of electronic means of communication has decentralized the consolidated power of language representation and facilitated access to the average Moroccan citizen, who can now play an active role in shaping his or her linguistic landscape.

There have essentially been three powerful forces that influenced the shifting perspectives of language ideologies in Morocco: the Muslim conquest, the establishment and removal of the French Protectorate, and the contemporary increased flow of new media known as “globalization.” Shifting sources of sociopolitical power perpetuate new ways of disseminating language ideologies, proving that there is no inherent power in any language. It is rather through the method of acquisition and sociopolitical uses that a speaker internalizes the value and power of a language.

Discourses about languages serve as a platform upon which Moroccans project beliefs about ethnicity, gender, class, and national imagination. Each code indexes status, power, oppression, and resistance, transforming languages into iconic representations of competing and overlapping identities.

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Appendix

Note: I have included seven transcribed interviews out of the total twelve.

1. Rachid

Rachid was my colleague and language instructor at the Center for Cross Cultural Learning. He studied linguistics in university and teaches Fus'ha, Darija, and Tamazight. Rachid is Amazigh and a strong advocate for Amazighi language rights. He makes very astute commentaries on the Moroccan state efforts of broadcasting television shows in Tamazight, which is the only language of many Moroccans. He eloquently illustrates the value of those in power adjusting to a certain situation rather than oppressing a specific language on the disenfranchised. I will note here that in my Tamazight classes with Rachid, he refused to teach me Tifinagh, accusing it of being a "Frankenstein language."

S: What languages do you speak?

R: Languages? I speak Tamazight – the Middle Atlas one, which is called Tamazight – Moroccan Darija, Fusha, French, and English.

S: Can you place in order the languages you feel most fluent in, to least fluent in? If the two are equal, you can say that. For speaking, this is for speaking.

R: For speaking, Tamazight, Darija, second one, Fusha, third one, English, fourth one, and French.

S: Okay, wow. And for writing? Most fluent to least fluent?

R: Writing? Fusha... Darija... Uh, English. Uh, French. And Tamazight.

S: What language do you think in?

R: I think in both Tamazight and Fusha.

S: What language is easiest for you to express yourself?

R: Uh, depending on where I am. So, if I was in my village, with my parents, with people of the village, I find myself like, uh... I find Tamazight is my natural language. But if I'm in Rabat at work, I'll find that Darija is more convenient to use.

S: Okay. What language do you find the most beautiful?

R: Tamazight is the most beautiful.

S: Okay. What language/dialects do you understand? For example, like Egyptian [Arabic] in movies, things like that.

R: Yeah, almost all the Arab languages, and the Amazigh languages as well.

S: All of them?!

R: Tashelhit and Tarifit and Tamazight, yeah.

S: How?

R: I-I uh, well, let's say someone from the south is talking, I can understand him/her, and I can respond in my own Tamazight. And the same with someone from the Rif, someone who speaks the Rifian language. So if he speaks the Rifi I would understand perfectly.

S: And you reply in your –

R: In my own Tamazight, and it would work.

S: It would work.

R: Yeah.

S: Okay. Do you feel or act differently when speaking each of these languages?

R: Do I what? Sorry.

S: Do you feel that your personality changes depending on what language you speak?

R: Uh... yes, when I speak like, uh... when I speak Tamazight, you know you have all this like, childhood memories, or the feeling of belonging comes to your mind. When you speak Darija, it's just a language. And when you speak French, you make more efforts. Like in French and English and like, Spanish, these are like foreign languages so we make more, more efforts. And, of course, these are more practical and languages that you can – of course, they serve a purpose of getting a job and interviewing people and everything so we use foreign languages.

S: Mhmm. Okay. So, you know code-switching...?

R: Yes.

S: Do you code-switch?

R: Yes. A lot.

S: A lot.

R: Code-switching and code-mixing, yeah.

S: When do you do it?

R: When I'm with a friend who is originally Amazigh, especially if he/she is from the Middle Atlas, we have the same, like, mother-tongue language, then if this person speaks also English, and French, and so we may use up to four languages at once. Like, especially if I'm talking to like, Nabil, who is my colleague, from the same region, we both speak French, English, and Arabic, so we can use four languages, and that's fine with us.

S: When do you switch from one to the other? Are you conscious of when you do it?

R: Uh, it's not a matter of consciousness but it's a matter of what comes to your mind first. Like, let's say – if I'm looking for a word that stands for the pen, so in any language that comes to my mind first, I would use it. Stylo, or pen, or qallem, whatever comes first, I would use it.

S: Okay, what comes first...

R: What comes first, that's what I use, yeah.

S: Okay. What languages do your parents speak?

R: My parents speak, uh... My mom speaks... Tamazight. My dad speaks Tamazight and Darija. And Fusha. But my mother, never... she has a very wacky accent in Darija.

S: Really?

R: Yeah, so she means, like... you, female, and ma – masculine and feminine. When it comes to you, like she wants to say *enta* for *enti* and vice versa.

S: Oh, I see! So what languages did you speak at home as a child?

R: As a child, it was Tamazight with my parents in the house, a mixture of Tamazight and Darija in the street, Standard Arabic in the class.

S: Describe your path of education?

R: My path of education was the Qur'anic school for two years, and this was a little room by the mosque for two years. So a couple of children, male children, we studied Qur'an and performed the prayer with a very, uh, very hard, very strong fuqii, teacher, for two years –

S: - did he hit you with the belt?

R: Yeah, because if you make anything like, if you misspell or mispronounce anything he will hit you on the head or feet. So for two years it was tough. We learned a lot about the Qur'an and how to perform the prayer. Then, at the age of six, I used to go to the formal school, which was a two-hour walk from where I lived to reach the school... When I was done with my six years, I moved to the village which was about an hour from where I grew up, and there I did three years of middle school and three years of high school. After high school I went to the university for four years to get my bachelor's degree in linguistics... And I was the only one of the kids in the village who was able to get my bachelor's degree. Even to finish high school. None of my friends of the kids in the village finished high school because they had no one to stay with.

S: What was the language of instruction in high school and middle school? Did it change in university?

R: Well, it was a combination of Darija, Fusha, and French. So some teachers when they teach they use Fusha, and sometimes they would switch into Darija. Some subjects were, like French, I think we had four hours per week of French language, you study grammar, anything that has to do with the language... But when I got to the university, I studied everything in English. Linguistics was four years in English. For people who major in sciences, they usually switch into French in the university, which is not the case with people who major in the arts. Arts majors, they don't switch languages.

S: Why did you choose English?

R: I don't know, I liked it. My teacher in the first year of high school influenced me a lot, he was a great teacher. So I loved his subject and I decided to continue with it... I studied three years in high school. [about the transition to university] It was hard the first year, but then you catch up. You double your efforts.

S: In high school, which subjects were taught in what language, do you remember?

R: All subjects were taught in Arabic, except the French language... Science was a mixture of Fusha and French.

S: Language or dialect?

R: All are languages! For me, if you are able to extract rules, that's a language. That's how I see it.

S: What do you consider to be the difference between a language and a dialect?

R: A major difference is, if you are not able to come up with rules, morphology, syntax, grammar, all the components of a language, if they don't exist in a language, that's how you call it a dialect. I think a dialect for Moroccans is more of a political term than what it exactly refers. Therefore all these languages we were talking about, you can come up with rules, thousands of rules, from each one of these.

S: Are the rules very different in Tamazight from Tashelhit?

R: Not really. They're different from Arabic. But the three languages, the Moroccan languages, Tamazight languages, they're almost the same rules. The terminology, the words, differ a little bit, but the grammar is almost the same.

S: Fusha adjectives?

R: It's the language of the Qur'an, it's the language of rules and grammar. It's a tough language. And it's a language of case endings. And the language of poetry. It's a beautiful language.

S: Adjectives for Darija?

R: A language with a lost identity, because it's a combination of Fusha, Tamazight, and French.

S: Adjectives for Tamazight, Tashelhit, or Tarifit?

R: Identity, my personal identity. The village, the parents, and... marginalization. Inequality. And the deep Morocco.

S: Adjectives for Hassaniya?

R: Very far. We don't know a lot about Hassaniya. There is also marginalization which comes through the media. We don't promote it a lot. There are very few cases that we know about Hassaniya. So there is this very far, uh... I can understand it but it is still very far from where I am... It's a kind of variety of Arabic.

S: Adjectives for French?

R: A language of prestige in Morocco. A language of the Protectorate and colonization. A language of climbing social... uh, social climbing. A language of identifying with a certain class, and a language of being educated in this country.

S: Adjectives for English?

R: Education... And, for me it means a lot, like music... Talks a lot about the country that I like, the States, the U.K., so it's the greatness of these two countries. So the language has these connotations.

S: Spanish?

R: For some reasons, like, what comes to my mind is discrimination. Discrimination in the sense that, like, whenever I think of Spanish I think of Moroccans who are in Spain and being discriminated against. And I think of myself when I'm in Spain and trying to use French or English, and people they don't respond to you. You get a kind of discrimination, and... also a language of colonization.

S: Do you think that English is starting to compete with French as the language of prestige, since so many people speak French?

R: Now, young people are using more English than French. Technology is based basically on English, so young people are attracted to technology... I think the functionality of English is much more than French so young people are attracted to English and it's growing in the universities. When I was in university we were maybe 360 students in the department of English, and now I think it's a thousand and something. So it's really growing.

S: Do you think English will replace French one day in Morocco?

R: I don't think so, no, because French is really strongly related to Morocco. And French is really deeply rooted in this culture, in the administration, in everything, so I don't think English will 'make it' as French did. I mean, in the lifestyle of people, in the music, yes, but in the administration, I don't think so.

S: Do you think that French "belongs" to Morocco? The French language, do you consider it to be a Moroccan language or do you consider it to be a foreign language?

R: I think it's a foreign language that becomes Moroccan. Or became Moroccan.

S: So today it is Moroccan?

R: Yeah.

S: What language do you encounter most often in literature and poetry?

R: Fusha and English.

S: What language do you encounter most often in music?

R: Mostly Tamazight and English.

S: What language do you encounter most often in films and television?

R: In films, mostly English. I hate dubbed films. I don't want to see George Clooney using Arabic or French. I prefer subtitles or... If it's French, it's French, and if it's English, it's English. I don't want the actors in a different language.

S: And on television?

R: Mostly Arabic. Fusha. Like on Al Jazeera. And of course some English, like CNN or BBC when it comes to news.

S: Do you watch any Tamazight television shows?

R: Actually, the Tamazight programs were not what I expected, so I don't watch them a lot. I watch the music every Saturday night, they that's what I watch.

S: What are the shows that you said are not what you expected?

R: So they developed this language, this language that is, uh... what do you call it, a no-man's language? So the "IRCAMic" language, that's the language they use in their TV channel, so it does *not* reflect my language.

S: So the language IRCAM invented, it's –

R: It's a combination, an invention of new terms, and it's... I don't know, it doesn't reflect any of the three languages. I mean, sometimes you hear, wow, there is an expression of *my* language. But it's confusing. Personally, it's confusing for me. It's not a natural language. I mean, it may work with years, but so far, it's not my cup of tea, Amazighi TV. [Of the 8 national channels of Morocco, only one is in Tamazight]

S: So what kind of shows are on this channel?

R: Well, they dub a lot of movies and TV shows.

S: In Tamazight? In the language that you don't like?

R: Yeah. And I also have the feeling that the Tamazight of the south, Tashelhit, has a big share when it comes to the media.

S: Why?

R: I don't know, maybe because they are more... They have this economical monopoly, so even when it comes to IRCAM, they have a say.

S: And they have the news in Tamazight?

R: Yeah.

S: And that's someone speaking in Tamazight, it's not dubbed?

R: Yeah, it's not dubbed.

S: And are there TV shows that are with Amazighi actors, or is it only dubbed shows?

R: No, there are Amazighi actors. And, again, most of them are from the south. And when it comes to singing and belly dancing, it's the Middle Atlas... Well, the image – If you tell someone, for instance, you are from Khenitra or Oulmes or wherever, somewhere from the Middle Atlas, they will say oh, the bled el-nashat? Bled el-nashat means the place, or the land, of fun. What do they mean by fun? Spending the night with a belly dancer, and drink a lot... That's the real stereotype. The truth is, in the past there were so many military garrisons around the area, and the women are like, very needy, and they used to do prostitution to survive, and since then they have this image of being a place of prostitution. And of course, prostitution plus they are very good at belly dancing. The sheikhat dancers – most of them are viewed as prostitutes. And whenever in the past, there is like a show, they will bring sheikhats to do ahidous. So all that we know about the Middle Atlas is sheikhats and ahidous. We never know about their lifestyle, do they have schools, do they have hospitals, no, all we know is they have belly dancing.

S: So that's all you see on television?

R: In the past, yes.

S: Is that changing now?

R: It is, yeah. Now I find a television show that is talking about a village in the Middle Atlas. Like how women developed a coop, or something like that, so things have been changing.

S: Are these shows popular?

R: Yes, actually, when I go to my village I see so many people watching these shows. Like my siblings in the village they all watch shows in Tamazight.

S: Is it because, I know you said some of them don't speak Arabic?

R: This is a good reason. Some of them are not educated in the village, so the only channel they understand is the Tamazight channel.

S: Do you think that by watching shows in Darija, a lot of them could learn Darija, for example?

R: Yes. Most people learn Darija through the media, through the TV. Even the Egyptian dialect – Egyptian language – people know it through the media.

S: So all the “dialects” you understand is from watching TV?

R: Yeah. All the Arab languages is through the TV.

S: What do you think of Darija transcriptions? For example, billboards and advertisements?

R: I don't mind having them both [Latin and Arabic scripts], but I really like to have them. Because at the end of the day, they are what we speak as Moroccans. In the street and everything, that's what we speak. When you see something that you speak, it makes more sense than when you see like Fusha or French or English or something. So it's very... stronger, when you have the natural language. And I hope one day we have it like in Tamazight, Tashelhit, that we speak. You know, it's stronger.

S: What do you think of Tifinagh? What does it accomplish?

R: For me, it did not accomplish anything. Personally, I don't use it. I like it in the way it is written, but I don't use it. Because it's one of the things I don't like about IRCAM, coming up with a new system that would marginalize the language much more than it was before because you simply make it local, you make it regional, you don't make it universal. But if it adopts the Latin, the international alphabet, it would be easy for anyone who wants to learn it, foreigners, Moroccans, anyone. And because they were very... Some activists were really into this idea of

having its own identity, its own symbols... they killed it. I may change my mind, but it seems really tough to learn this alphabet.

S: What do you think of the new policy of teaching Tifinagh in primary schools?

R: I'm against teaching Tifinagh because you just make another burden on the kids, because they are already exposed to Arabic, which is not their language, especially the ones who are from the Amazighi speaking areas. You impose another script on them – they have to deal with French, Arabic, and Tifinagh. Three languages. That's really tough. It's good but for kids, it's really tough.

S: What language do you use most on a daily basis?

R: I live in Rabat and Sale, so I basically use Moroccan Darija. And some Tamazight, at home with my wife.

S: So what language do you use mostly at work?

R: At work I use Arabic and English.

S: What do you use in your emails?

R: English. Just English.

S: At home?

R: Darija and Tamazight, and some French and English.

S: What languages do you want your children to speak?

R: My children, I want them do speak Tamazight, uh... I want them to speak what I speak. Tamazight, French, English, and Arabic. Good luck for them!

S: What language will get you the best job in Morocco?

R: So far, French. A good command of French and English will work for you. So far French is still strong. Because most of business and interviews is done in French.

S: What language best reflects Moroccan identity?

R: A combination of Darija and Tamazight, the three combined.

S: In your opinion, do all the languages spoken in Morocco belong to Morocco? Are they considered now to be part of Moroccan identity or are they still seen as a foreign language in Morocco?

R: I think they are part of the identity, but they are not recognized as part of the identity. On the constitutional level, Tamazight and Fusha are the official languages of the country, by the constitution. But they never reveal that French is also a language of Morocco, because I would say like 80% of our banking and administration is in French, but it's a fact that the Moroccan people don't recognize, don't talk about, but it is there. So I think it's a Moroccan language. As I told you, so many of our companies and investments and administrations are in French. But Spanish is not as strong as French.

S: How do you decide which Moroccan language to use with a Moroccan stranger?

R: With a Moroccan stranger usually you use Darija. And also Darija has different accents like Marrakshi, Tangiers, northern accents, southern accents, so usually you choose one of them in the middle, like Rabat or Casablanca.

S: So if you were in Tangiers, would you use the Tangiers one?

R: Um, no, because you won't get the best service, so you try to use theirs. Like, if you use the Darija of Central Morocco, they would say oh, he's from the dakhel, which means he's from the inside of Morocco. He's like, lagging behind, because for them, they identify themselves with the Spanish, with Europe, much more. The northern people. They look down on people from the center.

S: So if you switch to a Tangiers accent, you get better service?

R: Yes, like in a coffee shop or something. For instance, instead of khouya, you say khay [brother]. It's a very soft accent.

S: So would you personally switch?

R: No, I don't switch.

S: Even if you get bad service.

R: I don't mind.

S: Is there that same kind of tension if someone from Tangiers comes here [Rabat]?

R: I think it's all over Morocco. Even if you go, for instance, to a hanout [shop] and you talk Berber, you talk Tamazight, you will be served quickly and the guy will laugh at you and be kind to you. But if you speak Darija he will just serve you like any other people.

S: Just here in Rabat?

R: Everywhere. Because most grocery stores are chleuh, from the south, Tashelhit-speaking. If you say, madzakkin [how are you], they would serve you as quick as they can with a smile.

S: Because most of them are chleuh?

R: Yeah. [Switches from Tamazight to Tashelhit, but wouldn't switch Arabic accents "just to show that I belong to the north, for instance"]

S: Why?

R: I don't know [laughs].

S: Is there a hierarchy in the multitude of languages in Morocco? Social hierarchy?

R: Yes.

S: How is it organized?

R: French is the language of the elite, the language of people who are educated. And even French, there is the French of school and the French of... like if you grow up in a family that speaks French, so your French is not the same as if you grow up in a family that studied French. You see what I mean? When you grow up with your parents, and you go to a private school, so your French is not similar as the ones who go to a public school. So there is French and there is French. So then there is Arabic. Even if you study Arabic at the university in Morocco, it's not a big deal. Because what are you going to do with it? When it comes to the functionality, Arabic would be like, third. So let's say French would be first, English would be second, and third would be Arabic. In terms of getting a job, in terms of hierarchy. And the value of it, in Morocco. Then maybe Tamazight would be the fourth. And I think Spanish would be the third, with Arabic. Or actually, I think English and Spanish would be second. So we have French, English, and Spanish, and Tamazight and Hassaniya. In the north, Spanish would be the first. It depends where you are. I'm talking in general.

S: Do you think multilingualism is a benefit or a problem in Morocco?

R: It's both. It's a benefit, because it makes the country rich, because a language is a culture, because it has cultural connotations. It brings with it its culture. Also it's a problem for the kids, because instead of learning math and science or other subjects, they are stuck learning other languages, you know their mind is busy digesting other rules and grammar.

S: Are there tensions between francophone Moroccans and Arabophone Moroccans?

R: There are implicit tensions. Each school is defending their interests. It's like the political parties calling for the Arabization, especially since the independence.

S: What do you think of the Arabization movement?

R: That's a big lie, because those people that were defending the Arabization in Morocco, they send their kids to study in France.

S: Yesterday I was at McDonald's, and there were these Moroccan girls who only spoke French. And the man who worked at McDonald's said something to them in Arabic, and they laughed and said, "We don't speak Arabic." What do you think of that?

R: I think those two pretend they are not Moroccans. They want to eat, they want just to have food, and they pretend that they are not Moroccans. So the guy want to find out maybe why they are eating... [Note: this occurred during Ramadan, during which time Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset.]

S: So would you say there are tensions between Arabophone Moroccans and Amazighi Moroccans?

R: Not really... not clear tensions. I mean, each group is defending its language to be the official one, to have a say in the social sphere, but there isn't a clear clash between the two.

S: How do you react when a foreigner in Morocco tries to speak Arabic?

R: I appreciate the effort, and I try to help. Because most people would think it was very funny and strange to study and speak Arabic, but for me I know because I work with Americans, with people who study Darija and Fusha so I know what it means for them so I try to help. But for people, it does surprise them.

S: Why?

R: Because it's not common. They think, why do these people want to learn our language? For them, it's not worth it. They are studying Arabic? Why? Or Tamazight, why? Why are they wasting their time?

2. Oumaima

Oumaima was a Moroccan university student and part-time intern at the Center for Cross Cultural Learning. As the time of this interview, she was studying theory of education. While she insisted on speaking to me in English, her accent and speed of speech seemed to me to be much more fluent in French. Some code-switching occurs in this interview. Furthermore, I noticed that she sometimes translated French expressions into English where the two did not parallel. For example, she says "it comes to me" – a literal translation of the French "il m'arrive" – to mean "it happens to me." She would also inverse noun-adjective order to imitate the French construction, saying repeatedly "Arabic Classic" instead of "Classical Arabic."

What languages do you speak?

Arabic – Arabic Classic and Arabic Darija – French, English, and a little bit Chinese.

Order of fluency: Speaking fluency? Writing fluency?

Arabic Darija first, yeah. After, um... Arabic Classic. Then English, then French. Then in least, Chinese. This is for speaking. Writing... um, Arabic Classic, and English. Then French, then Chinese.

What language do you think in?

A lot of times, in English... it's crazy, I know. Maybe because I'm talking a lot with English, and I have a lot of friends, like foreign friends, so... also, American movies and American songs. I think this is why I'm thinking in English most of the time. [What movies or music do you like in English?] Um... I dunno, I like – I forget her name – Demi Levato... and Jonas Brothers. Also... also... Selena Gomez. And Jo Jo. And a little bit Justin Bieber, but I don't like so much.

What language is easiest for you to express yourself?

Speaking... I think a little bit Darija, yeah. But writing is... Arabic Classic. I can express myself with Arabic Classic very easily and clearly.

What language do you find to be the most beautiful?

I think Arabic Classic, yeah. Because you can express yourself with many different ways. And we have, like, a lot of rules and vocabularies. I think it's not like English or French, I dunno.

What languages/dialects do you understand? (ie. Egyptian or Lebanese Arabic in movies and television)

Like, do you mean Arabic dialects? Yeah, I can understand... I have no problem... like, Souriya and Egyptian, a little bit Egyptian... Palestine dialect, too. I can even talk with it. And Gulf, too. [You can speak it?] Yeah, I can speak it! I don't know how it came. It's not from TV, in fact. When I was like 13 year old, I had a lot of friends from Egypt, from Syria, from Palestine, from Gulf... so they teach me a lot, lot of vocabularies, so I can understand easily. If two, like, fore example, two people from Gulf speak, I can understand easily. It's not a problem for me. And I can speak it, too.

Do you feel/act different when speaking each of these languages?

I think it's normal to feel different in each language you speak – it's not your native language, so it's normal to feel strange. Oh yeah, I can speak Gulf dialect, oh that's strange. But sometimes, no. When you speak and you can see the other and understand its ok, you feel good. [What about when you speak English or French of Fusha?] I think it depends the time, or how many years you know this language. For example, when I start to take English class, it felt too strange to talk in English, and I felt like... Oh my god, I can't express myself in this language. But, in fact, no.

Do you codeswitch? (codeswitching = switching between the different languages you speak depending on context, etc.)

Yes, especially with French and Arabic. English, I don't know. No, not really. But French, Arabic, yeah, it comes to me a lot of times. Like, when someone talks in French, I'm trying to understand what he or she says in Arabic, not in French... Even if I can understand what he or she say, in French, I dunno why... it always came to me in French, I have to translate it all in Arabic and then I can answer... Maybe because we are in a French community, not really Arabic, because you know, in administration, in college, in my high school, we talk in all – in French. So we have a lot of vocabularies. So when you talk to people it's like “alors” or “donc” it comes to your mind and I just say it. I wonder why we can't talk in Arabic like 100 percent? Even in my daily talk, I can't talk in Darija only! [switches to French] I always marry my Darija with some French.

If yes, when? Why do you think you codeswitch?

For example, if I'm talking with a foreigner, we'll talk just in French. You are obligated to talk in French, only French. But if I know that someone talks little French, a little English, little Arabic, I feel more free in my language. I can talk little English, little French, little Arabic – like what I'm doing now – and for Moroccan... it's a problem for me. For example when I talk to my grandma, it comes like this, and I'm talking in French and she'll say... Oumaima, I can't understand you! Speak in Arabic! You are a Moroccan girl, you are an Arabic girl so please speak Arabic. Why are you speaking French? So for the people who are old... only Arabic. It's an obligation. Because they can't understand you. If you're talking with them in French.

This was the generation of Arabization?

Yeah, exactly. She was in that generation when the system changed in Arabic. But, in general, my grandma, she's illiterate.

What languages do your parents speak? Your grandparents?

Arabic and Darija. And... also French, a little English. And my mom speaks, my mom doesn't speak English. She speaks Spanish... Only my grandma speaks a little Berber, and dialectic Arabic. That's it. [Tamazight or Tashelhit or...?] I don't know, actually... Because she's not Berber, her origins are Arabic. But her husband was from Sousse, in Taroudant, so he speaks Tashelhit. So I think this is why she had to know a little.

What languages did you speak at home as a child?

At home... most of the time, Darija. A little Arabic, Classic Arabic... and a little French. My parents love Classic Arabic... my father was a poet, he has a diwan (book of poems), and my mother, she was writing short stories. But she stopped now, both of them stopped. So maybe because they... how we can say it... maybe because both of them know the meaning of Arabic Classic and how this language is beautiful, so they want to "transmettre" how this language is beautiful to us. So when I was a child, my mom spoke with me in Arabic Classic. Like, we are doing um... "une scene theatrale"... that's it. It was just for fun, just to say, 'Okay Oumaima, this is the real Arabic. It's not Darija. Darija, we can communicate with it. But Arabic, this is the mother of our language, so you have to pay attention for this.' And also, I still remember when I was thirteen years old, my mom bought for me a lot of novels and stories in Arabic Classic and she says, okay, you have one week to finish one book. So this is it. Maybe this is why I'm in love with books now!

Cartoons?

It was Arabic, Classic Arabic, chosen by my parents. And also in French, yeah. Chosen by my parents.

Describe your path of education: Public or private school? University?

In my primary school, I was in private school in Kenitra. After this, my parents moved to Marrakech. No – first we moved to Sidi Moukhtar, a small village. It was a strange village that I saw in my life! It was like an old, old life. The buildings were... I dunno... it was – they build their houses by... clay, kind of. And the houses, they made them only by the clay. There is no cement. Très très très traditionnel. And there are no colors, only the color of the clay. And the roof, they made it by wood. And there are no tables... just only a carpet, a traditional carpet. And two pillows, that's it. It was rural life. It was very scary for me! I was maybe six years, so it was very strange for me. Especially that you are born and you grow up in a town, in the medina. And you have like, more than a house. Also the TV, and stuff like this. And then there's no TV, no nothing, so it was very difficult for us. I think we all suffered from this. We stayed only for one year... I really feel sorry for those people, because it's not life. I dunno. For me, it's not life. It's like, you are going to your 'about' – how can we say? When someone dies, we put it on. Yeah! For me, it's like this. I hate it. So, we say that we were like one year there, and for sure there was no private school there. There was only one school, public school, and it was really traditional. So I started the first classes in primary school, they say no, I think the administration says no, we don't know the level of your daughter. They told that for my dad. So she has to repeat the first class. So it was... crazy. What? You don't know my level? What? Come on! I was in private school!

[Summary: Oumaima was made to repeat 2nd grade when she returned to the city with her family. Describing her time in the village, Oumaima recalls feeling like she couldn't fit in because she wore mini skirts and other 'modern' clothes while the other children wore more 'traditional' clothes: "You can say it's like culture shock, maybe."]

... But the big problem was in language, in French, especially in French. Because there, they had no French classes, so ... it was like for three... because I thought studying in an old system, not the new system, because the new system they start French in 3rd grade. But in my generation it was in 5th grade, so I had to wait three years, and then starting again from the zero, starting learning French. It was so difficult for me, because when the teacher tries to explain for me something, I say, 'Yes I know this, I knew this when I was like five years old.' I could feel like come on, this is my language, I know it, I can talk in it. But at the same time, you have a lot of problems with it. So I had a lot of problems with French in the beginning.

What languages were your various classes taught in?

It was all in Arabic, except language classes. In math and sciences, the numbers were in French. We don't have Arabic numbers. It was all in Arabic until university. University was in French. The change was strange.

Would you have preferred to continue at the university level in Arabic?

No... no. Because... with all my regret, we don't have a good – des ressources – in Arabic. Even – les oeuvres – les oeuvres en francais ou en anglais sont mieux que les oeuvres en Arabe. [She continues in French.] The sources of knowledge, in general. [Return to English] For examples, books of Emile Durkheim, or Freud, or Piaget, or Skinner. So all of this, more interesting people or scientists, they wrote in French or English. If I study in Arabic, it's going to be ridiculous a little bit. Because we don't have something new, or something scientist 'de valeur' (French: of value). So this is why. And also, the – [codeswitches to French] les oeuvres traduits en arabe, ils sont mauvais. Because the quality of translation is very, very bad. [reverts to English] I prefer read in French, even if its tough, because, you know, French – familiar French – it's okay for us. But philosophy French, it's a little bit strange, you can't understand all of the sentence and what the scientist is trying to say... it's going to be hard... And if I want to change the system, I think I'd change it to English, not to French. I think the newest methods in education or in scientist, its in English, its not in French. So we have to read or to learn from the source. And its English, it's not French.

What languages did you speak to your friends in while growing up?

In Darija, only in Darija.

Which of the following do you consider to be a language versus a dialect: Fus'ha, Darija, Tamazight, Tashelhit, Tarifit, Hassaneya, French, English, Spanish?

Fusha: It's language.

Darija: Dialect.

Tamazight: Dialect.

Tashelhit: Dialect.

Tarifit: Dialect

Hassaneya: Dialect

French: Language

English: Language

Spanish: Language

What do you consider to be the difference between a language and a dialect?

Okay... Um... It's really... it's really, uh... big topic. But... okay, for example, Darija, we can't write it. I know that now some people try to write it, there's a newspaper in Darija now. I don't know the name but it was the first one manifestation in Darija, and it did like BOOM, and a lot of people say no, we have to stop this newspaper. I'm not sure if it's continue, because I'm not interested... [Why? You don't want to read in Darija?] It's stupid! I dunno, it's dialectic, we have just to... I dunno, this dialectic, it's create to communicate for each other, oral

communication, not writing. If we want to write, we write in Arabic. As my mother say, Arabic, Classical Arabic, is the mother of our language, so we have to return to her. If we, every moment, it's not like Darija. Darija, it's new also... If we compare it, like Darija and Arabic Classic, it's new. Arabic Classic it's very old.

So the main difference is language, you can write it, and Darija you can't write it?

Yeah. And Darija, we use it just for oral communication. It's not the international language for us. The international, for us, is Arabic. And now, is Tamazight, too. Also, Tamazight, it's official language here in Morocco, and so we have to write it, we have to conjugate verbs like Arabic. I have really no answer for your question, I'm sorry! Because I'm always wondering the difference between the language and the dialect. Tamazight can be a language... I have no answer until now.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Fus'ha?

Our religion. Holy book. That's it!

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Darija?

Morocco! [laughs]

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Tamazight, Tashelhit, or Tarifit?

[pause] [in French] Racism. [back to English] I dunno why... Maybe because we see now a lot of racism people from Arab and also from Berber or Amazigh people, so if someone say Amazigh, or 'I can speak Tashelhit or Tarifit' in my mind... like, "Oh le racism." [in French] Maybe they are racist toward Arabs. [revert to English] You can't understand or you can't talk in this language, or in this dialect, so when you're going with this people, they can't respect you, like, okay we have a guest for us so she can't talk in Tarifit, for example, or Tashelhit, so let's try to talk with her in Arabic. This is never, never happened. I have a friend of me from Rif, from Husseina, and when I was with her, she speak with me in Arabic and it's going on, it's good, it work and it's okay. I try to learn some vocabulary, but it's just for fun. But when she tried to meet her friends from Husseina, too, they talk in Rifia, and I just sit like this and trying to understand something [switch to French] J'arrive pas a comprendre quelque chose, c'est tres difficile, c'est tres difficile, c'est comme le Japonais! [back to English] And I would say to her please Imam, next time please say to your friends, talk in Arabic... They know talk in Arabic because they live here, and they study here in Rabat, so how they can study in Rabat and they can't understand or talk in Arabic? She always say, okay, I'm trying, but I'm sorry Oumaima, we cant, it's something in our blood... For them, it's so strange.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Hassaneya?

Sahara.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of French?

Al-Ihtilal. [What's that?] When the French come to Morocco...

What adjectives come to mind when you think of English?

Freedom... it's strange [laughs] I think, English, why freedom, because now [French] dans le monde entier [English] you can speak English and most of people will understand you. So it create for you more freedom to express yourself. And I think the language itself, it's good, it's very easy.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Spanish?

Maybe salsa?

What language do you encounter most often in literature and poetry?

Arabic Classic. [and for literature] In Arabic, trying to read English literature.

You read English literature translated?

Yeah...

But I thought you said translations were bad!

Yeah, it's very bad, I don't like it but sometimes it's good because you know you can understand the main idea. And under the line.

Ah, we say in English 'Between the lines.'

It depends of my object, my goal. If I want to understand between the lines, I prefer to read in Arabic. It's easy, and I'm quickly reading in Arabic. I can finish the book, like 200 pages in three days. Yeah, it's quickly, it's fast, but in English it's like one week.

What language do you encounter most often in music?

English... [lists aforementioned American pop singers]

And do you pick up new words from listening to this music?

Yeah. I think the benefit from the new song, maybe, the short song, frizzle verbs. They use frizzle verbs a lot. [Frizzle verbs] Like, hold on, pick up, take off, take on. Those are called frizzle verbs. Come on! [Who decided this?] It's a verb with an adjective. We study it in grammar! Yeah, frizzle verbs.

Oh, phrasal verbs!!!

Yeah!

What language do you encounter most often in films and on television?

English, and a little bit French. I think the movies, when you have "l'habitude de" [French] to see the films in English it will be very difficult to see in French. And this comes not just to me. I have a lot of friends who are like me, we are in front of English movies, and we watch it in English.

With subtitles?

Most of the time, subtitles. But most of the time, I can watch without subtitles... One time, we want to watch a movie, and we have it in French, only French. So, we were all placed to watch it in French, and were like, so excited, we wait this movie. So when we watch it, she told me, is it stupid? I said, yeah! Because of the language. We have like, "l'habitude de voir les movies en anglais." So when we watch it in French, it was like, no come on. It's very stupid, I can't watch it! I think the actors are English movie, but they "traduire en francais."

Ca faisait bizarre? (French: It seemed bizarre?)

Oui. (French: yes)

You didn't like it?

At all, no.

Was it just funny, or ugly, or strange?

Maybe a little funny and a little ugly sometimes. Sometimes I just laugh because of – oh come on, in English it's more better! But sometimes ugly and no, I can't watch this. And Arabic movies... no. I think from time to time. They have nothing interesting. All the Arabic movies I saw in my life, it was like the movies that did "boom" in the cinema. Like Casanegra and Casablanca. So those are interesting for me because we can see the dark side of your society.

What do you mean?

Like, Morocco, the movies, they show the black side of Morocco. Like, “les putes, et les juifs avec les musulmans, et la vie sexuelle... donc, c’est bizarre.” There are a lot of things, you can’t see it. You are a normal citizen, so there are some stuffs you can see it... In fact, it’s not in Arabic Arabic, it’s in Darija.

What language do you encounter most often on billboards, signs, restaurant menus, etc?

In French. “Ouverture prochaine!” (French: “Opening soon!”)

Everywhere? For example, do you look first at the Arabic or French?

French. C’est l’habitude. Mauvaise habitude. (French: It’s a habit. A bad habit.) Because think logically, I’m Moroccan girl. My official language is Arabic Classic. And when you see something in French and next to it Arabic, you go “inconscient” for the French.

Why do you think that happens?

[answers in Arabic] Khalifat al-isti3ammar.

Les restes de la colonization? (French: The remains of colonization?)

Yeah. That’s it.

What do you think of Darija transcriptions? Do you prefer it be done with Arabic script or Latin script? Why? What about Facebook?

First of all, I think the idea it’s good. Why? Because we have, like, fifty percent Moroccans, who can’t understand Arabic Classic because they’ve never been in the school. So we have to think about those people, especially that fifty percent it’s half of the society, so we have to think about it seriously. I don’t like to write my Darija in French – I mean, Latin letters – because here, if we have a goal, we want those people to understand and write it with what a alphabet. So what does it mean? It doesn’t mean anything, because those people can’t understand it... They can’t read. They can’t read Arabic Classic, Classic Arabic, so how they can read alphabet French? So... like, if we can write it in Arabic, yeah it’s good for those people. For me, it’s sometimes in the avenue you see “teleboutique” in Arabic, it make me laugh. Maybe because we don’t have the “habitude”...

3. Leila

I met Leila thanks to Professor Said Bennis of Mohamed V University in Rabat. She was one of his linguistics students. Leila was in her late thirties and came to the interview with her 8-year-old son, which caused us to skip a few of the questions. What makes Leila's interview particularly interesting is that she is almost completely blind, so her relationship with languages is quite special. Furthermore, she is a storyteller and shares folktales learned from her elders. She learned to read as a child but can no longer see well enough to read.

What languages do you speak?

Arabic, and French as a professional language or in case I am with foreigners, if I am with foreigners I use French.

Order of fluency: Speaking fluency? Writing fluency?

In general, I express myself better in French. If I am angry, though, I express myself better in Moroccan Darija!

What language do you think in?

Both... It depends on the situation. In general though, Moroccan Darija.

What language is easiest for you to express yourself?

[tells story of when she was giving birth, she expressed pain in French] When I am expressing sadness or emotions, it's French. But otherwise, in daily life, if I am with people who don't speak French, I express myself in Moroccan Darija.

What language do you find to be the most beautiful?

Arabic. Classical Arabic. Not Standard Arabic, Classical Arabic. It's a rich language, rich in imagery, rich in style... it's a language without simple expressions... I don't know other languages but I know French, and I think that Classical Arabic surpasses French in terms of richness and beauty. We say in Arabic, "helloowa," sweet like sugar. It is so sweet! When I could still read, I read novels in Classical Arabic all the time.

What languages/dialects do you understand? (ie. Egyptian or Lebanese Arabic in movies and television)

Egyptian... I prefer Egyptian Arabic. Moroccan dialect is no good. It's not a language! It's not a language for television... it's "raw" [translated from a Moroccan expression]. Moroccan dialect

is not a language of communication, it's not a language of the media. It's a quotidian language – communication between people, but not on television. Television is the image of society! The translation of Turkish films in Moroccan dialect, I don't think it's well done. It's very... I don't know how to say it in French, but... it's not pretty. I'll give you some examples. In Egyptian, they say for "love," they say "habibti." In Moroccan dialect, they say "habiba." But it's a little... it's not pretty. It's raw! [Even if you speak it?] Even if, yes. Me, when I say to my husband, "my love," I don't say directly "habib" [masculine form of aforementioned "habiba"]. No, I say "mon amour" in French, "cherie," "mon joujou" ... I would never say "habib," it's heavy! I would prefer to see Classical Arabic and French in the media, not Moroccan dialect, except in television shows or documentaries... Or, there is a Moroccan dialect that is cleaner. It's a little bit mixed between Classical Arabic and Moroccan dialect Arabic. It's not the Moroccan Arabic of the streets, it's purified. That's nicer. There's no slang expressions. For example: I tell stories, I'm a storyteller. And the stories are supposedly in "dialect," but I don't think it's only dialect. Listen... [gives examples of extracts from a folktale] These expressions are mixed between dialect – it's a word, an expression from Classical Arabic that I use, making it a bit more "dialect" to facilitate the pronunciation, like I make the assimilation do give it fluidity. It's a Classical Arabic dialect! [referring to using Classical Arabic constructions pronounced in Moroccan dialect, i.e. collapsing vowels] They are expressions very "Classical" that I have made much more accessible to the public. Why do we use dialect? To communicate with the masses, non-intellectuals. So when I use Classical Arabic in my stories, it's a way to bring peoples closer together, to purify the ear of the one who listens to me. Especially children, to familiarize them with a cleaner, more elevated dialect Arabic. To make them like Classical Arabic, because most children don't like it. They find it difficult, with a lot of rules. I say no, Classical Arabic is beautiful, we just need to listen. So if I can capture children even for just 20 minutes, with my "Classical Arabic dialect," that's good.

(...)

It's a Moroccan "patrimoine" that I collected from the elders, my uncle or my grandmother, my father too. These stories are an oral "patrimoine," from mouth to ear. I think it's been three years that I started this... This is why I'm telling you that the Turkish films translated into Moroccan dialect, they could've been better. Not so brutal and raw, there's expressions that I don't like to hear... They speak of Turkish culture with a Moroccan language. There is a distance. There are some that argue that they are transmitting Turkish culture so that Moroccans become familiarized with it, but the words they use are... to low. You know, for a while there was a time when they translated Turkish or Brazilian films into Classical Arabic. As a result, spectators' Classical Arabic improved thanks to these films! So when you give them an Arabic dialect that they already know, what are they going to improve, these people? You've given them nothing, because the content of the film is not interesting...

But don't you think they are doing this to make the films more accessible to people without an education?

I recognize that my grandmother, too, saw the Brazilian films translated into Classical Arabic. I remember one time she told me, I can speak Brazilian! I said, really? How? She said, You want to see? And I said yes, I want to see. Then she began to speak in Classical Arabic. She made me laugh! Naively, she thought that that's what Brazilian was! She didn't know that that was Classical Arabic! The word "Classical Arabic" in her memory did not exist, because she did not study it. She knows the language of the Qur'an, but Classical Arabic, for her, is the language she hears on television. She may be illiterate, but at least the expressions she uses are clean. Even the insults we hear in films, they use insults from dialect Arabic that are not pretty! ... We see people dressed chic, with miniskirts... it doesn't count! The language doesn't correspond to the human beings! It's horrible! ... Moroccan dialect is very, very varied. The people who live in the countryside, they have their own language. The pronunciation is rounder... There is urban Arabic and rural Arabic. When we see rural Arabic on television shows, it's horrible. It's not pretty. Personally, I don't think it's pretty.

(...)

A woman in the bus, there was a Brazilian woman visiting Morocco that was on the bus and she fainted from the heat. Everyone got worried, they said, 'We don't know how to speak Brazilian!' And then an old woman said, 'Listen, I can speak Brazilian!' She approached her telling her to wake up in Classical Arabic!

Do you feel/act different when speaking each of these languages?

Yes... When I speak French, people consider me to be an intellectual. Especially, when you speak correctly... Now that I know I have good command of French, I feel that I am considered differently. But in my professional life, I am obliged to speak Arabic. Purified Arabic. I am not allowed to speak Moroccan dialect – by preference, etiquette says so. I avoid slang. In my profession, in general, I use an elevated form of Arabic. Between colleagues, we let ourselves go. But we usually speak French, actually. The majority of Moroccans speak French in administration. And since I work at the Ministry of Communication, the Arabic we must use is an elevated, standardized Arabic.

Do you codeswitch?

It depends on the space. At my house, it's both, but mostly French. My husband and my son, in general. But if I'm angry I speak Arabic! At work I speak both, but... when I speak with my mother, it's mostly Arabic. But me, what do I choose? I like speaking French. I like Arabic, but I really like French. In the stores... there's a mixture. 50 percent Arabic, 50 percent French.

Except with my mother. I don't make the change myself, but it depends on the people... If I speak Darija, it's especially with younger people. And we speak their Darija... And I have a tendency to speak the Darija of boys, rather than girls... because I grew up among boys... There's a big difference... I have a younger brother, we always speak Arabic together because he doesn't like French. It's a choice [imitates a conversation with her brother]. You see? In French, I am a woman but in Arabic, I can speak like a man! It's all to facilitate communication because when I speak to someone, it's only to that one person. If there is a young boy in front of me, cool and relaxed, I will speak like him. When I am with a girl, a nice girl, I will speak like her.

What languages did you speak at home as a child?

Arabic. And the little French that I knew growing up – because I always liked French – it gave me the name “Tata Jacqueline.” That's what my family called me. I would go to my mother and say “s'il te plais, Maman, s'il te plais, Maman,” and she would say, “What is this? ‘S'il te plais’ is not for me, it's for school!” We all studied French in school, my brothers and me, but I was the only one who would speak it because I loved reading French stories, things like that. I began learning French in 3rd grade. But my son began at two years old, because I put him in private schools since daycare. The teachers are bad in public schools. I want my son to be better than me.

Describe your path of education: Public or private school? University?

Public schools.

What languages did you learn in school?

Arabic and French.

Which of the following do you consider to be a language versus a dialect: Fus'ha, Darija, Tamazight, Tashelhit, Tarifit, Hassaneya, French, English, Spanish?

[initially confused when asked about “Fusha” because so accustomed to called it “l'Arabe classique”] Fusha is a language. Darija is a dialect. Tamazight is a language. No – because Tashelhit, it's a – I wouldn't say dialect... I would say it's a variety. It's a variety of the Tamazight language. It's the Amazighi language with its three varieties: Tamazight, Tashelhit, and Tarifit. And Amazigh is a language. Hassaneya is a language. French is a language. English is a language. Spanish is a language.

What do you consider to be the difference between a language and a dialect?

A dialect is a language used in the quotidian; it's the "dia," used in daily life. It's used in interpersonal communication, unlike Classical Arabic, which is a written language not used for oral communication. Unless it is used in official discourse. Written and official.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Fus'ha?

It's beautiful.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Darija?

[pause] Expressive.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Tamazight, Tashelhit, or Tarifit?

Identity.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Hassaneya?

An orientation. No – a region. The Sahara.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of French?

The language of the colonizer... and of novels.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of English?

I don't understand it. Incomprehensible.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Spanish?

Closer to French than to English. So... bizarre.

What language do you encounter most often in literature and poetry?

French.

What language do you encounter most often in music?

French and Classical Arabic.

What language do you encounter most often on billboards, signs, restaurant menus, etc?

When I could see, in general for menus I would read the French part – you can always find a French part... The menus would be written in Arabic and French, and sometimes it would be Moroccan dialect Arabic! Advertisements are in a very strange language that I don't understand yet, the language of SMS... It's very new for us. It's written with symbols, with numbers. Personally, I don't know it. It's not of my generation. I don't use it, because I write my messages in French. Or, in Arabic with Latin letters, since I can't write in Arabic.

What do you think of Darija transcriptions? Do you prefer it be done with Arabic script or Latin script? Why? What about Facebook?

They are speaking to a certain generation, so it's not my place to say. It's designated for a specific audience, it's not for everyone. So I can't say, no, they shouldn't do that. Publicity looks to communicate with everyone... But personally, I don't use it... The symbols, they are damaging the language. They are breaking the language. It's not Latin or Arabic letters, but numbers. It's mathematical letters! So when you write a language with another system... it transcribes a system with another system. So it destroys it! I don't like it... Arabic, write it in Arabic and French, write it in French! The future generation will think this is the norm. They won't know good things from bad things... Young people today will write Arabic in French and French in Arabic. It... destroys language! They don't help to develop the languages... We should keep the norm. I think we should keep the norm. So the films translated into dialect Arabic and the billboards written with numbers... this goes with modernity, yes, but they don't teach us anything. They don't give us anything more, they give us less. They devalue the language. So the youth won't learn how to speak better Arabic or French, they'll speak like nonsense. Perhaps my opinion is a bit archaic, but that's my opinion.

What do you think about Tifinagh? What does it accomplish?

They should have done this before, in the 1970s... I am not Amazighe, I am Moroccan. Moroccan among the Arabs. I always considered that Moroccans are Arabs. When I read our history, I learned that, unfortunately, Moroccans are not Arabs. The Arabs, they came to Morocco. But the Moroccan lands, they were occupied by the Amazigh. They were the first occupants. So their language should be valued. After independence, the government launched Arabization against the colonizer, against French. But this had two goals – against the colonizer, and against the Amazighs. It was not against the colonizer, it was to distance the language of the colonizer. But they did not take into consideration the Amazigh language... to say that the language that must dominate must be the language of power, and those in power were the Arabs. So Arab was the dominator. It's not fair. Yes, the Arabs brought Islam, but they brought it to a land that already had a people and a history. We must not neglect those who existed before us. It's not nice... we cannot forget our origins, we must live in harmony... It's a diversity that gives unity, not partition. But when they engaged in Arabization politics, they declared a certain partition. And the Amazigh felt marginalized. And they're right!

[goes into detail about the Charter of Agadir and U.N. declaration to protect minority indigenous languages]

What do you think about Arabization?

Arabization really screwed up the education system until now. The Moroccan education system sucks! All because of the Arabization laws of the 1990s, because we removed French and Arabized the sciences...

What do you think about the new policy of teaching Tifinagh in schools?

I've asked teachers in public elementary schools, how do children learn Tamazight? They said they learn it much better than Arabic or French, even if they are not Amazigh themselves! The children have a big desire to learn Tamazight. It's good!

Do you want your son to learn Tamazight?

I'm not Amazighe, my husband is not Amazighe. I won't say I want him to learn Tamazight. I just want us to live together in peace. I don't want there to be distance between an Arab and an Amazigh. The distance must be eliminated. We are Moroccans, we should live together. It's not nice to say, you are Amazigh, you are Chleuh.

Is there a hierarchy in the multitude of languages in Morocco? How is it organized?

First of all, we start with the language of power. It's at the summit: it's Arabic. Arabic, people say it's a priority. People say if you don't speak Arabic, you're not allowed to speak other languages. Because it's the official language, it's the language of the Qur'an. Even with Tamazight being official now, it has not yet achieved the summit, the place that it should have. So it is official only in the Constitution, it has not yet been made operational.

[following up on a previous statement] So when you said there shouldn't be separations, do you think it should be up to the Amazighs to learn Arabic or the Arabs to learn Tamazight?

If someone wants to learn something, he should learn it. I say in principle, the Amazighs should learn Tamazight. It's shameful to not learn your own language... When I meet an Amazigh who cannot speak Tamazight, I get angry. It's shameful. And Arabs who live where there are a lot of Amazighs should learn Tamazight. And they do! Arabs who live in a mixed zone with many Amazighs, they learn Tamazight. Everyone learns the language of the other.

4. Farah

Farah is the director and founder of the Center for Cross Cultural Learning, the largest study abroad organization in Morocco, where she has taught Arabic and currently lectures on Moroccan society and comparative religion. She was educated in a French mission school, but launched a student rebellion when she refused to sign her name in anything but Arabic on her graduation certificate. Many other students followed her example, defying directions to sign their names in French. Farah is also the first person in the history of the French mission schools to not continue her higher education in French. With much difficulty and persistence, she acquired her bachelor's degree in Arabic literature from a Moroccan university, much to the dismay of her secondary alma mater.

What languages do you speak?

It's interesting, I know you would like to hear Fusha and Darija as two different languages, or maybe you don't. When I write on my CV, I write Arabic, French and English, and I consider myself to speak those three languages quite fluently. However, there are moments when I think that maybe I should divide Darija and Fusha into two tongues, into two mother tongues, but I don't know. I do also speak some Spanish, not a lot. It's basic. I think I gave more importance to English at an early age, and that's how I lost some of my Spanish. But as soon as I'm in a setting where I need it, I feel it comes back. I don't think I can say that I can speak any Tamazight, unfortunately, but... I've taken some classes, which is unusual in Morocco. I took classes even before the Moroccan regime decided to give importance to Tamazight. This happened in 2000, but I was taking classes in '97 already, at a time when no one had recognized Tamazight as a language yet. [Why?] I feel that the more you learn about the dialects of a region or country, the more you understand about a culture. So, since I was a Darija teacher, there is a lot of Tamazight in Darija, it's very important for me to see the – my fear when you're teaching a language is not to know the etymology of the words and the origins of a language. And Darija, for Darija you need Tamazight, Arabic, and French. I had Arabic and French, but Tamazight was missing... I loved learning language.

Order of fluency: Speaking fluency? Writing fluency?

It's very difficult for me, I have to admit. The first language I studied in school was French. The first language I spoke as a child was Darija. I started studying Arabic when I was already fluent in French... French was like a native language. I do consider that I caught up in Arabic to the point that I consider it as a first language. But there are moments where I – for instance, I find it easier for me to count in French, but at the same time I find that I think in Arabic. But I write in English. It's very interesting, and I think it's the fact that my work has been more in English in the last 20 years: lecturing in English, having to write my lectures, having to write my lectures,

publishing in English. The fact that I'm doing this, it's becoming difficult for me to write in French which was initially my first language and which is still the language that... if I'm upset, it's French. Or my Moroccan dialect from the mountains of Tangiers, which is another level.

What language do you think in?

It's very difficult for me to say which is my first language, but I can say that I definitely write in English, even though I have problems in English. But I haven't written in French except for letters or emails or little things like that in years. So I don't know if I will be ever able to write well in French. But in Arabic I find myself, I like to write in Arabic. But so far I've been published in English. My thesis was in Arabic, you know. It's interesting how I gave up my first language after high school, which is French.

What language is easiest for you to express yourself?

Arabic. Orally, it's Arabic.

What language do you find to be the most beautiful?

Oh no, I don't think I find any difference in terms of which language is beautiful. I think there are certain things that I would not be able... There are certain things in French that I'm unable to find alternatives or translations for in Arabic or in English, and I find that just – this is it. It has to be like this. Same thing for Arabic. And I think same thing for English. I mean even in Darija, there are things that I'm like, no, I shouldn't translate them. Just keep them as they are. So... I think there is beauty in every language. And I wish I knew more languages so I could say the same thing about them.

What languages/dialects do you understand? (ie. Egyptian or Lebanese Arabic in movies and television)

For the Arabic dialects or accents or whatever – codes – I think I understand... most of them. I don't want to say all of them because I haven't tried myself with some of the dialects so I cannot say all of them, and I assume that in every country, like in Morocco, you have different accents depending on where you are so... but the standardized dialects of the Arab world, I think I can understand them all. It's very funny how you get to understand them all, and I think it has to do with the fact that I'm a teacher of a dialect... It's true that Moroccans are very good with dialects, with Arabic dialects, and the reason has to do with the structure of our dialect. Our dialect is based on the schwa sound. We swallow all the vowels. So if you swallow all the vowels, and you have the other dialects putting back vowels, it becomes easy. That's what it is. And the schwa comes from the Tamazight influence, because Tamazight is a language based on schwa. [Examples of Tamazight words in Darija?] Oh, many. Tcha. Tcha means, in Darija, to spot. To

see. In Darija, we use it as 'to spot.' In Darija it means 'to see.' But 'tchatik' – I spotted you. See how it's schwa? And if you think about how we say 'gliss,' the [hard g] comes from Tamazight. So if I say 'gliss,' and someone says 'ijliss,' it's easy for me to understand what he said. But it's difficult for him to understand me, because I'm saying 'g' and I'm not using any vowels. That's what makes it difficult for other dialects to understand the Moroccan dialects, and that's what makes it easy for us to understand other dialects. So we can already get 70% of other dialects because of the structure of our dialect. And because I've been teaching Darija, when I'm watching a movie, what is interesting to me is to spot the words that we don't have. For instance, Lebanese would say 'balleh.' 'Balleh' is not an Arabic word. It means let's start. I think it comes from Turkish because some countries have been under the Ottoman empire – many countries have – and they have a lot of influence. Like 'bey,' 'affendi,' all these words are from Turkish. But we don't have them because Morocco was never under the Ottoman Empire... Every language, you need to know – and it's the same thing for religions, by the way – you need to know what was before. When you understand what was before, you can say okay, so it was influenced by this. [...] It's not only Tamazight, but if we get Tamazight, if we get French, Spanish, and Arabic, I think we've covered 90% of Darija. The remaining 10% would be things that came from the Vandals, Phoenicians, etc.

Do you feel/act different when speaking each of these languages?

Yes. And I think it has to do with how I studied these languages, and from whom I studied. For instance, with French... I studied French within a French school, in a French system that was very different from the French system that we have in Morocco today. At the time, I studied French as if I was a French kid, because we did not study anything about the culture of the country where we are, but we studied every single detail of the French civilization. French, Christianity, secularism... French history, French geography. I was able to draw the map of France before I was able to know the map of Morocco. So I think... yes, it's very "mission"-oriented. It's very French-French. We used to sing the French anthem, and I didn't know the Moroccan anthem. So in other words, no matter what, French remained for me this language where you have to pronounce perfectly – or shut up. If you cannot speak French properly, you should not open your mouth. That's how we studied French. I remember you were not allowed to speak about anything but French when you stepped inside the school. It was the French mission all over Morocco at my time. We only were offered some basic Arabic at the age of 8 or 9 as a secondary language for which the grades were not important. In fact, it made sense, because the French "mission" was a French school for the French living in Morocco. But since there was no private school in Morocco, some of the parents wanted to put their children there. It was free of charge when I went there, it was not like now. It was not elitist... it was just a good system. But, in my case, I was lucky enough to have a mother who was quite enlightened who offered Arabic classes for my brother and I at home. So I didn't have a problem with Arabic thanks to that. We've had very strong intensive Arabic classes for 6 years at home, which helped me. But anyways, when I speak French, it's very difficult for me to get out of this system. And [my

husband and daughter] tease me a lot. So when they hear the French anthem say “Shhh... shut up, it’s very important for her!” They are always teasing me. I can joke about that now, I have to admit. I don’t have a problem with it now. I did at some point, I had an identity crisis – it was horrible. But at the same time, I’m very strict when it comes to French, to speaking French. I’m like, paying attention to all the mistakes. It has to be perfect. With Arabic, I think I think of Arabic in a – when I speak Darija, I don’t care about how many languages – I think it’s the most relaxed language of all the languages. It’s because I could be using French, English, Arabic, Tamazight, Spanish, whatever word in it, and I just feel – I love it. The second language I’m relaxed in is English. Because the way I studied English was always on the side – in the summertime, on my vacation. So it was something I did for myself. I never thought that English would become the language of my profession. So the way I studied it... I don’t care if I make mistakes. But I can’t do this with French. Impossible. With Arabic, the fact that it wasn’t my first language initially, because I wrote my thesis in this language, and it’s the language I chose to make a first language... Because after the French school, I moved to the public Moroccan university to study Arabic literature and linguistics. There is no one in the history of the French mission of Morocco who has done this. I’m the only one. It’s impossible. I didn’t understand a single word of what the professors were saying at the university my first year. The only thing I could do was to write everything they were saying. So every class I was just writing, writing. Then I would spend four hours trying to understand, at home, what the professors were saying. I had a dictionary, and I would look up every single word. So it was a lot of work, but I’ve done it. So for me, Arabic was something I had to work hard on. So when I speak Arabic, it’s like... I’m very comfortable in it because I’ve learned how to mix Fusha with the different dialects depending on who is in front of me. So if I’m speaking to a Lebanese person, I’m using Fusha with a mix of my Darija and some of their dialect... So with Fusha, I’m against everybody who speaks about “schizophrenia” or a problem with Fusha and Darija. I think it’s a wealth, it’s like, dipping here and here and here and make it and that’s what Fusha is going to become anyway. It’s going to become a mix of all dialects with a Fusha. And that’s fine, why not? So that’s how I feel with all the languages.

[Farah then admits to feeling an urge to correct her husband’s French grammatical mistakes because she just feels she “just has to do it, it feels like there is something wrong in her ears.” She tells a story of once being given a birthday cake with a missing n in ‘Joyeux Anniversaire’ and she corrected it. She was also given a red pen for her birthday because of her itching to correct.]

Do you codeswitch?

Yes.

If yes, when? Why do you think you codeswitch?

I think I'm doing it with – like, for instance, I haven't done it while you're here, because I know you're not speaking Arabic so I'm not using other languages with you. I'm not using codeswitch with my mother-in-law because she doesn't use other languages – so I am aware of it. With the staff, when I'm sending emails, I'll write words in Arabic or Darija or different languages because I'm lazy to think what's the proper word in one language when I speak with someone who I know speaks more than one language... I'm lazy, I just throw words as they come. When I speak with older generations I never do it, never, because you don't do it. With my mother-in-law, I only speak Arabic. I never use any word of French. I'm very aware of this, I know that some people aren't, but I am... because I want to be understood when I speak to someone. I feel that it's disrespectful if I'm using a language that the person I'm speaking to can't understand. It's very disrespectful. [Good control of what you're speaking and when?] I work a lot with people from different countries. For instance, I work a lot with people from Arab countries, and I would not use a French word with someone who is from Egypt or another Arab country – Jordan, or something. I might use an English word, because I'm aware that they have English as a second language... I'm very aware, yes. I grew up in a family where I would speak a lot of French with my father but a lot of Arabic, too, and my dad didn't like this codeswitching. You speak one language. It's very modern to use different languages at the same time. Older people, for them it was not good. Going to my grandparents home – they lived next door to us – everybody would speak Arabic and if you spoke French in front of them, it was disrespectful.

What languages do your parents speak? Your grandparents?

From my father's side, my grandfather spoke French, Arabic, English and Spanish. His grandmother was British, so I'm sure he was fluent in English. I know he watched TV and movies in Spanish all day long. His wife, my grandmother, did not speak any language other than Darija. My father grew up studying French only – again, it's the French colonial time. He was part of the elite, so he was not allowed to study Arabic. He speaks Darija, but he cannot read and write in Fusha. He speaks some English and a little Spanish. His English is not very bad. My mom was completely Arabic. She studied only in Arabic, her Arabic was excellent. My mom studied French when she was pregnant with me. I remember my mother taking English courses at the American center. My mother spoke five languages. She started with one – Arabic – and then her French was excellent. Her English was very good. Her Spanish was okay, but her Italian was excellent. She used to travel to Italy. So Arabic, French, Spanish, English, and Italian.

What languages did you speak at home as a child?

With both, Arabic and French. None of the others, actually. But I think my mother was insisting that we would try to speak Fusha at home, or at least use some Fusha words in our Darija. I remember her saying, okay, during this meal, no French. It was a way of making sure our language would not be passive.

Why did your mother did not like you to mix languages?

Because traditionally, it was considered to be lack of respect to the elders. And I think for her, the French system was that you speak only one language. She was very rigorous when it came to language... My two sisters do not speak Arabic to their children. I have a sister whose daughter did not speak a single word of Arabic until she was 8.

(...)

French is really just for finance in Morocco...

Which of the following do you consider to be a language versus a dialect: Fus'ha, Darija, Tamazight, Tashelhit, Tarifit, Hassaneya, French, English, Spanish?

Fus'ha: language

Darija: I say it's a language

Tamazight: I think it's a language, definitely

Tashelhit: You know, again, I'm not a linguist and I don't know Tashelhit, so... I mean I know everybody says it's a dialect. I don't know. To tell you the truth, I don't know. My guess is that there might be one language for Tamazight and one language for Darija, maybe, and maybe there are – I don't know if I have the right to use the term 'language' or 'dialect' or 'variation' – maybe I would prefer variation. I do believe that, again, I'm not a linguist, and I don't want to use the term dialect if it sounds pejorative or less important than a language. So if a dialect is just to say that it's a spoken language, then I think Darija is also a dialect. And Tashelhit is a dialect. No longer Tamazight because we have Tifinagh now. However, when I am able to write in Darija, I consider Darija to be a written language because I'm writing in it. If people write in Tashelhit, then it's the same thing. I'm not a linguist, I'm speaking from my feelings, emotions, thinking... I don't want to use anything that is pejorative, and I thin from my understanding, dialect means that it is oral and not written. And I don't know Tashelhit.

Tarifit: Same thing for Tarifit.

Hassaneya:

French: language

English: language

Spanish: language

What do you consider to be the difference between a language and a dialect?

To me, a dialect is a language, definitely, that does not have a written format or lost a written format. That's how I understand it. Now, I'm not a linguist. I might be wrong in my definition;

it's a definition of a normal person. For me, it comes from the root of the word dialect, which to me means 'dia.'

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Fus'ha?

Beautiful... rich... old... I don't know if it's an adjective, but I think... My identity, personally. I think it was very important to me to acquire Fusha at some point in my life, at an older age. But for me it's... it made me regain my – or at least, overcome the identity crisis, when I was able to have my bachelor in Arabic. I felt in that moment I was personally not in an identity crisis anymore, and I needed that. Poetic, is another one. I think it's poetry that made my love Arabic. Singing and poetry. I like the songs of Fairouz, she made me want to try to understand the lyrics, the words.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Darija?

Darija... um, simple... relaxed... mine, like I appropriate it, it's mine. It makes you – I'm sure there is an adjective, but – it makes you connect with everybody. It's connecting you to everybody.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Tamazight, Tashelhit, or Tarifit?

It's a huge, um... world that I unfortunately failed into knowing and finding out about. But I have a lot of – it's mysterious to me. But yet, it's part of me, so I feel like, it remained mysterious and I wish I could – not only I wish, I will – try to dig into it and find out more about it, its diversity, its wealth.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of French?

I think theatrical, for me. I think it's Racine, Corneille, all those people come to my mind. It's the literature. I love the French literature so much.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of English?

Easy. Open. Accessible. It's also a language that's allowed me to travel the world and to communicate with a much bigger number of people, to go up in my work. It just opened everything to me, the fact that I'm able to speak in the two, communicate in English, work in English, made a lot of doors open to me – especially coming from Morocco, as a woman. It's amazing how many doors open... But it's interesting what happened to me. When I went to the U.S., I used to go to the library and read very old Shakespearean books and be able to understand them and not able to speak with people because I had no practice. For months, I had headaches and I didn't know what people were saying. It was too difficult for me to understand a

spoken language, or to speak it. But to write, I could tell you. And after one month, after being immersed with people speaking to me, I was able to understand almost all of what people were saying. I was happy because I understood, but [my speech] wouldn't come out.

What do you think of Darija transcriptions? Do you prefer it be done with Arabic script or Latin script? Why? What about Facebook?

Arabic script. When I was teaching Arabic, I think I was among one of the first people to say it has to be written in Arabic. Again, it has to do with the etymology. To me, if a word is originally from a language – and I think it has to do with my French education with Greek and Latin. Origins, I'm always referring to why... Like the word "beaucoup," why do we write it b-e-a-u-c-o-o-u-p and not b-o-c-o-u? Again, it's because it has Latin and Greek origins. It's very important to keep the origins, and I think I come from this school [of thought]. I think that it's very important to write [Darija] in Arabic script, for two reasons. One, because of the etymology. The second one is the fact that some sounds do not exist in the Latin language and do exist in Arabic, and it makes it easy for people to pronounce them. These are my major reasons. [What about on Facebook?] To tell you the truth, I don't have any problem if people decide to use this new script with 3 and – I mean, I do the same thing with text messages. The same thing is happening on Facebook and SMS. Even if people are writing with English character, they're using new words like "zogzo" or whatever. I see people write "zogzo," it means hugs or whatever. X-o-x-o... it doesn't mean anything in any language, but it's the Facebook language. I do believe that even in Arabic, we should have the same things. So I don't have a problem if people prefer to write in Arabic characters. I even told the Arabic teachers, if you want to teach in Latin characters I don't have a problem. We just have to be consistent. Will you be able to continue beyond teaching grammar in Latin characters? And then they stop. I said, you have to think about it. You can't just switch, you have to decide. The other reason also, for me, why I think it's important to teach in Arabic characters is because at some point, Darija needs vocabulary from Fusha. So if you start teaching in Latin characters and you want to open to a student to continue by himself, speaking Darija and learning Darija, if he or she does not read the signs and the characters, etc, their learning is going to stop. If you want their learning to go beyond, then they will have more things to read in Arabic character than things to read in Latin character. So it is better to teach them with the Arabic character. At least they will be able to associate that character. It's the same thing with Tamazight. I insisted, either you teach me with Tifinagh or with the Arabic script – because of the sounds. I don't have a problem with either choice, I just think we have to be consistent, and we have to have an objective. What is the objective? If the objective is for someone to continue Darija, and maybe to further continue with Fusha – because as I said, we need to mix them at some point – it's better to start with Arabic characters for students to continue by themselves.

What do you think about Tifinagh? What does it accomplish?

Again, I don't know. I haven't done any research on this or studies to see what it did accomplish in terms of if it's beneficial. However, I think I'm a bit conservative in thinking that no language should be taught in a different character than the character of the language. I think Tifinagh is the character of Tamazight, and if I wanted to study Tamazight, I would not want to study it with Latin character or Arabic character, but with Tifinagh character. To me, a language is part of a culture, a part of a whole. And I'm not studying a language just to be able to read and write, but I'm studying a language to understand a whole culture behind it. Tamazight is written from left to right, has a different character, the character is linked to the folklore, to the crafts... then I'm missing a whole lot about the culture, which I will need to catch up at some point. Why not start with it?

What do you think about the new policy of teaching Tifinagh in schools?

I think, to me, it's not enough. To me, as a Moroccan citizen, I think I would have preferred to have in every single university in Morocco a department of Tamazight. We should have started by that. And after four years, who've got the bachelor's degree in Tamazight at the university could become the teachers. We could have had bigger numbers. You get a bachelor's degree, you could continue in translation, interpretation... teaching, doing research... you could do a lot of things! But start with a bachelor, and do a specialize in whatever you want. To me, the fact that we started by teaching those kids with whoever spoke Tamazight, with a little training... means that we will have to wait for many more years before we have enough people speaking Tamazight.

The fact that we also started in areas where we believe we have a larger number of Amazighi people living, such as Agadir, etc, is wrong. Tamazight is a language of Moroccans, not only the people who are "originally" Amazigh. This isn't about apartheid politics. To me, I think it is my language, and I have the same right as someone whose father or mother is Amazigh. It's not about my last name refers to an Arab tribe that I'm not – you know what I mean.

They started when my daughter was in school, but it wasn't implemented in her school or in Rabat then. So we missed a possibility of studying Tamazight. Same thing, I wish there were centers that would be open to me so study Tamazight like everybody else. And speak to me in Tamazight, don't speak to me in French. Speak to me in Tamazight! Don't speak to me in French. Why are you teaching Tamazight in French? Just because I'm making a statement that I'm not speaking the language of the colonizer who are Arabic, as if the French weren't also colonizers! I don't want to mix politics with this. If I'm teaching a language, I'm teaching a language. So I'm very unhappy with the fact that it's very exclusive and that we started only in certain areas.

There are several reasons behind what I'm saying. If you open a department of Amazighi languages and culture, let's put it this way. Unless you tell these young people that they aren't

going to have guaranteed jobs, very few people are going to go to those departments. They are going to go to English, French, German or Spanish. So I think my dream is a dream and may never come true just because of this reality. Maybe they were wiser than me by starting in only one university in Agadir. A lot of people, including Amazighi people, did not want their children to study Tamazight. It's like if you tell a kid now to study Darija. Who is going to send their kid to study Darija? We are still working on this notion... for a lot of people, we don't need to study it because we speak it anyway, at home. I know when we started teaching Darija, a lot of people were saying, why are you selecting something very easy and very stupid to teach to the people? Teach them Fusha, it's a real language. Again, I think we need time.

However, I do believe that there has been a policy of excluding the non-originally-Amazighi people from this. I have a lot of friends who are Amazighi, and a lot of times I have the impression that when we're speaking either Darija or French it's fine, but when I'm asking questions about words in Tamazight to be translated for me, they refuse to do it. I'm not sure about this. As if this is "our" language, we're protecting it. It makes me feel very uncomfortable, plus the fact that you have a lot of victimization, which I'm tired of. "We are Muslims, everybody looks at us." All these conspiracy theories, we are Muslims and everybody looks at us as terrorists. We are Amazigh and we've been victims of the Arabs, and our language was killed by the Arabs." Come on. What have you done since '99 when this language was recognized? Do something. Now that no one is discriminating this language and this culture anymore, do something. The constitution has been changed, and now the language has been recognized as an official language. What have we done in two years? Screamed?

So I think we are lazy people, Moroccans in general like to be the victims. We are the victims of everything. So of course, when we failed in the education system, it's because we Arabized everything. No, we have another problem. It's not because of language. Oh, a child is "schizophrenic" because he speaks Darija and Tamazight at home and at school he is forced to study Fusha. What would you want to study? Darija and Tamazight, and no Fusha? What, are you going to communicate to less people? I don't agree with any "schizophrenia" at all. I have no problem in Darija, I have no problem in Fusha, and I have no problem in French. And they were all at some point first languages, I did not know which was which anymore. But this is it, you have to overcome it and do something with it – not scream and cry.

On a similar note... When Arabic is taught to foreigners, it is split into Fusha and colloquial, and students who aren't aware of this split say simply, "I want to study Arabic." Immediately they're put in a Fusha class and experience immense frustration when they try to speak to people and they're laughed at because no one speak Fusha on the street... How do you explain that to students when you are a teacher?

A reality of the Arab world is that no single Arab country speaks Fusha. We are lying when we say that the Middle East speaks Fusha. The Middle East consider their dialect Fusha. In

Morocco, in this part of the world, we are the only ones that recognize that there is a split between these two languages. They don't, but we do. What we need to know is to speak to the students about the reality of multilingualism in this country. It is a truth, it is a reality. When you come from a culture that is monolingual like the U.S., and you come to a monolingual [one], the first thing students need to know is that this is a fact. You are going to feel frustrations because you don't speak French.

What's why what we do, is we try to mix the culture with Fusha and some Darija words. At some point, students are able to communicate in a mix of Fusha and Darija when they understand the culture. That's why I'm saying you cannot teach a language without its culture. When you teach them the culture, then they learn from the culture, and it makes sense. If I tell you, it's "hshouma" to say toilet, then you're learning something about the culture and that will stay with you. And then even if you don't know the word to say it but you've understood something about the culture... everybody would understand. You don't even need that word!

When I go to the east of Morocco, there are a lot of words I don't know. I may not eat just because I don't use the same words! So I rely on Fusha, even as a Moroccan in Morocco. Because a lot of the times you don't know the term for carrot, for instance. In Tangier it's "jehda," here it's "khizzou," and in the east it's "zrodeya." "Jazar" in Fusha. It's very interesting... that's why, which one are you going to teach those kids?

(...)

[Tells story of how in childhood, she had Arabic tutors to teach her Fusha after school. Her mother would prepare the lessons to ensure that there wasn't too much religion or nationalism. She would choose certain verses of the Qur'an that were more things about how to behave, attitude, loving others – not about the hereafter. Recalls thinking that because her mother was "a very strong woman," Arabic represented a strong language.]

THE REBELLION STORY: *When I was fourteen years old, I wanted to rebel against all the French system. At the time, we used to have the "brevet." In my time, they had changed for the first time in the system from "brevet" to "BEP" or something... I went in and there was a "surveillant general" – I don't know how to say this in English, because it's a very different system. Anyway, I had to sign. I got there, and I decided to sign in Arabic. And his reaction was the worst, because he said, "You cannot sign like this." When you are a teenager, you already have problems. Imagine that you already have an identity crisis. I decided to speak Arabic in the school with my peers. Darija. It was a decision made. Why not? It's our language. During the break, I have the right to speak whatever I want. When I signed, he said, "This is not a signature. What is this graboullis [scribble]?" I said, "It's my signature in Arabic." He said, "You can't do it." And I said, "Well you can refuse it. I don't want the diploma." I told everyone behind me to sign in Arabic. And they did. Many, many of them – not everyone – but many of us signed in*

Arabic. To me, this was very revealing. This guy, sitting there, was a colonizer more than anything else. This was like... I will not study French. I will not go to France to study, and I will not study French. I want to do something else.

It was the click that made me feel that – not that I hate the language, not at all. But I hated the whole thing, and I felt really... the oppression. When I announced to my parents that I wanted to do Arabic – wait a second, I sent a lot of applications to a lot of universities in France. And I got accepted to La Sorbonne with a grant to study Arabic. At La Sorbonne! And I refused to go... I wanted to study Arabic in the Arab world. When I wanted to get my dossier from the French mission, they sent it to an office in Rabat and not to give it to me because I decided not to study in France. For them, this was suicidal, to go to the Arabic department in Morocco. That same “surveillant general” said, “Your parents have wasted their money to send you to the best school system and now you are going to ruin it by going to a Moroccan university.” He wasn’t the only one. And my Arabic teacher then started laughing at me. He said, “You think you’re going to pass the exams?” He started laughing at me. Even if I have to do my first year ten times in my life, I will do it.

My mom was like, oh my god. She was so scared because she knew it was her influence. But I did it. I had an ulcer. I got sick. I lost twenty pounds that year. The first year was the most difficult ever. Second year was still difficult. By the third year, I was fine. It was a lot of work, which is not the case of people who go to the university in Morocco, especially the Arabic department. They study for the exams. People said, why is she studying in between? And then I got my bachelor’s degree with “Mention Bien,” which is very good. My crisis was the fact that I didn’t feel... Plus, I’m a religious person. I have a lot of faith. So there were a lot of things. Everything that was “you” was being denied. And when you’re a teenager, that’s when you rebel anyway. It could have been something else, I don’t know.

Another story I like to tell, I’ll tell you what it is. When I was a child, and we studied in a French school, we were reciting history courses. And one of the first history courses was speaking about La Gaule. France as La Gaule. Speaking about the ancestors of the French people, les Gaulois. And the way we were studying was like, we are the French people from the French Republic, and our ancestors were Les Galois. “Nos ancetres, les Gaulois.” And in my tutoring class, my tutor was teaching me history of Morocco. I was studying that the original inhabitants of Morocco are the Berbers, and they are our ancestors. And I grew up at some point thinking that Les Gaulois was the French word for “al berber,” the Arabic word. I mean how can you explain to me that these are my ancestors and these are my ancestors? I thought it was the same people! For a while, I didn’t understand that we were speaking about two different cultures...

There was a crisis on French being better. Your French part is better than your Moroccan part, if you wish. And I think that same year when we had the brevet thing, we were studying about the French de-colonization. And the only line about Morocco in my 13, 16 years of school from

kindergarten to 17 years old, the only line about Morocco was to say that Morocco was colonized. Morocco had the French Protectorate, colonized by France in 1912 and the de-colonization took place in 1956. It's not "independence." Wait a second. "De-colonization." It's like they decided to leave, and they left. This was the only sentence in my whole curriculum. It's a lot for a child, you know what I mean? It's heavy.

5. Badrdine

Badrdine was my colleague at the Center for Cross Cultural Learning in summer 2013. He is in his early thirties and teaches Arabic – Fusha and Darija – to study abroad students, primarily from the United States. Badrdine majored in English Studies in a Moroccan university, and worked relentlessly on perfecting an American accent by watching hours of popular American television shows.

What languages do you speak?

I speak Moroccan Arabic, Standard Arabic, French, English, and basic German.

Order of fluency: Speaking fluency? Writing fluency?

In terms of writing... in terms of speaking and writing Moroccan Arabic, Standard, English, French, German.

What language do you think in?

When I'm speaking English, I think English, when I'm speaking Standard, I think Standard, when I'm speaking French, I think a little bit English, for a simple reason... because English is my second language I speak best, due to the number of years I've spent studying English. French, still, I'm not very fluent and good in it compared to English, so that's why when I speak French I think English.

What language is easiest for you to express yourself?

Moroccan Arabic. Nishaan.

What language do you find to be the most beautiful?

Standard Arabic, the most beautiful, the richest, poetic, most... it's the language that I find myself very very eloquent and elegant. When I speak it, it gives, like, it's prestigious. When I

speak Standard Arabic I feel myself, I mean, at a level that I cannot compare when I'm speaking French or English.

What languages/dialects do you understand? (i.e. Egyptian or Lebanese Arabic in movies and television)

Egyptian is the first, of course, this is my exposure for the maximum of Moroccans. Watching like movies and... yeah, Egyptian dialect is... I can understand as an Egyptian. Second would be Algerian. The hardest is Tunisian, they speak very fast. But the easiest dialect or language I would say is Egyptian.

Do you feel/act different when speaking each of these languages?

I would say yes, because, you mean when I speak a language I act in a different way than when I speak a different language? Yes. Because the language plays a role in personality. For example when I speak English, I'm trying not to imitate British people or American people, but I do try to act in a pretty similar way, but not like a parrot, you see what I mean? So it's... I watch movies, I watch students when they talk, so I try to... for, whenever it comes to some face features, like moves and expressions, swear words of course, thank you... so yes, I do act in a different way when I speak a different language. Maybe it has to do with personality, because I'm a person who speaks with his hands more, like more than I do orally. So I use body language more in English than in Standard or Moroccan Arabic. You would find it weird, because they say Moroccans use their hands a lot like ups and downs, maybe I do actually try to apply some in Moroccan Arabic or in English, maybe this would be like weird, awkward, but I do feel myself, whenever I'm speaking English, I do use my hands explaining like more with gestures. Maybe this would have another explanation because when I fail to make things clear in English I use my body language. But when I'm speaking Moroccan Arabic or Standard Arabic, I can make myself very clear from the first point, so I don't need to have extra things, using my hands or face features to explain the meaning of the word. But in English, I actually use body language a lot.

Do you codeswitch? (codeswitching = switching between the different languages you speak depending on context, etc.)

A lot.

If yes, when? Why do you think you codeswitch?

I would say I codeswitch professionally, meaning at work, with my friends here or my colleagues. I codeswitch from English to Arabic to French to Standard Arabic a lot. I mean sometimes I codeswitch in three different languages in the same like I would say the same conversation maybe in a minute or too. This is at the professional level. But on the personal level

I do also codeswitch, meaning for example with my little brother... I say little brother, I mean he's 26 years old, with my younger one, and with my older brother, because we speak more than one language, but then it comes to my family, my mom, I don't codeswitch. So it's like three levels.

What language do you speak with your mom and your brothers?

I speak Moroccan Arabic with my mom. With my brothers I switch French and Arabic. Here [at work] French, Arabic, and English. I would say English would be 60%, 30% Moroccan Arabic, 10% French. It's more of context.

How do you compartmentalize the languages?

It's because of the conditions of work, because I write emails in English all the time, like 95% of my emails a day are in English, to other colleagues here at work. The language I use in a day makes me push a little bit to keep using it for the whole day even with my colleagues, more than any other language. That's why I'm saying English is more than 50% or 65%.

But when you see the colleague in person, what language do you speak to them?

I'd say like I codeswitch, that means English, French, and Moroccan Arabic. I can't say which language I speak first or second, but I keep jumping from one code to another. Because I use English in my emails all the time, so when I meet my friends face to face, that's why I use English as the largest part of my conversation, in addition to French and Arabic. I hope I've made this clear.

What languages did you speak at home as a child?

Moroccan Arabic.

Do you remember what cartoons you used to watch?

Yes, I used to watch like Walt Disney cartoons, dubbed in Arabic. Classical Arabic. Pluto, Bugs Bunny, dubbed in Standard Arabic. And also there's Tom Sawyer, it's old, like '80s or '90s, nice cartoon, pretty famous, you can ask people born in the '80s, Tom Sawyer, it's one of the famous cartoons. It was in French, and later on it was dubbed in Arabic. And plus there were other minor ones, like Tom and Jerry, the cat and mouse, that was one of my favorites, first they were in English. I still remember, it was in English and I didn't understand, just the movements, but afterwards it was translated into French and Standard Arabic.

Describe your path of education: Public or private school? University?

What languages did you learn in school?

Standard Arabic, French. French started in second grade. Primary education you have like six years. First year is first grade, only Standard Arabic, and geography, history, Q'ran, Islamic studies, second grade we start French. Then presecondary school is still French, three years. Then secondary school, which is tenth grade, where I was exposed to English for the first time. Tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade. At the University was when I actually specialized. I chose English Studies... all my classes were taught in English without exception.

How was that transition for you?

It was harder, it was very hard because moving from secondary which was beginner level – because most of my friends who were with me in the first year had extra classes in the American language center or American school, so they actually were intermediate level – I was beginner level. So I repeated the first year. But the second year when I repeated I was actually the level of my friends. But it was pretty hard. That's why it wasn't easy for me, the first year at university. Because [I] only [had] three years [of English] when I moved, because I had some good grades in secondary school, like 15 or 16 out of 20, which pushed me a little bit to think about opting for English Studies. But it was hard, it was pretty hard the first year. So that's the path of languages. [My accent] is very much a personal effort. Because the moment when I graduated back in 2003, I took a year, like a break, like a gap year, before I started looking for trainings and looking for job opportunities. And that year was just a year to do personal efforts, more of a break, I'll say, to watch movies, T.V. shows. I'm talking about American T.V. shows and programs, like Oprah, Jerry Springer, Dismissed, many many other... Pimp My Ride... they were pretty silly. I was not opting for these terrible shows, my interest was just to get a real American accent.

Why did you want an American accent?

Studying the American language, or studying the English language, I would say I was hoping that I can sometime travel to the U.S. or be able to communicate with a native American. Because the language I learned at school had nothing to do with the language I learned the year after. Because it was very academic, talking about Chomsky, Sossure, talking about George Orwell, literature, theater, drama, so on and so forth. That was mainly to write an essay with, not to communicate face to face. Because when I'm talking to an American I cannot talk about what Chomsky said when he – [laughter] – behaviorists, structuralists, like the old school vs. the new school, so it was nothing. But afterwards, I thought about having a good mixture between academic and conversational English so that was the point. But afterwards when I started working at CCCL, this complemented my English, because when I started meeting with real live native Americans. I had a hard time understanding them at the beginning, but afterwards – it was like a learning process. I'm still [picking up slang].

What made you want to major in English studies?

I'll tell you a story. When I graduated like Baccalaureate, I was not thinking for a minute that I was going to opt for English. So when I went to the university, I didn't have anything in mind at all, because my English, as I said, was not at the level of pursuing my studies in English. I was thinking, or I was dreaming, to become a teacher, like a primary school teacher. But I [failed the exam]. I didn't want to spend the whole year waiting for the next year to do the same exam, or apply for a second time, so when September came I said I have to make up my mind. So I went to university and said what about Islamic Studies? So I went there and I already go the papers to collect for the Islamic Studies department. I went back home and my dad asked me 'What did you do?' and I said 'Islamic Studies' and he said 'If you do this, I will make you stop and stay at home.' I said why, it was dinner time, and I still remember my dad said 'What? Why?' I said I don't know. He said if you opt for Islamic Studies I will force you to drop out of school, because at that time in Islamic Studies there were thousands of people graduating and not finding a job. So he said try to do something different than your brothers and sisters because my brother was graduating in history and my little sister was doing sonography, like a secretary thing. So I thought about doing English, so my father said why don't you do French. Why don't you do English, German. So I thought if English is the only language I know compared to French, I would say English is something I don't know as much as French. So I went, got reduced rate, and it was a very hard year at the very beginning. But afterwards, I will say thanks to G-d and thanks to my dad, that I actually can be at this level. And maybe that was my major role in having a job opportunity at CCCL because if I had Islamic Studies I wouldn't have the chance to work here at the center. So I was not thinking about anything related to English or studying a foreign language. I just went for it and there I was, it was good. First year was... I was just watching, not taking notes, it was a disaster. My grades, the marks I got, were the lowest grades I ever had, because I was not paying attention. I was just trying to see what they're studying so the next year I would try to make it up. All my professors were Moroccan. My friends who succeeded were having extra hours at the American school, I was not. I was just like, I will go for it next year, and I'll succeed. And I did it. And the second year, third year, fourth year. I remember when I was doing the year break I was recording T.V. shows like Oprah, Jerry Springer, MTV shows, Dismissed, I was watching it because I had something in mind. I was repeating words, sentences, phrases, 10, 20, 30 times to get the accent, for example 'and.' I love British accent, because it's a more flashy, snazzy thing like the upper class language, but American is a lower level, but I like to be like everyone else. The British accent is very distinguished. If you watch a British movie, then an American movie, you can tell the difference from the first word or first sentence. It's strong, it's prestigious, I love it. But the American one is cool.

Which of the following do you consider to be a language versus a dialect:

Fus'ha: *language*,

Darija: *G-d damn, language, moving towards becoming an official language, national language, I would say, like Catalan in Spain, there they have a national language and an official language, in Morocco we have only an official language, so I think Morocco is moving toward having the official language of Morocco and the national language of Morocco. National because it's the Moroccan dialect, vs. the official which is more Standard which is more prestigious, that is more spoken in specific contexts, but Moroccan Arabic is the national language of Morocco vs. the national language of Algeria etc. It's in the process of becoming official, not compared to Standard, but national.*

Tamazight: *language,*

Tashelhit: *language,*

Tarifit: *language,*

Hassaneya: *language,*

French: *language,*

English: *language,*

Spanish: *language*

What do you consider to be the difference between a language and a dialect?

I would say a dialect has a limited number of people, is not very standardized or structured, doesn't have an official register... a dictionary, for instance. A language has history, prestige, standard rules, is structured, and needs to be learned – it can be the mother tongue.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Fus'ha?

Rich.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Darija?

Mother tongue.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Tamazight, Tashelhit, or Tarifit?

Hard to learn. Hard, still. Hardest, it's like Russian for me, Japanese or Chinese. [respectively]

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Hassaneya?

No idea.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of French?

Etiquette. Elegant [sarcastically]. French is pretty, the language of the aristocracy, so aristocratic.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of English?

It's hard. I was never asked this question before, so maybe if you allow me to think some more or come back to it.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Spanish?

Easy.

What language do you encounter most often in literature and poetry?

Standard Arabic. I love [reading books in SA].

What language do you encounter most often in music?

English. [I listen to] Linkin Park, Adele, Justin Timberlake, and Michael Jackson.

What language do you encounter most often in films and on television?

English. I choose more NBC 2, FOX movies, action, I watch these more. But second I would watch Moroccan T.V. channels, Egyptian T.V. channels too, but English is number 1. I do this intentionally [to practice my English]. With a purpose. I like action movies but not the real action you think of, it's not about killing... action means that you feel captivated from the first minute to the last. Pursuit of Happiness, you watch that, it consists [of] action.

What do you think of Darija transcriptions? Do you prefer it be done with Arabic script or Latin script? Why? What about Facebook?

It's hard to decide because I find it easier to do it in Latin in text messages maybe because I don't have the Arab script or the alphabet in my mobile phone, so whenever I send an email I write Salam as S-A-L-A-M. That's easier for me, which is I think the case for the majority of youth now text messaging each other. Also on Facebook and other social networks. I think opting for the Latin script is becoming easier. I find it very easy and practical, not frustrating.

How do you feel about Darija written in Latin on billboards etc.?

Not more people would like that but there would be two trends, one saying why are we opting for this and not writing in Arabic script, the people who are for Arabization, and the other will say alright, this is globalization, this should happen so everyone can read it. But it's still very

problematic. You cannot have one way of seeing this type of propaganda, for example billboards, saying we all like it or we all don't like it. So you can have separate views, I think two different groups. Those for and those against. Those for because they say we are Morocco, closer to Europe, closer to U.S., we have tourists and just make it not only to Moroccans but also to people around who don't speak the language. But those who are against say we are in an Arab country so why don't we keep things Arabized, and everything should be Arabized instead of making it easier for other people to learn our language.

What do you think is the right way?

It's hard, it's hard to say, because both are good and both are bad, you cannot say what's the perfect solution. Because if you're working, if you're actually helping a group, the other group will not be able to, they wouldn't make more effort to see what you mean. So in the actual situation both scenarios are good, and both are not very good.

What do you think about Tifinagh? What does it accomplish?

It accomplishes the Moroccan identity because it complements it as a major constituent of the cultural heritage of Moroccans, or Morocco as a whole, but also it's a plus to make all Moroccans happy with the actual situation, because talking about Moroccans are not only Arabs but they're Arabs and Berbers, Arab and Amazigh. So it has helped make this reconciliation between the two groups, so that's what it accomplishes. Also it makes Moroccans... not about the Standard Arabic only but Arabic and other languages, like Amazigh. But I'm expecting sometime, in the future, that Moroccan Arabic will become the national language, so it will be admitted to complete the Moroccan identity, sort of. I say sort of because languages are not the only thing that constitute the Moroccan identity. Because we're talking about a cultural heritage that constitutes of multiple things, language music, dress, skin color I would say, food, many things. So the language remains... I would say sort of. Because the language accomplishes something, but the rest of the things should be paid attention also.

In your opinion, do all of the languages spoken in Morocco “belong” to Morocco?

No, French is a foreign language. It's the language of the colonizer, but it has been for a long time and so far it's more of the first foreign language in Morocco, but not the Moroccan language. Some people are Francophone so maybe they have taken French since they were kids or have French parents or reside here in Morocco, but that doesn't mean it's becoming Moroccan, because Moroccan and French are totally separate languages. What's the first thing that comes to mind when you think about Morocco – you think about Moroccan Arabic or Standard Arabic. You don't think about French, though Morocco, comparing French, comparing Morocco to Algeria, because Morocco has been colonized by the French for almost 45 years. But Algeria is referred to as the second France, because it has been colonized for 130 years,

which is a long time to make a country shift from Arabic to another language. Algeria is a different case from Morocco. In Morocco we have French as the first foreign language, but in Algeria it has been inculcated [sic] with the Algerian language, you cannot still separate the two languages. Here in Morocco you can still make a difference between French and Arabic. I'm talking about Arabic as being an independent language. But in Algeria it's hard. You can see this in the way they talk very clearly, they codeswitch a lot vs. Moroccans here. You can still find people who speak Moroccan Arabic with no French in their sentences, but if you take even an illiterate person in Algeria who has never been to school, he can still codeswitch, because this has been part of the language spoken at home with the parents and grandparents. I'm talking about a century and 30 years. Versus Morocco, if you're illiterate, you still can't speak French. When I codeswitch I do it intentionally vs. I think those in Algeria unintentionally codeswitch. My intentions are when I fail to communicate a word in English or Arabic, so French would make a greater impact on the interlocutor, or I want to put myself on a level to show that I speak more than one language, or when I want to actually impose what language I want the other to speak with me, meaning that if I speak French with you, more than I do in Arabic or English, then you might respond more in French. I do this in English too, for instance, when I'm with someone who spoke to me in French, I respond in French to show that I understand French, or to encourage him to continue speaking French, meaning that I'm not afraid. It's about language and communication and power. Whoever I speak to, I'm telling him that I'm ready to venture into any language you want. Showing off isn't the first thing that comes to mind, you actually want to communicate easily. Whenever you feel you're not finding the word in English you jump to French – when it's in neither you jump to Arabic. You jump from one language to another to make it easy instead of speaking in French because if you speak one language, it's hard. I can challenge anyone here to keep speaking SA for 20, 15, 10 minutes without codeswitching. Why? Because of laziness. At least for myself, I am a lazy person, I jump because jumping doesn't force you to think in the language you learned first in school. You get some from MA, some from SA, some from French, some from English, meaning your brain is lazy. You think about the word that comes first to your mind, no matter which language it is. For example speaking to Rachid, Rachid knows English, SA, MA, and some Tamazight, and some French. So I do jump, throw words, one French, one English, two in Arabic, one in Standard, blah blah blah, for 20 minutes, 15, but I do challenge people who can speak one language for – if you're speaking to English people I cannot switch if you don't know Arabic or French, that would be nonsense – but I'm talking Moroccan to Moroccan, someone who might speak more than one code. That's why I say lazy. But talking to you in English for 20 or 30 minutes as a lecture or whatever, this is not lazy because it forces yourself to think in English and say it in English. Because if you say it in another language, people will fail to understand what you said. But when it comes to Moroccans speaking to each other, they are very very lazy, and that's a fact. I say it's a fact because I see it this way. That's what I discovered on my field study when I was doing interviews and my research too. Speaking more than one language is actually easier and makes your brain feel really really lazy. So you don't think a lot when you speak three different codes. Maybe that

would be weird for... many people say you speak three languages, you must think a lot. I would say no, you would think a lot if you think one language because you have only one option, so just make your brain think twice before saying a word. But if you think three languages you have words that are in three different languages so you say things in a language you want at any moment so your brain doesn't think, just throws words.

Are there tensions between Francophone Moroccans and Arabophone Moroccans? Please describe.

Of course there would be tensions, because talking about Francophone and Arabophone... each group has its own standpoints, attitudes toward the other. For instance the Arabophones see the Francophones as arrogant, schizophrenic, double identity. And the Francophones see Arabophones as extremist, sticking to one side of the coin rather than having a diverse identity, not developed/underdeveloped, not able to communicate in more than Arabic vs. Arabic and French. So there is a tension, it cannot be... there should be tension as the case for a number of countries where you have Catalan in Southern or Central Spain, you have this case of people fighting for language, saying their language is best. In Morocco it's the case, like Anglophone vs. Arabophone, but it doesn't mean that it would get to the extent that we can have wars and clash between the two groups, but a tension meaning each group is defending itself as being the right path or the right person, we are best, going the right path, vs. the other group is sticking to one point, doesn't want to move ahead, doesn't want to develop itself, look prestigious, etc. So I think there is some tension, but not one leading to a clash that would destroy the country, a social tension. When Anglophone can still categorize themselves as upper class, but Arabophone says you are lower than us, you should speak the language, which is recognized as the prestigious language, as a universal language, in a sense. For me, English would never be looked down by anyone else, because English has its position and will maintain this position forever, because English is a more universal language than French. So I don't think French will be in a competition with English, because English is still maintaining its position of everyone who wants to communicate with everyone around the world, French comes in second, Arabic sixth or seventh. So a Moroccan who is really good at English is more prestigious than one who is really good at French. Someone who speaks French can be in a lower position, but one who speaks English has more chances. If you speak French you still limit yourself to Francophone countries. English would get you the best job in Morocco. If you're really fluent in French you have more job opportunities, but English you have even more. Because everyone who speaks English can speak some French, but not vice versa.

Are there tensions between Arabophone Moroccans and Amazighi Moroccans? Please describe.

The tension is getting less and less heated with what happened back in 2011 with the new constitution. I think that was a very smart move of the king, which I appreciate. It has actually solved a number of problems, like the tensions from before 2011 with the Berber manifesto and

trying to defend one's identity and one's heritage especially like the Amazighi people, but there was no official move from the government to make this happen until 2011 where talking about Morocco is not only one group of people speaking one language, but we have many languages. I think it will be good that we can talk about Morocco as being like a melting pot of languages. We have SA, Amazighi language or Tamazight, but Hassani, that thing, there's something that plays against, it's still discriminated. Which I think should be taken into consideration. Maybe in 20 years or 30 years, Moroccan Arabic, Darija becomes another language officially recognized by the government.

6. Hussein

Hussein is in his mid-thirties and identifies as Amazigh. He teaches English at a Moroccan high school. Of particular interest in his interview is his persistence in using a language “within its culture.”

What languages do you speak?

Arabic, French, English, Spanish, and Tamazight.

Order of fluency: Speaking fluency? Writing fluency?

Of course, Moroccan Arabic and Tamazight – my mother tongues. And then French, then English. Then Spanish. Classical Arabic, you know, we don't use it here in Morocco. We just study it in school.

So you speak Classical Arabic better than French?

Yes. Because the Classical Arabic, you know, I don't know how to say it, but... It's the mother of Darija. So when you speak Darija, sometimes you use terms in Classical Arabic. That's it. I use it more than French.

Writing?

I can write good in Arabic, French, and also English. Arabic better, I think. And then French, and then English. Darija we don't write it! Because it's always spoken.

What language do you think in?

It depends on the situations. Like, now, I try to think in English. When I speak French, I think in French. I think in French culture, French terms, you know. When I speak in Moroccan Arabic, I have to think in a Moroccan mind. That's it. And the same with Spanish, I try to use the language within its culture.

What do you mean by that? Can you explain?

I mean, when I speak a certain language, I try to use it within its culture. Like when I speak for example, Moroccan Arabic, I use the culture of Moroccan Arabic, Darija terms, specific terms related to Morocco, like some words, some terms that we use only in Moroccan Darija. And the same thing, when I speak in French, I try to think in French, and I use the French culture. Like when it comes to idiomatic expressions, and that stuff. You cannot like, take a Moroccan proverb, typically Moroccan, and you translate it into French while you are speaking French. You try to give the equivalent of this proverb within the French culture.

What language is easiest for you to express yourself?

Because we are Moroccans, we speak Darija every day, its our daily language, but sometimes, you come up with French words that helps you express and analyze. Sometimes you don't find the right words in Moroccan Darija. And you resort to either Classical Arabic or French. That is what happens to most people... Like, "logiciel" – how can you say "logiciel" in Moroccan Darija? So you keep the same word in French... and you find yourself explaining what you wanna say by using other languages.

What language do you find to be the most beautiful?

Arabic, Classical Arabic. Classical Arabic is a rich language. It's very rich. For example, if you take the word "lion" in English, and you take it into Arabic, you find that there are more than 500 synonyms for this word.

What languages/dialects do you understand? (ie. Egyptian or Lebanese Arabic in movies and television)

I can understand Egyptian Arabic, or Algerian, Tunisian Arabic. No problem. They are all form the same language which is Classical Arabic. And Classical Arabic has no native speaker, by the way... For example, with Egyptian Arabic, all people understand it because of the influence of TV, Egyptian films, Egyptian series... So all Moroccans and all Arabs understand Egyptian because of the influence of TV, of media. And Algerian Arabic, it is almost the same as the Moroccan Arabic spoken in Oujda and Saida. And Tunisian Arabic, also, we understand. No problem.

Could you speak in, for example, Egyptian Arabic if you wanted to?

No, I understand but to speak I think its... I'm not used to speaking Egyptian Arabic.

Do you feel/act different when speaking each of these languages?

As I have just told you, when you speak a language you speak it within its culture. It's like, when I speak French, I speak it within the French culture. So I try to think in French. Which means you are a little bit influenced by that culture. You put yourself – like, inside a certain... atmosphere, in which you use the language and culture interchangeably.

So when you speak French, you feel French?

You don't feel French, but you... Not 100 percent. But you find yourself thinking in a French way. But not French. [What do you mean? What is a "French" way of thinking?] A French way of thinking, or an English way of thinking, or an Arabic way of thinking, is that when you use that language, you use it within the culture of the native speakers of that language. When I speak English, for example, I can use a metaphor or a word which seems to a native English speaker very normal and ordinary. I can use this word in English, but I cannot use it in Arabic. Like, you cannot say in Moroccan Arabic, "This is stupid. What you are saying is stupid." But in English it is normal to say, "This is a stupid question!" I can say this in English, because I take the word "stupid" within the English culture, and it doesn't hurt. [I think it would hurt somebody if you said this is a stupid question...] No, in English it's okay! But in Arabic if you translate the word "stupid" and you say it in Moroccan Arabic, it hurts! It's like "mkullikh!" ... It doesn't get the same meaning. So, when I think in English, I can use English words.

So what you're saying is, even though linguistically you can say "this is a stupid question" – it's not that you can't say it, it's that you wouldn't say it because culturally it's rude. Is that right?

Yeah, it's rude. It's "hshouma" in Arabic to say it. But if you translate the same word, stupid, and you say it in Moroccan Arabic, its very hshouma. But in English it's okay! This is what I've been saying, when you speak a certain language, you can use terms depending on the culture of that language.

How do you learn the culture of that language?

When you learn the language itself, you are learning its culture... You cannot separate the culture from the language.

Do you codeswitch?

Yes.

If yes, when? Why do you think you codeswitch?

You do it subconsciously, or you do it to find the right word to express yourself... Sometimes I'm looking for a word, and I find it in English before I find it in Arabic.

Could you clarify your attitude towards francophone Moroccans?

It depends on the person, him or herself. If he, like some people, learned French as kids, and his parents spoke French with him, they are impacted by French language and French culture, it's very normal. You try to understand them. But if, some people, they speak French to show that they belong to a certain social rank. I don't like... I try to speak Arabic. If they speak French it's just to show off. I speak Arabic. I'm sorry, I'm Moroccan. You are Moroccan, and I'm Moroccan, so I think you understand Arabic and I understand Arabic. Why do you speak French?

What languages do your parents speak? Your grandparents?

Tamazight only.

What languages did you speak at home as a child?

Tamazight and Arabic, with my brothers. My parents don't speak Arabic. In the streets and in school, people speak Darija.

What languages did you learn in school?

In the classrooms, we speak Classical Arabic. But outside in the playground we speak Darija. I started learning French in primary school, in the third grade... And English we started learning English in high school, first year of high school. And I studied three years English in high school and then in the faculty I studied English literature.

What languages were your various classes taught in?

I studied in public schools. It was all in Arabic. Fusha Arabic... In all Arabic countries, they don't speak Classical Arabic outside, only in faculties, universities, schools.

Was it difficult switching from an Arabic-speaking academic environment to an English-speaking academic environment?

For me because when I studied in high school, I studied the first year in high school “Modern Literature” and second year “Modern Literature – English section.” I mean, we studied more courses in English. It’s like, I prepared myself to go to the university to study English literature. So when I went to university it was okay, it was fine for me, it was no problem. I was familiar with English because I studied so many things in English in my English class.

Which of the following do you consider to be a language versus a dialect: Fus’ha, Darija, Tamazight, Tashelhit, Tarifit, Hassaneya, French, English, Spanish?

Fusha, it’s a language.

Darija, it’s a dialect.

Tamazight, I – it’s a language. Some people say it’s a dialect, but it’s a language because it has got its own rules. So it’s a language.

Tashelhit, same thing. Tashelhit, Tamazight, Tarifit, they got their own rules, so they are languages.

Hassaniya I think it’s spoken in the Sahara. I’ve got no idea. I know it’s spoken in the Sahara. But I don’t know if it has got certain rules or not.

French, it’s a language. English, of course it’s a language. Spanish, it’s a language.

What do you consider to be the difference between a language and a dialect?

A language... I think, uh... linguistically speaking, language has got specific rules and dialect has not got rules. Like, if you say Moroccan Darija, I think there are no rules, just you change some syllables and you speak unlike Classical Arabic, which is... uh... which you cannot write or speak without using rules.

What do you mean there are no rules in Darija? For example... “wesh enta ma3aya, wesh enta ma3aha, wesh enta ma3ahom”...

Yes, these are rules. There are some cases where there are rules, but there are some cases where there are no rules.

Can you give an example?

Uh... like... uh... I have no idea now. Uh... no idea. No. I may be wrong... I’m just saying what I know. There are some times there are rules, or no rules, but to find an example...

(...)

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Fus’ha?

Uh... “iqra.” Read. Iqra. You know why? Because it’s the first word that the Prophet, peace be upon him, received. It was the first word, iqra.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Darija?

Uh... so many adjectives. “Twishiya, Twesha.” [These words mean “thingamajig.”]

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Tamazight, Tashelhit, or Tarifit?

The first adjective is Tamazight itself. Tamazight means “the country.” My Tamazight is Agadir. So Tamazight itself, what comes to mind is the country and childhood memories, and you dive into the past. [Doesn’t Amazigh mean free people?] Yes, if you go to the dictionary, Amazigh means free person. But Tamazight, in Tamazight language, it means the country, the village. I go to Tamazight. Ghanimshi li Tamazight. Tamazight it means the place in which you were born.

Tashelhit, uh... I... no adjectives, but maybe some figures, like maybe Rouyisha.

Tarifit, uh... Tarifit... In fact, I got images like “signified and signified”, more than adjectives. It’s like Tarifit, it comes to mind Karim El Khataby, who fought against the colonialism. The Rif... And words, I... No words, no specific words.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Hassaniya?

Hassaniya, same thing... No, no adjectives, but images. Images of, like... desert, and Hassaniya, which is spoken in the Gulf. I think there is a link between the Hassaniya spoken in the south and the Hassaniya spoken in Saudi Arabia.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of French?

French! [singing] Et quand je vois tes yeux, et je suis amoureux... [reverting to speaking] A la French way. A la française. When you say French, you start thinking more aristocratic, social rank, and... a la française! The elite, upper class...

So when you speak French, do you feel more elite?

No... some people, as I said, speak French to show that they belong to a certain class, social rank... but I like to be what I am. I can speak French, but I speak it as a language, like I speak English, like I speak Spanish, like I speak Arabic... But I want to be Moroccan, I want to be who I am. I don’t speak English to show that I am civilized. Civilization is not a language.

What adjectives come to mind when you think of English?

Shakespeare. Sonnets. I love Shakespeare, poetry and literature... also American poetry... Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, D. H. Lawrence... so when I say English, I say literature, poetry, so many nice things, so many nice memories at the faculty...

What adjectives come to mind when you think of Spanish?

Spanish, it's also a nice language. What I like about Spanish is it's... "cultura", its culture. Though, within the language Spanish, there are more than 700 words in Arabic! They are borrowed from Arabic... It's a nice language, easy to understand.

What do you think of Darija transcriptions? Do you prefer it be done with Arabic script or Latin script? Why? What about Facebook?

Darija should be written in Darija! In Arabic! It's Arabic, so it should be written in Arabic, so that the message would be transmitted clearly and precisely and to hit the target.

Why is it sometimes written in Latin script?

Because some people are not familiar with writing in the computer in Arabic, so we find it too hard... People they don't use Arabic, because we are not familiar with it. It's harder [on the computer]. I can use Latin words easier than Arabic. It's not our fault, it's the fault of the government! We should have been taught this stuff as kids, not at the age of thirty. So we are familiar with using Latin words. It's like numbers... we don't use Arabic numbers in Morocco. [Elaborates that high school essays are written by hand, not computers. On Facebook, Hussein also writes in Latin script.]

What do you think about Tifinagh? What does it accomplish?

I think Tifinagh... uh... it's a very big question, in fact. Tifinagh, they... those who are in the government, they choose Tifinagh to complicate things instead they could have used Latin words. Tifinagh it's very complicated and people are not familiar with this stuff, so how can they use it? Latin words or Arabic words are easier than Tifinagh... It's something new, people they didn't know before... People, they don't have time to get learning something new which has to do with rules of the past.

What do you think about the new policy of teaching Tifinagh in schools?

They get things worse and worse and get things more complicated. Tifinagh plus Arabic plus French and now plus English, so how come that these kids learn too much... They complicate things. Tamazight it is spoken and we are Amazigh and we speak it, so we can write it in Arabic. It's okay, no problem. The problem with identity has nothing to do with the writing. Identity is

within speaking and within preserving the culture of the Amazigh people. My parents and grandparents, they were illiterate, and they lived within Amazigh culture, and everything was okay. They did not have to write Tifinagh, they wrote in Arabic. So Tifinagh I think is just complicating things.

[The government] was obliged to do this... because some Amazigh movements tried to say, “We are Amazighs, we are the natives, we should show our identity to the world!” That’s it, just some political reasons... Amazigh culture will remain forever, this is what I believe personally speaking. No need to do this stuff. We need something that will take Morocco forward, not backward. If you start Tifinagh, I think it’s taking Morocco backward... Instead of wasting time in political discourses of “We want our children to learn Tifinagh,” they could do something more interesting than this.

What language will get you the best job?

I think French... Because most administration here works in French. Especially in Rabat, because it is the capital. So many people use French. Which is not the case in Kenitra or Agadir. If you go to Agadir, it’s a modern city. It’s like Miami of Morocco. And the official language is Tamazight! In the street, they speak Tamazight more than they speak Arabic! [So “official” means “in reality” here.]

What language do you want your children to speak?

Arabic. And Tashelhit, so that they know their origins. And Tamazight. I will, inshallah, I will teach them Tamazight, so that they know their origins. They are the natives, they are the aboriginals.

Is that something you are proud of?

Yes! I’m proud to be Amazigh, because we are the original inhabitants of Morocco, and we are the ones who brought pride to Morocco in so many wars throughout history, and Tariq Ibnu Ziyad who invaded Spain is Amazigh, and Gibraltar is Jabal Tariq, so he was a strong leader and he was Amazigh. We are the children of Tariq Ibnu Ziyad.

In your opinion, do all of the languages spoken in Morocco “belong” to Morocco?

No. The only Moroccan language is Arabic. Tamazight, Tashelhit, Tarifit, and Arabic. Arabic, Darija and Fusha both. Because Darija is derived from Fusha. So in Morocco, the natives speak Tahselhit, Tamazight, Tarifit, and Arabic. Other languages – French, English, Spanish – I consider them foreign languages. I don’t even like to say that French is a “second language” of Morocco. French, for me, is not a second language. It is a foreign language! A second language

is Arabic or Tamazight or Tashelhit, they are all languages of Morocco. But French is not a second language, it's a foreign language. It's true that we have been colonized by France, that's why we speak French. But French, it's a foreign language. Like English, like Spanish. And I'm for that the Moroccan administration should abolish using French. I'm for Arabization. Because it's a question of identity. Why do you need to follow France? That was during a period of time in the history, Morocco was colonized by France, but its over. Colonization left. You should go back to your origins. Arabic and Tamazight. That's it.

Is multilingualism a benefit or a problem in Morocco?

It's a benefit!

Are there tensions between the different language groups?

No... no tensions... for me, I try to understand who is just acting or showing off. I can speak to all these people. Somebody who is speaking French more than Arabic – It's okay for me, no problem IF I know that his background is French more than Arabic. It's okay, if he was educated at La Mission. Its okay! What I don't like is that some people speak French just to show off...

(...)

Hussein elaborates on Arabization:

Arabization within the borders of Morocco. It's like me, I'm Moroccan, and I go to a Moroccan company, and they speak to me in French. Why? I'm Moroccan, you're Moroccan, why do you talk to me in French? We speak Arabic!

But with the foreigners, of course we are obliged to use English, which is the international language. Or French, or Japanese, or Chinese. I don't mind speaking all languages. But – for example, I watch a Moroccan channel. There is a commercial for Moroccan people, and the commercial is in French. The receiver is Moroccan, and the one who is making the commercial is Moroccan, and he's doing it in French! Why? I don't like this. It's a big question, a huge question, big in political reasons. When France left Morocco during the colonization period, Morocco signed a document that the second language should be French... I think this is one of the reasons, it's a political reason. Another reason might be, maybe... a way of showing that we are somehow "civilized"... you see? Which I don't agree with. It's a problem.

7. Hanaa

Hanaa was a relative of the host family I lived with in Rabat. She was eighteen at the time of this interview and was working a summer job. Quite a bit of codeswitching occurs in this conversation, and I hope that the conventions I used to record our exchanges capture it well. Because of Hanaa's command of English was not at the same level as the other interviewees, I include more of the "negotiating for meaning" exchanges.

S: *What languages do you speak?*

H: Eu... I speak, eu... just, eu... in my life?

S: *Mhm!*

H: In normal life?

S: *Normal life.*

H: Darija.

S: *Do you speak any other languages?*

H: No, just Darija.

S: *And English!*

H: Ah! Any languages!

S: *Any languages, yeah.*

H: I speak the Arabic, French, and eu... English.

S: *Okay. So which one do you speak most ea– Uh, which is the easiest to speak to the hardest to speak? For you.*

H: The easiest is, eu... Darija.

S: *Wa après? (Arabic: And/French: after?)*

H: I think, um... I study French, eu... when I was little. In primary school. And English in the secondary school, but eu... I prefer to speak-a in English.

S: *Mmm. Ashal? (Arabic: Easier?)*

H: It's easy. [pause] Darija, English, French... [pause]

S: Fosha? (Classical Arabic)

H: We don't speak, eu... the Classical Arabic.

S: Yeah. Okay. So which is easiest to write for you?

H: To write?

S: Yeah.

H: [thinking]

S: Darija?

H: To write, we don't write with Darija. We write with, eu... Fosha.

S: Yeah.

H: And we speak Darija.

S: Yeah.

H: Uh, write... [pause, thinking] English.

S: English?

H: Yeah.

S: English and then Fosha?

H: Because in my, eu... I write, eu... le journal intime? (French: a personal diary?)

S: Ah yeah?!

H: And I write it with English.

S: Really?

H: Yeah.

S: Every day?

H: Not every day, but eu... Special days.

S: Oh...

H: In our life we have special days.

S: Yeah.

H: And we want to remember those, eu – those days. That's why I write it.

S: Why do you write it in English?

H: Because it's easy.

S: It's easy?

H: Yeah.

S: More easy than Fosha—

H: —Arabic. Yeah. Arabic, really... it's not easy.

S: Why? What makes it difficult?

H: It's not, eu, difficult, it's really difficult. Like... I dunno I don't like Arabic.

S: You don't like it?

H: I don't like it.

S: Okay.

H: When I, eu... read, eu... something in Arabic I find it just like, eu... like I'm a countryside person, from the countryside or something [laughs].

S: What do you mean? When you speak Fosha you feel like you're from the countryside?

H: Yeah, I come in the... from in the history—

S: Yeah. Min zaman? (Egyptian Arabic: From long ago?) Like in a movie?

H: —when I speak Fosha Arabic. Yeah, I feel like I'm, eu... [long pause] the past.

S: The past?

H: Yeah, in the past.

S: Interesting. So, what language do you think in?

H: I think in, eu... Darija.

S: Darija. Okay. What language is easiest to express yourself?

H: Darija.

S: What language do you think is the most beautiful?

H: [pause] the most beautiful?

S: That you can speak.

H: I wish that I will speak, eu... English.

S: You do speak English! Very well!

H: Not very well.

S: Yeah, you do.

H: But sometimes, I... [pause] like now!

S: La, enti... daroury taddarrab! (Arabic: No, you... have to practice!)

H: Yeah. But I have no one to practice with.

S: Ana hena! (Arabic: I am here!) Um... What languages do you understand, like from TV? Other Arabic (...) maybe?

H: Eu, Darija... eu, Fosha, French, English.

S: Wa, mathalan, eu... Masry ou Shami- (Arabic: And, for example, Egyptian or Lebanese)

H: Yeah, yeah, Masry [Egyptian].

S: Which ones? Ashman lougha 3arabeya? (Moroccan Arabic: Which Arabic languages?)

H: Masry. Eu... Souri... Sa3oudi. (Arabic: Egyptian... Syrian... Saudi.)

S: All of them?

H: Not all of them –

S: – Marra marra? (Moroccan Arabic: Sometimes?)

H: Not all of them. But they have special words. I don't understand those special words. But I understand the whole sentence... Like I can see Egyptian movies and I can understand... And then Sa3oudi movies. I can understand.

S: So... Could you speak in those other ones, like Masry or Sa3oudi? Could you change it if you wanted to?

H: Yeah, I can, but I... never, never do it!

S: Yeah. 3alash? (Moroccan Arabic: Why?)

H: [high-pitched voice] Hi! Izzayik? (Egyptian Arabic: How are you?)

S: Yeah! 3amla eh? (Egyptian Arabic: What are you doing?) [pause] That's Egyptian.

H: Yeah... When I speak Egyptian, I feel like I'm singing!

S: Like you're singing?

H: Yeah!

S: Why?

H: I don't know, I feel just like, eu...

S: Like Oum Kalthoum?

H: Yeah! [laughs, transitions to high-pitched voice] Hi, izzayik! Ana bikheir, wa enti? Wa ana kaman! [laughs] I feel like this.

S: Yeah? Like from the movies?

H: Yeah

S: So uh... do you feel different when you speak each of the languages? Like, do you feel different when you speak English than when you speak Darija?

H: No, I don't feel different when I speak English but I feel different when I speak French. And I feel different when I speak, like I said, Egyptian or other Arabic languages.

S: Mmm. How do you feel different?

H: I can say when I speak Egyptian I feel like I'm singing.

S: Yeah.

H: French, I feel... like I'm not... Like I feel it's another one, eu... [high-pitched voice] Salut, bonjour, comment cava?! [laughs] (French: Hi, hello, how are you?!)

S: Ishraheeli. (Arabic: Explain to me)

H: I don't feel the same... I feel just, like, eu... another Hanaa... who is speaking... when I speak French.

S: A different Hanaa?

H: Yeah. Salut, cava, oui cava bien, merci, et vous? (French: Hi, how are you, yes it's going well, thank you, and you?)

S: So... is your personality different? If you spoke Darija and then you spoke French, what's different? Inside you. Shakhseytik (Arabic: your personality).

H: [long pause] I don't feel the same. [long pause]

S: You feel funny? Or serious?

H: No, not funny, not serious, like.... Eu... you know the word layaqa?

S: Layaqa? No.

H: Here, in Morocco, we have persons that speak Darija. And if one came and speak French, eu... like, the ones who speak Darija is here and the ones who speak French is here – [off-screen gestures]

S: On top?

H: Yeah. Like it's an important person, it's different person who have culture and something like that. That's why I don't prefer to speak French, because other people think you are layaqa. It means you are higher than the other people.

S: Mmm. Mutakabbir? (Arabic: proud, arrogant)

H: Yeah, like that.

S: So that's why you don't like it.

H: Yeah, that's why.

S: Okay. So... In school, what languages did you learn, and when did you learn them? What did you start with?

H: I start with Fusha. As you know, in primary school we have six [grades]. In the third one, we learn French. And in secondary school, we have just three [grades]. In the third one, I learned English.

S: Okay, and Fusha from the first year.

H: From the beginning, yeah.

S: But you still think it's harder?

H: Yeah, it's harder.

S: Yeah? More than English?

H: More than English.

S: Even though you've been studying it for much longer?

H: I don't like it. Because... it's so hard.

S: Alqa3wid? The grammar?

H: Yeah, the grammar is so hard. I don't have good marks in grammar all my life.

S: No? [laughs] Okay, so tell me, I'm going to say a list of languages, and you tell me which one you consider a language, and which one you consider a dialect?

H: Dialect?

S: Yes.

H: What does it mean?

[explained language and dialect... but skipped exercise because point voided by explanation]

S: So tell me, what adjectives come to mind when you think of Fusha?

H: Adjectives?

S: Yes.

H: *Mo3aqada. [complicated] Hard.*

S: *Complicated.*

H: *Complicated, yeah.*

S: *What adjectives come to mind when you think of Darija?*

H: *[long pause] In Darija we can use any word you – we want. You know, just you can put letters together and then he come a word.*

S: *What do you mean?*

H: *If you know, everyone has his own Darija.*

S: *Ah bon?*

H: *Yeah, it's eu... frouha.*

S: *Frouha? What's frouha?*

H: *[laughing] Frouha... it's like a crazy language.*

S: ... *Oh. Ah bon?* (French: *Oh really?*)

H: *It's like a puzzle. We can put letters together, and then we came with a word. We can't do this in Fusha. In Fusha is just a... language, with eu... with specific um –*

S: *Rules?*

H: *Yeah. But Darjia, no. We have no rules. We can do everything we want with the language.*

S: *Momken ideeni... example? (Egyptian Arabic: Could you give me an...)*

H: *[long pause] Eu... I like your shoes. Eu, zbatkomstooni.*

S: *What?! Say that again.*

H: *[laughs] Tsbatik it means shoes.*

S: *Zabaat?*

H: *Tszzbat, yes. Shoes.*

S: *Yeah.*

H: Mstooni.

S: Mstooni.

H: Mstooni. It means zween.

S: Ah, ok.

H: And we can use this word, stoon, for everything. Just like... this computer is mstooni.

S: Mmm. So... how does that – why do you say that that’s like a puzzle? How is it like a puzzle?

H: Just, eu... you know, like we can play with letters. To combinate and then we can come with a word.

S: [pause] Can you give me another example? Mish fahma. (Arabic: I don’t understand.)

H: [long pause] Mm... no...

S: So I can take beh, zeh, alif, dal... Bzaad. This doesn’t mean anything!

H: No! [laughs] I mean in Fusha we have rules. But in Darija we don’t have rules.

S: But I can’t make up a word. I can’t say “bzad.”

H: No...

S: No.

H: You can’t say it, you can say only “bzaaf.”

S: Okay.

H: But we have different words, just like I said now. Dunya, frouha, bzaaf... we have a lot of words.

S: Wakha, okay. What adjectives come to mind when you think of Tamazight, Tashelhit, or Tarifit?

H: [pause] Qadaam.

S: Qadaam? Old?

H: Yeah, it's like a language we don't use in normal life. I don't know why we should use it.

S: Mmm.

H: You know recently, we have in our dostour. You know dostour?

S: Dostour, yeah, heritage.

H: We say that our second language is Tamazight.

S: Mhm.

H: I don't speak Tamazight. And I don't, eu... understand it.

S: Mhm.

H: And I don't know the use of this language.

S: Well, a lot of people in the mountains speak it.

H: Yeah! In the mountains!

S: Yeah.

H: But the people in the city don't speak it.

S: In Agadir they speak it.

H: We don't, eu... In the primary school, recently, they study it.

S: Mhm. What do you think about that?

H: I don't... I don't – I'm not agree.

S: You don't agree?

H: Yeah.

S: Why?

H: Because, in the whole world, no one speaks Tamazight!

S: Mmm.

H: So, in the primary school, they prefer – they will study English, [pause] e3ouad...

S: E3ouad? What's this?

H: I don't know how to say it in English. Because English is a... world language. All people speak it. But Tamazight, we speak it. Just, as you see, the people in the mountains. Just like mowkleez!

S: Mowkleez?!

H: You know, the cartoons of Mowkli?

S: Mowgli!

H: Yes, Mowkli.

S: Yeah yeah yeah, dans la jungle? (French: from the Jungle Book?)

H: Yeah. That's why. I don't know why this, eu... Morocco... tetfarad.

S: Tetfarad?

H: Tetfarad. Tebezziz.

S: Tebezziz... I don't know.

H: If you have a child, in America, you have the choice of what language do you wanna study. But here, no. In Morocco, the child, when he study in the primary school, he forced to... to... study Arabic, and Tamazight. And when he gonna use this Tamazight? When?

S: Hmm. I don't know. I think it's more because the Amazighi people feel like their culture is being pushed away, you know?

H: I don't see any, any advantages in this language.

S: So what do you think when they made Tifinagh? When they made the letters?

H: Just wasting time.

S: Wasting time? Yeah?

H: Yeah.

S: Do all the signs in the street – does anyone read that?

H: They don't read it and I don't... I don't like it.

S: You don't like it? Why?

H: Just like now, if I had the choice to learn Tamazight I would not waste my time to learn it. I would prefer to learn another language, like Chinese. I don't like this, I don't... see any use of this language.

S: Mmm. You would never want to go to a qarya and talk with the people? (Arabic: "qarya" is a village)

H: They understand Darija. Why should I talk Tamazight?

S: Mmm. Okay. So, what adjectives come to mind when you think of Hassaneya?

H: Hassaneya?

S: Yeah.

H: [long pause] [giggles] I don't know. Can you speak Hassaneya?

S: No, walou.

H: No one speaks Hassaneya.

S: No one?

H: Just the people who live in the south... south of Morocco.

S: In the desert?

H: Only them. In the desert, yeah. No one understand it!

S: No one, yeah. Okay. What adjectives come to mind when you think of French?

H: French?

S: The language.

H: It's like Fusha. It's easy to speak but the grammar and all is... difficult.

S: Difficult, yeah. What adjectives come to mind when you think of English?

H: English it's... easy.

S: Easy?!

H: Yeah, it's easy to speak, easy to learn.

S: Easy to learn? How did you learn English? How was it taught to you? Was the teacher nice?

H: Yeah, the teacher, and then we, eu... I learn it by movies –

S: Movies!

H: – songs, yeah. I went to an American Center.

S: Yeah? In Agdal?

H: No, in Meknes.

S: So what language do you see the most in literature and poetry?

H: I don't read poetry! [laughs]

S: What about literature? Al-adab. Do you like to read?

H: Yeah, I like to read novels... I never read in English.

S: No?

H: I just listen. But I read, eu... French.

S: Because of school?

H: No, just... passe-temps. (French: pastime)

S: What kind of books do you read?

H: The one now, it's... "Sans Famille."

S: Sans Famille?! Oh, it's so sad! Hazeen! I read it one time.

[...]

S: What language do you hear most in music?

H: English

S: English? What do you listen to?

H: Um... recently I listen to one song which I like. *The Impossible* from Justin Bieber. No, I don't like Justin Bieber! Arthur, James Arthur. And I like Justin Timberlake... When I was, you know, we have three periods. Primary school, secondary school, and –

S: High school.

H: Yeah. When I was in high school, I like Evanescence, Avril Lavigne, eu... Metallica. And I have a lot of them. Nickelback. Bzaaf!

S: None in Arabic or French?

H: No no no no no. I don't like Arabic or French music.

S: No? You don't like Cheb Khaled?

H: I like Cheb Khaled. I like Gnawa music. But Oum Khalthoum, I don't like this.

S: It's qadeem. (Arabic: old)

H: Yeah. But the fusion, I like it. I like Gnawa, I like Cheb Khaled.

[...]

S: What movies do you hear in movies and television?

H: Eu... English.

S: Which? In movies?

H: Yeah. I prefer to see English movies. Like yesterday I see one, *The Illusionist*.

[...]

S: And what about on television?

H: On television, eu... [pause] It depends. When I'm alone, I like to see movies in my computer. I don't watch TV a lot. But when we are with family, we see Darija...

S: Okay. And when you watch movies in English, do you have les sous-titres, ou non?

H: It depends. It depends. Here, in Morocco, in the internet, we... telecharger. Je telecharge des films, parfois il y a les sous-titres, parfois il n'y a pas. (French: download. I download movies, sometimes there are subtitles and sometimes there aren't)

S: *Wa enti ktfadally el films bi sous-titres, ou fahma kol shey bil englizi? (Moroccan Arabic: And you prefer films with subtitles, or do you understand everything in English?)*

H: Eu, they speak so fast, I prefer to see the subtitles!

S: *In English or French or Arabic?*

H: In Arabic! ... If they speak too fast in English, I prefer to see the subtitles in Arabic.

S: *So what do you think of Darija written down? For example, on Facebook.*

H: I liiike it!

S: *You like it?*

H: Yeah!

S: *Do you prefer with letters like this [Roman alphabet] or with Arabic letters?*

H: No, in letters like this [Roman alphabet].

S: *You like it better.*

H: Yes. We don't use the Arabic letters. I don't use it.

S: *Why?*

H: Because I... Hafoud haka, haka. Mafahoutch fhaka fihom elhorof. It's hard. It's hard to... you know, when we are speaking with someone, we don't see the [pointing to Arabic letters?] like that. Like, when I want to say "Salut." In Arabic, we gonna say "Assalam wa 3aleikom." And I don't have, in my mind, I don't have the Arabic letters.

S: *So... the computers here, your computer, they don't have the letters in Arabic?*

H: Eu, they have it, yeah.

S: *So how do you select these letters or the Arabic letters?*

H: We have two we have here. I have azachi clavier... we have two letters in the button.

S: *But it's still easier to use these letters?*

H: Yeah.

S: *Did you learn to type first with these or first with Arabic?*

H: No, in the first one, I learned to – with those letters. Without Arabic. But it's too hard to learn it in Arabic! Sometimes, I used to type in Arabic. But it's too hard. You should think, and search for the right one...

[...]

S: Are there tensions between Moroccans who speak mostly French and Moroccans who speak mostly Darija?

H: Like I said, the Moroccans who speak the Darija and French, they're 3aqey.

S: 3aqey.

H: 3aqey, they feel like they are more higher, more cultured than the other people. That's my view. That's my opinion. [converses with cousins in Arabic] There are two types of people who speak French and Arabic, and there are people like I said, they wanna feel like 3aqey. And the other people, there are parents who speak their child in French.