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Arabic and Berber in contact

Arabic in a minority situation in Al Hoceima region

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Near the Berber-speaking town of Al Hoceima, there are a few hamlets and villages where people speak Arabic and find themselves in a situation where Berber is the dominant language. These dialects of Moroccan Arabic have seldom been described. What is taking place on the border between Berber and Arabic in this region? What types of contact? What influences? We visited one village on the Berber speaking side (Taounil) and one hamlet on the Arabic-speaking side. Our fieldwork was tentative transdisciplinary work by linguists and ethnobotanists, which allowed us to collect very spontaneous data, since the stress was put on the ethnobotanic questioning. We present here our results, analysing the specific traits of these dialects.

1. Introduction: A border region

Near Berber speaking Al Hoceima, there are a few hamlets and villages (*duwwar* or *dechar*), where people speak Arabic and find themselves in a minority situation. These dialects of Moroccan Arabic have seldom been described.

The data used here is part of a larger project concerning the Arabic dialects spoken in the North West of Morocco, mostly in what is called the Jbala region. The Jbala dialects are fairly different from the dialects spoken in Central Morocco, they present a series of specific traits that were described by dialectologists in the beginning of the 20th century and classified as belonging to the first layers of Arabisation of Morocco.¹ Since these dialects sounded different and were sometimes mocked outside the region, it was predicted that they would disappear and be absorbed in a more central koine. But we witnessed that they are still being spoken nowadays.

1. See Colin (1921), Lévy-Provençal (1922), Marçais (1911) etc.

Unpublished studies directed by Simon Lévy in the early 90's² (that we accessed in 2012) showed that there had been little evolution in over a period of over sixty years full of major events that could have impacted massively people's speech, such as colonisation by Spain and France, imposition of new languages (Spanish and French), nationalism, decolonisation, Arabisation etc. We decided to revisit some of these places, and among them, a border region only described in the unpublished work of Maghdad for her *Mémoire de licence* (see Maghdad 1993 and Caubet 2017). Simon Lévy (1998: p. 12) defined it as:

Farther east, not far from Alhucemas, the tribe of Beni Yitteft is Riffian, embedded between Bokoya and Ait Ouriaghel – who speak a Riffian dialect (*ed. Berber*), is half Arabized. Their dialect was recently studied by one of our students (*ed. Maghdad 1993*). It is a dialect with Jebli features, strongly influenced by the Riffian spirant substrate (*ed. Berber*).³

This is a border region where two languages (Berber and Moroccan Arabic) have been tangled since the 8th century and have evolved in very close contact, borrowing from each other on all levels of language, phonetic, morphosyntactic and lexical. Nowadays bilingualism is very common, mostly on the part of Berberophones.

For a detailed discussion on the language in 2012–2015, see Section 6.

Amédée Renisio, in his 1932 study of *Dialectes berbères des Beni Iznassen, du Rif et des Senhadja du Srair*, published a map of the tribes and drew a line of the limit between Berber and Moroccan Arabic. It does not seem to have changed for our area, some eighty years later. We did our fieldwork exactly across the line between Beni Itteft (both Arabic and Berber-speaking, as S. Lévy was mentioning) and Boqqoya (Berber-speaking) tribes.

2. I discovered these studies in a footnote of article by Simon Lévy (Lévy 1998: p. 12 note 6). They were “Mémoires de licence” in the Spanish Department of Mohamed V University where Simon was a Professor.

3. My translation from French: “Plus à l’est, non loin d’Alhucemas, la tribu de Beni Yitteft, rifaine, enfoncée entre Bokoya et Ait Ouriaghel, au parler tarifit, est à moitié arabisée. Son parler a été récemment étudié par une de nos étudiantes. C’est un parler aux traits jebli, fortement personnalisé par le substrat rifain spirant”.



Map 1. Renisio's 1932 *Dialectes berbères des Beni Iznassen, du Rif et des Senhadja du Srair* – Villa San Jurjo is the former name of Al Hoceima (Renisio 1932)

2. Beni Itteft “Revisited”⁴...

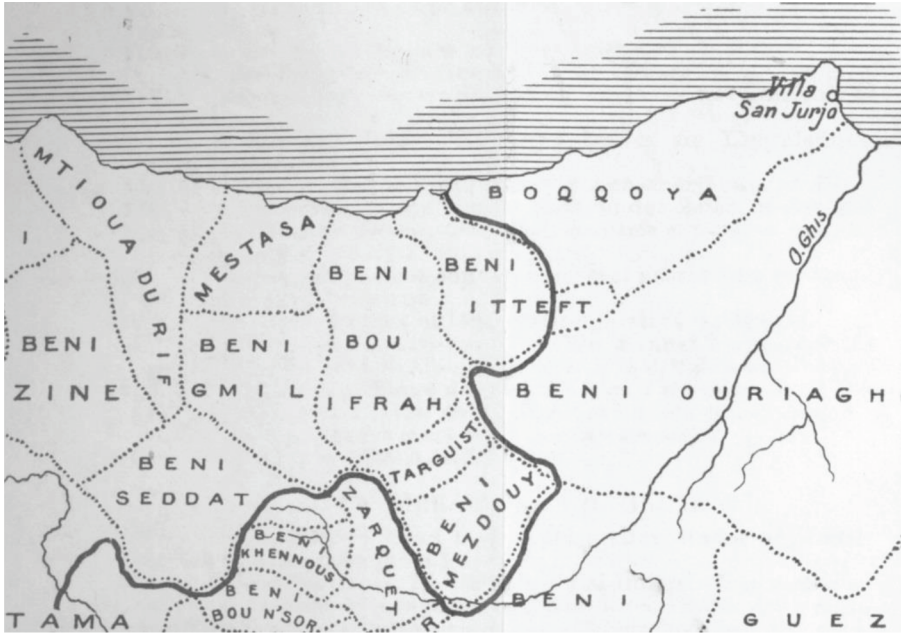
We “revisited” the region in February 2014 with the PICS programme *La Montagne et ses savoirs*,⁵ and Centre Jacques Berques's ‘Programme Jbala’, with ethnobotanist Yildiz Thomas,⁶ S. Lévy's former student, Amal Maghdad and a Master's student from Oujda University, Khalid El Jattari. We stayed in Al Hoceima National Park in the village of Taounil in the heart of the Boqqoya tribe.

The Beni Itteft (Ait Itteft in Berber) consider themselves as Ryafa (Riffians), not Jbala, although the large majority speak Arabic, as shown on Renisio's map, where only a small fraction to the South-East speaks Berber (Map 2). The language borders do not seem to have changed since then.

4. This article aims at “revisiting” the first unpublished description done by A. Maghdad in 1993 under S. Lévy's supervision.

5. PICS CNRS-CNRST 2013–2015 – IREMAM – Université de Fès, Tétouan.

6. CNRS- UMR CEFE 5175 Montpellier.



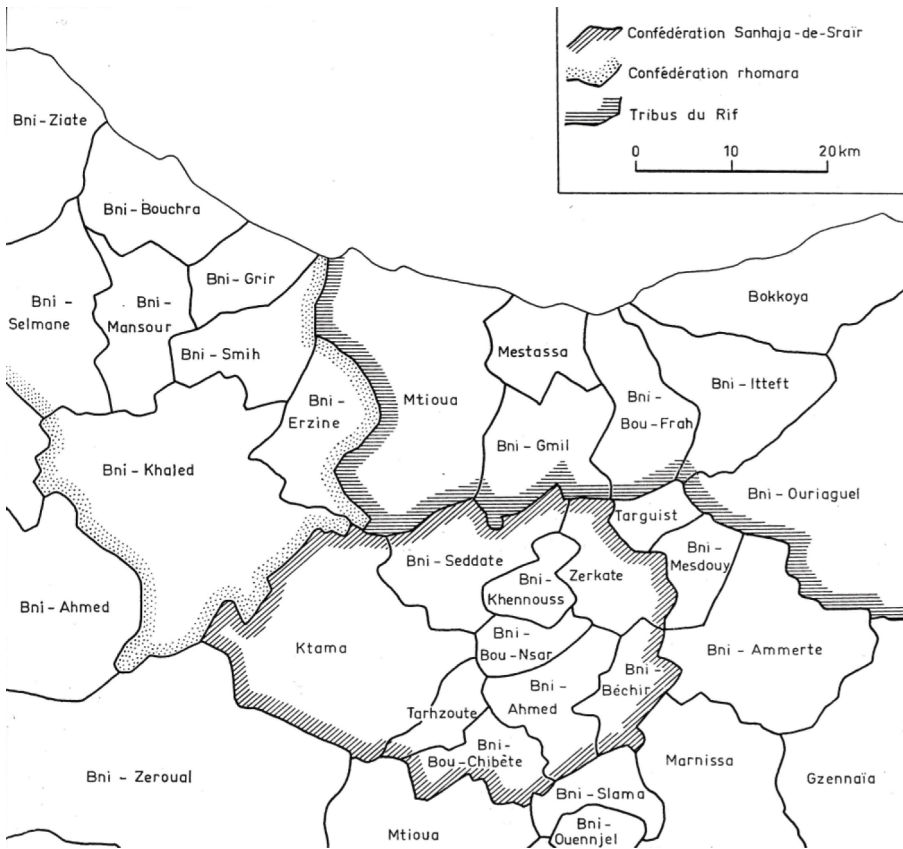
Map 2. A detail of Renisio’s map for *Dialectes berbères des Beni Iznassen, du Rif et des Senhadja du Srair* – Villa San Jurjo is the former name of Al Hoceima (Renisio 1932)

In 1968, Maurer (1968: p. 15) drew a map of the Riffian tribes -among whom the Beni Itteft (and the Arabic speaking Mtioua, Mestasa and Bni Boufrah) – and of their border with the Sanhaja-de-Sraïr and further to the West, the Ghomara (see Map 3).

According to Maurer (Map 4, 02–1–01), the Beni Itteft tribe counts four fractions, three of which spoke Arabic in the 1960’s, El-Amaïr, Izeroualène and El Ouadiyne (Maurer’s spelling), and the Aït Aïssa fraction who mostly spoke Berber (also see Map 5 from Renisio 1932).

The place we re-visited, *Msek*, is the only Arabic speaking *duwwar* (*deššar*) in the Aït Aïssa fraction. In her dissertation, Amal Maghdad (1993: p. 6) defined *Msek* as “un pequeño y único núcleo arabizado dentro de una fracción (Aït Aïssa) del Rif central” (a little and unique arabized nucleus inside a fraction (Aït Aïssa) of the Central Rif).

Msek thus appears to be a *minority* (Arabic speaking among the Berber speaking Aït Aïssa fraction), *inside another minority*, the Aït Aïssa fraction, as opposed to the mostly Arabic speaking Beni Itteft tribe.



Map 3. Extract from a map by Maurer (Fig. 3 Les tribus dans les montagnes du Rif central) (Maurer 1968: p. 15)

The Arabic dialect of Msek is a Prehilali dialect which shares a number of traits with the Jbala, but it also has its own characteristics. It has been in close contact with a *Rifi* dialect of Berber, i.e. a Zeneta variety and not a Senhaja one,⁷ for centuries.

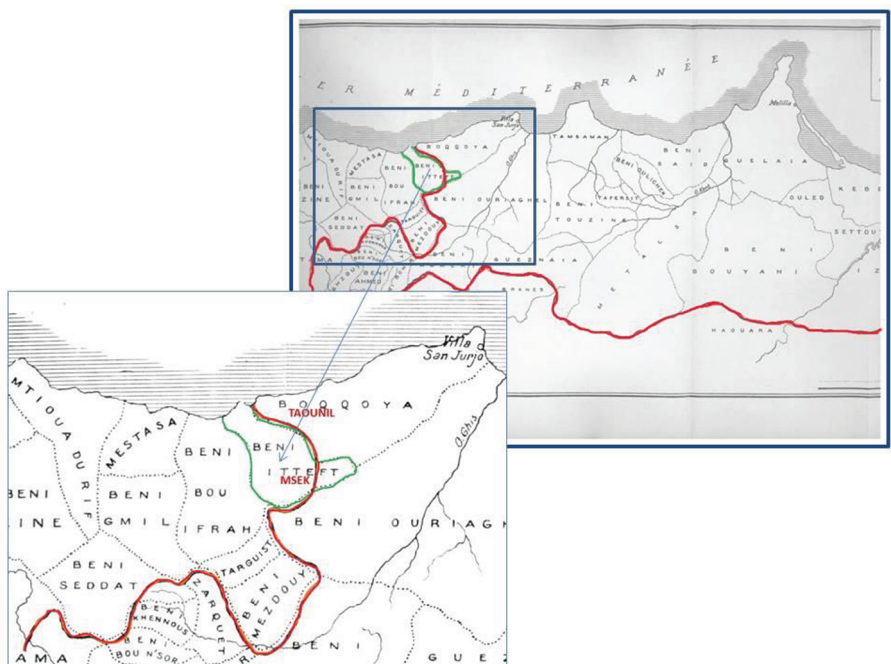
3. Method

In Msek we re-visited one of the families Maghdad (1993) had recorded 22 years previously for her initial 1992 fieldwork. We worked there in February 2014 with a mother of about 40, S., and her son Y., who was 13 at the time.

7. See Kossman (2017a).



Map 4. Extract from Maurer (1968: 16) (Fig. 4 Communes rurales et fractions dans le Rif central)



Map 5. Extract from Renisio (1932). The limits of Berberophony (red line taken from the limit proposed by Renisio). The Bni Itteft (green line) with a Berber-speaking part which corresponds to the tribe of Aït Aïssa of which Msek is part, located exactly to the West of this border. Villa Sanjurjo is the current location of the town of El Hoceima

In Taounil, our informant was our host, F., a woman of 50 from the Boqqoya tribe; she has never been to school, her native language is Berber and she told us she learned Moroccan Arabic, as a second language, from her neighbours from the Arabic speaking fractions of the Beni Itteft – probably Izeroualène or El-Amaïr (see Map 4) and from the Beni Boufrah. She also spent 15 years working with a Moroccan Riffian family living in Ceuta; she seldom went out, but she may have picked up some expressions from Ceuta.

When asked if the Beni Itteft learn Berber when living among the Boqqoya, she says humorously: *huma kayhəḍru l-earbiya waxxa huma rifiyin, huma kayhəḍru l-earbiya* “they speak Arabic, even if they are Riffians, they speak Arabic”, which shows a dominant attitude on their part, different from what happens in Msek.

3.1 A rare situation: Arabic as a minority language

In Msek, when I asked the boy – in the presence of his mother – what languages he spoke, he answered first: *l-earbiya* (Arabic); when I asked whether he spoke Berber, he said *šwiya* (a little) and his mother promptly interrupted saying: *la, ts, hna ma kanhəḍru š š-šəlha!* “No! Ts! We don’t speak Berber here!”.

She was stating clearly their linguistic identity in a minority situation. When we rephrased the question, asking with whom the boy spoke Berber, he answered: *f-ət-ṭriq dya l-mədrasa, f-ət-ṭobis!* “On the way to school, on the bus”. He had to learn Berber because he was going to school in a village with the Aït Aïssa and Berber was the language spoken in that environment (when playing soccer, during the intervals, on the way to school, all the exchanges took place in Berber...). The boy finds himself in a situation which is sufficiently unusual to be noticed, where Arabic is a minority language and Berber the dominant one.

We will try and compare these two mirrored situation: when Moroccan Arabic (M.A.) is a minority language in Msek, and when it is a second language which an illiterate woman learned from her neighbours in order to socialize in her own village of Taounil.

3.2 Transdisciplinarity

The fieldwork in both places was tentative transdisciplinary work between linguists and ethnobotanists; it proved very productive although we had to adapt to our respective enquiry methods. The linguistic material we collected was completely natural and fluent because the informants were answering questions about basic techniques of picking or preparing. We discussed *zembu* (barley paste), *tasukkant*

(wild asparagus) and *beqqula* (varieties of spinach) in Taounil; and various types of oil, almonds, cereals and bread in Msek.

Short texts will be presented complete and the traits resulting from contact will be discussed and compared in 6: *tasukkant* and *zembu* for Taounil, *εalwana* “baked olive oil” and bitter almonds oil for Sefri (Msek). The questioning on these practices was initiated by ethnobotanist Yildiz Thomas.⁸

4. Taounil data: *Tasukkant* (wild asparagus) and *zembu* (young barley paste)

When we stayed in Taounil, we were lucky to be present – at the end of February 2014 – for the very short season of wild asparagus, *tasukkant*.

4.1 Tasukkant

4.1.1 *The word ‘tasukkant’, a loanword?*

As a preliminary remark, we will comment on the name itself. The word *ta-sukkan-t* is a feminine substantive in Berber. Wild asparagus are called *səkkum* (*əl-bərr*) in M.A. It can be found in Mercier’s and Colin’s dictionaries:⁹ Why a feminine word in Berber? It is curious to note that the word has feminine agreement in text 1, and in the masculine text 2 (see below, 6.6 for agreement and 6.8 for the lexicon).

Mercier gives: “SEKKUM, asperge; – el-berr, asperge sauvage” (wild asparagus), *berr* meaning ‘sauvage (legume, fruit)’ (wild for a vegetable or a fruit); Colin: “səkkūm, *n. coll. Bot.* Asperges sauvages” (wild asparagus).

It is not clear whether Berber borrowed from Arabic or vice-versa. In a discussion with Salem Chaker, he said the root existed both in Berber – but not in the Rif – and in Arabic. He explained the passage from *sekkum* to *ta-sukkan-t* as follows: “*m* becomes *n* before the *-t* suffix, by assimilation to the following dental”.¹⁰

We will see a similar phenomenon with the term *tažafnit* for Msek (text 4 in 5.1 and 6.8). All the forms that will be analysed in Section 6 are in bold in the texts.

4.1.2 *The texts*

We will give successively the text and its translation, and the detailed gloss.

8. See Caubet & Thomas and Thomas & Caubet (2017).

9. See Mercier (1951: p. 182) and for Colin in Iraqui-Sinaceur (1993 vol. 4, p. 831).

10. Thanks to Salem Chaker (personal communication).

Text 1: *ka-tə-nbət hayda f-əl-aṛḍ, hiya fi-ha š-šukk, bəllati, hiya ġir hnaya fuq-d-dar dyał-na, hiya ka-t-kun ġir f-had-əl-waxt (weqt), ka-tənbət b-waḥd-a.*

It grows like this, in the ground, it has thorns, wait, you can find it right here, above our house, it grows only at this time of year, it grows by itself.

Text 1 *ka=tə-nbət hayda f-əl=aṛḍ*
 PRVB=3F.SG-grow\IPFV ADV PREP-DEF=N.F.
 ‘It grows like this, in the ground’
hiya fi-ha š=šukk bəllati
 PRO.IDP.3F.SG PREP-OBL.3F DEF=N.M. ADV
 ‘It has thorns, wait’
hiya ġir hnaya fuq-d=dar dyał=na
 PRO.IDP.3F.SG CONJ ADV.LOC PREP-DEF=N.M. POSS=OBL.1PL
 ‘you can find it right here, above our house...’
hiya ka=t-kun ġir f-had=əl=waxt (weqt)
 PRO.IDP.3F.SG PRVB=3F.SG-be\IPFV CONJ PREP-DEM.PROX=DEF=N.M
 ‘it grows only at this time of year’
ka=tə-nbət b-waḥd=a
 PRVB=3F.SG-grow\IPFV PREP-NUM=OBL.3F.SG
 ‘it grows by itself.’

Text 2: *Tasukkant? f-əl-māḥ, ka-n-səlquw-āḥ f-əl-māḥ ka-yṭeb, melli ka-y-ṭeb... ka-n-εəşşruw-āḥ ka-n-εəmluw-āḥ yaqtār, dik-əs-saea ka-nṭəyybuw-āḥ, ka-n-εəml-u l-u ət-tāwm, ka-n-εəml-u l-u əl-qasbuṛ, u ka-n-εəmluw-āḥ f-əl-māqla, dik-s-saea ka-n-εəml-u l-u əl-bāyṭat, dik-əs-saea, ka-yə... ka-yəntkəl.*

Asparagus? In water, we boil it, in water, it cooks, when it is cooked, we press it and we put it, to drip, and then we prepare it; we add garlic to it, we add coriander to it; and we put it in the frying pan, and then, we add eggs to it (the preparation), and then, you can eat it.

Text 2 *tasukkant f-əl=māḥ ka=n-səlq-uw=āḥ*
 N.F. PREP-DEF=N.M PRVB=1-boil\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘Asparagus? In water, we boil it...’
f-əl=māḥ ka=y-ṭeb melli ka=y-ṭeb...
 PREP-DEF=N.M PRVB=3M.SG-cook\IPFV CONJ PRVB=3M.SG-cook\IPFV
 ‘...in water, it cooks, when it is cooked...’
ka=n-εəşşr-uw=āḥ ka=n-εəml-uw=āḥ...
 PRVB=1-press\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘we press it and we put it...’
yaqtār dik=əs=saea ka=n-ṭəyyb-uw=āḥ
 3M.SG-drip\IPFV DEM.DIST=DEF=N.F. PRVB=1-cook\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘...to drip, and then we prepare it;’

ka=n-εəml-u l-u ət=tāwm
 PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3M.SG DEF=N.M.
 ‘we add garlic to it’
ka=n-εəml-u l-u əl=qəsbur
 PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3M.SG DEF=N.M.
 ‘we add coriander to it’
...u ka=n-εəml-uw=āh f-əl=mäq̣la
 ...and PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3SG.M PREP-DEF=N.F
 ‘... and we put it in the frying pan’
dik=s=saea ka=n-εəml-u l-u əl=bäỵtat
 DEM.DIST=DEF=N.F. PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3SG.M DET=N.F.PL
 ‘and then, we add eggs to it (the preparation)’
dik=əs=saea ka=yə... ka=yə-ntkəl.
 DEM.DIST=DEF=N.F. PRVB=3 PRVB=3-eat\IPFV\PASS
 ‘and then you ..., you can eat it.’

Tasukkant, *asparagus acutifolius*, grows in specific territories and particularly on the southern slopes, near the Mediterranean, which corresponds exactly to the situation of Taounil.

4.2 Zembu

Zembu is the name of the preparation which can be made from several cereals, depending on what is available in the region. In Taounil, it is thin flour made from roasted young (green) barley. It is called *zembu* in Al Hoceima region, *tazemmit* near Nador, which is a loanword in Berber, coming from *zammēṭa*, the name given to the preparation in the Jbala area, near Ouazzane.

In Taounil, when you want to eat it, you make a paste with warm water, forming small bowls; you eat it with butter, oil or honey. Once the flour is grounded and sieved, you get thin flour (*zembu*) and larger grains (*dšiša*) that can be prepared like couscous. F. made it for us and commented:

Text 3: *kangərbəl zəmbu daba, hayda, šuf! ha huwa əd-dšiša, ha əd-dšiša! zəmbu ha hiya, ha huwa! hadi əd-dšiša u hadi zəmbu.*

zəmbu: haḍi ka-yaklu-ha hayda, ka-yeəžn-u-ha b-əl-ma sxunin u kayaklu-ha, (h)a-hi b-əz-zəbda, (h)a-hi b-əz-zīt, (h)a-hi b-lə-əsəl, lli bḡiti, lli bḡiti ntina. u hadak ka-nṭayybuw-āh ka-neəmlu bi-ha lə-ḥrīra wəlla ka-nfowwɾuw-āh mēa-l-lḥən wəlla ka-nṭayybuw-āh hayda, ka-yəntkəl hayda ka-yeəml-u l-u z-zīt u ka-yakluw-āh wəlla ka-yeəmlu-h bḥāl səksu əāwəd u ka-yeəml-u eli-h l-lḥəm, wəlla mēa ḡ-ḡdād, wəlla bḥāl səksu.

I'm sifting *zembu* now, like this, look! This is *dchicha*, here is *dchicha*! *Zembu*, here it is (fem), here it is (masc)! This one is (fem) *dchicha* and this one is (fem) *zembu*!

This one (fem. *zembu*), they eat it like this, they knead it with hot water, and they eat it, either with butter ... or with oil, or with honey, whatever you want, whatever you prefer

and the other one (masc.), we cook it, we make *harira* (Ramadan soup) with it, or we steam it (and eat it) with buttermilk, or we cook it like this, you can eat it like this, we put it with oil and they eat it, or they prepare it like couscous too, and they put meat with it, or with chicken, or, like couscous.

- Text 3 *ka=n-ğərbəl zəmbu daba hayda šuf*
 PRVB=1-sift\IPFV N.M. ADV ADV look\IMP.M
 'I'm sifting *zembu* now, like this, look!'
ha huwa əd=dšiša ha əd=dšiša
 PRST PRO.IDP.3M.SG DEF=N.F. PRST DEF=N.F.
 'This is *dchicha*, here is *dchicha*!'
zəmbu ha hiya ha huwa
 N.M. PRST PRO.IDP.3F.SG PRST PRO.IDP.3M.SG
 'zembu, here it is (fem), here it is (masc)'
hadi əd=dšiša u hadi zəmbu
 PROX.F DEF=N.F. CONJ PROX.F N.M.
 'This one is (fem) *dchicha* and this one is (fem) *zembu*'
hadi ka=y-akl-u=ha hayda
 PROX.F PRVB=3-eat\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3F.SG ADV
 'This one (*zembu*), they eat it like this'
ka=y-εəžn-u=ha b-əl=ma sxun-in
 PRVB=3-knead\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3F.SG PREP-DEF=N.M ADJ.PL
 'they knead it with hot water'
u ka=y-akl-u=ha (h)a=hi b-əz=zəbda
 CONJ PRVB=3-eat\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3F.SG PRST=3F.SG PREP-DEF=N.F.
 'and they eat it, either with butter...'
(h)a=hi b-əz=zīt (h)a=hi b-lə=εsəl
 PRST=3F.SG PREP-DEF=N.F. PRST=3F.SG PREP-DEF=N.M.
 '... or with oil, or with honey...'
lli bği-ti lli bği-ti ntina
 REL want\PFV-2F.SG REL want\PFV-2F.SG PRO.IDP. 2SG
 'Whatever you want, whatever you prefer'
u hadak ka=n-ṭayyb-uw=āh
 CONJ DIST.M.SG PRVB=1-cook\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG
 'and the other one, we cook it'

ka=n-εəmlu bi-ha lə=ħrīra
 PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3F.SG DEF=N.F
 ‘we make ‘harira’ (Ramadan soup) with it’
wəlla ka=n-fowwɾ-uw=ǎh mēa-l=lḥən
 CONJ PRVB=1-steam\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG PREP-DEF=N.M.
 ‘or we steam it (and eat it) with buttermilk’
wəlla ka=n-ṭayyb-uw=ǎh hayda
 CONJ PRVB=1-cook\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG ADV
 ‘or we cook it like this’
ka=yə-ntkəl hayda ka=y-εəml-u l-u
 PRVB=3-eat\IPFV.PASS ADV PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3M.SG
 ‘you can eat it like this, we put it with...’
z=zīt u ka=y-akl-uw=ǎh
 DET=N.M CONJ PRVB=3-eat\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘...oil and they eat it’
wəlla ka=y-εəml-u=h bḥal səksu
 CONJ PRVB=3-do\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG ADV N.M.
 ‘or they prepare it like couscous...’
εāwəd u ka=y-εəml-u eli-h l=lḥəəm
 ADV CONJ PRVB=3-do\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3M.SG DEF=N.M
 ‘... too, and they put meat with it’
wəlla mēa ġ=ġdād wəlla bḥal səksu
 CONJ PREP DEF=N.M CONJ CONJ N.M.
 ‘...or with chicken, or, like couscous.’

We will analyze the contact phenomena and the linguistic peculiarities in paragraph 6.

5. Msek data

We discussed several techniques in Sefri (Msek), but Yildiz Thomas asked S. if (and how) she made a special type of oil, from baked olives (called *ealwana*), and with bitter almonds. They both involved the very particular use of a special cloth, *dərri d-əl-ḥayati*.

5.1 Ealwana

This is a special olive oil, made from olives previously left to dry all night in the oven, which gives it a very peculiar smoked taste.

Text 4: *ka-n-žni-w z-ze'tun, ka-nžibu-h, ka-nḥmiw l-fərṛan, ka-nḥmiw, ka-yttəhma mazyān, bḥal lli ġadi ttiyyəb əl-xobz; ka-nməšū-h mazyān, n-žib-u z-zitun, nnəqqiw-əh wə nēaddl-u fi-h, nēaddl-u fi-h y-bat l-lila kamla, yibəs, thəss bi-h yabəs; f-əš-šbah, məlli thəll əl-fərṛan, tšib-u yabəs, thəzz-u tžib əl-məhraz, tdoqq-u, tdoqq-u mazyān ḥta yetdəqq dik-lə-ətam dya-l-u mazyān, məlli ndoqqu-h nžib-u hadikəəə...tažəfnit, baš ka-nēəžn-u, ḥna ka-nqulu-ha tažəfnit.*

bqa tdoqq u təməl fi-ha, doqq u əməl fi-ha, žib əl-faxə, əaml-u f-əl-məžmar, šḥəl (šəəl) əl-əfiya u nəzzəl eli-ha dik-tažəfnit, dik-əl-gəšə, xalli-h ḥta yəsxun mazyān u bda əəžn-u b-yəddə-k, w-əntina ka-tšuf-u ka-yxərrəž z-zit, ka-təəžn-u hayda, hayda, šafi u tžib dərṛa d-əl-ḥayati u əəššə; šafi u z-zit ka-txəž mazyān!
We collect the olives, we bring them, we heat the oven, we heat it, until it is very hot, as if you were going to bake bread, we clean it off well, we bring the olives, and we clean them, and we work on it, we prepare it and it spends the whole night (in the oven) in order to make it dry, you make sure it is dry, the next morning, when you open the oven and you find them dry, you take them out, you bring the mortar and pound them, you pound them well, until the stones are pounded well, When we have pounded it, we bring this *tajəfnit* (large dish) where we knead bread, we call it *tajəfnit*.

Keep pounding and working on it, pounding and working, bring some charcoal, put it in the burner, light the fire, and lay on it this *tajəfnit*, this dish, leave it there until it gets really hot and start kneading it with your hands, and you can see it oil coming out, you knead it like this, like this, and that's it, you bring a piece of cloth made of linen and press, that's all, and the oil comes out nicely!

Text 4 *ka=n-žni-w* *z=ze'tun* *ka=n-žib-u=h*
PRVB=1-pick\IPFV-PL DEF=N.M. PRVB=1-bring\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG
'We collect the olives, we bring them'
ka=n-ḥmi-w *l=fərṛan* *ka=n-ḥmi-w*
PRVB=1-heat\IPFV-PL DEF=N.M. PRVB=1-heat\IPFV-PL
'we heat the oven, we heat it...'
ka=y-ttə-ḥma *mazyān* *bḥal lli* *ğadi t-tiyyəb*
PRVB=3-heat\IPFV.PASS ADV CONJ REL FUT 2-cook\IPFV
'until it is very hot, as if you were going to bake...'
əl=xobz *ka=n-məšh-u=h* *mazyān*
DEF=N.M. PRVB=1-clean_off\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG ADV
'...bread, we clean it off well'
n-žib-u *z=zitun* *n-nəqqi-w=əh*
1-bring\IPFV-PL DEF=N.M. 1-clean\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG
'we bring the olives, and we clean them'
wə *n-əaddl-u* *fi-h* *n-əaddl-u*
CONJ 1-make\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3M.SG 1-make\IPFV-PL
'and we work on it, we prepare...'

fi-h *y-bat* *l=lila* *kamla* *y-ibəs*
 PREP-OBL.3M.SG 3M.SG-spend_night\IPFV DEF=N.F. ADJ 3M.SG-dry\IPFV
 ‘...it and it spends the whole night (in the oven) in order to make it dry’
t-ħəss *bi-h* *yabəs*
 2SG-feel\IPFV PREP-OBL.3M.SG dry\PTCP.ACT.M.SG
 ‘You make sure it is dry’
f-aş=şbaħ *məlli* *t-ħäll* *əl=fərɾan*
 PREP-DEF=N.M. CONJ 2SG-open\IPFV DEF=N.M.
 ‘the next morning, when you open the oven...’
t-şib=u *yabəs* *t-ħəzz=u*
 2SG-find\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG dry\PTCP.ACT.SG.M 2-pick_up\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘and you find them dry, you take them out...’
t-žib *əl=məħraz* *t-doqq=u*
 2SG-bring\IPFV DEF=N.M. 2-pound\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘you bring the mortar and pound them’
t-doqq=u *məzya(n)* *ħta* *yə-tdəqq*
 2SG-pound\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG ADV CONJ 3M.SG-pound\IPFV.PASS
 ‘you pound it really well, until (its stones) are pounded...’
dik=lə=εtam *dyal-u* *məzyan*
 DEM.DIST=DEF=N.PL POSS-OBL.3M.SG ADV
 ‘[its stones], well!’
məlli *t-doqq-u=h* *žib-u* *hadik* *əəə*
 CONJ 2SG-pound\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG bring\IMP-PL DEM.DIST HESIT
 ‘When you have pounded it, bring this er...’
tažəfnit *baš* *ka=n-εəžn-u* *ħna*
 N.F REL PRVB=1-knead\IPFV-PL PRO.IDR.1PL
 ‘*tajefnit* (large dish) where we knead bread, we...’
ka=nqul-u=ha *tažəfnit*
 PRVB=1-say\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3F.SG N.F
 ‘...we call it *tajefnit*.’
bqa *t-doqq* *u* *tə-εməl* *fi=ha*
 keep\IMP 2SG-pound\IPFV CONJ 2SG-do\IPFV PREP=OBL.3F.SG
 ‘keep on pounding and working on it’
doqq *u* *εməl* *fi=ha*
 pound\IMP CONJ do\IMP PREP=OBL.3F.SG
 ‘pound and work on it.’
žib *əl=faxəɾ* *εəml=u* *f-əl=məžmar*
 bring\IMP DEF=N.M. do\IMP=OBJ.3F.SG PREP-DEF=N.M.
 ‘Bring the charcoal, put it in the burner’

šhəl əl=ɛafiya u nəzzəl ɛli-ha dik tažəfnit
 light\IMP DEF=N.F. CONJ lay\IMP PREP=OBL.3F.SG DEM.DIST N.F.
 ‘light the fire, and lay on it this *tajefnit*’
dik=əl=gəʃɛa xalli=h ɣta
 DEM.DIST=DEF=N.F. leave\IMP=OBJ.3M.SG CONJ
 ‘...this dish, leave it there until’
y-sxun məzyan u bda ɛəžn=u
 3-heat\IPFV ADV CONJ start\IMP knead\IMP=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘it gets really hot and start kneading it.’
b-yəddə=k w=əntina ka=t-šuf=u
 PREP-N.M=OBL.2SG CONJ=PRO.IDP.2SG PRVB=2-see\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘... with your hands, and you can see...’
ka=y-xərrəž z=zit ka=t-ɛəžn=u
 PRVB=3-extract\IPFV DEF=N.M PRVB=2-knead\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘...oil coming out, you knead it’
hayda hayda šafi u t-žib dərɾa d-əl=hayati
 ADV ADV ADV CONJ 2-bringt\IPFV N.F POSS-DEF=N.M
 ‘like this, like this, and that’s it, you bring a piece of cloth made of linen’
u ɛəʃʃəɾ šafi u z=zit
 CONJ press\IMP ADV CONJ DEF=N.F
 ‘and press, that’s all, and the oil...’
ka=t-xrəž məzyan
 PRVB=3F.SG-come_out\IPFV ADV
 ‘comes out nicely!’

This technique, with a simple cloth, is not common; more often, a twin-screw wooden oil press is used, like in Taounate (see El Alaoui 2007, Thomas and Caubet 2017, and our own observations with Y. Thomas, L. Clochey and F. El Ghazzaz in April 2014, near Aïn Mediouna). Our informant uses the same technique to make bitter almond oil, because she only makes small quantities at a time.

5.2 Bitter almond oil – zit l-ləwz mərr

Text 5: ka-nžibu l-luz bhal hada u huwa mərr, ka-nduqqu-h wəlla ka-nṭəhnu-h
f-Moulinex bhal lli ġadi neəddlu əl-ħəlwə bda ka-yəɾjəe bhal t-ṭhin, rṭəb, dik-əs-
səə ka-nžibu əl-kəskas, ka-neəmlu əl-ma yṭib bhal ila kun-na maš neəddlu
əl-couscous, ka-neəmlu əl-ma yṭibu ḥta ka-ygliw, ka-neəmlu əd-dərɾa d-əl-hayati
wəlla ši dərɾa u šafi, əl mohimm təqbəṭ l-ək ġe l-luz u šafi, baš ma yṭeḥ l-ək ši
f-əl-boɾma, tḥəɾəš-ha f-əl-kəskas, təməl dik-l-luz yətbəxxəɾ ḥta ka-yətbəxxəɾ,
ka-yṭeb məzyaan... məlli ka-təə..., hada, ka-tžib-u, k-təbda təəʃʃəɾ, ka-txəlli-h
ɛla n-naɾ walakin, ma thəbbṭ-u š, ka-txəlli-h, tžib boṭa šġira wəlla məžmar

wəlla... lli... tʒib-u, nəzzəl dik l-borma təmma hda-k u hada.. w-əntina ka-teəşşər
b-dik-əd-dərri d-əl-hayati wəlla ka-teəddl-u f-əd-dərri d-əl-hayati u ka-teəşşər
gīr šwiya, šwiya, šwiya, šwiya, (h)ta... yhbət z-zit.

We bring the almonds, like these, but bitter ones (they are bitter), we pound them, or we grind it in a blender, as if we were going to prepare cakes, and it begins to look like flour, smooth. Then we take the couscous maker and we put water to heat as if we were going to prepare couscous. we put water to heat until it boils, we use a piece of cloth or any cloth, it doesn't matter, as long as it retains only the almonds that's all, so that it does not fall into the pan, you spread them out in the colander of the couscous maker, you put the almonds to steam until they are well steamed, very well cooked; when they er.. what's it, you bring them, and you begin to squeeze, you leave them on the fire all the same, don't take them away, you leave them, you bring a small stove, or a charcoal burner or any... you bring it, and you put this pan (the bottom part of the couscous maker) there, next to you and the rest, and you go on squeezing with that cloth, or you do it in the linen cloth and you press it gently, gently, gently, gently, and the oil comes out

- Text 5 *ka=n-žib-u l=luz bhal hada u*
PRVB=1-bring\IPFV-PL DEF=N.M. ADV DEM.SG.M CONJ
'We bring the almonds, like these, but..'
huwa mərr ka=n-duqq-u=h wəlla
PRO.IDP.3M.SG ADJ PRVB=1-pound\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG CONJ
'bitter ones (they are bitter), we pound them, or..'
ka=n-təhn-u=h f-Moulinex bhal lli
PRVB=1-grind\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3M.SG PREP-PN CONJ REL
'we grind it in a blender, as if ...'
gadi n-əəddl-u əl=həlwə bda ka=y-rjæ
FUT 1-make\IPFV-PL DEF=N.F begin\PFV-3M.SG PRVB=3M.SG-become\IPF
'we were going to prepare cakes, and it begins to look...'
bhal t=thin rṭəb dik=əs=sæə ka=n-žib-u
CONJ DEF=N.M ADJ DEM.DIST=DEF=N.F PRVB=1-bring\IPFV-PL
'... like flour, smooth. Then we take...'
əl=kəskas ka=n-əəml-u əl=ma y-tib
DEF=N.M PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL DEF=N.M 3M.SG-cook\IPFV
'... the couscous maker and we put water to heat'
bhal ila kun-na maš n-əəddl-u əl=couscous
CONJ CONJ be\PFV-1PL FUT 1-make\IPFV-PL DEF=N.M
'...as if we were going to prepare couscous.'
ka=n-əəml-u əl=ma y-tib-u ḥta
PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL DEF=N.M 3M-cook\IPFV-PL CONJ
'we put water to heat until ...'

ka=y-ġli-w *ka=nə-ɛml-u* *əd=dərɾa*
 PRVB=3M.SG-boil\IPFV-PL PRVB=1-do\IPFV-PL DEF=N.F
 ‘it boils, we use a piece of cloth...’²
d-əl=ħayati *wəlla ši dərɾa u šafi əlmohimm*
 POSS-DEF=N.M. CONJ INDF N.F CONJ ADV ADV
 ‘...made of linen, or any cloth, it doesn’t matter, as long as...’
tə-qbəʔ *l=ək* *ge* *l=luz*
 3F.SG-catch\IPFV PREP-OBL.2SG ADV DEF=N.M
 ‘it retains only the almonds’
u šafi baš ma y-ʔeħ *l=ək ši*
 CONJ ADV CONJ NEG1 3M-fall\IPFV PREP-OBL.2 NEG2
 ‘that’s all, so that it does not fall...’
f-əl=boɾma *t-fəɾɾəʃ=ha* *f-əl=kaskas*
 PREP-DEF=N.F 2SG-spread_out\IPFV=OBJ.3F.SG PREP-DEF=N.M
 ‘...into the pan, you spread them out in the colander of the couscous maker...’
tə-ɛməl *dik=l=luz* *yə-tbəxxəʔ*
 2SG-do\IPFV DIST=DEF=N.M 3M.SG-steam\IPFV.PASS
 ‘you put the almonds to steam,’²
ħta *ka=yə-tbəxxəʔ* *ka=y-ʔeb* *məzyan*
 CONJ PRVB=3M.SG-steam\IPFV.PASS PRVB=3M.SG-cook\IPFV ADV
 ‘...until they are well steamed, very well cooked’
məlli *ka=t-əə* *hada ka=t-žib=u*
 CONJ PRVB=3F.SG-HESIT DEM PRVB=2SG-bring\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘when they er.. what’s it, you bring them’
ka=tə-bda *t-ɛəʃʃəʔ* *ka=t-xəlli=h*
 PRVB=2-begin\IPFV 2-press\IPFV PRVB=2-leave\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG
 ‘and you begin to squeeze, you leave them’
əla *n=nəʔ* *walakin ma t-ħəbbt=u* *š*
 PREP DEF=N.F. CONJ NEG1 2SG-take_down\IPFV=PRO.3M.SG NEG2
 ‘.. on the fire all the same, don’t take them away’
ka=t-xəlli=h *t-žib* *boʔa šgira wəlla məžmar*
 PRVB=2-leave\IPFV=PRO.3M.SG 2-bring\IPFV N.F ADJ.F CONJ N.M
 ‘you leave them, you bring a small stove, or a charcoal burner’
wəlla lli t-žib=u *nəzzəl* *dik=l=boɾma*
 CONJ REL 2SG-bring\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG put\IMP DEM.DIST=DEF=N.F
 ‘or any, you bring it, and you put this pan (the bottom part of the couscous maker)’
təmma *ħda-k* *u* *hada w-əntina*
 ADV.LOC PREP-OBL.2 CONJ DEM CONJ-PRO.IDP.2
 ‘there, next to you and the rest, and you’

ka=t-εaššər *b-dik=əd=dərɾa* *d-əl=ħayati* *wəlla*
 PRVB=2SG-press\IPFV PREP-DIST.DEM=DEF=N.F. POSS-DEF=N.M CONJ
 ‘(you) go on squeezing with that cloth, or’
ka=t-εaddl=u *f-əd=dərɾa* *d-əl=ħayati*
 PRVB=2-make\IPFV=OBJ.3M.SG PREP-DEF=N.F. POSS-DEF=N.M.
 ‘you do it in the linen cloth’
u *ka=t-εaššər* *ğir* *b-šwiya*
 CONJ PRVB=2-press\IPFV ADV PREP-ADV
 ‘and you press it gently...’
šwiya *šwiya* *šwiya* *u* *ka=y-hbət* *z=zit*
 ADV ADV ADV CONJ PRVB=3M.SG-go_down\IPFV DEF=N.F.
 ‘gently, gently, gently, and the oil comes out’

These texts give us insights into techniques still used in the Rif; we will now try and analyse the linguistic phenomena due to language contacts.

6. Arabic and Berber in contact

6.1 Language contact

The contact between Berber and Arabic dates back to the arrival of Arabic in the region, in the 7th century, and the cross-influences are deep and intricate. The Prehilali Arabic dialects of North Africa all bear traces of these contacts. But among them, what William Marçais called “les parlers villageois”, and later, Colin for Morocco, “les parlers montagnards”, the oldest and most innovative Arabic dialects in the Maghrib are the descendants of the first layers of Arabization (see Marçais & Guïga 1925 and Colin 1937). Berber and Arabic share a long history of contact and most studies have shown how much Berber has borrowed from Arabic, especially on the lexical side. The situation presented here is a result of a historical situation, combined with present-day regular contacts.

Kossman (2017b) in an article on Berber-Arabic language contact writes:

Since the start of the Islamic conquest of the Maghreb in the 7th century CE, Berber and Arabic have been in continual contact. This has led to large-scale mutual influence. The sociolinguistic setting of this influence is not the same, though; Arabic influence on Berber is found in a situation of language maintenance with widespread bilingualism, while Berber influence on Arabic is no doubt to a large degree due to language shift by Berber speakers to Arabic.

In the case of Msek, we have seen that the child is led to learn Berber in order to communicate with other children at school, so it is an unusual situation. Kossman's study is very detailed, analyzing sound systems, morphology, syntax and lexicon:

Arabic influence on Berber is the result of a long history of coexistence, with high degrees of bilingualism on the part of Berber speakers. (...) On the other side of the coin, Berber influence on Arabic is no doubt to a large degree due to language shift from Berber to Arabic (on which see, among others, Lévy 1998), as minority Arabic-speaking groups gradually assimilated more and more Berber speakers and groups.

As for the data we collected, we will examine some linguistic features that can be linked to contact and have been studied by dialectologists for the past century:¹¹ on the phonetic level: vowels and diphthongs, spirantization, weakening of certain fragile phonemes; an interesting question on the status of *u/w* - vowel or consonant – and its implications on verbal morphology; morphosyntax (preverb of the imperfect, future particle, demonstratives...), and changes in agreement in gender and number due to contact; a rare negation particle *bu* present in both languages; and finally a few specific lexical features.

6.2 Phonetics: Remarks on vowels and diphthongs

- In **Taounil**, the vowels have a particular colour in F's speech: the /ə/ is realized [œ] *l-lħæm* "meat", in a pharyngeal context, or [ä] near a glottal, *ka-yakl-uw-äh* "they eat it".
- There are some diphthongs – which are found among women, according to Vicente (2000: p. 34, 2005: p. 112); for **Taounil**: *ət-tāwm*, *əl-bäyṭat*, *əl-lāwz* "garlic, eggs, almonds"; for **Msek**: *l-ləuz*, *z-ze'tun* "almonds, olives".
- Clearly linked to F's Berber "accent", the nasal realization of final *-a* in pausal position: *f-əl-mā*, "in water", *mən təmmā*, "from there":

- (1) *əl=ħaža r=rumiya ka=y-εəml-u l-a əd=dwā*
 DEF=N.F. DEF=ADJ.F. PRVB=3-do\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3F.SG DEF=N.M
 'the imported plant (thing), they give it treatment (medicine),
əl=bəldiya ma ka=y-εəml-u l-a bu¹² d=dwā
 DEF=N.F. NEG1 PRVB=3-do\IPFV-PL PREP-OBL.3F.SG NEG2 DEF=N.M
 the local one doesn't need any treatment'

11. For a summary of these points of variation in Arabic dialects, see David Cohen's questionnaire (Cohen & Caubet 2000), and the one I proposed for North Africa (Caubet 2002).

12. For negation and the use of *bu*, see below 6.8.

6.3 Phonetic remarks on consonants and spirantization

Some features are also found in the Jbala dialects, like the unvoiced realization of *q* and of *d*.

- /q/ is realized [q]: *fɪq* “on”, *səlqu* “they boiled”, except in the word *waxt* for *wəqt* “time” in **Taounil**; see also the compounds formed with *wəqt* (Colin:1921: p. 43, for North Taza: *fīwax* (<*fi ayy weqt) “when”, *dūx* (<*da l-weqt) “now”).
- /ɛ/ in realized [ɨ], in **Msek**: *šhəl* (šɛəl) “light”.
- /d/ is realized [t] *əl-bəyʔat* “the eggs” in **Taounil**, as is often the case in Jbala dialects (see Colin 1921: p. 40 for North Taza and for Ceuta, Vicente 2005: p. 115). In **Msek**: *əl-ɛʔam* “the bones”.
- In **Taounil**, /ž/ is realized [ž], *ʔanʒa* “Tangiers”, *žit* “I came, I am here”, except when it is geminated, *ž + ž > ġ*: (*ğ*)*ğdad* “chicken”, (*ğ*)*ğiran* “the neighbours”, like in North Taza (see Colin 1921: p. 39). It is the same in **Msek**: *ka-n-žib-u-h* “we bring it”, *ka-t-ɛʒn-u* “you knead it”, *əl-məʒmar* “the charcoal burner”. I found no example of *ž + ž > ġ*.
- **Spirantization** is not generalized, but can be found in **Taounil** with /b/, /k/ and /d/: *l-lbən* “buttermilk”, *haði* “this one (fem.)”, *hayða* “like this”, although otherwise realized [b] and [d]: *bħal*, *bğiti*, *hadak*; *hayða* “like, you want, that one (masc.), like this”. In **Msek** (*msek*): *ħda-k* “next to you”, but *hadik* “that one (fem.)”, *bda* “he began”, *hayða* “like this”, *dərɾa* “handkerchief”, *bħal* “like”, *f-əl-borma* “in the pan”.

6.4 The weakening of fragile phonemes /h, l, n/

There are many cases of elision in Prehilali dialects: apocope, apheresis; and the 3rd person pronouns, *-ha* (fem.) and *-hum* (plural), where the *h* is often elided.

- **Truncation:** in Msek, there is an *apocope*: *məzya(n)* “well”, and the indefinite article *wāḥəd-əl-bənt* “a girl”, which is reduced to *wāḥ* (see Maghdad 1993): *wāḥ-l-modə* “a place”, *wāḥ nnhar* “one day”. I found a case of apheresis in 2014: *f-aḥəd-lə-žəbbānya* “in a large bowl”. The article is reduced to *ḥa* in North Taza (see Colin 1921: p. 30): *ḥannhār* “one day”.
- **Elision of the *h* in the affix pronouns -*ha* and -*hum*; elision of the final *l* of *dyal***

In **Msek**, the *h* of the affix pronouns is often elided:

- (2) *ma ka=n-dir=a* *ši bəzzaf*
 NEG1 PRVB=1SG.do\IPFV=OBJ.3F.SG NEG2 ADV
 'I don't make it much anymore'

- (3) *nə-mši* *n-žib=a* *l-a*
 1SG-go\IPFV 1SG-bring\IPFV=OBJ.3F.SG PREP-OBL.3F.SG
 ‘I’ll go and get it.’
- (4) *ka=nə-εfi-w=ha* *l-um*
 PRVB=1-give\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3F.SG PREP-OBL.3PL
 ‘We give it to them.’
- (5) *ka=y-žib(u)=um* *l-na* *l=fəllāha*
 PRVB=3-bring\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3PL PREP-OBL.1PL DEF=N.PL
 ‘The peasants bring them to us.’

But it is also present:

- (6) *ka=nə-εfi-w=ha* *l-um*
 PRVB=1-give\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3F.SG PREP-OBL.3PL
 ‘We give it to them.’
- (7) *ka=yə-εfi-w=ha* *l-na*
 PRVB=3-give\IPFV-PL=OBJ.3F.SG PREP-OBL.1PL
 ‘They give it to us.’

There is also a very strange phenomenon which was described for the first time by Maghdad for **Msek**, and commented by her supervisor, Simon Lévy (1998: p. 12 note 6): **the elision of the final ‘l’ of possession particle *dyal*:**

(...) the occlusives /b/, /t/, /d/, /ḡ/, /k/ are slightly fricative /b/, /t/, /d/ like in *Tarifit*; the liquid /l/, realized /r/ /ž/ in *Tarifit*, is muted in the studied dialect: *dyäl-i* > *dyäy* (my/mine).¹³

The “l” of the possessive *dyal* is assimilated or elided; the complete paradigm was given by Maghdad 1993: *dyäy*, *dyäk*, *dyänna*, but for the 3rd person masculine, *dyäh*; this is because the fall of “l” entails the presence of the “h”, by compensation: *dyäl-i* > *dyä-y* ‘my, mine’ but, *dyäl-o* > *dyä-h* ‘his’, *dyäl-hom* > *dyä-hom* ‘their(s)’.

In our 2014 data, there is a hesitation, but the pronunciation is so fast and lax that it is sometimes difficult to hear if the “h” is really present or whether it is just a diphthong: *ən-nəšš dya~um* ‘heir half’; *lhäqq dya~hum* ‘their share’, *dya~ha* ‘hers’.

In **Taounil**, we found an elision of the final *l* of *bhal* ‘like’: *bha hada* ‘like this’, and the muting of the *h* in affix personal pronouns is common:

13. (...) les occlusives /b/, /t/, /d/, /ḡ/, /k/ sont réalisées légèrement fricatives /b/, /t/, /d/, /ḡ/, /k/ comme en *tarifit*; la liquide /l/ réalisée /r/ /ž/ en *tarifit* – s’amuit dans le parler étudié ». *dyäl-i* > *dyäy* (mon/à moi).

- (8) *l=ɛarbiya tɛalləm-t=a ġe hna*
 DEF=N.F. learn\PFV-1SG=OBJ.3F.SG CONJ ADV
 ‘Arabic, I learnt it just here.’
- (9) *ɛənd=om bəzzaf*
 PREP=OBL.3PL ADV
 ‘They have a lot.’
- (10) *ka=tə-nbət b-waħd=a*
 PRVB=3F.SG-grow\IPFV PREP-NUM=OBL.3F.SG
 ‘It grows by itself.’
- (11) *t=ṭiba dyał-a f-əš=škəl*
 DEF=N.F. POSS-OBL.3F.SG PREP-DEF=N.M
 ‘Its taste is different.’

6.5 Vowel or consonant: u/w? Implications on verbal morphology, the sense of an evolution

In Taounil, when F. was describing the way she prepared *tasukkant* or *zembu*, a certain rhythm was given to her narration, by the series of plural verbal forms expressing the habitual. They were all imperfect plurals with a 3rd p. m.sg affix pronoun (see texts 2 and 3):

ka-nsəlquw-āh ‘we boil it’, *ka-nṭəyybuw-āh* ‘we cook it’, *ka-nɛəmluw-āh* ‘we do it’, *ka-nɛəşşruw-āh* ‘we press it’, *ka-nṭəyybuw-āh* ‘we cook it’, *ka-nfowwruw-āh* ‘we steam it’.

The 3rd p. m.sg affix pronoun has two forms in M.A., depending of the ending of the word: *-h*, if the word ends in a vowel, and *-u*, if it ends in a consonant: *ɛli-h* ‘on it/him’; *l-u* ‘to him’. In F.’s speech we find an **innovation**: *ka-n-ɛəml-u-h* > *ka-n-ɛəml-uw-āh*, as illustrated in the list above. Over ten verb forms, only one was regular, *ka-yɛəmlu-h*.

This form is quite frequent in Prehilali dialects, but only with *defective verbs*; in F.’s case, it is found with *regular verbs*. We’ll try and analyse **the sense of an evolution**.

– For defective verbs only in the North of Morocco, Djidjelli and Tlemcen

This construction happens with *defective verbs* when the affix is added to a vocalic ending, thus producing a diphthong: *nsa-w + h* > *nsaw-āh* ‘they forgot’ ‘they forgot it’.

Msek: with S., the *-uw-āh* ending occurs only with *defective verbs*: *n-nəqqi-w-əh* ‘we’ll clean it’; *nxəlli-w-əh yxmər* ‘we let it rise (the dough)’, whereas regular verbs

have the regular construction: *ka-nžibu-h* “we bring it”; *ka-n-məsh-u-h* “we wipe it clean”; *ka-nduqu-h* “we pound it”; *ka-nṭəhnu-h* “we grind it”.

These forms have indeed been described for *defective verbs* for Tlemcen (W. Marçais 1902: p. 130), Tangiers (W. Marçais 1911), North Taza (Colin 1921: p. 71), Djidjelli (P. Marçais 1956: p. 441), Fez (Caubet 1993: p. 161), Chaouen (Natividad 1998: p. 117), and Moscoso (2003: p. 162).

Tlemcen: W. Marçais (1902: p. 130) mentions it for *defective verbs* only, and he describes it as a “consonantization” of *u* in *w*:

Il importe enfin de noter la singulière façon dont les pluriels en *āu*, *īw*, provenant de parfaits et de futurs de verbes défectueux se comportent avec les affixes personnels. (...) les affixes de la 2^e pers. sing et 3^e ms. sing. sonnent *ök*, *āk* et *öh*, *āh*, et *u* se consonantise devant eux en *w*. L’on a ainsi de *qrāu*, ils ont recité, *qrāwöh*, ils l’ont recité

I found an example in his texts (1902: p. 264 l. 1): *yenfiwöh* “they banish him”; with ordinary verbs, the construction is a simple affixation of pronoun *-k* (1902: p. 268 l. 42): *nḥebbrūk* “we inform you”.

Tangiers: W. Marçais (1911) does not give a description of the dialect, but I was able to find one occurrence in the texts (1911: p. 57), on a *defective verb* (*w* is transcribed *u*): *éom^mrom ma kēḥḥāṭṭēuqḥ* “ils n’y manquent jamais” (translation by Marçais 1911: p. 162 “they never fail to do it”), with verb *ḥāṭṭā* (1911: p. 282) “négliger, manquer à l’accomplissement d’un devoir – to fail to accomplish/do”.

North Taza: Colin (1921: p. 71) also describes it for *defective verbs*:

Suffixés à l’une des personnes du pluriel des verbes défectueux, les affixes de la 2^e pers. comm. sing et de la 3^e pers. masc. sing. deviennent respectivement: *-ök* et *-ah*, *-öh*; le *ḥ* de la terminaison se consonantise. *wuṣṣāwah* ils l’ont arrangé; *nəbyiwök* nous t’aimons; *rmiwöh* jetez-le.

Djidjelli: P. Marçais (1956: p. 441) mentions it only for *defective verbs*:

Quand le thème verbal comporte une syllable diphtonguée, *āu*, *īu* (...) L’adjonction de l’affixe de la 2^e personne du singulier, et bien plus encore celle de l’affixe de la 3^e du masculine, font apparaître des ensembles de constitution phonique insolite don’t il faut tenter de rendre compte: *nsāu* + *ēk* = *nsāwēk*; *nsāu* + *ēh* = *nsāwēh*; (...)

He analyses it as due to the ambiguity of the second element of the diphtong, *u/w*:

(...) on mettra en cause la nature ambiguë du *u/w* second élément de ces diphtongues: senti ou traité comme voyelle, il aboutit à *nsāuk*, *nsāuh* (...) senti et traité comme consonne, il doit aboutir à: *nsāwēk*; **nsāwu* (...) *nsāu* + *k* étant *nsāwēk*, *nsāu* + *h* a été *nsāwēh*; (...)

He then quotes an example from Tangiers (W. Marçais 1911: p. 23 l. 5), where the same construction applies to an active participle: *εāmlīnāh*,¹⁴ which he explains as being influenced by a combination of two constructs: *εāmlīnēk* and *yāḡḡīwāh* – *in* + *h* being treated like *īu* + *h*. He also mentions this construction in his *Esquisse* (P. Marçais 1977: p. 193).

Fez: I had also noted this form for *defective verbs* (Caubet 1993 tome 1: p. 161): *nsāw-ak* “ils t’ont oublié(e)”; *nsāw-ah* “ils l’ont oublié”.

Chaouen: Natividad mentions it for *defective verbs* (1998: p. 117):

Les verbes défectifs au pluriel de l’inaccompli intercalant une voyelle brève /ə/ entre la désinence du pluriel et les pronoms suffixes des 2^e et 3^e personnes du singulier: /*nā-nḡallīwəh*/ “nous le bouillons”; /*nəssīwəh*/ “nous le faisons”; *nəkmīwək* “nous allons t’abandonner”.¹⁵

Moscoso (2003: pp. 162–163) gives examples for *defective verbs*: *n-nās lā-yāḡḡīwāh* “people give it normally”; he adds that in rare cases, it can be extended to *regular verbs* and he gives one example: *nā-nṭāhhkūwāh* “we circumcise him”, adding that the norm would be *-ūh*.

The Chaouen situation will lead us to consider this innovative construction in dialects where the *-uw-āh* ending is frequent for *regular verbs*: Anjra and Ceuta and our new data, Taounil.

– *Innovation, the new construct for all types of verbs: Anjra, Ceuta, Taounil*

Anjra: A. Vicente first reported the extension of the construct when she described the dialect of Anjra (Vicente 2000: p. 138):

(...) en el dialecto de Anjra, esta manera de realizar el sufijo se ha extendido a todos los demás tipos de verbos (In the dialect of Anjra, this realization of the suffix has extended to all the other types of verbs.

She gives a number of examples: *nsāmlūwāh* “we do it”; *nḡībūwāh* “we’ll bring it”; *nxāslūwāk* “we’ll wash you”; *yṭāyybūwāh* “they cook it”.

Ceuta: Vicente also found this construction in her description of Ceuti Arabic (2005: p. 153); she describes the phenomenon as: “la présence dans les formes verbales d’une voyelle brève /ā/ entre les désinances verbales du pluriel et les suffixes *-h* et *-k*. Ce trait existe dans tous les types de verbes.” She gives the following examples: *nāklūwāh* “we eat it”; *nsīyybūwāh* “we throw it ways”.

14. Instead of *εāmlīnu*.

15. We use the authors’ original transcriptions.

Taounil: F. spent 15 years in Ceuta in a Tarifit speaking family; did she pick it up in Ceuta, or is it present in the area? We would need to enquire more. A very peculiar rhythm is given to text 2: *ka-nsəlquw-āh*, *ka-nṭəyybuw-āh*, *ka-nεəmluw-āh*, *ka-nεəşruw-āh*, *ka-nfowwruw-āh*, etc.

– *The sense of an evolution: regularization*

We saw P. Marçais's hypothesis (1956: p. 441) about the ambiguity of the status of the phoneme /u/w/ to explain the sense of this evolution. Vincente (2000: p. 138) noted¹⁶ “the presence in the verbal forms of a short vowel /ā/ between the plural verb ending and the suffixes -h and -k”.

In fact, this diphthong *adds a syllable* to the word and gives it more weight and depth:

kayεəmlu-h is pronounced as *three syllables*: *kay – εəm – luh*.

kayεəmluw-āh, as *four syllables*: *kay – εəm – lu – wāh*;

Expressivity uses the lengthening of words, by the addition of suffixes for example (which also adds syllables): *hna* and *hna-ya* “here”, *hna-k* “there”; *ḥna* and *ḥna-ya* “we, us”; *hayda* and *haydaya* “like this”; this new verbal form probably gives the same effect.

The need for regularization of a paradigm can lead to evolution. We will explain the process as follows: *defective verbs* evolve first: from *nsa-u-k* / *nsa-u-h* to *nsa-w-ək* / *nsa-w-āh* “they forgot you/him”; from *nnəqqi-u-h* to *nnəqqi-w-əh* “we will clean it”; once this is established, the *regular verbs* can align on the paradigm, like in Anjra, Ceuta and, as we just discovered, Taounil.

6.6 Morphosyntax

We'll list some features that characterize these two dialects: the preverb of the imperfect, the demonstrative adjectives and the future particle.

6.6.1 *The preverb of the imperfect is exclusively ka-*

Contrary to a number of Jbala dialects that have a variety of other preverbs, *ʾa-*, *a-*, *la-/na-* or *da-*,¹⁷ both varieties studied here have *ka-* – the koinic preverb – exclusively: *ka-y-εəml-u* etc.

16. My translation.

17. See Colin (1921), Lévy-Provençal (1922), Natividad (1998), Vicente (2000), Moscoso (2003), Caubet (2017).

6.6.2 *The demonstrative adjectives are invariable*

Had (proximal) is invariable in M.A., but in Msek and Taounil, *dik* (distal feminine form) also is; it is the same in Anjra (Vicente 2000: p. 139). Colin notes *dak* invariable for North Taza (Colin 1921: p. 71): fem. *dik-əs-saεa* “that time”, plur. *dik-l-εṭam* “those bones”, masc. (collective) *dik-l-luz* “those almonds”. The demonstrative adverb is *hayda* “like this”.

6.6.3 *From collective to plural*

The term *əl-bayḍ* / *əl-beḍ* “(the) eggs” is a collective in M.A. In F’s speech in Taounil, it becomes countable and takes a plural: *əl-bäyṭ-at*; *ḍ* > *ṭ* and an external plural is formed with the suffix *-at*.

6.6.4 *Possession: Double construction*

In Msek, I found a double construction used with kinship names, which had been noted for Djidjelli, where it is generalized (P. Marçais 1956: p. 413, 421): the possessor is marked doubly, via the possessive pronoun which is affixed on the kinship term, and through the analytic construction, with possessive particle *d*: *ḥnaya*, *bba-h d Moḥamməd*, *εənd-u l-arḍ bəzzaf*:

- (12) *ḥnaya bba=h d Moḥamməd... ..εənd=u*
 PRO.IDP.1PL N.M=OBL.3M.SG POSS PN PREP=OBL.3M.SG
l-arḍ bəzzaf
 DEF=N.F. ADV
 ‘As for us, Mohammed, his father, he has a lot of land’ [lit. his father of M.]

6.6.5 *The future particle*

I only found future particles in S’s data in Msek; she uses *ḡadi*, the usual particle for central Morocco, and several occurrences of the more Prehilali particle, *maš*:

- (13) *bḥal lli ḡadi t-ṭiyyəb əl=xobz*
 CONJ REL FUT 2SG-cook\IPFV DEF=N.M.
 ‘As if you were going to cook bread.’
- (14) *bḥal lli ḡadi n-εəddl-u əl=ḥəlwa*
 CONJ REL FUT 1-make\IPFV-PL DEF=N.F.
 ‘As if we were going to make cakes.’
- (15) *bḥal ila kun-na maš n-εəddl-u əl=couscous*
 CONJ CONJ be\PFV.1PL FUT 1-make\IPFV-PL DEF=N.M
 ‘As if we were going to make couscous.’
- (16) *əš=šəḥfa f-aš maš n-εəžn-u*
 DEF=N.F. PREP-REL FUT 1-knead\IPFV-PL
 ‘...the dish in which we are going to knead (the dough)’

6.7 Changes in agreement in gender and number due to language contact

We will examine the influence of both languages on the agreement in gender and in number. Some changes in gender or number have been lexicalised, others are due to an accidental confusion.

- In **Taounil**, F., a second language speaker often hesitates in **gender** agreement; in text 3, she gets confused in the agreement of *zambu* (masc.) and *dšiša* (fem.). This is flagrant in the first part of text 3: *ha huwa əd-dšiša, ha əd-dšiša! zambu ha hiya, ha huwa! hadi əd-dšiša u hadi zambu!*
- *ha huwa əd=dšiša ha əd=dšiša zambu ha hiya*
PRST PRO.IDP.3M.SG DEF=N.F PRST DEF=N.F N.M PRST PRO.IDP.3F.SG
ha huwa hadi əd=dšiša u hadi zambu
PRST PRO.IDP.3M.SG PROX.F.SG DEF=N.F CONJ PROX.F.SG N.M
‘This (masc.) is ‘dchicha’, here is ‘dchicha!’ Zambu’, here it (fem) is! Here it is (masc.); this is ‘dchicha’, this (fem.) is ‘zambu!’

It also happens in text 3, where *zambu* (masc.) has feminine agreement: *hađi ka-yakl-u-ha hayda* etc. “this one (fem.), they eat it (fem.) like this”; whereas *dšiša* (fem.) has masculine agreement: *u hadak ka-n-ṭayyb-uw-āh* etc. “that one (masc.), we cook it (masc.)...”

Similarly in text 2, *tasukkant*, which is a feminine word in Berber, agrees systematically in the masculine in text 2: *ka-n-səlq-uw-āh f-əl-mā*, etc. “we boil it (masc.) in water...” We saw in 4.1 the ambiguity about the origin of the term; the agreement may be due to the word in M.A., *səkkum*, which is masculine... But in text 1, it has feminine agreement. This shows F.’s confusion on the question of agreements.

- For **number**, some words that are usually singular in M.A. have become plural in this dialect under the influence of Berber; for example *əl-ma* “water” (*aman*, pl. in Berber) or *l-qmāh* “wheat”, which has plural agreement, due to Berber influence:¹⁸ *b-əl-ma sxun-in* (adj. plural); see Colin 1921: p. 58; Salem Chaker confirms that “*irden*, le blé, terme pan-berbère, est bien un pluriel et commande un accord pluriel (vrai aussi pour l’orge, *timzin*, *tumzin*).”

Taounil: it has plural agreement with an adjective: *b-əl-ma sxun-in* “with hot water”.

Msek: S. starts with a singular agreement: *kanəəmlu əl-ma yṭib* “we put water to boil (sg.)”; but she immediately switches to the plural (text 6) on bitter almond oil: *kanəəmlu əl-ma yṭibu, ḥta kaygliw* “we put water to boil (pl.), until it (pl.) boils. In a long passage about the making of flour, *l-qmāh* has plural agreement:

18. Personal communication from Salem Chaker (Sept. 2014).

kanžibu dīk-əl-qmāḥ, kanəqqiw-hum u nəddiw-hum l-ər-rḥa, nṭəḥnu-hum fə-r-rḥa...

‘We bring that wheat, we clean it (pl.), and we take it (pl.) to the mill, we grind it (pl.) in the mill...’

6.8 Negation: Conservatism and innovation, locator **bu**

6.8.1

A first remark is that in **the discontinuous morpheme** *ma...š*, the second element (< *šay “thing”) is often found in a fuller form, *ma...ši*, *ma...šay*, without rendering the negation more insistent, as would be the case in central Morocco (see Caubet 1993 tome II: p. 68).

In **Msek**:

- (18) *u ila ma ɛməl-ti-ha šay*
 CONJ CONJ NEG1 do\PFV-2F.SG=OBJ.3F.SG NEG2
 ‘And, if you don’t do this...’
- baš ma y-ṭeḥ l-ək ši*
 CONJ NEG1 3M.SG-fall\IPFV PREP-OBL.2SG NEG2
 ‘that’s all, so that it does not fall...’
- (19) *ma ka-n-dir-a ši bəzzaf*
 NEG1 PRVB=1.do\IPFV=OBL.3F.SG NEG2 ADV
 ‘I don’t make it much anymore (almond oil)’

But there are also occurrences of *ma...š*:

- (20) *ma thəbbt-u š*
 NEG1 2-take_down\IPFV=OBL.3M.SG NEG2
 ‘... on the fire all the same, don’t take them away’
- (21) *ḥna ma ka-n-həḍr-u š š-šəllḥa*
 PRO.IDP.1PL NEG1 PRVB=1-speak\IPFV-PL NEG2 DEF=N.F.
 ‘We don’t speak Berber here!’

In **Taounil**, we don’t have enough examples to draw any conclusions and we would need more data, but the only two forms we found have a reduced form:

- (22) *ma ka=y-fəhm-u š məzyan bḥal ḥnaya*
 NEG1 PRVB=3-understand\IPFV-PL NEG2 ADV CONJ PRO.IDP.1PL
 They (Beni Itteft) don’t understand (Berber) well, like we do (Arabic)

- (23) *huma Bni Bufraḥ ma y-qəḍr-u š y-ḥəḍr-u*
 PRO.IDP.3PL Beni Boufrah NEG1 3-can\IPFV-PL NEG2 3-speak\IPFV-PL
huma š=šəllḥa
 PRO.IDP.3PL DEF=N.F.
 ‘For their part, Beni Boufrah, they cannot speak, them, Berber...’

6.8.2

Another remark concerns the presence of a second element *bu* for strong negation in Taounil: *ma...bu* ‘not...at all’. It is also present in Maghdad (1993)¹⁹ *mä käyn bu ḍḍra* ‘there was no corn at all’, with a spirantization of the *b* in *bu* and an article, *ḍ=ḍra*. In February 2016, I asked Amal Maghdad to give me an occurrence with a non-assimilating consonant to make sure the article was present: *mä käyn bu l-ḥlib* ‘there is no milk at all’.

I had described this negation at length for Fez (Caubet 1983: pp. 172–176); at the time I had not found it described in any previous publication and it was really *novel*. It struck me when I found it in Maghdad’s (1993) data in 2012, and later, when I heard F. using it in 2014 – note that *bu* bears a stress:

- (24) *əl=ḥaṣa r=rumiya ka=y-εəml-u l=a əḍ=dwə*
 DEF=N.F. DEF=ADJ.F. PRVB=3-do\IPFV-PL PREP=OBL.3F.SG DEF=N.M
əl=bəldiya ma ka=y-εəml-u l-a ‘bu²⁰ d=dwə
 DEF=N.F. NEG1 PRVB=3-do\IPFV-PL PREP-PRO.3F.SG NEG2 DEF=N.M
 ‘The imported plant (thing), they give it treatment (medicine), the local one doesn’t need any treatment.’

In my 1978–1980 Fez data (see Caubet 1983: pp. 172–176), I first heard it from the mother, who was around 60 at the end of the 70’s, but the whole family (of Riffian origin) used it, although many Moroccans seemed surprised when they heard it, or found it too ‘rural’.

In 1983, I worked in the enunciative framework, with Antoine Culioli, and I still find the analysis pertinent: *bu* (< *father) acts as a locator (see below its usages), and an example like *ma kain ‘bu ḥlib* (with no article in Caubet 1983: p. 172, and with a stress) ‘there is no milk at all’, could be glossed as: ‘there is a relation between *bu* and *ḥlib*; when negating the locator (*bu*), one negates the localisation of the object, and thus, its existence, leading to a strong negation bearing no exception’.

The difference with Taounil and Msek is that there is *an article* before the negated term, whereas in my Fez data, there is clearly *no article*. I checked again, thirty years later in February 2016 with one of my informants to make sure, with

19. See Maghdad (1993: p. 23), Text II, and Caubet (2016, 2017).

20. For *bu* in negation, see Caubet (1983: p. 172–174) and Caubet (1993 tome II: p. 294–295).

nouns starting with lunar consonants. *Bu* is often used in an answer to a previous utterance or a question and comes as a strong denial:

- (25) – *waš ma ɛand=ək əl=mæɛdnus?*
 Q NEG1 PREP=OBL.2SG DEF=N.M
 – *ma ɛand=i 'bu mæɛdnus*
 NEG1 PREP=OBL.1SG NEG2 N.M
 ‘– Don’t you have any parsley?’
 ‘– No I don’t have any parsley/the slightest sprig of parsley.’
- (26) – *žibi ġtar mən təmm*
 bring\IMP.F N.M PREP ADV
 – *ma kayn 'bu ġtar*
 NEG1 EXS NEG2 N.M.
 ‘– Bring a plate from there!’
 ‘– There is no (not a single) plate here!’

My informant spontaneously gave me two synonyms of strong negation and, as noted in Caubet (1983 and 1993), they differ in nominal determination: *bu* is followed by the bare noun, whereas *š* needs a construction with a determined substantive:²¹

- (27) *ma ɛand=i 'bu luz*
 NEG1 PREP=OBL.1SG NEG2 N.M
- (28) *ma ɛand=i š l=luz*
 NEG1 PREP=OBL.1SG NEG2 DEF=N.M
 ‘I don’t have any almonds at all.’

Utterance (27) can be glossed as: “there is a relation of location between *bu* and *luz*, when negating the locator (*bu*), you negate the localisation of the object, and thus, its existence; as far as *luz* is concerned, it does not exist”. (See Caubet 1983: p. 176.)

Utterance (28) could be glossed as: “whichever way you look at it, there is no *šay/š* “thing”/“trace” (not the slightest trace) of a validation of the relation ‘me-having almonds’; the predicative relation is negated”. (See Caubet 1983: p. 89.)

The negation of the location or of the complete predicative relation produces an excluding negation.

What is common to the Fez and Al Hoceima examples is that *ma...bu* marks this strong excluding negation, whereas recent work by Mena Lafkioui about the “Moroccan Arabic variety of Oujda (MAO)” shows a different functioning. In her

21. See Caubet (1983: pp. 89–90) for the use of article *əl*.

article (Lafkioui 2013), she claims that *bu* is only used in Oujda Arabic, and she gives it a Berber origin:

With respect to this negation system, the Moroccan Arabic variety of Oujda distinguishes a new discontinuous marker, *ma* ____ *bu*, whose second element is borrowed from Tarifit, which is the only Berber language where this morpheme occurs. (Lafkioui 2013: p. 51)

About the Berber etymology, she tries to give *bu* a negative meaning; this is curious, since in Darija negation is borne by the first marker *ma*, whereas the 2nd element (*ši, bu, hedd...*) bears the degree, the manner or the intensity: “not... *a single*, not... *at all*, not... *in the slightest*, not... *anyone*”; it is a quantifier and it never has a negative meaning:

Concerning the origin of this marker, no conclusive explanation is available. However, two options may be envisaged: the first one relates to the Tuareg Berber verb *iba* (and variants) signifying meanings such as ‘there is no’, ‘cessation of’ and ‘lack of’, of which the derived form *āba* is used in optative constructions. Texts from the Ayer region (Niger) prove the existence of this verb as a negation adverb, i.e. *ebəw* ‘no, really!’ The second option has to do with the Arabic nominal modifier and determinant *bu* (e.g. *bu rās* ‘him with the head’ > ‘big headed one’) that occurs in both Arabic and Berber data. (Lafkioui 2013: p. 79 n. 25)

Lafkioui adds: “Until now, the negation with *ma* ____ *bu* has only been attested, at least in a systematic way, in the region of Oujda (particularly in the city)” (Lafkioui 2013: p. 84), whereas the phenomenon had been described as early as 1983 and 1993 for Fez (Caubet 1983 and 1993).

The other question to be raised is: why go and look for a Tuareg or Nigerian Berber origin for marker *bu*, when the Arabic etymology seems obvious and self explicit?

6.8.3

In order to support this argument, I will examine *the usages of particle bu* – apart from negation – in M.A., which seem fairly straightforward, and well described, before going back to its developments in negation:

Bu as *locator of properties*, is used to attribute properties to a person or an object, to create nicknames based on defects (or more rarely, qualities), to create toponyms or names; it is built as a construct state (see Colin below), with *no determiner* on the second term: *bu kərš* [father-belly] ‘the big eater’ or ‘the guy with a big belly’.

Colin, in his dictionary²² defines its roles as follows:

Comme premier terme d'un état construit, *bu* sert à former de nombreux sobriquets, le plus souvent préjoratifs; le mot perd alors sa valeur primitive de père pour prendre le sens de: celui qui est caractérisé par..., l'homme à..., *bu kərš*: individu à gros ventre, le père gros ventre. Suivi d'un pluriel sans article dans les toponymes, *bō-qrōn*: à Rabat, *bū-žlūd*: à Fès.

Henry Mercier, in his dictionary of M.A., translates this usage of *bu* as "titulaire de.... l'homme à..." [lit. holder of..., the man with...], and he gives an impressive list of over a hundred expressions built on this construction (see Mercier 1951: p. 18). It includes names of illnesses or plants, euphemisms naming sexual body parts, proper names, nicknames etc. I will give examples taken from his list, trying to classify them:

- illnesses: *bu dħas* "whitlow"; *bu fmim* / *bu friqīš* / *bu qmiqim* "foot and mouth disease"; *bu glib* "cholera"; *bu ħellan* "hydrocephalus"; *bu ħemrun* "measles"; *bu idida* "one-handed man"; *bu kebbar* "adenitis"; *bu šeffir* "jaundice"; *bu sellum* "sciatica"; *bu šwika* "chickenpox, scarlet fever".
- plants: *bu denjal* "aubergine"; *bu ewida* "pear".
- animals: *bu ferṭiṭu* "butterfly"; *bu fesses* "gnat"; *bu mlis* "lizard"; *bu mqiša* "earwig".
- attributes (defects or qualities): *bu ħdebbā* / *bu ħdibba* "hunchback"; *bu laħya* "bearded"; *bu niḥ* "smart, clever"; *bu rejlin* "with big feet"; *bu šentuf* "with very thick hair"; *bu šlagem* "man with a moustache"; *bu udina* "credulous"; *bu udnin* "with big ears"; *bu ujhayn* "hypocrite, two-faced".
- names (used as first names too): *bu jemea* "the Friday man, i.e. born on a Friday"; *bu šta* "the rain man".

Boujloud, "the guy wearing animal skins" on the day after the Eid al-Adha, is also the name of a gate in the medina of Fez, Bab Boujloud. In Casablanca and further South, it is called *Bu Bṭayen* (pl. of *bṭana* "untanned sheep skin with the wool"). Traditionally, in rural societies, on the day following the Eid a man would dress in the recently slaughtered sheep and rams' skins, paint his face black, and roam the place, whipping the air with a branch of leaves (for fertility and good luck): a very scary experience for many ... Since 2010, there seems to be a revival of this tradition even in urban environments (see Caubet 2011 for Casablanca, and the numerous pictures posted by young people on Facebook at the time of the Eid in recent years ...).

22. See Iraqui-Sinaceur (1993: vol. 1, p. 133), entry *bu/bo*.

This etymology of *bu* allows us to account for its usages *in negation* in several dialects. Since *bu* is used both in Berber and in M.A. (Lafkioui 2013), the contact phenomenon is undeniable, but how it developed is still the question. Lafkioui claims a borrowing from Berber into Arabic (see above²³), but I would rather plead for *the simpler hypothesis of the locator bu* (* < father, see the gloss above), used both in the creation of nicknames and as a second element of the negation.

One has to account for two different constructions: one in Al Hoceima and Oujda, with an article, and another one in Fez, with *no article*. Lafkioui gives for Oujda Arabic a pattern “[*ma* + verbal predicative syntagm + *bu* + noun]”, but, judging from her examples, it should rather be [*ma* + verbal predicative syntagm + *bu* + **article** + noun] (Lafkioui 2013: p. 80)?

As for the scope of the negation, in Fez, Taounil and Msek, it is an excluding negation (not a drop of, not an ounce of, etc.), whereas in Oujda it is described as “basic negation” (...) “associated with a determined subsequent object, regularly marked by the definite article in MAO. The negator *ma* ____ *bu* is used for basic negation in descriptive contexts (...). Therefore, its second element does not function as a tool that demarcates the negation scope and may occupy different positions in the syntagm.” (...) “(78) *ma šra-w bu l-ḥawli had l-eām* ‘They did not buy a sheep this year’”, and “(79) *ma eand-na bu ḍ-ḍaw f d-dār l-qdīma*. ‘We do not have electricity at the old house’” (Lafkioui 2013: pp. 80–81).

These usages are quite different from those described for Fez, both for the syntactic construction with the article on the object, and for the scope (basic negation/strong excluding negation).

As for the El Hoceima data, they would need further enquiry; but as regards the etymology, since *bu* is found in very close contact with Berber (Taounil and Msek) as well as in much laxer contact (Fez and probably Oujda), and because of its other uses as a locator, I would definitely plead for the M.A. origin, and for the invariant behind the locator *bu*.

23. Lafkioui (2013: p. 53) draws a map showing how this *ma_bu* negation travelled from the Rif (including Al Hoceima) to Oujda, which does not take Fez into account.

6.9 Lexicon: Intrication and loans

6.9.1

The analysis of borrowings is more straightforward when it comes to words like *ibawen* “broad beans”, which is also found for North Taza (see Colin 1921: p. 59), or *aqezzu*²⁴ “puppy”, both borrowed directly from Berber.

6.9.2

It is more intricate when a word combines an Arabic stem and a Berber pattern, in new words like *taẓafnit* or *tasukkant*, combining Arabic *ẓafna* “large tub, basin or dish”, *sekkum* “wild asparagus”, and the Berber feminine pattern *ta___t*. This pattern is very common in central Morocco, but limited to “abstract nouns of profession and personal characteristic”; Harrell (1962: p. 88) writes: “The abstract noun names either the profession or the abstracted personal quality associated with the meaning of the stem”, which differs from the above construction; Harrell gives examples like “*tabennayt* ‘(profession, art of) masonry’ or *tawekkalt* ‘gluttony’”; I could add *tagnawit* “the art of Gnawa (rites and music)”. On the contrary, the above examples are nouns designating concrete objects and not notions or concepts.

6.9.3

Finally I’d like to introduce a novel hybrid word which will bring us back to *bu* (see above); we discovered it in Msek. It involves *bu* and combines an Arabic pattern and a Berber lexeme; it was uttered by Y. (13) when Y. Thomas asked him about the varieties of almonds present in their orchard. He answered saying it depended on how hard their shells were and how one could break them,²⁵ defining three types:

waḥəd-n-nue, kaythərrəs ġir mən əl-fu’, wella mən l-iddayən; hada, ma-huwa kaythərrəs b-əl-idd, ma ... dəġya kaythərrəs mən l-hjər; kayn waḥəd axor, ʃeib baš thərrs-u; u kayn waḥəd axor, saḥəl baš thərrs-u. hadak lli kaythərrəs dəġya, kayqulu l-u “Bu-ġommāsi”.

One kind, you can break just with your mouth, or with your hands ... the other, it does not break with the hands, it ... it breaks easily with a stone; there is another one, which is difficult to break; and there is yet another one, which is easy to break. That one, which is easily broken, they call it “*bu ġommāsi*”.

24. Salem Chaker (personal communication September 2014) confirmed that “*aqezzu* est une formation expressive que l’on peut rencontrer sous des formes voisines diverses: *aqezzuḥ, aqez-zun, aqjun*”.

25. In reference to the work of Malou Delplanque (2011) in Bni Boufrah.

The noun *bu ġommāsi* is formed with locator *bu*, plus a word formed with a combination of a Berber noun, *tuymas* “teeth”, transformed through an Arabic intensive pattern (Measure II with the gemination of C_2 : *ġommās*),²⁶ and a *nisba-i* > *bu ġommās-i* “the one which has the property of being breakable with the teeth”. It was striking to note that in Bni Boufrah,²⁷ this kind of almond is named just *snan* “teeth”, implying the same breaking process; a metonymy combined with a sort of euphemism or a semantic shortcut?

7. Conclusion

The dialects we have briefly introduced here show how interesting it can be to work in cooperation with ethnobotanists; as for the enquiry methods, which is important for linguists involved in field research, we share the same approach of immersion. We linguists imposed the use of good recorders, because we were interested in the linguistic data and not just in the contents. We had to adapt to the use of translation, which is not easy when you need to record uninterrupted good sound quality. The ethnobotanists had to adapt to our spontaneous reactions to what was being said. This transdisciplinary approach has brought us novel data. The work on the borders between languages and their intrication is really worth pursuing for the younger generations that shared our fieldwork during the years 2013–2014 in the North West of Morocco.

As for the linguistic part, it is interesting to note once again that those marginal dialects that were predicted to disappear in the middle of the 20th century are still present. We tried to do a general overview of the Jbala region in 2012 with fifteen students and our volume (see Vicente et al. 2017) shows that the Jbala region has not evolved much in the space of a century (referring to Colin’s study in 1921 in North Taza or Lévy-Provençal in 1922 in Ouargha, for example). Even with the development of electricity (and thus, television, which the Bni Itteft family has had since 2007), mobile phone and new technologies, it has not changed much in the last twenty years since Maghdad did her fieldwork under the supervision of Simon Lévy (1992).

26. Harrell (1962: p. 66) calls it “the nouns-adjective of profession and personal characteristic”.

27. Malou Delplanque, personal communication.

List of abbreviations

ADJ	djective	IMP	imperative	PREP	preposi-
ADV	adverb	IPFV	imperfective	tion	
CONJ	conjunction	LOC	locative	PRO	pronoun
DEF	definite article	M	masculine	PROX	proximal
DEM	demonstrative	N	noun	PRST	presentative
DIST	distal	NUM	numeral	PRVB	preverb
EXS	existential	OBJ	object	PTCP	participle
F	feminine	OBL	oblique	Q	question marker
FUT	future	PL	plural	REL	relative
HESIT	hesitation	PN	personal noun	SG	singular
IDP	independent	POSS	possessive		

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