

[ Working Papers 22

[ Morocco: Language and Legislation

**Adil Moustou**

**2006**



## WORKING PAPERS

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### **Publisher**

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### **ISSN 1133-3930**

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Translation to English: Beatriu Krayenbühl i Gusi

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## [ Morocco: Language and Legislation

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### *1.1. In the way of a presentation*

The aim established for this survey has been to see to what extent the sociolinguistic situation of Morocco could be a positive factor in an eventual process of negotiation between Morocco and the European Union for an eventual future incorporation of Morocco into the Union. The question is why this country has been chosen: firstly, a country (Morocco) that does not belong geographically to the European Continent, and, secondly, why the beginning of some negotiations for its eventual incorporation into the Union has not been included in the agenda of the European Union as a current issue.

Firstly, the subject regarding the enlargement of the European Union is a reality that has always been present; it is even a subject that is ever present in the European Parliament. Secondly, and regarding Morocco, the question of its eventual adhesion was already proposed almost a decade ago. An eventual adhesion that, to a certain extent, was supported by the application of the principles established in the Euro-Mediterranean Process of Barcelona in 1995. Thirdly, the geostrategic position of Morocco and its nearness to the European Continent are facts that in principle favoured Morocco. Fourthly, we have to point out that, probably, the relations that have been maintained and are maintained between Morocco and the Union would play an important role if negotiations to this aim were started. Finally, we considered that perhaps the fact of beginning an analysis of the sociolinguistic situation in Morocco with all its complexity would help understand the social and linguistic issues in which the Moroccan community –Amazigh-speaking or Arabic-speaking– living in the different countries that make up the Union was involved.

### *1.2. The Morocco-European Union relationships*

No doubt, the relationships between the European Union and Morocco enjoy a privileged position within the foreign affairs of the European Union. Such relationships exist within the framework of the Agreement of Association of 1996 that came to replace the previous agreements of 1963 and 1976, broadening in this way the relations in the political, social and cooperative fields. We should also point out that the agreements signed by Morocco –as a Mediterranean country– and Europe within the framework of the Euro-

Mediterranean Process of Barcelona are regarded as one of the initiatives that have improved and consolidated the relationships between Morocco and the Union.

The European Union-Morocco Agreement of Association came into force on March <sup>1</sup>, 2000, and despite the fact that on the bilateral level it declined the cooperation principles established in the Euro-Mediterranean Process, it aimed at reinforcing economic and financial cooperation, and, along these same lines, to broaden the social and cultural dialogue.

Furthermore, the balance of the last meetings of the Council of Association has been considered very positive by both parts<sup>1</sup> and Morocco has repeated its wish for further broadening the agreements established in the Euro-Mediterranean Process. All this would probably enable a move towards the enlargement of cooperation spheres and to orient the relations towards what is called a Statut Avancé (Advanced Status) within the framework of the new proximity policy established by the EU.

But the question that is addressed is: i) how these relations will develop according to the political, social and economic circumstances in which Morocco is immersed, ii) taking into consideration the political, economic and social changes that both the Union and Morocco are undergoing, how far could negotiations go –if they started– between the European Union and Morocco for a hypothetical incorporation of Morocco into the Union. What are now the expectations of Morocco of convincing most of the countries that make up the Union? All the same, what factors may play a pre-eminent role in an eventual process of negotiations?

What is true is that in this survey we approach the question of the “Yes or No” to the incorporation of Morocco into the Union in terms that are not only economic but mainly social and political. And one of the key concepts in this socio-political dimension is the notion of democracy and respect for human rights. In addition, when we speak about human rights, we should always refer to the kind of social policies; in this case, the ones we are interested in are the linguistic and cultural policies that have been applied and are applied by the Moroccan State. This is due, firstly, to the social and political dimension languages

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<sup>1</sup> I am not referring here to the eventual incorporation of Morocco into the Union but to the economic relations that both sides keep between themselves.

have, and, secondly, to the importance of the issue of linguistic and cultural rights of a minority or majority community or social group in any language policy. Therefore, our aim is to see to what extent the exercise of language policy in Morocco could be considered democratic or not on the basis of a western concept of democracy, for, in this case, the reference is the EU. All the same, our aim is to disclose the situation of linguistic and cultural rights of minorities in Morocco making use of the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights as a juridical framework. Finally, we consider that the analysis that we shall present on the sociolinguistic situation in Morocco, as well as the analysis that we will carry out on the history of the language policy applied by the Moroccan State from independence until today, could become essential for acquiring greater knowledge of the country involved, an improvement in the relations in the fields of communication and scientific and technical cooperation, and even the social one, between Morocco and the European Union.

### ***1.3. Morocco: Some historical, social and political considerations***

We cannot begin the analysis on a sociolinguistic situation of a specific region or state without taking into consideration the social history of this region or country; as C. Castellanos (2005) observes, “The social situation regarding languages in contact depends on the social history of the geographical area analysed”. Specifically, we will focus on the kind of relationships that were established among the population due to the different dominations that existed in Morocco.

With regard to the sociolinguistic situation in Morocco, we could say that it is the result of how power and subordination relationships between different linguistic communities have been developing. Furthermore, according to Castellanos (2005), “Successive historical dominations have established exclusion systems by means of the attribution of social roles to different linguistic communities”. Thus, in Morocco, the two most important dominations, the Arab and the French ones, and, to a lesser extent, the Spanish one, have resulted as follows:

The establishment of a linguistic Arabic-speaking and a religious Arab-Muslim population. This population is the one that has been in power since the Arab invasion of Morocco in the seventh century until today controlling the access to power. All the same, it has had control over the access to material

and symbolic goods not only due to the symbolic power it enjoyed in relation to the Muslim religion but to social and political power as well.

The assimilation of the Amazigh-speaking population and its advanced Arabisation, creating and maintaining in this way a historical relationship of social and linguistic subordination of this community with regard to the Arabic-speaking community.

After the colonialist rule, another division has been established between:

“A population linked to the field of technique and large capitalist businesses (industrial, financial, etc.) that can use French.

A population that is not linked to the field of technique and large capitalist businesses that cannot use French. We are referring to the Arabic-speaking and/or Amazigh-speaking working-class population.” (Castellanos, 2005)

Furthermore, to these considerations we should add the power enjoyed by the king; a power that involves symbolic-religious, juridical, political and military spheres.

As we shall see later on, all these factors have directly influenced the kind of language policies that started to be applied in Morocco, as well as the kind of relationships that were established between different social groups and different linguistic communities.

## **2. SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE LANGUAGES OF MOROCCO**

### ***2.1. Moroccan Arabic (MA)***

The language known as Moroccan “dialect”, which in this survey we call Moroccan Arabic, is a variety of Classical Arabic for it comes directly from it. Moroccan Arabic is the last variety of the Arabic we would call classic and is located at the western end of the Arab linguistic continuum. In fact, it is the one showing more differences compared to what is called the classical Arabic of the Hijaz (Arab Peninsula). Maghrebian linguistics agree that this same Moroccan



Arabic has or is divided into several speeches<sup>2</sup> which, according to Moroccan dialectological tradition, were called urban speech, Bedouin speech and mountain speech. According to Boukous (1995: 29), there exist five speeches or subvarieties of Moroccan Arabic: i) the urban speech employed in imperial cities –Fez, Mequinez, Sale, Rabat– that shows some similarities with the Arabic that was spoken in Al-Andalous, ii) the mountain speech (Yebli) is spoken in the north-west area of Morocco, iii) the Bedouin speech (Arubi) is spoken by the inhabitants of the region located in the middle of the Atlantic Coast; iv) the eastern Bedouin speech is spoken in the eastern area of Morocco, and v) the Hasania speech that is used in the Sahara.

In this way, each speech or subvariety of Moroccan Arabic is identified with a city or a region; all the same, we have to point out that they are defined by their clearly marked linguistic characteristics of which their speakers are well aware.

### ***2.1.1-Uses and functions.***

Moroccan Arabic is considered the mother tongue of those Moroccan speakers who do not have any of the varieties of Amazigh as their mother tongue, since it is the first language that they learn within their families and in the everyday life of the neighbourhood. With regard to their habits of use, in addition to being present in the family and everyday environment, it is used in popular literature, in theatre plays and also in some parliamentary debates. At school, the use of this language takes place in spaces that are outside the classroom (in the schoolyard) and, obviously, at the staff meetings of teachers. We should not forget that most teachers employ this variety in classrooms, even though the orders of the Ministry of Education point to the use of the standard variety of Arabic.

With regard to the media, the use of the standard variety is not frequent, except for some radio and television programmes of a social kind addressed to the whole population. It is important to point out that in some fields related to public life, Moroccan Arabic is not used (in the Justice Administration, the educational sphere, commercial and administrative services in general, etc.).

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<sup>2</sup> Youssi, Abderrahim (1988: 116) speaks about multidialectalism to refer to the variation that Moroccan Arabic presents. He also insists on the need to take into consideration this variety in this survey, in addition to the linguistic factor, regional factors and ethnic or community ones.

Therefore, the main function of Moroccan Arabic is to establish and maintain communication between different speakers and in social relations, in addition to representing or expressing different aspects of Moroccan culture and society. It is also used as a lingua franca among the Amazigh speakers who speak different varieties.

### **2.1.2. *The teaching of MA.***

In the sphere of the teaching of languages and, more precisely, the teaching of Arabic, the Moroccan variety is used as the basic language, but it is not taught as a mother tongue variety. Its writing is not taught either; in fact, there are very few handbooks either on Maghrebian grammar or its orthography. Nevertheless, what really starts to happen is the publication of some handbooks to teach this variety addressed to non-native people that are presented as planning initiatives in the three main countries of the Maghreb: Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia<sup>3</sup>.

This proves the absence of any planning of this variety; in fact, public institutions and, mostly, the Institute of Studies and Research on Arabisation, the only institution that manages the linguistic and social use of Arabic, gives more importance to the classical variety<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, we have to point out that the learning of classical Arabic does not imply being able to speak the Moroccan variety, for, despite the fact that syntactic structures do not differ too much, specific oral characteristics such as rhythm, intonation and pronunciation are different.

### **2.1.3. *The ideological aspect of MA.***

As we may observe, Moroccan Arabic is the mother tongue variety of most Moroccan speakers. Despite this fact, its use may not seem to be either represented or planned by any official or legislative text, for it is considered a simple “dialect” that is only used in Morocco, which has been written by its own speakers only a few times and that is usually limited to its oral use because it derives from classical Arabic, a variety that is legislated and standardised.

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<sup>3</sup> We have to point out the existence in Spain of two Departments of Arabic Philology: that of the University of Cadiz and that of the University of Almeria. In both, a process of teaching Moroccan Arabic, recognised and valued by the other departments of Arabic Studies all over Spain, takes place.

<sup>4</sup> Gilbert, Grandguillome (1983): *Arabisation et politiques linguistiques au Maghreb*, Maiseuneuve et Larose, Paris.

The presence of a heterogeneity of criteria to name linguistic varieties makes it necessary to take into account a series of factors: the functional status of these varieties, the representations that speakers and individuals have of these varieties, and, finally, the different discourses that value these varieties. In general, in the Maghreb, and in Morocco in particular, the problem is more complex because the variety that is called “language” is not the national language. That is to say, it is not the variety that people usually speak; it is rather a supranational variety, reserved for formal uses and limited to some specific situations. Thus, the Arabic that is spoken in the Maghreb, present in everyday life, has the status of constitutionally absent language (Laroussi, 2002), whereas classical Arabic, absent in everyday life, is the official-institutional and national language. From this situation we may infer that the linguistic issue in the Maghreb is a social and political paradigm that is very much pervaded with a series of ideologies that we will analyse later on.

## ***2.2. The Amazigh language (Berber)***

### ***2.2.1. On the concept of “Berber”.***

The varieties that were spoken in the area that embraces northern Africa, Egypt and the Near East were, generally speaking, called Berber languages. In fact, the word “Berber” has Greek origins (*barbaros*, -on). Greeks called Barbarians the foreign peoples that spoke other languages different from the Greek that today we call classical; that is to say, those languages that were foreign to them. Later on, this same word (*barbar[ic]us*, -a, -un, from which also comes the word “Barbaresque”) was chosen by the Romans to designate the peoples of Northern Africa that did not speak Latin. Thus, this area started to be called later on *Barbary*. When the Arabs came (between 670 and 800) to Northern Africa, they kept the same word, but adapted it to their language; in fact, they started to use the word “*Al barbar*” or “*Al barbarí*” –its singular– to call the peoples, and “*Al barbaría*” to refer to their language. This name was transferred to the Romance languages: “*berbère*” in French, “*berber*” in Catalan, “*beréber*” in Spanish, “*berbero*” in Italian, etc. However, Moroccan Amazigh-speakers use their own word “*amazigh*”, that is a masculine substantive that means “free men”; but the most used word is its feminine, “*tamazight*”, used by Amazigh-speakers themselves to call their language. At present, the word “Berber” in the different variants is used by foreign people to refer to the inhabitants of the areas where the Amazigh language is spoken. The word “Berber” is a name that does not belong either to the people concerned or their language, but it is a foreign imposition somehow considered by

Amazigh-speakers themselves as an inappropriate use due to its confusions. We also have to point out that the concept of “Berber language” is an essentially political word: in fact, it does not correspond to a homogeneous linguistic reality existing in the consciousness of the speakers of this language.

### ***2.2.2. The territorial distribution of its speakers.***

Varieties of Amazigh spread all over the Mediterranean littoral, from Morocco (including the Canary Islands) to Egypt (the Oasis of Siwa), and from North to South, from the Mediterranean Coast to the Niger River. The most characteristic aspect is that they are separated by the great distances that exist between the different countries in which they are spoken, which makes linguistic exchange and planning between the different countries difficult. What generates this situation is the increase in the differences and the heterogeneity of Amazigh varieties.

In Morocco, the Amazigh language is divided into three varieties, according to the areas and communities: i) Tamazight, spoken in the mountains of the Middle Atlas and part of the Great Atlas, ii) Tarifit or Riffean, spoken in the Rif mountains, in the north of the country, and iii) Tachelhit, spoken in the areas of the Great Atlas, of the Anti-Atlas and in the mountains of Sus, in the South. The three varieties have the same morpho-syntactic structure and are only different in some phonological, phonetic and lexical aspects.

According to the official statistics from 2004, in Morocco there are 30 million inhabitants, of which 90% speak Moroccan Arabic, whereas the three varieties of Amazigh are spoken by 30%. With regard to the latter, it is considered that there are 2.5 million speakers of Tachelhit in the southern area of Morocco –known by the name of Sus–, 3 million speakers of Tamazight in the mountains of the Atlas and approximately 1.7 million speakers of Tarifit in the Rif<sup>5</sup>. Nevertheless, these figures do not correspond to those offered by some associations that protect these languages. Some of these associations, like for instance, the Congrès International de la Langue Amazigh (International Congress for the Amazigh Language), the Association Marocaine de Recherche et d'Échanges Culturels (Moroccan Association of Research and Cultural Exchanges) and the Association Kabyle International-France (International-France Kabyle

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<sup>5</sup> Until now, statistical surveys have not been carried out in Morocco on the number of speakers of each one of the three varieties of Amazigh; the data presented are only estimates.

Association) declare that over 50% of the population of Morocco speaks Amazigh. We should not forget those speakers who are not from Amazigh origins but who speak some of these varieties, which could raise this figure up to 80% of the speakers of the Amazigh language<sup>6</sup>. To these figures we should also add the number of Moroccan Amazigh speakers that live in Ceuta and Melilla, even if the majority of them have a Spanish passport. Nevertheless, in these two cities, Amazigh does not enjoy any official recognition; this is why it is considered a minoritised language. Outside Morocco, there is also a large Amazigh-speaking community: the Riffeans living in Germany, the Low Countries and Catalonia, whereas in France there is quite a large number of Kabyls, as well as speakers of Tachlhit and Tamazight.

### **2.2.3. Uses and functions.**

When we speak about the uses of a language, we always refer to the number of its speakers and the status it enjoys in society. Applying these criteria to the Amazigh language of Morocco, we could say that, due to historical and ideological reasons, the use of the Amazigh language has come to be reduced in a large part of the cities in which it has been displaced by Arabic in social and oral uses. Therefore, its use has been reduced to the family environment. However, if we limit ourselves to the territorial distributional factor, we may say that, in the areas where Amazigh is spoken, its use is more widespread since, in fact, we find it in everyday life and, in some cases, in public administrations, as long as their staff are Amazigh speakers. However, this use is exclusively oral and never written. With regard to the appearance of these variants in the media, we should recall that there is a public radio station broadcasting daily that devotes some time to each variant. All the same, since a few years ago, the first public television channel has broadcast a television news-bulletin in Amazigh and another private channel broadcasts once in a while some programmes in this language. In the written media, according to the greater importance that has recently acquired what is now known as “the Amazigh cause”, there is some leeway to found magazines that are exclusively devoted to dealing with linguistic, anthropological and historical subjects related to Amazigh language and culture, such as the journals *Imazhigen*, *Tifinagh : revue mensuelle de culture et de civilisations maghrébine* or *Tasafut*. All three enjoyed a certain reputation and

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<sup>6</sup> This datum appears in a dossier published in the journal *Tel quel* (Nr 3, November, 2001), which had a great impact in Morocco.

prestige, but they are not published anymore. At present, weekly magazines and monthly journals, such as *Le Monde Amazigh* or *Tawiza*, are published.

Therefore, considering its vitality, no doubt Amazigh still has an important weight within Moroccan society. In addition, we should point out a more important datum, which is the capacity of language to reflect the identity signs of an ethno-linguistic group that is different from another group –that of the Arabic speakers– in some aspects. This is why Amazigh, in addition to being a vehicle of communication, is able to convey the specificities and characteristics of a whole culture that is rooted in North-African and Moroccan society.

#### ***2.2.4. The teaching of Amazigh.***

In the field of the teaching of Amazigh, we may say that it has been poor in comparison with classical Arabic, French, English and Spanish, for it was not taught in schools, despite the fact that there were royal decrees that introduced educational programs –mainly Royal Decree Nr 1-01-299, of October 17, 2001 (29 of Rajab of 1422)–. What really existed, although very few, were educational programs in non-formal educational institutions, such as, for instance, the program of Amazigh language and culture of the French Institute in the town of Agadir and other courses that are given in some associations and NGOs that are working in the dissemination and safeguard of this language, both in Morocco and other countries.

During the 2003-2004 school year and for the first time, the program of Amazigh teaching was started, a program that since then has been applied by the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture in Morocco (IRCAM) and the Moroccan Ministry of Education. The project aimed at introducing the teaching-learning of the three varieties of Amazigh in 317 state schools of primary education, after having trained over one thousand professors and teachers specialised in the teaching of this subject. Until now, courses have been three hours per week, and they are compulsory both for Amazigh-speaking pupils and for the other pupils that do not have Amazigh as their mother tongue. With this project, the Moroccan Ministry of Education is trying to be able to generalise in 2013 the teaching of Amazigh all over the national territory; to do that, it needs to train over 20,000 teachers specialised in this subject.

The debate that has taken place during the last two years regarding the teaching of Amazigh in Morocco turned on two questions: the first one was if varieties of Amazigh (Tarifit, Tachelhit and Tamazight) or the standard and common language should be taught; the second one was on which alphabet written Amazigh should be based: Arabic, Latin or Tifinagh (Amazigh alphabet). Almost the whole majority of the Amazigh cultural movement, that is to say, the Amazigh associations, proposed and continue to propose the teaching of a common, standard and written Amazigh using the Latin alphabet, for in Algeria, Mali and Niger, as well as in other countries with a great tradition in the writing of Amazigh, the Latin alphabet has been chosen.

We should point out that the decisions regarding these two aforementioned questions were only made within the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture in Morocco (IRCAM). Therefore, other organisations-associations and NGOs, which normally should participate, were excluded, mostly Amazigh linguists and sociolinguists that are not members of the Scientific Committee of the IRCAM. In fact, this exclusion has been one of the reasons for the severe criticism that this institute has received. All the same, the debate within the IRCAM was very long because several proposals were presented, both for the teaching and writing of Amazigh. Finally, it was decided to teach the three varieties of Amazigh that are present in Morocco; also, Tifinagh spelling was chosen as the right one to be used when writing.

Now, there is some concern on the part of the Amazigh cultural movement in Morocco with regard to the teaching program of Amazigh that the IRCAM and the Moroccan Ministry of Education are applying. This concern is due to two reasons: firstly, due to the teaching of the three varieties, since, in this way, the promotion and use of common and standard Amazigh is not fostered; secondly, due to the choice of Tifinagh spelling to write the three varieties. According to some experts in the Amazigh cultural movement, the choice of Tifinagh goes against the previous tradition, both in Morocco and in other countries, especially in Algeria and France, which implies writing Amazigh in Latin alphabet. To these two reasons, we should add the lack of resources and qualified staff to carry out the teaching of Amazigh.

### ***2.2.5. The ideological-institutional aspect of Amazigh.***

As we have previously indicated, Amazigh is the dominated language: although a majority of people speak it, in fact, it is a minoritised language because it is not recognised by a part of the institutions. Furthermore, due to its essentially oral nature, politicians and some philologists usually present it as a whole series of speeches. These linguistic varieties have been called in very different ways: dialects, varieties, wild speeches, indigenous languages, etc.; therefore, never before has the state given it the full status of a language, a status which, at least in the field of linguistics, is recognised, mainly in linguistic atlases.

In official Moroccan texts such as the Mudawana (Civil Code) and, especially, the Constitution, there is no reference to this language; in fact, institutionally speaking, it does not have its own status. With independence, the language policy of Morocco was predefined in an irreversible way: since then, classical Arabic has been and still is the official language. The same can be said of official political speeches and of every institutional text, which systematically avoided any kind of mention of the term “Amazigh”. This situation also occurs in the other countries where Amazigh is spoken, except in Mali and Niger, where the varieties of Amazigh are regarded as national languages; in Algeria it is only regarded as national language in a part of the official discourse.

We should point out that both before independence and after it the three varieties of Amazigh in Morocco have not been subject to a process of codification and normalisation, despite the fact that the IRCAM started a standardisation project of Amazigh that has not been concluded yet. We should also add that its processes of teaching have been very limited and poor throughout history.

## ***2.3. Classical Arabic (CA) and Standard Modern Arabic (SMA)***

### ***2.3.1. Classical Arabic (CA).***

But, what do we mean when we say “Arabic language” or simply “Arabic”? If we asked any Arabic speaker, he would reply us that it is “al-lughā al-‘arabiya al-fus’ha”, which we could translate as “the pure Arabic language”, which in modern linguistics is usually called “classical, religious or literary Arabic”. This classical Arabic started to be spoken in Hiyaz in the north-east



of Saudi Arabia. Through this classical Arabic –al fusha–, the Koran was revealed to the Prophet Mohammed. Since it was associated with the divine nature of this event, it was considered excellent, inimitable or, according to the Koran itself, “the explicit word of God”. Later on, with the spreading of Islam, this variety came to be established in many countries.

### ***2.3.2. Uses and functions of CA.***

At present, classical Arabic is not used in everyday life in any Arabic-speaking country, for it is not the mother tongue of any Arab living in any Arab country. CA is used in many situations: in every religious event, in the prayers recited by all Muslims, regardless of what their mother tongue is, or in official speeches, both religious and political ones. In addition, it is the teaching language in the faculties of theology and in the institutes of Islamic studies such as the university Al Karaiyen and the school Hassania del Hadith. The role of this language, as it has been throughout history, is that of reflecting the Muslim identity of the Arab society and, at the same time, to maintain both religious and cultural unity, and the national one as well, among the different Arab societies; therefore, it is considered the language of the independence and revolution against colonisation. All these functions confer on classical Arabic a symbolic power because society also considers it the language of the ulemas (wise men), of the sacred sphere and of the elite in power. This is why it enjoys a privileged status, for it is the language of Muslim religion, of secular power and, moreover, it is the official language of public institutions.

With regard to its teaching, we should point out that, hitherto, the courses of classical Arabic have been given in Koranic schools, in institutes of Islamic studies and in faculties of theology, parallel to other Islamic sciences.

### ***2.3.3. Standard Modern Arabic (SMA).***

The Arabic of the Koran, of the sayings of the Prophet and of the productions of a theological kind underwent some changes until becoming what is known today as modern Arabic, much easier to understand than classical Arabic, even for natives themselves. An instance of this development is that one proposed by the Tunisian linguist Mohamed Maamouri who distinguishes three varieties of Arabic: 1) classical Arabic, 2) modern Arabic, and 3) Tunisian Arabic

(arab tunisien), which corresponds to the variety spoken in each Arabic-speaking country.

#### ***2.3.4. Uses and functions of Standard Modern Arabic.***

Standard modern Arabic is the vehicle of teaching at all levels of education, except in scientific higher education. It is also the language of literary productions, written press, oral press, and of any sort of leaflet and administrative and legal document; finally, it is the language that is used in official institutional ceremonies and in parliamentary sessions. On a supra-national level, standard modern Arabic is the language of communication par excellence, both written and oral, in the Arabic-speaking world; this is why it is a reference variety for the whole Arab community, because, through it, Arab culture in general, and a part of Moroccan culture in particular, is conveyed.

#### ***2.3.5. The teaching of Standard Modern Arabic.***

As we pointed out before, in all educational institutions, standard modern Arabic is the vehicular language, both in primary and secondary education, because all subjects are taught in Arabic. This teaching is offered both to the pupils that have the variety of Moroccan Arabic and one of the three varieties of Amazigh as their mother tongue; this is why, in learning, this situation would favour Arabic-speaking pupils for whom it would be easier to learn standard modern Arabic than for the Amazigh-speaking ones. With regard to the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language, there are several programs organised by the different Moroccan universities in which courses of standard modern Arabic are given. What characterises this teaching is the lack of coordination with the programs of other Arab countries; in fact, there is little material available, as well as few didactic methods that might improve and make the process of teaching-learning of Arabic easier.

### ***2.4. French***

#### ***2.4.1. The introduction of French in Morocco.***

It is a well-known fact that the introduction of this language dates back to the moment in which France colonised Morocco in 1907 and later on with the signing of the Protectorate on March 30, 1912, in the city of Fez. Nevertheless, some French linguists, some scholars researching the sociolinguistic

situation of the Maghreb and mostly one of its experts, Manzano (1997: 16), assert that the presence of French in Morocco existed before the Protectorate and that its presence is part of a deeper process. Then, by observing the situation in the past and today, could we speak of a status quo of French in Morocco or not? Prior to the independence of Morocco, French was the official language and the language of education of the Protectorate's institutions, a situation that lasted for about 50 years.

#### **2.4.2. Uses and functions.**

After the independence of Morocco, French was replaced by Arabic, which became the official language; nevertheless, French started to be considered officially the first foreign language of the country. In addition, its status and functions have been changing due to the policy of Arabisation that started in Morocco in 1963.

Today, French is the language of teaching in compulsory education, it is one of the foreign languages that is taught from the first levels of basic education, it is the language of education in scientific and technical faculties, in the faculty of Law and Economic Sciences and in higher schools and colleges as well. French is present in the spheres of everyday life and in the forms of the Public Administration and is the working language in banking and in every economic activity of a formal kind all over the country. Finally, French is the language employed in consular affairs in non-Arabic-speaking countries and the working language in Moroccan companies located abroad.

Furthermore, there is a large Moroccan literary production in French, considered rather important in the Francophone space, and once more it points out the important presence of this language in Morocco.

With regard to the media, we should point out that in Morocco there are two radio stations that make use of Arabic and French, Radio Méditerranée Internationale and Radio Magreb, as well as one TV channel, 2M, which broadcasts programmes mainly in French. There is also some Moroccan press extensively in French, in the same way that the main political parties have a press office both in French and Arabic. We would like to point out that some French channels can be seen and heard in Morocco; more specifically, French TV5 enjoys a large audience all over the country.

What impresses us most about this situation is that, despite its broad use and its special role as vehicular language, French does not have any official or institutional status; in other words, it is not present in the Moroccan Constitution, either as a national or official language. In Morocco, French is a language that appears not only as some remains of the French rule but also as a kind of opening device to a different world of modernity and technology that represents the western world. But it is also true that it represents the world of emancipation and moral freedom related to the civilisation of consumption. This language was introduced through these elements, and still continues to spread.

From what we have explained before, no doubt French enjoys in Morocco a fully privileged situation; this is due to the effects that the period of the French Protectorate left in Morocco, for the latter had to depend on France in many aspects, and in the linguistic field as well.

Taking into consideration the situation of French, could we say that, in addition to being a language of communication, it is also a language of culture? On the basis of the Moroccan case, we have to distinguish between the functional use of French and its use as an expression of the vision of its speakers' world. In this case, we are forced to distinguish between French as a language of teaching, French as a language to have access to sciences and technology, French as a foreign language and, finally, French as a means of expressing a specific culture and view of the world<sup>7</sup>.

Therefore, could we speak of a French-speaking identity in Morocco or in the Maghreb? In the case of Morocco, in a research survey carried out by the sociolinguist Boukous (2000: 23) on the attitudes and images Moroccan speakers have regarding French, the sociolinguist reached the conclusion that, on a sociolinguistic level, Moroccans do not see themselves as first-rank French speakers and that, for them, French is still today the first foreign language of the country. Be that as it may, for French to really become a linguistic identity, not only in the Maghreb but all over French-speaking Africa, the conception that people have of French should be adjusted and changed, in the same way that linguistic and cultural policies in France, which up to now have been conservative, should

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<sup>7</sup> See Akouaou, Ahmed (1984), "Pourquoi le français et quel français au Maroc?" In *Le français dans le monde*, Nr 189, Hachette/Larousse, Paris. Chadli, El Mustapha (1984), "Maroc : quel(s) F.L.E.?" In *Le Français dans le monde*, Nr 189, Hachette/Larousse, Paris.

also change<sup>8</sup>. The same is ratified by Boukous (2000: 21) when he says that “To answer the question of whether Morocco is a French-speaking country requires a historical study regarding the origins and the notion of French-speaking countries”.

### **2.4.3. The teaching of French.**

In the previous section we have dealt with the use of French in the educational sphere in Morocco, but we have not explained in enough detail how the teaching of this language takes place. In primary education, French is the first foreign language that is taught as a compulsory subject from the second year on, whereas in private schools it is taught from first year and even from nursery school or preschool education. Such teaching takes place in this way until the end of secondary school. With regard to higher education, in addition to what we have explained in section 4.2, we observe that French is still a complementary language in all the degrees of Humanities and Social Sciences. All the same, we point out that in every Moroccan university there is a department of French language and literature, which all in all amount to 13 departments all over the country.

Furthermore, in Morocco, great importance is given to the programmes of the teaching of French as a foreign language outside formal education, that is to say, in educational institutions and language schools. At present, in Morocco there exist nine French institutes (Institute Français) that depend on the French Embassy, and in all of them programmes of French teaching, known as DALF and DSLF, are carried out. These institutes have signed agreements with the Moroccan Ministry of Education with the aim to train Moroccan teachers and elaborate new materials that adjust to the new needs of Moroccan students. In addition, in Morocco, there is also a network of French educational institutions, some depending on the Agence pour l'Enseignement du Français à l'Étranger (AEFE, Agency for the Teaching of French Abroad) and others on La Mission Laïque (The Laic Mission). In total, there are 14 primary schools (écoles) and 13 secondary schools (lycées)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> On the subject of the linguistic policies of France in French-speaking countries, see Calvet (1996).

<sup>9</sup> See the virtual page of the French Embassy in Morocco: [www.ambafrance-ma.org](http://www.ambafrance-ma.org)

#### **2.4.4. *The ideological aspect of the French language.***

The fact that Morocco maintained the use of French in several spheres and followed the French educational system, mainly on the level of basic education, until 1963, the year in which the Arabisation policy started to be implemented, in higher education, in marketing, in the Administration and in some media can be included within the general framework of the dependence theory, which later on led to a stratification system in which colonised countries had to be subordinated to the countries that had colonised them. One of the ways of being under the rule and the dependency is linguistics, and these ways had to remain even after the independence of Morocco in 1956<sup>10</sup>.

The Arabisation of the country that started in 1963 somehow provoked a remarkable regression in the use of French, but the fact of regarding it as just another foreign language, more than anything else, in primary and secondary education, was not attained.

Today, there exists a large group that advocates the use of French in all spheres of everyday and working life and, obviously, in education. This group is made up of the Moroccan bourgeoisie and intellectuals, that is to say, an elite that has power and a social status that prefers to enrol its children in the French schools established in many Moroccan cities since the period of the French Protectorate, believing in the validity of the power of French language and culture, and, in so doing, fostering it.

### **2.5. *Spanish***

#### **2.5.1. *The introduction of Spanish in Morocco.***

It is a well-known fact that the contact existing between Morocco and Spain throughout many centuries indirectly introduced the contact with Spanish<sup>11</sup>. We do not know exactly when Spanish was introduced in Morocco as a vehicle to be used by Moroccan themselves; it could be with the expelled moriscos (subject Moslem in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Spain), with the Spanish tradesmen that for many centuries had often travelled to Morocco, or,

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<sup>10</sup> On the subject of dependence, see chapter 8, "Social Change", Cooper, Robert L. (2001), in *Language Planning and Social Change*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>11</sup> We do not know exactly when the contact with Spanish started in Morocco, or with the expelled moriscos, with the populations of Ceuta and Melilla where the presence of Spain dates back to the sixteenth century; or since the Spanish colonisation of the Sahara and of Northern Morocco.

finally, with the Spanish colonisation in the North and, mostly, with the entry into Tétouan in 1860 and the Sahara in 1906.

Spanish is remarkably present in the areas that are close to the two cities under Spanish sovereignty: Melilla and Ceuta. This area runs from the harbour of Tangier to that of Nador, where there is a rather high proportion of people who speak Spanish. The second area where an important number of Spanish speakers are concentrated is in the Sahara, an area that goes from the harbour of Tarfaya until that of Laguïra, the last southern city located in the Moroccan Western Sahara.

### ***2.5.2. Uses and functions.***

In the North, there is a continuous spreading of the media, for both the TV channels and radio stations with the greatest audience are the Spanish ones. By means of these media, language is learned, not forgetting the everyday contact with the 2,000 Spanish who live permanently in Tangier and a few hundred others in Tétouan. To this we should add the thousands of Spaniards who for reasons related to trade or work must travel to these areas and who are established in Ceuta or Melilla. Other factors that increase its presence in this area are: firstly, its proximity to Spanish territory and, secondly, the very important amount of Spanish tourists that choose northern Morocco as the place to spend their holidays or simply as a place to visit, which encourages northern Moroccans to learn and practise it with them.

In relation with the Sahara, which, as we all know, was not incorporated into Morocco until 1975, it was normal for Spanish to be present there as the foreign language of this area since obviously it was the language of the colonisers. Other factors that we may also include are, on the one hand, the spreading of the media due to the proximity to the Canary Islands, and, on the other hand, the common activities between both areas. Generally speaking, hitherto there has been a certain Spanish linguistic influence on this situation.

And regarding the Moroccan media in Spanish, in the field of the press we should mention a Moroccan newspaper called *La Mañana*. On television, a half-hour news-bulletin is broadcast on the first channel, whereas on the radio there is another programme that broadcasts news an hour a day in Spanish.

Finally, we should point out that the use of Spanish is allowed in every public competition and exam organised by the state to access any position in the Public Administration.

It is true that for Spanish to attain this situation, both in the North and in the Sahara, it was necessary that, from the very beginning of the Spanish settlement, Spanish authorities in Morocco applied a language policy. Firstly, they tried to make Castilian become the official language in the colonised areas, but this process required previous planning. One of the first interventions was the founding of the first Spanish school for Moroccans known as Escuela Hispano-árabe (Spanish-Arabic School) in Nador (a city that is about 8 kilometres from Melilla) in 1912, in addition to making Castilian the language of use in all the administrations by establishing the Alta comisaría (High Commissariat) and the Dirección de Asuntos Indígenas (Bureau for Native Affairs) in Tétouan. Secondly, in Madrid two institutes were opened that were in charge of planning cultural and linguistic interventions: the Instituto de Estudios Africanos (Institute of African Studies) and the Instituto de Estudios Políticos (Institute of Political Studies). To this we should add all kinds of services of a cultural type like building libraries and cultural centres; in fact, the Spanish General Library was inaugurated in Tétouan, considered the twin sister of the National Library in Madrid. There were also libraries in Tangier and later on municipal libraries in the cities of Larache, Asilah, Alcázarquivir, Alhucemas and Chauen<sup>12</sup>.

### ***2.5.3. The teaching of Spanish in Morocco today.***

At present, in Morocco, the teaching of Spanish is quite well organised; in this regard we should highlight the teaching carried out by the Ministry of Education and the one fostered by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture. With regard to the teaching organised by the Moroccan Ministry of Education, we should point out that Spanish is taught in the first year of secondary education in the public education, whereas in private education, some schools start teaching it from primary education. At a university level, there are five departments of Spanish language and literature, in addition to one school of translation and another of journalism; both have a Spanish Department. All the same, there are two departments

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<sup>12</sup> VV. AA (1992), España- Magreb siglo XXI: El porvenir de una vecindad. Mapfre, Madrid.



specialised in the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language in the Escuela Normal Superior (Higher Normal School) in Fez and Tétouan; both prepare university bachelors degrees in Spanish Philology so that later on they are able to teach this language.

Due to the extension that this language has attained today, Spanish settlements have realised the need to organise the teaching better; this is why there are eleven Spanish educational institutions including the Spanish Cultural Mission (Misión Cultural Española) in the city of Aiyun in which primary and secondary education are taught, in addition to five Cervantes Institutes (Institutos Cervantes) in the cities of Tangier, Tétouan, Casablanca, Fez, Rabat, and a Cultural Classroom (Aula Cultural) in the city of Agadir. With regard to the institutions depending on the Spanish Embassy in Rabat, there is the Council of Education and Science (Consejería de Educación y Ciencia) that cooperates with the Moroccan Ministry of Education. In turn, this Council has a series of linguistic consultant's offices that disseminate the use of Spanish in Moroccan educational institutions, in universities and in other institutions as well.

## **2.6. English**

### **2.6.1. Introduction and maintenance of English in Morocco.**

The first contact that the Maghrebian population, and especially the Moroccan one, had with English dates back to the middle of the twentieth century, more specifically during Second World War, when the United States established some air bases in Morocco. The presence of Americans made it compulsory for a part of the Moroccan population that was in contact with them to learn some English in order to be able to communicate in this language. On the other hand, during the French Protectorate, the teaching of English followed the laws and the French educational system; thus, in most cases, English was the second foreign language chosen by pupils, for the first one was Arabic. After the independence of Morocco, the status of languages changed; therefore, English no longer had the same status it had during the French Protectorate, although it was still one of the foreign languages that were taught from secondary education on. Therefore, after the independence of Morocco, a process of teaching-learning and of introduction of English started that has been spreading for two reasons: globalisation and the new language policy of the country.

We have to point out that the fact that Moroccans do not associate English with colonisation fostered its dissemination and teaching, for the Moroccan population had a different attitude from the one they showed in relation to French and Spanish; this is mostly due to the fact that English is the vehicle of scientific research, of modern technology and of all kinds of international relations, political, economic and diplomatic, with non French-speaking countries.

### ***2.6.2. Where is English present?***

In part, the use of English in Morocco spread quickly due to the needs of communication with other countries, more specifically, England, the United States and the countries of the Commonwealth. In general, the sociolinguistic functions of English in Morocco are limited to the fields of education and marketing. Regarding the educational field, we could say that its use as a vehicular language only takes place at the level of the American Missions, more specifically, the American and Israeli schools. Nevertheless, recently, a process of founding higher schools of an Anglo-Saxon type, specialised in marketing, computer science and telecommunications, has started; in these schools, courses are given in English. All the same, we have to point out the founding of the first Moroccan private English-speaking university, “Al Ajawain”, the courses of which are only given in English.

With regard to the field of marketing, we highlight that some companies, both national and multinational, located in Morocco use English as their working language, as well as some from the tourist sector in which the use of English has recently undergone an important increase.

In relation to the media, right now there exist three daily publications in English: Morocco Today, Hello Morocco and The Messenger of Morocco. All the same, the Moroccan radio broadcasts daily in the afternoon a programme in English for about one hour and a half. We should also point out the role that foreign TV channels and radio stations play, especially BBC World Service and Voice of America for radio and BBC and World Net for television, in the spreading of English in Morocco.

### ***2.6.3. The teaching of English.***

Firstly, in the field of public education, we have to point out a very important progress related to English: it is the introduction of this language since 2004 in public primary education. We should recall that until that year, English was only taught from secondary education on as the second foreign language. This decision is part of the new language policy of Morocco that recognises the multilingual situation of the country, even the need to introduce, at least in education, other languages that did not exist previously in the linguistic market such as English.

English is also taught in almost every faculty, school and higher institute as a complementary foreign language. In addition, there is a teaching of English that is much more specialised that is provided in the 13 departments of English Language and Literature that exist all over the country.

Regarding the training of English teachers, there are two official institutions that have been training English teachers for primary and secondary education. Recently, a one-year teaching program has been created for some teachers of first cycle of English so that they may be incorporated into secondary education. In a parallel way, a substantial number of students go abroad in order to specialise in the teaching of English at a university level.

Secondly, in the private sphere, the teaching of English has started in the last few years from the first years in most primary schools, although there are some that do not introduce it until secondary education. Moreover, in the market there is quite a large number of private language schools and institutions where mostly English is taught to all levels. But the teaching of English with the largest demand and prestige in Morocco is offered by the American Language Centres and the British Council. At present, all over Morocco there are 10 American Language Centres with a total amount of 16,000 students and 2 schools for English teaching that depend on the British Council in which over 2,000 students are enrolled.

Finally, given the increase in the number of students and English teachers, several associations have been created that coordinate and foster the teaching of English, of which we highlight: 1) the Moroccan Association of English Teachers that publishes different handbooks and pedagogic material on this language, and 2) the Moroccan-American Commission, the function of which is

to develop exchanges between Moroccan and American university students, as well as to organise stays in American universities for Moroccan teachers of English.

### **3. ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY MODEL OF THE MOROCCAN NATION-STATE**

#### ***3.1. Morocco: a multiethnic nation-state***

It is true that the analysis of concepts such as “nation” and “state” and “nationalism” has always been done from a political perspective; in other words, the analysis has been based on the literature produced in relation to these concepts in Political Science. Since in this paper we are dealing with a mainly sociolinguistic subject, we will try to carry out a sociolinguistic approach that also combines the political and the ideological perspectives. Therefore, we attempt to analyse briefly the definitions of the “nation”, “state” and “nationality” concepts and analyse later on the language policy model of the Moroccan nation-state.

Firstly, we consider that the term “nation” defines a territorial unity that is politically independent and that is controlled –or the control of which is increasing– for a large part or increasingly more by a specific nationality. We should also point out the difference established between nation and state that implies that the state, unlike the nation, does not always have only one predominant nationality. In this way, we reach the conclusion that there exist two different notions: multinational states and multiethnic nations. Therefore, a country could be a multinational state if the socio-cultural groups that make it up were considered nationalities that, by chance, were under the sovereignty of a foreign government. All the same, nationalities are components of a socio-cultural nature that were developed above the concepts of self-determination, concerns and union ties when faced with any localist feeling. In addition to this concept, that is to say, to nationality, there is another that is more important in any language policy: the notion of “ethnic group”. This concept is similar to that of nationality, but with a socio-cultural organisation that is less complex than nationality. In fact, a state can be a multiethnic nation, a situation that, in principle, does not appear so complex when analysing it, provided that the members of the socio-cultural groups of this state feel that they are at the same time citizens of the nation in which they live and

members of their own specific group; therefore, this country would come close to the end of the scale called multiethnic nation.

Such theoretical approaches will be our point of reference throughout this paper because, perhaps, these may be the most appropriate notions to present, and at the same time, understand the language policy model applied by the Kingdom of Morocco, for one of the socio-political structures that could be adopted by a country is that of “multiethnic nation”. As we will see later on, it would come close to the model of Morocco for, in socio-political terms, we have two majority ethnic groups: on the one hand, Amazigh speakers, and on the other hand, Arabic speakers. In sociolinguistic terms, two linguistic groups: one with Arabic speech and the other with Amazigh speech. In addition, both groups see themselves as citizens of the nation in which they live.

### ***3.2. The language policy model introduced in Morocco after independence***

To a certain extent, Morocco's language policy was the result of French and Spanish colonisation. After some years of colonisation, the country started a process of union and integration of its citizens under one unique model with the aim of attaining homogenisation in several aspects: mainly religious, cultural and linguistic ones. In fact, any process that involves choosing a language does not originate in any linguistic event proper but as the result of a political action.

Regarding the model followed by Morocco, we could assert that it is “unimodal”, characterised by the presence of a national linguistic tradition; at the same time, though, the state, facing this situation, was forced:

- i) to preserve what it considered genuine in its tradition, which appears in the maintenance of the local language –that of the majority group– as the national and official language,
- ii) to comply with the requirements of the modern state, which appears in the maintenance of French in the institutional sphere but without any juridical status.

If we analyse the sociolinguistic situation of Morocco, we find that the cultural and linguistic context of the country is marked, on the one hand, by the importance of Arabic with two varieties, oral and written, and, on the

other hand, by the presence of Amazigh –with its three varieties–, French and Spanish, a situation that proves the multilingualism of the country. Furthermore, Islam is present, which constitutes a basic value linked to the monarchy. The latter represents a symbol of unity in this context of plurality and linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity. From these factors, Morocco established, firstly, its Constitution and its Madawana (Civil Code), in which it gave priority to Islamic Law based on the Koran and the Sunna –the facts and sayings of the Prophet– and, secondly, the choice for classical Arabic as the official language, although Moroccan Arabic is the mother tongue variety of the majority. In fact, the language policy not only of Morocco but of most countries of the Maghreb was based first on Arabism, an ethno-sociological concept, and second on Islam, a religious concept.

The decisions that have been made on the basis of the linguistic model of nation-state clearly reveal the wish of the monarchical state to keep the union ties between Arabic and Islamic religion, as well as the Islamic nature of the monarchic institution. To legitimate this position, since it is almost completely a Muslim country, over many years and since independence Morocco established Koranic schools, introduced some Islamic sciences in education as a compulsory subject, and, mostly, it started the Arabisation of education and the Administration. All these actions began to foster the use of classical Arabic in the institutional spheres. Nevertheless, the maintenance of French and the determination of political institutions of keeping it prove that this language is more than a mere inheritance of colonisation, that it is a cultural heritage that has become predominant among the population.

This language policy leads us to the following reflections: that the modern concept of nation and the process of its building were introduced by colonialism; in other words, in the structure and functioning of its politico-social apparatuses, the Moroccan state is a model inherited from the French colonisation. As a consequence of it, the fact of following a model inherited from a colonising country somehow implies questioning ourselves on the degree of independence of the country when the relations that were created due to the circumstances of colonisation have not yet been broken, a fact that could perfectly justify the maintenance of French in the model established at the moment of independence, even by the very same monarchy that was completely bilingual and that considered itself a model to be followed by the rest of the population.

Nevertheless, in this model of state we observe the presence of a nationalist Arab-Moroccan ideology in the following: 1) since classical Arabic was chosen as the only one official language, full monolingualism was advocated, 2) a firm stand is made on a unique history in which priority is given to a majority group, whereas minority groups are ignored, and 3) emphasis is made on the exaltation of the historical past of the predominant language, which in this case is classical Arabic (Moustaoui, 2005).

During the process of creation of any nation-state, there exists an important influence of power on the management of linguistic practices; in the case of Morocco, this influence expresses itself in two fields: the first one is related to state power, represented by the monarch and the government and the control they exert on social dynamics; the second one is political and involves decision-making and interventions that are carried out with the aim of legitimising any action or initiative of a political kind.

After this reflection, we could reach the following conclusion: the symbolic place of power is reserved to the monarchic institution, which, on the basis of the fundamental principles of Islamic Law, is the sole institution that until now has guaranteed the unity of the country and expresses Morocco's cultural identity. In this context, monarchy conferred on Arabic the symbol of a sacred language that maintains the values of Islam. Meantime, the role of French is reserved to the functions of modern life proper, functions that Arabic cannot easily fulfil.

Moreover, we should indicate that the Arabic-Islamic genuine nature, the purity of traditions and Arabic are features that characterise the Maghrebian nationalist ideology and, therefore, that have an influence on any type of linguistic planning developed by Arab nationalists. This sacred power and the symbolic function attributed to Arabic have been throughout the linguistic history, not only of Morocco but also of other Arab countries, a way of legitimising and justifying the language policy implemented.

We should point out that in this model of Morocco's language policy prevails the idea that the nation must be homogeneous and that the official language is related to the historical past of the predominant group, in this case the Arabic-speaking one, which has had more power and greater participation in the building of the nation.

### **3.3. Consequences of this model and some of its contradictions**

One of the consequences of this model is the hierarchy established in the status of each one of these languages and the relations between them. The situation that we may find in Morocco on the basis of today's relations between languages and the social function that is available to each one of them is the following: we have two groups of languages according to their field of use: 1) institutional languages and 2) vehicular languages. In the first group we include the languages used mostly, that is to say, classical Arabic and French, whereas within vehicular languages (mother tongue and of common use) we may find two subgroups: that of majority languages of everyday use, that would be Amazigh and Moroccan Arabic, and that of the minority ones, such as French, classical Arabic and, sometimes, Castilian.

With regard to French and classical Arabic, we have seen that they are the two languages allowed in the institutional field due, among other reasons, to the fact that both enjoy a standardisation that has to be respected, for there exists only one standard French, the one divulged and advocated by the Académie Française, and the same happens with classical Arabic, the standardisation and evolution of which is supervised by the Office of the Coordination of Arabisation. Nevertheless, we should point out that, although between both languages there is a conflict of prestige and power, Arabic has adopted many terms from French to fulfil its scientific and communication needs, a phenomenon that is quite normal for we are in a situation of languages in contact. In this sense, we may assert that these two languages seem to be socio-politically protected (Moustaoui, 2003b).

Furthermore, we have to highlight that, generally speaking, in nationalism language is an additional component among others such as the religious, the historical and the cultural ones. Furthermore, nationalism, in this case the linguistic one, consciously fulfils the task of producing standard, modern, genuine and unified varieties that are used and are assumed consciously, since, previously, only regional and social varieties could exist. Nevertheless, we should distinguish nationalism from another concept, "nationism", a grouping of values, beliefs and behaviours that belong specifically to the acquisition of a politically independent territoriality.



According to nationalism, language is a problem that appears in two important fields, education and the Administration; this is why it is necessary to choose between one or several languages. In education, the language chosen would be the one that may better fulfil its functions and convey all the contents and national knowledge to all the pupils, whereas in the Administration, the language chosen should be one that may fulfil its role perfectly but at the least cost.

Regarding Morocco's case, we should point out that until 1958 education was carried out in French; however, later on, from 1965 on, Morocco started to implement an Arabisation policy, an Arabisation that was called horizontal because it was introduced in subject gradually. Thus, primary education was started to be Arabised in three years; later on, secondary education started to be Arabised within a period of seven years. According to this policy, in 1980 Morocco was able to Arabise the first four years of primary education, whereas in secondary education, between 25% and 50% of the subject were only taught in classical Arabic. But, in 1988, Morocco came to Arabise all the levels of primary education, secondary education and a part of university education, although the latter continued to be bilingual in some faculties, for instance those of humanities; meanwhile, in science faculties and in other higher schools courses are still taught in French today.

Regarding the Administration, today it is still bilingual, for all forms and official documents are elaborated in French and classical Arabic.

Once the problem of the "nationalist" choice is solved, there appears another, in this case the "nationalist" one. An instance of it would be when a recently independent made country chooses the language of the colonising country as the most immediate solution to its linguistic problem. According to the predominant nationalism, to choose another possible option such as that of teaching in the language of the ethnic minority groups may be a threat to the unity of the nation if they were to attain too much importance. We have to point out that the option of choosing the language of the coloniser after independence could be qualified as something "terrible", even contradictory from the nationalist point of view. This is why we observe that the aims, both of "nationalism" and "nationalism", are complementary.

This disparity of aims is most obvious in education, in which another aspect is taken into consideration. For instance, in Morocco, there is a large number of speakers who have one of the three varieties of Amazigh as their mother tongue; however, teaching has never been done in Amazigh because the educational and language policy has been of the predominant monolingualism type (previously, French, and later on, classical Arabic).

In the model of state chosen by Morocco, we observe the lack of the Amazigh language and culture, which makes this language policy turn into a delicate subject open to debate and discussion. The model it followed not only depended on how political power, represented by the king and its government, wanted the linguistic situation of their country to be, it was also conditioned by the type of relations that Morocco wanted to establish or maintain with certain countries with economic power, in this case, France, with which it maintained and still maintains some elements of linguistic subordination. In fact, to choose classical Arabic as the official language after independence and to express it in legislative texts –the Constitution– proves that any linguistic planning is a political stand that goes beyond the linguistic field, for it is also related to the question of power in the sense that language is employed as a system of domination. Therefore, this linguistic political stand taken by Morocco has been considered a key element in its process of independence and unification.

#### **4. LINGUISTIC CONFLICT IN MOROCCO**

##### ***4.1. The linguistic conflict, an additional component of language policy***

Firstly, we have to place the linguistic conflict in a broad definition of what language policy is. This approach was proposed previously by Calvet (1999) in his book, *La guerra de las lenguas y las políticas lingüísticas* (The War of Languages and Language Policies), and by several Canadian sociolinguists. In this paper, we base ourselves on the views of Labrie (1996, 1997) who tried to gather together the different proposals with the aim of analysing this subject more thoroughly.

Labrie (1996) established a very close relationship between linguistic conflict and language policy and indicated that multilingualism

may evolve in an agreed way according to linguistic regulation. However, were this consensus broken, linguistic conflict would appear, so that its neutralisation requires a commitment of a political type, which could solve the conflict quite satisfactorily or could create another conflict of a socio-political nature. The latter case appears when political commitment is the result of a series of power relationships in which language policy favours, due to ideological reasons, the languages of the predominant group in detriment of the dominated groups that speak other languages.

Thus, linguistic conflict appears when two or more languages that are clearly differentiated confront each other in the social and political field. But, in fact, the groups of language speakers are the ones who start having an antagonistic relationship and not the languages. This is why the conflict originates in the very same structure of society; to define it means: i) to analyse the languages and the social agents involved and ii) to examine the forms of expression of these agents and the spaces in which they express themselves (Moustaoui, 2004). This is the scheme that we will follow to analyse the linguistic conflict in Morocco.

#### ***4.2 Languages and groups of speakers: basic components of the conflict***

One factor that fosters the conflict between languages in Morocco is the functional distribution and the distribution regarding the use of each one of the linguistic varieties existing in the community, according to its status, and the prestige, the socioeconomic and political power of its speakers. At the same time, these languages reflect a situation of vitality and contact that provokes an extremely complex and conflictive situation. Next, we will specify the three fields in which conflict is more acute.

The first case of conflict is the one existing between French and classical Arabic, which in fact is a conflict between the group that advocates Arabisation and the group that advocates Francophony and the maintenance of French. All this is due to the fact that both are languages that are mainly institutional and, in a minority, vehicular ones, but classical Arabic is the only official language. Nevertheless, the spoken use of classical Arabic is scarce in some formal environments in which, however, French is spoken, both in oral and written form, for instance (in all leaflets and written documents), in the private

sector and in higher schools and science faculties in which it is used in the courses and in writing. In all these areas, French is the language that is most frequently used and, therefore, it becomes the high and predominant variety not only with regard to classical Arabic but also to the other varieties. All the same, since French is the way to sciences and modernity and classical Arabic is associated with the past and the moral values of religion, a balanced situation has not yet been attained. What is more, the strengthening of French teaching and its presence in the economic sector has generated its massive use in detriment of classical Arabic, although the latter is the official language, a fact that has increased the degree of conflict. Furthermore, we have to point out that the group that advocates the maintenance of French has a weight and a logistic power from which it benefits in the economic-financial and socio-political spheres.

To a certain extent, the previous conflict outshines another more important conflict, the one existing between Amazigh and Arabic in its varieties; in other words, between part of the Arabic-speaking population and the Amazigh-speaking population. With regard to why there is a conflictive relationship between these varieties, we can say that it is mainly due to the fact that there is a relationship of diglossia and linguistic subordination. This situation was maintained for many years because it was supported by the state by means of a policy of Arabisation and promotion of Arabic, thus excluding Amazigh. In addition, we have to point out that Amazigh speakers learn Moroccan and classic Arabic in their contacts outside the family, at school or in other situations. What is more, Moroccan Arabic is usually employed among Amazigh speakers or in affairs not related to the family. This situation made it compulsory for part of the Amazigh-speaking population to assimilate itself; therefore, they had difficulties to rise up in the socio-educational level and to have access to political power and different economic resources. In this way, the Amazigh-speaking community found itself under the supremacy and the social control exerted by a part of the dominant group (the Arabic-speaking one), creating a linguistic subordination and a hierarchy between these ethno-linguistic groups. Therefore, the conflict appeared between the Arabic-speaking sector that advocated the maintenance of these situations and the Amazigh-speaking sector that tended to oppose the language policy of the state creating an Amazigh cultural movement of opposition. Castellanos (1997: 219) ratifies this idea when he asserts that "Confrontation thus appears between elitist and Arabo-Islamic powers and an Amazigh movement that is based on democratic and popular forces. The orientation that tends to break with Islam is expressed in the role that women play not only in the maintenance of the Amazigh

language and culture but also in the will of thorough democratisation and modernisation". In the beginning, this conflict was considered a social issue; with time, it became a political one, and due to the political change in Morocco at the end of the twentieth century it started to be regarded both as a sociolinguistic and political subject. In fact, at present, the debate does not take place on a social level and between some specific groups any longer; now, it is the responsibility of sociolinguists, politicians and it even involves the whole of civil society.

The third conflict that has been present in the linguistic market in the last few years is the one existing between foreign languages: French, Spanish and English; we shall explain why. Historically speaking, the predominant discourse from independence until 1999 (King's discourse) referred to western foreign languages. However, by foreign and western languages it was inferred that it was referring to French and France, for the first foreign language most used in Morocco was French. On some other occasion, bilingualism –not institutional but individual– was even directly mentioned (national language / foreign language), which meant knowing French and classical Arabic. This fact questioned the status of French as a foreign language. In today's official and predominant discourse, the concept of foreign languages has been broadened to include Spanish and English.

Firstly, with regard to Spanish, we have to point out that the number of its speakers is reduced compared to that of French, and it is only present in some areas such as the North and the Sahara (we must take into account the historical factor of the Spanish colonisation of these areas). However, there are some elements that prove that, in fact, there is an increase in the knowledge and use of this language. Since Spanish is one of the languages with a greater extension on an international level, there are speakers that privilege its use in some fields. In addition, being able to speak and write this language may favour the access to different services and prioritise those who know it, mainly in the professional field. This is why for over seven years the use of Spanish has been allowed in any public competition or exam organised by the state to access any position in the Public Administration.

This is the reason for this preference or wish to learn and maintain Spanish in the former Spanish colonies and in the bordering areas to Ceuta and Melilla; this is a situation that is gradually extending all over Moroccan territory. In addition, according to data provided by the Council of Science and Education (Consejería de Educación y Ciencia) of the Spanish Embassy in

Morocco, this is the country in which the Spanish Government invests more for the dissemination of Castilian than what it invests all over the world to this purpose.

Secondly, the situation of English in the last few years has undergone a change that we must link, mainly, to globalisation and to a political event that has happened in the Moroccan sphere, the coming of the new king to the throne. These changes have led English to be introduced more in the private sector; both the economic and the educational ones; thus, the number of speakers of this language has increased, a fact that has increased also its future prospects. All this has been taken into consideration in the new language policy of Morocco, which last year announced the compulsory introduction, from 2005 on, of English in primary education.

All these elements contribute to the existence of a conflict of socioeconomic interests between Francophony, Hispanophony and Anglophony in the Moroccan linguistic market, mostly if we take into account the geostrategic situation of this country. All the same, this situation makes it compulsory for Morocco to reconsider its language policy with regard to these languages and to question their status in relation to the national and autochthonous languages. What is more, it is necessary to see whether there really exist effective language policies of the three countries related to these languages in Morocco, and if this is so, what are they and how they impinge on it in practice.

#### ***4.3. How its agents express the linguistic conflict?***

The linguistic conflict may take different forms and have recourse to different means; everything depends on its degree of virulence. Thus, it may express itself in social-political pressure, claims, legal replies, political fighting, terrorist actions or ethnical cleansing (Labrie, 1997). All the same, we have to point out that both the forms that the conflict takes and the means used by its agents to express it depend, to a certain extent, on the type of political regime established in the country.

In Morocco, the forms taken by the linguistic conflict have been reactions against both the model of language policy and the agents with political power. These reactions express themselves through epilinguistic or claiming discourses with different interests, sometimes even opposed ones, which has implied a discursive confrontation between the different groups involved in the

conflict. Then, we will analyse how these discourses are faced, but we will only highlight the confrontation related to the first two conflicts analysed in the previous section.

#### ***4.3.1. The traditional discourse of Arabisation versus the discourse of Francophony.***

The discursive confrontation that we analyse here is the result of the conflict between the Arabists defending Arabisation, whose discourse we call “traditional of Arabisation”, and the defenders of the maintenance of French.

The first group carries the Arab nationalist ideology that in the past fought any type of colonisation; it has been the predominant group since the independence of Morocco and it is made up of politicians, intellectuals and ideologues of language. Their discourse was a reproduction of part of the discourse of Hassan II and, thus, it advocated Arab monolingualism and monoculturalism and made use of Islamic and patriotic values as voices of authority that justified and legitimised Arabisation. Its aim consists of showing that Morocco is a united nation-state, which implies one sole national language, a monolingual educational system, some common values and one unique cultural and linguistic heritage. All the same, the language policy established by this ruling group was improvised, based for the most part on interests related to the founding and strengthening of the nation-state and not on social and linguistic criteria. Another conclusion that we have reached in a survey carried out on the analysis of this discourse (see Moustouai, 2003a) is the contradiction it shows because, since the king's discourse is more representative of the official institutional predominant discourse, it advocates a monolingual society with a clear predominance of Arabic and, at the same time, it demands implicitly the need to maintain French as the national language but without any status. Furthermore, this discourse insisted on a unique history in which the ruling group –the Arabic-speaking one– was given priority, and minority and minoritised groups were excluded, in this case Amazigh speakers; all the same, the exaltation of the historical past of Arabic as the language of prestige was emphasised. Therefore, this discourse did not recognise Morocco's linguistic diversity (see Moustouai, 2003a).

With regard to the discourse we call “of Francophony”, it is a discourse produced by an elite made up of some intellectuals and politicians who

advocate the maintenance of the use of French, at least in the most important fields, such as education and the Administration, a fact that has generated a confrontation of ideologies and socio-political interests between this group and the Arabists' one. We have to point out that this discourse is taking advantage of the contradictions existing in the language policy itself to explain its ideas.

To justify the use of French, this discourse refers to the universal nature of Muslim religion that forces Moroccans to learn other languages and use them. Thus, the foreign language, in this case French, is used in favour of that which is Arab and Muslim; in this way, its presence is legitimised as just another language of the country without having any political status. At the same time, French is considered as a language favouring Arabs, that is to say, the policy and process of Arabisation; therefore, the presence and use of French favours the good development of Arabic. In addition, this discourse is based on other arguments for the maintenance of French: firstly, granting to it the function of a language that could promote the access of Moroccans to modernity and technology, making thus its presence essential; secondly, by considering this language an element of the cultural knowledge of the people that introduces the latter in the world of emancipation and moral freedom linked to the civilisation of consumption.

We observe how the notions of tradition (Arabisation) and modernity (Francophony), represented by two discourses with opposite interests, start a confrontation that goes beyond linguistics, revealing the complexity of the linguistic conflict and its multiple dimensions.

#### ***4.3.2. The Amazigh alternative discourse versus the traditional discourse of Arabisation.***

The appearance of the Amazigh alternative discourse in the Maghreb in general and in Morocco in particular is linked to the most important historical event in the history of the Amazigh cultural movement in the whole Amazgha: we are referring to what is called "Tafsut Imazighen", the Amazigh Spring of April 1980. After the demonstrations both in the city and the University of Tizi Ouzou (Algeria), the Amazigh issue suddenly emerged on the social and political scene, not only in the Maghreb but also on the international scene. From this moment on, the consciousness of Amazigh identity and its claims started to be



echoed in Maghrebian society, which led to the origins of an Amazigh alternative discourse.

Regarding Morocco, Mohamed Chafik, a great militant of the Amazigh cause, pronounced in 1980 one of the first speeches on the Amazigh identity of Morocco and on the diversified identity of the country. Such a speech opened the way for a whole claiming process to take place in Morocco by means of the production and spreading of speeches by the Amazigh associations in Morocco that are in favour of the recognition of this language and its culture<sup>13</sup>. Thus, this claiming process reached its highest peak with the wording and presentation of the Charter of Agadir on August 5, 1991. In the elaboration of this document, all the Amazigh associations of Morocco participated; this is why the appearance of the Charter of Agadir is considered a fundamental stage in the history of the Moroccan Amazigh associative movement. Four years later, in 1995, the Amazigh World Congress was founded as a kind of transnational network that represents all the Amazigh associations of the world. One of the aims of the Amazigh World Congress is the elaboration of a transnational discourse on Amazigh identity; all the same, to advocate the rights of Amazigh speakers as an autochthonous people and to apply democracy and human rights to the exercise of any type of policy, social, linguistic or cultural. But, in spite of the constitutional reform in Morocco of 1996, the status of Amazigh did not change, despite the fact that King Hassan II, in a speech pronounced in August 1994, had pointed out the need to teach what he called the dialects of Amazigh. Nevertheless, the Moroccan Amazigh Cultural Movement (ACM), increasingly organised and institutionalised, never ceased its activism and endeavours advocating Amazigh language and culture. The result of all this was the elaboration of the Berber Manifesto in March 1, 2000, a document worded by Mohamed Chafik and signed by more than 229 individuals: university students, intellectuals, militants of the Moroccan Amazigh movement and high civil servants.

We may date the beginning of the boom of the alternative discourse on Amazigh identity to that moment. A date that also coincides with the death of Hassan II and the coming to the throne of Mohammed VI and, therefore, what we believe was the beginning of a new phase in the language policy of Morocco.

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<sup>13</sup> We should highlight the role played by the Moroccan Association of Research and Cultural Exchange (MARCE) as the pioneering association in the promotion and defence of the Amazigh language and culture; it was founded and started its activities in 1967.

Next, we briefly present the theses on which the Amazigh alternative discourse in Morocco is based, illustrating our comment with examples from different documents (discursive varieties) of great importance for the Moroccan ACM.

The first thesis that pleads for the Amazigh alternative discourse is historical legitimacy, an idea based on the autochthonous nature of the Amazigh people, for they were the first inhabitants of Northern Africa: “The historicity of the Amazigh language and culture and their rooting in Moroccan land have been proven for over 5 thousand years according to archaeological documents available. [...] The Amazigh language is the language of the existence of which in the Maghreb we have the oldest evidence. (...) The most important community whose first language is Amazigh is located in Morocco.” (Charter of Agadir, 1 and 2)

The second thesis is related to legal and political legitimacy, according to which laws must recognise the official status of the Amazigh language and include this language in all the bills that structure the functioning of the Moroccan State. Thus, all the agents of the Amazigh movement consider that establishing a legal framework that safeguards the Amazigh language is one of the first measures to be implemented. This is why in many documents we find claims such as: 1) “Time has come for our original national language, Berber, to be recognised as an official language by the supreme law of the country. [...] All the same, we, the signatories of this manifesto, persistently demand that Berber is recognised official national language by the provisions of the Constitution” (Berber Manifesto, 2 Claim: 12), 2) For all these reasons, we claim: the constitutionalisation of Morocco’s Amazigh identity, as well as the fact that the Kingdom of Morocco is part of and belongs to Northern Africa. To enrich the constitutional text with a solemn reference to Human Rights by constitutionalising cultural and linguistic rights, and by recognising the peoples’ rights together with the rights of individuals” (claims of the Charter of Amazigh regarding the revision of the constitutional text: 6), 3) “The recognition of the Amazigh language as an official language included in the Moroccan Constitution” (Rapport alternatif du Congrès Mondial Amazigh : Les Amazighs du Maroc, un peuple minorisé, Alternative Report of the Amazigh World Congress: The Amazigh of Morocco, a minoritised people, 17).

The third legitimacy is the socio-linguistic one and is related to the right of any language to undergo a process of standardisation, social promotion and teaching. These sociolinguistic claims are expressed in the Charter of Agadir as follows: "Promotion of the Amazigh language with an aim to carry out the following tasks: i) elaboration of a unified graphic system that allows us to appropriately transcribe Amazigh; ii) standardisation of the grammar of Amazigh; iii) elaboration of teaching materials adequate for the teaching of Amazigh" (Charter of Agadir, 4). We may find the same claims in the Berber Manifesto: "All the same, we ask the Government to prepare and implement laws making the teaching of Berber compulsory in primary and secondary schools, in universities and in assimilated institutions. In addition, we ask it to create educational institutions devoted to standardise Tamazight and provide it with the pedagogic tools it needs." (Le Manifeste Berbère , 4th Claim: 15)

By means of this approach to the Amazigh alternative discourse in Morocco, we could assert that it is a critical answer to the policy of Arabisation and the discourse supporting it, and not because it takes classical Arabic as the basic language but rather because it is a political action that was carried out by a power that only favoured and promoted this language, at the same time that it marginalised the vehicular languages that were most used, which are Moroccan Arabic and the three varieties of Amazigh. In fact, it is a reaction against the hierarchy imposed all through the history of Morocco, which certainly had an influence on the type of language policy implemented by the new independent nation-state. Furthermore, this discourse not only proposes the process of making Amazigh official, but it is also in favour of the linguistic diversity and recognises the maintenance of the use of the other languages in Morocco: classical Arabic, French, Moroccan Arabic, etc. In addition, it bases itself on the idea that the process of standardisation and normalisation would not play a leading role in the process of making the language official or not, but rather its long existence in history and its broad use in everyday life. Therefore, it is a discourse that advocates the principle both of territoriality and individuality, as well as the need to teach this language within the framework of human rights, basically, the linguistic ones.

On the other hand, when presenting some of the contents expressed in the different discourses, we observe that the linguistic conflict is a reality existing in the linguistic market. All the same, we observe how the defence of a minoritised language (Amazigh) is also the defence of linguistic diversity, a

situation that always opposes the ideology of monolingualism and its socio-political interests.

## **5. THE NEW MODEL OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND THE LEGISLATION SUPPORTING IT**

### ***5.1. The new model of language policy***

Given the fact that language policy is part of the general policy of the state, we have to point out that in July 1999 there was a change in power in the Kingdom of Morocco, for the new King Mohammed VI came to the throne upon the death of his father. This event introduced a series of changes, and one of them was the kind of predominant official-institutional discourse on language policy and the valuation of languages. Such a new discourse started to recognise in an explicit way the multilingualism existing in the country<sup>14</sup>. Therefore, here we are facing another model of discourse that hints at a new order and model of language policies for the Moroccan nation-state. Thus, on October 17, 2001, in the town of Khénifra, King Mohammed VI pronounced one of the first speeches in which linguistic diversity and the plurality of identity in Morocco were acknowledged. In this speech, the king said the following:

“By means of this reception, we wish first to express together our recognition of the integrity of our common history and of our national cultural identity built on multiple and different contributions. The plurality of the influxes that have built our history and shaped our identity cannot be separated from the unity of our Nation gathered around its sacred values. [...] Amazigh constitutes a basic element of national culture, as well as a cultural heritage whose presence is reflected in all the expressions of Moroccan history and civilisation; we pay very special attention to its promotion within the framework of the implementation of our project of democratic and modernist society, based on the consolidation of the valuation of Moroccan personality and of its linguistic, cultural and civilisation symbols.”

A year later, on July 30, on the occasion of the celebration of the Throne, the king highlighted and valued Morocco's cultural diversity. He said:

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<sup>14</sup> As an example of the official-institutional discourse we include especially all the speeches by King Mohamed VI from 1999 on, the National Charter on Education and Training of January 1, 2000, and Royal Decree Nr 1-01-299, of October 17, 2001.

"beloved people, about an important subject that interests us all, that is to say, the issue of national identity, an identity that is characterised by its diversity and its plural nature, in the same way that it is singled out by its homogeneity, its unity and originality throughout history. Plural identity because it was built on different contributions: Amazigh, Arabic, Sub-Saharan, African and Andalusian, so many origins that, given their opening to different cultures and civilisations, and interacting with them, have contributed to refining and enriching our identity."

If we compare this new discourse with the official discourse that was predominant until 1999 we may find differences at the level of the knowledge represented in both discourses. We clearly perceive that the new discourse, at least in the discursive practice, recognised and valued Morocco's linguistic and cultural diversity. In the same way, it took into consideration some of the theses defended and claimed by the alternative discourse. Next, we highlight the different interventions that are part of the new language policy and that were carried out in several spheres.

Firstly, in the educational field, we have to point out a singular experience related to the Amazigh language: in the 2003-2004 school year started a process that still exists of teaching this language in some schools, 319 in total, as a compulsory subject for all speakers, both Arabic-speaking and Amazigh-speaking. The aim of this policy is to end up generalising the teaching of Amazigh all over the national territory in 2010. Another datum that we have to highlight in the educational field is the introduction of English, from 2005 on, in primary education.

Secondly, we should also report in the socio-linguistic field and regarding the Amazigh language the founding of the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture (2001), an institution that is in charge of the standardisation process of the Amazigh language in addition to carrying out surveys and research projects with different contents related to the Amazigh literature, culture and civilisation. Furthermore, with regard to Arabic, we must highlight the founding in the year 2000 of the Academy of Arabic Language, in addition to the already existing Institute of Studies and Research on Arabisation. As their names indicate, both institutions carry out the linguistic planning of classical Arabic.

Thirdly, in the sphere of the media, a process of publication of different newspapers and magazines specialised in the Amazigh language and

culture that deal with this subject in different languages and from several disciplines was started.

At any rate, the measures expressed in this model make Morocco's language policy not be improvised any longer as it happened previously, for now there are official institutions that make decisions and implement them. Furthermore, we think that this new model plays the role of a bridge between the previous predominant discourse and the alternative one as long as it tried to promote the use of the other varieties previously considered minoritised languages, more used but with no institutional status; that is to say, mainly the varieties of Amazigh. At the same time it would maintain the process of making a language official only in the case of Arabic.

However, this does not mean that contradictions do not exist any longer, in the same way that, as long as the language policy in Morocco limits itself only to formal planning, without changing the political status of the languages and creating a legal framework that safeguards these languages, in the relation between them there will continue to be a social stratification, a linguistic subordination and, obviously, a linguistic conflict.

## ***5.2. The legislation supporting the new language policy of Morocco***

### ***5.2.1. The Moroccan Constitution of 1996.***

According to the history of the Moroccan Constitution, from the first text that was worded in 1962 to the last one of 1994 and reformed in 1996, it was based on two basic axes: Islam and Arab identity<sup>15</sup>. The Preamble of the Constitution clearly expresses the model of nation-state with regard to language that Morocco has applied from independence to today; the Preamble says: "The Kingdom of Morocco, a Muslim sovereign State, the official language of which is Arabic, constitutes part of the Great Arab Maghreb".

From this Preamble we may infer, firstly, that the subject of linguistic rights and the recognition of languages is very closely linked to power; that is to say, that the social group or linguistic community that has been in power and that has even controlled the access to power has impinged directly on the type

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<sup>15</sup> We should point out that the concept of Arab identity is based on an ethno-sociological argument and that we must distinguish it from the concept of Arabisation, a concept that refers to the linguistic, cultural and educational policy that was started in Morocco with the Merinid dynasty and that is still in force.

of cultural and language policies that have been implemented. Secondly, it means that, historically speaking, the Moroccan Constitution has denied the recognition of the existence of the Amazigh people and, therefore, everything related from the linguistic and cultural point of view to Amazigh has been excluded. Thirdly, with regard to linguistics, the Moroccan Constitution clearly defines the language policy of the state, a policy that implies that, according to the text, the functioning of public and private institutions is in classical Arabic and, if we stick to reality, also in French.

Finally, we should not forget that there is an ambiguity at a textual level with regard to the notion of “Arabic” in the Moroccan Constitution, because, in the sociolinguistic field, in Morocco there exist three varieties of Arabic: classical Arabic, standard modern Arabic and spoken Moroccan Arabic, the latter being the mother tongue of the Arabic-speaking Moroccans. This situation leads us to the following conclusions: 1) that the Moroccan Constitution not only excludes Amazigh but also Moroccan Arabic, a variety that has not been protected either and has been forgotten by Moroccan language policy, and 2) the Constitution includes, protects and promotes, in the sociolinguistic aspect, varieties that are not the mother tongue of any Moroccan<sup>16</sup>.

### ***5.2.2. The National Charter on Education and Training from 2000.***

In the educational field, Moroccan legislation is promulgated according to two models: firstly, by means of Royal Decrees issued by the king and only signed by him; secondly, by means of laws drawn up in this case by the Ministry of Education and approved by the Parliament.

The National Charter on Education and Training is a law that belongs to this second type of legislative texts. It was published by the Ministry of National Education in January of the year 2000 after having been included in a speech pronounced by the King of Morocco, Mohammed VI, on October 8, 1999, on the occasion of the opening of the first parliamentary session of that year and passed later on by the Parliament. Such a law is mostly applied in the first and second cycles of Moroccan compulsory education.

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<sup>16</sup> For a more thorough analysis on the linguistic issue in the Constitution of Morocco and in all the countries that make up the Maghreb, see Benhakeia (2005b).

In pragmatic and discursive terms, the National Charter on Education and Training could be considered a predominant official-institutional discourse, firstly due to its nature, that is to say, because it has been authorised and legitimated; secondly, due to its importance because, on the one hand, it is official and its implementation is the responsibility of governmental institutions and, on the other hand, because it is the unique discourse that is applied as a law in the educational field, in addition to organising the use of languages and offering a status to some of those that are present in the linguistic sphere in Morocco. Next, we will only comment on the contents related to the language policy in the educational sphere explained in this Charter.

Chapter IX includes nine articles. The first one, number 110, refers to Arabic as the official language of the Kingdom of Morocco. It also indicates a series of features that characterise Morocco and that are considered basic when deciding educational and language policies.

The second article regards the need to improve the teaching of Arabic, although it does not specify to which variety of Arabic it refers. Nevertheless, emphasis is put on the official nature of Arabic and on the obligatory nature of its teaching to all Moroccan children. Moreover, the following articles, 112 and 113, deal with the use of spoken Arabic; this is why we might infer that it refers to Moroccan Arabic. All the same, in Article 113, a very important datum is mentioned: the founding of the Academy of Arabic from the 2000-2001 school year on.

In the Charter, more precisely, in Article 114, the possibility of diversifying the languages of access to new technologies is mentioned, as well as the possibility of introducing Arabic in scientific research.

One of the most important innovations in the whole history of language policy in Morocco is the recognition of Amazigh, present in this text. Article 115 of the Charter refers directly to Amazigh without defining its sociolinguistic status; that is to say, we do not know whether it is considered a language or simply a “dialect”. What the aim of teaching Amazigh would be is not specified either, although it might only be a language to support the teaching of Arabic according to what may be inferred from this article. Nevertheless, in Article 116, the importance of linguistic and cultural studies on Amazigh at a university level is recognised.



Due to the multilingual nature of the country and to the presence of other foreign languages, the Charter approaches the issues related to the process of the teaching-learning of these languages. The first one that we may point out is in Article 117 in which the Charter indicates the importance of having a good command of foreign languages. Nevertheless, from this same article we could infer that it is not referring to a process of language teaching but rather to an opening process to the use of these languages. I also observe that the term “foreign languages” is not specified, knowing that the two or three foreign languages that are most present in the Moroccan sociolinguistic scene are French, Spanish and English.

Briefly summarised, these are the measures of the new language policy in the educational field that are included in the Charter, which, to a certain extent, have been complementing the measures that were taken in previous and later legislative texts.

### ***5.2.3. Royal Decree Nr 1-01-299 of October 17, 2001 (29 of Rajab of 1422).***

Undoubtedly, the legislative text with the greatest importance within the sphere of language policy with regard to Amazigh is Royal Decree Nr 1-01-299. The aim of this decree is, firstly, to establish the founding of the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture in Morocco (IRCAM), and secondly, to specify the basic lines of what was going to be later on the linguistic planning of Amazigh within the IRCAM and in other public institutions.

Furthermore, we must point out that this decree recognises the linguistic diversity of Morocco and, more specifically, it defines Amazigh as a component of the linguistic and cultural patrimony of Morocco. Nevertheless, the decree does not specify what sociolinguistic and legal status Amazigh will have in society; all the same, it does not offer a thorough description of how Amazigh is conceived, that is to say, whether it is considered a “dialect”, a variety or a language. What this Decree explains is, on the one hand, the recognition of the Amazigh culture as a national culture and, on the other hand, a civilisation that has existed throughout Morocco's history.

Finally, we have to highlight that one of the points that comprises all the philosophical and ideological ethics of this decree is point 4 of the Preamble; in this point it is recalled that the aim of democratic practice within a constitutional state is to guarantee the equality of rights and duties among all Morocco's citizens. But the fact is that this equality to which this point refers is still lacking in the linguistic and cultural aspect, for Amazigh has not been recognised by the legislation as an official language, or at least as a national language. All the same, the Amazigh-speaking population does not yet enjoy its linguistic rights, such as the right to use its language in all the spheres of everyday life and to have access to education and teaching in its mother tongue. All this may allow us to assert that what really was announced in the Royal Decree were only slogans that only became ink on paper.

#### ***5.2.4. Law 01-00 on the University from 2000.***

In the university sphere, from independence to today, Morocco's language policy has been a bilingual one that combines the use of classical Arabic and French, although lately, some university centres have chosen English instead of French. Therefore, let us recall that teaching in the faculties of Humanities has always been carried out in classical Arabic or standard Arabic; opposite to this, today, in science faculties and in higher schools, courses are still offered in French and sometimes in English. Nevertheless, the legislation applied – and expressed in this case in Law 01/00– at the level of the Moroccan university does not fully define the language policy implemented until now; therefore, an ambiguity is generated with regard to this issue. Two points of the first article of this law clearly express what we have previously said. This law states the following:

The State is in charge of the organisation, development, regulation and orientation according to the economic, social and cultural needs of the Nation, which defines its national policy together with the scientific community, the labour market and the economy, as well as local communities and especially the regions.

It works in order to develop teaching in Arabic in the different fields of training, to mobilise the necessary means for the studies and research in the Amazigh language and culture, and to have a good command of foreign languages, and this within the framework of a programme planning defined for attaining these aims. (Bold characters and italics are ours.)

Thus, we observe how the notion of “Arabic language” is somehow indefinite because it is not exactly specified to which variety the law refers. Instead, for the first time it is spoken about the promotion of the Amazigh language and culture through the launching of a research programme that has this language as its target. All the same, the notion of “foreign languages” is also vague, but we understand that by “foreign languages” it refers to French, for it is the first foreign language used in university education. Meanwhile, with regard to the identity issue in this law we should point out that in the first point of Article 3 it is firmly announced that the mission of Moroccan universities is “to contribute to the strengthening of Islamic and national identity”. Therefore, by means of this article, the importance of Muslim identity is emphasised, an identity that is always paired off with Arab identity. All the same, the concept of national identity is still open although, indirectly, the Amazigh identity is excluded.

Through this analysis that we purport to be critical we have tried to offer a global vision on the different legislative texts related to Morocco’s language policy. These texts express to a great extent what the basic lines of the new model of language policy are, as well as its bases and aims, although these aims often contradict today’s reality.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

We could classify the conclusions that we may reach after this sociolinguistic and critical analysis of Morocco’s language policy and its legislation on three axes: the future prospects of languages, the linguistic conflict and linguistic rights in Morocco.

In this first axis we will firstly see what the prospects of mother tongues are; that is to say, Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh. With regard to Moroccan Arabic, despite the fact that there is no good language policy, such variety is still maintained due to its broad everyday use. We could consider it the first-rank means of expression and culture in Moroccan society; it seems that there are measures for its teaching. This is why future prospects seem favourable to its maintenance and use. Furthermore, in the last few years a variety of Moroccan Arabic has appeared called medium. Perhaps the appearance of this medium variety may make Moroccan Arabic be standardised since all the linguistic factors available until now would favour a standardisation process. All the same,

the fact of establishing a broad linguistic basis may tend to make the necessary process of homogenisation and elaboration, as well as the appearance of the political will and of the socio-political interests of state power that are needed for the standardisation and the later process of making this variety official become effective, easier.

With regard to Amazigh, we could say that, somehow, future prospects are not as optimistic as we expected after the founding of the IRCAM. From the founding of this institution, the situation of Amazigh has changed in some aspects; however, there exist some issues that it has not been possible to deal with until now within this institution and at the level of state policy such as the process of making Amazigh official, its posterior use in the Public Administration and the implementation of a good policy for the teaching of this language. Three subjects that still worry very much the Amazigh movement in Morocco and that, in fact, are directly related to the practice of democracy in language policies. Thus, according to Benhakeia (2005: 1), "Tamazight is an unavoidably democratic issue". Finally, it goes without saying that the most outstanding aspect of the Amazigh issue in Morocco is the strength with which it has disseminated beyond intellectual and university spheres, presenting the Amazigh issue as a responsibility of the whole Moroccan public opinion. In the last few years, public opinion is increasingly aware of the linguistic issue of Amazigh; proof of this is the increasing number of pro-Amazigh associations that have been active in Morocco over the last two years; the number of publications on the Amazigh issue from different disciplines has also increased; finally, there is the founding last July of the first Amazigh party called the Moroccan Amazigh Democratic Party. Whether the state authorities consider it a separatist movement and separatist party that threatens the unity of the country is something that is still to be discovered. If this were not the case, the Amazigh language and the Amazigh culture could change their socio-political status in Moroccan everyday life (if there is political willingness, of course).

Secondly, we have dealt with the future prospects of the other languages. Firstly, regarding classical Arabic and standard modern Arabic, we have to point out that, since Morocco is a Muslim country, it must comply with the principles of Muslim religion that appear in the Koran, the sacred book –written in classical old Arabic–; therefore, both factors, that is to say, the fact of following Islam as a religion and the Koran as its sacred book, would guarantee the persistence of classical Arabic and, furthermore, it would protect it from any action coming from other languages that could be in conflict with it, thus avoiding to

endanger its status and prestige. Meanwhile, with regard to standard modern Arabic, somehow it continues to enjoy a predominant position at a school, administrative and media level; however, in everyday use it does not have the same status as the Moroccan variety or the Amazigh language because it is not used in everyday life. Instead, at a sociolinguistic level, we see that this Arabic is developing in its way and according to its spheres of use and communicative functions. Thus, this evolution allows it to differentiate itself from classical Arabic and, therefore, to foster more its use in education and the media. Secondly, regarding foreign languages, no doubt French will continue having the same function it has had since independence within Moroccan society. What might change is its total predomination as foreign language compared to other languages such as English and Spanish:

With regard to Spanish, we know that it is the language of another colonising country and that it is still present in some areas of the territory and in the whole sociolinguistic scene of the country.

The situation of English in the last few years has undergone a change that we must relate, mainly, to globalisation and a political event that has happened in Morocco: the coming to the throne of the new king. These changes have led English to be more introduced in the private sector, both in economy and education; thus, the number of speakers of this language has increased, a situation that also has increased its future prospects. We have also observed that its sociolinguistic status and the educational policies that Morocco is implementing with regard to this language have fostered its use and spreading. Therefore, the presence of English is a reality and is expressed by means of the increase in its use in several areas in which French was previously employed.

All these factors are threatening the status of French as the first foreign language<sup>17</sup>, giving rise to an eventual conflict between both languages. One datum indicating the existence of this conflict is the increase in the number of students in the studies of English Language and Literature in detriment of those of French. Furthermore, official statistics carried out by means of public-opinion polls have revealed that the number of Moroccan students that prefer to carry out a degree in English is higher than those who prefer a degree in French. All the same, the positive attitude of Moroccans in general towards English and the importance

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<sup>17</sup> Until now there is no Moroccan legislative text that has explained clearly the status of French. When we say that French is the first foreign language, we base ourselves obviously on the surveys that have been carried out until now on the situation of French by Maghrebian sociolinguists.

they give to its teaching are two factors that are making its spreading easier, even though it has the status of second foreign language. All this shows that there is a conflict of socioeconomic interests between Francophony, Hispanophony and Anglophony in the Moroccan linguistic market, mainly taking into account the geostrategic situation of this country (Moustaoui, 2004: 18); this is why, when facing this fully dynamic situation of languages, some changes may take place at the level of the use and social status of French.

The second axis of our conclusions is related to the issue of the linguistic conflict in Morocco. After analysing this conflict and discovering its paradigms, we could assert that a linguistic market without power relations and without a conflict is in fact a Utopian situation. On the one hand, as long as there is contact between languages, power relations and opposed interests between the different social groups and the different linguistic communities, there will be a social stratification, a linguistic subordination and, therefore, a linguistic conflict. On the other hand, regarding the very same conflict in Morocco, the state, trying to carry out linguistic regulations and to solve the conflict, seeks a balance of power between the different social groups. But in the basic aspects it maintains the same status that languages had before and the same power relationships that were historically established by the different people in power. This fact leads us to the following conclusion: as long as the language policy in Morocco limits itself only to formal planning, the conflict will continue and it may even extend to other varieties, as it happens now to the languages considered foreign.

The third axis, and therefore the last one, is related to linguistic rights in Morocco. Thus, on this axis we carry out a balance of linguistic rights and later on we progress in the development of some proposals related to this issue.

The analysis of Morocco's language policy –from independence to now– has shown us that this policy has always been characterised by its ambiguity regarding the status that it establishes for each language. All the same, if we take into consideration the sociolinguistic situation of the country, it has been characterised by its contradiction. These two characteristics have been backed by the type of legislation in force that organises and supports this language policy. In fact, we believe that the development of a clear, democratic and egalitarian language policy, that is to say, in the sense that it is including and efficient, is conditioned by the establishment of a state legal

framework that takes into account the speakers' sociolinguistic reality and that applies the principles of a democracy based on the particularities of the country.

On the basis of the principles established in the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, the latter being our reference legal framework to analyse the situation of linguistic rights in Morocco, we propose the following:

As an urgent legal measure, Morocco must recognise as official languages the two mother tongues of the two linguistic communities that are majority in the national territory, that is to say, Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh (with its three regional varieties). (See Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, UDLR.)

To start implementing a language policy through which the following is guaranteed:

- i) the use and employment of the mother tongue in juridical, administrative and public bodies in general, at least in the areas in which Amazigh is the most used language,
- ii) in the educational sphere, to foster the teaching in one's own language, mostly with the Amazigh-speaking community, and to establish bilingual educational institutions, Arabic/Amazigh, both in Arabic-speaking and Amazigh-speaking areas. In this proposal, we have taken into consideration the existence of an Amazigh-speaking community in Arabic-speaking areas and of an Arabic-speaking one in Amazigh-speaking areas. (See Article 3 of the UDLR.)

Furthermore, we think that it is fundamental that Morocco increases the budgets assigned to linguistic and cultural policies. This would improve more the process of linguistic planning of the unprotected languages – Amazigh and Moroccan Arabic–, thus fostering a research of a sociolinguistic, cultural and educational type related to these two languages and cultures in all the universities and research centres of the country.

To sum up, the proposals that we have presented in this paper might be considered a first stage for the state to progress later on in the implementation of a much more integrative and democratic linguistic and cultural policy.

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