

ⵜⴰⴷⵓⴷⴰ ⵜⴰⴳⵓⴷⴰⴽⵜ
ⴰⴳⵓⴷⴰⴽⵜ ⵜⴰⴷⵓⴷⴰ
ⵜⴰⴳⵓⴷⴰⴽⵜ ⵜⴰⴳⵓⴷⴰⴽⵜ



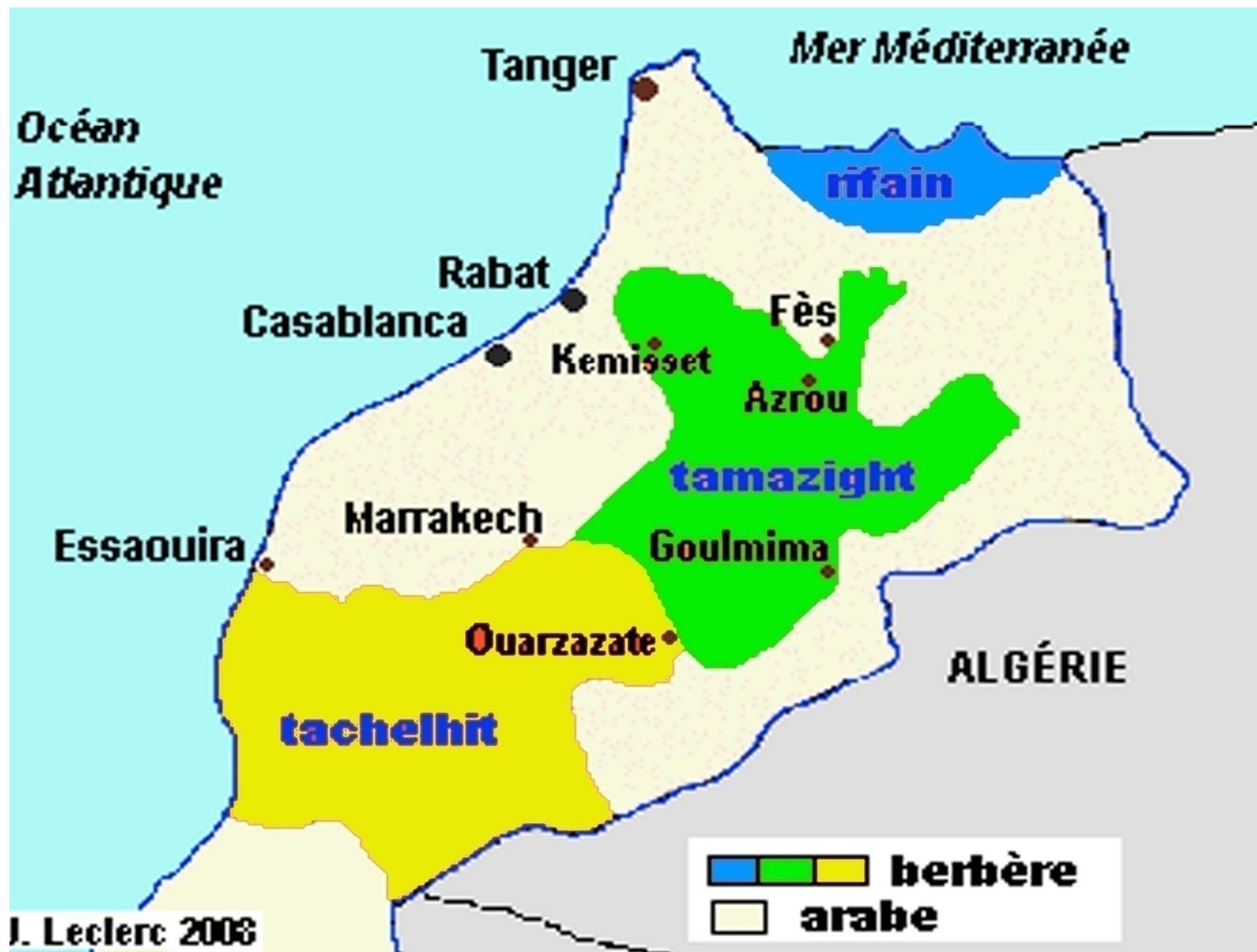
ROYAUME DU MAROC
INSTITUT ROYAL
DE LA CULTURE AMAZIGHE

The Standardisation and Dissemination of Amazigh Terminology in Morocco

by: *Khalid ANSAR*
IRCAM, Morocco

Introduction

- Amazigh in North Africa
- Amazigh in Morocco



- Objectives :

- ❑ Overview on the history of Amazigh and the socio-political context that has paved the way to its revitalisation;
- ❑ Overview on the efforts made to plan Amazigh and its terminology;
- ❑ Problems regarding the dissemination and acceptability of Amazigh terminology;
- ❑ Some lines of thinking as to how to contend with the problem of dissemination and acceptability of Amazigh terminology.

I. Amazigh: from attrition to revitalization

- Factors underlying the progressive attrition of Amazigh:
 - 1) Its contact with dominating languages such as Arabic, French and Spanish (see Julien (1994));
 - 2) The institutionalisation of administrative life and the schooling of Moroccans ;
 - 3) The massive migration of Amazigh people from the countryside to cities and their linguistic assimilation to the largely Arabic-speaking population of the city.

- The process of moving from precariousness to revitalisation recognises three important stages:
 - **Stage 1 (1960-2000):** characterised by associative movement in an inhospitable political context;
 - **Stage 2 (in 2001):** creation of the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture (IRCAM) in a context where cultural and linguistic identity and rights are gaining more momentum (insertion of Amazigh in the educational system and the media);
 - **Stage 3 (in 2011):** officialisation of Amazigh.

II. Amazigh and language planning

- With an eye to revitalising Amazigh, the government as well as the Language Planning Center in IRCAM launched a project in 2001 meant to standardise the Amazigh language (Boukous (2012)).

A- Status Planning

- **2001-2010:** Although the language agency under IRCAM was involved in the process of Amazigh standardisation since 2001, no clear-cut strategy was designed to achieve this goal.

This is apparent in :

- Lack of constitutional texts which set the functions of the language (regional, national, territorial, official or media language ?)

- ❑ There was common consensus that a standard form of Amazigh is the goal meant to be achieved, yet there was no clear consensus as to how this is to be achieved (tendency towards the polynomic approach (see Marcellesi (1983))
- ❑ No harmonious collaboration between the State and the language agency in planning the insertion of Amazigh in the educational system and the media.

- **2011:** Amazigh gained official status, an important move.
- Up to now, the expectation of Amazigh people, which is to operationalize the official status of Amazigh, has not been achieved.

B- Corpus planning

This activity is undertaken by the researchers of the Language Planning Center (IRCAM).

- **Objective:** Unification of the Moroccan Amazigh varieties (Tarifit, Tamazight and Tashelhiyt) along the different linguistic levels (graphic, phonetic, morpho-syntactic and lexical).
- **Approach:** basically Polynomic (a single standard Amazigh language to be progressively developed from the three main Amazigh varieties attested in Morocco).

1- Standardising the graphic, phonetic and morpho-syntactic levels

- Amazigh standardisation has been undertaken along a number of linguistic levels:
 - Graphically : creation of a writing system along with its spelling and orthographic rules;
 - Phonetically : alphabet of 33 phonemes chosen on a comparative basis along criteria of historicity, geographic extension and opposition frequency;
 - Morpho-syntactically: Basic grammatical and morphological rules have been developed.

2- Standardising the lexicon: Compilation and modernisation

- The standardisation of the lexicon has gone through two important stages:
 - **First stage:** Compiling the existing lexicon (from dictionaries (Taifi (1991), Serhoual (2002), Oussikoum (1995)), atlases (Lefkioui(2007)), field work research);
 - **Second stage:** Updating, modernizing and enriching the lexical repertoire by resorting to word creation and neologisms. A database of 3000 terms has been undertaken and a number of technical glossaries (domains of education, media and administration are prioritised) (Ameur et. al. (2008))

- First stage: time-consuming but not daunting;
- Second stage: more daunting as it requires knowledge not only of the grammatical and semantic structure of the language, but also of the representations, perceptions, knowledge structure, attitudes, beliefs, ethnology, sociology and anthropology of Amazigh users.

- Evaluation of terminological work created at IRCAM:
 - More attention is paid to Amazigh grammatical and semantic rules in the process of word creation;
 - Little attention is paid to the representations, perceptions, knowledge structure, attitudes, beliefs and sociology of Amazigh people.

III. Terminology planning and the problem of acceptability and dissemination

- Fishman (1983) argues that terminology planning should be carried out while taking into consideration the socio-cultural structure of the language community.
- Fishman explains that lexicons “are not endless laundry lists, without rhyme and reason, without order or pattern, without systematic links to each other and to all other facets of language” and that they are directly related to “socio-cultural and political sensitivities”.

- Fishman (1983: 3) argues that social acceptability or non-acceptability of planned terminology falls out from the socio-cultural expertise of the planner and the knowledge of the complex structure of lexicon.
- The observation reached, thus far, is of prime importance to the case of Amazigh, as the terminological work undertaken looks to face the same problems raised by Fishman.

- The problem of acceptability is one of the most prominent problems besetting the diffusion of the terminological work undertaken in IRCAM. This resistance is observed in the media, associations, and for many Amazigh speakers.
- Some Amazigh speakers consider the terms created by IRCAM to be at odds with the lexical items they use, and that these terms do not represent them.

- With this observation as background, some of the questions that IRCAM researchers need to provide an answer to are:
 - ❑ What representations do users have of sociologically validated borrowed words from other languages like Arabic and French?
 - ❑ How can this representation invalidate newly created words?
 - ❑ What conditions decision-making (what term to use) in text production?

- Antia (2000) tries to provide a general approach along which a terminology planner is, on the basis of written terminological material, able to spot where the weakness of the terms lurks and, thereby, understand why the terms are resisted by the users.
- Antia explains that the problem of acceptability pervades the terminology of many languages (Alloni-Fainberg (1974), Rubin (1977), Kummer (1983)).

- His theoretical framework recognizes a whole range of criteria along which the written material discourse is to be assessed, to explain why a term is resisted.
 - ❑ A linguistic approach (strategies used),
 - ❑ A terminological systems approach (how groups of terms reflect the relationship in the corresponding sets of concepts),
 - ❑ Knowledge approach (the effectiveness and efficiency of the terminology project as a means of imparting knowledge),
 - ❑ Sociological approach (societal validation of the terminology planning effort as evidenced by knowledge of, and attitudes towards, the terms).

Conclusion

It is my belief that an analysis along Antia's line of thinking should be undertaken to the Amazigh terminological literature to see the reasons underlying the problem of acceptability and dissemination of the terms adopted by the Language Planning Centre in IRCAM.



THANK YOU