

New linguistic Practices of the February 20 Movement in Morocco: Toward a New Model of Language Policy

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ABSTRACT

In Morocco, the "Arab Spring" raises questions about the importance of new linguistic and discursive practices of the social movements as a new form of communication. This paper therefore will focus on the February 20 Movement in Morocco. Its main objective is to analyze the relationships between the occurrence of these linguistic and discursive practices of the M20F, which are considered a trend toward a new model of language politics due to the emergence of new revolutionary scenes and spaces of interaction. The analysis will focus i) on the choice, the use-distribution, and the function of mother tongues, namely Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh as local language resources, ii) on the role played by local languages in constructing a new model of language policy in Morocco, iii) on the roles played by other languages (Standard Arabic, French and English) in the communication strategies of the February 20 Movement and also in the internalization of the protests.

Keywords: Multi-/Plurilingualism in Morocco, dynamics of change, New Linguistic Practices and Language Politics, Arab Spring.

1. INTRODUCTION

Currently there are ongoing political, economic and sociolinguistic changes in Moroccan society in the form of the expansion of the new linguistic practices related to initiatives of local, regional and national economic and social development and specifically, to the Arab Spring mobilisations. I consider that the aim of the use of this new linguistic practice in this event was to gain access to political discourse in the public sphere and media discourse or social networks. Consequently, this use has been an important factor and a key element in the failure, success or continuation of the process of delegitimization of the State apparatus by the social actors of these popular mobilisations in the context of the Arab Spring Almandjra (2003). At the same time, the claims of delegitimization have to do with changing social and economic policies, power and the governance model. In this sense, Hammami (2011: 51), in relation to the Tunisian revolution, states that these new communication strategies are also related to the establishment of a new social and political model in which many local languages

are resourced by the multilingual community (Warschauer and De Florio-Hansen 2003: 2). From a critical sociolinguistics approach, I believe that these new language practices have introduced a trend toward a new power relationship between languages and consequently a new glottopolitical model implanted by the movements' protests, not only in Morocco but in many Arab states. Most importantly, what interests us is the restructuring of the field and linguistic market by defying a traditional authoritarian structure of the state, in this case, Morocco.

Therefore, taking the aforementioned background into consideration, I will focus my paper exclusively on the February 20 Movement in Morocco (hereinafter M20F). The main objective is to analyze the relationships between the occurrence of these new linguistic and discursive practices of the M20F, which are considered a new language politics' model that resists the Moroccan sociolinguistic regime and produces today different socio-linguistic dynamics of change in the Moroccan linguistic market.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

First, I have to note that social movements in North Africa in the context of the Arab Spring, specifically in Morocco with the emergence of the M20F, underwent a dynamic process of change that led to a kind of hybridization of political and social movements (Ben Nefissa 2011), which in turn ensures *a hybrid linguistic construction and creativity* (Stroud and Mpendunkana 2009: 379), in a Moroccan multilingual and identity field that has historically been characterized by social and political stratification (Boukous 1999 & 2008). Secondly, I consider that this *hybrid linguistic construction* has introduced new multilingual and local choices regarding the use-distribution and the function of mother tongues, namely Moroccan Arabic and the Amazigh language in the new language practices of the M20F. These practices aim to delegitimize not only the institutional, political, social and economic apparatus of the state, but also to exercise resistance against the stratified and *hierarchial* Moroccan linguistic regime (Bourdieu 1982 & Boukous 1999). I argue also that these practices also have a pragmatic influence on communicative and persuasive forms in an innovative and alternative model of language politics in Moroccan society. In this sense, what questions can we ask against this backdrop? How do the new linguistic practices used by the M20F contribute to restructure Moroccan linguistic scenarios? Will these new local multilingual practices, specifically the use of Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh, have a direct relationship with the overall strategy of the M20F? Are we facing new forms, new organizations and a *relocalization* of national and foreign languages in Morocco in the context of the Arab Spring and glocalization in Morocco? And finally, how is this process articulated politically and socio-linguistically in the construction of social categories (in terms of class and inserted in a mass communication theory) and of power relations among the languages of Morocco?

1.2 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

My objective is to provide both description and critical analysis in a critical sociolinguistic approach defined by Heller (2003: 14) as “a sociolinguistics that will be able to reveal what interests underlie the actions, representations and discourses, and that it benefits from the development of social processes”, and in a critical theory of language politics.

So, I will employ the concept of ‘language politics’ used by Labrie (2010: 334) as follows: “Language politics corresponds to the exercise of social control on linguistic diversity and linguistic variation through political channels, which include, on one hand, the expression of power relationships within the civil society and, on the other, the codification of language practices by agents who hold institutional power.” My study focuses on the evolution and dynamics of change in the Moroccan linguistic market through the analysis of the new linguistic practices in the M20F as a form of resistance towards the Moroccan institutional sociolinguistic regime (Blommaert 2007). Linguistic practices can be defined as the exercise of a set of actions and interventions that have to do with the use of language as a social practice. This use develops a series of functions that are not only linguistic but also social. In addition, linguistic practices are continuously changing depending on the different social, political, economic and ideological dynamics of change that occur both at micro and macro levels in any communication event or communicative process. So, I consider also relevant for the study the use of the notion of language as resource situated in a sociolinguistic of globalization. For this purpose I’ll adopt specially Heller’s definition (2010: 350) of language as resource:

The emergence of the idea of language as resource, and of the new forms of its production and circulation in current market conditions, does challenge dominant ideologies of language in important ways...we can draw on Bakhtinian notions of heteroglossia, Foucauldian ideas of discourse, and Bourdieuan ideas of markets to reimagine language as communicative resources socially constructed in uneven, unequal distributed social spaces.

Finally, I use the notion of language activism understood as a set of actions and mobilisations undertaken by minority groups and social movements in order to develop and promote their local languages for use in the significant domains (See Nyika 2008: 5, Kriel 2003: 51).

1.3 PROCESS OF LINGUISTIC DATA COLLECTION

My linguistic data has been collected through a multimedia and virtual observation, both refer to the process of data collection in online settings such as social media platforms, blogs, chats and other online settings. I argue that internet is a medium that affects the organization of social relationships of the virtual community in time and space, in accordance with the term *virtual community* used by Rheingold (1993: 5), which is defined as “social aggregations that emerge from the NET when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace.”

I also scrutinized the social worlds as constituted by communities observable in the internet. The reason I chose to use this method for collecting data is because it was impossible for me to be present to directly observe the development of the events that have to do with the movement and its protests. I directly observed the movement's actions on the street and the linguistic practices that accompanied them just once. But the linguistic data I collected were insufficient for a thorough analysis. It should be noted also that the extension of the linguistic data was through a university seminar that I organized and titled *The Arab Spring and Its Discourses: Keys for Study, Interpretation and Analysis*. This seminar took place in May 2012.

The method I employed is documentary analysis. I searched for all the documents that were produced by the M20F since its creation until June 2012 from these sources: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, websites of the Mamfakinch platform and global voices. I also collected documents including photos that appear regularly in some Moroccan Newspapers, specially, Magazine *Tel Quel*. My linguistic data is composed of: 1) all announcements and declarations of the M20F, 2) then YouTube videos of the M20F, 3) interviews with activists, 4) some slogans repeated and used during demonstrations organized by the M20F, and, finally, photos from different sources.

The language data thus collected is a valuable source of information about not just the M20F but also the socio-political context of Morocco during the Arab Spring.

2. LANGUAGE POLITICS IN MOROCCO AND DYNAMICS OF CHANGE

After Morocco gained independence an authoritarian structure of the state was imposed through a strong coordination between language, identity and the nation-state. This manifestation of language, identity and nation-state was central to creating and legitimizing the Moroccan nation-state and its sociolinguistic institutional regime; it was also central to the way this axis has represented this legitimacy at different times of Morocco's post-independence. The consequences

of this manifestation in the Moroccan model of language politics after independence were manifested in the creation of: i) a population-related technical world, business and capitalism (industrial, financial and so on), which has the ability to use Fuṣḥa or Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), French and English languages and controls material and symbolic goods, and ii) a population with Moroccan Arabic or Amazigh as mother tongues deprived of the world of technology and large capitalist enterprises. Such populations were not able to use standard Arabic or French because neither of these two languages is the mother tongue of any Moroccan speaker. And consequently, this Moroccan population has not known any kind of social, economic or political advancement. This language politics model has created, on the one hand, a lack of equality between languages and linguistic communities in the choice of language practices while on the other hand, a sociolinguistic and economic conflict started to take place in Morocco.

In addition, on discursive terms the knowledge constructed concerning the representation of linguistic diversity has been built around this model through the various discourses on language, identity and language policy that reflect the multilingualism and linguistic diversity in Morocco: the official discourse, the traditional discourse, the alternative discourse (focused on defending the Amazigh language), and finally, the modern and liberal discourse (which focuses on the defence of mother tongues and the language rights of individuals and communities) (See Moustouai 2012). I assume that if the dominant discourse were opened up to other Moroccan linguistic varieties, we would find other types of discourses. Taking into consideration that language politics is an interactive, linked process, the discursive dialogue that arose in the field of language politics was structured around three basic topics: Arabization/Arabism, Amazighness, French-speaking (*francophonie*) /Frenchness. The analysis of the different discourses that I had realised in other research demonstrates that the context and the socio-political, economic and linguistic dynamics of change have influenced the type of knowledge generated by the discourse on language politics (see Moustouai 2008 & 2010).

Therefore, there has been a change from 2000 to the present in the discursive representation of language, identity and multilingualism in official discourse and, consequently, in the rest of the discourses. However, a discursive order has been arrived at that is dominated by a power relationship between different discourses and different models of *language policy*. We believe that there was a causal relationship between the fact that language(s)/identity(/ies) are in a subordinate position and the discourse that occurs around these language varieties and identities. This situation is manifest in that the Arabic dimension was historically dominant in the process of representing Morocco linguistically and in constructing national (ethno-linguistic, cultural and social) identity.

Concerning the economic level, currently there are ongoing economic changes in Moroccan society related to initiatives of local, regional and national economic development. The new Moroccan economy refers to all neoliberal economic

reforms implanted in Morocco during the last decade. The modern liberal reforms that have taken place recently in Morocco during the last ten years led to an industrial spread of many projects. As a consequence, and due to the modern industrial liberal tendency in Morocco, new and huge multi-national companies were founded. Therefore, in line with the economic crisis occurring in Spain, several construction projects were conducted, and new industrial zones and scientific complexes were built in many large cities such as Casablanca, Tanger, Marrakesh, Fes, and Agadir. Such procedures encouraged tourism and other forms of investment in Morocco. Moreover, it is worth mentioning the role played by financial transferences, approximately 6% of the national income in 2009, by Moroccans living abroad (Report of Haut Commissariat au Plan, Moroccan Kingdom, 2009). Consequently, these local, regional and national initiatives have been an important factor and a key element in the emergence of a Moroccan cultural model of communication which in turn ensures *a hybrid linguistic construction*. This situation has introduced new multilingual choices regarding the use, distribution, and function of Moroccan Arabic and the Amazigh, in the Moroccan sociolinguistic regime. In this sense the use of local languages – Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh – is considered as a new linguistic and communicative resource in the economic area (see Laraoui 2010: 185, Heller 2010: 357).

On the legislative level, the last political and legal recognition of the local languages (Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh, and other linguistic varieties) aims to protect the language rights of communities, both majority and minority. Concerning the Amazigh language, it is important to stress that the new constitution recognizes Amazigh as an official language in Morocco. Also, Hassaniya has been acknowledged as Moroccan linguistic and cultural heritage in the new constitution.¹

¹ See the preamble to the new Moroccan Constitution. The article 5 of the new constitution says that: "The state works to preserve the Hassaniya, as an integral part of a united Moroccan cultural identity and the protection of cultural expressions and the spoken practiced in Morocco."

Linguistic varieties	Institutional and official communication	Education and literacy	Political and religious discourse	Oral and Written literature	Mass media, Social communication and Publicity (Public and private sector)
Modern Standard Arabic	*	*	*	*	*
Moroccan Arabic	*	*	*	*	*
Amazigh		*		*	*
French	*	*		*	*

Table 1. *Domain of uses of the local, official and foreign languages in Moroccan linguistic regime.*

Moreover, the local languages- Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh specifically, continue to be considered undervalued and dominated. So, one of the aims of many social movements in Morocco has been to defend and promote these languages using and relocating them in the sociolinguistic market.

3. ACTIONS PROTEST IN MOROCCO, THE EMERGENCE OF M20F AND THE NEW LANGUAGE POLITICS MODEL

The protests and revolutions that are occurring in many countries of the world, in what is called the revolutionary area of indignation in Europe and the Arab Spring in the countries of the Maghreb and Middle East, are driving and implementing a social and political order. Similarly, I believe that social discourses of contestation that emerged in the context of this global outrage have been instrumentalized and used new linguistic and socio-political practices. These new social, political and linguistic practices highlight three aspects: the use of new communication strategies, the use and transformation of space as social production (Lefebvre 1991), and the presence of the local multilingualism. Mother tongues were brought back into a position of empowerment, thus breaking with traditional models of sociolinguistic stratification and hierarchy that existed between local languages and languages of power in the linguistic market.

The emergence of the M20F in Morocco is inseparable from the socio-political context of the Arab Spring in North Africa, especially after the success of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions. In fact, the movement was also influenced by the revolutionary area of indignation in Europe. The events that occurred in the region, the Maghreb and the Middle East, played a fundamental role in the emergence of this movement and also in the direction that it adopted to eventually obtain its sociopolitical and discursive legitimacy. February 20th, 2011 is the date

that marks the onset of the M20F which was clearly inspired by Tunisia and Egypt, without, however, aiming to overthrow the regime. The movement is defined as: “une force de protestation et non de proposition¹.” “Indépendant de tout parti politique, syndicat et autres organisations. Le mouvement ne s’essouffle pas, il se propage de la rue vers les institutions, les partis.”² The organization gained power because it does not have leaders or spokespersons. Similarly, the movement has no unified identity. There are 30 coordination groups all over the country, and the number has increased to 115 since the date of its birth on the 24th of April, 2011. Many movements aligned and decided to support the M20F including the AMDH (Moroccan Association of Human Rights), which openly adopted the objectives of the M20F, left-wing parties, such as the Democratic Way and the Unified Socialist Party (PSU), youth, civil society, and women’s movements, as well as the Islamist movement, namely Al-Adel Wa Al-Ihsan (Justice and Charity).

With the success of the first event, the M20F managed to revive protest culture in Morocco. In this way, the M20F has changed the national political scene and associative space of activism. From its birth until now, the M20F has convened more than a thousand activities at the national level. Starting with an average of one activity a month, the movement has recently been running a demonstration every week, in addition to rallies and sit-ins organized by local coordination groups in each city or village. Similarly, the M20F experienced internationalization through the establishment of foreign cells. It has gained popularity in the circle of Moroccan activists abroad. It is in France that the M20F has more coordination groups because there are almost a dozen cells throughout France. Cells are also found in the Netherlands, the United States, Canada and Spain.

My questions now are: What are the new linguistic practices used by the M20F in a new model of language politics? Do they guarantee new relationships between the different linguistic varieties in the Moroccan linguistic market? How is this process articulated at these levels: the nation-state, the construction of social categories, and the power relations between linguistic varieties of Morocco, politically and socio-linguistically?

² Declaration of the M20F "The regional and international context characterized by the Arab Spring and the revolutionary air of indignation in Europe and in the world, certainly influence the political street in Morocco and gives considerable moral support to this youth movement. This Young people decided that boldly evident and does not hide his intentions at a time close was considered a taboos and an impassable red lines!"

4. NEW LINGUISTIC PRACTICES OF THE M20F: TOWARD A NEW MODEL OF LANGUAGE POLICY

As I have already pointed out, the hybrid social and political nature of the social protest movements in Morocco guaranteed, in turn, hybrid linguistic originality and creativity at the heart of these movements. In the case of the M20F, the object under study in this article, this innovative character, has been reinforced with the appearance and creation of new hybrid public and on-line spaces, on the one hand, and with the diversification of the spaces of activism and the use of multi-modality as a strategy of communication, on other hand. This multi-modality translates into the use of both vertical and horizontal communication, the adaptation of the new technologies to the country's multilingual sociolinguistic reality, maintaining a heterogeneous character in both linguistic uses and the construction of collective identities. And consequently, the extension and creation of new social categories in terms of class that emerged from the individual and collective levels and have extended to the regional, national, and international levels. The purpose is to be able to change and to influence the state model, in all spheres including, obviously, the linguistic sphere. This is the reason that I shall analyze the following three aspects: i) Linguistic equality in the choice of language, ii) the script of local languages as linguistic attraction and iii) innovation in the linguistic practices of the February 20 movement according to the spaces of activism, both the new ones and the old ones, which the movement used to carry out its protest actions and its activism.

4.1 LINGUISTIC EQUALITY IN THE CHOICE OF LANGUAGE

One of the challenges of the exercise of language politics is to change the language utopia that sets up a direct relationship between “language policy/planning and the construction of social, political and economic inequality,” as Tollefson (1991) argued. So, we believe that the aim of the new linguistic practices of M20F is to achieve and guarantee at the same time the promotion of equality between the Moroccan linguistic varieties and consequently the language politics would become a form to promote democracy on all levels and in all areas including the sociolinguistic level. In this section we try to demonstrate how the new model of language politics proposed by M20F create and sustain various forms of social and political equality, and reduce inequality between the languages in the Moroccan linguistic Market and promote the maintenance and an equal use of local languages (Tollefson 2006:43 & 2013:7).

4.1.1 THE USE OF MOROCCAN ARABIC AND AMAZIGH IN A ROTATIONAL WAY IN ORAL COMMUNICATION

One of the frequent practices in the M20F videos that appear on YouTube is the equal distribution in use and the rotational order in which Amazigh and Moroccan Arabic appear. This strategy is reflected in the two following examples:

(1) Example in Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh

"حنا شباب مغربي كانبغيو هاد البلاد ؤ كاناجدو التغيير والكرامة."

“ⵏⵉⵔ ⵏ ⵓⵙⵓⵏⵉⵔ ⵏ ⵎⵓⵔⵏⵓ ⵏ ⵎⵓⵔⵏⵓ ⵏ ⵎⵓⵔⵏⵓ ⵏ ⵎⵓⵔⵏⵓ
ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ
ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ ⵏ
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“We are the young people of Morocco. We love this country. And are calling out for change and dignity. We want to change many things in our country and not to be slighted. We want one who stole it is stopped. We want to get to say: stop to theft and stop the corruption.”

The fact that both varieties are alternated, despite belonging to two different families and two linguistic communities that are clearly separated in Moroccan sociolinguistic reality, means a process of socialization in this use in the public and on-line space, as well as in the social and media discourse of the M20F. This means the elimination of the historical subordination of Amazigh in relation to Arabic, whether standard or Moroccan. In the same way, the alternation and egalitarian distribution in use guarantee, *ipso facto*, social and political equality for the two linguistic varieties and their corresponding linguistic communities. What we have noticed, in contrast, is that the use of Moroccan Arabic has a greater presence than Amazigh in videos and in oral communications. I believe this is due to the fact that this variety is also considered to be a *lingua franca* used in oral communication among the three speaking communities that form this Amazigh linguistic macro-community - the Amazigh populations of the Rif, those living in the Middle Atlas and Central High Atlas chains, and finally speakers of Tashelhit living in the Western High Atlas, the Sus Valley and the Anti-Atlas.

I must point out, on the other hand, that this practice (in the example number 1) also has to do with the notion of “mixing of local language” (King Tong and Hong Cheung 2011:70) insofar as it generates a win-win, de facto bilingualism that follows the Moroccan constitution’s line of defense and legislative protection of both languages, as well as the rest of official and institutional discourses. That is, these are strategies that corroborate in practice and through action the notion of sustainable, lasting plurality among the languages of Morocco (Boukous 2008: 11), guaranteeing consequently a linguistic ecology in relation to local multilingualism in Morocco.

The use of the oral mode that also integrates both languages in videos can be justified by the fact that the culture of communication at the heart of the Moroccan linguistic communities continues to be mainly oral. The bilingual oral mode is, in this case, a main channel of communication. This is because citizens are a source of information that is very close to the movement, which would guarantee the participatory success of the masses in the protests and their corresponding action.

4.2 THE POSITION OF AMAZIGH WITH ITS TIFINAGH SCRIPT

The acknowledgement by the State and the IRCAM (Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture) of Tifinagh as the only alphabet and writing system of Amazigh in Morocco was one of the most polemic decisions made regarding the language planning of Amazigh. However, the socialization of the use of this writing system in different contexts is still costing the State an effort. Similarly, no important changes have been noted in the Moroccan linguistic landscape regarding the presence of the Tifinagh, except for in the historically Amazigh speaking regions, and regarding a strong presence of protesting social forces, or even regional political parties that defend the promotion of Amazigh as language, culture, and identity.

However, one of the attractions that I have observed in both visual and written communication for the M20F is the position and order in which Amazigh written with Tifinagh script appears. In the majority of the examples that I have gathered, I have noted that Tifinagh is in first place in the lineal order of languages. The following examples clearly show this:

(2) example³:



Figure 1.

Figure 2.

Figure 3.

This practice confirms the idea that Amazigh continues to be the first autochthonous language of the country. This new replacement and reorganization is done not only with respect to Arabic, but also with respect to foreign languages. This gives Amazigh a global and international character, on the one hand. On the other hand, it endows it with prestige as a local, national, and official language, today, when recently it was considered to be a marginalized minority language that was subordinated to other Moroccan languages in its areas of use, function, and status. This practice confirms Amazigh's evolution and movement from an oral language to another written language. In addition, this transformation is closely linked to the modification of what is visible in the new linguistic landscape that has emerged with the creation of the M20F and its protest actions, in particular, and the Arab Spring, in general. We have to argue that the use of Amazigh by the M20F is in fact not as significant as the use of Moroccan Arabic. Nevertheless, this practice could be considered a technical challenge that is related to giving Amazigh and the Tifinagh writing system the capacity to normativize and socialize their uses in different spaces, especially on internet. The normativization of the use of Tifinagh has some difficulties because this process needs a sustainable language planning and policy from the State and also from civil society. All of these actions produce a series of dynamics of change at the heart of Amazigh in its qualitative dimension, creating real conditions for this language's linguistic revitalization.

³ Video of the first campaign that announced the creation of the M20F and that also called for the first march organized by the movement (source YouTube).

4.3 THE SCRIPT AS LINGUISTIC INNOVATION

4.3.1 THE SCRIPT OF MOROCCAN ARABIC

According to Spolsky (2004: 217), the choice and standardization of writing systems is part of the process of innovation and modernization of a linguistic variety. One of the innovative practices that the M20F resorts to, even though it has had a long historical process, is the writing of Moroccan Arabic with Arabic characters (see Moustauoui 2012). As I have pointed out, the importance of Moroccan Arabic in the oral communication of the M20F, as a lingua franca, caused this variety to be written down. This way of writing Moroccan Arabic was used, on one hand, on the posters and placards that were made for the different marches and demonstrations that the movement organized. The following two pictures reflect this use.



Figure 4. Source: Tel quel Magazine. **Figure 5.** Source: www.Mamfakinch.com.

On the other hand, Moroccan Arabic is also present in the written messages in the videos that have appeared on YouTube in the different information and dissemination campaigns carried out by the M20F.



Figure 6.⁴

First, I believe that the use of written Moroccan Arabic could be interpreted as another linguistic modality that enriches and extends the formal linguistic register in communication. The option of using written Moroccan Arabic in these kinds of messages has to do mainly with the pragmatic function that it would fulfil in the comprehension of the message and the later identification of the Moroccan participant with this message. Therefore, interaction is guaranteed because the discourse is presented, orally and in written form, in the mother tongue. Second, this practice integrates a mother tongue, considered a dialect in common sense thinking, into areas of use that used to be reserved exclusively for standard Arabic and French. This practice breaks away from the system of linguistic subordination in which these two languages occupied the position of varieties of prestige. Third, the broadening and extension of the sphere of use of Moroccan Arabic to the written form and to spheres in which it used to be absent provides us with data on the importance of local linguistic identity in the resistance carried out by the M20F. That is, both the oral and the written use of Moroccan Arabic generate linguistic uses that are completely independent from the rest of the dominant languages in the Moroccan language market, that is, standard Arabic and French. Thus, these uses re-locate and empower linguistic identities that existed before and also new ways of belonging, mainly based on that which is local –that which is Moroccan, despite the fact that it continues to be Arabic. Finally, the fact that Moroccan Arabic is written and this writing is spreading through the protest actions of the M20F forces us to rethink its position and its relation to the language market, not only in relation to standard Arabic but also in relation to Amazigh. Similarly, it induces us to rethink the process of standardization of the writing of Moroccan Arabic, taking into account the context and the situation of plurilingualism in Morocco (see Moustaoui 2012).

⁴ The second video campaign announced the creation of the M20F and appealed to the February 20th demonstration (source YouTube).

4.4 THE USE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AS A STRATEGY OF INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE PROTEST

As outlined above already, the local nature of the movement is reflected in the identity construction of the 20F movement based on elements of local character for its self-legitimization. Similarly, this local character is translated to the importance that mother tongues have in the M20F's horizontal and vertical communications. Nevertheless, one of the new practices that has been observed is the use of French, Spanish and English in different forms of communication.



Figure 7.5

I believe that this use of foreign languages is justified, first, by the internationalization that the M20F underwent after its birth by means of the creation of sections and representational groups in various countries in Europe and America. This made it necessary to broaden the profile of the interlocutors, who are no longer only national or local but also transnational. Evidently, this generated the need to create contents in English directed to a much wider and more heterogeneous global public. Second, the occupation and use of on-line media space by users and M20F militants, mostly young people, with linguistic training not only in French but also in English, made the task of disseminating their discourse using English much easier. One example of this is the English version of the webpage *Mamfakinch*, one of the independent platforms that disseminated all kinds of discourses produced by the M20F. *Mamfakinch* is a word in Moroccan Arabic with the meaning 'no concessions'. This platform is a popular website and a citizen media project that grew out of the Arab Spring in early 2011. Its objective is to defend and promote freedom and rights on the internet, and also to criticise the government.

⁵ The third video campaign of the M20F (source YouTube).

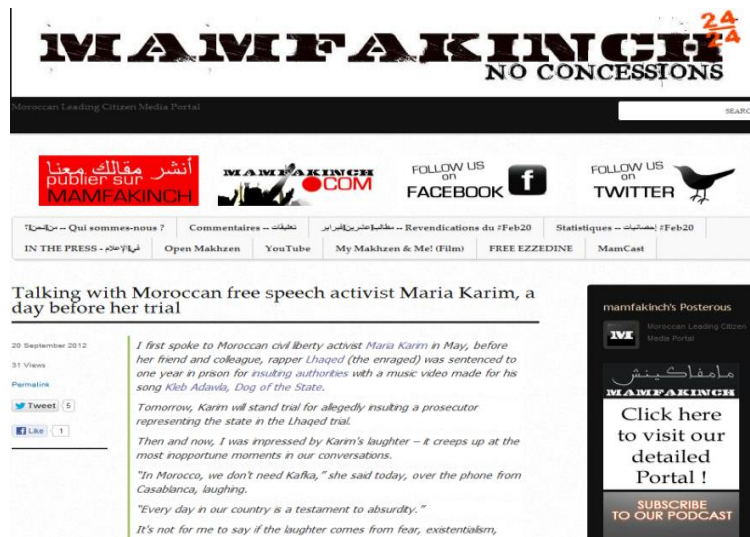


Figure 8. Source: www.mamfakinch.com.

The reformulation of local contents that have to do with the movement's protest actions through the use of English as a language of globalization can be clearly seen in this example. This action shows, then, that globalization is a practice of localization, and therefore the two processes do not come into conflict or opposition but rather, on the contrary, they tie together, they are complementary and they are used in favour of the struggles carried out by the M20F.

The second example that I will present relating to the use of English is the action of subtitling some videos and translating the messages that also appear in propaganda videos that use Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh as languages of oral communication.



Figure 10.⁶

Figure 11.⁷

These two practices, illustrated by these two examples, clearly reflect the way in which discursive practices that, to begin with, resort to local languages as the first

⁶ The first video campaign announced the creation of the M20F and appealed to the February 20th demonstration (source YouTube).

⁷ The first video campaign announced the creation of the M20F and appealed to the February 20th demonstration (source YouTube).

channel of communication are actively represented and reconstructed. However, the objective is to get the message out to a heterogeneous global audience because English is another language, used in subtitles, but not the only one. In this way, localization is maintained and does not disappear in the presence of a language of globalization and power such as English. Its function is, therefore, to integrate itself into a multilingual process of interaction that completely discards the idea of linguistic homogenization that, as a general rule, consists of the use of only English in international communication. In the same way, the presence of English does not mean any conflict at all, either with local multilingualism or with the institutional linguistic regime.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In keeping with the analysis in section 4, and regarding the questions set forth at the beginning of the article, I can reach the following conclusions. The use of local multilingualism is a communication strategy that is directly related to effective and efficient militancy. The new conditions of the social and political order in Morocco require multilingual militants and references. Similarly, the use of local languages, specifically of Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh, due to their condition of mother tongues, is framed as a pragmatic option of the movement's political and social communication - a pragmatic option, not an ideologized or symbolic option that is based on immediacy, on nearness to the speakers and citizens, and on their participation as sources of information and knowledge, creating a critical mass of political and social content.

The distribution and the order of use of both Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh has shown the trend to relocate both varieties within the Moroccan linguistic regime. We understood by relocation the process of changing the functions of local languages and its place in the sociolinguistic regime (Blommaert 2010). I believe that this relocation is a clear form of resistance not only to the power relations established by the state system of political, economic, and social authoritarianism, but also to the historical relations of subordination and power that exist between the languages within the Moroccan language market. This resistance strives for Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh to become languages in first place in the external communication, and prestigious written languages. In contrast, I have noted that the function of standard Arabic and French has been reduced exclusively to written internal communication. Also, this resistance can be interpreted as a kind of control over the production and distribution of linguistic capital. And it has, therefore, generated new linguistic and communicational skills, that are valued and measured (Heller 2010 and Heller and Boutet 2006), in Moroccan Arabic and in Amazigh. This control guarantees, *ipso facto*, the creation not only of a new model of communication at the heart of the M20F, but also the sketch of a new model for managing and planning multilingualism and linguistic variation in Morocco, even though the M20F is an organism that has

emerged from civil society itself (Labrie 2010). Finally, I think that, the ways in which English, French and Spanish are used and the functions they have in communication attest to glocalisation (Robertson 1995): a mechanism through which the M20F has managed to relocate its collective identity in a global sociolinguistic regime by resisting any process of homogenization that could occur in spaces of discourse and social interaction. At the same time, glocalization is a strategy by which the M20F internationalizes its cause in transnational, global space.

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