The Social Dimension of Code-Switching: the case of Kabyle speakers

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Résumé:

Les situations de contact des langues donnent lieu à différents phénomènes sur le plan sociolinguistique. L'un des phénomènes les plus apparents est ce qui est communément appelé le code-switching (alternance codique). Le passage d'une langue à une autre- ou le mélange de différentes langues- se fait de manière très naturelle dans la communauté berbérophone bilingue. Même si certains pensent que cette pratique langagière est déviante, négative et réductrice, le fait est qu'elle dénote une créativité et un savoir faire linguistique de la part des locuteurs. C'est cette capacité d'utiliser l'Arabe Algérien, l'Arabe dit Classique, le français et Tamazight à des fins sociales qui montre la maestria des locuteurs berbérophones – ceci est valable pour tous les bilingues d'ailleurs – dans l'instrumentalisation des différentes langues à leur disposition.

Language contact situations result in a number of phenomena which have been investigated from various points of view: linguistic, sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, ethnological, etc. Among the phenomena that result from language contact we can cite: bilingualism and biculturalism, code-switching and borrowing, pidgins and pidginisation, creoles and creolisation, etc. The present paper which focuses on the social implications of code switching in bilingual context is the result of an investigation undertaken in a bilingual speech community; namely the Tamazight/Arabic/French speech one in Algeria. The informants who were from different towns, backgrounds, occupations and educational levels were at times asked questions as to the reasons for code-switching and / or using words from Arabic or French.

Code-switching has been extensively investigated from a structural angle i.e. grammatical and syntactic constraints by many researchers (Bentahila, & Davies, 1995), Myers - Scotton, 1997); yet, the social dimension has not been given the importance it deserves. Although bilingual speakers frequently code-switch in a spontaneous unconscious way, they are sometimes motivated to do so. The scope of the present paper is to investigate the motivations of Tamazight/Arabic/French bilinguals to alternate languages.

1. Linguistic Deficiency

One of the reasons for code-switching is the speaker's lack of mastery in one of the two, or more, languages he uses in the course of a discussion. Skiba (1997) explaining Crystal's point of view (1987) that what we consider as a switch resulting from linguistic deficiency occurs when:

> *"… a speaker may not be able to express him/herself in one language so switches to the other to compensate for the deficiency. As a result, the speaker may be triggered into speaking in the other language for a while."*

Thus, this linguistic deficiency should not be considered at the level of the general individual competence but rather as a linguistic "incompetence" in one of the codes that constitute a speaker's repertoire. Because a speaker does not know a word in one of the codes, he relies on the second code to fill this deficit. This is quite frequent with Tamazight speakers who rely on Arabic or French when conversing in Tamazight or rely on Tamazight when conversing in Arabic or French. Consider the following examples

(1) awid lmaʂʂalħa

"Bring the broom"

I must say here that this instance was encountered in the course of a conversation between two young sisters born and brought up in Arabic speaking town, namely Oran. This can explain the use of /lmaʂʂalħa / instead of /θafalluuʃθ/. This kind of switch is unlikely to occur with speakers of the older generation whose speech remains less influenced by AA.
The opposite process where a speaker relies rather on L1 frequently happens with individuals living in Kabylia. Their mastery of AA not being one that we can consider as perfect, speakers may switch to Tamazight when they do not know the appropriate term in Arabic or in French, as in the following:

(2) manaqbalʃ narkaɖ lmabaadiʔ ntawʕi
"I won't accept to trample principles mine (I won't accept to trample on my principles)".

The use of /narɣaɖ/ is justified by the fact that the speaker who does not, or at least did not at that very moment, know the Arabic term /naʕfas/ relied on his L1 as a means to maintain a certain continuation in his message.
Another instance was heard on the radio during a football match report:

(3) amjurær juʏalad ur la défense
"The player came back to the defence"

When asked why he used "la défense" rather than /θamħaddiθ/, the journalist, who uttered this sentence, answered that he forgot the word in Tamazight because it was new for him.
Although most informants asked about what they thought of such a switch answered that they viewed it as negative, one must confess that it allows avoiding breaks in the flow of communication since both the speaker and the listener are kept

within the scope of the conversation without any cuts or stops. It is interesting to note that, in spite of their lack of mastery of one the languages they use, these bilinguals show a great capacity of adoption and adaptation of vocabulary to keep the coherence and the cohesion of their discourse. Another reason for switching is to show solidarity.

2. Solidarity Marker

Switching from one code to another is a strategy which is used also to mark solidarity with an interlocutor by using the same type of switch i.e., by switching to the same language. Skiba (1997) writes:

> *"…switching commonly occurs when an individual wishes to express solidarity with a particular social group. Rapport is established between the speaker and the listener when the listener responds with a similar switch."*

A case in point is that of two Berber speakers who live in Arabic speaking areas and who meet during their holidays in a Kabyle village. While most of the conversation between the members of a group is held in Kabyle one of the two speakers cited above switch to Arabic for some reason; he is responded by the other interlocutor by a switch to Arabic to show linguistic solidarity. This kind of switch is not meant to exclude the other members of the group from the conversation but allows showing a kind of difference between the two speakers in question and the reset of the group. A switch to Arabic in such a case is meant to show that the speakers live in big cities and are therefore more up to date than the others who live in villages and mountains.

However, the opposite process is also true. The same two Berber speakers we talked about earlier would react differently in the town they live in. It is actually frequent for Berber speakers in Oran, an Arabic speaking town in the west of Algeria, to converse in Arabic between them. Yet, once one of the interlocutors

switches to Kabyle the second one does the same thing to mark solidarity and show through this that he too belongs to the same community. The following is an example:

(4) A: salaam ʕliikum

"peace be upon you (hello)"

B: ahlaa, kiraak?

"welcome, how are you?"

A: raak taskun hna?

" you are living here? (do you live here?)

B: wah, fə deuxiéme étage

"yes, in the second floor"

A: ihi aqlikid zðæθːi kæn

" so, you are near me just (so you live just near my house)"

B : æjən anga iθzaðɤəɖ ʁatʃini ?

"why, where do you live?"

A : ðiˌl baʈima jinna en face

"in the building that in front (in that building in front of us)"

The above conversation which starts in Arabic from both speakers shifts to Tamazight from speaker A first. The response of speaker B who in his turn switches to Tamazight by following the code-switch triggered by speaker A is meant to show solidarity with his interlocutor.

The same switch can be used, as suggested by Crystal, to exclude other people who do not speak the language.

3. Marker of Attitude towards an Interlocutor

Code-switching can also be used to show attitude towards one's interlocutor. As each code is considered in terms of prestige, intimacy, etc, a switch from one code to another suggests a change in attitude on the part of the speaker. This is closely related to mood as will be seen later. For example a switch from Tamazight to French may suggest unfamiliarity while the opposite may

convey an invitation to familiarity and more closeness. Skiba (1997), quoting Crystal, says that this switch is:

> *"…the alteration that occurs when the speaker wishes to convey his/her attitude to the listener. Where monolingual speakers can communicate these attitudes by means of variation in the level of formality in their speech, bilingual speakers can convey the same by code-switching."*

Thus, formality can be conveyed through a switch to one of the varieties the speaker has at his disposal. This happens in a situation where a bilingual wants to widen or narrow the distance between him and another bilingual. To paraphrase Skiba, code-switching in this case would the equivalent of underlining, bolding using parentheses in a written text. It allows show change in tone, mood, formality, distance, etc.

Actually, many scholars got interested in the sociolinguistic implications that this phenomenon can have. As will be seen below, these implications take various forms and degrees depending on whether code-switching is considered from a micro-sociolinguistic point of view or a macro-sociolinguistic one.

4. Situational Code-switching

Blom & Gumperz in their study of the situation in Norway noticed that each of the two varieties used, the standard dialect (Bokma°l) and the local dialect (Ranama°l), were used to redefine what is known as "Rights and Obligations". Lectures at university are given in Bokma°l which suggests respect of the status of the teacher and the place where the interaction takes place, but the same teacher encourages his students in Ranama°l in order to be nearer to them and to make sure his message is well received. This assumes a direct relation between the social situation and code choice. Bouamrane (1986) equates situational code-switching with

diglossia since the varieties that are solicited are in complementary distribution.

(5) A: je ne crois pas que ça servira à quoique se soit!
I don't think it will serve anything!"
B: Tu n'as pas le droit de parler comme çà ; on doit garder espoir
"you don't have the right to speak this way (you don't have the right to say so), we should keep hope."
A: Mais quel espoir ? rien ne marche normalement !
"But what hope ? Nothing is working the way it should"
B: saħħa, akkar θura annatʃ imansi
"okay, stand up now we have dinner now(okay, stand up now let's have dinner now)"

In the above conversation from my corpus, between a mayor (B) in Kabylia and a citizen (A), we can easily notice that a change in situation led to a change in code. We can easily presume that the first subject of the conversation is one that is serious and very important for the two interlocutors and the relation between the two antagonists is that between a mayor and one of the citizens in his circumscription. Such a situation dictated the need for the use of French. Yet, switching to Tamazight indicates that the situation has changed into a discussion between two neighbours or two people from the same village. In this sense Blom & Gumperz (1972:421) write:

> "*the same individual needs to be absolutely consistent with all his actions. He may whish to appear as a member of the local team on some occasions, while identifying with middle-class values on others."*

This is what the mayor cited above actually did. He behaved and spoke like a mayor in one situation, but became a villager in another situation.

5. Metaphorical Code-switching

Besides situational code-switching, Blom & Gumperz propose another type of switching which they call metaphorical. The reason for such a switch depends exclusively on the individual who is in control of the codes he uses. This happens when a speaker changes to a code which is not expected to be used in a given situation. Thus, on the opposite side of situational code-switching, there is a case where it is the speaker himself who switches to a code which is different from the one used in the conversation. It is not much the situation that determines this code-switch than the speakers will to redefine the relation between himself and the addressee. What seems to be a behaviour that breaks the norms of Rights and Obligations is actually meant as a reminder of them since it resets the respective positions of the interlocutors. The following example is a case in point:

(6) A: iθura addiin agi ilaq annaxðam jəs

"And now, this religion, we must work with it (we must apply its percepts)"

B: mais, wi ddinnan ur nxaddmara jəs?

"But who said we don't work with it (we shouldn't follow its percepts)?"

A: iʃabbæji rabbi ðajagi iddaqqaarəm

"It seems to me that this is what you say"

B: alors vous avez mal compris! Et puis parler de religion en politique, c'est très délicat

"So you have misunderstood! And then, talking about religion in politics is quite delicate"

A: lækin wiinu lmuʃkil?

"But, where is the problem?"

The above conversation between a journalist and a political party representative on the Tamazight radio station is quite edifying at more than one level. The debate was expected to be held in Tamazight, and this is how it started. To the first remark of the journalist, the political representative responds in the same language i.e., Tamazight. But, at the second remark, the representative switches to French in an attempt to put a certain distance between his interlocutor and himself. This distance may be understood from different angles. The representative might have wanted to convey that the topic of discussion is beyond the reach of the journalist and that one has to be well trained in politics to be able to tackle such subjects as religion in politics. Another possible interpretation is that the representative wanted to remind the journalist that the topic in question was not within the scope of the debate. To this, the journalist reacts by switching to another unexpected code which is Arabic. This again can be interpreted in different ways. The journalist might have wanted to show his religious tendency through the use of Arabic and push therefore the representative to respond to his initial statement.

This can also be a technique through the journalist wanted to take more distance from the representative in reaction to the latter's distance.

Thus, following the principle of Rights and Obligations that are, normal situation, known by all the members of the community, what happens in situations of metaphorical code-switching is a negotiation of the status of the interlocutors by means of using different languages or even different levels of the same language.

Later on, Gumperz (1992) adds that CS (code-switching) is determined by what he calls contextualisation cues (workplace, school, mosque), yet he puts much of the responsibility of code

choice on the part of the individual rather than on the part of the community. Gumperz assumes that even if contextualisation cues play a great role in choosing one language or the other; it is the speaker himself who decides which one to use according to the aim he wants to reach. The following section is an examination of the markedness model as proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993).

6. The Markedness Model

The markedness model was proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993) in an attempt to combine the micro and the macro perspectives in the study of code-switching. One can easily notice the similarities with Blom & Gumperz's types of code-switching. In this model code-switching serves negotiating positions between the speakers. In other words, it is through code choice and switching that a speaker makes it possible to bring about his position intimacy, respect, etc, and relation to the addressee. Speakers switch to different codes because they main gain various statuses in doing so. In her study of Swahili/ English code-switching in Nairobi, Kenya, Myers-Scotton claims that members of a multilingual speech community are aware of the range of codes that would be appropriate for a particular type of conventionalised exchange, and they assign meanings to choices based on such expectations. It is on this basis that she proposes three maxims in code choice in bilingual conversations in relation to the markedness feature.

6.1 Unmarked Choice Maxim

What is meant by an unmarked maxim choice is the switch from one variety to another in situations where the switch is expected to occur. As the members of any bilingual community are aware of the code distribution according to social norms, situation and usages, an unmarked maxim choice is one that is thought of as being normal and entailing no particular meaning from a micro-sociolinguistic point of view. Thus, switching from an unmarked code to another unmarked code can be equated with what Blom and Gumperz call situational code-switching since it is determined

by the situation rather than any other parameter. The following conversation is a case in point.

(7) A: antruħaɖ ur θmaɤra θamaddiθ?
"Will you come to the wedding party tonight?"
B: wallah ma ziɤ. uɖnaɤ ʃwiit
"I swear, I don't know. I am a bit ill."
A: ðaʃu kjuuɤən?
"What's the problem?"
B: Ben, Le médecin dit que c'est un début d'ulcère
"Well, the doctor says it's the beginning of a ulcer"
A: Et tu suit un traitement?
"And you're following a treatment?"
B: Oui, je suis obligé de toute façon!
"Yes, I am obliged anyway!"
A: adjafk rabbi ʃfa! ær azəkka ihi.
"May god give recovery (I hope you will recover very soon)! See you tomorrow then"
B: nʃallah! θanmirθ
"God willing! Thanks"

The conversation is held in Tamazight when it deals with a wedding party which is a quite relaxed, normal situation. As soon as the discussion shifted to talking about health, doctor and medicine, a language change occurred which fits more a situation the two speakers consider as being a serious one. This shift into the French language is frequent in the Kabyle speech community especially when the topic or the situation becomes more formal than it was at the beginning as in the case of the conversation above. By the end of the conversation; however, the conversation shifts back to Tamazight as greetings are usually expressed in this language.

6.2 Marked Choice Maxim

The marked maxim choice is actually a strategy used by bilingual speakers to mark a change in the position of one of the two interlocutors. It is at this level that the negotiation of Rights and Obligations takes place since it allows a speaker manifest the distance between him and the addressee. This can occur in two ways, either to put distance between the interlocutors or shorten it. This maxim sometimes also serves aesthetic purposes. Let's consider the following examples:

(8) driver: sjagi ðavrið n jækurən ?

"is this the way to Yakouren ?"

policeman : ruħ kæn niʃæn

"Go just straight ahead"

driver : mæliʃ ma dawwraʏ sijagi ?

"is it okay if I turn this way?"

policeman: lla mamnuuʕ

" no, it's forbidden"

driver: æjen? ðagi kæn adawwraʏ

" Why? I will turn just here."

policeman: ʕʈini kwæʏat assijara!

"Give me the car papers!"

The conversation above is a case of marked maxim choice. The driver kept speaking Kabyle through the whole conversation while the policeman shifted to AA at a given moment. The policeman being the representative of the law of the republic replied in Tamazight at the beginning as a sign of understanding and closeness to the driver who in this case represented a citizen. Yet, when the driver asked to turn at a forbidden way, the policeman shifted to AA to show his authority and mark distance with his interlocutor. The latter who did apparently not understand this shift kept on asking the same thing, To show more distance and

more formality, the policeman switched to ESA. Thus, a negotiation of Rights and Obligations took place through a change from the status of the policeman who is near to the citizens to the official representative of authority.

The reverse may also happen when the expected language is supposed to put distance between people is replaced by a language that shortens this distance. The following is a case in point:

(9) A (judge): lijatafaɖɖal aʃʃæhid θθæni

" may the second witness come in (call the second witness)…...

l ʔsim, allaqab, assakan wa lmihna?

" first name, name, address and occupation?"

B (witness)…….

A: aqlikid ðagi ðə témoin kæn , inid jak ajen θazriɗ ur tsagað

"you are here just as a witness, say everything you know, you don't have to be afraid"

The situation in this case is expected to be a formal one since it takes place in a tribunal. Although the judge starts speaking in Arabic to respect the formality of the place and the topic on the one hand and to show his status as the leader of the debate on the other, he switches into Tamazight to put the witness at ease and help him answer the questions freely. Here again, Rights and obligations are negotiated and redirected to meet the will of the speaker, the judge, in reducing the gap between him and his interlocutor.

Therefore, while the unmarked choice in any context is the normatively expected one, marked choices convey deviations that are meant to trigger implications that are socially symbolic of the speaker's communicative intentions. Grosjean (1982) notes that while using a particular language or mixing languages in a particular social context can signal group solidarity, or ethnic identity markers, making marked or unexpected choices implicitly

conveys the speaker's social identity or dynamics of interaction during conversation.

6.3. Exploratory Choice Maxim

The other choice maxim Myers-Scotton puts forward is of the exploratory. This may take place mainly when unmarked choice is not obvious from the situation situation. This results in a confusion or rather a clash in the norms to be respected and in role relationships. In such a case one of the interlocutors reduces distance with the other one while the situation requires keeping it for some reason. The situation described by Myers-Scotton (1993b: 144) is a case in point. In an office, a sister talks to her brother in their mother tongue, Lwidakho, in the presence of other customers while the brother talks to her in Swahili to explain that she is considered as a customer and not as a sister at that very moment. Thus, although the sister did not take the unmarkedness norm of the situation into consideration, the brother redirected the role relationship between them to what is considered as the norm in the community for such a situation. The difference with the marked maxim choice resides in the fact that it is not a change of code from one of the speakers that occurs but rather an "intrusion" of an unwanted marked choice from one speaker which is "corrected" by the use of a marked choice by another speaker. This happens quite frequently in situations where a Tamazight speaker is talking in Arabic with Arabic speakers and another Tamazight speaker addresses in Tamazight. The reaction of the first speaker is to answer in Arabic to let the second speaker get aware that he is treated like the other members of the group they are with at that moment. Another reason for exploratory choice maxim is the reduction of tension and misunderstanding on the part of members of the group who do not understand the language used by two speakers. Therefore, there is avoidance of marking solidarity to the benefit of speech accommodation to the majority group not much as a token of integration but rather as a sign of respect towards this group on the one hand and as a redefinition of

the due situational norms. The following is an example of such a case: a glassmaker (A) who was with Arabic speaking customers at his shop saw his cousin (B) to whom he prepared a glass to put on a window.

(10) (B) azzuul fellwən " hello"

(A) assalaam u raħmat allah "hello"

(B) i la vitre anni æ ʕli "what about that glass, Ali ?"

(A) ça y est raahi wæʒda, taddi :ha ? "it's okay, it's ready, do want to take it?"

(A) waah! mada bi :k "yes, please."

What happens in the above conversation is that the cousin started using Tamazight, which in this situation is a marked code because not suitable, for some reason. The code used between the cousin and the glassmaker in intimate situations marks solidarity. To this the glassmaker responds in Arabic for different reasons. The first one is that since they are in Arabic speaking town where work in general and trade is monitored in Arabic, it is this code which expected to be used in a workplace. Add to this the fact that in this very situation Arabic speaking customers were in the shop; this made the glassmaker use Arabic not only to explain that the cousin is treated like a customer but also to avoid any misunderstanding from the customers who might have the feeling that there is a will to exclude them from the conversation. This is something that all traders, craftsmen and the like would avoid. At the end of the conversation we can notice that the redefinition of the role relationship of each speaker has been achieved because the cousin integrates (or reintegrates?) the norm by using Arabic on his turn.

The notion of "auditor" as suggested by Bell (1984), is to be taken into consideration at this point. He says that in the West of Ireland, Irish/English bilinguals will switch to English not only when conversing with an English speaker but also when within the group comes an interlocutor who is considered as an "auditor" i.e., a

participant in the interaction. This is due to different factors among which the prestige of the English language and the will to integrate an individual to interchange in some specific situations.

The different cases of code-switching seen above agree on the fact that people code switch because of various reasons; however, Fishman (1972) sees the phenomenon of code-switching from a macro-sociolinguistic level. He makes a one to one relation between the code and the topic. He writes

> *"'proper' usage dictates that only one of the theoretically co- available languages or varieties will be chosen by particular interlocutors on particular kinds of occasions to discus particular kinds of topics."* Fishman (1972:437)

In Fishman's point of view, it is the topic that determines the choice of code to be used. In particular situations when discussing a particular topic speakers will opt for the variety that can the situational norms and can be used for a given topic. However, this point of view poses a problem since it excludes de facto cases of intrasentential code-switching which is a characteristic of all bilingual communities. Even if much of this holds true to the case of Tamazight in relation to the languages it is in contact with in Algeria, one can hardly affirm that it is all the time the case. The question that seems to be quite pertinent in the above quotation is:

what should we consider as "proper" usage? There seems to be two ways in which one can consider the matter. The first one relates to what the members of a community as an entity conceives as "proper". In this case, it is certainly clear that varieties are compartmentalised in the sense that each variety correlates with (a) given situation(s) and (a) given topic(s). One can assert without any risk of being mistaken that in the case under study, Tamazight, French, AA and MSA are used each in particular situations with particular interlocutors and when discussing particular topics. A bilingual Tamazight speaker, who speaks also AA, MSA and Fr, will probably use T at home with

members of his family when talking about such topics as food or the price of something, AA with an Arabic speaker in a café when the topic is football, MSA or ESA when addressing an imam in a mosque about a religious subject and Fr in a bank with a bank manager if the subject concerns banking matters. However, this sharp cut of functions that has many been assigned to different varieties a community has at its disposal is not as fixed as one might think. Because Man is not robotised, he sometimes uses techniques to express what he wants to. The other angle from which we can regard the "properness" of a code is its real occurrence in the community intercourse. As shown before, code use and choice is not fixed and the assumed one to one relation code/topic, interlocutor/situation is not respected. Code-switching occurs very frequently, not to say that it is the rule, in any bilingual speech community. This happens for the many different reasons explored earlier throughout this paper.

Yet, one cannot deny that Fishman's assertion that different parameters do play an important role in determining which variety is to be used in which circumstances is of great interest to the comprehension of language behaviour in bilingual speech communities. We will try, in the following chapter, to shed some light on language user and language choice in the Tamazight speaking community.

7. Conclusion

The above investigation brings out some interesting conclusions that can be quite useful for the fields of Berber linguistics and sociolinguistics. One of these is that the linguistic behaviour of Berber speakers contradicts many set up beliefs that Kabyle speakers in particular avoid using AA or SA and, therefore, rarely switch to these varieties. It is clear that the speakers are not limited to a single variety, be it their mother or the so called language of the nation. Even if it can be argued that there is a kind of rejection of one variety or another for some reason, the fact is that when conversing, Tamazight speakers switch from Tamazight

to French, to AA and even to SA. It is switching to the latter language which is the most astonishing because of all the tension that has existed between the promoters of the "all Arabism" and the promoters of the "all Berberism". This can, however, be explained by the fact that the newer generations have all been educated in SA and are prone to have more contact with the Arabic speaking communities. The other reason is the close link that exists between SA and Islam. When dealing with religious topics or topics that are related to religion, there is a tendency to mix Tamazight and SA because of the lack of some religious vocabulary in the former and because of the prestige the latter has. In addition to this, the emergence of ESA reduced the gap not only between the different levels of Arabic but also between Arabic in general and Tamazight.

On the other side, the older generations switch more to French because of their educational background. As, in most cases, the only language they know beside Tamazight is French, old aged speakers are more inclined to use the latter language when conversing.

This does not mean that the cut between the generations is a clear sharp one. We come across young speakers
who switch to French and old speakers who switch to Arabic as a result of, among other things, the media and mainly satellite TV with all the French and Arabic spoken channels.

A no less important conclusion, is that it seems that Tamazight as it obtains in Algeria presents many similarities with Algerian Arabic as far as switching to other languages is concerned. This is certainly due to many reasons among which their co-existence and their development in the same conditions for many centuries. They have had contacts with the same languages at the same periods in history and under the same conditions. The fact that Tamazight is believed to be one of the important components of
AA is not to be neglected to explain the similar behaviour the two languages have. Further diachronic research will probably show the close link between Maghribi Arabic and Tamazight in general

and AA and Algerian Tamazight in particular. The switches that some Tamazight speakers living in Arabic speaking areas make might seem as "deviations" for some speakers from Tamazight speaking areas because they make use of adaptations and adoptions that seem to obtain only in the former areas. From a linguistic and sociolinguistic point of view, these deviations must be looked at as a natural development of a language in a natural environment.

On a sociolinguistic level, the different strategies used reveal that the speaker are in a lot of instances conscious of the switch and the functions and impacts it may have on the interlocutors' status, position and attitudes towards each other.

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