Introduction

Berber (aka Tamazight) is a branch of the Afro-Asiatic language phylum and counts about forty languages, which entirely cover North Africa, stretching from Morocco to Egypt, as well as from the Mediterranean Sea to the Sahara and the northern and western Sahel, including Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. The number of Berber speakers is estimated at more than forty million, of which the majority lives in Morocco (about 70 percent speaks Berber, mainly along with other languages). Berber has a general “continuum” makeup, which means that one Berber language gradually merges into another Berber language when they are contiguous. As a result, Berber forms a tightly knit and coherent bloc, which makes its subclassification very tricky. On the typological level, three major subdivisions can be made. The first is Northern Berber, which mainly contains Tarifit (including Senhaja Berber; North, Northeast, and Northwest Morocco), Tamazight of the Middle Atlas (Central Morocco), Figuig Berber (East Morocco), Kabyle Berber (North Algeria), Tashawit (Aures, Northeast Algeria), and some oasis languages like Berber of Mzab (South Algeria) and of Ouargla (South Algeria). The second is Southern Berber, which comprises languages such as Zenaga (Mauritania), Tashelhit (South Morocco), and Tetsseret and Tuareg Berber (Sahara, Sahel). The third is Eastern Berber, which includes languages such as Berber spoken in Siwa (West Egypt), Sokna and El-Fogaha (Fezzan, Central Libya), Yefren and Zuara (Tripolitania, North Libya), and Ghadames (East Libya), as well as all the Berber languages of Tunisia (e.g., Jerba, Tamazret, and Sened). Berber has its own writing system, tifinagh (Libyco-Berber script), an ancient indigenous system that the Tuaregs have preserved and developed and that has recently been renewed by other Berber peoples, especially in those countries where Berber acquired an official status, such as in Morocco and Algeria. Berber is also written in other scripts, generally Latin based or Arabic based. The latter script is also attested in manuscripts tracing back to ancient times.

General Overviews

There are no general overviews of the entire Berber family, but there are some general comparative introductions to Berber, such as the foundational work of Basset 1894 and later of Applegate 1971, Basset 1952, and Galand 1988. The latter contribution was recently worked out in more detail in Galand 2010.


A general introduction to some of the primary issues in Berber linguistics.


This detailed comparison of the Berber verbal morphology is an indisputable milestone in Berberology and still provides a valid framework for current linguistic descriptive and theoretical studies.


The first comparative grammar of Berber, involving phonological, morphological, and lexical phenomena of about forty language varieties.

A very solid overview of Berber’s main comparative features.


This landmark work provides the principal comparative-historical phenomena of Berber phonology, morphology, and syntax.

Textbooks and Grammars

There are no textbooks that cover the totality of the Berber language family, though many textbooks deal with individual languages. Some recent examples include El Mountassir 2009 and Prasse 2010. No comprehensive reference grammar of the individual Berber languages exists either, although some detailed descriptive grammars are available, such as Bentolila 1981, Chaker 1983, Heath 2005, Lux 2013, Mourigh 2016, Prasse 1972–2008a, and Prasse 1972–2008b. Some outdated grammatical descriptions were recently revisited, such as in van Putten 2014, which is based on Paradisi’s work.


A comprehensive functionalist description of Aït Seghrouchen Berber (Northern Berber, Central Morocco).


A thorough description of Kabyle Berber (Northern Berber, North Algeria), with a special focus on syntax.


This basic course introduces the reader to Tashelhit (Southern Berber, South Morocco) by means of grammar notes, vocabulary, and dialogues as well as a set of audio recordings.


A detailed grammar of Tamashek (Southern Berber, Mali), with a special focus on phonology, noun phrase structure, and verbal morphology.


The first description of Tetserret Berber (Southern Berber, Niger), which includes some comparisons with other Southern Berber languages.


A descriptive grammar of Ghomara Berber (Northwest Morocco), including topics concerning the impact of Arabic on this Berber language.

A three-volume foundational work on Tuareg Berber of Ahaggar (Southern Berber, South Algeria), covering many of the core features and constructions relating to phonetics, phonology, and morphology.


The final volume of Prasse’s series of studies on Tuareg Berber of Ahaggar (Southern Berber, South Algeria), which is dedicated to syntax.


This textbook forms an introduction to Tahaggart (Southern Berber, South Algeria), with a special focus on its verb system.


An updated description of Awjila Berber (Eastern Berber, Libya), based on Paradisi’s work.

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**Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies**

The Atlas provided in Lafkioui 2007 is the first and so far only existing linguistic Atlas of its kind in the field of Berber studies. Albeit still important as a data source, Basset’s geolinguistic studies—sometimes called “Atlases”—were very sketchy and primarily based on lexical material only, obtained via methods that would be regarded as questionable nowadays. Moreover, Lafkioui’s Atlas fills the gap left in Berber geolinguistics since Basset 1959. Based on the state-of-the-art methodology and techniques as well as on the original data and findings, qualitative and quantitative classifications of the linguistic varieties of the Rif area were provided in Lafkioui 2008a and Lafkioui 2011, which include computational algorithmic classifications (dialectometry and lexicostatistics) and complexity phenomena. Furthermore, Lafkioui 2008b and Naït-Zerrad 2009 show how algorithmic classifications are valuable for other kind of linguistic classifications and sociolinguistic applications.

**Basset, André. 1959. *Articles de dialectologie berbère*. Paris: Klincksieck.**

A wide-ranging collection of papers on Berber dialectology, with a special focus on linguistic geography in its Part 2.


This monograph is a milestone in Berber geolinguistics because of its original findings regarding the highly complex language continuum of Tarifit (including Senhaja; North, Northeast, Northwest Morocco) as well as its pioneering methodological framework. The Atlas includes 356 maps and deals with a wide array of linguistic phenomena relating to phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon, plotted on 141 georeferenced points. It also provides numerous descriptive, comparative, and diachronic analyses.


This article presents both an algorithmic classification of the Berber lexis of Tarifit (Northern Berber; North, Northeast, and Northwest Morocco) and a critical overview of the various computational techniques verified for this purpose.

A paper on how qualitative and quantitative geolinguistic methods and studies benefit linguistic classifications in general as well as language planning in Berber.


The article discusses how language change and diffusion in Tarifit (Northern Berber; North, Northeast, and Northwest Morocco) can be explained by system-internal factors. The phonological and morphological cases examined concern several innovation processes triggered by the vocalization of the liquids /r/ and /ṛ/.


An example of how dialectometry can be useful for other linguistic classifications in Berber.

**Dictionaries**

Some major Berber dictionaries are Benamara 2013 (Figuig); Dallet 1982 (Kabyle); Delheure 1987 (Wargli); Heath 2006 (Tamashek); Naït-Zerrad 1998–2002 (comparative); Ouissikoum 2013 (Tamazight); Prasse, et al. 2003 (Tamajeq); Serhoual 2002 (Tarifit); Taifi 1991 (Tamazight); and Taine-Cheikh 2008 (Zenaga).


A fine Figuig Berber–French dictionary of over eight hundred pages long.


At over one thousand pages long and including an informative appendix with illustrations, Dallet’s Kabyle Berber–French dictionary is a reference in Berber studies.


Delheure’s Ouargli-French dictionary is a welcome addition to the study of Wargla Berber (Northern Berber, South Algeria), hitherto poorly documented.


A good dictionary of Tamashek (Mali).


A three-volume dictionary of the Berber roots attested and useful for comparative analysis.

This is a lengthy dictionary of 1021 pages on the Tamazight variety of Ayt Wirra (Central Morocco), which includes an informative grammatical presentation at the beginning.


A two-volume dictionary including about forty thousand entries on Tuareg Berber of Niger (Tawelemmet and Tayert). An indubitable reference in Berber linguistics.


This Tarifit-French dictionary of 745 pages forms Serhoual’s PhD dissertation and is of good quality. It mainly concerns the Rif Berber variety of Ayt Said (Central Rif Berber).


This is a general but rich dictionary documenting Tamazight Berber (Northern Berber, Central Morocco).


This is a detailed Zenaga Berber (Southern Berber, Mauritania)—French dictionary, with a somewhat complex structure for the less experienced reader. Its French-Zenaga counterpart is also available.

Collective Volumes and Special Issues

The most consistently published group of collectively authored editions dedicated to Berber languages and linguistics relate to the biannually held Bayreuth-Frankfurt-Leidener Kolloquium (BAFRALE), whose proceedings appear in the series of Berber Studies, edited by Harry Stroomer and published by Rüdiger Köppe Verlag. Other recent Berber collections covering a range of topics include Allati 2017; Chaker, et al. 2009; El Aissati 2008; Lafioui and Brugnatelli 2008; and Mettouchi 2011. There are some recent special issues that deal with Berber linguistics, such as Bendjaballah and Ben Si Saïd 2015, which mainly concerns linguistic corpora, and Taine-Cheikh and Lux 2014, which focuses on typology.


A Festschrift for Michael Peyron, with a collection of articles covering Berber linguistics, literature, anthroponomy, and lexicography.


A special issue on building and using corpora in Berber linguistics.


A Festschrift for late Naima Louali, with various articles on Berber linguistics, including detailed phonetic studies.

A collection of articles on the linguistic and sociolinguistic variation of Berber in Europe and in Morocco, with a particular focus on the debate on institutional education in Berber.


A collective volume with chapters dealing with different forms of language contact involving Berber in both North Africa and its diaspora, approached from a linguistic and sociolinguistic perspective.


A Festschrift for Paulette and Lionel Galand’s ninetieth birthday, including a variety of articles ranging from linguistics and sociolinguistics to literature, culture, and history.


A special issue on the Berber languages, considered from a typological perspective.

**Bibliography**

The most comprehensive bibliography of Berber is Bougchiche 1997. There is also the online bibliography of the Langues et cultures du Nord de l’Afrique et diaspora – Centre de Recherche Berbère (LACNAD-CRB) at the Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (INALCO, Paris), although it lacks many major works and it is not up to date.


A comprehensive annotated bibliography of the Berber languages and literatures, comprising six thousand entries relating to works of twenty-three hundred authors.

**Journals, Book Series, and Encyclopedia**

There are a number of journals dedicated to Berber languages and cultures, the main ones being *Asinag, Awal: Cahiers d’études berbères, Etudes et documents berbères, and Studi Magrebini*. Even though these journals publish articles dealing with linguistics, their scope also covers other disciplines of humanities. For linguistics-specific topics, scholars also publish on Berber in journals with a more African or general linguistics orientation. As for book series, the following three series are the most consistent and productive ones (alphabetically ordered): Berber Studies, Série Etudes, and Ussun amaziġ—Maghreb-Sahara. Berber also has Encyclopédie berbère as encyclopedia.

*Asinag*. 2008–.

A journal published by the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture (IRCAM), dedicated to promote research on Berber (Amazigh) language and culture. It regularly publishes special issues.
Awal: Cahiers d'études berbères. 1985–.
This biannual journal founded in 1985 in Paris by Mouloud Mammeri and Tassadit Yacine is set up to enrich and diffuse the knowledge of Berber languages and cultures from all perspectives of humanities.

A linguistic- and text-oriented series on Berber languages, published by Rüdiger Köppe Verlag. About two volumes appear per year and comprise monographs as well as collections of papers.

This encyclopedic series founded by Gabriel Camps in 1970 and under editorial supervision by Salem Chaker since 2002 offers a wide range of contributions to Berber studies including all disciplines of humanities. Numerous entries deal with linguistic topics. Volumes 1 (Abadir-Acridophagie) to 41 (Rif-Rusuccensis) have been published so far.

Etudes et documents berbères. 1985–.
This journal, issued by L'Harmattan, is dedicated to the study and documentation of Berber languages and cultures.

Série Etudes. 2004–. Rabat, Morocco: Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe.
A book series on Berber language and culture, including topics on linguistics.

Studi Magrebini. 1966–.
Although this journal, published by the Istituto Universitario L'Orientale, includes publications on North African Arabic, it is an important source of study on Berber languages and literatures.


Conferences and Proceedings

There exists one major international conference series dedicated to Berber languages and linguistics, the Bayreuth-Frankfurt-Leidener Kolloquium zur Berberologie (BAFRALE), which is organized every two years by Ibriszimow, Vossen, and Stroomer. The proceedings of the papers are regularly published by Rüdiger Köppe Verlag in the series of Berber Studies. The papers cover an array of topics, including descriptive issues as well as historical-comparative and typological issues, and form an important indication as to how Berber linguistics is progressing. The most recent proceedings volume, Ibriszimow, et al. 2012, is dedicated to Berber syntax primarily.

Proceedings of the 6. Bayreuth-Frankfurt-Leidener Kolloquium zur Berberologie, an international conference on Berber languages and linguistics, whose main theme was syntax.
Text Collections, Manuscripts, and Archives

There are many editions of diverse Berber traditional texts, including folktales, lyrics, epic literature, ethnographic and historiographic narration, and all kinds of religious texts. These written sources are not only capital for the purpose of linguistic analysis and the directly connected disciplines like sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, and literature but also serve other domains of humanities, such as historical study for instance. Some collections of Berber texts with translations are, for example, Benamara 2016 for Figuig Berber (Northern Berber, East Morocco), Heath 2005 for Tuareg Berber from Mali (Southern Berber), Lafkioui and Merolla 2002 for Tashawit (Northern Berber, Northeast Algeria), Mitchel 2007 for Zuara Berber (Eastern Berber, Northeast Libya), and Schiattarella 2017 for Siwa Berber (Eastern Berber, West Egypt). Furthermore, there exists the Fonds Arsène Roux collection of Berber archives, installed at the Institut de recherches et d'études sur les mondes arabes et musulmans (IREMAM) in Aix-en-Provence, France. It contains a rich and diversified set of archives that document the Berber oral tradition of Central (Tamazight) and South (Tashelhit) Morocco during the colonial period. This collection contains more than two hundred manuscripts (mostly Latin based) covering a wide range of subjects, such as the religious tradition of the Berber peoples of the area, their customary law, medicine, and alchemy practices and canons. A catalogue of these Berber archives is given in Stroomer and Peyron 2003. Another important collection of Berber manuscripts is conserved in the library of Leiden University in the Netherlands and contains more than a hundred texts of the literary tradition of the Sous region (South Morocco), most of them composed in verse and in Arabic-based script. It also contains the oldest-known manuscript in Tashelhit Berber, authored by Ibrahim Aẓnag, as well as Awzal's Baḥr ad-dumūʿ (“The ocean of tears”), which is considered to be the masterpiece of the Sous Tashelhit literary tradition (van den Boogert 1997). Other manuscripts that received attention lately are in Eastern Berber and mainly concern early Iḥābi Islamic religious and cultural matters (South Tunisia, North Libya, East Algeria). The longest Berber manuscript studied at present is the Mudawwana, an Arabic-based compendium of over a thousand pages on Iḥābi jurisprudence by Abū Gānim Bīšr b. Gānim al-Ḥurāsānī, which probably goes back to the 10th and 15th centuries (see Brugnatelli 2015, Ould-Braham 2008). Various detailed studies on written sources about Berber ranging from Antiquity to contemporary times are presented in Lafkioui and Brugnatelli 2018.

A fine collection of Figuig Berber poetry (Northern Berber, East Morocco), including both ancient and contemporary works, with French translation.

A philological presentation of the Mudawwana and of its linguistic and historical perspectives.

Annotated texts from Tamashek (Southern Berber, Mali), with translation into English.

This volume is dedicated to the study of written sources about Africa from different historical periods (i.e., Antiquity, medieval, modern, and contemporary periods) and brings together various disciplines. A good deal of the book deals with Berber.

A revised selection of Mercier’s stories in Tashawit (Northern Berber, Northeast Algeria), a language that up to then was largely unexplored. The texts and their French translation are preceded by an informative linguistic and literary introduction.

The original version of the longest corpus of Zuaran Berber texts (Eastern Berber, Northeast Libya), translated into English and with a bibliography of prior linguistic studies on Zuaran Berber.


An introduction to the Ibâḍî Berber manuscript Mudawwana, written in North African Arabic script.


A look at some Berber tales and riddles from Siwa (Eastern Berber, West Egypt), introduced by a grammatical sketch.


A precise catalogue of the Berber archives contained in "Fonds Arsène Roux."


A thorough and insightful presentation of the Berber manuscript tradition of medieval North Africa, including grammatical and lexical descriptions.

Prehistoric Epigraphy

Berber has a tradition of studying its oldest inscriptions, which date back to Antiquity and are written in Tifinagh, also called Libyco-Berber script. Significant insights are given in Galand 2001, Pichler 2007, and Springer Bunk 2014.


A concise but solid overview of the debate on the origin of the Libyco-Berber script, with some convincing arguments in favor of its indigenous origin.


A critical survey of the various hypotheses on the origin of the Libyco-Berber script since the 19th century, with a special focus on the scripts used in Morocco and the Canary Islands.


An epigraphical study of the Libyco-Berber inscriptions of the Canary Islands, which indicates that the estimated date of settlement on these islands matches the period of the use of this script in North Africa.
Phonetics

Phonetics has been attracting more interest lately from scholars in Berber linguistics, including acoustic studies on gemination and syllabification in Bouarourou et al. 2014; Louali and Maddieson 1999; Ouakrim 1994; Puech and Louali 1999; and Ridouane 2007 as well as on vowelless syllables in Ridouane 2008 and on vowel quantity and quality in Louali 2000.


An articulatory and acoustic study of singleton and geminate voiced and voiceless consonants in Tarifit (Northern Berber, North Morocco).


An instrumental examination of the basic vowels of five Berber languages, that is, Rif Berber (Iznasen and Temsaman), Tashawit (Kays), Tashelhit (Anezi), Tamazight (Aït Sadden), and Tawellemmet (Abalagh).


An instrumental study that addresses the contrast between singleton and geminate plosives when spirantized, which usually transforms into a contrast between fricative and plosive in Berber. Duration seems to be the underlying distinctive phonetic parameter.


An acoustic verification whether geminates are monophonemic tense consonants.


An acoustic study of the way syllabification is organized in Tashelhit (Southern Berber, South Morocco), a language wherein all phonetic units, unvoiced stops as well, seem to function as syllabic.


An instrumental verification of the general claim that geminates in Tashelhit (Southern Berber, South Morocco) are simple segments that are discriminated from their corresponding singletons mainly by tenseness.


An acoustic and electropalatographic investigation of the way vowelless syllables are phonetically structured in Tashelhit (Southern Berber, South Morocco).
Phonology

A large part of the Berber phonological debate has always centered around the phenomena of gemination, syllables and syllabification, like in Bensoukas 2001, Boukous 2009, Dell and Elmedlaoui 2002, and Saib 1976, whose formalist studies complement the historical-comparative and geolinguistic accounts presented in Galand 1997 and Lafkioui 2007 (cited under Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies, Part 2), for instance. The phenomenon of spirantization has also attracted particular attention in Berber studies, for which Kossmann 1999, Lafkioui 2006a, and Lafkioui 2007 (cited under Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies, pp. 38–58) provide some historical-comparative insights. In addition, vocalization and vowel quantity and quality have been the object of increased study, as is shown in Chtatou 1994, Lafkioui 2006b, Lafkioui 2007 (cited under Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies, pp. 17–37), Lafkioui 2011 (cited under Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies), Prasse 1972–2008a and Prasse 1972–2008b (both cited under Textbooks and Grammars), and Prasse 1975. These studies point to the fact that Berber can be divided into those languages with a basic vowel system consisting of the vowels /i/, /u/, and /a/ (the majority) and those with an extended system (the minority), to which belong Central Tarifit (Northern Berber, North Morocco) and Tuareg (Southern Berber, Sahara, Sahel). All these Berber questions are also of relevance to current general theories in phonology, whether considered within the typological-functional or formalist framework.

A detailed study in optimality theory of the syllable structure in Tashelhit Berber (Southern Berber, South Morocco), including the prosodic morphological analysis of gemination and phenomena such as stem allomorphy, epenthesis, and vowel copying.

An insightful book dedicated to the phonology of Tashelhit (Southern Berber, South Morocco) and which provides an updated overview of various issues on which the author has published before.

An overview of the vowel system in Tarifit (only the varieties of Central Tarifit are considered; Northern Berber, North Morocco).

A work on generative phonology of Tashelhit (Southern Berber, South Morocco), with a special focus on its particular syllable structure, which has complex consonant sequences in the surface representations. Geminates are extensively considered in this study, based on the claim that singleton/geminate contrast is one of phonological length.

An alternative view on geminates, arguing that long and short consonants are contrasted by means of the tense/lax feature.

An attempt at historical reconstruction of a number of phonological phenomena in Berber, based on preceding contributions such as Prasse 1972–2008a and Prasse 1972–2008b (both cited under Textbooks and Grammars) and Prasse 1975 and on the comparison of a set of documented Berber languages.

A diachronic study of the spirantization of the velar /k/ in Tarifit (Northern Berber; North, Northeast, and Northwest Morocco), based on the geolinguistic data of the Atlas of the Rif (see Lafkioui 2007, cited under Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies, pp. 38–58). It also includes
Morphology

One of the topics that attracted much attention in Berber morphological studies is the origin of the prefix \textit{w(a)-} of masculine nouns. An interesting diachronic scenario is recently developed in Brugnatelli 1998. The prefix would be the result of the grammaticalization of former demonstrative pronouns that became articles before their reanalysis as an inflectional prefix. Another well-studied matter of noun morphology in Berber is its state, that is, the two inflectional forms of independent versus dependent state, for which Berber provides the typologically rather unusual phenomenon of marked nominative, as is explained in Aikhenvald 1990, Brugnatelli 1997, and Mettouchi and Frajzyngier 2013. A detailed geolinguistic study of the inflectional forms of the noun is given for Rif Berber (including Senhaja Berber, Northern Berber) in Lafkioui 2007 (cited under Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies, pp. 113–115), which demonstrates that those cases of dependent state nouns without the preposed possessive are generally the result of assimilation with the subsequent noun. This analysis confirms the findings presented in Galand 1966a and in Brugnatelli 1997, consistent with, for example, Prasse 1972–2008a and Prasse 1972–2008b (cited under Textbooks and Grammars). As for the Berber pronoun, Galand 1966b provides an important general historical-comparative analysis, whereas Lafkioui 2007 (cited under Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies, see pp. 116–136) accounts for its highly complex system of dependent (affixes, clitics) and independent pronouns in Rif Berber (Northern Berber, including Senhaja). Research on the verbal morphology of Berber has been focused primarily on Tense–aspect–mood (TAM), derivation and state verbs, which are dealt with in, for example, Cadi 1987, Lafkioui 2007 (cited under Atlas and Geolinguistic Studies, pp. 164–205), Leguil 2000, and Prasse 1972–2008a and Prasse 1972–2008b (cited under Textbooks and Grammars). Major comparative overviews are given in Basset 1952 (cited under General Overviews) and Galand 1977. One of the assumptions underlying these studies is that roots consist of consonants only, as is also observed in, for example, Nait-Zerrad 1998–2002 (cited under Dictionaries). Because of its significant irregularity, root formation and derivation in Berber poses particular theoretical challenges for scholarship in both Berber and general linguistics. Furthermore, Berber’s verbal system has been the object of some remarkable innovations, which are extensively presented in Lafkioui 2018 and Leguil 2000.


An interesting comparative look at case marking in Berber.

An important contribution to the understanding of the dependent state and its origin in Berber.


A diachronic analysis of the $w$-prefix of Berber nouns, which is regarded here as a former demonstrative.


A detailed morphosyntactic study of the verb system of the Iqel’iyen variety of Tarifit (Central Tarifit, Northern Berber, North Morocco).


A seminal paper on noun phrase complements, including findings on the origin of the dependent state of the noun, which would relate to demonstratives.


A general historical-comparative analysis of the personal pronoun in Berber.


An influential paper on the verbal system in Berber and its linguistic historical developments.


This article analyzes in detail the innovated morphological oppositions and the semantic distinctions of which the imperfective in Berber has been the subject.


A comparative study of the series of secondary morphological verbal oppositions that Tuareg Berber has developed.


A study of the functional distinction between the dependent and independent states of Berber nouns, arguing that the dependent state in Berber forms a hitherto unrecognized typological category.
Berber languages provide numerous syntactic phenomena that are typologically interesting, among which those related to the expression of sentential and constituent negation, considered from both a diachronic and a synchronic perspective and including various grammaticalization features and constructions. Brugnatelli 2014 and Galand 1994, for instance, examine negation marking in Berber from a general diachronic perspective, whereas Lafkioui 2013b (cited under Language Contact) addresses a specific case of negation diachony, that is, the grammatical origin of the negator NEG ___ bu in Tarifit (North Morocco), involving various grammaticalization and language contact issues. Mettouchi 2009 explores the negation system of Berber from a synchronic viewpoint, based on data of some different Berber languages. Clause linking and chaining has also received some attention in Berber linguistics. Leguil 1992 and Leguil 2002, for instance, point to the particular connection between clausal hierarchy and verbal morphology in Berber, which is briefly considered in Mauri 2015 for Ayt Atta Berber (Southeast Morocco). Moreover, Chaker 1995 (chapter 7), Lafkioui 2002, and Lafkioui 2009 account for the significant role prosody plays in clause linking and chaining in Berber.


A significant diachronic survey of the negation system in Berber.


A book presenting some important syntactic issues of Kabyle Berber (Northern Berber, North Algeria) as well as some diachronic issues of a more pan-Berber nature.


A paper on the functions of the aorist in the Berber verbal system, including the issue of clause chaining.


A comparative outline of the negation system in Berber.


A detailed study of the syntactic functions of intonation parameters in Tarifit (Northern Berber, North Morocco).


A study of the essential role of prosody in structuring information on a syntactic and discursive level in Tarifit (Northern Berber, North Morocco), including various prosodic clause linking mechanisms.


A reference work on the morphosyntax of predication in Berber, considered from a functionalist perspective.
The Syntax-Prosody-Pragmatics Interface

Addressed topics in Berber linguistics that are of particular relevance for general linguistic theories concern the complex and subtle interface between syntax, prosody, and pragmatics and include research on topicalization and focalization. Lafkioui 2011a examines, from a comparative perspective, the pragmatic strategy of topicalization in Berber and its intricate relationship with intonation. Furthermore, Lafkioui 2014 deals with topicalization in Berber from a typological perspective and provides its major syntactic, prosodic, and pragmatic properties, which point to a tight formal and functional interdependency between them. As for focalization, Chaker 1998 presents a concise general outline of this issue in Berber and discusses whether it should be regarded as a syntactic phenomenon or a discursive phenomenon. Mettouchi 2003, on the other hand, explores contrastive focus phenomena in Kabyle Berber (Northern Berber, North Algeria) and suggests that the it-clefts in question have a different prosodic configuration compared to the prosodic properties of other languages of the world examined in this respect. Roetger 2017 provides an acoustic analysis of a set of contrastive focus constructions in Tashelhit (Southern Berber, South Morocco). Prosody also plays a vital role in the predication of noun phrases, which in many Berber languages are complex in nature and functioning, as is demonstrated in Lafkioui 1999, Lafkioui 2006, and Lafkioui 2011b.


A brief overview of the major focus constructions in Berber.


An in-depth typological study of the interface between morphosyntax, semantics, and pragmatics of noun phrase constructions in Tarifit (Northern Berber, North Morocco), including comparative examinations with other Berber languages for each noun phrase type.


A study of the interdependent relationship between syntax-prosody-pragmatics in Tarifit (Northern Berber, North Morocco) noun phrase utterances, including instrumental analysis.

A comparative examination of topicalization in Berber and the role of intonation in this pragmatic strategy.


This book presents detailed studies on language variation and structuring in Rif Berber (Northern Berber, North, Northeast, Northwest Morocco), including the formal and functional typology of non-verbal predication, intonation and its structuring role in oral discourse, a general typology of speech acts, and the study of certain structural geolinguistic phenomena.


A comprehensive study of topicalization in Berber, considered from a typological perspective.


An interesting paper on contrastive focus constructions in Kabyle Berber (Northern Berber, North Algeria).


A quantitative study that explores stress and intonation in Tashelhit (Southern Berber, South Morocco).

**Language Contact**

Scholars in Berber linguistics have lately taken a great interest in language contact in the region of North Africa (including Sahara and northern and western Sahel) as well as in its diaspora, which is examined in, for example, Lafkioui 2008, which concentrates on bilingual Berber-Dutch code-switching. Although most studies are dedicated to lexical borrowing issues, as in Kossmann 2005 and Souag 2013b for Saharan and sub-Saharan lexical influence, some recent studies involving grammar and hence more deep forms of language contact are also available. Some recent studies on grammar issues involving language contact are presented in Christiansen-Bolli 2010, Kossmann 2013, Lafkioui 2013a, Lafkioui 2013b, Lafkioui 2013c, Lafkioui and Brugnatelli 2008 (cited under Collective Volumes and Special Issues), Mourigh 2016 (cited under Textbooks and Grammars), Souag 2013a, and Tilmatine 2011, even if the direction of this kind of contact is sometimes difficult to prove, especially with respect to Berber-Arabic contact.


A thorough description of Tadaksahak, a strongly Berberized Songhay language (Northern Songhay, Nilo-Saharan) spoken in East Mali and West Niger. It shows by means of numerous cases how this Songhay language has been deeply affected by contact with Tuareg Berber.


A study of a set of Berber loanwords in Hausa, based on the works of Claude Gouffé and Neil Skinner.


An overview of some effects of a prolonged contact between Arabic and a group of Northern Berber languages, mainly from the perspective of the latter affected group, including grammatical and lexical issues.

A study of Berber-Dutch code-switching in computer-mediated discourse.


A comprehensive study on how new negation patterns are created in Moroccan Arabic (Oujda region, Northeast Morocco) through contact with Berber (Tarifit, North Morocco), affecting the morphological data as well as the related syntactic structuring and semantic functioning.


This article examines the grammatical origin of the negator NEG ___ bu, which has been created in Moroccan Arabic (Oujda, Northeast Morocco) by contact with Tarifit Berber. It develops two main diachronic scenarios: (1) the grammaticalization of a verbal form related to iba “there is no” and presently occurring in Tuareg Berber and (2) the grammaticalization of the nominal head bu, attested in Berber as well as in Arabic.


This book studies from a dialectological perspective various African Arabic varieties. Different specific linguistic aspects related to phonetics and phonology as well as to morphology, syntax, and lexicology are discussed. Furthermore, the African Arabic theme is also approached from a more general perspective analyzing the contact effects on linguistic features and systems from a broader typological and universal viewpoint. The volume contains a great deal of contact phenomena involving Berber.


This work addresses the contact history of Siwa Berber (Eastern Berber, West Egypt) with respect to Arabic, of which different varieties from different time periods seem to have been involved, with a special focus on loanwords and calques.


A sound investigation of the impact of trans-Saharan trade—in particular the importation of slaves from the Sahel—on the linguistic landscape and the history of the region, a field that remains virtually undocumented despite the existence of significant study material, with an overview of sub-Saharan loans across North Africa.


An informative outline of linguistic features relating to the Berber-Arabic language contact.