

**Introduction:** My aim is to analyze the internal structure of the rhotic /r/ in Taznatit Berber, which has six surface forms: [r, Ɂ, h, ʁ, a, ø] (cf. [2] [6]). **Data:** The liquid /r/ surfaces as a rhotic [r] only when followed by a vowel (/rV/). However, it surfaces as a laryngeal fricative [Ɂ] when it precedes a voiceless segment /t, k, s, ʃ, f/ (1), and as a glottal fricative [h] before a voiced segment /d, g, z, ʒ, b/ (2). /tinzaɁt/ → [tinzaɁt] ‘nose’; /abrkan/ → [abəɁkan] ‘black’; /amrsid/ → [aməɁsid] ‘pollen’; /irdn/ → [ihdən] ‘wheat’; /targa/ → [taɁga] ‘canal’; /inrz/ → [inəhz] ‘heel’. Furthermore, /r/ surfaces as a voiced pharyngeal [ʁ] when it precedes a pharyngeal consonant, a nasal sonorant /n/, or a voiced approximant /w/ (3). In final position, it surfaces as a vowel [a] when preceded by a consonant (4), and it is elided when preceded by a vowel (5). /rzm/ → [ʁzəm] ‘open’; /rni/ → [ʁni] ‘add’; /tarwa/ → [taɁwa] ‘children’; /amzr/ → [amza] ‘sickle’; /azqqur/ → [azəqqur] ‘beam’; /aɁfir/ → [aɁfiø] ‘ditch’.

**Analysis:** My analysis is couched within Government Phonology (Element Theory; cf. [1] [3] [4] [5], a.o.), and I argue that the rhotic /r/ contains a phonological prime |A|, which can be realized only if it is fortified by an adjacent prime or when it is syllabically bipositional. The different surface forms of the rhotic /r/ can be explained by: (i) *the spreading of a phonological prime from an adjacent segment:* the forms obtained in the data in (1-3) result from the propagation of a prime from an adjacent segment (a form of assimilation). (ii) *bipositionality at the syllable tier* i.e., the (non)-branching of prime |A| to multiple syllable positions: (i) in the coda position, the element |A| branches to two syllabic positions and surfaces as a vowel [a] (4); and (ii) when the vocalic/nucleus position is already occupied, the element |A| cannot branch, so the rhotic does not surface (5).

**References** [1] Backley, P. (2011). *Introduction to element theory*. Edinburgh University Press. [2] Boudot-Lamotte, A. (1964). *Notes ethnographiques et linguistiques sur le parler berbère de Timimoun*. Imprimerie Nationale. [3] Harris, J. (1990). Segmental complexity in phonological government. *Phonology* 7: 255-300. [4] Kaye, J., Lowenstamm, J., & Vergnaud, J. R. (1985). The internal structure of phonological elements: a theory of charm and government. *Phonology*, 2(1), 305-328. [5] Kaye, J., Lowenstamm, J., & Vergnaud, J. R. (1990). Constituent structure and government in phonology. *Phonology*, 7(1), 193-231. [6] Kossmann, M. (1999). Cinq notes de linguistique historique berbère. *Etudes et documents berbères*, 17(1), 131-152.

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**Title**

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