

Multilingual Code Switching in Algerian Rap Song Lyrics: A Functional Approach

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ABSTRACT

The use of multilingual lyrics in contemporary rap songs is a recurrent phenomenon in Algeria. If the lyrics are articulated through Algerian Arabic as a “base language,” the rappers saturate them with other languages for the sake of producing linguistically mixed songs. The most frequently used languages for code-switching are Standard Arabic, Berber (Tamazight), French, English and Spanish. These multilingual songs are most often embedded with code-switching (CS) where each used language assumes a particular discourse and pragmatic function. Therefore, this investigation aims to explore the recent phenomenon of multilingual CS in Algerian rap songs, basically to identify the functions that CS fulfils in song lyrics. Indeed, the analysis is mainly qualitative. A corpus of 10 songs from five Algerian rappers was collected and analysed. The researchers applied Gumperz's (1982) and Appel and Muysken's (2005) functions of CS. This research answers the following question: What are the functions of CS in the lyrics of contemporary Algerian rap songs? The corpus included lyrics from rap songs produced in the period extending from 2019 to 2021. The findings reveal that the concerned multilingual CS is underpinned by a strategic positioning issued by rappers based on the social representations that specify each language in the Algerian sociolinguistic space concerning particular functions and socio-cultural considerations. A distinct set of functions was identified: 1) code-switching for language convenience, 2) identifying or drawing the attention of addressees, 3) serving as a marker of social/cultural identity, 4) complying with social norms, and 5) facilitating rhyme. This study can act as an asset for anyone who wants to extend the framework to examine multilingual CS in other Algerian communication contexts. Furthermore, it highlights the fundamental role of CS in rap song lyrics to increase the potential of promoting freedom of expression, multilingualism, and modernity.

Keywords: Code-switching; base language; Algerian Arabic; sociolinguistics; rap song

INTRODUCTION

The use of multilingual lyrics in contemporary Algerian rap songs is a recurrent phenomenon in Algeria. These plurilingual song lyrics are most often manifested under the form of code-switching in which language assumes a particular discursive functionality. The alternation of codes is thus underpinned by the strategic positioning of the singers based on the social representations that specify each language in the Algerian sociolinguistic space. The phenomenon of code-switching (CS, hereafter) constitutes one of the prominent manifestations of Algerian multilingualism, which usually finds its fertile ground in song lyrics. CS allows a multilingual singer to take advantage of the resources that exist in his/her linguistic repertoire depending on the varying degrees of command that he/she possesses over those languages. As a result, it can offer additional linguistic possibilities that permit the maintenance of a high level of discursive and pragmatic performance. The use of multilingual lyrics in Algerian songs is governed by the same principle.

There has been substantial interest in studying the CS phenomenon in conversations in Algeria (for example, Bagui, 2014; Zerroug & Lakehal, 2010) while only a few concerns exist about analysing code-switching in songs in general, and particularly, contemporary Algerian rap song lyrics. Bentahila and Davies (2002, p. 119) point out that “code-switching in song lyrics is a very different phenomenon from code-switching in conversation, as it is neither spontaneous nor is it intimate.” It seems interesting to study CS within contemporary Algerian rap songs because of the distinct characteristics of this kind of CS that extends from its typological nature, functional categories, and syntactic patterns to the lexical choices adopted by artists.

In addition, the Algerian linguistic landscape has been undergoing significant changes. Today, foreign languages occupy a major role in the country, as is the case for the majority of local domains, particularly, education, culture, economy, and social spheres (Nakla, 2021). The recognition of this reality drives researchers to pose questions about the phenomenon of language contact and its influence on Algerian society and its daily discourse. To examine this subject, the present researchers carried out an investigation based on a sociolinguistic analysis of discourse. This study aims to explore the multilingual CS in contemporary Algerian rap songs. The main question sought to be answered can be put forward as follows: What are the functions of CS in the lyrics of contemporary Algerian rap songs?

LITERATURE REVIEW

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON CODE-SWITCHING

While there is abundant work on CS, it should be noted that recent theoretical developments on this phenomenon have been mainly oriented toward approaching it from a discursive and pragmatic perspective. Nevertheless, before discussing it from this angle, we first need to review Poplack’s (1980) typology of CS that seems relevant for this study, as long as the categorisation of the different forms and types of CS occurring in the corpus are concerned. Poplack (1980) has mentioned three main types of CS. First, “tag switching” which is represented in the switching of either a tag phrase or a word, or both, from one language to another one. Second, “intra-sentential switching” comprises switching from one language to another within the same sentence or clause. Finally, “inter-sentential switching” involves a switch transcending the clause or sentence boundary level, where each clause or sentence is embedded with a discrete language or language variety.

Indeed, beyond the intrinsically linguistic aspects linked to the typology and modes of structuring of CS, recent works on this phenomenon (Gardner-Chloros, 1995; Giles & Coupland, 1991; Giles & Smith, 1979; Giles et al, 1987) have specifically highlighted the oral and conversational dimension of CS and its multiple discursive and pragmatic functions. From these analyses, we can first retain the major distinction made by Carol Myers –Scotton (1993) between the two modes of code-switching: ‘marked’ and ‘unmarked’ code-switching. In its logic, there is a sought-after and calculated dimension of code-switching with a particular aim alongside the unmarked variant, which is spontaneous and often unconscious.

On the one hand, Gumperz (1989) refined this distinction by emphasising the characteristics of each pole. He assimilated marked alternation to situational switching and unmarked alternation to conversational alternation. Situational alternation is linked to constraints relating to the communicative situation, namely change of interlocutor, setting, and topic. It stems

from a rational intentional focus as it is usually guided by a discursive or even pragmatic purpose. On the other hand, conversational alternation involves the spontaneous and unconscious generation of language forms. It is not stimulated by a perceived need for accommodating language forms to a specific audience, topic or setting; it is not consciously motivated and proceeds through an effortless customary way of language use.

This is a principled dichotomy that can be considered today as a milestone in understanding the notion of CS. Situational alternation has obtained less attention in research because CS is rarely understood as a spontaneous and random mixture of languages. Instead, it is more often considered a communicative strategy used by bilinguals or multi-linguals for surpassing the limitations that may result from the static use of a single linguistic system. This functional logic has led pragmatists like Gardner Chloros (1991) to examine this phenomenon under the notions of “convergence” and “divergence” developed in “Communication Accommodation Theory” (Giles & Smith, 1979). According to them, the speech styles may be used to ‘converge’ or ‘diverge’ from a particular audience. In particular, they explain that:

“...during interaction individuals are motivated to adjust (or accommodate) their speech styles as a strategy for gaining one or more of the following goals: evoking listeners' social approval, attaining communicational efficiency between interactants, and maintaining positive social identities. In addition, it is the individual's perception of the other's speech that will determine his or her evaluative and communicative responses”.

(Giles, et al., 1987, p.14–15)

On the other hand, "divergence" refers to the instances in which individuals accentuate the speech and non-verbal differences between themselves and their interlocutors (Giles & Coupland, 1991).

In the context of this study, the singer and his/her targeted audience share, to some extent, their sociocultural background. Therefore, in this situation, the singer may adjust his style, by switching to Berber, for instance, to draw closer to his audience to show solidarity with Algerian Berber speakers and at the same time can maintain it to show his Algerian identity.

Moreover, this dichotomy of convergence vs. divergence can be associated with the study of CS in terms of language prestige. In other words, one can adjust one's style to a variety that is higher or lower than one's own in terms of status. Accommodation may have more of an impact on status in some cases (Gardner-Chloros, 1991). In the context of this research, the singer may switch to standard Arabic, as it is the sacred language of the Quran and the first official language of Algeria, to French or English as they are the language of technologies, and education, or to Berber and Algerian Arabic as they are the native languages of the country.

After all, these considerations aim to highlight the functional dimension of CS, which stays as part of a communication strategy. They will also lead some specialists to attempt to identify the different discourse and pragmatic functions of CS. Gumperz (1982, p. 75-84) identifies in his work six conversational functions of CS whereby one language could be more authoritative or factual than another. They can be useful in studying the discourse functions of CS in contemporary multilingual song lyrics. These functions are listed below, drawing on the work of Gumperz (1982):

1. Quotations: the passages that involve code-switching are identifiable either as direct quotations or as reported speech.
2. Addressee specification: the purpose behind the switch is to direct the message toward one particular person in a set of several possible addressees.

3. Interjection: it involves the insertion of certain language units or sentence fillers from one linguistic system to another.
4. Reiteration: it happens when a given message that has been previously articulated in one code is repeated via the other code for the sake of amplifying or emphasizing a specific point.
5. Message qualification: it occurs when a switch in grammatical constructions is used to qualify an earlier message uttered in another code.
6. Personalisation vs objectivisation: the switches represented by this contrast serve to delineate a distinction between talking about actions and eliciting actions through spoken language. They can also give an idea about whether a given statement is reflective of a personal point of view or factual knowledge.

Appel and Muysken (2005) also identified six conversational functions which can be listed as follows:

1. Referential: it is driven by the interlocutor's lack of knowledge or lack of facility in one language.
2. Directive: this function relates to the directives that the addressee receives and it can be issued for purposes of both inclusion or exclusion of a particular person (or persons) from a part of an ongoing conversation.
3. Expressive: More than one language can be used within the same discourse for stressing the mixed identity held by the target audience.
4. Phatic: this function is also known as metaphorical switching as it is characterised by a change in the tone of the conversation.
5. Metalinguistic: it comes into play when switching is utilised to comment directly or indirectly on another language involved in discourse.
6. Poetic: it is used by bilinguals to express puns, jokes, and so forth for the sake of entertainment.

It seems that these functions overlay, to some extent, with those proposed by Gumperz. However, the limitations of these functions were highlighted by Appel and Muysken (2005) who perceived that they do not apply to all bilingual communities. On the other hand, Gumperz (1982) found out that the same functions apply to three different multilingual speech communities. As far as this study is concerned, these lists can offer us a conceptual starting point for approaching the analysis of our corpus.

Despite the large amount of research that has been conducted on CS, scholars have not reached a consensus about putting forward a standardised conventional definition for this phenomenon. Some scholars have used CS as an umbrella term that covers other related concepts like code-mixing and borrowing. Since this study concerns CS in song lyrics and discusses both switchings at the level of single verses and between verses, there is no special need to distinguish between all these terms in this paper. Indeed, if researchers want to understand the social and cultural aspects involved in CS, they have to free themselves from the need to distinguish CS, code-mixing and borrowing (Eastman, 1992), as well as perceive CS as “an exception rather than the rule” (Gardner-Chloros, 1995, p.68). Therefore, CS is hereby defined following Clyne's (1987, p.740) work in which he considered it as “the alternative use of two languages either within a sentence or between sentences”.

THE CONTEXT FOR ALGERIAN RAP

Rap music, in Algeria, initially emerged in the urban centres of Algiers, and subsequently flourished in other urban cities within the country. Its roots return to the musical performance and concerts that took place in the period extending from the late 1980s to the early 1990s, owing to the influence of French music channels. According to Miliani (2000), the Algerian singer Hamidou published the song “Sarouel loubia” (translated literally as bean pants), a parody where he mocked the traditional Algerian pants. The song followed a jerky rhythm and it marked the adoption of rap style for the first time. Subsequently, around 1992, three rap groups emerged in Algiers: MBS (Le Micro Brise le Silence), Intik (cool, in Algerian slang) and Hamma Boys.

Later on, rap became a national phenomenon as it expanded to conquer other cities in the country, including Annaba, Constantine and Oran. Through the dazzling rise of the Double Kanon group, Annaba is now considered the second rap scene in Algeria. Constantine, which witnessed the rise of rap groups for the first time in 1997, offered six groups over two years (between 1997 and 1999) including Constantine Rap. Oran where the raï genre constitutes a real obstacle in front of the progression of rap, currently counts about sixty groups, including the “matrix of Oran groups” to the early “Deep Voice” group that performed indoors at the French cultural Center in 1992 (Miliani, 2000).

To build their musical identity, the first local rappers started by identifying with foreign singers, especially French artists. According to Miliani, this identification presented the risk of being bogged down in fruitless imitation. To circumvent this risk, Algerian rappers have created their style, a rap that is essentially the result of a process of rehabilitation or "recontextualization" (Androutsopoulos & Scholz, 1999) of a foreign register of rap. Miliani and M. B. H (1998) agree that Algerian rap is partially the product of a continuum that progresses by drawing on preexisting artistic pieces. Indeed, “the musical matrix existed long before the propulsion of rap groups, there was no break with what had been done from the start of the 80s” (M. B. H, 1998).

Daoudi (2000) notes that its plurilingual character particularises the Algerian rap text, which is the predominant theme and the fundamental subject of interest in our research. The Algerian rap text assists, in fact, in the updating, exploration and exploitation of all the constituent languages of the Algerian verbal repertoire, which create an “elastic and ironic Esperanto” (Daoudi, 2000). This “explosive mixture” (Hafiz, 2001, p.63) seems to guarantee the achievement of the objectives that rap sets itself. Indeed, the code-switching involved in rap song lyrics is not neutral and spontaneous. It is functional because it contributes to the construction of discourse with multiple variants that fulfill the singer’s communicative purposes. Singers rely on social representations and symbolic dimensions of languages in interaction to build an effective speech. The code-switching in Algerian rap draws on more than two languages, including Standard Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Tamazight (Berber), French, Spanish, and English. This reflects the fact that Algerian urban youth community has a multilingual orientation. The singer takes advantage of the values, social representations and functionalities carried by these different languages to build a multivariate discourse with various positions. To this end, it reflects youths’ daily experiences by laying bare all the ills of society as well as exploiting crude and harsh themes. The rappers speak without complacency, with furiously hammered words about drugs, civil war, corruption, the black market, injustice, and unemployment.

SOCIAL STATUS OF LANGUAGES INVOLVED IN CODE-SWITCHING

The three languages involved in code-switching occupy an important space in the sociolinguistic landscape and sociolinguistic representations in Algeria. First, concerning Tamazight, it is undeniable that the language suffered for years from the marginalization and the competition between Arabic and French. Despite not acquiring the status of an official language in the Algerian constitution alongside classical Arabic until 2016, it has penetrated the majority of institutions in the country, particularly in Kabyle regions. Furthermore, it has far crossed the borders between ethnic groups and countries for it is now spoken and even written in the majority of North African countries. Therefore, it can be argued that it has become a default language for Algerian Berbers who use it as a basic means of communication (Blaidi, 2020).

Second, it can be argued that Algerian Arabic has almost experienced the same evolution as Tamazight in terms of assimilation and diachronic development. It was the result of the contact that occurred between colonial languages and the native language of the country, notably Tamazight. It is a language formed by different languages, which has come about through the coexistence of various civilizations in the North-African lands, like Arab, Berber, French, Spanish, Turkish, and Italian and also through the influence of English as a global language (Kerras & Baya, 2016, p. 142). Although it does not enjoy a constitutional status as an official language, it has been present in all fields on a wide scale, it has also reached the top of the state since the supreme authority, and the presidential discourses are expressed via Algerian Arabic.

Thirdly, French is a colonial legacy that was imposed by power and violence in the colonial era as the official language of the country. In the same way, Taleb-Ibrahimi (1997) states that French as a language imposed on the Algerian people in violence has constituted one of the main elements used by France in its policy of depersonalization and acculturation of Algeria. After colonization, the trends were reversed. Arabization policy led to the quasi-replacement of French institutionally, but the language of the colonizer managed to maintain its status within the Algerian speech community. However, far from this linguistic legislative conflict, it should be noted that in terms of social representations, French is seen as the language of technology, education, intellectual elite, and accessibility to the international academic sphere in almost all domains.

As for Standard Arabic, it should be noted that it is rooted in the Algerian community as a language of religion. Although it has been imposed as an official language since Algerian independence, fluency in SA is often equated with mastery of the Quran and maintaining accessibility to religious resources, and Islamic culture. The status of SA as a language of religion is what establishes the high prestige it holds within the Algerian speech community (Blaidi, 2020). Finally, English and Spanish have a lesser sociolinguistic representation in Algeria. However, they are studied in the Algerian system of education. English is seen as a “lingua franca” and a language of science and new technology. The former background information can assist in building a general understanding of the linguistic situation in the local context and can help in raising the readers’ awareness of the considerations that were accounted for in the analysis of our corpus.

BASE LANGUAGE VS. RESOURCE LANGUAGE

The interacting languages involved in CS do not have the same hierarchy. One language dominates the verbal discourse while the other languages provide discursive, pragmatic, and aesthetic resources to enrich the framework. The main language that draws the speech frame is called “base” or “matrix” language (Bullock et al, 2018; Myers-Scotton, 1997; Nortier, 1990), while the other

languages can be called a resource or “embedded languages” (Jake & Myers-Scotton, 2009; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017). The basic language is always unmarked while the resource languages can be marked or unmarked depending on usage (Eastman; 1992; Myers-Scotton, 1983). As far as our corpus is concerned, Algerian Arabic represents the basic language, since it is the dominant language that the singers use spontaneously. The others are resource (embedded) languages insofar as it is in these latter languages that the singers draw upon for consolidating the Algerian Arabic lyrics used in their performances.

Another distinguishing feature that defines what separates a “base” language from an “embedded” one is determined by the presence or absence of the stylistic use of CS. In this respect, the alternation is said to be unmarked when it has no style value; that is when it is spontaneous, unpremeditated, and proceeding in a banal and customary way of using the basic language. Conversely, marked alternation involves the stylistic use of CS. In other words, at this level, the alternation is motivated by a discursive and/or aesthetic purpose; it proceeds from a stylistic and discursive choice. Davies and Bentahila (2008) found out that “switching is skillfully exploited to add to the rhetorical and aesthetic effect of the lyrics” (p. 1). In the analysis, our attention will be directed toward the alternations that serve the functions corresponding to the scope of this study.

METHODOLOGY

This study is situated in the field of sociolinguistics and takes as its focus the local Algerian situation. It aims to survey the CS phenomenon within contemporary Algerian rap songs to discover the types and functions of CS which are used in those songs. Therefore, it adopts a qualitative approach for the analysis of data as it analysed the used discourse based on the qualitative properties that characterise the functions of the linguistic units existing in the content of the concerned songs. The present study adopts a qualitative content analysis due to the flexibility of this method in the analysis of data. Content analysis is defined as a “research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 24). Furthermore, the study employs Poplack’s (1980) typology of code-switching, as well as the pragmatic theories of Gumperz (1980), and Appel and Muysken (2005).

DATA POOL AND CODING PROCEDURES

The data pool consisted of ten contemporary Algerian rap songs by five well-known rappers in Algeria, namely Soolking, Algerino, Palermo, Mok Saib and Raja Meziane. In the last three years, all these singers released their top songs (see the appendices). As such, song titles are understood to be a means of communication through which singers describe the reality they live within. The data collection procedure involved the use of purposive sampling. According to Palinkas et al (2015, p. 1), “Purposeful sampling is widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest”. At the time of analysis, (shortly after the publication of the songs) most of the lyrics were available on the Web; this would not have been true for more recently released material. The five rappers in question have a loyal “underground” audience as they have gained much recognition within Algerian rap circles. The last three years (from 2019 to 2021) marked the acknowledgement and appreciation of their national and international success in the artistic scene. We consider the output produced by these

five singers in this period (from 2019 to 2021) as a synchronic “snapshot”, which constitutes a representative sample of Algerian rap.

Multiple passes were made through the lyrics and all words and phrases were coded for one of the six linguistic categories listed. When the lyrics were available in the form of integrated subtitles, they were transcribed. Otherwise, lyrics were usually available on the Web. A minimal amount of new transcription was necessary. After all the lyrics had been set down, they were checked at least twice in respect to the recorded versions of the songs by two different coders, and corrections were made as necessary. All quotations from the lyrics comprising French, Spanish or English parts are presented in normal orthography, while Standard Arabic, Algerian Arabic and Berber are presented in phonemic transcription, using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

When coding was complete, the available formatting resources of our word processing software had been thoroughly exploited to enable us to code every word in one of the six categories listed below, through the use of the following combination of bolding and italicisation:

1. French (unmarked code)
2. **Spanish (bolded)**
3. **English (bolded)**
4. Standard Arabic (unmarked code)
5. *Algerian Arabic (italicised)*
6. ***Tamazight or Berber (bolded and italicised)***

- Each verse is immediately translated into English. For the translation, we favoured the use of italics.

The classification of the three types of CS was based on Poplack’s (1980) typology of CS. Then, all words, clauses, and phrases of each variety of languages that appeared in songs as CS passages were categorised and interpreted through the support of the functions of CS given by Gumperz (1980), Appel and Muysken (2005), and other pragmatic functions of CS mentioned previously in the literature review.

Since our analysis focuses on the phenomenon of CS that manifests in the singers’ song lyrics, it seems relevant to examine the models that attempt to explain this process. Using both data transcription and interpretation, we will try to highlight the languages, types and functions presented in our introduction by identifying and classifying them into categories and then interpreting them to reveal the different aspects of CS presented in the theoretical part.

RESULTS

In what follows, we get to the significant part with the analysis of the corpus. Our objective will therefore be to identify and analyse the different types and functions of CS at the level of the songs’ lyrics involved in our corpus. This analysis made it possible to put into orbit the classic functionalities that can be found in the functional repertoire of CS, but also an unprecedented set of functions that are specific to the Algerian sociolinguistic context.

CODE-SWITCHING FOR LANGUAGE CONVENIENCE

CS phenomenon that carries a referential function is usually due to language convenience and appropriateness. Hence, bilingual speakers switch languages for a particular topic; when certain terminologies are not available in the target language; or when words are used to express particular cultural connotations and denotations that do not have an available equivalent in Arabic. In nearly all of the cases identified in the corpus French or other languages were used since there was no other acceptable label or concept which matched the intended meaning in Arabic. French and other languages were fulfilling the function of convenience for language use. For instance, in the few cases where foreign brands, products or figures were referred to, they did appear in their original languages.

Example 01: Soolking's song

*Ēarbi comme French Montana, j'ai mis Gucci et Versace.
Arab as French Montana, I put on Gucci and Versace.*

Example 02: Palermo's song

*Ma yhemhach ykoun bared l'essentielle 3endo le Benz
It is not important to be a man with cold feelings; the main thing is that he has a Mercedes Benz.*

Example 03: Algerino's song

*Cacher le iPhone s6
Hide the iPhone s6*

In these first three examples, the singers used the following brand names of foreign products respectively: Gucci, Versace, Benz, and iPhone s6, to refer to those prestigious and hyper-class clothes or marks which have no equivalent name in the Arabic language.

Example 04: Palermo's song

*Trap King dgajez mi enti machi Beyoncé.
Trap king is passing by, but you are not Beyoncé.*

This example refers to Beyoncé Giselle Knowles, whose popularity among Algerian youth may be overwhelming. It would be probably uncommon for young people to be ignorant of Beyoncé's name, particularly when exposed to a verse like this one which deals with an exemplary gender contrast. The used switch fostered certain distinctive conceptions and cultural representations held by some youths concerning the cases of typical masculinity ("Trap King") and typical femininity ("Beyoncé").

Unlike conversational speech, song lyrics are premeditated and structurally organised into predetermined patterns. Likewise, words from resource (embedded) languages used within songs are deliberately selected, often for particular properties that Arabic does not contain. The following example indicates the use of language accepted by youth in the corpus, where a Berber expression is used instead of Arabic to convey peculiar political meanings for youth that cannot be transferred in Arabic:

Example 05: Raja's song

Fi bir tah el 3jachi w chabiba ma ta3jach, ulach smah ulach.
El 3ajachi fell into a well, youth will never tire, no forgiveness.

In this example, the singer switches to Berber (Tamazight) to refer to the Kabyle slogan shouted during the Kabyle movement in 2001. So, Berber was used quite deliberately to express specific linguistic and cultural information. Arabic was not used because the contextual information here does not only require the right equivalent in Arabic but also demands a change in the used linguistic code in a way that better suits the political theme targeted by the artist. It is not just a case of selecting a Berber translation or an equivalent Arabic item that is convenient for the topic, but rather a case of using Berber as a vehicle of political beliefs through slogans related to historical events. Berber has been used for decades as a means to express opposition to governmental policies. Resorting to complicated explanations through the base language would not be appropriate for rap music.

TO IDENTIFY OR DRAW THE ATTENTION OF ADDRESSEES

The most evident function of code-switching is the vocative function. Switching in this case functions as a means for the identification of addressees or drawing their attention. Similar to what Gumperz (1982) called “addressee specification”, CS can be used as an effective strategy to direct a message to a specific person in a conversation by switching language and vice versa. This can be seen in examples (6 and 7). In these two examples, the “base language” is French and the switch is issued through Algerian Arabic.

Example 06: Raja's song

Allo, allo, allo, systeme? Rak tesma3 fija?
Hello, hello, hello regime? Are you listening to me?

The question “Allo, allo, allo, systeme?” (“Hello, hello, hello regime?”), as in example (6), occurs in the corpus and also serves as a discourse marker—here, to attract the attention of the addressee at the outset of an utterance. Once the vocative function was fulfilled, the singer shifted back to Arabic.

Example 07: Algerino's song

L'Algérie, comment va? Hamdoullah, khoya, labas
Algeria, how is it? Praise be to God, fine brother

In example (7) the addressee is Algeria and the switch includes the rhetorical greeting “comment va?” that aims to attract the attention of the audience.

TO ACCORD WITH SOCIAL NORMS

According with or adjusting to social norms is another function of CS found in Algerian rap songs. In this corpus, foreign languages were often used when expressing certain things perhaps thought to be too direct, rude, or uncomfortable to say in Algerian Arabic or Berber. English, French, and

Spanish were intentionally chosen for conveying that kind of ideas which may violate the social norms for proper verbal discourse, discuss taboo topics, or contain terms of endearment.

Example 08: Palermo's song

Rah nebda n visé, I am crazy. I begin to shoot, I am crazy

Ya Omri tu m'as blessé rani m brisé. You have hurt me my love, I am broken

3cheqna sólido. Our love is solid

Allo, tu me manque. Hello, I miss you

Ja 3omri kunek gentile. Be kind my dearest

Ja manich normal zero morale. Ah, I am not normal, I am demoralised

Djillali Palermo, in this example, uses English, French, and Spanish words to express his fragile emotional state. Although such words have their equivalents in Arabic, he preferred other foreign languages because they seem to be more appropriate when the theme deals with love and emotion. In addition, Mok Saib's "I am sorry mamma" song, the English word 'sorry' and the French statement "J'ai pas le choix" (I have not a choice), are frequently used as direct expressions of apology. The direct use of apology statements in English may function as a communication strategy through which the singer managed to save face in front of his mother because he is living far from her home. Likewise, Soolking's direct use of the French statement "excuse-moi", in his song "la liberté", has a similar function that serves saving one's face.

In the song "Youv" by Soolking, the singer used many foreign slangs such as "la mula", "biff", "gow", and "gringo loco" which appear to be taboo in Arabic. In Algerino's 'Banderas', he used also the vulgar French phrase "espece de conne", which means, "you bitch" in English. It would likely be very offensive to the Algerian audience, but it is tolerated when used in French language which represents a linguistic system of a foreign culture.

For expressing emotions, the following phrases in French, Spanish and English were respectively used: "je t'aime"; "mi amor"; 'baby'; and 'love'. These latter were utilised as terms of endearment, throughout Algerino's "mi amor" and Mok Saib' 'baby' song. These words probably appeared due to the influence of Western musical styles and the kind of vocabulary anticipated for intimate discourse. The socio-cultural discord about using the classical Arabic equivalents of those terms of endearment within the Algerian speech community might also explain the singers' linguistic choices. As it has been previously argued, Arabic is considered the common and primary language used predominantly for religious discourse. This can justify the singers' bias toward choosing French and Spanish for expressing terms of endearment.

AS MARKERS OF SOCIAL/CULTURAL IDENTITY

CS as a marker of social or cultural identity is a very prevalent function of CS in this corpus. In line with the subjectivity of artists, we find CS instances where the singer's perception of reality is repeatedly communicated even if it arises controversy at a societal level. In addition, the point of view defended by rappers can be justified by the sense of pride it creates and the impressions they leave on the target audience. It can be utilised as a strategy that serves the purpose of identity affirmation. Hence, CS can be inspired by important elements in the life of each artist. By fostering a certain identity, he/she manages to situate himself/herself in a position that permits expressing solidarity with certain milieus or ethnic groups and sometimes alienating others. Thus, we will try

to address the salient features that testify to both the singers' individual and collective identity affirmation in our corpus.

Example: 09 Soolking's song

Ceci notre message, notre **ultima verba**, *Soolking w ouled el bahdja*
This is our message, our last words, and Soolking and ouled el bahdja

In the earlier example, Soolking affirms his Algerian identity through the insertion of the Arabic expression "ouled el bahdja", which means the "sons of Algiers" among the Algerian population, as it represents a slogan repeatedly expressed by the fans of the 'USMA' football club located in the capital city.

Example: 10 Algerino's song

L'Algerie ma patrie pour qui je donnerai ma vie
Algeria my homeland for whom I will give my life
On écrira l'histoire comme nos héros, nos martyrs.
We will write history like our heroes, our martyrs.
Ana weldek ntija JA manish berani, Tessendiya damazigh talwith Kan imevghir
I am not a stranger, I am your son, and you know I am amazigh who wish you peace

In this song, Algerino claims the Algerian identity through the expressions «L'Algerie ma patrie" (*Algeria my homeland*), and "Ana weldek ntija" (*I am your son*). His emotions, which are often expressed with passion, his concerns, and his reference to the glorious past of the country, are all proof of his attachment to the Algerian identity. Most of the songs we have selected involve the common theme of Algeria. In addition to the affirmation of Algerian identity, we find an affirmation of Amazigh or Berber identity; evoked by Algerino, through his use of the Berber expression "**Tessendiya damazigh**" (*I am amazigh*).

Alongside proclaiming Algerian and Berber identities, the affirmation of the Arab identity is claimed twice, in the corpus, by Soolking and Algerino using respectively these two Arabic expressions "J'suis 3arbi de luxe" (*I'm a luxury Arab*) and "mes 3arbi" (*my Arabs*). To avoid being labelled regionalists, the two singers go further by inserting their identity in its entirety. That is to say that stressing the Arabic identity is even more inclusive and unifying than the Algerian identity.

TO FACILITATE RHYME

By using marked alternation, the singer aims to set up his style and integrate himself/herself within the mainstream trend that characterises the Algerian artistic domain. Thus, the frequency of using a particular language can be a clue and/or a strategy that put the singer into one of those well-esteemed artistic categories, defined by the stylistic use of specific linguistic codes. Among those stylistic strategies, we find a rhyme. It is commonly acknowledged that "the use of rhyme in rap lyrics—both final and internal—is crucial to the success of any rap number" (Sarkar et al., 2005, p. 2070).

In our corpus, every singer tried to respect this rule of verification. Sometimes, they improvised for the sake of adding a sense of originality through the construction of rhyme schemes based on code-switching, as in these examples:

Example: 11 Raja's song

Toxic, toxic raha toxic toxic, toxic it is toxic
Tetnehaw ga3 avec une révolution pacifique
You will be all fired through a peaceful revolution.
Lhala mkhelta w jqolouli khtik men politique
The situation is chaotic and they say stay away from politics

Example : 12

Rah nebda n visé. I will start aiming
I am crazy. I am crazy

Examples: 13

| | |
|---|--|
| Venga venga mi amor | <i>Come come my love</i> |
| Way way way bouge ton corps | <i>Way way way move your body</i> |
| Piña colada, chicha menthe, si señor | <i>Pina colada, mint chicha, yes sir</i> |
| Chemise ouverte, Rolex en or | <i>Open shirt, golden Rolex</i> |

Example: 14 Palermo's song

| | |
|---|--|
| Love of my life <i>Eli khelani</i> | <i>love of my life who left me</i> |
| Take all you want <i>ja koulchi feni</i> | <i>take whatever you want; all things are evanescent</i> |

In these excerpts and so many others, the rhyme is constructed through the addition of two terms each belonging to a given language, with a phrasal construction arising from the intra/ or extra sentential code-switching. The rhyme in question is constructed using the repetition of the phoneme, respectively "ique", "zi", "or", and "ni" at the end of the words «toxic», «pacifique», «politique», «visé», «crazy», «amor», «corps», «senor», «or», «khelani», and «feni». These alternations allowed the singers to carry out a typical aesthetic performance by incorporating the sounds of the two languages while respecting the patterns governed by a rhythmic balance in their discourse.

Example: 15 Algerino's song

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| J'suis en mode Emirates Fly | <i>I am in Emirates fly mode</i> |
| Verre de rosé, J'suis die | <i>a glass of rosé (wine), and I am dead</i> |

The rhyming syllable in example (15) is /ai/. It occurs in "fly" and "die".

In Algerian rap songs, the possibilities for creating rhyme are multiplied by the availability of so many languages and language varieties. Rappers draw on all the available assets and possible linguistic resources existing in their repertoire for maintaining rhymes in their songs. The outcome of such endeavour is eventually manifested in the extensive use of CS on the phrasal and sentential levels of their lyrics.

DISCUSSION

This paper attempted to explain songwriters' CS in Algerian rap songs' lyrics from a functional perspective. When songwriters engage in writing or performing their songs, they have specific communicative goals. To realise or approach these communicative goals, they are expected to make a choice about language selection that will be used following the purposive nature of their discourse. The analysis revealed that Algerian rappers applied CS for a distinct set of functions that may be unique to the local context. This set of functions can be represented as follows: code-switching for language convenience, identifying or drawing the attention of addressees, complying to social norms, serving as a marker of social/cultural identity, and facilitating rhyme. Such a distinct set of functions represents an unprecedented revelation in terms of research targeting CS on the local art scene. To our knowledge, this combination of functions may have not previously been identified within a corpus of Algerian rap songs.

While multilingual speakers make use of multilingual forms to achieve a more interesting, meaningful and effective communication, it is also natural for singers, who incorporate two or more languages into their lyrics, to exploit the CS phenomenon as a device to reach their communicative intents. In this study, we have noticed that the new generations of Algerian rappers switch between different languages. The two prominent overlapping codes were Algerian Arabic, which is their mother tongue, and the French language, which represents the second widely used language in the country. Aside from switching from Algerian Arabic to French, the findings identified switches from those "matrix languages" to other codes, namely, English, Spanish, and Berber. The latter three languages acted as "embedded languages" that singers used as a resort for conveying specific functions. Tamazight, for instance, was utilised for conveying ideas related to the political situation in the country, owing to the long history of constant opposition of the Berber speech community to the Algerian regime. Hence, it is not daring to say that CS served a political function since it was adopted for proclaiming the political stances held by a specific ethnic group.

Furthermore, these young singers put more emphasis on the utilisation of Algerian Arabic language because it is considered the most used language variety in Algerian society. By doing this, they may direct their messages to a larger number of people. This choice is stemming from rappers being inspired by the linguistic reality that Algerians experience most frequently in their daily interactions. Therefore, the artist cannot overlook the languages used in society because they are part of people's identity as well as the means of communication through which they describe the reality they live within.

Regarding foreign languages, they are considered the identifying languages favoured by intellectuals and trendy people who are perceived by a large portion of society as influential national or international figures. In this respect, the presence of foreign languages in many songs is not always linked to a terminological deficit, they are used to avoid offensive and taboo language, or to add to the rhetorical and aesthetic effects of the lyrics as we have seen beforehand. In many cases, rappers use them to embrace the societal defining criteria for what characterises intellectuality, prestige, and grandiose language. This may also be explained by the rappers' attempt to appeal to certain foreign audiences or milieus that might have an interest in their artistic work and the content of themes covered by those songs. In addition, it might be related to the origin of rap music, which emerged in the USA as rappers try to make use of English to adhere to the conventional language through which rap songs are usually composed and lyrics are communicated.

We can, therefore, argue that through the numerous communicative possibilities that CS offered, Algerian rappers could sustain the genius of harnessing the symbolic and representative force of languages for maintaining a discursive discourse and positioning the artists in line with the local identity paradigms fostered by different ethnic groups. The fact that Tamazight was the least used language in songs can be traced back to the rappers' lack of linguistic competence in the concerned language. Despite being native Berbers themselves, they have lived far from the latter linguistic environment.

The results of this study fall in line with previous literature regarding the role of CS in the construction of discourse with multiple variants to achieve the singer's communicative purposes (Daoudi, 2000; Hafiz, 2001; Davies & Bentahila, 2008). The study also reveals that code-switching in song lyrics should be studied from a sociolinguistic perspective and based on the analysis of pragmatic and discourse functions of CS. Such a practice can highlight the relationship between language and identity. The findings conform to the conclusions of other studies found in the literature (e.g., Bentahila & Davies, 2002; Sarkar, Winer & Sarkar, 2005; Miliani, 2000).

Our investigation of the linguistic characteristics of Algerian rap that adopts Algerian Arabic as its "base/matrix language" is still in its beginning stages. Yet, by analysing a limited corpus of lyrics corresponding to ten songs of five rappers, we have tentatively identified several functions that CS tends to serve. We anticipate that the analysis of an extended corpus will confirm and strengthen the representativeness of these findings. It will allow us to access more inclusive data and permit the conduction of a deeper analysis of the linguistic, stylistic, and socio-cultural aspects of CS.

CONCLUSION

CS in Algerian rap song lyrics is the result of complex interactions between different languages used in a plurilingual artistic discourse. In this paper, we tried to illustrate how it can act as an element in a communicative construct that exploits the representative and symbolic force of different languages for fulfilling functions related to the maintenance of a discursive discourse, proclaiming identity, and appraising the stylistic and pragmatic dimensions of language usage.

Our analysis has demonstrated how the use of CS in rap song lyrics establishes a terminological reinforcement tool for Algerian Arabic. The findings revealed that it can function as a marker of euphemism that allows the rappers to discuss socially controversial themes, therefore, summoning the use of vulgar expressions, and dealing with the complex emotions and concepts held by a large proportion of Algerian youth. For attaining this goal, rappers resorted to French, English and Spanish for communicating the western values that may be considered, to a certain degree, taboo topics in Algerian society. Furthermore, the study revealed that switch patterns may interact with elements of lyric structure such as rhyme, which can enhance the rhetorical and aesthetic effects of the lyrics.

Many implications can be drawn for educators and policymakers. CS in songs reflects the current linguistic situation in Algeria since it does not only arise in songs but also in various Algerian modes of communication. Therefore, if linguistic creativity, constructive criticism, and the inspiring zeal channelled by rap songs could be accepted and exploited to help people from different cultural backgrounds to work together for a positive change, there would be tremendous potential for transformation. It can increase the likelihood of promoting freedom of expression, multilingualism and modernity.

As a recommendation for future research, we hope to expand the database through the inclusion of further works by expanding data collection to encompass freestyle rap songs in the context of Algeria. In addition, we perceive that a corpus analysis of the features that may increase the popularity of these songs among the Berber speech community will assist in gaining a deeper understanding of the subject. A quantitative research design that uses statistical data derived from surveys, which explore the youths' attitudes about the functions served by CS in rap songs, can reinforce the findings attained by this study.

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APPENDIX

LINKS OF THE SONG LYRICS OF THE CORPUS

- Djalil Palermo “I am crazy” 2020 <https://www.lyrics-arabic.com/2020/08/lyrics-video-i-am-crazy-djalil-palermo.html>
- Djalil Palermo feat Trap King “Bizarre” 2021 <https://www.musixmatch.com/fr/paroles/Trap-King-Djalil-Palermo/Bizzare>
- Raja Meziane “toxic” 2019 <https://www.musixmatch.com/fr/paroles/Raja-Meziane-3/Toxic>
- Raja Meziane “allo systeme” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xa9iMaQAFDw>
- Soolking “youv” 2019 <https://paroles2chansons.lemonde.fr/paroles-soolking/paroles-youv.html>
- Soolking “liberté” 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTAH-AqYm48>
- Mok Saib “Sonia” 2020 <https://paroles2chansons.lemonde.fr/paroles-mok-saib/paroles-sonia.html>
- Mok Saib “Baby” 2020 <https://paroles2chansons.lemonde.fr/paroles-mok-saib/paroles-baby-baby.html>
- L’Algérino “elle est ou” 2019 <https://paroles2chansons.lemonde.fr/paroles-l-algerino/paroles-il-est-our.html>
- L’Algérino « Algérie mi amor » <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yl4I9dpKqic>