

## Code Switching

(Qu'est-ce que le 'code switching' ou l'alternance codique?)

In line with J. J. Gumperz,<sup>1</sup> code switching can be defined as the juxtaposition of passages within the same verbal exchange where the speech belongs to two different grammatical systems or subsystems. This phenomenon is very common among creole populations, within communities characterised by diglossic-type (See '**Diglossia**', **link:** <<http://creoles.free.fr/Cours/anglais/Diglossia.pdf>>) situations. Creole and French alternate in communication in this way according to complex rules which vary with the speakers, the themes of the exchanges, and so on. These various parameters and the way in which diglossic communication functions have been studied many times by authors including L. F. Prudent who has cited from and commented on a corpus<sup>2</sup> of Martinican speakers which is characterised by code switching.

In order to reach a general theoretical level, it is important to attempt to interpret code switching data by extracting motivations for this alternation and conceptualising usages. The notion of continuum (See '**Continuum**', **link:** <<http://creoles.free.fr/Cours/anglais/Continuum.pdf>>) is, of course, directly linked to that of code switching.

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<sup>1</sup> John J. Gumperz, *Discourse Strategies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

<sup>2</sup> This corpus can be found at <<http://creoles.free.fr/Cours/intervi.htm>>