

## Linguistic diversity in the artistic work of Djamel Allam

### Tanɣa tutlayant deg umahil n Ğamal Eɛllam

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#### Agzul

Amahil n Ğamal Eɛllam yufrar-d s uzawan atrar akked tanɣa n tsekkiwin n tzuri yellan deg yidrisen-ines. Ineggura-agi sdukkulen gar: taqbaylit, tafransist, taerabt i ttmeslayen deg Lzzayer, d timeslayin-agi i iawnen umuy n tezlatin-is iwakken ad kksent tilisa tutlayanin akken diy ad fkent udem agreylan i leqdic-is. Amagrad-agi yekkat ad d-yesken tanɣa tutlayant deg umahil n Ğamal Eɛllam. Tazrawt-nney tbedd yef usteqsi-ya agejdan: Amek i ttwasqedcent tutlayin n taerabt akked tefransist deg tuyac n Ğamal Eɛllam ?

Ammud-nney yuddes yef ukkuɣ n tezlatin i d-nekkes seg wumuy n unazur Ğamal Eɛllam, d tid iwumi nga tasleɣt iwakken ad nesnekwu ddeqs n tumanin am: Awal aretɣal, code-switching.

**Awalen isura:** Aretɣal, code-switching, Ğamal Eɛllam, tisekkiwin n tzuri

#### Abstract

Djamel Allam's work is distinguished both by its modern music and by the linguistic diversity of its lyrics. His lyrics combine Kabyle, Algerian Arabic, and French, enabling his repertoire to transcend linguistic barriers and give his work a universal character. The present paper sheds light on the linguistic diversity of Djamel Allam's work. Our study is guided by the following research questions: What are the manifestations of code-switching in the lyrics of Djamel Allam songs? What forms of code-switching dominate in the selected song lyrics? This descriptive qualitative study investigates the types of codic alternation between Kabyle, Arabic and French in the artistic work of Djamel Allam. Our corpus comprises four song lyrics drawn from the artist's repertoire, which were analyzed to identify phenomena such as borrowing and code-switching. To conduct the present research, we have relied on Poplack's classification of codic alternation. The results indicate that the linguistic background of the artist as well as the universal character of his artistic work influenced his linguistic choices. Therefore, the corpus analysis revealed code-switching with inter-sentential and intra-sentential CS as the most dominant types.

**Keywords:** Borrowing, code-switching, Djamel Allam, linguistic diversity, lyrics

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## **Linguistic Diversity in the Artistic Work of Djamel Allam**

Djamel Allam, whose real name is Mohamed Allam, was born on 26 July 1947 in Bejaia. He is one of the main Kabyle singers who marked generations alongside Matoub, Ait Menguellet, Idir and many others. It was under the guidance of Cheikh Sadek El Bedjaoui, at the Conservatory of Bejaia, that Djamel Allam took his first steps in the world of song by discovering the sounds and melodies of Andalusia and Châabi music. During the 1970s, he settled in Marseille and then in Paris where he met figures of the French artistic scene such as Brassens, Moustaki, Léo Feré and Bernard Lavillier. These encounters enabled him to begin his artistic career by imitating the great names of French songs until M'hamed Issiakhem asked him: "Why don't you sing in your language?" » Thus, in 1973, he signed his success « Mara Ad Yuḡal » which propelled him to the forefront of the musical scene. Djamel Allam's work is distinguished both by his modern music and by the linguistic diversity of his texts. Indeed, his texts mix Kabyle, Algerian dialectal Arabic and French, allowing his repertoire to cross linguistic barriers and give his work a universal character.

This study is exploratory in nature as it aims to explore the linguistic diversity in the artistic work of Djamel Allam. It is guided by the following research questions: What are the manifestations of code-switching in the lyrics of Djamel Allam songs? What forms of code-switching dominate in the selected song lyrics? By adopting Poplack's classification of code-switching, and through the analysis of some selected lyrics, we will try to shed light on the occurrence of this linguistic phenomenon.

### **1. Theoretical Background of the Study**

#### **1.1. The Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

The Algerian linguistic landscape is characterized by the presence of several languages that cohabit with each other, each with a different status. This linguistic diversity is the result of a long series of invasions that Algeria witnessed throughout its history. Consequently, the contact between languages and the cohabitation of different languages, Arabic, Berber and French, in Algeria have affected the way Algerian speakers speak. As a result, the language is constantly evolving and therefore subject to change, particularly through phenomena such as interference, code-mixing, code alternation, and borrowing.

According to Benrabah, the reasons for the peculiarity of Algerian languages lie in the fact that: "the linguistic creativity that characterizes the native speaker is strikingly apparent in the language of young people, who make up the majority of the population in Algeria. The

practice, dictated by the immediate needs of communication, produces a situation of conviviality and tolerance between the languages present: Algerian Arabic, Berber and French. In the streets of Oran, Algiers and elsewhere, Algerians sometimes use one, sometimes the other, sometimes a mixture of two or three idioms (1999, p. 177). According to Endriani (2018), code-switching and code-mixing events can generally be found in multilingual communities using several languages in language contact so these events become commonplace in the daily conversations of multilingual communities. These linguistic phenomena take several forms. In this study, we will focus on borrowing, code-switching and code-mixing.

## 2. Definition of Key Concepts

### 2.1. Borrowing

According to the Dictionary of Linguistics and Language Sciences: "a linguistic borrowing occurs when a language A uses and ends up integrating a linguistic unit or feature that previously existed in a language B (called the source language) and that A did not possess; the borrowed unit or feature is itself qualified as a borrowing." The most common type of borrowing involves the introduction of new vocabulary with origins in other languages (Hartmann, 1973).

Example 1 : Likoul L'école/ tabasalt la bassine/Astilou stylo

In the same vein, according to Louis Deroy, four levels of integration are distinguished: "..., phonetic, morphological, and semantic" (1980, p. 8).

#### *a. Phonetic level*

It is the adaptation to the phonetics of the host language, for example, by replacing some sounds of language A (source language) with sounds closer to language B (target language), for example: in French: un vélo in Kabyle: avilou [avilu]

So, here the vowel "o" in French becomes "ou" in Kabyle and the "é" becomes "i"

#### *b. Morphological level*

Morphological borrowing or integration consists of borrowings with forms specific to the target language. In other words, during the transition of the word from the source language to the target language, the morphosyntactic structure has been modified, for instance: "La boîte" in French becomes "tabwat" in Kabyle.

*c. Semantic level*

When borrowings are taken as they are in the original language and integrated as such into the target language with minor phonetic modifications and without undergoing semantic changes, such as “radio” in French “aradio” [aradyu] in Kabyle.

However, it is worth mentioning that on one hand, during the process of borrowing, words can lose their connection to their original meaning, for example: “machine” in French becomes “tamachint” [tamacint] in Kabyle with the meaning of a train. On the other hand, some words can keep their original meanings but acquire new meanings within the framework of the target language, for example: “taxi” in French becomes “ataxi” [ataksi] in Kabyle which is also used with any car.

**2.2. Code-mixing**

Khawla Taleb Ibrahim (1997) illustrates code-mixing with examples from dialectal Arabic:

- "proposite lwasmah" (I proposed the thing)
- "dégutit" (I'm fed up) or (I'm disgusted).

She therefore proposes a definition of code-mixing as a situation in which the two languages are involved in the creation of units that do not fully belong to either the first or the second language (Taleb-Ibrahimi, 1997, p. 112).

**2.3. Code Alternation or Code-switching**

Code-switching is a sociolinguistic concept invented by the American linguist, Hans Vogt in 1954 in his article “Language Contacts”. This linguistic phenomenon occurs when a speaker alternates between two or more languages, or varieties of languages, in the context of the same conversation or situation, using the vocabulary, grammar and accents of these languages. The Cambridge Dictionary of Linguistics defines it as the act of “switching between two languages or dialects in the same conversation, usually dependent on social or other contextual factors” (Miller & Brown, 2013, p. 83). In other words, it is the linguistic action of alternating or combining two or more languages. Ben Rampton defines code-switching as follows: "Code-switching is a linguistic phenomenon in which speakers alternate between two or more languages or language varieties in the context of a single conversation or utterance" (1995).

### **2.3.1. Types of code-switching**

According to Poplack (1979), the following types of CS can be identified: tag-switching, inter- and intra-sentential switching.

- a. Intra-sentential CS: this is when the change of language occurs within the same utterance.

Example : ass-agi ulac a marché.

- b. Inter-sentential CS alternation: this is when two languages alternate at the boundary of the sentence or utterance.

Example: He can speak Berber, et français.

- c. Tag-switching: when interjections, idiomatic expressions or fixed forms are inserted into the sentence.

Example: I'm fine elhemdoullah.

### **2.3.2. Functions of code-switching**

Appel and Muysken (2006) classified six (6) functions of code-switching:

- a) Referential - Code-switching functions as referential when the user lacks the vocabulary of the target language.

- b) Directive - Speakers utilise the directive function of code-switching to build or maintain solidarity.

- c) Expressive - Used by speakers to express their feelings or demonstrate their self-identity.

- d) Phatic - Involves a change in intonation, speakers use phatic when they want to emphasise the important parts of their speech or conversation.

- e) Metalinguistic - Speakers apply this function when they want to insert a quotation, phrase, or metaphor.

- f) Poetic - Used for entertainment purposes, involving the insertion of words or phrases of different language from the conversation or speech.

### **2.3.3. Distinction between code alternation / code mixing / borrowing / interference**

Code-switching and code-mixing are often used interchangeably. However, the distinction between code switching and code mixing is controversial. Some linguists believe that there is no difference between the two linguistic phenomena, while others believe that the two concepts do not apply in the same situation. In this context, J. Hamers and M. Blanc (1989) consider that unlike borrowing, which is generally limited to lexical units, code-mixing transfers elements to units belonging to all linguistic levels, ranging from the lexical item to the whole sentence; so much so that it is not always possible to distinguish code-

mixing from code-switching. In other words, code-switching frequently alternates the source language with the target language, whereas code-mixing alternates the source language with the source language accompanied by segments of the target language. Furthermore, Bokamba makes the following distinction between the two concepts:

Code switching is the mixing of words, phrases and sentences from distinct grammatical (sub) systems across sentence boundaries within the same speech event...code mixing is the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes (bound morphemes), words (unbound morphemes), phrases and clauses from cooperative activity where the participants, in order to infer what is intended, must reconcile what they hear with what they understand (1989, p. 278).

As far as the distinction between borrowing and code-switching, Hudson considers that:

Whereas code-switching and code-mixing involved mixing languages in speech, borrowing involves mixing the systems themselves, because an item is "borrowed" from one language to become part of the other language (1996, p. 55).

Both concepts are outcomes of language contact even though they denote two separate phenomena. In this context, Poplack (1980) claims that to make a clear distinction between borrowing and code-switching, the item in question ought to be integrated into the host language phonologically, morphologically and syntactically.

#### **4. Different Linguistic Code-switching in Kabyle Song**

The song as a means of artistic expression has always been a channel through which the artist deals with various themes: love, exile, colonialism and the struggle for identity are the most recurrent, depending on the circumstances of the period in which the artist lives. The use of different linguistic codes in Kabyle songs dates back to the 1940s, the work of Slimane Azem and Cheikh El Hassnaoui are examples where Kabyle, Arabic and French are mixed. These artists were very popular mainly among the Algerian immigrants because their songs reflected the situation these latter lived far from their homeland and families.

### **5. Methodological Framework**

#### **5.1. Aims and Significance of the Study**

The study aims is to identify and analyse the linguistic phenomenon of code-switching in selected lyrics of Djamel Allam's songs.

#### **5.2. Research Questions**

The present study is guided by the following research questions:

What are the manifestations of code-switching in the lyrics of Djamel Allam songs?

What forms of code-switching dominate in the selected song lyrics?

### 5.3. Research Design

This study uses a descriptive research method relying on a qualitative approach to identify and analyse the code-mixing and code-switching utilized in Djamel Allam’s lyrics. In order to answer the aforementioned research question, each song's lyrics were broken down to identify the type of codic alternation using Poplack’s classification.

### 5.4. Presentation of the Corpus

To verify and identify phenomena such as borrowing and code-switching, our present study focuses on the work of Djamel Allam. The corpus of our study consists of the songs illustrated in the table below.

- **The corpus of the present study**

**Table 1**

*Sample of selected songs*

N	Title of the song	Year of release and album title	Topic covered	Used languages
1	<b>Trabendo</b>	1991 Album Mawlud	Informal economy	Dialectal Arabic /English /French
2	<b>Muhand</b>	2008 Album Les Youyous des Anges	Mixed marriages	Kabyle/French
3	<b>Gatlato</b>	Les Chants des Sources	Cultural heritage	Arabic/Kabyle/ French
4	<b>Dassine</b>	2008 Album Les Youyous des Anges	A tribute to people with specific needs	Kabyle/French

### 5.5. Qualitative Data Analysis

#### Song n°1

**Muhand:** Performed in duo with Mohamed Fellag, this song is part of the Kabyle heritage. Released in 2008 from the album "Les Youyous des Anges", in this song Djamel Allam deals humorously with the theme of mixed marriages.

#### Linguistic phenomena identified

- **Borrowing from French to Kabyle**

**Tabalitz yef tayet ----- la valise**

Ya madame **serbi latay ----- from the french verb server ----- le thé**

Muħend ikra-d **ataksi ----- taxi**

Muḥend yettbeddil l'euro ----- euro

Muḥend yer l'Paris yuḡal ----- Paris

- **French Kabyle code-switching**

Y a **madame** serbi latay Madame:

Muḥend yettbeddil l'euro

**Muḥend va changer l'euro**

Yeyli-d ar æcra duru

**Il a chuté à cent dinars**

Muḥend yer l'Paris yuḡal

**Il est retourné à Paris**

- For the code-switching we are in the presence of intra-sentence code-switching for the first line then we find inter-sentence alternations where we note the use of Kabyle and French at the end of the statement.

### **Song n°2**

#### **Gatlato**

- **Borrowing**

Crédit makache, mačči d arrac ----- Crédit (français/kabyle)

Imeellem iḥemmel nnidam ----- Imeellem / nnidam (arabe/kabyle)

- **Code-switching**

Crédit makache mačči d arrac

We are in the presence of two forms of code-switching:

- Inter-sentential code-switching: the use of the word “crédit” at the beginning of the statement.
- Intra-sentential code-switching: the use of the word “makache” in the middle of the statement

The last verse is completely written in dialectal Arabic although we can also say that the language used in this verse is as close to the language that we find in the upper town of Bejaia where Djamel Allam grew up in a working-class neighborhood known as “lhouma oucherchour”.



### Song n°3

**Dassine:** This is a song from the album « Les Youyous des Anges » 2008 written for a young child with specific needs.

- **Code-switching**

Ad am-iniy a Dasin, mačči d rebbi i tt-yebyan

Èelmey c'est difficile d lmektub i am-d-yebran

In the chorus of the song, we find an intra-sentential code switching: the use of “c'est difficile” in the middle of the statement.

### Song n°4

**Trabando:** this song from the 1991 album Mawlud deals with the theme of smuggling and the informal economy in Algeria. Indeed, the term trabando was born in Algeria and is of Spanish origin “contrabando” which means smuggling and applies to all economic activities that escape regulation.

- **Borrowing**

Ki lhewwat bla marsa εecrin [âchrine] ssa fel fili ----- le filet (français/kabyle)

Ma nspiki ma neqra rani saken εend xti [khti] ----- (anglais/kabyle)

Trabando wac [wach] ya xu [kho] kac Marlboro --- (espagnole/français marque commerciale)

Cabas billet w nkouvri fel consulat ----- Cabas, billet, consulat (français/kabyle)

Cravata fiha mouchoir win raki y a leḥnana ----- cravate mouchoir (français/kabyle)

Ghedwa rendez-vous fi Gambeta ----- rendez-vous (français/kabyle)

Ma ndiklari ma walou fi maṭar Dar El Beida ----- déclarer (français/kabyle)

Parabole démocratie 70 partis provisoires iberḥou âla rassi ---- démocratie, partis, provisoire, (français/kabyle)

Tefawdaw fel couloir ----- couloir (français/kabyle)

- **Code-switching**

- **Intra-sentential code-switching:**

Fi Barbès ndir séchoir wa ndebbar elmadona

Cravata fiha mouchoir win raki ya leḥnana

Ghedwa rendez-vous fi Gambeta

- **Inter-phrasticcode-switching:**

Trabando trabando trabando ya kho kach Marlboro

Cabas, billet ..... consulat

Alger, Paris sans escale

Pas de problème okay

## 5.6. The Results and Discussion

This study explores code-switching and borrowing as linguistic phenomena in Allam's lyrics. The analysis of our corpus allowed us to answer the research questions that guided this enquiry. So, we have recorded the following results: Dialectal Arabic and French appear in many of Djamel Allam's songs.

In the classification of the different types of codic alternation, according to what we have seen in the analysis of our corpus, we have noticed that inter-sentential, and intra-sentential CS are the most dominant types in the texts of the songs, on the other hand tag-switching is rarely used. Furthermore, we have also observed a large number of borrowings, ranging from full borrowing to hybrid borrowing.

All in all, code-switching and borrowing are prominent features of Djamel Allam's lyrics. These linguistic phenomena are widely observed in his artistic work because of the linguistic background of this artist. He grew up in Bejaia and his mother tongue is Kabyle. Besides, he was influenced by the music of Cheikh Sadek Elbedjaoui which is characterized by lyrics in Arabic. Moreover, since he lived in France, he was in contact with the French language mainly when he worked with famous artistic figures such as Moustaki, Brassens and others. This multilingual environment resulted in the linguistic diversity of Allam's work. Accordingly, Hudson makes a relation between bilingualism and code-switching in which the latter is inherited within bilingualism, according to him, it is the "[...] inevitable consequences of bilingualism, as anyone who speaks more than one language chooses between them according to circumstances" (1956, p. 33). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that Djamel Allam addressed a variety of audiences.

Accordingly, Holmes states that (2000), code-switching is often used in speech and rhetoric, on purpose to either attract attention or to persuade an audience. In the same vein, Nerghes (2011) comments on the effect of code-switching in persuasion and its ability to grab the attention of the audience by saying, „code-switching will draw the participant's attention and will increase their motivation to carefully analyze the message presented.

## 6. Limitations of the Study

Some limitations of the present study have to be acknowledged: The sample size for this research study is limited to four lyrics, so an in-depth analysis of a larger sample of Djamel Allam's lyrics, focusing on the different functions of code-mixing and code-switching, may provide us with interesting insights. Furthermore, since the study concentrates on the linguistic side of the lyrics with particular attention to code-switching,

future research may investigate Djamel Allam's repertoire from other perspectives, such as the stylistic analysis of his lyrics.

The main aim of this present research is to shed light on the linguistic diversity of Djamel Allam's work. The analysis of a selected corpus of his lyrics revealed that besides Kabyle, which is the mother tongue of the artist, he incorporates both dialectal Arabic and French into his songs. This linguistic cross-fertilization in Djamel Allam's work can be explained by the fact that he experienced exile at a relatively young age in 1967, when he left his homeland, he was barely twenty years old. In Phillippe Etienne's documentary portrait *Djamel Allam, oiseau minéral*, he said : "Je ne suis pas un chanteur de terroir, je ne suis pas un chanteur kabyle, je suis Algérien et je suis aussi Français quelque part, de par la culture, c'est aussi un pays d'adoption" (He has an umbilical connection to France, a powerful cultural and cultural-linguistic bond) (2005, 09:23). This is confirmed by one of his friends, the writer Mustapha Sadi, who says of Djamel Allam: "Il a un lien ombilical avec la France, un lien très fort, culturel, culturo-linguistique" (He has an umbilical connection to France, a powerful cultural and cultural-linguistic bond) (Etienne, 2005, 20:39). Tolerance, humanism, and respect for others are also values and qualities that have enabled the artist to add a personal touch to his songs, making his work a special genre.

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