

## Code-switching in Croatian media: Dialect/standard and dialect/dialect relations

Code-switching is a complex phenomenon, which has inspired a wide range of theoretical analyses from different perspectives. Researchers have focused variously on the competency of bilingual (or multilingual) speakers who engage in code-switching, the structural linguistic features thought to govern where and how code-switching may occur, and the situational and sociolinguistic factors that influence speaker choices. These multiple and shifting perspectives are reflected in a lack of terminological agreement, with labels such as code-switching, code-mixing, language alternation, borrowing, interference, style shifting, sociolinguistic repertoires, or translanguaging being applied to language contact phenomena that are often difficult to distinguish in practice (see Li 2013, Spotti and Blommaert 2017 for overviews). I adopt code-switching as a cover term, with the understanding that “code” is intended as a neutral label for any language variety, and that the concept of code-switching is inherently “fuzzy” in nature (Gardner-Chloros 1995). While there may be many factors that influence code-switching, it should be seen at least partly as “a creative and critical act” that “language users perform in specific social contexts for specific purposes” (Li 2013: 371).

Less research has been devoted to code-switching between closely related varieties, such as local varieties of Croatian in relation both to the standard language and to other local varieties. This paper will focus on language use in broadcasts of “Ćo mi, ćo ti” (Radio Rijeka) and “Ćakaviana” (Radio Pula), both broadcasts in which the hosts and guests speak local ćakavian dialects. Although these examples may involve some degree of conscious performance of local varieties, they are still valid objects of study. As argued by Coupland (2001) in his analysis of the performance of Welsh identity in radio broadcasts, the idealization in dialectological and sociolinguistic research of “authentic speech” collected in traditional speech communities is difficult to sustain, given that all language use can be understood as performative in some sense. Following Auer (1984), we will employ a conversational analysis of specific interactions to help us understand the possible motivations for code-switching in these particular contexts. The data for this preliminary study reveal a range of behaviors, including single-word shifts (borrowings), situational and topic-conditioned shifts, accommodation to interlocutors, and the adoption of different dialect guises. The existence of these radio programs and the use of local varieties by speakers who appear on them are an indication of the cultural value assigned to these varieties, and they illustrate the importance of the local, regional, and national identities that speakers construct through their language use.

## References

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