Code Alternation Among
Libyan Arab Speakers

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ABSTRACT

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It has been recognized that code alternation (CA) is a universal phenomena in bilingual communities, but its functions vary between communities. Taking into account this observation and the specific characteristic of the overall picture of speech interaction among Libyan Arabs who speak Libyan Arabic (LA) and Tunisian Arabic (TA), the analysis of this paper has attempted to investigate several discourse functions mentioned by LA speakers.

Data was collected from sixty subjects, thirty-six females and twenty-four males. Thirty hours of spontaneous recordings and observation notes were used to collect data required for the purpose of the study.

On the basis of thirty-four extracts, the researcher has identified seventeen functions by LA speakers and the purpose they designate. The functions are (i) situational such as: setting, participants, and topic; (ii) conversational functions such as: person specification, quotation, exclamations, reiteration, message qualification, personalization, question alternation, rhetorical ask and answer, mitigating and aggravating demands, attention attraction, substitution, clarification, designation, emphasis, and cultural untranslatability.