

Code-Switching in Religious Discourse: The Case of Sheikh Mohammed HAMRI's Discourse

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Abstract :

Religious discourse can be used to achieve various goals in societal, political, economic, and cultural fields. For that, preachers tend to switch between different languages or codes to deliver the information in a good way and be understood by the largest possible number of recipients, thus achieving those goals and purposes. So, to explore the phenomenon of code switching in the religious discourse a qualitative study was undertaken by means of recording different discourses delivered by Sheikh HAMRI, an Islamic preacher from Tlemcen; in addition to a structured interview with Sheikh. The study, thus, fits into the field of sociocultural linguistics, a newly developing aspect of linguistics that looks beyond formal interests to the social and cultural meanings and functions of language use; and it reveals that switching between different codes in the religious discourse has become more than necessary, especially in our current era of openness to other cultures.

Key Words: Religious Discourse- Preacher- Code-Switching- Sociocultural Linguistics- Qualitative Study.

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Introduction:

The study of language alternation has been successful in identifying constraints and influencing various fields like syntax, morphology, and phonology. However, this focus on structural aspects fails to answer basic questions about why switching occurs. Grammatical restrictions on codes switching are necessary conditions, but they are not sufficient to describe the reason or effect of a particular switch. Linguists should consider code switching as a practice of individual speakers rather than a product of a grammatical system. This paper is part of sociocultural linguistics, an emerging approach that looks beyond formal interests to the social and cultural functions and meanings of language use. Linguists have proposed bringing their studies closer to other fields of social inquiry, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, and social science, and considering language within its broader social setting.

Religious discourse is one of the social practices that establish an interpersonal relationship between the preacher and addressee. Recently, code switching between Arabic and French in the religious discourse has become a frequently observed phenomenon in the Algerian arena. Before deeply investigating this sociolinguistic phenomenon, it seems at first glance that this behaviour neither advances nor delays the desired objectives of religious discourse and that in the speech communities where Arabic is the official and national language. For that, we ask the following question: why do Islamic preachers switch between Arabic and French in their discourse?

I. Sociolinguistic situation in Algeria

Algeria was seen as "an extension of metropolitan France on the southern side of the Mediterranean sea" when the French landed in the country in ١٨٣٠ as part of the newcomers strategy (Mostari ٢٠٠٥: ٤١). In Algeria, a "harsh programme of acculturation" was implemented, with the goal of making French the dominant language and marginalising and expelling Arabic and Berber (Maamari ٢٠٠٩: ٧٧). During the French occupation, the most successful means of "assimilating" Algerians was through education. Thus, special consideration was given to the realm of education, where "épousez le pays" was the slogan of the Ecole Coloniale (Maamari ٢٠٠٩: ٧٧-٨). In addition, the French government went so far as to pass a law designating Arabic as a foreign language, which meant it couldn't be used in official papers or in classrooms. Arabic was therefore limited to usage in religious schools, and French became the sole official language of the nation for ١٣٢ years.

The period of French control came to an end with the country's independence in ١٩٦٢. The goal of the succeeding administrations was to bring back Arabic and make it the official language of the country in all public settings. Algeria started an "Arabization" initiative to reclaim its Arabic identity. Thus, Arabic was imposed in place of French and declared the official language. To support and strengthen this project, a number of laws, decrees, and ordinances were passed (Mostari ٢٠٠٥: ٣٧). Despite the "Arabization law" (Mouhadjer, ٢٠٠٢), French continues to be the language of choice, particularly in the economic and professional spheres. Since French is an integral part of Algeria's linguistic landscape, it is not considered a foreign language. French and Arabic are now used interchangeably, particularly in the fields of education, government, economics, business, social life, and the armed forces. In short, according to the Algerian constitution, French is recognised covertly as the second official language in Algeria. That is to say, a speaker should be fluent in both Arabic and French in order to interact according to daily communication practices needs. Additionally, Bensafi (٢٠٠٢) states that: "the press, radio, and television made an ample room for the use of French." That is to say that these practices reflect the sociolinguistic reality and situation in Algeria. And what is recently highly remarkable is that the religious discourse, purposefully; integrate the use of French in the linguistic behaviour although we live in a stage in which the government is trying hard to exclude French from all the areas of social and political life. However, these remain merely attempts, because French is considered as an essential component of Algerian identity, always has been and always will be, like it or not.

II. Religious Discourse

The term "discourse" has been used in various ways to study language use. In the narrowest definition, it focuses on grammatical and other relationships between sentences, often as a problem of cohesion. This study aims to understand the inferential processes by which speakers communicate their meanings and how hearers interpret what is said. A more general use of the word "discourse" is to study broader functional uses of language in social contexts, such as how the language we use is based on the social environments in which we use that language. The broadest concept of discourse is the study of whole systems of communication. These systems form a self-contained system of communication with a shared language or jargon, specific ways in which people learn what they need to know to become members, a particular ideological position, and specific forms of interpersonal relationships among members of these groups (Scollon & Scollon, ١٠٨: ٢٠٠١).

Some forms of discourse are linguistic patterns that have internal, linguistic, structure, and sociolinguistic contexts. These forms have been studied for centuries by literary critics, historians, folklorists, and others. With the increasing availability of sophisticated tools of linguistic analysis, new lines of internal analysis of forms of discourse open up, and current linguistic research is slowly extending itself into the analysis of forms of discourse (Hymes, ١٩٦٧). That, what had encouraged

scholars of linguistic behaviour to utilize these new possibilities for the analysis of forms of religious discourse in various societies and from different perspectives. It suggests that religious identity will tend to be reflected linguistically in the dimensions of social dialect variation. In some communities, this kind of variation may be quite pervasive, as seen in the phonological, grammatical, and lexical differences in the Arabic of the Muslims, Christians, and Jews (Cohen, ١٩٦٤). In American society where differentiation seems minimal, there are linguistic features that tend to correlate with religious identity, such as the use of Latin vocabulary items in the writings of Roman Catholic academics. This highlights the importance of understanding the role of forms of discourse in socio-cultural systems and the influence of social distinctions within speech communities.

Religion-related discourse is a type of social interaction when a religious matter is highlighted. This may be the result of the environment or certain elements of the social interaction having a distinctly religious quality. Religious discourse stands out as a kind of speech that intersects with political discourses in its use of tools and strategies to convince the addressees, but the breach between them is a matter of substance. The advocacy is part of it, dealing with issues such as enticement and intimidation, promise, advice, guidance, issues of faith, faith and unity, all with the help of the speaker with factual events and evidence from religion law. Religious discourses are a natural element of any civilization. Preserving forebears' experiences is crucial for human progress. The religious discourse encompasses a broad range of terminology influenced by mythology and religion in each language. The religious vocabulary is a cultural relic with both material and spiritual significance, as it is stable and has written records.

The religious discourse is that which combines multiple and intersecting forms of discourse, including the holly books and the guidance of the Messenger prophets. Religious discourse is characterized by renewal within the framework of Islam. Its content is linked to what Muslims need. Its purpose is to resolve and address the current challenges facing the Islamic Ummah. It is based on the sources of Islamic legislation, namely the Holy Quran, Sunnah of the prophet and other sources of Islamic legislation, such as consensus. Religious discourse seeks to spread the Islamic religion in faith, law, morality and treatment, with a view to teaching people all that is useful to them in the world and in the afterlife, making every effort to serve this religion in compliance with God ' s command and the order of the Prophet.

III. Code-Switching (CS)

Code-switching is a linguistic practice where a speaker alternates between multiple languages or varieties in a single conversation or situation. CS can occur between sentences, sentence fragments, words, or individual morphemes in synthetic languages. It can also occur when there is a change in the environment, such as switching to a different language or code to match the audience's needs. It can be employed when speakers cannot express themselves adequately in a single language or to signal an attitude. Several theories have been developed to explain code-

switching from sociological and linguistic perspectives (Auer, ١٩٩٠-١٩٩٥-١٩٩٨; Gumperz, ١٩٨٢; Myers-Scotton, ١٩٩٣-١٩٩٦; Wong, ٢٠٠٠).

In the field of bi/plurilingualism study, one of the most persistent concerns is why do bi/plurilingual speakers switch between languages during verbal interaction? The extra-linguistic elements of topic, setting, participant relationships, community norms and values, and societal, political, and ideological developments were all considered to impact speakers' language choice in conversation that what has been concluded by sociolinguists who had studied code-switching prior to the ١٩٨٠'s, with very few exceptions (Gumperz, ١٩٨٢). For instance, the widely recognised study by Blom and Gumperz (١٩٧٢) established the distinction between "metaphorical switching" and "situational switching." As the name suggested, situational switching was brought about by a shift in circumstances. The basic premise was that speakers required adapting their language choice to keep up with changes in situational conditions in order to retain the appropriateness of only one of the co-available languages or language varieties for a given situation. Conversely, metaphorical switching described alterations in the speaker's word choice when the circumstances stayed the same. It was considered to be a special communicative aim for the speaker to code-switch in this instance. However, as had been established in the case of situational switching, the conversation participants' (and analysts', for that matter) interpretation of the speaker's communicative intent in metaphorical code-switching depended on the association between a particular language or language variety and a particular situation. Put another way, before interpreting a deviant choice of language, one must first determine what the acceptable choice would be for the context (Auer, ١٩٨٤). Notwithstanding variations in emphasis, this line of reasoning was typically not refuted by sociolinguistic research on the meaning of code-switching.

According to structural and pragmatic norms, CS is a highly regularised linguistic behaviour (Myers-Scotton, ١٩٩٣; Auer, ١٩٩٨), and as such, it does not typically represent disfluent speech. Speakers use communicative codes to communicate with other language users, while listeners use their own codes to understand the contributions of others. Speakers may switch their forms to signal changes in situation, social roles, or alternate ways of understanding a conversational contribution. Code switching is a means for language users to contextualize communication, as it signals a context in which the linguistic contribution can be understood (Auer, ١٩٩٨: ١٣). The meaning of the linguistic behaviour emerges from the interaction. However, the use of specific linguistic forms has no inherent meaning, as individuals can recall past experiences of discourse and use them to understand discourse functions. It is more interesting to understand the effect of linguistic form on discourse practice and emergent social meanings rather than tracking frequency or regularity of recurrences.

١. Reasons Behind CS

The use of Code Switching in communication and interaction practices is due to one or more of the following reasons (Gumperz, ١٩٨٢; Auer, ١٩٩٥):

- Code switching is common during discourse on a specific topic, when a specific language is necessary or preferred.
- It can occur while quoting someone, expressing solidarity or gratitude, clarifying words or concepts, or expressing group identity.
- Code-switching can soften or strengthen command, mark emphasis, or provide inspiration.
- It can occur when translating technical or idiomatic speech from a foreign or non-primary language could distort the precise meaning.
- Code-switching can occur unconsciously, such as when frightened by a specific event or circumstance.
- It can be used to fit in, get something, avoid effects of implicit bias, or say something in secret.
- It could be an im/polite strategy to exclude or include someone from/to the ongoing verbal behaviour.

In summary, code switching refers to the process by which participants in a discourse utilise different grammatical systems, subsystems, or codes to indicate changes in context. It is impossible to view these codes' mental representation firsthand either by participants in conversation or by analysts. The analyst's task is to watch discourse unfold and determine which linguistic form is salient as a code based on how it affects discourse interaction. According to the method outlined here, code-switching is what people do in specific speech contexts. As a result, it is unable to identify the precise nature of any code before interaction or to outline the general purposes of language alternation. Discourse partners treat codes as such, which make them significant. Codes are the result of interaction.

٢. Code-Switching in Religious Discourse

CS is the use of two or more languages in conversation, a topic of interest in linguistics, sociolinguistics, and pragmatics. Researchers have investigated CS in various contexts, including education, courtrooms, family situations, and workplaces. However, little attention has been given to examining CS in a religious domain. Barnes and Mahomed (١٩٩٤) and Wong (٢٠٠٠) conducted studies on code mixing between Arabic and English in a community of South African Indian Muslims. They found that code mixing with Arabic occurs most frequently when discussing topics related to worship or religious events. Wong (٢٠٠٠) surveyed nine bilingual speakers and found that some participants switch to more intimate language for religious purposes, either because they feel more comfortable or because the religion is perceived in a specific language. For example, a Catholic woman prefers Spanish for confessing her sins and praying, as she learned all prayers in that language.

In this paper, unlike what was mentioned before, we will explore the phenomenon of code switching from Arabic with its two versions Classical and AA^١ to French in

^١ : Algerian Arabic

religious discourse even though Arabic is the native language of the addresser and addressee alike.

On February ١٩th, ٢٠٢٠, participants in the work of the international forum on “The Qur’anic Miracle and its Impact on Promoting Religious Discourse,” organized by the Directorate of Religious Affairs and Endowments in the Algerian city of Blida, called for the promotion of religious discourse in the Islamic world in line with developments in living reality. Professors and doctors specialized in Sharia sciences and the Arabic language explained during this meeting that the imams of mosques are required to renew the jurisprudence of discourse and balance it with people’s concerns and developments of the time in order to achieve the primary goal of these discourses, which is “serving society and deepening people’s faith in the right religion.” The participants in this forum emphasized, in papers they presented, the necessity of improving and updating the content of religious discourse across pulpits, and the commitment of preachers to using the classical Arabic language, especially during Friday sermons. They also stressed the importance of “mosque preachers refreshing their knowledge and improving their Arabic language” in order to help recipients gain a true and deep understanding of Islam. ٤٠٠ specialists in Sharia sciences and the Arabic language from Jordan, Tunisia and Lebanon, in addition to Algerian specialists, are participating in the work of this international forum. In addition to that, the president of the Algerian Republic, Mr. Abdemajid TEBBOUNE, said in the context of interest in the English language in line with the international economic, scientific and technological repercussions: “French is a spoil of war, but English is a global language.”

Through what was above mentioned, we conclude that there is a great intention to exclude French from all areas of the Algerian life, as well as to emphasize the use of Arabic in religious discourse. But paradoxically, as recipients, we notice that the use of French in religious discourse has recently increased in Friday lessons and sermons, as well as religious sermons through the social media.

IV. The Adopted Methodology

The work adopts a qualitative research approach aiming to analyse and describe the use of code switching in religious discourse. First, the researchers relied on the scientific observation targeting different kinds of discourse delivered by different preachers. Then, they limited their scope of observation to Tlemcen preachers. As it is, to a certain extent, difficult to contact several preachers the researchers have chosen many discourses (Friday lessons) that are found on YouTube delivered by Sheikh Mohammed HAMRI who is known by code switching between Arabic and French in his discourses. Furthermore, the researchers conducted an interview with the preacher in order to give the reader a reliable data about why code switching occurs in religious discourses. In this research paper we limited ourselves to the English version of the interview. However, the excerpts selected from the chosen discourses are on the Arabic version^٧ and the English one.

^٧ The Arabic version has been phonetically transcribed.

١. Phonetic Symbols

Arabic sound	Symbol	Example	Arabic sound	Symbol	Example
ء	[ʔ]	[ʔisla:m] (Islam)	ض	[d]	[əddulm] (injustice)
			ع	[ʕ]	[ʃariʕa] (Sharia)
ب	[b]	[bu:mba] (bomb)	غ	[ɣ]	[ɣani:ma ħarb] (war spoil)
ت	[t]	[tila:wa] (recitation)	ف	[f]	[fa:waq] (when)
ج	[ʒ]or[dʒ]	[l(d)ʒumuʕa] (Friday)	ق	[q]	[qa:l] (he said)
ح	[ħ]	[lhaja:t] (life)	ك	[k]	[əlmukarabi: n] (the closest)
خ	[x]	[xɑ:j] (my brother)	ل	[l]	[əllawm] (blame)
د	[d]	[əddi:n] (the religion)	م	[m]	[maʕraka] (a battle)
ر	[r]	[ramɖɑ:n] (Ramadan)	ن	[n]	[nħa:wlu] (we try)
ز	[z]	[ʕazza] (Gaza)	ه	[h]	[əlhida:ja] (guidance)
س	[s]	[mssalhi:n] (armed)	و	[w]	[wa:ħad] (someone)
ش	[ʃ]	[ʃku:n] (who is it?)	ي	[j]	[raba:nija] (divine)
ص	[ʂ]	[əʂʂahajina] (the Zionists)	ط	[t]	[xɑʔi:ʔa] (a sin)
Vowels					
short			long		
a			a: ا		
u			u: و		
i			i: ي		

The phonetic symbols make the transcribed version readable.

٢. The Interview:

The interview was held on ٢١/٠٤/٢٠٢٤ at ١٤:٣٠, Al-Mashwar secondary school, Tlemcen.

From an ethical perspective, before we schedule an appointment with the preacher, we had contacted him personally, given him an idea about the topic of our research, and asked for a permission to analyse some of discourse that serve our objectives.

The researchers: Could you please introduce yourself to us?

Sheikh: Professor Hamri Mohammed, born on September ٢٤, ١٩٧١, in the city of Tlemcen. a teacher of Islamic Sharia in secondary school; graduated in ١٩٩٤ from the Institute of Islamic Civilization, Oran.

I have practiced as a teacher of secondary school in Islamic sciences from ١٩٩٤ to the present day. In addition, I have volunteered in Friday lessons, sermons, and lectures in the mosques of Tlemcen and other than Tlemcen, and in the universities of Tlemcen and non-Tlemcen, as well as university residencies, and this has been since the nineties of the last century. I aim to introduce the virtuous values of our true religion. We correct some deviations in the behaviour, thinking, and feelings of Muslims, and this is thanks and success from God.

The researchers: Could we consider you an Islamic preacher?

Sheikh: This ruling is up to you. I consider myself a Muslim citizen trying to fulfill his duty towards himself, his Lord, and all people. So yes, yes we call to Islam and the teachings of Islam, for I am a preacher in the linguistic sense of the word.

The researchers: Do you consider yourself a modernist and what is the true meaning of religious discourse?

Sheikh: I swear, Professor, the word “modernist” is a heavy word. I do not judge myself, because in my speech to people I try to address them with what their minds understand, first and foremost. Secondly, I address them with the discourse that is familiar to them and they practice it in their daily lives and evenings. Because whenever the addresser addresses the addressee using this technique, he will be updated. That is to say, he will not address people in the way the previous generations were addressed. Of course, the speech is renewed to take into account the repercussions of the lived time, and I take this into account. This is the renewal. We will not differ on the term as long as this matter plays the

role of conveying the information from the deliverer to the recipient, so he understands it, and this is the goal of the discourse.

The researchers: Is code switching in religious discourse considered a form of renewal, and what are the reasons and objectives of this linguistic behaviour?

Sheikh: There is a proverb which in this regard means that it would be beneficial to use a second or third language to communicate your speech to meet your target and the addressees' needs. But this is not without criticism from some who do not see the benefit of code switching in the religious discourse, because I have been subjected to a lot of criticism in this regard. In my humble experience of Islamic preach, I have met those who prefer classical Arabic, enjoy it, and demand that we adhere to it and only it, and there are those who demand that we should simplify the religious concepts by resorting to Algerian Arabic. In addition to those who demand the use of some explanations in the French language, since their culture is largely French and they understand only a little bit of Arabic.

Now pleasing people is an unattainable goal, but I have a goal that I want to reach and a message that I want to convey, which is that when I address people, they understand what God wants from them, and it is appropriate for their varying linguistic levels. This makes me, as a speaker, try my best to take into account all these needs and shortcomings. For that, I find myself forced to use a second or third language if required, because I do not find any embarrassment in using only the Arabic language because I speak it smoothly and fluently, thank God, but the goal is that sometimes the end may justify the means. Because through my experience in preaching for more than thirty years, I see that it is more than necessary to use more than one language in your speech to people especially when you are conveying to them a universal message, which is the message of Islam. Because it is our prophet's Sunnah, may God bless him and grant him peace, that he addresses everyone who comes to him with his language, and he commissioned the Companions to learn the languages of other peoples so that they could address everyone in his language. There is no legal embarrassment in using other languages in religious discourse as long as they serve the purpose.

So, the first purpose or goal is to understand religious discourse as widely as possible, as well as to target the largest possible group of listeners.

Secondly, the psychological and emotional aspect because sometimes switching from one language to the other, even with a word, awakens and alerts the listeners. This is a way to attract their attention.

In adopting this approach (switching between different codes), we have several goals that yield very good results and that is relying on our preaching journey.

There is another technique for the speaker: after he knows the title, time, and location of the lecture, the first question he poses to the event organizing committee is the target group, and with this the speaker prepares himself to understand them according to their linguistic needs, as we previously mentioned, and our success is only on God.

V. Analysis of the interview

It is very obvious from the interview that the preacher is highly convinced of the effectiveness of code switching from Arabic to French, from Arabic to dialectal Arabic and even to English if necessary to achieve the desired objectives of the discourse relying on the saying: “sometimes the end may justify the means”. These sociolinguistic practices are not arbitrary, but rather are an actual Sunnah of our prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) that the preacher must follow.

Due to the request of the target population, the preacher finds himself obligated to address every one according to his linguistic comprehension ability. Otherwise he enjoys resorting just to the Arabic language as he speaks it smoothly and fluently. That the target population understands in a good way what God want from them is the goal of religious discourse, which rises above personal goals in using a specific language and not other ones.

Moreover, the preacher, from his point of view, has summarised the purpose of code switching in religious discourse in two points:

١. The discourse should be as understandable as possible and target the largest possible group of listeners.
٢. Code-switching is a technique approved by the preacher to attract the listeners' attention.

VI. Analysis of Sheikh Hamri's discourses^٧

The first example: (Friday lesson, ١٩/٠٤/٢٠٢٤)

wə tʃi:b əlʒunu:d əʃʃahajina mssalhi:n wə fəlməʔraka wə ʕa:raf ki jamʃi lʔazza ʕa dɛpɛnt fa:waq əʔfi:h ʕli:h ʔəlbunba wəlla əss.... w jamʃi il a l'audace et le courage d'être present.

^٧ All the discourses have been taken from his YouTube channel: youtube.com/hamrimohamed.

(And you find Zionist soldiers armed and in the battle, he knows that when he goes he does not know when he will be bombed, and he goes, he has the audacity and courage to be present.)^٤

In this example the preacher switches from AA to French. It is an inter-sentential code switching. Due to this linguistic behaviour, the preacher aims to attract the listener's attention and it is a kind of emphasis to strengthen the resolve of Muslims.

The second example: (Friday lesson, ١٢/٠٤/٢٠٢٤)

ʔana mina əlmala:ʔika ʔalmuqarabi:n ʔana maʔʃu:m ʔana ma naʔmal ʔata ʔaʔi:ʔa ʔana ma: naʔmal ʔata danb *donc je ne suis pas concerné.*

(I am one of the closet angels, I am infallible, I do not commit any sin. So, I am not concerned.)

As the previous example, in this excerpt there is an inter-sentential code switching from Al-Fosha to AA. Then he switches to French. The preacher tends to explain what is said in Al-Fosha in AA for clarifying the idea to the recipients who do not master Al-Fosha. Then he addresses those who their culture is largely French.

The third example: (Friday lesson, ١٢/٠٤/٢٠٢٤)

liʔanna ʔal baʃma hija ʔal baʃma ərraba:nija *la signature, le créateur c'est, il est unique, kajan xi waʔad*

(Because the fingerprint is the divine fingerprint. The signature, the creator is, he is unique. Only one.)

The example displays that the preacher switches between three codes: Al-Fosha, French, and AA respectively. The preacher tends to address all the all attendees depending on their levels and linguistic needs.

The fourth example: (Friday lesson, ٠٥/٠٤/٢٠٢٤)

Ga :l ʔana ʔana hada ramda :n ka :mal w ʔana ʒa:jab ra:si *je me sens vraiment bien, ↑attention !↑*

(He said I have done well this Ramadan, I feel really good, be careful!)

In this example it seems clearly that the preacher, when he switches from Arabic to French, tends to attract the listeners' attention he reinforce his tendency with warning using the term **↑attention !↑** which is louder than the other utterances in the sentence.

VII. Interpretation of the Results

The researcher started her investigation with the hypothesis that using another language beside Arabic in religious discourse it does not bear fruit especially when it is addressed to native speaker of Arabic. However, and depending on the interview held with Sheikh Hamri who is more specialized in the religious and preach field; more than ٣٠ years in preaching and guidance, code-switching is more than

^٤ (.....):The English version of the transcribed data.

necessary to meet the addressees' needs and achieve the religious discourse purposes. More than ٣٠ years in Islamic preaching is not a short period, during which the preacher met and verbally interacted with several segments of society; an experience that makes him aware of what the target group requires.

From the analysis of the recorded and transcribed excerpts of the religious discourse we could say that in addition to the different reasons mentioned in literature concerning code-switching it functions as a means for targeting the largest group of listeners, and to attract their attention for delivering the greatest amount of information and divine messages. Throughout these practices the preacher consciously and/or unconsciously meets the polite function of belongingness; that is to say that the preacher by code switching he respects the addressees' needs and wants and so he belongs to them and they belong to him as well.

In their papers, ٤٠٠ participants, from all over the Islamic world, in the international forum on "The Qur'anic Miracle and its Impact on Promoting Religious Discourse" stressed the need for preachers to stick to using classical Arabic, particularly during Friday sermons, and the need to update and improve the content of religious discourse across pulpits. Additionally, they emphasised that in order to assist recipients in developing a thorough and accurate grasp of Islam, preachers should refreshing their knowledge and improving their Arabic language. This call is rather a contradiction to the above. So, we would like to point out, however, that code-switching is an individual phenomenon it is up to the speaker or the preacher to decide whether resort to it or not depending on the repercussions of the discourse, its context, and the target population. And all of this is to achieve the divine goal, which is to worship God as he want. Anything that supports the achievement of this purpose must be resorted to by the preacher if it does not violate Sharia law; that confirms what Sheikh Hamri said: "sometimes the end may justify the means."

Conclusion

Submitted work fits into sociocultural linguistics that considers social and cultural functions of language use. It explores the phenomenon of Islamic preachers switching between Arabic and French in religious discourse. Religious discourse is crucial in Islamic countries for advancing values and addressing societal, political, economic, and cultural issues. Preachers often switch between languages or codes to reach a wider audience and attract its attention. The qualitative study on Sheikh Mohammed HAMRI's discourses and interview revealed that code switching in religious discourse is increasingly necessary, especially in today's era which witnessed openness to other cultures. This studied phenomenon is a practice of individual speakers, rather than a product of a grammatical system. Its occurrence depends on the speaker's intentions and the listeners' needs as well as the context of the discourse.

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