Code-Switching at the Meeting Point of the Slavic and Roman and German Worlds:
The Speech of the Slovenian Community of the Kanalska Dolina Valley
(La Val Canale, Italy)

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Taking into consideration the results of historical and sociolinguistical studies on the use of Slovenian in the multilingual community of the Kanalska Dolina valley (La Val Canale, Das Kanaltal, La Val Čjanål), which has originated from the gradually increasing number of languages spoken in this area (a potential quadri-linguality has been forming since WW II), this article concentrates on researching “intrasentential code-switching”.

The corpus of code-switching data is based on the recordings of two linguistic-ethnological camps and individual field research in 2003–2004 (approx. 30 hours in total). The recorded material consists mainly of conversations between the local people and Slovenians who have explicitly declared themselves to be non-speakers of other valley-languages (to minimise instances of code-switching as a result of adaptation to the person being spoken to). An analysis of the semantic fields of lexical items occurring in code-switching, and the socio-pragmatic factors of their occurrence, is followed by experimental phonetic analysis, mainly concentrated on the measurements of prosodic variables in switching (pitch realisation and the preservation of contrasts, changes in prosodic features, sentence intonation, segmental variability, etc.).

Special attention is paid to differences between code-switching into German and code-switching into Italian; these differences originate from a greater degree of phonological convergence between German and Slovenian varieties in contact. The results of this comparison might be helpful in finding out to what degree such measurements are relevant to definitions of the border between borrowing and code-switching.