Exploring rhetoricity as the distinctive feature of online written code-switching
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An early empirical study of written online code-switching (CS, Hinrichs 2006) showed that the most consistent unique feature of digital CS—as opposed to CS in speech—is the more rhetorical stance that online writers take compared to speakers. Far from being a categorical distinction, the overall greater rhetoricity of written online CS is rooted in the perforce higher degree of pre-utterance planning in written discourse, compared to the greater spontaneity of speech. Based on the author's corpus of bi-varietal Jamaican asynchronous CMD and data from other published, pertinent studies, this paper further investigates rhetoricity in digital CS. The following instance of online CS illustrates some aspects of rhetoricity (glossed using regular font for English, italics for Cypriot Greek):

Opou, you know, first self-conscious written narrative, alla ullo logia, re koumbare.
Where, you know, first self-conscious written narrative, but it's all words, mate.
(Tsiplakou 2009: 382)

Taken from an e-mail exchange among Greek academics living and working in London, this passage discusses (and dismisses) a piece of literary criticism. The phrase "first self-conscious written narrative" is a quote from that piece. Using CS, the author enacts several different identities: the informally chatty self who characterizes himself as bilingual in the first two words; the pompous critic whose formal style is dismissed by the intentional clash with the informal discourse marker you know, and a down-to-earth "peasant" (ibid.), an identity mobilized through the use of vernacular Cypriot Greek (it's all words, mate), which is popularly associated with an uneducated persona in Greek culture. This instance of CS, I argue, demonstrates the rhetoricity of CMD in three ways: (1) it is a creative use of CS, as opposed to formulaic; (2) it uses language contrast to index cultural constructs, i.e. the different identities (as opposed to having a deictic, or organizing function); and (3) it contrasts self- and other-voicing (as opposed to exclusive self-/single voicing, cf. Bakhtin 1982). By drawing on CMD data demonstrating CS among Greek, English, Jamaican Creole, and Mandarin Chinese in varying combinations, published in Hinrichs (2006), Tsiplakou (2009), and other works, this paper develops the different aspects of these three facets of rhetoricity. They add up to an analytical framework of great heuristic utility in assessing the degree and type of rhetoricity of empirical CS data.