The Use of Code-Switching as a Teaching Tool at the Tertiary Level: A Case Study of English Lecturers in the Department of English Language Teaching at the University of Kelaniya

PGRY Gamage[1#]

[1]University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

[#]ransikayasasini@gmail.com

The present study examines the use of Code-Switching (CS) as a teaching tool by English lecturers in the Department of English Language Teaching (DELT) at the University of Kelaniya. The research focuses on compulsory 2-credit intensive courses including English for Humanities (DELT 12252) and English for Social Sciences (DELT 11212), which are offered to undergraduates from the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The key objective of this study is to determine the frequency and rationale behind the use of CS by DELT lecturers during English as a Second Language (ESL) lectures. Qualitative data for the study were gathered from 12 temporary assistant lecturers and demonstrators of the DELT via semi-structured interviews. Data were analyzed thematically using Canagarajah's (1995) theoretical framework on the functions of CS. The findings denote that CS is strategically used by DELT lecturers to enhance instructional effectiveness, particularly in contexts that require improved student comprehension and active engagement. This study further identifies the most and the least common reasons for the use of CS by lecturers, demonstrating its role in facilitating better comprehension and engagement among undergraduates. This research contributes to the broader understanding of the pedagogical benefits of CS in bilingual educational settings, emphasizing its significance in improving English language instruction at the tertiary-level education system in Sri Lanka. Further, this study evinces that CS facilitates better comprehension and engagement among undergraduates. Overall, the findings conclude that while CS is an effective teaching tool during ESL lectures, its application remains context-dependent.

Keywords: *code-switching, teaching tool, english language teaching*