

THE USE OF CODE SWITCHING IN TRANSLANGUAGE IN A CLASSROOM SETTING

by:

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Language is a form of communication that transfers information for many purposes of human endeavors. The use of specific language is an important tool to be understood by many. It helps us communicate to the rest of the world, business transactions, employment, education and the likes. In the Filipino context, language contains a diversity of regional dialects that make each region unique from one another.

However, in education, language also becomes a hindrance in addressing the mastery level of students across learning areas. Speaking the English language has been one of the predicaments of students and teachers in terms of mastery of the subject matter.

This becomes an avenue for educators to consider using multi-lingual and code switching during the conduct of classes especially to those subjects that demand for context-based and curriculum based pedagogies. This is to ensure that students can express their thoughts and able to share their opinions to make classroom discussions more interactive.

The tradition of speaking Tag-lish (Tagalog and English) or Bisa-kol (Bisaya and Bikol) are not only dominant traits of language within a cultural area but also within the frame of political jurisdiction. However, as much as language tends to move over from diversity to code switching, the phenomenon is a classic feature in language studies but its significance is never lost in the New Normal set-up (MacSwan et al. 2019).

There are countries which are speaking bilingual or multilingual. This is different from code switching which may be defined as speaking two or more languages in a combination. There is a big difference between the two - and the keyword that made

them different from each other is fluency. In bilingualism or multilingualism, one may be fluent with the languages used - including English, French, German, and Spanish. Speaking these languages in their proper orthography is a qualification to test the fluency of a speaker. Thus, in terms of fluency, most of the prominent speakers use bilingual or even multilingual to be understood by the audience. It creates more interaction within the context of communication. On the other hand, code switching is also being considered by many including Filipinos to create good conversation with others.

Code switching on the other hand, is just like bilingualism and multilingualism, but within the sentence, two or more languages are used (Valdés, 2019).

Around the world, code switching is very evident. In Canada, people are speaking both French and English fluently. In China, most people used Mandarin, Cantonese, and Hakka, Tong Shan among others. The complex language of the Chinese are more gleaning to the fluency part as code switch may make certain sentence obscure and confusing. In India, the people used Hindi but also understand or even used Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Kashmiri, Assamese, Oriya, Konkani, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu. In Switzerland, people were speaking German, French, Italian, and Rumantsch. In the Philippines, there are eight major dialects including Bisaya, Kapampangan, Ilongo, Tagalog, Bicolano, Cebuano, Pangasinanan and Ilocano and other 120 minor dialects. A common Filipino individual understands Tagalog and English, but it is not impossible for anyone to understand or learn various languages of archipelago even without formal studies. This is true especially when the language of the parents are being considered. For example, if the maternal language spoken is Ilongo (Iloilo) and the paternal language spoken is Chavacano (Zamboanga), the children may have learned these languages aside from modern-day Filipino (Tagalog) and English (Bautista, 1991; and Olivera, 2021).

In the present K-12 curriculum, the problem in language acquisition is less imposed than the problem presented by code switching among students. Thus, from

Grade 1-3, aside from English and Filipino subjects spoken either way, Mother Tongue is taught. Then Grade 4 and up, the Mother Tongue was taken off the curriculum to give way to English which the students will carry until college. The primary focus of the study is not amongst elementary school pupils, but to seek a higher perspectives on bilingualism in a form of code switching. Students are more relaxed when expression of one's self is imposed but are naturally felt nerves when asked to speak in English.

In Dinalupihan, a melting pot of culture and a center of commerce, Zambal from Olongapo, Tagalog from Bataan and Kapampangan from Pampanga hovered over markets, establishment, and professionals at the place. Code switching from Kapampangan and Tagalog, or Tagalog and English and even combinations of which are very much common. The practice of speaking code switching is predominant in the marketplace, in several business establishments, and in the school as well. There are three most important skills in teaching – the acquisition of new information, making meaning of the conversation; and the transfer the meaning from the source to another. Thus, code switching is an addition to that body of knowledge concerning language acquisition and the concern of teachers to formal use of orthography in a classroom. While there are significant practice of code switching, no Tag-lish or Bisa-kol is used in any formal books or modules. Understanding the nature, acquisition of language, and the practice of code switching is an excellent research study in the future especially when language seems to have no boundary in a globalized world. That, as long as everyone understood each other, whatever code switched from one or another, the meaning seems to be more important than the language itself (Roxas, 2019).

References:

MacSwan, J., Guzman, N., McAlister, K. T., & Marcus, M. (2019). Effects of home codeswitching practices on bilingual language acquisition. In *Codeswitching in the Classroom* (pp. 148-161). Routledge.