

LEARNERS' ENGAGEMENT THROUGH CODE-SWITCHING IN ELT CLASSES AT SECONDARY LEVEL IN BALTISTAN

Muhammad Mustafa*, Lubna Ali Muhammad, Sadia Ayub
Lincoln University College, Petaling Jaya, Negeri Selangor, Malaysia.
Corresponding author: Muhammad Mustafa, Email: mmustafa@lincoln.edu.my

Abstract: In sociolinguistic contexts, it is a prevalent practice within social settings to exploit various languages for communicative or discursive rationales. A flourishing discourse is done when both the narrator and the listener comprehend effortlessly. For an enhanced and thriving discourse in the pedagogical settings, understandable linguistic items, like words, phrases or sentences borrowing from other languages is ordinary practice. The application of linguistic items like words and phrases from other languages in discourse is called code-switching (CS). Balti speakers (dwellers of Baltistan region of Northern Area of Pakistan) use some English words spontaneously or willingly while communicating in their local language (Balti language) for better and successful interaction. Code switching of local language i.e. Balti, makes teaching and learning of English effective at secondary level in Baltistan. The research method applied in this study is Qualitative research based on case study. This Descriptive study with Purposive Sampling aims at investigating the attitude of learners while teaching English books by the teachers.

Keywords: Learners' engagement; Balti language; Borrowing; CS (Code Switching); ELT (English Language Teaching)

1 INTRODUCTION

Code switching is simply the alternation, replacement or changing of words or phrases in conversation. It is the process of altering from one language to other in the same sentence of discourse [1]. The phenomenon of Code-switching is capable of enhancing the learners' comprehension regarding the complex data and it can foster the social inclusion in the learning atmosphere [2]. It has been noticed that the practice of CS happens both accidentally or by purpose for various reasons and people convey their feeling in different ways while switching code in daily discourses. One of the major features of the bilinguals is that they apply integrated elements or terms from their L1 within the same statement in discourses [3]. In all over the world it is not easy to find out any monolingual nation, as it is said that there bilingual people code switch in their daily discourses. In different fields like education, business and travel, people need to speak a language other than his mother tongue or national language. In Pakistan it is impossible to find a nation who is monolingual so the feature of bilingualism or multilingualism leads to code switching or lexical borrowing in conversation. Baltistan is also a region of Northern Area of Pakistan where bilingualism and multilingualism is common. In educational institutions, business, and travel and other sectors of life, Balti people speak Urdu or English as well. Though several researches have been done on CS but application of CS in Balti language at secondary level was an ignored area. In teaching and learning the code-switching has also vital role in Skardu Gilgit-Baltistan so in this study the researcher tried to identify the applications and strategies of CS by the teachers and its positive influences of applying code switching from English to Balti in the ELT classes at Baltistan. The researchers have analyzed the positivity of L1 codes in the ELT classes at Skardu of Baltistan a region in Pakistan where English is being taught at elementary level for skill purposes.

English subjects are taught in formal setting in Baltistan just like of the other parts of Pakistan. Different teaching methods are used to teach English subjects but GTM is commonly used in our country. It is depended on the teaching method and teachers that how much the lesson is understandable and acquirable. The teaching method is the main thing that makes understand the learners properly. The teachers teach with hard working but sometime it is difficult to make students understand properly by using a single language or single word. In such condition a teacher needs to use lexical borrowing or code switching for easy and better communication. Code switching makes teaching and learning easy and understandable. Code switching of local language i.e. Balti, makes the process of teaching and learning of English effective at secondary level in Baltistan.

English is a compulsory subject in Pakistan at different level study. Different methods are used to teach English subjects in our country and the traditional methods of teaching English is used hitherto. The native language is also used in classroom. In Baltistan the teachers are commonly native speaker of Baltistan who speaks Balti Language. Sometime the teachers and students use Balti words, phrases or sentence while teaching or learning. This causes easy transmission of lesson for students comfortably and easily.

The current investigation aimed at examining the learners' engagement in ELT classes and the effectiveness of code switching while teaching of English Subjects at Secondary level schools. This study will try to give the useful idea of using code switching for better understanding when the learners are also able to understand the borrowing words. The present

research may impress the English teachers of knowing the importance of code switching of Balti Language while teaching English Subjects. It is a new field of study so it will be helpful for further researches in Balti Language and its uses. This research will be helpful for find out new ways on doing researches on Balti Languages and code switching.

This study is based on the research questions like investigating the effectiveness of CS in teaching of English at Secondary level, to investigate the learners' attitude towards Balti CS in English classes and to answer the question of view of English instructors' views about Balti CS in the instructional process.

For the current study, the samples had been taken from District Skardu, Gilgit Baltistan, North Areas of Pakistan and the target school is The Oxford Public School, located in Shagari Kalan of Skardu. Keeping in view the nature and capacity of current research, the first three chapters of 8th grade English book (Punjab textbook board) have been chosen for study.

2 THEORETICAL AND SCHOLARLY OVERVIEW

The inclusions of the codes can enhance vital improvements while unveiling that code in code switching are eminent and critical components in LLMs and indeed it can convey a quality with model performances [4]. Ye states that the application of Code switching is very common in Chinese schools but its functions are not vivid so he highlighted its functions in both Mandarin language and English[5]. Hamdan investigates the functions of code switching in Brueian schools at secondary level and identifies its positivity and importance while applying the typologies[6]. The conclusion of this paper revealed eleven types of functions regarding code switching together with discourse, marker, clarification, referential, quotation in imitation and emphasis etc.

Several popular languages that had applied the Computational method ignored the importance of CS so massive models are not successful to apply diverse CS types[7]. The practice of code-mixing (CM) occurs at the morpheme, word, and phrase level, while code-switching (CS) happens at the clause, sentence, and utterance level. However, intra-sentential code-switching shows no clear distinction from code-mixing, which leads to their classification into both categories [8].

Sobahle suggested that when two or more groups of people with different cultures meet, they are bound to affect each other in the sense that one group will borrow from the other[9]. Code switching has great role in linguistics factors that influences the teaching also.

Code-switching in foreign language instruction setting is considered a common phenomenon that has captured interests of researchers worldwide over the past decades and one of the areas of studies identified that there lack of studies about code-switching in legal English teaching and learning in various languages that gives rise to this current research [10]. The major important types of the code switching included Intra-sentential Switching and Inter-sentential Switching and the Intra-Sentential is more prominent in the instructional settings. In Pakistan and many other countries English is used as L2 that is used in education, trade, business, and offices. Having the characteristic of bilingualism code switching has now become common in different fields of life. Baltistan is also a region of Pakistan where different bilingual nations dwell. They also code switch in their daily life of communication.

Different researchers have written research articles and papers on code switching as Hossain on Code-Switching among Stranded Urdu Speaking People in Bangladesh and Gamback on Code Mixing in Social Media Text. Though several research studies have been done on CS of various languages of the world but still it has been noticed with the help of literature that there is no any research found on Balti CS in English language classes at elementary level. So, there is gap in the CS of language, region and level of the students that have been focused in this study.

3 METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

Qualitative approach is a popular method in linguistics as it can be applied in many areas of linguistic studies including analyses of the structures, distribution of the rhetorical moves, and the semantic, grammatical or morphosyntactic studies [11]. So, one can find several types of studies in linguistics with qualitative approach. For this study the researchers have selected Qualitative while considering the nature of area of study in linguistics and code switching (CS).

Recording, a systematic tool in research is identified as a trusted data collection in research instruments as it ensures the validity and reliability [12]. Deductive approach with non probability or purposive technique sampling has been applied for this research.

For data collection voice recordings of three classes / lectures have been utilized to search out the effectiveness of the phenomenon code-switching while English textbooks teaching at secondary level. The recordings, in purpose of data collection, aim at investigating the attitude of learners towards the instructors, lessons and functions of CS. The gathered data have been analyzed to assess the positivity, function and prevalence of CS to first language (Balti Language) in the instructional processes of Language 2 (English Language).

This study is a case study as under the umbrella of descriptive research it has discussed a current trend named Code Switching CS in teaching of English and it is qualitative as it is based on textual not numerical. So it aims to discuss the teaching process of English books at secondary level while applying the phenomenon of CS.

English language and grammar at the backbone of instructional process anywhere in the world and teaching English books with English grammar is impossible but on the other hand the 1st language of the learners cannot be ignored as it becomes a

hurdle or supportive handler in teaching L2 like English somewhere. Numbers of language are being extinct but one of the ways to support the dying languages is to allow using Code Switching or barrowing in communicational process. Gaps in population are a major part of finding new research topics. The target population is the students and English instructors of 8th grade learners of the school named The Oxford Public School that is located in North of Pakistan, Shagari Kalan, in Skardu. Only recordings have been used to assess the applications of CS in the mentioned classes and on all lectures have been assessed to check out the flow of code switching and its responses.

4 DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

In this section, the data analysis and its results have been highlighted. The recordings collected from 8th grade at the Oxford public school, Shagari Kalan, Skardu, have been analyzed thoroughly. Recording, a systematic tool in research is identified as a trusted data collection in research instruments as it ensures the validity and reliability [12]. The recordings were done in grade 8th English classes where the instructor were teaching Chapters firstly, Tolerance of the Rasool (S.A), secondly, A dialogue on (problem solving) and thirdly, one the ocean (poem).

Where there is a difference, it becomes a unique trend in the process and where languages are not similar it leads so many unique things for the learners. The units of analysis in the targeted three chapters are Code switching of Balti language in the instructional process of English 8th grade book in Baltistan.

Frequency of CS to Balti Language has been analyzed firstly and found that in each session the English instructors applied CS to Balti while teaching the chapters but rarely. It was found that the teachers were switching to Balti language consciously and sometime unconsciously. The attitude of both the instructors and learners found positive of the CS in the lessons and majority of the learners were actively participating in the classes and giving their feedbacks in Balti and English language. It is to mention that the impacts of CS to Balti found positive and effective in the recordings and the most common time and situation of applying Balti found where there was to give an example from the Balti culture and society of Baltistan. On the other hand, both the instructors and learners maintained their proficiency in pedagogical processes in the target situation. Function of CS is considered a great teaching technique by the instructors to maintain the captivating atmosphere of learning and it is a cause of motivation for the learners if CS is applied positively, timely and appropriately.

In the first chapter titled 'TOLERANCE OF THE RASOOL' the Balti phrases used by the teachers and the learners were 'thiakh luk means tolerance, Nuzin, recognize and bloodshed, Khraq Drull used. Secondly, in the chapter of 'A DIALOGUE' the phrases in Balti language used were 'ato yang la pata yod, means Father, you know, laigy taq taq, pretty hard (bit humorous literally in Balti) and Sning Dokh means worry in English. Thirdly, in the chapter titled (poem) 'ON THE OCEAN' the linguistic units like 'Chhogho means Bigger in English and 'Water, Water means Chhu, Chhu' used by the participants.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study found the frequency, importance, functions, and attitude of the instructors and learners towards Balti CS in the pedagogical processes of English lesson taught in 8th classes in Baltistan region where 98% of the residence speak Balti language.

The current study on CS will be helpful and enlighten the path for coming researches in the field of teaching of English and other languages in term of using of code switching at deferent levels of instruction. With the help of this study, the teachers and students may be able to know the importance, role, techniques and limitations of code switching and correct application and alternation of words, phrases or sentences in the pedagogical processes. It is necessary to keep in mind that CS is not always best option as there are some limitations like is should not be applied repeatedly with any reason. It should be used appropriately, timely and positively when required and just alter the language where there are the same language users in the target situation.

So, in short, it is to mention with this investigation that the phenomenon of CS is an effective strategy in the instructional processes but it should be applied appropriately, positively and timely on the other hand the learners and instructors have same native language and linguistic background.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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