

**HYBRID LINGUISTICS VARIATIONS AND CODE SWITCHING
AMONG THE STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA,
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

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Introduction

This research topic was taken in for the discussion since it is often seems that university students use more than one language and code switching in their communication. Code switching is an activity, which may be observed in the speech, or writing of bilinguals who go back and forth between their two languages in the same conversation (Deuchar, 2012). In order to collect data a questionnaire was given to 25 students who study in English and Sinhala mediums in the university. Most of the students follow their degree in English medium but they use Sinhala at home. Finally, the responses were gathered according to their attitude towards using a mixture of two languages in the university. Thus, many students stated that as a natural phenomenon and that it is perfectly fine to use a bilingual language as long as the other party could understand what is said. Some students stated that it affects the digression of the language and therefore it is not good.

Methods

A questionnaire was given to 25 students of the University of Kelaniya, Faculty of Humanities. Thus, given to time limitations and effectiveness in gathering responses, the required data were planned to be collected by a questionnaire survey containing eight questions, which cover the language/languages, which the students use at home and what they use when communicating with their lecturers and friends in the university. The medium in which they study in the university and their attitudes towards code switching was taken in to consideration at the end.

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Findings and Argument

Sinhala was the first language of 80% students. Most of the students follow their degree in English medium. The percentage was 85%. Only 15% study in Sinhala medium. 80% of the students use Sinhala, 10% use English and 10% use Tamil at home. 54% students use English when communicating with the lecturers and friends in the university and 46% use Sinhala. Therefore it is clear that majority of the students use English when communicating with their lecturers/friends in the university. Next a sentence was given to choose how each individual would tell it to their friends (see table 1). According to the responses gathered, it is clear that most of the university students do not use one language in their daily conversations but a mixture of two languages. Although the students use grammatically correct English language, none of them use a full Sinhala sentence. Therefore, it is clear that even the students who study in Sinhala medium in the university or those who have Sinhala speaking background at home neither use complete Sinhala when communicating.

According to the responses gathered, some students have stated that it is perfectly fine to use a mixture of many languages as long as what is spoken is grammatically correct and comprehensible. It is also stated that using such a language is a natural phenomenon that has established firmly within the society with the hybridization of socio-cultural elements and for a person who has grown up in a bilingual environment. Although it naturally happens, in general, the language does not make sense and therefore it is found out to be not perfectly fine. It also increases the vocabulary but at the same time it affects the digression of the language. If a person can use pure English and pure Sinhalese when speaking it would be better, but it is impractical.

Although it is found out through the questionnaire that none of the students uses pure Sinhalese to communicate although they use complete English. In most of the occasions code switching has become a common element today

Table 1

Answer choices	Responses
Let's go to the language lab	25%
lecture language lab	54%
let's go to the language lab for the lecture	21%

Conclusions

According to the data, it was found out that, most of the students use Sinhala at home but in communicating with their lecturers/ friends they use English. The students who study in different mediums also use code switching. This mostly happens with English and Sinhala languages. Using a complete Sinhala sentence in daily conversation is less seen. Therefore, it is evident that code switching has become a significant element among university students.

Keywords: Multi lingual speakers, Medium, Background, Culture

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