THE PREVALENCE OF CODE-SWITCHING

by:

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Clegg and Afitska (2011) showed in the study that codeswitching among sub-Saharan African classrooms is not acceptable as the authorities are prohibiting the use of it, and the teachers are finding it not necessary. They believe that code switching inside the classroom interferes the second language learning among the students that is why they treated it in a negative way. Yet, even though there are unfavorable views about code switching inside the classroom, Clegg and Afitska (2011) pointed out that the use of bilingualism specifically the codeswitching inside the classroom is relevant as it engages useful explanation, elaboration, and participation. The use of code switching establishes relationship during instructions as everyone may feel connected as they can understand each other easily through interaction. They able to participate freely that triggers an interactive classroom atmosphere. Hence, code switching is a good bilingual pedagogy inside the classroom.

Throughout the years, the perception about codeswitching in teaching has changed. It has become a language discourse inside the classroom as it caters casualty and normality inside the bilingual learning environment. Codeswitching as the code choice has become widely accepted as it is used in daily living particularly when people use it in the churches, television and radio programs.

In the language teaching-learning process, code switching becomes a necessity as it leads the students to learn more: the comprehension is certain and the rapport is established. It serves as a good bilingual tool or pedagogical practice, for it ensures the learning process of the second language. Ahmed (2009) figured out that code switching is an avoidable classroom discourse as it is used to instruct the students who are having
low English proficiency. In addition, Brew-Daniels (2011) claimed that children who are using code switching as classroom discourse performed better than those who are learning through using English language only. The way of focusing solely in the target language may create a gap that leads to a social distance inside the classroom.

In the Philippine classroom setting, the mixture of English and Filipino is commonly used among Filipino students. There are various reasons why code switching is occurring as the classroom discourse. First, it is used to make the expressions among the students easier. Second, it avoids interruptions through lacking of vocabulary as it leads the interaction to flow spontaneously, for everyone is convenient in using the language. Third, the speaking of mother tongue is already a habit which becomes inevitable to use. Filipino students are exposed to two languages. Hence, it leads them to use those languages as the code choices. The usage of Taglish or Tagalog-English in the Filipino classroom helps the teachers to deliver the lesson well as everyone is comfortable in the language they are using. It increases the level of English proficiency among the Filipino students, for the lessons are easy to understand. Tagalog and English as classroom discourses may look taboo for teaching the language. Yet, it is necessary as foundation in learning the second language. Probyn (2010) agreed that code switching is the common teaching discourse among Filipino classrooms, for teachers can simplify the instruction as they lessen the time for explaining the concepts. It gives way in producing good teaching practice as it clarifies students’ understanding.

References:
