

Translanguaging and Its Impact on Second Language Learners of English in Sri Lankan Universities

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Abstract

The medium of study of most degrees offered in Sri Lanka is English, and mastering English at least to a certain extent is vital for any undergraduate studying in Sri Lankan universities. To facilitate learning English, undergraduates are allowed to improve and master the English Language in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes conducted for them in Sri Lankan universities. In such classes English Instructors or Lecturers may resort to Translanguaging when they attempt in making sure that what they teach is clear to the students, to ice break, to reinforce and reiterate what is taught etc. This practice of Translanguaging has been practised by teachers of languages for a long while. However, Linguists, Teachers and also learners of English as a second language perceive this use of First Language (L1) when teaching a Second Language (L2) in diverse ways. This controversy has been there for a long time, yet, it is unresolved. This study focuses on the attitudes of teachers and learners of English as a second language in Sri Lankan universities on Translanguaging in the English classroom. Data were collected via questionnaires and semi-structured interviews conducted for both undergraduates and English Instructors and English Lecturers in several Sri Lankan Universities. Randomly selected 500 answered questionnaires shared with undergraduates and 200 Instructors and Lecturers of English were taken into consideration when arriving at the conclusions. Out of 200 questionnaires of the Language Teachers, more than 96 percent agree that Translanguaging helps second language learners of English master the target language whereas nearly 90 percent of the undergraduates agree with the same idea. It was also perceived that the undergraduates' competency level plays a role in their perception of Translanguaging in the classroom. Hence, it was evident that Translanguaging does play a huge role in improving, motivating and assisting undergraduates who learn English as a second language in Universities in Sri Lanka even though very few disagree with the point. Consequently, the majority of the second language teachers and undergraduates agree that Translanguaging does have a positive impact on learning English as a second language.

Keywords: *English as a second language, first language, translanguaging, undergrad*

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