

## Code Switching Problems in Bilingual Society of Sri Lanka

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In Sri Lanka, national language issue seems very influential in both cultural and political sphere; it was the major bone of argument between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. The use of English words within the society has increased amazingly. One of the reasons may be due to the extensive use of the mixed code in daily conversations by Sri Lankan bilinguals like Sinhalese and Tamils. This study explores the impact of code switching in the case of bilinguals and multilinguals who select different varieties of two or more languages to meet the requirements of different situations. The switchers use English words and expressions even when equivalents exist in Sinhala or Tamil vice versa. They feel that these English expressions come so naturally to them that their equivalents in Sinhala or Tamil might sound formal and unnatural. Nowadays most communication in a bilingual or multilingual society crosses national, linguistic and cultural boundaries and requires confidence and competence to be effective. The data presented in this paper have been collected through observation, questionnaires and analyzed descriptively. The study also includes catch phrases and slogans used in the electronic media to substantiate data gathered from an analysis. The study provides insight into the mixing strategies used by urban bilinguals. The analysis reveals that the mixed code is used dominantly in advertisements (print and electronic) where the medium of communication is Sinhala or Tamil. The methodological functions are identified (a) for translation, (b) for clarification, (c) for highlighting and (d) for efficiency. The social functions included code switching (a) for praise, (b) for encouragement, (c) for disapproval. Findings shall be discussed formally in a conference presentation. Consequently, there is a need for a valid and reliable form of code switching when problems are analyzed.

**Key Words:** Bilingual, Code Switching, Multilingual, Slogans, Communication, Electronic Media