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NEOLOGISM AWARENESS, CLASSROOM CODE-SWITCHING, AND SPEAKING PROFICIENCY AMONG GRADE 11 STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to find out the neologism awareness, classroom code-switching and speaking proficiency among eighty (80) Grade 11 students at the Visayas State University (VSU). The first forty (40) respondents answered a survey on neologism awareness. The remaining forty (40) respondents answered a survey questionnaire on classroom code-switching adopted from Olugbara (2008) and a speaking proficiency test from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS, 2017). The study followed a descriptive survey design. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The Spearman's Rho method was used for correlation analysis. Results showed that majority of the respondents are in the average ("Fair" and "Good") level of awareness based on newly coined words and expressions or new meanings for an established word. Results further showed that most of them are also aware of some factors related to neologism like coined words with reference to famous personalities, popular events classic periods or the like. However, majority of them have "Poor" level of awareness in neologisms when it comes to enumerating neologisms that the respondents know at the moment when the research was conducted. Meanwhile, the remaining forty (40) respondents indicated that they agree on the usage of code-switching inside the classroom as they answered "Agree" on 23 out of 27 item indicators in classroom code-switching. For the result of their speaking proficiency test, 40% of the respondents scored at the level of "Very good", 25% "Good user", 17.5% "Competent user", 10% "Limited user", 25% "Good user", 5% "Modest user", and 2.5% "Extremely limited user". However, given that only 7 (17.5%) out of 40 respondents fell under "Competent user" in the speaking proficiency test result, overall findings indicated the need for this group to improve their speaking proficiency. This study suggests that students be more aware with neologisms since basically, language is dynamic and that some meanings of certain words have meaning extensions or some may have changed depending upon the time, environment, speakers, and the like. Moreover, they are to be particular with the usage of classroom code-switching to facilitate their language learning, but not to the extent that it would deteriorate their English language proficiency.

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INTRODUCTION

Every language is like a dynamic system that changes and develops all the time (Minkova and Stockwell, 2009). Consequently, changes in the vocabulary happen when new meanings are introduced. Some of the newly coined words successfully adapt in the language and are extensively used by people, whether other neologisms exist for a while and disappear from the language (Gontasavora, 2013). New words and expressions or neologisms are created for new things depending upon the times, persons, technology, or the like. New words are either integrated to the center of the system, or survive some time at its periphery, and then disappear (Stekauer, 2008). Others survived and went straightway to updated dictionaries. According to Dent (2017), there are five contributors to the survival of a new word: usefulness, user-friendliness, exposure, the durability of the subject it describes, and its potential associations or extensions. She further emphasized that if a new word fulfills such criteria, it stands a very good chance of inclusion in the modern lexicon. Aside from neologisms, code-switching is also considered as a kind of a language update. One does the code-switching based upon the language of the times, and in some ways would include neologisms. Code-switching has a variety of functions which vary according to the topic, people involved in conversation, and the context where the conversation has taken place (Alenezi, 2010). Many students inside the classroom who were

instructed to speak in English as much as possible would tend to code-switch using English along with their local dialect or vernacular. Nevertheless, they are still aware that since they are in the academe, learning to become proficient English speakers can be considered as one of their goals why they study the target language. As a consequence of the need to communicate in English, several forms of assessment are being utilized to gather information on language learners' abilities and/or achievement in using the language. That is why it is important to have a study on neologism awareness along with classroom code-switching and speaking proficiency among Grade 11 students to have some fundamental bases on how to improve their English language proficiency.

Objectives of the study

This research was on neologism awareness, classroom code-switching, and speaking proficiency among Grade 11 students. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Determine the students' neologism awareness based on newly coined words and expressions or new meanings for an established word;
2. Survey some of the factors or attributes (person, period, event, or the like) related to students' neologisms;
3. Determine the students' classroom code-switching;
4. Determine the students' speaking proficiency; and
5. Determine the relationship between students' classroom code-switching and their speaking proficiency.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study followed a descriptive survey design. The first forty (40) respondents answered a survey on neologism awareness that tackled on neologism based on coined words and expressions, factors or attributes related to neologisms, and neologism enumeration. The remaining forty (40) respondents answered a survey questionnaire on classroom code-switching adopted from Olugbara (2008) and a speaking proficiency test from IELTS (2017). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The Spearman's Rho method was used for correlation analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For neologism awareness, results showed that out of 40 participants of the study, only 6 (15%) had an "Excellent" level of awareness, 18 (45%) "Good", 15 (37.5%) "Fair", and 1(2.5%) belonged to "Poor" level of neologism awareness. This indicates that majority of the respondents are in the average ("Fair" and "Good") level of neologism awareness based on newly coined words and expressions or new meanings for an established word. This implies that the respondents are updated with what is new in the language for communication. Results further showed that majority of the respondents are familiar with the new words and expressions, and that they are aware that these neologisms got some of their references from famous personalities, popular events, classic periods, or the like. However, majority of the respondents have "Poor" level of awareness when it comes to enumerating neologisms that the respondents know at the time when the research was conducted. This implies that the respondents were not so particular in using what is new in language and language change but were fully aware of the existence of

neologisms as reflected in the previous results in which they were not required to enumerate. In other words, they can recognize what can be called as neologisms but they are just passive users of these newly coined words and expressions. Meanwhile, the remaining 40 participants indicated that they agree on the usage of code-switching inside the classroom as they answered "Agree" on 23 out of 27 item indicators on classroom code-switching. This result is in consonance with Zahra et al's study (2016) which revealed that in an educational institution, more than one language is used as a medium of instruction and that learning the course in more than one language makes the course easy to understand. In their speaking proficiency test, 40% of the respondents scored at the level of "Very good user", 25% "Good user", 17.5% "Competent user", 10% "Limited user", 5% "Modest user", and 2.5% "Extremely limited user". This implies that the respondents are above average when it comes to their speaking proficiency. However, based on the gathered data, the students' classroom code-switching is not significantly related to their speaking proficiency. Thus, the two variables of interest are independent from each other. This implies that the students' usage of classroom code-switching has nothing to do or has no significance to their speaking proficiency. Nevertheless, given that only 7 out of 40 respondents fell under "Competent user" in the speaking proficiency test result, overall findings indicated the need to improve their performance in oral communication using the English language.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since language is basically dynamic, this study has come to conclude that students must take chances to become more aware with the existence of neologisms to keep them updated with today's expressions. Moreover, they have to be particular with the use of classroom code-switching in a way to help them understand the lessons more but not to the extent that this would be the cause for the deterioration of their English language proficiency.

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