

The Role of Mother Tongue as a Tool of Motivation in the English as a Second Language Classroom: Lecturers and Learners Perspectives

PP Shanilka Pathirana

National Youth Services Council

<pubudinipathirana@gmail.com>

Abstract - Using the Mother Tongue or the First Language (L1) in the Second Language classroom is recognized as one of the commonly discussed phenomena since the most common belief is that the Second Language should be taught and learned solely in a particular language. In the English as a Second Language (ESL) context in Sri Lanka, the learners encounter various difficulties in learning English. Motivation, as a fundamental internal factor, has a great impact on learners in the ESL classroom. This study aimed to examine the usage of the L1 as a tool of motivation towards the Learning and Teaching Process in the ESL Classroom. The data of this study were collected from randomly selected thirty Undergraduates of the University of Moratuwa and ten English lecturers who are working in state universities in Sri Lanka. A student questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used to collect data. The data were analyzed using a mixed method. As result, this study indicated the reasons for students' use of L1 and the instance where they expect the lecturers to use L1 in the classroom. Moreover, both informants have positive perspectives towards the usage of L1 and it has helped learners to understand the language better while actively engaging in learning. It is also identified that it is a great way of decreasing learner anxiety. Accordingly, it could be concluded that the usage of L1 as a tool of Motivation has involved in creating a successful teaching and learning Process in the ESL classroom.

Keywords: Mother Tongue, English as a Second Language, Motivation