

Code Mixing and Code-Switching Patterns in Kannada-English Bilingual Children and Adults Who Stutter

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Abstract : Background/Aims: Preliminary evidence suggests that code-switching and code-mixing may act as one of the voluntary coping behavior to avoid the stuttering characteristics in children and adults; however, less is known about the types and patterns of code-mixing (CM) and code-switching (CS). Further, it is not known how it is different between children to adults who stutter. This study aimed to identify and compare the CM and CS patterns between Kannada-English bilingual children and adults who stutter. Method: A standard group comparison was made between five children who stutter (CWS) in the age range of 9-13 years and five adults who stutter (AWS) in the age range of 20-25 years. The participants who are proficient in Kannada (first language- L1) and English (second language- L2) were considered for the study. There were two tasks given to both the groups, a) General conversation (GC) with 10 random questions, b) Narration task (NAR) (Story / General Topic, for example., A Memorable Life Event) in three different conditions {Mono Kannada (MK), Mono English (ME), and Bilingual (BIL) Condition}. The children and adults were assessed online (via Zoom session) with a high-quality internet connection. The audio and video samples of the full assessment session were auto-recorded and manually transcribed. The recorded samples were analyzed for the percentage of dysfluencies using SSI-4 and CM, and CS exhibited in each participant using Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model parameters. The obtained data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software package (Version 20.0). Results: The mean, median, and standard deviation values were obtained for the percentage of dysfluencies (%SS) and frequency of CM and CS in Kannada-English bilingual children and adults who stutter for various parameters obtained through the MLF model. The inferential results indicated that %SS significantly varied between population (AWS vs CWS), languages (L1 vs L2), and tasks (GC vs NAR) but not across free (BIL) and bound (MK, ME) conditions. It was also found that the frequency of CM and CS patterns varies between CWS and AWS. The AWS had a lesser %SS but greater use of CS patterns than CWS, which is due to their excessive coping skills. The language mixing patterns were more observed in L1 than L2, and it was significant in most of the MLF parameters. However, there was a significantly higher ($P < 0.05$) %SS in L2 than L1. The CS and CS patterns were more in conditions 1 and 3 than 2, which may be due to the higher proficiency of L2 than L1. Conclusion: The findings highlight the importance of assessing the CM and CS behaviors, their patterns, and the frequency of CM and CS between CWS and AWS on MLF parameters in two different tasks across three conditions. The results help us to understand CM and CS strategies in bilingual persons who stutter.

Keywords : bilinguals, code mixing, code switching, stuttering

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