

Sveučilište u Zagrebu

Filozofski fakultet

Odsjek za anglistiku

Katedra za metodiku

## L1 AND L2 USE IN THE CROATIAN YEFL CLASSROOM

Diplomski rad

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Zagreb, rujan 2014.

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**Graduation Thesis**

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## **Abstract**

In the first chapter, a brief overview of literature is given on the topic of L1 in English Language Teaching - its role throughout history, its representation in different language teaching methods and approaches, and its use in the L2 classroom. In chapter two, the concept of ELL (early language learning) is presented and discussed, and chapter three presents the ELLiE (Early Language Learning in Europe) project. Part two of this thesis is the study itself. The aim of the study was to look into and analyse L1 use in the Croatian YEFL classroom, with the stress being on its quantity and functions, and see how it changes through a period of three school years (grades 1-3). Data was collected and later transcribed by researchers from the ELLiE study. The author of this paper then examined and analysed transcripts from two Croatian schools in order to see how they differed according to their L1 use when compared to each other. It was assumed that the amount of L1 use would keep decreasing in accordance with grade progression. The results of this study were somewhat surprising and overall very interesting to observe.

Key words: *L1/mother tongue, L2/target language, ELL, L2/FL classroom, YEFL classroom*

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## **1. THE ROLE OF L1 THROUGHOUT HISTORY**

### **1.1. Language teaching methods and approaches**

Throughout history, opinions and beliefs about teaching foreign languages have drastically changed. Researchers worked hard on trying to find the best method or approach to language teaching. As we know today, there is no single approach that serves its purpose completely and fills all the students' needs. That is why several methods need to be combined in a proper way and used to their full potential. Many approaches have been introduced over the years, but only the most important will be presented here.

#### **1.1.1. Grammar-translation method**

This type of method was introduced in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and its dominance continued for another 100 years. As the name says, this method's main points are grammar and translation. Students' L1 is used actively and freely most of the time in classes, especially when giving instructions. The L2 is used only in reading and translation exercises. The stress is always put on grammar, which is thoroughly explained. The most common type of exercise in this method is translation, where students have to read and translate sentences or whole texts from their L1 to the FL and/or vice versa. The goal of the Grammar-translation method is for students to be able to read and translate complex texts without making grammatical mistakes. Comprehension and pronunciation have not been given much importance in this approach. (Abdullah, 2013)

#### **1.1.2. Direct method**

The complete opposite, and in itself, a reaction to the Grammar-translation method is the Direct method. It came into existence at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and continued till the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Here, the L1 is not used in the classroom, and is even prohibited. Because of this, the teacher does not necessarily have to be a native speaker of the students L1, but is obligated to be a native speaker of the L2, or at least to have a native-like proficiency.

In this method, grammar is not explicitly explained, but is rather taught in such a way that students can come to their own conclusions and generalise rules through practice. Real conversations in the L2 are used and encouraged in the classroom. Comprehension plays a

major role in this approach, and is accomplished by visual aids and demonstrations. The most popular exercise in the Direct method is asking questions and giving answers to them, just like in a real conversation. (Abdullah, 2013)

### **1.1.3. Audio-lingual method**

The Audio-lingual method gained its popularity in the 1950s. This method is based on behaviourism, a psychological approach where children, in this case, students, are seen as ‘blank slates’. The L1 can be used only by the teacher; the students have to use the L2 at all times since their L1 use is discouraged. The most important part of the Audio-lingual method is repetition. Students listen to the teacher or listening materials and repeat what they have heard until they start using it spontaneously. The stress here is on pronunciation, the goal being native-like pronunciation. The teacher makes sure that there are no learner errors by correcting the students every time they make one. Since everything is controlled in this method, the vocabulary is fairly limited, especially in the beginning stages of learning. Listening, speaking, reading and writing are taught and practiced in the order they were listed. (Brewster et. al, 2002)

### **1.1.4. Total Physical Response (TPR) method**

Total Physical Response (TPR) method has been designed and explained by James Asher in the 1960s. What is most important for this approach is listening comprehension through movement. The teacher’s role is to give out commands and the children have to act them out. In the beginning, the teacher acts out the command by herself/himself, then they do it together, and in the end the students act out the commands by themselves, and even give commands to the teacher. This type of method is very interesting and motivating to young learners because they are physically involved and enjoy these fun game-like activities. In TPR, the stress is first put on listening. Learners listen to the teacher’s commands in the L2 and when ready, they start using it themselves. Not being forced to speak, the children don’t feel pressured and are motivated to speak when they feel they are ready and capable of doing so. (Asher, 1969)

### **1.1.5. The Communicative approach**

The Communicative approach was introduced and developed in the 1970s. The main goal of this approach is communication, that is, communicative competence in the L2. What is characteristic for this approach is that the stress is always on communication and not on grammar and/or grammar accuracy, which is considered not to be that important. This approach has been criticised because of this lack of interest for grammar. From the beginning, learners are faced with real-life situations, where they have to act them out and are engaged in authentic conversations. Classroom activities often include group and pair work, where the teacher is the facilitator of communication. The classroom environment is very positive and not very stressful since the students don't get scolded if using their L1, although L2 use is encouraged. Errors are not directly corrected by the teacher, which can be positive in order to achieve fluent conversation or communication, but can also be a downfall since the learners are often unaware they are making errors. (Brewster et al., 2002)

## **1.2. L1 use in the L2 classroom**

### **1.2.1. Different opinions**

Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century's Great Reform/the Reform Movement<sup>1</sup>, the topic of the mother tongue and its use has been considered to be problematic. And even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the prevailing attitude towards L1 use in the L2 classroom has been negative. It has been pushed aside, and according to the official guidelines, should be used only in extreme cases, that is, in case of difficulty.

Popular beliefs regarding the role of L1 in the L2 classroom proved to be a major factor when it comes to adopting teaching practices. Over the years we have learnt to be prejudiced about L1 use in the L2 classroom. In Hitotuzi's opinion, this view seems to have originated from an ideology where the teachers were L2 native speakers, and didn't actually know the learners' L1. In this case, it was easier for them to just use the L2 and claim it was the best way to teach the L2. (Hitotuzi, 2006) This is accompanied by English-speaking textbooks used by most teachers/schools because of their price - they are cheaper. Because of that stress on monolingual classes and the scarceness of bilingual teaching techniques, teachers do not realise the importance and the effectiveness of these techniques. The use of L1

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<sup>1</sup> A new approach to language teaching has been suggested by linguist and phoneticians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which was in a way a response to and criticism of the grammar-translation method. This approach later developed into what we know today as the Direct Method.

and L2 depends on the teacher's personal assessment and teaching style, which are conditioned by the teaching context and personal variables.

The importance of teachers and their role in the whole process of L2 learning is crucial, and certainly needs to be pointed out. Teachers are the ones who have to follow the official guidelines and adjust them to learners' needs. They need to decide on which methods to use, how to use them and when; they also need to deal with financial setbacks. A huge weight has been put on their shoulders and expectations are high (Pica, 2000). Foreign language teachers nowadays feel even more stressed because of the pressure to use only the L2 in the FL classroom. Using the L1 in an L2 classroom often comes with feelings of guilt, self-doubt, embarrassment and lack of adequacy, which isn't a surprise since the topic of L1 is rarely mentioned in teacher training and has been kept under the rug. (Atkinson, 1987; Butzkamm, 2003)

Although throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century the L1 was considered as the learner's greatest enemy which should be fought back and kept at a safe distance, we are now aware that it can in fact be their "strongest ally". According to Butzkamm, the mother tongue is "the greatest asset people bring to the task of foreign language learning. For this reason, the mother tongue is the master key to foreign languages, the tool which gives us the fastest, surest, most precise, and most complete means of accessing a foreign language." (2003: 31). He provided us with 10 statements which form his theory about the benefits of L1 use. Here they are explained:

- 1) The mother tongue serves as a base for the learner's further development in the L2 and its acquisition.
- 2) When meaning is explained by only using the L2, this can easily lead to learners' misunderstanding and misinterpreting these items
- 3) By using the so-called 'sandwich-technique'<sup>2</sup>, the teacher creates a more learner-friendly atmosphere, where learners feel more confident using, or at least trying to use the L2.
- 4) If real, message-oriented communication wants to be achieved, using the L1 cannot be avoided.
- 5) With the help of the L1, more complex texts can be used in the L2 lesson. This can be achieved by giving the students translations for the harder sentences, or even

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<sup>2</sup> A technique in FL teaching where the teacher inserts the L1 translation into an unknown L2 phrase and then repeats the L2 phrase in order to convey meaning; the L2 phrase is then repeated by the students.

encourage them to try reading their favourite books in the L2, with the help of the same book in their L1.

- 6) It is better to give an idiomatic translation of a certain sentence than trying to explain it in the L2. Even a literal translation can be helpful in some cases.
- 7) The L1 and the L2 are interconnected and by excluding the L1 from this ‘relationship’ causes it to break and prevents further building of cross-linguistic networks.
- 8) Interference is a natural phenomenon in L2 learning and the L1 cannot simply be blamed for its existence. “Interference is nothing other than knowledge or skills that we do not yet possess.” (2003: 36)
- 9) When pressured to teach monolingual classes, teachers eventually fail by using the L1 in a wrong way, and that can gradually develop into using it through most of the class.
- 10) When we acquire FL items and keep using them over a period of time, they start functioning on their own, being no longer dependent on the L1.

According to him, avoiding the L1 in a FL classroom can be contra-productive. When used in a right way and carefully planned, it can be very effective. (Butzkamm, 2003)

Cook (2001) agrees with Butzkamm in that he argues that the L1 should not be avoided in the L2 classroom, and disproves the arguments for avoiding it by saying that they are not convincing. He gives examples of the before mentioned anti-L1-usage arguments. In the first argument, there is talk about L1 acquisition, and how learners should acquire the L2 in the same way, that is, by not using the L1 in this process. Cook’s contra argument is that the goals of L1 and L2 acquisition are considered the same, when in fact native-like L2 acquisition is rarely achieved, and is rather just a possibility. The second argument states that the learners’ L1 should be kept separate from the L2 in order for L2 acquisition to be successful. This argument is flawed because you cannot simply divide the two languages in different compartments due to their interconnectedness. The third argument suggests that the L2 use should be maximized in the classroom in order to achieve real language use; however, this does not exclude using the L1, but rather minimizing it. In his opinion, the L1 and L2 should be used together in order to create a more natural environment and situations where the learners can acquire the L2. Cook also suggests ways of positively using the L1 in teaching. One way of using the L1 positively in the L2 classroom is to convey meaning. The important factors here are learning and naturalness. Efficiency can be achieved when the teacher uses the L1 in order to organize tasks, maintain discipline, explain grammar, and when testing the students. By using the L1 to gain contact with individual students, the teachers achieve

naturalness. When talking about translation as a teaching technique, it is important to point out that it encourages learning and has external relevance.

In his article, Atkinson (1987) mentioned some general advantages of L1 use:

- translation techniques have great importance in the process of L2 acquisition
- students can express themselves more freely
- using the L1 can be time-saving when it comes to achieving a specific aim.

Meyer (2008) also proposed several L1-use advantages: it is very important for students' cultural identity; it is very useful when comprehension checks are needed; it plays an important role in classroom management, especially when it comes to discipline; code-switching is also seen as a useful technique; by using the L1 when introducing new material, students can relate it to their previous knowledge, especially if they are made more aware of the similarities and differences between the two languages. According to him, comprehension is the key in the language learning classroom and the L1's main goal is to actualize it. However, Atkinson also pointed out the dangers of L1 overuse:

- it can result in students needing a translation for everything because of lack of understanding
- oversimplifying things can result in inaccurate translations
- student's ability to speak in the L2 is put aside because they are used to communicating in their L1 in the FL classroom
- the importance of using only English in certain activities is not realized. (1987)

On the other hand, Turnbull (2001) points out the importance of L2 input, and therefore the importance of maximizing the L2 use in the classroom. It is important to realize that although the L2 use should be maximized, that doesn't equate to excluding the L1 completely. In his opinion, there is no harm in using the L1 every once in a while if necessary; sometimes it has shown to be even helpful. However, he does not approve of licencing teachers to use the L1, but thinks that the official guidelines of encouraging teachers in using the L2 promote and result in greater or maximum use of the target language. According to him, using the L2 in the FL classroom has an important benefit, and that is learners' motivation. They become more motivated to learn the L2 when they realize its usefulness.

### **1.2.2. Research examples**

In order to find out whether their opinions and certain doubts about the L1 use were justified, language specialists were compelled to conduct their own research. Several research examples will be shown in order to see the importance of investigating the L1 use, and also teachers' opinions of it.

The first research presented here will be the one by Inbar-Lourie (2010), who wanted to show YEFL teachers' L1 use and their opinions on this topic. His research was done in Israel, where both Hebrew and Arabic are official languages. The L2 in question was English. The participants were six YEFL teachers, all non-native English speakers. The findings are as follows: two of the teachers mostly used the L1; two of the teachers combined L1 and L2 use; two of the teachers mostly used the L2. It is interesting to view the teachers' opinions on the subject of their L1 use. The ones that used the L1 most of the time did not do it by accident, but are very much aware of and carefully plan the amount and way of its use. What is important to observe in this example is the teachers' belief in the L1 and its benefits, rather than its failures and weaknesses.

The second research presented here is the one by William Schweers (1999). He conducted research at the University of Puerto Rico on the use of the L1 in the English classroom. He wanted to find out the frequency and purpose of L1 use in English classes. The results showed that the students see more uses of the L1 than the teachers, but both agreed that the L1 should be used in the L2 classroom 'to some degree'. When asked to give examples where the use of L1 together with the L2 can be beneficial, the teachers responded that L1 use is important for understanding certain concepts, for establishing rapport with the students, and for the students to better identify with them. Schweers believes that by using the L1 to some degree in his classes, his students will be more eager to learn the L2 and have more positive attitudes toward it. Although he is in favour of maximizing the L2 in the EFL classroom, he is also aware of and points out the beneficial purposes of its judicious use. He also points out that being aware of the similarities and differences between the two languages is very important to students learning/acquiring the L2.

The third example is a follow-up to a study from 1990 conducted by Polio and Duff. In this (current) study they focused on how the L1 was used and when, rather than on how much of it was used in the FL classroom. The research was conducted on six university FL classrooms where both teachers and students were included in it. It is interesting and

important to point out that all of the teachers were native speakers of the L2. The results of this study showed that the L1 was used for several purposes, including administrative vocabulary items, which was prevalent along with grammar instruction. Some of the teachers used the L1 to manage the classroom, to get empathy from the students, and even for their own practice of the students' L1. Polio and Duff noticed and pointed out that the teachers weren't aware of their own L1 use, which is a big problem. They advised teachers to become more aware of the amount of students' L1 use and to learn how to use it more effectively and at appropriate times. (Polio and Duff, 1994)

This next research is very interesting, but also inspirational because the researcher, Anne Edstrom (2006) conducted it on her own L1 use in the L2 classroom during one semester at the university. She pointed out several goals of her study:

- to determine how much of L1 she actually used
- to identify the functions of her L1 use
- to compare her own perceptions and her students' perceptions with her actual L1 use
- to explain her L1 use (motivations, reasons)

Edstrom also agrees with maximizing the L2 use in the L2 classroom, but is on the other hand aware of her own 'slips' into using the L1. She emphasizes the importance of the L1 use topic/issue in teacher training. The results showed that she underestimated the quantity of her L1 use. There were several purposes of her L1 use: grammar instruction, classroom management, dealing with the lack of comprehension. She enumerated her motivations/reasons for using the L1:

- in order to establish rapport with her students
- because of her respect and moral obligation to her students
- to show the importance of knowing the difference between representations and reality when it comes to cultures
- it was easier and quicker to use the L1, which she attributed to her own laziness, although she admitted she feels guilty when using the L1 too much

Edstrom suggested that teachers make use of their own experiences and points out the importance of reflective evaluation in order to better their teaching practices, especially when it comes to their L1 use in the L2 classroom.

The last research example presented here will be the study done by Sanja Čurković Kalebić (2006) in order to show the Croatian perspective on L1 use. She pointed out the importance of explanations and instructions and wanted to prove it in her study. The research was conducted on Croatian students organized in two corpora. The first one consisted of elementary school beginners (grades 1-3,) and the second one of pre-intermediate and intermediate elementary school (grades 6-7) and secondary school (grades 1-2) students. The results of her study showed that:

- explanations and instructions make up more than a third of teacher talk in elementary or beginning levels of L2 learning
- L1 is used slightly more often than the L2 when it comes to explanations and instructions at elementary level, while at pre- and intermediate level L2 is used more than 2/3 of the time
- teachers' use of the L1 in explanations and instructions depends not only on the learners' level of knowledge but also on the type of explanations

## **2. RESEARCH ON EARLY LANGUAGE LEARNING (ELL)**

When it comes to early language learning (ELL), it is very important to mention the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), which “claims that natural language acquisition is available to young children, whereas older adolescents and adults have limited or no access to it.” (Nikolov, 2009:4) Several researches have provided counter arguments for CPH. The most important ones being that young learners are slower at acquiring language, and that SLA (Second language acquisition) isn’t impossible and there is no sudden fall in the ability to acquire another language for later starters or adults, but rather that their success declines continuously over time. Although the CPH hasn’t been fully supported and is still a debated issue, it has provided us with important information and findings about young learners (YLS) and their characteristics.

Young learners:

- learn and develop slower in the L2
- are better at SLA than later starters in the long run
- forget things quickly if they are not repeated several times
- are still developing conceptually so topics should be approached and dealt with more slowly
- are at an early stage of their learning
- have no metalinguistic awareness, so giving grammar explanations and explicit rules doesn’t make sense in their case, but they should rather be involved in functional activities where they can and do rely on their memory
- have a lot of energy and need to be physically active in the classroom
- have many and various emotional needs so they need many different activities and they need to be changed often in order for them not to get bored
- can be egoistic and self-involved so they need to be put in groups to avoid this self-orientation

### **3. The ELLiE project**

The ELLiE (Early Language Learning in Europe) project is a transnational, longitudinal study on the introduction of L2 in European primary schools. It has been conducted over the period of three years (2007-2010), plus a scoping year (2006). Six to eight schools from each of seven European countries participated in this study, including Croatia, England, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and Sweden. As already mentioned, the project lasted for three years, when learners attended grades two to four of primary school, plus a scoping year, where the learners/participants were first graders.

A transnational longitudinal study certainly has its benefits: “Observing one classroom over a few sessions can offer some valuable insights, but to really understand the complexity of the early language learning experience it is important to observe and collect data over a much longer period, from many different kinds of schools in many different regions.” (Enever et al., 2011: 18)

It is important to point out the importance of teachers and their role in teaching languages to young learners, which proved to be crucial. They serve “as a role model for input of spoken FL, as a facilitator of students’ development of language self-confidence and motivation”. They also have the “ability to integrate meaningful language in the everyday curriculum.” (Enever et al., 2011: 81) There are three categories of FL teachers in Europe: generalist, specialist and semi-specialist, with unqualified teachers belonging to a special category. The first type of FL teachers was favoured in the ELLiE project, and that is the generalist primary school teacher, which also has to have good language teaching skills and has to be fluent enough in the FL.

When it comes to Croatia, it is interesting to observe the changes in the starting age of learning the L2. In the past, the L2 was compulsory in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, later on in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and since 2003, it has been compulsory from the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. As seen from the study, the conditions of L2 learning in Croatian schools are far from ideal. There are only two classes of L2 per week, there are too many learners per group, and a significant amount of teachers lack training and/or qualifications to teach young learners. There were 173 YEFL participants in the Croatian study, which came from seven schools. Two of those schools will be presented and compared in this thesis, regarding the amount and type of L1 use in their classroom. Like in other countries, the classes were observed about three times per year, were audio-recorded and later transcribed.

## **4. THE STUDY**

### **4.1. Aim**

Inspired by a teacher's overuse of L1 in a foreign language school in Croatia, it was decided that the topic of L1 use would be very interesting to study, especially because of lack of research on that subject in Croatia.

The aim of this study was to show the amount of and functions of L1 used in two Croatian schools - School 74 and School 76 and its changes/progressions throughout the first three years of EFL learning.

### **4.2. Sample**

Two schools - School 74 and School 76 were chosen to be analysed and compared in order to find out the amount and functions of the teachers' L1 use in the L2 classroom. School 74 was a small village school with the number of students per class between 9 and 21. The EFL teacher had a university degree in early/primary education with a minor in English. The second one, School 76 was a large metropolitan school with the average number of students per class of 27. Generally highly qualified teachers worked at this school, earning it a good reputation. The EFL teacher was a specialist teacher - she had a university degree in English language and literature. The participants were first to third grade learners, meaning that they were six or seven in the first (scoping) year of the study and eight or nine in the third year of the study (second year if the scoping year isn't counted). There is a reason why the first grade was analysed and not the fourth year. The first year of studying, which was not part of the official ELLiE study but rather a scoping year, was used in order to hopefully show the progress of L2 use throughout the years of learning and to get a better picture of both schools' L1 use. The reason for not using the fourth year of studying is fairly simple, and that is the lack of transcripts and/or audio-recorded files for both of the schools.

### **4.3. Procedure**

In order to collect data, researchers from the ELLiE project visited schools, observed and audio-recorded the classes two times a year. The recordings were later transcribed and analysed. The transcribed audio-recordings from schools 74 and 76 were used in order to analyse the use of L1 by the EFL teachers from the two schools, that is, to show the

similarities and differences in aspects and amounts of their L1 use. Transcripts from each yearly visit were used in this study. The first step was to count the amounts of both L1 and L2 use in each year of learning from each school, which were expressed in terms of percentages. The next step was to go through all of the L1 utterances and analyse them according to their aspects and/or functions of use. They were then counted separately and the results from the two yearly visits in each of the schools were combined and the averages were expressed in percentages. The last step was comparing the results of School 74 and School 76 when it comes to aspects of L1 use and overall L1 use in their three years of EFL learning.

#### 4.4. Results and discussion

The results will be presented in four figures. The first three figures show the aspects of L1 use in both of the schools throughout the first three years of EFL learning. In the last figure, School 74 and School 76 will be compared according to their overall L1 use (years 1 to 3 of learning). The exact meaning of L1 use in the schools must be explained and pointed out. It is only the teachers' use of L1 that was analysed in this study, and not the students'.

As can be seen below, the first figure (Figure 1) shows the results of L1 use in the first year of studying. Both of the schools were analysed according to their aspects of L1 use. The categories which were part of the analysis were: gaining contact with the learners, organizing tasks, conveying meaning of words and sentences, maintaining discipline and explaining grammar. The categories were chosen after reading Vivian Cook's article, where he gives examples of using the L1 positively in the FL classroom. (2001)

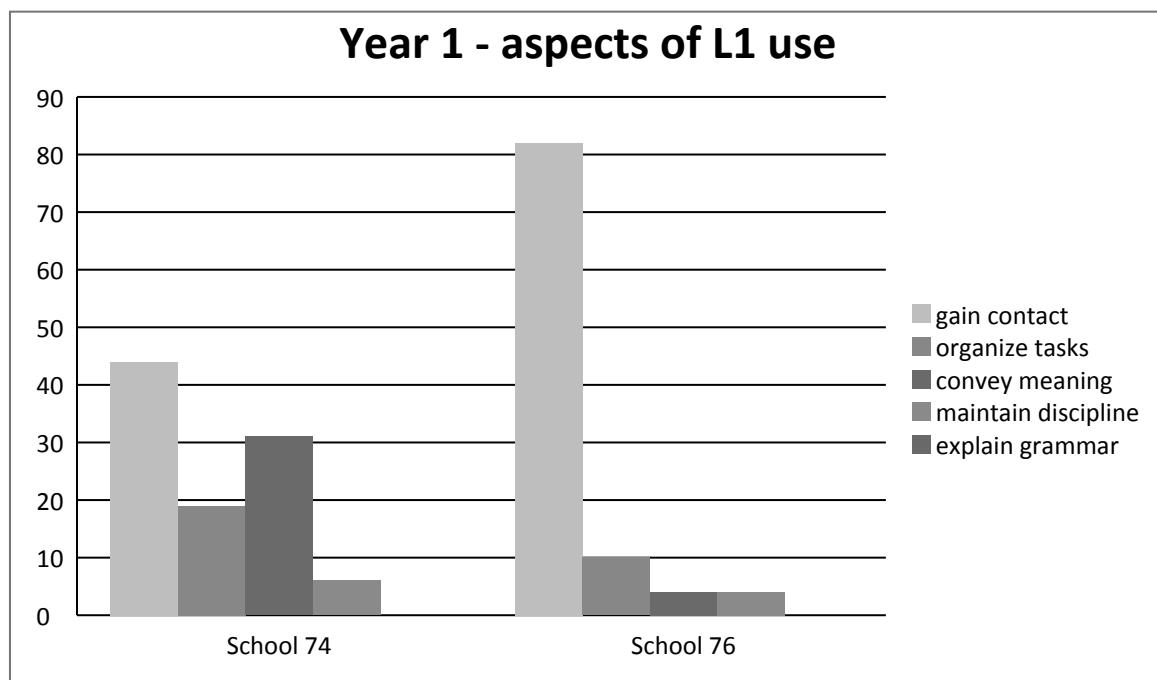


Figure 1: Year 1 - aspects of L1 use

In the first year of studying, as seen from the transcripts, the teacher from School 74 used the L1 almost half of the time (44%) and the teacher from School 76 used it most of the time (82%) to gain contact to the students in the EFL classroom. This means that they praised individual or all students, made certain remarks to some of them or corrected them or their homework. This can be seen in the next few examples from the transcripts.

Example one (School 74):

T:     jel' znaš Dino pjesmicu?  
      jel' sam znaš?  
Sx:   ja znam sam!  
T:    jel' sam znaš otpjevat' pjesmicu?  
      tko zna sam otpjevat' pjesmicu?  
Ss:   (nekoliko učenika) ja!/ ja!/ ja!  
T:   a tko ne zna sam?  
      svi?  
      znaš sam?  
Dino: da!  
T:   ajd da čujem!  
     braaaaavo!  
     pa ti znaš sam!  
     odlično!

Example two (school 76):

T:     jesi napisala?  
      da vidim.  
      di si napisala?  
      napiši.  
      gledaj me.  
      ovako.  
      bravo!

One of the main reasons for using the L1 in order to gain contact with the students is to achieve a more natural atmosphere in the classroom and to connect with the students on a more personal level. We agree that using the L1 to gain contact with the students has its benefits, however, it would perhaps be better to make the students used to being praised in English, by using praises in both languages in the beginning, and later just use the L2 when praising them. By using just their mother tongue when being praised or in other circumstances, the students might get the wrong impression about the (lack of) importance of the target language. Our suggestion for achieving both naturalness in the classroom and

learners' awareness of L2 importance would be to use both languages when trying to gain contact with the learners in the EFL classroom.

The second category where the teachers' L1 use was measured was organizing tasks. Teachers from both School 74 and School 76 used the L1 in order to help themselves and the students when organizing different tasks. School 74 had a slight bigger percentage (19%) than School 76 (10%), as can be seen from the graph in Figure 1. The teachers used the L1 to explain to their students what exactly they needed to do and how to do it. Understanding what has been asked of you to do, that is, what your task is, is the key to successful task solving for the learners. Here we have some examples from both of the schools.

Example 1 (School 74):

T: za zadaću my family  
vježbenica  
pedeset peta  
nacrtati!  
i još za zadaću  
pokušajte kod kuće sami lijepo ovu pričicu na engleskom prepričati.

Example 2 (School 76):

T: podijelit ču vam papirić svakome.  
svatko će na papirić znači nacrtat po dvije stvari koje smo ovdje govorili kao healthy food.  
ok?  
dogovorite se koje čete da ne bi +...  
da ne nacrtate dvije iste u košaru.  
ok?  
znači, svatko crta po dvije stvarčice, lijepo oboja i reže.  
i sad svaka od njih dvije.

By using the L1 when organizing and explaining certain tasks to the class, the teachers hope to achieve their goal of being able to explain what the students need to do so that all the students understand their task. The main benefit of L1 use in this case is that it is efficient in L2 learning. Using only the L2 when trying to explain students' tasks in this stage of learning can be detrimental to both the students and the teacher if/since comprehension isn't fully achieved in the classroom. In order for all the students to understand their assignments, using both L1 and L2, just like in the previous category, is recommended, at least at the beginning stage of learning.

When it comes to the third category, which was conveying meaning, the teacher from School 76 used the L1 for that purpose just a couple of times (4%), while the teacher from School 74 used it more often (31%). This category needs further explanation. In order to

explain the meaning of certain words and sentences, it is the easiest choice to simply translate them. Here are two examples of using the L1 to convey meaning.

Example 1 (School 76):

T: so we have favourite food  
imamo omiljenu hranu  
we have favourite breakfast  
imamo omiljeni doručak  
and we have our family  
imamo našu obitelj  
and we all eat together  
i svi zajedno +...?  
što radimo?  
eat together!  
svi zajedno +...?  
Ss: jedemo!/eat!

Example 2 (School 74):

T: so, Greg has got a birthday and he has got a birthday party for his friends.  
ok.  
priredio im je rođendansku.  
Sx: zabavu  
T: zabavu, tako je.  
ok.  
this is his birthday table.  
Ss: table, table!  
T: aha, what's a table?  
Ss: table, table.  
T: what's a table?  
možete pogodit?  
Sx: stol.  
T: ma tako je.  
this is his birthday table, hah.

Both of the teachers used the L1 to translate certain words and sentences, but did it in a way that emphasized only the meaning of those words and sentences, which wasn't further explained. Teachers cannot always use just the translation equivalent, but must find a way to do it so that the learners become more aware of and feel the similarities and differences between the two languages.

Although the L1 hasn't been used as much in the next category, which was maintaining discipline, it has to be mentioned. It was used by the teacher from School 74 slightly more (6%) than by the teacher from school 76 (4%). It needs to be pointed out that the class from School 74 needed to be disciplined more in general. Both of the teachers combined the L1 and the L2 when maintaining discipline most of the time. They would usually warn the

students in the L2 and would repeat this warning in the L1 if the students didn't react to it in time, or would start with the L1 and would repeat it in the L2 for the sake of language learning. It is interesting to observe the behaviour of both teachers when agitated by the students' lack of discipline. They always switched to the L1 when the students weren't listening and were out of control. Two examples are given to show this difference in language use in different situations.

Example 1 (School 76):

T: Dino sit down!  
you are not Ronnie!  
nije on više Ronnie jer je zločest!  
Sx: ja bi bio Ronnie!  
T: ne može to tako.  
okreni se lijepo sad  
pristojno sjedi

Example 2 (School 74):

T: ej! što sam ja rekla?  
u čemu je problem?  
ej!  
prvi c!  
kartice ne dirat, ne lizat, ne jest!  
prljave su, zmazane, otrovne.  
put it on the table!  
put your card +...  
+< ok, sit down +...

Sometimes the use of the L1 in order to maintain discipline in the classroom and to get the students attention is necessary if you as a teacher want to be taken seriously. It is more efficient to use the L1 in such cases because you get to the main point of the class quicker, which is language learning. We would recommend using the L2 first, as a warning, and then switch to the L1 if it doesn't seem to get any results. After the discipline has been maintained, the sentences that were used could then be translated by the students, which would make this a good learning experience.

It is no surprise that neither the L1 nor the L2 were used in the next category, which was explaining grammar. In the beginning stages of learning a foreign language, when it comes to young learners, grammar explanations, especially explicit ones are not advised. As was already pointed out in a previous chapter, young learners have no metalinguistic awareness, so giving grammar explanations and explicit rules doesn't make sense in their case. However, if certain grammar issues appear in the YELF classroom, the teacher can

explain it by giving several examples so the students can understand its meaning and can move on to learning other things. Rules are not to be given and/or explained at this point of learning. If there is need for grammar explanations, we suggest doing it in the L1 since these are beginner young learners who wouldn't be able to understand them in the L2. Even in later stages of learning, grammar explanations given in the L2 are harder for students to grasp, which is why explanations in both the L1 and the L2 are advised.

In the next figure (Figure 2), you can see all of the above mentioned categories where the L1 has been used, which represent the second year of L2 learning (Grade 2) in both of our schools, School 74 and School 76. We can see that the percentages of L1 use in each of the categories have changed for both of the schools, some even drastically. When compared, School 74 and School 76 certainly differ in the amounts of L1 used in different aspects.

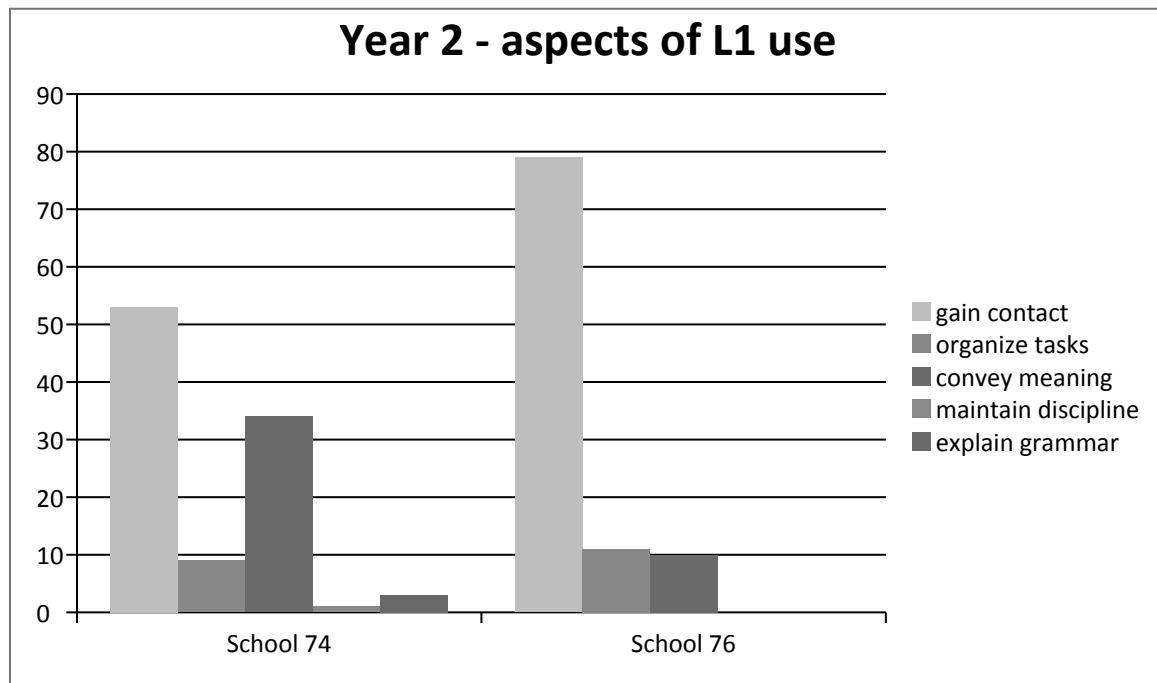


Figure 2: Year 2 - aspects of L1 use

In the first category of L1 use, which was gaining contact, there were slight changes in comparison with the first year of L2 learning. The difference was not very noticeable in both School 76, where there was only 3% more of L1 used in this category in the second year of learning, and School 74, where there was a 9% difference in L1 use. The teacher from School 76 used it more often (79%) than the teacher from School 74 (53%) in the students' second year of EFL learning. This shows that gaining personal contact with individual students is very important in L2 learning. However, this could and should have been achieved by using

the L2, at least half of the time, since the students have progressed in their L2 learning, and should be encouraged by the teachers' use of the L2.

When compared to the first year of studying, a small difference in L1 use appeared in the next category, which was organizing tasks. The amount of L1 used in this category decreased by 10% in School 74 (from 19 to 9%), and in School 76 it increased by just 1% (from 10 to 11%), which shows that both of the teachers didn't overuse the L1 when organizing and explaining tasks, but combined the L1 and the L2 or just used the L2 and checked the students' comprehension of the task which was explained to them. They could have, for example explained the task in the L2 and asked the students to repeat it in their L1 in order to see if they understood what was asked of them to do. When it comes to this category, both of the teachers did right by not letting the students get used to too much L1 use in the L2 classroom, since they are in the beginning stages of their EFL learning.

There was also just a slight difference in the quantity of L1 used in the next category, which was conveying meaning. Both of the teachers used it a bit more in the second year of EFL learning. In School 74, the amount increased by only 3% (from 31 to 34%), and in School 76 by 6% (from 4 to 10%). Since comprehension is the most important part in this category, the teacher from School 74, which used the L1 more often should not be criticised because she combined the L1 and the L2 in order for the students to understand and grasp the meaning of certain words and sentences. However, criticism is still necessary for both of the teachers because of their lack of pointing out and making the students more aware of the similarities and differences between the two languages. Simply translating everything is certainly not enough.

In the next category, which was maintaining discipline, the L1 was used only in School 74, and the amount was only 1%. The reason why the L1 wasn't used at all in School 76 and was used so little in School 74 isn't because of the L2 dominance, but rather because there was no need to maintain discipline. The learners were behaving properly, and an occasional 'shhh' or 'psst' were enough to make them stop disrupting the class.

The last category where L1 use was analysed in the second year of L2 learning was explaining grammar. In School 76, grammar was like in the first grade not mentioned. However, the teacher from School 74 used the L1 in order to explain a grammar rule. In this instance, the teacher gave a couple of examples and repeated the parts that were important to learn to use the singular and the plural. This was done in the L2 and after that, the rule was explained in the L1 with the help of the students. Here is the example:

Example 1 (School 74):

T: Greg is dancing!  
listen!  
teacher is dancing!  
but Greg and teacher are dancing!  
Greg and teacher are dancing.  
kad je jedno onda je is a kad je dvoje onda je +...?  
Ss: are!

There is another example of L1 use in this category, following the previous one, when the student made a mistake in word order and the teacher corrected him by giving the right example in the L2 and explaining the rule in the L1.

Example 2 (School 74):

T: neee Ivane!  
Greg are teacher!  
Greg and teacher!  
i onda are!  
glagol ide poslije subjekta  
jel tako?  
Greg and teacher +...?  
Sx: (are) dancing.  
T: Greg and teacher are dancing.

In cases like these, where grammar issues appear, it is best to follow the previous example where the teacher from School 74 explained a grammar rule simply, after giving some examples in order for the students to understand its concept and to be able to use it in the future.

The last year of EFL learning which was analysed was year three, or the third grade. In the next figure (Figure 3), we can see the results of our analysis on L1 use when it comes to the before mentioned categories or aspects of its use.

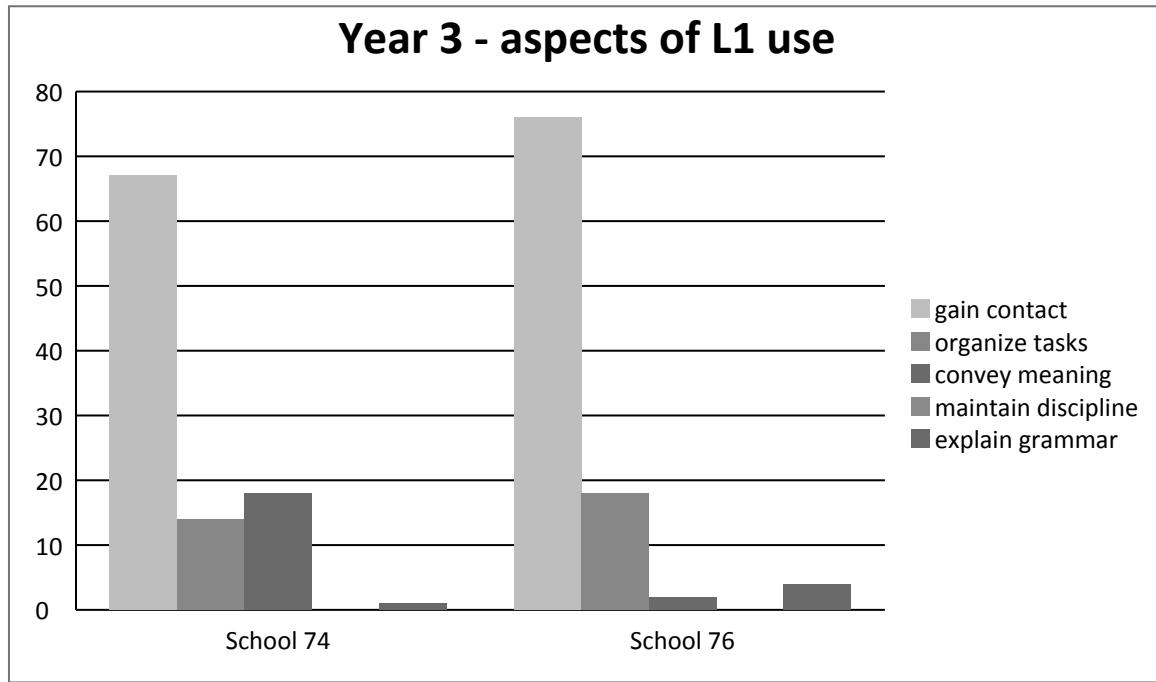


Figure 3 - Year 3 - aspects of L1 use

The first category of L1 use, which was gaining contact hasn't changed much throughout the years in both of the schools. In School 74 the teacher used the L1 to gain contact with the students a bit more (67%) than the overall average (55%). This result shows that the amount of L1 used in this particular category hasn't decreased, like we would expect it to. It has, on the contrary increased by 10% each year, which would not be advised. L2 use should be maximized whenever possible, which wasn't the case in School 74. The results in School 76 were very similar in all three years of learning. In the third year of learning the results (76%) were slightly below the average of L1 use in this category (79%). This result shows no significant improvement and therefore serves as an example of L1 overuse when it comes to gaining contact with the students. The percentages of L1 use should have been much lower in order for students to be able to progress more. They should be exposed to the L2 in the EFL classroom as much as possible.

In order to organize tasks, the teachers from both schools didn't use the L1 that often. The average L1 used in this category for both of the schools was appropriate for YEFL learners. The result from School 74 in the third year of learning corresponds with the average result (14%). This shows us that the L1 use hasn't increased in this category, but has rather stayed almost the same. Like in the previous category, the L1 use for organizing tasks has slightly increased over the years. The results from the third grade (18%) are higher than the School 76 average. We have already pointed out that comprehension is the key when trying to

organize tasks. However, this does not mean that using the L1 too often for that purpose is advised. It should be used just when necessary. For example, when the students don't understand what is asked of them. In this case, the L1 should be combined with the L2.

When compared to each other in the next category, which was conveying meaning, School 74 average was higher (28%) than the one from School 76 (5%). However, in grade three, the results from both of the schools were lower than their average, which is commendable. In the third year of EFL learning, the teacher from School 76 hardly used the L1 in this category (2%), while the teacher from School 74 used it more often (18%). In this case, the amount of L1 used in both of the schools is acceptable because of the way it was used. The teacher from School 74 would ask the students in the L1 how to say certain things in the L2. Here is an example.

Example 1 (School 74):

- T: pa kako se kaže tisuća?  
Ss: thousand!  
T: kako se kaže tisuću tristo?  
Ss: thousand three  
Sx: thousand  
Sx: three thousand  
Sx: hundred  
T: jedna tisuća i tristo?  
Sx: one thousand  
Sx: three  
Sx: three hundred  
T: one thousand and three hundred.

Although in both schools the meaning was not really conveyed, but rather just translated, the amount of the L1 used for this purpose wasn't excessive.

The next category of L1 use that was analysed was maintaining discipline. It is interesting to see that neither of the teachers used the L1 in this category in the third year of learning. Just like in the previous year, the reason was the students' behaviour. They didn't need to be disciplined in either the L1 or the L2. If and when necessary, the teacher could use the L1 in order to discipline the class. This has shown to be more effective than doing it in the L2, and the students therefore start behaving sooner, enabling the class to continue learning the L2.

The last category of L1 use, explaining grammar, didn't bring high numbers. The reason why the average of L1 used in both schools (1%) is so low

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