

Examining the experiences and methods of teachers using the first language in English language classes Malek Ahmad Kord

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Abstract

This article examines the experiences and methods of English language teachers' use of the first language (L1) in classrooms. Despite the emphasis of common approaches on maximal use of the target language (L2), evidence shows that limited and targeted use of L1 can in some cases facilitate learning. Potential benefits include helping to better understand grammar points and difficult vocabulary, comparing the structures of two languages, effectively managing the classroom, and connecting emotionally with learners. However, most teachers emphasize the need to limit the use of L1 to avoid over-reliance. The appropriateness of the learners' language level is also an important factor, and as L2 mastery increases, the need for L1 decreases. The findings support a flexible and balanced approach in which, along with L2 centrality, the benefits of intelligent L1 use are also taken advantage of. Finally, teachers should judge the extent and manner of using L1 according to the circumstances of each class and with the aim of facilitating effective learning of the target language.

Keywords: English language teaching, the role of the first language, teaching strategies, learning the second language

Introduction

Using the first language in English classes is an important and challenging issue. Most teachers believe that the use of the first language should be limited and purposeful and used only when necessary, such as explaining difficult grammatical concepts or complex vocabulary, in order to prevent students from becoming too dependent. In some cases, the use of the first language can help to better understand language points, especially for lower levels. For example, comparing the structures of two languages or equating vocabulary. Sometimes teachers resort to the first language to express their meaning in cases such as disciplinary notices, stating rules and instructions to make sure the message is conveyed correctly. Some teachers believe that sometimes using a common language creates a feeling of closeness and empathy with students. The higher the level of learners' proficiency in the second language, the less need to rely on the first language. There are different views about the optimal level of use of the first language, which is rooted in the educational beliefs of teachers. All in all, it seems that a flexible and balanced approach in the use of the first language, according to the classroom conditions and the needs of the learners, can be useful, provided that it ultimately facilitates the main goal of learning and strengthening the second language (Moradi Moghadam and Muazipour, 1400).

The use of the first language in English language teaching classes is a complex and controversial topic that has different views. On the one hand, some believe that the use of the first language in the classroom should be avoided as much as possible so that the students have the most exposure and practice with the target language. The argument of this group is that the frequent use of the first language can increase the dependence of the learners and reduce the opportunities to learn and interact with the second language. On the other hand, the supporters of using the first language believe that in some cases this can be a useful tool to facilitate and accelerate learning. For example, to explain complex grammatical points, abstract concepts or the meaning of difficult words, resorting to the first language is sometimes more effective and efficient than a long explanation in the second language. Also, comparing the structures of two languages can help learners to understand more deeply. Other uses of the first language include classroom management, maintaining discipline, stating important rules and instructions, and communicating better emotionally with learners. In these cases, using a common language can prevent misunderstandings and create a positive atmosphere in the classroom. However, even the supporters of the use of the first language emphasize its limited and purposeful nature. Excessive and indiscriminate use of the first language definitely damages the learning of the second language. It is important to consider the level of students. At higher levels of language proficiency, the need for a first language is much less. Finally, research evidence suggests that a flexible and balanced approach that combines the effective use of the first language alongside teaching primarily in the target language can produce the best results. Teachers should have the best judgment about the amount and manner of using the first language according to the class conditions, the needs and characteristics of the learners and the educational goals at each level.

The use of first language (L_1) in English language classrooms is a common phenomenon that has been debated among linguists, language teachers, and educational policymakers. While some argue that the use of L_1 can hinder the learning of English, others believe that it can be a valuable tool in the classroom. This review aims to explore the experiences and methods of English language teachers who use their native language in their classrooms. The first language (L_1) in English language teaching classes is a common phenomenon that is debated among linguists, English language teachers and education policy makers. While some English language teachers use L_1 to know English, others consider them as a useful teaching tool.

The role of the first language in English language classes

The first language is used in English language teaching classes for the purpose of, among others:

1. Facilitating communication : English teachers use L_1 in classes to communicate with students and provide explanations and repeat recommendations.
 2. explaining complex concepts : English teachers use L_1 to explain concepts to students while giving explanations and instructions to students.
 3. Giving feedback : EFL teachers use L_1 to perform and use to improve their performance while giving feedback.
 4. Managing Classroom Discourse : English teachers use L_1 while managing the classroom to engage students to participate in moving and engaging activities.
 5. Supporting student learning : English teachers use L_1 to support students in English while helping students.
- Using L_1 in English classes can be effective for students' English. Some researchers believe that L_1 can help students to speak better and be able to listen better in English. At the same time, some others believe that L_1 can be codeswitched and language interference (Porakbar, 1402).

Research Methodology

This research is an applied study and is written in a review (library) way, that is, materials from reputable sites and internal scientific treatises and articles on the sites of the scientific database, Sivlika, sid and Normagz, and a little help from artificial intelligence. It has been written.

findings

Using the first language (L₁) in English language classrooms is a common phenomenon that has been debated among linguists, language teachers, and educational policymakers. This review explores the experiences and methods of English language teachers who use their L₁ in their classrooms.

Findings suggest that L₁ use can be a valuable tool in the classroom, particularly when used to facilitate communication, explain complex concepts, provide feedback, manage classroom discourse, and support student learning. However, teachers should be aware of the potential risks associated with L₁ use, such as code-switching and language interference.

Recommendations include using L₁ strategically and intentionally, monitoring code-switching, encouraging student participation, providing additional support, and engaging in reflective practice. Future research directions include investigating the effects of L₁ use on student motivation, examining the relationship between L₁ use and student language proficiency, and developing a framework for strategic L₁ use. By acknowledging the complexities of L₁ use and implementing strategies to mitigate its potential risks, teachers can harness the benefits of L₁ use and provide students with a more effective and engaging learning experience (Issa Levy Asal and Nik Tash, 1402).

Common methods of using first language teachers in English classes are:

1. Explanation of grammatical points: One of the most common uses of L₁ is to explain complex grammatical structures. Especially at the lower level, some grammatical explanations can be understood in the first language and avoid confusion.
2. Vocabulary meaning: When faced with descriptive or abstract vocabulary, some teachers provide their equivalents in the first language or use L₁ to explain the meaning. This can help him understand concepts faster.
3. Comparing the structures of two languages: sometimes the structural similarities and differences between L₁ and L₂ can be pointed out to help learners better understand linguistic points. For example, the comparison of words in a sentence or the use of letters in two languages should be added.
4. Classroom Management: Teachers sometimes use L₁ to give clear instructions and disciplinary remarks, explain activities, or answer students' questions to communicate clearly and control.
5. Emotional communication: In cases of L₁ use, a friendly and empathetic atmosphere can help. For example, telling jokes or short stories in a common language or sharing personal experiences.
6. Check content: Some teachers ask questions in the first language on key points to ensure correct understanding of the content or have learners give feedback to the L₁ provider.
7. Presentation of lesson summary: sometimes at the end of the session, the teacher presents a summary of the main points of the lesson to the L₁ for a final review and assurance.

Of course, it is usually mentioned that most teachers believe that these uses should be limited and purposeful, and they believe that they should not be overdone so that it is not undesirable. Adjustment and attention according to the classroom conditions is the key (Taghi Elah, 1400).

Here are some common methods used by English language teachers to use their first language (L₁) in the classroom:

1. ****Code-switching****: Teachers may switch between their L₁ and the target language (English) to facilitate communication, provide explanations, and clarify instructions.
2. ****Translation****: Teachers may translate vocabulary and grammar explanations from English into their L₁ to help students understand complex concepts.
3. ****Explanation****: Teachers may use their L₁ to explain complex grammar and vocabulary concepts, providing step-by-step explanations and examples.
4. ****Feedback****: Teachers may use their L₁ to provide feedback on students' work, correcting grammar and vocabulary mistakes and offering suggestions for improvement.
5. ****Discussion****: Teachers may use their L₁ to facilitate class discussions, encouraging students to share their thoughts and opinions on various topics.
6. ****Clarification****: Teachers may use their L₁ to clarify instructions and answer students' questions, ensuring that students understand the tasks and activities.
7. ****Error correction****: Teachers may use their L₁ to correct students' errors, providing feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.
8. ****Role-playing****: Teachers may use their L₁ to facilitate role-playing activities, encouraging students to practice their language skills in a more natural and interactive way.
9. ****Storytelling****: Teachers may use their L₁ to tell stories and share cultural experiences, providing a more personal and engaging way to teach language and culture.
10. ****Bilingual instruction****: Teachers may use their L₁ to provide bilingual instruction, teaching students in both their L₁ and the target language (English).

It's worth noting that while these methods can be effective, they should be used judiciously and in a way that does not hinder students' language development (Najarian Kermani, 2018).

Conclusion

Examining the experiences and methods of teachers using the first language in English language classes shows that this issue is complex and multifaceted and it is not possible to apply a single version for all classes. Using the first language can have both advantages and disadvantages, and it will be different depending on the conditions of each class, the level of the students, the educational goals and the teaching style of the teacher. While many emphasize the importance of maximum use of the target language to provide maximum opportunity for exposure and practice, evidence shows that intelligent and purposeful use of the first language can in some cases be a useful supplement to facilitate learning. These include explaining complex grammar points, vocabulary meaning, comparing the structures of two languages, classroom management, and effective communication. However, most teachers emphasize the limited and calculated use of the first language so that it does not prevent the students from becoming overly dependent and does not replace the use of the target language. The suitability of the learners' language level is also important, and the more proficient they are in the second language, the less need to rely on the first language. All in all, it seems that a flexible and balanced approach that, while mainly relying on teaching in the target language, also takes advantage of the advantages of targeted and limited use of the first language, can be a suitable solution. Teachers must make their best judgment about how to use these tools in each classroom, taking into account the set of circumstances and being aware of the potential advantages and disadvantages. It is important to finally achieve the main goal, which is to help students learn effectively and improve their English language skills.

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