

Effect of L1 Use on Writing Proficiency of Tertiary Students: A Quasi-Experimental Study

Analyn C. España
Eastern Visayas State University

Abstract

L1 facilitates teaching-learning in ESL contexts. Its indispensability in the development of L2 skills such as writing cannot simply be underrated. This eight-week quasi-experimental study investigated the effect of L1 on the writing proficiency of 75 first year tertiary students. Instances of L1 use from audio-tape-recorded classes with the experimental group show that the teacher resorted to L1 to check for comprehension, convey meaning of ambiguous words and sentences, check or test students' previous knowledge and promote student's comfort and confidence. As deduced from the findings, use of L1 by the students is prompted whenever they encounter difficult concepts, complex grammar points, and new vocabulary items. Based on the increased mean scores derived during the post test, use of L1 in the classroom promotes students' learning. L1 use positively influenced students' writing proficiency and achievement in Purposeful Communication.

Keywords: mother tongue, L1, medium of instruction, quasi-experimental design, writing proficiency

Introduction

How learners achieve language competence and proficiency is the most important question that encourages teachers to be eclectic in their approaches and techniques. In doing so, language teachers are often left uncertain because of the many factors that come into play, but obviously, the language of the teacher and the students will matter as it bridges the teaching-learning connection. It must be considered in juxtaposition with pedagogical facets. While some claim that L2¹ learners should be submerged in the target linguistic pool, there are also others that are inclined to believe that L1², serving as the linguistic schemata of the learner (Manara, 2007), plays an important role in the second language classroom settings.

Over the last two decades, two issues have drawn researches on L1 use in the L2 classroom. The first issue has something to do with the ways in which L2 learners use their L1s during

¹ L2, also known as second language or target language, refers to the language that is learned after the acquisition of and in addition to L1. In the Philippines, English is now considered as the second language as it is formally learned and taught in the English as a second language (ESL) context.

² L1, also known as mother tongue, refers to the learners' first language. It is the language that the learner knows since birth and at home. It is the primary language that a person basically uses for communication. For example, Waray is the L1 of the vast majority of the people in Eastern Visayas.

collaborative, productive and communicative activities in L2 classes (e.g. DiCamilla & Antón, 2012; Scott & Dela Fuente, 2008; Yaghobian, Samuel & Mahmoudi, 2017; Ochie, 2009). The second issue has bearing to the ways in which L1 use assists L2 learning (e.g. Schweers, 1999; Tang, 2002; Bowen, 2004; Timore, 2012; Mohebbi & Alavi, 2014).

Though English was believed to be used to the fullest, still it cannot be denied that use of Mother Tongue will always come into play. In the study of Manara (2007), it was revealed that the use of L1 heightens the efficiency of learning the target language. In other words, teachers believed that L1 is a sort of assistance in honing students' skills in the English language, considering the goal and proficiency of the learners themselves.

On the role and function of L1, a study by Bozorgian and Fallahpour (2015) has shown that teachers use L1 mainly for translation processes, closely followed by elicitation and activity instruction. On the other hand, students believe that the purpose of L1 is for asking questions and further clarification. Also, the study stated that although there is minimal use of L1 in classrooms, it is still viewed as a medium by teachers in order to establish a communicative and cordial environment between and among learners.

Tajgozari (2017) also concluded in his study that despite the positive perception of the use of L1 in English classes, the teachers and students in the survey are reluctant to do so in their respective learning. Other findings of the study have shown that high schools utilize L1 more often than Institutes. Even so, L1, along with L2, are both reported to be essential to the development of linguistic skills and abilities.

According to the study of Helland (2016), L1 greatly improves the learning of L2 through the guidance of educators with the existing knowledge of students. One of the primary purposes of L1 such as translation eases the learning environment for students and enables them to create a positive rapport between teachers and themselves. This study also views L1 as a valuable tool of teaching, especially when students help each other in the comprehension of what they have learned.

Based on the study of Devaki (2018), majority of teachers and a number of students in Tamil, India prefer to use L2 both for communication and instructions. However, among students, there is a greater percentage of those who prefer to understand both L1 and L2. For material comprehension, although students understand L1 better, they are more comprehensive and participative when both L1 and L2 are used. Despite the endless debate between these two, this study concluded that the use of L1 should be done in a prudent manner as a way to avoid linguistic learning problems.

Likewise, Auerbach (1993) says that L1 provides a sense of security and validates the learner's experiences, allowing them to experiment and take risks with English. L1 is the mother tongue or the native language spoken by every individual. In most of the roles of L1 being look into, there is the common theme that L1 provides a familiar and effective way of quickly getting to grip the meaning and the content of what needs to be used in the L2. To arbitrarily exclude L1, this proven the efficient means of communicating meaning, is parallel to saying that pictures of real objects should not be used in the L2 class. The L1 needs to be seen as a useful tool and that like other tools should be used.

Matsuda (1999) advances that English would not facilitate thinking as much as the L1 does for students who are still having difficulty expressing them in the L2. From her personal class observation of the Japanese students, she decided to incorporate L1 in teaching ESL composition and good results were noted.

Though there are oppositions to the use of L1 in the language classroom, many studies have shown that employing L1 in the second or foreign language classrooms can pave the way towards successful target language acquisition/learning. Foreign studies have underscored the idea that use of L1, whether it is in EFL or ESL setting, is something which can be considered unstoppable and inevitable both for English teachers and learners. For one, the findings in the study of Galali and Cinkara (2017) clearly showed an overwhelming majority who are in favor of using the L1 specifically to check the meaning of an unknown word or concept during an English class. Similarly, the results correspond with that of Huang (2006) learners' L1 is generally used both by the teacher and learners to clarify ambiguous terms or unknown words and concepts.

However, most of the studies conducted concern with the learners from kindergarten to senior high school and a few concerns tertiary English settings. Little empirical research has been done along this area with college students. The reason behind may be attributed to the expectation that by tertiary level, the English competency and proficiency of the students should have been elevated already and the facility of the language should have already been established. In fact, as stipulated in Section 2 of the Executive Order No. 210 series of 2003 on Institutions of Higher Education, it is clear that all higher education institutions (to include SUCs) must promote, forge, and strengthen English as a medium of instruction (MOI) as a means to brace up for quality education and to contribute in filling the gap on mismatch. This mandate applies to the MOI in the tertiary level in various fields of specialization. This maybe the linguistic goal and practice, but reality tells that college students and even professors cannot simply put aside their L1s even in the courses primarily taught in the English language, as pointed out also by Besa (2014).

In the tertiary classes at the Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU), where the author teaches at the college level, English is being used as the medium of instruction. In consonance with the English-only-Policy and with the national directives, college students are strictly encouraged to speak English in all classes (except in courses where Filipino serves as the MOI and is an ancillary language in teaching). In fact, class organizations implement some internal policies to reinforce the use of English in the classroom and the entire campus and eventually to develop students' proficiency both in written and oral communication. Nevertheless, no matter how strong the advocacy it has been observed that learners still revert to using their mother tongue. They deliberately use their L1 in the English classes even if teachers ask them not to. They even welcome fines as a consequence of the "offense". In a classroom composed of non-native speakers, like the case of EVSU, the influence of the mother tongue is likely to increase. Teachers and students have more chances to use the mother tongue, especially as they may share all the same linguistic competencies and cultural backgrounds and therefore more likely to give into the temptation to fall upon the mother language.

Prodded by the aforementioned reasons and by the background of learners in the Eastern Visayas State University, there is a need to look into the situation by conducting an experimental study to find out if using L1 in teaching composition writing would facilitate students' competence and performance. The author therefore argues that knowing the learner's linguistic background, learning preferences and attitude towards the use of L1 will be beneficial in carving out pedagogies and instructional techniques that will best cater to the interest of learners.

Objectives of the Study

This study investigated the effect of L1 use on writing proficiency of the freshmen Education students³ at the Eastern Visayas State University, Main Campus during the first semester of school year 2018-2019. Specifically, it tried to determine the following:

1. profile of the students as to:
 - 1.1 perceptions on
 1. favorability of L1 use in the English classroom
 2. frequency of teacher's use of L1 in the English class
 3. usefulness of L1 in Learning English
 4. frequency of t students' use of L1 in the English class
 5. reasons for L1 use
 6. appropriacy of L1 use
 - 1.2 proficiency level in English;
2. pretest scores of the control and experimental groups;
3. posttest scores of the control and experimental groups;
4. significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the control and experimental groups;
5. significant difference in the adjusted posttest mean scores of the control and experimental groups;
6. when L1 is used within lessons in Gen Ed 001; and
7. writing proficiency of the control and experimental groups.

Methodology

This study utilized quasi-experimental design. This is deemed necessary as subjects were not assigned randomly to conditions in order to establish cause and effect relationships between variables (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1994). The subjects of the study were the two intact classes handled by the researcher during the first semester of school year 2018-2019. One group, the BSEd class, was composed of 35 students and the other group, the BCAEd class, was composed of 40. The first group of 35 students belong to the control and the other class of 40 belong to the experimental. Both groups were given pretest at the start of the experimental period. The experimental group was exposed to using L1 while the control was taught in L2. Conduct of the quasi-experimental study was done for eight consecutive weeks, roughly two months from July to August 2018. At the end of the experimental period, the two groups were given the posttest.

Further, both groups followed the same course syllabus and lessons outline relative to the writing component of the Purposive Communication course. In addition, same exercises and instructional materials were used to eliminate external influences in the course of the investigation, except for the teachers' L1 use in the experimental group particularly in facilitating understanding and attending to the learning needs of the students.

³ Education students refer to the students enrolled in the two programs of the College of Education, viz., the Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Mathematics (BSEd) and the Bachelor of Culture and Arts Education (BCAEd).

There were three research instruments used in the study, viz., on students' profile variables and perceptions of using L1 in the English classroom which was adopted from Tang (2002, on students' achievement in Gen Ed 001 (Purposeful Communication) through the pretest and posttest scores of both groups, and set of writing tasks aimed at evaluating the writing proficiency of the students.

In particular, the second instrument consists of two parts and it constitutes a total of 120 items. The first part is a 20-item multiple-choice-type of test based on the topics prescribed within the experimental period and the test was interpreted using the grading system of the university. The second part of the second instrument is a test on letting writing which determines their performance whether excellent, very good, average, fair, poor, or very poor. The rubric used was taken from Jacobs, et al. (1981), which consists of the following criteria and percentage: content (30%), organization (20%), vocabulary (20%), language use (25%) and Mechanics (5%).

The third instrument is a set of writing tasks aimed at evaluating the writing proficiency of the students. These tasks were focused on writing a descriptive composition, writing a than you letter and writing a composition out of a pie chart.

To ensure quality and integrity of this research, the researchers observed and followed ethical standards from start to finish following the proper research protocols and ethical standard. Proper orientation with the subjects was held to make them informed. They were also assured of confidentiality, objectivity and fairness. In fact, to eliminate subjective evaluation on the students' write ups, the researcher requested three language teachers from other SUCs to rate the papers. The external raters are master's degree holders of specializations allied to language teaching and have been teaching English for more than ten years. The researcher also audio-tape-recorded the sessions, but only transcribed three sample recordings. The transcription was analyzed in order to determine classroom instances or situations where L1 use has surfaced. These instances were highlighted, recorded and tallied.

Results were statistically treated. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the pretest and posttest performance of both groups. T-test was used to determine if a mean difference existed between the students' scores in the two groups. The composition of the adjusted posttest mean in the students' scores was made in order to determine the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) in the pretest and posttest scores in both the achievement and writing performance in Gen Ed 001 of both groups. The ANCOVA was also used to determine the difference in the writing performance between the control and experimental group on the bases of their posttest adjusted mean scores. Further, it enabled the researcher to adjust the posttest mean scores on the dependent variable for each group to compensate for the initial difference between the groups on the pretest. How much the posttest mean scores was adjusted depended on how large the difference was between the pretest scores and the degree of relationship between the variate and the dependent variable. Processing of the data was made possible using the application of SPSS and level of significance was set at 0.05.

Results and Discussions

Profile of the Students. The profile of the Education students is discussed according to their perceptions on favorability of L1 use in the English classroom, frequency of teacher's use of L1 in the English class, usefulness of L1 in Learning English, frequency of t students' use of L1 in the English class, reasons for L1 use, and appropriacy of L1 use of L1 and also the proficiency level of the students in English.

Table 1A: Favorability of L1 Use in the English Classroom

Perception	Control Group	%	Experimental Group	%
Favor (Yes)	29	38.7	26	34.7
Do not favor (No)	6	8	14	18.6

As shown in Table 1A, the students strongly favored the use of L1 in the English classroom. This may mean they have a favorable attitude towards speaking their mother tongue even in the English classroom.

Table 1B: Frequency of Teachers use of L1 in English Class

Perceived Frequency of Teachers' L1 Use	Control group	Experimental group	Total	%
A lot	6	2	8	10.7
Sometimes	16	17	33	44.0
A little	9	17	26	34.7
Not at all	4	4	8	10.6

The data in Table 1B simply tells that as perceived by the students, though they favor the use of L1, it must only be "sometimes". It shows that the college students do not necessarily negate the importance of directly exposing them to English, which is now considered as a second language in the country.

As to how important L1 is in learning English, the students' response may mean they do not totally disagree with the idea that L1 has no space in the English class and they are not also saying that L1 is not useful in their learning in English.

Table1C: Usefulness of L1 in Learning English

	Control group	%	Experimental group	%
A Lot	7	9.3	10	13.3
Fairly much	7	9.3	10	13.3
A little	15	20	16	21.3
No	6	6	4	5.3

Forty-nine (49) or 65.3% answered “sometimes” when asked about how often should students use L1 in the ESL classroom. This means that the BCAEd students preferred the use of L1 but implying a judicious and equitable use. By this, it means students use of L1 will be controlled and only permitted in certain circumstances. This has bearing to the idea of Doyle (1997) that students use of L1 may help them develop circumlocution strategies which allow them to experiment L1 or L2 as they navigate means to take risk and get used to the rigors and facility of the English language.

Table 1D: Frequency of L1 Use in the English Class

	Control group	%	Experimental group	%
Fairly Frequently	5	6.7	5	6.7
Very rarely	6	8	10	13.3
Sometimes	24	32	25	33.3

Table 1E: Reasons for L1 Use

Reasons for L1 Use	Control group	Experimental	Total	Rank
It helps me understand the difficult concepts better.	21	23	44	1
It helps me understand the new vocabulary better.	16	24	40	2
It makes me feel at ease, comfortable and less stressed.	20	3	23	3
I feel less lost.	3	2	5	4

As indicated, seventy-five percent or 44 students perceived that L1 helps them understand difficult concepts, while 40 admitted that L1 helps them understand new vocabulary items better; 23 conceded that L1 makes them feel at ease, comfortable and less stressed and only 5 stated that L1 makes them feel less lost. The control group felt more at ease with L1 use in the classroom than the experimental group. It means that the majority of the Education students believe that L1 is necessary in the English Classroom because it assists their learning for academic success, confirming Auerbach’s (1993) position that L1 provides the learners a sense of security and confidence-booster as L1 use guides students with the familiar and effective way of quickly getting to grip the meaning and content of what needs to be used in L2.

The students’ perceptions as to when it is appropriate for the teacher to use L1 in the English class are presented in Table 1G. The majority’s perception is that L1 should be used to explain difficult concepts. This was followed by L1’s use to help students feel more comfortable and confident, to explain complex grammar points, and to joke around with students. But both control and experimental groups did not favor the use of L1 in testing. This finding jibes with Cook who has stressed that language teacher uses L1 for certain activities like conveying meaning of words and sentences, explaining grammar and managing the classroom and other similar activities.

Table 1F: Appropriacy of L1 Use

Events	Control group	Experimental Group	Total	Rank
To explain difficult concept	24	30	54	1
To introduce new material	6	3	9	9
To summarize material already covered	2	3	5	11
To test	1	1	2	13
To joke around students	12	8	20	5
To help students more comfortable and confident	16	9	25	3
To check for comprehension	9	1	10	8
To carry out small group discussion	2	1	3	12
To explain the relationship between English and the L1	5	3	8	10
To define new vocabulary items	21	16	37	2
To practice complex grammar points	9	1	10	8
To practice the use of some phrases and expressions	9	6	11	7
To give suggestions on how to learn more effectively	6	8	14	6

Students' Proficiency Level in English

Table 3 show the proficiency level of the students based on the qualitative description of their scores in the proficiency test. The 75 students clustered around superior and very good. It means that these students have a very good level of proficiency in English.

Table 2: Students' Proficiency Level in English

Scores	Control group	Experimental Group	Total	Description
107 – 96	22	10	32	Superior
95 – 84	7	22	29	Very Good
83 – 72	4	7	11	Good
71 – 60	2	0	2	Fair
59 and below	0	1	1	Poor
Total	35	40	75	

Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Control and Experimental Group in the Achievement Test

The pretest and posttest scores in the achievement test of the control and experimental groups are presented in Table 3. The pretest performance of both control and experimental groups

was very good. Both groups, too, performed well in the posttest. It means that they really were able to maintain their very good performance in the achievement.

The table shows that the control group's score was 3,293 with a mean of 94.09 whereas the experimental group's was 3,603 with a mean of 90.8 a higher score compared to the control group. In the posttest, the control group scored 3,211 with a mean of 91.74 while the experimental group had 3,740 with a mean of 93.5, a higher mean score compared to the control as observed in the increase from 90.8 to 93.5.

That the experimental group performed better than the control shows that the treatment, or the use of L1 influenced the performance of the students in the subject.

Table 3: Pretest and Posttest Achievement

Group	N	Pretest Scores	Mean	Description	Posttest Scores	Mean	Description
Control	35	3293	94.09	Very Good	3211	91.74	Very Good
Experimental	40	3603	90.8	Very Good	3740	93.5	Very Good

Difference in the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Control and the Experimental Group

In table 4, the difference in the pretest and the posttest scores of the control group and the pretest and posttest of the experimental group are shown.

The control group, with $n=35$, got a pretest score in English equal to 94.09 and a posttest score equal to 91.74. The computed t-value for the control group is $t=1.999$ with a p-value of 0.054 whereas the experimental group obtained a 2.775 compute t value with .008 p-value. This means a decrease of 2.35 in the mean scores of the control group from pretest to posttest is not significant at all. This finding, though, does not affirm that the absence of L1 use in the class contributory to the decrease they obtained in the posttest. There may have been some external factors, that the present study does not encompass, which directly or indirectly affected their performance in the classroom.

Table 5 also shows variability of scores in the pretest and posttest. It shows that the pretest scores are more variable than the posttest scores because the pretest scores have a standard deviation of 11.036 which is higher than the standard deviation, $SD=10.345$, of the posttest scores.

In the experimental group, $n=40$, the pretest and the posttest mean scores are 90.08 and 93.50, respectively. The computed t-value is $t=2.775$ with a p-value of 0.008. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the level of significance, the null hypothesis is disconfirmed. The pretest and the posttest mean scores of the experimental group differed significantly at 0.05 level of significance. This means that the increase gained by the experimental group is highly significant.

The table further indicates that the pretest scores of the experimental group were more variable than the posttest scores. As shown in the table the standard deviation of the pretest scores is greater than the standard deviation of the posttest scores. This further indicates a better performance in the favor of the experimental group.

Table 4: Pretest and Posttest Mean Achievement Scores

Group	Pretest		Posttest		Computed t value	p-value	Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.			
Control (N = 35)	94.09	11.306	91.74	10.345	1.999	.054	Not Significant
Experimental (n=40)	90.08	9.396		2.775	2.775	.008	Significant

Difference in the Adjusted Posttest Mean Scores of the Control and Experimental Groups

Table 5 presents the posttest and adjusted posttest mean score in the achievement test of the experimental and control group. The adjusted posttest mean obtained by the control, at 90.31, is smaller than the experimental, at 94.75. This means that the students who resorted to using L1 manifested an increase in their scores. This further indicates that the experimental group had a higher posttest adjusted mean compared to the control.

Table 5: Posttest and Adjusted Posttest Mean Scores in the Achievement Test

Group	Posttest Mean	Adjusted Posttest Mean	Interpretation
Control (N = 35)	91.74	90.31	Not Significant
Experimental (n=40)	93.50	94.75	Significant

Analysis of Covariance

The analysis of covariance shows that the computed F ratio, $F=8.015$ is greater than the critical ration, $F(1,72)=4.0$. Since the computed F-ratio is greater than the critical F ratio, then the difference is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is disconfirmed. The analysis of covariance shows that the experimental group posted a significantly higher adjusted posttest mean than the control groups.

These finding indicate that L1 influenced their performance and that it helped the Education students learn better in English 123. As much, using L1 did not hinder learning but rather facilitated their grasp of meaning in the L2 contexts. This is in accord with tang's findings that the supportive and facilitative role of MT in classroom does not reduce the students' exposure to the L2. L1 is deemed as a "substitute" for L2 as an utterance initiator when the performance has to produce in the target language but has not acquired enough of the L2 to do this.

Uses of L1 within Lessons in English 123

The data were obtained from three audio-recorded classes from the experimental group. Instances were identified from the experimental group. Instances were identified from the transcribed class sessions then categorized into different uses. The frequency of L1 use was noted in every category, and those categories were ranked, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Use of L1 within Lessons in Gen Ed 001

Category of Use	F	Rank
To check for comprehension	8	1
To convey meaning of words and sentences	7	2.5
To check/test students' previous knowledge	7	2.5
To help students' feel more comfortable and confident	5	4.5
To elaborate a point/idea	5	4.5
To explain difficult concepts	4	6
To joke around with students	3	8
To show transition in the discussion	3	8
To summarize material already covered	3	8
To give an example	2	12.3
To introduce a new material	2	12.3
To discipline students/manage the class	2	12.3
To explain directions/instructions	2	12.3
To convince/persuade students	2	12.3
To illustrate an example	2	12.3
To explain new vocabulary item	1	16.5
To encourage students to talk/participate in the class discussion	1	16.5

As gleaned from the table, the teacher resorted to L1 use 8 times to check for comprehension; 7 times each to convey meaning of words and sentences and check or test students' previous knowledge on the subject matter; 5 times to help students feel more comfortable and confident; 5 times to elaborate a point or idea; 4 times to explain difficult concepts; 3 times each to joke around with students and show transition in the discussion; twice each to give example, introduce students and illustrate an example; one each to explain a new vocabulary item and encourage students to participate in the class discussion.

The findings further indicate that the most common uses of L1 have to do with conveying meaning of words and sentences and letting students grip the meaning and content of what needs to be used in the L2. These were also mentioned in Cook's investigation (2001) which further affirms that L1 use is advantage to either the students' learning processes or the teacher's ability to provide an efficient learning environment.

Writing Performance of the Control and the Experimental Group

Writing performance of the control and the experimental groups, both in the pretest and posttest is shown in Table 7A. The pretest mean score of both the control and experimental group was average. This means that they have not yet developed the skills needed in writing

compositions. The posttest means of the control group was numerically higher than that obtained in the pretest. But qualitatively it was still average. The control group maintained their performance in the three-pronged writing tasks. On the other hand, the experimental group performed higher than the control in the three writing tasks because they obtained better ratings, from average to good, indicated by the mean scores 6.56-7.07. It further indicates that the students who resorted to L1 were able to increase their writing performance strengthening further what all the cited related literature says about L1's help in the L2 performance.

Table 7A: Pretest and Posttest Writing Performance of the Control and Experimental Groups

	Pretest Mean	Description	Posttest Mean	Description
Control	6.46	Average	6.6	Average
Experimental	6.56	Average	7.07	Good

Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores in the Writing Tasks

Table 7B shows that the pretest total score of the control group reached 678.14 with the mean of 19.38 whereas the experimental group had 787.75 with the mean of 19.69. It can be noted from this data the experimental group's score was higher than the control group's based on their mean.

Table 7B: Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores in the Writing Task

Group	N	Pretest Mean	Mean	Posttest Scores	Mean
Control	35	678.14	19.38	694.3	19.84
Experimental	40	787.75	19.69	848.92	21.22

The posttest score of the control group was 694.3 with a mean of 19.84. On the other hand, the experimental group obtained 848.92 with a mean of 21.22. This shows that the experimental group increased their scores in the posttest. And the significant difference is highly significant. This further indicates that the use of L1 helped students develop their writing skills.

Both groups showed increases in their posttest scores. Though the pattern was also observed in the control group, the difference is not significant. The performance of the control group might have been influenced by the prohibition of using L1 that they experienced for six weeks and by some other variables that may have interfered in their learning. This bears on the position of Auerbach (1993) that prohibiting the native language within the context of ESL instruction may impede language acquisition or learning precisely because it imposes disempowering relations. Likewise, Krashen's affective filter hypothesis must also be considered where the L1 of the learners is welcomed in the English class. It creates a tension-free learning setting. Hence, the Education students felt "at home" in the class, so their motivation to learn whetted. To this can be attributed their better performance in the class.

Difference in the writing Performance of the Control Group and the Experimental Group

The difference in the writing performance of the control group and the experimental group is shown in Table 8A.

The comparison between the pretest and posttest scores because the standard deviation of the pretest scores are higher than the post test scores. Likewise, the pretest scores of the experimental group are more variable than the posttest scores.

In the control group, $n=35$, the pretest mean score is 19.38 and the posttest mean score, 19.84. As shown in the table, the computed t-value is 1.861 with a p-value of 0.71. Since the p-value 0.71 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is confirmed. Hence, there is no significant difference in the pretest and posttest mean scores of the written performance of the control group.

The results of the pretest and posttest in the experimental group showed a mean score of 19.69 and 21.22, respectively. As shown in the table, the computed t-value is 7.718 with a p-value of 0.000. the p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance; hence, the posttest mean of the experimental group was significantly higher than the pretest means or there was an increase in the pretest.

Table 8A: Difference in Writing Performance

Group	Pretest		Posttest		Computed t value	p-value	Interpretation
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.			
Control (N = 35)	19.38	2.633	19.84	2.170	1.861	.071	Not Significant
Experimental (n=40)	19.69	1.924	21.22	1.737	7.718	.000	Significant

Posttest and Adjusted Posttest Mean Score in Writing

Table 8B presents the adjusted posttest means of both groups. The adjusted posttest mean in writing of the control group was 19.96 while experimental groups was 21.12, which means that the experimental group performed better in writing after they were exposed to the treatment, the use of L1.

Table 8B: Posttest and Adjusted Posttest Mean Scores in Writing

Group	Posttest Mean	Adjusted Posttest Mean
Control (N = 35)	19.84	19.96
Experimental (n=40)	21.22	21.12

Analysis of Covariance

The analysis of covariance of the pretest and posttest scores in writing of the control and experimental groups reveals that the experimental group posted a significantly higher adjusted posttest means than the control group. It implies that the use of L1 influenced the students' writing performance. Moreover, it reveals that students exposed to using L1 performs better in the writing tasks than those who were not. L1 positively influenced the development of the learners' writing skills as indicated by the experimental groups obtained significant difference. This is similar to the

findings of Matsuda (1999), where L1 was incorporated in the teaching of ESL writing to Japanese students and the students performed better in writing.

Test of Difference

The summary of test of difference is presented in table 10. It reveals that the control group's p-value of .154 was a little higher than .05, the level of significance, which means that the difference in achievement gained by the control group in the subject was not significant. The p-value obtained by the experimental group was .008, which is lesser than .05, the level of significance, thus, a significance difference was noted.

The writing performance of the control group has a p-value of .071, which was higher than .05, the level of significance. This means that the difference between the pretest and the posttest was not significant, whereas in the experimental group, with a p-value of .000, it has found highly significant. These test results confirmed the research hypotheses that students who resort to the use of L1 perform better than those who do not, and that the use of L1 does not make a difference in the writing performance in L2.

Table 9: Summary Table on the Test of Difference

Variables	Mean	Mean Difference	Values		Interpretation
			Computed t-values	P-values ($\alpha=0.05$)	
Achievement in English					
Control					
Pretest	94.09	2.35	1.99	0.54	Not Significant
Posttest	91.74				
Experimental					
Pretest	90.08	3.42	2.775	0.008	Significant
Posttest	93.50				
Writing Performance					
Control					
Pretest	19.38	0.46	1.861	0.071	Not Significant
Posttest	19.84				
Experimental					
Pretest	19.69	1.53	7.718	0.000	Significant
Posttest	21.22				

Conclusions and Implications

Based on the study findings, Education students perceived that L1 should be used in the English classroom at some times in the whole class periods especially when they encounter difficult concepts, complex grammar points, and new vocabulary items. The perceptions of a higher number from the control group favored L1 use in the classroom. This perception may or

may not necessarily mirror their preference. But they admitted too that teacher may resort to L1 use to make the class feel comfortable and confident. This implies that even though English is the medium of instruction in an English class, the control group still perceived the influence of L1, something that they can deny as they may have experienced it before they were included in the experiment and prevented to use L1 in Gen Ed 001 (Purposive Communication). The students could still feel the importance of L1 not only outside the classroom but also during classes. It is further implied that resorting to L1 in the English class must not be vilified or maligned as evil nor be condemned as an offense but rather stressed as a bridge to establish open communication within the learning premises. The aforementioned perceptions imply that the Education students felt the need for L1 use in the language classroom.

Their proficiency in English also manifested that nearly one half of the freshmen Education students were on the superior and very good level, meaning they have already developed some important language skills necessary to face the challenges in the course Purposive Communication.

There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores in English 123 of the control group. In the experimental group, a highly significant result between the pretest and posttest means was noted. This implies that the treatment in the experimental group earned for it better results. It implies further that L1 use assisted the students in learning their English lessons. Therefore, using L1 in the classroom helped the Education students perform better in English 123.

There is a significant difference in the adjusted posttest mean scores of the control and experimental group. It shows that L1 influenced their performance and that it helped them learn English 123. As such, using L1 did not hinder their learning but rather facilitated it. It can be concluded that the teacher's judicious resorting to L1 use in teaching affected positively the students' learning in the English course, thus making L1 an indispensable teaching-learning tool.

The analysis of the transcription of sample classes in the experimental group showed that L1 made it easier for both teachers and students communicate more effectively. The teacher switched between L1 and L2 to make lessons understandable. It can be further implied that a number of L1 uses are evidently helpful both to the teacher and students. On the part of the students, L1 assisted to become actively involved in class because L1 use effected home-like and tension-free classroom setting conducive to learning. The use of L1 was instrumental in realizing the English 123 goals.

The pretest average writing performance of both groups implies that these students had developed to a certain extent their writing skills as a product of their training in high school. But in the class where the teacher resorted to L1, a better performance was noted. It implies that the use of L1 in the classroom helped the learners achieve the desired learning outcomes, specifically increased their confidence to express themselves, as they felt more secure in being allowed to use L1 in their ESL writing class.

There was no significant difference between the writing pretest and posttest scores of the control group. On the other hand, there was a significant difference in the writing pretest and posttest mean scores of the experimental group. This implies that the performance of the experimental group. This implies that because their teacher had used L1 in explaining writing processes, they comprehended well, thus improved their composition writing skills. Therefore, using L1 in teaching writing to the Education freshmen is advantageous to teaching writing than teaching the skill purely in L2. The use of L1 helped students take advantage of all the resources they possessed, and enhanced their awareness of their writing skills and cultural rhetorical differences.

Taken as a whole, the L1 use, if judicious, prudent, practical and sensible, projects the mother tongue as a facilitator or enabler of L2 learning. It must be understood, however that Gen Ed 001 (Purposeful Communication), just like any other language class, must be taught dominantly in the target or second language. However, though L1 compensates for deficiencies in L2, ESL educators must not abuse resorting to L1, or L2 teaching-learning goals must not be defeated. In learning the target language, language teaching experts and advocates eclectic and affective humanistic approach are inclined to suggest that learners must be totally exposed to L2 with some help from L1 towards better ESL learning and mastery of skills.

Furthermore, the present study implies that teaching language subjects wholly in the target language is not really feasible. Teach only in the target language may create other sociocultural division if the mother tongue is banned in the ESL classroom. Therefore, if judicious use of L1 influenced the first year Education students to perform better in the subject, and in writing, L1 is an important instrument in L2 teaching-learning. Thus, it is concluded that L1 plays a positive role in language teaching and it is a tool to successful L2 learning.

References

- Antón, M., & DiCamilla, F. (1998). *Socio-cognitive functions of L1 collaborative interaction in the L2 classroom*. **Canadian Modern Language Review**, 54(3), 314–342. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.54.3.314>
- Auerbach, E. R. (1993). *Reexamining English only in the ESL classroom*. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(1), 9–32.
- Besa, L.M. (2014). *Language use in the university: A clash of policies*. **Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences** 134 (2014) 92 – 100. Retrieved from <https://pdf.sciencedirectassets.com>
- Bozorgian, H. & Fallahpour, S. (2015). *Teachers' and students' amount and purpose of L1 use: English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms in Iran*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305298206_Teachers%27_and_students%27_a_mount_and_purpose_of_L1_use_English_as_foreign_language_EFL_classrooms_in_Iran
- Cook, V.J. (2001). *'Using the first language in the classroom'*, *CMLR*, 57, 3, 402-423 Online version
- Devaki, V. (2018, December). *The study of English language learners' perspective towards the use of L1 in L2 class*. *Intellectual Quest*. ISSN 10 2349-1949. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/V-Devaki/publication/331097624_The_Study_of_English_Language_Learners%27_Perspective_Towards_the_Use_of_L1_in_L2_Class/links/5c6815cc92851c1c9de5ab34/The-Study-of-English-Language-Learners-Perspective-Towards-the-Use-of-L1-in-L2-Class.pdf
- Doyle, T. (1997). *The L1's role in ESL instruction*,” paper presented at TESOL '97.
- DiCamilla, F. J., & Antón, M. (2012). *Functions of L1 in the collaborative interaction of beginning and advanced second language learners*. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 22(2), 160–188. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2011.00302.x>
- Galali, A. & Cinkara, E. (2017). *The use of L1 in English as a foreign language classes: insights from iraqi tertiary level students*. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1160111.pdf>

- Hall, G., and G. Cook. (2012). "Own-language Use in Language Teaching and Learning." *Language Teaching* 45 (3): 271–308.
- Helland, Erin Lynn, "English Only? Examining the Use of Students' L1 in the ESL Classroom: A Systematic Literature Review" (2016). School of Education Student Capstone Theses and Dissertations. 4191. https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_all/4191
- Jacobs, H.L. (1981). *Testing ESL Composition: A practical approach*. Newbury House Publishers, Inc., Rowley, MA 01969. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED217708>
- Khati, A. R. (2011). *When and why of mother tongue use in English classrooms*. *Journal of NELTA*, 16(12). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3126/nelta.v16i1-2.6128>
- Khreshah, A. (2012). *Exploring When and Why to Use Arabic in the Saudi Arabian EFL Classroom: Viewing L1 Use as Eclectic Technique* *English Language Teaching* Vol. 5, No. 6; June 2012. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n6p78>
- Krashen, S. (2009). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. University of Southern California: Pergamon Press Inc. (internet edition) Retrieved from http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/principles_and_practice.pdf
- Liu, Y., and A. P. Zeng. 2015. "Loss and Gain: Revisiting the Roles of the First Language in Novice Adult Second Language Learning Classrooms." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 5 (12): 2433–2440.
- Manara, C. (2007, January). *The use of L1 support: teachers' and students' opinions and practices in an Indonesian context*. *Journal of Asia TEFL*. 4(1):145-178. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262183454_The_Use_of_L1_Support_Teachers'_and_Students'_Opinions_and_Practices_in_an_Indonesian_Context
- Meyer, H. (2008). *The pedagogical implications of L1 use in the L2 classroom*. *Maebashi Kyoai Gakuen College Ronsyu* 8(147-159).
- Nunan, D., & Lamb, C. (1996). *The self-directed teacher: Managing the learning process*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Ochie, Y. (2009). "The Role of L1 in Facilitating L2 Production," *Interpreting and Translation Studies*, No.9. pages 123-140. Japan Association for Interpreting and Translation Studies. Retrieved from <http://jaits.jp/home/kaishi2009/pdf/10-ochi.pdf>
- Scott, V.M. & Dela Fuente, M.J. (2008). *What's the Problem? L2 Learners' Use of the L1 During Consciousness-Raising, Form-Focused Tasks*. *Modern Language Journal* · March 2008 DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00689.
- Schweers, W. (1999). *Using L1 in the L2 classroom*. *English Teaching Forum* 37(2): 6-13.
- Tajgozari, M. (2017, June 20). *Factors Contributing to the Use of L1 in English Classrooms: Listening to the Voice of Teachers and Students in Iranian Institutes*. *International Journal of Research in English Education*. 2(2): 63-75. Retrieved from https://ijreeonline.com/browse.php?a_id=43&sid=1&slc_lang=fa
- Timor, T. (2012). *Use of the Mother Tongue in Teaching a Foreign Language*. *Language Education in Asia*, Volume 3, Issue 1. Retrieved from https://leia.org/LEiA/LEiA%20VOLUMES/Download/LEiA_V3_I1_2012/LEiA_V3I1A_02_Timor.pdf
- Yaghobian, F., Samuel M., & Mahmoudi, M. (2017). *Learner's Use of First Language in EFL Collaborative Learning: A Sociocultural View*. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences* (Volume5 - Issue 4). Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1156623.pdf>

<http://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/index10.php?doctype=Executive%20Orders&docid=a45475a11ec72b843d74959b60fd7bd645f73003691a4>. Retrieved last April 20, 2012