



## Second Language versus Dominant Mother Tongue

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There are several reasons for this problem of Mother tongue dominance versus second language acquisition. The debate over L1 in the classroom is a topic that has been in question for several decades and has created a heated debate between theorists and teachers, leaving only two options on the table yes or no. However, many factors have led to this rigid stance on L1 on both sides. Those who support an English-only policy base their teaching policy on the Direct Method and the quantity of exposure to the language. Those who oppose using only L2 in-class use students' support of L1 and ignore pedagogical evidence. A major stumbling block in the teaching industry is the limited experience or limited choices, which creates extensive classroom teaching problems ranging from disrupted lessons and lesson plans to classroom management issues and a total breakdown of teaching.

We still know very little about how language is stored in the brain. However, many theories exist, such as the dual ice burg model by Jim Cummings. It should be noted that Cummings also coined the acronyms CLAP (Cognitive Language Academic Proficiency) and BICS (Basic Interpretational Communicative Skills). This helps teachers qualify a student's language ability. In addition, we understand what parts of the brain facilitate language as we have Broca's area responsible for speech production. Wernick's area in the left temporal lobe is associated with language and comprehension. Nevertheless, we do not fully understand how speech is stored and all the complexity that goes with it.

In Previous years it was thought that each language learned was stored in separate parts of the brain. However, this has proven to be only a half-truth. With modern technology such as FMRI, we are starting to reveal the brain's secrets and where language is stored. For example, according to the Department of Psychology at the University of Southern California, Children who learn a second language store the L2 with the L1 early on, while as we reach adulthood, we store L2 separately from L1. This could give insight into why the mother tongue is dominant in some cases in the classroom at certain ages and why fewer outbursts are seen in adult classes than in younger students.

According to Mayberry and Kluender, delayed L1 acquisition shows much more substantial effects of age of acquisition, both on attained proficiency in the late acquired language and on the neural representation of that language than we see anywhere in the L2 literature. Mayberry and Kluender argue that there is a critical period for acquiring a first language. However, there is no critical period for acquiring a second language, and age effects on L2 arise from other variables. Another hypothesis is a critical or sensitive period for first and second language acquisition. However, the effects of age on L2 acquisition are reduced because another language has been acquired early in life. Striking differences between late L2 and late L1 learning tell us that having an early L1 helps; it does not demonstrate that there is no age effect in L2. The striking differences in neural representation may also result from a reduced age effect. Greater language proficiency often shows stronger left hemisphere lateralization. This is true for individuals who vary in L2 proficiency and L2 learners at different phases of learning and aphasics after left hemisphere strokes of varying severity.

This is still a part of the language we know very little about. Even with FMRI, there is enormous speculation amongst theorists. We do not fully understand the brain's map or the relationship between bilingual languages.

We can all agree that language acquisition changes in the brain depending on the student's age.

However, we wish to understand how the process of learning a new language affects an existing L1 language and not just where it resides at a specific age in our development from childhood into adulthood. Our need to know how a language is acquired and processed has led us to many theoretical models. Some of the most well-known and closest we have come to so far are Krashen's (1985) Monitor Model is, a theory which consists of five hypotheses:

- 1) The acquisition-learning hypothesis, in which a dichotomy is drawn between acquisition and learning, the former being a subconscious way of developing L2 ability, the same as children acquiring their L1, whereas the latter is a conscious way to know about language;
- 2) The natural order hypothesis, in which rules of language are acquired in a predictable order, which might be different from the order followed by in-class instruction.



3) The monitor hypothesis, the essence of which is that the ability to produce L2 utterances derives from the learner's acquired competence (subconscious knowledge) while learning (conscious knowledge), simply as a Monitor, helps him make corrections or change output.

4) The input hypothesis states that language is acquired by receiving "comprehensible input."slightly above one's current level of competence (i+1).

5) The affective filter hypothesis, in which the affective filter, like a mental block, can control the access of comprehensible input to the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) for acquisition.

**DOMINANT MOTHER TONGUE VERSUS SECOND LANGUAGE 17 New Evidence.** However, one of the most impactful studies was by Robert De Keyser in the 1990s on explicit and implicit learning studies in second language acquisition (SSLA) explicit and implicit learning. His research has changed the way of thinking on SLA and age. Robert De Keyser's research interests concern primarily cognitive aspects of second language acquisition, from implicit and explicit learning mechanisms, automatization processes, and age differences in learning. The most interesting is that System one and system two learning is used to explain how we process at different ages and skills.

### **The Dominant Mother Tongue The reasons students resort to L1 rather than using L2**

What reasons are there for students to use L1 over L2?

There are many reasons for this occurrence, and a teacher must have a keen eye to identify the source. Reasons students use L1 in class. 1) Students are at the wrong level. 2) Students are stressed.3) Lack of understanding of L2. 4) Scared to make mistakes. 5) Lack of motivation to use L2. 6) Students are bored. 7) Students are shy or have low self-esteem. 8) The teacher constantly uses L1 to explain. 9) No classroom management. 10) Afraid of being judged by other students. 11) The Classroom is not a comfortable environment.

According to Cook (2001), L1 is employed for efficiency, as well as to stress that the discipline is "real and not pretend" (p. 416). Stress is one of the main factors in students' inability to learn. Contributing to an uncomfortable class environment and an array of other problems. Vivian Cook (2001) Looks at arguments that second language teachers and linguists have about using L1 in the classroom. He discussed the positive ways L1 can be used in the foreign language classroom. He argued that L1 and L2 have two different linguistic systems and characteristics. As a result, students should reduce their use of L1 in order to acquire L2 fully.

I agree with Cook's view of how L1 can help facilitate the L2; however, the main problem lies with the teachers not knowing how to use L1 in a classroom situation. This is due to several factors. First, being a new teacher facing students who had a previous teacher who used L1 constantly can be a considerable challenge. Using L1 at any opportunity is more straightforward

**DOMINANT MOTHER TONGUE VERSUS SECOND LANGUAGE 19** than letting students figure out the answer themselves. Third, this is due to time constraints or lack of classroom management—teachers who do not assert themselves in a class.

### **The Positives of L2 in the Classroom**

According to Norris and Ortega (2000), instruction assists language learning, a welcome assertion for both second language teachers and learners. Instruction is distinctively necessary for EFL settings where classroom instruction is the primary input source for learners and is even more effective for L2 adult learners. The Norris and Ortega article provides encouraging evidence that L2 instruction is practical, be it explicit, implicit, or a combination of the two, and that instruction may produce lasting effects on learners.

Here it is proposed that L1 is a must in class past a certain age because we lose children's ability, and adults rely more on explanations and experience. However, we also need to consider the student's needs and at what level. Robert M. Dekeyser's hypothesis on the Robustness of Critical Period Effects in Second language acquisition. This study was designed to test the Fundamental Difference Hypothesis (Bley-Vrom,1988), which states that in contrast, children are known to learn language almost entirely through (implicit) domain-specific mechanisms. Adults have largely lost the ability to learn a language without reflecting on its structure and have to use alternative mechanisms, drawing especially on their problem-solving capacities, to learn a second language. The hypothesis implies that only adults with a higher level of verbal and analytical ability will reach near-native competence in their second language acquisition. However, this ability will not significantly predict childhood second language acquisition success. A study with 57 adult Hungarian-speaking immigrants confirmed the hypothesis that very few adult immigrants scored within the range of children arrivals on a grammaticality judgement test. The few who did had high levels of verbal and analytical ability; this ability was not a significant predictor for childhood arrivals. De Keyser's study and findings prove that children have a language ability that we lose as adults.



According to Polio & Duff, 1994). Studies have found that teachers use L1 to explain new Vocabulary and Grammar, for instructions, for students' discipline, and to create a comfortable classroom atmosphere.

According to Biden (2000), most students believed the teacher should have knowledge of the L1 and that the teacher and students should use the L1 during class. This trend decreased as English proficiency levels increased, although postgraduate students bucked this trend and had similar views to the "pre-intermediate" level students. Students were split into proficiency categories (Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, Advanced, and Postgraduate) based on their year level. The most common reasons given for appropriate L1 use by the teacher were "relaxing the students," "explaining the differences between [L1] and English grammar," "explaining new words," and "talking about tests". According to (Biden, 2000a, p. 144) concluded that students "recognize communicative lessons wish native speakers should be conducted in L2 while receiving the right to ask about usage through the L1, thus creating a more relaxed, humanistic classroom where they can freely express themselves" We know that creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere is one of the essential requirements to facilitate learning, and L1 can help in that regard. However, bearing in mind that age and level must be considered.

According to Yanan Z (2019), vocabulary is the basic material of English writing. If the amount of vocabulary is insufficient, the writing is very difficult. Because the vocabulary is insufficient, many students use their mother tongue to replace the target language, the negative transfer of mother tongue occurs. Vocabulary is the basic material of English writing. If the amount of vocabulary is insufficient, the writing is very difficult. Because the vocabulary is insufficient, many students use their mother tongue to replace the target language, and the negative transfer of the mother tongue occurs. **Not enough.** Insufficient vocabulary or grammar knowledge at certain student levels can have serious consequences where L2 is concerned. Without a direct translation from L1 to L2, this can cause many mistakes and misunderstandings in interpreting the Vocabulary and Grammar. Furthermore, this could demotivate a student if they face constant cross-checking and translators giving misinformation and wasting time. Here we have evidence that at certain levels and ages of a language, L1 is necessary. However, caution must be used by the teacher as overuse of L1 for Vocabulary could lead to L1 becoming dominant in the class.

### Positives of L1 in the classroom

Grammar instruction and vocabulary translation, and comprehension. The reason for grammar instruction and vocabulary translation is to support comprehension. L1 use in the context of Grammar and vocabulary assistance is explored as discrete pedagogically-related items and as separate entities. However, the main reasons for L1 use concerning Grammar and Vocabulary are the same: clarification and comprehension.

Krashen (1985, p14) was pivotal in forwarding the argument that L1 should not be used in the classroom, and Krashen, advocated maximum exposure to the target language. He stated that all the lessons or as much as possible should be in L2 (English in our case). That there was a definite relationship between comprehensible input in L2 and proficiency. Crucially though, this perhaps implied that time spent using L1 would only detract from learning. He even suggested that exposure was not always successful in facilitating proficiency because learners had access to their L1 either in class or out of it.

In theory, this may work; however, in a classroom environment, this is not practical as each student's needs are different from young students to old and L1 is required in certain instances for clarity, time saving and instruction. However, Doughty and Williams caution that the absolute separation between explicit provision of rules and communicative use diverges in crucial ways from the proposal of focus on form.

Doughty & Williams, chapter 10) disagree that such simple rules are the best candidates for instruction because they assume that the more straightforward rules are the ones that students can discover for themselves.

Although grammar rules can be explained in L1, they should be limited to more complex grammar structures and not simple Grammar that students can attain through system two thinking. (Ellis, 2005, 2008), It is essential to "create an input-rich environment which provides learners with optimal opportunities for meaningful use of the target language. Overusing L1 could destroy an input-rich environment leading to student problems in class. This we observed in the study of observation group B. We also see in the study by Robert De Keyser that the ability to absorb information as a child is lost in adult students, and we focus more on problem-solving skills. This would explain why using L1 with older students to explain complex grammar structures is more effective as a learning strategy. Research by Burden, P. (2000). Exploring Japanese university students' opinions (across varying levels of English proficiency) of the importance of a foreign English teacher's L1 fluency, the need for L1 usage in English classes, and the specific purposes of L1 in English classes.



### Using L1 When Appropriate

**Student's expectations.** Tsukamoso (2011) conducted a "small study" on Japanese university students' perceptions of L1 use in English classes. Tsukamoto surveyed 42 major English students asking, "Did you feel the instructor needed to use Japanese in class?" The majority of students (83%) believed the English instructor did not "need" to use L1 in the class. (Tsukamoso, 2011, p. 150).

This study explores four areas related to Japanese university students' opinions of L1 use in the EFL classroom across various levels of English proficiency. Desired Teacher Fluency Overall, most participants (66.29%) preferred that an English foreign teacher be fluent in L1 rather than not know L1 (see Figure 1). Unsurprisingly, there was a trend of decreased preference for teacher L1 fluency for participants with higher levels of English proficiency (see Figure 2).

Seventy-five per cent of students with TOEIC scores ranging from zero to 300 preferred a teacher fluent in L1. Sixty-seven per cent of students with TOEIC scores ranging from 301 to 450 preferred a teacher fluent in L1, and seventy-three per cent of students with TOEIC scores ranging from 451 to 600 preferred a teacher that was fluent in L1. On the other hand, only forty- seven and fifty per cent of students with TOEIC scores ranging from 601 to 750 and 751 to 900, respectively, preferred a teacher fluent in L1.

However, considering that this study was done with adults, the collected proficiency scores validate Robert M. De Keyser's hypothesis on the Robustness of Critical Period Effects in Second language acquisition. We know about the brain in adulthood and how L1 and L2 are stored in different parts of the brain.

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