UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

TEACHER USAGE OF L1 AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN PRIVATE EARLY GRADE CLASSROOMS IN THE BIRIM CENTRAL MUNICIPALITY, GHANA

EMMANUEL TWUM YEBOAH

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EARLY GRADE CLASSROOMS IN THE BIRIM CENTRAL

MUNICIPALITY, GHANA

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my original research and that no part of

it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Name: Emmanuel Twum Yeboah

Candidate's Signature: ....

Date: ....

Supervisors' Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised

per the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Education,

Winneba.

Name: Mr. Hans Kweku Anderson (PhD)

Supervisor's Signature: ....

Date: ....

DEDICATION

To my parents, Mr Michael Yeboah and Mrs Theresah Ahenkorah

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ABSTRACT

This study explored Teachers use of L1 as a medium of instruction in private early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana. A concurrent embedded Mixed Method was used to conduct the study. Simple random sampling and Convenience sampling techniques were used to sample 95 private school early grade teachers from across the municipality for the study. The instruments used to collect data were; questionnaire, interview guide and observational checklist. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics whilst thematic analysis as well as narratives were used for the qualitative data. The result of the study proved that learners" first language should be allowed during English lessons, L1 should be used to discuss tests, quizzes, and other assignments appropriately. In explaining difficult concepts and unknown vocabulary to learners, teachers desire to use L1. It is recommended that the Birim Central Municipal Ghana Education Service should organise seminars to educate private school proprietors/tresses, parents and teachers about the functions of the use of the L1 as a medium of instruction in the classroom.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter includes the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitation, operational definition of terms and organization of the study.

1.1 Background to the study

A child's language is important in his/her development and is also a medium in teaching and learning. The child's first language is part of the child's intimate, social, cultural identification and his/her L1 (mother tongue) (Hirst, 2016). The word "native language" or "L1" applies to the language of the racial community rather than the first language of the group (Davies, 2003). In a wide context, L1 is the language of the immediate world and everyday contact that 'nourishes' the infant in the first four years of his or her life, whereas the local language is the language of the immediate or local culture that the child is acquainted with (Bühmann&Trudell, 2008; Ouane&Glanz, 2011). L1 or mother tongue is the language that a person acquires in early years and which becomes his or her natural instrument of thought and communication (Atkinson, 1987: 43).

In sub-Saharan Africa, there are approximately 1250 and 2100 languages of various status; however considering the multiple languages, many African countries still use colonial (Government White Paper, 1992; Muthwii, 2002; Owu-Ewie, 2006; Adebayo, 2008; Fakeye & Soyinka, 2009) or second language as a means of instruction at different stages of learning (Ouane, 2003).

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The word "language" has been interpreted in several respects by many individuals in their fields of research. According to Kwapong (2006), "language" is a method of human vocal activity that has been traditionally learned and which enables knowledge to be conveyed smoothly. "Language" is a collection (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in duration and built out of a finite set of elements (Chomsky& Miller, 1958). Language is explained as a structured system of arbitrary vocal conventional symbolsthrough which members of a social group interact(cited in Owu-Ewie, 2006).

UNESCO (2008) has suggested that, to promote the consistency of children's learning, the importance of local language for early childhood education and grades 1 to 3 should be properly defined. If children use a language that is not well integrated through writing, communicating, reading or listening experiences, the cognitive structure would not perform at its highest (Cummins, 2000).

The role of language and literacy in our schools is, therefore, very significant in the growth of high school literacy. But, in many African countries, including Ghana, the question of the right language of instruction in schools has been a thorny one for years. Language-in-education policy in Ghana has changed over the years, and especially after independence (Dery, 2017).

In June 2006, the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, with the assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), set up a task force to establish the National Literacy Acceleration Program (NALAP) for Ghanaian learners in primary schools. The national implementation of the programme started during the 2009/2010 school year and involves production and disseminationof teacher guides and instructional materials; training for national and district education

staff, and workshops for all primary Headteachers" and lower grade teachers"; and a public awareness and publicity campaign (MOESS, 2008).

NALAP aims to include instruction in the prevalent Ghanaian language of the local school community through KG1 to P3, with the inclusion of English in primary 4. The curriculum assumes that learners will first become competent speakers and readers of the local language of instruction and immediately adopt the English language skills.

To ensure the effectiveness of the initiative, the Educational Quality for All Project (EQUALL) project, with the assistance of USAID, produced a significant number of teaching and learning materials for early school pupils in 11 officially accepted and recognized languages for instruction in Ghana. These languages included AkwapemTwi, Asante Twi, Dagaare, Dagbani, Dangme, Ewe, Fante, Ga, Gonja, Kasem and Nzema (MOESS, 2008).

The programme was planned to increase the already very low rates of student literacy and numeracy in Ghana. Global evaluation results indicate that the overwhelming majority of primary pupils cannot read with comprehension in their first language or English. Many conditions lead to this, but the key reason is that learners are struggling to learn to read in a language (English) that they do not grasp or talk fluently (NALAP, 2010).

Improvements have been made in all other fields of study, but private teachers are feeling reluctant in the use of L1 as a means of instruction in the teaching and learning at private early grade schools at the central municipality of Birim. The view of private early grade school teachers in the Birim Central Municipality concerning the use of L1 usage as a medium of instruction in teaching and learning must be developed to

allow the use of L1 usage as a medium of instruction in private early school in the Birim Central Municipality as an integral part of teaching and learning, since most of the private schools' early grade teachers" were reluctant towards the use of L1 as a medium of instruction in their classroom. This research was to find out the use of L1 as a medium of instruction in private early grade classrooms.

There is a growing awareness that the perceptions kept by people are the strongest measures of the choices they create in daily life (Bandura, 1986). There is rising literature in education that indicates that the perception of teachers affects their actions in the classroom (Al-Alawi, n.d.). This research explored the understanding of teachers regarding the usage of L1/mother tongue in their classrooms. There is a great deal of research on the study of teachers' values, both in schooling and in the ELT. Perception affects the development and understanding of skills (Nespor, 1987), the concept of tasks and the development of course material (Gahin, 2001) and influences the application of curricula by teachers (Fang, 1996).

Perception too, influence teachers" instructional decisions. Various meanings of interpretation exist however, Borg (2001: 186) is of the view that perception is "a proposition that can be consciously or unconsciously held is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual and is therefore imbued with an emotional commitment; it also serves as a guide to thought and behaviour." It is because of the understanding of behavioural factors that the researcher had chosen to analyze not just why early school private teachers use the L1, but also the perception behind their behaviour.

In countries like Ghana, the strategy of using the child's L1 as a means of instruction in lower primary school and English after primary three, which is stated to have

improved academic results, has not produced the desired outcome. The prestigious and practical reputation gained by English has also led the Ghanaian community to establish optimistic attitudes towards its usage and research in colleges, whereas local languages have been accorded an unfavourable negative attitude (Owu-Ewie&Edu-Buandoh, 2015). Though there have been few studies on language attitudes in Ghana (Amissah, et. al. 2001; Kwofie, 2001; Edu-Buandoh, 2015; Sarfo, 2012). A lot of studies have been conducted in the context of the first-language usage of English classrooms by many scholars and language teachers. Many of these studies have examined the views of teachers and learners on the usage or frequency of native language in classrooms. There have not been several surveys investigating the use of L1 by private early grade teachers in the classrooms, and this research is intended to fill the void and evaluate the general awareness of the study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There is an increasing international agreement recently that children best learn essential reading skills in the language they speak in their home setting (Pflepsen, Benson, Chabbott & van Ginkel, 2015). Evidence indicates that children can reach a reasonable degree of fluency in their first language (L1) before moving to an additional language (L2) unless they are not proficient enough in both languages (L1) (Cummins, 1979).

Studies also suggests that "learning in the L1 has a cognitive and emotional value" (UNESCO, 2008. p.5). The potential, social and academic growth of a child relies on the L1 milestone (Plessis, 2008). When L1 is not used in the classroom, learners are deprived of achieving a better academic performance.

The then Minister of Education (2015) of the Republic of Ghana, Prof. Jane Naana Opoku Agyemang, also emphasized the significance of the use of L1 to teach children

before they were exposed to the English language. She announced that "the level of competence of a parent to speak a particular language has an impact on his/her children's education and believes that if children are taught early in the language, their parents will understand and speak it; it will help them to start well" (Cobbinah, 2015).

Contrarily to these public comments, Birim Central Municipal Ghana Education Service coordinators reported that, during the process of their surveillance, it appeared that most privateteachers at the early grade level in the Birim Central Municipality are not using the L1 (the Twi language) as a medium of instruction in their classrooms (Birim Central Municipal Ghana Education Service Report, 2019).

A seminar was organized by the Language Coordinator, the Early Childhood Coordinator and the Private School Coordinator of the Birim Central Municipal of Ghana Education Service with the private early grade school teachers within the municipality.

Thecoordinators stated that, globally, there are 50-70 million 'marginalized' children out of classes as a result of children whose main language is not the language of school instruction and are more likely to be out of school or to be out of school early. Research has shown that the predominant language of children is the best language for reading and learning in primary school (UNESCO, 2008a).The coordinators also added that the usage of L1 in the classroom could build a less threatening environment for learners and also help the teaching and learning process.

The L1 is helpful in certain cases, according to the coordinators, it is where the facilitator describes grammatical errors, explains new words, and interprets tests items to learners.It has also been found thatL1 use as a language of instruction is successful in supporting the learning of second languages (Cummins, 1979).

To justify the use of L1 with scientific data, numerous experiments on language in education have demonstrated that the use of L1 as a means of learning during one early school year resulted in increased development of information by learners.As part of these practices in early grade private schools, learners find it challenging to pick up and communicate in other languages and as a result, their intimate, social and cultural identities are not improved. Learners are not able to think critically and grow their reading skills. They ultimately lose their self-esteem and all these variables have resulted in low academic performance among private early grade school learners in the Birim Central Municipality (Andoh-Kumi, 1992; Fafunwa, Macauley &Funnso, 1989).

Again, the coordinators pointed to the success of the private school early grade learner in their L1 fluency and writing as not promising as opposed to the performance of the public early grade learner as a whole. According to the 2014 EarlyGrade Reading Assessment (EGRA), majority of learners in Ghana have low reading and numeracy results. The study noted that "in general, only the top 2% or less have been able to read with fluency and understanding" (Ministry of Education, 2015, p 1).

Based on the study by the Birim Central Municipal Ghana Education Service reports (BCMGES, 2019) and personal engagement as a national service person of the Birim Central Municipal Ghana Education Service and a follow-up meeting with a few private early-school teachers, it appeared that there was a contradiction about the use of L1 among private early grade school teachers and the problem was that most of the private early grade teachers were not using the L1 in their classrooms. There was, therefore, a need for a scientific and empirical study by the researcher to carry out this

study to identify the variables that surround the use of L1 as a medium of instruction in early grade private school classrooms.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The goal of this study was to explore teachers use of L1 as a medium of instruction inprivate schoolsearly grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality of Eastern Region, Ghana.

1.4 Research Objectives

The study sought to:

1. to find out how L1 enhances teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schoolsin the Birim Central Municipality.

2. investigate the impacts of L1 on teaching and learning processes in the private school early grade classroom in the Birim Central Municipality.

3. analyze the situations in which private school early grade teachers in the Birim Central Municipality desire to use the L1 in their classroom.

4. identify the challenges of the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. How L1 enhances teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schools?

2. What are the impacts of L1 on the teaching and learning process in private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality?

3. What are the situations in which private school early grade teachers in the Birim Central Municipality desire to use the L1 in the classroom?

4. What are the challenges associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The outcome of the study would be beneficial to learners, school administrators and other stakeholders involved in language policy. Through this study, teachers would be made aware of the significance of utilizing L1 in teaching children and to further notify school management about issues relating to the usage of L1 in classrooms. Teachers and other stakeholders would be informed of the difficulties that private school teachers encounter in utilizing L1 usage as a means of instruction in early grade schools. This study would be added to the current literature on the use of L1 in early grade schools and would also serve as a reference point for other researchers who are interested in this field.

1.7 Delimitation

This study is restricted to teachers use of L1 as a medium of instruction in private early grade classrooms in theBirimCentral Municipality of Eastern Region, Ghana.

1.8 Limitation

Although this research was carefully prepared, there were some limitations. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, few teachers were selected for the qualitative data collection in the municipality.

1.9 Operational Definitions of Terms

PRIVATE SCHOOL   An educational facility (school) that is privately operationalized and funded.

EARLY GRADE	An educational level that starts from kindergarten 1 to primary 3.
L1	A first language, native tongue, native language, mother tongue is the first language or dialect that a person has been exposed to from birth or ones‟s ethnic group dialect rather than one‟s first language (Davies, 2003).

1.10 Organization of the Study

This study is structured into five different chapters.

Chapter one, discusses the introduction,background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions,significance of the study, delimitations, definition of terms and organization of the study.

Chapter two review of related literature. The review looked at the conceptual, theoretical and empirical.

Chapter three, the methodological component explained how the study was conducted. Subheadings discussed were: research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrument(s), data collection procedure and data analysis.

Chapter four dealt with the presentation and interpretation of the results.

Chapter five, the final chapter of this research covers summaries, findings and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

This chapter includes the views and opinions of some of the scholars and analysts that are important to the present study. The chapter is categorized into logical, analytical and scientific evaluations. The methodological analysis covers topics linked to the concept of teacher understanding of the usage of L1 in the classroom, the concept of the L1 component and the variables of the L1 factor analyzed, and then the conceptual framework. The theoretical analysis includes topics such as language methods, language viewpoints research, language creation and acquisition theories, language policy in context, language policy, planning and intellectual views, and the theoretical structure. The empirical review includes work undertaken by scholars on teacher interpretations about the usage of language in the classroom.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.2 How L1 enhances teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schools

There have been contradicting views on the use of L1 in foreign language classrooms. While the proponents of the monolingual approach claim that the use of L1 can hinder the target language learning (Krashen, 1981; Turnbull, 2001), many researchers (e.g. Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Widdowson, 2003) have found that L1 use was potentially beneficial.

Cook (2001) explained three fundamental supports for the monolingual approach. First is the belief that L2 learning has a similar process as when children acquire their L1. Hence, a massive amount of L2 exposure is needed. Second, L1 and L2 are

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perceived as two distinct systems. Since the use of L1 can cause overgeneralization, L1 and L2 should be separated. Third, L2 has to be used as a medium of interaction to provide learners with a range of natural samples of L2.

In recent years, more scholars (e.g.Anh, 2010;Schweers, 1999; Shimizu, 2006; Tang, 2002; Zacharias, 2004) have corroborated the value of L1 in foreign language classrooms. Tang (2002), for instance, claimed that the use of L1 can assist the teaching and learning process. Strategies such as translating words into L1 and making contrasts between L1 and L2 forms may facilitate acquisition (Rolin-Ianziti& Brownlie, 2002), and evidence shows that code-switching can enhance input by making linguistic items more salient (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002).

Zacharias (2004) metaphorically described the use of L1 as „a ashelter‟. The L1 use could create a less threatening atmosphere. Shimizu (2006) mentioned that it is often extremely difficult for beginners to make themselves understood in monolingual English classroom settings. L1, in this case, can be beneficial. Anh (2010) found that L1 was useful in some situations. There were three most popular situations in which L1 should be used, i.e. when explaining grammatical points, when explaining new words, and when checking for understanding.

Most of the studies, however, have been conducted at secondary and tertiary levels (Kim & Petrarki, 2001; Tang, 2002). As Cameron (2001) noted, research on language use atthe primary level is still fairly thin on the ground. Moreover, the research on English immersion programs is mostly conducted in ESL context rather than EFL context, in which the teacher and students may not share the same L1. With the mushrooming of early English learning programs in EFL contexts, this study tried to fill this gap.

Children have amazing abilities in acquiring languages. When being exposed to more than one language at an early age, they can acquire all the languages equally well. With such a belief, many more pre schools in Indonesia start to offer early English immersion programs in which English is used as „the vehicle for content instructions", not as „the subject of instructions" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Pinter (2006) pointed out that since children in L2 or FL classes are still in the process of learning their L1, the L2 acquisition process will be similar to the L1. With a massive amount of L2 exposure and meaningful interaction in L2, the children can acquire the target language easily.

While proponents of L1 use in L2 settings stress the possible benefits of L1 use in L2 settings, those who prevent the use of L1 state that increased sensitivity to the target language is necessary, and L1 use in such settings can lead to negative effects, including transfer errors and over-reliance on L1 (Voicu, 2012). There is an increasing body of literature that focuses on the possible beneficial usage of L1 in L2 environments (Auerbach, 1993; Duff & Polio, 1990; Littlewood &William, 2011).

Today, the increasing body of literature questions the prevailing hypothesis that the usage of L1 is being wiped out at all costs and outlines many advantages. Analysis favouring the strategic manipulation of L1 learners to develop language abilities reveals a range of advantages in the functional, emotional, socio-cultural and pedagogical fields (Bhooth, Azman, & Ismail, 2014; Blackman, 2014; Calis & Dikilitas, 2012; Eldridge, 1996; Macaro, 2001; Gudykunst, 2004; Luk& Lin, 2015). As well as promoting the usage of L1, analysis in this vein often concerns the conclusions of the English only camps groundless and unverified by scientific research (Auerbach, 1993).

Some of the previous studies examined the perceptions and beliefs of teachers towards the use of L1 in FL classes. Previous findings indicated that most of the language teachers supported the judicious amount of L1 in FL classes (Ahsan, Ghani and Khaliq, 2016; Edstrom, 2006; Macaro, 2005; Manara, 2007; Shabir, 2017). Conducted at state colleges and universities with 156 participants, Ahsan, Ghani and Khaliq, (2016) found that teachers had positive attitudes towards the use of L1 in FL classes and they believe that L1 is necessary. On the other hand, Manara (2007) found that 57% of the teachers agreed that L2 should be the only medium of instruction and concluded that the majority of the teachers have supported monolingual teaching but there is still room for L1 use in L2 classes. A scale questionnaire applied to 23 student teachers by Shabir (2017) revealed that limited use of L1 is necessary especially in certain classroom activities and L1 should not completely ban from the classes. Macaro (2005) noted that the majority of teachers regard L1 use as unfortunate and regrettable but necessary. Similarly, comparing her perception towards the use of L1 and her actual practice, Edstrom (2006) discovered that although she aimed to maximize the use of TL, she found herself using L1 for some classroom activities, which made her feel regretful. These studies showed that most of the teachers had positive attitudes towards the use of L1 and they believed that if used carefully and judiciously, L1 can facilitate L2 learning and teaching.

2.3 Impacts of L1 on teaching and learning

Singleton, Fishman, Aronin&Laoire, (2013) suggested many roles for the use of L1 in L2 teaching. For example, to express and verify the definition of terms, clarify grammar, coordinate lessons and activities, establish classroom discipline, communicate with specific learners, and do some checking. Some issues emerged regarding new ideas and theories about the use of L1. Other theories were endorsed,

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although the other one was contradictory about the usage of L1 in the L2 School. As Ellis (2005) mentioned, learners learned more easily when they obtained and were exposed to more L1 conditions.

Studies on the usage of the mother tongue, in general, have generally sought to take a list of the pros and cons of utilizing the mother tongue in the English class without a clear connection to a single language or from a specific point of view. These forms of articles typically contained a chronological review of other research carried out in the same field and presented an explanation of their findings and alternative explanations.

One of the most significant papers found to be a very useful guide for the first-language usage is that of Cook‟s (2001) utilizing the First Language in the classroom. In his article, Cook addressed the numerous reasons in support of utilizing the first language in the classroom. He objected to the popular assumption that learning of the second language should be viewed as the acquisition of the first language in the context that no other language should compete with the acquisition of the second language.

Cook (2001) pointed out that language learners vary in that they are more advanced and willing to create distinctions and analyze the usage of language. The approach they use is also distinct from the methods they use to acquire their first language, and might often require the use of their first language to help them learn their second language. Cook also claimed that while teachers do their hardest to distinguish the first language from the second language in their instruction by attempting to utilize a variety of methods, such as miming or drawing illustrations, to educate their pupils, learners would typically create associations in their minds between the vocabulary, grammar, and phonology of their first and second languages.

As a consequence, even though the teachers were attempting to distinguish the two tongues, the learners would always relate to them and bind them to their minds. Cook pointed out many aspects that teachers would positively bring the first language into second-language instruction. Teaching modern vocabulary and testing the definition of this new vocabulary were the main uses of the first language. Most teachers use the first language to express meaning and to verify the meaning of new terms for their pupils. The first language may often be used to teach learners explicit principles of grammar to enable them to achieve a deeper comprehension of certain rules of grammar. He concluded that first-language usage could save teachers time and effort if classroom contact does not prevail.

Tang (2002) carried out an analysis close to previous research on the perceptions of teachers and learners regarding the usage of the first language in English classrooms in Chinese colleges. He also studied the level of first-language usage in English classrooms. He observed that the largest volume of first-language use was to clarify the significance of new words, while the lowest was to explain the laws of grammar. Teachers concluded that the usage of the first language saved resources and was more successful in illustrating the modern words. About 70% of learners and teachers who participated in the study felt that Chinese could be included in English classrooms. Most learners felt that the first language should be used to illustrate grammar points, although most teachers thought that it should be used to practice the usage of new words and phrases. Also, about 69% of learners claimed that the first language helped them understand a little English. In comparison, several of them felt that the first language could be used for around 5% of class time.

Levine (2003) undertook a study, which showed that teachers and learners typically use the first language to address lesson schedules, course rules, and class management. The first language was often used to describe grammar in FL (Foreign Language) classes. Levine argued that the target vocabulary was typically utilized for course book events, while the first language was mostly used to address subjects that were not relevant to classroom activities. This study demonstrates that the usage and intent of the first language are common across various languages, and not just when English is learned as a second or a foreign language. Another interesting result in Levine's research was the degree of distress correlated with target language usage among learners. Participants displayed a higher degree of distress as the volume of target vocabulary included in class grew. The research concluded that the first language has a significant part to play in target language learning and that teachers ought to find strategies to implement the first language and utilize it successfully in the classroom. While this research looked at learners' views on first-language usage in the target language classroom, it looked at learners who spoke English as their first language, not English-language learners.

Bouangeune (2009) performed a first-language analysis in Laos to enhance the learning of English by pupils. He used two categories, an experimental group and a control group, to carry out his research. The first language was used as a medium of training and the translation of new terms and vocabulary for the experimental community, whereas the control group did not obtain the instruction and translation of the first language. The findings revealed that the study group showed a higher increase in English relative to the control group. Bouangeune contributed this change to the successful usage of first-language guidance and correct translation of new words and vocabulary.

Kovacic and Kirinic (2011) investigated the views of teachers and learners on using Croatian English for particular purposes (ESP) in classrooms. They looked more closely at the idea of whether the first language should be used in English schools or whether it should be stopped. The research evaluated the phrases of the first language in terms of necessity, frequency, utility and appropriateness. Learners and teachers decided that the first language should be used moderately in the English classroom for such learning purposes. However, there were certain conflicts in opinion between the teachers and the learners as to the circumstances in which the first language should be used. Approximately 56.1 per cent of the learners involved in this study indicated that they often chose to use Croatian, whereas only 45 per cent of teachers reported the same response. Also, about 50.9% of learners in the Kovacic and Kirinic's studies indicated that they preferred their teachers to use the first language moderately in the English class. As regards the utility of the first-language usage, about 73.1 per cent of the learners and 80 per cent of the teachers agreed that using Croatian is both necessary and useful for enhancing the learning of English by learners.

The research showed that most of the participants accepted that first-language usage is more relevant in describing grammar points, difficult topics, and thoughts, and speaking habits, which are consistent with the results of other surveys. Previous research did not seek to examine learners' impressions of first-language use in-depth (Al Sharaeai, 2012). The present research analyzed the perceptions of early grade private school teachers on the usage of L1 in their classrooms in the central municipality of Birim, the Eastern part of Ghana.

The pluralities of Ghanaian learners are ELLs and they speak a local dialect at home, but English is the only mode of instruction in classrooms (Nguyen, 2009). Research has found that the usage of a child's first language in school increases linguistic,

cognitive and academic performance (Baker, 2001; Owu-Ewie, 2006). The National Association for the Education of Young Children (2010) indicated that the lack of children's home language could result in the disturbance of family contact habits. An intervention in bilingual education in Mozambique has found that children have gained significantly from the usage of their mother tongue in terms of school attendance, self-confidence, bilingualism and second-language literacy. Such findings may suggest that low academic performance in Ghanaian schools, especially in English, maybe due to a lack of foundation in the child's local language for second-language transition (Owu-Ewie, 2006).

In the early stages of education, most reading activities are done by listening and, as a result, children acquire good listening skills and appear to maintain those skills even in the later stages of schooling. It is challenging for a Ghanaian child, who does not have English skills, to begin by learning such listening skills to help with reading comprehension skills. Young children who neglect the English language can often lose confidence in education at a crucial stage in their lives.

In Ghanaian culture, pupils with English as their first language do better academically than learners with English at the beginning of education. This is because the above category must resolve deficits in English and at the same time preserving academic success for English-speaking pupils and many do not excel (Fry, 2007). However, speaking a parent's native language rather than English at home may have a positive influence on the growth of children's English literacy skills, and bilingual language abilities may have a positive impact on children's educational success if the student's linguistic and cultural attributes are not ignored. New evidence suggests that learning a native language at home during primary school years has had a beneficial impact on

the completion of high school. In comparison, for non-language learners, having been reclassified as fluent English by sixth grade raises the chance of high school graduation (Zarate & Pineda, 2014).

Increased language diversity further adds to the country's global competitiveness, as it helps the country to integrate culturally and economically. However, the usage of the native Ghanaian language as a method of improving educational achievement has been regarded unfavourably by several experts. In Ghana, a shortage of reading skills was falsely related to the constant usage of the student's native tongue. This has contributed to less trained Africans learning their native languages at colleges. Africans learning indigenous languages outside Junior High School are deemed academically incompetent. For example, in 1994, the study of Ghanaian languages as a core topic in high school was abolished because it was viewed as leading to the abysmal output of learners in reading and other courses requiring the use of reading comprehension (Edu-Buandoh, 2015).

Ghana is very concerned about the high reading failure rate, particularly at the elementary level. This concern has contributed to an increase in all fields of education. The expenditure in education created high-quality educational facilities and teachers but did not generate a return on high academic performance when more than 64 per cent of all learners read substantially below their grade level (Ghana Education Service, 2010). This is because good instruction is not enough for ELL learners if their linguistic and cultural abilities are neglected. Instead, educators must ensure that learners obtain a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum by planning standard-oriented and content-rich lessons and practices that are developmentally acceptable based on the degree of English-language proficiency of learners (Taylor, 2016).

In recent years, further scholars (e.g. Anh, 2010; Schweers, 1999;Shimizu, 2006; Tang, 2002; Zacharias, 2004) have verified the importance of L1 in foreign language classrooms. Tang (2002), for example, proposed that the use of L1 could help the teaching and learning process. Strategies such as translating words into L1 and comparing types between L1 and L2 can promote acquisition (Rolin-Ianziti &Brownlie, 2002) and evidence suggests that code-switching may improve feedback by rendering linguistic objects more important (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002).

Zacharias (2004) metaphorically explained the usage of L1 usage as a cover. The usage of L1 could build a less threatening environment. Shimizu (2006) pointed out that it is always exceedingly challenging for newcomers to recognize themselves in monolingual English classroom environments. L1, in this situation, can be helpful. Anh (2010) observed that L1 was effective in some cases. There were three most common cases in which L1 was to be used, that is, when discussing grammatical points, when explaining new phrases, and when testing for comprehension.

Concerning the reasons, Anh's(2010) data indicated that the participants used L1 to clarify complicated terms, to incorporate new ideas and directions, to ensure that learners understood lessons, to discipline and power, to offer more comprehensive guidance, to build a teacher-student relationship, and to introduce Indonesian words. Given the various perspectives of the research, certain aims carry certain parallels to the results of Anh (2010), Zacharias (2004), Tang (2002) and Cameron (2001).

At the outset of the process of studying English, teachers ought to move closer to their pupils (Gordon, 2007; Cameron, 2001). Although a significant amount of English feedback is required in the sense of the EFL, using English at all times would keep teachers away from their learners. This may also build emotional obstacles triggered

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by anxiety, stress, boredom, or lack of interest, as teachers tend to be outsiders who do not speak the same language as children do. In this situation, the use of L1 will help to build a connection between the teacher and the learners.

Cook (2001) also indicated that effective acquisition of L2 relies on the acquisition of L2 in the manner in which the monolingual child acquires L1 and proposes holding L1 and L2 distinct structures to prevent conflict with L1. On the other side, L1 supports foreign language (FL) classrooms retain a full variety of counter-arguments. They emphasize that the role of L1 in teaching techniques in FL classrooms is of paramount importance (Nazary, 2008). In an early publication, Larsen-Freeman (2000) outlined the benefits of using L1 in the sense of the EFL.

She explored the function of L1 across different methods of English Language Teaching (ELT) and found that L1 has a position in almost all teaching methods (except for the Direct and Audio-lingual Method). A large number of researchers have established the essential roles of L1 in the classroom of EFL. In particular, it is suggested that L1 should be used to raise the consciousness of the similarities and disparities between L1 and L2 (Schweers, 1999; Carson &Kashihara, 2012), to offer learners a sense of trust and to authenticate their perceptions by enabling them to articulate themselves more easily (Schweers, 1993; Auerbach, 1993).

Data also shows that L1 may be used to provide scaffolding to lower affective filters (Meyor, 2008; Schweers, 1999) and aid learners of language disabilities (Nazary, 2008). In other forms of literature, L1 is often identified as a tool for offering direction, addressing classroom methodology, testing comprehension, monitoring, regulating student actions, and specifically teaching grammar (Atkinson, 1987; Macaro, 2005). Other L1 uses of teachers include bridging contact differences

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(Nzwanga, 2000), disciplining learners (Macaro, 2005) and sharing vocabulary, assessments and tasks (Levine, 2003).

In line with previous research findings (Burden, 2001; Hopkins, 1989; Schweers, 1999), the results of the study suggested that learners see a position for L1 in their monolingual EFL class, while they consider the usage of L2 to be quite significant. Learners find that L1 makes studying easy and makes them feel more secure. The results also show that L1 was deemed an invaluable teaching method for teaching new words, reading and grammar, providing test directions and encouraging learners to grasp complicated concepts. These results are compatible with those in Burden (2001) and Levine (2003), which argued that participants also preferred the use of L1 for grammar and vocabulary instruction, advice and correspondence on tests and assignments. Teachers have access to L1 where learners have trouble interpreting those situations.

Pan and Pan also claimed (2010) that "Several studies have shown the benefits of using L1 to learn TL." Other researchers have similar ideas on L1. Based on the data collected by Villamil and de Guerrero as cited in Pan (2010), it has been seen that 'L1 is an important tool for rendering text relevant, recalling language from memory, exploring and expanding information, directing their behaviour through work, and preserving dialogue.'

Atkinson (1987) suggested certain uses of the mother tongue such as eliciting language (all levels), checking comprehension (all levels) and creating and/or sustaining collaboration between learners, addressing classroom methodology (early level), presenting and improving language (mainly early level), sense-checking, and evaluating. In addition, Harbord (1992) classified the reasons for which the mother

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tongue should be used as three: to facilitate contact, to facilitate teacher-student connections and to facilitate the learning of L2 (English).

2.4 Situations where teachers desire to use the L1 in the classroom

It is well noted that class routines can provide opportunities for language development (Pinter, 2006; Cameron, 2001; Paul, 2003). Since children will hear the same language, they will eventually be able to grasp the definitions again and again (Gordon, 2007). However, one cannot forget that the teachers ought to implement them first before the utterances become rituals. All the participants decided that the implementation of new guidance L1 are required to render the definitions simpler.

Managing classrooms is a big struggle when dealing with two to three-year-old learners. Cameron (2001) concluded from many findings on the application of L1 in TEYL that L1 is more likely to be used to control classroom behaviour. This is fair when children have a small spectrum of focus. They need a range of events. However, to achieve this, teachers ought to be willing to monitor pupils and regulate the classroom.

The creation of a teacher-student bond is, therefore, important for the proper care of children. Children have all kinds of learning techniques as special beings. Preschool teachers, therefore, will need to recognize this, as Paul (2003) pointed out. When a good feeling is attached to a learning event, the brain appears to be transmitting a message that the knowledge is essential and that the mind can maintain it. On the other side, when children are emotionally disturbed, feel challenged, or have unpleasant thoughts, the productivity of the brain's critical thought region tends to decline, and thus understanding and retention often declines (Kurniawati, 2017).

Facing decades of opposition to L1 use, several academic studies are currently reviewing the use of L1 and discovering its benefits in language learning. As in Meyor (2008), the usage of L1 has been shown to help lower affective filters that are considered to be harmful to learners' learning. This evidence indicated that one field of language learning that L1 may be dynamically extended to was related to emotions. Ocak, Kuru, and Ozcalisan (2010) also noticed a finding that confirmed this claim; they added that learners typically use their L1 while they are scared of having errors that would be humiliating to them. Another scholarly support for the use of L1 is the argument on student comprehension, especially for learners with lower language proficiency.

Machaal (2012) examined the usage of Arabic (L1) in English classrooms and noticed that this method was helpful for learners as it served well to help learners understand and learn. Saricoban (2010) researched more and noticed that L1 was used to cope with complicated ideas, unfamiliar phrases, and to refresh the interpretation of the lessons gained from the teacher. Similarly, Mirza, Mahmud and Jabbar (2012) argued that the usage of L1 plays an important role in coping with complicated syntax, learning about new vocabulary and complex concepts. In this respect, however, L1 serves as a mechanism to render the learning process simpler for learners. In addition, Damra and Qudah (2012) suggested that the usage of L1 could improve learners' understanding and knowledge of similarities and discrepancies between their L1 and L2. Awareness-raising of learners can contribute to more successful learning. In support of this argument (Horst, White& Bell, 2010) added that L1 is often assumed to be a valuable method to close the distance between the newly learned information and that already existing in the learners. This attribute is important for learners to make adequate progress on their language skills. If the learners are unable to link

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what they research to what they already know, it will be quite challenging for them to accomplish the aim of studying a language.

Cook (2001) claimed that if L1 is used as a platform for schools, it will support both teachers and learners in several ways: it allows teachers to communicate significance, clarify grammar and coordinate lessons, while also encouraging learners to carry out collective activities and individual strategies.

Study results suggest that teachers use L1 for classroom management problems, clarify grammar and vocabulary, create connections between learners and themselves, and illustrate vague and challenging concepts (García, Flores, & Woodley, 2012; Sali, 2014; Sharma, 2006).
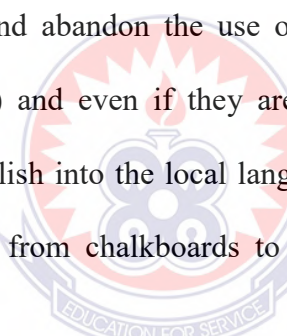
2.5 Challenges associated with the use of L1 in the classroom

English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers with proper classroom strategies and techniques should know how to use L1 in L2 teaching. Moreover, by taking into account the affective, sociolinguistic, and psycholinguistic factors that contribute to L1 use in EFL classrooms, teacher education programs can better prepare teachers to professionally deal with the daily challenges of using L1 usage as a teaching tool and for classroom management while teaching EFL.

Though, the teachers may be aware of the challenges that may arise when L1 is allowed in their EFL classrooms. When it is used disproportionately, L1 may lead to a negative effect that can decrease learning outcomes. L1 may lead to a significant underexposure to the TL, which would probably lead to poor learning outcomes (Macdonald, 1993; Polio & Duff, 1994; Wells, 1999). Nevertheless, when it is used proportionally, it can help students progress in learning. It is in line with what Sharma

(2006) argues that banishing L1 from English classrooms would negatively affect students" progress.

Teacher training programs can train teachers to deal with the everyday challenges of using L1 usage as a teaching device and for classroom administration while teaching L2.Teacher education and teacher training programs on the importance of the use of L1 in the classroom has not been well explained to most teachers on how to connect the first language in L2 teaching. Lack of local language trained teachers in schools is the result of not educating teachers on the role of L1 in teaching and learning processes. Teachers do not use L1 in their classrooms because they are not trained in their local languages (Ahsan, 2016). The lack of skills and training has led to many teachers to misinterpret and abandon the use of local language as the medium of instruction (NCDC, 2008) and even if they are proficient, some concepts are not easily translated from English into the local language and pupils spend most of their time copying the content from chalkboards to notebooks and then memorizing it (UNESCO, 2008).

Through findings in recent studies have shown that many teachers have not been trained in the use of local language for instruction (Heugh & Mathias, 2014; NCDC, 2008). Therefore to bridge the gaps in training needs, a one day workshop should be organized focusing on the following aspects: methods of teaching reading and writing, the use of instructional materials and conducting a continuous assessment.

According to Rateng (1992), lack of instructional materials on local languages is one of the problems and a vital factor that has led to teachers not using the L1 in their classrooms. Teaching and reading materials on L1 encourage learners to be able to read and write in their local languages. Most teachers feel that school administration

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should be blamed for having a stake in it. To minimize the challenge of instructional material, Rateng (1992) encouraged the teachers and administration to engage in constant curriculum material review based on cost-benefit analysis. In the Ghanaian languages, thereis alack of materials to be used in teaching and it has become a challenge for teachers to use the L1 in their classrooms (Owu-Ewie, 2006).

School authorities" involvement in the education of the child is an important motivating factor for learning. In most studies, it has been realized that some school authorities exhibit non-committal behaviour to the L1 education of their learners. Some school authorities think that their learners should be well fluent in the L2 and therefore the L1 should be taught less in their schools. Jackson and Remillard (2005) highlighted the role of school authorities in the child"s education and their displeasure towards the use of L1 in their schools. In addition, Bradley (2002) emphasizes that practices such as employing local language teachers in the school, using the L1 usage as amedium of instruction at the early grade level and warmth in interactions in the L1 at their early stage promote children"s development of skills.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The previous discussions on the functions of L1 usage as a medium of instruction in private school early grade classrooms. The research analysed the attributes/ variables of L1 usage and its non-usage in the classroom. Therefore, the researcher hasconceptualized that the role of L1affects language learning and acquisition. As a consequence, the L1 usage as a component and its characteristics arising from its contribution affect language learning and acquisition. In my construct, this logical structure is explained as follows:
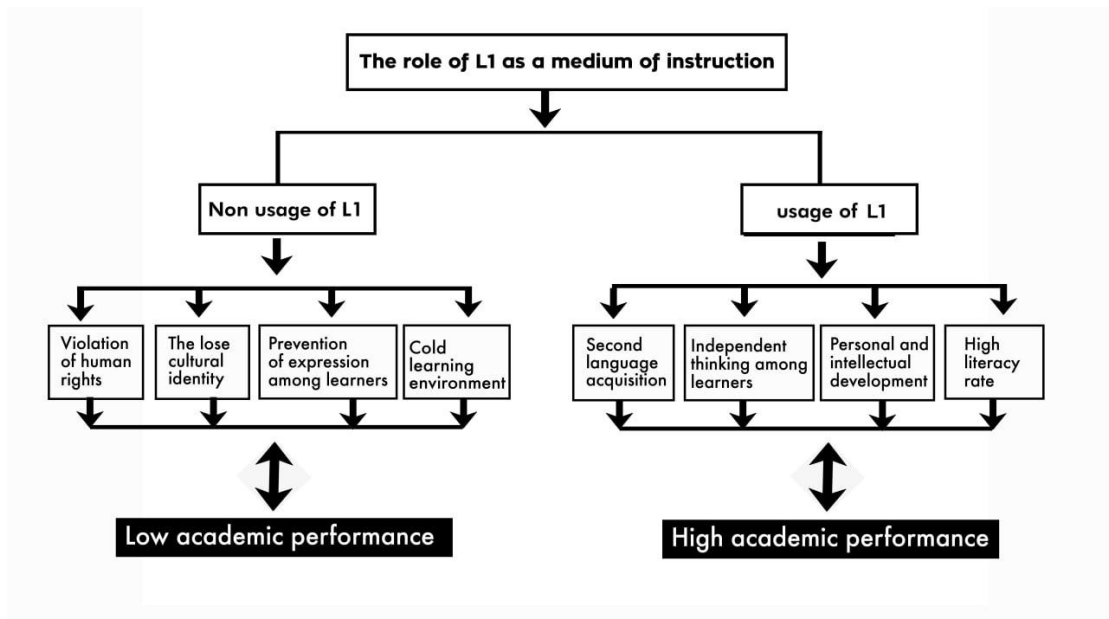
Figure 1: Conceptual construct for the role of L1 as a medium of instruction in the classroom

2.7 The meaning of the conceptual construct

In my conceptual construct, the role of L1 is the dependent variable that determines the usage of L1 and the non-usage of L1 as its independent variable. However, it is when the paradigm is used in a sample that it is known if the effect is positive or negative. It should be remembered that the order in which the structure of the characteristics of the role of L1 in the mental model implies that the interpretation of the role of L1 affects the use and non-use of L1. For example, if teacher X's view of L1 use is positive, then teacher X's impact on language development and acquisition would be positive; and if teacher Y's perception ofusage of L1 is negative, then teacher Y's affects language development and acquisition negatively.

2.8.1 The role of L1 as a medium of instruction in the classroom

Language transfer affects speakers or writers either positively or negatively depending on the relevant unit structure of both theirnative and acquired languages. Most learners apply knowledge from their native language to the second language and this

transfer can resultin both positive and negative transfer. Positive transfer occurs when the meaning of items that are transferred is in line with the nativespeakers" notion of acceptability. Negative transfer occurs when the opposite happens resulting in errors. Negative transfer happens at agreater scale when the difference between two languages is big. The similarities and dissimilarities in word meanings and word forms affecthow quickly a learner can acquire a foreign language (Odlin T, 1989: 77).

For learners to succeed, they need to be proficient in reading and writing. Arguments, on how much one"s mother tongue affects his/her acquisition of a new language, have risen and a divide has been created between groups that are for monolingualism in the classroom and those that are against it. Butzkamm (2003.5) as cited in Suntharesan V"s research paper „Role of Mother Tongue in Teaching English to Tamil Students" remarked, "The international dominance of English native speakers who find absolution in the dogma of monolingualism when they cannot understand the language of their pupils, together with the cheaper mass production of strictly English-speaking in the Anglo-American mother country, constitutes one of the reasons behind the sanctification of, and the demand for, monolingualism in the classroom." Here, Butzkamm supported the use of the first language in the classroom as it is a useful tool that can be used to explain difficult grammar. L1 can also be used when giving instructions that learners might not be able to understand in English, and for checking to understand, especially when using complex contexts (Suntharesan, 2012).

The use of the first language provides students with a sense of security that enables them to learn with ease and in comfort.Mother's tongue serves social and cognitive functions in that students who work in groups will discuss in their native language. This allowsthem to relate and have a sense of identity. Language transfer or

translation is an involuntary thing done by language learners. Using L1 incases where students are incapable of activating vocabulary proves useful in their learning, and gives them the comfort to read difficult textsin the second language. With texts that require higher proficiency, learners are advised to first read the text in their first language, then in thesecond language to better understand the concept (Suntharesan, 2012).

The influence of a learner‟s native language in making the acquisition of a second language easy or difficult varies depending onthe factors that will be analyzed in this study. Many learners need a sense of security when learning a foreign language. It is challenging forthem to completely abandon their native tongue despite the communicative methods that emphasize that a foreign language (FL) be taught and learnt through the foreign language. The idea of ceasing the usage of mother tongue in the language classroom was brought by the oddphenomenon where after studying a foreign language (FL) for a long time through grammar-translation; students were still unable tofluently speak in the language.

L1 is believed to play an important role in EFL learning. Seftiawan (2018) stated that L1 can help 6-year learners to study EFL and master vocabularies through translation. L1 also serves to function as a powerful tool for EFL learning and teaching if pedagogical activities are well prepared because L1 helps students to comprehend L2 knowledge and decrease students‟ insecurities due to their limited L1 proficiency (Pan & Pan, 2010). Furthermore, L1 can also be used to explain a certain vocabulary, grammar, instructions, organization purposes, and to check students‟ understanding (Hanakova & Metruk, 2017).

Galali and Cinkara (2017) stated that learners" L1 plays a facilitating role for them to acquire foreign language knowledge under certain conditions. The use of L1 is tolerable among beginners and its use should be then limited as their proficiency becomes more advanced because, as stated by Gomathi & Kiruthika (2013), it is an effective resource if it is utilized appropriately.The role of L1 has great importance in second/foreign language teaching because they are inseparable from each other although both teachers and students are aware of the use of the language being learnt as much as possible in the classroom, however, they still cannot avoid the importance and role of L1 (Paker & Karaağaç, 2015).

Al sharaeri (2012) argued that L1 is also said as a mediation process in language teaching and learning because both teachers and students are not against the use of L1. He further stated that L1 should be used in emergencies where necessary (Mahmutoglu & Kicir, 2013) because L1 can also be used as a facilitator in the classrooms and students always use it to help them learn English (Rommel & Tonelli, 2017).

2.8.2 Usage of L1

Facing decades of opposition to L1 use, several academic studies are currently reviewing the use of L1 and discovering its benefits in language learning. As in Meyor's research (2008), the usage of L1 has been shown to help lower affective filters that are considered to be harmful to learners' learning. This evidence indicated that one field of language learning that L1 may be dynamically extended to be related to emotions. Ocak et al. (2010) also noticed a finding that confirmed this claim. They added that learners typically use their L1 while they are scared of having errors that would be humiliating to them. Another scholarly support for the use of L1 is the argument on student comprehension, especially for learners with lower language

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proficiency. Machaal (2012) examined the usage of Arabic (L1) in English classrooms and noticed that this method was helpful for learners as it served well to help learners understand and learn. Saricoban (2010) researched more and noticed that L1 was used to cope with complicated ideas, unfamiliar phrases, and to refresh the interpretation of the lessons gained from the teacher. Similarly, Mirza, Mahmud and Jabbar (2012) argued that the usage of L1 plays an important role in coping with complicated syntax, learning about new vocabulary and complex concepts.

In this respect, however, L1 serves as a mechanism to render the learning process simpler for learners. In addition, Damra and Qudah (2012) suggested that the usage of L1 could improve learners' understanding and knowledge of similarities and discrepancies between their L1 and L2. Awareness-raising of learners can contribute to more successful learning. In support of this argument, Horst et al. (2010) added that L1 is often assumed to be a valuable method to close the distance between the newly learned information and that already existing in the learners. This attribute is important for learners to make adequate progress on their language skills. If the learners are unable to link what they learn to what they already know, it will be quite challenging for them to accomplish the aim of learning a language.

2.8.3 Second language acquisition

Incomplete first-language abilities also find studying other languages challenging. Cummins (2000) stressed that the degree of growth of children's mother tongue is a good indicator of their second language development. Concepts and reading capabilities may be passed to the second language after the mother tongue has been promoted. In comparison, there was a high association between learning to read in the mother tongue and eventual reading in the second language (Koda, 2005). In brief,

encouraging the growth of the mother tongue promotes the development of second-language learning.

2.8.4 Independent thinking among learners

Education is a possible method for promoting critical thought among learners. Learners should be permitted and empowered to present their views and perceptions of the events around them. Vygotsky's (1978) philosophy focuses extensively on language and social contact, and on the role they play in encouraging learners to improve the society in which they reside. In his philosophy, language is the medium used by people for the dissemination, correspondence and reflection of the community. For him, language is the most essential therapeutic method to mediate our feelings. Centred on the Nicholl (2008) account of Vygotsky's theory, "language is the tool that enables the emergence of self-awareness and consequently voluntary control of one's actions" Initially, it is the parent who said yes or no to the child, and then the kid may answer yes or no to his or herself. In other terms, "an inner process requires outward criteria" (Wittgenstein as cited in Nicholl, 2008). For Vygotsky, then, growth aims to allow the transition from being non-regulated to self-regulation.

In brief, according to Vygotsky philosophy, language performs two specific functions in cognitive development: contact and control. Communication is essential for the propagation of culture. Regulation is important in acquiring control of one's cognitive processes (example; thoughts, memory, etc.). He argued: "In growing up within linguistically structures and sustained relationships the child begins to perceive the world not only through its eyes but also through its speech. And later it is not just seeing but acting that is informed by words" (Vygotsky cited in Edwards, 2004, p.32). It is worth noting, though, that it is plausible to assume that comprehension is the

basis of language skills (Derwing, 1974). Vygotsky himself insisted that "thought undergoes many changes as it turns into speech" (Golub & Reid 1989, p.46). "It would be wrong, however, to regard thought and speech as two unrelated processes, either parallel or crossing at certain points and mechanically influencing each other" (Vygotsky, 1986, p.211). However, in later innovations, he stressed, even more, the role of language in intellectual growth. Until he asserted that "thought development is determined by the language that is by the linguistic tools of thought and by the socio-cultural experience of the child" Vygotsky (1986) as cited in (Elliot, 1994, p.41). His idea is reasonable and acceptable until the infant has learned his/her mother tongue.

2.8.5 Personal and intellectual development

Mother tongue (first language, natural language, or L1) is important for learning as part of an intellectual capability. The mother tongue is the language that human beings have learned after birth. It allows the infant to learn intellectually, morally and emotionally. In their research, Schick, de V``illiers, de Villiers and Hoffmeister, (2002) demonstrated that the language deficits usually found in deaf children are causally linked to delays insignificant aspects of cognitive growth. They hold children who cannot understand dynamic syntactic types as complements having trouble knowing how their thoughts and opinions can vary from those around them. Most of the child's potential social and academic growth relies on the milestone of the mother tongue (Plessis, 2008). The Mother tongue, thus, plays a central role in schooling that involves cognitive development.

2.8.6 High literacy rate

Studies suggest that children going to school with a solid foundation in their mother tongue gain better reading skills. Overall, the study is very strong on the value of

children's mother tongue for their personal and educational growth (Baker, 2001; Cummins, 2000; cited in Cummins, 2000). When parents spend time with their children and share stories or address problems with them in a way that strengthens the language and ideas of their mother tongue, children come to school well equipped to learn and succeed in schooling.

In 2002, FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) claimed that the academic growth of children is very much related to the language they speak; whether they are educated in their mother tongue, their knowledge grows. When children study in their mother tongue, they are acquiring ideas and analytical abilities that are equally important to their ability to work throughout their entire existence. In other terms, according to the 2008 UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization) Newsletter, "Learning in the mother tongue has cognitive and emotional value" (p.5). Also, according to Krishnaji (1990), many psychological, social and educational studies have shown that learning through the mother tongue is richer, quicker, and more successful. In reality, by utilising the student's mother tongue in the classroom to teach subject matter, the learners' cognitive skills will be established (Dumatog& Dekker, 2003).

2.8.7 High academic performance

Based on the variables listed above, learners can increase their academic performance and the usage of L1 in the classroom has several influences that can lead to the cognitive growth and intellect of learners.

2.8.8 Non Usage of L1

Compared to previous opinions which agree with the use of L1 in the classroom, reasons have also been discovered about the refusal to use L1 in the classroom. Using

L1 in the classroom will hinder learners' comprehension of the target language learning process (L2). This is since teachers and learners usually use L1 in classrooms whereas, in studying L2, the usage of target vocabulary in the classroom itself can be used more dominantly to accomplish the aims of the L2 learning process. According to Schweers (1999), English should be the primary means of communication in the English classroom (p.9).

Similar to the previous point, Schweers often wished to stress that in second-language instruction, the target language can be used to connect and engage. This argument, also quoted in Harmer (2007), clarified that the only way to learn a language is by using the language itself. This suggests that anytime learners wish to study English, they can use English as a means of studying in the classroom. Harmer (2001) has reported that the overuse of L1 limits the sensitivity of learners to the target language. In line with the above; some researchers endorsed the concept of avoiding the usage of L1.
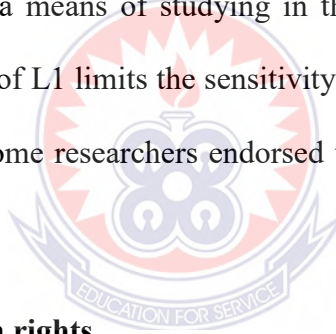
2.8.9 Violation of human rights

Auerbach (1993) has intimated that requiring individuals to use only L2 abuses human rights when it requires enforcing ideological power on them. In other words, forcing people to use the TL may attempt to sever one's links with one's native language, culture or identity. As a consequence, many academics and teachers believe that learners should be able to convey what they want to say in their L1, and only the teacher should support them formulate it in English.

2.8.10 The loss of cultural identity

Cook (2007) criticized the idea that language teachers ignore translation and follow a single-language method to teaching English. According to her, since culture is part of

the vocabulary, neglecting the L1 learners in the classroom often implies neglecting the learning culture, which could contribute to the danger of denying their identities. In addition to the cultural factor, there is no reliable evidence confirming that the monolingual solution is the safest. By comparison, missing learners' mother tongue may be de-motivating and making them less excited about studying the target language.

2.8.11 Prevention of expression among learners

The absolute prohibition on L1 in monolingual classrooms prohibits learners from expressing themselves openly and efficiently, contributing to communication issues such as incomprehension in the classroom. Harbord (1992, p. 351) saw the "humanistic aspect" as a rational approach towards the usage of the student's mother tongue and finds it extremely doubtful that a teacher will fail to address a query such as "What does ... mean in English?".

2.8.12 Cold learning environment

It is often suspected that L1 makes the learners more confident and less apprehensive in the classroom setting, and this could be the explanation why the teachers suggested in the think-aloud protocols that they would like to use L1 for casual discussions and jokes or for establishing relationships with the learners. Similarly, Bruen and Kelly's (2014) research of twelve lecturers also indicates that the usage of L1 in the L2 classroom is warranted in circumstances that may help alleviate cognitive overload and learning distress. It can also be inferred because L1 can be used to lower the affective filter and help learners gain language feedback more quickly, while when L2 is used in the classroom, learners may find it challenging to sit happily and find

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pleasure in the classroom because they are introduced to a language they are not comfortable with and thus find it difficult to remain in the class.

2.8.13 Low academic performance

Based on the aforementioned factors, learners may find it challenging to succeed in their academic performance and could even cause most of the learners to drop out of school (UNESCO, 2008a).

2.9 Theoretical Review

Approaches to language acquisition and learning explain how teachers and learners see whether language can be used as a teaching tool in the classroom. There are three approaches to language acquisition and learning, namely: Behaviorist, Intrinsic and Interactionist viewpoints on language learning and learning, which affect the adoption of L2 teaching and learning. There is dispersed literature on the theoretical basis of L1 acquisition and L2 learning (Bhaskaran, 2012) that needs to be pulled together for a systematic understanding of these phenomena (Mohamadnor & Rashid, 2018).

2.10.1 Language learning and acquisition on Behaviourists' perspective

Behaviourists describe schooling as a permanent transformation in behaviour, where learners have little free will and are completely influenced by their social world (Ludescher, 2010). If L1 and L2 are to be effective, parents or teachers must offer constructive feedback whenever children or learners perform the required behaviour. They can have to conduct actions of their own in time.

There are two forms of classical conditioning and operant conditioning in Behaviorism. Classical conditioning happens as learning occurs involuntarily when there is a conditioned reaction to a favourable stimulus after it has repeatedly been combined with an unconditioned stimulus. In other terms, classical conditioning may be related to a reflex response. This principle may be used to describe L1 to

adolescents. When parents want to teach children etiquette, such as saying "thank you," parents can (without being conscious of this specific behavioural theory) train their children to respectfully say "thank you" or "please" by offering their children a gift or food and demonstrating to them that any time anyone brings them something, they can say "thank you." Often, whether they wish to get anything or inquire for approval, the parents will teach the children to say "please" before continuing with their order. With time, children learn how to say "thank you" and "please" sometimes without their parents prompting them or associating terms with offering things to the children or making them do something or go anywhere. Act and vocabulary are naturally acquired and become a habit for infants.

Operant conditioning, where a positive response is rewarded (reinforcement) by a cue, may aptly explain L2 learning. In a structured classroom, when the teacher asks a question (stimulus) and the student answers the question (response) correctly, the student may obtain a candy (reinforcement) from the teacher. This student will soon be inspired to answer questions raised by the teacher, and the student learns any time a query is answered correctly; the respondent will earn a prize (the reward may not necessarily be something physical, sometimes praise or approval will do). Other learners in the school will also fight with each other to get the best response, and they would also receive a prize for any correct answer. However, if the learners gave an incorrect answer, the teacher will execute negative feedback or penalty. In a healthy and alternative usage of positive and negative feedback, the teacher will monitor and train learners to learn L2 effectively (Ludescher, 2010).

2.10.2 Language learning and acquisition on Innatists perspective

One of the best-known Innatists, Krashen (1982), tried to differentiate between the learning of L1 and the acquisition of L2 by believing that there are two avenues to improve language skills. Next, language learning, which is a method close to how children acquire their abilities in L1; is performed subconsciously in the same manner as language acquisition arises. Language acquirers are usually oblivious of the reality that they are learning a language, culminating in learned expertise where they generally have a "feel" for the correctness and where the words "sound right" or "feel right" may not have the understanding of particular grammatical laws. He claims that language acquirers are only conscious of the language they use throughout the contact phase. The second approach is by language acquisition, where the L2 learning phase is performed intentionally. L2 learners understand and know the language laws, are mindful of these rules and may speak about them. Some people call L2 structured learning or explicit learning.

On the other hand, language processing is often known as casual learning or unconscious learning, or language acquisition. Krashen (1982) distinguishes between acquiring and learning, arguing that training is unconsciously and subconsciously learned in casual contexts, whereas learning is performed directly and deliberately in structured situations. In comparison, acquisition happens while grammatical "feel" is used by language learners when grammatical laws are used by language learners. The acquisition of the language depends on the temperament of the language learners, whereas the performance of the language learners depends on aptitude. Language development often takes place in stable order, although language learning is typically arranged from basic to complicated and to promote learning. Krashen (1985) has proposed five theories to describe language acquisition and language learning. Next,

in The Natural Order Theory, learners develop language laws in a consistent order. Second, in Acquisition/Learning Theory, learners have two distinctive avenues to acquire L2d skills: where learners use language for actual conversation when studying is where learners know the language. Third, in The Monitor Theory, L2 learners are knowledgeable of their learning process and may be used as the editor of their L2 development. Fourth, the Feedback Theory where language learners acquire a language through understanding signals or through receiving understandable input. Fifth, there is some form of conceptual barrier in the Affective Filter Theory that stops feedback from accessing the LAD.

When the affective filter is poor, comprehension of the language can be gained more quickly, when learners' anxieties are lessened and their defence of learning the language reduces, they may be more open to learning the language, providing an optimum learning atmosphere where good language learning will take place. L2 learning is close to the acquisition of L1 according to the Innatist Principle. Children develop language when communicating with the adults around them, such as parents who accommodate children with 'Baby Talk,' where expression is usually slowed down, enunciation is more effective, and the sound is nurturing. Similarly, 'Foreigner Talk' or 'Teacher Talk' is used in an L2 classroom where native speakers communicate to L2 learners in various ways to maintain a secure and non-threatening environment while at the same time enabling the feedback to be properly absorbed by providing the L2 learners time to be completely trained and ready to produce the target language. Furthermore, where there is enough comprehensible feedback, both children and adults are more effective in the acquiring and developing of languages since more comprehensible information implies more language skills. Likewise, the absence of comprehensible feedback is equal to low language proficiency.

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2.10.3 Language learning and acquisition on Interactionist perspective

The Interactionist Hypothesis was primarily followed by Vygotsky and his Region of Proximal Growth (ZPD) Theory. In discussing his notion of ZPD, Vygotsky (1978) argues that: Using copying, children can do even more when they are followed and directed by adults than when they are left alone and can do so with comprehension and self-reliance. The discrepancy between the level of tasks that can be done with adult supervision, assistance and the level of tasks individually undertaken in the region of proximal growth (Erben, Ban, & Castaneda, 2009, p. 53). When children face a dilemma that they cannot fix on their own, they seek support from the individuals around them, such as their parents, siblings, or extended family members (Rashid, Mohamed, Rahman, & Wan-Shamsuddin, 2017). This attempt to cooperate with others is also an essential move in the acquisition of L1 for infants. Language production is not feasible without this partnership. Vygotsky claims that children have an academic involvement in their families through the usage of words.

Collaboration between children and representatives of the group can contribute to the creation of vocabulary through the bargaining phase. Those studying L2, for example, in a language school, benefit from the teacher's assistance and support their peers acquire the language productively. As the classroom can be viewed as a group of its own, with its laws and authorities (class monitors or teachers), the classroom can be a simulation of real-life activities, in terms of interacting with each other and understanding how contact takes place in various circumstances and conditions. In addition, a teacher may exemplify actual social experiences by a range of classroom events, such as role-playing, theatre, choral speaking, or simply through gathering learners to collaborate collaboratively with their peers, whom they meet individually and feel familiar with so that they have little to no trouble engaging through utilizing

the L2 to discuss a teacher's assignment. They will now feel safe to open up and not feel intimidated or ashamed if they made any errors when engaging with L2 among their peers. The Interactionist Hypothesis links the language acquisition of learners or learners to social interaction (Rashid, 2016b). Ziglari (2008) separated social contact into mutual and intrapersonal experiences. Interpersonal contact happens as the acquirer or learner meets face-to-face via an oral medium or a written medium. In comparison, intra-personal contact arises within the acquirers or learners as they seek to create context as a reaction to a phenomenon.

Doughty and Long (2003) further explained the word interaction by explaining that interaction arises when equal status people who have the same needs attempt to create an effort to learn from each other. In the Interactionist Theory, Gass and Torres (2005) added that interaction applies to exchanges of knowledge through which such statements are not interpreted and it is through the error-correcting phase that the interest of the learners or learners is attracted to specific language structures. Gass and Torres assume that feedback plus engagement can boost language retention or language learning (as cited in Mohamadnor& Rashid, 2018).

2.11 Context of language policy in Ghana

The extensive usage of English in Ghana is due to colonial dominance and, in particular, to missionaries who encouraged it at the detriment of native languages, thereby relegating it to the margins. On the opposite, it is the Christian missionaries who have been at the forefront of the promotion of African languages through translating the Bible into them and their use in schooling. According to Albaum"s study of the Language Policies in African Education (1997), Ghana's language policy during the pre-independence era supported English through the 139 mission schools

founded by the Church. These schools had enrolled about 5,000 learners. Since then, there have been contradictions in the introduction of Ghanaian languages focused on pre-and post-independence policies, which date as far back as before 1925. The summary and chronology of these measures are when, in 1882, the Ordinance was proclaimed by the British, which they interpreted as supporting the colony's educators. The Ordinance mandated the usage and instruction of English in schools and was referred to as the "Ordinance for the Promotion and Assistance of Education in the Gold Coast Colony"(p.4-6). In 1925, however, the Guggisberg Ordinance reversed this and provided for the usage of local languages as a medium of teaching during the first three years of education, during which English would be used and local languages taught as subjects (Andoh-Kumi, 2002). The Governor at the time, Guggisberg, claimed that "While English education is required, it must be based on vernacular knowledge," because the Educational Ordinance at the time stipulated that English should be used as a medium of instruction at all levels of education in the colony.

The Educational Ordinance of 1925, therefore, stressed the compulsory usage of the Ghanaian language as a means of instruction at the lower primary level (PI-3) and as a matter of study at the upper primary level. In 1951, the election of the Legislative Assembly obtained by the Convention Peoples Party (CPP) implemented an Accelerated Growth Programme, which also affirmed the stance of the 1925 Education Ordinance that Ghanaian Languages should be used as a means of instruction in the Lower Primary and as a matter of study in the Upper Primary (McWilliams & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). At independence in 1957, the Rapid Growth Programme was checked by the Government of the CPP, and Ghana introduced the usage of English as a medium of instruction from the first year of schooling (Andoh-

Kumi, 2002). At the same period, attempts were also made to create essential national languages, 9 of which were selected to be taught along with French, another international language. The nine languages were Nzima, Ga, Kasem, Akuapem Twi, Asante Twi, Ewe, Dagbani, Fanti and Dangbe. As a result, pilot primary schools were chosen in which English was to be the primary language of instruction (Boadi, 1976). In 1963, though, the CPP government requested the Bannerman Committee to study the country's pre-university schooling. This committee has put Ghanaian languages prominently in the school system. Unfortunately, this recommendation was not adopted by the government because the nation had more immediate educational requirements, and this reform has never seen the light of day.

In 1966, Professor Alex Kwapong was appointed to the head of a committee set up by the National Liberation Council (NLC), which took over the government's mission of reviewing the education system at all levels in the region. The Committee found that "English-only policy," as proposed, was not practised in many areas, and instead, local languages were used in the primary school cycle. It, therefore, proposed that Ghanaian languages should be used as a medium of instruction for the first three years of primary school education and that English should only be used as a medium of instruction in the fourth year, whereas Ghanaian languages should remain as a subject of some type (McWilliams & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). There was, however, a downside to the recommendation, as it was refused by the NLC Administration, which recommended that Ghanaian Languages be used only as a means of instruction in primary class one.

Fortunately, as the administration of the Progress Party (PP) came to power under Dr Busia, the advice of the Kwapong Committee on the Ghanaian Language was

accepted. Moreover, in 1970, local languages were reintroduced for the first three years of schooling, as was the case during the Guggisberg Ordinance and a Ghanaian Languages School was created. The teaching of Ghanaian languages in teaching colleges has also been made obligatory, even for lower groups in secondary schools (SS). Unfortunately, Ghanaian language schools have not been established owing to a shortage of time and resources to update the programme. As a consequence, schools started to focus on British textbooks (Clermont, 1985).

In 1974, Reverend Dzobo led a committee set up by the then governing Government of the National Redemption Council, which reviewed the system and content of education in Ghana. This assembly, like its predecessors, often stresses the languages of Ghana. The study suggested, among other things, that Ghanaian languages should be compulsory from primary to university level and (Dzobo, 1974) recommended, among other things, that children at primary school level should acquire their language and potentially one more Ghanaian language. English as a means of learning from primary four to six, as well as junior high school, can be included. The proposed framework and quality of education were then initiated on a pilot basis in several colleges.

In 1987, a new Education Policy Guidance was released under the People's National Defense Committee (PNDC), in which the Government reiterated that learners in primary schools must study their languages in addition to every other language in Ghana. The local Ghanaian language was to be used as a medium of instruction for the first three years of primary school, and English was to be taught as a subject from the first year of school and eventually became a medium of instruction in the fourth year of primary school (Bamile, 1995). In essence, this language regulation was

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enforced through the Dzobo Committee's suggestion, with minimal adjustments to education policy.

Similarly, Ghanaian language strategies have experienced a variety of formulations over the years, but neglect successful long-term preparation and execution, which is why the contradictions have been highlighted. Notable examples of contradictions include Governor Guggisberg's announcement that Ghanaian languages should be a medium of instruction throughout the first three years of primary school and used to teach all other topics, on the one hand, while, on the other, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) revised its strategy in 2002 so that English substituted vernaculars as a medium of instruction in the first three years.

Ghana's current language policy calls for one of 1112 Ghanaian languages to serve as the instruction medium for grades KG1 through primary 3 (with English as a subject), switching to English as the instruction medium starting in primary 4 (early exit model) (Ankrah& Lapin, 2015).

2.11.1 The monolingual approach

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the ELT profession experienced a significant shift in the views and values of researchers and teachers about second-language instruction. The GTM began to decrease as it struggled to "enhance student communication skills in the target language" (Brown, 2007, p. 16). This opened the way for the advent of the Direct Method. The prevalent idea was that learners can master a second language in the same manner that they have learned their L1 (Brown). Instead of concentrating on the written form of the TL, the emphasis turned to oral abilities. This indicated that L1 was banished from L2 schools since it was considered to be more of a hindrance than a platform to promote L2 learning. The

monolingual approach as a pedagogical technique has inspired and led to the emergence of the Communication Approach (CA), especially in the 1970s and 1980s. The CA firmly indicates that L2 should be taught to monolinguals through authentic class exercises. It also advises teachers to refrain from utilizing the L1 of their learners, since such activities are "irrelevant to second-language learning" (Pennycook, 1994, p. 169). As a consequence, non-native English teachers, who operated in an English-only setting, often felt bad when they resorted to learning L1 to promote learning to do something, they assumed that they were against the values guiding good teaching practices at that time (Auerbach, 1993; Ferrer, n.d.; Atkinson, 1987).

It is worth noting that instructional activities are not just regulated by institutional policies. Rather, their pedagogical perceptions and values are formed.

Indeed, education policymakers in several countries have only embraced English as part of their administrative policies. Teachers, however, not only take an English-only approach because of administrative strain but also assume that the exclusive use of L2 would help their learners to learn TL faster than when L1 is permitted (Yphantides, 2009).

The monolingual method has prevailed, thanks to the immense help offered by scholars and linguists. L2 supporters argue for maximum immersion in the target language and complete banishment of L1 from the FL classroom. The key explanation is that there is a minimal chance for L2 learners to be introduced to TL outside the school. This renders the consistency of the L2 feedback and the quantity of TL exposure greatly important (Duff & Polio, 1990; Edstrom, 2006). Chaudron (1988, p. 121) suggested that L2 teachers are advised to create a rich TL atmosphere in which

"not only instruction and drill are carried out, but also disciplinary and management operations."

The monolingual method argues that learners should be immersed in the target language since the L2learning phase is close to the L1 learning process. Krashen (1982) proposed a natural approach to learning L2, which involves tremendous exposure to the target language by substantive and random conversation. Ellis (1984) stressed the significance of utilizing the target vocabulary for both teaching and classroom management. He criticized the preference of teachers to use the L1 of their learners to clarify classes, coordinate events and/or control behaviour since this deprives L2 learners of useful insight into the TL.

Despite the encouragement of some scholars and linguists, the monolingual method has faced substantial scrutiny and opposition (Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Phillipson, 1992; Prodromou, 2002; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Vanderheijden, 2010; Wechsler, 1997). First of all, it has been criticized for its impracticability and for the fact that the enormous exposure to L2 is not often enough to understand. It is deemed impossible since "the majority of English teachers are non-native speakers" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 191-192), and such teachers cannot learn the target language at the same degree of proficiency. As long as immersion is concerned, it is accurate that the sum of exposure to L2 plays a major role in language learning (Phillipson, 1992). However, other aspects lead to language acquisition, such as a qualified teacher, an appropriate evaluation framework and course book content.

Second, the monolingual method suggested that the second-language learning phase is identical to the acquisition of one's MT. But, this does not appear to be valid, since age is one of the main variables in the L2 learning process. Brown (2007) drew on the

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disparities in the method of language acquisition between adults and adolescents. When children study two languages, it occurs at the same moment. However, this is not the case for adults; if it happens in structured or casual environments, adults systematically study a second language. This includes formulating grammatical laws, utilizing their L1 information, to help them in bridging the linguistic void they cannot fill in L2.

The third part of the critique of the monolingual method is its inability to discriminate between English as a second language (ESL) and English as an international language (EFL). ESL applies to the teaching of English where "a language is necessary for everyday life or in a country in which English plays an important role in education, business and government". In western nations, for example, Canada, Australia, and the United States, L2 learners are immersed in the TL beyond the school. Also, learners come from diverse language backgrounds and, as a result, there is no L1 exchanged with them. There should also be a universal language for teaching and correspondence in the school, which is English.

EFL, on the other hand, "implies the use of English in a community where it is not the usual means of communication" (Abbott, 2001: p. 467). This explains the condition in which L2 learners come from the same linguistic context and share the same L1. In this case, learners only study English in structured classroom environments, since they have no interaction with the target language in the outside world. Therefore, the disparity in essence between the EFL and the ESL needs the introduction of more efficient teaching methods that are sufficient for each context.

Fourth, the monolingual method suggests that the usage of L1 reduces the chances for learners to be introduced to the target language. However, the banishment of L1 from

L2 classrooms is an unjustified decision. The judicious use of L1 has a beneficial impact on mastering the target language. Insisting on the usage of L2 across dynamic linguistic and cognitive activities implies refusing learners the ability to use a helpful and useful cognitive method that they possess (Swain &Lapkin, 2000). Moreover, the dependency of learners on L1 steadily declines as they become more competent in the TL (Vanderheijden, 2010; Prodromoum, 2002).

At the end of the day, the English-only method would not understand that the mother tongue remains in the minds of learners and during their EFL/ESL courses (Wechsler, 1997). Both admitted or not, learners, particularly low-level learners, prefer to use their L1 during collective work at varying degrees to scaffold new knowledge and grasp challenging concepts (Anton & Dicamilla, 1999; Slavin, 2006). Swain and Lapkin (2000, p. 768) concluded that "learners always approach learning and L2 with expertise in their L1, and this expertise remains a somewhat unexplored resource." The absolute banishment of L1 learners in EFL classrooms restricts learning possibilities for learners and reinforces a feeling of L2 superiority over their L1. To motivate L2 learners when they struggle to understand, they "should have as many tools as possible at their disposal in the learning environment to develop new learning" (Vanderheijden, 2010, p. 5).

As mentioned above, the monolingual notion has been subject to a lot of scepticism as it has overlooked the previous learning awareness and the possibility that L1 already resides in the learners' minds as they enter the TL. The following segment discusses the bilingual notion and investigates the concepts underpinning it.

2.11.2 The bilingual approach

There has been a profound assumption in ELT that "the more learners are exposed to English, the more quickly they will learn; as they hear and use English, they will

internalize it to begin to think in English" (Auerbach, 1993, p. 14-15). The only way to help them master the L2 is by forcing them to use it. Any reference to learners" L1 was seen as a sign of unprofessionalism and lacking proficiency. Prodromou (as cited in Hitotuzi, 2006, p. 163) claims that learners" L1 has been treated as a "skeleton in the cupboard, a taboo subject, a source of embarrassment, and on the part of teachers, a recognition of their failure to teach properly, that is using „only English‟".

However, a lot of Practitioners and researchers have started to re-examine the role of L1 in facilitating learning a second language during the last few decades. Deller and Rinvolucri (2002, p. 4) believed that "the mother tongue is the womb from which the second language is born". Therefore, it is not practical to banish L1 from L2 classrooms, as learners" L1 can be a beneficial tool for language learning (Macaro, 2001; Willis & Willis, 2007). Banishing it from the L2 classroom does not necessarily mean banishing it from learners" minds, and this will result in impeding learners to think (Hitotuzi, 2006). There is no rationale behind using a monolingual pedagogy, as "the very subject we teach is, by definition, bilingual" (Widdowson, 2003, p. 154).

Atkinson (1987), who is considered an influential L1 advocate, argues that learners" L1 has been a neglected resource in monolingual English classrooms. He identifies the main reasons contributing to the lack of interest in exploring the potentiality of L1 usage as a classroom resource:

1. A negative association between the use of L1 and the grammar-translation method;

2. The fact that one "can only learn English by speaking English;

3. Native speakers receiving their teaching training in an exclusive monolingual environment;

4. Finally the prevalence of learning theories promoting the exclusive use of the
    L2(p. 242).

Atkinson‟s (1987) and Auerbach‟s (1993) writings encouraged a considerable number
of professionals and researchers to re-examine their teaching practices and beliefs and
reconsider the role L1 might play and the potential benefits it might bring into the L2
English classroom as a facilitating tool. Atkinson (p. 241) blamed the "gap in
methodological literature" for the feeling of guilt teachers had for allowing their
learners to use their MT in the L2 classroom. L1 supporters (Atkinson, 1987;
Auerbach, 1993; Cook, 1999; Cummins, 2007; Mahmoud, 2006; Nation, 2003;
Schweers, 1999) have identified a lot of reasons justifying the use of learners‟ first
language, which will be suggested below. Whether admitted or not, learners‟ L1 is
used in FL classrooms by some learners and teachers. It has the potential as a
pedagogical classroom resource to create authentic and relevant learning opportunities
in the target language (Cook, 1999).

It should be seen as an effective classroom resource to enhance and maximize
learners‟ learning. Auerbach (1993, p. 20) argued that L1"allows for language to be
used as a meaning-making tool and for language learning becoming a means of
communicating ideas rather than an end in itself". Instead of ignoring the fact that it
exists in the learners‟ minds, L1 can be used to activate learners‟ prior knowledge.
Besides, the mother tongue, especially for the beginners, is a final resort when
communication fails, as "the natural desire to communicate impels learners to use
their L1 to fill in communication gaps, a strategy that successfully moves their
acquisition of the L2 forward" (Mahmoud, 2006, p. 29).

Moreover, allowing L1 in the L2 classroom positively affects learners" motivation and increases their participation, as it reduces learners" anxiety and lowers their affective filter. As mentioned earlier, the bilingual approach assumes that learners" L1 has a significant role to play in English classrooms (Elmetwally, 2012).

2.12 Theoretical Framework

I followed Cummins (1976) threshold hypothesis theory of first (L1) and second (L2) language acquisition as the theoretical basis for my research, provided that its construction requires variables that promote or hinder language production. It also takes into account the circumstances in Ghana as a developing nation in which the research is being performed. Unlike the other hypotheses mentioned, Cummins (1976) also addressed the minimum language literacy requirement that must be passed before a second-language speaker can derive any gain from the language.

The threshold hypothesis is the second-language learning hypothesis explained in a study by Cummins (1976) that claimed that a minimum language competence threshold must be passed before a second-language speaker would derive some gain from the language. It further notes that to achieve mastery in a second language, the learner must also have passed a minimum age-appropriate degree of maturity in his or her first language.

Incomplete first-language abilities also find studying other languages challenging. Cummins (2000) stressed that the degree of growth of children's mother tongue is a good indicator of their second language development. Concepts and reading capabilities may be passed to the second language after the mother tongue has been promoted. In comparison, there was a high association between learning to read in the mother tongue and eventual reading in the second language (Koda, 2005). In brief,

encouraging the growth of the mother tongue promotes the development of second language learning (Noormohamadi, n.d.)

Most of Jim Cummins' (1979) philosophy is focused on semantic and constructivist paradigms. Cummins (1979, 1981b, 2000) addressed the social setting in which language learners have a direct effect on the learning of a second language. His beliefs hold that learning is activity-dependent on prior interactions and reflects an outgrowth of interrelated data and knowledge regarding a specific subject; acquired over time by a language learner. It often addresses three components of the learning of a second language discussed to a degree or another by its predecessors: the cognitive ability of individuals to successfully acquire and retain several languages, the age at which individuals are more vulnerable to language acquisition, and scholarly language versus conversational language.

A commonly held assumption by proponents of bilingual education is that the parallel creation of the first and target language (L2) limits the opportunity of individuals to acquire a single language with an acceptable degree of proficiency (Crawford, 2004). Cummins (1979, 1981b) referred to this definition as a Separate Underlying Proficiency (SUP) and, in brief, implies that the brains of individuals have insufficient data storage ability to handle fluency, vocabulary and grammar in multiple languages. However, Cummins (1979) suggested a counter-concept and an opposition hypothesis referred to as the Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP). Conversely, CUP portrays the brain as possessing infinite storage space to essentially adjust and grow for the further feedback it gets. Although Cummins (1979, 1981b) admitted that the notion of SUP can seem to be "common sense," several experiments have produced supporting proof of the brain's potential to extend and amass limitless memory that can advance

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the production of second language (Davidson, Amso, Anderson & Diamond, 2006, Genesee, 2000, Fisher, 2005, Lamendella, 2006).

Presuming brain plasticity and cognitive capacity to perpetually acquire and apply content, Cummins (1979, 1981b), an early cognitive criticism of the critical time theory focuses emphasis on the special ability of mature learners to learn new languages due to the cognitive skills they have already created. He indicated that cognitively taxing standards of language proficiency, like progressive mental activity, are far less challenging for adult ELLs than their juvenile counterparts. In the assumption that grammatical processes learned by older adolescents and adult learners are moved from the native language to the target language, Cummins (2001b) retains the mastery of the native language as a crucial element in the learning of the second language among ELLs. Other researchers have promoted this theory of language and experience conversion in more recent research, placing natural language proficiency as a measure of second language learning progress (August &Hakuta, 1997, Hakuta et. al., 2003). The latest study has produced a substantial volume of data to reinforce this point.

Sparks, Patton, Ganschow and Humbach (2009) for example, high school learners who were more adept at decoding words in their original language were also able to extend the same expertise to decoding words in the target language. In the study of the reading abilities of Chinese pupils, Gottardo et. Al. (2001) showed that the native language catalyzed the transition of the phonological components of the English language. In this scenario, high proficiency in the native language was an indicator of comprehension of terms and concepts in the target language. The volume of studies with related results is increasing (August & Shanahan, 2006, Sparks, et. al., 2009, Lee

& Lemonnier Schallert, 1997). The consensus among these findings is that second-language learners who lack mastery abilities in their native language have a decreased capacity to pass skills from L1 to L2, contributing to deficits in the growth of the academic skills of both languages (Cummins, 2000, Hakuta et. al., 2003, Hakuta, 1990).

Cummins (1981b) referred to this notion of information conversion as an "interdependence hypothesis." He notably used this concept to describe the findings of early case studies, which showed learners academically proficient in a native language, attended schools mainly in a foreign language, and outperformed their native-speaking peers in standardized exams conducted in a native language. Such data was found in at least two case studies during the period when Cummins' arguments were first made. One defines American learners attending international language colleges, and the other describes English-speaking Canadian learners attending French-speaking Canadian schools (Cohen, 1975). In both instances, before joining the foreign language environment, subjects displayed mastery skills in their native language. Similarly, in both situations, learners studying L2 showed substantial improvements in cognitively challenging second-language abilities (Cohen, Genesee, 2000, Lambert & Tucker, 1972). Cummins (2001a) and others credit these phenomena to the transformation of skills found in a mature language learner.

At the same time, though, he states that the popularity of these individual topics was often the result of their social climate (Cummins, 2001a, Hakuta et. al, 2003). In both instances, participants lived in communities where their native language was the dominant language, and it was simple to learn, talk and write in their native language. This condition is not necessarily the case with the US ELLs. Much of the way, it's the

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very reverse. In the US, ELLs have few chances to participate in the dominant culture in their native tongue. As Cummins (1981b) stated, "[this] produces a lower threshold level of bilingual competence," making mastery of natural language abilities, which offer the most favourable conditions for the transition of languages, an even higher priority for ELL teaching.

Cummins (1981b, 2000) was, therefore, aware of the various forms of language skills that ELLs must achieve to be competitive in the school and social contexts. Cummins (1979) hypotheses offered a framework for explaining how various standards of academic performance are influenced by particular aspects of bilingualism or language proficiency. It is essential to remember, for example, that not all language components are linked to literacy and/or cognition. Cummins distinguished between cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communications skills (BICS). CALP relates to the scholarly terminology linked to literacy, scientific words and abstract principles. The above, BICS (a precursor to CALP), corresponds to the degree of proficiency in the target language that facilitates contact at the social level. It contains social and verbal hints, expressions and changes of speech. Cummins expected that it would take around one or two years for an ELL pupil to achieve BICS and almost 10 years to reach CALP (Cummins, 1979). The distinction between these two types of mastery is that BICS may be learned in a very casual environment, such as a playground where the conversational language is peer-to-peer, less structured, easy, transparent and followed by intense body language; while CALPS is fixed within the academic framework, needing learners to grasp "complex grammatical structures" that enable learners to learn (Cummins as cited in Crawford, 2004, p.197).

Thus, Cummins (2000) suggested that progress for ELLs through the curriculum includes both conversational proficiency and academic language proficiency in L2. As explained by Cummins, the essential aspect of academic language proficiency is the ability to make complex meanings explicit, either in oral or written language, rather than in contextual or paralinguistic terms.

Cummins (1981b) identified four quadrants of language learning by clarifying this spectrum of language proficiency. Quadrants, split into four equal sections, detail context-based events, which provide hints to help the language learner interpret significance at the pinnacle and context-reduced activities at the bottom of the segment (see figure 2, adapted from Cuevas, 1996). The meaning of reduced tasks relates to practicesthat lack the cues available in the learning setting. The definition of perception, per se, is a background of diminished action. The right side of the diagram refers to cognitively unanswerable behaviours that can be contextualized, such as retrieving activities (i.e. referring to simple mathematical equations) or a diminished meaning, such as explaining knowledge. The left side reflects cognitively taxing tasks within the context of the embedded sphere. (i.e. reading a book with photos) and, in the sense of decreased tasks (as reflected in the lower left-hand side) that lead to the writing of a study (Cummins, 1981b). Each of these quadrants distinguishes between different degrees of language proficiency, from beginner to mastery. The quadrants further indicate the need to assess the expertise of ELL at each point of the spectrum to capture a reliable reflection of their language skills.

The principle of Cummins (1976) considered language to be an essential element in teaching and learning, where correspondence can take place from teacher to learner, and vice versa, how the learner can become adequate in his or her acquisition of L1

and can also be sufficient in his or her acquisition of L2 language. My research was planned to explore the possibility that the following illustration shows the language proficiency theory paradigm of Cummins, adapted from Cuevas (1996), and the present study is focused on that model.

Context
Embedded

Cognitively
Demanding   Cognitively
                             Undemanding

Context
Reduced

Cummins' Model of Language Proficiency
Adapted from Cuevas (1996)
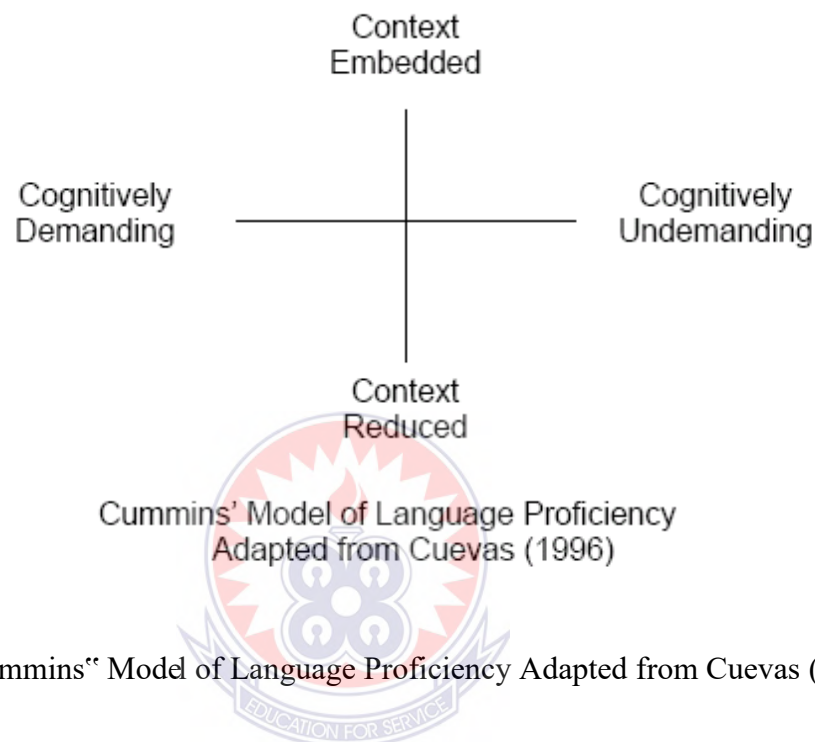
Figure 2. Cummins" Model of Language Proficiency Adapted from Cuevas (1996)

2.13 Empirical review

Several recent empirical studies have examined the function L1 could play in L2 classrooms. They were performed in many learning environments where English was often the L1. Several language experiments have been completed. While some of these studies explored the function of language in schooling, others concentrated on L1 usage as a means of instruction for young learners.

Taşkin (2011) conducted a study on perceptions on using l1 in language classrooms: a case study in a Turkish private university. The goal of the study was to expose the expectations of learners, learners, teacher trainers and administrators regarding teachers by using L1 at the private university preparatory school in Ankara. Firstly,

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teachers" perceptions were revealed in terms of the amount of L1 they use, reasons for their L1 use, maximizing L2 use and the relationship between L1 use and learner success. Then, the learner perceptions related to the amount of L1 used by teachers and reasons for teachers" L1 use were examined concerning their teachers" L1 use. Finally, a study was carried out of teacher trainers and administrators' impressions of teachers utilizing L1. Perceptions in each category were compared to any potential inconsistencies between them. Two (2) forms of data analysis-qualitative and quantitative-were used for the analysis. Learners, teachers, coaches and managers were interested in the research. Questionnaires that contained Likert-scale objects and open-ended questions were administered to learners and teachers to capture both qualitative and quantitative data.

Semi-structured interview procedures for learners, classroom trainers and managers were carried out. 302learners and 55 teachers were included in the report. The findings of the study showed that teachers had pessimistic opinions regarding the usage of L1 in their classroom and highlighted the limited use of L1; but, due to certain issues relating to the curriculum and the examination method of the preparatory school, they used it as a last resort. Moreover, these issues appeared to affect the volume of L1 they were utilizing in the school. As far as learning perceptions were concerned, it was observed that they preferred it in the classroom and saw it as a way of achieving the goals of the test. On the other side, teacher"s trainers and managers claimed that L1 should be discarded in the classroom, finding out the strategy of the preparatory school in English only. Some mismatches were found between the classes and it was concluded that they should be excluded for a more functional language teaching and learning environment.

Elmetwally (2012) published a report on student and teacher perceptions towards studying the mother tongue in English language classes in UAE public high schools. The research explored the perceptions of learners and teachers regarding the usage of L1 learners in the sense of UAE English lessons. A mixed-method technique was used to secure the required data. Five (5) Likert scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were administered with both learners and teachers. Research results have shown that the restricted and sound usage of first-language learners can help study English as a foreign language. The findings also demonstrated the disadvantages of the excessive usage of the mother tongue of learners, and how this could adversely impact student learning.

Sarfo (2012) published a report on the desires and feelings of Ghanaian university learners in English. He also looked at the variety of reasons that inspire learners to learn English. He used representative samples from two universities in Ghana, the University of Ghana, Legon, and the University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast. The study showed that the reason for learning English was more instrumental/utilitarian than inclusive; nevertheless, learners wanted to see the integration of English in the future.

Buripakdi and Thongwichit (2014) researched to investigate college learners' views of L1 use with differing levels of English proficiency in L1 use in English classrooms. The research included various stages of English proficiency: the Junior, Intermediate and Original Classes on the Usage of First Language (L1) in the English Classroom. The study was conducted at a government university in the southern region of Thailand between July and August 2012. 12 student participants with various English abilities from four different majors were chosen and questioned separately and analyzed quantitatively. The findings of the study were that participants with three

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stages of English proficiency understood the benefit of utilizing L1 to build a supportive classroom environment that encourages mental well-being, loss of understanding and improves language proficiency. The advanced category tended to have the most pessimistic view since they favoured the vocabulary of the classroom to English. However, they support the other two groups; the usage of L1, if correctly done, would have advantages rather than harming language learning.

Owu-Ewie and Edu-Buandoh (2015) conducted a study on living with pessimistic attitudes towards the study of L1 in high schools in Ghana (SHS). As a design for the research, a qualitative study was used. Semi-structured interviews and analyses were used as data collection techniques to examine the negative attitude of Ghanaians towards the analysis of L1 in the SHS and how SHS learners study their L1 with negative attitudes. The research consisted of eleven senior high schools drawn from both the Central and Western regions of Ghana. The schools werebeen chosen for proximity, and also because they give the language of Ghana as an elective subject. The L1 schools are composed of five (5) SHS from the Western Area and six (6) SHSs from the Central Region. The schools included in the sample were made up of two (2) girls' and nine (9) co-educational schools. Seven (7) of the schools were in the 'B' group (less endowed schools in terms of educational resources) and four (4) in the 'A' category (well-endowed schools in terms of educational resources). The sample size used for the analysis was composed of 110learners. The teachers and learners were also purposively selected because they teach and study the Ghanaian language respectively. The teachers consisted of seven (7) females and four (4) males, while the learners consisted of 70 females and 40 males since the female learners were enthusiastic and able to speak about the problem.

Observations and interviews were the main tools used to collect the data. In addition to the observations, semi-structured interviews were used for the teachers and learners. The learners were interviewed in focus groups of 10 learners each. The five teachers in the Western Region were interviewed together, the two teachers in the Cape Coast Municipality were interviewed together and the last four (outside the municipality) were also interviewed together. The data analysis strategy used was the inductive analysis and creative synthesis approach. The study found that parents, school authorities, other language teachers and learners, and the general populace have negative attitudes towards Ghanaian language study in the SHS. The negative attitudes are exhibited in what they say and in their actions and behaviours. The negative attitudes portrayed by these people have had a negative influence on enrolment in the study of Ghanaian languages and also affected the morale of both Ghanaian language teachers and learners. The study also found that learners cope with the negative attitudes towards them through self-motivation, encouragement from their teachers, parents and Ghanaian language interns from the universities, and professors of the Ghanaian language. It was also identified in the study that the negative attitudes towards the study of Ghanaian languages in the SHS can be changed through concerted efforts by all teachers and learners, parents, school administrators, the government and the general populace.

Ahsan (2016) researched to investigate teachers" views of the usage of the Urdu language in English in a foreign language classroom at the university level. Through the report, the researcher attempted to discover the motivations and explanations why the teachers used Urdu in their English-language classroom at home and abroad, as well as to show the circumstances and acts in which they chose not to use their L1. The research was base on 156 teachers who taught English at the graduate level at

various public sector colleges and universities in Southern Punjab, Pakistan. The questionnaire method was used to capture the results. Data were analyzed using the SPSS (statistical package for service solution). Thus, using descriptive analyses and Variance Analysis (ANOVA). The findings of the analysis showed that the teachers had rather favourable views of the usage of L1 in the L2 classroom. The majority of respondents preferred to use Urdu in some contexts for particular purposes, such as learning about grammar and its use in the L2 classroom, discussing course policy, attendance and other administrative facts, describing some complicated concepts, providing instructions on examinations and presenting the intent of the classes, discussing assessments, quizzes and other assignments. Similarly, they were strongly inspired to use Urdu when teaching and recognizing summaries and short queries, writing letters and paraphrasing texts in BA/Bsc and B.Com classes.

Rihulay (2016) conducted a study on advanced learners" perceptions towards the use of L1 in an English classroom. The purpose of the study was to examine learners' impressions of the use of L1 in the English classroom, particularly for advanced learners. Close-ended questionnaires were circulated to obtain data from 150learners of the English Teacher Education Programme, Faculty of Language and Literature, Satya Wacana Christian University, Salatiga. 12 statements were included in the questionnaires and divided into two aspects; the advantages and drawbacks of the usage of L1. The data was analyzed quantitatively. The result revealed that most learners have good expectations of the benefits of using L1, which could allow them to communicate their thoughts when they do not know how to explain them in English. Then, as a downside to the usage of L1, the learners assumed that L1 could preclude them from thinking explicitly in English.

Kurniawati (2017) conducted a study to investigate teachers" perspectives toward L1 use in Early English Immersion Programs. Data on interviews and classroom findings were used as a study guide. The findings of the study revealed that L1 was used for many reasons and those pre-school teachers often appreciated the usage of L1 in their English classrooms. While L1 was seen as a hindrance to the development of L2 for children, the teachers accepted that L1 could help children learn L2 more effectively. In addition, the positions of L1 and L2 in this specific sense have been essential factors that help teachers determine which vocabulary to use. While they understand the need to introduce children to a large amount of English input, they cannot overlook that children still need to learn the national language.
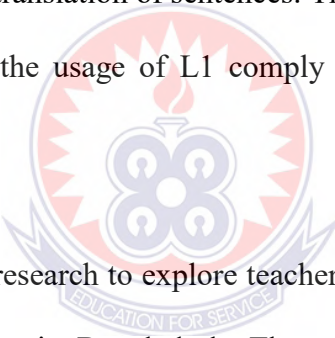
Diaf (2017) conducted a study on the perceptions of teachers and learners towards the usage of the first language in the EFL classroom: the situation of high school pupils at the Oued Djilali secondary school. The purpose of the study was to shed light on the attitudes of both teachers and learners towards the usage of Arabic in the English classroom. It, therefore, explored circumstances in which teachers could turn and encourage the use of Arabic. The researcher was looking into whether the mother tongue has some beneficial impact on the English classroom. The case study analysis was done in El Oued Djilali secondary school, focusing on a variety of data collection testing tools: a questionnaire for learners and a semi-structured teacher interview. The data obtained were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings showed that high school learners and their English teachers had a good outlook about the usage of Arabic in English language sessions. Arabic (L1) allows them to understand better as they encounter certain challenges, and with the use of mother tongue teachers, they may offer brief clarification and promote the management of learning

and teaching. On the other hand, the research showed that using Arabic helped learners conquer fear and become more self-confident.

Amriana (2018) reviewed to examine the usage of L1 and L2 for teachers in the Indonesian EFL classroom. The study was done in Makassar, a private high school. Ethnography analysis has been used to obtain evidence about how the teacher perceives the application of L1/L2 by in-depth interviews and classroom evaluations and the degree to which the methods they follow affect student achievement. The findings of the study have shown that the more involved a teacher is in supporting L2 instruction, the more conscious he is of the educational methods utilized in the classroom. The findings of the study also indicate that the more he increases the consistency of his teaching style, the more he understands the language of his pupils.

Suhayati (2019) conducted a study on teaching attitudes towards the use of l1 in EFL classrooms to ascertain the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about the use of L1 in teaching English as an EFL and to define the roles for which L1 was employed by teachers. The participants in the research were 15 teachers who taught in a variety of schools across Banten, West Java and Jakarta (Indonesia). Likert-scale surveys and semi-structured interviews were used to gather data from teachers. The data was analyzed through the qualitative method. The findings revealed that few teachers were in question as to whether the use of L1 could or might not have a detrimental effect on learners' learning English, but mostly their attitudes towards the use of L1 in English classrooms were optimistic. The findings have shown that the teachers employed L1 usage as an instructional aide in classrooms and for classroom management to improve learning outcomes.

Taşçı and Ataç (2020) conducted a study to examine the use of L1 in teaching L2: the number, functions and interpretation of the use of L1 in the sense of Turkish primary school. Three (3) EFL teachers participated in the study. The study data were obtained by observations and semi-structured interviews. Both qualitatively and quantitatively, the research data was analyzed. The results showed that the three (3) Turkish EFL teachers used a similar volume of L1 in their classrooms, varying from 21 to 30 per cent of all classroom teaching. The analysis found that Turkish EFL teachers were inclined to use more L1 in lower grades. The results also showed that EFL teachers used Turkish in nine (9) separate tasks, such as teaching, translation of unfamiliar terms, classroom management, comprehension, eliciting, drawing focus, guidance, grammar instruction, and translation of sentences. The findings also revealed that EFL teachers' expectations of the usage of L1 comply with their current practices with small variations.

Farzana (n.d.) performed research to explore teacher impressions of the usage of l1 in secondary EFL classrooms in Bangladesh. The research called the exploration of many variables that affect the usage of L1 by the teacher. Qualitative and quantitative details have been used to address the intent of the analysis. Key methods for study are open and in-depth inquiries, interviews, focus group dialogue and classroom evaluation. Seventy-seven (67) learners and ten (10) teachers took part in the report. The study addressed the rationale for utilizing L1 to help teachers change their classrooms to minimize the level of first-language usage and to use MT as an important method. The results of the study helped to explain the explanations why teachers can use L1 (Bangla) in secondary EFL classrooms in Bangladesh. The findings revealed that in the EFL classrooms where L1 was used, learners had a

strong interest in engaging in the class. Both teachers and learners have a good outlook about utilizing L1 since they accept that it promotes learning and offers a deeper interpretation of the quality of the lessons. The reasons for using L1 have been stated.

2.14 Summary of the Literature Review

The literature examined on the topic, the role of L1 usage as a medium of instruction in private school early grade classrooms revealed that the use of L1 has become a questionable problem in the field of second-language teaching; whether it should be permitted or forbidden in the classroom. The findings are varying in various situations (Buripakdi &Thongwichit, 2014). Language learning and acquisition models have shown that the teacher has a role to play in the language development and comprehension of the learner. Similar findings on the use of L1 in the classroom indicate that earlier reports only concentrated on other variables with little or no consideration paid to early grade private school teachers. This research has filled that gap.
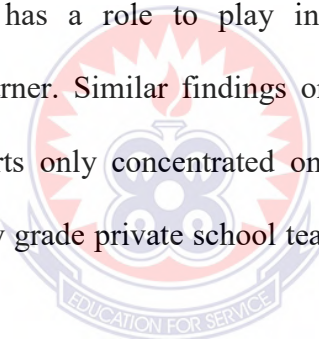
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter addressed theresearch methodology in terms of research design, population, sample and sampling technique, research instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a designcalled concurrent embedded mixed method design (Creswell, Plano Clark, et al., 2003). The premise of this design is that a single data set is not sufficient, that different questions need to be answered, and that each type of question requires different types of data. This meant that the questionnaire, interview and observational checklist were collected on the same day.

Other researchers use this design when they need to include qualitative and quantitative data to answer a research question within a largely quantitative or qualitative study.

3.2 Research Approach

To investigate the teachers use of L1 as a medium of instruction in private school early grade classrooms, a multi-pronged approach commonly referred to as mixed methods were used. According to Creswell & Plano-Clark (2007), mixed methods research is a research method with philosophical assumptions that fluid the direction of the collection and analysis of data through the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many places of the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its premise is that the use of quantitative and

qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than using only one approach.

Teachers" questionnaires and semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility for early grade teachers to share their perceptions on the use of L1 in private early grade classrooms as a medium of instruction, the observational guide helped the researcher to observe critically the situationin the classroom in the use of the L1 while the questionnaire data allowed for more objective data analysis and provided the opportunity for results across methods to be compared systematically. The questionnaire also allowed access to a greater number of early grade teachers with a range of teaching experiences providing a sample more representative of the population.

The mixed-methods approach was used for the following reasons.

1. Mixed methods provide strengths that offset the weakness of both quantitative and qualitative types of research. Quantitative research is said to be deficient in understanding the context in which people talk and also the voices of participants are not directly heard in quantitative research. While qualitative research makes up for these weaknesses, it is seen as deficient because of the personal interpretations made by the researcher, the ensuring of less or no bias created by this method, and difficulty in generalizing findings to a large group because of the limited number of subjects studied. Thus, the strength of one approach makes for the weakness of the other approach (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

2. Mixed methods approach, according to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) provides more evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative

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or qualitative study alone. With mixed methods, researchers can use all of the tools of data collection available rather than being restricted to the type of data collection typically associated with quantitative or qualitative research. Thus, mixed methods helped in using questionnaires, interview respondents, and observe some of the characteristics investigated. Mixed methods research also, helped in answering questions that could not be answered by quantitative and qualitative approach alone.

3. Mixed methods provided a bridge across the sometimes adversarial divide between quantitative and qualitative designs. This study falls under behavioural and social sciences and only quantitative and qualitative research would be too narrow an approach. Mixed methods approach offered an opportunity for collaboration (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

4. Mixed methods research encourages the use of multiple worldviews or paradigms rather than the typical association of certain paradigms with quantitative and qualitative researchers. Mixed methods study is "practical" in the sense that the researcher is free to use all methods possible to address a research problem; and also that individuals tend to solve problems using both numbers and words, combine inductive and deductive thinking and employ skills in observing people as well as recording behaviour (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

3.3 Population

The populationhas been defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2001) as a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events that conform to specific criteria in research. The available statistics from the Birim Central Municipal Ghana

Education Service (Report, 2021), theywere20 private early grade schools within the municipality with a target population of 100 private early grade teachers. Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of determining sample size, 19 schools were drawn out of the 20 private early grade schools. Based on the 19 schoools,95 private early grade teachers were used as theaccessible population for the study because from Kindergarten 1 to Primary 3 each grade had 1 teacher. It was made up of 56female teachers and 39 male teachers. Teachers gender, teachers age, teachers class they teach, teachers local language they speak, teachers language they use for instruction and how long they have been in the school were specified.

3.4 Sample and Sampling techniques

Studying the whole population will greatly enhance the outcome of the study. Sampling, therefore, became the only effective means for conducting the study. Crossman (2013) perceived a sample as a subset of the population being studied. It represents the larger population and is used to draw inferences about that population.

A simple random sampling technique wasused to identify and select the number of schools as a unit of sampling and teachers‟ on whom to based the studyon as the unit of analysis. The simple random technique ensured that all the private schools hadan equal chance of being selected for the in-depth study. The lottery method of simple random sampling technique was adopted for the study. The researcher assigned numbers to the 20schools. These numbers were written on a piece of paper and dropped in an opaque container. The researcher let a colleague picked the numbers one after the other from the opaque container and recorded the numbers with replacements until the sample size was reached. The study selected 19schools from the 20schools as the sample size. The sample size was selected from the population by

using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of determining sample size, which states that, a total population of 20 should have 19 as its sample size.

Based on the unit of sampling of 19 schools, 95 teachers were drawn from the schools as the unit of analysis because each early grade classroom consists of one teacher (Kindergarten 1 to Primary 3).

According to Dörnyei (2007, p. 98) a convenient sampling procedure is a common form of sampling in education research, where the researcher determines or chooses the sample participants and it isnon-probabilistic sampling and based on this, the researcher selected 10 teachers from the 95 teachers by using the convenient sampling technique for the interview and observation data collection to validate the questionnaire responses due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

3.5 Instrument(s)

To understand teacher use of L1 as a medium of instruction in private school early grade classrooms, questionnaires, observation and interviews were self constructed and adopted in collecting the data. Thus, methodological triangulation was used (Denzin, 2006). Denzin has intimated that in this triangulation, a phenomenon is studied using several different data collection instruments like the questionnaire, interview and observational guide. Questionnaires are known for being economical, easy to arrange, and efficient in terms of time, their low cost and the considerable amount of collected data (Brown, 2001; Denscombe, 2007; Kagan, 1990). In addition, the responses obtained hada highdegree of standardization and consistency, as every respondent sees the same questions and responds to the same items (Brown, 2001; Denscombe, 2007). Moreover, questionnaires are more suitable when addressing

sensitive and/or confidential issues, as "assurances of anonymity can be built into questionnaires" (Brown 2001, p. 77).

However, questionnaires have some disadvantages that need to be considered before deciding to use them. One of the main disadvantages is that questionnaires may be mechanical and superficial as they do not require reflection from respondents or lead to in-depth exploration (Kagan, 1990; Brown, 2001). Another disadvantage is that the questionnaire data may not be reliable as some respondents may "skip many of the questions or only partially answer some" (Brown, 2001, p. 77). Moreover, being distant from the respondents, the researcher cannot ensure the honesty of the responses (Denscombe, 2007). That was why semi-structured interviews and an observational checklist were adopted as another data collection tool to enable the researcher to obtain truthful and in-depth data.

The questionnaire items were closed-ended questions 4 Likert-type scale. The Likert-type scale is widely used for its relative reliability, flexibility and ease in construction. It also requires neither statistical assumptions nor judges (Karavas-Doukas, 1996). Such a scale provides quantitative data that are accurate, measurable and easy to analyze. It also measures the direction and intensity of attitude byinviting respondents to determine to what extent they agree or disagree with a set of a statement (Albaum, 1997). However, this type of scale is not free of problems. The midpoint is not always easy to interpret. It shows either respondent do not have a clear opinion or are not interested in a particular statement (McDonough & McDonough, 1997).

Some of the questionnaire items on how L1 enhance teaching and learning, the impacts of L1 on teaching and learning processes and situations in which teachers" desire to use the L1 in their classroom variables were borrowed fromHamze (2010),

Singleton, Fishman, Aronin, Laoire (2013), Tsagari and Diakou (2015). The items were grouped by content about the variables measured. Thus, the items were placed in the same format together (Asham, 2015).The questionnaire was developed to measure the respondents" knowledge on how L1 enhance teaching and learning as a medium of instruction in private school early grade classrooms. The item format was developed by deciding the information required for answering the researcher questions.

The questionnaire consisted of five sections. Section A covered the demographic information of the respondents. Section B had objective type questions followed by 6-items on how L1 enhance teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schools. Section C hadan 8-items on the impacts of L1 on teaching and learning processes in the private early grade classroom. Section D had 7-items on situations in which private early grade teachers" desire to use the L1 in their classroom and Section E had 6-items on challenges associated with the use of L1 in the private early grade classroom.
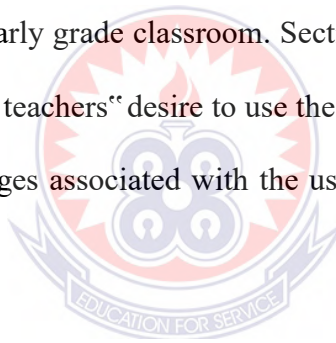
An interview guide can be a powerful tool that allows the researcher to obtaina deeper understanding of the research area. However, this should not be seen as a way of accumulating information; it is rather a technique to "establish a relationship with people that enables us to share in their perception of the world" (Richards, 2003, p. 50).

Semi-structured interviewwas used for the study, as it "combines the flexibility of unstructured, open-ended interview with the directionality and agenda of the survey instrument to produce focused, qualitative, textual data" (Schensul, Schensul &LeCompete, 1999, p. 149). A semi-structured interview consists of a set of pre-formulated, open-ended questions related to an area of interest in an attempt to

identify and analyze the different factors and variables contributing to a particular research area (Brown, 2001; Schensul et al). The participants were interviewed based on all the 4 Research Questions.

According to Spradley (1980), observation is one of the most frequent data collection forms and a researcher should be able to adopt different roles in the process. This is why in the observation process the researcher had a participant observer role in which he/she collects data through a structured checklist without participating in any activities. The 10 teachers were observed directly in the classroom. Seven closed-ended questions were observed about the participants teaching and learning process in the classroom based on Research Question 3 because the reasercher wanted to confirm that, are there some situations teachers desire to use the L1 in their classrooms. The observation, therefore, helped the researcher gain insight into what exists in the classroom setting which helped make the study more credible.

3.6 Pre-testing of instruments

The instruments for this study were pre-tested in two different schools outside the target population for the study. The schools used were Living Bread school complex and Hans Future Leaders School at Akyem-Aboabo, Birim Central Municipality in the Eastern region.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

According to Golafshani (2003), validity and reliability are very important in a triangulated study where multiple methods of data collection and data analysis are employed to investigate a phenomenon. The validity, therefore, means determining the accuracy of a data collection instrument for the results to be accurately applied and interpreted (Friberg & McNamara, 2010).The questionnaire was validated

through expert judgment. A self constructed copy of the designed instrument was issued to the researcher supervisor to check for the representativeness of items, as well as reading the instrument to remove grammatical inconsistencies and irrelevant items.

Reliability provides information on whether the instrument is consistent (Wang, 2006). The key word in this definition is that consistency in results provided by the same instrument administered at different times makes the data to be reliable. To determine the reliability of theresearcher instruments, therefore, the questionnaire, interview and observation guide were pre-tested at different times in two of the private early grade schools inanother area that were not sampled for the study but have the same characteristics as the sampled schools in terms of them being the same early grade private schools. The choice of the schools in that area for the pre-test was as a result of the same characteristics with the sampled schools, the researcher intends to study. The necessity of the pre-test was that it helped establish the validity and reliability of the instruments and also improved the question format.

According to Creswell (2007), the purpose of the pre test was to help determine that the individuals in the sample are capable of understanding the questions posed in the interview and questionnaire. The pre test allowed the researcher to make changes to the research instrument based on feedback from the individuals who evaluated the instrument. It was a mechanism that allowed the researcher to reframe the structure of the interview and questionnaire items and find out whether the questions are workable. According to Rosnow and Rosenthal (2006), the purpose of pre testing is to prevent the production of flawed data to check each question for relevance, to establish the best sequence of questioning and establish the best wording of questions.

To achieve the foregoing and obtain the instrument"s validation, the test-retest method was used to test the reliability of the questionnaire instrument over time. The pre test was taken at the start of the 2019/2020 academic year (first week of the first term). Nineteen teachers were purposively selected from early childhood education centres within Birim Central Municipality for the pre test. Also, the retest was conducted towards the middle of the term (specifically during the eighth week of the first term). During the intervening time, there were no intervening factors such as changes in the known mechanisms used to protect and promote the rights of teachers.Rosnow and Rosenthal (2006) stressed that the pre test is carried out with a small number of participants to ensure that the procedure and instructions are clear and to identify problems that were likely to be encountered during the data collection proper.

In analyzing the reliability of the data from the pre-test, the data were coded and scored before entering them into the computer. The Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) Version 20 was used to calculate the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.84.

3.8 Trustworthiness of the qualitative data

Trustworthiness can be described as the establishing the validity and reliability of qualitative research (Streubert-Speziale & Carpenter,2003, pp.56). Qualitative research is trustworthy when it accurately represents the experiences of the study participants. Four criteria were used to measure the trustworthiness of data collected: credibility, dependability, transferability and comformability that is Guba"s model for establishing trustworthiness of qualitative research (Speziale & Carpenter, 2003).

3.9 Ethical considerations

There are laid down principles and guidelines for conducting studies in an ethically appropriate manner which require researchers to obtain approval from the ethics committee or equivalent and the participants (Halai, 2006). Based on this premise, the following ethical considerations suggested by Creswell (2012) for conducting mixed methods research were adopted for this study.

Clearance was sought from the Ghana Education Service, Birim Central Municipality. With an introductory letter from my Head of Department, I took a letter of permission from the Directorof Education who introduced me to the sampled schools under his jurisdiction. In each school I visited, the purpose of the study was communicated to the respondents after taking pleasantries with the school head. They were also, assured of the protection of their anonymity and the keeping of their responses confidentially. Due respect was given to the study population.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

The study involved collecting both quantitative and qualitative data on private early grade school teachers" from the Birim Central Municipality, Eastern region of Ghana. To reach the respondents for the main data collection, an introductory letter was collected from the Head of Department of the Department of Early childhood Education of the University of Education, Winneba and the Municipal Director of Ghana Education Service, Akim Oda in whose jurisdiction the study was undertaken.

The data collection began on23rd March 2021 and ended on30th April 2021. In each school, all the three instruments were administered and that was Quantitative before Qualitative. The researcher personally gave the questionnaire to the teachers, conductedinterviews and observation. A questionnaire, interview and observation

were conducted on the early grade school teachers in each school sampled for the study. The data were collected during school hours when the class has been prepared for the exercise. Duringthe administration of the questionnaire, the paper and pencil method was used (Boynton, 2004).

The 95 private early grade school teachers were given a copy of the questionnaire in their classroom for each school I visited. After distributing the questionnaire to the teachers, the researcher informed them about the aim of the study, explain the means of completing the questionnaire, assuring them of confidentiality and the need for them to respond to the questions as best as they could. Teachers" were given enough time to respond to the questionnaire items.

After the respondents finished filling the questionnaire, 10 teachers were interviewed and recorded due to their convenience.

The ten convenientteachers" were then observed during teaching and learning situations. Thus, the observer-participant stance was taken to collect the observation data (Kawulich, 2005). The subjects that were being taught at the time of the observation were Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science, History, Our World Our People (OWOP) and English Language.

3.11 Data Processing and Analysis

Mixed methods research involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data using different instruments and that Concurrent Embedded Design data is treated both quantitatively and qualitatively(Todd,2011). Before the quantitative data were analyzed, they were edited. With the quantitative data, few of the respondents ticked the boxes intended for ticking. Moreover, some of the ticking"s were faint. These anomalies were corrected. Again, some respondents ticked one box twice and left the

next box following it vertically for the next question, empty. These corrections were also made. Finally, with the qualitative data even though the interviewees could express themselves well in the English language or Twi, a few of the responses had to be re-phrased as the interviewees did not properly state them. After the editing, the quantitative data were coded. With all categorical data, the first response item was coded 1 and the other response was coded 2 for example ;(1) for males and (2) for females. Questions that have three or more responses were coded (1) for the first response, (2) for the second response and (3) for the third response and so on. The Likert scale responses were coded (1) for Strongly Agree, (2) for Agree, (3)for Disagree, and (4)for Strongly Disagree. However, in the discussions of the data „strongly agree and agree" and „disagree and strongly disagree" were combined to avoid misunderstanding of the results.

In entering the data, all the 95 questionnaires were numbered. The corresponding figures of the responses made by each participant were written against the questions on the questionnaire. When each questionnaire was picked, all the figures were entered horizontally in the Data View of the Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) software. Occasional cross-checking was done to ascertain whether all the figures entered were correct. Wrong entries found were quickly corrected. Before the data was analyzed, a final data cleaning was done. The units of analysis for this study were the school teachers".SPSS Windows version 20 was used to analyze the responses from the questionnaire to generate a descriptive picture of data obtained on the various themes.

Research Question 1 states, „How L1 enhance teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schoolsin the Birim Central Municipality?" The type of data collected for this question was quantitative and qualitative. Descriptive statistics such as

frequency, percentages and means were used to analyze the quantitative data and assisted in the discussion and interpretation of the data. The qualitative data were grouped thematically and analysed.

Research Question 2 states, „What are the impacts of L1 on the teaching and learning process in private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality?‟ The type of data collected for this question was quantitative and qualitative. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages and means were used to analyze the quantitative data. The qualitative data were grouped thematically and analysed.

Research Question 3 states, „What are the situations in which private school early grade teachers in the Birim Central Municipality desire to use the L1 in the classroom?‟.Quantitative data was collected for this research question. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The qualitative data were collected through interviews and observation. Quasi-statistics (Becker, as cited in Ratcliff, n.d.) and Yin‟s (1994) pattern marching-descriptive/Explanatory methods were used to analyze the data.

Research Question 4 states, „What are the challenges associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms in theBirim Central Municipality?‟ The type of data collected for this question was quantitative and qualitative. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages and means were used to analyze the quantitative data. The qualitative data were grouped thematically and analysed.

Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages and means were used to analyze the data to give quick visual impressions on values and assist in the discussion and interpretation of the data. The mean, according to Statsoft (2011), is

the most often used descriptive statistic. These central tendencies were used because of their relevance to the answering of the research questions. The mean was, therefore, calculated for each of the L1 factors. In conclusion, any L1 factor with a mean score that is more than the overall mean implied that the L1 factor is influencing the medium of instruction at the early grade classroom in the Birim Central Municipality, Eastern region of Ghana.

Descriptive statistics give numerical and graphic procedures for summarizing data collected clearly and understandably. They help to simplify large amounts of data sensibly and reduce lots of data into a simpler summary. Thus, descriptive statistics enable us to present data in a more meaningful way which allows for a simpler interpretation of the data (Jaggi, n.d.). Jaggi added that inferential statistics provides procedures for drawing inferences about a population from a sample.

Onwuegbuzie and Combs" (2011) mixed methods data analysis guideline and pattern-descriptive/Explanatory (Yin, 1994) were used to analyze the interview aspect of the qualitative data. Content analysis based on the emerging themes from the responses from the interviews and the observed behaviours was done and used to buttress the findings from the questionnaire data. Thus, the Concurrent Embedded Design method of data analysis was used through quantification of the qualitative data. That is, the qualitative data were coded, numbers assigned to the codes, and the number of times the codes appear recorded as numeric data. A comparison of the quantitative and qualitative data sets was made (Creswell, Plano-Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Verbatim quotations from respondents were also used to support the findings. The observation data were analyzed using frequency and percentages (Becker, as cited in Ratcliff, n.d.).

3.11.1 Anonymity

Research participants" well-being and interest need to be protected. Participants" identities in the study should be masked or blinded as far as possible (Trochim, 2006). The people who read the research and the researcher should not be able to identify a given response with a given respondent (Babbie, 2004). The names of the respondents who participated in this study were not revealed anywhere instead, code names were used. In this study, the interview participants were identified with alphanumeric codes: T1, T2, T3 and T4.

3.11.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality indicates the handing of information in a confidential manner (Strydom, 2002). This implies that the researcher must jealously guard all the information disclosed by the participant so that only the researcher has access to it. Administration of the structured interview took place at the classrooms to allow privacy, non-interruptions and the creation of an atmosphere in which the participant feel comfortably engaged.

The purpose of the research, the role of the interviewees and the confidentiality of the selected material was explained to the participants before the commencement of the interview. To this end, the researcher is the sole custodian of the documents used and information collected for this study.

3.12 Chapter Summary

To investigate teachers use of L1 as a medium of instruction in private early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality of Eastern Region, Ghana, is to gather information from the field through the classroom teachers of early grade private schools. Questionnaires, interviews and observational checklists were used for the data collection. Data was gathered from 95 private early grade teachers through

questionnnaires and 10 out of the private early grade teachers were interviewed and observed.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Overview

This chapter provides data presentation, analysis and discussions of the findings from a structured Likert scale questionnaire administered to 95private early grade school teachers, semi-structured interviews with 10 early grade private school teachers and observation data from 10early grade private school teachers" classrooms. Data are presented, analyzed and discussed under five categories, thus:

1. Demographic characteristics of participants

2. How L1 enhance teaching and learning in the classroom

3. The impact of L1 on the teaching and learning process in the classroom

4. Situations in which there is a desire to use the L1 in the classroom

5. Challenges associated with the use of the L1 in the classroom

In the Tables, SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree and M = Mean.

Respondentswere identified as T1-T10 (Teacher one to Teacher ten).

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

A standard demographics questionnaire was administered to gather information about gender, age, class, the local language, language for instructions and years spent in the school. A summary of the demographic characteristics of respondents is as follows:

Table 1: Background Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	39	41
Female	56	59
Total	95	100
Age		
20 - 25	70	74
26 – 30	20	21
31 - 35	02	02
36 years and above	03	03
Total	95	100
Teachers Class		
Kindergarten 1	19	20
Kindergarten 2	19	20
Primary 1	19	20
Primary 2	19	20
Primary 3	19	20
Total	95	100
Local Language		
Mossi	01	01
Twi	89	94
Twi and Ewe	04	04
Twi and Ga	01	01
Total	95	100
Language for Instruction		
English	80	84
English and Twi	15	16
Total	95	100
Years in the School		
1 - 3	81	85
4 - 6	09	10
7 - 9	03	03
10 years and above	02	02
Total	95	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Approximately; most of the respondents" gender tends out to be 39 (41%) males and

56 (59%) females. The maximum age was 20 – 25 years and the minimum was 31 -

35 years representing 70 (74%) and 02 (02%) respectively. From the data 19 (20%)

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respondents represented kindergarten1, 2 and Primary 1, 2 and 3 respectively. 01 (01%) spoke Mossi language, 89 (94%) spoke the Twi language, 04 (04%) spoke Twi and Ewe language and 01 (01%) spoke Twi and Ga language. The English language was the most used as the medium of instruction in the classroom with 80 (84%) and English and the Twi language was the less used language as the medium of instruction in the classroom with 15 (16%). From the data 81 (85%), 09 (10%),03 (03%), and 02 (02%) showed how long they have been in the school with the ages of 1 – 3 years, 4 – 6 years, 7 – 9 years and 10 years and above respectively for the records above.

Research Question 1: How L1 enhance teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schools in the Birim Central Municipality?

The respondents responded to a 4-point Likert scale to express their views on whether they agree or disagree with some perceptionsprovided. Questionnaire and Interview data were gathered on this question. The quote examples from the data collected through the interview were given to support each point in the process of analyzing the data. The data were analyzed descriptively, and some supporting theories were included to carry out the analysis.

Table 2 presents data collected in answer to research question one. In this discussion, SA and A have been merged as a single response to the statement while D and SD also stand as one opposing view to the statement.

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Table 2: Respondentsviews on how L1 enhances teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schoolsin the Birim Central Municipality?

Questions		SA				D		SD	Mean
	F	N (%)	F	N (%)	F	N (%)	F	N (%)	N (%)
I perceive that learners" first language should be allowed during English lessons.	22	23.2	61	64.2	06	06.3	06	06.3	1.9579
I prefer to use instructions in L1 to correct learners" mistakes in pronunciation.	26	27.4	30	31.6	31	32.6	08	08.4	2.2211
I perceive the more L1 that learners use in the English classroom; the better they will be atcommunicating in English.	32	33.7	50	52.6	08	08.4	05	05.3	1.8526
I think that L1 should be used to learn about L2 grammar and its usage properly.	24	25.3	35	36.8	24	25.3	12	12.6	2.2526
I am of the view that L1 should be used to discuss tests, quizzes, and other assignments appropriately.	31	32.6	31	32.6	12	12.6	21	22.1	2.8526
I think that teachers should use their learners" first language in teaching in the classroom.	26	27.4	39	41.1	23	24.2	07	07.4	2.1158
Mean of Means									**13.226**

Source: Field Survey, 2021

From Table 2, the data reveal that 12 (12.6%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreedto the statement that learners" first language should be allowed during English lessons in their classroom, while 83 (87.9%) either strongly agreed or agreed to the statement that learners"first language should be allowed during English lessons in their classroom. The total valid entries were 95 (100%). The mean score is 1.9579. The finding is that early grade private school teachers uselearners" first

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language as a medium of instruction even during English lessons in their classroom.Shimizu (2006) mentioned that it is often extremely difficult for beginners to make themselves understood in monolingual English classroom settings. L1, in this case, can be beneficial.

The qualitative data that was used to confirm the quantitative data on the useof learners" first language as a medium of instruction during English lessons in their classroomwas through the use of interviews. Through the interview, mostof the interviewees confirmed that they mostly uselearners" first language as a medium of instruction during English lessons in theirclassroom.The findings as mentioned confirms the previous study(Shimizu, 2006).   For instance,

Interviewee T10 noted:

Some of my learners are not well fluent in the English language so

I mostly use their first language while I am teaching.

As a follow-up question to ascertain whetherearly grade private school teachers prefer to use instructions in L1 to correct learners" mistakes in pronunciation in their classrooms, the respondents expressed their views on how they prefer to use instructions in L1 to correct learners" mistakes in pronunciation in their classrooms. Data in Table 2 show that 39 (41%) of the respondents either strongly disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that they prefer to use instructions in L1 to correct learners" mistakes in pronunciation in their classrooms while 56 (59%) of them either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.2211. The data suggested that the early grade private school teachers confirmed that they prefer to use instructions in L1 to correct learners" mistakes in pronunciation in their classrooms.Pinter (2006) pointed out that

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since children in L2 or FL classes are still in the process of learning their L1, the L2 acquisition process will be similar to the L1. With a massive amount of L2 exposure and meaningful interaction in L2, the children can acquire the target language easily.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, mostof theteachers confirmed that they prefer to use instructions in L1 to correct learners" mistakes in pronunciation in their classrooms. The current study confirms the literature of (Pinter, 2006). For instance,

Interviewee T2 noted:

Learners already pronounce words in their first language and therefore when they are wrong in producing the sounds of words in the English language, I assist them in pronouncing them.

More respondents expressed their views in the L1 thanlearners use in the English classroom; the better they will be atcommunicating in English. Data in Table 2 show that 13 (13.7%) of them either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that the more L1 that learners use in the English classroom; the better they will be atcommunicating in Englishwhiles 82 (86.3%) either strongly agreed or agreed to that statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.8526. The data suggested that the early grade private school teachershave a stronger confirmation that the L1 help learners to communicate well in the English language.Proponents of the monolingual approach claimed that the use of L1 can hinder the target language learning (Krashen, 1981; Turnbull, 2001) yet many researchers (Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Widdowson, 2003) have found that L1 use was potentially beneficial.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, 08 out 10 of the teachers confirmed that the more L1learners use in the English classroom; the better they will be

atcommunicating in English in their classroom. This finding confirms with the literatures of (Krashen, 1981; Turnbull, 2001). For instance,

Interviewee T5 noted:

Ghana Education Service school curriculum demands us to teach

the learners in L1 and also helps them in learning the L2.

The respondents expressed their views on the statement that L1 should be used to learn about L2 grammar and its usage properly. The finding is that L1 should be used to learn about L2 grammar and its usage properly in their classroom.Cook (2001) explained three fundamental supports for the monolingual approach and that was first, is the belief that L2 learning has a similar process as when children acquire their L1.Also, Anh (2010) found that L1 was useful in some situations and there were three most popular situations in which L1 should be used and that is when explaining grammatical points when explaining new words, and when checking for understanding.

To ascertain the validity of the responses ofthe interview data. This finding confirms the literatures of Cook (2001) and Anh (2010). For instance,

Interviewee T9 noted:

I know that the grammatical structure we use in our L1 differs

from the L2 but I sometimes use the L1 to assist learners to

structure good grammatical statements in their L2 language.

From Table 2 the data revealed that 33 (34.7%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that L1 should be used to discuss tests, quizzes, and other assignments appropriately in the classroom while 62 (65.2%) of them either strongly agreed or agreed to that statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%)

with a mean score of 2.8526. The finding is that L1 should be used to discuss tests, quizzes, and other assignments appropriately in the classroom. L1 can also be used when giving instructions that learners might not be able to understand in English, and for checking to understand, especially when using complex contexts(Suntharesan, 2012).

To ascertain the validity of the responses, 07 out of 10 teachers confirmed that they use L1 to discuss tests, quizzes, and other assignments appropriately in their classroom. This finding confirms the literature of Suntharesan (2012). For instance,

Interviewee T1 noted:

I know very well that, my learners are not much fluent in the L2 so I use the L1 to assist them when discussing tests or examination questions in the classroom.

Finally, from Table 2 the data revealed that 30 (31.6%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that teachers should use their learners" first language in teaching in the classroomwhile 65 (68.5%) of them either strongly agreed or agreed to that statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.1158. The finding is that teachers should use their learners" first language in teaching in the classroom.Tang (2002), for instance, claimed that the use of L1 can assist the teaching and learning process. Strategies such as translating words into L1 and making contrasts between L1 and L2 forms may facilitate acquisition (Rolin-Ianziti& Brownlie, 2002) and evidence shows that code-switching can enhance input by making linguistic items more salient.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data confirmed that teachers use their learners" first language in teaching in the classroom. This finding supported the literatures of Tang (2002) , Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002).

Interviewee T4 noted:

I use the L1 because they are in Kindergarten and young too for

the English language.

Research Question 2: What are the impacts of L1 on the teaching and learning process in private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality?

The respondents responded to a 4-point Likert scale to express their views on whether they agree or disagree with some preferences provided. Questionnaire and Interview data were gathered on this question. The quote examples from the data collected through the interview were given to support each point in the process of analyzing the data. The data were analyzed descriptively, and some supporting theories were included to carry out the analysis.

Table 3 presents data collected in answer to research question two. In this discussion, SA and A have been merged as a single response to the statement while D and SD also stand as one opposing view to the statement.

Table 3: Respondents Knowledge on the impacts of L1 on the teaching and learning process in classrooms

Questions	F	SA N (%)	F	A N (%)	F	D N (%)	F	SD N (%)	Mean N (%)
Using L1 promotes critical thinking among learners.	44	46.3	23	24.2	23	24.2	05	05.3	1.8842
Using L1 promotes a more relaxed environment.	44	46.3	37	38.9	12	12.6	02	02.1	1.7053
The use of L1 saves time in teaching and learning processes.	41	43.2	37	38.9	11	11.6	06	06.3	1.8105
The use of L1 in my classroom helps my learners to cultivate a positive attitude toward learning.	43	45.3	28	29.5	17	17.9	07	07.4	1.8737
The use of L1 in my classroom helps learners to develop as bilingual/multilingual learners.	39	41.1	34	35.8	16	16.8	06	06.3	1.8842
The use of the L1 makes learners understanding very easier.	48	50.5	41	43.2	04	04.2	02	02.1	1.5789
The use of L1 makes the English language learning process easier.	44	46.3	39	41.1	08	08.4	04	04.2	1.7053
Learners actively participate in class activities when I use their L1 for talks or discussions.	47	49.5	37	38.9	09	9.5	02	02.1	1.6421
Mean of Means									**14.0842**

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Using L1 promotes critical thinking among learners. From Table 3, the data show that

67 (70.5%)of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while

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28 (29.5%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.8842. The finding was that the use of L1 promotes critical thinking among learners in the classroom.Ketabi, Ghavamnia, and Rezazadeh (2012), Lin and Yu (2015)noticed that students with a higher level of proficiency preferred to use L1 as a thinking instrument that required more paraphrasing and refresher than students with a lower level of proficiency who tended to use word-to-word translations. This study affirmed that the use of a child's first language in school increases linguistic, cognitive thinking and academic performance (Baker, 2001; Owu-Ewie, 2006).

To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview dataconfirmed that L1 promotes critical thinking among learners. This findings confirms the findings of(Baker, 2001; Owu-Ewie, 2006), (Ketabi, Ghavamnia &Rezazadeh, 2012) and (Lin & Yu, 2015).

Interviewee T4 noted:

I use the L1 to assist (learners) in solving and learning mathematical concepts and enhances understanding in the classroom.

Using L1 promotes a more relaxenvironment. The data in Table 3, revealed that 81 (85.2%)of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 14 (14.7%)either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.7053. The findings was that the use of L1 promotes a more relaxed environment in the classroom for learners. Zacharias (2004) explained that the use of L1 could build a less threatening environment.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, most of the teachers confirmed that L1 promotes a more relaxed environment. This findings confirmed the literature of Zacharias (2004). For instance,

Interviewee T10 noted:

When I use L1 in my classroom, learners who are not fluent in the

English language also feel comfortable and contribute to the class

when we are discussing a topic.

The use of L1 saves time in the teaching and learning processes. Data in Table 3revealed that 78 (82.1%) of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 17 (17.9%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.8105. The findings was that the use of L1 saves time in teaching and learning processes in the classroom. Cook (2001) concluded that first-language usage could save teachers time and effort if classroom contact does not prevail.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, 06 out of 10 teachers confirmed that L1saves time in the teaching and learning processes. This findings confirmed the literature of Cook (2001). For instance,

Interviewee T10 noted that:

The use of L1 in my classroom save me from explaining difficult

terms in the English language which will take me enough time to

explain to the learners.

The use of L1 in the classroom helps learners to cultivate a positive attitude towards learning. The respondents expressed their views on the use of L1 in the classroom whether it helps learners to cultivate a positive attitude towards learning, from the

data in Table 3 revealed that 71(74.8%)of the respondentseither strongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 24 (25.3%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.8737. The findings was that the use of L1 in the classroom helps learners to cultivate a positive attitude towards learning. Levine (2003) undertook a study, which showed that teachers and learners typically use the first language to address lesson schedules, course rules, and class management.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data confirmed that the use of L1 in the classroom helps learners to cultivate a positive attitude towards learning. This findings supported the literature of Levine (2003). For instance,

Interviewee T1 noted:

Since my learners are well fluent in their L1, learning other languages or subjects in the L2 they pay attention in the class.

The use of L1 in the classroom helps learners to develop as bilingual/multilingual learners. Data in Table 3revealed that 73 (76.9%) of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 22 (23.1%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.8842. The finding was that the use of L1 in the classroom helps learners to develop as bilingual/multilingual learners. Cook (2001) pointed out that language learners vary in that they are more advanced and willing to create distinctions and analyze the usage of language. The approach they used is also distinct from the methods they use to acquire their first language, and might often require the use of their first language to help them learn their second language.

To ascertain the validity of the response, 07 out 10of the teachers confirmed that the use of L1 in the classroom helps learners to develop as bilingual/multilingual learners. This findings supported the literature stated. For instance,

Interviewee T1 noted:

> *The learner already can speak in his/her L1 so if I introduce L2 to*
>
> *the learner he/she becomes bilingual.*

The use of the L1 makes learners understanding very easier. The data in Table 3 revealed that 89 (93.7%) of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 06 (06.3%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.5789. The finding was that the use of L1 makes learners" understanding very easier when teaching them in the classroom. Teachers used L1 in their analysis to prevent isolation from low achievement induced by inadequate comprehension, which could contribute to distressed learners and minimize learning opportunities(Tsagari & Diakou"s, 2015).As Ellis (2005) mentioned, learners learned more easily when they obtained and when exposed to more L1 conditions.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, the inrerview data confirmed that the use of L1 makes learners understanding very easier. This findings confirmed the literaturesof Tsagari, Diakou"s (2015) and Ellis (2005). For instance,

Interviewee T1 noted:

L1 helps my learners to understand easily.

Interviewee T6 also noted:

I use the L1 to help slow learners in my classroom and help them in

understanding teaching and learning processes.

The use of L1 makes the English language learning process easier. Data in Table 3revealed that 83 (87.4%)of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 12 (11.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.7053. The findings wasthat the use of L1 makes the English language learning process easier in the classroom. Kovacic and Kirinic (2011) indicated thatL1 is useful for enhancing the learning of English by learners.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, 08 out of 10teachers confirmed that the use of L1 makes theEnglish language learning process easier. This findings confirmed the literature of Kovacic and Kirinic (2011). For instance,

Interviewee T2noted:

The L1 helps learners to understand the English language because they can comprehend it in their L1.

Learners actively participate in class activities when L1 is used for talks or discussions. The data in Table 3 revealed that 84 (88.4%) of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 11 (11.6%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.6421. The findings wasthat Learners actively participate in class activities when L1 is used for talks or discussions.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data confirmed that Learners actively participate in class activities when L1 is used for talks or discussions. For instance,

Interviewee T10 noted:

Every human being feels free and comfortable when speaking in his/her L1 so do my learners also participate actively when I use their L1 for discussions in the classroom.

Research Question 3: What are the situations in which private school early grade teachers in the Birim Central Municipality desire to use the L1 in the classroom?
The respondents responded to a 4-point Likert scale to express their views on whether they agree or disagree with some preferences provided. A questionnaire, Interview and Observational data were gathered on this question. The quote examples from the data collected through the interview were given to support each point in the process of analyzing the data. The data were analyzed descriptively, and some supporting theories were included to carry out the analysis.

Table 4 presents data collected in answer to research question three. In this discussion, SA and A have been merged as a single response to the statement while D and SD also stand as one opposing view to the statement.

Table 4: Respondents Knowledge on the situations in which there is a desire to use the L1 in the classroom

Questions	SA		A		D		SD		Mean
	N		N		N		N		N
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)	(%)
Explaining unknown vocabulary.	41	43.2	45	47.4	04	04.2	05	05.3	1.7158
Translating phrases.	30	31.6	54	56.8	07	07.4	04	04.2	1.8421
Assisting grammatical errors.	28	29.5	54	56.8	11	11.6	02	02.1	1.8632
Giving directions about examinations to learners.	27	28.4	41	43.2	23	24.2	04	04.2	2.0421
Testing or checking learners comprehension.	36	37.9	28	29.5	27	28.4	04	04.2	1.9895
Discussing a lesson or a topic.	28	29.5	45	47.4	20	21.1	02	02.1	1.9579
Explaining difficult teaching concepts.	39	41.1	46	48.4	09	09.5	01	01.1	1.7053
Mean of Means									**13.1159**

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.1: Observational checklist for Teachers

ITEMS	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	USED		NOT USED	
											FQ	%	FQ	%
1. Explaining unknown vocabulary.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	09	90	01	10
2. Translating phrases.	X	X	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	06	60	04	40
3. Assisting grammatical errors.	√		√		√	X	√	√	√	√	09	90	01	10
4. Giving directions about examinations to learners.	√	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	√	√	07	70	03	30
5. Testing or checking learners „comprehension.	√	√	X	√	√	X	X	√	√	√	07	70	03	30
6. Discussing a lesson or a topic.	√	X	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	07	70	03	30
7. Explaining difficult teaching concepts.	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	08	80	02	20

Source: Field Survey, 2021

L1 is used to explain unknown vocabulary in the classroom was either strongly agreed or agreed to by86 (88.4%) of the respondents while 09 (11.6%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to that statement according to the data. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.7158. The findings was that L1 was used to explain unknown vocabulary in the classroom.

The qualitative data used to confirmed the quantitative data onL1 usage to explain unknown vocabulary in the classroom, (the observation data 4.1) ascertained that 09 (90%) used the L1 to explain unknown vocabulary in the classroom while 01

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(10%) did not use it. Cook (2001) pointed out many aspects that teachers would positively bring the first language into second-language instruction. Teaching modern vocabulary and testing the definition of new vocabulary are the main uses of the first language. Most teachers use the first language to express meaning and to verify the meaning of new terms for their pupils. Tang (2002) observed that the largest volume of first-language use was to clarify the significance of new words, while the lowest was to explain the laws of grammar.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, 09 out of 10 teachers confirmed that L1 was used to explain unknown vocabulary in the classroom. This findings confirmedthe literatures of Cook (2001) andTang (2002). For instance,

Interviewee T5 noted:

I use L1 to explain big vocabularies and concepts and also help

in the understanding of the classroom teaching.

The statement, L1 is usedto translatephrases in the classroom, waseither strongly agreed or agreedby 84 (90.6%) of the respondents while 11 (9.5%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the data in Table 4. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.8421. The findings wasthat L1 is used to translate phrases in the classroom. The qualitative data used to confirmed the quantitative data onL1 usageto translatephrases in the classroom, (the observation data 4.1) showed that 06 (60%) used the L1 to translate phrases in the classroom while 04 (40%) did not use it. Tang (2002) stated that most learners felt that the first language should be used to illustrate grammar points, although most teachers thought that it should be used to practice the usage of new words and phrases.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, 07 out 10of the teachers confirmed that L1 was usedto translatephrases in the classroom. This findings confirmed the literature stated.

L1 is usedto assist grammatical errors in the classroom was either strongly agreed or agreedby82 (86.3%) of the respondents while 13 (13.7%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement according to Table 4. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.8632. Khresheh (2012) mentions that the usage of L1 (Arabic) by college teachers in Saudi Arabia was driven by a desire to prevent grammatical errors, which expressed the desire of teachers to avoid embarrassing circumstances in front of students. Cook (2001) also claimed that the first language may often be used to teach learners explicit principles of grammar to enable them to achieve a deeper comprehension of certain rules of grammar.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data confirmed that L1 wasused toassist grammatical errors in the classroom. This findings confirmed the literatures of Khresheh (2012) and Cook (2001). The findings was that L1 usage assists grammatical errors in the classroom. The qualitative data used to confirmed the quantitative data onL1 is usedto assist grammar challenges in the classroom, (the observation data 4.1) revealed that 09 (90%) of the teachers used the L1 to assist grammar challenges in the classroom while 01 (10%) did not use it.

L1 is usedto givedirections about examinations to learners in the classroom, waseither strongly agreed or agreedby 68 (71.6%) of the respondents while 27 (28.4%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement in Table 4. According to the data, the total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.0421. The findings wasthat L1 was used to give directions about examinations to

learners in the classroom. Thequalitative data used to support the quantitative data onL1 usageto givedirections about examinations to learners in the classroom, (the observation data in Table 4.1) showed that 07 (70%) used the L1 to give directions about examinations to learners in the classroom while 03 (30%) did not use the L1 to give directions about examinations to the learners.

Duff and Polio, 1990; Levine, 2003; Macaro, 2001; Nzwanga, 2000 and Vasiliou(2010) studies indicated thatteachers use more L1 to include test and assignment guidance, and examinations guidance in their classrooms. To ascertain the validity of the responses, 08 out of 10 teachers confirmed that L1 was usedtogive directions about examinations to learners in the classroom. This findings confirmed the literaturesof Duff and Polio, 1990; Levine, 2003; Macaro, 2001; Nzwanga, 2000 and Vasiliou(2010).

The statement, L1 is usedtotest or check learners „comprehension in the classroom, waseither strongly agreed or agreedby 73 (76.9%) of the respondents while 22 (23.2%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement according to the data in Table 4. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.9895. The findings wasthat L1 is used to test or check learners „comprehension in the classroom. The qualitative data used to confirmed the quantitative data onL1 usagetotest or check learners‟comprehension in the classroom, (the observation data in Table 4.1) showed that 07 (70%) of teachers used the L1 to test or check learners „comprehension in the classroom while 03 (30%) did not use it.

L1 is often identified as a tool for offering direction, addressing classroom methodology, testing comprehension, monitoring, regulating student actions, and specifically teaching grammar (Atkinson, 1987; Macaro, 2005).To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data from the teachers confirmed that L1 is

usedtotest or check learners „comprehension in the classroom. This findings confirmed the literature stated. The findings was that L1 is used to givedirections about examinations to learners in the classroom.

The statement, L1 is usedto discuss a lesson or a topic in the classroom, wasstrongly agreed or agreedby 64 (67.4%) of the respondents while 31 (32.6%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed according to the data in Table 4. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.7053. The findings was that L1 are used to discuss a lesson or a topic in the classroom. The qualitative data used to confirmed the quantitative data onL1 usageto discuss a lesson or a topic in the classroom, (the observation data in Table 4.1) showed that 07 (70%) used the L1 to discuss a lesson or a topic in the classroom while 03 (30%) did not use it.Kovacic and Kirinic (2011) research showed that most of their participants accepted that first-language usage was more relevant in discussing difficult topics, and thoughts, in their classrooms. Anh's(2010) also indicated that L1 was used to clarify complicated terms, to incorporate new ideas and directions, to ensure that learners understood lessons, to offer more comprehensive guidance.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, 06 out of 10teachers confirmed that L1 are usedto discuss a lesson or a topic in the classroom. This findings confirmedthe literaturesof Kovacic and Kirinic (2011) and Anh's(2010).

The statement, L1 is usedto explaindifficult teaching concepts in the classroom,wasstrongly agreed or agreedby 85 (89.64%) of the respondents while 10 (10.6%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement according to the data in Table 4. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 1.9579. The findings was that L1 are used to explain difficult teaching concepts in the classroom.The qualitative data used to confirmed the quantitative data

onL1 usageto explaindifficult teaching concepts in the classroom, (the observation data in Table 4.1) showed that 08 (80%) used the L1 to explaindifficult teaching concepts in the classroom while 02 (20%) did not use it.Rabbidge and Chappell (2014) found that elementary school students wanted L1 explanations from their teachers for a good interpretation of class procedures before going forward with advanced practices.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, majority of the teachers confirmed that L1 are used toexplain difficult teaching concepts in the classroom. This findings confirmed the literatureof Rabbidge and Chappell (2014). For instance,

Interviewee T10 noted:

I use the L1 in assisting the learners in explaining difficult concepts in the learning and mathematical period.

Also, interviewee T9 noted;

I use the L1 in assisting the learners in explaining difficult concepts in learning.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality?

The respondents responded to a 4-point Likert scale to express their views on whether they agree or disagree with some preferences provided. Questionnaire and Interview data were gathered on this question. The quote examples from the data collected through the interview were given to support each point in the process of analyzing the data. The data were analyzed descriptively, and some supporting theories were included to carry out the analysis.

Table 5 presents data collected in answer to research question four. In this discussion, SA and A have been merged as a single response to the statement while D and SD also stand as one opposing view to the statement.

Table 5: Respondents Knowledge on the challenges associated with the use of the L1 in the classroom

Questions	F	SA N (%)	F	A N (%)	F	D N (%)	F	SD N (%)	Mean N (%)
Unavailability of L1 teaching and learning resources.	19	20.0	36	37.9	24	25.3	16	16.8	2.3895
The fear of being ridiculed by other staff members.	28	29.5	22	23.2	31	32.6	14	14.7	2.3263
Disfluency in the learners L1.	15	15.8	38	40.0	28	29.5	14	14.7	2.4316
The presence of a Language barrier in my classroom.	16	16.8	51	53.7	19	20.0	09	09.5	2.2211
The expectation of my school authorities.	22	23.2	52	54.7	16	16.8	05	05.3	2.0421
Unavailability of trained teachers in the L1 in my school.	34	21.1	20	35.8	27	28.4	14	14.7	2.6316
Mean of Means									**14.0422**

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The challenge associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classroomsis theunavailability of L1 teaching and learning resources. From Table 5, the data give evidence that 55 (57.9%) of the respondentseither rstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 40 (42.1%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.3895. The findings was that unavailability of L1 teaching and learning resources is a challenge at the private school early grade classrooms. According to Rateng (1992), lack of

instructional materials on local languages is one of the problems and a vital factor that has led to teachers not using the L1 in their classrooms. InGhana, thereis alack of L1 teaching and learning materials in the classrooms (Owu-Ewie, 2006).To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data confirmed that unavailability of L1 teaching and learning resources is a challenge in private school early grade classrooms. This findings confirmed the literatures of Rateng (1992) and Owu-Ewie, (2006). For instance,

> Interviewee T1noted:
>
> *I wish to teach the learners local language in the classroom but there is no teaching and reading books on their language in my classroom.*

The fear of being ridiculed by other staff members is a challenge associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. From Table 5, the data gave an evidence that 50 (52.7%)of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 45 (47.3%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.3263. The findings was that the fear of being ridiculed by other staff members was a challenge associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. To ascertain the validity of the responses, most of the teachers confirmed that they fear being ridiculed by other staff members when they use the L1 in teaching. For instance,

> Interviewee T2 noted that:
>
> *The school is a private school and therefore when I use the L1 in teaching most of my colleagues will think I am not fluent in English.*

Disfluency in the learners L1 was another challenge associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. From Table 5, the data gave anevidence that 53 (55.8%) of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 42 (44.2%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.4316. The findingswas that disfluency in the learners‟ L1 was a challenge associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. To ascertain the validity of the responses, majority of the teachers confirmed that disfluency in the learners L1 was also a challenge associated with the use of the L1 in the classroom. For instance,

Interviewee T3 noted that:

I am a Ewe but I am at Akim Oda teaching, which is an Akan

state. I am not fluent in the Twi language.

The challenge associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classrooms waslanguage barrier. From Table 5, the data revealed that 67 (70.5%)of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 28 (29.5%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.2211. The findings was thatlanguage barrier was a challenge inthe private school early grade classrooms. To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data confirmed that the language barrier has been a challenge associated with the use of L1 in the classroom. For instance,

Interviewee T4 noted that:

My class is made up of different ethnic groups and languages, so

using only one local language to teach is very difficult for me.

The expectation of school authorities was a challenge associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. From Table 5, the data gave an

evidence that74 (77.9%) of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 21 (22.1%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.0421. The finding was that expectation of school authorities was a challenge associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. Jackson and Remillard (2005) highlighted the role of school authorities in the child's education and their displeasure towards the use of L1 in their schools. Most private school teachers wish to use the L1 at the early grade but school authorities have cautioned them not to use it in their teaching and learning process because they expect their school children should be fluent in the L2.

To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data confirmed that the expectation of school authorities was a challenge associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. This findings confirmed the literature of Jackson and Remillard (2005). For instance,

Interviewees T4 and T1 notedthat:

I wish to use the L1 in my classroom and to help them learn the L2but because of school authorities. T9 also noted that *I wish to use the L1 in my classroom but because of school authorities.*

The unavailability of L1 trained teachers was another challenge associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. From Table 5, the data showed that 54 (56.9%)of the respondents eitherstrongly agreed or agreed to the statement while 41 (43.1%) eitherdisagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. The total valid entries were 95 (100%) with a mean score of 2.6316. The findings was that the unavailability of L1 trained teachers was a challenge associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. This result affirmedHeugh and Mathias (2014) and NCDC (2008) findings which showed that many teachers have

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not been trained in the use of local language forinstruction. To ascertain the validity of the responses, the interview data confirmed that the unavailability of L1 trained teachers wass another challenge associated with the use of the L1 in the classroom. This findings confirmedthe literatures stated. For instance,

Interviewee T4 noted that:

I am not a trained teacher for none of the local languages in
Ghana so I cannot teach my learners their L1.

4.2 Chapter Summary

To ascertain teachers use of L1 as a medium of instruction in private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipalityof Eastern Region, Ghana. How L1 enhance teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schools, the general finding was that the teachers had several opinions and views that supported the use of L1 as the means of instruction in their classrooms.The general finding on the impacts of L1 on teaching and learning processes in the private school early grade classrooms was that there were some benefits teachers get from the usage of L1 in their classrooms. In the situations in which private school early grade teachers desire to use the L1 in their classroom, the general finding was that there were circumstances that make early grade teachers use the L1 in their classrooms. Furthermore, the study found out that there werechallenges associated with the use of L1 in the private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality which can be addressed.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Summary of the study

The purpose of this research was to explore teachers use of L1 as a medium of instruction in privateschool early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality of the Eastern Region, Ghana. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Find out how L1 enhances teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schoolsin the Birim Central Municipality.

2. Investigate the impacts of L1 on teaching and learning processes in the private school early grade classroom in the Birim Central Municipality.

3. Analyze the situations in which private school early grade teachers in the Birim Central Municipality desire to use the L1 in their classroom.

4. Identify the challenges of the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality.

To exploreteachers use of L1 as a medium of instruction in private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality of the Eastern Region, Ghana. A Mixed-Method approach called Concurrent Embedded Design (Creswell, Plano Clark, et al., 2003) was used. This method enabled the researcher to collect, analyze and mix both quantitative and qualitative data in this study (Creswell, 2007). The population for this study comprised all private school teachers in the Birim Central Municipality of the Eastern Region who were in school at the time of the study. The sample size used for this study was 95 private early grade school teachers drawn from the population through simple random sampling and convenient sampling techniques. A questionnaire, semi-structured interview guide, as well as structured observation checklist were the instruments used for the data collection. The instruments for this

study were pre-tested in two different schools outside the target population for the study. A pilot test conducted yieldedα = 0.84 Cronbach"s alpha reliability coefficient. The data collection lasted for four weeks. In each of the sampled schools, the questionnaire was administered to all the 95teachers present, 10 teachers were interviewed and observed in the classroom. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and means were used to analyze the quantitative data and themes were used for the qualitative data.

The results of the study are as follows: On the demographic characteristics of the participants, the results on the gender of the respondents showed that there are more females in the private early grade schools in Birim Central Municipality than males and that the majority of the respondents spoke the Twi language, which reveal that, the Birim Central Municipality is dominated by the Akan people (Twi speakers). The results also revealed thatEnglish language was the most used as the medium of instruction in the classroom than any other language.

5.1 Key Findings

The following are the key findings of the study based on the research questions:

Research Question 1: "How L1 enhances teaching and learning at the early grade in the private schools in the Birim Central Municipality?" was designed to help to ascertain how L1 enhance teaching and learning in private early grade schools in the Birim Central Municipality. The results from the responses of the private school early grade teachers were that L1 was helpful as a medium of instruction to young learners in their classroom. There is also the finding thatthe use of L1 as an instruction to correct learners"mistakes in pronunciation was a perception that most teachers hold on the usage of L1 as a medium of instruction in their classroom. The results also showed that the majority of the teachers viewed that L1 should be used to learn about

L2 grammar and its usage properlybut generally, teachers think that L1 should be used to discuss tests, quizzes, and other assignments appropriately. The qualitative data show that the perception private school early grade teachers hold on the use of L1 as a medium of instruction aligns with the role of L1 usage as the medium of instruction in early grade classrooms.

Research Question 2: "What are the impacts of L1 on the teaching and learning process in private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality?" was designed to ascertain the impacts of L1 on the teaching and learning process in private school early grade classrooms. The results showed that the use of L1 has many benefits for the teacher and even the learners as a whole. The results also revealed that the use of L1 promotes critical thinking among learners, promotes a more relaxed environment and saves time in the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. Lastly, the results showed that the use of L1 in the classroom helps learners to develop as bilingual/multilingual learners. The qualitative data showed that the private school early grade teachers are aware of the numerous benefits they receive from the use of the L1 in the classrooms and therefore, the Ghana Education Service of the Birim Central Municipality can organise seminars to educate school owners on the importance of the usage of L1 and also form a monitoring team to inspect whether private schools are using the L1 alongside the L2 in their classroom. The general finding on this variable is that the teachers have a positive perception towards the use of L1 and its impact on teaching and learning in the classroom.

Research Question 3: "What are the situations in which private school early grade teachers in the Birim Central Municipality desire to use the L1 in the classroom?" was designed to ascertain the situations in which private school early

grade teachers desire to use the L1 in the classroom. Explaining unknown vocabulary, translating phrases in the classroom, assisting grammatical errors are some situations in which teachers desire to use the L1. The results show that the teachers use the L1 in various situations when teaching. Lastly, the results show that majority of the respondents confirmed that L1 is used to give directions about examinations to learners in the classroom. The qualitative data on the situations in which private school early grade teachers desire to use the L1 in the classroom showed that the teachers mostly use the L1 in any situations to enhance learners comprehension in teaching and learning processes and have a positive perception towards the use of L1 in their classroom.

Research Question 4: "What are the challenges associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality?" was designed to ascertain the challenges associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms. The results for this research question showed that the teachers wish to use the L1 alongside the L2 in teaching but several factors impede them from using the L1 in their classrooms. The general finding on the challenges associated with the use of the L1 in the private school early grade classrooms concerning the statement is that unavailability of trained teachers in the L1 language in their school impedes the use of L1 in the classrooms since most private schools do not employ qualified and train teachers in their school, most private school lack trained language teachers in their schools. The qualitative data confirmed that the use of L1 in most private schools in Birim Central Municipality is a challenge to teachers. School proprietors/tresses are the ones who decide for teachers to either use both the L1 and L2 in the classroom or only the L2 in the classroom as a medium of instruction for teaching and learning.

5.2 Conclusions

The choice of language as a medium of instruction is the most important thing in teaching and learning in the classroom. The study has revealed some variables that affect the use of L1 as the medium of instruction in early grade classrooms. From the findings emanated from the study, there is a generally good response from the teachers, which indicate that L1 enhance teaching and learning processin their classrooms. Furthermore, the findings can be concluded that the use of L1 has a lot of positive impacts on teaching and learning in the classroom. Also, it can be concluded from the findings that teachers have situations in which they use L1 in their classroom. Finally, from the findings, it can be concluded that the teachers have some challenges when they use the L1 in their classrooms.

5.3 Recommendations:

Based on the outcome of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Since private school early grade teachers admit that L1 enhance teaching and learning in their classrooms, I recommend that the Birim Central Municipal Ghana Education Service should organise seminars to educate private school proprietors/tresses and parents about the contributions of the usage of the L1 language to their learners' language development.

2. Since L1 has a positive impact on teaching and learning processes, I recommend that the Birim Central Municipal Ghana Education Service and other private school early grade teachers should organise programmes and workshops to educate other private school teachers who do not use L1 in their early grade classrooms and conduct periodic monitoring at the various private school early grade classrooms to ensure that, L1 is used alongside the L2 as a medium of instruction.

3. Since private school early grade teachers have situations in which they use the L1 in the teaching and learning process, I recommend that the Birim Central Municipal Ghana Education Service should organise seminars to educate private school proprietors/tresses and teachers about the usage of L1 in helping learners to understand a difficult concept in teaching and learning.

4. Since private schools have some challenges associated with the use of L1 in their classrooms, proprietors/tresses should employ qualified Ghanaian language teachers in their schools to help learners to be able to read and write in their mother tongue, teaching and learning resources should be given to private schools within the Birim Central Municipality of the Eastern Region, Ghana by the stakeholders of the private schools.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

This study was conducted in only private school early grade classrooms in Birim Central Municipality of the Eastern Region, Ghana. It is suggested that future researchers consider conducting it in public school early grade classrooms in other parts of the country to find out whether the same outcome would emerge.

I also suggest that a future study be conducted to investigate the challenges associated with the usage of L1 in public early grade classrooms.

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APPENDICES

A

QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

I am **EMMANUEL TWUM YEBOAH**, a**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** student of the Department of Early childhood Education. As part of the requirement of completing my course of study, I am conducting a study to determine private school teachers" perception of L1 usage in early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality. I, therefore, need your support, participation and commitment to help me fill this questionnaire. I assure you that the information granted here are for academic purposes ONLY, and all information provided would be treated confidentially.

DIRECTIONS: Please tick (√) the appropriate space provided in each case.

SECTION A

PERSONAL DATA

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age: 20 - 25yrs. ☐ 26 - 30 yrs. ☐ 31- 35yrs. ☐ 36 yrs and above ☐

3. Which class do you teach: ....

4. Which language do you speak: ……………………………

5. Which language do you use for instruction: ……………………

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6. How long have you been in school? I. 1 – 3 yrs. ☐   II. 4 – 6 yrs. ☐

III. 7 – 9 yrs. ☐ IV.10yrs and above   ☐

RATING SCALE

Strongly agree-**[SA]**   Agree-**[A]**   Disagree-**[D]**   strongly disagree-**[SD]**

PLEASE READ EACH STATEMENT AND TICK ONE OF THE OPTIONS LETTERED **SA** TO S**D.**

SECTION B

HOW L1 ENHANCES TEACHING AND LEARNING AT THE EARLY GRADE SCHOOLS IN BIRIM CENTRAL MUNICIPALITY?

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	I perceive that learners" first language should be allowed during English lessons.				
2	I prefer to use instructions in L1 to correct learners" mistakes in pronunciation.				
3	I perceive the more L1 that learners use in the English classroom; the better they will be atcommunicating in English.				
4	I think that L1 should be used to learn about L2 grammar and its usage properly.				
5	I am of the view that L1 should be used to discuss tests, quizzes, and other assignments appropriately.				
6	I think that teachers should use their learners" first language in teaching in the classroom.				

SECTION C

THE IMPACTS OF L1 ON THE TEACHING AND

LEARNING PROCESS IN CLASSROOMS?

7	Using L1 promote critical thinking among learners.				
8	Using L1 promotes a more relaxed environment.				
9	The use of L1 saves time in teaching and learning processes.				
10	The use of L1 in my classroom helps my learners to cultivate a positive attitude toward learning.				
11	The use of L1 in my classroom helps learners to develop as bilingual/multilingual learners.				
12	The use of the L1 makes learners understanding very easier.				
13	The use of L1 makes the English language learning process easier.				
14	Learners actively participate in class activities when I use their L1 for talks or discussions.				

SECTION D

SITUATIONS IN WHICH THERE IS A DESIRE TO USE THE L1 IN THE CLASSROOM?

15	Explaining unknown vocabulary.				
16	Translating phrases.				
17	Assisting grammar challenges.				
18	Giving directions about examinations to learners.				
19	Testing or checking learners comprehension.				
20	Discussing a lesson or a topic.				
21	Explaining difficult teaching concepts.				

SECTION E

CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF THE L1 IN THE CLASSROOM?

22	Unavailability of L1 teaching and learning resources.				
23	The fear of being ridiculed by other staff.				
24	Disfluency in the learners L1.				
25	The presence of a Language barrier in my classroom.				
26	The expectation of my school authorities.				
27	Unavailability of train teachers in the L1 in my school.				

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INTERVIEW FOR TEACHERS

I am **EMMANUEL TWUM YEBOAH** with index number **200025165**. I am a **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** candidate with the Department of Early childhood Education. As part of the requirement of completing my course of study, I am conducting a study to determine private school teachers" perception of L1 usage in early grade classrooms in the Birim Central Municipality. I, therefore, need your support, participation and commitment to help me fill this interview. I assure you that the information granted here are for academic purposes ONLY, and all information provided would be treated confidentially.

Interview questions

1. What is your understanding of the L1 medium of instruction?

2. What will be the reason why you will not use L1 in your classroom?

3. Do you think the use of L1 is necessary for the classroom?

4. Under which circumstances will you use L1 usage as a medium of instruction in your classroom?

5. What are the challenges associated with the use of L1 in your classroom?

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APPENDIX C

OBSERVATIONAL CHECKLIST

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

The purpose of this observation is to assess the situation under which

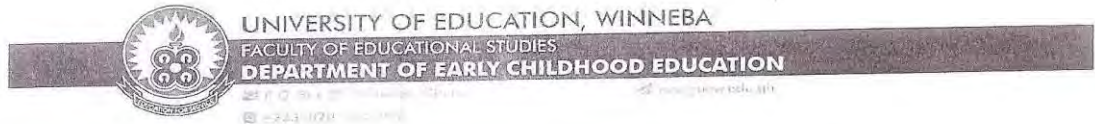private school early grade teachers" uses L1 in their classrooms.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

ITEMS	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	USED		NOT USED	
											FQ	%	FQ	%
1. Explaining unknown vocabulary.														
2. Translating phrases.														
3. Assisting grammar errors.														
4. Giving directions about examinations to learners.														
5. Testing or checking learnerscomprehension.														

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6. Discussing a lesson or a topic.														
7. Explaining difficult teaching concepts.														

APPENDIX D

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

FES/DECE/S.6

11ᵗʰ March, 2021

The Director,
Ghana Education Service,
Birim Central Municipal Education Service,
Akim-Oda.

Dear Sir/Madam

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

I write to introduce to you **Mr. Emmanuel Twum Yeboah** with index number **200025165** who is M.Phil student in the above department. He was admitted in 2018/2019 academic year and has successfully completed his course work and is to embark on his thesis on the topic: *Private School Teacher's Perception of L1 use in Early Grade Classroom in The Birim Central Municipality.*

Mr. Emmanuel **Twum Yeboah** is to collect data for his thesis, and I would be most grateful if he could be given the needed assistance.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Yayra Dzakadzie, Ph. D
Ag. Head of Department

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APPENDIX E

EMMANUEL TWUM YEBOAH,

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES,

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION,

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA,

WINNEBA.

22ND MARCH, 2021

THE DIRECTOR,

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE,

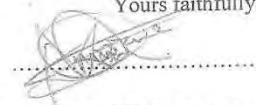BIRIM CENTRAL MUNICIPAL EDUCATION OFFICE,

AKIM – ODA.

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A STUDY

I wish to inform this noble office to permit me to conduct my study on the topic: PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF L1 USE IN EARLY GRADE CLASSROOM IN THE BIRIM CENTRAL MUNICIPALITY in the various private schools in this municipality.

I will kindly adhere to the rules and principles governing these schools. Please I have attached my introductory letter from my department to this letter. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

EMMANUEL TWUM YEBOAH

(THE RESEARCHER)

APPENDIX F

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

In case of reply the number and date of this
letter should be quoted
Tel. 0 208339266
Fax 0 3 4 2 9 2 2 6 8 6.
E-mail : odages@yahoo.com
My Ref. No. GES / ER / ODS.
Your Ref. No. ....

REPUBLIC OF GHANA

MUNICIPAL EDUCATION OFFICE
BIRIM CENTRAL
P. O. BOX 302
AKIM ODA.
22ND MARCH, 2021

EMMANUEL TUWM YEBOAH
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A STUDY
MR. EMMANUEL TWUM YEBOAH

Permission is granted to Mr. Emmanuel Twum Yeboah an M.Phil student at the University of Education Winneba, Faculty of Educational studies, Department of Early Childhood Education to conduct a study on the topic "PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF L1 USE IN EARLY GRADE CLASSROOM IN THE BIRIM CENTRAL MUNICIPALITY" in the various private schools in the Municipality.

Mr. Yeboah, you are advised to abide by the rules and principles governing these schools. It is my hope that you will accord him the necessary assistance and support to undertake his study.

I wish success in the conduct of your study.

BENJAMIN CUDJOE (MR)
MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
BIRIM CENTRAL – AKIM ODA

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN