

COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE RESPONSES OF L1 (AFAN OROMO) IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

Gemechu Bane, Tamene Kitila

College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communication
Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, Addis Ababa University
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
E-mail: gamub32@gmail.com

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Abstract

One of the most common issues that EFL teachers face in the classroom is the decision of whether or not to use L1 in the L2 classroom. The purpose of this study was to explore the cognitive and affective responses of L1 (Afan Oromo) use in primary school of EFL classrooms. The study employed a qualitative research method with a descriptive case study. Classroom observations and interviews were used to collect data. The Nvivo 12 computer program qualitative data analysis software was used to analyze the collected data. The finding indicated that the most prevalent cognitive reactions were comparing English and Afan Oromo grammatical rules, acquiring new vocabulary, and forming links between Afan Oromo and English. Teachers preferred Afan Oromo for teaching new vocabulary, grammatical lessons, and abstract concepts. Students preferred L1 use for better understanding, mastery of grammar and complicated issues, and a more natural way of expressing themselves because Afan Oromo enables them a more confident sense while expressing their views and keeping the affective filter low. Although using L1 contributes to a better understanding, unguided usage and unsystematized practice of L1 may impede the achievement of desired goals in English teaching and learning.

Keywords: *Afan Oromo/L1; affective responses; cognitive responses; English/L2*

1. Introduction

The usage of the first language (L1) in the second language (L2) classroom has been a passionately debated issue. The issue is exacerbated when students and teachers have the same L1. The discussion is divided into two camps: proponents of L1 usage and advocates of L2 use. Some researchers claim that a student's mother tongue is detrimental, and should be outlawed in foreign language lessons, whilst others believe that L1 is helpful, and facilitates the process of acquiring L2. Others also divide the issue into two categories: monolingual and bilingual approaches. Advocates of monolingual techniques argue that maximum exposure to the target language (TL) is essential and that utilizing students' mother tongue (L1) is a hindrance to learning the TL. Bilingual advocates, on the other hand, consider L1 to be a valuable resource that may facilitate and contribute to TL learning. The gap between these two techniques has resulted in an ongoing debate about the importance of employing

L1 in EFL lessons. The aims of this study were to explore the cognitive and affective responses of L1 (Afan Oromo) use in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes.

2. Literature Review

First Language (L1) use in foreign language or second language (FL/SL) instruction has long been a contentious topic among language teachers and researchers (Alsied, 2018). While some contend that L1 should not be utilized in EFL classes, others contend that L1 can aid in learning of English as a foreign language. In this sense, while proponents of English-only usage have dismissed the possibility of L1 serving as a pedagogical tool in EFL teaching, other studies are beginning to evaluate its application.

According to Wu (2018), teachers in EFL classrooms can use L1 to help students learn L2, and even believe that a student's proficiency in L1 influences their proficiency in L2. Hence, using L1 is essential for learning the target language since it provides scaffolding for learners' learning processes, according to (Kaymakamoğlu & Yiltanlilar, 2019). They believe that L1 is the most powerful one we have for mediating thought, allowing us to explore and articulate our thoughts in L2. According to these researchers, L1 refers to the words that not only convey information but also communicate the speakers' ideas, feelings, and identities.

In the same vein, students in elementary schools in Ethiopia are challenged to learn English because of their weak comprehension of the TL, as one of the justifications for teachers referring to L1 students' low language competency level (Bozorgian & Luo, 2018). As a result, they build and utilize new languages while relying on their prior linguistic knowledge. Such accomplishments provide convincing logic and theoretical arguments in favor of L1 adoption. According to second language acquisition (SLA) studies, the learner's first language (L1) is critical in the L2 learning process. Little and Shufang (2022) contend that excluding students' L1 is not only impractical but also misguided.

In addition, L1 can serve dynamic functions such as mediating L2 learning (facilitating metalinguistic awareness and private speech), cognitive tool (a tool for thinking that allows learners to interact with one another), social mediation, and finally frustration reduction, according to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory reports that L1 allows learners to function effectively in the zone of proximal development (ZPD), and contributes to the development of L2, particularly in peer interaction. He believes that students learn language via interaction with their peers and teachers in the social world. Thus, ZPD refers to a set of skills or knowledge that a student cannot perform on his or her own but can do with the assistance or instruction of another, more knowledgeable, or competent individual.

Moreover, Vygotsky contends that everyone learns on two levels. People initially interact with others before incorporating what they learn into their own mental processes. In the EFL context, there appears to be a growing notion that employing L1 in the EFL classroom plays a significant and facilitating function. L1 gives cognitive support to L2 learners during language analysis. In this process, L1 is used as a scaffolding strategy to increase students' language acquisition.

Furthermore, L1 is a potent source that may be exploited to accelerate foreign language acquisition, but it must be handled with caution. Wells (2020) exhibits and discusses the crucial role that L1 may play in the execution of collaborative tasks in L2. Similarly, recent study has sought to understand when and how L1 could be effectively utilized to boost students' L2 learning (Wach & Monroy, 2020). According to Shabir (2017), L1 is crucial since students already know it and rely on prior knowledge to acquire new

things; hence, it is appropriate to employ L1 in the teaching of L2 for the convenience and comfort of the students in the learning process. According to the findings of Sekar et al. (2022), students are able to understand and engage effectively in EFL learning when mediated by L1, which they feel would assist shaping and improving their English. This implies that L1 is significant in EFL teaching, especially for low-proficiency students. As L1 use is unavoidable and has a positive impact on students' TL acquisition, the English-only policy that views L1 activities as an impediment to successful language learning has to be reconsidered.

Some researchers have shown that using L1 selectively in particular EFL circumstances might be a successful scaffolding strategy. Enama (2016) shows that using L1 boosts learners' cognitive capabilities and meta-linguistic awareness, reduces anxiety, and makes them more liable. Several studies claim that students who are not proficient in the TL need L1 to facilitate their learning. The use of students' L1 is beneficial in terms of aiding their comprehension and to make them become more confident to learn L2 (Sbaihat et al., 2018). This is necessary for learners who are still not proficient in the TL or are at the beginner level. According to Shabir (2017), excessive use of English has been observed to have detrimental impacts.

Although English is taught as a foreign language in Ethiopia, there are certain challenges with teaching and learning, particularly in primary-level education. Among the various obstacles and peculiarities that surround this educational setting, some nevertheless go unnoticed, such as the use of L1 in the EFL classroom. The use of L1 in L2 classrooms has long been a source of contention in the field of foreign language instruction in general, and in English as a foreign language in particular. According to the researchers, English is a foreign language teaching experience, and informal observations in primary schools and EFL teachers are oblivious to know how pupils think and feel when L1 is utilized in L2 classrooms. Due to this, they are torn between using or not using L1 in English lessons.

Despite the fact that numerous studies have been conducted around the world to settle the debate over the use of L1 in L2 classrooms, teachers' voices are being heard in the Ethiopian context where there have been differing views on how to teach English, particularly on the use of L1, in this case, Afan Oromo. In Ethiopia, there has been little research into teachers' and students' perspectives on the use of L1 in EFL classrooms. Despite the controversies surrounding its usage, both teachers and students utilize L1 in their EFL classroom since little is known about how it is implemented in the context of the English language classroom of local primary school.

In Ethiopia, some studies on L1 usage in the L2 classroom have generally concentrated on adult or secondary-level classrooms, despite the fact that the L1 use of young learners is understudied. According to Gemechu and Tamene (2023), Afan Oromo is a useful teaching-learning instrument, especially for clarifying grammatical issues and explaining word meanings in primary schools in Ethiopia. Another local research on L1 use was carried out, this time with Amharic as the student's first language (L1) in secondary school (Abiy, 2012). According to the findings, the majority of participants employed their L1 throughout the prewriting stage of L2 writing. However, none of the preceding research focused on students' strategic responses to teachers' usage of L1 in EFL lessons in Ethiopian primary schools. That is why the current study is intended to better understanding EFL teachers' use of L1 and their perspectives on it. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' cognitive and affective reactions to teachers' L1 use in EFL classrooms. As a result, the current study tries to fill the gap by addressing the research questions listed below:

- 1) What are the beliefs of primary school English teachers on the use of Afan Oromo in English lessons?
- 2) How do students react to their English teachers' use of Afan Oromo?
- 3) Do the beliefs of primary school English teachers on their usage of Afan Oromo coincide with those of students?

3. Research Method

The current study investigates students' cognitive and affective reactions to L1 usage by teachers in EFL classes. A descriptive case study design is adopted in the study. Merriam (1998:19) proposes the case study technique because it "allows for a more in-depth analysis of the occurrence and its consequences for the persons involved." The focus is on the process rather than the outcome, on context rather than a specific variable, and on discovery rather than confirmation.

3.1 Sampling Procedure

This study aims to explore teachers' and students' perspectives on using L1 (Afan Oromo) in EFL classes. Purposive sampling is used because it allows for consideration of participants' accessibility, willingness, and availability. The researchers choose these schools and individuals because they feel more at ease in these classes and with the teachers. Merriam (1998:61) states that a purposeful sample will assist in discovering, understanding, and gaining insight; thus, we choose a sample from which the most may be learned. With that in mind, and based on our familiarity with *Shambu* town, we pick schools and participants for the research that are both familiar and close to us.

3.2 Participant

The study involves four English teachers from primary schools. Convenience sampling was to decide on the site of the data collection and participants were employed for the study. The permission of the subjects was required for participation in the study. Teachers were included in the research because they volunteered to take part. The teachers presented the researchers to their classroom students who had been chosen for classroom observations by the teachers. The participants were also advised that they might quit their enrolment in the study at any moment. The agreement of the participants was gained after they were briefed on the objective of the study. In addition, each teacher chose three students from their classroom for the interviews. Afan Oromo was the mother tongue of both teachers and all the student participants.

3.3 Instrument

The current study is designed as a descriptive case study using the qualitative approach. To this end, the study used qualitative research instruments that produced mostly qualitative data. Two data-gathering instruments, namely, semi-structured interviews and classroom observation were used.

The aim of using a semi-structured interview is to elicit deep responses from research participants about their ideas, feelings, or thoughts about a certain problem. Furthermore, the study employed stimulated recall techniques to collect adequate evidence on why participants needed to switch to L1 and liked doing so. A stimulated recall interview was used to elicit participants' opinions and feelings about L1 use in EFL classes. These techniques were used to recollect teacher-generated concepts while carrying out specific activities in the English classroom using L1. The researchers used stimulated recall

techniques to collect four classroom audio recordings (two for each teacher) to obtain the participants' views and feelings regarding utilizing L1 in English classes. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and thematically evaluated.

3.4 Procedure

Participants were first questioned to discover their perspectives, feelings, and thoughts about L1 usage in English lessons. Following that, their English lessons and interviews were audiotaped in order to examine the nature of L1 usage in L2 instruction. The NVivo 12 was used to thematically analyze the audio recordings from the semi-structured interviews and classes.

3.5 Data Analysis

The descriptive analysis approach was used in the data analysis for the study. The descriptive data were collected from interviews, lesson audio recordings, and stimulated recall interviews. Data were transcribed, as "The initial step to any adequate analysis of interview material must be transcription," according to Richards (2003:81). The interview recording was translated from Afan Oromo to English and then transcribed on a computer using Microsoft Word. We transcribed the audio from the interview the old-fashioned way, using playback, rewind, and pause. Thematic analysis of data was used in the data analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Teachers' Views on Afan Oromo Use in EFL Classes

The data acquired from the interviews to the teachers in this study revealed that incorporating L1 in L2 sessions surfaced as a teaching approach. Teachers indicated that when English was employed as a medium of instruction, their students did not grasp it. One teacher, for example, shared the following story:

"When pupils don't understand English, I talk to them in their own language" (T2).

Teachers shared their thoughts on students' use of L1 in English lessons. For varied reasons, two teachers believed that Afan Oromo had a part in their normal teaching practices. Teachers discussed how they used L1 as a teaching tool in EFL lessons. They introduced new vocabulary and grammatical concepts in Afan Oromo. They stated Afan Oromo helped them clarify grammatical rules and vocabulary, simplify lessons, and encourage and support slow learners. The following situations depict how the interviewing teachers use L1 in their daily English instruction:

"I feel that using Afan Oromo is critical for teaching English in our context. The pupils' reactions are rather negative when I merely use English. Then Afan Oromo is the finest choice to assist students." (T1)

"I utilize Afan Oromo to teach grammatical structures and provide extra examples so that students may use those structures in specific situations and complete the objectives." (T3)

"I use Afan Oromo to engage students on a task. English instruction cannot be successful unless students use their mother tongue." (T4)

Furthermore, when no other choices for making the lesson understandable to the pupils, teachers use L1. By enabling all students to participate in classroom practices, they employ L1 to make work more exciting, communicative, and meaningful. All teacher participants agreed that using L1 might help slow learners engage in class activities. The responses to the teacher interviews were as follows:

As a teacher, I have to assist students. If the students' English learning process does not lead to developing a comprehensive understanding, I will allow students to utilize L1 appropriately, or use L1 while answering questions or offering feedback to students, thus promoting their acquisition of English." (T2)

"Since all students should engage and be active in class activities, I believe that utilizing Afan Oromo can make work more entertaining, communicative, and useful." (T3)

Furthermore, teachers said that students had very little opportunity to study English outside of the classroom. As a consequence, they utilized L1 to discuss and show the differences between L1 and L2. T2 stated:

"Because of the pupils' little exposure to the English language, we use Afan Oromo to explain the meaning of new keywords." (T2)

According to the chosen teachers, numerous English words are ambiguous and must be translated into L1. T1 has also presented the following ideas:

"To be honest, students' English skills are poor, making it difficult for me to conduct English classes; hence, I feel that employing Afan Oromo in teaching English is crucial." (T1)

The quantity of L1 use, according to the sampled teachers, is determined by the nature of the issue and the student's competency level. Teachers say that students do not grasp vocabulary and grammatical elements until L1 is employed. They feel that some topics, such as grammar, require more L1 help than others. Two teachers shared the following ideas:

Different classes need varying amounts of Afan Oromo. Different students need a different amount of Afan Oromo. Some teachings call for less Afan Oromo. More Afan Oromo should be taught in grammar schools. It is not necessary for Afan Oromo, for example, to talk (conversations). In EFL sessions, I employ Afan Oromo for up to 20% of the classroom instruction, depending on the situation. I use less Afan Oromo if the students grasp the lesson easily; if the topic is challenging, I use more Afan Oromo to clarify it. As a result, because L1 is context-dependent, there is no consistent usage of it (T2).

"15% - 20% of the instructional time is spent on Afan Oromo. Utilizing more than this quantity may impede the student's opportunity to learn English."(T3)

When considering the use of L1 in classrooms, pupils' English competence appears to be an essential consideration. Using L1 helps slow learners, according to the teacher participants. Allowing L1 in English lessons is also an effective teaching approach for enabling slow learners more likely to participate in classroom activities. The teachers proposed the following ideas:

"I feel that students should be helped and encouraged to learn English and that we should use all available resources to help them, including Afan Oromo." (T3)

"When Afan Oromo is used, it eliminates any confusion among students. As a consequence, I believe that using Afan Oromo in this situation is advantageous since combining two languages (Afan Oromo and English) is intended to help slow pupils learn languages faster." (T4)

Allowing L1 in English lessons is also an important teaching approach for encouraging students to engage in classroom activities. Teachers agreed that L1 serves as a motivator by making learners feel more comfortable and confident by conquering language fear. They also claimed that L1 should be utilized only as a last option. The teachers made the following suggestions:

"If a student arrives late and knocks on the classroom door, the teacher must ask about his lateness with Afan Oromo. As English teachers, we should consider how our students feel and be aware of what is going on in their minds." (T2)

"When studying English, especially when speaking English, students are not free. Afan Oromo eliminates such difficulties and increases pupils' confidence in their English study." (T3)

The teachers contended that L1 should not be prohibited in EFL lessons. They claimed to use L1 for two key purposes: instructional and motivating techniques. T1 suggested the following ideas:

"Prohibiting Afan Oromo in English schools may pose other severe problems. It is possible to say that prohibiting the use of Afan Oromo will interfere with English learning. Students will not understand until Afan Oromo is taught alongside English." (T1)

4.1.2 Students' Responses to the Use of Afan Oromo

Aside from the social and pedagogical motivations for using the L1 in the FL classroom, its use has been thought to be dependent on students' FL competency and cognitive levels. Language learning strategies are employed to aid comprehension, learning, and memory of new information. Some of these strategies are visible, whilst others are not. Students stressed the following ideas:

"When Afan Oromo words or phrases are utilized in English learning lessons, I readily memorize them in English. Another student provided when the teacher explained using Afan Oromo, the distinction between English grammar and Afan Oromo grammar was quite clear." (S2)

A similar response was given by another student:

“When my English teacher repeats Afan Oromo words to me, I am able to remember them and never forget what I have learned in this manner.” (S4)

“When the teacher utilizes Afan Oromo to teach English, I truly comprehend the lesson. My prior understanding of Afan Oromo aids me in learning English.” (S5)

“Understanding word meaning is simple when my English teacher translates what is being taught in English into Afan Oromo. At this time, my mind instantly goes to the equivalent meaning in Afan Oromo.” (S6)

Teachers' use of Afan Oromo in EFL lessons elicited cognitive responses from students. Although stimulated recall gave some insight into their cognitive processes, they did not always comment on how they cognitively responded to their teachers' usage of Afan Oromo. They also highlighted the good effects or advantages of teachers using Afan Oromo. Students said that when Afan Oromo was used to teach grammar, they made cognitive analogies between English and Afan Oromo grammar, which helped them understand and remember English grammar.

Furthermore, the cognitive reactions of the students demonstrated that Afan Oromo aided them in learning new words. They went on to say that students were able to memorize the new words since the teachers translated them into Afan Oromo. For example, one student responded:

“When an English teacher uses Afan Oromo in class, it helps me validate that I grasp the lesson correctly, which enhances retention of that topic, especially grammatical rules.” (S3)

The student above described how Afan Oromo helped her analyze her comprehension, but she did not describe the mental processes she went through as a result of its use.

Because the teacher uses Afan Oromo when I do not understand anything, it facilitates comprehension. We do not study it in prior levels, therefore it is new to us, and we notice and learn it when the teacher employs Afan Oromo (S4).

When the teacher utilizes Afan Oromo, I comprehend more and hence have a better chance of passing the exam. My L1 prepares the route for my comprehension. I enjoy learning in L1. It aids my academic performance. Furthermore, it assists me in passing the examination. Such an approach assists me in not forgetting what I have learned (S6).

According to the evidence shown above, students believe that Afan Oromo enhances learning and understanding. They feel that Afan Oromo is important in the English classroom since it helps pupils pass exams and that its usage is a positive practice that should be continued. It also enables them to assess their understanding of the input. Furthermore, teachers' usage of Afan Oromo helps pupils recall certain concepts. They mean that they could readily recollect earlier lessons. Furthermore, they indicate that when the teacher

repeat these points several times, they recall the point the next time they have heard it and would never forget it.

When questioned about their subjective reactions to teachers' use of Afan Oromo, students reported that feeling was at ease, comfortable, reassured, and joyful, all of which were connected with students' motivation to comprehend when Afan Oromo was utilized. One student had ideas:

"I feel more at ease when Afan Oromo is used since I can comprehend it. I become uncomfortable and anxious when the entire lesson is in English, and there is something I don't understand." (S1)

"When the teacher uses Afan Oromo, I feel relaxed. I am completely at ease. The teacher knows and shares our feelings."(S3)

This sentence suggests that the student is at ease, which helps him understand. Of course, in this case, it is fair to consider a blend of cognitive and affective reactions in which the learner gains more knowledge, feels more at ease, and gains even more confidence. This means that the more calm pupils are in class, the more they learn. Although the same student felt relieved when Afan Oromo was used, he expressed his disapproval when it was overused. In reaction to the restricted usage of Afan Oromo, another student stated: *"I felt more at ease when the teacher used Afan Oromo, but it must be used sparingly since I wanted to improve my English." (S4)*

When Afan Oromo is employed excessively, the student claim to be both bored and uncomfortable. Too much Afan Oromo here may have shifted the focus of the lesson. Although the pupils do not explain it and may not be aware of it, there may be an implied differentiation between Afan Oromo in this statement for instructional purposes. There is a recurring pattern here in that some students have ideas about how to best use L1 in the classroom.

4.2 Discussion

Overall, it has been discovered that the L1 plays a significant role in the FL instruction analyzed in this study. The acquired data were evaluated and classified in this respect in line with the three study questions.

4.2.1 Teachers' Views on L1 Use

It should be noted that the data analysis in this study shows that the participating teachers allow the usage of L1 in their lessons. In order to assess how the L1 was used in these FL classrooms as if the teacher was using it as a pedagogical tool, a variety of factors that may characterize the varied roles in which the L1 was employed in FL instruction were also explored. Thus, the functions in which the teacher used the L1 in FL classrooms were grouped into four primary issues: improving teaching and learning efficiency, explaining new vocabulary and grammatical lessons, engaging low-proficient students, and making students feel secure and comfortable in EFL classes.

Teachers argued that L1 improved the efficacy of teaching and learning. According to the data, teachers expressed positive views on the use of L1 in English classrooms. They believe that effective L1 use creates a positive learning atmosphere and increases students' interest and drive to study. Their viewpoint is comparable to the notion that L1 provides a supporting and enabling role in their teaching. They justified employing L1 in English

classrooms improved students understanding. In addition, it benefits teachers to clarify difficult concepts. This conclusion is congruent with the findings of Garca et al. (2017), who discovered that both teachers and students successfully employed the TL and learners' L1 for creativity and instruction.

Dealing with grammar teaching as a topic, teachers frequently say that they use L1 when teaching grammar lessons. In addition, this finding is in with using L1 to clarify vocabulary throughout the ZPD process can aid in second language teaching (Swain & Lapkin, 2013). This is due to the fact that L1 vocabulary allows learners to process TL knowledge that they may not have yet in order to construct concepts and acquire greater levels of understanding. Teachers use L1 while teaching grammar to ensure that pupils comprehended the material. When the teacher translate a new vocabulary word, the pupils assume they understand it right away and could thus contribute to its retention. These findings are congruent with the findings of Debreli (2016) study which stated that teachers used the L1 in the EFL classroom to assist students in learning English, particularly in defining difficult or unfamiliar words for students, giving instructions to students, and taking into account the use of L1 in English communities or those in which English was supposed to be used perfectly.

Teachers unanimously believe that L1 use is crucial for low-proficiency students and that it is a valuable instructional resource for improving students' knowledge of L2. As a result, teachers used L1 more often with students who had a lower level of FL proficiency. The majority of studies on L1 and L2 usage in classrooms have discovered that the student's level of proficiency influences L1 use. According to Neokleous (2017), low proficient EFL students had good sentiments regarding their L1 use in the classroom, and this had proven its benefits for L2 learning. Communication in the L1 between teachers and students adds to a more supportive environment in the L2 class, particularly by encouraging students with lower levels of competence to engage. Strategic L1 usage benefits target language by allowing students to "make connections and comparisons, ask deep questions, and practice and play with language" (Turnbull, 2017).

Several additional researchers have found that students' L2 competency influences teachers' decision to employ L1 in their classrooms. Furthermore, according to Hong and Basturkmen (2020), the teacher's usage of L1 EFL lessons is likely to address any possible or perceived language problems that students and teachers confront, as well as to enhance students' learning. Wach and Monroy (2019) discover that there is a special requirement for learners with limited L2 competency to use L1.

Despite the fact that the sampled teachers agreed with the use of L1 in English lessons, they preferred its limited use. The student's level of competency, according to the teachers, was insufficient to grasp English-only teaching. As a result, teachers were eager to include students' L1 in English classrooms. This shows that teachers are not resistant to using L1 in English classes. Another possibility is that the sampled teachers are aware of the disadvantages of utilizing L1 excessively in English lessons and/or believe that students' proficiency levels are insufficient to grasp English-only instruction. This is because they are presumably aware of the advantages of using L1 judiciously. Teachers feel that using L1 does not always help L2 learning; rather, they believe that using L1 just when essential helps learning.

Furthermore, teachers believe that using Afan Oromoo in English classrooms will inspire pupils to actively engage in events, giving them confidence in themselves. When students utilize their first language, they feel safer and more productive in their English

studies. Switching to the L1 may also aid in the reduction of cultural shock throughout the L2 classes. L1 can also help pupils reduce their affective filters. As a result, L2 students, particularly those with little proficiency, feel more at ease and calm.

The outcomes of this study reveal that there are many links between classroom practice and teacher views. Teaching grammar is one of the areas where teachers' opinions regarding L1 use are focused. Teachers have indicated that they must employ L1 more frequently when teaching grammatical lessons. The necessity to employ L1 stems from concerns about their pupils' failure to grasp the instruction in English.

4.2.2 Students' Beliefs about L1 Use

Language learning strategies are employed to aid comprehension, learning, and memorizing of new information. Affective, motor, and cognitive abilities, as well as cognitive strategies, may be incorporated. This research focuses particularly on cognitive and affective strategies. Cognitive strategies guide these language functions in the mind. The process of thinking or knowing something is referred to as cognition (Oxford, 2011: 46). According to Wenden, cognitive strategies are mental steps or approaches used to manage "linguistic and sociolinguistic content" (1991:19). Students were questioned to determine their feelings regarding teachers utilizing Afan Oromo in EFL classes.

According to the data collected, students were enthusiastic about utilizing L1 in the English classroom. L1 was crucial to the students for a variety of reasons, the most important of which was a lack of comprehension due to their own weak command of the English language. According to Yenice's (2018) study, teachers considered L1 critical to adjust FL instruction to each student participating in the FL classroom. The value of L1 in acquiring new vocabulary, clarifying instructions, participating in group work activities, and discussing personal difficulties was emphasized by students. When their teachers include L1 in grammar and vocabulary explanations, they understand English classes better. They identified L1 as a useful resource for teaching grammar and vocabulary. As a result of the study, students expressed good attitudes toward the use of L1 in English lessons. Students feel more at ease in class when L1 is utilized due to their incapacity to understand and implement English instructions.

The teachers believed that L1 was utilized for instructional purposes in addition to grammatical and vocabulary clarification. This study is parallel with studies of (Adil, 2019; Kaymakamoğlu & Yıltanlılar, 2019) which stated that using L1 in EFL classes was beneficial in terms of making unclear grammar rules and structures as well as abstract vocabulary more understandable and meaningful for EFL learners. According to the study's findings, students thought teachers ought to use L1 in a way that increased students' English learning capacity. Using L1 improves students' metalinguistic awareness as well as their understanding and language talents (Kaymakamoğlu & Yıltanlılar, 2019). Lower levels, in particular, may be able to discriminate between their L1 and the TL, as well as recognize similar utterances with L1. This might be due to their weak English proficiency and difficulty grasping complex topics and concepts without an explanation in their own language. Surprisingly, the data analysis revealed that students valued teachers' use of L1 to help and feel more at ease and confident. They wanted their teachers to utilize L1 in order to be more at ease and confident in class.

Furthermore, the students rated the quantity of L1 usage well. They did not appear to support its excessive use. They did not discount the significance of L2 exposure. They thought that in order to communicate in English, they needed as much exposure to the

language as possible. Despite the fact that students thought L1 were useful and beneficial in the English classroom, they were aware that overuse might stymie their English language progress. According to student interviews, teachers should use L1 as little as possible. They argued that teachers should only use L1 when students have difficulty comprehending English.

4.2.3 The Consistency of Teachers' Views with the Student's Views

According to data analysis, students and teachers were enthusiastic about employing L1 in L2 situations in their English learning and teaching. The overall positive views about L1 usage revealed that students' grasp of L1 was helpful in English learning. It demonstrated how teachers utilized L1 as a resource in teaching aids and as a facilitator in English learning. They felt that using L1 was essential since the student's English language competence level was insufficient to absorb English.

Similarly, teachers believe that L1 helps students grasp and master complicated grammar teachings and abstract concepts. Such assistance may go a long way toward building a pleasant L2 communication environment, which stimulates class participation and learning. Furthermore, students acknowledge that they utilize L1 because they think they are not proficient enough in English to do so, and it helps them comprehend and learn English. This demonstrates how the L1 might act as a linguistic "scaffold" for students who are unable to understand English without the L1.

The teacher has a difficult time communicating with students in primary school since they have poor vocabulary. It has also been shown that when the teacher teaches in the student's first language, the pupils grasp and follow the lesson more readily. Misunderstanding the meaning of a word, according to the findings, may hinder students' ability to understand and follow their teacher's instructions. When pupils are unable to respond in English, using L1 allows them to communicate with the teacher more effortlessly. They may also ask questions in L1 when seeking clarification. As a result, the perspectives of students and teachers on the usage of L1 in English teaching are relatively consistent. Researchers such as (Marsella, 2020; Perdani, 2021) revealed that learners' L1 utilized as a resource in the foreign language classroom to give explanations of confusing English topics, but its overuse resulted in overreliance, which was a less desired outcome.

5. Conclusion

This study explores students' and teachers' perspectives on the role of L1 use in the EFL classroom. The study reports that the L1 role influences the English language learning and teaching process. The study backs up prior studies suggesting L1 can be a cognitive help for EFL learners by scaffolding their practice to meet learning objectives, improving students' understanding, and assisting in the formation of a conducive learning environment. The findings recall students' cognitive reactions, such as comparing two languages, drawing connections between English and Afan Oromo, and quickly acquiring new words. The data also reveal that L1 usage is critical for students with low English proficiency.

Furthermore, students should inevitably utilize L1 during the learning process, and teachers use L1 in the classroom to help students learn. The findings show that teachers have comparable perspectives, suggesting that employing the L1 in the English classroom in a confined sense does not reduce students' exposure to English, but rather can benefit the teaching and learning processes. Students and teachers agree that students with lower levels of competency need more Afan Oromo in the classroom. In general, both teachers'

and students' perspectives align in this study on the affective filter, which prove to be lower when Afan Oromo is used in the EFL classroom. Teachers believe that they use L1 as a bridging aid for students in the classroom since L1 assists L2 students with effective aspects of learning, such as reducing language anxiety when faced with second language difficulties. According to the findings, it is recommended to use L1 in a principled, directed, and intentional manner, as unguided usage and unsystematized practice of L1 may impede the achievement of desired goals in English teaching and learning. Furthermore, further research is necessary particularly on L1 for students with lower ability levels in a primary school EFL context.

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