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## L1 AS A MEANS OF MOTIVATION IN TEACHING YOUNG (1-4 GRADES) EFL LEARNERS

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### ABSTRACT

*The place of mother tongue (L1), the Karakalpak language in this case, has been an argument in ELT history for ages. While some teachers see L1 as a block before learning foreign language (L2) and strictly avoid using the native tongue in language teaching, on the other side the others consider using L1 as a reference and believe in the contribution of the native language in the acquisition of the target language. This paper reviews the literature on using L1 in the teaching of L2 and by analyzing the attitudes of English teachers in the use of L1, comments on the findings from the interviews. Moreover, young learners and their motivation will be discussed in this article. The results of the research show the specific ways ELT teachers prefer using L1, which breaks the psychological barriers and concludes that the use of L1 creates a low anxiety atmosphere for both the learners and the teachers.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Young EFL Learners, Motivation, Use Of L1*

### INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of mastering L2 depends not only on the pupil's strategy, but also on the teaching strategy. An important factor helping to achieve this goal is to increase the effectiveness of the teacher's pedagogical impact on pupils, their communication in the lesson in conditions of complete social and psychological compatibility.

Taking into account that English is taught from the first grade, we aimed to analyze the use of L1 in foreign language lessons, which we considered to be one of the ways to stimulate interest in learning a new language.

When pupils reach this level, their mental processes begin to become more analytical and logical. They will begin to see patterns in their own language and develop language awareness during the next two to three years. They need opportunities to choose and decide on actions, to investigate, explore, and be curious, to be encouraged to ask questions in order to figure things out, to participate in activities that help them focus and pay attention in order to develop memory and concentration skills, and to participate in activities that reinforce concepts and allow them to practice speaking skills. They look for answers to the questions "What" and "Why." However, reading and writing will almost certainly be limited in English. At this age, pupils are still learning how to construct characters and words in their native language. We can do more with this group than we can with the pre-school age group on this level. We'll be capable of leading them into more independent tasks, such as collage creating or design, in which they can work alone or in small groups. While it's important to maintain firm control, our function is to monitor and facilitate. Give learners at this age the opportunity to show you what they can achieve, always in a supportive environment and with lots of praise.

Cameron (2001) defines young learners as youngsters under the age of 14, but Rixon (1999) defined them as children between the ages of 5 and 12. Young age is one of the key elements in language acquisition success. The reasons for this are that the brain is more flexible before puberty than after, and language acquisition can happen without self-consciousness at a young age, as well as the fact that young learners have more possibilities than adult learners. Young learners learn L1 by immersing themselves in it, making meaning of what they hear, and socializing with adults (parents, family, and teachers) as well as their peers. Young learners are also capable of learning many languages, and some of them are multilingual as a result of their families speaking to them in numerous languages.

They have a natural desire to actively participate in the social environment around them, which supports their learning of new languages. Young learners, according to Harmer (2001), respond to meaning even if they don't understand particular words. In addition, they frequently learn indirectly rather than directly.

Considering the opinions above, the teachers should focus on varied and interesting activities that involve children in the activities. It is also important to use teaching methods that attract pupils' attention and motivate them to learn.

Formation of motivation of learning at school age without exaggeration can be called one of the Central and fundamental problems of modern school, as well as the problem of both domestic and foreign psychology. Its importance is associated with the analysis of the sources of human activity, the motivating forces of his activity, behavior.

The issue of motivation has particular importance, precisely at the initial stage of education, since the foundations for children to be able and willing to learn are laid in primary school age.

Motivation is an inner psychological characteristic of a person that finds expression in external manifestations, in a person's attitude to the world around him, and various types of activity.

In my experience as a teacher of young pupils, they require stimulation from the beginning to the end of the lesson. Something must be going on in the classroom from the moment they walk in until the moment they leave. This is partly due to the fact that our pupils at this age are less goal-oriented. There is no way to predict the future or determine whether or not their English is improving. Young learners at this age are often unable to see beyond the task they are currently engaged in thus teachers must create immediate motivation. This inspiration must come from the current task that we are working on as a class.

As a result, we must include a fun element in our classes in order for learners at this level to appreciate what they are doing. As we said in our analysis of young learners earlier, will like being challenged within their ability range, but they will learn more if they enjoy what they are doing.

Well, how can we motivate children to learn a foreign language using their L1?

Language teachers have been debating whether they should use L1 in L2 in their teaching. Some professors believe that L1 should not be allowed in order to expose pupils to the target language, while others believe that L1 should be allowed under certain circumstances. There have been various researches on how L1 is used in the classroom for example, explaining difficult concepts, checking comprehension, raising confidence, explaining the purpose of language learning activities, error analysis, and vocabulary clarification. The findings revealed that pupils at lower levels are more likely to accept the usage of L1, but pupils at higher levels have a negative attitude toward L1 in the classroom.

Harmer (2002) asserts that learners use their L1 when choosing tasks that are not compatible with their target language level. It is natural for them to use L1 to communicate, whereas teachers do not create situations that make them use L2 naturally. According to Papamihiel (2001), L1 has aided in the learning of L2 abilities in the sense that the use of the former facilitates the acquisition of the latter.

When I observe English lessons in school, I pay attention to how much the teacher uses L1. The most common uses of L1 are: specific vocabulary - in this case, pupils often ask for the meaning or translation of an unfamiliar word, explain grammar, give instructions, organize goals and test comprehension. While in certain circumstances, such as when an unfamiliar word arose, pupils requested the teacher for a translation, which usually resulted in a brief explanation in L1. The teachers did, on occasion, spend a minute or two in L1 explaining the meaning of a word or an expression.

Based on the above considerations, we believe that the use of L1 in English lessons in the primary period will give good results in the future. Let's just say, a task contains the word "a dog" and a teacher gives this dog a name in his or her native language, for example "Aqtirnaq" (White claws). First of all, if a child hears familiar words used in the family, on the street and among the friends during the lesson, it increases interest as well as motivation to learn foreign language. Secondly, teaching young learners the words that are vanishing from our native language in this way, will help us to preserve our language.

Should we use the pupils' L1 in the classroom, or not? This is one of the most controversial topics among EFL teachers, with both advantages and disadvantages. The main argument against the use of L1 in language teaching is that pupils will become reliant on it and would stop trying

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to acquire meaning from context and explanation, or express themselves in the target language despite their weak command of L2.

However, there are a few circumstances in which we can use the pupil's mother tongue, such as when there is a lack of communication or a complete misunderstanding, because it can save time spent on ineffective explanations and instructions that could be better spent on language practice.

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