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English as Additional Language Teaching: A Comparison of Policy and Practice in Estonia and Catalonia. Challenges and Opportunities of Introducing the Principles of Plurilingual Pedagogies in Public Schools

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Abstract

This research compares English as an additional language (AL) teaching policy and practice in public secondary schools in Estonia and Catalonia, with a focus on the commonness of the use of plurilingual pedagogies in English lessons. Given the complex and not always welcoming attitude towards the use of Russian in Estonian schools, and the use of Spanish in Catalan schools, the research asks if public policy and English teachers are informed by the potential benefits of involving s L1-s and other plurilingual strategies in teaching English as AL. The research was conducted using three research tools: comparative policy analysis, semi-structured interviews and surveys. The main findings show that the plurilingual approach has been widely introduced in the public policy of Catalonia while it is thoroughly absent in the language policy of Estonia. There isn't, however, a direct correlation between policy and practice as neither the teachers nor the students of either cases were familiar with or actively putting into practice the principles of plurilingual pedagogies.

Key words: English as AL, plurilingual pedagogies, secondary education, public school

Resum

Aquesta recerca compara la política i la pràctica de l'ensenyament de l'anglès com a llengua addicional (AL) en l'escola pública secundària a Estònia i a Catalunya, centrant-se en la popularitat dels usos de les pedagogies plurilingües a les classes d'anglès. Atesa la complexa i no sempre benvinguda actitud envers l'ús del rus a les escoles d'Estònia, i l'ús del castellà a les escoles de Catalunya, la recerca busca respostes a la pregunta de si la política pública i els professors d'anglès estan informats sobre els potencials beneficis d'incloure les L1-s i altres estratègies plurilingües per ensenyar l'anglès com a AL. En aquesta investigació, s'han utilitzat tres eines de recerca: l'anàlisi comparatiu de les polítiques públiques; entrevistes semiestructurades i enquestes. Els principals resultats demostren que l'aproximació plurilingüe ha estat àmpliament introduïda en les polítiques públiques de Catalunya, mentre que és totalment absent en els documents d'Estònia. Malgrat això, no s'ha trobat cap correlació entre la política i la pràctica, ja que ni els professors ni els estudiants de cap dels dos casos estaven familiaritzats ni posaven en pràctica els principis de les pedagogies plurilingües.

Paraules clau: anglès com a llengua addicional, pedagogies plurilingües, educació secundària, escola pública

Kokkuvõte

Käesolev magistritöö võrdleb inglise keele kui võõrkeele (AL) õpetamise poliitikat ja praktikat Eesti ja Kataloonia avalikes põhikoolides, keskendudes mitmikkeelsete õppemeetodite kasutusele inglise keele tundides. Arvestades, et vene keele kasutus Eesti koolides ja hispaania keele kasutus Kataani koolides ei ole üldjoontes soositud, küsime kuivõrd informeeritud on mõlema piirkonna riiklik poliitika ja õpetajaskond emakeelte ja mitmikkeelsete strateegiate kasutamise kasuteguritest inglise keele kui võõrkeele tundides. Uurimuse läbiviimiseks kasutati kolme uurimismeetodit: riikliku poliitika võrdlevat analüüsi, osaliselt struktureeritud intervjuusid ja küsitlusi. Uurimuse tulemused näitasid, et mitmikkeelsed õppemeetodid on laialdaselt tunnustatud Kataloonia riiklikus poliitikas, kuid Eesti keelepoliitikas on sellel olematu roll. Samas pole keelepoliitika ja praktika selles küsimuses erilises seoses, kuivõrd mitmikkeelsusest polnud teadlikud ei Kataloonia ega Eesti õpetajad ega õpilased.

Märksõnad: inglise keel kui võõrkeel, mitmikkeelsed õppemeetodid, põhikooli haridus, avalik haridussüsteem

Resumen

Esta investigación compara la política pública y la práctica de la enseñanza del inglés como lengua adicional (AL) en la escuela pública secundaria en Estonia y Cataluña, centrándose los usos de las pedagogías plurilingües en las clases de inglés. Dado el complejo y no siempre bienvenido uso del ruso en las escuelas de Estonia, y del uso del castellano en las escuelas de Cataluña, esta investigación busca respuestas a la pregunta de si la política pública y los profesores de inglés están informados sobre los beneficios de las estrategias plurilingües para enseñar inglés como lengua adicional. Tres herramientas de investigación fueron utilizadas para realizar este trabajo: el análisis comparativo de las políticas públicas, entrevistas semiestructuradas y encuestas. Los resultados principales demostraron que la aproximación plurilingüe ha sido ampliamente introducida en las políticas públicas de Cataluña, mientras es totalmente ausente en la política lingüística de Estonia. A pesar de ello, no hubo una correlación entre la política y la práctica, dado que ni los profesores ni los estudiantes de ninguno de los dos casos fueron familiarizados ni ponían en práctica los principios de las pedagogías plurilingües.

Palabras clave: inglés como idioma adicional, pedagogías plurilingües, educación secundaria, escuela pública

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1. Introduction

1.1.   Presentation, contextualization and justification of the research

Drawing on recent research outcomes that highlight the benefits of using plurilingual activities in additional languages (henceforth AL) lessons to improve students' language acquisition as well as to enhance their communicative competences through cross-cultural skills and knowledge (Cummins, 2007; Cummins et. al., 2005; González-Davies, 2021; Wilson and González-Davies, 2016; Wichser-Krajcik, 2021), this study asks if the use of plurilingual pedagogies is promoted by the state institutions through their policy and whether these are used in Estonian and Catalonian public schools' English lessons. Contextually, it focuses on one public school of Barcelona that is characterized by having a large number of students from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. In Tartu, Estonia, the research focuses on a public school that has several Russian speaking students in addition to those who define their L1 as Estonian. Given the complex and not always welcoming attitude towards the use of Russian in Estonian schools (cf. Branchadell, 2011; Rannut, 2004), and the non-favoured use of Spanish in Catalan schools (Erdocia, 2020), the research asks if there is currently a change in the policy and teaching practices of English as AL; namely if teachers are aware of the potential benefits of involving students' L1 and other additional languages for teaching English and if students would welcome such practice.

The research is motivated by the author's own personal connection with both educational contexts that are analysed in this study. A significant event that raised my interest towards this question was the beginning of Russia's war against Ukraine in February 2022 which, as of June 2022, has resulted in the arrival of more than 40 000 Ukrainian refugees to Estonia. More than 1700 of them are children who have the right to public education (United Nations, 1989). This is an unprecedented situation for the Estonian public education system and it raises questions of how will the recently arrived migrants' L1-s be perceived and dealt with in the school system. Beyond providing newcomers with Estonian lessons to enhance their integration into the Estonian society, will there be any recognition of the value of their own L1-s (mostly Ukrainian and Russian), especially taking into account that Russian speakers make up almost a quarter of the Estonian population, yet the language has not achieved an official status nor prestige during the country's 30-year independence period.

Even though the research does not aim to provide any cutting edge solutions to these questions, these inquiries are timely because the implementation of plurilingual pedagogies for English as AL teaching has not been studied in the Estonian context, which is why it hopes to shed light on the possible benefits it might have especially in a demographically and sociolinguistically quickly changing environment. A comparative study between the Estonian and Catalonian educational system seemed to be especially useful since the latter already has some experience both in introducing plurilingual pedagogies and in integrating newly arrived students, be it through immersion (e.g. *aules d'acollida*) or other programs. The comparison is also advantageous because the L1 language context is somewhat similar in Estonia and Catalonia where both have suffered from the invasion of a bigger, dominant language in the last century (cf. Skerrett, 2008), for which conservationist attitudes might play a role in the overall education and language policies. The comparative approach thus aims to discuss the pros and cons of both educational systems, especially regarding their involvement of students' L1-s and other plurilingual strategies for teaching English as an additional language.

1.2. Research objectives

The stated objectives of the research are as follows:

1.   To investigate how plurilingual pedagogies are conceived at the institutional level, that is, in policy documents that define its meaning and use in the public education system of Catalonia and Estonia.

2.   To investigate if and how plurilingual pedagogies are implemented for teaching English as AL in public schools of Catalonia and Estonia, putting special focus on the use of minority and heritage languages in both contexts.

3.   To study teachers' perceptions of the use and usefulness of plurilingual activities for English teaching to develop proficiency as well as other communicative skills and strategies.

4.   To study students' perception of the use and usefulness of plurilingual activities for the acquisition of English as well as for developing other communicative skills and strategies.

2. Theoretical framework: from monolingual to plurilingual pedagogies. Shifting goals and principles

In recent years, a growing body of literature has been published on multilingual and plurilingual teaching approaches, arising from the need to provide alternatives to monolingual teaching in sociolinguistic contexts that are increasingly more diverse and plurilingual. Leaving aside multilingualism, in this research I focus and adhere to Wichser-Krajcik's (2021: 9-10) definition of plurilingual pedagogies:

> Plurilingualism emphasizes linguistic repertoires and plurilingual language competencies, language synthesis and code-switching, and multi/pluriculturalism. In plurilingualism, a student's entire linguistic repertoire is considered and developed—including uneven or partial skills in a language.

Plurilingual pedagogies are thus a set of strategies, practices and activities that allow students to learn new additional languages while putting into practice knowledge obtained from and through the use of other languages. Key scholars, such as Jim Cummins (2007) and Maria González-Davies (2021) have argued for rethinking the dominant, monolingual instruction strategies in mostly plurilingual classrooms since they obstruct the evolvement of what is a natural plurilingual environment. The monolingual classroom phenomenon among plurilingual students has been criticized as something that "denies students a valuable, naturally accessible learning resource" (Wilson and González-Davies, 2016: 3). As such, monolingual strategies

> …obstruct not only the use of these [plurilingual] learning strategies to acquire new languages but also the possibility of connecting worldviews in the classroom and, so, have indirectly promoted a segregation of identities and a lack of interest in classmates' cultural backgrounds, thus missing a golden opportunity to share, understand, and develop on-site plurilingual and intercultural competences that are crucial for 21st-century citizens González-Davies, 2021: 2).

In contrast, the implementation of plurilingual strategies, methods and activities have been recommended for enhancing the acquisition of additional languages as well as other communicative competences that are relevant for current day citizens. Arguing in favor of bilingual and plurilingual strategies, Cummins' studies (Cummins et. al. 2005; Cummins, 2007) have shown that as a general principle, giving instructions should not be done only in the target language since using students' L1-s provides a lot of teaching and learning opportunities. It has also been argued

that plurilingual classes typically increase levels of participation and student engagement as they often require that students take an active role in their learning (Wichser-Krajcik, 2021). As such, they are also more engaging and inclusive.

Cummins' stance is that if students' prior knowledge is encoded in their L1, then their L1 is clearly relevant to their learning even when instruction is done through the medium of L2 (Cummins, 2007). Allowing the use of students' L1 can therefore acknowledge and promote two-way cross-language transfer (Cummins, 2007), that is, knowledge obtained in one language to be transferred to the other and vice versa. Using students' L1 is thus important for unravelling their prior knowledge, which is essential for acquiring new knowledge by connecting it to earlier notions. Cummins makes a point that especially in earlier stages of language acquisition when students' prior knowledge is strongly encoded in their L1, the L1 is relevant to their learning even when instructions are given through the target language. That is to say, even if the teacher uses the target language for explaining the class, a welcoming posture toward students' use of their L1 will enhance their learning process by activating prior knowledge in the L1 which can then be translated into the target language.

Subsequently, drawing on the work of Herdina and Jessner (2002, cited in Cummins, 2007), Cummins argues that there is evidence that the presence of one or more language systems influences the development not only of the target language but also the development of the overall multilingual system, including the L1. This means that students might not only improve their target language skills through the implementation of plurilingual activities, but also their own L1. With that, Cummins refers to plurilingual activities' potential to not only train proficient target language speakers, but also improve students' overall linguistic competences, such as punctuation or narrative skills. González-Davies (2021) adds to this that the use of plurilingual tasks, especially translation, can also improve aspects such as the cognitive competences, e.g. the efficient use of lower- and higher-order thinking skills, high-level (meta)cognitive proficiency, and the control of language interference.

Regarding plurilingual activities, Cummins (2007) advocates the use of bilingual dictionaries and the writing of identity texts which promote identity investment among both majority and minority students in bilingual/immersion programs. He also recommends implementing other type of translation activities from or to students' L1 since these have been well associated with higher linguistic awareness and pride in bilingualism, "particularly for minority bilingual children whose home language is not valued by the majority culture" (Malakoff and Hakuta, 1991: 163, cited in Cummins, 2007: 227). Other practices of plurilingualism, such as translanguaging, grammaring or

codeswitching have also been discussed and recommended by different scholars (Wichser-Krajcik, 2021; Macaro, 2001) who advocate their use with arguments similar to those of Cummins and González-Davies.

One of the key points of these arguments is the idea of identity investment being enhanced by paying attention to L1-s especially if they are minority or heritage languages. This is especially relevant for the present study since its target group are students within the age of 15-17 years, that is, adolescents who are in a full process of identity formation and the recognition of their home language and culture is an important part of it. Regarding this issue, González-Davies (2021) showed through a study in schools of high complexity in Catalonia that in cases where students were not proficient in their L1 because of its lack of prestige or because the parents put little emphasis on its acquisition, plurilingual activities that promoted investigating and discovering aspects of students' L1 had a positive impact on these students' identity-building. This was largely achieved by acknowledging and connecting the speakers to their L1 through activities in English lessons that involved the use of students' L1-s.

While Cummins and González-Davies have both highlighted the positive outcomes of implementing plurilingual teaching strategies, there have also been more critical views of their use. Wichser-Krajcik (2021) has admitted that the goals and outcomes of plurilingual activities might be hard to measure which makes setting learning objectives complicated. One of the central practices of plurilingual strategies –codeswitching between the L1 and the target language (TL) has been seen to undermine the TL learning process (Chambers, 1991) and the frequent use of L1 has often been adverted as something that cuts down on the exposure to L2 (Cook, 1991, cited in Macaro, 2001: 532). Focusing on the implementation of plurilingual strategies in Catalan schools, Erdocia (2020) criticized that activities such as translanguaging might not always be well thought-through strategies, but rather "opportunistic invocations of internationally fashionable education trends" that do not necessarily favour students' language acquisition. However, it must be noted that his writing was more critical of the Catalan education policies' half-hearted intents of promoting the use of plurilingual strategies, and not so much of its actual implementation in public schools.

The majority of these critical notes have been answered by Wichser-Krajcik's guidelines (2021) on the use of what she calls plurilingual pedagogies, which I have adopted for this research. I will now draw on her paper to sum up and outline the dimensions and objectives of plurilingual pedagogies in order to specify the elements that were relevant for designing the interview questionnaire and surveys for this research.

Drawing on Pinho and Andrade (2009: 315, cited in Wichser-Krajcik, 2021: 10-11), the dimensions and objectives of plurilingual pedagogies are to:

- highlight the development of linguistic and communicative knowledge and skills

- value learners' previous knowledge and understanding

- prepare students for language use in social situations

- see language learning as a life-long process of development

…while the broader aims of plurilingual pedagogies according to Boeckmann (2012: 267, cited in Wichser-Krajcik, 2021: 11-12) are:

- developing interest in and respect for languages and cultures

- increasing motivation and engagement for language learning as it will better reflect language use in the real world

- being inclusive of learners with different proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds

- sharing linguistic and cultural knowledge in the classroom

Finally, Wichser-Krajcik argues that teachers and policymakers must equally mentalize that the main objectives of additional language learning have shifted with plurilingual language learning strategies because "in plurilingualism, the goal of achieving native-like proficiency has been replaced with the goal of developing a repertoire of communicative skills and strategies (Ellis, 2016; Lin, 2013, cited in Wichser-Krajcik, 2021: 86).

Drawing on these renovated dimensions and aims of additional language learning, in the next section I will explain the methodological design of this research to show how the theoretical ideas were combined with research questions and surveys that helped investigate teachers' use of plurilingual strategies and students' perception of it.

3. Methodology

3.1. Procedure

This thesis was methodologically designed to be carried out using three different instruments. First, a qualitative comparison of the education policy in Estonia and Catalonia was carried out to

focus on the existence or lack of guidelines and policy actions that favour the use of plurilingual activities in AL teaching. This was carried out between January and May 2022 to provide the researcher with knowledge on the policy perspective in both contexts. Secondly, semi-structured, qualitative interviews were held with one English teacher from the Estonian system and one from the Catalan public school system, to learn about their teaching practices and whether they have heard of and implemented plurilingual pedagogies in their lessons. These interviews were held in April and May 2022, once the theoretical framework of the dissertation had been finalized, which allowed making questions that were informed both by theory and policy. The last stage of data collection consisted of surveying 9th grade / 4th of ESO students in both countries to learn about their own willingness and disposition of doing plurilingual activities in the English lessons. These were done in the second half of May, after conducting interviews with the respondents' English teachers.

Regarding the methodological approach, the study used mixed methods; policy analysis and interviews being of qualitative character and the survey of a quantitative nature. While quantitative methods allow having a bigger sample and thus to represent a wider range of opinions, qualitative research methods depart from the perspective that each person actively constructs an individual reality out of his or her own particular experiences and that the reality is shaped by interactions with other people (Cropley, 2002). I hereby acknowledge that my role as a researcher was active in terms of creating and attributing meaning to data and therefore the interpretation of it corresponded to my subjective perceptions which aimed to offer a version of the experienced reality that would be as loyal as possible to the context in which the knowledge was produced (Pink, 2009).

3.2. Participants

The research participants were recruited by reaching out to teachers who I already knew and who put me in contact with candidates that fulfilled the criterion of being secondary school English teachers in public schools. At the time of the interview (28 April 2022), Teacher 1 (T1) was 27 years old and had three years of experience as an English teacher; she had been hired in the school that she worked in at the time of the interview in mid-autumn, when the school year had already started. She accessed the teaching career through *Noored Kooli* [Teach for All] which is a state-funded program that aims to attract young people to become teachers by taking a 2-year practical

course. She was teaching two groups of 9th graders, both of them had 19 students; the majority of them have Estonian as their L1, but in both groups there were also 3-4 students whose L1 is Russian. The school where T1 worked is a public primary and secondary school which does not include the high school part. It is located in the district of Annelinn, Tartu, which, as the interviewee framed, is the "Russian part of the town", meaning it has a high number of Russian-speaking inhabitants and it is generally perceived as a lower-middle income area. The informant did not provide any more details on the socioeconomic profiles of the students.

Teacher 2 (T2) was 38 years old and had eight years of experience; however, she has mainly been working as a history teacher. She entered the school where she worked at the time of the interview (5 May 2022) with a temporary, 2-week substitution contract in January 2022, but finally covered the position until the end of the course in June 2022. She taught three groups of 4th of ESO at the time of the interview; in two of these groups she admitted to have a lot of socioeconomic and linguistic diversity, including Catalan, Arabic, Finnish, Italian and French as students' home languages. The school is located in the district of Ciutat Vella, Barcelona, which is a lower-middle income area that is characterized by a high number of migrant (both European and non-European) population. It is a secondary and high school that tends to have relatively small ratios; also, up until 2021 it was categorized as a high complexity school.[1]
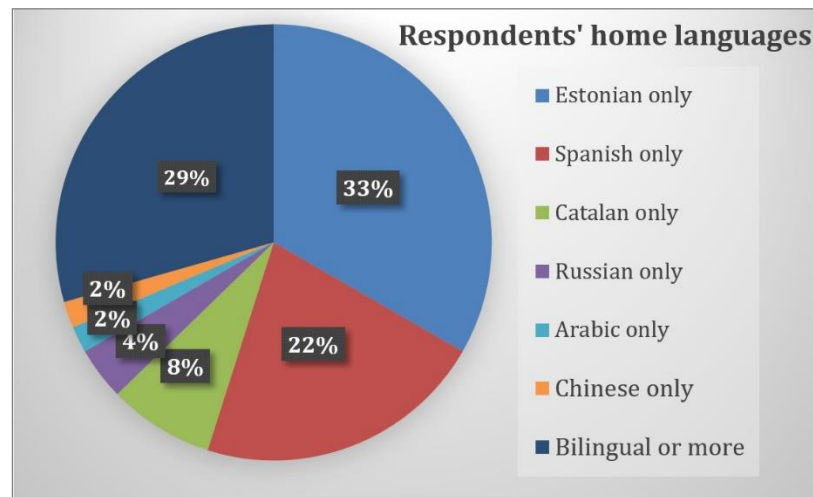
Figure 1. Respondents' home languages. Source: Author.

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[1] In Catalonia, the classification of high complexity schools [centres de màxima complexitat] which is normally given to educational centers that have a big range of students either with behavioral problems, who come from dysfunctional families, have diagnosed medical issues, and tend to have a high number of migrant students. The state provides these schools with extra resources in terms of psycho-pedagogical personnel and physical materials.

Regarding the participants of the survey, they were aged 15-17 and they were all students of 4th of ESO in the Catalonian school or 9th graders in the Estonian school. Out of the total amount of respondents 49% were male, 45% female, and 6% preferred not to reveal their gender. A total of 12 L1-s were mentioned, 36 of the respondents claimed to speak only one language at home, 15 of them combined two or three of them in the domestic environment. Out of the 24 respondents from the Estonian school, 17 spoke only Estonian and 2 spoke only Russian at home while the rest spoke a mix of various languages, including Russian and English. Out of the 27 respondents from the Catalonian school, 11 claimed to only use Spanish, 4 of them only Catalan, and the rest spoke Arabic or Chinese only, or varied between two to three languages at home.

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. Language policy analysis

Policy analysis generally consists of a systematic, empirical study of documents that are likely to influence practitioners in their design and implementation of their professional tasks. It can include institutional documents such as laws, special decrees and reports, as well as non-institutional resources like interviews, speeches or opinion articles (cf. Erdocia, 2020). Here, I adhere to the critical language policy (CLP) stance that, rather than being neutral, "acknowledges that policies often create and sustain various forms of social inequality, and that policy-makers usually promote the interests of dominant social groups" (Tollefson, 2006: 42, cited in Johnson, 2011: 268). CLP is often performed using critical discourse analysis (CDA) which enables a vigorous assessment of what is meant when language is used to describe and explain something. In this study, CDA was used to conduct the policy analysis. The procedural framework of CDA can be consulted in Appendix 1; it was designed following Mullet's (2018: 7) original diagram which was slightly modified and adapted to the characteristics of the current study.

3.3.2. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews normally consist of a fixed set of questions but allow a certain amount of spontaneous questions to be added, which makes them particularly flexible and accessible because they allow interviewees to "provide responses in their own terms and in the way that they think and use language" (Qu and Duqay, 2011: 246). There were 18 core questions that were written, drawing on the theoretical chapter of this dissertation. One of the interviews was performed online, using the Zoom video conferencing platform, and the second one was done face to face, in the premises of the school where the interviewee works. Both interviewees were told about the aims of the research prior to the interview, as well as about my intention to hold a survey among their students. In the beginning of the interview, oral consent to record their voice and to use their answers for the research were asked with the condition that their names and the school where they worked would be anonymised. Both interviews were recorded and transcribed word by word, and thematically analysed afterwards. The full list of interview questions can be consulted in Appendix 2; the transcriptions of the two interviews can be found under Appendix 3 and 4.

3.3.3. Online surveys

The online surveys were designed using Google Forms as both interviewees confirmed that their students were familiar with its functioning. Except for the age and gender, the survey required no personal information that could make the respondent identifiable. It consisted of 13 questions of different types: single-answer (9), open-ended (3) and a matrix question (1). Most of the questions overlapped or were derived from the interview questions in order to study the same aspects from both the teachers' and the students' perspective. The link to the survey was first given to the teachers so that they could review the questions and ask me to make changes in case they considered the questionnaire to be too complex. Also, following the petition of both teachers, the survey was written fully in English and the students were encouraged to write their answers in English, even though they were also allowed to use Estonian, Catalan or Spanish if it allowed them to express themselves better. The whole questionnaire can be consulted as Appendix 5.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Policy analysis: plurilingualism in language policy documents

Resources from the Catalan Education System		
Document title	Nature of the document	Recognition of plurilingualism
A. Departament d'Educació, Generalitat de Catalunya (2015). Competències bàsiques de l'àmbit lingüístic.[2]	Legally binding; teachers practicing in Catalonia must design their curriculums and evaluation criteria following the competences outlined in this document.	Yes
B. Departament d'Educació, Generalitat de Catalunya (2018). The language model of the Catalan education system. Language learning and use in a multilingual and multicultural educational environment.	The document consists of recommendable guidelines that are not, however, represented in the law.	Yes, in depth, including theoretical and methodological guidelines.
Resources from the Estonian Education System		
C. Vabariigi Valitus (20111). 6. jaanuar 2011. Põhikooli riiklik õppekava.[3]	Legally binding regulation: teacher practice in Estonia must design their curricula and evaluation criteria following the competences outlined in this document.	No
D. Vabariigi Valitus (2009). Haridus- ja teadusministri käskkiri 13. märts 2009 nr 186 Lisa 1 Eesti võõrkeelte strateegia 2009–2015[4]	An official directive which is not, however, legally binding.	No
E. Haridus- ja teadusministeerium (2018). Eesti keelevaldkonna arengukava 2018-2027. Keel loob väärtust.[5]	Strategy plan that has no legally binding character.	No

Table 1. Policy analysis resources. Source: Author.

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[2] Department of Education, The Government of Catalonia (2015). Basic competences of the linguistic field.
[3] The Government of Estonia (2011). 6 January 2011. The National Curriculum of Upper Secondary School.
[4] The Government of Estonia (2009). Decree of the Ministry of Education and Science. 13 March 2009 no 186 Appendix 1. The Strategy of Foreign Languages in Estonia 2009-2015.
[5] Ministry of Education and Science (2018). The Development Plan of the Area of Languages 2018-2027. Language adds value.

A. Department of Education, Generalitat de Catalunya (2015). Competències bàsiques de l'àmbit linguistic

This 127-page document was published by the Department of Education of the Government of Catalonia and its goal is to establish and describe the basic and specific competences that students must acquire at the level of upper secondary school in the area of languages. Plurilingual strategies are clearly mentioned and recognized in the document, but they are not seen as a separate competence with its own evaluation criteria and system, but as a set of transversal skills that ought to be practiced throughout the education system, especially in the additional language lessons (Department of Education, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2015: 7).

The document provides a definition of what plurilingualism is in the words of the Department of Education, and why is it seen as necessary for the students:

> Plurilingualism is understood as the knowledge that an individual has of different languages, and it must be differentiated form multilingualism, which is the coexistence of more than one language in a determined society. With the plurilingual dimension, the individual develops a communicative skill that mobilizes all of the integrated linguistic experience in which the knowledge that the person has of different languages become interrelated and they interact in a determined cultural context (Ibid, 112)

In terms of skills, obtaining the plurilingual competence is seen as something vital for today's society where monolingualism is ever more infrequent; educational centres are thus expected to "guarantee for its students so that they could develop their capacities of personal, social and professional development" (Ibid, 112).

Finally, it is suggested that having plurilingual strategies is important as it allows local students to relate better to the situation of newcomer students by "getting closer to the experience of newcomer students and by sharing the difficulties they find when they begin learning in a new language" (Ibid, 112). As for the class activities and the language used by the teacher, the document makes it clear that the use of L1 and translating should be avoided, which goes somewhat against the research-based suggestions discussed in the previous theoretical chapter. It is stated that foreign language teachers must speak in the target language and not in any other languages to "optimize the results" (Ibid, 7). Similarly, translation should only occur in "some moments that require resolving difficult communicative situations or highlighting morphological and syntactic elements that are common in different languages" (Ibid, 113).

B. **Department of Education, Generalitat de Catalunya (2018). The language model of the Catalan education system. Language learning and use in a multilingual and multicultural educational environment.**

This is a 73-page document published by the Department of Education in 2018 which is three years after document A where plurilingualism as a transversal competence had already been introduced. It also discusses the benefits of the plurilingual approach and of the methodological concerns of its implementation, including aspects such as inclusivity.

As for its key contents, the aims of the plurilingual and intercultural model include aspects such as to reinforce the role of the Catalan language as the language of reference in the education system and encourage its use among students; develop students' ability to use their plurilingual skills to process information transmitted in different languages with the aim of building new knowledge; give greater presence in schools to the languages and cultures of students with other family languages; to promote their recognition, to emphasize their cultural and economic value, and to promote their educational integration (Department of Education, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2018: 14). It also highlights the importance of recognizing other family languages, their cultural and economic value, and the importance of promoting their educational integration. The latter principles are in accordance with some of the ideas discussed by Cummins (2007), González-Davies (2021), and Wichser-Krajcik (2021) who defend the plurilingual approach for the social benefits it might have on the students.

Importantly, the document states that schools are obliged to offer students with different home languages the opportunity of involving them through different activities that might be twinning or access to cultural products, films and the like in their original languages, which should lead to the effective improvement of student plurilingualism (Department of Education, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2018: 19). Nevertheless, this is not supported by any reference to laws or decrees, and it is therefore just a suggestion. Finally, from a different perspective, the document also points out that the plurilingual language model can contribute to the internationalisation of the Catalan society and economy (Ibid, 55), which expresses a bigger political aim of the policy.

C. Vabariigi Valitsus (2011). 6. jaanuar 2011. Põhikooli riiklik õppekava

This is a 16-page directive that was first approved in 2011 and last modified in 2022 by the Government of Estonia. The document establishes the learning objectives and competences at upper secondary school level (until 9th grade), and the hours of lessons required to achieve them. The national education program defines three different categories of competences: general ones, competences regarding the subject field, and competences that correspond to the level of schooling. How exactly these competences are shaped and achieved must be described in each school's education program [Vabariigi Valitsus, 2022: § 4 (2), p. 3]. The directive does not mention pluri- or multilingualism; it is only stated that two foreign languages must be taught at the 3rd stage of upper secondary school (6th – 9th grade) and that by the end of 9th grade a student must be capable of expressing oneself in everyday situations in at least one foreign language, both in oral and in written form, and be able to read texts that are suitable for their age [Ibid, §11 (56), p.7].

D. Vabariigi Valitsus (2009). Haridus- ja teadusministri käskkiri 13. märts 2009 nr 186 Lisa 1. Eesti võõrkeelte strateegia 2009–2015

This is a 25-page ordinance that was published by the Ministry of Education and Science in 2009. It provides a 'state of the art' of foreign language learning opportunities and challenges in Estonia as of 2008 and it stablishes rather generic goals of improving Estonians' knowledge of foreign languages both at mandatory education level as well as in special educational centres and in workspaces. Pluri- or multilingualism are not mentioned despite there being an acknowledgement for the need of further cultural openness (Vabariigi Valitsus (2009: 7). The document is not focused on improving the foreign language knowledge of only upper secondary school students, but of all the Estonians which means that there are no specific indications regarding educational approaches or methods at upper secondary school level. Also, the document was published in 2008 and it might have therefore preceded many influences coming from posterior research on plurilingualism.

Regarding the main themes of the document, the importance of learning foreign languages is made especially clear from three main perspectives. Firstly, "an efficient foreign language policy" is seen to support "the country's foreign, interior, economic and cultural policies" as "good knowledge of foreign languages and the willingness to communicate at an international level helps increase Estonia's visibility and recognition in the whole world" (Ibid, 3). In second place, "knowledge of foreign languages" is seen to increase "individuals' economic activity and subsistence" parallel to

their "career opportunities: a better knowledge of languages improves professional mobility and the society's economic and social coherence" (Ibid, 7). In third place, it is estimated that knowledge of foreign languages can improve people's openness and tolerance towards other cultures:

> The analysis shows that a better knowledge and experience of using foreign languages brings further cultural openness and knowledge […] The social capital of individuals in different social groups will increase, and with it, the overall coherence and sustainability of the society will improve, the social differences in the society will decrease (Ibid, 7).

The presented utilitarian idea of foreign language knowledge as something beneficial for individuals' career opportunities and for the whole country's internationalisation and visibility is very indicative of Estonian political leadership of the late 2000s which was strongly marked by the agenda of the centre-right liberal reformist party (Reformierakond) who have been more famous for their economic ideas than for their concerns for social equity.

E. Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (2018). Eesti keelevaldkonna arengukava 2018-2027. Keel loob väärtust

This 26-page document was published by the Ministry of Education and Science and its aim is to establish a development plan of the use of languages in Estonia in the period of 2018-2027. Like document D, this one is also focused on the whole citizenry, and not just upper secondary school students. While it is mostly focused on the development and conservation of Estonian language, it also dedicates a section on the use of foreign languages. There is only very little dedicated to the teaching of foreign languages and plurilingualism as such is not mentioned. Something that did not appear in the other documents is a critical note on the insufficient number of foreign languages that Estonians know beyond English (Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium (2018: 7). Similarly, it points at the shortcomings of the educational inequalities between Estonian and Russian-speaking citizens:

> The integration and the learning of Estonian language of children with a different mother- or home language is affected by the surrounding linguistic environment, the motivation and the methodology applied for learning the language, the attitude towards the official language of the country and its speakers. Insufficient language knowledge limits the opportunities of higher education studies and career opportunities, and it is one of the main reasons why the income of people with a different home language remains below the average levels of Estonia (Ibid,11).

This document also lacks specific indications of how language acquisition could be improved at upper secondary school level, and what the exact approaches should be. Despite being a strategy

plan, it does not provide any concrete action points which means that the achievement and evaluation of the potential goals would be difficult to follow.

4.1.1. Summary of the policy analysis

The analysis has shown that in Estonia there is no equivalent strategy plan or statement of guidelines to document B in the Catalan case, which discusses plurilingualism in detail. What is more, there is no mention of plurilingualism in the Estonian language policy documents whatsoever, which is highly indicative of the lack of recognition of this approach at the level of policy making in Estonia. Apart from the three documents introduced in the methodology grid, other institutional documents and even university degree programs were consulted to find references to plurilingualism in the Estonian education system, but it did not appear. In fact, the concept of "mitmikkeelsus" which is equivalent to plurilingualism in Estonian was very difficult to be found anywhere in the dictionaries or education websites. This also answers part of the first research objective which asked how the meaning and use of plurilingual pedagogies are defined in language policy documents: plurilingualism as the coexistence and the parallel use of different languages is not a recognized concept in the language policy-making spheres of the Estonian education system or simply it has not been relevant in comparison to other questions.

In the Catalan context, plurilingualism has been clearly acknowledged in document A that establishes secondary school competences and in document B that frames the multilingual and multicultural education model of Catalonia. Both documents have been written in a more recent period when research on plurilingualism has advanced rapidly, which might be one of the reasons that explain the interest put on this topic. What is more, it is remarkable that both Catalan policy documents bring out that educational centres must provide students with other home languages the opportunities of putting those languages into practice through different activities. However, it is a different question if this actually happens in practice.

4.2. Interview analysis

Neither of the interviewees mentioned following any specific theory, methodology or approach in their teaching, and by no means was it inspired by the plurilingual approach. Mainly it was about

achieving some specific objectives, such as making students more acquainted to the English language and culture (teacher 2 in Catalonia, henceforth, T2), or preparing them for the exam that they have to take at the end of 9th grade (teacher 1 in Estonia, henceforth, T1). Both admitted that many students struggle to achieve the level of B1 by the end of the school year (which is a shared goal in both educational contexts), because the students' knowledge of English is very unequal. In the Estonian context, the weakest students were said to be the ones with Russian as L1; no such specification was done in the Catalan context.

Preparing activities and exams for the different levels was said to be the most time-consuming effort for both teachers. Regarding the use of L1-s, both respondents were generally convinced that students' maximum exposure to the target language benefits them the most, meaning that the use of Estonian or Catalan and Spanish ought to be avoided as much as possible. This conviction very much represents earlier scholars' unwelcoming stance on introducing other languages in the AL lessons, seeing codeswitching as something that undermines the learning process and cuts down the exposure to the target language (cf. Macaro, 2001). Despite their preference to always speak in English, doing so was often challenged by students' lack of comprehension. In this line, T1 described her negotiation between her own principles and the students' need for fully understanding the class contents:

> **T1:** So, I made it a point to speak in English. I tried to only speak English since the beginning. However, I have had to translate something sometimes for those weaker students sometimes, or when I go to speak one on one with them, then sometimes I use Estonian […] For me, it makes sense to use English, especially in 9th grade. Especially in the beginning, they really wanted to speak in Estonian whenever they could. And even simple things like saying yes or no or just asking a very simple question that I know they could ask in English and it didn't make sense to me. So, I always tried to speak in English, and I also really think it's important because my students need to be able to understand. They need to be able to listen and just hear English, be in the environment because otherwise the learning would be so much slower.
>
> **ML**: But do you feel like sometimes for giving instructions, especially for students that have a lower level, you might have to use Estonian or would you rather repeat it several times in English?
>
> **T1:** I would try to repeat it or make it more simple. I've had occasions where I speak and someone doesn't understand, someone from the students. They translate or they explain [the students], but sometimes I've had to still translate it. Maybe sometimes when it's even easier for me. Sometimes there are phrases, or I can't think of a good translation or something that doesn't really have a translation. So sometimes I do use it, but I try not to.

As seen from the excerpt, T1 is generally reluctant to translate into L1 and prefers repeating the same thing several times or making the oration simpler. T2 also finds herself from similar situations

where, despite her effort to always use the target language, she must switch to Catalan or Spanish to make sure that the students understand:

> **T2:** I try to speak all the time in English, even if I speak to them […] Sometimes when I talk to them or I explain something, the answer is like… okay, so I need to [use Catalan] because they don't really understand me.
>
> **ML:** In that specific situation, do you still prefer speaking in English first and then maybe translate it?
>
> **T2:** Sometimes I say "this word is in Catalan, how is it in English?" Is it this one? Sometimes I'm feeling [like] I'm explaining…I don't know, like if I was talking to students from primary school, it's like I need to, I don't know, to explain... for example: future simple. I need to explain things that are to me really simple. So, I need to use the language that they know and from the language they know go to English. Yeah, sometimes it works like that.

From the second answer of T2 it is important to highlight that when resorting to students' L1-s, she tries to activate the knowledge that they have obtained in L1 so that they could transfer it to the target language. This is representative of Cummins' (2007) idea of 'two-way cross-language transfer' whose benefits can arise when teachers acknowledge the knowledge encoded in students' L1-s, and free themselves from the exclusive reliance on monolingual instructional approaches (TL in this case), thereby opening positive learning opportunities.

Regarding the institutional instructions of using the plurilingual approach, T2 admitted never having received any indications on this question in the school where she works, nor through the wider education system. In fact, she admitted having received hardly any indications at all upon arrival and having a lot of freedom for designing the curriculum. T1 admitted that in her former school the head teacher had advised her not to always use English "because some of the students wouldn't understand and it would be really difficult."

As for introducing other languages in their English lessons, T1 said that she has done that a few times, but it has never been anything "systematic".

> **ML:** In the English lessons, have you ever brought examples from other languages, maybe to explain something or to make 'neural connections'?
>
> **T1:** Yeah, especially in the first year. I really had French in my mind, and I like languages and I like introducing other languages. And I've done, like, music quizzes of different languages and tried to explain where this group is [from]. And these are similar languages. And I have brought examples from French […] And when I did that, they also wanted me to say something in French because most of them have actually learned French as well. And so sometimes they do speak French because they study French. And I can reply in French, but it's not like it's something topical. Like we are learning the passive voice. And then they

say this and ask the question, it doesn't happen like this. It's more like this social side, not so systematic.

Like T1, the response of T2 also showed that her teaching practice is not completely alien to involving other languages in her English lessons, even though she can't always do that:

> I think I tried because I decided to introduce connections between languages and the English culture and the British Empire around the world and places that other countries that were connected to. I tried to introduce other languages that they give me some examples, of course, or things like that. I tried, but not always. I can't.

When it comes to the teachers' opinion of whether the use of L1-s can be detrimental for the TL acquisition, the respondents' answers weren't as strict as in their original answers to the question on the same issue (Q8: How often do you use students' L1 in your English lessons?). Here, the respondents did admit that the use of L1-s can have some benefits for the knowledge transfer:

> **ML:** Do you think that the use of L1 or mother tongues is beneficial or detrimental for learning the target language, for learning the foreign language?
>
> **T2:** Yeah, if they were, for example, Catalan and Spanish, if they were learning French, it could be easy. But people that are Arab, I can't find connections. I need to really find connections. Like if we, for example, speak Spanish and I try to find words that we have in Spanish that come from Arabic and I don't know, it's very difficult.

Here, the respondent is hesitant about the benefits of introducing different L1-s in the English classroom because of the limitations of her own knowledge of languages like Arabic, which indicates that her perception is that teachers ought to be familiar with all the L1-s present in the classroom, which is not actually necessary for implementing plurilingual pedagogies. Her response might therefore be influenced by the lack of training on how to activate students' L1-s as a cognitive and linguistic resource without having to dominate their L1-s, so that it could function as a stepping stone to scaffold more accomplished performance in the TL (Cummins, 2007). The opinion of T1 was that it really depends on the situation:

> When there are some translation exercises, I think it's important that they also try to do that and translate things into Estonian and maybe sometimes try to see the parallels between the languages. For example, when we're learning about passive voice, how is it in Estonian? Then they can maybe understand it better. So, we can make this connection at some point, say how it is or maybe the word order sometimes to show like it's like this in Estonian […] I don't know if I've done anything with Russian, because, again, my Russian isn't that good.

Here, the respondent admits that for teaching grammar, it might be good to explain the differences between the TL and L1 as it might enhance its comprehension, and she also says that translation exercises can be useful for drawing parallels between the two languages. However, she does repeat that "first and most of all," things should be done in English. Again, this shows that there is some (unconscious) recognition of the value of knowledge already encoded in the L1, but the informant generally resists resorting to it since it might deter TL acquisition. Again, this confirms Cummins' argument that even in cases where monolingual approaches acknowledge the role of prior knowledge, they are "likely to limit its expression to what students can articulate through their L2" (2007: 232).

This leads us to the next section of questions about the respondents' awareness of the plurilingual approach and their training in this field. Neither of the interviewees knew what the approach was about nor had received proper training on it. T1 recalled having received some information about multilingualism during her 2-year training period in the Teach for All program:

> **T1:** It did have some [training on multilingualism], but not much, I would say, and more perhaps for elementary school teachers who would have more Russian students maybe. I don't remember much of it. For English teachers, especially for me, as I was going to go to a school where most of the… no, okay, I had some Russian speaking students, but they spoke good Estonian as well. So, I didn't really learn much about that, I would say. And as I was focusing on really trying to create an English-speaking environment, that [plurilingualism] wasn't really my number one priority either.

From this excerpt, we can see that firstly, little or no emphasis was put on the question of pluri- or multilingualism during the Teach for All program and secondly, that it is understood as something that is more necessary when there are students who do not understand Estonian, and not as a way of recognizing and putting value to the other L1-s and their cultures (Russian in this case).

In the case of T2, she was not aware of the principles of the plurilingual approach either but showed great interest in learning about it in the future. Regarding their opinion on learning multiple foreign languages at a time, both agreed that it can be something positive as it allows creating connections between the languages. Both respondents also agreed that foreign language learning should be more about developing a series of communicative strategies and skills that would help the students in real life situations, like travelling, and not so much about becoming native-like speakers.

Finally, the teachers' opinion of what their students would think of introducing the plurilingual approach in their lessons was somewhat different. T1 understood it as something that could be welcomed by students who have a poorer English level and would thus be happy to receive more instructions in Estonian. T2, however, was rather optimistic about it:

> So, if you involve other mother tongues, maybe they will feel more involved? Probably, yeah. Because it's like: "I have something to say". I have something to say... especially students that don't have a really good level or they have difficulties to learn English or other languages. I think that if we introduce their past, their history, their mother tongues and these things, they will be more involved. So, it could be important.

Here, T2 acknowledges that students might appreciate the positive effects of plurilingualism in terms of identity-building and inclusion by being more "involved". It thereby affirms the findings of González-Davies (2021) who argued that plurilingual activities that promote investigating and discovering aspects of students' L1 can have a positive impact on these students' identity-building.

4.3. Survey analysis

11.8% of the respondents of the survey said that they were not generally allowed to use their L1 or other languages in English lessons; while almost 30% said they can use it and nearly 60% said that it depends on the situation. There was not much difference in this question among the respondents of the two schools as in both cases the use of L1-s seemed to be mainly negotiable upon the situation. In situations when students do use their L1 to speak in the English lesson, it is most commonly done for speaking to their companions (67% of the situations), for answering or expressing their opinion (59%) and for clarifying doubts (57%). In contrast, L1-s are less often used for preparing spoken texts (37%) and written texts (35%).

As Figure 2 shows, there was a rather clear difference in the question of whether the respondents thought that using L1 in English lessons could help them learn English better. Here, 41% of the students of the Catalonian school[6] thought that using L1 would help their English learning, while this figure was 67% in the Estonian school.

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[6] From here on, the respondents from the Catalonian school are marked with CAT, the ones from Estonia with EST to differentiate the informants.
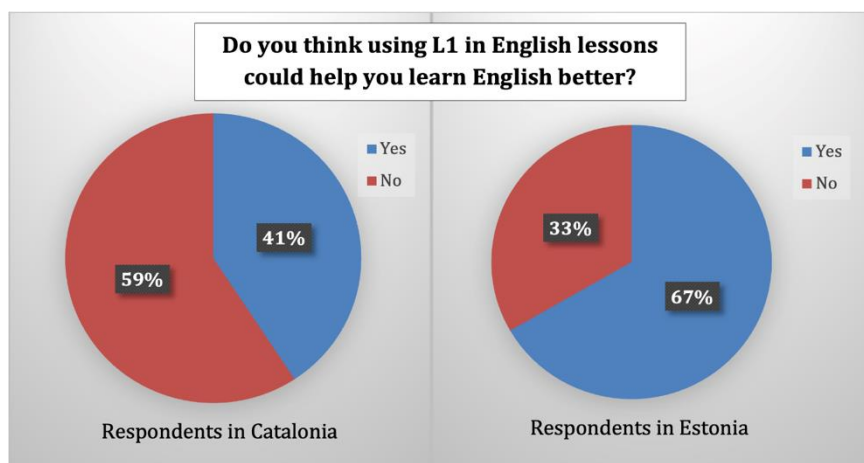
Figure 2. Opinion of L1 use in English lessons. Source: Author.

The justifications that were pro or against the use of L1 were similar among the respondents of the two schools. As for those who believed that using L1 could be useful for learning English, they brought out the following aspects:

> R3 CAT: "Yes. I know more vocabulary and expressions in L1. So having the chance to know how to say those, would make my English richer."
>
> R35 EST: "Yes. By using my L1 language, I would improve my ability to translate the two languages and I feel like it would help people who struggle get a better grasp on the language."
>
> R15 CAT: "Yes. It can help with finding relation between words (maybe this could help us remember certain words or expressions in English)."

The above explanations point to the question of the use of L1 allowing to make connections between the two languages by resorting to knowledge previously obtained in L1, thereby transferring the knowledge of different words or expressions from L1 to TL. This is seen as something that could also help memorize the new words. Some respondents also explained their selection as a matter of comprehension: "We can understand more if we can use our home language" (R34 EST); "Because we can ask what we can't understand, and we could understand better" (R45 EST). Without being representative of the larger group, one of the respondents with Spanish as L1 tied his answer to the question of integration, saying that being allowed to use his L1 in the English lessons would make him feel "more integrated in the class and the language" (R20 CAT).

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As for the respondents who did not agree with the idea that using L1 could help them learn English better, the main concerns were about being little exposed to the English language and therefore not being able to practice their hearing and speaking enough. Again, the answers from the respondents of the two schools had common arguments:

R52 EST: "No. It wouldn't help us get used to using English in our daily lives."

R13 CAT: "No. Because the point of taking English lessons is to learn English without speaking your L1. In my opinion if the teacher speaks other languages than English, it could be bad for the students because they are going to be used to hearing everything in Spanish and they're not gonna strive to learn."

Other respondents were concerned about mixing up the L1 and English if they use it in the same lesson: "I think that we should try to write and speak in English. In the end, I think it's not thoroughly beneficial to mix the two languages as we would become too 'confident', and we would take advantage of it." (R23 CAT); "No. You mix up your native language with your English." (R38 EST). These fears affirm many of the arguments that speak of the danger of cross-contamination in bilingual or plurilingual classrooms (cf. Creese and Blackledge, 2010). The survey questions did not inform the respondents exactly how the L1-s would be involved, which might have raised questions of its usefulness and fears of students not being able to keep the two (or more) languages apart.

The following two charts in Figure 3 compare the answers to three questions that regard the introduction of other languages and cultures in the English lessons. The first chart corresponds to the participants in Catalonia and the second, in Estonia. Regarding the students' own preference for there to be activities that include learning about other languages and cultures, the respondents from Catalonia showed a much clearer support to this, with nearly 60% of the students being in favor of this idea; in Estonia, the support was a mild 37%. In both contexts, the majority of respondents said that they already do translating exercises. However, tasks that include the use of other languages and cultures to compare them were not seen as a common practice in neither of the schools, especially in Estonia where 71% of the respondents said that they are not used to doing such exercises.
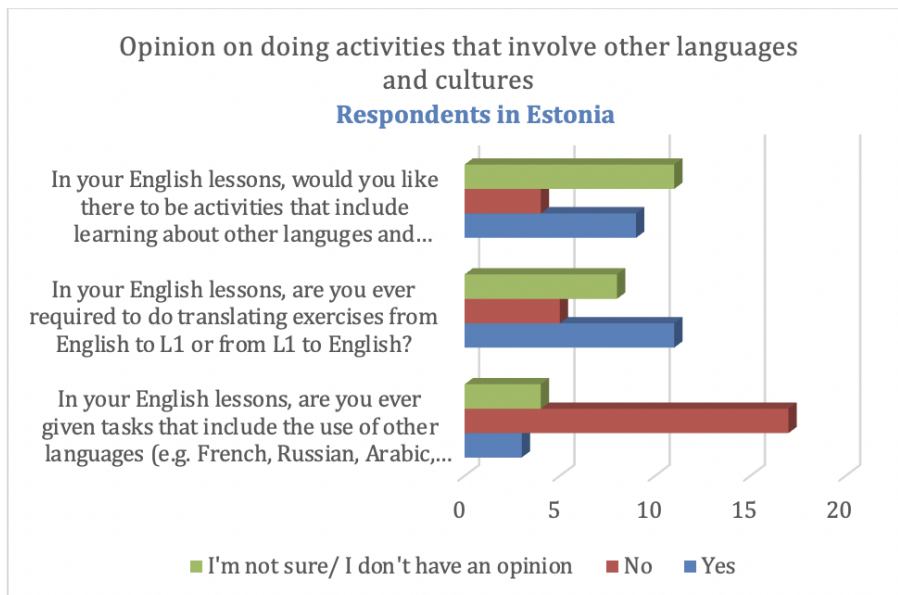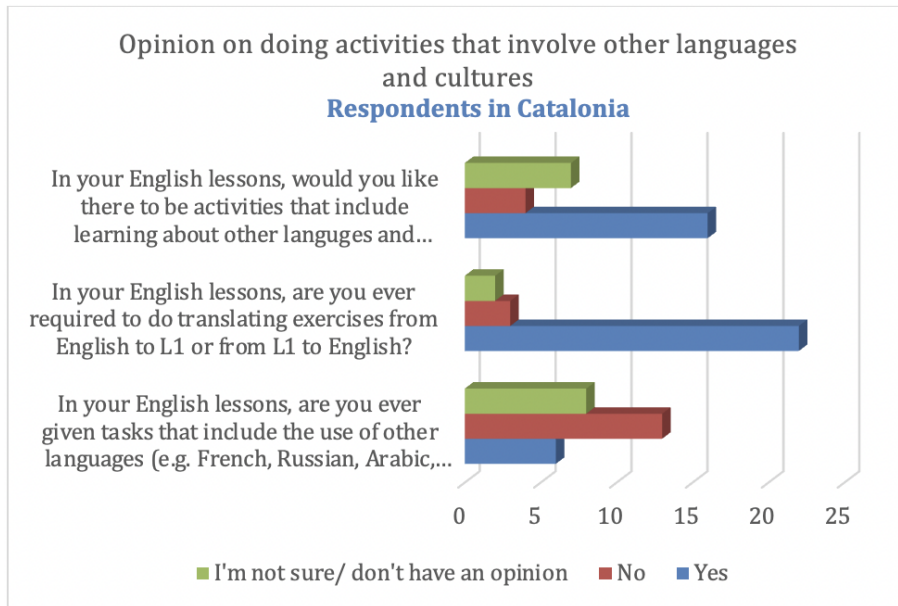
Figure 3. Respondents' opinion on doing activities that involve other languages and cultures. Source: Author.

Finally, the last question of the survey asked the students to choose which of the below language learning objectives was more important for them. Here, the results were again very similar: more than half of the respondents believed that it is more important to improve their overall communicative skills and strategies while learning to speak and write well in English, and not so much to obtain the highest possible level and to speak and write like native English speakers. In principle, this shows that the majority of the respondents are not so much motivated by achieving a certain level with its corresponding certificate, but rather, by being able to express themselves in everyday situations.

As an English learner, which of these objectives is more important for you?

Respondents in Catalonia

0%
59%
41%

Respondents in Estonia

4%
54%
42%

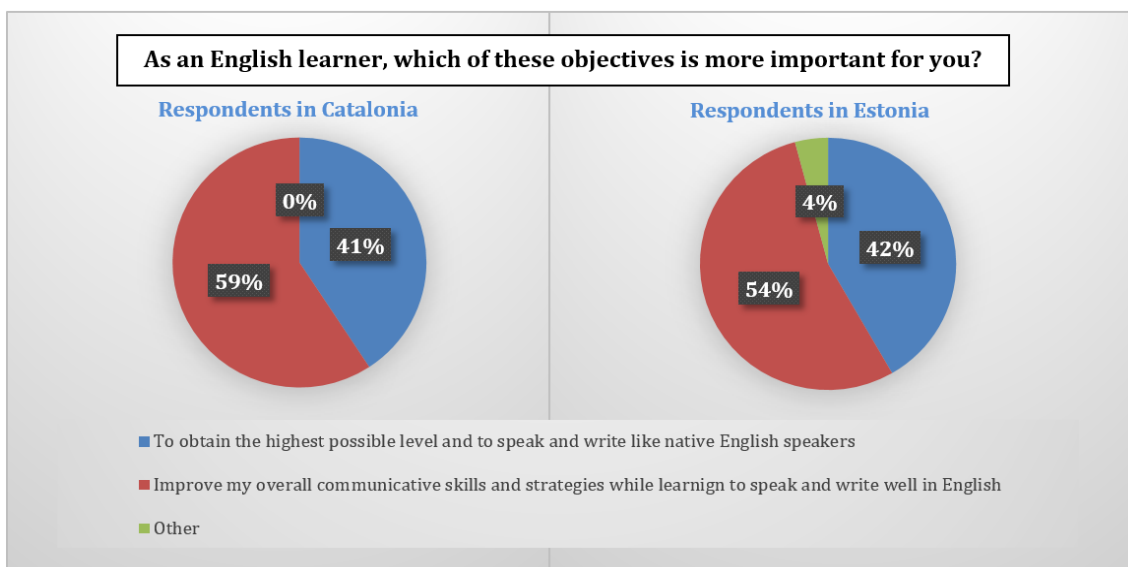■ To obtain the highest possible level and to speak and write like native English speakers
■ Improve my overall communicative skills and strategies while learnign to speak and write well in English
■ Other

Figure 4. English learning objectives. Source: Author.

5.   Conclusions

This dissertation was motivated by an interest in pursuing an understanding of the use, or lack thereof, of plurilingual pedagogies in teaching English as an additional language in Catalonia and Estonia. For this end, four research objectives were stated in order to tackle the use of plurilingual pedagogies from different angles, and three different research instruments were applied to find answers to these objectives. The main results have already been discussed in the previous chapter, but in this final section I will draw some overarching conclusions between the three study phases.

In first place, the policy analysis showed that the plurilingual approach has been broadly defined and introduced in the Catalan education policy, including theoretical and methodological guidelines of how it should be implemented. However, it is not categorized as a specific competence but a transversal one, which means that its implementation and evaluation are not obligatory in the curricula. The notion of plurilingualism was not found anywhere in the policy documents of Estonia, showing a void in its language policy in this regard.

Independently of policy, the plurilingual approach was not a familiar question for either of the interviewed teachers. This was less surprising in the Estonian case since the country's language policy does not recognize plurilingualism at any level, which is a result of Estonia's dominantly monolingual education system, and its lack of initiative to recognize other languages as co-official. In the meantime, Catalonia has a longer experience with bilingual education and might therefore

be more prone to adapt new pedagogical approaches that can be more inclusive of other languages and cultures.

Nevertheless, the interview with the teacher in Catalonia demonstrated that despite the existing policy and the more diverse sociolinguistic reality where multiple languages coexist in the everyday classroom, plurilingualism was still not a well-recognized practice. This is especially surprising as the school where T2 worked is one that could benefit most from this approach as its students have very diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and the recognition of these through the plurilingual approach could potentially improve some of the conviviality problems that the centre experiences. While both teachers had put some plurilingualism-related activities into practice, they were generally against allowing more use of L1-s in their lessons. Both teachers showed more openness towards the introduction of other languages in their lessons; that is to say, in situations when the objective was not to make students' life easier by giving the instructions in their L1-s but rather, to improve their knowledge of the connections between languages. This shows that on the one hand, it is recognized that bringing examples from other languages can sometimes be beneficial for TL acquisition, but the value of unravelling knowledge encoded in students' own L1-s, especially if it is the official vehicular language, is not really appreciated. Paradoxically, then, this shows a situation where teachers are open to bringing examples from other AL-s to create knowledge through connections with the TL, while activating previous knowledge that has been obtained through students' L1-s is seen as a bad practice even though it could be a useful one if it were well-informed by theory and methodology.

The results of the survey did not show major differences among the respondents of Estonia and Catalonia, nor did they go against the information given by the teachers. There were those in favour of increasing the use of L1-s in English lessons, as well as those very much against it, the main concern for it being the reduced exposure time to the target language. On the other hand, the majority of the respondents favoured the idea of introducing other languages and cultures in English lessons, which shows their positive disposition for the future implementation of plurilingual pedagogies. The respondents in both countries were also somewhat more motivated by the idea of language learning helping them develop overall communicative skills and strategies and not so much by wanting to achieve a native-like language level, showing that students are aware of additional languages' transversal role in helping them improve their communicative abilities and therefore, their future opportunities for work, study and mobility, as well as for increased intercultural interactions.

Finally, returning to the differences mainly found at policy level, these must be viewed from the perspective of demographic and sociolinguistic diversity. Catalonia has been a migration destination from different parts of the world for more than two decades now (Generalitat de Catalunya, nd.), giving way to several generations of migrant children for whom the schooling system has had to be adapted through initiatives like language immersion. Estonia's demography has mainly been composed of Estonians and Russian speakers who mainly arrived in the 1980s because of the Soviet Union's russification policy. External migration has only experienced a significant increase in the last decade when it grew tenfold, reaching almost 20.000 annual arrivals in 2021 (Statistics Estonia, nd.). This means that the country is yet to face the bigger challenges of creating inclusion and integration programs for newcomer students in the Estonian schools.[7] If plurilingualism were to become one of the inclusive approaches to recognize and give value to newcomers' languages and cultures, the political elites of Estonia would also have to change their perception of the use of the Russian language, whose speakers represent a minority that, rather than being recognized for the value that their language and culture could bring, are simply seen as a problem and a threat to the integrity of the Estonian education system. A plurilingual approach that teaches students to be inclusive of different others and their languages could therefore be a positive step towards a more cohesive society, and it is something that Estonian policymakers could learn from Catalonia –if not from its actual practice, then at least from its elaborated policies.

5.1. Limitations of the study

Unfortunately, the scope of this dissertation was greatly limited by time and geographical distance. Ideally, the study would have involved a minimum of ten teachers from both Estonia and Catalonia, and their practice would not only have been inquired about through an interview, but also through (non-)participatory observations of their lessons. A bigger sample would also have risen the odds of encountering teachers who do follow the plurilingual approach and who could have shared their views of its challenges and opportunities. Similarly, holding interviews with headmasters and policymakers would have added a wider spectrum of opinions to enrichen the study. The small number of participants of this research has not therefore allowed to draw a unique account of the state of the art of plurilingual pedagogies in both contexts, but it has tried to

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[7] Here, I am setting aside the fact that the schooling system for Estonian and Russian speakers has been largely segregated up until recently and Russian-speaking communities' quests for recognition have been systematically ignored ever since the country's independence in 1991.

describe the observed realities with the greatest detail that the word extension of this research allowed.

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7. Appendices

Appendix 1: CDA framework

Stage of analysis	Description	Example
1. Select the discourse	Select a discourse related to the implementation of plurilingual pedagogies	Guidelines to include plurilingual strategies in AL lessons; guidelines to (not) use L1 in AL lessons.
2. Locate and prepare data sources	Select texts and prepare the data for analysis	Legislation, institutional guidelines; development plans.
3. Explore the background of each text	Examine the social and historical context and producers of the texts.	Characteristics of the genre, historical context, production process, overall slant or style, intended audience, intended purpose of the text, publisher characteristics.
4. Code texts and identify overarching themes	Identify the major themes and subthemes	Thematic analysis
5. Analyse the external relations in the texts (interdiscursivity)	Examine social relations that control the production of the text and examine how the texts affect social practices and structures.	Dominant ideas of monolingualism and of minority languages. Social structures, governments and legal systems, language policy institutions.
6. Interpret the data	Interpret the meanings of the major themes, external relations, and internal relations identified in stages 4 and 5.	Revisit the structural features and individual fragments, pacing them into the broader context and themes established in the earlier stages.

Appendix 2: Interview questions

1st Section: General background	
Objective	*Question*
NA	1. What is your full name and age?
	2. How many years have you been working as a teacher of English as AL?

	3. In which school do you currently work in and what characterizes it?
	
	  1. Is it a public or private school?
	
	  2. What is the average socio-economic profile of the students?
	
	  3. Which courses do you teach and what is the students' approximate level, following the European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)?
	
	  4. What are the L1-s of the students and how many students with different L1-s do you have in each group?

2nd Section: Teaching practices	
Objective	*Question*
Objective 2	4. How would you generally characterize your general teaching practice? Is it informed by any specific type of theory, methodology or approach?
	5. What would your 'normal' lesson look like?

	6. What are the main goals and objectives of the courses you teach?
	7. Which are the main difficulties that you encounter in fulfilling the overall and the daily goals and objectives?

3rd Section: Use of L1-s in the English lessons	
Objective	*Question*
Objective 2	8. How often do you use students' L1 in your English lessons?
	9. On which occasions do you use it? (E.g. for giving instructions, for oral punishments, for bringing examples from other languages…)
	10. Do you think that the school where you work or the education system as a whole encourages the use of different L1-s for teaching AL-s?
	11. Do you ever use L1-s other than the official one in your lessons, if so, on which occasions (bringing examples from other languages…)?
Objective 3	12. Do you think that the use of L1-s is beneficial or detrimental for learning the target language?

4th Section: Awareness of plurilingual pedagogies	
Objective	*Question*

Objective 3	13. Do you know what plurilingual pedagogies are and what their principles are?
Objective 2	14. Did your teacher training (Bachelor's or Master's degree or other posterior training) include any courses or sessions on plurilingual pedagogies?
Objective 3	15. Do you agree or disagree with the following sentence: Learning more than one AL at a time will pose disadvantages for the learners?
	16. Do you agree or disagree with the following sentence: The goal of English lessons should not be to achieve native-like proficiency but to develop a repertoire of communicative skills and strategies?
	17. Do you ever implement activities that include the use of bilingual dictionaries, translating or the writing of identity texts?
Objective 4	19. What do you think are the students' perceptions of the use of languages other than English in class?

5th Section: Conclusions	
Objective	*Question*
Objective 2 and 3	18. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your teaching practice?
	19. Would you like to receive the results of the study once it is finished? If so, could you please give me your email address?

Speaker 1 (ML)

To start off, could you tell me your name and age, please?

Speaker 2 (T1)

My name is X and I'm 27 years old.

Speaker 1

Could you please tell me how many years you've been working as an English teacher?

Speaker 2

This is my third year working as an English teacher.

Speaker 1

Okay.

Speaker 2

My first year in this school.

Speaker 1

Okay. And which school is it? I won't mention it in the TFM, but could you say whether it's a fully public school or private one, where is it located and so on?

Speaker 2

It is located in Annelinn, and it's a municipality school. So it's a public school.

Speaker 1

Could you maybe try and describe a little bit the average kind of socioeconomic profile of the students in terms of income, a little bit about their background, if it's possible.

Speaker 2

I'm not sure if I know that much. I know they have mostly Estonian background, but there are some students with Russian ethnicity, and their mother tongue is also Russian, since it is in the Russian part of town in Tartu.

Speaker 1

But would you say that in economic terms there is a lot of inequality between the different students? Is that something that would make the school kind of known for, just to understand a bit?

Speaker 2

I'm not really sure.

Speaker 1

Okay, that's fine. So could you tell me which courses you teach and what is the student's approximate level, if you follow the European framework of reference for languages.

Speaker 2

Okay. So I teach two, 9th grade. I teach English. Well, they should achieve B1 level. But I have students who are struggling with A2 and students who have probably already reached B2. There is a big difference.

Speaker 1

Okay. Could you say that difference, that it has it anything to do also with their L1, with their mother tongue?

Speaker 2

I can say that among my students, the weakest ones are the ones with the Russian mother tongue.

Speaker 1

Okay, so you said there are two courses. How many students do you have in each? And if you could tell me what is their L1? You said there are several Russian kids, and I think you used to have a Ukrainian speaker as well. Right?

Speaker 2

I have 19 students in each class, and I used to have a Russian student. She left for talent.

Speaker 1

Russian or Ukrainian?

Speaker 2

Ukrainian. Yes. Okay. We only spoke in English, and I don't really speak that much Russian, but yeah, I have students whose mother tongue is Estonian and then students whose mother tongue is Russian.

Speaker 1

So how many Russian speakers do you have in each group? Do you know?

Speaker 2

I think two of three in one class and then I have three or four in the other one.

Speaker 1

Okay. All right. So that was just to get a bit of background. Now, I would like to know a little bit more about your own teaching practices. To start with, I'd like to know if you could characterize your general teaching practice. Is it informed by any specific type of theory or methodology or approach? Was there anything specific coming from the Noored Kooli [Teach for All] formation and if you could speak about that a little bit?

Speaker 2

Yes, the Teach for All was the basis of everything I do, because that's the only teacher training I've had.

Speaker 2

This is a very difficult question.

Speaker 1

So maybe let me break it down: do you ever inform yourself in terms of let's try and apply this approach for teaching or some specific methodology or is it more like let's try and

get through the day, which is fine as well. I just need to know because we are doing a lot of theoretical things at the Masters right now, but then I go to my school and it's a whole different thing and it's just very much about getting through the day.

Speaker 2

I don't know if it answers your question, but I am teaching them a lot of grammar because they have had their English teachers change. They've had like five teachers in the past three years or something, and they say that they haven't really learned much. And I got them in November. But I try to maybe… I'm not very strict as a teacher. I try to follow the idea of forming relationships first, and I think I've succeeded in that. At the end of the trimesters, I've done personal one on one conversations with each student, and I want them to analyze their learning and their behavior and sort of encourage them and empower them because I think motivation is really important. And also this good relationship with the teacher is really important. So I try to focus on that.

Speaker 1

So if I ask you what would a normal lesson look like for you? For example, I don't know how strict or how does it work exactly in Estonian schools, but for example, in your school, are you asked to always follow a book or you have lots of freedom to design your own course?

Speaker 2

Okay. So I have a lot of freedom. They have their books, but they don't have workbooks. So if I want them to write anything, I have to print copies or show them something that they can write down. So I use different workbooks for that, different grammar books, everything I have. So I don't have to follow anything. And currently, for example, we are learning how to write a letter that is a requirement in the exam that most of them are taking. And we are having an exchange with another school. They're writing letters, so we don't have to follow anything. And I don't have to even present a plan. Let's say in many schools in Estonia, at least, you have to present a trimester plan at least or a year's plan what you're going to teach and when and what are the outcomes and so on. So this school doesn't require us to do that. And I think it's really reasonable because to have a plan, it makes sense for teachers. So you have some basis to teach on, but to have these

deadlines and to present them and create this unnecessary stress because the plan changes so much anyway. So, yeah, I have a lot of flexibility.

Speaker 1

So have you worked in other schools before?

Speaker 2

Yes, during the two year Teach for All program I taught in a school outside of Tartu.

Speaker 1

So my question is, would you say that in the Estonian or in Tatu's education system, it's very much the school alone that decides how strict they are in terms of the curriculum, of what the year plan is? Does it depend on the school if they require it or not?

Speaker 2

Yes. Well, in the end, I do have to reach certain goals, especially with 9th graders finishing school and taking the exams as well. So there are some aspects, some outcomes that they should reach.

Speaker 1

Okay. I guess you've mentioned this already, but what would you say are the main goals and objectives of the courses you teach? These being 9th graders, I guess it's quite a lot about doing well in the exam?

Speaker 2

It's all of the topics of the exam, let's say all the grammar parts and reaching the B one level but also wanting to learn and read. I read a book with them. They got to choose a book they had to read. Yeah. I don't want to let's say like teach for the examination but I feel oftentimes that I have to because I have limited amount of lessons left with them. And as they say, they say they haven't had good teachers. Like they did group work and they didn't really learn much. So I feel like I have to take the topics of the exam through really quickly, the topics that you should go through in middle school.

Speaker 1

So just two questions that I've forgotten about. Firstly, how many hours of English lessons do they have?

Speaker 2

They have three per week.

Speaker 1

Okay. And the other question I have is if you have any idea why have the English teachers changed so often in that school? Is it some kind of a structural problem maybe?

Speaker 2

No, I don't know. I think it's just a coincidence. I talked to some other teachers, the psychologist at the school. They say the position is cursed, it just happens. People choose other things. I have another teacher with me who teaches younger grades and then she also will not continue next year because she wants to go study full time. So there are reasons for this happening.

Speaker 1

Okay. But in general, just to know a little bit more about the Estonian system as well, it's always the school that would hire teachers directly, right? They open up the position and is there normally like a one year testing period or how would you work in order to have a fixed position?

Speaker 2

No, it depends on the school. You can have this testing period. But usually schools are in such a need of teachers that if you can and if you're suitable, then... I don't even have a master's degree. I don't have the qualifications that you should have for a teacher and neither does the other English teacher. She has just finished her bachelor's degree and we're still teaching. We can only sign a one-year contract. If you don't have the qualification, I see it can be only for one year but schools are really eager to give you the next contract because they really need teachers.

Speaker 1

So what would you say are the main difficulties that you encounter in fulfilling the goals and objectives that you might have on a daily basis as well as for the yearly plan?

Speaker 2

Difficulties... I think the most difficult part is that I cannot really do anything that helps the stronger students as well as the weaker ones. So I feel that someone is always being left out. In a way, it's really difficult to differentiate at all times. That is the most difficult part.

Speaker 1

Do you also have problems with discipline in class in terms of keeping it quiet?

Speaker 1

There can be. There sometimes are difficulties. I have a class that really likes to talk a lot, not in a bad way. They're friendly, they don't want to disturb, but they sometimes,they can't help it. And I feel that maybe I'm not as strict as I sometimes should be, but I have tried to focus on the good relationships and kind of humor that I can use to direct them back to working. I've had some what can I say? Some students who have shown provocative behaviors, especially after, let's say, one or two months of teaching, they got to know me a little bit, and now they are showing like they want attention or they are showing who they are. I think that has gone well in a sense that I've had like these one on one talks with them. They have told me what they're about, why they are behaving like this. We have talked it through. So I think, yeah, it has ended up well, I don't have that kind of behavior that much anymore. And even if I do have something, I can resolve it with humor and with the relation that we have.

Speaker 1

Okay. I think that's really good. Can the students continue high school in the same place?

Speaker 2

All of those who are interested in continuing the studies will go to other schools.

Speaker 1

Now I would like to know now a little bit about the use of L1 or the mother tongues in the English lesson. First of all, you said you don't speak much Russian. And also Estonian is the only official language in Estonia. But just to make sure, I guess, you don't tend to ever use Russian in the English lessons?

Speaker 2

Not really. I sometimes understand when they speak Russian. I don't know. Maybe I've used "no" in Russian.

Speaker 1

Now how about the use of Estonian in class? How often do you use it or on which occasions do you use it?

Speaker 2

So I made it a point to speak in English. I tried to only speak English since the beginning. However, I have had to translate something sometimes for those weaker students, sometimes or when I go to speak one on one with them, then sometimes I use Estonian.

For me, it makes sense to use English, especially in 9th grade, especially in the beginning. They really wanted to speak in Estonian whenever they could. And even simple things like saying yes or no or just asking a very simple question that I know they could ask in English and it didn't make sense to me. So I always tried to speak in English and I also really think it's important because my students need to be able to understand. They need to be able to listen and just hear English, be in the environment because otherwise the learning would be so much slower.

Speaker 1

Okay. But do you feel like sometimes for giving instructions, especially for students that have a lower level, you might have to use Estonian or you'd rather repeat it several times in English?

Speaker 2

I would try to repeat it or make it more simple. I've had occasions where I speak and someone doesn't understand, someone from the students. They translate or they explain, but sometimes I've had to still translate it. Maybe sometimes when it's even easier for me. Sometimes there are phrases or I can't think of a good translation or something that doesn't really have a translation. So sometimes I do use it, but I try not to.

Speaker 1

Okay. But then another type of situation, for example, oral punishments, do you ever feel like they're more efficient when it's done in Estonian than in English?

Speaker 2

No. They understand when they I say something, they can understand tone and mimics and looks. So I don't think that's necessary.

Speaker 1

Okay. Now, do you think that the school where you work currently or the Estonian education system as a whole encourages the use of Estonian or other mother tongues for teaching English? Or it's rather the contrary? So I'm suggesting more like not only the instructions or the banal conversations, but more like using examples from other languages to implement them in the English lessons.

Speaker 2

The school where I worked before, there I wanted to also speak English at all times and my head teacher told me not to because some of the students wouldn't understand and it's really difficult. And "you should use Estonian" and what not and the books that we use, especially in the lower years, they have Estonian instructions and I know there are great books that don't have Estonian instructions and that are fully in English. But the specific books that I also use with the 9th grade, I think in the 9th grade they don't have that much Estonian anymore

But the system, I don't know. It's hard to tell because I've heard advice from different teachers, English teachers. The head teacher was also an English teacher. Different sites. Some say you should definitely teach only in English. They can understand also the terms,

different phrases, grammar and whatnot. And the other side is like, no, it's too difficult. They have to understand, otherwise they will not understand anything if they don't understand the basis. And the books that you get to choose are also different. So it's really difficult to tell.

Speaker 1

Okay. The question was, in the English lessons, have you ever brought examples from other languages, maybe to explain something or to make kind of neural connections?

Speaker 2

Yeah, especially in the first year or something. I really had French in my mind, and I like languages and I like introducing other languages. And I've done, like, music quizzes of different languages and tried to explain, like, where this group is. And these are similar languages. And I have brought examples from French. Sometimes this word comes from French and said it in French. And when I went there, when I did that, they also wanted me to say something in French because most of them have actually learned French as well. And so sometimes they do speak French because they study French. And I can reply in French, but it's not like it's something topical. Like we are learning the passive voice. And then they say this and ask the question, it doesn't happen like this. It's more like this social side, not so systematic.

Speaker 1

Okay. So would you say that you think that the use of Estonian in this case is beneficial or detrimental for learning the target language, for learning English?

Speaker 2

It depends on the situation. I think it's beneficial to the students to just try to speak and hear English in the lessons. However, when there are some translation exercises, I think it's important that they also try to do that and translate things into Estonian and maybe sometimes try to see the parallels between the languages. For example, when we're learning about passive voice, how is it in Estonia? Then they can maybe understand it better. So we can make this connection at some point, say how it is or maybe the word order sometimes to show like it's like this in Estonia or how to say no or if we can. I don't

know if I've done anything with Russian, because, again, my Russian isn't that good. Maybe like to just quickly state the similarities or differences between certain more difficult grammar construction, but otherwise I think it's important to speak first of all and most of all in English and try to do that.

Speaker 1

Okay. So let's now talk a little bit more precisely about plurilingual pedagogies. So do you generally know what this concept of plurilingual pedagogies is and what its principles are, what it refers to?

Speaker 2

I'm not sure.

Speaker 1

So basically it's a line of research, I would say, but also of practice that is growing more and more. And I would say that it emerged especially in Canada, where they did more bilingual teaching, obviously, but also there's lots of it done here in Catalonia as well. Again, it's bilingual, but then English will be the third language. And also in both cases, they are very multilingual societies. So several scholars or many scholars have argued that there is this new linguistic context when it's almost never just monolingual. There's no city or town or neighborhood where people only speak the same mother tongue, let's say. Then they say that it no longer makes sense to just use one language and strictly the target language for teaching foreign languages as well. So basically, it's just different views, but also methods and approaches of how to involve, above all, students' own L1one in the lessons. So beyond just giving instructions, as I say. But it's more about also doing activities or tasks where they, for example, they would have to investigate about their own language in a way. So, for example, you research and teach idioms.

And say, here I have students from the Philippines, for example, or from Italy and Colombia. Well, that's Spanish speaking, but with lots of different languages. So what you do is that you ask them to reflect upon their own mother tongue, which they might not dominate 100% because maybe they only speak it at home with their parents, but it's a way of kind of connecting with the roots. But then in the end, they also translate it into English, obviously. And then they would compare, the Filipina girl saying, like, okay, in

my language, you would say an idiom like this, and then they might find connections with other languages. Like maybe in Finnish you say something similar.

Speaker 2

Right.

Speaker 1

So it's a little bit about that in general. And I was also curious to know whether in the Estonian education policy or system, if there's any steps or indications of introducing that idea, even though the sociolinguistic situation in Estonia is different, I guess, because here, for example, there are some official documents that do try to encourage this type of approach among the teachers. But again, the reality is quite different in the classrooms.

So the next question was whether your teacher training, which I guess in this case would be the Teach for All one, did it ever include any courses or sessions on plurilingual teaching practices or multilingual practices?

Speaker 2

It did have some, but not much, I would say, and more perhaps for elementary school teachers who would have more Russian students maybe. I don't remember much of it, for English teachers, especially for me, as I was going to go to a school where most of the… no, okay, I had some Russian speaking students, but they spoke good Estonian as well. So I didn't really learn much about that, I would say. And as I was focusing on really trying to create an English speaking environment, that [plurilingualism] wasn't really my number one priority either. But for the system again, I don't know. I know that there are changes taking place on the higher levels. They're changing the plans, verification, all the instructions and whatnot. I don't think they have finished yet. So I don't know what is going to come out of that. I do know that there are some really knowledgeable experts working on it. And maybe this is something that you would see more of in, let's say like the Russian parts of Estonia.

Speaker 1

Yeah. The Russian speaking schools. Yeah. I think it really depends so much on the specific context because as I say, I think in Estonia the schools are either you have majority Estonian, maybe a few Russian speakers, and perhaps somewhere in the center of Tallinn or the private schools of Tallinn maybe there might be more students that come from maybe from other European countries or something like that. But it's not as it happens here that you go to whichever town or village or city and there's lots of Arabic speakers, lots of mix everywhere. Okay.

Speaker 2

However, we had some...how do you call them...some Arabic speakers come in with the political problems [referring to the war in Syria] and also the Ukrainians are coming now. So we do have that happening at the moment, let's say, but I haven't had any Arabic speaking students myself. I know there are some in our school, but I personally don't have any experience with that. In a sense, I do understand, for example, the idioms or finding something. How is it in your language? I feel like I have done that, but not much...like maybe once or twice on some topic, but not much.

Speaker 1

Okay, so just a few more questions about this. Would you agree or disagree with the following sentence: Learning more than one foreign language at a time will pose disadvantages for the learners.

Speaker 2

I disagree. Learning more than one languge at a time, I think it's beneficial because you get to create these connections. The more languages you learn, the better you can learn a new one. Especially as a child, your learning potential is so big, I don't think it's a disadvantage.

Speaker 1

Okay. And a second similar question is do you agree or disagree with the following sentence: The goal of English lessons should not be to achieve nativelike proficiency, but to develop a repertoire of communicative skills and strategies.

Speaker 2

Okay. I think I do agree because I don't think native efficiency, it's really difficult to achieve.

Speaker 1

Well, I think native like this comes from an author as well. So I think she refers more to this obsession of us back in the day, at least I remember they were always saying, you have to learn British English, right. It's more about this obsession with the pure accent and always saying that native speakers are the best ones. The other opinion is like there might be more things to a language beyond just pronunciation and so on.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Okay, then I do agree because even I don't have a British accent, I have a weird accent. I can't teach it. And I think it's more important that they can just understand different accents as well and that they can express themselves.

Speaker 1

Okay, perfect. Now, this is a bit of repetitive, but do you feel that you've ever implemented activities that include the use of bilingual dictionaries or translating? I think you already said you do. Right. Or also the writing of identity texts? I can tell you what these are if you don't know.

Speaker 2

I mean I have had them write about themselves. So I guess. Yes. I don't know if because they get to choose how they do it. Right. They can write the whole text in their mother tongue and then translate it if they want, especially if they do it at home. Most of the times they would just type it into Google Translate, but yeah, they do that sometimes. I see it, especially the Russian students. They use Google Translate. They use it a lot.

Speaker 1

So it's only for translating into or from English, or do you think it's also for understanding Estonian better? I don't know what their Estonian level is.

Speaker 2

It's rather with English at least what I see. Yeah. And some of the students, a couple of students, they use it a lot. The dictionaries I have also used, but they don't really use this on their own. I don't know. It's difficult to get the children to use dictionaries. We even had a lesson with the 9th graders on how to use it, how to use a physical dictionary. So they don't really go for it on their own, but on their phones they do.

Speaker 1

So finally, this is something I would really like to know is what do you think are the students' own perceptions of the uses of languages other than English in class? So I'm referring to both Estonian, Russian, but also French or other languages.

Speaker 2

I don't think I understand the question.

Speaker 1

So the idea is what do you think is their perception of implementing more Estonian or using more Russian or drawing more comparisons with other languages with French, German, while learning English? Do you have any idea what their perception might be?

Speaker 2

I think some of them at least would be interested, especially comparing with the languages that they know or that they're interested in. For example, I have a girl who goes to Italy quite often. So we have talked about Italian at some point as well. Maybe it would be interesting. And I think there are also a group of students who care. Yes.

Speaker 1

All right. So we're almost done. I just want to know whether there's anything else you would like to tell me about your teaching practice or to share in this context in general.

Speaker 2

But the last question, I think if you ask them, I think some of them would say like, oh, yes, it's good if we can speak in Estonian and so on, or if there would be more instructions in Estonia or Russian or something. I also think that.

Speaker 1

All right. And very last thing. Do you think you want to receive the results of the study once I'm finished?

Speaker 2

Yes, once it's done, I might have a read.

Speaker 1

Great, I will send it to you then.

Appendix 4: Transcription of interview with T2

Speaker 1 (ML)

Can you tell me your age and first name?

Speaker 2 (T2)

My name is Y, and my age is 38 years old.

Speaker 1

Okay. So how long have you been working as a teacher of English as an additional language?

Speaker 2

Well, officially, I'm a teacher of history.Yeah. But here in Catalonia, there is a lot of demand for English teachers. And for the reason that the last call that they made to me, the service was English. So I started last January.

Yes. Sometimes before I did only support or I introduced English in history, my subject, history, but to teach officially, to do programs and things like that, last January I just started it.

Speaker 1

Okay. Right now we know the school where you're working. I know how I would characterize it, but can you put it in your words? How would you characterize this school in terms of school?

Speaker 2

So to start with, it's a public school. Secondary school. Students, we have seen that they are not from the closer neighborhoods. They are from other parts of Barcelona or even from other cities like Sant Adrià or really far away from Zona Franca. So it's something that was curious. Okay. We have students not from closer neighborhoods. And while I saw that, I think that there are especially students, their families are from different parts of the world, especially students from here, from Barcelona or their families. Their parents weren't born here, or they were born here, but their grandparents were born in another part of Spain or something. But especially I saw people from Morocco, and even from other parts of Europe, I saw that it's a kind of international school, more or less.

Speaker 1

So if we speak of the socioeconomic aspect, do you think it's very varied?

Speaker 2

Yeah. So a lot of differences. Yeah. Especially for example, in 4th of ESO, one class, I think that the family incomes are different. It's not low incomes. It's a high one, probably, but yeah, different kind of.

Speaker 1

Okay. So can you tell me which courses you're teaching now? I'd like to know what's the approximate level of English knowledge, if we think about the European framework of reference.

Speaker 2

I teach three groups of 4th of ESO. Depending on the class, because the level is like A1 or B1. Some students have B1, B2, and others an A2. So I could find that when I prepare the exams, I prepare four different exams, four different levels: basic one/ level one, two and three. Because I want that they pass the exam, the level they have.

Speaker 1

Is it casualty that you have one group that you say has a very low level?

Speaker 1

I think in 4th of ESO, I think that it's the moment that the school decided to split the different groups to organize the groups according to the career or the knowledge. For example, that one group that they are more interested in art history, the students that are good in mathematics or things like that is in. So I think that happens.

Speaker 1

So you want to say that they might have spent 1st, second and third together and then they mixed for the fourth?

Speaker 2

Yeah, I think so. Because it's like some of them are going to do other programs that are not particular.

Speaker 1

Okay. So if you think of the groups you have, especially the two ones that you would like to introduce the survey that we talked about, could you roughly tell what are the home languages of your students?

Speaker 2

I think that some of the students are from here. One of them I think that he said to me that his father was born in France. He said to me that he was Spanish but at home I think he speaks French in general. In another group, I think that their mother tongue is Catalan but there are two that they speak Finnish and there is another one, another Spanish too. Yeah, I think most of them speaks Catalan. They could say Spanish and foreign languages like French.

Speaker 1

Could you name the foreign languages?

Speaker 2

Yeah, French. He said to me French and one of them is from Pakistan. I don't know if he speaks English at home because he speaks Pakistani probably at home. And the rest of them, I think Italian, because they talk Italian to me sometimes.

Speaker 1

Okay. So how would you generally characterize your kind of teaching practice? Is it informed by any specific type of theory or methodology or approach? I mean, me just coming out of the Masters or finishing it, we're given all the methods and everything that we should follow. Obviously, if you've been working as a teacher for longer, it might not be the same. But there are teachers who still like to keep on researching the whole time. So I was just wondering if it's something that you ever think of or what is your general practice?

Speaker 2

Yeah. Before I started teaching, I worked in a museum and I was in the Education Department. And I think that a lot of the knowledge that I learned there in this museum, I use here in my classes. Sometimes I try to prepare materials like theory, but I try to practice speaking or preparing activities or play, I don't know, different exercises, like not really using the book. I don't know. I try to combine a lot of things, but the theory for me is like the beginning of the rest of the things, but probably because I knew doing that and it's like the way I used to receive the information. But sometimes I try to do the opposite. We see something. What's that? Try to learn from that, from the example that they put and from that to go to the theory. Yeah. Try to combine because of that, because when I was at this Museum, we worked with different methods

Speaker 1

So you kind of mentioned it already, but could you maybe draw a picture of what would your normal English lesson look like? You said you don't like to use the book too much.

Speaker 2

No, I don't really use no, I prefer my own material. And I put all the materials in [Google] Classroom and I put exercises, videos, songs, and we do research. Like, for example, we're talking I like to say, well, we can talk about anything sometimes even when we are correcting the exercises. Because I think that they need

to practice the conversation speaking and yeah, I don't know if I have only one way. It's like I try to improvise.

For example, the other day we were doing with 4th of ESO, we were doing green spaces, things like that. I was asking to them, this happened here, and they were like, why are you asking? I don't know. It's a way to connect the exercises.

Speaker 1

So right now as you work with the 4th of ESO, what would you say are the main goals and objectives of the course that you teach?

Speaker 2

I think that now from my opinion, the point is to improve all this because 4th of ESO is like a summary of all that they have done. Repeating what they have done. And I think that probably to improve their vocabulary, to use more expressions or phrases or things like that. I think it's a level where to really complete all the knowledge, and practice this knowledge.

Speaker 1

So you wouldn't say that preparing for a final exam is important at this level?

Speaker 2

No, I think they have no exam like that at this level.

Speaker 1

So which would you say that are the main difficulties that you encounter on a daily basis in fulfilling the goals and objectives that you have? You said you want to complement their general knowledge. So what are the difficulties there?

Speaker 2

Sometimes when I try to do only a review or something it's like I need to explain all again, they don't remember because they don't have the habit to study English or they don't watch films even for example. I like to spend part of the 2-hours class that we have some 30 minutes watching a film with subtitles in English. My objective here is that you get used to watch films in English and well, if you can't understand what they are saying, maybe we can put the subtitles but yeah. What I think is that they need to be more used to English, to be more attached to the culture. I think that they don't really know why they are studying English. I think that maybe we need to prepare them why English is so important, to explain a little bit the history or the other countries that speak English. And maybe if they have a general vision of English, not only the grammar, vocabulary like this, I think that they would understand why English is so important.

And that quality could be one objective and something that I'm trying to explain to them. And another thing, another objective could be, it could be that they could use in their daily life English because they want to find a job or things like that. I think that they need to know that. It's not sometimes I think that they believe that English is like a boring language and it's like the enemy.

Speaker 1

But then at this level of age, are there also disciplinary problems?

Speaker 2

Yeah, it is. For example, yesterday we did an exact in 4A and I remember some students asked why we have an exam today. I put all the information in Classroom. I write information on the blackboard. I put it in their calendar. But then there are other students, like this girl who is competing. She went to America to compete. So imagine. And she came back and I said, oh, Victoria, we have an exam. And she said to me, yes, I know. I said, but have you studied? Yes. You put all the information in Classroom days ago. I know that we have an exam. I was in complete shock. So I think in some sense, it's one of the problems.

Speaker 1

Now, I would like to speak a little bit about the use of L1s, their mother tongues in English lessons. So how often do you use your own mother tongue? Is it Catalan or Spanish?

Speaker 2

No, it's Spanish.

Speaker 1

Okay. So how often do you use the L1?

Speaker 2

No, I try to speak all the time in English, even if I speak to them. Or then I try to explain things in Catalan because we have a problem with this. And they don't use to speak Catalan except in 4A. The rest of them, they speak Spanish. I try to use my mother tongue not really often here. And really I need to sometimes I need to because when they answer my questions, they always use their mother tongues or not English. And I always have to say "please, in English". I try to speak all the time in English.

Speaker 1

Okay. And how about the use of the other languages that you know that the students speak, say Spanish or Arabic, have you ever used them as examples?

Speaker 2

I think I tried because I decided to introduce connections between languages and the English culture and the British Empire around the world and places that other countries that were connected to. I tried to introduce other languages that they give me some examples, of course, or things like that. I tried, but not always. I can't.

Speaker 1

So on the occasions that you do use Catalan, which occasions would it be? Is it for giving instructions sometimes or for oral punishments? Or is it for bringing examples from other languages? In which occasion would it be?

Speaker 2

Sometimes when I talk to them or I explain something, the answer is like, okay, so I need to because they don't really understand me. And for the reason I need to use, I want that they try to translate and to find

words that are more easy to understand in Catalan or sometimes even in Spanish. Yeah. So I used in all of these cases.

Speaker 1

In that specific situation, when you say, I'm giving them an example and it looks like they don't understand, do you still prefer speaking in English first and then maybe translate it?

Speaker 2

Sometimes I say this word is in Catalan, how is in English? Is this one? Sometimes I'm feeling I'm explaining. I don't know. Like if I was talking to students from primary school, it's like I need to, I don't know, to explain. For example, future simple. I will go for example; I need to explain things that are to me really simple. So I need to use the language that they know and from the language they know go to English. Yeah, sometimes it works like that.

Speaker 1

Okay. So would you think that the school where you currently work or the general Catalan education system encourages the use of different mother tongues for teaching foreign languages?

Speaker 2

No, I don't think so. When I came here, I came only for two weeks to do a substitution. I haven't received the program. I haven't received anything. So I needed to start it over from nothing. They didn't give me instructions about that or it's something that in part I did because I wanted to do it. But no, I didn't receive instructions about that. They only gave me a book and that's it.

Speaker 1

I know these realities are also very much context specific because definitely if you were in another school or attending private school, it would be all different. Well, and I'm precisely interested in public schools. But a last question in this section would be to know whether you think that the use of L1 or mother tongues is beneficial or detrimental for learning the target language, for learning the foreign languages.

Speaker 2

Yeah, if they were, for example, Catalan and Spanish, if they were learning French, it could be easy. But people that are Arab, I can't find connections. I need to really find connections. Like if we, for example, speak Spanish and I try to find words that we have in Spanish that come from Arabic and I don't know, it's very difficult.

Speaker 1

But then within this context, do you think that the more English speaking is done in class, the better, because the more you would use Catalan and Spanish, the less they are exposed to English? Do you agree with that?

Speaker 2

We come here to do some program. You need to do like that. And it's like sometimes I forgot it. To take it easy, to try to see all the things that I could do and to learn more about? To try to open my mind. To open my mind. I haven't time to do it yet.

Speaker 1

I will ask you about your awareness of plurilingual pedagogies now, which is what I am interested in. Let's say, to start with, do you know what pluralingual pedagogies or strategies are and what their principles are?

Speaker 2

No, not really. It's to teach different languages and different subjects. It's like that?

Speaker 1

Yeah. Well, we're kind of close. So basically, especially in the line of research, it's something, let's say, relatively new, which especially started in Canada, being bilingual and also with lots of migration coming in. So it's a series of proposals that say that our day to day reality is that we live in plurilingual societies or multilingual societies. So it makes little sense to have lessons done monolingually, right? Just in one language. Because what we do is that we are not facilitating children a sort of competence or capacity that they require afterwards. Right? They need to speak different languages. They need to be able to connect different languages and cultures as well. So it's basically applicable to all subjects as well, not just language teaching. But what these authors also try to say is that we ought to try and make efforts of introducing our students mother tongue in the lesson. So it's not that we all have to know Arabic or Chinese and so on, but it's more through activities such as translation or, for example, they talk about identity texts. So, for example, you can ask students to write more biographical things about their own life.

All in all, it's that type of principle that they want to introduce, especially in very diverse contexts.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Wow. No, the question was?

Speaker 1

It was if you are aware of these strategies.

Speaker 2

I wasn't, but I will be if I receive the instructions. Yeah. Because sometimes for me it's really hard to find that, for example, if now I'm doing a course that it's something like that, because I think that I'm very interested, I'm interested in this kind of thing, to connect people, to connect ideas. I'm a historian, so only for that I really like to know when this happens and to connect people that at the end, the history of people, it's about people and things. And I would like to receive the instructions, the way to do it. And if I could learn more about that, I will be able to introduce that in my classes, I think so it's another way that they do it because now here it's another way to teach. It's like they need to create their knowledge. It's like you give these pictures and from these pictures they need to do a research. And in some aspects it's like all the research they do, all the information they can find, it's something that could be efficient. That's true. Sometimes that's a mistake because they can give you this information. But if they don't confirm this information with other sources, they could be wrong. But now this other new pedagogical way to teach is like they are always right.

I disagree with some parts, but maybe it's extreme. But in that sense, I really would like to introduce because at the end, for example, today when we spoke about languages, like this, there is Jay, she is from

China and she said to us, yeah, but Chinese is more or less Chinese language is 60% of the total characters in Japanese and things like that in Korean. And she started to explain a lot of things. And it was like, my God, I didn't know all of that. And she explained that from there. We are very used to Latin to talk about Latin, Latin, Latin and French. And I think I would really like to receive information about how to teach this kind of subject. I would be really able to introduce them in my classes. I think it's something that you can do in English, in history and technology and a lot of things. You only need to find a subject and to do the research could be okay.

Speaker 1

My question is now if in your teacher training in the master's degree or bachelor's, or posterior training, if it included any courses or sessions on plurilingualism or multilingualism?

Speaker 2

No, I'm only doing that now because I thought that was important. My idea is to teach maybe in the future history of art in Catalan and English, if I can I would like to improve all the languages that I have.

Speaker 1

Okay, now do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Learning more than one foreign language at a time will pose disadvantages for the learners.

Speaker 2

No, I think it's something positive and at the end of what you have said all that are connected in some way, I think it's something that they could do. Maybe they are very…I don't know maybe they don't know that they can do it. But I think that it's good to learn different languages when you are here because maybe a lot of them will not have the opportunity to do it outside here. And if they don't do it here I need to learn maybe I don't know simple words. Yeah, I think the best is that they could learn foreign languages here. I think it could be positive.

Speaker 1

And do you agree or disagree with this phrase: the goal of English lessons should not be to achieve native like proficiency, to speak like native speakers, but to develop resources of communicative skills and strategies.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I think the second one, it could be more the second, I think yeah. I mean, there could also be

certificate that proves that you have this level, it could be okay, but only if you want. But in my opinion it's more important to travel around the world and you could be able to talk other people, I think more or less if they want to survive things like that. Yeah. I think it's the best. And after that, if they need to get a certificate or something like this, it's another way. But the first one is the second option that you have described.

Speaker 1

Now again, in your classes, have you ever implemented activities that would include the use of bilingual dictionaries, for example, or translating or writing these personal texts or identity texts?

Speaker 2

Yeah. I don't try to translate the sentences. I tried that they use dictionaries especially and even dictionaries that you can write the sentence and they could find references from other books or like this and they can see the translation. But not a Google translator, for example. I don't like that. Or try to find for example to find a war and find a picture of things like that. But no translation exercises per se. From.

And they use dictionaries only because they maybe they will find different options and if it fits the right one you're looking for.

Speaker 1

Okay. The last important question is: what do you think are the students' perceptions of the use of languages other than English in the English classroom?

Speaker 2

So if you involve other mother tongues, maybe they will feel more involved? Probably. Yeah. Because it's like I have something to say. I have something to say, especially students that don't have a really good level or for them or they have difficulties to learn English or for other languages. I think that if we introduce their past, their history, their mother tongues and these things, they will be more involved. So it could be important. I understand. Okay. Sometimes I do that another way.

Speaker 1

Okay. So this is actually it. I only want to ask you if there's anything else you want to tell me about your teaching practice or in general.

Speaker 2

Every day I'm learning something new. I try to see their interests and from that I learn. The other day, for example, we had an exam with 4th of ESO. And I said okay, we need to try to remember the use of first conditional and the use of second conditional. Before we started the class, they were talking about Johnny Depp, you know, what's going on with him. Okay. And they were really into it and I said, okay, if you want we try to do the review and after that we can talk about this and they said to me, okay, can we? Yeah, we can talk about it. It's perfect. He's English. They taught me something and we started to discuss…they are following what's going on with him and I tried to introduce the review, you know, the conditional. If he was and they said, okay, well, let's try to say this. It's a good conditional. It was interesting and I think that maybe we can stop a little bit for a while and think about what they really need and from what they really need to put at the same level. Maybe we can connect more and if we connect with them, maybe they will connect or they would connect with our subject in English or others.

Speaker 1

So when I finish the studies, which will be the end of June, would you be interested in receiving the results?

Speaker 2

Okay.

Appendix 5: Survey questions

Languages in the English classroom

In this survey you are kindly asked to answer questions regarding the use of your own L1 (the language you use at home) and other additional languages for learning English in your school.

EST: Raskuste korral võid vastata ka Eesti keeles.

CAT: Si tens dificultats de respondre en anglès, ho pots fer en català.

ESP: Si tienes dificultades de responder en inglés, puedes hacerlo en español.

*Required

1. Which is your class/group?

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ 9A

   ◯ 9B

   ◯ 4t ESO A

   ◯ 4t ESO B

2. How old are you? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ 14

   ◯ 15

   ◯ 16

   ◯ 17

3. Which gender do you relate to? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Female

   ◯ Male

   ◯ Other

   ◯ I prefer not to say it

4. What is your L1 - the language you speak regularly at home? (It can also be several languages) *

_____

5. Are you generally allowed to use your L1 or other languages in English lessons? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes
◯ No
◯ It depends on the situation

6. In these situations, how often do you use your L1 (or languages other than English) in the English lesson? *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Never	Not very often	Quite often	Always
To answer or express my opinion	◯	◯	◯	◯
To clarify any doubts with the teacher	◯	◯	◯	◯
To speak to my companions	◯	◯	◯	◯
To take notes	◯	◯	◯	◯
To search for words in the dictionary	◯	◯	◯	◯
To prepare written texts	◯	◯	◯	◯
To prepare spoken texts	◯	◯	◯	◯

7.   Do you think using L1 in English lessons could help you learn English better? *

     Mark only one oval.

     ◯ Yes*

     ◯ No**

8.   *If yes, why do you think that using L1 could help you learn English better?

     _____

     _____

     _____

     _____

     _____

9.   **If no, why do you think that using L1 is detrimental (bad) for learning English?

     _____

     _____

     _____

     _____

     _____

10. In your English lessons, are you ever given tasks that include the use of other languages   *
     (e.g. French, Russian, Arabic, German) and cultures to compare them?

     Mark only one oval.

     ◯ Yes

     ◯ No

     ◯ I'm not sure

11.   In your English lessons, would you like there to be activities that include learning about   *
        other languges and cultures?

        Mark only one oval.

        ◯ Yes

        ◯ No

        ◯ I don't have an opinion on this

12.   In your English lessons, are you ever required to do translating exercises from English to   *
        L1 or from L1 to English?

        Mark only one oval.

        ◯ Yes

        ◯ No

        ◯ I'm not sure

13.   As an English learner, which of these objectives is more important for you? *

        Mark only one oval.

        ◯ To obtain the highest possible level and to speak and write like native English
            speakers

        ◯ Improve my overall communicative skills and strategies while learnign to speak
            and write well in English

        ◯ Other*

14.   *If other, please describe what is your biggest objective for learning English.

        _____

        _____

        _____

        _____

        _____

15. By filling in and sending this survey, I agree that this information will be used for research purposes. The data will only be processed by Blanquerna - Universidad Ramón Llull and will not be transferred to third parties. The data is fully anonymized. *

Mark only one oval.

○ I agree

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