

Effect of L1 Use on Students' Essay Writing Performance (EWP) in English Language Classroom

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of first language (L1) use on students' EWP in an English language (L2) classroom. Utilizing an experimental design, data was collected through pretests, posttests, and interviews. The participants were second-year undergraduate students majoring in Dawro Doonaa and enrolled in a Sophomore English course. Originally, all sixty-eight students were in one section, divided into two sections for this study. To establish similar baseline levels, a pretest was administered, and students were grouped based on their scores. Their EWP was evaluated through a posttest, and interviews with two instructors provided insights into their views on L1 use in student's writing. The data analyzed with a t-test in SPSS version 26 showed that students who were allowed to use their L1 in the English classroom performed significantly better than those in an English-only setting. Thus, it is suggested that L2 teachers in bilingual environments should consider a strategic and optimal use of students' L1.

Keywords: *classroom language, essay writing, L1 use, writing performance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning a second language (L2) is a complex process influenced by various factors, including the learner's first language (L1). In the context of English language learning, particularly essay writing, the role of L1 has been a subject of considerable interest and debate among educators and researchers. Understanding the effect of L1 use on students' EWP is crucial for developing effective teaching strategies and improving language proficiency.

Effective essay writing in English requires mastery of multiple linguistic and cognitive skills, such as grammar, vocabulary, coherence, cohesion, and critical thinking (Hyland, 2019). For L2 learners, these skills are often developed with reference to their L1, which serves as a cognitive and linguistic resource (Cumming, 2001). The interplay

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between L1 and L2 can significantly impact learners' ability to produce well-structured and coherent essays in English.

Historically, language teaching methodologies have oscillated between strict monolingual approaches and more flexible bilingual strategies. Early methods, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, heavily relied on L1 for teaching L2, while later approaches, like the Direct Method and Communicative Language Teaching, emphasized exclusive use of L2 (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Despite these shifts, the use of L1 in L2 classrooms remains a contentious issue, with arguments both for and against its use.

Theoretical frameworks such as Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory suggest that L1 can play a facilitative role in L2 learning by providing cognitive and linguistic support (Vygotsky, 1978). This theory posits that social interaction and cultural tools, including language, are fundamental to cognitive development. In this light, the use of L1 in the classroom can be seen as a valuable resource that aids comprehension and learning. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) further emphasizes the importance of guided interaction and scaffolding, where L1 can serve as a scaffold to bridge the gap between current abilities and potential development in L2 (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Research has also indicated that the strategic use of L1 can reduce cognitive overload, allowing learners to focus more on the task at hand (Macaro, 2005). For instance, using L1 for brainstorming and planning can help students organize their thoughts more effectively before writing in L2 (Woodall, 2002). Moreover, L1 can be instrumental in clarifying complex grammatical structures and vocabulary, thereby enhancing comprehension and retention (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003).

This study aims to investigate the effect of L1 use on students' EWP in English language classrooms. Understanding this relationship is significant for several reasons. First, it can inform teaching practices and help educators make evidence-based decisions about the inclusion of L1 in their instruction. Additionally, it can contribute to the broader discourse on bilingual education and translanguaging, offering insights into how these approaches impact language development. Furthermore, this research has the potential to influence language education policies, advocating for practices that support effective language acquisition.

The relevance of this study extends to both theoretical and practical domains. Theoretically, it explores the intersections between L1 and L2, contributing to our understanding of bilingual cognition and language transfer (Odlin, 1989). Practically, it offers empirical evidence that can guide teachers in optimizing their instructional strategies to improve student outcomes in essay writing.

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the use of L1 affect the overall performance of students' essay writing in English?
2. What specific features of essay writing (e.g., language, structure, idea development, explicitness) are most influenced by L1 use?

Based on these questions, the study hypothesizes that:

1. Alternative Hypothesis 1: The use of L1 in English classroom affects the overall performance of students' essay writing.
2. Null Hypothesis 1: The use of L1 in English classroom does not have any effect on the overall performance of students' essay writing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing has long been recognized as a crucial means of translating thoughts into language, allowing us to express our ideas and emotions. Dougherty (1985) emphasizes that writing is a deeply creative process, akin to producing a work of art. Writing's importance extends beyond creativity, as recent research highlights its cognitive benefits, particularly when done by hand. Studies suggest that handwriting enhances brain connectivity and memory retention, as it encourages reframing information in one's own words, leading to a deeper understanding (Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014; Ose Askvik et al, 2020). Thus, writing remains an essential tool for communication and learning, involving a wide range of skills, from selecting the right words to organizing a coherent essay, all of which are vital for engaging with diverse audiences and purposes.

Writing is not an isolated skill but is deeply interconnected with other language skills such as listening, speaking, and reading. Teaching writing in conjunction with these skills provides a holistic approach to language learning. Kroll (1991) suggests that integrating language skills can be effectively achieved through activities like dictation, where students listen to passages, write key vocabulary on the board, and then reconstruct the passages from memory. This method engages multiple language skills simultaneously: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Integrative tasks like these encourage a more comprehensive learning experience, as students develop their vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills concurrently (Hyland, 2002; Weigle, 2002; Zamel, 1987; Zeleke, 2013).

The integrative approach to language teaching is particularly beneficial for enhancing writing proficiency. For instance, activities such as note-taking and discussions help students improve their writing skills while simultaneously engaging other language skills. This approach not only enhances students' writing abilities but also contributes to overall language competence, as they practice and refine their skills in a more meaningful and interconnected way.

2.1 Reasons for Using L1 in L2 Classrooms

The inclusion of an L1 in L2 classrooms has been widely debated, with many scholars advocating for its use. Nation (2003) highlights three key reasons for incorporating L1 in L2 environments: it creates a more natural learning atmosphere, facilitates communication, and provides emotional comfort. Utilizing L1 can make the classroom feel more familiar and comfortable, thus enhancing student engagement and participation, which is consistent with sociocultural theories emphasizing the role of social interactions in cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978).

L1 can also improve communication, especially when students encounter complex concepts or instructions (Nation, 2003). Research supports the idea that L1 use enhances comprehension and reduces misunderstandings in L2 settings (Macaro, 2001; Swain & Lapkin, 2000). By processing information in their native language, students can achieve better cognitive efficiency and improved learning outcomes (Cummins, 2007).

Furthermore, L1 use can ease the emotional challenges associated with L2 learning, particularly for students who are shy or lack confidence (Nation, 2003). This can reduce anxiety and embarrassment, fostering a more supportive learning environment (Auerbach, 1993). Krashen's affective filter hypothesis reinforces this, suggesting that lowering emotional barriers aids in language acquisition (Krashen, 1982).

L1 use in L2 classrooms also contributes to a supportive social environment, essential for academic success. Despite teachers' efforts to limit L1, students often revert to their native language mentally during L2 learning, reflecting a deep cognitive reliance on L1 (Lee, 2010; Wells, 1999). Studies, such as Teklesellassie and Boersma's (2018) research on Amharic in English-medium courses, reveal positive attitudes toward L1 use, suggesting its benefits in diverse educational settings.

2.2 Effects of L1 in the L2 Classroom

In foreign language (FL) classrooms, students often experience tension between using their L2 and relying on their L1. This dynamic environment serves a dual purpose: teachers impart a new language while learners acquire one they might not have voluntarily chosen (Macaro, 1997).

The role of L1 in L2 instruction is contentious, particularly regarding its impact on learners' emotional and affective states. Harbord (1992) cautions against frequent L1 use, suggesting it could foster dependence, undermining L2 immersion and overall language acquisition. In contrast, Auerbach (1993) argues that incorporating L1 can lower affective filters, leading to better progress in L2 learning by reducing anxiety and creating a more supportive learning environment.

Recent studies present more complex views. Bakhtiari (2014) found that L1 inclusion did not significantly enhance learning outcomes compared to exclusive L2 instruction. However, Smolak et al. (2020) observed that code-switching could benefit bilingual students, facilitating academic success when alternating between languages. Spice (2018) emphasized that while code-switching is especially useful during the initial stages of language learning, its advantages diminish as learners near fluency.

Lee (2010) studied code-switching in Korean classrooms, showing that it generally enhances vocabulary learning more effectively than L2-exclusive instruction, particularly for younger learners. Teacher-led code-switching resulted in better retention and more significant vocabulary gains, especially with abstract vocabulary, where younger learners benefited more than adults.

Regarding writing skills, Nation (2003) advocates using L1 in L2 writing lessons, suggesting that L1 discussions before L2 writing tasks improve learners' comprehension and control of L2 vocabulary. This approach allows learners to grasp task content and develop relevant vocabulary in a supportive context, leading to better performance in subsequent L2 writing tasks. Nation also found that L1 translations were particularly effective, though maintaining a focus on L2 use remains crucial.

2.3 How Much L1 to Use in L2 Classes

Determining the appropriate amount of L1 use in L2 classrooms is essential for effective language teaching. Research indicates that L1 should be used strategically to offer necessary support while ensuring ample exposure to L2. According to Nation (2003), L1 can be particularly valuable for clarifying complex concepts and ensuring learners fully grasp task requirements. By providing explanations or instructions in L1, teachers can prevent misunderstandings that might arise from using L2 exclusively, especially for beginners or when addressing abstract topics. Additionally, Auerbach (1993) notes that L1 can help reduce learners' affective filters, decreasing anxiety and fostering a more supportive learning environment.

However, overreliance on L1 can hinder the immersive experience crucial for language acquisition. Macaro (2001) suggests that L1 use should be limited to no more than 10-20% of classroom time, allowing learners to predominantly engage with L2 while receiving occasional support when necessary. Harbord (1992) similarly advocates for minimal and strategic L1 use, emphasizing the need to maximize L2 interaction and practice.

The ideal amount of L1 use varies based on learners' proficiency levels, the complexity of the material, and instructional goals. For instance, Smolak et al. (2020) found that bilingual students benefit from code-switching when dealing with challenging content, whereas advanced learners may need less L1 support. Lee's (2010) study on vocabulary acquisition in Korean EFL contexts revealed that code-switching is more advantageous for younger learners, suggesting that L1 use should be adapted to learners' age and proficiency.

In conclusion, while L1 use offers benefits such as improved comprehension and emotional support, it should be employed judiciously. A balanced approach, with L1 comprising no more than 10-20% of classroom time and adjusted to learners' needs, creates an optimal environment for language acquisition.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study sought to evaluate the impact of using students' first language (L1) in an English classroom on their English Writing Performance (EWP). To achieve this, an experimental research design was implemented, where the classroom language served as the independent variable, and the students' EWP as the dependent variable. The research primarily employed quantitative methods.

The study took place in the Dawro Zone of the Southwest Ethiopian Region (SWER), where the local language, Dawro Doona (Dawrotsuwa), is widely spoken and used as the medium of instruction in schools from grades one to four. It is also taught as a subject up to grade ten, used in teacher training for first-cycle teachers, and studied at the Bachelor of Arts (BA) level at universities. The Dawro Zone's capital, Tercha Town, is home to the Dawro Tercha Campus of Wolaita Sodo University, which hosts the Department of Dawrotsuwa Language and Literature. Students in this department, who are proficient in Dawro Doona, take the Sophomore English (EnLa 2043) course as part of their studies. The study focused on these students and the university teachers who taught writing skills courses.

The English Language and Literature Department was responsible for assigning teachers for all English courses on campus. Four teachers, all proficient in Dawro Doona, made up the department. To control for extraneous variables, such as differences in teaching styles, a female teacher with a Master's degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and ten years of experience was selected for the study. She was briefed on the study's goals, the selected topics for writing lessons, teaching methods, assessment techniques, the intended use of code-switching, and how to ensure that code-switching was limited to planned instances only. This ensured that all factors, aside from language use, were kept constant.

Since the study aimed to assess the effects of L1 use on writing performance, it was essential to select a class where all students shared the same L1. The Department of Dawrotsuwa Language and Literature, where all students spoke Dawro Doona, was

therefore chosen. The department had 68 second-year students, initially in one section. For the study, these students were divided into two sections based on their pretest scores, ensuring comparability between the groups. The pretest results were arranged in descending order, and students were alternately assigned to one of two groups.

To achieve the study's objectives, data were collected using pre-tests, post-tests, and interviews.

1. Pre-test: This was administered before dividing the students into groups to avoid discrepancies. The results were used to create two comparable groups, with even-numbered scores assigned to one group and odd-numbered scores to the other. The compositions were scored holistically, and the results were recorded in Microsoft Excel for further analysis.
2. Post-test: Conducted after the instructional sessions, the post-test assessed the effectiveness of the treatment. Both groups completed the same essay writing activities under identical conditions. The essays were evaluated by both the course teacher and the researcher using an analytic scoring approach, ensuring consistency in evaluation criteria across both groups. The average scores were then analyzed.
3. Interview: Two teachers were interviewed to gather insights on the general use of L1 in English classrooms and the reasons behind its use.

The study also designed and administered items addressing four key features of writing: language, structure, idea development, and explicitness. Language-related items evaluated grammatical accuracy, spelling, punctuation, and correct tense usage. Structure-related items assessed the presence of a clear introduction, coherent sentence arrangement, effective paragraph division, smooth transitions within paragraphs, and a strong conclusion. Idea development items evaluated the sufficiency of points supporting the thesis statement, the credibility of evidence, the integration of external ideas, and proper citation of sources. Explicitness was measured by assessing whether key concepts were clearly defined, the essay's goals were explicitly stated, and linking words and phrases effectively indicated the relationship between ideas.

The mean score for each feature was calculated using SPSS by summing the results for all relevant elements and dividing by the number of elements. For example, the mean result for the structure was obtained by averaging the results for the clarity of introduction, sentence coherence, paragraph division, smooth transitions, and effectiveness of the conclusion.

The study compared the students' EWP between the experimental and control groups, focusing on each feature of writing. An independent-sample t-test was conducted using SPSS version 26 to compare the mean differences between the groups, and the overall performance across all writing features was also compared.

Before the experiment, a pre-test was administered, and students were grouped based on their results. A bilingual teacher proficient in both Dawro Doona and English was selected to teach both groups. The assignment of the experimental and control groups was determined by a lottery. The experiment lasted for an entire academic semester, following a pre-test-post-test control-group design. In the experimental group, the teacher used L1 when necessary, while in the control group, only English was used as the medium of instruction.

During the experiment, students engaged in essay writing sessions in class, followed by post-test sessions. The students' EWP was evaluated using an analytic

approach with a checklist covering the key features of writing. Quantitative data were primarily required for the study, and statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26. An independent sample t-test was used to compare the mean differences between the groups, and relationships between the students' performance across various writing features were examined.

The study was part of a PhD thesis, with ethical approval obtained from the proposal examiners at Addis Ababa University. All participants, who were above 18 years of age, were informed about the study and consented to participate.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Results

This section provides a comparative analysis of the mean results of participants' performance in essay writing. It aimed to compare the mean scores across various writing features, including language, structure, idea development, and explicitness, as well as the overall EWP. Due to the absence of five students (three from the EO group and two from the CS group) during the post-test, the analysis was conducted using the mean scores of 31 EO students and 32 CS students.

In order to ensure the establishment of equal ground between both groups, the comparison of the mean values on the pretest between the groups was conducted using an independent sample t-test.

Table 1. The pretest results between groups.

Group	N	M	SD	SEM	F	sig	t	df	Sig(2-tailed)	d
EO	34	4.750	1.6461	0.291						
					0.09	0.76	0.25	65	0.807	0.0599
CS	34	4.6571	1.45406	0.24578						

As the results in Table 1 shows, the F-value (0.092) with a significance level of 0.763 indicates that there is no significant difference in the variances between the two groups. The t-value (0.245) with 65 degrees of freedom results in a Sig(2-tailed) value of 0.807. This suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. Cohen's d, which measures the effect size, is 0.0599. This is a very small effect size, indicating that the difference between the two groups is negligible.

Table 2. Comparison of students' performance on language as a feature of writing between groups.

Group	N	M	SD	SEM	F	sig	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	d
EO	31	3.07	.84	.15						
					10.08	.002	-2.832	47.37	.007	0.74
CS	32	3.56	.48	.08						

As the result in Table 2 shows, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the performance of language as a feature of writing in EWP for English only (EO) and code-switching (CS) groups.

Statistically significant differences were obtained with $p = 0.007$ which is much smaller than the conventional cut-off point (0.05) with ($t(47.37) = -2.832$, $p = 0.007$) in the scores with the mean score for EO ($M = 3.0726$, $SD = .83963$) and for CS ($M = 3.5625$, $SD = .47941$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = $-.48992$, 95% ci: $-.83785$ to $-.14199$) was significant. Therefore, the participants who attended the class where code-switching was allowed performed significantly higher in maintaining language as a feature of writing at EWP with the Cohen's d 0.74 which suggested a moderate effect size.

Table 3. Comparison of EWP on structure as a feature of writing between groups.

Group	N	M	SD	SEM	F	sig	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	d
EO	31	2.63	.88	.16	7.142	.01	-1.648	53.973	.105	0.43
CS	32	2.94	.62	.11						

As the results in Table 3 show, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the performance of structure as a feature of writing in EWP for English only (EO) and code-switching (CS) groups.

There were no statistically significant differences as p 0.105 is bigger than the conventional cut-off point (0.05) with ($t(53.973) = -1.648$, $p = 0.105$) in the scores with the mean score for EO ($m = 2.6258$, $sd = .88052$) and for CS ($m = 2.9438$, $sd = .62473$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = $-.31794$, 95% ci: $-.70467$ to $.06878$) was not significant. Therefore, the participants who were allowed to switch codes to their mother tongue did not perform significantly higher in maintaining structure as a feature of writing at EWP although the Cohen's d 0.43 suggested a modest effect size. As a result, the alternative hypothesis (h_1) which students who attend the class where classroom code-switching (CS) is allowed perform better in writing than the students who attend the English class where only English is used as a medium, was not supported in structure as a feature of writing at essay writing.

Table 4. Comparison of EWP on idea development as a feature of writing between groups.

Group	N	M	SD	SEM	F	sig	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	d
EO	31	2.86	.87	.15	7.941	.007	-3.089	50.321	.003	.8
CS	32	3.43	.55	.10						

The results in Table 4 show the comparison of the mean performance on idea development as a feature of writing between experimental and control groups. An independent-samples t-test indicates that there were statistically significant differences between the groups with $p = 0.003$ which is far less than the conventional cut-off point (0.05) with ($t(50.321) = -3.089$, $p = 0.003$) in the scores with the mean score for EO ($M = 2.8629$, $SD = .86804$) and for CS ($M = 3.4297$, $SD = .54711$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = $-.56678$, 95% ci: $-.93523$ to $-.19834$) was significant. Therefore, the participants who were deliberately allowed to switch codes to their mother tongue performed significantly better in maintaining on idea development as a feature of writing at EWP with the Cohen's d 0.8 which suggested a moderate effect size. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H_1), that students who attend the class where classroom code-switching (CS) is allowed perform better in writing than the students who

attend the English class where only English is used as a medium, was supported at idea development as a feature of writing of essay writing.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the performance of explicitness as a feature of writing in EWP for experimental and control groups as it is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Comparison of EWP on explicitness as a feature of writing between groups.

Group	N	M	SD	SEM	F	sig	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	d
EO	31	3.28	.80	.14						
					5.403	.023	-2.635	48.223	.011	.7
CS	32	3.72	.47	.08						

The result shows that there were statistically significant differences with ($t(48.223) = -2.635$, $p = 0.011$) in the scores with the mean score for EO ($M = 3.2796$, $SD = .80322$) and for CS ($M = 3.7188$, $SD = .47224$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = $-.43918$, 95% ci: $-.77426$ to $-.1041$) was significant. Therefore, the participants who were deliberately allowed to switch codes to their mother tongue performed significantly higher in maintaining on explicitness as a feature of writing at EWP and the Cohen's d 0.7 suggested a moderate effect size. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H1), that students who attend the class where classroom code-switching (CS) is allowed perform better in writing than the students who attend the English class where only English is used as a medium, was supported in explicitness as a feature of writing at EWP level.

Regarding the comparison across features of writing between groups, the data were analyzed to examine on which features of writing the students' performances have shown bigger mean differences. In order to gain the result, the mean values were computed in the SPSS 26 and the mean differences (MD) were taken to compare the differences as presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Comparison of students' PWP within features of writing between groups.

Group	Language				Structure				Idea Development				Explicitness			
	N	M	SD	MD	N	M	SD	MD	N	M	SD	MD	N	M	SD	MD
EO	31	3.07	.84		31	2.63	.88		31	2.86	.87		31	3.28	.80	
				.49				.31				.57				.44
CS	32	3.56	.48		32	2.94	.62		32	3.43	.55		32	3.72	.47	

The results showed that the biggest MD (0.57) was observed in idea development as a feature of writing. This indicates that those who were in the CS class have shown better EWP than those who were in EO class in maintaining the idea development. The next biggest MD (0.49) was observed in language as a feature of writing suggesting that the CS group maintained language elements better than the EO group. The third biggest MD was 0.44 which was gained in explicitness as a feature of writing, and the smallest MD was obtained in structure as a feature of writing. The smallest MD on structure as a feature of writing shows that the students in the class where CS was used and those who attended the EO class performed relatively similar in maintaining structure.

The comparison of mean of students' EWP between the groups was conducted to examine which instructional type (CS or EO) yields higher performance of students' overall essay writing. Thus, an independent-samples t-test, as in Table 7, was conducted

to compare the performance of essay writing for English only (EO) and code-switching (CS) groups.

Table 7. Differences in EWP between groups.

Group	N	M	SD	SEM	F	sig	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	d
EO	31	2.95	.81	.14	10.301	.002	-2.779	47.504	.008	0.75
CS	32	3.42	.46	.08						

The results show that there were statistically significant differences because the p-value of 0.008 is much smaller than the conventional significance cut-off point. In addition, ($t(47.502) = -2.779$, $p = 0.008$) in the scores with the mean score for EO ($M = 2.9602$, $SD = .81367$) and CS ($M = 3.4137$, $SD = .46017$) was gained. The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = $-.46351$, 95% ci: $-.79891$ to $-.12812$) was found to be significant.

Therefore, there were statistically significant differences in figures that show the higher performance of the experimental group (where code-switching was deliberately allowed in the classroom) than the control group (where only English is used as a medium of instruction). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H1), that students who attend the class where classroom CS is allowed perform better in writing than the students who attend the English class where only English is used as a medium, was supported by the moderate strength of the effect size ($d=0.75$).

4.2 Discussion

This study investigated the impact of first language (L1) use in English language classrooms on students' essay writing performance (EWP). The research employed a pretest-posttest design along with interviews to gather data. While the influence of L1 varied across different writing features, a significant positive effect was observed on students' essay writing. Specifically, statistically significant improvements were noted in idea development, language use, and explicitness, all with moderate effect sizes. However, although improvements in writing structure were noted, the effect size was modest and not statistically significant.

In terms of overall essay writing, the use of code-switching (CS) was found to enhance students' performance. Interview responses supported this finding, with teachers highlighting the role of L1 in facilitating student understanding. One teacher explained that using the mother tongue depends on students' comprehension levels, noting that many students struggle to understand lessons delivered entirely in English. Another teacher mentioned that students were more comfortable and confident when certain concepts were explained in their first language, which encouraged them to ask questions and engage more actively in class.

These results align with previous research by Auerbach (1993) and Nation (2003), who suggested that L1 use lowers students' affective filters, leading to improved L2 learning. Similar conclusions were drawn by Lee (2010) and Smolak et al. (2020), who found that CS contributes to academic success and benefits bilingual students facing L2 challenges. However, the study also cautions against over-reliance on L1 in L2 classrooms, echoing Harbord's (1992) concerns about the potential drawbacks, such as an increased dependence on L1, which could undermine the development of L2 proficiency.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The objective of the study was to examine the effect of L1 use on students' EWP in English language classroom. To this end, an experimental study was carried out grouping sixty eight second year undergraduate into two groups: experimental and control based on the pretest results. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, comparisons of the means were made. The analysis of the data was running an independent-samples t-test in SPSS 26. The grand total mean of the students' EWP between the groups showed that there were statistically significant differences between groups suggesting that the students who attended the code-switching class performed higher than those who attended the class where English only was the medium of instruction. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H1) that "students who attend the class where classroom CS is allowed perform better in essay writing than the students who attend the English class where only English is used as a medium" was supported.

The task of improving L2 teaching and advancing students' performance in L2 learning is what every concerned body should share. Based on the results, it is recommended that the L2 teachers, language policy makers, and school principals should be aware of the context where L2 teaching takes place. As a result, they should encourage principled and professionally planned use of students' L1 where needed.

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