



EMI OR BILINGUAL INSTRUCTION? AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY IN THE TEACHING OF ORAL COMMUNICATION AMONG PHILIPPINE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Bilingual instruction has gained its popularity and importance as an alternative instructional strategy of English as medium of instruction in a classroom setting. Bilingual instruction is oftentimes associated with the use of code-switching, which is still presumed as an asset during the giving of the lessons which includes teaching and learning interaction between the learners and the teacher. This study examines the use of code-switching and measures the effectiveness of bilingual instruction by looking into the mean gain of the pre- and post-test scores of the control (EMI) and experimental (Bilingual Instruction) groups employing a quasi-experimental method. Senior high school students who are non-native speakers of English were involved in this study. Two classes who were under different teaching modalities with regards to the aligned competency used during the conduct of the study; had undergone observation, and audio recording, which was transcribed to analyze why and how bilingual instruction was used. The analysis of bilingual instruction revealed that both bilingual instruction and EMI are effective tools in improving the language proficiency of the teacher and understanding of the subject Oral Communication as manifested in the mean gain. Therefore, whatever medium is used, they could be effective as long as the teacher knows what he is teaching and applies appropriate strategies in the teaching and learning process. This calls for the school administrators to encourage the use of bilingual instruction since there are students that are still left behind when it comes to communicative competence and have lower cognitive skills when English is used as medium of instruction.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Bilingual education is a policy where two languages are used as media of instruction. Several models are depending on the goal pursued, the most common being additive and transitional. In additive bilingual education programs, both languages are given the same value and recognition. The goal for learners is the development of literacy and communication in two languages (Glossary of Curriculum Terminology | International Bureau of Education., n.d). In the context of teaching L2, code-switching is regarded as one of the fundamental ideas. This method has been extensively observed but with insufficient research (Kashi, 2018).

Since its establishment in 1974, the Philippines' educational system has been known as the Bilingual Education Program (BEP). English was the only language of instruction up until 1974. Assuming that mother tongues are the best media for facilitating learning, the Department of Education has supported mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) at all levels of education since 2009. The politically entrenched belief that only English and Filipino, the national language, can promote learning among Filipinos and articulate their country's identity is challenged by this institutionalization (Tupas and Lorente, 2014).

The act of switching codes or using and understanding two languages effectively is referred to as bilingualism. Language is a group property, whereas bilingualism belongs to an individual. A person using two languages implies that there are two distinct language communities. However, being bilingual does not automatically imply that one is fluent in both languages or that one is literate in both (Major, 2002). In addition, Gottardo and Grant (2008) cited in their study that, several variables, including the age at which the second language is acquired, continued exposure to the first language (L1), level of proficiency in each language, and the environment in which each language is learned, all play a role in the complex definition of bilingualism. According to common definitions of bilingualism, language proficiency is thought of as falling into one of two categories: either someone has learned two languages or not (Brutt-Griffler, 2017). This research has significant implications for linguistics and education, as it may reveal new insights into bilingualism wherein there can be advantages and disadvantages to possessing two functioning languages as a medium of instruction.

Through Code-Switching (CS), one may build a better exchange of communication and grasp things that would be better understood if translated and or explained in one's mother tongue. However, many would disregard its core function and conclude that this is 'simply because the language exists'. As mentioned by Kashi (2018), CS is an essential method and has been extensively observed but with insufficient research. Because of that, the use of code-switching in an English language classroom adds fuel to the ongoing debate on whether it is an asset or a hindrance to the student's learning and academic performance in response also to the language policies used in a classroom.

A study by Ollajide et.al (2023) found that bilingual instruction in ecology improved pre-service integrated science learners' understanding and motivation. This teaching method was more effective than monolingual instruction in connecting classroom ecology with real-world ecology. The study supports the idea that science can be taught in students' language, demonstrating the potential benefits of bilingual instruction in enhancing their understanding of the subject. Like Launio (2015), the class that was administered using two languages, English and Hiligaynon respectively, performed better in their posttest results rather than those that were taught with English only. However, it is crucial to remember that the English language is widely used in the Philippines, as English was the only language of instruction up until 1974 (Tupas and Lorente, 2014). Still, there are advantages of a practical, intellectual, and cultural kind. It should also be said that bilingualism has been allowed to seem a disadvantage, or lack of competency here and elsewhere in which the study limits considering the factors that affect most of the children's language learning.

Furthermore, previous studies on code-switching in the Philippines have focused on qualitative data and identifying different types. Villafor and Lipaopao (2019) studied code-switching in political speeches, while Osmeña (2017) studied bilingual code-switching in BSED III-A and III-B. Poplack's book elaborated on different types of code-switching. However, few studies have explored widespread code-switching between English and Bisaya or Cebuano, another Philippine language. Abastillas (2018) found divergence in Cebuano and English code-switching practices in Central Philippines, while Paculanang's (2017) study discussed the speech anxieties of pre-service Cebuano teachers using code-switching as a tactic to accommodate fewer competent pupils in their classes.

Addressing issues on bilingual education would contribute to one sustainable development goal of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which is quality education, the fourth one out of seventeen ("Goal 4: Quality Education - the Global Goals"). Thus, this study on bilingual education promotes quality education as code-switching serves as a tool that enhances the student's learning in an English language classroom. This Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) permits this study on code-switching as a tool that helps in transforming education holistically not just on the target respondents but on the Philippine education system itself as it is strengthened as a global common good. Likewise, this highlights the significance of instruction of language for a good and equitable education.

Hence, to add discussion and firmly supports on the existing literature on bilingualism in education, this paper went beyond having an actual experiment by observing a teaching and language learning environment i.e., two non-English majoring classes of the Grade 11 Senior High School students, recognizing the significance of bilingual instruction as a linguistic scaffold or instrument device for studying and teaching languages . At the same time, this paper aimed to determine the effectiveness of Bilingual Instruction through determining the statistical difference between the two senior high school classes using their pretest and posttest scores. The goal here is the existing

hope that educators will become aware of these findings so they do not reject casual Cebuano-English code-switching as an example of random, irregular language mixing brought on by insufficient command of either language. Code-switching is a bilingual skill that is on exhibit and warrants more research.

2. METHOD

Design

This study used a descriptive quantitative design employing a quasi-experimental method to establish a causal relationship between two variables i.e., the independent and dependent variables. The dependent variables are the test scores of the student participants while the independent variables are the medium of instruction which are the experimental (bilingual instruction) and controlled variables (EMI). This effect is presumed to have occurred during the study itself. This means that experimental manipulation is applied to the subjects to some extent since it aimed to analyze the effectiveness of bilingual instruction and address the cause-effect relationship between bilingual instruction and non-codeswitching (EMI) in an English Language Classroom.

Participants

An initial sixty-three student-participants took part in the experiment. Forty of these senior high school learners were then identified using random sampling on Microsoft Excel (screenshot attached in the Appendix). Twenty were from the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) class and the other twenty were Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) class. And one cooperating teacher who also took part in this study. These students were enrolled in the subject of Oral Communication. They had at least ten years of prior formal instruction in English and are now enrolled in different Academic Tracks under the K-12 curriculum. The participants were under observation by the proponents. They also received a great number of lessons for the day which are oral communication activities from their respective subject teacher and at the same time the cooperating teacher for this study. These pieces of information taken follows ethical considerations from the participants ranging from the different informed consent forms and approval of the school principal and noted by the research adviser, the student's parents' consent together with the student's consent and the cooperating teacher's approval to be observed on his instruction of the lesson.

Instruments

This study included Oral Communication Activities as the topic during the instruction. This topic was taken from the cooperating teacher's lesson (see Appendix O). A set of pre-test and post-test questionnaires with 15 items; which were reviewed by experts, were used to analyze the effects of both bilingual and EMI instruction in their academic performances. This paper-based and structured questionnaire tool was used to collect the students' answers. This contained a list of ready-made multiple-item test questions from the proponents which correspond to the three learning competencies (taken from the cooperating teacher's Lesson provided by the Department of Education's module) for the reliability of the instrument. This instrument comes with the approval of both the research adviser and the cooperating teacher. Then, the cooperating teacher included the questionnaires as part of the class activity. The researchers were also the participants as observers for their role in this study as they were considered a researcher and not a member of the group being investigated. This study also utilized recordings, videos, and transcripts to identify the occurrences of code-switching during bilingual instruction.

Data Analysis

Statistical treatments employed were mean and standard deviation for descriptive analysis and the t-test for inferential analysis of the data. The level of significance was set at .05 alpha which is a liberal estimate for educational research. Statistical computations were done using Microsoft Excel. The T-test is a technique that tests the difference between the two means. Solving for the simple percentage was also used in identifying the number of frequencies in code-switching that the cooperating teacher did. Wherein, frequency is equivalent to the number and type of code-switching it belonged to. N is equivalent to the total number of frequencies of the three types of code-switching.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.

Types of Code-Switching used in Experimental Group

TYPES OF CODE SWITCHING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	RANK
TAG SWITCHING	23	29.49	2
INTRA-SENTENTIAL SWITCHING	45	57.69	1
INTER-SENTENTIAL SWITCHING	10	12.82	3
TOTAL	78	100	

Table 1 explicit the frequency of occurrences on the types of code switching. As presented in the Table, intra-sentential switching was the most frequent type of code switching that occurred on bilingual instruction in teaching oral communication with a frequency of 45 or 57.69%. The occurrence of this type is shown in one of the examples under extract 1. Meanwhile, inter-sentential switching got the lowest number of switches

with a frequency of 10 or 12.82%, and it is illustrated in one of the examples under extract 2.

Extract 1: L15

"There is, uh, naay usa ka picture dinha nga dili kaayo klaro so let's just skip that one, okay?"

[Translation: There is uh, there is a picture in there that is not so clear so let's just skip that one, okay?]

Extract 1: L15 is an example of intra-sentential code-switching during the utilization of bilingual instruction of the cooperating teacher. Although the existence of a filler was evident such as "uh", the switching of codes was smoothly used. The cooperating teacher switched his language from English to Sinugbuanong Binisaya at level of clause or sentence, which adheres that only bilinguals with high levels of fluency are able to switch in this way, which appears to involve unique rules governing how the syntax and morphology of both languages may interact. In which Murtiningsih et al. (2022) mentioned that fluency in bilinguals usually has an impact on intra-sentential switching. By switching between English and Sinugbuanong Binisaya in a sentence, it demonstrated the significance of complementary functions. The cooperating teacher was able to communicate his idea in a clear and organized manner by utilizing both languages.

Additionally, it should be noted that the sentences in the extract followed the grammar rules of both Sinugbuanong Binisaya and English and that the words from the two languages were connected naturally. This allowed for a smooth transition between words like extract 1 made it seem like the cooperating teacher was using one language. Also, similar studies that identified the different types of code-switching found the same findings which were intra-sentential as the most frequent switching occurrences like (Villafior, and Lipaopao 2019; Osmeña, 2017 and Mangila, 2019).

Extract 2: L4

"Okay, please sit down. Alright so I think everybody is present I don't see any blank or empty seats... naa ra ang tanan".

[Translation: Okay, please sit down. Alright so I think everybody is present I don't see any blank or empty seats... everyone is present.]

It is noted that there is an alternation where the switching occurs at the end of the sentence. This involves a significant amount of syntactic complexity and conformity, implicating that speakers performing this kind of switching are usually fairly proficient in the participating languages. Also, the purpose of the teacher's code-switching act is to facilitate. In this extract, the teacher is no longer merely a content or language instructor. He is starting the class therefore he was facilitating first. From being an instructor to a facilitator in the classroom. In this instance, the instructor had opted to use code-switching in the classroom discussion because it was of the management and routines in the classroom where orders or directives were given by the instructor to the students in a more accessible language, such as Bisaya linguistic proficiency in English in order to encourage the students' active participation in the class (Mangila, 2019).

On the other hand, tag switching is marked as the second to the highest with a frequency of 23 or 29.49%. It is represented by one of the examples which states:

Extract 3: L65

"Okay, thank you. Now there is what we call as a second type of oral communication activity which is meetings. Now what happens during a meeting or why do we conduct meetings "para? Ha?" Why do meetings happen?"

[Translation: Okay, thank you. Now there is what we call as a second type of oral communication activity which is meetings. Now what happens during a meeting or why do we conduct meetings? For what? Why do meetings happen?]

The teacher inserted an interjection or tag "for what" into the sentence to emphasize its strong emotion, or to gain attention, without adding any grammatical value on the sentence. This adheres to Putranto (2018), as he stated that tag switching is usually used from a different language or a foreign language placed into the speaker's spoken language or a common tag language that the speaker uses before switching to another language. It is evident that no words or clauses from one language are integrated into the other during the process of code-switching. There is only a language change that takes place. The example revealed that the teachers switch code at the end of his utterance to check or monitor the students' comprehension and this implies that the employment of English and Sinugbuanong Binisaya in his utterance is a means to facilitate smoother flow of ideas and to ensure understanding. Hence, code switching is a symbol of expression' to interact with one another (Markhamah and Kardena, 2023). In

this case, the teacher used code-switch to transfer the materials by means of providing expression necessary for the teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, there are times that these three code-switches go together in a sentence or two. Like in the following examples below:

Extract 4: L41

Video calls... voice calls through messenger or through your phone, so that... those are some examples of telephone conversations. "Naa paba'y nag gamit diri sa" landline? "Ha? Wala na kaayo no?" So usually, we use our mobile phones. And of course, informal oral communication also includes discussions that take place in a business meeting, okay, we also have examples of formal oral communication you have there the first one, presentations...

[Translation: Video calls... voice calls through messenger or through your phone, so that...those are some examples of telephone conversations. "Is there anyone in here still uses landline? "What? Not anymore, right?" So usually, we use our mobile phones. And of course, informal oral communication also includes discussions that take place in a business meeting, okay, we also have examples of formal oral communication you have there the first one, presentations...]

In this example, two types of code-switching occurred, the first type is intra-sentential switching as the teacher inserted the phrase “*Naa paba'y nag gamit diri sa...*” which means “*Is there anyone in here still uses...*”. From the speech that the teacher uttered, he probably used the code of language to emphasize the words that he said. The application of the code-switch served to amplify or clarify the message being implicated. According to Mangilas’s (2019) study, the excerpt also demonstrates how the teacher’s code-switching actions during class demonstrate reformulation as a pedagogical function. The teacher’s code-switching actions in this instance amounted to reformulation because she produced concurrent translations of the questions she had initially posed in English after observing that the student had not provided feedback.

The second type of code-switching that can be drawn out from the example is the insertion of a tag switching which states “*Ha? Wala na kaayo no?*” which means “*What? Not anymore, right?*”, this insertion of tag conforms to the teacher asking the students to confirm his comprehension of the discussion, then shifts to English at the end of the sentence.

The occurrence of both code appeals is an attempt to clarify any difficulty in understanding the concept being discussed. The expressions would help the teacher in facilitating the teaching process. The implications mentioned were by Memory et al. (2018) who stated that code-switching is appropriate when used for building emotions with students and organizing the class. Speaking English sometimes caught the students’ attention, but they paid more attention when the teacher spoke to students L1. Hence, Jiang et al. (2014) explicitly that code-switching is a helpful asset in bridging communication during the teaching and learning process. This implies that teachers would need to utilize code-switch to explain and promote English language acquisition, as well as help students join lessons more effectively.

Extract 5: L47

"Kinsa ma'y dili mugamit og" facebook messenger "diri? O mihilom"...okay, are you familiar with Skype?"

[Translation: Who among you here doesn't use Facebook messenger? Oh! Why is it suddenly silent? Okay, are you familiar with Skype?]

It is noted that language switches occur for the reason that the speaker finds it difficult to communicate in one language, therefore, code-switching makes up for the shortcoming. In the switching of codes, “*O mihilom*” was an indication that facilitation (Mangila) was utilized since during the instruction, the cooperating teacher had to observe the classroom management.

Table 2.
Pre-Post-Test Scores

Competencies	Controlled		Experimental	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
1	60	72	68	77
2	61	78	48	68
3	76	61	68	60
TOTAL	197	211	184	205

Table 4 presents the scores of the twenty student participants per group that is between the controlled (bilingual instruction) and experimental (EMI). It can be observed that under the three (3) competencies there is a variation of results. Competency one (1) under the pretest scores shows that both groups (controlled & EMI) did not meet the expectations. However, the post-test scores revealed that the experimental group got a fairly satisfactory score, while the control group did not meet the expectations. In competency two (2) the pretest scores of both groups failed to meet the expectations. However, the posttest score of the controlled group revealed a fairly satisfactory average, while the experimental group did not manage to achieve the desired results. And competency three (3) under the pretest scores shows that the control group got a fairly satisfactory score while the experimental

group did not meet the expectations. And their post-test scores also revealed that both groups did not meet the expectations.

Competency one (1) obtained low scores in the pretest and post-test scores for the controlled group thus, both percentage scores did not even meet the expectations. In the experimental group, the scores they obtained are low in the pre-test scores meeting the same ends as the control group. However, its post-test scores revealed an average that is fairly satisfactory revealing that bilingual instruction was essential and, Cummins's Theory on the function of language proficiency was proven to be effective (Launio 2015). It further suggests that in comparing informal to formal oral communication the low scores would indicate that there is still room for improvement. The data could be supported by this study where the Chinese preferred bilingual instruction over English-only instruction, and some even saw their test scores increase when Chinese was added (Lin and Lei, 2021).

Competency two (2) shows that the pre-tests of the experimental group and the control group did not meet the requisites of said competency. However, only the control group presents the results of their posttest to have a fairly satisfactory average indicating that their percentage score as a whole failed to describe the function of oral communication used in the given oral communication activity. It further suggests that although code-switching is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, there must be an instruction or guide before the conduct of bilingual education. This supports the idea of Jacobson (1983), who proposes criteria for code-switching instruction in the classroom, (a) The distribution of languages must be 50/50; (b) the alternation must be unconscious and; (c) the alternation is for the sake of learning. The criteria presented according to Jacobson are not a prerequisite for all teachers but if it does not meet then it is considered as an unstructured code-switching.

Competency three (3) revealed that both pre-tests and post-test scores of the experimental group did not meet the expectations, which means that on each test their average percentage as a whole failed Competency three (3). While the controlled group had fairly satisfactory results on their pretests, they did not meet the expectations on the posttests, which means that their average percentage failed to recognize the use of oral communication as an integral part of human life. At the same time, it could mean that English instruction failed to assist the students' learning or could be the result of the students' cognition.

Although the notion of the teachers in the education system was that, if the competency of the lesson was discussed, then it is considered as CARRIED. The class's failure to meet the expectations or to get a higher score could be affected by the existing individual cognitive differences. Perhaps, the learner's existing knowledge and new knowledge did not interact although the teacher utilized different types of code-switching according to Poplack's theory.

In addition to this, Cummins's Theory on the function of language proficiency was proven to be effective, in response to the competencies that each group was able to meet the expectations by the grading scale. By that, the cooperating teacher still was able to bridge his lessons toward the students and gain higher scores. Indeed, this theory backs up the idea that using an instructional medium makes it easier for students to learn, increases the likelihood that they will understand more, and boosts their performance (Launio,2015).

Table 3.

Mean difference (Experimental Group)

	mean	Std Dev	T Stat	df	p	Decision
Pretest	9.2	2.525657809	-2.010080046	19	0.02	Reject H0
Posttest	10.3	1.94358869				

Level of Significance α 0.05

Table 3 shows the relation between student-participant's pretest and post-test scores. It can be observed that the mean pretest score is 9.2 and the mean posttest score is 10.3. The degrees of freedom for the t-test are $df=20-1=19$. This was calculated as $n-1$ where n is the number of pairs of the experimental group (ABM class). Since the level of significance was set at .05 alpha which is a liberal estimate for educational research, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected because the p-value is less than the certain alpha level which is 0.02. Hence, there is a statistical difference between the pretest and post-test results signifying that the results reject the null hypothesis which states that bilingual instruction will not improve the academic performance of senior high school students and accept the alternative hypothesis of the study which states that bilingual instruction will improve the students' academic performance.

Similar studies shown like Launio's (2015) study found in one of its findings that the class that was administered using two languages, English and Hiligaynon respectively, performed better in their posttest results rather than those that were taught with English only (p.464). Also, when a second language (L2) is necessary for comprehension and meaningful communication, it should be used in the involvement of the students, which ultimately results in improved academic performance. The government of Namibian education ought to create rules for using the Code (Simasiku et al., 2015). The findings of Ali et al., (2023) in their study titled: "Effect of Code Switching on Bilingual Students' Success in Mathematics and Language Education") showed that code-switching and bilingual students' performance in mathematics and language were positively correlated, indicating that integrating English and mathematics instruction can improve learning outcomes.

Indeed, bilingual instruction is an effective tool in increasing the scores of the students. There was a statistical mean difference between the two scores and implying that bilingual instruction took an effect on the student's academic performances.

Table 4.
Mean Difference (Control Group)

	mean	Std Dev	T Stat	df	p	Decision
Pretest	9.55	2.187885304	1.896789149	19	0.03	Reject HO
Posttest	10.65	2.158825217				

Level of Significance α 0.05

Table 4 shows the relation between student-participant's pretest and post-test scores. It can be observed that the mean pretest score is 9.55 and the mean posttest score is 10.65. The degrees of freedom for the t-test are $df=20-1=19$. This was calculated as $n-1$ where n is the number of pairs of the controlled group (STEM class). Since the level of significance was set at .05 alpha which is a liberal estimate for educational research, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected because the p-value is less than the certain alpha level which is 0.03. Hence, there is a statistical difference between the pretest and posttest results signifying that the scores showed improvement using English as a medium of instruction.

Although Lin and Lei's (2021) study showed relevance to bilingual instruction, it did too on the results of their study which showed that participants were happy with the English as Medium of Instruction (EMI) strategy, which enhanced their linguistic proficiency and disciplinary learning, which supports the findings of this study. Furthermore, the findings of this research reflect in the study of Villanueva and A Bert (2023), who firmly believed that the definition of an instructional medium needs to be operationally redefined. It should be inclusive in the sense that it does not isolate the classroom from the society in which it is situated. And so, the contrastive views between bilingual instruction and EMI resonate with the notion that it should uphold as a meaningful consideration instead of obstacles that will hamper the process of achieving the learning goals (Nurhamidah et.al., 2018). Hence, the findings of this study and the previous ones strongly confirms that English as medium of instruction is effective

In addition, whatever medium is used, they could be effective as long as the teacher knows what he is teaching and applies different strategies, especially in managing the class. Also, one should not treat the EMI as more than just a rule; rather, they should consider it as an integral part of their education. Students and teachers should be aware that teaching and learning English is essential and that there is never a reason to give the same justifications repeatedly because learning is a process and there is always room for improvement.

4. CONCLUSION

Intra-sentential switching was the most frequent type of code-switching that occurred during bilingual instruction in teaching oral communication, which was then followed by tag switching which is marked as the second to the highest, while inter-sentential switching ranked third for its frequency during the bilingual instruction of the cooperating teacher. Competency 1 obtained low scores in the pretest and post-test scores for the controlled group thus, both percentage scores did not even meet the expectations indicating that they failed. In the experimental group, the scores they obtained are low in the pre-test scores meeting the same ends as the control group. However, its post-test scores revealed an average that is fairly satisfactory revealing that their percentage score passed. Competency 2 showed that only the controlled class passed, and Competency 3 showed that the experimental group failed in competency. While the control group had a fairly-satisfactory results on their pretests, they did not meet the expectations on the posttests. There was a statistical mean difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the experimental group and controlled group. This justifies the presumption that Bilingual Instruction is as effective as English Only instruction. Therefore, Bilingual instruction is an asset to the ABM Class.

The overall findings of this study confirm that there was a statistical mean difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the experimental group (Bilingual Instruction) and the control group (EMI) signifying that both medium of instruction are effective tools in improving language proficiency of the teacher and understanding of the subject Oral communication that significantly affects their academic performance as reflected in Lin and Lei's (2021); Ali et al., (2023) and Launio's (2015) who also found that both English and local language used in instruction can significantly improve students performance. It is recommended that school administrators should recommend to their teachers the use of the learner's first language as a supplement medium of instruction for teaching an English since there are students that are still left behind when it comes to communicative competence and have lower cognitive skills when English is used as medium of instruction.

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