

**'Speak in English!'**  
**The Language Use of Student Teachers Teaching English in**  
**Maltese Primary Schools: Case studies**

by

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## **Abstract**

The National Minimum Curriculum recommends that English lessons should be taught in English, with some code-switching if necessary for the pupils to understand. Maltese and English are the official languages of Malta and both are used in primary education. The aim of this study was to explore the actual use of Maltese and English by student teachers during English lessons. This was done through the use of case studies of three participants: Anne, Suzanne and Lisa. I was interested in how the student teachers used English and why and when they drew on Maltese during their lessons. Through the process of data collection, coding and analysis I became more aware of the possible pedagogic use of Maltese that was involved in the teaching and learning process. I came to the conclusion that both languages were being used to mediate learning and to negotiate meaning and understanding in Maltese primary school classrooms. I also realised that the choice of using Maltese or English in the classroom depended on the identity of the user, as constructed through lived experiences, knowledge about language, and beliefs about language use and teaching as well as the social, cultural, educational and linguistic context. In the classrooms I observed, Maltese was drawn on frequently to ensure understanding and learning, for procedural issues, to address classroom management issues and at times to establish a friendly atmosphere during English lessons. Thus, I came to question the 'English-only' immersion policy in view of the use of Maltese as an additional pedagogical resource in the classroom.

### ***Keywords:***

*Bilingualism; code-switching; case studies; teacher identity; language and identity; medium of instruction; social context; teacher education; student teachers; Malta.*



## **Dedication**

To James and Max

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost I would like to thank Anne, Suzanne and Lisa for participating in this study. They allowed me to delve into their lives through the English lesson observations, interviews and questionnaires. This study would not have been possible without their generous participation.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to the primary schools and pupils who welcomed my presence and allowed me access to observe lessons over two academic years.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr Julia Davies, my supervisor, for her constant encouragement, support and expert advice. Discussions with Julia were instrumental in extending my ideas and thoughts throughout this research study. I appreciate her being there for me.

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

### 1.1 Aims of the study

This study set out to explore factors that influence the language use and language choices of student teachers following an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme to become Primary School teachers in Malta<sup>1</sup>. The student teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards English Language Teaching (ELT) and the use of the second language (L2) in language teaching in the classroom were explored qualitatively at specific points over a period of two academic years. This qualitative case study aimed to explore the influences and/or factors that affected these student teachers' use of language when teaching English as L2 in class. The research study involved the use of lesson observations, interviews and questionnaires.

This study was prompted by my interest in understanding why some teachers and student teachers appear not to use English as much as is advised during English lessons. This is despite English being the recommended medium of instruction for this subject area as stated clearly in the National Minimum Curriculum<sup>2</sup> (Ministry of Education, 1999) and the syllabus for English (Ministry of Education, 2006). Before embarking on this research I was curious about why a number of student teachers (and teachers) refrain from using English, and draw on Maltese (here the first language or L1) partially or totally when interacting with pupils in class. In many lessons that I observed over the eight years that I have worked in teacher education and practice placements I noticed

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<sup>1</sup> Malta is a small island situated in the Mediterranean Sea that has a population of ca. 400,000 inhabitants and measures ca. 316 km<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Henceforth to be referred to as NMC.

that teachers tend to use English to read from the text book or for language exercises and then, more frequently than not, they would switch to use Maltese to explain the lesson. At that stage I could only suggest, or speculate, that the reasons that led to such situations may have been caused by students': Maltese speaking background; negative experiences with learning or using English; negative attitudes towards English and speakers of English; the belief that pupils might not understand the lesson; low levels of self-confidence; low levels of proficiency and communicative competence in English; or a lack of effective lesson planning. I must admit that the most common reason to which I attributed this use of language switching in class was a lack of language proficiency and fluency in using the L2.

Now that I have undertaken this study I realise that I was viewing this phenomenon mainly from a somewhat deficit position. I had not considered that the teachers themselves may not have been aware of the amount of code-switching taking place. I did not think that some teachers may have preferred to code-switch and therefore not align themselves only with one language during a lesson, or risk appearing as 'snobs' to the pupils and to other teachers. For some the decision to use Maltese could be political in that they were asserting their own national identity and were reluctant to use the former colonial language. I had not reflected upon how the teachers' identities could be perceived by themselves as well as by the pupils and other teachers. To me it seemed clear that if you were teaching English you were to use mainly English and if you were teaching Maltese you used mainly Maltese. I did not perceive that use of the L1 could be an effective pedagogic and communicative resource or leave a positive impact on the language classroom. I never thought that a teacher may feel the need to use the L1 to connect more with the pupils or to interact on a more affective level with them. To me

the principal difficulty that lay in the way of more English being used in L2 lessons was the teacher's lack of confidence and proficiency in using the L2.

This study supports the view that teachers' prior language learning and lived experiences are important because they shape who they are as individuals and also contribute to shaping their 'identity' as teachers (Goodson and Sikes, 2001). In turn teachers have an effect on pupils and on their learning. Thus, I believe that the teachers' identity which is constructed through their attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, experiences and actions is important and relevant to their language use and this is an area I wish to investigate in this study. How these factors contribute to language use in class will be an important facet of this study. Thus, there may be many other factors at play that influence the student teachers' language use in class which do not support my hypothesis of inadequate skills in the L2 as the only, or main, reason for switching to the L1.

I believe that the teaching of English in Maltese Primary Schools is an important feature of our educational system, not only because English is our official L2, but also because it is a global language, a *lingua franca*, that can provide access to international literature and many opportunities on the educational and employment front. Malta is a small island and needs, for its own well-being and survival, to maintain good communication with communities beyond its own shores. Therefore, I am interested in exploring this area in order to help me, as a Teacher Educator, to think about ways of working with Primary School student teachers in the future and to understand the complex language situation in Malta.

## 1.2 Research stance

I comment briefly on my research stance here, although issues related to the research design and the methodology are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

### 1.2.1 A socio-cognitive approach

The study of factors that influence language use is never a straightforward one. It is complex in that language use can be seen as a result of both the internal thought process as well as serving a social role. Rogoff (1990, p 25) explains this as follows:

*Individual effort and sociocultural activity are mutually embedded, as are the forest and the trees, and . . . it is essential to understand how they constitute each other. Rather than according primacy to the role of sociocultural activity or of the individual, the aim is to recognize the essential and inseparable roles of societal heritage, social engagement, and individual efforts.*

Thus, being in agreement with Rogoff's stance above, the approach I strove to adopt was a **socio-cognitive** one that draws on exploring both of the above perspectives (Atkinson, 2002; Atkinson, Churchill, Nishino, and Okada, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2007; de Bot, Lowie and Vespoor, 2007). By socio-cognitive I mean that I looked at cognitive aspects that were concerned with the beliefs, attitudes and experiences of the participants towards ELT and their use of the L2 in language teaching in the classroom as well. I believe in the social nature of language (Gee, 1991; Hymes, 1977; Street, 1997) since language is dynamic and is shaped by, and in turn shapes, the social context.

There has been an on-going debate, that began with the presentation and subsequent publication of a seminal paper by Firth and Wagner (1997), proposing that the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) should be broadened to include language 'use' as



part-and-parcel of language ‘acquisition’ and that the predominant focus on language as a purely internal and cognitive process keeps it artificially separate from the social and interactional nature of language<sup>3</sup>. Ten years later Firth and Wagner (2007) reminded us that in their 1997 paper (Firth and Wagner, 1997, p 286) they had called for a ‘reconceptualization of the field of SLA’ in three areas:

*(a) a significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use, (b) an increased emic (i.e. participant-relevant) sensitivity towards fundamental concepts, and (c) the broadening of the traditional SLA database.*

Firth and Wagner (2007) state that their theoretical stance towards SLA came from their response to ‘others’ influential calls for socially constituted linguistics’ in the 1970s and 1980s starting with Gumperz and Hymes (1972), Halliday (1973), and Hymes (1974). Firth and Wagner (2007) also acknowledge that their article was influenced by the sociocultural nature of critiques of SLA by various researchers such as Block (1996), Rampton (1987), Kramersch (1993), Lantolf (1996) and van Lier (1994).

Dunn and Lantolf (1998, p 427) proposed a sociocultural approach to SLA that draws on a Vygotskian tradition of learning. They argue that in sociocultural theory:

*communication, including the conversation of the classroom... and the learning development that emerges from it, arise in the coming-together of people with identities (which entail more than simply whether one is a native speaker), histories and linguistic resources constructed in those histories.*

Therefore, a socio-cognitive framework allowed me to study the language use of the three case study participants in a more thorough manner than if I chose between either cognitive or social theory. By drawing on both these perspectives I wanted to gain a more detailed, focused and reliable picture of the participants’ situations, experiences and language use.

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<sup>3</sup> For more discussion see: Firth and Wagner, 1997; 2007; all articles in the Focus Issue of *Modern Language Journal*, 1997, Vol 81, 3 and *Modern Language Journal*, 1998, Vol 82, 1.

### **1.2.2 A constructivist-interpretative framework**

The qualitative nature of this study is intended to give depth to the research and is based on what Denzin and Lincoln (1994) define as a ‘constructivist-interpretative’ inquiry. As I discuss in my methodology chapter, a constructivist-interpretative stance determines that data are collected in natural settings, in this case naturally occurring classroom situations, as opposed to experimental settings. The data are presented through transcriptions of lessons and interviews and are subsequently processed and analysed qualitatively. Moreover, the data are explored in an open manner and therefore there is no fixed and rigid hypothesis that I set out to prove or disprove from the outset.

This does not mean that I do not have a position – I do have my own opinions, beliefs and ideas about the role of English in Primary Education, about how English could, or should, be taught, and how proficient and comfortable with the language teachers should be in order to teach it. I will discuss my positionality and include an autobiographical note in the following section to allow the reader to see ‘where I am coming from’ and how this inevitably influenced my choice of study and how I approached this research.

I was also aware that my position as researcher was sometimes influenced by my role as primary teacher educator and teaching practice tutor. Related to this, I kept in mind the effects that my position as teacher educator roles may have had on my interpretation of the data and on the participants who were student teachers since this entailed a power imbalance in the relationship. However, the student teachers’ beliefs, opinions,

attitudes and commentaries about their work and experiences were central to this study and I wanted to learn from these voices.

### **1.3 My biography and positionality**

I am aware that I have my own identity as a bilingual Maltese and English speaker, my lived experiences of language learning and teaching, as well as my own family and cultural background that may be similar to or different from that of the research participants. This has undoubtedly coloured my choice of research, my methodology, as well as my interpretation of the data. Therefore, with this concern in mind, it is relevant for me to provide a glimpse into my language biography.

#### ***1.3.1 Living in two languages: at home, at school and at play***

My mother came to Malta from Kenya with her parents as a teenager and my father came to work in Malta from the U.K. Neither of my parents were of Maltese origin and did not speak Maltese, thus English is the first language I learned. I do not know where, when or exactly how it happened, but Maltese became part of my life. I guess the main ‘exposure’ to Maltese happened when I played with children in my neighbourhood and when I started to go to nursery and then school. At home my siblings and I would use Maltese increasingly amongst ourselves whilst using English with our parents.

Until I was 7 years old I attended a private church school where both English and Maltese were used as languages of instruction. After that I attended state schools for the rest of my formal education. The primary state school I attended was located in our village in the southern part of Malta and was attended by children who lived in the area. Maltese was used as the language of instruction and English was just another subject, in

fact I remember that at one point I experienced difficulties in English writing and spelling. In hindsight I can only surmise that it could have partly been a matter of development and adjustment to a new school, and also because I was exposed to more Maltese and less English than before. However, I think that my exposure to spoken English at home and my love for reading in English always gave me an advantage when it came to using English in class. At the same time my Maltese was as developed as that of any other pupil in my class. I do not recollect experiencing any significant difficulties in speaking either language at school. New teachers I met at the beginning of a scholastic year would usually address me in English (to them I must have looked fairer than most Maltese and I also had a British surname) and were always surprised when I replied in fluent Maltese.

Thus, this brings me back to my own language experiences that are atypical to those of many other Maltese people. I perceive myself as being a 'balanced bilingual' and believe that I hold both languages in a positive light and am competent in using both Maltese and English appropriately in various domains or situations with different interlocutors from any walk of life. However, I must say that due to work-related responsibilities I do most of my writing and reading in English. Thus, overall, I can say that my experiences of language use at home, at school or in the wider community have been positive.

Growing up in the southern part of Malta I was mainly exposed to a social and linguistic context where Maltese people spoke Maltese and where English was used at school during some lessons (or parts of lessons) or to interact with non-Maltese speakers<sup>4</sup>. In fact my mother was referred to as '*l-Ingliża*' (the English one, or the English lady) in

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<sup>4</sup> Camilleri's (1995) Type B Families. For more detail see section 2.5.3

our village. This example indicates how the use of English was a 'marked' choice of language in the community while the use of Maltese was perceived as the default language.

### **1.3.2 The currency of a language: Maltese and English**

Many of the villagers probably had the proficiency to speak and write English but did not do so because they did not see the need to use English in their everyday lives, and because speaking in English to other Maltese-speakers was perceived by them as snobbery (Bonnici, 2010; Camilleri, 1995; Farrugia, 2003, 2006; Sciriha, 2001; Sciriha and Vassallo, 2001). For the majority of the population in Malta, Maltese is the first language which is learnt at home and is the language used in everyday life, whilst English follows as the second language that is learnt formally through schooling (although more exposure to English through the media has to be acknowledged).

This is in contrast with the reality in some other parts of Malta where English is perceived as a more prestigious language and Maltese is seen to belong to those who are less educated or those with less standing in society<sup>5</sup> (Camilleri, 1995; Cassar, 1991; Sciriha, 2001). I remember that I could not understand this attitude and was shocked at the idea of someone not being proud of their own national language. I wondered how it came to be that I should feel proud of a language that *became* mine, while some Maltese-born and bred people found it so easy to look down on their own national language. In retrospect I realise that maybe I was being quite judgemental. I now understand that using English was natural for them due to the social and linguistic context they grew up in and may also be a post-colonial legacy. They probably lived in an area where it was considered desirable to speak English or attended schools where

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<sup>5</sup> Mostly Type D families (Camilleri, 1995).

English was the language of instruction. Through this study I became more aware of my own biases, prejudices and misconceptions and learned to see language use in a different light, as a complex issue despite the small and relatively homogeneous population that inhabits the Maltese islands.

### **1.3.3 Student teachers and their languages**

Thus, the language situation is very complex and I have to bear in mind that my experiences of language learning and use are not typical in Malta. This is especially the case with the student teachers I come into contact with through my work as a teacher educator. For me it is very natural to use both languages interchangeably, without any reserve or reluctance. However, I need to be aware that the student teachers come from family and language backgrounds that are different from mine and that this does not necessarily put them in a situation where they feel equally at ease with both languages. Most of the student teachers I meet through ITE come from Maltese-speaking family backgrounds (Borg *et al.*, 1992) and I cannot exclude the possibility that some of their experiences of learning and using English may have been very traditional or even negative. Given such a scenario then it is understandable that they may not view English in a positive light and may have reservations about using English themselves, let alone with a class of primary school pupils.

I used to think that since I learned English at home, and Maltese at school and through friends, others' experiences would be similar but the languages would be inverted. However, I think that was a naïve view that did not account for why some pupils and student teachers seemed to have a negative experience of English and did not seem keen to use English even during English lessons. Through the process of writing up this biographical note, I thought about my experiences and attitudes towards language that I

have not acknowledged so overtly before. Indeed I feel that this process has afforded me the space to grow and to value my own 'lived experiences' (Lortie, 1975) while at the same time becoming more open to, and aware of, others' experiences related to language learning and language use.

### **1.3.4 Use of language in class**

For many years I was in favour of the immersion monolingual 'English-only' approach as the language of instruction during English lessons. To me it seemed obvious that to learn English pupils should be exposed to the language as much as possible, at least during English lessons. This position has also been upheld by research and literature in the field of teaching English as L2 (Halliwell, 1992; Vale and Feunteun, 1995; Willis, 1981). I was always against the system that seemed prevalent in many Maltese classrooms, where during an English lesson the reading and writing would take place in English but all other communication and explanation would be done through Maltese. This dichotomy, I feared, would not allow pupils to become fluent speakers of English. Thus, I favoured an approach that would allow pupils to become more fluent in speaking and proficient in using English for communicative purposes (Nunan, 1991; Harmer, 2003). However, now I am more aware that such an approach did not take the social context the student teachers or pupils hailed from into enough consideration or the use of the L1 as a pedagogic and communicative resource (Ferguson, 2003; 2009; Lin 1990; Merritt *et al.*, 1992; Van der Walt, *et al.*, 2001).

Through this study, and through delving into the linguistic, educational, social and cultural backgrounds of the participants, I have learnt that it does not have to be a choice between two extremes. At times in class, the use of Maltese may be appropriate to explain a difficult concept, to put pupils at ease, or even to ensure all pupils have the

opportunity to participate in a learning activity. This is especially the case when one considers the different cultural and language backgrounds the pupils may hail from and their experiences of language and language learning. I was aware of this but did not really accept it as valid in the Maltese context. These issues made me wonder whether I was expecting too much from teachers and pupils who were using English as their L2. Maybe I had been expecting others to hold the same attitudes to language I held, without taking their 'lived experiences' into account. All this made me realise how important the role of student teachers' identities could figure in the complex sphere of language use within the Maltese classroom context.

I now understand that Maltese can play an important role alongside English during English lessons when used appropriately and 'judiciously' (Levine, 2003; Nazary, 2008; Polio and Duff, 1994; Tang, 2002). The second language may actually be an additional educational resource to be drawn on during the lesson to enhance pupils' learning and understanding, for classroom management, as well as to provide a warm and supportive environment to put pupils at ease (Camilleri, 1995; 1996; 2000; Ferguson, 2003; 2009; Lin 1990; Merritt *et al.*, 1992; Nazary, 2008).

### **1.3.5 My choice of research study**

The decision to study the language use of student teachers in class seemed a natural one to me. Firstly, I think that my own atypical language biography has kindled in me a lasting interest in language learning and language use. I think that through studying language use I will become more aware of my own language experiences and question assumptions that may hinder me from seeing and valuing the experiences of others as I mentioned above.



Secondly, it is an area of study that is very relevant to me on a professional level since it revolves around language use in education and in society and as such is related to much of my work involving student teachers and the teaching of English to pupils in primary school. I would like to be in a position to suggest improvements to the ITE programme in the area of English Language Teaching in primary school, through informed and research based proposals.

Thirdly, I believe that there is a gap in local research dealing with language use, student teachers and primary schools. This does not appear to be so understudied in the secondary school sphere, but in primary there is an urgent need for research to inform practice. However, I will delve into this area in more detail in section 1.6 where I discuss the anticipated value of this study.

#### **1.4 Overview of the study**

I chose to undertake case-studies because I wanted to establish an in-depth and close relationship with the situations studied, and to be allowed the privilege to delve for a while into the lives and experiences of the participants involved. I wanted to ‘zoom in’ to obtain a more detailed and intimate picture of these individual student teachers’ and how they used language in classrooms. I am interested in learning how ‘who they are’ may shape their use of language in class and how this may be influenced by their knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and experiences and also by the social and cultural context they inhabit.

The study involved three preservice teachers at various points, during the first and second year of their four-year Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme (B.Ed. Hons. Primary Cohort of 2005-2009). Observations during Teaching Practice (TP) placements and in-depth informal interviews were held for each of the case-study

participants. The participants were also invited to validate their transcriptions and to give feedback and comments about these during the last phase of the research.

I carried out this study to obtain a picture of student teachers' language use in primary school classrooms, in particular their use of the L2 during English lessons. I wanted to explore their language use through a socio-cognitive approach that would draw on multiple sources. I also wanted to ensure that I gave due attention to their social, cultural and language backgrounds and their language cognitions (that is, their beliefs, attitudes and knowledge) about language use and teaching in primary school and language use in general. I also wanted to look into the notions of identity that one forms through prior experiences of language learning and language use, through family and personal history and also through interactions within culturally and socially situated 'spaces' or domains such as schools and classrooms.

## **1.5 Research questions**

The main focus of this study is to explore the language use of Maltese student teachers as they embark on their initial experiences of teaching English as L2 in primary schools. I would like to explore whether the variables that have been found to influence the teachers' use of language in class in bilingual settings in the international literature are also present in, and relevant to, the Maltese educational setting.

The research questions are an attempt to articulate my thoughts and interests. The process of writing the research questions helped me to clarify my ideas and aims. I kept returning to the research questions to write, re-write and reshape them as my familiarity with the literature developed and increased, in light of the results that started to emerge, and in view of my own process of development in understanding and perceiving the

salient issues that were at play as I journeyed through this research study. The research journey was not a smooth one and in hindsight I can say that the process of posing the main questions, doubting their validity, re-visiting them, adding some and throwing out others, really is evidence of a bumpy and challenging research journey. The three broad research questions I posed were the following:

1. What influences Maltese student teachers' use of Maltese and English?
2. What influences Maltese student teachers' use of Maltese and English in the classroom?
3. Do Maltese and English serve different functions in class? Is there a pattern to this language use during English lessons?

The **first main research question** focuses on what influences the student teachers' use of Maltese and English. This question deals with the kinds of beliefs and attitudes student teachers express and what leads to the formation of these beliefs and attitudes towards language/s (Brownlee *et al*, 1998; Borg, 2001). I also explore whether these beliefs and attitudes are rigid and static or whether they shift and change (Lortie, 1975; Britzman, 2003; Twisleton, 2006). Invariably, these beliefs and attitudes form part of our identity, and hence, language use, our lived experiences, family background and how this relates to identity (Kagan, 1990; Lortie, 1975; McCarthy and Moje, 2002). This can be perceived in two ways that may be reciprocal: how language use shapes identity, and how identity shapes language use. Finally, I consider the idea of 'space' and how inhabiting different spaces, social and cultural contexts, or moving from relationship to relationship may impact upon our identity and thus on our use and choice of language/s (Borg, 1980; Camilleri, 1995; Ellul, 1978; Kress, 1997; McCarthy and Moje, 2002). When we interact in different social contexts our language use often reflects this, as we use language that is appropriate according to the situation, the

interlocutor/s or even the physical space (Hymes, 1977; Kramsch, 1998; Street, 1997). Thus, this first research question aims to explore issues related to L1 or L2 use that are related to the individual's beliefs, attitudes, identity and social context.

The **second main research question** focuses on what factors or situations influence the Maltese student teacher's use of language in the classroom. Here I again look at the beliefs and attitudes held towards the use of the L1 and L2, but this time with the added construct of the classroom as the social context or space to be considered (Cabaroglu and Roberts, 2000; Camilleri, 1995; 2001; Lortie, 1975; McLeod, 2001). Are these consistent with the beliefs and attitudes expressed about language use in general, or do they change due to the classroom context? Does inhabiting a different space seem to change the beliefs and attitudes held by student teachers about the use of the L1 and L2? The second sub-question deals with whether there is consistency between the articulated beliefs of the student teachers about the use of the L2 and their actual use of language in the classroom. This focuses on the beliefs and attitudes student teachers express, whether openly or through their behaviour (Borg, 2003; Dörnyei, 2001; Fasold, 1984; Weinstein, 1990), towards the use of English as L2 in their own lives and in society. Sometimes there seems to be a mismatch between what teachers state they do in class and what they actually do (Borg, 2006; Breen *et al.*, 2001; Richardson *et al.*, 1991). I do not mean this as though I am trying to 'catch them out' but because it could be that they are not fully aware that they are constantly making decisions as to which language or languages to use in class (Lacorte, 2005; Fasold, 1984). It may also be the case that the situation they are in is conducive to decisions that do not fully reflect their beliefs. These beliefs and attitudes will undoubtedly influence young pupils in class (Thibodeau and Hillman, 2003). Any positive or negative attitudes or beliefs expressed by a teacher may have lasting effects on pupils who may look up to them as role models and figures

of authority. In this study I attempt to study the beliefs and attitudes held by student teachers towards the use of English as L2 in class.

The **third main research question** seeks to investigate whether Maltese and English serve different functions in the class, and what sort of functions they play during English lessons (Camilleri, 1995; 2001). This question also seeks to explore whether this possible pattern of language use changes according to the context. That is, is the pattern the same for the student teacher with different classrooms in different schools and different social contexts? Does this language use shift according to the type of English lesson being held or in relation to various stages or phases of the lesson, such as presenting new concepts, teaching new vocabulary, explaining or reading a text? Does it change in accordance with the type of interaction taking place, such as, maintaining order, sharing a joke or reassuring pupils? Does the language use of student teachers change at all as they gain more experience and theoretical knowledge as they progress in their ITE programme from one year to the next?

The methodology I chose to investigate these research questions hails from the qualitative field of research. The methods I adopted included a case-study approach, taking an ethnographic texture (Bloome and Green, 1996) that drew on in-depth interviews, questionnaires and lesson observations as data collection tools. I discuss the methods used in this study in the methodology chapter (Chapter 4) which will follow the literature review.

## **1.6 Value of the study**

I believe that this study is valuable to me as a teacher educator because there is a lacuna in the research of teacher language use and bilingualism at primary level that has been

felt over the past years. In fact most schools in Malta still lack a clear language policy. This is one of the reasons why I think that this research focusing on student teachers' use of language in the primary school classroom is important and could be a modest contribution to knowledge and practice within the Maltese educational sphere and the wider social context.

There are some small-scale unpublished research studies carried out by undergraduate or Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) students (Baldacchino, 1996; Attard, 1995; Attard and Spiteri, 1998). At preschool level there are a few studies, such as those by Sonia Ellul (1978) and Karen Bonanno (2007) that focus on language, bilingualism and code-switching. A growing number of studies, on the other hand, exist for the domain of secondary schools, albeit by the same author (i.e. mainly by Antoinette Camilleri (or Antoinette Camilleri Grima) over the past two decades (see Camilleri 1987; 1991; 1993; 1995; 1996; 1997; 2001). A study about the use of English during numeracy teaching has been the focus of a doctoral study by Farrugia (2003; 2006), whilst a Masters' level study by Caruana Anastasi (2003) focuses on the use of bilingual instruction during English and Mathematics lessons and how this impacts on performance in examinations which are held in English.

I think that this research study is also valuable because language research with student teachers in a natural classroom setting can potentially throw light upon the complex area of language use within a bilingual educational setting. This could help when drawing up initial teacher education programmes, when deciding upon school language policies, when advising and visiting student teachers on their TP placements. This would shed light on the current practice of language teaching and language use in primary schools by student teachers and by pupils.

The longitudinal nature of this study also makes it special because modest comparisons may be drawn between the beliefs, knowledge, attitudes and even actions (to some extent) of student teachers as they are introduced to primary school teaching in their first and second years of ITE.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study by offering a brief look at the areas under study and gives a preview of the research methodology employed. Chapters 2 and 3 present and discuss the relevant literature in two parts. The first part focuses on the student teachers' use of L2 in the classroom and the factors that impinge on this such as, the teachers' beliefs, attitudes and prior experiences. Through chapter 2 I have identified my areas of learning throughout the journey of my PhD studies; this thesis now goes into more detail about the learning journey. Chapter 3 deals with the Maltese context of this study. Therefore, it discusses bilingualism, education, English as L2 in Maltese primary schools and the local provision of Initial Teacher Education. Chapter 4 provides a rationale for the research design and outlines the methodology employed. Chapters 5 through 7 present and discuss the case studies. Chapter 8 provides a cross-case thematic discussion of the results spanning the three case-studies presented in previous chapters. Finally, Chapter 9 offers the conclusion to this work. In the conclusion I highlight the main findings and their implications for Maltese L2 classrooms as well as implications and suggestions in relation to initial teacher education in Malta. I also list limitations pertaining to this study.

Thus, my aim in this first chapter was to introduce the study by outlining the aims, my main areas of interest, the methodology employed, the research stance adopted, the research questions as well as providing a glimpse into my biography.



## CHAPTER TWO

### The Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction

Language use in classrooms is influenced by teachers' identity, formed through their own lived experiences as pupils (Britzman, 2003; Lortie, 1975; McLeod, 2001), their level of bilingualism and comfort with the L2 or target language (Twiselton, 2006), their beliefs about language learning and teaching (Borg, 2003; 2006), and also their attitudes towards the L2 (Brownlee et al., 2001). However, besides these factors at teacher level, the language the teacher uses also depends on the context: and in relation to this thesis this refers to the Maltese social, cultural, linguistic and educational contexts. The Maltese context will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

The literature I draw on in this chapter and the following one is mostly qualitative and hails from the tradition of sociolinguistics and linguistic ethnography. This is as opposed to a prescriptive approach to linguistics and language study where there is a sense in which speakers are measured against an abstract notion of proficiency in language. Another area of sociological work I drew on is the literature dealing with identity and teacher identity in particular, as well as language teaching and learning.

The advantage offered by the tradition of social language study is that it views language and literacy as 'social practices rather than technical skills to be learned in formal education' (Street, 1997, p 47). Thus, Street (1997, p 47) argues that:

*The research requires language and literacy to be studied in social life, taking account of the context and their different meanings for different cultural groups. The practice requires curriculum designers, teachers and*

*evaluators to take account of the variation in meanings and uses that students bring from their home backgrounds to formal learning contexts, such as the school and the classroom.*

Gee (1991) is also in favour of a social view of language as being a continually negotiated process of meaning making. Hence, language is viewed as a social process that is interactive and dynamic in nature (Gee, 1991; Hymes, 1977; Kress, 1997; Street, 1997).

In my research I sought to describe and to understand what was happening. From this I wanted to be informed about the best ways of supporting student teachers in their journeys to becoming primary school teachers. However, I was aware that there was a tension in all this because the work was set within the fairly prescriptive context of the Maltese National Minimum Curriculum and the subject syllabi.

In this introduction I also want to explain that I use the terms L1 and L2 to refer to Maltese and English as first and second language respectively. The use of this terminology is widespread in SLA (Second language Acquisition) literature and ELT (English Language Teaching). I do borrow this terminology; however, I am aware that at times these terms are problematic since they may give a semblance of simplicity to complex linguistic, cultural, educational and social issues involved. Graddol (2006) holds that the term 'L2 users' to refer to people who use a second language for communication within their own community does not make sense. In Malta English is the L1 for a fraction of the population and therefore according to Graddol's reasoning (2006) they should not be referred to as 'L2 users'. This will be discussed in more detail in section 3.2.2.

## **2.2 Bilingualism in education**

In this chapter I deal with literature about bilingualism in education. I first discuss definitions and types of bilingualism, bilingualism and language development, code-switching and the cross-language transfer of knowledge and skills. Then I focus on the teachers' use of language in the classroom in the light of L2 and the functions of code-switching. I then proceed to discuss the role of teachers' lived experiences and their biographical background on their personal and professional 'teacher' identity. Finally, I discuss how the teachers' identity, including beliefs, attitudes, lived experiences and expectations, comes to bear on the use of language/s in class.

### ***2.2.1 Definitions and types of bilingualism***

There is no widely accepted definition of the concept of bilingualism. Thus, below I present and discuss some of the different definitions.

Bloomfield (1935) views bilingualism as the native-like control of two languages, while on the opposing end Haugen (1953) and Macnamara (1969) believe that anyone who could minimally understand, speak, read or write a second language can be considered as bilingual. Aburdarham (1987) proposed the term 'dual language' instead of bilingualism to refer to situations where at some stage two languages or codes are involved, whether inclusive or exclusive of each other. Baetens-Beardsmore (1982, p3) states that bilingualism is, 'a cline with no clear-cut limits other than those of the pure monoglot at one end and the perfect ambilingual at the other'.

Baker (2001) holds that bilingualism is the ability to use more than one language, whilst Iram Siraj-Blatchford (1994) defines bilingualism as the use of more than one language

regularly and effectively in their particular communities. According to Hornby (1977, p 4) bilingualism, 'is not an all or none property but may exist to degrees varying from minimal competence to complete mastery of two languages'.

Harding and Riley (1986, p 47-8) classified five main types of bilingualism and below I present them in table format. The categories include factors such as the parents' native language, the language of the community at large and the parents' strategy in speaking to the child.

**Table 2.1: Five Main Types of Bilingualism<sup>6</sup>**

1	<b>One-person-one-language</b>	Parents have different native languages but have some degree of competence in the other's language. One of the parents' languages is the dominant language in the community. The parents speak their own language to the child from birth.
2	<b>Non-dominant home language</b>	Parents have different native languages. The language of one of the parents is the dominant language in the community. Both parents speak the non-dominant language to the child. The child is exposed to the dominant language outside the home, especially at school or nursery.
3	<b>Non-dominant home language without community support</b>	Parents share the same native language which is not the dominant language of the community at large. The parents speak their own language to the child.
4	<b>Double non-dominant home language without community support</b>	Parents each having different native languages. Moreover, neither of their languages is the dominant one in the community. The parents each speak their own language to the child from birth.
5	<b>Non-native parents</b>	Parents share the same dominant language of the community. However, one of the parents always addresses the child in a language which is not his/her native language.

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from Harding and Riley (1986).

Although the above table presents five types of bilingualism, none of them describe the Maltese scenario. Romaine (1995) added a sixth type to the ones proposed by Harding and Riley (1986), 'mixed languages'. According to Romaine (1995, p 166), this sixth type:

*...leads (arguably) to more mixing and interference than the other types, but is nevertheless probably the most frequently occurring context for 'natural' bilingual acquisition in multilingual societies.*

I will return to this sixth type of bilingualism in the second part of this chapter when I refer to research by Albert Borg who makes a case for Mixed Maltese English (Borg, 1980; 1988).

I have presented these different types or perceptions of bilingualism to show that there are many views about what constitutes a bilingual person. A person's understanding of what bilingualism means might impact on their stance towards bilingual speakers and also on the languages they use. I believe that levels of bilingual competence can vary for both languages. However, I tend to identify with the definition of bilingualism given by Siraj-Blatchford (1994), that is, the use of more than one language regularly and effectively in a particular community. I align myself more closely with this definition because it seems to best describe the Maltese context.

### **2.2.2 Bilingualism and language development**

The amount of crosslinguistic influence of L1 on L2 varies at different stages according to the child's pattern of literacy acquisition. There are certain fundamental ways in which all human languages are alike and other ways in which they differ (Romaine, 1989; García, 2009). Therefore, it is not surprising that learners of second languages sometimes misjudge and transfer to the second language specific, inappropriate features

of the first language. This used to be referred to as interference, or negative transfer, and can vary from the most extreme foreign accent to the occasional import of an idiom. However, these terms seem to give a negative impression of the language processing taking place. Sharwood Smith and Kellerman (1986) use the term 'crosslinguistic influence'<sup>7</sup> in an attempt to create a neutral term that refers to this or influence of languages on each other such as: transfer, interference, avoidance, borrowing and language loss. García (2009, p 49) holds that the word 'transference' is used more nowadays 'to refer to language contact phenomena at all linguistic levels', instead of the term 'interference' which may carry negative nuances. This awareness also helps us to view bilingualism and code-switching as an additional linguistic resource (Edwards, 2004; Li Wei, 1998; O'Neil and Velasco, 2007) that is available to the language learner/user instead of perceiving it as a hindrance.

It seems that there is less influence of the L1 on L2 at the phonological level than at other levels. Vocabulary also appears to be distinct before syntax. Ruke-Dravina (1967) holds that L1 interference is always present in bilinguals and is more evident when the languages are close in their phonological and morphological features.

On the other hand, Fantini (1985) believes in a gradual process of separation, and not interference, when languages develop alongside each other from the start. According to Arnberg and Arnberg (1985, p 21) a child is 'truly bilingual' when s/he separates the two systems of language. They argue that if the adults the child is exposed to always use a code-mixed variety it will not be clear to the child whether there are two separate languages to be acquired in the first place.

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<sup>7</sup> I will be using the term 'crosslinguistic influence' but will use the other terminology that the researchers themselves used to maintain authenticity where I refer to ideas and arguments put forward using terminology that was employed when their work was published.

According to Beardsmore (1968, p 45):

*The concept of interference referred to the use of formal elements of one code within the context of another i.e. any phonological, morphological, lexical or syntactic element in a given language that could be explained by the effect of contact with another language. But when does a language within the context of another cease to be interference but represents a switch in language - code-switching?*

In class some teachers may model language use that could confuse the children. Beardsmore's comments and questions indicate how code-switching and transference, or crosslinguistic influence, may be seen to be on a continuum. This is a useful observation because it highlights that when languages come into contact they present us with a complex situation and it is not as simple as categorising utterances as definite code-switches or as interference.

### **2.2.3 Code-switching**

Poplack (1980) subdivides code-switching into intersentential and intrasentential. Intersentential code-switching takes place when speakers switch language when they take turns or switch at the clause or sentence boundary. An example from Martinez (2006, p 95) depicts this type of code-switching:

*Anyway, I was in and he was, you know, the one that would let you out. And he was laughing cause he saw me coming in. Se estaba riendo de mi.*

*(He was laughing at me).*

Intrasentential code-switching usually occurs within the sentence or clause; another example from Martinez (2006, p 95) highlights this:

*Si, y heugo es una trampoline asi; pero aqui vienen los ropes asi. Y nomas de ese tamano. Esa era para brincar. No era to... it wasn't a big trampoline.*

*(Yes and there was a trampoline like this, and the ropes come like this here. No more than this size. That was for jumping. It wasn't to.... It wasn't a big trampoline.)*

Other types of crosslinguistic transference exist on various levels. Poplack (1980) also comments on the insertion of a tag in the other language in an utterance that usually serves the function of turning a statement into a question. Camilleri (1991, p 107) illustrates this:

Teacher: *kif rajna lbierah, right? (as we saw yesterday, right?)*

Discourse markers are those words or phrases that usually precede sentences in the spoken form (like the use of: 'Now', 'So', 'Ok', 'like'). Discourse markers are sometimes used as floor holders to gain an audience's attention and to keep communication channels open (Goss and Salmons, 2000). These markers are also used by teachers when they are about to give new information, begin a new task or else when concluding a lesson or reiterating given information.

Auer refers to a definition of code-switching: 'as verbal action, the alternating use of two or more "codes" within one conversational episode'. Auer (1998, p 1) holds that within the field of bilingualism 'code-switching has and creates communicative and social meaning, and is in need of an interpretation by co-participants as well as analysts'. Auer argues that the study of bilingual speech and code-switching has received a lot of interest and has developed from what Luckmann (1983, p 97) referred to as 'possibly a somewhat peculiar...act', into 'a subject matter which is recognized to be able to shed light on fundamental linguistic issues, from Universal Grammar to the formation of group identities and ethnic boundaries through verbal behaviour' (Auer, 1998, p 1).



Auer (1998, p 3) argues that ‘from earlier and more recent research we know (a) that code-switching is related to and indicative of group membership in particular types of bilingual speech communities, such that the regularities of the alternating use of two or more languages within one conversation may vary to a considerable degree between speech communities, and (b) that intrasentential code-switching, where it occurs, is constrained by syntactic and morphosyntactic considerations that may or may not be of a universal kind’. Li Wei (1998, p 173) states that:

*...it is important to remember that code-switching is only one of many linguistic resources available to bilingual speakers. They may, and indeed do, select alternative cues in the sequential contexts in which we have studied in this chapter. Thus, the fact that a bilingual speaker has chosen to code-switch invites a more detailed, perhaps multi-layered analysis which can demonstrate that in addition to its capacity of highlighting the status of the on-going talk, code-switching as a contextualization cue has the capacity to ‘bring about’ higher-level social meanings such as the speakers’ language attitudes, preferences and community norms and values.*

Li Wei (1998, p 173/4) holds that ‘the CA [conversation analysis] approach to code-switching has broken new ground and provided us with the mechanisms to examine and understand bilingual conversationalists’ procedures of locally creating and interpreting the meaning of code-switching.’ McClure (1981), however, stresses the point that researchers have not reached a consensus as to what constitutes code-switching. The choice is wide and varied and ranges from topic, setting and participants, to linguistic constraints that determine the nature of the change of code. Ervin-Tripp (1968) goes one step further and states that code-switching depends on the setting (the place or time), the participants (their gender, occupation, social class), the topic and even the function of the interaction (asking, greeting, informing). Hymes (1972, p 33) argues that:

*Cases of bilingualism...are salient, special cases of the general phenomenon of variety in code, repertoire and switching among codes.*

To clarify, in stating that a person changes linguistic code in a particular situation, we are deliberately posing the question of whether this involves a switch of language or of dialect (Fasold, 1984). However, it has been argued that in multilingual societies there is an elaborate pattern of appropriateness, which either dictates or strongly influences the choice of a particular language variety in a particular context. In circumstances where the choice of a language is not so strongly predetermined by the context, it can be argued that bilinguals have an additional communicative resource available. In the company of other bilinguals, speakers have the option of changing language within an utterance (code-switching) or of incorporating features from one language to the other (code-mixing or speech borrowing). The latter can lead to the incorporation of foreign loan words into the language (language borrowing) used by the population as a whole.

Rampton (1995, p 313) views code-switching or what he calls 'language crossing' as temporarily borrowing a language that is not one's own:

*Crossing... focuses on code alternation by people who are not accepted members of the group associated with the second language they employ. It is concerned with switching into languages that are not generally thought to belong to you. This kind of switching, in which there is a distinct sense of movement across social or ethnic boundaries, raises issues of social legitimacy that participants need to negotiate...*

García (2009, p 50) agrees with Milroy and Muysken (1995) that the ability to code-switch is an asset and argues that:

*Far from being a sign of inadequacy or sloppy language usage or lack of knowledge, it has been shown that code-switching is a sophisticated linguistic skill and a characteristic of the speech of fluent bilinguals.*

Edwards (2004, p 20) also holds that bilinguals have an additional resource to draw on and phrases it as follows: 'bilingual speakers whose twin bow-strings allow them not

only the style-shifting available to monolinguals but also full-language shifting.’ Cen Williams (cited in Baker, 2001) proposed the term ‘translanguaging’ to define the process of switching modes in classroom – for example, writing is done in one language and then the reading is carried out in the other language. García (2009, p 45) borrows this term and defines it as follows:

*For us, translanguagings are **multiple discursive practices** which bilinguals engage in order to **make sense of their bilingual worlds**. Translanguaging then goes beyond what has been termed code-switching, although it includes it, as well as other kinds of bilingual language use and bilingual contact.*

The concept of translanguaging presented above seems to reduce the importance of looking at two (or more) languages as separate and compartmentalised but instead promotes the idea that there are ‘no clear-cut boundaries between the languages of bilinguals’ (García, 2009, p 47). For the purpose of my research I will use the more common term of ‘code-switching’ to describe this process.

Batibo (2005) holds that the language use of bilingual speakers usually corresponds to the social context or situation, the interlocutor as well as ‘their communicative and affective intent’ (p 1). Fishman *et al.* (1971) had proposed the notion of ‘domains’ to refer to various social contexts and situations, which ‘summate the major clusters of interaction that occur in clusters of multilingual settings involving clusters of interlocutors’ (p 586). On the grounds of interviews and observations of a Puerto Rican community, Fishman *et al.* (1971) concluded that Spanish was used mostly in the domains of family, friendship and religion. English was found to be used mostly for the spheres of education and employment.

### **2.2.4 Crosslinguistic transfer of language skills and knowledge**

Researchers such as Lambert and Tucker (1972) and Krashen (1985) believe that skills and knowledge learnt in the dominant language are transferred to the other language. Therefore, if a child learns a new concept s/he should be able to transfer this knowledge without having to relearn it in the other language so long as the relevant vocabulary is available. With the content knowledge already there, what Krashen (1985) calls 'comprehensible input', the task of learning new vocabulary is facilitated. It seems that while learning new concepts or skills the content goes beyond the specific language of presentation (Hamers and Blanc, 1989).

### **2.3 Teachers' use of language in the classroom**

As mentioned earlier, language use in class is influenced by the teachers' own beliefs and attitudes. We all form different sorts of beliefs, mostly based on our experiences, which mark our outlooks. In the sphere of language learning, teachers have accumulated a wealth of experiences through first hand observations in class as pupils (Britzman, 2003; McLeod, 2001; Johnson, 1994; Kagan, 1992). These prior learning experiences, or what Lortie (1975) refers to as 'apprenticeship of observation', play an important part in the formation of our beliefs about teaching and learning (McLeod, 2001). Therefore teachers' practice will invariably be influenced by their prior experiences, their level of bilingualism and their comfort with the target language (Twiselton, 2006), their beliefs about language learning and teaching (Brownlee *et al.*, 2001; Borg, 2001), as well as their attitudes towards the L2.

However, besides these factors at teacher level, the approach to language/s and language teaching that the teacher adopts also depends on the educational, social, linguistic and

cultural contexts. These contexts will be discussed in the light of the Maltese setting in the second part of this chapter.

### **2.3.1 Teachers' use of L2 in the classroom**

The language the teacher uses depends largely on his/her preferences and levels of confidence in using the language (Twiselton, 2006). Language use in class is influenced by attitudes and beliefs held about language learning and teaching (Brownlee *et al*, 2001; Borg, 2001). The teachers' own language background has an important part to play because the teacher will automatically use the language s/he is most confident and fluent in when interacting with students in a class (Camilleri, 1996).

Thus, even if the subject or content of the lesson requires the use of L2 as a medium, a teacher who is accustomed to using English at home will tend to use more English, whereas a teacher who is accustomed to using Maltese at home will use more Maltese and less English during lessons (Camilleri, 1996).

Generally, code-switching in educational contexts has been looked-down upon for many years but the monolingual policy of using 'English-only' is contested by researchers who argue that this artificial exclusion of the L1 in L2 learning situations is not appropriate (Butzkamm, 2003; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation, 2003; O'Neil and Velasco, 2007). Some researchers hold that complete deletion of L1 in L2 situations is not appropriate (Butzkamm, 2003; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation, 2003; Schweers, 1999). Thus, code-switching as a pedagogic tool can be drawn on in the classroom without inhibition (Camilleri, 2001) or furtiveness (Probyn, 2005) by teachers and pupils.

Brown (2000, p 68) argued that the ‘first language can be a facilitating factor and not just an interfering factor’ in the classroom. There has been a shift in perception and practice as more teachers are using the L1 in class to convey meaning and to interact (Butzkamm, 2003; Nazary, 2008; O’Neil and Velasco, 2007).

The trend seems to favour the use of a balanced or bilingual approach to teaching the L2 (Auerbach, 1993; Miles, 2004; Nation, 2003) through which the L1 is acknowledged, respected and valued as a resource (Atkinson, 2002; Camilleri, 1996; Nazary, 2008; Probyn, 2005; Schweers, 1990).

However, these approaches in favour of L1 use in teaching the L2 do not uphold the use of the L1 indiscriminately. Atkinson (2002) and Nazary (2008) proposed that the L1 should be used judiciously by teachers and students as a vital source and tool for communication especially when the ‘subject’ being taught is the language itself.

### ***2.3.2 Functions of Teacher Code-switching***

In the past code-switching in class was considered by many to be an undesirable practice (Camilleri, 1996; Milk, 1981; Potowski, 2007). Martin-Jones and Saxena (1996) argue that code-switching need not be perceived as ‘bad’, because it is the way language is used, and by whom, that really leaves a mark on how students perceive the value of their two languages. According to García (2009, p 298), ‘the negative associations with code-switching in the classroom have been increasingly questioned by scholars’.

Jacobson (1990) refers to some cases where teachers seem to be code-switching in what appears to be a random manner in a conversation as ‘flip-flopping’.

García (2009, p 296) holds that:

*Without any awareness about language use in education, teachers who are members of bilingual communities will use their two languages in classrooms in ways similar to those in which they use them in the community.*

Some teachers do in fact use their two languages in one lesson to teach the same content concurrently. This is usually done through moving between both languages frequently during the lesson with no thought or concern about why they are using language in such a manner (Jacobson, 1990; Potowski, 2007). Thus, the teacher may hardly be aware of when or why a switch was made. Zentella (1997) holds that at times teachers code-switch almost automatically to match the language used by the pupil/s. Zentella has termed this type of language switch as 'following the child' (1997, p 19).

Faltis (1990, p 50) argues that usually code-switching is not random at all because teachers may decide to switch between languages due to any of the following needs:

- a) for conceptual development in the native language, hence a switch from the second language to the native language;
- b) to review a lesson previously taught in the native language, hence a switch from the native language to the second language;
- c) to capture attention of students who are distracted, hence a switch to the students' native language; and
- d) for immediate praise or reprimand, hence a switch to the students' native language.

Code-switching may be used as an effective pedagogical and communicative tool in bilingual classrooms to scaffold pupils' learning (Arthur, 1996; Lin 1990; O'Neil and Velasco, 2007). According to Lin (1990) code-switching may be used for effective

teaching and also for classroom management. Merritt et al. (1992) hold that code-switching is drawn on by many teachers to consolidate and clarify lesson content as well as to regain students' attention or help them to focus.

In fact, research carried out in Europe on bilingual education (CLIL/EMILE, 2002) indicates that if code-switching is applied well and understood properly, it can have a positive effect on the development of cognitive skills in 'non-language' subjects (Serra, 2007). However, the idea of responsible code-switching is important for subjects where the language is the focus (CLIL/EMILE, 2002).

O'Neil and Velasco (2007) propose that code-switching to the pupils' L1 can be perceived as a useful and 'responsible pedagogical technique' in the following three situations:

- a. when providing the definition of a word;
- b. when providing a linguistic summary; and
- c. when providing a summary of a lesson in one language so that the child can derive more meaning, as well as focus on the language structures.

Ferguson (2003, p 231-232) proposed three categories to account for code-switching in the classroom. Ferguson's categories are broad but nonetheless include all aspects mentioned by other authors in a condensed manner as follows:

- a. Constructing and transmitting knowledge
- b. Classroom management
- c. Interpersonal relations



Writing about these categories at a later date, Ferguson (2009, p 232) states that the benefits of having a 'short taxonomy' is that

*...it reflects teachers' perceptions that their central task is to facilitate pupil access to curricular knowledge in a classroom environment that feels comfortable, familiar and safe.*

In relation to the Maltese educational scenario Camilleri (2001, p 11) believes that code-switching:

*becomes a pedagogically efficient way of communicating, of solving the difficulty of making sense of a 'foreign', new and academic text in English, by liberally and uninhibitedly discussing it in one's native language.*

Another reason behind code-switching in class is that teachers may feel that they remain distant for their pupils when they use L2 only, and thus, they feel that using the L1 during the lesson allows them to build a better rapport and to engage emotionally with the students (Camilleri, 1996; Polio and Duff, 1994; Zentella, 1997).

Van der Walt, *et al.*, (2001) believe that through 'responsible code-switching' the link with the students' home language can be strengthened especially when one views the L1 as a pedagogical resource. They hold that teachers should not only code-switch to the L1 to give instructions, orders, to manage the class, but should use it to provide meaningful learning support. They do warn teachers that they have to monitor the quality and quantity of their code-switching, and they advise them that the main part of the lesson should take place in the language that is being taught or developed.

## **2.4 Identity matters**

Teachers as individuals have their own personal identities that are constructed through their family background and life experiences. Teachers also proceed to develop a 'teacher identity' that may be congruent with their personal identity or may clash with it

(Britzman, 2003; Mishler, 1999). Teachers, or student teachers who come from a background and culture that fit in with the expectations of ‘teacher’, thus embodying the appearance, manner and behaviour expected of a teacher, seem to be socialised into the profession more easily. Others may experience conflict and tension<sup>8</sup> between their identity and ‘teacher identity’.

McCarthy and Moje (2002, p 231) hold that identity is not something fixed and unchanging, but can be described as hybrid as follows:

*Thus, a person’s identity is not necessarily incoherent and contradictory... but identity can be hybrid, it can be complex, and it can be fluid and shifting as a person moves from space to space and relationship to relationship.*

As an outcome of her longitudinal research involving Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in the UK, Twisleton (2004) proposed that student teachers could be seen to fit into one of three categories as listed in the table below.

**Table 2.2: Three Categories of Student Teachers<sup>9</sup>**

<b>Task Managers</b>	Concerned with getting the task done rather than developing learning. Typical of students at the beginning of ITE where survival to the end of each lesson was the main issue.
<b>Curriculum Deliverers</b>	Understood the purpose of tasks for learning but in a limited manner within a ‘given’ curriculum.
<b>Concept/Skill Builders</b>	Focused on subject and concepts and skills to become proficient in it. Set learning objectives according to a broader understanding of the subject and its relevance to the pupils.

She argues that teacher identity may be seen as a ‘central, dynamic force’ that influences the way ‘student teachers interpret classrooms and leads them to manage and shape the activity systems in which they operate’ (Twisleton, 2004, p 159). Although the categories above help to clarify developmental stages within the student teacher’s

<sup>8</sup> As in Deborah Britzman’s (2003, p 123) narrative about Jamie Owl.

<sup>9</sup> Categories of student teachers adapted from Twisleton (2004).

journey, they are not meant to describe a simple developmental path. This means that not all student teachers will necessarily follow these stages or move in a straight-forward sequence through them. Twisleton (2004, p 158) holds that:

*The way student teachers view themselves as teachers, how they understand the curriculum (the National Literacy Strategy in England in particular) and the beliefs and values they hold in relation to the subject have a direct impact on the ability of student teachers to effectively support children's learning in literacy.*

Twisleton (2004) acknowledges that the student teachers' experiences of teachers from when they were pupils have a strong bearing on the beliefs they bring with them to student teaching. This is in line with Lortie's (1975) concept of 'lived experiences' or 'apprenticeship of observation'. Family members or friends who are teachers may also have encouraged some student teachers and these are also considered to be 'influential sources of belief determining the sense of identity student teachers link to with the role they are seeking to develop' (Twisleton, 2004, p 160). Therefore, there are various factors at play that impact the student teacher's teaching and these are important in forming and performing their professional teacher identity.

#### **2.4.1 Culture, language and identity**

*It is widely believed that there is a natural connection between the language spoken by members of a social group and that group's identity. By their accent, their vocabulary, their discourse patterns, speakers identify themselves and are identified as members of this or that speech and discourse community. From this membership, they draw personal strength and pride, as well as a sense of social importance and historical continuity from using the same language as the group they belong to.*

(Kramsch, 1998, p 65-66)

However, Kramsch adds that it is not always simple to define which group a person belongs to. She argues that in the case of isolated and homogeneous communities one may be able to define group membership by their 'common cultural practices' but nowadays due to more open and complex societies it is difficult to define the boundaries of group membership, or even the linguistic or cultural identities of the members.

## **2.4.2 Teachers' beliefs, attitudes and knowledge about language teaching and learning**

Fajet *et al.* (2005, p 717) suggest that:

*Preservice teachers conceive of teaching primarily as a task involving affective, interpersonal relationships rather than a profession requiring a skilled and knowledgeable practitioner.*

This implies that many pre-service teachers hold a naïve and unrealistic view of what teaching entails. I agree with Fajet *et al.* (2005) that being a teacher is a profession that involves skill and knowledge. However, I also believe that an affective and interpersonal relationship between the teacher and pupils should be encouraged and nurtured. Nutbrown and Page (2008) have argued in favour of affective relationships especially in early childhood settings.

Moreover, we all think we know what a teacher is and what a teacher does 'because we have all played a role opposite teachers for a large part of our lives' (Britzman, 1986, p 443). She continues that:

*Prospective teachers, then, bring to their teacher education more than their desire to teach. They bring their implicit institutional biographies – the cumulative experience of school lives – which, in turn, inform their knowledge of the student's world, of school structure, and of curriculum.*

(Britzman, 1986, p 443)

Also a common belief is that due to their having been participants in the educational process as pupils, through their apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975), or what Britzman (2003) refers to as ‘school biography’, teaching is a profession that seems familiar to them. This notion that teaching is a profession that is easy and that anyone can do is strengthened by Britzman (2003, p 6) who states that, ‘perhaps the best we can say is that what makes the field of education so contentious and unique, compared to other professions, is that everyone can feel like an expert’.

### **2.4.3 The influence of ‘lived experiences’**

It seems that teachers’ prior learning experiences are very important and are present at the beginning of teacher education. It is interesting to note that:

*By the time they reach college, most students have closely observed and scrutinized teachers and their behaviours for at least 12 or 13 years. These activities leave an indelible imprint on the minds and hearts of most students as they develop folk theories about what it takes to be a teacher.*

(Doolittle, Dodds and Placek, 1993, p 717)

The vocational model of teacher training which is based on the apprenticeship model of education (Gordon, 1985) does not address ‘the hidden significance of biography in the making of a teacher, particularly as it is lived during student teaching’ (Britzman, 1986). Johnson (1994) holds that beliefs formed through prior life experiences are very hard to change despite teacher education. Therefore, Johnson argues that how teachers were taught will in turn influence the manner in which they teach.

Thus, if a teacher was taught certain subjects in English as L2 s/he will probably teach the subject in the same way, and therefore, most probably in the same language/s of

instruction as well. Therefore, any instructional decisions taken by pre-service teachers on a practicum were founded on ideas produced through their own experiences as L2 learners (Johnson, 1994). Through work with pre-service teachers, Numrich (1996) also found that student teachers tend to use or avoid certain teaching strategies depending on their own positive or negative experiences as pupils.

#### **2.4.4 Does ITE change beliefs about teaching?**

Brownlee *et al.* (2001, p 251) hold that:

*There is growing evidence to suggest that it is important to consider preservice teachers' beliefs, in particular epistemological beliefs, in teacher education since such beliefs will influence performance in the classroom.*

Pajares (1992) also expresses the concern that the beliefs held by student teachers will impact upon their performance in class. Despite acknowledging the above, Brownlee *et al.* (2001) agree with Nespor (1987) that very often these beliefs about learning held by student teachers are not addressed during ITE. One way to change may be to encourage student teachers to reflect explicitly on these beliefs (Brownlee *et al.*, 2001; Lyons, 1990; Stanton, 1996). However, such a process may be slow as well as difficult.

According to Almarza (1996), despite teacher education, some student teachers do not change their beliefs about teaching and learning. Almarza (1996) followed the learning progress of four PGCE students who were reported to have adopted specific teaching methods they were taught during the course. However since they were being assessed they may have felt the need to conform. In fact when these students talked about their work it emerged that they varied in their acceptance of the suggested approach to

teaching. Almarza (1996, p 69) gives an example of one of the participants who at the end of the practicum:

*... saw herself free from the constraints imposed by the context of the classroom, she was back in the position in which she could continue to explore the ideas she had about language prior to the beginning of the course.*

Therefore, in this case while the teacher education course *seemed* to have an effect on the actions of the preservice teacher in class, it did not ultimately, in practice, succeed in changing prior beliefs.

However, some researchers (Sendan and Roberts, 1998; Cabaroglu and Roberts, 2000) observed evidence of change due to teacher education. Freeman (1993) reports positive findings showing the impact of the teacher education course on participants' cognition although he also notes that some preservice teachers retained their prior beliefs even when these went against the course philosophy or against current pedagogy and practice. These researchers confirm that initial beliefs about language are very difficult for teacher educators to shift. These beliefs seem closely tied to identity and so even when student teachers articulate agreement, their behaviour may remain unaffected.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

In this first part of Chapter 2, I attempted to present and discuss a review of some of the literature that is pertinent to this study. The first part of the chapter presented the reader with a review of literature related to the main areas of the study and these include: bilingualism in education and the teachers' use of language in class, teacher and personal identity, culture, and the role of teachers' lived experiences, beliefs, and attitudes. Therefore, the main thrust of the argument presented is that code-switching is not always random and when used purposefully it can serve important communicative

and pedagogical functions. More importantly, code-switching is not to be viewed categorically as 'wrong' or as necessarily detrimental to learning or language learning.

The next chapter deals with the Maltese social context of this study. Through the chapter I provide some insight into the local bilingual scenario and some attitudes and beliefs held by Maltese people about L1 and/or L2 use in the community at large, in the home and at school. I also introduce the Maltese educational system that is in place for primary schools and the provision of ITE.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **The Maltese context of the study**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I bring together literature to illustrate the context against which the data is presented and analysed later on in this study. The social, cultural, educational and linguistic context of the Maltese Islands is presented here. First I deal with the historical plight of the 'language question' in Malta and the bilingual situation. Language use by Maltese families at home and in the school domain will be discussed.

Then I talk about social class and language, and how these interact with each other, with examples from the local scene. I then move on to the Maltese educational system and the various types of schooling provided, before discussing the provision of primary education, the National Minimum Curriculum (NMC, Ministry of Education, 1999) and the English Syllabus for Maltese Primary Schools (Ministry of Education, 2006).

Since the study deals first and foremost with student teachers following an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Programme I cannot neglect to provide the necessary background about ITE in Malta and how this is catered for by the University of Malta. I also provide details about the components of the programme, especially those related to teaching in the primary school. I also touch upon how some student teachers react to their first school observation visits and their first teaching experiences; in this section I draw on my own experiences as a Teaching Practice Tutor and a School Experience Tutor. I include all these aspects in this part of the chapter since it prepares a launch

pad for the research areas that are central to this work and therefore I return to these areas in more detail through the presentation and discussion of the results of the case studies.

### **3.2 Bilingualism in Malta**

In Malta the language situation seems to fall within Kachru's (1985) outer circle (or second concentric circle) since English, as one of the official languages, occupies an administrative role in the country, is an integral part of schooling and is used by the majority of the population as their second language. The bilingual situation in Malta is mainly a compound bilingual one. Therefore, both languages are available for one semantic reality. Fishman's (1967) description of bilingualism without diglossia is applicable in this situation because neither of the languages is designated as the High or Low function language. In Malta either language may be used in all situations and domains (except in Parliament and the Courts of Law where Maltese is used unless foreigners are present). English and Maltese are both learnt within more or less the same social context and the same culture, although there are some social differences among and between various groups of Maltese nationals which I will discuss later.

Camilleri believes that although Maltese and English may have had different functions in the past (English for the foreign administration and Maltese elite, while Maltese was the language for everyday life), 'both are used practically in all spheres of life' (Camilleri, 1997, p 24) and seem to have lost these distinctive functions. The term 'transglossia' (García, 2009) to refer to Malta's linguistic situation may also be appropriate since in Malta languages can be used interchangeably in many domains and with different interlocutors. The term diglossia carries the notion that one of the languages is in a position of higher status and presents such a position of language

domination as normal and natural (Calvet, as cited in García, 2009; Williams, 1992). Thus, despite being members of the same speech community we cannot assume that all will think in the same way about the language/s. Some Maltese speakers will see Maltese as being politically superior and others will see English in this light.

This concern is also addressed by The Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe (2003) whereby the term 'multilingualism' is employed instead of diglossia.

García (2009, p 79) proposes the term 'transglossia' as an alternative, as follows:

*'Transglossia' might be a better term to describe societal bilingualism in a globalised world: a stable, and yet dynamic, communicative network with many languages in functional interrelationship, instead of being assigned separate functions.*

Fishman (1999, p 450) also agrees that that two or more languages can co-exist in individuals or societies and states that:

*the global and the specific are now more commonly found together, as partial (rather than exclusive) identities, because they each contribute to different social, emotional, and cognitive needs that are co-present in the same individuals and societies and that are felt to require and to benefit from different languages in order to give them appropriate expression.*

This shift and change in terminology reflects the changes in perception of social practices and language use. Thus, languages in a bilingual society are seen as interrelating in the same spaces or domains and not being isolated, compartmentalised or vying for superiority by competing against each other.

### **3.2.1 Malta's languages**

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the language situation in Malta was complex, as Italian, English and Maltese were competing for supremacy. Frendo (1975, p22)

describes how Maltese replaced Italian in 1934 as the official language together with English.

*Paradoxically, the Maltese language emerged as a synthesis of the pro-English and pro-Italian rivalry. The Maltese vernacular served as a social and emotive bond and became a natural unifier. Both Anglophiles and Italophiles thus contributed, unwittingly to the success of Maltese nationalism and nationhood.*

Malta became an independent and sovereign state in 1964 and a Republic in 1974. That same year the Constitution of the Republic of Malta (1974, Section 5) declared Maltese the national language of Malta, while both Maltese and English were given the status of official languages.

### **3.2.2 English in Malta**

The need for a Language of Wider Communication (LWC) continues even with the rapid socio-economic development, since smaller nations, even if prosperous; need a language for international and scientific purposes. Not all language speakers, especially when their populations are small, can afford to be literate and cognitively able only in their languages; they need a LWC for access to scientific literature and international communication. This language will be primarily the English language since much of the scientific literature printed in international journals is in English.

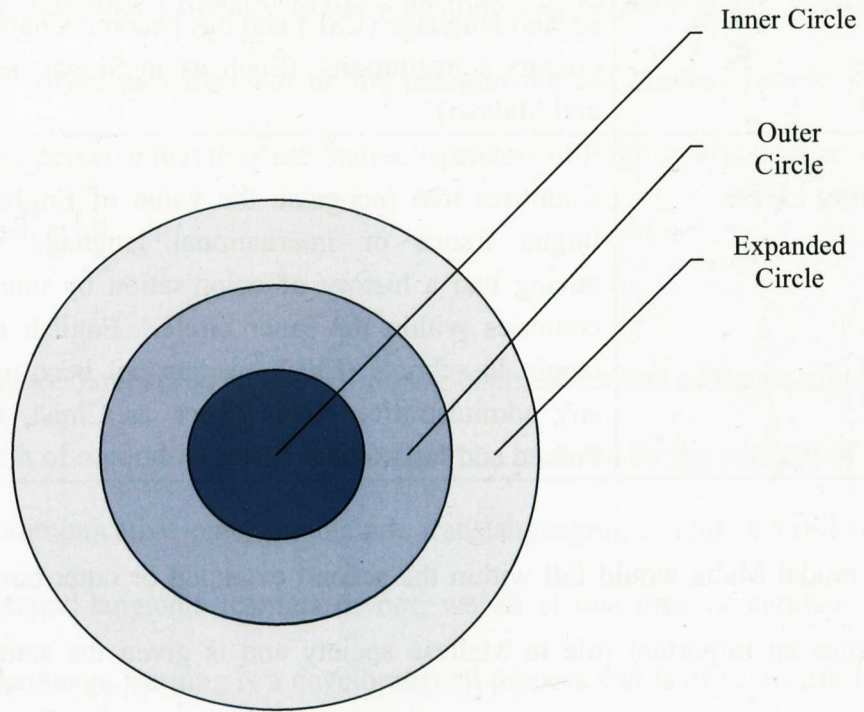
Crystal (1997) holds that, excluding creoles, America is the home to almost 70% of all English mother-tongue speakers. He argues that:

*the present-day world status of English is primarily the result of two factors: the expansion of British colonial power, which peaked towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the emergence of the United States as the leading economic power of the twentieth century.*

(Crystal, p53)

The intention behind the model put forward by the Indian linguist Braj Kachru (1985; 1986) was to map the spread of English through three concentric circles that represent the spread of English (see Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1: The Spread of English<sup>10</sup>**



The figure above depicts the three concentric circles. Here I present a table to facilitate the description of what falls into each of Kachru's concentric circles and then see where the Maltese language situation fits into this model.

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<sup>10</sup> From Kachru (1985).

**Table 3.1: The Spread of English<sup>11</sup>**

<p><b>1. Inner Circle</b></p>	<p>Countries where English is the primary language. (L1 varieties, such as USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand).</p>
<p><b>2. Extended/Outer Circle</b></p>	<p>Countries where English plays an important role as a second language (ESL) and has become a part of that country's institutions. (Such as in Singapore, India and Malawi).</p>
<p><b>3. Expanding Circle</b></p>	<p>Countries that recognise the value of English as a lingua franca or international language without having had a history of colonisation by one of the countries within the inner circle. English may be taught in schools (EFL) but has not been assigned any administrative status (Such as China, Greece, Poland and Japan).</p>

Thus, in this model Malta would fall within the second extended or outer circle since English occupies an important role in Maltese society and is given the status of an official language alongside Maltese. This model has since been criticised by Graddol (2006, p 110) who argues that in our globalised world 'the tradition of the 'second-language user' (as one who uses the language for communication within their own country) no longer makes sense. Pakir (1993) also felt this difficulty and she referred to speakers within the second outer circle as *English-knowing bilinguals*, and to those in the third expanded circle as *English-using bilinguals*.

A narrow view of bilinguals as second-language learners seems to carry negative connotations and also undermines the notion of bilingualism as a societal reality and a way of being for large sections of the world's population (García, 2009). Instead García, Kleifgen, and Falchi (2008) propose that those in the process of learning a

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<sup>11</sup> Adapted from Kachru (1985)

second language be referred to as *emergent bilinguals* who can slide across a bilingual scale or continuum. They argue that such terminology would help to reduce the artificial categorisation between on the one side, native-speaker or fluent speaker, and on the other, the non-native or second-language learner. In Malta some speakers are fluent speakers of English but are not ‘native speakers’ in the strict sense of the term. Moreover, although officially Malta’s position can be seen to fall within the second concentric circle, this may not be the position that all Maltese people would choose since some perceive that they are ‘native’ speakers of English whilst others hardly speak any English at all.

According to García (2009, p 60), ‘In the globalised context of the twenty-first century, the concept of second-language learner must be replaced by the concept of the bilingual whose communicative practices include translanguaging’. This is valid since whether we are second-language learners or not, we all at one time or another, are learners, because language learning is a developmental process that is circular, life-long and life-wide.

The choice of language is never culturally, socially or politically neutral. The choice of English as an official language in post-colonial countries is sometimes taken as a ‘given’ and as such is uncontested. Moreover, it is ‘often presented as the effect of a deliberate choice’ (Bamgboṣe, 2006, p 647). One could argue that it is an obvious choice not to forgo such a linguistic resource that occupies an important role as an international lingua franca, the language of globalisation, the language of technology and opens doors to educational advancement. Bamgboṣe (2006) quotes Pennycook (1994, p 12) when he makes the case that such an outlook does not ‘problematize the notion of choice’. Bamgboṣe (2006, p 648) poses the question: ‘Is the choice of English

a free choice or are there constraints that make the choice inevitable?' For many people in a globalised world it is not a matter of whether they want to learn English or not, but actually one can argue that they have no real choice because they *need* English. This is the case with Malta because English is part and parcel of the educational system which draws on the use of English as a language of instruction for various areas of the curriculum such as, Mathematics, science and technology, and not only as a subject to be learnt. Extensive use of English is also found in the media, arts, entertainment scene, business and industry well as being the main language of socialisation for a portion of the population.

### **3.2.3 Maltese**

I now discuss the nature of the Maltese language in terms of its linguistic features. This gives the non-Maltese reader a better background to the language used by speakers of Maltese, especially since the data to be presented through the use of lesson and interview transcriptions will include both languages.

Maltese is a language with clear syllable boundaries (Aquilina, 1985; Aquilina, 1988) and this means that it is easy to split words into syllables both in writing and in speech. Unlike English, it has a transparent orthographic structure, that is, a fair amount of consistency in the written to spoken correspondence, especially at the syllabic level (consonant-vowel patterns). Although Maltese belongs to the Semitic language family, and its structure, vocabulary and word formation are basically Arabic, it is written in Roman script (Aquilina, 1988; Sciriha and Vassallo, 2001).

The most outstanding characteristic of Maltese, as is the case with other Semitic languages, is trilaterism (Aquilina, 1985). This enables three consonantal radicals to



generate various derivatives (eg: *k-t-b* is the root for *ktieb* (book) and from this the following are generated: *kitba* (writing), *kiteb* (he wrote), *kitbet* (she wrote), *kitbu* (they wrote), *ktibna* (we wrote), *jikteb* (he writes), *tikteb* (she writes), *niktbu* (we write), and so on.

English, on the other hand, develops a series of derivatives in a different way, mainly by using prefixes and suffixes. The process of semantics in Semitic Maltese operates mainly from inside as seen from the various forms of the verbs which generate more verbs modifying the meaning of the original form from which they are derived. Semitic Maltese is a language of patterns and analogy to which most of the loan words conform. The Maltese language also incorporates elements of Romance languages and elements of English.

### **3.2.4 The history of English in Maltese education**

During the 1840s when efforts were made to set up a Maltese educational system one of the first issues to be decided upon was the choice of language to be used for instruction (Blouet, 1987). Should it be Italian, Maltese or English? According to Keenan (1879) Maltese should be the language of instruction and that English should be taught as another subject through the medium of Maltese. There were difficulties as there were only a few books available for this purpose in Maltese and there was no agreement on the form of the alphabet to be used in schools. Italian was offered as an optional language that students could choose to study.

The use of English in Maltese education was a consequence of British rule (Zammit Mangion, 1992) and also due to its highly respected literature. For many years Maltese had been regarded as the 'language of the kitchen' and many thought it was not

appropriate as an academic language as it was associated with a lack of education (Camilleri, 1995; Caruana, 2007). Thus, Maltese held negative connotations and this might be why the use of English by Maltese people is perceived as ‘snobbish’ (Camilleri, 1995; Caruana, 2007). Due to British colonization, civil servants were required to know English and this brought with it the necessity to learn and teach English. Thus, between the 1850s and 1870s the use of English had spread widely (Keenan, 1879).

In 1924 when compulsory schooling came into effect, Maltese was probably used as the medium of instruction with English and Italian taught as subjects in state primary schools (Camilleri, 1995). English was used as the language of instruction in private schools until the beginning of the 1970s and in some cases students *caught* speaking in Maltese would be punished (Navarro and Grech, 1984).

The University of Malta recognised Maltese as its official language, alongside English, in 1971. Caruana (2007, p 184) argues that despite Maltese being recognized as the official language together with English, there seems to be a preference for Maltese as a spoken language and English for writing purposes:

*Maltese is very widespread as a spoken variety but it is used to a lesser extent as a written medium. In fact, Maltese can be said to be the language used to communicate orally in most circumstances... English, on the other hand, is mainly used in writing.*

This is usually quite evident even in classrooms where a large amount of writing is done in English but then related explanations are held mostly in Maltese. Farrugia (2003) also found this to be the case in her study of numeracy and language use in Maltese Primary classrooms. Camilleri (1997) also affirms this as she writes that although the Maltese

language 'has gained importance and some prestige in education, English continues to be the major medium of education' (p23).

### **3.2.5 Language use in Maltese families<sup>12</sup>**

Maltese is the first language of the majority of families in Malta (Borg *et al.*, 1992). In fact, Sciriha (1993) through her survey conducted with 501 Maltese respondents found that 90.4% reported using Maltese exclusively (M) when interacting with family members whilst 1% claimed to use English only (E). The other respondents used both Maltese and English in different proportions. 5% said that they use more Maltese with some English (Me) and 1.8% English with some Maltese (Em). These results are very intriguing as they suggest that within the home domain a large number of the participants prefer to use Maltese. In a later study that involved 930 pupils and focused on language use at home and at school, Sciriha (1996) reported that the majority of children said they spoke Maltese at home but used English predominantly at school. This was especially the case for pupils who attended church and independent schools. Sciriha concluded that language use was not only person-oriented but also domain-oriented. The above-mentioned studies seemed to be a realistic portrayal of the Maltese linguistic scenario since it tallies with the results of the national census. The language spoken at home by the Maltese population over the age of 10 years was as follows:

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<sup>12</sup> In this section, and the next, I draw on a body of local research by Camilleri that deals with bilingualism in Malta. Over the past twenty years she researched: the use of Maltese and English code-switching as used in Maltese secondary schools; language use in Maltese families; and the use of dialect or/and standard Maltese.

**Table 3.2: Language/s spoken at home in 2005<sup>13</sup>**

Language	%	N
Maltese	90.2	326,703
English	5.9	21,636
Other language	0.9	3,344
More than 1 language	2.9	10,693
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>362,376</b>

Camilleri (1995, p84) also studied language use of Maltese families and describes four types of family identified on the basis of chronological acquisition of language varieties by the children and their use of Maltese and English at home. The following table describes these different types of family in brief.

**Table 3.3: Language Use in Maltese Families<sup>14</sup>**

<b>Type A</b>	A dialect of Maltese is acquired as a first language by the children and is the parents' first language and is spoken widely in the neighbourhood. Standard Maltese is acquired mainly through explicit teaching by the parents or other family members and by formal teaching at school. English is also acquired formally at school.
<b>Type B</b>	Standard Maltese is the first language of the family. English is acquired through formal teaching.
<b>Type C</b>	Both Maltese and English are acquired as a first language and are used interchangeably.
<b>Type D</b>	English is spoken by one or both parents and is acquired as a first language by the children. Maltese is acquired later through formal teaching at school and through socialising with speakers of Maltese.

From this chart we may deduce that language use is usually determined by our family background, by the type of school we attend and also by the people we socialize with. Although this chart helps to clarify the language use of families in Malta, it does not

<sup>13</sup> Census of Population and Housing (2007)

<sup>14</sup> From Camilleri (1995, p84)

cater for the attitudes of speakers towards the languages. I believe that attitudes towards language leave a significant impact on our language use and language choices.

### **3.2.6 Language use and social class in Malta**

According to Camilleri (1995), two social groups can be identified in Malta: one group with a primary orientation towards English, and a second group with a primary orientation towards Maltese. The most influential social groups are held to be those who prefer to use English as a first language with their children (Borg *et al.*, 1992). This group (which in 1992 was estimated to compose about 2% of the population) associates English with prestige and therefore chooses this language as their major means of communication. This English-speaking group tends to live mainly in high-class tourist areas. These Maltese families match the description of Camilleri's (1995) Type D family. The children of English speaking parents, as in Camilleri's Type C and D families, tend to attend private independent schools where English is usually the language of instruction. Thus, they continue to use English whilst learning Maltese as another school subject.

According to Borg *et al.* (1992) and Sciriha (1998) the Maltese L1 group tends to associate the use of English as a first language by Maltese citizens as 'snobbism' (*tal-pepe*). On the other hand speakers of Maltese are generally regarded as 'uneducated' and 'unsophisticated' by the English-speaking sector. There are also a number of Maltese who may be regarded as language purists since they insist on using standard Maltese and who regard Maltese as a high-class language (Camilleri, 1996). Speakers of Maltese may use the standard Maltese or else the dialect they learnt in their village. Most Maltese and Gozitan (Gozo is Malta's smaller sister island) dialects vary from the standard in all linguistic features (Aquilina and Isserlin, 1981, cited in Camilleri, 1995).

Thus, standard Maltese is viewed as being of a higher status than the use of a village dialect. As a lecturer I encounter many Gozitan students who speak to me and to their Maltese colleagues in standard Maltese but immediately switch to their dialect when interacting with fellow Gozitans. This was also observed by Camilleri (1995) who reported that dialect tended to be used in more informal situations (at home, in the village) while standard Maltese was used for more formal situations (at work, in church, official occasions) even amongst the same speakers.

Hence, a situation of diglossia, or even transglossia, as regards the use of standard Maltese and dialects (or language varieties) seems to be in play here. Standard Maltese serves High functions whilst dialects serve Low functions (Borg, 1980; Camilleri, 1987). Such a 'power' relationship, however, does not seem to exist between the use of English and Maltese because either language can be used in all areas of Maltese private and public life. This seems to fit in very well with the arguments put forward that view both languages as co-existing and interrelating (Fishman, 1999), such as the notion of transglossia (García, 2009), and multilingualism (Council of Europe, 2003).

There also seems to be a trend towards more code-switching between English and Maltese. Camilleri (1995, p 102) also holds that teachers use this kind of code-switching to establish their 'professional identities' within the scholastic context, in fact:

*Their code-switching can be seen as a way of managing more than one identity and of avoiding being seen as too purist or too snobbish. At the same time, code-switching is a crucial communicative resource for managing the dilemmas imposed by the lack of a clear language policy.*

Therefore, from the above it is clear that code-switching also serves the function of leaving the door open for those who do not want to be associated strictly with either of the two groups, to put it simply, that is, either 'English-speaking snobs' or 'Maltese

language purists'. Thus, despite being a small island, the language situation in Malta is complex and is a reflection of the social, cultural and historic melting-pot that it is. In terms of my study this is what makes the study of language use in Malta so challenging and so at the same time so interesting. Moreover, the changes and shifts in language use are still being felt and it is an aspect of Maltese life that is constantly in a state of flux.

### **3.2.7 Crosslinguistic Influences**

The term 'crosslinguistic influence' as used by Kellerman and Sharwood Smith (1986) is an attempt to create a neutral term that refers to influence of languages on each other, or contact phenomena (García, 2009), such as: transfer, interference, avoidance, borrowing and language loss. Camilleri (1991) refers to Burling (1970, p 169) who holds that languages hardly ever meet on equal terms since the speakers themselves bring to the situation their social positions and also due to the societal attitudes towards the languages concerned.

English as used by some Maltese speakers was first referred to as 'Maltese English' by Broughton (1976, in Camilleri, 1995). This term was also later used by other Maltese linguists (e.g.: Borg, 1980; Borg, 1988; Sciriha 1991).

*Maltese English is influenced by Maltese on all linguistic levels, namely phonology, grammar, semantics, and discourse, but not on the lexical level, i.e. there are no Maltese lexical items within a Maltese English stretch of speech. There is however, an influence from Maltese on lexical choice.*

(Camilleri, 1995, p 88)

Borg (1980; 1988) also came up with the term 'Mixed Maltese English' to describe a mix of both Maltese and English by some speakers who mix both languages through various modes of code-switching. Despite this influence on English by Maltese at all

linguistic levels, according to Kachru's (1986) circles of English, the English used in Malta cannot be viewed as a localized variety of English.

### ***The influence of Maltese on English***

The Maltese influence on English as it is used in Malta is felt on many levels. The impact on the phonology is evident and intonation can vary a lot. Sometimes speakers place the word stress on English words as though they were Maltese words. Some Maltese speakers also find it difficult to deal with silent letters in English words (like: comb, thumb, bomb) because Maltese has a very transparent orthography and therefore the sound-symbol relationship is very tight. We also tend to sound out the consonants quite strongly.

The sentence structure of Maltese is quite frequently super-imposed on that of English. (E.g.: *Marija trid tixrob?* 'Maria you want to drink?' Note that the English version lacks the 'do' at the beginning and that the statement is made into a question by the use of a rising intonation).

According to Camilleri (1995) one also finds many literal translations of expressions or idioms that do not make sense in English unless you happen to know the Maltese version (E.g.: 'Don't stay in the middle'. '*Toqgħodx fin-nofs*'. Instead of 'Don't stand in the way'). Once I was reading a pupil's composition and she wrote the following: '...we were out for a drive and suddenly the car stopped and my father started pulling.' The first thing that came to my mind was that maybe she meant that 'he started pushing the car'. However, I soon realized that what she meant was that he started to swear. The Maltese expression would have been '*u beda jiġbed*' which is literally translated as, 'he started to pull'. The literal translation of the verb in this context meant that only a Maltese speaker would have been able to work out the meaning of this sentence. Thus,



with the above I have tried to show how the influence of Maltese influences English on the phonological, the grammatical and also on semantic levels.

### ***The influence of English on Maltese***

The influence of English on Maltese is mostly felt on a lexical level, which means the use of English words in an otherwise Maltese utterance (Eg.: *gej tixtri t-ticket? Are you coming to buy the ticket?*). The words may be 'borrowed' as they are in English or else the English word is then totally (written in Maltese) or partially assimilated into Maltese (mostly written in English but pronounced in Maltese). Some of these loanwords become incorporated in the Maltese language and even take on the Maltese structure (Eg.: by having Maltese forms added on to make the following plurals: *jeans - jeansijiet; fridges - friggiijiet; cookers - kukers*). English words are also integrated into Maltese and are then written using Maltese alphabet and pronounced differently from the 'original' English standard pronunciation (Eg.: *cake - kejk; football - futbol; teacher - tijċer; mobile - mowbajl; computer mouse - maws*).

### **3.3 Education in Malta**

The Maltese Educational system caters for all requirements at kindergarten, primary, secondary and post-secondary levels. Schooling is compulsory from the age of 5 to the age of 16, but most children attend kindergarten classrooms from the age of 3 (Mifsud *et al.*, 2000).

Education is free of charge in state and church schools but there are also a number of fee-paying private independent schools. About 30% of all students attend non-State schools, such as private church schools or private independent schools. One of the pertinent differences between state schools and some of the private schools is the use of language/s as medium of instruction and interaction. As stated by Navarro and Grech

(1984), English was the official language of instruction in private schools until 40 years ago.

I think it is important for me to provide readers with this background to the educational system in Malta because this is the backdrop against which the participants of this research were studied.

### ***3.3.1 State or non-state provision of education***

There has been a long-standing class divide between those who attend private schools and those who attend state schools. Private independent schooling and church schooling used to be accessible mostly to those families who belonged to the higher social classes and who could afford to pay fees. According to Sultana (1991) nowadays this class divide is less felt due to equal access to all types of school. Equal access is ensured through the ballot system for entry to church schools; however, I do not think that there is equal opportunity for entry into all types of school since private schools still charge hefty fees that not all families can afford to pay.

The language used for instructional purposes favoured in church and independent schools is usually English and in state schools it is Maltese. Here we can already see an indication of the status English held in the field of education. Private schools are still elitist in that you have to be able to afford hefty school fees. On the other hand, church private schools offer equal accessibility to all through a ballot system for entry at the beginning of primary education. Church schools are now subsidised by the government. Therefore they no longer charge fees and cannot choose their own pupils. However, parents who can afford to, usually give the school a monetary 'donation'.

### **3.3.2 Bilingual education and schooling**

English is used widely in Malta and is taught from early on at school. English is introduced at preschool level (Kindergarten I and II, when children are 3- and 4-years-old respectively) in the majority of state and private schools. As the child progresses through the schooling stages, English gains in importance as it is used as the language of instruction in some subjects and thus is also a gateway to learning.

Legal Notice 73 (Government of Malta, 1989, p vi) states that at Primary Level:

*Maltese will be the first language used in teaching, but the teachers should also seek to speak English so as to accustom children to understand and speak the language. Those children who speak English at home should be trained to a more correct use of the language in addition to their being taught Maltese.*

However, personal experience suggests that this is not generally the reality in every Maltese primary school. For instance, Camilleri (1995, p 128) also notes that, 'lessons are mainly conducted in English in Private Schools where as many as thirty per cent of the students are foreigners and many others are Maltese English-speaking students'. Maltese is generally the medium of instruction in State Schools, with a considerable amount of code-switching between Maltese and English. Any strategies for bilingual education and schooling in the Maltese Islands need to take into account the current state of development of Maltese and English and the available resources. This is because there is a wide choice of materials available from the international market for English as opposed to a very limited availability of materials in Maltese. This may happen due to the expense of having to create Maltese language textbooks for all school subjects for such a limited market. When it comes to choice of books most teachers and policy makers decide to opt for the readily available English medium textbooks that

would cost a fraction of the price as compared to what it would cost to commission Maltese language texts.

Most state schools in Malta do not have explicit language policies despite being encouraged to do so through the NMC (1999). However, the choice of medium during lessons usually depends largely on the individual teacher. The language used in the textbook, for testing purposes and in the annual exam papers may direct the teacher in her/his use of language. Despite all this, the language the teacher uses depends largely on his/her preferences and levels of confidence in using the language (Twisleton, 2006). The choice of language during lessons also reflects the particular teacher's language background and prior schooling experiences (Lortie, 1975; McLeod, 2001; Twisleton, 2006). Camilleri (1996, p. 93) believes that:

*In the classroom, the teachers' own experience at home or as a student at school is reflected in their own use of language. Teachers who come from English-speaking families are more likely to use English as a spoken medium in class. Teachers who attended English-medium schools, especially private schools, are more likely to use English in the classroom.*

She argues that when teacher education was in the hands of British Colleges in the 70s more teachers tended to use English, whereas now teachers are trained at the University of Malta through the medium of Maltese. Camilleri (1996), comments that one finds many older teachers who use more English during their lessons than the younger teachers. This suggests that student teachers and young teachers may be exposing Maltese pupils to less and less English during their schooling, even during English lessons. If students are not exposed to English they may not feel confident enough to use English and that could lead to the loss of a very valuable tool both in the sphere of further education and in the employment market, especially with all the educational and employment opportunities available through being part of the European Union.

However, the increase of the use of Maltese by teachers may also be a reflection of teachers asserting their Maltese culture and maybe an affirmation of a Maltese nationality. The decrease in the use of English may also be attributed, in part, to the change in teachers and the institutions they come from. The older teachers (who are not all of retirement age) were trained through the medium of English at the Mater Admirabilis (for females) and St Michael's (for males) Teachers' Training College<sup>15</sup> before the University was established in an era when the knowledge of English was equated with a good level of education.

### **3.3.3 Bilingual Education: local and international perspectives**

Malta represents a compound bilingual situation without diglossia (Fishman, 1967) where both official languages are available for the same semantic reality (refer to section 3.2 for more detail). Maltese, as the national language, and English, as the second language, may be drawn on in all situations and domains (except in Parliament and the Courts of Law where Maltese is used unless foreigners are present) (Camilleri, 1997).

It may seem strange to some that the Maltese state supports both Maltese as the official national language and English, an ex-colonial language as the official second language. Bunyi (1997) holds that countries retain the language of the colonisers for a variety of reasons. Pakir (2004) wrote about the situation in Singapore and proposed that English as the ex-colonial language was made the language of instruction since it was perceived as 'neutral' (to avoid possible conflict that would result if they were to choose between the three languages used by the main ethnic groups) and as a language that would empower its users.

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<sup>15</sup> All student teachers were required to attend the Training College as full-time boarders.

In Malta no such tension exists between official languages (since Maltese does not have to compete to be the national and official language with any other local language) and therefore English does not serve the purpose of a 'neutral' lingua franca as in some multicultural and multilingual countries. Bonnici (2010) holds that Malta's bilingual situation and relationship with English are different from other post-colonial countries. She states that

*Malta stands apart from the other outer circle Englishes for a number of reasons including its colonial history, near cultural and religious 'homogeneity', widespread bilingualism, European cultural alignments, and geopolitical size. As a British protectorate, Malta's history of colonisation was not plagued by violence as was the case in India.*

(p 21)

In Malta most people perceive the knowledge of English as an asset (as discussed in section 1.3.2). In a linguistic survey held by Sciriha and Vassallo (2001) Maltese respondents were asked which two languages were most useful to them in addition to their L1. They report that the majority chose English (78%) and then Italian (58%) as the two languages that were most useful to them together with Maltese.

The Maltese societal and educational bilingual setting is very different from bilingual situations where one language may be viewed as being the majority or minority language, as more powerful or prestigious, as formal or colloquial than the other/s. Maltese is not a 'heritage language' in danger of perishing or needing 'language maintenance' (minority languages in UK or USA) or 'language revival' (Wales).

Bonnici (2010) states that the use of either language in Malta does not serve to differentiate between faith groups (as in Malaysia or India) and therefore do not represent tensions amongst religious groups.

A situation of diglossia where a high (H) and a low (L) language or variety exist in some countries such as: Arab countries (classical and dialect), in Haiti (French and Creole) and also in Greece (Katharevusa and Dhimotiki). In such situations the variety/language takes on specialised functions as follows:

*H is used for sermons, letters, political speeches, university lectures, news broadcasts, newspaper editorials, and in poetry ... L is used to give instructions to servants, waiters and workmen, to converse with the family, to talk with friends and colleagues, and in folk literature and radio soap operas.*

(Grosjean, 1982, p 131)

Language can also be an indication of one's wealth and standing in society as in the case of Peru, where according to Grosjean (1982, p 121), 'Spanish is the language of the educated and urbanized middle class, and Quechua is the language of the rural Indian poor'. In Malta this is not the case as both English and Maltese enjoy high status and are not indicators of wealth or status.

The experience of English and Welsh in Wales does not mirror the bilingual scenario in Malta since there is a conscious decision and drive to revive Welsh and to include it in the school curricula (Jones & Martin-Jones, 2004). At a societal level not all people speak Welsh and so it does not embody a compound bilingual situation. According to Williams (1987) the number of Welsh speakers in Wales has suffered due to the influx of English monolinguals, the out-migration of Welsh speakers and marriages to monolinguals the majority language of English. This entails that many families are no longer in a position to reproduce the language within the home (Williams, 1987; Romaine, 1995). Language shift is taking place as more of the population are in mixed marriages or in interaction with others who do not speak Welsh. In such situations the use of the majority language or dominant language is common (García, 2009; Romaine, 1995). There are schools that are Welsh-medium and others that are English-medium

schools. In state funded schools where English is the medium of instruction lessons to learn Welsh are compulsory for pupils between the age of five and sixteen. Therefore, here the native language is being re-introduced due to political pressures and in order to re-assert the Welsh national identity; there has never been a similar crisis for Maltese in Malta.

The language situation in Hong Kong is similar to that in Malta. In Hong Kong English and Cantonese are official languages and are taught in school as mandatory subjects. Both languages are used as language of instruction for other subjects. In Maltese primary and secondary schools both languages are drawn on as language of instruction according to the lessons being taught. The NMC recommends that the language of instruction be determined by the subject/content being taught (NMC, 1999). Therefore, an immersion approach is recommended whereby lessons are taught in one language (Maltese only or English only policy) with the possibility of code-switching should it be necessary. Thus, according to the Maltese NMC Mathematics, Science and English are to be taught through the medium of English, whilst Maltese, Religion, Social Studies are to be taught through the medium of Maltese (1999, p 79). I discuss this aspect in more detail later (in section 3.5.2).

### *Types of bilingual education programmes*

In the following table I categorise, describe and give some examples of bilingual education programmes. Of course all countries have differing needs and language situations, and therefore, the implementation of any of the following programmes do not necessarily have the same outcomes in each setting. In the table below I refer to 'majority' or 'minority' students. Minority language students learn through a medium



of instruction language that is not their L1 or mother tongue. Majority language students on the other hand have as their L1 the language of instruction.

**Table 3.4 Types of bilingual education programmes**

<b>Programmes</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Submersion</b>	Minority children put into majority language classes to learn through L2 (sometimes without any explicit teaching). 'Sink, struggle or swim' approach (Baker, 1993, p 154).	L2 undermines proficiency in L1. Results in subtractive or disruptive bilingualism. Language minority assimilated into majority language group.	Finland. (Romanies placed in Finnish schools without catering for the L1).  <i>Baker (1996)</i>
<b>Transition</b>	English as L2 teaching is provided. Students get reading lessons in their L1. As students become more proficient in the L2, the L1 is reduced and then discontinued. <i>Early-exit:</i> Students are mainstreamed by end of 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of primary schooling. <i>Late-exit:</i> L1 teaching continues till end of primary.	Students become fluent in L2 and L1 is phased out for instruction. The result is subtractive bilingualism.	USA: Spanish/English programmes  <i>Garcia (2009)</i>
<b>Pull-out</b>	Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are taken out of class for part of the day to attend basic English courses or L1 reading lessons. Also called 'Sheltered English' programmes.	Can result in additive bilingualism.	Many bilingual programmes in the UK and USA.  <i>Faltis (1993)</i> <i>Baker (1996)</i>
<b>Maintenance</b>	Teaching takes place in L1 and L2. L1 is acknowledged and valued in the school.	Additive bilingualism. Ethnic identity and culture are retained amongst the minority children.	Malaysia (Bahasa Malaysia/Mandarin/Tamil/English) <i>Shah &amp; Ahmad (2007)</i>  Wales (Welsh & English) <i>Baker (1988), Jones &amp; Martin-Jones (2004)</i>
<b>Immersion</b>	L2 is medium of instruction for teaching subjects. Teacher's aide may assist with L1 and L1 may be used as a second language of instruction.	Enrichment of majority children. Outcome is additive bilingualism.	Canada French & English  <i>Swain &amp; Lapkin (1982)</i>

The type of programme offered to a language group usually depends on its status or relationship it has with the state (Romaine, 1995). According to Romaine (1995, p 247) 'a group's status must be accepted by the state which represents the interests of the more powerful, dominant group in society.' The Canadian French/English programmes set up in Quebec in 1965 are the most well know immersion bilingual programmes due to their success at the time. English-speaking families wanted their children to learn French to gain access to employment opportunities since French was perceived to be the 'language of work' (Swain and Lapkin, 1982, p 1). So the pupils who came from English-speaking homes were immersed and taught through French as the language of instruction.

French immersion or English immersion programmes were available. These would usually offer monolingual education, either in English or French, depending on the population majority in the area. In these programmes the second language would be introduced through a limited time frame each week as in any other subject. English as the L1 was introduced during their third or fourth year of primary education. The Maltese education model does take on an immersion approach but not to such an extent. During Mathematics and English the pupils are expected to learn through the medium of English as the L2 but local research has shown that an immersion model is not usually adhered to rigidly in practice (Camillieri, 1995; 2000; Caruana, 2007; Cucciardi, 1990; Farrugia, 2003). Given that both the teachers and pupils share the same L1 and L2 it natural and common for them to code-switch during lessons (Farrugia, 2003). Teachers code-switch to ensure pupils are understanding and following the lesson and frequently switch between using English for reading and writing and Maltese for speaking (Camillieri, 2000; Caruana, 2007; Farrugia, 2003).

The other types of bilingual programmes listed in the table above do not apply to the Maltese scenario because both languages are taught concurrently from pre-school till the end of secondary compulsory education. The aim is that students should be fluent in both languages.

Language teaching in a bilingual situation may also take place through a language distribution/separation model. Jacobson (1990) proposed an approach where each language is differentiated according to person, location, subject and time. However, the languages are not separated by location (the classroom where it is taught), or by time of day (lessons in the morning or afternoon, or on alternate days), or by person (different teachers for each language). Camilleri (1995) holds that in Malta we separate by subject as some subjects are taught through the medium of Maltese and others through English.

In this section I show how the Maltese bilingual situation is different to that in other countries or communities. I looked at Malta's case of compound bilingualism both from a societal and educational perspective. Maltese and English do not share a diglossic relationship since both languages are used in daily life and in various settings. Maltese is not viewed as 'heritage language' that is threatened by the use of English. In the educational sphere all Maltese pupils learn Maltese and English in school and neither of the languages is the 'minority language' of a particular language or faith community. Both languages are valued and official languages of instruction and are shared by all teachers and pupils.

### **3.4 Teaching and the Maltese context**

I now switch from the areas of language use and education to teaching and the provision of ITE. I do this in order to outline teaching in the Maltese context that is the background against which I study the participants and their language use in this study. I start by discussing primary education and the use of English as L2 in Maltese schools, then I explain when teaching became recognised as a profession in Malta and how teaching is still perceived to be a prestigious career, although opinions of some parents and even teachers about the status held by teachers in the primary vis-à-vis those in secondary schools may not always be in agreement.

I then move on to discuss the provision of primary education, the subjects taught and the high-stakes examinations students sit for before they begin secondary education. The state education system upholds a series of formal summative assessment measures held on a national level. I also give some insight into the influence of religious beliefs and rituals on primary schools in Malta.

#### ***3.4.1 Teaching as a profession in Malta***

Teaching was legally recognized as a profession in the Education Act of 1989 (Legal Notice 81). Teaching is viewed as a popular profession in Malta and teaching still carries a certain status. Primary school teaching is taken up by many females (usually there are only two or three males amongst about 50 females following the Bachelor of Education programme (B.Ed) as it is perceived to be a career that one can combine with having a family (Acker, 1983; Darmanin, 1991).

### **3.4.2 Primary education**

Primary education is compulsory from the age of 5 up to the age of 16<sup>16</sup>. Schools are located in every village and are open to all the pupils who live in the area. The Education Division sets the syllabi for all the subjects taught and therefore, what children learn is somewhat homogeneous across the island<sup>17</sup>. However, the core subjects taught everyday are Maltese, English, Mathematics, Religion and Social Studies and these are assessed formally on a national level at the end of the scholastic year for Years 4, 5 and 6.

Pupils usually sit for the Junior Lyceum (JL) Examinations that are entry examinations to Secondary School (11+ entry examinations). Whether one obtains good grades in the JL Examinations determines if the pupils gain access to a JL or will have to attend an Area Secondary School. The opportunities for further education are usually more in line with the ethos and the syllabus followed at a Junior Lyceum. This is also because the pupils with better results go to JLs and the others attend area schools or opt for vocational training.

Therefore, these formal exams at the end of primary schooling are very important and many teachers, parents and pupils work hard to achieve entry to JL schools (Cassar, 1991; Grima and Farrugia, 2006). The harsh reality of the situation is depicted in the following extract taken from a study of a Year 6 class a few days before the JL examinations:

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<sup>16</sup> In State Schools the Primary years are split into two bands: the Early Years and the Junior Years. The Early Years span Years 1, 2 and 3 (pupils of 5 to 7 years, equivalent to Key Stage 1 in the UK) while the Junior Years cover Years 4, 5, and 6 (from 8 to 11 years, equivalent to Key Stage 2 in the UK).

<sup>17</sup> According to the NMC (1998) the basic subjects taught at Primary level are: Maltese, English, Mathematics, Religion, Social Studies, Media Education, Physical Education and Sport, Science, Technology, and Creative Expression.

*Make sure that this weekend you take care of yourselves and see what you do and where you go, so that you will be fit for your examination. It is important because this is a public examination, and if you don't sit for it you have lost everything.*

(Cassar, 1991, p 38)

Thus, it is clear from the teacher's advice that the JL examinations are a source of pressure and stress for students and teachers alike. Cassar argues that in such cases teachers many times end up teaching for the examination and not for life. Through conversations held with the pupils, Cassar also concluded that parents tended to threaten the children with punishments if they did not succeed and promise rewards if they passed the exams.

A new policy paper has been launched that proposes to remove JL exams by 2011 and gradually phase-in a system whereby a smoother transition from primary to secondary school is introduced (Grima *et al.*, 2008). The setting up of the State School Colleges in 2007 whereby all Maltese and Gozitan State Primary and Secondary Schools were grouped up to form Colleges should help the transition process (Grima and Grech, 2008).

This process, if managed and implemented well, could allow teachers and students to engage in more learning-oriented activities. In many classrooms this focus on learning is sometimes neglected due to high-stake formal examinations at every stage of the educational process, which currently seems to lead teachers to 'teach for exams'.

The purpose behind providing this background information here is to introduce the reader to the primary education scenario within which the participants of this study grew up and within which they will undertake their first teaching assignments as they move from being a student in class to being a student teacher and then a novice teacher.

### **3.4.3 Examinations and language skills**

Education in Malta is very competitive and many pupils in the primary, sometimes up to three or four times a week attend private tuition to study the main subjects to ensure they pass their JL (11+) exams, obtain their Secondary Education Certificate (SEC), the local equivalent of 'O' Levels set by the MATSEC Examination Board (Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate).

The end-of-year annual assessment procedures in place at Primary School Level for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, in the last decade have started to take into consideration the oral component (listening and speaking skills) of the language being learnt as well as the written component. However, the oracy section in the Primary School Annual Exams only carries 15%, while the written component carries 85% of the total mark. It is interesting to note that despite the presence of an oral section in the Annual Exams, the JL (11+) exam did not include oracy skills.

The percentage allocated to the 'Listening and Speaking' component of the English SEC Paper is 25% of the total mark and shows an increase in weighting from the Primary School Annual Exam. This means that students may be competent in reading and writing but not as competent or confident in speaking English.

#### ***Examination culture***

In Malta schools and teachers tend to be judged on the grades pupils obtain in formal exams and tests (Grima and Farrugia, 2006; Tabone, 2007). This examination culture that is present in Malta makes teachers strive for pupils to be successful in exams and obtain good grades, since teachers are judged by many parents according to how many

children in their class pass high-stakes exams. Thus, for many parents a ‘good teacher’ is one whose pupils pass exams and achieve high scores.

This outcome may have led to a situation where learning and studying seem to take place mainly to satisfy written examination requirements to gain entry into learning institutions that are considered better than others that are available for pupils who ‘fail’ in their exams at the transition between primary and secondary school (area secondary schools, trade schools). At higher levels competition still reigns to gain entry into post-secondary education (6<sup>th</sup> Form, Junior College) that prepares the student for university entry. All this competition may also be a result of Malta being such a small island and opportunities being restricted due to its size.

### ***Language of assessment and language of instruction***

An issue related to examinations is the language used in examinations. This means that since Mathematics<sup>18</sup> is taught through English in Primary school, then the pupils sit for an examination or test in English. This may pose difficulties in learning content as well as assessment if the pupil experiences difficulty in learning or mastering English.

It is not only about the language of assessment but also about access to learning content. Should pupils be taught content for other subject areas in their L2? Is this an infringement of Maltese children’s right to education and social justice? These questions do not seem to be given much consideration in the Maltese context. According to Camilleri (2001) ‘the use of English for examination purposes does not seem to be contested as it is understood by the Maltese population as a necessary window to the field of world knowledge’ (p 7).

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<sup>18</sup> The NMC holds that Mathematics, Science, Technology and English are to be taught through the medium of English.



### **3.4.4 Religion and its presence in primary schools**

Life in Maltese primary schools reflects the religious beliefs and rituals that are part of the Maltese culture. Schools are part of the social fabric of society and therefore, cannot but reflect the rituals and beliefs of its people. This is especially the case since Malta is a Roman Catholic country<sup>19</sup> and in the past little or no distinction was made between State and Church legislation.

Roman Catholic religious practices are merged into the school day with prayers being said each morning and before and after the lunch break. The celebration of Mass in schools is a monthly occurrence. Religion is also taught as subject in its own right, and is regulated in State Schools by an agreement between the Republic of Malta and the Holy See (NMC, 1999, p 52). Religious activities are usually carried out in Maltese and therefore one can see clearly how the language of rituals contributes to, and is part of, the social environment of the school, which in turn is a reflection of the larger Maltese society.

### **3.5 English as L2 in Maltese primary schools**

The language attitudes and preferences of children in a semi-rural town in Malta were studied by Attard (1995, as cited in Camilleri, 1996). The reasons the children gave for preferring to use Maltese included the following: 'English is to be used with English people', 'I am Maltese', 'I am not a snob', and 'my friends would make fun of me' (Attard, 1995, p 22). Thus, the reasons given by the eight-year-old children reflect their awareness of the social aspects of language use and also the need to conform to their friends' use of language. These 8-year-old pupils are 22-year-old adults now. Such attitudes towards language and language use also exist amongst the child and adult

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<sup>19</sup> 98% of the population is Roman Catholic

population and are important in this study since the attitudes and beliefs student teachers hold will be reflected in their daily use of language inside and outside the classroom.

### **3.5.1 Code-switching in Maltese classrooms**

Code-switching in Maltese classrooms is a common occurrence. The idea that code-switching in the classrooms may be detrimental has neither been proved nor disproved, but is an occurrence that cannot be ignored. Examples of code-switching provided by Camilleri (1991, p 107) from her transcriptions of observations in Maltese classrooms are illustrated below:

#### **Example 1**

Teacher: We have substances going in and out **issa ha naraw minn fejn sa jidhlu**  
*(now let us see where they get in from).*

#### **Example 2**

Teacher: These are two symbols **ghandkom ideja ghal x'hiex inhuma?**  
*(have you any idea what they mean?)*

#### **Example 3**

Teacher: The changed food **ikun jista` jghaddi mit-tubes ghac-cells.**  
*(will be able to pass from the tube to the cells).*

#### **Example 4**

Teacher: **il-hwejjeġ li ghandhom il-kulur fihom** you can't bleach  
*(Coloured clothes can't be bleached)*

Poplack (1980) subdivides code-switching into intersentential and intrasentential. Intersentential code-switching takes place when speakers switch language when they take turns or switch at the clause or sentence boundary (see the first two examples given above), whilst intrasentential code-switching usually occurs within the sentence or clause (see the third and fourth examples above).

Other types of crosslinguistic influence exist on various levels. Poplack also comments on the insertion of a tag in the other language in an utterance that usually serves the function of turning a statement into a question. Examples of tags in Maltese and English from the work by Camilleri (1991, p 107) follow:

Teacher: it's a little speck, *tara?* (*Can you see?*)

Teacher: **kif rajna lbierah**, *right?* (*As we saw yesterday, right?*)

Camilleri (1995) argues that by switching tags from English to Maltese the teacher manages to avoid the conflict of delivering a lesson in English while at the same time maintaining the relationship with the learners. She holds that through switching tags 'the teacher also invites the learners' confirmation of, and participation in, what is going on in the classroom' (1995, p 195).

Discourse markers are those words or phrases that usually precede sentences in the spoken form (like the use of: now, so, ok). Discourse markers are sometimes used as floor holders. These markers are also used by teachers when they are about to give new information, begin a new task or else when concluding a lesson or reiterating given information. Common Maltese discourse markers would be 'mela' (so) or 'issa' (now). Here are two examples of tag-switching:

Teacher: there will be deductions, **hux veru**  
*there will be deductions, won't there?*

Teacher: if you don't use a lot of heaters, **sewwa**  
*If you don't use a lot of heaters, right?*

(Camilleri, 1995, p 195)

In many cases code-switching is thought to be another communicative resource used in the classroom (Edwards, 2004; García, 2009; Merritt *et al.*, 1992; Lin, 1990). Camilleri (1996, p 101) surmises that in the Maltese classrooms she observed,

*...the teachers used codeswitching as a communicative resource for discourse management purposes: in providing explanations, in introducing new topics, or in making asides.*

Thus, according to Camilleri (1996; 1997) switching from English to Maltese usually occurs when the teacher needs to explain something or to elicit responses from pupils. She reported that teachers also used code-switching to make a difference between talk about the lesson content and 'talk related to the social relations of the classroom' (Camilleri, 1996, p 101). In Camilleri (1996; 1997) code-switching also took place for the teacher to show authority or to build a rapport with the pupils. Teachers also switch from English if they want to ascertain that their pupils have understood what was said in English and to encourage the pupils to participate.

Switching from Maltese to English usually happens due to the use of technical terms or to refer to a text written in English (Camilleri, 1997). Camilleri (2001, p 8) holds that, 'the use of technical terms in English amidst what can be otherwise considered as Maltese discourse, amounts to two-thirds of all code-switching taking place in the classroom'. Most Maltese speakers use English to say the numbers in Maltese and use Mathematics terms in English (Cucciardi, 1990; Farrugia, 2003). If you ask anyone their telephone number, their Identity Card number or their car registration the reply is usually in English.

### **3.5.2 The NMC and the role of English in primary education**

Provision of Primary Education in Malta follows the National Minimum Curriculum (NMC, 1999). According to this document it is very clear that bilingualism should be achieved by all pupils by the end of their years of formal education, since it:

*...considers bilingualism as the basis of the educational system. This document regards bilingualism as entailing the effective, precise and confident use of the country's two official languages. This goal must be reached by students by the end of their entire schooling experience.*

(NMC, 1999, p. 37)

The NMC also stresses that schools should adopt the policy of using both of Malta's official languages and that every school should clearly state its linguistic policy in its development plan. Primary school teachers are encouraged to use English when teaching English, Mathematics, Science and Technology. The role of code-switching between the two languages and consistent use of the languages is explained below:

*In classroom situations when teaching these subjects in English poses difficulties, code switching can be used as a means of communication. These situations apart, the National Minimum Curriculum advocates consistency in the use of language during the teaching-learning process.*

(NMC, 1999, p 79)

Despite these recommendations, I have come across many situations where the English lessons were carried out mainly in Maltese in state schools and the reverse situation, that is, the use of English during Maltese lessons in some private independent schools.

Sciriha (1998) holds that in reality some teachers are not linguistically prepared to teach English as their own English is not up to scratch. This claim is made on the basis of qualitative research she carried out in private schools. The result of this is that both

teachers and pupils communicate in what Pavlova (1987, as cited in Sciriha, 1998) refers to as a 'hotchpotch' of English and Maltese that goes beyond code-switching.

### **3.5.3 The English Syllabus for primary schools**

The learning outcomes for every year of primary schooling are set out in the *Syllabus for Primary Schools* issued in 2006 by the Department for Curriculum Management (Ministry of Education, 2006). The learning outcomes are also further developed into a programme that provides more practical examples of activities that may contribute towards attaining the aforementioned learning outcomes. The programme may be taken on board by teachers and adapted according to their pupils' needs and levels in the various subjects.

For English the learning outcomes are presented under the strands of Oracy, Reading and Writing. Each strand is then broken into smaller units. For example, the Learning Outcomes for Reading at Year 1 level are divided under the following sub-headings: Concepts and Conceptions of Print; Reading Strategies, Reading; Vocabulary; and Attitude. The rationale for the English Programme (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 4) states that:

*The four language modes/skills should be inter-related in an integrated approach whereby every lesson should ideally incorporate listening, speaking, reading and writing.*

It is suggested that this takes place through the use of 'activities that promote receptive skills...which then lead to productive skills' (p 4). Teachers are also encouraged to develop a cross-curricular and thematic approach in the teaching of English since this encourages the use of English within a meaningful context.

### **3.6 Initial Teacher Education in Malta**

Initial Teacher Education provision in Malta is catered for by the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. The 1988 Education Act obliges the State to provide free university education to all students with the necessary entrance qualifications. The duration of the B.Ed (Hons.) course is four years and is two-pronged so students choose whether to take the Primary or Secondary Track, depending on which level they would like to teach. The paths leading to Secondary School teaching include the B.Ed (Hons.) in Education or a Bachelor's Degree followed by a PGCE.

Another option is the access to teaching, in primary or secondary schools, by those in possession of a Masters or Doctoral degree in any area of study. This is highly contested by the Faculty of Education since it places people without any preparation for teaching in charge of classrooms of pupils, thus undervaluing the work of the Faculty of Education.

However, I now focus on the Primary Track since this research study focuses on student teachers reading for a degree in primary education.

#### ***3.6.1 ITE in primary education***

During the four years of the B.Ed Primary course, student teachers attend taught courses at University and also have school-based training in the form of class observations and TP placements in primary schools. Therefore, this is a concurrent model of Initial Teacher Education whereby subject knowledge, pedagogy and TP are included throughout the four years.

During the first year of their studies students follow a number of taught courses (60 ECTS credits) together with a programme of School Experience that is aimed to introduce them to primary schools and their first teaching experience during the course. School Experience involves a series of tutorials in a small group setting together with observation sessions and a practice placement in a primary school (Department of Primary Education, 2005). The tutorials deal with specific themes every week. The themes (such as: classroom management, getting to know the school, lesson planning, pupils and learning, assessment, communication, reflection and evaluation) are related to 12 observation sessions carried out every Wednesday in primary schools. During the observation sessions the student teachers have tasks to carry out. Every week the groups meet their tutors to discuss their observations and to prepare for the theme to be focused upon the following week.

After 12 weeks of observing their assigned class, the student teachers then take over the class for five consecutive Wednesdays (referred to as Serial TP). During the Serial TP the students also receive visits from their tutor but the assessment is not summative at this stage. This then leads to a two-week mini practice placement where they take over the class completely from the collaborating teacher. During the two-week practicum the student teacher receives two visits from the School Experience Tutor and is assessed. In this way the student teachers have the time between November and April to get to know the school, the teacher, any collaborating adults and the children they will be working with. The tutor is also available to discuss any difficulties on an individual basis. Usually a good rapport is built with the School Experience tutor over the span of almost a whole academic year. Therefore, the aim is for the student teachers to experience a gradual induction into the experience of teaching in a Primary School.



During the second, third and fourth years the student teachers continue to attend courses at university. The TP duration increases from two weeks in the first year of ITE to six weeks for each of the successive three years.

### **3.6.2 Inside primary schools and classrooms**

At the beginning of School Experience many student teachers are astonished by the sheer noise level in classrooms and schools. Many would not have visited a primary school since they were there as pupils themselves. Therefore, seeing things from a different perspective is a new experience for most student teachers.

#### ***The reality shock***

Although, a gradual and positive induction to teaching is a goal to aim towards, sometimes this is not achieved in its entirety. This may happen because sometimes the class or school the student teacher is assigned to do not offer an example of good practice. Regrettably, sometimes students return from their first school experience observation visits very disappointed and with a list of 'what **not** to do' that they observed the teacher doing in class. Some student teachers are shocked by the reality they observe. This happens mostly when they have a romantic idea of teaching or pupils.

*Many beginners embark on their first full-time teaching assignment with highly idealised perceptions of teaching. They tend to envisage themselves spending the entire day fostering their students' academic growth. However, early on in the school year, they find that teaching actually involves a wide range of non-academic duties, including completing administrative paperwork, being involved in preparations for school outings and field-trips, collecting money and forms, and disciplining students.*

(Bezzina, 2001, p 7)

Thus, at times the situation student teachers face in the school may not be what they were expecting. This reality shock happens also when the type, size, culture or location of the school they are posted in is very different from the school/s where they were educated (state, church or independent school). Veenman describes this reality shock as 'the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during teacher training by the harsh and rude reality of classroom life' (1984, p 143). It is common for a number of student teachers to question their choice of degree and future profession once they come in touch with the nitty-gritty daily life in schools. Some may opt to change track to secondary because they think that they would prefer to teach older pupils, while others may change course entirely.

### ***And the 'up' side...***

Others feel at ease in class and through their classroom observations may confirm that they chose the right course of study and career. They come to the School Experience tutorials full of enthusiasm and with many positive experiences to share. They are usually very excited at the idea of visiting the school the following week. Some find that the theory they learn in the taught courses at university makes more sense to them when they can apply it to the classroom reality.

## **3.7 Conclusion**

This chapter presents the Maltese social, cultural, linguistic and educational contexts of this study. I discussed bilingualism, education, English as L2 in Primary Schools, the role of exams, the presence of religion in Primary Schools and finally, the provision of Initial Teacher Education. This contextual information is meant to give the reader a better idea of the Maltese scenario. I believe that knowing the context the research is located in is a necessary prerequisite to understanding the data and interpreting the results and discussion that follow.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Research Design and Methodology

#### 4.1 The study

The research I present involves case studies of three Maltese student teachers as they embark on the first two years of their ITE programme (B.Ed. Hons. in Primary Education). The data was collected through a series of interviews and observations. I also drew on questionnaires with the student teachers at three points during this time.

The qualitative nature of this study is intended to give depth to the research and is based on a 'constructivist-interpretative' research stance (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Silverman, 2005) that entails that data are collected in natural settings, in this case naturally occurring classroom situations, as opposed to experimental settings. The data are presented through transcriptions of lessons and interviews and are subsequently processed and analysed qualitatively.

##### **4.1.1 The research questions**

The main focus of this study was to explore the language use of Maltese student teachers as they embark on their initial teaching experiences of English as L2 in Primary Schools. The process of writing up the research questions was not straightforward and this is a reflection of the research journey I have embarked upon. The research was not bound by rigid or pre-set hypotheses and in fact the research questions and the study itself shaped each other and were interrelated throughout the process (Silverman, 2005).

I list the three main research questions here and refer the reader to Chapter 1 section 1.5 for more details about the questions.

1. What influences Maltese student teachers' use of Maltese and English?
2. What influences Maltese student teachers' use of Maltese and English in the classroom?
3. Do Maltese and English serve different functions in class? Is there a pattern to this language use during English lessons?

## 4.2 The participants

The participants of the study were student teachers enrolled in a 4-year B.Ed degree as their Initial Teacher Education (ITE) with the Department of Primary Education, within the Faculty of Education<sup>20</sup> of the University of Malta. The majority of student teachers attend this ITE course at the age of 18-19, immediately after having completed their secondary and post-secondary education. The participants for this case study were invited and then chosen from a B.Ed cohort (2005-2009) that was composed of 49 students, of which only one was male<sup>21</sup>. The nationality of the cohort is Maltese, except for one Maltese-Canadian student. The age-range of the cohort was predominantly between 17 to 20 years, with 2 participants between the ages of 21 to 25 and another two between 31 to 35 years respectively. There were no students in the age bracket of 26 to 30 years.

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<sup>20</sup> This is the only teacher training institution in Malta.

<sup>21</sup> These were the figures at the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year of the B.Ed in Primary Education.

The case studies were undertaken with members from the 2005-2009 cohort of the ITE programme. They were invited to participate on a voluntary basis. The participants were not chosen at random since I believed that the study would benefit from diverse language and schooling backgrounds. The drawback of voluntary participants, or what Dörnyei (2003) refers to as 'respondent self-selection', is that they may be over-eager to please.

Since the number of individuals who were prepared to participate surpassed the number required four case study participants were chosen systematically from amongst all the questionnaire respondents, according to their language and schooling backgrounds.

In this study different sources and methods were used to corroborate each other through a process referred to as 'methodological triangulation' of research methods (Mason 1996, as cited in Silverman, 2005, p121). The notion of crystallisation applies (Janesick, 2000); this takes the concept of triangulation a step further by proposing that researchers can consider data from many perspectives.

I employed a socio-cognitive approach taking the social context as well as the individual's language cognition into consideration. By language cognition I mean their beliefs, attitudes and knowledge about language use and language teaching. The study of the social world has many facets and thus, the image of the crystal takes the place of that of the triangle in the process of analysing situations from multiple points of view.

### **4.3 The case studies**

A case study approach was chosen here because in-depth data was preferred over the quantity or broadness of the data (Yin, 1994). According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p 253) a case study:

*...provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles.*

I wanted to capture examples of what the student teachers were experiencing and learning through ITE and the TP, while learning about their backgrounds and the experiences of learning and teaching that currently inform their beliefs and practices.

#### ***The case study participants***

The participants of the case studies were three student teachers from the B.Ed cohort (Group 2005-2009). Lesson observations and in-depth interviews were held with the participants. I selected participants from volunteers, according to their different language and schooling backgrounds as reported in the questionnaires (Appendices 1, 2, & 3).

However, at this early stage one of the participants resigned from the programme and a replacement was selected from the same cohort of ITE students. Unfortunately, the newly identified case study participant also resigned after the first round of interviews were held and the TP had already begun. I decided that introducing a new participant at that stage was not an option since I would not have a complete set of data for the new participant.

Therefore the case studies were to be three and not four. I was disappointed because this participant and the one before her were selected because they were the only ones

who volunteered to participate who stated that they had English as a first language with Maltese as a second language.

**Table 4.1: Case study participants by first and second language**

<b>Participants<sup>22</sup></b>	<b>First Language</b>		
	<b>Maltese</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Maltese &amp; English</b>
<b>Lisa</b>			L1
<b>Suzanne</b>	L1	L2	
<b>Anne</b>	L1	L2	

As Table 4.1 illustrates, one out of the three participants reported both Maltese and English as her first language (Lisa), while the other two participants had Maltese as a first language with English being their second language (Anne and Suzanne).

The type of schooling experienced by each participant was also a factor taken into consideration when choosing the case studies. The table overleaf indicates the type of schooling each participant had undergone. The participants attended more than one type of educational establishment at the various levels of their education, thus the type of schooling assigned here is based on the predominant span of years in one type of schooling system. The two case study participants who withdrew from the study were those who had received their schooling in private independent schools. The remaining participants came from a state, or private church school background.

<sup>22</sup> The participants' names used throughout the study are pseudonyms.

**Table 4.2: Case study participants by type of schooling**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Type of school</b>		
	<b>State School</b>	<b>Private Independent School</b>	<b>Private Church School</b>
<b>Anne</b>			preschool primary secondary post-secondary
<b>Suzanne</b>	preschool primary secondary post-secondary		
<b>Lisa</b>	post-secondary	preschool	primary secondary

### **4.3.1 Lesson Observations**

Observations during TP supplemented responses that were obtained through the questionnaire and the initial interview. During the TP period student teachers in Maltese Primary Schools take over from the teacher completely and are responsible for the class all day for five days a week. Therefore, student teachers are usually very much occupied with work related to planning, preparation and delivery of lessons and so would not have too much time to think about pleasing me as the researcher involved (Dörnyei, 2003). They would be more concerned with satisfying their TP requirements and obtaining a positive report from their tutor when s/he visited the school to observe and assess a lesson.

In all, 9 observation sessions were held, 3 sessions for each case study participant over the 2-year-period of this study. The first observation took place during the student teachers' first TP (April 2006). Only one observation was held at this stage not to make the student teachers feel too nervous as other visits by their TP tutor were held during



the same two weeks. During the 6-week practice placement in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year of the course (March - April 2007), it was more feasible to include two observation sessions due to the longer period of the field placement.

During the observations I audio recorded the lessons and wrote field notes. I also collected some relevant documents that were available to aid me in writing up my field notes, such as lesson plans, handouts and worksheets. I had a sheet to remind me to write down notes about logistics such as the date and time of the lesson, the topic of the lesson, the classroom layout and the number of pupils present for the lesson. I wrote brief notes about language use and interaction in the class but preferred to focus closely on what was going on rather than spending too much time writing notes. That is where the transcriptions were very helpful as they enabled me, to some extent, to reconstruct the lesson in my mind (as well as on paper). Graddol, Cheshire and Swann (2003, p 180) note that audio recordings provide a 'permanent record of spoken language' since when transcribed the language may be studied in more detail. However, Graddol *et al.* (2003) also point out that this data is only a part of the language event since it does not include the non-verbal information. I provide more detail about transcriptions and translation of Maltese utterances in section 4.3.5. I did not attempt to code key situations or incidents while in class and left that to a later date when I could examine the transcriptions in detail.

Following below are two tables that provide a brief overview of the dates, time and duration and lessons that I observed. Table 4.3 presents information about the first round of lesson observations held during the student teachers' very first TP placement. The placement was for a period of two weeks (due to its brevity it is usually referred to as their 'Mini-TP'), and took place at the end of April and beginning of May 2006.

**Table 4.3: Details of lesson observations during 1<sup>st</sup> Year Teaching Practice**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
<b>Anne State School</b>	4/05/06	12.30-1.10pm 40 mins	Yr 4	English Reading The Wicked Witch
<b>Suzanne State School</b>	27/04/06	10.30-11.15am 45 mins	Yr 1	English Reading & Conversation The Pancake
<b>Lisa State School</b>	2/05/06	10.00-10.40am 40 mins	Yr 2	English Listening/Speaking Happy House: Goodbye!

As one can deduce from the above table, the 3 participating student teachers were placed in primary state schools for their first practicum. Their lesson duration ranged between 40 and 45 minutes. Table 4.4 below lists the details related to the second TP that took place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year of ITE. This was their second TP placement and lasted 6 weeks (March/April 2007)

**Table 4.4: Details of lesson observations during 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Teaching Practice**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
<b>Anne State School</b>	20/3/07	10.40-12.40am 120 mins	Yr 4	Creative Writing: Spring
	27/3/07	10.30-12.15pm 105 mins	Yr 4	Creative Writing: If I were...
<b>Suzanne State School</b>	15/3/07	10.50-11.48am 58 mins	Yr 2	English Grammar: Opposites (Story)
	23/3/07	10.45-11.40am 55 mins	Yr 2	Happy House Unit 4: Face
<b>Lisa Church School</b>	13/03/07	12.30-1.10pm 40 mins	Yr 6	Spelling & sounds: '-our'
	22/3/07	9.45- 10.30am 45mins	Yr 6	Comprehension Text: Silk

During the second placement we can see that only one student teacher (Lisa) was placed in a church school for her practicum, while the other two participants of this study were again placed in a state school. The lesson duration this time ranged between 40 minutes to 2 hours.

Anne was allocated a Year 4 class for both placements. Suzanne remained within the early childhood band of classrooms since she had a Year 2 during her first TP and a Year 1 for her second year placement. Lisa experienced quite a change since in her first TP she was assigned a Year 2 state school class and then in her 2<sup>nd</sup> Year she was placed in a Year 6 church school class.

Thus, in total I observed 9 lessons (548 minutes) of English lessons in the various primary schools and classrooms taught by the student teachers participating in this study. Some people may think that this is a small number of lessons. However, this yielded a huge amount of linguistic data that provided ample classroom data since I commented and analysed small bits of data in detail.

#### **4.3.2 Interviews**

The interviews held with the student teachers before, during and after their teaching practicum placements over a period of two academic years were more of an open type (Silverman, 2005), or semi-structured (Cohen and Manjon, 1994; Wellington, 2000). This meant that I had no structured interview schedule to follow rigidly.

The reason I chose interviews for this part of the study was because I wanted to allow the opportunity for student teachers to come up with any issues they felt were of particular importance to them (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007; Wellington, 2000). I did not want to go to meetings with the student teachers with a rigid predetermined set of questions that would limit their input due to questions asked, or not asked. Rather I had a very fluid list of key topics I wished to include, such as; the student teachers' experiences of teaching; planning; language use in class; their rapport with significant others within the school (school administrators, teachers, pupils, parents); whether they felt successful; and what they had learnt through their teaching

experiences; and also whether they felt that they had made the right choice in choosing to take up a teaching career in primary school.

I wanted an open discussion that would be more like a conversation rather than a formal interview (Wellington, 2000). This allowed for more spontaneity of interaction and the direction the exchange took would be in the hands of the student teacher as much as in mine as the researcher. Here I was also aware of the power issue due to the fact that I am their lecturer and teacher educator and that they may have felt uncomfortable or may have said things that they thought I expected. I wanted to encourage the student teachers to make their own voice heard as Wellington (2000, p 72) holds that:

*The research interview's function is to give a person, or group of people, a 'voice'. It should provide them with a 'platform', a chance to make their viewpoints heard and eventually read... In this sense the interview empowers people - the interviewer should not play the leading role.*

I prompted when I felt there was a need and posed a few questions to focus the discussion but tried to talk as little as possible to allow the participants to talk about their thoughts and experiences.

**Table 4.5 Interviews: Dates and Duration**

Participant	Int 1	Time	Int 2	Time	Int 3	Time	Total
<b>Anne</b>	20/02/06 office	2.00- 3.00 60mins	4/05/06 school	1.20- 2.00 40mins	30/05/07 school	12.30- 1.32 62mins	162mins 2hr42
<b>Suzanne</b>	21/02/06 office	11.20- 12.14 56mins	15/05/06 office	10.00- 11.15 75mins	23/03/07 school	10.30- 11.20 50 mins	181mins 3hr1
<b>Lisa</b>	20/02/06 office	10.30- 11.20 50mins	2/05/06 school	9.45- 10.58 73mins	3/05/07 office	12.00- 12.43 43 mins	166mins 2hr46

### ***The first interviews***

Interviews were held with the student teachers, individually, before and after observation sessions. Nine interviews were held (that added up to 509 minutes). The interviews before the first TP placement took place before the observation to gain insight into their cognitions about teaching and language at the various stages of the ITE course. The post-observation interview on the other hand focused more on the experience of teaching the class, language use, decisions, thoughts and ideas, and any situations or episodes thought to be important in relation to the particular lesson/s observed.

### ***Interview 1***

The first interview with each of the participants was held in February 2006 after the questionnaires had been administered but prior to the first TP placement. The interview was conducted with the case study participants on an individual basis to explore their responses to the questionnaire and to delve into the reasons behind some of their responses. The main aim was to get to know the participants more, to ask about their own language backgrounds and experiences, and to obtain a picture of their beliefs, attitudes and knowledge about language use and language teaching before they went out on observation and TP placements in primary schools. The use of language by the participants during the interview was also of interest. This would give me the opportunity to gauge their level of comfort and confidence when using English and also to get a general idea of their attitudes towards the language/s.

It was during these meetings with each participant that I had the opportunity to brief them about the research study, what their involvement would entail and to obtain their written consent. This also helped to break the ice before the interview proper began.

### ***Interview 2***

A second interview took place after the observation sessions held in each participant's class during the 2-week TP (April-May 2006). The interview was held exactly after the lesson or as soon as was possible given the commitments the student teachers had during that period of time. Sometimes it took place a week later due to their teaching commitments on the day of the observation. This interview focused on their first teaching experience, language use, particular decisions, thoughts and ideas in relation to the lesson observed. At the end of the interview the participants were also asked if they would give me a copy of any relevant documents that would help me build a clearer picture of their practice in class. These could include lesson plans, handouts, classroom-seating plans, class profiles and weekly evaluations. Some provided me with all documents but some only had the lesson plans and maybe a spare worksheet available.

### ***Interview 3***

The interview (March 2007) was held during or after the second practice placement during the ITE course. This TP was of 6 weeks duration. This time it was not always possible to hold the interviews directly following the lesson observation. Thus, I held separate meetings for the interviews as necessary according to the case study participants' schedule.

The main issues discussed in the third interview included the student teachers' experience of the level and amount of planning for a 6-week TP as compared to the two weeks of the previous TP. The interview also focused on the two lessons observed, especially the language used by the student teacher and by the pupils during the lesson in particular, and during their second TP placement. The student teachers were also

eager to discuss their experiences of a different school and class, and how these differed from the previous experience of teaching.

The topics included: pupil progress, language use, amount of planning and preparation, relationships with school administration, co-operating teachers, school visits by TP tutors, feelings of tiredness, frustrations and also the affirmation about the student teachers' choice of career. Since this interview took place towards the end of the TP period, I also attempted to draw on perceptions of what they had learnt in relation to language teaching and learning, preparing for TP, managing a class, time management and also what they thought they would do differently in their next TP. At the end of the interview the participants were asked if they would provide me with a copy of any lesson plans and handouts used during the lessons observed.

### **4.3.3 Questionnaires**

The questionnaires were completed by the case study participants before, and after, their first year, and then again after their second year of their Initial Teacher Education course as indicated below:

- i) at the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year (October 2005)
- ii) at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year (July 2006)
- iii) at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year (July 2007)

These intervals were chosen because they were key stages during the ITE course that allowed enough time in between data collection for student teachers to exhibit possible changes and development. The beginning of the first year was significant because at that point students' responses were not influenced by any course content or practice placements in schools. The end of the first year was chosen as the second point for the

questionnaire completion to investigate how, and whether, the university courses and the two-week teaching practice placement marked their experience. The end of the second year was also chosen for this reason and to see how students had developed or changed in their knowledge, experiences or beliefs related to language teaching and learning.

### **Questionnaire Structure**

In the process of compiling a questionnaire I tried to define the information required and then created a pool of items to select from (Dörnyei, 2003; Oppenheim, 1992). I tried to narrow-down the questions and contain the number of items to include those I thought would be the most relevant ones.

*The temptation is always to cover too much, to ask everything that might turn out to be interesting. This must be resisted.*

(Moser and Kalton, 1971, p 309)

Keeping Moser and Kalton's advice in mind I used simple language was to avoid jargon that would make the questionnaire obscure or difficult to complete (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). If respondents were unable to understand, and reply to the questions, then the whole exercise would be in vain. For each section I included 4 or more items to ensure more internal reliability and validity (Brown, 2001; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Dörnyei, 2003).

### **Questionnaire Content**

#### **Questionnaire 1A**

The questionnaire (Appendix 1) included 27 items and aimed to obtain information about the student teachers' language backgrounds, schooling and beliefs, attitudes,



knowledge and expectations vis-à-vis teaching in primary school. Some questions focused directly on their beliefs and attitudes about teaching of English and Maltese in a Maltese Primary School bilingual setting. As indicated in the literature review, all the above may impinge on the beliefs and attitudes of the student teachers (Borg, 2006; Kagan, 1990). The questionnaire was divided into 5 Sections as follows:

### **Section A: Personal Data**

I included this section in order to gather some background information about the participants, such as gender, nationality, age, schooling history and interests. I thought that it would be interesting to see if any of the above variables would be related to their beliefs, attitudes and knowledge about teaching in Primary Schools. It is also frequently the case that Primary Education courses are very popular with females. The age of participants, nationality, as well as the type of schools they attended as pupils might also reflect their preferences for particular teaching approaches over others.

### **Section B: Language Profile**

This section dealt with their language biography and therefore I collected information related to their L1 and L2. I also asked the participants to rate their levels of confidence vis-à-vis their own language skills, whether they wanted to improve any of these skills, whether they ever felt embarrassed or uncomfortable when speaking L2, and the language/s they used in particular situations. I hoped that replies to these questions would indicate how and when student teachers used Maltese and/or English in their everyday lives, and how confident they perceived they were in using these languages and whether this was related to their stated intentions related to language use during future teaching practice placements in primary classrooms.

### **Section C: Language Learning Experiences**

This section set out to find out what their favourite subject at school was when they were pupils and whether this preference was related to how the subject was approached pedagogically. Prior experiences of their own learning and whether these were remembered in a positive light were included to see if their own experiences coloured their views about teaching and learning. They were asked whether their experiences of learning Maltese and English were positive and whether they spoke English or Maltese during language lessons at school. I believed this to be a relevant question since Lortie (1975) demonstrated the impact schooling experiences have in shaping ones' beliefs about teaching. He refers to this 'apprenticeship of observation' and holds that many teachers will teach in the way they were taught despite research and content of ITE programmes that promote and teach methods or pedagogies that are different to what they think is good practice. How they learnt English or Maltese as pupils would therefore shed light on how they would be most prone to teach since these beliefs formed through their prior life experiences are usually resistant to change despite teacher education programmes (Lortie, 1975; Johnson, 1994).

### **Section D: Teaching in Primary School**

This section dealt with whether they thought they would be a good teacher, reasons for wanting to be a primary school teacher, preferred subject they would like to teach, whether a teacher should be highly proficient in both Maltese and English, what they considered important when teaching L1 or L2, whether it was appropriate to use the L1 when teaching L2, and what they thought was most important when teaching Maltese or English.

## **Section E: Teaching Practice**

This final part of the questionnaire focused on whether they were looking forward to TP, what they were looking forward to in teaching, whether they thought they would be successful, what they were not looking forward to in their TP, and what expectations they thought the pupils, parents, teachers, school and university tutors had of them.

### **Questionnaire 1B**

This questionnaire (Appendix 2) administered at the end of the First Year of the ITE was based on the items in the first one (Q1A) to enable comparisons between the responses at different stages of the ITE Course. This second questionnaire was very similar to the previous one to enable comparisons between the results of each questionnaire. However, this one was intended to take into account the experiences and learning that took place during the first year of the course. By this stage the student teachers would have undergone various methodology, pedagogy and content modules as well as 2 weeks of Teaching Practice in a Maltese Primary School.

### **Questionnaire 2**

This questionnaire (Appendix 3) continued to build on the previous ones (Q1A and Q1B) and almost all items were the same. However, some new items were included to take into account that the participants were at the end of their second year since this meant that they would have gained more experience in class due to a 6-week TP and many more taught modules at University. This questionnaire was administered at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Yr of the ITE course.

#### **4.3.4 Data validation and participant feedback**

As part of the research process, once all transcriptions were ready, I contacted the case study participants through email (September 2008) to ask if they would be willing to validate the data and give me some feedback about the data I had compiled for each one of them through the interviews and lesson observations. I asked if they would read the transcriptions of their interviews and lesson observations and give me some written or oral feedback. This process served as a data validation exercise as well as an additional data collection activity (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

In interpretative research studies it is not uncommon for participants to validate their own data and through having the opportunity to amend or change any parts of the transcriptions they do not agree with. They may also be able to fill in any gaps in the research, like parts of speech in interviews that was not clear or not audible. The same applies for the transcriptions of lesson observations where sometimes speech is attributed to a particular speaker erroneously, or when in fact there were two speakers who were identified as one because they were not distinguishable on the audio recording. Thus, this participant validation of data allows for more reliability and validity of the data collected (Silverman, 2005; Borg, 2006). This data validation process helped me to come to an agreement with the case study participants about the interpretation of the data. However, this agreement does not define a truth. Moreover, it does not claim to make the research objective. The transcriptions make up a part of their story and I checked my version of the story with theirs to ensure I was not misinterpreting the data.

All three participants accepted to do this, preferring the option of writing their comments rather than via an interview or informal conversation. I compiled all

transcriptions for the three participants and sent a printout to each by regular post together with a covering letter. In the covering letter I asked them to write down any comments that came to mind when they read through their transcriptions. I did say that I was particularly interested in their use of language and their development as teachers.

The following were the transcriptions enclosed for each participant:

1. First Interview
2. Lesson Observation (1) during 1<sup>st</sup> Yr mini-TP
3. Interview after 1<sup>st</sup> Lesson Observation
4. Lesson Observation (2) during 2<sup>nd</sup> Yr TP
5. Lesson Observation (3) during 2<sup>nd</sup> Yr TP
6. Interview after 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Lesson Observations

I explained that they could write any comments on their interview and lesson transcriptions or else on separate sheets if they preferred. The transcriptions I sent included their real names, names of the schools and localities to make it less confusing for them. I assured them that after this process I would replace all names with pseudonyms so that the data would remain confidential and the participants anonymous so that any potential readers would not be able to identify the participants, the schools or the localities (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Silverman, 2005). I did not give any dates by which I wished to receive the data since I wanted them to be free to read through the transcriptions in their own time and not to feel it was a task they had to do against a time-frame that might be constricting to the type of feedback they would send me. I sent the email and the letter with the transcriptions while they were still on summer holidays (September 2008) since I thought it would be a better time to elicit responses at

that point rather than when they were fully immersed in their university course work and TP placements.

Two of the participants returned the transcriptions with comments. However, the third participant did not return the transcriptions and did not reply when I sent her an email reminder a few weeks later. I did email her again in a last attempt to collect this feedback and in June 2009 she said she would be willing to validate the data and asked me to send her the documents in electronic format again. However, she did not reply and I decided not to send her another reminder, because I wanted to respect her freedom to participate or withdraw from the research as set out on the Consent Form and did not want to pressure her to participate in any way.

#### ***4.3.5 Analysis and coding of the data***

According to Patton (1990, p 376) when analysing interviews one is to decide 'whether to begin with case analysis or cross-case analysis'. In this thesis I first present the case studies and then the cross-case discussion. I found it useful to draw on the constant comparative method when analysing the data. Glaser and Strauss (in Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p 339) hold that the constant comparative method comprises of four main stages:

1. Comparing incidents applicable to each category,
2. Integrating categories and their properties,
3. Delimiting the theory, and
4. Writing the theory.

Thus, my analysis followed these steps as I combined the process of inductive category coding with a comparison across the data of individual case study participants and later

across the three case studies (Silverman, 2005). I first began the process of analysis as I was transcribing the interviews and observations. Some trends and categories were already becoming apparent through revisiting the interview data as I worked through the lengthy process of transcription (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). These were categories such as:

- teacher education;
- desire to become a teacher;
- teaching the L2;
- language use at home and school;
- language proficiency;
- confidence in language use;
- teacher identity;
- personal identity;
- lived experiences/apprenticeship of observation;
- social context;
- attitudes towards L1 and L2;
- values and perceptions related to language L1 or L2 use: and
- effects of teaching methods and pedagogy on language use.

I then started to analyse the data generated in the classrooms during English lessons in a slightly different way. Here I looked more closely at the interaction patterns between the student teachers and the pupils. I gave prominence to language use and instances of code-switching as I categorised and marked the data. I started to pick out the instances of code-switching and started to identify their purpose in the teaching/learning situation. I go into more detail about this in section 4.3.6 below.

These 'data bits' were then categorised under broader headings that were useful in comparing incidents and gave shape to the emerging themes (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Johnson, 1994; Silverman, 2005).

As I transcribed the interviews and observations I wrote some notes about the description or interpretation of the data I was handling (Wolcott, 1994). Goetz and LeCompte (1981) hold that hypothesis generation starts with these initial thoughts and observations about the data.

*As events are constantly compared with previous events, new topological dimension, as well as new relationships, may be discovered.*

(Goetz & LeCompte, 1981, p 58)

This type of data analysis allowed me to start grouping, clustering and categorising the data as a basis for the organisation of the case study data. Since I adopted an inductive stance towards the data analysis this meant that I did not want to impose categories or themes on the data. Patton (1990, p 390) defines inductive analysis as a process whereby themes, patterns and categories 'emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection or analysis'.

I did not use any computer software (such as Nudist or NVivo) for the coding or analysis process, but instead worked through the data transcripts manually and 'tagged' pages or sections through the use of coloured sticky notes and coloured marker pens. I marked codes or categories first in pencil and then in different colours as the themes emerged more clearly. As I re-read the transcriptions I continually refined the categories of data. As Silverman (2005) holds, this was a cyclical process rather than a linear one.



#### **4.3.6 Analysis and writing-up of case study data**

The case study analyses were not a straightforward process since I wanted to study the data from the different sources I had: interviews, lesson observations and field-notes, the questionnaires, and the participant validation and feedback documents. I wanted to present each participant in the light of her family background, language biography, schooling history, as well as language teaching and learning experiences, beliefs, and knowledge. Here the idea of crystallisation as proposed by Janesick (2000) was applied to take into consideration all the different sources and perspectives. Therefore, to start writing-up the case studies I first created general profiles of each participant by triangulating data from the initial interviews and questionnaires. I then worked to weave in and merge the data related to the lesson observations and related interviews in a chronological order that would also enable me to capture development in the participants throughout the two-year research period. I focused mainly on moments of code switching, or linguistic transitions, during the lessons. I then used the social and educational context and also my knowledge as a teacher and speaker of Maltese and English to identify the functions of that language at each given instance. This allowed me to identify the role Maltese was playing for the student teachers and pupils during the lesson.

As explained above (section 3.4.5) I studied the transcriptions of the interviews and the lessons carefully to identify and pick out the parts I felt were salient to my research. I then started to write while collating the transcript data of interviews and lesson observations together with my own field-notes. I continued to write-up the case studies and found that I felt more at ease adding the discussion and analyses at the same time. I preferred to include the discussion with the presentation of results rather than include the analyses separately in a subsequent chapter. This would also allow for less

repetition across chapters. Following Wolcott's (1994) advice I became more aware of the distinction between description, analysis and interpretation of the data. This distinction helped me become more aware of when I was describing, analysing or interpreting the data. It was useful in making sense of the data, especially when I was exploring categories and themes (Wolcott, 1994).

#### **4.3.7 Analysis and writing-up of cross-case thematic chapter**

Common themes started to emerge from amongst the case studies as I scrutinised the data closely through the constant comparative method (as explained in section 4.3.5). Patton (1990) points out that the methodology of constructivist-interpretative research entails that no fixed categories should be imposed on the data. Instead, these categories should be identified and defined inductively through the study of data themselves (Johnson, 1994; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Hence, I did not form any categories or key themes at the outset of this research study. The identification of themes was also informed through my reading of the literature.

The common key themes were used as a basis for the discussion bridging across the case study participants. I felt that there were themes that deserved further discussion despite being discussed in the case study chapters. Thus, I conducted analyses for each participant on an individual basis and then presented a discussion of themes across cases in a separate chapter (Chapter 8). This was what Johnson (1994, p 442) did in order to:

*...ensure the integrity of the data as representing the perceptions and experiences of the individual teachers before attempting to look for broader generalizations across teachers as a group'.*

I wanted to compare and contrast Anne, Suzanne and Lisa's beliefs, practices and experiences. In this cross-case discussion I did not attempt to include every possible theme but only the ones that I defined as 'rich' or particularly significant (Johnson, 1994; Patton, 1990). I believe that the four themes I identified emerged from the data through the process of data collection, analysis and re-analysis and also through my reading of the literature and by linking them to the research questions.

The following are the four key themes I identified:

1. Language and identity
2. Language and context
3. Language use, practices and beliefs
4. Becoming a teacher and language use

In identifying and defining the key themes the research questions did guide me to a certain extent, but I frequently changed and adapted the research questions and key themes throughout the phase of data collection and analyses. It was not an easy process and countless times over the period of the study I doubted, added or removed possible themes from my tentative list. When I started writing the second draft of the cross-case thematic chapter I was pleased with the four key themes that emerged through the lengthy and sometimes frustrating process of extracting and establishing the themes.

#### **4.3.8 Transcription and translation**

*As soon as one puts pencil to paper in making a map, as soon as one makes a transcription, one is thereby making a decision, a theoretical decision, about what is important...for no transcription no matter how fine grained is ever complete. One must inevitably make a selection.*

(Kendon, 1982, p 478)

Keeping in mind that in making and then selecting parts of transcriptions involves a decision making process that leaves a mark on the data, I decided to transcribe the full interviews and observations and then choose particular parts to highlight according to their relevance at a later stage since I did not want to exclude any chunks of primary data that could turn out to be important at any early stage of the data collection (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Silverman, 1994). I was aware that the parts I would choose to focus on would also involve an intervention on the data that would not be neutral since when one transposes the spoken language into writing it changes (Edwards, 1992).

Thus, I was very careful not to amend any speech to make it more like written language and tried to be as faithful as possible to the recordings. This was a challenging exercise, especially when the student teachers used language in a non-standard way. I am aware that data analysis begins with the process of transcription, since I agree with Edwards (1992) that transcription systems and conventions are interpretations that should not be perceived as neutral or interchangeable.

Transcribing the interviews and lessons myself was very labour-intensive since it took me almost a full day to transcribe one hour of observation. Despite being a time-consuming process, it actually enabled me to become more familiar with the data collected. This process was estimated by Edwards and Westgate (1987) to take up to 15 hours for one hour of audio recording.

### ***Transcription conventions***

For the classroom observation sessions I used a traditional play-script format that is simple and easy to follow. Had I been interested in studying the turn-taking patterns of a group I would have adopted a column transcript that would be more suited to the

purpose (Graddol *et al.*, 2003). Instead I decided upon a transcript format that included 4 columns as follows:

- i) The line/paragraph number;
- ii) Speaker (T=teacher, P=pupil, Ps=pupils, LSA=Learning Support Assistant)
- iii) The text of the transcribed lesson; and
- iv) Any contextual information.

I transcribed speech and occasionally added contextual information by writing a brief note about the interaction, language use, particular body language, the seating arrangements, teacher movement around the class, outside interruptions, when a teacher or pupil raised their voice significantly, when they laughed, when the teacher referred to work on the white-board. These annotations helped when I looked at the transcriptions later, since they served as reminders of particular events. I also kept more detailed field notes that I did not include with the transcriptions. When transcribing the interviews I included three columns as indicated below:

- i) The line/paragraph number;
- ii) The speaker (JM=myself, A=Anne, S=Suzanne, L=Lisa); and
- iii) The text of the transcribed interview.

In the extracts from the transcriptions which I included in the results and discussion chapter I removed the annotations since these were mostly as *aide-memoires*, and included instead the translations of any Maltese utterances by the teachers, pupils or myself. I did not include transcriptions with annotations about voice stress, accent, paralinguistic features, precise duration of pauses, or signalling of instances of conversation overlap since my purpose was to study the use of language and possible reasons behind the use of Maltese and/or English during English lessons.

When taking a quote or an extract from transcriptions in the results and discussion chapter, I include references to the source that include the participant; whether it was taken from a questionnaire, interview or observation; and the line number/s. Here is an example: **A.Int.2.24-26**

In this case the data are from the twenty-fourth to the twenty-sixth line of the second interview with Anne. **A** refers to the participant, in this example Anne. **Int.2** refers us to the second interview, whilst the numbers **24-26** refer to the lines/paragraphs in the transcription.

### ***Translations of transcriptions***

I did not translate all the utterances in Maltese into English in the transcriptions but only the ones I selected for data analysis purposes. Cook (2003, p 55) holds that when translating 'at every step decisions need to be taken about when to provide explanation and extra detail, and how far to depart from the original'. He then continues that the issue is how much one should depart from the original, rather than whether one should depart from the original at all. Thus, translation is not only about knowledge of the language but also the culture. Cook (2003, p 55) affirms this when he states that:

*These may seem to be linguistic rather than cultural matters. Indeed, they beg the question of the relationship between language and culture, for translation as conventionally defined, is between languages not cultures. Yet, even as a simple example will show, translation cannot be conducted at a purely linguistic level but must incorporate cultural and contextual factors too.*

In light of this I attempted to make the translations sound as natural as possible while also retaining the meanings and nuances of the Maltese utterances. My knowledge of both English and Maltese languages and cultures enabled me to be in a position to draw on my experiences of the Maltese context to avoid mistakes in translation due to literal translations or lack of knowledge about the specific cultural contexts and appropriate

use of language in various contexts. I also recognise that in the process of translation I am also giving my own interpretation and to some extent colouring the translated text through my perspective. However, it was a necessary process to allow the non-Maltese speaker access to the data and to give Maltese readers the opportunity to read the text in the language it was uttered and to evaluate for themselves whether the translations offered are 'accurate' and reflect the meaning of the original text.

Keeping the above concerns in mind, I decided to retain the original Maltese versions alongside the English translations in the results and discussion chapters for the benefit of authenticity, transparency and trustworthiness of the data. In the interviews with the case study participants where only a few utterances were in Maltese I kept the original English and Maltese version with the Maltese word or phrase translated in brackets. However, in the more lengthy switches to Maltese during the lesson observations I presented two columns. The first column featuring the transcribed text in both languages and the second column with the English translation highlighted in **bold print**. Due to word-count limitations, in the second column I did not reproduce the text that was already in English but only the text that was translated from Maltese.

#### **4.4 Data collection plan**

Below I list the data collection instruments and/or methods, the participants involved as well as the timeframe adhered to. As I specified earlier the data collection for this study took place over a period of two and a half academic years. It began in October 2005 with the initial interviews and finished in January 2009 with the participant validation of the data and feedback.

**Table 4.6: Timeline for data collection**

Step	Data	Participants	Timeframe
1	Questionnaire 1a (start of 1st Yr)	Whole cohort	Oct 2005
2	Interviews pre-TP	Case studies	Jan 2006
3	Observations 1 <sup>st</sup> TP	Case studies	Apr 2006
4	Interviews post-TP Observations	Case studies	Apr-May 2006
5	Questionnaire 1b (end of 1 <sup>st</sup> Yr)	Whole cohort	May-June 2006
6	Observations 2 <sup>nd</sup> TP	Case studies	Mar-Apr 2007
7	Interviews post-TP Observations	Case studies	April 2007
8	Questionnaire 2 (end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Yr)	Whole cohort	June -Aug 2007
9	Data Validation and Feedback	Case studies	Sept 08-Jan 2009

Initially I had also planned to carry out an interview with each of the three participants in February 2007 before the observation sessions held during the 2<sup>nd</sup> teaching practicum. Due to time constraints (I was on maternity leave) this was not possible. I did however, manage to do the observations in March and April 2007 and then held the second series of interviews after the teaching practicum.

#### **4.5 Ethical considerations**

I first sought permission to carry out research with student teachers attending the University of Malta (Appendix 4). The Department of Primary Education (University of Malta) and the Office for Professional Practice granted me permission to conduct research with the B.Ed Primary student teachers. I also completed an Ethics Form for the University of Malta Ethics Committee. This was approved and permission to carry out research was granted<sup>23</sup>. After I began my research the University of Sheffield introduced their ethics policy, but since it the procedures were similar to the one I had

<sup>23</sup> I was not required to complete a similar form for the University of Sheffield because at the time it was not required as part of the procedure.



already completed for the University of Malta it was not deemed necessary to carry out a second review by another institution.

The case study participants were approached individually and asked to confirm whether they were interested in participating in the research study. After they all accepted, individual meetings were conducted to share further information about the study, to ask them to read and sign a consent form (Appendix 5) and to conduct the first preliminary interviews. The consent form indicated what the study was about and what it would involve them in. It also stated that they could decide to withdraw from the study at any point without having to provide any explanations (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Silverman, 2005).

I assured participants of confidentiality at all stages of the research. No data that could identify the individual or schools was disclosed and any names used were fictitious. I ensured that the all participants were aware of the nature of the study and that anonymity and confidentiality would be guaranteed.

Once I knew where each student teacher was to be placed for TP I approached each school to obtain permission to carry out observation sessions. I did not need to obtain permission from parents since I was not collecting data directly related to the pupils and was not going to take any video footage or photographic evidence where the pupils would be identified.

#### ***4.5.1 Observations and Interviews***

As justification for the reason of my presence in class I told participants that I was interested in their use of language and their experiences related to teaching English in

class. Also, due to the qualitative nature of the main part of the research I did not have a structured check-list of what to focus on as I wanted that to develop and become clearer through the observations and interviews. After interviews with the case study participants all audio recordings were stored safely and full names were not used either in transcription drafts.

#### ***4.5.2 Awareness of my presence in the picture***

Since I am a member of the ITE academic staff I was aware that some student teachers might feel that I was there to assess them and this could elicit behaviour that was unnatural on their part in that they would try to please me or give me what they thought I wanted to hear. Therefore, I made it clear from the start that whatever I would observe and/or discuss with them in relation to this study would have no bearing on their grades or ITE course as I was doing this research as part of my doctorate and not as a TP tutor or supervisor. I made sure that I was not assigned these student teachers for TP during the study. However, the participants attended compulsory modules I was responsible for at university and were assessed as everyone else. I had to keep in mind that this thesis describes points of view of student teachers who may put forward what they think a person in my position would like to hear. My concern about this was that they could respond to my ideas and provide me with what they thought I would approve of, or want and not really show what they believed or thought (Borg, 2001; Silverman, 2005). However, although this may have affected the data, this does not invalidate it since whoever carried out the research would impact in some way on how the information is passed on (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). There would never have been a neutral researcher that I could appoint in my place (Wellington, 2000).

### **4.5.3 Reporting outcomes to participants**

As explained previously, I obtained data validation and comments from two of the three case study participants. The third case study participant decided not to take up my invitation to send me her feedback about the transcriptions that I had sent her. However, I also wanted to make sure that I would report the outcomes of the research to the participants. I planned to invite them to a meeting to discuss the outcomes and give them a copy of the research in December 2010 but when I contacted them through email and text messages they said that they did not need to see the results at this point and trusted me with their case study since they had already read through all the data for the data validation process. I think that maybe the timing was not ideal since now they are teachers in primary schools and are very busy during term time.

### **4.6 Field testing**

I did not have the opportunity to carry out field-testing of observations of student teachers in school. This was because during the two TP placements every year I was assigned as a TP tutor and therefore I had to be there to assess their performance and progress. Thus, in planning and thinking about how to conduct the Observation Sessions I drew on my experience as a TP tutor. Also, since I did not make use of a structured checklist there were no specific tools I wished to trial. The questionnaires<sup>24</sup> I used were piloted in July 2005 with a small group of B.Ed. (Hons.) Primary student teachers from the 2002-2006 cohort.

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<sup>24</sup> I draw on the questionnaire data as background information that adds detail to the contextualisation of this study. I also retained the questionnaire data for the case study participants as additional data.

## **4.7 Contacts with schools**

Due to a national literacy survey I had been involved in and due to my visits to schools as TP tutor I am familiar with most of the school administrators of state, private independent and private church schools across the island. As staff on the ITE I also know many teachers who used to attend the programme and who are now teachers in primary schools. This relationship established with the schools, administrators and teachers also facilitated the process of gaining access to schools to be able to observe the student teachers in class.

## **4.8 Conclusion**

My aim in this chapter was to present a research overview of this study, including a discussion of the qualitative nature of the methodology and the methods adopted. I also described the research journey and the challenges I encountered along the way. I described and discussed the case study approach undertaken through in-depth interviews and classroom observations. I also attempted to justify why I chose the data collection methods in my effort to shed light on the research questions posed. This chapter also presented the ethical considerations as well as the timeframe and main steps of the study as they unfolded. In the following three chapters I present the case study results and discussion for Anne, Suzanne and Lisa respectively.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Anne: Case Study 1

#### 5.1 Introduction to Anne

Anne started her ITE in October 2005 when she was eighteen years old. She never doubted that she would gain entry to the B.Ed in Primary Education to fulfil her dream of becoming a teacher. In her own words, ‘since I was a little girl...I always wanted to become a teacher’ (A.Int.1.44).

I have known Anne since she was a little girl but had not seen her in years. Her stepfather is a primary school teacher in a village (in the southern part of Malta, with about 9,000 inhabitants). This sort of encounter in Malta is not unusual. Due to the small size of the island, one is bound to meet acquaintances, neighbours, relatives, friends, colleagues, students and ex-students regularly.

I feel that this background is relevant especially to the reader who is not Maltese, to be able to understand the small island context in which this study is couched. Sometimes it is difficult for people to understand the social relations and networking that takes place due to the ‘size’ of the place. This also places a greater ethical responsibility on researchers who have to be very careful to protect the identity of research participants and to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

## 5.2 Language profile

Anne feels most at ease using Maltese, her mother tongue. At home with her family and her friends she speaks Maltese. When angry she automatically uses Maltese. However, she uses English to write emails and to count or use numbers. She sends text messages (SMS) in English with a little bit of Maltese. Sciriha (2004) argues this could be due to the fact that when writing in English one can make use of the inbuilt dictionary and predictive text function that makes the process of sending an SMS so much quicker, whereas such a facility does not exist for Maltese. However, it could also be that she was used to accessing technology through the use of English as she was similarly always exposed to popular culture through English. In fact she said that she enjoyed films and listened to pop songs in English.

Anne rated herself as very confident in understanding Maltese and English and speaking Maltese; confident in reading Maltese and English, writing and speaking English. An area she did not feel confident in was writing Maltese. Sometimes she felt uncomfortable when using English. She felt inadequate and self-conscious when speaking to English-speakers but at the same time she did not want people with Maltese as L1 to get the wrong idea about her.

*Maybe they would think I am a snob or trying to show-off... I feel...I don't know...a bit shy...don't want them to think I'm putting on airs.*

(A.Int.1.10)

Hence, Anne does not want to be labelled a 'snob' by the Maltese speakers and does not want to be associated with the perceived culture of English-speakers due to her language use. Language affiliation often entails association with the culture that uses the particular language. Kramersch (1998, p 65) holds that,

*It is widely believed that there is a natural connection between the language spoken by members of a social group and that*

*group's identity. By their accent, their vocabulary, their discourse patterns, speakers identify themselves and are identified as members of this or that speech and discourse community.*

The following extract from the first interview with Anne uncovered a lot about her language profile and her feelings and beliefs about her own proficiency.

*Well at home we use Maltese, and even when I was at church school X for primary and secondary we used Maltese most of the time. It was only during 6<sup>th</sup> form at a church 6<sup>th</sup> Form that I really used English. During the two years I was with a group for English 'A' Level... they were English-speaking so I spoke English more. I used to feel uncomfortable if the people I did Maths 'A' Level with heard me talking in English... But with the English group I learnt to speak better English. At the beginning of the course I got spelling mistakes in essays but by the end of it, after 2 years, I hardly got a mistake anymore.*

(A.Int.1.6)

Anne said that during the two years that she studied at the church sixth form her English improved a lot because she socialised more with other students who spoke English as their preferred language.

In the extract above Anne was anxious about sending the wrong message about her identity to a group of Maltese-speaking friends, while at the same time wanting to belong to the English-speaking group of new friends. Thus, she was struggling with her own identity as it shifted and changed through the language crossings that took place due to socialising with two groups with different language preferences.

Rampton (1995) views language crossing, or code-switching, as temporarily borrowing a language that is not one's own. Anne's language use did not arise out of ethnic identity crossings (Rampton, 1995) because all the speakers in both groups were Maltese. However, the diverse socio-cultural backgrounds and identities of the groups

were different and marked according to the language they preferred and used during social interaction on a daily basis.

From the above we learn that towards the end of her post-secondary education Anne felt more confident and comfortable in using both languages with friends and said that now, 'It depends on the mood I'm in, and whom I'm with' (A.Q.2.12) which directs her language choice.

### 5.3 Language and schooling

She attended church schools for all levels of her schooling. Anne's schooling was mostly through the medium of Maltese with English being learnt as her L2. Some church schools still tend to use English as the language of instruction and this may be a remnant of some policies in Malta's history when pupils in some of the girls' church schools were punished for speaking in Maltese (Navarro and Grech, 1984).

Anne explained that in primary school during English lessons, pupils only wrote the sentences in English while all interaction and teaching was carried out in Maltese.

*We always used Maltese most even though I went to a church school... the teachers and students were mostly Maltese speakers. English was only to read sentences and things like that. I don't remember exactly what the lessons were like but we didn't use English to speak to each other.*

(A.Int.1.14)

It is clear that Anne, retrospectively at least, did not feel this was best practice. Consequently, as a result of the way she was taught English she feels that counter-intuitively she can actually read more fluently in her second language, than in Maltese. She believes that due to the approach to language teaching and learning in her school she was not confident with English oracy during her compulsory education



(A.Int.1b.46). This may also be a result of an educational system that relies heavily on examination oriented assessment procedures that place emphasis on the reading and writing aspects of language more than on the oral component as discussed earlier in section 2.7.2 and 2.7.3.

According to Anne, the teacher of English she had in secondary school used English more consistently. Anne has fond memories of the lessons because she enjoyed these activity-packed lessons and liked the teacher (A.Int.1.18). Anne believes that a ‘good teacher’ makes a difference in pupils’ achievement and subject preference. Despite the ‘very good teacher’ at secondary level Anne still felt that her lack of confidence in using English was a direct effect of her schooling, because she said that:

*I didn't learn to speak English confidently when I was at school...we only read in English. If a tourist comes to ask me something...I would be confused at first because I don't practice a lot, especially before 6<sup>th</sup> Form. Today, now... I'm speaking English...but I haven't since I finished 6<sup>th</sup> Form this summer.*

(A.Int.1.22)

Anne was not satisfied with the way she was taught English at school. She made the point that one needed to practice a language to become, and remain, a fluent speaker. Thus, she would like to see more English used during English lessons and more attention given to a communicative approach to language teaching and learning whereby pupils and teachers used language for a ‘real’ purpose and not only to read out of a text book (Nunan, 1989; Willis, 1996). Her own goals for teaching English to her pupils in primary school, reflect this approach because, she plans to increase pupils’ exposure to English in class (A.Q.1.21). She felt that her own proficiency suffered due to a strong focus on reading and writing skills to the detriment of listening and speaking

skills and therefore she proposed a balanced approach to, ‘...help the students to become confident in speaking and writing the language’ (A.Q.1.24).

Thus, here we see that Anne’s pedagogy was directly influenced by the way she was taught, in this case causing her to want to teach in a different manner to how she was taught and not to repeat the mistakes she believed her own teachers made when she was a pupil (Britzman, 2003). Here, Anne’s choice of method is affected by her reaction to her own prior experiences and she assumes that the pupils in her class will have the same needs and preferences she had as a pupil.

It was only when she was attending a church 6<sup>th</sup> Form that she started to speak English socially with a group of new friends who were studying English ‘A’ Level. She felt that both groups of friends were quite different from each other because the Mathematics group were Maltese speakers, while the English ‘A’ Level group were English speakers.

Anne says that when interacting with the English ‘A’ Level group,

*I find it awkward to speak to them in Maltese if they speak to me in English. `Cos a lot of people say “if they are Maltese speak to them in Maltese and they say whatever they want in any language they want”. But I don’t really like that... if they speak to me in English I speak to them in English... you feel the odd one out if you don’t speak English.*

(A.Int.1.20)

So here Anne shows that she thought that it was polite to use the same language as her interlocutor. The issue of social exclusion from a group according to the language being used was also felt in her comment above. Kramsch (1998, p 70) holds that through code-switching, or language crossing, the speaker is able

*...to change footing within the same conversation, but also show solidarity or distance towards the discourse communities whose language they are using, and whom they perceive their interlocutor as belonging.*

She goes on to say that it was 'easier for me to speak to them in English rather than Maltese...it used to come natural to me' (A.Int.1.24). She felt happy to fit in with them and was satisfied that she could use English well despite her concerns and this seems to indicate her increasing confidence in using English communicatively. It is interesting that initially Anne was concerned about her lack of fluency and confidence in using her L2 but here she says that speaking English with the English group felt natural to her. So although she said that she used to feel shy to speak in English, here when she found herself in a situation where all the other interlocutors were using English, her need to be part of the group was stronger than her feeling of inadequacy in speaking English. This may be because she saw her efforts were successful and the group accepted her without remarking on her language use.

On the other hand, she spoke Maltese with the group of friends who were attending the Maths course. They had known her for some time and she feared she would feel embarrassed if they heard her speaking to the other group in English because they would think that she was 'putting on airs' (A.Int.1.10). Anne explained that this feeling was exacerbated when she heard them talking about the English group of students harshly and referred to them as *tal-pepe* ('snobs').

Despite wanting to 'belong' to both groups Anne was also very aware of her own language use and remarked that during the two years of studying for her 'A' Levels she felt that her English had improved due to this interaction (A.Int.1.6). Her self-confidence in speaking English as well as her writing improved.

However, she was not happy about the comments some of the English 'A' Level group passed about Maltese-speakers who mispronounced a word or made a mistake when

using English. She felt that ‘it was not fair’ because, they, on the other hand could not speak Maltese well anyway and ‘they used to use a lot of code-switching’ (A.Int.1b.30). Anne was bothered by the attitude of her English-speaking friends when they denigrated the L2 language efforts of her other group of friends. She did not uphold either of these stances and said that:

*...it was like ping-pong from one group to the other group...I had friends from both groups so it didn't really bother me that much.*

(A.Int.1b.30)

Anne believed that since she belonged to both groups she did not have to choose to uphold either one of these stances as part of her identity. This meant that although she felt loyal towards both groups, she also felt free to disagree with either of the groups' positions and attitudes, especially about the ‘other group’.

## **5.4 Teaching and English**

At university Anne felt at ease and confident asking questions during lectures and writing academic assignments in English. She also interacted in both languages with friends depending on the situation and who the interlocutors were.

To teach in Maltese primary schools Anne knew that she needed to be proficient in all skills in both Maltese and English. As regards to speaking in English, in the first interview with me Anne said that:

*I would prefer to speak in Maltese to say what I want to say. Because it is a natural thing that when you hear someone speak for the first time you see if they have good English or not...even unconsciously but people do it so even when I speak in front of the class or something in English I'm bound to speak in English...I feel tense and I know they're hearing my English rather than what I'm saying.*

(A.Int.1b.8)

Here Anne reveals her self-consciousness about using English during the interview with me, and also that she was afraid others would judge her English speaking skills and would not focus on the message she wanted to convey but on what she feared was not very fluent English instead.

I think that maybe Anne experienced an overall increase in her self-confidence due to a successful academic year at university and a successful teaching experience. These positive outcomes may have allowed Anne to feel more confident about her language proficiency in both languages and to acknowledge to herself that in fact she was already quite proficient in her L1 and L2.

## 5.5 Becoming a Teacher

Anne has 'always' wanted to become a teacher. As a child she remembers playing school with her dolls. She also recalled that in her primary school class out of 29 pupils who said that they wanted to become a teacher she was "the only one who was actually reading for a teaching degree at University (A.Int.1b.118). She believed that playing at being a teacher and wishing to become a teacher was not a childhood phase for her as she suggests may have been the case for some of the other children. She used the word 'always' four times in the following extract alone to emphasise her point.

*Since I was a little girl...I always wanted to become a teacher, always. With part-time jobs, summer work, I always wanted to teach...even in summer. I always wanted to work with children and not find any type of job. It is strange for me that I meet some of my friends here and they say that they only decided to become a teacher this year.*

(A.Int.1.44)

Therefore for Anne becoming a teacher was a life-long dream and she found it difficult to understand how other student teachers 'decided' to become teachers just before entering the course. In a way she also sounded rather judgemental of the student teachers who decided at a later point that they wanted to teach, as though they had less of a right to become a teacher than she had.

Anne also held that her desire to become a teacher was not related to the fact that her step-father is a teacher and asserts that 'I always wanted to become a teacher even before I met my dad' (A.Int.1.44). However, through having a teacher in the house she felt more prepared because she believed that she knew what to expect out of teaching and what the profession entailed. However, as Britzman (2003) holds, usually teaching is perceived as 'easy' due to our extensive apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) and our extensive school biographies (Britzman, 2003).

In an interview with me Anne said that she believed that she would be a good teacher because 'I love children and love spending time with them' (A.Q.1.18). Thus, Anne's desire to become a teacher and her reasons for wanting to become a teacher remained consistent. Her 'love' for children, or for being with children, was mentioned every time, however, she did not stop at the romantic idea of 'loving children' but also wanted to make a difference in their lives and considered her own job satisfaction. Some pre-service teachers choose a teaching career because they 'love' children, or 'love being around kids'. Britzman (2003) says this is a very naïve, romantic and mistaken idea some novice teachers hold about teaching since teaching entails so much more than care and 'love' for children.

## 5.6 Looking forward to teaching practice

Anne was posted at her home village primary school<sup>25</sup>. So that meant that she first carried out her School Experience Observations in the said school to become familiar with the settings, the teacher, the pupils and the school ethos. Then she was to take over the observed class for two weeks.

The class assigned to her, and another student teacher from the same village, by the Headteacher was her step-father's class. She asserted that they were both at ease with the situation and were looking forward to collaborating professionally. This meant that she knew many of the children and their families, as well as the community on a larger scale.

Anne said that when she told him that they would be expected to use English consistently during the English lesson he made an effort to use more English with the pupils.

*...in fact he didn't use lots of English and now because I said he should use more he is...he always tells me to tell him if he makes a mistake or something like that during the observations we do.*

(A.Int.1.38)

The class teacher's attempt to use more English was in fact an indication of the situation in many classrooms where English was not used very much during English lessons. The approach whereby English lessons are explained in Maltese is widespread and not seen to be unusual. I knew that this teacher was held in high regard by parents. However, through his willingness to assist his step-daughter, he was going to make an effort to use more English. The fact that he asked her to tell him if he made any

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<sup>25</sup> The Education Directorate and Faculty of Education try to post student teachers close to their homes not to put undue pressure on them due to travelling.

mistakes also seems to uncover a lack of confidence about using English as a language of instruction.

Once Anne had been in class carrying out observations and becoming familiar with the planning and teaching work she was expected to take on, she started to deal with the reality of the situation. Anne was concerned because the children got to know her as a student teacher who sat at the back most of the time, and who wrote notes, who was still therefore learning, and not in charge of the class. She was worried that this may result in her not being able to establish herself as a figure of authority and as their 'teacher'.

Anne was especially concerned about preparing interesting and creative lessons since many of her teachers had been traditional in their teaching. Anne was not about to give up easily since here she was dealing with her life-long dream of becoming a teacher, and so 'somehow' she would find a way to manage (A.Int.1.40).

## **5.7 Thoughts and beliefs about Language use in class**

### ***Teachers and Language Proficiency***

Anne held that a 'teacher has to be confident herself in order to be able to teach students' (A.Q.1.20) and therefore, had to be fluent in reading, writing and speaking Maltese and English. Here she made a reference to teachers who had taught her, whom she thinks were not very fluent in all the skills, in particular spoken English. She also wished to improve her own skills so that she could measure up to the benchmark that she herself had set.



### **Language switching and mixing**

Anne said that it made sense to use the L2 to teach the target language 'because the more the students hear the language the more quickly they would get used to it' (A.Q.1.21). Anne believed in using the L2 as a medium of instruction, therefore, agreed with the notion of immersion, of 'teaching English through English' as much as possible (Halliwell, 1992; Willis, 1981; Vale and Feunteun, 1995). Anne was conscious about her language use and preferred to use each language separately especially when in class.

*I don't like to mix both languages at the same time... like sometimes when I am speaking or explaining something in class I say 'mela' or 'issa' when speaking English but I try not to...*

(A.Int.1.20)

The principle of sticking to one language, when teaching, was important for Anne. However, the words she mentioned here, 'mela' (so) and 'issa' (now), are generally used as discourse markers to signal a change in activity or to move on to an explanation or as a floor-holder (Camilleri, 1995; 1996). This shows that Anne's first impulse was to speak in Maltese, her first language, and so to speak in Maltese would be the most natural choice for her to deal with classroom organisation and management issues and was also tied closely to her Maltese identity.

The use of these discourse markers, or floor-holders, is very common amongst Maltese teachers (Camilleri, 1995; 1996). A monolingual speaker would use words such as: 'OK', 'so', 'now', or 'let's see...' for similar purposes. Therefore, words like these could be considered both an English and Maltese word.

Anne said that during one of the School Experience sessions she found herself in difficulty when trying to use English to assist a child with a task.

*...I tried explaining and explaining, showing him the sentence and the word and in the end I told it to him in Maltese. I couldn't do it. I try to keep in mind that I want to use English only...there are two children who are very weak and don't understand things in Maltese sometimes...so in English it is almost impossible...*

(A.Int.1.26)

When confronted with such a situation Anne tried various strategies before she realised that it would be better to switch to Maltese to explain since the other methods had not worked for her in that particular situation. She tried using repetition and pictures but then resorted to Maltese. Some researchers regard the possibility of explaining in two or more languages as an additional educational resource available to the bilingual (Camilleri, 1995; 1996; García, 2009; McCarthy and Moje, 2002; Merritt et al., 1992; Milroy and Muysken, 1995). Camilleri's work refers to teachers who make informed choices, however, Anne, in her situation, reverted to Maltese as a last resort. Therefore, Anne's final linguistic choice to resolve this situation, although ultimately may have been appropriate, actually came about through inexperience and insecurity. Anne did not seem to view her use of Maltese as appropriate and that led me to wonder whether in her eagerness to teach well and do what is expected of her, she may be over-zealous to use English at all costs. This situation seemed the right opportunity for Anne to utilise code-switching as a resource in a positive and conscious way, instead of perceiving her use of the L1 in this context as a result of 'giving up' or of not being 'good enough' at English. This child had not yet undergone any screening tests, so she did not know why he was finding it difficult to achieve the level of work of other pupils in the class. Therefore, it seemed that the difficulty was not necessarily the way Anne was trying to teach this pupil but the level of work in the L2 was not matched to his level of ability. As an inexperienced student teacher Anne could not yet identify whether the child was experiencing linguistic or conceptual problems.

## **5.8 Anne's views about her own language proficiency before TP**

Anne stated that she felt that she was lacking a certain level of fluency in speaking English as her L2 and felt more proficient and confident in reading and writing in English. Reflecting upon this she traces this back to her own schooling and language learning experiences. She said that in her process of language learning as a pupil, English was mostly used 'to read and write sentences'. She is convinced about this approach to increase fluency in using a language, and goes on to assert that when teaching English, teachers should 'help the students to become confident in speaking and writing the language' (A.Q.1.24). One can see how her own experiences of L2 language learning, or what Lortie (1975) refers to as 'apprenticeship of observation', are reflected in her beliefs about language teaching. Here instead of taking on board the methods she observed she is aiming at a different approach to counter the methods implemented when she was a pupil and that did not work for her. She wants 'her' pupils to have better opportunities and more relevant language experiences and exchanges to become fluent users of English as their L2.

## **5.9 Lesson 1: 'The Wicked Witch'**

Here I present and discuss an English reading lesson by Anne with the Year 4 class in a state school in the Southern part of Malta that took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2006. This was the first of three lessons that I would observe Anne teaching over the two years of research. Anne sat on a low chair holding the big book, entitled 'The Wicked Witch', which she had made as part of her resources for the week that would focus around the theme of 'Magic'. The pupils were sitting on cushions eagerly waiting for her to start. In the abstract below Anne physically and verbally orchestrated a start to the lesson. Her position at the front of the class was dominant and clear as she raised her hand and

counted to three to gain the pupils' attention. She immediately began the lesson in English as follows.

1.	T	One, two, <b>kulhadd bilqieghda dritt</b> , Christine, three. We are going to have an English reading lesson now. So quietly stand up and come and sit down here. Quietly. So... can everybody see this?	One, two, <i>sit up straight everybody</i> , Christine, three.
2.	P	No	
3.	T	Come here, wait... can everybody see this?	
4.	P	Yes.	
5.	T	So who is this? Who do you think is this person?	
6.	P	Magda	
7.	T	Put up your fingers	
8.	P	<b>Sahhara.</b>	<i>A witch</i>
9.	T	I don't understand Maltese. Raissa	
10.	P	Magda.	
11.	T	Magda... hmmm ... and who is Magda?	
12.	P	<b>Is-sahhara...</b>	<i>The witch</i>
13.	T	I don't understand Maltese.	
14.	Ps	The witch, witch...	
15.	T	The witch. And can you tell me something about her? ... Samira	
16.	P	She eat the children	
17.	T	She eats the children... something else.. Brandon	

(A.Obs.1.1-17)

Here she was counting and inserting classroom management directives in between the numbers. In line 1 she used Maltese between counting from two to three to tell the pupils to sit up straight to see the book. Her use of English when saying the numbers may not be indicative of her conscious effort to use English but could indicate that she usually employs this strategy in other lessons too, even during a Maltese lesson. As I discussed earlier it is common for technical terms and numbers to be used in English (Camilleri, 1995; Farrugia, 2003).

Once the pupils settled down she showed them the front cover and asked them who they could see. She elicited responses from the pupils. A pupil said 'Magda' and Anne asked 'Who is Magda?' Two pupils answered 'sahhara' in Maltese, which was the

correct answer as was the answer of those who said ‘Magda’. However, Anne wanted more, she wanted them to say ‘witch’ in English. She tried to encourage them to use English and to say the word in English by telling them, ‘I don’t understand Maltese’. The way she says it indicates that she expects the pupils to understand and take this as a cue to switch to English and not literally that she suddenly does not understand Maltese. This was a strategy she used when the pupils used Maltese. It seemed to work because in line 14 some pupils say ‘the witch’. Anne rephrased the pupil’s answer in line 17 to correct the verb from ‘she *eat* the children’ to ‘she *eats* the children.’ Here Anne gave validity to the pupil’s response, and also rephrased the reply using the correct grammatical structure and made sure the class heard the response.

Anne continued to elicit responses from the pupils about the witch depicted on the front cover of the book and a pupil said ‘she is evil’.

19	P	She is evil.	
20	T	She is evil...what an expression...evil. <b>Ċapċpulha wahda.</b>	<i>Give her a round of applause.</i>
21	P	Teacher, x’jigifieri?	Teacher, <i>what does it mean?</i>
22	T	She is evil, the witch is evil. Do you know what cruel means?	
23	Ps	Yes.	
24	T	It is also...it is nearly the same thing.	

(A.Obs.1.19-24)

As we can see in the extract below Anne praised the girl and switched to Maltese to tell the pupils to give her a round of applause. Then another pupil asked what the meaning of ‘evil’ was and Anne then explained that it had almost the same meaning as ‘cruel’. Thus, here she used a word in English that the pupils knew without direct translation into Maltese or explaining in Maltese.

In this next extract Anne code-switched to Maltese and used the discourse marker 'mela' to mark the transition from discussing the witch, to the title and story.

40	T	She has a black castle. So, do you want me to read you the story?	
41	Ps	Yes.	
42	T	<b>Mela</b> , what is the title of the book? Tell me Liliana	<b>So</b> , what is the title of the book?
43	P	The ...wicked.... Witch	
44	T	Very good. The wicked witch. Clap hands for Liliana.	(Pupils applaud)
45	P	Miss what is wicked?	
46	T	Wicked... is like cruel, evil. She doesn't like to be good. It's the opposite of good, in a way ok. Did you all understand?	

(A.Obs.1.40-46)

In the above Anne praised the child for reading the title and invited the pupils to give her a round of applause. This time she did this in English unlike the previous round of applause that she invited in Maltese (A.Obs.1.20). The children clapped and this indicates that there was no real need to use Maltese on the previous occasion due to any possible lack of understanding on the pupils' part. So Anne may have felt the need to use Maltese to establish her rapport with the pupils or to encourage the pupils to participate during the introduction to the lesson. Maybe Anne herself needed to switch to English gradually after speaking Maltese throughout the morning.

In line 46 Anne managed to explain 'wicked' without resorting to L1 translation or explanation. Here she gave a word that was similar in meaning (cruel) but also explained that it was the opposite of 'good'.

Before she started the story and at some points during the story Anne stopped and used a few phrases in Maltese to organise the children's seating arrangement. At other times during this lesson she drew the attention of pupils to sit properly, to move or to be quiet.

While moving a pupil would inadvertently hit another and then the other would complain or push the other one away. Here I will only illustrate by giving one example, however, in total there were six such interventions in Maltese dealing with the seating arrangement during this lesson. The example below also happens to be one that depicts the longest switch to Maltese (20 words) by Anne in this lesson.

48	T	<p>Good. When you don't understand something tell me ok. Ask me and I will explain.  <b>So, intom morru dik in-naħa ghax inkella ma tarawx. Morru wara Roxanne u ersqu ftit. Ersqu ftit inkella ma tarawx. Mela, everyone can see now?</b></p>	<p><i>So, you go that side otherwise you won't be able to see. Go behind Roxanne and move a little. Move a little otherwise you won't be able to see.</i>  <b>So, everyone can see now?</b></p>
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(A.Obs.1.48)

Here she was directing pupils as to where they should sit to be in a better position to see the book and to follow the story. Again, she used the discourse marker 'mela' to indicate a shift from classroom management directives to settling down to discuss the first page and its illustration and from addressing particular pupils to addressing the whole class. It was interesting that she started the Maltese switch after using the discourse marker 'so' in English and ended by using the discourse marker 'mela' in Maltese. It seemed that Anne could use either language as a discourse marker to serve the same purpose. The 'so' at the beginning followed on from her previous speech in English whilst her discourse marker 'mela' in Maltese marked the end of her intervention in Maltese.

It seemed that Anne felt more at ease addressing the classroom management issues that resulted due to the seating arrangement in Maltese because it came naturally to her and maybe because she felt it was more time-effective to carry out these functions in Maltese to continue the lesson without additional delay. Perhaps Maltese was used because these incidents also engage emotion somehow and are intense moments that

could be, or lead to, possible crisis points in the lesson where the pupils could disengage.

Despite these interruptions by the pupils, Anne managed to keep the situation in check and kept the pupils focused on the story. She switched back to English and continued from where she had left off without any apparent difficulty. As I said before, Anne often explained difficult words by providing the opposite word in English or else by providing an alternative in the L2. The lesson proceeded with a child reading the title very softly and tentatively.

Anne read to the pupils about Magda the Witch who wanted to fill a pot with water to boil the children in. A pupil asked what ‘boil’ meant.

221	P	<b>‘Boil’ xi tfisser?</b>	<i>What does ‘boil’ mean?</i>
222	T	Boil? Ehm...when you put the water in the kettle and your mother wants to make some tea for example, and she pours the water in the kettle and then she lets it boil. It becomes very hot.	
223	P	And it has bubbles	
224	T	Yes and bubbles come up.	
225	P	And smoke..	
226	T	And steam...steam it is	
227	P	<b>Ibaqbaq</b>	<i>It boils</i>
228	T	<b>Iva, ibaqbaq. Brava.</b>	<i>Yes, it boils. Good girl.</i>
229	P	In Maltese.	

(A.Obs.1.221-229)

Anne explained ‘boil’ in English drawing on a situation in the children’s everyday life, that of making a cup of tea. In a way she was drawing on her own experience of the ‘mother’ making the tea as opposed to the father. In her case her mother was a stay-at-home mum while her father was a teacher. However, the same social reality holds for most pupils in Anne’s class who come from a similar family background. She used the



same word the pupil uses ('ibaqbaq') to validate the pupil's response and then praises her in Maltese. The pupil was pleased to have understood and to receive praise and smiles happily. However, the pupil showed that she was aware that she did not use English as she remarked in her response.

In the extract below Anne asked pupils to summarise the page they had just read to check the pupils' understanding of the story up to that point.

239	P	<b>Suppost indunaw li l-witch</b>	<i>They should have realised she was the witch</i>
240	T	try it in English	
241	P	<b>Suppost indunaw</b>	<i>They should have realised</i>
242	T	They should have realised...why? Tell me Andrea	
243	P	<b>Li ser titfagghom fil-cage</b>	<i>That she was going to put them in the cage</i>
244	T	So 'cage' is in English. <b>U x'inh, 'ser titfagghom'?</b>	<i>And what is 'she is going to put them?'</i>
245	P	She can put them.	
246	T	Good. So tell me the whole sentence. ....She told them that ...	
247	P	That she is going to put them in a cage.	

(A.Obs.1.239-247)

One pupil said that it reminded him of the story of Hansel and Gretel. Anne acknowledged that it was similar and then called on another two pupils to give an account of what happened. In line 238 Anne rephrased the pupil's intervention due to grammatical errors before calling on another child.

Andrea responded in Maltese in the next extract and his response indicated he had understood the story so far. Anne urged him to use English but he repeated in Maltese. Anne then translated it for him and asked him to elaborate on 'why' the two children should have realised that Magda was a witch. The pupil again responded correctly in Maltese and this time used 'cage' in English. He made no attempt to translate the rest

of the phrase into English. Anne noticed this and tried to encourage him by affirming that ‘cage is in English’ and used Maltese to ask him to say it in English. Her strategy worked and he replied in English ‘that she is going to put them in a cage’. Through the support and encouragement Anne offered, he produced a correct and well-structured phrase. It was interesting to note that she did not conclude this interaction with some praise, as usual, but moved to the next child demanding attention.

Anne was making a very conscious effort to use English throughout the lesson. Below, Anne encouraged a child to try to express herself in English. Anne was asking for the meaning of ‘to take care of’. A girl called Jasmine knew the meaning, translated it and replied twice in Maltese. Anne in line 153 told her to try to say it in English, however, she went on to say quite harshly ‘or don’t say anything’.

150	P	<b>Tiehu hsiebhom</b>	<i>Look after them</i>
151	T	Jasmine	
152	P	<b>Li tiehu hsiebhom</b>	<i>To look after them</i>
153	T	Not in Maltese, try and say something in English ok...or else don't say anything...	
154	P	<b>Miss jien mhux qed nara..</b>	<i>Miss I cannot see</i>
156	T	<b>Mhux inti gejt hawn...ga ghedtlek ersaq hemmhekk.</b> Tell me Cressida...	<i>You came here...I already told you to move over there.</i>

(A.Obs.1.150-156)

Therefore, it seemed that Anne was trying to use English in the lesson at all costs, even of restricting correct responses because they were in Maltese. This I felt was a very harsh response and was not going to encourage the child to try a response in Maltese or even English. In this case, unlike in the previous passage, Anne did not encourage the pupil by leading her or by giving hints, or even providing her with time to rethink her response in English. Instead, in her next utterance she sounded annoyed with the pupil who complained about not seeing the book. I think here Anne, due to inexperience,

may have been anxious to keep in check the situations that kept cropping up due to the pupils' seating arrangement. Many novice teachers are usually more concerned with 'giving' the lesson as planned rather than responding to the needs of the pupils as they arise during the lesson (Tochon and Munby, 1993; Twisleton, 2006).

In this instance Anne could have accepted her Maltese response as correct, and then could have helped the pupil translate her phrase into Maltese. Anne could have praised the pupil because, after all, her answer was correct, she did know the meaning of 'to take care of' albeit in Maltese. Anne may not have realised yet, that at times the L1, may be used with the L2 as 'an additional resource' available to the bilingual in class, in order to teach effectively (Camilleri, 1996; Lin 1990; McCarthy and Moje, 2002; Merritt et al., 1992). This was a key moment for me since it showed me very clearly what the consequence of sticking to one language only in the classroom could mean if taken as a policy to adhere to strictly.

### ***5.9.1 Language use observed during the first lesson***

In this lesson Anne used English throughout with only minor interventions in Maltese. Where this happened the interventions were mainly to deal with classroom management and directives. The seating arrangement whereby all pupils sat on cushions on the floor at the front of the class was the main contributor to this since the pupils complained when they bumped into each other or when someone was obstructing the view of the book. This seating arrangement also resulted in her reprimanding a number of pupils in Maltese while directing them to sit quietly. Other situations where Anne used Maltese were to offer praise (inviting pupils to clap; saying 'brava/u' which is translated as 'good boy/girl').

She reminded the pupils to speak in English when they spoke, or were about to speak in Maltese by saying 'try it in English' or 'I don't understand Maltese'. The final passage I presented, where Anne told the child to respond in English 'or else not say anything' was the only time in the lesson where she came across as wanting to use English at all cost. To believe in the benefit of using the target language during a lesson, as Anne did, and to have enough determination to actually use English throughout an English lesson is not easy, especially with a class of pupils who are Maltese L1 speakers. At that point in time maybe she was too inexperienced and anxious about the lesson and the children's behaviour that she did not acknowledge that the pupil had actually given the right answer in Maltese. Thus, Anne would have provided a better L2 learning situation if she had first praised the child and then encouraged her to arrive at the English version by offering her some support as she did with other pupils at various stages of the lesson.

## **5.10 Interview and questionnaire after the first practicum**

### **5.10.1 Anne's first experience of teaching**

She said that the two weeks of teaching practicum seemed: 'long, not long two weeks but hectic' (A.Int.2.2). So here Anne seemed to be trying to voice her perception of the experience. There was some competing discourse going on in that she first said that it was 'long' but then changed it to 'hectic'. Despite the 'hectic' time Anne was positive and said:

*I really, really like it here. Because I know a lot of people... I like the atmosphere, the teachers are friendly...*

(A. Int.2.38)

She also said that the whole teaching experience so far was positive and she explained that every morning 'I was looking forward to going to school - so I think it is better than I expected it to be' (A.Int.2.6). Anne concluded that the practicum had been an

excellent experience for her and had surpassed her expectations. Anne sounded enthusiastic and exclaimed that what she enjoyed most in this first practicum was:

*... the **children**, the fact that I am having contact with the children everyday...they behave well and they are sweet children...they appreciate the work that I do for them, that they see that I **love** them. I really like it.*

(A.Int.2.8)

This is surprising because often student teachers and novice teachers initially try to be the pupils' friend to win their co-operation and instead end up with classroom management difficulties (Britzman, 2003). I think she arrived at the stage where she could do this because from the first day she seemed to have established her presence in class as a figure of authority. She clearly saw herself as 'a teacher' in charge of the class and this came through in her confident and assertive interactions with the pupils in class.

### **5.10.2 Becoming a Teacher**

Through this experience of teaching Anne asserted her desire, dream and ambition to become a teacher. Anne felt that her ideas about teaching have changed – she was now very much 'looking forward to the time when I will have my own class... to become a teacher' (A.Q.2.25). She truly seemed to have reinforced her intention of becoming a primary school teacher.

*I think I have changed my ideas with regards to the children mainly...the relationship is more friendly than I thought...*

(A.Int.2.110)

From the above comment it seemed as though Anne was expecting to have to take on a more distant role, one that would not allow her to be friendly with her pupils due to the fear of not being able to assert her authority.

### **5.10.3 Anne's views about language use during the first lesson**

Despite her initial uncertainties about her language proficiency and the pupils' response to the use of English, Anne used English in both the first lesson I observed and the post-lesson interview (A.Int.2). In class she made an effort to use English throughout the English lessons as much as possible and encouraged L2 use amongst the pupils. In order to use the L2 she employed effective strategies and resources to maximise language use, such as, visual aids, rephrasing, paraphrasing, and gestures.

Anne also used easier words or simple explanations when children asked for meanings of words. In the lesson observed she was successful in providing easy explanations in English that children could relate to (such as the example about boiling water to make tea).

It was not always easy for Anne to find ways to explain things; she explains one of her strategies below:

*...now I plan before in my mind the words I am going to say in English beforehand'.*

(A.Int.2.154)

She explained that the pupils were not used to using English throughout the English lessons. However, she feels that her careful planning and interesting activities had motivated the pupils to use English more.

*...they speak in English very rarely...even though we emphasise on them to speak English...and the fact that they WANTED to speak English...I liked that because they don't usually want to speak English.*

(A.Int.2.74)

It seemed that Anne was successful in her endeavour to encourage pupils to use their L2 more. In fact she felt that she surpassed her goals because there were times during the English lessons when the pupils were very keen to participate and respond in English.

She explained that although it was not easy, she hardly ever used Maltese during her English lessons. Initially she believed it was going to be very difficult for her to use English throughout the English lessons and to encourage the pupils to do so as well.

However,

*...some [pupils]...I don't even realise, speak to me in Maltese and just like that in a split of a second I reply in Maltese and then I realise and I switch to English again. I have to be on the alert always to speak English.*

(A.Int.2.166)

This highlights how natural it was for Anne and the pupils to speak and respond in Maltese. Maltese is the default language for her and the pupils unless she makes a conscious effort to use the L2. Here Anne seems to be aware that at times during her first practicum she would follow the child (Zentella, 1997) and reply using the language the pupils would use in the question or query.

She believed that teachers should not give up on using English but should try 'different alternatives before switch[ing] to Maltese when the students do not understand' (A.Q.2.13). After her first practicum she had now modified her ideas about always using the target language during English lessons. Anne now held that *sometimes* it was appropriate to use L1 'to help weak students' as she argued that, 'sometimes the last resource would be to say some words in Maltese, in order to help them understand' (A.Q.2.10). Thus, she said that she did not agree with using English throughout and at all costs, especially to the detriment of the pupils' learning, but instead conceded that

sometimes some use of Maltese may actually help pupils understand better. This was also the position upheld by Camilleri (1995; 1996), Faltis (1990) and McCarthy and Moje (2002), as well as O'Neil and Velasco (2007) amongst others.

Anne said that she only used Maltese occasionally to maintain discipline and order in class, when children spoke to her in Maltese, when she happened to reply automatically or when she had to explain to children who did not understand a word or explanation in English. She said that sometimes she praised the pupils in Maltese by saying 'brava' or 'bravu' (good girl/boy) (A.Int.2.80), although she did use the English 'very good', or 'good' frequently as well.

Anne also said that she tends to use the L1 to tell them off when they misbehaved (A.Int.2.176). Thus, it seemed that Anne used Maltese when she was involved in classroom management issues and when her emotions seemed to be involved more.

Maths remained one of her preferred subjects while English had gone from being her first preference to fourth. She explained this change as follows: 'the class I was with did not really like to speak in English and so this influenced my preferences' (A.Q.2.9). Thus, here we see how the pupils' perceptions and attitudes towards language use had an effect on Anne's preferences related to her preferred subject/s to teach.

Anne firmly believed that despite being a serious challenge, during the two weeks with the pupils she managed to use English with them and felt that the pupils had improved in their confidence and ability to use English. She said that during the first lesson with her, the pupils were not sure about her approach and were not very willing to speak, but



by the end of the practicum they were all speaking in English quite well during the English lessons (A.Int.2.210).

Through Anne's perspective we also got a first glimpse into the pupils' attitudes towards the use of English as their L2 in class. Anne believed that the pupils were reluctant to use English because 'they are afraid, and they had to think about every word...and that they will make a mistake' (A.Int.2.82). So according to Anne it was the pupils' apprehension about making mistakes that kept them from trying to express themselves in English. Anne also believed that they were not comfortable using English and maybe their level of proficiency and competence was a hurdle, together with the fear of making mistakes. She said that she had to persist because:

*...sometimes the words don't come, they don't really know how to say them in English...I have to keep on trying, to keep on pressing.*

(A.Int.2.198)

However, she also explained that once they did speak in English she was 'amazed at the words they know' (A.Int.2. 156). Here one then needs to try and understand the situation. On the one hand Anne said that the pupils were not very capable speakers, but on the other hand once they were given the opportunity to use English in a supportive environment and through motivating activities, the pupils seemed able to draw on a bank of vocabulary that even surprised the student teacher. This outcome seemed to affirm her position of using the L2 during English lessons as much as possible. Anne firmly believed, that despite being a serious challenge, during the two weeks with the pupils she managed to use English with them and feels that the pupils have improved in their confidence and ability to use English.

Anne stated that during the Maltese and English lessons she tried to stick to the target language depending on the lesson. However, Anne asserted that 'the maths lesson is the

most bilingual lesson' (A.Int.2.172). During the Maths lesson the pupils were used to Maltese for interaction and explanations, while English was used when referring to the text book or any written work. It was the usual procedure to code-switch freely during Maths in Anne's class, as in most other Maltese state primary schools (Baldacchino, 1996; Bonanno, 2007; Farrugia, 2003).

## 5.11 Lesson 2: Spring

During her 2<sup>nd</sup> Year TP (March 2007) Anne was posted at a primary state school in the Western part of Malta. She was to plan and teach all lessons to a Year 4 class of 20 pupils for 6 weeks. The lesson started with Anne writing the date on the board: 20<sup>th</sup> March. She asked them: 'what's tomorrow?' and they replied: '21<sup>st</sup> March ... Spring'. She then put up a flash card on the whiteboard that read 'spring'.

### 5.11.1 Speak in English!

She asked them to write sentences about spring, in groups of 4 to 5 pupils on mini-whiteboards. Anne was hoarse and tried to keep the noise at a comfortable level not to strain her voice. She reminded them to speak in English during the group work as we can see below.

17.	T	Good. So...today we are going to talk about SPRING ok. I will give you...go to the groups that you were this morning. I don't want to hear too much noise from the chairs ok. Quietly you can go as you were before...quietly. In the groups you have to speak in <i>English</i> as well. Ok? So, in the groups, in <i>English</i> , write down some points that come to mind when you think of Spring. Like for example, Ryan already told me one. Come up with as many points as you can, but don't write more than 10. Ok? You have 5 minutes.
18.	P	We write in sentences?
19.	T	No, no, just points. In <i>English</i> !

(A.Obs.2.17-19)

She reminded them to use English three times in this extract alone. Thus, we can see that since the English lesson had just started Anne was ensuring that they knew what was expected of them in this lesson. From the above we see that the pupil who did ask questions at that point in the lesson did so in English.

Anne asked prompting questions to elicit more ideas and put up some flashcards and pictures during the brainstorming session. The teacher allowed the children to use some Maltese during the brainstorming when they could not express themselves in English. However, she always tried to encourage them to use the L2 by saying, 'try in English first' (A.Obs.2.254).

243.	T	Summer is hotter than Spring, but Spring is hotter than Winter. In Spring it is hot but in Summer it is much hotter.
244.	P	Miss, can I tell you in Maltese?
245.	T	Try in English first.
246.	P	Hmm...

(A.Obs.2.243-246)

Each group worked in groups to write points on mini-whiteboards. Then Anne wrote the points mentioned on the white-board and praised them. At times she rephrased a comment to make it accurate and for the other pupils to be able to follow while she wrote.

66.	T	Good. So Spring is one...of the four seasons. Good now tell me the point...one of your points. Chris, your group.	Writes on w/b.
67.	P	Miss...(inaudible)	
68.	T	What did you say?	
69.	P	Bloom...	
70.	T	Ah I see. The flowers will bloom....good...good. I will write this down. Very good. I will write this down...Bloom...	Writes on w/b.
71.	P	What does it mean?	
72.	T	Bloom means they grow. Ok?	
73.	P	<b>Miss dik ghedniha ahna imma.</b>	Miss <i>but we already said that one.</i>
74.	T	But they used another word...which is	

		bloom. I wrote it down in brackets ok. So, your group...	
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(A.Obs.2.66-74)

In the extract above one pupil used Maltese to protest that his group had already mentioned the point that a pupil had just said (A.Obs.2.73). However, the teacher explained that they had used 'bloom' which had the same meaning as 'grow' but was a different word.

In the next extract the teacher and pupils discuss their favourite season. This was all undertaken in English until the teacher switched to Maltese to translate a word the children were not familiar with: climate - **klima**.

109.	P	Spring is... my...favourite season.	
110.	T	Ok. But now you have to tell me why Spring is your favourite season. Why?	
111.	P	Because there is no warm, there is no cold...	
112.	T	It is not too warm or too cold. When it is not... It means that there isn't any extremes. Have you ever heard this word? You know what climate is?	
113.	P	Yes...	
114.	P	No...	
115.	T	Climate... <b>bil-Malti klma</b> . Which is the weather at that time. So...	Climate ... <i>in Maltese it is climate.</i>
116.	P	In Spring comes...	
117.	T	There is no extreme weather....which means that the weather doesn't change too much. Good.	

(A.Obs.2.109-117)

After giving the Maltese translation Anne immediately switched back to English to give further explanation. This made me wonder why Anne thought the translation necessary since she had explained in English. Maybe she wanted to reassure herself that the pupils had understood.

In the following extract Anne explained the concept of hibernation in English and gave them the word herself when the pupils did not come up with it. It was interesting to note that a pupil drew on the Italian '*letargo*' (A.Obs.2.164) to express 'hibernation', however, the teacher did not comment on this (we do not know if it is because she was only attending to L2 input or whether she did not know this Italian word).

159.	T	Yes during Spring....do you know what the word is...when you say they sleep...do you know another word for when they go to sleep for a long time?	
160.	P	They are going to...(inaudible)	
161.	T	No. I will tell you. It is called hibernate. They go for hibernation. So it means when they go to sleep for a long time. Then usually in Spring they wake up.	
162.	P	(inaudible)	
163.	T	In Maltese...hibernate....	
164.	P	I know it in Italian... <i>letargo</i> .	(Italian for <i>hibernation</i> )
165.	T	No. I don't think there is a single word for it in Maltese that means hibernate.	
166.	P	But some animals...	
167.	T	They go to sleep for a very long time... so animals wake up from hibernation, ok? Do you know some animals that wake up from hibernation?	
168.	P	<b>Nofshom</b> Miss.	<i>Half of them</i> Miss.
169.	T	Chris	
170.	P	Frogs	
171.	T	No. frogs don't hibernate. Tell me..	
172.	P	Ants.	
173.	T	No.	
174.	P	Butterflies.	
175.	T	You told me an animal, I think, as we started the lesson...	
176.	P	<b>Werżieg nahseb</b> Miss.	<i>I think it is a cricket</i> Miss.
177.	T	No.	
178.	P	<b>Ballottra?</b>	<i>A weasel?</i>
179.	T	What's a <b>ballottra</b> ? Try in English ok...	What's <i>a weasel</i> ? Try in English ok...
180.	P	<b>l-istampa qieghda fuq il-one cent.</b>	<i>the picture of it is on the one cent [coin]</i>
181.	T	Ahh... an otter...no not an otter.. tell me Christian...sshhh!. Tell me Christian.	
182.	P	Kangaroo...	
183.	P	Hedgehog	
184.	T	Yes hedgehogs do hibernate. And	

		there's an easy one you all know it...it starts with a B	
185.	P	B...butterfly	
186.	T	No.	
187.	P	What Miss. Can you repeat it again?	
188.	P	Bears	
189.	T	Bears, very good. Bears hibernate as well. Very good	
190.	P	Miss birds?	
191.	T	No. bears...ors.	No. bears... <i>a bear.</i>

(A.Obs.2.159-191)

The pupils mentioned various animals, reptiles or insects in English (frog, butterfly) or Maltese (*ballotra* - weasel, *werżieq* - cricket), but only one pupil got a correct answer by mentioning hedgehogs. Anne gave them a cue so they would say 'bear' and another pupil guessed correctly. The teacher praised her and when she rephrased for the benefit of the whole class one pupil actually thought she said 'birds' (A.Obs.2.190). To clarify Anne said 'bears', and also used the Maltese translation 'ors' to ensure there were no misunderstandings (A.Obs.2.191).

The discussion turned to the season of winter and Anne explained that it rains a lot and that we get thunder. When she asked them whether they knew what thunder was they said yes. She then translated it into Maltese and continued to comment in English and then ended with a Maltese tag (*mhux hekk?* – Isn't that so?).

247.	T	Uhm...we can't really say. But the thing is...usually, in Winter we have a lot of rain, thunder...do you know what thunder is?	
248.	Ps	Yes...	
249.	T	<b>Sajjetti...u beraq.</b> ...And this year we only had...(leave it, leave it)...few showers of rain...so the plants can't grow. <b>Mhux hekk?</b>	<b>Lightning...and thunder.</b>  <b>Isn't that so?</b>

(A.Obs.2.248-250)

Here at first glance the need for Anne’s translation seems unfounded especially since the pupils answered in the affirmative when she asked if they knew the meaning of ‘thunder’. She may have translated to ensure they really knew the meaning; maybe she had seen some puzzled looks.

In the extract below Maltese was used for the organisational management related to copybook use and distribution during the lesson. A pupil asked whether he could distribute the copybooks but Anne wants to finish the explanation first. Then some confusion arose because a copybook was misplaced. In this exchange Anne switched to Maltese when searching for the copybook but used English exclusively for the explanation before and after the search. Thus she seemed to treat this as a sort of ‘aside’ to the lesson.

271.	T	Yes. So wait. Leave the language there and then we collect it afterwards. Hurry up...quietly.	
272.	P	<b>Inqassam?</b>	<i>Shall I hand out [the copybooks]?</i>
273.	T	No leave it here.	
274.	P	...summer (inaudible)	
275.	T	Good. You can say...listen to me... listen to me please. One, two, three... you can also say that Spring comes before Summer and it comes after...after what?	(Claps to get attention).
276.	P	Winter.	
277.	T	Very good. It comes after Winter. So you can also say that if you like.	
278.	P	Miss...when there is hot and Spring is hotter and Summer is hottest.	
279.	T	Very good.	
280.	P	(inaudible)	
281.	T	No you have more things to do.	
282.	P	Miss...	
283.	T	Start. Hurry up.	
284.	P	Miss... <b>dahlet</b> (inaudible)	Miss... <i>she came in</i> (inaudible)
285.	T	<b>Ma nafx fejn hu mela.</b>	<i>I don't know where it is then.</i> (looking for Writing copybook)
286.	P	<b>Veru Miss.</b>	<i>That's true</i> Miss.
287.	T	<b>Le m'hemmx hemm.</b>	<i>No there aren't any over there.</i>
288.	P	Ok. Miss I found it.	

289.	T	You can start yes. The title is....?	
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(A.Obs.2.271-289)

She explained the individual writing task, then monitored and circulated to help pupils with difficulties. At this point many pupils were discussing in Maltese amongst themselves and asking Anne about difficulties or asking her for the English version of a word or phrase they had difficulty expressing. The examples beneath are evidence that the pupils really tried to use English.

Below Anne assisted a pupil who cannot seem to express himself in English and invited him to tell her in Maltese and then she translated for him (A.Obs.2.345).

342.	P	Miss...I want to write...	
343.	T	Tell me in Maltese.	
344.	P	Li matul spring niċcelebraw...	<b>That during spring we celebrate...</b>
345.	T	That in spring we celebrate...you can just say that. Yes...	

(A.Obs.2.342-345)

In the next extract she used translation again to help a student with the writing task (A.Obs.2.400). She translated but said that it may not be exactly what the child meant since she did not know the context. However, in this instance she first encouraged the pupil to try to use English (A.Obs.2.398).

395.	P	Miss what was...they sleep?	
396.	T	Hibernation. It is written there. Animals wake up from hibernation.	
397.	P	Miss...	
398.	T	Ah you wrote it already? ...Write it and I will check it. First try it out.	
399.	P	What is <b>wasalna</b> ?	What is <i>we arrived</i> ?
400.	T	We arrived...but what do you want to say?...no. now we are in Spring. <b>Xi haġa hekk. Imma ma nafx xi trid tghid.</b>	<i>Something like that. But I don't know exactly what you want to say.</i>

(A.Obs.2.395-400)



In the extract below Anne seemed impatient and used Maltese to state that she had already explained a particular point (A.Obs.2.441) about Easter dates changing according to the Roman Catholic Calendar.

439.	T	In Spring there will be some insects like....	
440.	P	Miss...	
441.	T	<b>Ghedtlek diga`.</b> You can't say when they are...sometimes it is in Spring. But not always. Write sometimes we have Father's Day. Sometimes we have Father's Day...but not always.	<i><b>I already told you.</b></i>

(A.Obs.2.439-441)

Below Anne replied to a pupil's request for help by first answering in English but then prompting her in Maltese to elicit the word 'lighter' to describe clothes worn in Spring (A.Obs.2.457). This strategy worked because the pupil came up with the correct word and continued writing without delay.

452.	P	...nghidu li l-hwejjeg huma soft...hekk?	<i>...we say that clothes are soft... like?</i>
453.	T	Not soft...they are less ...what do you want to say exactly?	
454.	P	<b>Li il-flokk irqiq..</b>	<i><b>That the top is light..</b></i>
455.	T	<b>Kif tghid li il-flokk irqiq iktar?</b>	<i><b>How do you say the top is lighter?</b></i>
456.	P	... lighter...	
457.	T	Lighter clothes. Good. Or short sleeves sometimes. It depends... You have 2 minutes left. Hurry up. That you can keep drawing afterwards.	

(A.Obs.2.452-457)

After colouring in a scene of a house in spring the pupils then had a crossword to do as a concluding activity. The teacher had originally planned puppet work for the lesson closure, but due to a sore throat she prepared a crossword instead (she explained this to me before the lesson started). In the following extract Anne used English to tell the pupils to what to do. A pupil used Maltese to show the teacher that he understood the crossword and the vocabulary included.

482.	T	Yes. When you are finished you can continue the drawing. Write your	
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		name on the crossword please. Now stop drawing and continue when you are ready from this. You have to put these words at the side in the...in the crossword. Ehm...do you know what robin is?	
483.	P	Yes. In Maltese <b>pitiross</b> .	In Maltese <b>a robin</b> .
484.	T	Tulips...do you know what tulips are?	
485.	P	<b>Iva</b> miss. Flowers.	<b>Yes</b> Miss.

(A.Obs.2.482-485)

This next exchange illustrated how the pupils used Maltese to signal to Anne that they had finished their work. Anne herself responded in Maltese to assure them that she would check their work soon (A.Obs.2.515).

506.	P	Miss I'm finished.	
507.	T	Good. <b>Anki jien</b> .	Good. <b>I'm [ready] too</b> .
508.	P	Good.	
509.	T	Let me correct it for you. You have 2 minutes left.	
510.	P	Miss does not fit...	
511.	T	Make sure you did not make a mistake.	
512.	P	Miss <b>jien lestejt</b> .	Miss <b>I'm ready</b> .
513.	T	One of them is good I can see it from here...	
514.	P	Miss <b>jiena lesta</b> .	Miss <b>I'm ready</b> .
515.	T	<b>Issa nikkoregih...</b>	<b>I'll correct it soon...</b>
516.	P	Miss... <b>issa ngib il-ktieb ghada kollu bis-seasons</b> .	Miss... <b>I'll bring my book tomorrow it is about seasons</b> .

(A.Obs.2.506-516)

### 5.11.2 Language use observed during the second lesson

Anne used English almost exclusively during the lesson and very rarely code-switched. Instead of translating any difficult words, she used easier words instead, or explained in English. She also used pictures to aid understanding.

The pupils often spoke in the L1 amongst themselves when working in pairs or groups and also when they started their individual writing task. During the time for individual writing Anne moved around the class to assist the pupils and that was when most pupils

addressed her in Maltese. She accepted some questions on an individual basis in Maltese but urged others to try to use English first. Regardless of whether the pupils addressed her in the L1 or L2, her response was always in English.

### **5.12 Lesson 3: 'If I were ...'**

This writing lesson took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007 with the same Year 4 class as the second lesson observed. The lesson began with Anne putting on some instrumental music (including *The Nutcracker*, *Under the Sea*, *Beauty and the Beast*) and asking the pupils to listen and imagine they were an animal or an insect.

#### **5.12.1 Language use observed in the third lesson**

In the extract below a pupil asked Anne in Maltese whether the writing task was about the song. Anne answered the pupil's Maltese question in English and did not 'follow the child' indiscriminately (Zentella, 1997). In such a situation and since Anne's first language was Maltese, it would have been very natural for her to reply using the same language the pupil used. However, she used English and this showed that she was making a conscious effort to use English and was very aware of her own language use and that of her pupils during the English lesson.

In her first year practicum Anne had said that when pupils asked her questions in Maltese she would switch into Maltese easily to reply without even realising that she was not sticking to English all the time (A.Int.2.166). Thus, this indicated that Anne was becoming more aware of her own language use in class.

99	P	Mhux dwar is-song?	<i>Not about the</i> song?
100	T	No not on the song. The songs had different themes. From them you could have chosen some. For example the first one I told you a bee...that what reminded me from the first song. The sound of the bee for example. But you can't use bee.	

(A.Obs.3.99-100)

Maybe this awareness could have been heightened due to my presence in the class but even if that were the case I think it would have worn down a bit by the time the lesson was finished. Anne's use of the L2 remained constant throughout the lesson and this indicated that it was not a behaviour that was put on to impress me but something she had accustomed herself and the pupils to during English lessons. However, this did not entail that Anne did not use Maltese at all during English lessons. As I will show below she did draw on code-switching to Maltese as an additional resource during the lesson to explain to a child who was experiencing difficulties with following the lesson in English (Camilleri, 1995; García, 2009; 2000; McCarthy and Moje, 2002; O'Neil and Velasco, 2007).

Since the pupils were still confused about what Anne expected from them in this writing task, Anne drew on a similar Maltese lesson they had done to help them understand what the writing task involved. Anne explained in English and then added, 'like when we did *I am a Toy* in Maltese'. Here instead of drawing on the L1 she used an example of a lesson done previously in Maltese and used their previous experience and knowledge.

7	T	(...) If it is a tree it has to have feelings, the ability to move... ok? <u>Like when we did 'I am a Toy' in Maltese.</u> The toys do not talk or move but you said that they talk ok. So do you know what I am saying?	Writes on w/b
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(A.Obs.3.7)

However, despite this explanation and the very good example of previous written work that Anne drew on, the pupils still found it difficult to understand the task fully and the questions they posed both in English and Maltese showed this. Later in the lesson a pupil asked whether they were to write about the music, whilst some pupils needed help in choosing what to be. Maybe this was an excellent opportunity for Anne to use Maltese to explain the task to help the pupils understand what they needed to do (Camilleri, 1995; 2000; Lin, 1990; O'Neil and Velasco, 2007).

However, maybe Anne thought that this would have been an unjustified use of Maltese at the beginning of the lesson, especially with me in the class observing. The use of Maltese to clarify instructions at this stage could have helped Anne keep the lesson on track and to avoid the misunderstandings that cropped up. I think that because of the lack of clarity about the task at the beginning of the lesson, Anne had to draw on Maltese later on in the lesson to explain to some pupils at more length as in the case I present next.

### ***Maltese to explain tasks/procedures***

Anne realised that 30 minutes into the lesson a girl had not understood the task since she had not yet decided what to be and had not written down any points. Anne first tried asking Rodienne what she wanted to be in English and when she got no response she switched to Maltese '*xi trid tkun?*' The pupil responded in English that she wanted to be a bird. Thus, we can see that although the pupil at first did not seem to understand what was expected of her in English, once it was clarified in Maltese, she was able to give a one-word reply in English. In the extract below we can see that Anne continues to support the pupil by using English and Maltese as necessary. We also see how Anne switched very skilfully between languages to explain to Rodienne. Then she switched to English to address the whole class or other pupils. She first used English but then

switched to use 'iktibha' in Maltese to direct Rodienne to write down the word 'nest' on the handout as one of her points. She then suggested to Rodienne that a bird eats worms and translated it to 'dud' for her to understand but then repeated the English version to reinforce the new vocabulary she had just introduced.

175.	T	So what do you want to do? The others continue.  <b>Xi trid tkun?</b>	<i>(Addresses Rodienne)</i>  <b><i>What do you want to be?</i></b>
176.	P	Bird	
177.	T	So as a bird what can you hear?	<i>(Addresses Rodienne)</i>
178.	P	I sing.	
179.	T	No the other birds are singing so write that...if you are a bird flying, what can you see?...the clouds...or the trees. Ehm, I want the leaders please to come out and give out the writing... English writing please.  What can you touch? The nest maybe...	<i>(Addresses Rodienne)</i>  <i>(Addresses class)</i>  <i>(Addresses Rodienne)</i>
180.	P	Nest	
181.	T	Write nest. And wood? Write wood. Here, here, in this box. No, no. Write it down. <b>Iktibha.</b> Now what can you taste? What does a bird eat? Worms... <b>dud</b> ...worms. Write it over there. (...)	<i>(addressing Rodienne)</i>  <b><i>Write it down.</i></b>  Worms... <b>worms</b> ...worms.
182.	P	<b>M'ghamiltx kollox.</b>	<b><i>I didn't do everything</i></b>
183.	T	You don't need to write everything I told you. And you can smell a lot of different things. <b>Tghaġġilx meta taghmel l-affarijiet.</b> What can you smell? What can you smell?	<i>(Addresses Rodienne)</i>  <b><i>Don't rush when you do things.</i></b> <i>(addresses another pupil)</i>  <i>(Anne points to her nose when she asks this)</i>
184.	P	<b>Inxomm</b> ...flower	<b><i>I smell</i>...flower</b>
185.	T	<b>Brava.</b> Flowers? F-l-o-w-e- for elephant, r-s. Now write sentences with these. Alright?	<i>(Addresses Rodienne)</i> <b><i>Good girl.</i></b>
186.	P	Yes.	

(A. Obs.3.175-186)

Anne used Maltese to tell another pupil not to do things in a rush. She then moved to the next of the five senses and asked Rodienne what she would smell as a bird. Anne pointed to her nose and to the picture on the handout as she said this. Thus, here instead of translating or code-switching she was using gestures to convey meaning. The pupil understood the question and answered using the Maltese 'inxomm' (I smell) and 'flower'. Anne was quick to praise her in Maltese and spelt out the word 'flowers' for her to write down. Anne's use of English and Maltese here seemed successful in aiding Rodianne to understand the task assigned in class and to help scaffold her learning. The way Anne used language also helped Rodienne to experience some success because if she had not given her individual attention and adapted her language use according to the situation then the pupil would not have been in a position to do the task or learn anything from the lesson. Anne also helped the child feel at ease through the use of Maltese and did not force or intimidate her into using only English (as she did with a pupil during the first lesson I observed in the 1<sup>st</sup> Year practicum).

### ***Reminding pupils to use English***

A boy tried to ask a question in Maltese and she said 'try in English' and then he said 'in Africa...?' This shows that when prompted he made a greater effort to try to use English even though he could not express himself fully in the L2. In the following extract Anne was encouraging a pupil to write in English, to 'just try' and reassured him that it did not matter if he made any mistakes. However, she then seemed to back-track because she reminded him to be careful about literal translations from Maltese. Thus, on the one hand she was encouraging him not to worry about making mistakes, but on the other hand she was telling him what not to do. She was also telling him not to worry because he would learn from his own mistakes and here I think that she was also assuming that he would make mistakes!

*It doesn't matter. Just try. Don't worry. You will learn from your mistakes. Very good. Don't write it exactly as you do in Maltese, all right?*

(A.Obs.3.281)

### **Use of Maltese translation**

At times Anne drew on Maltese and here we see how she translated from English into Maltese when pupils experienced difficulties with vocabulary. In line 39 Anne did not automatically give the Maltese translation, instead she reminded the pupil of a video-clip they had watched earlier that day about bees. However, she then did provide the word '**nahla**' in Maltese when she realised he was not going to say it.

38.	P	What is a bee?	
39.	T	What is a bee? The film you saw this morning...The film you saw that's a bee. The...of the bees....that's a bee. <b>Nahla</b> in Maltese. Jacqueline.	<b>Bee</b> in Maltese.

(A.Obs.3.38-39)

Anne provided an English translation of 'kok' for a boy who wanted to be a 'cook' or a 'chef' for this writing task. However, she did not stop at giving the translation of the word; she also added a short definition in English.

174	P	<b>Miss kok x'jghidulu bl-Ingliż?</b>	<i>Miss what do we call a cook in English?</i>
175	T	Cook - <b>Kok</b> the one who cooks.	Cook. <b>Cook</b> the one who cooks.

(A.Obs.3.174-175)

In the following exchange the same pupil used Maltese to seek Anne's assistance in generating ideas. She replied in English to give him some suggestions and then switched to Maltese to offer the translation into Maltese of 'oil' to 'zejt' and 'sauce' to 'zalza' to ensure that he had really understood.



188	P	<b>Miss, lanqas naf x'nista' naghmel.</b>	<i>Miss, I don't know what to write.</i>
189	T	If you are a cook...you can smell a lot of different things...maybe the oil boiling... <b>zejt.</b> Maybe the sauce, <b>zalza.</b>	boiling... <i>oil.</i> Maybe the sauce, <i>sauce.</i>

(A.Obs.3.188-189)

A pupil who was not sure about his sentences asked Anne if they were correct. She did not give him a direct reply but instead said 'we will see later' in Maltese and directed him to continue with his work. So here we see that Anne uses Maltese but then follows on with the English translation, as though she answered in Maltese by mistake and therefore repeated in English. Another pupil then asked her if he could write a 'rough' draft and she used English to say 'no' but then switched to Maltese to tell him to write in his copybook. The word 'copybook' was uttered in English but the preposition and the definite article were in Maltese. She then reassured him that it was 'good'.

219.	T	<b>Issa mbaghad naraw.</b> Finish it and then we will see. Tell me Christian.	<b>We'll see later.</b>
220.	P	<b>Nista' naghmel fuq ir-rough?</b>	<b>Can I work on my rough notebook?</b>
221.	T	No. <b>Fuq il-copybook.</b> It's good.	No. <b>On your copybook.</b>

(A.Obs.3.219-221)

It seemed that during this part of the lesson while she was walking around the class answering the pupils' queries she was hearing more Maltese being spoken amongst the pupils themselves and also addressed to her and thus, may be more prone to following their language use when answering pupils individually (Zentella, 1997).

### ***Maltese to explain a concept or grammar point***

In line 259 Anne drew on Maltese to explain and clarify a grammar point related to the tile 'If I were...' and thereby to ensure understanding of a concept. Thus, here she was tapping the pupils' experience and knowledge of the tense form in Maltese and applying

it to new learning in English. This crosslinguistic transfer of language skills and knowledge is a common feature related to language learning in a bilingual context (Hamers and Blanc, 1989; Krashen 1985; Lambert and Tucker, 1972). For example when the writing system used is very similar, as the case of Maltese and English then features learnt in one language can be applied to the other (such as punctuation, style, concepts about print). Therefore, pupils would not need to learn when or why certain rules apply all over again for English if they had already learnt them for Maltese.

259	T	But before. When you are...you can't be this person or this object...So you say 'If I were...', 'Kieku kont...' you say in Maltese... <b>mhux 'kont'</b> .	'If I were...' you say in Maltese... <b>not 'I was'</b> .
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(A.Obs.3.259)

### ***Maltese to address a pupil feeling poorly***

Anne used Maltese to address a pupil who did not seem to be feeling well. The use of Maltese may be the more natural language for both Anne and the pupil in such a situation. Anne was trying to see how unwell the pupil was feeling before referring her to the Head's office to send for her family.

329.	P	<b>Ma niflahx.</b>	<b>I'm not feeling well</b>
330.	T	<b>Trid tghidilhom jigu ghalik? Ma tiflahx tissaporti jigifieri? Mur ghidilhom forsi jaghmlulek xi haga ta.</b> Come on you don't have to show me every sentence. You know how to do it. Come on.	<i>(Addressing 'sick' child)</i> <b>Do you want to tell them (family) to come for you? Do you feel you can't stay on? Go to the office so they can help you.</b> <i>(Addressing another pupil)</i>
331.	P	<b>Ghax support (inaudible) ... il-mummy.</b>	<b>Because (inaudible) ... my mummy should...</b>
332.	T	<b>Inti ara jaghmlulekx xi haga mill-First Aid alright?</b>	<b>Go and see if they can give you something from the First Aid alright?</b>
333.	P	(inaudible)	
334.	T	<b>Hazin jekk tirremetti.</b>  Why do you like it?	<b>It's not good if you throw-up.</b>  <i>(addresses another pupil)</i>

(A.Obs.3.329-334)

Thus, her concern about the child's wellbeing and ensuring there were no misunderstandings was more important than sticking to English. This exchange in Maltese about this situation could be seen as an aside that was separate from the lesson. In fact, while talking to the child Anne used English to address other pupils (as in parts of lines 330 and 334).

There was an instance when she used both languages as in, 'Ehe. Very Good' (Yes. Very good.) (S.Obs.3.151). Anne also used Maltese to praise (**brava** - good girl) when explaining to a pupil who was experiencing difficulties during the lesson. Anne used 'mela' ('So'), as a discourse marker, when moving from one activity to the next, when shifting between addressing a particular pupil and the whole class and also when starting a new explanation (S.Obs.3.3; 82).

### **5.13 Final interview and questionnaire with Anne**

This interview with Anne served as the post-observation interview as well as the concluding interview. Thus, issues related to her language use during the second and third lessons were discussed as well as more general issues related to becoming a teacher and her own progress over the first two years of the ITE programme.

#### ***5.13.1 Language Use observed during the second and third lessons***

The pupils' questions were mostly in Maltese while Anne replied using English and sometimes a bit of Maltese as well. Anne gave positive feedback and offered encouragement to the pupils in English. She used Maltese in an individual explanation when she realised that a pupil still had not understood the writing task 30 minutes into the lesson.

### **Use of English**

Anne explained that she used the L2 as much as possible and that the pupils ‘coped really well...they started to tell each other to speak in English’ (A.Int.3.112). She said that initially it was not easy to use English with the pupils since ‘At first children didn’t really understand the explanation in English’ and because using the L2 throughout the lesson ‘was something new to them’. However, Anne believed that the pupils collaborated and tried their best to use the L2 (A.I.3.140). She was eager to point out that they addressed her in the L2 and if they forget she reminded them to ‘speak in English’ (A.Int.3.116).

### **Use of Maltese**

Anne acknowledged that it was not easy for the pupils to adapt to the use of the L2 as a medium of instruction because, ‘the word comes more easily in Maltese’ (A.Int.3.116). She explained that at one point she had to code-switch more due to the presence of a new girl in class. However, she held that when she scolded them she would most likely switch to Maltese (A.Q.3.21).

### **5.13.2 The Teaching Practice Experience**

In the final interview with me Anne expressed her satisfaction about the 6-week practicum as follows:

*I think I did quite well. Obviously not perfect but I did quite good I think. From the feedback I got and from the way the children reacted to me, from their work...*

(A.Int.3.4)

Anne explained that this year she ‘was much more relaxed’ and that ‘as a whole it was a better experience than last year (A.Int.3.38). She believed that this was partly because the pupils were motivated to learn and that the school environment helped to motivate

the pupils. She explained that she felt even more at ease after her first tutor's visit because,

*...as soon as I saw that the first one was positive, and that they wanted to help me rather than criticise me, then I...I was looking forward for them to come because I like feedback.*

(A.Int.3.40)

Anne had high expectations of herself and her performance during the practicum but she said that she did not think it would be easy. However, she said that it actually turned out better than she had thought (A.Int.3.90). Reflecting upon the experience Anne concluded that:

*On the whole it was a positive experience. There are some lessons that I would have changed a bit. But this depended on the class. Every year is different so I can't really say what I will do next year.*

(A.Int.3.166)

Anne explained how her level of planning had continued to improve over the previous year. She stated that this year she was 'faster' and she was more independent in that she did not need her father's help (A.Int.3.30).

Anne felt that now she was in a better position to adapt her lesson plans according to how the lesson was developing and not teach strictly according to the lesson plans. This shows a level of operating that goes beyond the mere delivery of curriculum to being able to respond in a dynamic way to the pupils' needs and situations as they arise during the lessons (Tochon and Munby, 1993). According to Twisleton (2006) 'novice teachers direct their actions mainly through preordained planning and are much less likely to respond contingently or to even be open to the need to do so'.

### 5.13.3 *Becoming a Teacher*

When comparing the second practicum to the first experience, Anne said that this year she had started to panic due to the amount of preparation she had to cope with in such a short timeframe and actually doubted whether she should be following the ITE programme and that those thoughts were ‘horrible’ (A.Int.3.58). However, she asserted that it was only at the beginning of TP that she felt like that and that she still wanted to become a teacher.

*I want to effect other people's lives sort of...I want to make a difference. If I don't become a teacher I won't become anything...*

(A.Int.3.96)

### 5.14 Anne's final thoughts and beliefs about L1 and L2 use

Anne argued that sometimes it was acceptable to use Maltese during an English lesson because:

*At times there are students that do not understand English at all, and so in order for him/her to understand, especially in giving instructions, the last resource has to be switching to Maltese.*

(A.Q.3.10)

She therefore believed in putting the pupils' needs and understanding first. However, she also believed in trying to use English as much as possible and only if that did not work then one should switch to the L1. The above also indicated that Anne did not view code-switching as a positive resource but as ‘the last resource’ that should be avoided if possible.

Anne explained that she tried to use English as much as possible during her English lessons. She held that during this practicum she managed to use English more than in

the previous one. She believed that her effort in using English paid off. She added that when the pupils addressed her during English lessons they always tried to use English since if they used Maltese she reminded them and encouraged them to use the L2.

101.	JM	Anne, what about language use this year?
102.	A	I use it much more than I did last year. For example, I can't say that I did every lesson in English the maths lessons. <u>But, I did three fourths of them for sure in English. Cos they did understand, so why not?</u> In fact, one time I was going to do a Maltese lesson in English! Because I've been trying to teach them a lot of different vocabulary because I knew they had the basis. So I wanted to teach them different vocabulary and so... <u>I spoke in English a lot.</u> Even between lessons, except when I scolded them. Usually it comes in Maltese. Because they won't tell me 'I didn't understand you'. So usually I say that in Maltese. But even to go to the toilet and things like that...

(A.Int.3.101-102)

Anne explained that she tried to use English as much as possible during her English lessons and believes that her effort in using English paid off because the pupils 'coped really well...they started to tell each other to speak in English' (A.Int.3.112). Anne explained that she really made an effort to use English during this practicum. Anne said that she sometimes switched to Maltese to scold the pupils. This indicated how Maltese as her L1 was the most natural language for Anne to "draw on when faced with an uncomfortable situation despite all her efforts to use English.

Towards the end of her second week of TP Anne was surprised to find out that she would have a new pupil in class. According to Anne the new girl could not follow English as well as the other pupils in class and therefore to cater for her Anne code-switched more.

This meant that although she had established a routine of using more English with the pupils now Anne had to backtrack and use more Maltese to cater for the learning and language needs of this new pupil.

*But in fact, now this week I did the maths lessons...I did first in English and then in Maltese, because she [the new girl] practically never understood. It is hard for her to understand the Maths concept let alone to understand English and Maths as well. So I had to switch to Maltese. But as long as I see that the others have understood in English, that's fine. Because I can't do miracles in a week.*

(A.Int.3.126)

Anne's decision to put the needs of this new pupil first and therefore introducing more Maltese showed that she had managed to achieve a level of flexibility in her language teaching that allowed her to make informed decisions and she did not attempt to use the L2 'at all costs'.

Anne explained that it was not easy for pupils when they were not used to using their L1 for learning and communicative purposes because 'the word comes more easily in Maltese' (A.Int.3.116). Here she acknowledged that using English was not something that came naturally to the pupils but they needed to make a conscious effort and sometimes she had to remind or encourage them to do so. Here she identified with the pupils' experiences since at the beginning of her 1<sup>st</sup> Year of ITE she herself felt that using English demanded conscious effort and also a level of self-confidence.

## **5.15 Conclusion**

Through this case study of Anne and her language use I had the privilege to delve for a while into her life as a student teacher as she experienced the beginning of her journey to becoming a teacher. She allowed me to share some of her experiences through lesson observations, questionnaires and interviews as she explored and negotiated her thoughts, beliefs and actions related to teaching English as the L2. I zoomed-in on three of her lessons with primary school pupils at specific points during the two years of her 4-year Initial Teacher Education programme. In her first lesson she used English to teach



English while code-switching to Maltese to deal with classroom organisation and management issues that resulted mainly due to the seating arrangement during the 'The Wicked Witch' reading and story-telling lesson. She reminded the pupils to use the L2 in English if they passed a comment or asked a question in Maltese. She praised and encouraged the pupils through the use of English as well.

In order to use the L2 she employed effective strategies and resources to make best use of language, such as, visual aids, rephrasing, paraphrasing, and gestures. Anne also used easier words or simple explanations when children asked for meanings of words.

At one point during the lesson (A.Obs.1.153) when Anne asked for the meaning of 'to take care of' and a girl (Jasmine) responded by giving the equivalent in Maltese, here Anne sounded harsh and told the pupil to attempt the meaning in English or else not to say anything. Here Anne did not acknowledge that the response was correct albeit in the L1 and unlike other similar situations she did not scaffold the pupil's effort to translate into English. Here Anne seemed to want the English meaning at all costs without recognising the fact that the girl did know the meaning of the phrase 'to take care of'. Maybe Anne needed more time and experience to realise and accept that she could draw on Maltese as an additional resource to teach the L2 effectively (Camilleri, 1995; 1996; Lin 1990; McCarthey and Moje, 2002; Merritt et al., 1992). Anne made a conscious effort to use English and said that, 'I have to be on the alert always to speak English' (A.Int.2.166). Thus, maybe she felt that despite all her efforts to use English the pupils were not always ready to follow suit and she was tired and frustrated by this.

In the second and third lessons that were held during her second TP Anne continued to use English, and when pupils did not understand she continued to use easier words or

offered simple explanations supported by pictures that she seemed able to do effectively. She still made a conscious effort not to rely on translation or code-switching when the pupils experienced difficulties in comprehension. However, there was a change in her beliefs after her first practicum in that she now holds that *sometimes* it is appropriate to use the L1 in order to help 'weak students' (A.Q.2.10).

While Anne managed to engage the pupils in using English in whole-class or pupil-teacher exchanges, it was more challenging to motivate pupils to use the L2 during the group writing task during the second lesson. The third lesson observed was also a writing task. The pupils' questions were mostly in Maltese while Anne replied using English determinedly most of the time. She used some Maltese when responding to pupils who used Maltese to ask questions. Maybe this happened because she found it natural to answer the pupils in the language they used in the exchange and thus she sometimes seemed to lower her guard to 'follow the child' (Zentella, 1997). This also was a clear indication that it was natural for Anne to use Maltese with her Maltese pupils, especially when participating in one-to-one exchanges with them. She also explained that she tended to use Maltese when she was dealing with classroom management matters and this showed that she was aware of her language use. She also accepted replies in Maltese if the pupils could not express themselves in English and here this contrasts with the episode I observed during her first practicum where she insisted on a girl giving her reply in English or not at all (A.Obs.1.153). Thus, here we seem to have an instance where Anne's classroom practice conflicted with her intentions and stated beliefs.

In both her first and second practicum Anne tried to carry out all the English lessons through English, and her lessons were characterised by her goal of exposing the pupils

to as much English as she could during the daily English lesson. The ability to provide pupils with simple explanations and examples, the use of easy words and pictures to explain any difficult vocabulary was clearly her forte when using English in class.

In the second practicum Anne seemed to achieve a level of flexibility in the use of the L1 that showed that she had learnt to appreciate it as an additional resource to draw on in the teaching of English instead of something to be avoided at all cost. This shift in her beliefs about language teaching seems to give her the flexibility to allow her to cater more effectively and efficiently for pupils with diverse levels of proficiency and confidence in using English as their L2.



## CHAPTER SIX

### Suzanne: Case Study 2

#### 6.1 Introduction to Suzanne

Suzanne was 18 years old when she started the first year of her teacher training. She was the youngest of three siblings and lived in the west-central part of Malta. She came from a state school educational background and was the first in her family to pursue tertiary education.

#### 6.2 Language Profile

She considered Maltese as her L1 and English as her L2. Suzanne said that sometimes she felt uncomfortable using her L2 due to a fear of making mistakes and because she felt ‘embarrassed when I know that people are listening to my English conversation’ (S.Q.1.10). This concern with her use of spoken English<sup>10</sup> was also present when I asked her about it during our first interview.

55	JM	Good. Here [ <i>referring to Questionnaire 1</i> ] you say that you consider Maltese to be your first language and English your second language. What can you tell me about that?
56	S	Yes. At <u>home we talk in Maltese</u> . My father doesn't know any English ... <u>ehm (Hmm)</u> ... that's why so at home I talk in Maltese... even with my friends. I just talk in English in English lessons that's all... <u>I don't practice English that much</u> . Neither <u>in school we didn't talk in English much</u> . That's why. Even my friends talk in Maltese. But when I have to talk to someone in English I do...I try to talk in English...
57	JM	So at the moment would you be feeling uncomfortable speaking in English?
58	S	Not uncomfortable...but I feel a little bit not tensed... but I'm a bit ... not that confident. Not that I don't know but...
59	JM	Yes..
60	S	Not that I'm not confident but... <u>hekk (like)</u> ...I think, am I saying the

		right things?
61	JM	You'd be self-conscious
62	S	Yes, <b>ehe</b> (yes) ... but then it's fine once I get the rhythm of it..

(S.Int.1.55-62)

Thus, Suzanne felt extremely self-conscious when speaking English and did not feel confident communicating in her L2. Maltese was the language she used with her family and her circle of friends. English was the language she drew on when necessary, during English lessons and when speaking to foreigners, but would not be her language of choice for everyday interaction.

There seemed to be some hedging in her attitude towards English and her feelings of discomfort. At one point she said she felt uncomfortable speaking English but then, 'not uncomfortable but I feel a little bit tensed' (S.Int.1.58). This seems paradoxical because she said she was confident but then in her next utterance she said that she doubted what she says (S.Int.1.60). Perhaps this complexity was due to her being interviewed and maybe she was saying what she guessed I would like to hear.

This perceived lack of spoken proficiency that she was concerned about was raised later on as well. This was clearly a sensitive issue for Suzanne because she seemed to raise this concern repeatedly. I suppose that it was not easy for her to say that she felt she lacked confidence in her L2. This was especially true when embarking on a programme to become a primary school teacher that entailed teaching this language. Moreover, discussing this openly with me could not have been easy either due to my position as a lecturer involved in the teaching of English within the ITE programme.

148	S	Not friends, because if they are at the same level like me it doesn't bother me but if there is someone else who is <u>really brilliant in English</u> and is hearing to me, hearing me, I feel a little bit, <b>hekk</b> (like) ... ashamed... not ashamed really but shy.
149	JM	Shy ... self-conscious...
150	S	Yes self-conscious ... really conscious about what I'm saying. And

		sometimes it doesn't help me because I'm thinking about what I'm saying and what I have to say and I get mixed <b>hekk (like)</b> ...
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(S.Int.1.148-150)

Here she again expressed her unease at having others listening when she spoke English. She felt that she would be judged. To me this seems an underlying issue that Suzanne associated English with schooling, practicing skills and being assessed, that is part of her schooling history.

Suzanne explained that she tended to use Maltese when she was with her family and friends, when she was angry and to ask questions during a lecture. She used both English and Maltese to write assignments, to send short text messages (sms) and to read for enjoyment. English was used to write emails and shopping lists. She went on to explain that, 'When writing usually I prefer to use English although I do use Maltese as well, when talking I prefer to use Maltese' (S.Q.1.12). She also preferred to use Maltese in verbal interaction. On the other hand she used English for writing purposes such as using digital media for communication (texting and email).

Suzanne's perception of her English writing skills seemed to be different from that of speaking. Here we did not see a concern with performance and proficiency. Instead, she seemed to feel that it was quite 'normal' for her to write emails in either language or university papers (assignments) in English. It was interesting to note that functional writing and reading as a leisure activity were also undertaken in English<sup>26</sup>. This reinforces Suzanne's own notion about being taught in a traditional way. In Malta the system for many years was to focus on English reading and writing and not on oracy.

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<sup>26</sup> This may also be due to the larger choice of books available in English. Nowadays there is a wider choice of Maltese books, but as she was growing up she would have encountered a limited choice of Maltese publications.

This, in turn, reflects the examination-driven educational system that emphasised reading and writing (Grima *et al.*, 2008; Grima and Farrugia, 2006; Tabone, 2007). She felt that she really became aware of her own language situation as regards the use of English as her L2 when she moved from her state secondary school to the Junior College.

*... everyone was at the same level you know. Everybody had my background really. But then when I went to Junior College and University I felt it most because we are mixed, some come from church school, private schools, state schools ...because normally the students who come from church schools and private schools they are good most in English... I think and I feel. Then when we talk in class and somebody is really brilliant in English and then I have to talk and I am not that brilliant in English I feel a little bit hekk (like) ... but that's why. But in secondary and primary it really didn't affect me because everybody was the same.*

(S.Int.1.162)

Thus, when she was still in her own town and attended the area school with her group of friends, who came from similar home and linguistic backgrounds, she did not perceive herself as having any difficulties with English. She had always passed her exams and did well at school, so to her it came as a nasty surprise that when she compared herself to others she found out that her level of spoken English was not as good as that of other students who maybe had attended private independent or church schools. Suzanne also seemed to be indicating that there may be more prestige in attending private schools and more advantages in that they were 'really brilliant in English' (S.Int.1.162).

*I think that it was really difficult for me. Especially when I went to Junior College, you know, till secondary I didn't bother at all. But then when I went to Junior College I realised how much I lacked in English, you know, and how much I didn't use English, not like other friends. That's why ... and I don't want this to repeat again for the pupils I will teach and for my kids.*

(S.Int.1.238)



Through having this ‘difficult’ experience, when she started Junior College, Suzanne was set on ensuring that her own children (when she has them) as well as the pupils she would eventually teach were given more opportunities to use English.

This tied in very well with Suzanne’s reflections upon her three nieces’ experiences of learning their L2. We gather here that Suzanne held the predominant belief that the acquisition of English in childhood was a great advantage and one that she was not given the opportunity to enjoy fully.

### **Language use and social context**

In this following extract Suzanne showed that she was aware that the social context guided language use and that there were social conventions and rules that govern language choice and use in particular circumstances (what Hymes refers to as **appropriateness** as cited in Cook, 2003; Canale and Swain, 1980). She believed that it was unnecessary for a Maltese speaker to use English when the people present were using Maltese. She held that one should switch according to the language being used in the exchange.

160	S	Exactly! Why is the person talking in English? But if everyone is talking in English ... you have to talk in English... it depends... But I don't bother if someone is talking in English maybe his first language is English. You have to accept everybody.
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(S.Int.1.160)

Here Suzanne was speaking about affiliating oneself with the group according to the language being spoken and adapting to the situation according to the unspoken rules that were part of the interaction amongst bilingual groups of speakers (Attard, 1995; Camilleri, 1996; 2001; Kachru *et al.*, 2006; Kramsch, 1998). However, the other side to the same argument is that choice of language can also be used to exclude others.

Suzanne's account of her language profile also seemed to confirm the notion about bilingual practices as related to particular 'spaces' or domains (Batibo, 2005; Camilleri, 1995; 2001; Fishman, 1971). At home with her family and when relaxing with friends she used Maltese. Spoken English was mostly perceived of as belonging to school and English lessons, while written English was seen as being part and parcel of technology-mediated communication, as well as for reading purposes. Line 160 (S.Int.1) is an example of another inconsistency in Suzanne that showed her lack of confidence around her use of the L2. She insisted that we should accept everybody, but at the same time remarked on a person who chose to speak in English.

### 6.3 Language and Schooling

Suzanne explained that as a pupil she was taught Maltese and English satisfactorily, but '...in a very traditional way as my teachers were practically all 50+'. She said that the method used entailed, 'Reading from books and doing the corresponding exercises' (S.Q.1.16). In the extract below Suzanne drew on her experience of achievement in learning some English phrases when she was a child.

*I will try to use English ...not...not all the time English because as I told you they don't know how to talk in English but I will try to include English - Such small phrases. I remember my Year 2 teacher and she used to use these kinds of phrases and I used to go at home and say to my mother what I've been taught. She really used to be proud of me...you know...*

(S.Int.1.90)

However, she specified that she would not necessarily speak English 'all the time' because the pupils would not be that fluent. Given her previous concerns about her spoken English, here, I cannot but wonder whether it was really the pupils' competence that she was concerned about or her own. The following extract highlighted her concern with spoken English yet again. Here she said that she thought that teaching

English speaking skills to pupils would be a challenge since she was not in possession of 'perfect English'.

134	S	Yes, I think so, because as regards the accent ... as I told you I wasn't exposed to talking much in English. <u>Therefore, for me it is difficult to teach pupils to talk in English, in perfect English, when I don't know that perfect English.</u> You know? But then in Maltese I think I am really more <u>confident in Maltese.</u> So it is better for me to teach Maltese because I am better, I'm confident, I don't have problems with grammar... so that's why
135	JM	So to teach English and Maltese, in primary you have to teach both languages, <u>what do you think you need to improve in yourself?</u>
136	S	In English <u>I wish that I talked ... used it more as a language.</u> I know how to write etc... I have an Intermediate in English... but I don't use it that much. Sometimes it is not how much you know but how you can use it ...

(S.Int.1.134-136)

Suzanne felt that not having the opportunity to use English to communicate in was a drawback, because, although academically she had obtained examination certification in English, she believed that this did not reflect *real* language use. This comment also draws attention to the pit-falls of an exam-oriented educational system where only areas assessed formally were perceived of as worth studying.

#### 6.4 Thoughts and beliefs about language use in class

*I feel that I am good in teaching/explaining things and I would like to offer children a completely different teaching method than the ones I had when I was a pupil*

(S.Q.1.18)

Suzanne believed that she would be a good teacher and wanted to offer pupils a positive experience of learning that would offer real opportunities to engage in language learning. Here Suzanne was expressing her determination not to teach in the traditional way she was taught (Numrich, 1996).

She believed that a primary school teacher should be fluent in Maltese and English, ‘because it is obvious that if you are going to teach something you must be fluent in it in all ways, in order to teach it in an excellent way’ (S.Q.1.20). Thus, here we can see that she held high standards for herself: to be fluent in both languages and to teach in ‘an excellent way’.

She also believed in using the target language to teach the language, since she argued that ‘by using English in an English lesson students will feel more confident with the language’ (S.Q.1.21). Thus, it seemed that Suzanne believed in the notion of teaching English through the exposure to, and use of English (Harmer, 2003; Halliwell, 1992; Willis, 1981). She also placed a high value on the balance between both languages and this emerged clearly when she observed the Year 1 class she was assigned for School Experience Observations.

In the extract below she commented on the class teacher’s lack of use of the L2 for communicative and management purposes. She struggled with this because to her this teacher was ‘a really good teacher’. Since Suzanne placed such high value on speaking English for real purposes in the class, due to her ‘lived’ experiences, she could not easily understand why such a ‘good teacher’ would not use the target language more.

86	S	They are in Grade 1 <sup>27</sup> ...5-year-olds mostly...but even the teacher she doesn’t talk to them in English. You know, not even things like ‘hang up your jackets’ or ‘take out your books’. She says everything in Maltese. She is a <b>really</b> good teacher in everything else...but in that way I don’t agree with her. <u>They are not getting exposed to English.</u>
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(S.Int.1.86)

<sup>27</sup> Equivalent to Year 1 level.

Here again, with the mention of her childhood teacher, we see the extent of the influence of her own 'lived experiences' on her beliefs about teaching (Britzman, 1986; Doolittle *et al.*, 1993; Lortie, 1975).

However, in my first interview with Suzanne, she conceded that there was a benefit to using Maltese 'sometimes' to explain especially if the pupils did not understand.

I think that sometimes I have to use Maltese especially with these kids who I know their English is not that good. You know, to explain things I think that I have to use Maltese. But not using Maltese all the time. I will use English most of the time but if they are not understanding or they feel shaky about it, you know, I will have to explain in Maltese. I think it is nonsense, to keep talking in English when I see they do not understand anything I am saying. As they are first years...

(S.Int.1.216)

Suzanne exhibited a strong belief about the need to use Maltese, the L1, as here she put the pupils' understanding before the NMC recommendation, to use English during English lessons. She also took into account that the pupils were only 5-years-old and in Year 1<sup>28</sup>. Thus, here Suzanne could be seen coming into contact with the reality of teaching and with the complex decisions she had to take about language use and the role of careful planning to ensure she had the appropriate resources to aid the pupils' learning. This was where she used her judgement based on experience as opposed to her role as teacher. Here was the conflict that Suzanne was experiencing related to her own language and identity as well as to her personal and teacher identity.

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<sup>28</sup> Pupils in state schools only start English reading and writing formally during the second term of Year 1, after they have first started reading and writing in Maltese. .

## 6.5 Becoming a teacher

*...I feel that it is like a dream. I always wished to become a teacher and now that I'm close, and have the last step to become a teacher... I don't know I feel...is this really happening?*

(S.Int.1.194)

At the beginning of ITE Suzanne held a romantic view of teaching and was happy that her dream was about to become reality. It was interesting to note that she was at the very beginning of the programme, but here she referred to it as 'the last step'.

When I asked Suzanne what had led to her wish to become a teacher she responded as follows:

*I think I was influenced by my Year 1 teacher. When I think about it, this issue, because she was young, she was attractive, she had a way how to teach things... you know... and kids become influenced by their teachers. That's why. I used to pretend to be her... and this went on and on and on... Even at school when we had a presentation or something of the sort, my other teachers used to tell me, 'you have a way how to teach', and it boosted me you know... that's why.*

(S.Int.1.192)

Having a role model influenced Suzanne. Her admiration for her young, attractive and charismatic teacher ('she had a way') made her turn this positive experience of teaching/learning into a lifelong desire to become a teacher.

Other teachers recognising and commenting upon features that were 'teacher-like' in her manner during presentations reinforced this aspiration. Probably these occasions also allowed her to 'play' at being teacher as she used to when she was six years old.

## 6.6 Lesson 1: The Pancake

I observed Suzanne giving an English reading and conversation lesson on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2006. She was in the second week of her mini-practicum placement at a state primary school in her home town. The lesson was held with the Year 1 class she took over for the 2 weeks of her placement. This was a lesson based on the book 'The Pancake', which is part of the Oxford Reading Tree series of graded readers, which features Biff and Chip as the two main child characters.

### 6.6.1 Language use observed during the first lesson

The extract below shows how Suzanne navigated the transition between the Maths lesson and the beginning of the English lesson and organised the pupils through the use of both Maltese and English.

3	T	<b>Isa ha nara. Sal-five ma rrid nara xejn hlief il-ktieb. One, two...Ha naraw jergax imur fuq is-siggu. Three, four...ha ndur u ma rrid nara xejn. Five.</b>	<b>Come on, let me see. By five I don't want to see anything except the book. One, two...Let's see if he ends up on the chair again. Three, four...I'm going to turn around and don't want to see anything [on the desks]. Five.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.3)

She spoke in Maltese to get the message across so that they would all clear up their desks and leave only the English book out. Interspersed with her use of Maltese, she used the numbers in English. Here she was counting up to five to get the pupils organised without wasting time. The use of numbers in English was not surprising since most Maltese use English for numbers (Camilleri, 1995; Cucciardi, 1990; Caruana Anastasi, 2003; Farrugia, 2003). Maltese was used for the management of behaviour and for giving instructions. This gives an indication of how code-switching between Maltese and English is made use of in Maltese classrooms on a daily basis.

In the extract below Suzanne was using Maltese for classroom management purposes, and then uses ‘mela’ (then/so), to indicate the start of the lesson proper (Camilleri, 2001; 1995). The use of the Maltese ‘mela’ acted as a discourse marker at the beginning of an otherwise English sentence and indicated the transition from management issues to the lesson content (Merritt et al., 1992; Faltis, 1990; García, 2009). Maltese teachers use discourse markers frequently, such as, before they give out new information, or when beginning a new task (Camilleri, 1995).

11	T	<p><b>U allura? Il-break spiċċa u marridx nara tfal jieklu. Ma niehux gost inkella.</b>  <b>Mela, who can tell me... who is that man? Who is the man we can see over here James?</b></p>	<p><b>So? The break is over and I don't want to see children eating. I won't be pleased.</b>  <b>So, who can tell me...</b></p>
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(S.Obs.1.11)

The lesson starts with Suzanne directing the pupils to the figure depicted on the cover-page of the book and opening with a question to all the pupils, but that she then directed at a particular pupil. In the following utterance Suzanne used Maltese to manage a child's behaviour. The boy was not paying attention and was holding the book against his lips. She was using language in a complex way by drawing on irony. She seemed to expect higher understanding of the pupils socially than linguistically.

40	T	<p><b>Enrico, inti jaqaw ghandek aptit xi pancake? Ghax qed narak tiekol il-ktieb... hsibtek ghandek aptit xi pancake.</b></p>	<p><b>Enrico, do you feel like eating a pancake? I can see you're eating the book...I thought that maybe you felt like a pancake.</b></p>
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(S.Obs.1.40)

In the next extract Maltese was used in an aside to offer positive reinforcement to encourage a boy to share his book with the group.

60	T	<p><b>Now, le ...thobb tixxerja hux, dejjem tghidli kemm thobb tixxerja.</b></p>	<p><b>Now, no ...you like to share don't you, you always tell me how much you like to share.</b></p>
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		<b>Ejja ghamlu fin-nofs issa.</b> Let's read here together. The frying pan.	<b>Come on put it in the middle now.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.60)

Suzanne offered praise in English and used the L1 to encourage all the pupils to respond to her question. She seemed to use Maltese to emphasise her point and to show the pupils that she was expecting more participation in the example below.

158	T	The eggs, very good. <b>Ha nerġa' ghax ma smajtx lil kulhadd. Kulhadd irrid nisma'.</b>	<b>Let me repeat because I didn't hear everyone. I want to hear everyone.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.158)

She seemed to use both English and Maltese separately or together to praise pupils as we can see below<sup>29</sup>.

56	T	<b>Bravu. Intih ċapċipa lil James, ghax dejjem ikun attent James. Naħseb illum ser nerġa' nagħtih reward iehor.</b>	<b>Good boy. I'll clap my hands for James, he always pays attention. I think that today I will give him another reward.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.56)

263	T	Very good. Ehm, Christian, what are these two children doing?	"
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(S.Obs.1.263)

269	T	Very good Dale. <b>Brava ara kemm tkun attent.</b>	<b>Good girl, look at how attentive she is.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.269)

However, she tended to use more Maltese to scold or reprimand the pupils when they were misbehaving or inattentive. This also tied in with Suzanne's own use of Maltese and English in her everyday life.

44	T	<b>Qed tara hux m'obdejtx. Qlibt kollox. Issa jekk jiġi id-dud jiġi taħtek.</b>	<b>See, that's what happens when you don't obey. You dropped everything. Now if bugs come they</b>
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<sup>29</sup> There are many more examples of this in the transcription, but my aim is to give an example and not list them all.

		Turn the page. In page one we can see...	<b>will be under you.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.44)

Here she was addressing a pupil in front of the class because he dropped the contents of his packet of snacks on the floor under his desk when he should have been attentive and not furtively eating his snacks.

When it comes to dealing with issues of classroom management Suzanne seemed to switch to Maltese more often than not. Maybe because it was more time-efficient since she could assume that if she said something in Maltese all the pupils would understand her first time, without having to spend too much time explaining and rephrasing. Maybe issues related to management and behaviour (Faltis, 1990) were more quickly and effectively dealt with in the L1. Camilleri (1996) asserts that using the L1 can be seen to hold the function of maintaining a positive rapport with the pupils and so that the teacher is perceived as caring and not as 'distant' by the pupils.

### ***Use of Maltese as a commentary, thinking aloud, or directing the lesson***

Suzanne also used Maltese to think aloud during the lesson and at times as a sort of aside or commentary. This confirmed that Suzanne was most at ease functioning in Maltese. The following extracts may be examples of her L1 coming through in the lesson when she did not really need to use it. In the first example she was showing them the items as she took them out from behind her desk one by one, and therefore, there did not seem to be a need for explanations in the L1.

72	T	With me I have, <b>apparti</b> l-lunch, <b>Ghandi</b> other things. <b>Ha nurikom l-affarijiet.</b> I have a book...	With me I have, <b>besides my</b> lunch, <b>I have</b> other things. <b>Let me show you these things.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.72)

She proceeds to organise the items on her desk, whilst saying ‘ha niżbarazza naqra’ (let me tidy up a bit). She explained the procedure in Maltese and then used the discourse marker, ‘mela’ and asked the question in English.

80	T	<p>So I have four things.  <b>Mela ha niżbarazza naqra....</b>I have four things. <b>Ha nara min ser jiehu l-points jekk tghollu subghajkom u tghiduli l-answer tajjeb. X’saqsejt? Għadni ma’ staqsejt xejn.</b>  <b>Mela,</b> which from these four things, which I have over here, which is the frying pan?</p>	<p><b>So let me tidy up a little...I have four things. Let’s see who is going to get points if you raise your hands and give me the right answer. What did I ask? I haven’t asked anything yet.</b></p> <p>So,</p>
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(S.Obs.1.80)

In the next extract she only used the L2 to refer to the vocabulary, the content, she was going to write on the whiteboard, whilst she told the pupils what she was going to do, in the L1 and this concurs with Camilleri’s (1996) observation that the Maltese teachers she observed made a difference between talk related to the content and talk related to the social relations within the classroom.

198	T	<p><b>Ha nerga’.</b> Qabel xejn <b>ha niktbilhom</b> cooking book <b>minflok,</b> <b>ha tarawha wkoll.</b>  <b>Mela, hawnhekk... ha nergghu naqraw din il-kelma.</b></p>	<p><b>I’ll repeat. First of all let me write cooking book instead, so you can see it as well. So, here... we are going to read this word again.</b></p>
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(S.Obs.1.198)

She also retained the use of Maltese to direct them to the following step she wanted them to participate in. In the extract below she used a Maltese code-switch when she stuck a flashcard on the whiteboard. She did not need to give that piece of information to the pupils and so it seemed as though she was verbalising her action as a think-aloud. She reverted to English to tell them what they were expected to do but then code-switched to encourage them to read. Suzanne used Maltese to encourage the pupils and to ensure they were aware of the procedure for acquiring points. The use of English

seemed to be content and task-oriented and directly related to the reading activity ('let's read the flashcards' and 'let's read everything over here').

303	T	<p>Of a cow. Very good. Now, together let's read the flashcards which I have on the board.  <b>Imma qabel xejn ha nwahhal din il-kelma....</b>          Let's read everything we have over here.  <b>Ha nara issa liema grupp ha jaqra l-ahjar, biex imbagnhad inkun nista' naghtih point. Mela ha naraw....</b></p>	<p><b>First of all I will stick up this flashcard....</b></p> <p><b>Let me see which group will read best, so that then I can award a point. So let's see ....</b></p>
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(S.Obs.1.303)

At the end of the lesson Suzanne switched completely to Maltese. She told the pupils that the lesson was over and that she would give everyone points according to the reward system. She also seemed to be thinking aloud when she told them that she needed to call the office to ask about the photocopies of their homework handouts.

357	T	<p>Ok. <b>Daqshekk issa. Ha naghti points lil kulhadd. Bravi. Ha nispjega ffit il-handout imbagnhad intihielkom aktar tard. Mela il-handout ser tkun...ser ikollkom (...)</b></p> <p><b>Issa aqraw f'qalbkom halli nilhaq inċempel biex nara habba l-photocopies. Ghax imbagnhad insaqsikom taqraw wahedkom.</b>  <b>Ahna dak qed naqraw?</b></p>	<p>Ok. <b>That's enough now. I'll give everyone points. Well done. I will explain the handout and then give it to you later. So, the handout will include...on one side you will have (...)</b></p> <p><b>Now read silently so I can call to check about the photocopies. Because later I will ask you to read individually.</b></p> <p><b>Is that how we read?</b></p>
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(S.Obs.1.357)

Thus, here I think that Suzanne was treating the homework explanation as separate to the lesson and was regarding it as a matter of procedure that was best conducted through the use of Maltese.

### **Translations and Explanations**

In the following examples I will look at the function of some translations Suzanne offers during her lesson. In this extract Suzanne was trying to encourage the pupils to respond. She wanted to elicit the word ‘apron’.

116	T	<p>Kayle, dad is wearing a cooking hat. Julian, dad is wearing a cooking hat.</p> <p><b>Isa</b>, is he wearing something else? Is he wearing something else?</p> <p><b>Harsu lejh. Ghandu xi haġa oħra?</b> Is he wearing something else?</p>	<p><b>Come on</b>, is he wearing something else? Is he wearing something else?</p> <p><b>Look at him. Is he wearing anything else?</b></p>
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(S.Obs.1.116)

She used ‘isa’ (come on) to encourage them and ‘harsu lejh’ (look at him) to help them focus. She then asked them what else he was wearing in Maltese followed by the same question translated into English. This may seem superfluous since she had already asked the question in the L1, and one could safely assume that the pupils would understand the question in Maltese and do not need an English translation. However, Suzanne may have done this to emphasise her question, or even to expose them to the English version despite it being preceded by the same in Maltese.

In the following extract Suzanne was showing the pupils an apron. She explained what its purpose was in Maltese, but did not offer a Maltese translation of the word ‘apron’ at this stage. Then in the following extract she showed them the apron and asked them what it was called. Two pupils answered that it was a ‘fardal’ (apron) in Maltese, before she requested the word in English. The pupils provided the English word successfully without Suzanne having to translate it herself. Therefore, here the pupils translated the Maltese word into English successfully when prompted.

127	T	<p>Very good children. Look here I have an apron as well.</p> <p><b>Dan nilbsuh biex meta nsajru ma</b></p>	<p><b>We wear this so that we don’t</b></p>
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		<b>nhammġux il-hwejjeġ, inhammġu dan.</b>	<b>dirty our clothes when we cook, we dirty this.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.127)

176	T	<b>Mela ha nerġghu naqraw il-kliem flimkien. Mela, what is dad wearing? X'ghedna li hu dan?</b>	<b>So let's read the words together again. So, what is dad wearing? What did we say this is?</b>
177	P	<b>Fardal.</b>	<b>Apron.</b>
178	P	<b>Fardal</b>	<b>Apron</b>
179	T	<b>Bl-Ingliż</b>	<b>In English</b>
180	P	Apron	
181	Ps	apron	
182	T	<b>Mela, apron, dad is wearing an apron. What else? He has a ...? What does he have?</b>	<b>So,</b>

(S.Obs.1.176-182)

In both examples above, the importance of employing visual aids and resources was evident. Since Suzanne had the physical item to display (an apron) it was easier to teach and ensure comprehension of new vocabulary without relying on Maltese translations, that she would probably have drawn on if she did not have the item to show (Halliwell, 1992; Philips, 2003; Willis, 1981).

Below, Suzanne was not as successful at obtaining a reply from the pupils so she supplied it herself in English and then added on the Maltese translations together with a brief explanation. Thus, here she went beyond merely translating, to offering more information about who wears a 'cooking hat' (Camilleri, 1995).

184	T	<b>A cooking hat jġifieri il-kappell li jilbes il-kok. What else can we see?</b>	<b>A cooking hat that is the hat the chef wears.</b>
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(S.Obs.1.184)

In this following extract Suzanne elicited and explained the homophones: flour and flower. She switched to Maltese completely for this explanation except for the use of these two words. She elicited the word 'fjura' (flower) from a pupil and then explained that it was 'flower' in English and that these words (flour-flower) sounded the same but

were written differently. Maybe here she felt the need to use more Maltese to help the pupils understand the concept of homophones that would have been difficult concept for these Year 1 pupils even in Maltese. This was one of the instances where the use of the L1 could be perceived as an additional resource to aid understanding and learning (Faltis, 1990; Merritt *et al.*, 1992).

202	T	<b>Bravi. Ha nara min ser jghinni. Ghollu subghajkom. Bl-Ingliż ghandna kelma ohra li nghiduha u tinstema bhal din il-kelma. Corrine, x'inhid din il-kelma? Li nghiduha wkoll bhal 'flour'. Hawnhekk qed nghidu 'flour' ghad-dqiq, pero hemm kelma ohra li nużawha hafna bl-Ingliż. Maryclo ...</b>	<b>Well done. Let me see who's going to help me. Raise your hands. In English we have another word that sounds like this one. Corrine, what is the word? The word we say that sounds like 'flour'. Here we are saying 'flour' for flour, but there is another word we use a lot in English. Maryclo ...</b>
203	P	<b>Fjura.</b>	<b>Flower.</b>
204	T	<b>Ara, Maryclo qartilna li fjura. Bl-Ingliż nghidula flower. Mela flour ghad-dqiq, u flower ghal x'hiex iktar?</b>	<b>Look, Maryclo said flower. In English we say flower. So flour for flour, and flower for what else?</b>
205	P	<b>Dqiq</b>	<b>Flour</b>
206	T	<b>Ghad-dqiq u ghall-... ?</b>	<b>For Flour and what else... ?</b>
207	P	<b>Fjuri</b>	<b>Flowers</b>
208	T	<b>Fjuri, fjura, flower. Mela il-kelma flour tad-dqiq u flower tal-fjura jinstemghu l-istess. Imma jinkitbu differenti.</b>	<b>Flowers, flower, flower. So the word flour for flour and flower for flower sound the same. But they are written differently.</b>
209	P	<b>Flower f-l-o-w-e-r</b>	
210	T	<b>Bilqieghda inti. F-l-o-w-e-r. Ejja quddiem please u ġib il-ktieb. Ersqulu f'it please. Mela il-kelma flour tad-dqiq u flower tal-fjura nghiduhom l-istess. Mela ghandna tnejn, żewġ kelmiet li nghiduhom l-istess imma niktubhom differenti. Bravi. Intom kontu bravi għax kontu tafu.</b>  Look at pages two and three. What can you see? What can you see in these pages?	<b>You, sit down. F-l-o-w-e-r. Come to the front please and bring your book. Make space for him please. So the word flour for flour and flower for flower we pronounce the same. So we have two, two words that sound the same but are written differently. Well done. You were all good (clever) because you knew this.</b>

(S.Obs.1.202-210)

In the above extract she continued to use Maltese to scold a pupil who was not paying attention and to change his seating place. According to Lin (1990) code-switching may be drawn on for effective teaching, as we saw above and also for classroom management. She then praised the whole class in Maltese and seemed to signal the end of this explanation by switching back to English as she directed the pupils to other pages of the book.

Another example of Suzanne's use of Maltese, was to ensure the pupils understood what the illustration and text of the book meant. Here she was helping them to distinguish between the activity the children and their dad were doing in general, that is, 'cooking', and the step of the recipe where they were mixing the ingredients together to make a pancake.

216	T	They are cooking. <b>Qeghdin isajru.</b> They are cooking. <b>Imma ezatt... mhux qeghdin isajru, x'qeghdin jaghmlu? Qed ihalltu il-...</b>	<b>They are cooking.</b> <b>But exactly... they are not cooking, what are they doing? They are mixing the-...</b>
217	Ps	Flour	
218	T	<b>Il-flour mal-bajd.</b> They are mixing eggs with flour. <b>Qeghdin ihalltu l-bajd mad-dqiq biex jaghmlu l-pancake.</b>	<b>The flour with the eggs.</b> <b>They are mixing the eggs with flour to make the pancake.</b>

(S.Obs.1.216-218)

Suzanne switched to Maltese, first to translate from L2 to L1, but then to extend and go beyond the translation to ask them what the children and their father were actually doing. She then used Maltese to start to answer her own question and then paused to wait for the pupils to continue. A pupil did so in English by saying 'flour' and then the teacher took the word and continued in Maltese. Then she said the whole phrase in English: 'They are mixing eggs with flour'. She then translated this to Maltese and added that it was to make a pancake. This idea of translating and then adding more



information in the L1 is not uncommon. So it was not only a translation but an explanation and extension of the L2 text as well (Camilleri, 2001; García, 2009).

In the next extract Suzanne explained the ‘difficult’ concept of singular-plural. Hence, here her use of Maltese could be seen as pedagogically sound as it was drawn on for effective teaching of a concept that may have proved problematic otherwise.

228	T	<p>Some eggs.  An egg, <b>meta jkollok bajda wahda</b>, some eggs, <b>meta jkollok iktar minn bajda wahda</b>.  Very good. So in pages two and three we can see dad, Biff and Chip – they are cooking, they are mixing egg with flour. And then we have a wooden spoon, a cooking book and some eggs as well. Now please turn the pages to pages four and five.</p>	<p>An egg, <b>when you have one egg</b>, some eggs, <b>when you have more than one egg</b>.</p>
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(S.Obs.1.228)

## 6.7 Interview and questionnaire after the first practicum

*On the whole it was a positive experience. I'm really glad about all that happened to me and I think for the hard time I had during the preparation I had good feedback both from the children, the class teacher, the facilitator and even the administration.*

(S.Int.2.2)

Suzanne said that she enjoyed her practicum, felt well prepared and believed it was a success. The quote above reflected her positive feelings about her first practicum. She was very happy that the pupils enjoyed her lessons and that she had good feedback from the school, the parents and also from her tutor. Suzanne placed value on being prepared and organised and being appreciated by the pupils, school and tutor, as we will see in more detail below.

### 6.7.1 Suzanne's first experience of teaching

When I asked her about the lesson I had observed (The Pancake), Suzanne commented that overall it was a positive lesson. She also said that her tutor visited her and gave her positive feedback on the follow-on lesson that focused on consolidating the new vocabulary learnt. So it was mostly from feedback given to her, rather than reflection upon her practice that informs her 'evaluation' of her lesson. She also reasons that if the children remembered the words, then the lesson must have been good!

70.	S	I think that it went good. Ehm... I was satisfied, even the children. Even the next lesson which the tutor saw. The introduction was a revision of the words which they had learnt in the first lesson. I asked them which words do you remember and they told me 'the pancake' and I asked them to come and choose the word flashcard and stick it on the board. Everybody remembered the words, they knew which words they had to choose and that show that they really understood.
71.	S	Yes. Then I told them to mix the ingredients and they asked 'do I put water?'
72.	JM	So did you really cook pancakes in the end on the cooker?
73.	S	I thought of the idea and in fact at home I was preparing and there was my niece and I told her let's go up and cook a pancake to see what happens... but the taste was really horrible! ( <i>laughs</i> )

(S.Int.2.70-73)

### 6.7.2 Suzanne's views about language use during the first lesson

As regards language use in class, Suzanne reported that she used both languages during English lessons and said that she resorted to code-switching mainly to explain when some children did not understand or when she had to explain a difficult concept (S.Q.2.21). She said it was difficult to only use one language because the children did not know how to speak English.

*This in fact, my tutor talked to me about it as well. She asked me to speak in English more often in lessons, because after all that is how they learn. Although she wrote in the end I used more and more English. But as the children are only 5 year-olds in Year 1, it is the first time that they are actually spoken to in English. I tried to use English; in fact I used English most of the time. But still I used Maltese to make sure that they understand because I really wanted to make sure, as I told you before, that I really wanted to know that they are understanding. So to do*

*so, I spoke in Maltese so that I know that they are understanding what I am saying. And the use of the resources I was using, that was the main aim as well, that if I speak about eggs I show them eggs.*

(S.Int.2.84)

In her rationale above, she explained that she used English most of the time and used Maltese to ensure they understood. The extract above shows us that Suzanne has her own notion related to language teaching: she chooses a language for a specific purpose.

She also added that she used resources such as realia, to show them concrete objects they could relate to. Maybe she did not seem to realise just how much Maltese she was drawing on. This also indicated that her intention was to use English as much as she could. The fact that her performance did not seem to follow suit may not be because she was not convinced about her intention (Borg, 2003; 2006). Using English requires more effort since it is her L2, and maybe to her it did seem like she had used it all the time. She did use English but she rarely did so exclusively, without translation or explanation in Maltese.

She explained that she did use resources and strategies to aid the pupils' understanding without using Maltese:

*In fact I remember using that for the cooking hat and for the apron. I told them what is dad wearing and pointed to my head for example. And they understood.*

(S.Int.2.94)

However, Suzanne stated that her goal was to use more English and not code-switch to Maltese so frequently, especially when she could avoid it by pointing at things (S.Int.2.100). However, here I must admit that she said this after my suggestion that

maybe she could draw on more strategies as she had done successfully with the flour, eggs and apron (S.Int.2.87).

Suzanne then said that to use English 'is not something out of this world. It is easy to do I think' (S.Int.2.104). Here I think she may not have evaluated her use of language realistically. She went on to comment that it was unrealistic to expect Year 1 pupils to be fluent or capable of speaking and reading in their L2 at this stage, since there were 'some of them who did not even know how to read on their own' (S.Int.2.106). Thus, here she seemed to contradict her previous statement that it was 'easy' to use English. Perhaps this competing and conflicting discourse reflected her inner conflicts about the use of the L2 during lessons. Her L2 teaching intentions and her lived experiences did not match up (Almarza, 1996; Johnson, 1994; Twiselton, 2004) and therefore, here we have this tension emerging between the two aspects as Suzanne tries to find her way through these conflicting beliefs.

In the first questionnaire Suzanne believed that it was not appropriate to use Maltese during English lessons, but now her opinion has changed and she says it is acceptable to use Maltese 'when you realize that the pupils are not following'. She did not mention that pupils would be more confident using English in the English lessons as she did in her reply to the same question in the first questionnaire before the practicum. In fact she listed not being able to conduct an English lesson solely in English as one of her main weaknesses and said that 'I was not able to use only English during an English lesson although I really wanted to'. She stated that during her next practicum she would strive to use the L2 more.

Suzanne seemed to keep the pupils' learning outcomes in mind when planning and preparing her lessons, however, as we see below at this stage it was centred around her: her planning, her effort, her resources and not the pupils'. This drive for all the pupils to understand may be why she constantly code-switched to Maltese in the lesson I observed. Maybe that was her way of checking their understanding and reassuring herself that they were learning. So it seemed that she was trying to do more than just 'dish out' the information and deliver the 'given' curriculum as is common with many novice student teachers (Britzman, 2003; Twisleton, 2000; 2006).

### **6.7.3 *Becoming a teacher***

Suzanne still believed that she would make a good teacher because, 'I love teaching, I wish to spend the rest of my life amongst children and I feel that I am capable of doing so'. Despite, this she realised that there were areas where she needed to learn and develop more, 'after all I am still a first year' (S.Int.2.68).

Therefore, on the whole she felt that her first teaching experience was very positive.

*I feel I have learnt a lot. You know, before I thought that it wasn't that hard ... but it isn't that easy to teach, to prepare, and even to get to know the kids. Each one of them has their own character, you know, you have to know each one individually. But the children are quite happy with me...*

(S.Int.2.12)

However, in the extract above, more importantly, she realised that she had held the mistaken belief that teaching would be 'easy'. This lays the foundation for further learning about teaching and learning that is not only based on her previous beliefs and/or experiences (Britzman, 2006; Kagan, 1992; Lortie, 1975; McLeod, 2001). It shows she was developing a realistic view of teaching.

Suzanne was positive about her experiences of teaching but it was not always a smooth ride for her, and she did experience doubts about her choice of profession.

*What am I doing here? I didn't get the response I wanted...They used to give me a hard time until they settled down'.*

(S.Int.2.140)

So she felt upset and frustrated that all her hard work was not being appreciated by the pupils. As we saw before, she placed high value on being appreciated. She also expressed the concern about what becoming a teacher would entail as regards time dedicated to producing resources as she says, 'I can't spend all my life cutting the resources'.

## **6.8 Lesson 2: Opposites**

During her 2<sup>nd</sup> Year TP Suzanne was placed in a state primary school in the central-western part of Malta. This time Suzanne was assigned a Year 2 class to teach for 6 weeks. For her 1<sup>st</sup> Year placement she had been posted in her home town, which is in the same geographical region.

### **6.8.1 Classroom Management**

Classroom management is usually quite a challenge for student teachers during their initial teaching experiences, and thus, focusing on having a class 'on task' may distract them from the learning outcomes of the lesson (Britzman, 1986; 2003, Twisleton, 2000), in this case the 'Opposites' in English. Twisleton (2004) proposed that when student teachers are at the stage of 'surviving' until the end of the lesson, they can be said to fall into the first category of student teachers she described as 'Task Managers'.

#### **Getting the pupils' attention**

The introduction to the lesson started with the pupils and Suzanne reading opposites, done in a previous lesson, off the chart. They took some time to get settled, maybe

because the pupils had just moved from their desks to the cushions. Suzanne used Maltese to try and get their attention. She told them to look at the chart so they could start reading.

1.	T	<p><b>Ejjew... araw iċ-chart halli meta naqraw tkunu tafu sew. Suppost lejn iċ-chart... lanqas tifel wiehed m'hawn jew tifla thares lejn iċ-chart. Mela ejja nibdew billi naqraw l-opposites li konna ... that we had done. Iva harsu l'hawn ha naghmlu l-opposites li ghamilna l-ahhar darba. Isa, let's start.</b></p>	<p><b>Come on... read the chart so that when we read you will know them. You should be looking at the chart... there is not even one boy or girl looking chart. So let's start by reading the opposites we had done ... that we had done. Look here so we can read the opposites we did last time. Come on, let's start.</b></p>
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(S.Obs.2.1)

So here she drew on Maltese to settle the pupils and to attempt to gain their attention. She urged them on one last time in Maltese (**Isa**), before she said 'let's start' in English. The pupils and Suzanne chorus read the list of opposites, some pupils trailed behind the others while reading, but through this strategy Suzanne managed to calm them down before the Powerpoint presentation. As though to mark the change in activity Suzanne used the Maltese, '**Issa tfal**', to direct them to the laptop (see extract below). She translated the last part of her sentence and added to it that they would see something once they were all looking at the screen. So here, once again Suzanne was using Maltese to translate and add to what she said in English to ensure they understood her instructions.

3.	T	<p><b>Issa tfal,</b> I want you to look at the laptop over there and we are going to see something. <b>Ha naraw xi haga... x'hin kollha tkunu qed tharsu l'hawn.</b></p> <p><b>Issa qieghda eqreb lejn il-karozzi hawn jigifieri iżjed u iżjed nista' naqla'. U jiena naf f'liema gruppi it-tfal qeghdin.</b></p> <p><b>Mela,</b> I want you to look here in silence. You are going to see something and then I want you to</p>	<p><b>Now children,</b></p> <p><b>We're going to see something... when you are all looking here.</b></p> <p><b>Now I am closer to the cars (car race reward chart) so I can remove them even more easily now. And I know which groups all the children belong to.</b></p> <p><b>So,</b></p>
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		note...and to look at the opposites which are going to be mentioned. <b>Ha naraw xi opposites, ha jissemmew xi opposites hawn u rridkom tibqghu tiftakruhom. Mela ha nara... kulhadd qed jara?</b>	<b>Let's see some opposites, some opposites will be mentioned here and I want you to remember them. So let me see ... can everyone see?</b>
4.	Ps	<b>Iva.</b>	<b>Yes.</b>
5.	T	Silent start... <b>ma nghajtux hekk please.</b>	Silent start... <b>let's not shout like that please.</b>
6.	P	(inaudible talking)	
7.	T	<b>Sshh! Mela, let's read.</b>	<b>Sshh! So, let's read.</b>

(S.Obs.2.3-7)

She also used the L1 to tell them that she was now closer to the car-race behaviour chart and could remove cars easily. Maybe this warning or 'threat' was also articulated in Maltese to ensure that all pupils understood her intentions and would behave well. This use of code-switching from English to Maltese for classroom management and for reprimanding was evident in her 1<sup>st</sup> Year lesson as well. She used the discourse marker, 'mela', to move on to reading the story on the laptop.

The teacher started the story 'Fuzzy at the Mountain Castle' through the use of a Powerpoint presentation on her laptop. The teacher read the story off the monitor, while pointing to the words. While she was reading, some pupils echoed and she sounded irritated and stopped to reprimand them in Maltese, as in an aside to the story to tell them that she was going to read.

8.	T	<b>Jiena ha naqra.</b> "Fuzzy was a small caterpillar.... Fuzzy was a small caterpillar. He saw a big castle on a mountain." Let's read:	<b>I am going to read.</b>
9.	T & Ps	small - big	
10.	T	Fuzzy...	
11.	Ps	Fuzzy...	
12.	T	<b>Min ser jaqra? Jekk tergghu taqraw darb'ohra nitfilu.</b>	<b>Who is going to read? If you read one more time I will switch it off.</b>

(S.Obs.2.8-12)



Below Suzanne continued to read the story until a pupil interjected with ‘zghir’ (small). Another pupil asked for the meaning of ‘short’ and she replied ‘qasir’ (short) in Maltese.

13.	T	“Fuzzy opened the door. He saw that the monster was short.”	
14.	P	<b>Zghir...</b>	<b>Small...</b>
15.	T	He was short	
16.	p	<b>Xi tfisser short?</b>	<b>What does short mean?</b>
17.	T	<b>Qasir...</b> “But its tail was long.”	<b>Short...</b>
18.	P	Short-long.	
19.	T&Ps	Short-long.	
20.	T	Very good. <b>Allavolja mhux kulhadd.</b>	<b>Although not everyone.</b>

(S.Obs.2.13-20)

As she read the opposites ‘short-long’, she signalled for all the pupils to read ‘short-long’ from on the chart. She praised them in English, but then added a reprimand in Maltese because not everyone had joined in. Thus, Suzanne used Maltese to translate and then to reprimand.

Another example of how Suzanne drew on Maltese for classroom management and procedural information to organise the pupils is illustrated below. She said, ‘Isa hurry up’ to urge them to put the cushions away quickly before they participated in a game. As pupils got back to their seats there was some classroom noise. Suzanne tried to get them organised to begin the next activity by counting up to ten in English, interspersed with Maltese instructions.

94.	T	Ok. Very good. Now I want you silently ...don’t forget the star-race, to go back in your places, put the cushions on the floor and we are going to have a game. <b>Isa hurry up.</b>	<b>Come on hurry up.</b>
95.	Ps	<b>Isa... ejja... inqeghduhom fl-art.</b>	<b>Come on... come on... let’s put them on the floor.</b>
96.	T	Put it on the floor.	
97.	P	<b>Ahh!</b>	
98.	T	Hurry up! I am going to count to	

		ten and you have to be ready. One, two, <b>ghamluhom ma' l-art il-cushions.</b> Three, four, five... <b>ġib is-siġġijiet...six, seven.</b>	One, two, <b>put the cushions on the floor.</b> Three, four, five... <b>bring the chairs..</b>
99.	P	<i>(inaudible -Some children arguing).</i>	
100.	T	<b>Halliha imbaghad naghmluha wara.</b> Eight, nine... <b>ha nara sa kemm ser indum.</b> Nine point one, nine point two, nine point three, point four, five, six,	<b>Leave it we'll do it later. Eight, nine...let's see how long I have to wait.</b>
101.	P	<b>Le...</b>	<b>No...</b>
102.	T	Seven, eight, nine ten. Very good. Put it on the other chair please (...)	

(S.Obs.2.94-102)

This strategy was drawn on by Suzanne in her first practicum and I had commented about the common use of numbers in English (Camilleri, 1995; Caruana Anastasi, 2003; Cucciardi, 1990; Farrugia, 2003). Thus, it is feasible that Suzanne was not using English for the numbers because it was an English lesson but because using English for numbers is the norm even amongst monolingual Maltese speakers.

In the following excerpt Suzanne used Maltese 'spicča dan', to tell them that the story had finished and to indicate that she would move on to the next step of the lesson.

103.	T	Yes he was happy to see Fuzzy. Now, I want you to sit over there and ... <b>issa daqshekk spicča dan...</b> and I want you to tell me which opposites were mentioned in the story. <b>Mela,</b> let's start. Samira...	<b>now this has finished...</b>  <b>So,</b>
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(S.Obs.2.103)

She used English to explain what they would do next and then used 'mela' in Maltese to indicate that they were to read the opposites mentioned in the story.

Suzanne regularly called on pupils to pay attention by addressing them in Maltese (Camilleri, 1995) as indicated in the two extracts below. The example below also shows Suzanne using English to praise.

122	T	<b>Andre hares l'hawn! Malcolm. Do you know how to write beautiful? B-e-a-u-t-i-f-u-l. Very good. What's the opposite of ugly?</b>	<b>Andre look here!</b>
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(S.Obs.2.122)

In the next extract Suzanne addressed the whole class, and warned them not to shout and told them that they were not at the market. Here she was drawing on their knowledge of the culture (the market being a noisy place where hawkers shout out to sell their wares) and was indicating that the noise level in class was too loud. She was also bringing the authority of one of her tutors to bear by saying that 'the man' had already told them not to make too much noise.

233	T	<b>Diga' ghedt biex ma' nghajtux. Mhux qeghdin il-monti. Diga' qalilkom dak ir-ragel.</b>	<b>I already told you not to shout. We are not at the market. That man already told you so.</b>
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(S.Obs.2.233)

I wonder whether she was doing this to justify herself or to impose authority that she felt she lacked at that point in time. Here Suzanne sounded exasperated and upset. Her outburst confirmed that indeed when she was stressed, angry or upset, she tended to use Maltese. It is common for bilinguals to draw on their dominant language in situations where strong emotions are drawn on (Camilleri, 1995; Ferguson, 2003; García, 2009).

In the following extract Suzanne knocked loudly on the whiteboard to gain the pupils' attention to tell them that the time allocated for the matching game was up. When a pupil told her that he was not ready, she used English quite harshly to tell him to 'shut up'. She knocked loudly on the whiteboard again attempting to gain the class' attention so they could read together. She directed them to do this in English, unlike other times when she code-switched to do this.

259.	T	Ok. Time up. <b>Jekk m'intomx lesti</b> just wait.	Ok. Time up. <b>If you are not ready</b> just wait.
256.	P	<b>Jien mhux lest.</b>	<b>I'm not ready.</b>
257.	T	Shut up!! If you're not ready don't worry. We are going to read it together. OK? So I want you to look at the front page. Ok let's see... I want you to look at the front page. Everybody. And put your books in the middle. In the middle. Yours is not in the middle.	
258.	P	<b>Inti m'ghamiltux</b> in the middle.	<b>You didn't put it</b> in the middle
259.	T	In the middle. Over there. Let's read the book together.	
260.	T&Ps	Fuzzy at the Mountain Castle.	
261.	T	<b>Mhux kulhadd qed jaqra. Hawn min qed jiekol il-lapes minflok.</b>	<b>Not everyone is reading. Someone is eating a pencil instead.</b>

(S.Obs.2.259-261)

As they were about to start reading Suzanne stopped to remark in Maltese that not everyone was reading and that 'someone is eating a pencil instead'. Both the reprimand and the sarcastic comment were made in Maltese and showed her increasing irritation at the pupils' behaviour.

### **Reprimand**

In the paragraph below Suzanne chided a pupil for looking at another pupil's work and not his own, and told him to sit up properly. At the time she was trying to elicit the opposite of 'small' from another pupil. While she was encouraging him the pupil she had just reprimanded whispered the answer. She showed her displeasure by saying '**ha jghidha hu**' (let him say it) in an irritated voice, and turned to Russell to continue asking him about the opposite of small.

171	T	<b>Inti hi mohhok f'tieghek mhux f'ta' haddiehor..u bil-qieghda sew. Isa...</b> what's the opposite of small..	<b>You focus on your own work and not on others'... sit up properly.</b>
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	<b>Ha jghidha hu...</b> What's the opposite of small Russell?	<b>Come on let him say it...</b>
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(S.Obs.2.171)

In the following extract Suzanne was organising the class for the next activity that consisted of a game. While she was telling them to put their books away (S.Obs.2.308) she addressed a particular group in Maltese, as though in an aside, to comment that they were the last group to get ready. She then continued to explain the activity in English. Again, she used an aside in Maltese to address a pupil who was getting out of his place. Suzanne continued with the explanation until she switched to Maltese yet again to reprimand a pupil who was not paying attention, and to say that she would not explain again. She used, the discourse marker, 'mela' to indicate the shift from addressing one pupil to addressing the whole class and to indicate that she would continue from where she had left off. While she was explaining a pupil coughed repeatedly, she stopped explaining and in Maltese asked him why he was coughing and told him to cover his mouth. Here she did not sound concerned about his cough, but was showing her disapproval at being interrupted.

308.	<p>T Ok. Can you please put the books underneath the table?</p> <p><b>L-ahhar grupp hi l-flowers.</b> Now we are going to have a small game... I want you to look here and understand carefully.</p> <p><b>Ibqa' fejn kont hi... hadd ma qallek...</b> I want you to look here. We are going to have a game. I am going to give these two pairs of children a set of cards ... don't touch. And I am going to give the other pair, another set of cards.</p> <p><b>Issa ghidli ma fhimtx. Tghidlix biex nispjegalek ghax mhux ser nispjegalek!</b></p> <p><b>Mela,</b> I am going to give these pair a set of cards and the other pair of children another set. And you have to play a game. For example this pair is going to tell them 'moist' and the other pair have</p>	<p><b>The Flowers are the last group.</b></p> <p><b>Stay were you are... nobody said you could...</b></p> <p><b>And then tell me that you didn't understand. Don't even bother to ask me to explain to you again!</b></p> <p><b>So,</b></p>
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		to look for its opposite. You can look over there (chart) or on the whiteboard. What's the opposite of moist? Who can tell me? <b>Inti x'ghandek, il-hin kollu tisghol? Ghatti halqek hi.</b> What's the opposite of moist? Justin.	<b>What's wrong with you, why are you coughing all the time? Cover your mouth.</b>
309.	P	Dry	
310.	T	Dry. <b>Mela dan il-grupp ifittex fil-cards sakemm isib il-kelma dry ..and they put it next to the other card. Ok?</b> <b>Fthemna?</b>	<b>So this group has to search the cards to find the word</b>  <b>Clear?</b>
311.	P	<b>Dawn naghmluhom hawn.</b>	<b>We put these here.</b>

(S.Obs.2.308-311)

In line 310 Suzanne used Maltese to explain what the groups should do to match opposite cards. She did this partly in Maltese and then continued the explanation within the same sentence in English. She then asked the pupils whether they had understood in both languages. Although here I would like to note that many Maltese speakers use 'OK', and therefore, it could be considered as both a Maltese and an English word.

### ***Praise and encouragement***

Suzanne used 'isa' and 'ejja ha nara' in Maltese to encourage a pupil to read and write the opposite of a particular word on the booklet. Thus, here we see that she was being encouraging and seemed to be using Maltese to create a safe space for the pupil to read.

177	T	Very good. Now turn the page and it is Russell's turn. You have to write the other opposite. Do you have a pencil? No? <b>Isa..in the castle...ejja ha nara.</b> Can you read for me please?	<b>Come on...in the castle...come on let's see.</b>
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(S.Obs.2.177)

In the next extract Suzanne used English throughout to praise a pupil for finishing her work and to tell her what to do while she was waiting. She repeated the phrase 'wait for the others' to ensure that the pupil understood her instructions in English.

237	T	You're ready?
238	P	Yes
239	T	Very good. Just wait for the others. Wait for the others. If you want you can start colouring in these

(S.Obs.2.237-239)

Suzanne praised Luke for getting the opposite of the word 'dry' correct, first in English but then in Maltese to reinforce her praise.

336	T	Moist. Very good Luke. <b>Illum vera qed niehu gost bik.</b> <b>Veru bravu. Moist.</b>	<b>Today I'm really pleased with you.</b> <b>Very good boy.</b>
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(S.Obs.2.336)

Here Suzanne showed her linguistic dexterity as she skilfully switched languages for different purposes during the same utterance. She praised the child in English but then switched to Maltese to tell him how pleased she was with him today and how good he had been. She did not only translate the praise but added to it to ensure the child got her message and maybe also to show that she really meant it.

### **Translations**

As she was reading the story about Fuzzy, a pupil asked Suzanne the meaning of 'short', she provided the translation in Maltese (**qasir**), and continued reading the story without attempting to explain the word in English. Maybe she did this to hasten the clarification so she would not have to slow down the pace of the story.

35	p	<b>Xi tfisser short?</b>	<b>What does short mean?</b>
36	T	<b>Qasir... "But its tail was long."</b>	<b>Short... "But its tail was long."</b>

(S.Obs.2.35-36).

Later on in the lesson when explaining what the pupils were to do she addressed the group in English but then translated her instructions into Maltese without being asked to. In the following Suzanne was explaining how they should match up the opposite cards. She told a pupil that she had to find the word 'bitter' first in Maltese and then translated to English. This seemed unnecessary since she had already said it in Maltese. When explaining how to put them near each other, Suzanne first used English and then

translated to Maltase a few seconds later. Perhaps she was translating to enhance their understanding or to reinforce the message, as a monolingual would paraphrase or rephrase to aid understanding.

318	T	<p><b>Inti. Ejja inti. Imbaghad toqghod tghid li m'ghandekx bitter.</b>          Very good.  <b>Ghamilhom hdejn xulxin. Inti bitter trid issib.</b>          Find the word bitter. Sweet – bitter. Find the word bitter...there it is. Put them next to each other...put them next to each other. <b>Ghamluhom hdejn xulxin. Ghamluhom hdejn xulxin bhall-grupp tal-flowers.</b> Very good. Now I want you to find the word always. ...this one. Always...</p>	<p><b>You. You come here. And then you say that you don't have bitter.</b></p> <p><b>Put them near each other. Now you need to find bitter.</b></p> <p><b>Put them next to each other. Put them next to each other like the group of flowers.</b></p>
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(S.Obs.2.318)

***Maltese to explain***

151.	P	Miss opposite of warm cold <b>jew cool?</b>	<b>or cool?</b>
152.	T	Bravu. Look, <b>ara Clyde x'induna. Hawnhekk,</b> we wrote warm-cool and here I have warm-cold. Very good.	<b>look at what Clyde noticed. Here,</b>
153.	P	Cool u cold... <b>qishom</b>	<b>...are like</b>
154.	T	<b>Qishom l-istess cold kiesah u cool ukoll qisu kiesah.</b> Very good Clyde. <b>Dak ifisser li kien attent.</b>	<b>They are almost the same cold for cold and cool is also like cold.</b>  <b>That shows that you were attentive.</b>

(S.Obs.2.151-154)

In the above extract Suzanne praises Clyde in Maltese because he had noticed that there was a discrepancy between the list on opposites 'warm-cold' and 'warm-cool' on the chart and on the whiteboard. She then proceeded to explain in Maltese. She switched back to English to praise him and then told the class in an aside in Maltese that he had noticed because he was paying attention.



### **6.8.2 Language use observed during the second lesson**

During the first lesson I observed during Suzanne's second TP, she drew on Maltese very frequently during the first 15 minutes of the lesson. The use of Maltese was mostly for classroom management, to reprimand the pupils and to translate. She used both English and Maltese consecutively or in a mixed manner for explanations. The lesson involved Suzanne reading a story on the classroom monitor that contained opposites and then the pupils worked out a matching activity in pairs. During plenary of the lesson the pupils used English to read the words (opposites) but for the pair work the pupils spoke in Maltese.

### **6.9 Lesson 3: My face/features**

Suzanne started the lesson<sup>30</sup> by pointing to her own face and features to elicit the terms from the children in English. Together they started revising parts of the face and features (face, ears, eyes, mouth, hair etc.) dealt with in a previous lesson. Then they listened to a dialogue (on the Happy House CD) between Otto and the three mice (Ruby, Tina and Spike).

#### ***Classroom management***

In the extract below Suzanne was trying to settle the pupils down to start the lesson. She showed this intention by using 'mela, let's start'. She then addressed one pupil in Maltese to tell her that her jacket was going to fall onto the floor. She then reverted to English to continue with the introduction to the lesson. She explained what they would do and then switched to Maltese to tell them that they should participate in the activity slowly and quietly. Thus, the procedure dealing with the activity itself was addressed in English, whereas, the part about their behaviour was explained in Maltese. Maybe

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<sup>30</sup> This lesson was based on the Happy House Course Book (Unit 4, Lesson 2, pg. 26, and Activity Book pg. 23).

Suzanne did this because she had already engaged in similar activities during the previous lessons about 'faces' and features. She may also have felt that using Maltese would help to emphasise her instructions about behaviour, and that more pupils would understand her.

17	T	<p><b>Mela</b>, let's start ... to start the lesson...Everybody sitting down now!</p> <p><b>Ha taqaghlek il-ġakketta.</b></p> <p>So, to start the lesson we are going to revise the parts of the face that we have learnt in the previous weeks. So I am going to point to my parts of the face... and you have to name them.</p> <p>Slowly <b>imma u ma nghajtux.</b> Sit down. Pay attention.</p>	<p><b>Your jacket is going to fall.</b></p> <p><b>But slowly and quietly.</b></p>
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(S.Obs.3.17)

In the following, Suzanne, explained the activity in English without any code-switching. Maybe she was more confident using English with this class whilst doing this theme now since they had been working on this vocabulary for the past fortnight though similar activities. In the explanation Suzanne pointed at parts of her face as she explained the activity. Thus, the non-verbals helped to convey the message as well.

45	T	<p>Very good. So I am going to point to my parts of the face and you have to correct me because I will either say them correct, like nose (<i>pointing at her nose</i>) or incorrect, mouth...and you have to tell me if it is correct or if it is not correct.</p>
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(S.Obs.3.45)

### **Reprimand**

In the extract beneath Suzanne used English to remind a pupil to speak in English and then halted her English explanation to reprimand two pupils who were sharing a joke.

84	P	A mouse... <b>kien qed...</b> (inaudible)	...was
85	T	<p>In English please.</p> <p>What parts of the face were mentioned? Not only of the face... there were others.</p> <p><b>Forsi bid-dahk Maria u Hailey</b></p>	<p><b>Maybe because they were laughing</b></p>

		<b>ma fehmux.</b> Natalia.	<b>Maria and Hailey didn't understand</b>
86	P	Pink..	

(S.Obs.3.84-86)

She also drew on Maltese to scold a pupil who replied out of turn while she was directing the question to another pupil (109) and to reprimand another pupil who spoke out of turn to say that she wanted to reply to her question (137-139). She used the L2 to deal with the organisation of choosing pupils to take part in the role-play, but interjects in the L1, almost as an aside to remark that she would chose pupils who were being good and not those who were leafing through pages. She then switched back to English to assign roles. Thus, the organisation and management of the role-play have been negotiated in both languages. However, this time the procedure was dealt with in English. In the second paragraph, Suzanne explained how they were to do the role-play and used Maltese to explain that they had to 'pretend' to be outside and knock.

219	T	Otto is lying. He's not telling the truth. <b>Issa ha naghzel ftit tfal. Dawk li qeghdin bravi...zgur mhux dawk li qed idawru l-pages.</b> And I want them to be Otto, Ruby, Spike and Tina. And they are going to play the part. They should pretend to be Otto, Ruby, Spike and Tina. So choose some volunteers. Russell, you are Otto Russell. Come. Hailey is Tina. Maria and Chris.	<b>Now I will choose some children. Those who are behaving well...and not those who are leafing through their pages.</b>
220	Ps	<b>Iiii...</b>	<b>Hey...</b>
221	T	Now... Otto come here. Come over here. He is going to be outside... <b>taparsi.</b> You have to knock. Like this (knock, knock)... <b>habbat. Ok.come in... ghidlu.</b>	<b>pretend.</b> <b>knock. Ok. Come in... tell him.</b>

(S.Obs.3.219-221)

While she was directing them to read, Suzanne was distracted by pupils who were kicking the side of their desk, she stopped mid-sentence and in Maltese told them to

stop making noises. She immediately switched back to English to continue what she was saying.

250	T	Read from there... <b>ieqfu il-hsejjes b'saqajkom</b> ....big..	<b>...stop making noises with your feet...</b>
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(S.Obs.3.250)

In paragraph 377 Suzanne switched to Maltese to quieten the class and to reassure the pupils that they would all get a turn at saying a true/false sentence. She also used Maltese to encourage Justin to create his own sentence.

377	T	True. It is true. Luke has got a face. Justin... <b>sshhh kulhadd ser jaghmel... isa</b> Justin something about yourself. Ryan hi ... sit down properly.	<b>sshhh everyone will have a turn... come on.</b>
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(S.Obs.3.377)

This part of the lessons was taking more time than planned and the pupils were becoming restless. Those who had already said a sentence did not seem interested in the activity any more while those who had not were eager to get their turn and were not really listening to each other. Suzanne drew on Maltese again in extracts 411 and 452 to comment that particular pupils were not attentive. She used the L1 to conclude the activity by calling on two pupils, and to remark that one of the pupils should have already thought of her sentence or statement.

498	T	<b>Issa Hailey u Maria tal-ahhar.</b> <b>Isa, support ga hsibt.</b>	<b>Now Hailey's turn and then Maria will go last.</b> <b>Come on, you should have already thought about it.</b>
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(S.Obs.3.498)

Despite Suzanne's tendency to use Maltese to address undesirable behaviour through the L1, below we have an extract in which she was directing them in the L2, quite harshly, to be silent and not talk during the homework explanation.

508	T	It is false very good. Now. I want you to close your books and open the other book. I want you to find page 23...in silence!! Shut up please...Stop talking. Now, what animals can you see...Justin?
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(S.Obs.3.508)

In the extensive extract below Suzanne used quite a lot of Maltese, especially when compared to the rest of this particular lesson. Suzanne sounded irritated when she switched to L1 to address a pupil who was finding the listening activity difficult and was not keeping up with the rest of the class.

564.	T	Tail...but it wasn't mentioned, <b>imma</b> . Now. What we are going to do is this. I want you to listen <b>u skont in-numri</b> you have to put the numbers in the boxes here. Alright?	Tail...but it wasn't mentioned, <b>but</b> .  <b>and according to the numbers</b>
565.	P	Yes	
566.	CD	Activity Book page 23 listen and write the numbers.	
567.	T	Put the numbers	
568.	CD	Number 1: I've got big teeth... grr.	
569.	T	I've got... <b>immarkaw toqoghdux tghiduli</b> . I've got big teeth.	<b>...mark them and don't tell me.</b>
570.	CD	Number 2: I have big ears and I have a big nose.	
571.	T	I have big ears and I have a big nose. Ok Dorothy?	
572.	CD	Number 3: I've got big eyes.	
573.	T	Big eyes. <b>Clyde hi x'gara? X'gara? Qed taghmilhom? Nigi nara. Qeghdin number 4 u ghadek lanqas ghamilt it-three.</b>	<b>Clyde what's wrong? What's wrong? Are you doing them? I'll come and see. We're at number 4 and you haven't even done number three.</b>
574.	CD	Number 4: I have a big mouth. Lesson 33...	
575.	T	I've got a big mouth. So... I will correct them for you, ok? <b>Kollha trid taghmilhom.</b> Bless you (Pupil sneezed).	<b>You have to do them all.</b>
576.	P	<b>Mhux lest...</b>	<b>I'm not ready ...</b>
577.	T	So close your books and put them underneath the table. I want you to find a new page please.	

		<b>Ohrog il-pitazz l-iehor. Ok.</b>	<b>Take out the other copybook. Ok.</b>
578.	P	Talking	
579.	T	Shut up. Malcolm. Now I want you to find a new page.	
580.	P	<b>Tajjed?</b>	<b>Is this good?</b>
581.	T	No. A new page. A new page. <b>Tghajjatx! Tghajjatx! Inti hi ohrog il-pitazz l-iehor. Il-brown jew x'kulur hu.</b> Find a new page and I want you to write down the date please. This is for homework. OK? Listen carefully what I am going to tell you. On the whiteboard I am going to write down three sentences. At home you are going to underline the correct word... <b>Jigifieri taghmlu underline taht il-kelma t-tajba. Ftehemna jew le?</b>	<b>Don't shout! Don't shout! You, take out your other copybook. The brown one or whatever colour it is.</b>  <b>That means you are to underline the correct word. Are you understanding or not?</b>
582.	P	Iva.	
583.	T	<b>Id-dar mhux hawn.</b> Number 1: I have got a tail. <b>Issa jekk ghandkom spazju komplu iktbu hawn, jekk le iktbu hdejha. Jien m'ghandix spazju allura ser nikteb taht.</b>	<b>At home not here.</b>  <b>Now, if you have enough space continue writing here, if not write next to it. I don't have room so I will write below.</b>

(S.Obs.3.564-583)

In paragraph 581 Suzanne seemed to be racing against time to explain their homework task. She used English but then she translated part of what she has just said to ensure they understood and maybe to be efficient on time. She also used Maltese to remind them that this was homework and explained how they should write the 3 sentences on their homework copybooks and how she would write them out on the whiteboard.

### ***Translations and Explanations***

Here Suzanne, told the pupils to open their books *after* listening to the story. She asked a pupil what 'after' meant and he gave the right word in Maltese. She then repeated the Maltese word for the class to hear, but reinforced the English version by repeating 'we will open the books afterwards'. However, she changed 'after' to 'afterwards'.

123	T	Pay attention. <b>Jiena ghedt</b> open the books after. So now leave the books underneath the table. After. What does it mean after? What does it mean Dean?	Pay attention. <b>I said</b>
124	P	<b>Wara</b>	<b>After</b>
125	T	<b>Wara.</b> We will open the books afterwards. Ok? Now you will listen to the story once again.	<b>After.</b>

(S.Obs.3.123-125)

In the following extract Suzanne was eliciting the meaning of *true* and *false* from the pupils. The pupils gave the Maltese equivalents and she repeated them. Thus, Suzanne was using the L1 effectively to elicit the Maltese versions of the words to check that they knew the meaning of the concepts and as a preparation for the following activity. It was also interesting to note that she switched back to English without being drawn into a whole explanation in Maltese.

361	T	What does <i>true</i> mean? Ryan what does it mean?	
362	P	<b>Veru.</b>	<b>True.</b>
363	T	<b>Veru.</b> True <b>jigifieri...</b> <i>False?</i> Adrian..	<b>True.</b>
364	P	<b>Mhux veru.</b>	<b>False</b>
365	T	<b>Mhux veru.</b> Very good. False. It is not true. False. So now we are going to play a small game. We will have a small activity.	<b>False.</b>

(S.Obs.3.361-365)

In the following extract Suzanne was explaining and reinforcing the meaning of the concepts true and false, by translating the words from English to the L1 as she explained. This emphasis seemed to indicate that Suzanne thought that this may be a difficult concept for her class of Year 2 pupils to handle and thus justified her use of the L1 for conceptual development (Faltis, 1990) and as a pedagogical tool (Merritt *et al.*, 1992).

371	T	Ok blue or green. Everybody is going to say something about himself.	
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		<b>Issa</b> it can be true, <b>vera</b> , or something which is not true, <b>false</b> , <b>mhux vera</b> . Ok. I am going to start. So, I have got pink hair.	<b>Now</b> it can be true, <b>true</b> , <b>false</b> .
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(S.Obs.3.367-371)

Below, Suzanne used translation in what might be considered a less effective manner, because she first gave an instruction in Maltese and then repeated it in English. In this situation it surely was not a translation for comprehension purposes. Maybe she spoke in Maltese without meaning to and switched as soon as she realised.

530	T	<b>Tiktbu xejn.</b> Don't write anything for now. Listen...	<b>Don't write anything.</b>
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(S.Obs.3.530)

### ***Encouraging pupils***

In the extract below, Suzanne, switched to Maltese to encourage a pupil to label a part of her face she was pointing at. It seemed to work, as he replied in English. She praised him in Maltese. Suzanne drew on Maltese to ask the pupil a question and praise him. I do not think that she did it because the pupil had a difficulty in understanding: 'what is this?' or 'good'. Here she seemed to draw on the L1 to encourage the pupil and to make him feel at ease (Camilleri, 1996).

35	T	<b>X'inhi?</b>	<b>What is this?</b>
36	P	mouth	
37	T	<b>Tajjeb.</b> Yes. Clyde..	<b>Good.</b>

(S.Obs.3.35-37)

Suzanne was encouraging a pupil to say a statement in English beginning with, 'I have got...' and used Maltese to prompt him. She also used English to prompt and encourage the other pupils, while referring them to the whiteboard where she had written down the features of the face during the introduction to the lesson. She also



repeated what the pupils said to ensure all the class heard. This also served to reinforce the structure of the English statements they were practicing.

199.	T	What did Otto tell Tina, Ruby and Spike? <b>X'qalilhom?</b> He told them...	<b>What did he tell them?</b>
200.	P	He told them ...	
201.	T	I have got...	
202.	P	I have got... ears	
203.	T	Ears. But look at the whiteboard. He told them I have got ...?	
204.	P	Big ears.	
205.	T	He told them I have got big ears. What else? What did he tell them then?	
206.	P	A big teeth.	
207.	T	That he has got big teeth. Andre`... what else? He told them he has ...	

(S.Obs.3.199-207)

In line 233 Suzanne encouraged a pupil to say his phrase. He managed to do it but still required Suzanne's assistance to join together other phrases. This was a part of the lesson where other pupils experienced some difficulty as well since they had to make up their own phrases for the role-play.

232	P	I am a ...mouse.	
233	T	<b>Ejja f'daqqa ghidhielhom sew.</b> I am a mouse	<b>Come on say it all in one go</b>
234	P	I am a mouse.	
235	T	And I have got...	
236	P	And I have got	
237	T	Big teeth.	
238	P	Big teeth.	

(S.Obs.3.232-238)

Below Suzanne praised them in English and then switched to the L1 to encourage them to make up their own phrases and tell them that this time she would not be telling them what to say. She then switched back to the L2 to choose pupils for the next role-play.

263	T	Very good. Give them a clap. Let's have some other role-play. <b>Issa tridu titkellmu intom mhux</b>	<b>Now you have to talk and I will</b>
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		<b>ser nghidilkom jien. Suppost tafu kif ghandha tigi.</b> Four children are...Andre, ehm...Justin, Samara, Natalia.	<b>not say anything. You should know what to say now.</b>
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(S.Obs.3.263)

During the role-play Suzanne prompted and encouraged them to speak by using 'isa' (come on), 'ejja' (come on) and by referring them to the words written on the board.

Below she used Maltese to direct them to speak up.

291	T	Otto a cat. Very good. I need four more children. <b>Imma ghajtu ftit ghax inkella lanqas tinstemghu. Jekk tmorru fuq il-palk ta' veru lanqas jaghzlu kom ghax jghidu dawn lanqas jghajtu.</b> Eric, Andrew, Gabriel and Nicole.	<b>But speak up a bit otherwise you won't be heard. If you go on a real stage no one will choose you because you're not raising your voices enough.</b>
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(S.Obs.3.291)

Thus, in this role-play Suzanne seemed to use Maltese to prompt and direct them, whilst she used English to help them with the content. She also used English to direct one role-play episode as well as to praise the pupils.

### **Use of English**

In this lesson Suzanne drew pupils' attention to use more English, this was something she rarely, or never did in the lessons observed previously. In previous lessons she seemed to make an effort to use English during the English lessons but she did not appear to be encouraging the pupils to do so as well. In the following two extracts Suzanne asked the pupils to speak in English.

63	P	Miss ears.. <b>m'ghamilnihix</b>	Miss <b>we didn't do</b> ears.
64	T	Ok. Ears <b>m'ghamilnihix</b> . Ok. But now we are supposed to speak in English not in Maltese.	Ok. <b>We didn't do</b> ears.
65	P	I know how to speak English..	

(S.Obs.3.63-65)

84	P	A mouse... <b>kien qed...</b> (inaudible)...	A mouse... <b>was...</b> (inaudible)...
85	T	In English please. What parts of the face were mentioned? Not only of the face...there were others. <b>Forsi bid-dahk Maria u Hailey ma fehmux.</b> Natalia...	<b>Maybe Maria and Hailey didn't understand because they were busy laughing.</b>

(S.Obs.3.84-85)

Suzanne (line 423) confirmed the pupils' intervention that 'tnejn' is 'two', but reminded them that they should speak English. However, as soon as she finished saying that she switched to Maltese to address some pupils who were being talkative and not paying attention.

So despite her intentions Suzanne seemed to revert to Maltese almost invariably when addressing classroom management issues (Camilleri, 1995; 1996; Faltis, 1990).

421	T	Two hands	
422	Ps	<b>Tnejn.</b>	<b>Two</b>
423	T	Two <b>tnejn</b> , but we are speaking in English now. Samira. <b>Sshhh! Iktar ma ndumu iktar ma taghmlux t'hemm wara.</b> I have ..	Two <b>two</b> , but we are speaking in English now. Samira. <b>Sshhh! The longer we take the more likely it is that the ones at the back won't have the opportunity to do one.</b> I have ..

(S.Obs.3.421-423)

In the three extracts above Suzanne reminded the pupils to speak English, in the following extract she used a slightly different approach; she told them that she did not understand Maltese (146). This tactic worked because the pupil repeated and translated his Maltese phrase into English.

144	T	So in the pictures there are: Otto, Spike, Ruby and Tina. And what is Otto doing?	
145	P	<b>Qed ihabbat.</b>	<b>He is knocking.</b>
146	T	I don't understand Maltese	
147	P	He is knocking.	

(S.Obs.3.144-147)

Suzanne's use of the phrase 'I don't understand Maltese' is like some other phrases she uses that seem to form part of her 'teacher phrases'. Such phrases seem to belong to a kind of 'script'. Much of classroom language is scripted like this and we also develop our own phrases and 'ways of being' in language.

### **6.9.1 Language use observed during the third lesson**

In the third lesson (S.Obs.3) I observed Suzanne, she seemed to use English more than she did in the previous two lessons I observed. Here she did not switch to Maltese in almost every sentence or phrase. Maybe, it was because she had gained more confidence and experience in planning and language use since she was now towards the end of her 2<sup>nd</sup> Year 6-week practicum. The type of lesson they were doing may have been more suited to the use of English, since it involved the consolidation and revision of vocabulary the pupils had learnt in previous weeks. Suzanne used non-verbals and gestures frequently (she pointed at her face and her features) during the activities. Having the audio CD to listen to, may also have created an environment that was more conducive to the use of English. In this lesson it was important to note that Suzanne reminded the pupils to speak in English when they switched to Maltese. The pupils were not expected to give lengthy replies in English and so that may have helped as well. During the first part of the lesson most of the pupils used English consistently as they only had to reply with the words *True* or *False*. Then in the following activity they had to repeat the set phrase 'I have got....' The second part of the lesson was more difficult for the pupils because it involved the production of spoken language to do a role-play. In fact during this part of the lesson Suzanne had to suggest phrases and many pupils just repeated after her as they seemed unable to make up their own phrases and do the activity on their own.

## 6.10 Final interview and questionnaire with Suzanne

Initially Suzanne was disappointed with her experience of the 6-week practicum since she found it difficult to manage the class and to meet the needs of all the children. She felt she was preparing a lot and it was all in vain. The thought of giving up crossed her mind and she even had days when she went home and cried.

### ***The School and Pupils***

This year Suzanne was experiencing being in a new school. Although, it was a state primary school, as last year, it was a totally new school to her. She did not know her way around the school, did not know the staff, the pupils and their families or even the area very well<sup>31</sup>. Therefore, she felt that this time she was on unknown territory and holds that,

*...yes it makes a difference... because I knew the other pupils, I knew their way of life... it was like a family.*

(S.Int.3.42)

This was very different to her experience in her 1<sup>st</sup> Year<sup>11</sup> practicum, since Suzanne had been posted to her childhood school. During her 1<sup>st</sup> Year she had the opportunity to carry out observations of the class she was going to take over, which were not possible during her 2<sup>nd</sup> Year. Thus, she had to start her 6-week practicum with a class she hardly knew (S.Q.3.18).

She was also upset because some parents complained about an apparent lack of traditional homework. She felt this was unfair since she always gave homework. She also may have felt upset because she had to prove herself to the parents and school,

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<sup>31</sup> She did know one of the pupils in her class because he was her cousin's son.

because they did not know her and her family, as the parents and staff of the previous school did.

### **6.10.1 English language use in class**

Suzanne believed that this year she had tried to use more English in class and said that, ‘Now, I think I’m doing quite well’ (S.Int.3.96). She explained that during her previous practicum her tutor had advised her to use more English. Suzanne stated that she used Maltese during Maltese lessons and English during English lessons, whilst drawing on code-switching from English to Maltese to explain difficult concepts and also to maintain discipline in class. Suzanne explained that it was difficult for her to use only one language in class (S.Q.3.21).

Suzanne believed that the class teacher did not use English to communicate with the pupils during English lessons, and therefore it was not easy to use English with the pupils either. She also said that since she does not speak English at home it was not so easy for her either. Therefore, despite her conscious efforts and intentions to use English it was still natural for Suzanne to switch to Maltese even during English lessons. She continued by saying that for her it was ‘a challenge’ to speak in English for an hour or more. Thus, Suzanne’s experiences uphold the claim made by Camilleri (1996) that teachers would automatically use the language they are most familiar and at ease with, even in class.

86.	S	I think that I am improving in using more English. Last year ...I don’t know... one of the tutors, I think it is written somewhere... she pointed out to use more English. She told me that although the lesson was good, I need to use more English to get them used to it. And in fact, this year, that is what I am trying to do.
87.	JM	So you agree with the comments?
88.	S	Yes I do agree. And <u>I always wanted to use English, but sometimes, you know, as I’m not used to it... as I don’t speak English... as I don’t speak English you know at home, so I’m not so used to speak English, I</u>

		mean...it's <u>another challenge for me...</u> for me to speak English for about an hour or so...
89.	JM	I remember that last year you said that you had been working as a receptionist ... and you were using English and you felt better
90.	S	Yes it helped me to feel better
91.	JM	..to feel more confident...
92.	S	Yes exactly. And comfortable in using English. Yes I do and I think I <u>have improved</u> , although, I mean... although not so... not so ... I mean... excellent.
93.	JM	I see...
94.	S	But not bad.
95.	JM	Hmm... so you feel with the children here... were they used to English before?
96.	S	I don't think so because, at first when I, when I... when we had the first English lesson and I spoke to them in English they were kind of lost... but still they didn't bother. <u>I mean whilst speaking in English I try and use a lot of gestures, for them to understand... and I think it helped.</u> Now, I think I'm doing quite well.
97.	JM	They seem to understand when you say something...
98.	S	Yes. But I don't think they were really used to it. I don't think so. Because even when they come to speak English or to say something...
99.	JM	They find it a bit more difficult.
100.	S	Exactly. Although I try as much as possible ... but sometimes I ... not forget, but you know... I want to do the lesson, I want to speak in English, then I forget they have to speak in English back to me. You know? But then still when I realise, I say, for tomorrow I will try to get them to speak more English. You know. So that's why I am learning all the time.

(S.Int.3.86-100)

Suzanne thought that she had improved her own language proficiency and confidence in using English through working as a part-time receptionist, where she had to use English with guests and tourists. She seemed quite pleased to have improved; however, she qualified this by adding that she was not 'excellent'. Thus, we see that her underlying concern with her own proficiency was still very present. I think that her lack of confidence in her own proficiency was bound to be felt in her use, or lack of use, of English as a medium of instruction in class.

## 6.11 Conclusion

Through the lesson observations, it was clear that in the majority of cases, whenever there is a classroom management difficulty Suzanne switched to Maltese immediately and this highlighted the fact that Maltese was the language that she was most comfortable using to communicate and explain. Her efforts to use English were mostly conscious efforts and related directly to the content of the lesson (the reading, sentences, vocabulary). Even the times when she did appear to be using English to direct the pupils or give instructions, it was mostly when it followed on closely to the reading or related directly to the lesson content. In fact, Camilleri (1996, p 101) commented that, frequently teachers she studied also marked the difference between talk about lesson content and 'talk related to the social relations of the classroom' as follows:

*...the teachers used codeswitching as a communicative resource for discourse management purposes: in providing explanations, in introducing new topics, or in making asides.*

In a nutshell, Camilleri (1995; 1996; 2001) holds that code-switching in most of the Maltese classrooms she studied was done in such a way that it could be perceived of as a resource to aid the teaching and learning taking place or to build a positive rapport with the pupils.

Jacobson (1990) on the other hand argued that code-switching by some teachers seems haphazard. I do not believe that Suzanne uses language in a haphazard manner or that her language use could be described as a 'hotchpotch' of Maltese English (Pavlova, 1987). However, I think that her lack of confidence in using the L2 may be a factor that leads her to use the L1 more frequently.

The first two lessons by Suzanne that I observed worried me. I got the feeling that she could not hold a lesson through the use of English as the language of instruction. She



hardly uttered one whole sentence in English. There did seem to be a broad categorisation visible for her use of Maltese. She did switch to Maltese more often to address classroom management and organisational issues. She also switched to Maltese to provide explanations and translations to aid understanding. However, I believe that she could have managed to use more English even during explanations. Many times the Maltese interventions were initiated by herself and not by pupils asking for clarifications. So her code-switching here did not take place because she was 'following the child'. Zentella (1997, p 19) holds that teacher code-switching may take place for the teacher to imitate the same language the pupil has used and therefore, would be 'following' the pupil's language use.

At times it seemed almost as though she was offering additional explanations to reassure herself that the pupils were understanding, and maybe not because of a real need. Maybe it was her lack of confidence in her own use of the L2 that also kept her from using more English. I also thought it worrying that at times her perception of her language use after her first practicum (1<sup>st</sup> Year) was not realistic, in that in the interview after the first practicum she told me that she used English most of the time and also asserted that it was not something too difficult to do (S.Int.2.84). However, she may have been trying to please me by telling me what she thought I wanted to hear.

In the third lesson Suzanne used more English. Maybe because the lesson came towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> week of her 6-week practicum, she felt more at ease with the class, was better prepared and had established herself as an authority in the class and could focus more on the lesson instead of continuously addressing classroom management issues.

Suzanne was good at switching to Maltese for different functions and this shows an acute awareness of the use of language for social, affective and cultural expression. However, she may need to become more confident in her own L2 use and more aware of her own language use as a resource to aid L2 learning and therefore, to be in a better position to draw on code-switching 'responsibly' as proposed by Ferguson (2003) and Van der Walt et al. (2001). I say this since she does have the responsibility of teaching the pupils English during the English lessons. Her use of code-switching during other lessons across the curriculum does not worry me as much. Unless she does this she will probably be unwittingly perpetuating the same feelings of lack of confidence and proficiency in using English for communicative purposes, that in the first interview she was adamant that she would not do.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Lisa: Case Study 3

#### 7.1 Introduction to Lisa

Lisa was 18 when she started to read for a degree in Law but then after her 1<sup>st</sup> Year she decided to read for a degree in Primary Education instead. Lisa's summer job, working as a children's activity animator in a hotel, helped to direct her toward working with children and to opt for Education instead of Law, because 'It gave me an inkling of what I like' (L.Int.1.124).

*I felt I would do better with children. I have quite an understanding with young children. Even through my work experience children seem to enjoy it.*

(L.Int.1.126)

Lisa hails from a family of teachers: 'all my family are educators; my mother's a teacher, my father was a lecturer, my grandfather a Headmaster, my grandma a teacher.' (L.Int.1.10). In a later interview (L.Int.3) Lisa did say that she wanted to try to do something different, not to fit in so neatly with her family, but somehow she was drawn to teaching maybe because it was something she felt she knew and shared values relating to education.

At one stage or another during her schooling Lisa attended different schools: an independent preschool; church schools for her primary and secondary education; and, a state post-secondary school. Thus, her schooling experiences were varied, but the

longest periods of schooling, that were also the compulsory ones, were spent in church schools for girls.

Lisa's mother was a full-time teacher and her late father was a teacher and lecturer of Maltese. She grew up in a home that was literacy-rich and where education was valued (L.Int.18; 20). At home both English and Maltese were used, as I describe below.

## 7.2 Language profile

Lisa considers herself as **bilingual** and said that both Maltese and English were her first language (L.Q.1.6-7; L.Int.1.8). She said that up to the age of four she used to speak English as her L1 at home but then when she started Primary Education she attended a church school where 'the children were not English-speaking' and 'so when I went to school I started integrating with other children and at home they introduced Maltese to me' (L.Int.1.12). Lisa believed that she had a good start in her education and schooling due to a literacy-rich home environment and being read to by her mother when she was young. This was a feature Lisa valued and brought up again when she taught at a state school during her first practicum and compared her background with that of the pupils.

Lisa used English to write assignments, emails and shopping lists, to read for enjoyment, to ask questions during a lecture and even to count. At home and with friends she tended to use Maltese with some English. This was also the case when she sent text messages. She explained that the only time she tends to use Maltese exclusively is when she is angry!

Lisa says she can switch between languages easily:

*Depends on who I am speaking with... I alternate between languages, since I feel confident in both, if the other person prefers one language over another...*

(L.Q.1.12)

Here she showed her communicative competence as to the appropriateness of language use (Canale and Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972). This shows her implicit knowledge of the unspoken conventions of language use amongst interlocutors as well as her ability to interact with speakers who belong to various groups or communities (Attard, 1995; Camilleri, 1996; 2001; Kramsch, 1998).

However, during our first interview when I asked about her language preferences, Lisa said that she prefers English but that this is something she feels her late father would not have been pleased to hear (L.Int.1.94). She says that:

*Sometimes I find Maltese a bit...I'm good at Maltese and my spoken Maltese is good, but grammatically mostly writing 'ortografija' [writing] isn't too good. I always passed and did well but still if I speak with friends I speak perfect Maltese and everything, but if I was to explain something I would probably switch to English. Not in a classroom, but talking to friends I would... I love English.*

(L.Int.1.96)

She held that she always got better grades in English and said that she felt more confident using English.

*Even writing a nice essay or letter, I feel better doing it, expressing my thoughts in English than Maltese. I CAN do it in both because even my Maltese is good, but still I would... if someone said to me choose a language... it would be English because I feel confident in it.*

(L.Int.1.98)

Thus, here there seems to be an underlying conflict within her responses, because on the one hand she says that she is confident as regards both languages and considers both as

her first language, but then she says that although she ‘can’ use both languages well, she ‘loves’ English and prefers it to Maltese.

### **7.3 Language and schooling**

Her favourite subject at school was English, followed by Maths, ‘I loved essay writing and being creative as well as having to use my brains as much as possible’(L.Q.1.13).

Lisa held that her experience of learning English at school was very positive because ‘the teacher was younger, had experience abroad and gave pleasant lessons’ (L.Q.1.16).

This teacher seems to have influenced her because she mentioned her again during the interview and also in the questionnaire.

*I used to like English especially the Secondary, we had a good English teacher who was young, studied abroad and was fun. I used to love it.*

(L.Int.1.139)

Thus, Lisa’s picture of a teacher who pupils like is someone young, with new ideas and also ‘fun’. She did not say anything about the teacher being an effective facilitator of learning, about her abilities and skills, or about classroom management styles. Thus, here she was still viewing the teacher from a pupil’s perspective and not from that of a teacher. Hence, Lisa had not yet started developing her identity as a teacher but seemed to hold beliefs about what it meant to be a teacher based on what she experienced as a pupil (Lortie, 1975; Twiselton, 2004).

Lisa said that her experience of learning Maltese at home was positive but at school it was negative since it was ‘too parrot-like’ (L.Q.1.15). Here it was clear that she already had views on a particular style of teaching and showed a preference for active learning.

## 7.4 Thoughts and beliefs about language use in class

One of the first things Lisa said to me after she signed the consent form and we started our first interview was:

*So I was reading here that your study is about teaching and language. Well our tutor wants us to speak in English, and ideally we speak to them [the pupils] during Maths and English in English. But the problem is that the children find it very difficult to understand me.*

(L.Int.1.2)

She said that the Year 2 class she had been assigned was not used to using English and that:

*Usually Maths ends up in Maltese because they won't understand. And most of them say, 'Why are you speaking in English?'*

(L.Int.1.4)

There seemed to be some resistance towards English as a language of instruction in the class during English lessons. This may be the case in some schools or areas where English speakers are likely to be regarded as 'snobs' or '*tal-pepe*' by their Maltese speaking counterparts (Camilleri, 1995; Ellul, 1978; Sciriha, 1999; 2001).

Lisa pointed out that the class teacher did not use English for basic instructions during English lessons. She said that although the Headmaster introduced 'English Wednesdays' to encourage the use of English, after prayers in English during assembly he would switch to Maltese to give instructions (L.Int.1.6). I asked her whether she would use any Maltese during English lessons and she replied as follows:

*I worry about that. For telling students off probably! I still haven't taught for one lesson yet so I don't know. I'd love to teach the children at least one lesson now so I can see. But I tried on an outing, a school outing, I tried to play a game with the children on the coach, English games. Because I prefer English to Maltese, like 'I spy...' and 'Guess the Animal' and I realised that they know the farm animals well because they were*

*the words they could think of and maybe one or two said crocodile. During the games we spoke in English and I succeeded in continuing the conversation in English because I insisted on it. So if they asked me I repeated in English and answered back in English.*

(L.Int.1.68)

Lisa stated that she would probably switch to Maltese to reprimand the pupils and this was in line with her language use in her everyday life, since she had stated earlier that she used Maltese when she was upset or angry. Here, it was clear that she believed that she was successful in playing games on the coach with the pupils in English, and through English, due to her determination to use the L2. It was in the above extract that Lisa first mentioned to me in passing that she preferred English to Maltese. I picked up on this point at a later stage in the interview.

When I asked Lisa about teaching English and Maltese, and what she thought about using them together or separately, she said that:

*I would preferably keep them separate if possible... but I think it depends on the level of the children. Sometimes speaking Maltese comes automatic when the children really can't understand. I mean, I am inexperienced so automatically when I'm seeing the child who isn't understanding at all... what I'm saying it comes natural, I pity him and say, no 'ara, trid tagħmel hekk' [look, this is the way to do it]. But I hope that by time and through experience I will keep my calm and cool...*

(L.Int.1.150)

Lisa seemed to be of the opinion that it was better to use the target language when teaching the L2. However, she said that it also depends on the pupils' level of understanding and that it was natural to switch to the pupils' L1 if they did not follow. At this stage she said that she switched to Maltese to explain something to a pupil out of 'pity', and that she probably did that because she was still inexperienced. Lisa seemed to believe that using Maltese at any point during a lesson was unacceptable and did not



seem aware of how she could use the L1 responsibly as a resource to aid learning and understanding or to explain a difficult concept to a pupil (Camilleri, 1995; 1996; 2000; Faltis, 1990; Lin, 1990; Merritt *et al.*, 1992; McCarthy and Moje, 2002). Here Lisa seemed to suggest, (and I can only surmise here because she does not finish her sentence), that given more time and experience she would remain calm and collected enough to be able to deal with such a challenge differently. This also indicated that Lisa did not feel 'calm' or 'cool' in class when faced with pupils who do not understand, which was natural since she was preparing for her practicum and was inexperienced in planning for, and teaching, a primary school class.

When I asked Lisa what alternatives she could think of instead of using Maltese when pupils did not seem to understand, she said that graded or multilevel work might help, but then did not seem sure and said that 'I can not figure out which levels because mostly they are at the same level' (L.Int.1.154). It was interesting to note that after experiencing positive results in playing games with the pupils in English in an informal situation (on the coach), Lisa did not seem to have reflected on, or realised how these language games and activities could be employed in the class to provide motivating L2 learning opportunities for pupils (Dörnyei, 2001). Thus, Lisa was still not sure which strategies she would draw on during her practicum to encourage the use of the target language.

Although, Lisa pointed out that she was inexperienced, I also got the feeling that she tended to put the onus for her use of Maltese on the pupils: because of the pupils' level; because she pities the pupil; and because they do not have the 'right' background. According to Britzman (2003) this idea of deflecting responsibility onto 'others' is

common at this stage as student teachers tend to look outside themselves to place the blame on others for unsuccessful teaching and/or learning.

I think that Lisa was challenged by the use of language in class and through her we can see that behaviour is fluid even within the same individual. We can see the complexity of the relationship between Maltese and English invested in Lisa as she recognises the currency of each language. Maybe Lisa viewed English as aspirational, as being synonymous with doing well, learning and being good.

## **7.5 Becoming a teacher**

Lisa believed that she would be a good teacher. She wanted to be a primary school teacher because she loved children and believed it was a vocation rather than just a job.

In her own words:

*I love children and I believe I have the appropriate patience, as well as will, to follow-up the job as well, even though it is more of a vocation than a job!!*

(L.Q.1.18)

Here Lisa seemed to be basing her choice of becoming a teacher on affective reasons, because that is what she emphasised, and at this stage did not say anything about the role of teacher as a facilitator of learning, as ‘knowledgeable’ or ‘skilled’. This seemed to echo her belief that she had ‘quite an understanding with young children’ (L.Int.1.126) that was based more on intuition and the idea that teachers were ‘born’ and not ‘made’ (Britzman, 1986; 2003; García, 2009).

The two subjects she would prefer to teach most (English and Maths) are the same ones she held as her favourites when she was a student at school herself. Here we can see how her experiences of learning subjects at school coloured her preferences as to

favourite subjects to teach and how her prior experiences impinged on her beliefs and attitudes (Bailey *et al.*, 1996; Britzman, 1986; Nespor, 1987).

She believed that a primary school teacher should be fluent in reading, writing and speaking Maltese and English, because a teacher:

*...is to be of an example to the children in her class and be able to provide the students with an environment which is very Maltese and English friendly!*

(L.Q.1.20)

She continued that she thought that it was not appropriate to use Maltese during an English lesson because,

*English lessons are for learning English. The more the pupil hears and participates the more confident she feels in it.*

(L.Q.1.21)

Lisa seemed to believe in teaching English through the target language and exposing the pupils to the language as much as possible (Halliwell, 1992; Willis, 1981). She said that the same applied to the use of English during a Maltese lesson (L.Q.1.22). Lisa believed that when teaching Maltese it was important to focus on spelling and orthography. Here she placed emphasis on an area she was not confident in and therefore, her judgement here was influenced by her own experiences of language learning. She held that when teaching English one should focus on communication and exposure to English:

*to enhance the communication skills between pupil and teacher especially if for some pupils, schools are the only place to obtain a chance of using English.*

(L.Q.1.24)

Lisa seemed aware of the social and linguistic culture of the pupils and was aware that for some pupils school was the only place they would use English.

## 7.6 Looking forward to teaching practice

Lisa was looking forward to her first TP and had positive expectations about her performance. She said that:

*The teaching practice is the first chance we will have to participate fully in a real life classroom, not as students but as future teachers.*

(L.Q.1.26)

When I asked about the class and pupils she was observing during her School Experience sessions she commented as follows:

*Well there's a range, most of them are weak students and not very good. There is only one or two who seem bright. I think personal background helps. They don't read. They have problems at home. I have children who tell me, 'papa hit mama'.*

(L.Int.1. 44)

She seemed to be quick in her judgement that the pupils were 'weak', and implied that their background did not help since they had problems at home and did not read. I think that here Lisa was adopting a deficit approach towards the pupils and their backgrounds. She did not seem to appreciate their 'funds of knowledge', that is, what they did know and what they brought with them to school from their family and cultural background (Moll et al., 1992). According to Moll *et al.* (1992, p 132), using their funds of knowledge would entail drawing on the 'knowledge and skills found in local households' and that

*...by capitalizing on household and other community resources, we can organize classroom instruction that far exceeds in quality the rote-like instruction these children commonly encounter in schools.*

Thus, Lisa seemed to equate the different backgrounds and culture of the pupils as being not only 'different' to her own but as 'inferior'. From the outset here it was evident that

the background and the culture the pupils come from were very different to Lisa's own upbringing and church schooling, and I will return to this later because I think it is an aspect that is important to Lisa's development as a teacher.

### ***The 'others': church schools or state schools?***

Lisa delivered a mini-lesson as part of her School Experience tasks. She decided to give a lesson in her mother's class, in a church School. She compared this experience with her experience of the state school class she was assigned for TP. She commented on the 'big difference between the children' (L.Int.1.140) in the church school and state school. Her preference for the church school and the pupils there was clear in her statements below:

*You could see they were understanding and enjoying it. And I could ask questions and I realised that the children were bright (...) and even at home they know certain things. They show that they read and that they know certain things. (...) I had to give so much in one lesson, while with the others you get tired trying to explain one sentence.*

(L.Int.1.144)

Lisa expressed her satisfaction at teaching the church school class and with the knowledge and abilities the pupils had. She also gave importance to the 'funds of knowledge' gained from home and from the reading that these children seemed to possess. She felt that she could give a lot in a lesson with these pupils, whereas, with 'the others' it was a frustrating experience for her.

*I see differences between church school and government schools and private schools. There is a big difference between all three. In private schools even though children come from quite different families, most of them have businesses and you can see that their children are not really concerned with school because they know they have a job and money already in store for them. I think that in church schools children are best, in my opinion, I find children have help at home, are willing to learn, they know quite a lot already. At state schools you find an assortment of everything, but most of the children need a bit of pushing.*

(L.Int.1.176)

Both quotes above show how Lisa found it easier to identify with the church school pupils and their home backgrounds. This was not surprising since the ‘funds of knowledge’ of these church school pupils and their families were very similar to hers. I also think that what she said here shows how much her identity has been shaped through her years of church schooling and her upbringing. She asserted that pupils in church schools are the ‘best’ because they were willing to learn. I think that Lisa felt that they had a positive attitude to school and learning that they came with from home. Thus, they were already prepared for schooling because they already had the ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1973) or ‘funds of knowledge’ (Moll et al., 1992) that could pave the way to success in education and schooling.

## **7.7 Lesson 1: Let’s go!**

Here I present and discuss an English Oracy lesson held by Lisa on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006, during the second week of her two-week practicum. For this first practicum Lisa was assigned a Year 2 class of 13 pupils (between the ages of six and seven) in a state school that is situated in a coastal town in the eastern part of Malta. Lisa was sharing this class and lessons with another preservice teacher from the same cohort. Therefore, this lesson was the first English lesson Lisa taught in this class, since the previous week the other student teacher had taught English and Lisa had taught Maltese.

### ***7.7.1 Language used during the first lesson***

#### ***Classroom Management***

From the outset of the lesson it was evident that classroom management was a challenge for Lisa. The lesson started and the pupils were not attentive, some were not even aware that the lesson had started. Lisa used Maltese to tell them to find their books and

that she was going to start the audio from the beginning again. Her tone of voice and the use of Maltese 'isa' (come on) twice were meant to encourage the pupils to pay attention and to participate (L.Obs.1.2). She started the audio CD again but there was still a lot of noise in the class and it was difficult to hear the audio. In line 8 a pupil said that they could not hear.

1.	CD	<i>Ok. Let's go! Oh no! I forgot my toothbrush, said Jack.</i>	
2.	T	<b>Sibu r-reader isa. Ha nerġa' nibdih isa ejja ha nara.</b>	<b>Find your reader come on. I'm going to start it again, come on let's see.</b>
3.	CD	<i>Narrator: turn to page 41 to follow the story. 'OK! Let's go!'</i>	(barely audible due to classroom noise).
4.	P	<b>Miss L, tnejn Jack mela.</b>	<b>Miss L, we have two Jacks then.</b>
5.	T	We have two Jacks, we have...	
6.	CD	<i>Ok. Let's go!</i>	
7.	Ps	Ok. Let's go!	(Some of the children repeated with a few joining in for 'ok' and 'go').
8.	P	<b>Miss, ahna mhux nisimghu...</b>	<b>Miss we can't hear it ...</b>
9.	T	So.	
10.	CD	<i>Oh no! Where's my toothbrush???</i>	
11.	Ps	Oh no! Where's my toothbrush?	
12.	CD	<i>'Vrrrooommm' (Sound effects of car driving off)</i>	(Ps repeated sound). "
13.	T	Shh! Shh!	
14.	CD	<i>Oh no! Where's my nightdress?</i>	
15.	Ps	Oh no! Where's my nightdress? Oh Polly.	
16.	P	<b>Le mhux ahna.</b>	<b>It wasn't us.</b>
17.	Ps	Ok. Let's go.	(CD & pupils and background talking in class).
18.	T	Shh! Sara u...sit down.	Shh! Sara and...
19.	P	<b>Lanqas smajniha Miss.</b>	<b>We didn't hear it Miss.</b>
20.	T	<b>Oqoghdu kwieti. Mela dad issa.</b>	<b>Be quiet. So, dad now.</b>
21.	P	Oh no..... let's go.	
22.	T	Ok. <b>Owen bilqieghda.</b>	<b>Ok. Owen sit down.</b>
23.	T	Shh! We're going to listen to it again. Ok it's started.	(T spoke very loudly to be heard over noise)
24.	T	<b>Ejja tal-ahhar ha nismaghkom. Oqoghdu sew.</b>	<b>Come on, I want to hear you for the last time. Behave.</b>

(L.Obs.1.1-24)

Lisa attempted to quieten the class and gain their attention but the pupils kept talking, partly because they were excited about the use of the CD and partly because they could not hear it well. Some pupils joined in when they heard the sound effects of the car coming to a halt but were not following the text on their book.

Lisa drew on Maltese to encourage the pupils to find their books, to explain that she would start the CD again, to tell them to be quiet and to tell a pupil to sit down. She used English to acknowledge the comment made by a child about ‘two Jacks’ (in line 5). She used English to snub a pupil’s comment about not being able to hear the audio by saying ‘So’ (in line 9). She started calling on two students in Maltese but then switched to English to tell them to sit down (line 18). In line 23 she tried to get them to be quiet so that they could listen to the dialogue again. She raised her voice to try to be heard over the noise that was reigning in the class. She then used Maltese to tell them to behave so they could listen to the CD for the last time. Her switch to Maltese shows her attempt to gain the pupils’ attention and to tell them what they were going to do. However, even this strategy did not seem to help much. The classroom management difficulties experienced by Lisa were such that switching to the L1 did not seem to help.

46	T	... go in your place. <b>Isimghu.</b>	<b>Listen.</b>
47	P	Oh no.... <b>Issa ...</b>	<b>Now...</b>
48	T	Look here class. Hands up. I will draw a picture and you have to tell me what it is.	

(L.Obs.1.43-45)

In the extract above Lisa started another activity as part of the lesson. However, she did not explain what they were about to do but instead called on them in Maltese to listen (**Isimghu**), and then in English told them to raise their hands (L.Obs.1.48) before she had explained the activity. Therefore, here Lisa drew on both Maltese and English in an



attempt to gain the pupils' attention and then proceeded in English in her attempt to explain the activity.

57.	T	Hands up. Sit down. Sara. <b>Haitem ejja barra ha nkellmek. Haitem, Haitem. Kwieti.</b> Rebecca, Charlot...	<b>Haitem ejja barra ha nkellmek. Haitem, Haitem. Kwieti.</b>
58.	Ps	<b>Jien Miss. Jiena...</b>	<b>Me Miss. Me...</b>
59.	T	No, no, don't talk. You don't need the book. <b>Min hu kwiet ha nara.</b>	<b>Let's see who's quiet.</b>
60.	P	Lindsay... ( <i>inaudible</i> )	
61.	T	No. <b>Ha nara min hu kwiet.</b> No need to talk. And Jasmine...	<b>Let me see who's quiet.</b>
62.	P	Miss Hatim...	
63.	T	<b>Mela</b> , you four go in the back you four. Find a space at the back.	<b>So,</b>
64.	P	<b>Fejn Miss?</b>	<b>Where Miss?</b>
65.	T	Now I want Kaya, I want Mariah, I want Cachel and I want Daniel.	
66.	Ps	( <i>inaudible</i> )	
67.	T	Sit down. <b>Mela</b> , I want you to find who lost what. Who forgot what. <b>Jasmin</b> go next to <b>Haitem. Ejja.</b>	<b>So,</b> <b>Come on.</b>
68.	Ps	( <i>inaudible</i> )	
69.	T	Good. Polly. Who did Polly forget?	
70.	P	A tiger	
71.	T	Jack . What did Jack forget?	
72.	P	A book	
73.	T	A book. Dad. What did Dad forget?	

(L.Obs.1.57-73)

In the extract above Lisa raised her voice considerably to try to talk over the classroom noise (some pupils are still mimicking the sound effects of screeching tyres) and therefore not all the pupils' say is audible. Lisa used English to try to organise the pupils to participate in an activity (to raise their hands, to choose pupils, to explain the activity) and for the lesson content. She also used English to tell them not to talk. She

switched to Maltese to try to encourage a boy to participate and to try quieting the class. She uses ‘mela’ (so) when asking four pupils to go to the back of the class. Lisa used ‘mela’ again to move between telling a child to sit down (management) to explain the activity (organisation). She then used ‘Ejja’ (come on) this time impatiently to urge the pupils to obey and to move around the class as she directed them. Lisa switched to Maltese to remark on the noise levels and to check on who was being quiet and paying attention (L.Obs.1.57; 59; 61; 94; 135). English was used when instructing pupils to raise their hands, not to talk, to sit down and to explain activities.

In the following extract Lisa used the phrase ‘**ha nara**’ or ‘**ha naraw**’ (let me see / let us see) almost as a floor holder and to gain the pupils’ attention (lines 94, 98 and 110) before she chose pupils to participate. She said ‘**l-ahhar wahda**’ (the last one) to indicate that they would be doing the matching activity for the last time. She made it a point to say ‘let’s see’ and ‘who’s quiet?’ in Maltese before selecting the pupils to match flashcards.

94.	T	<b>Ha nara</b> , who is obedient. Haitem... go and find ... Who is .... <b>Min hu kwiet?</b>	<b>Let me see,</b> <b>Who is quiet?</b>
95.	Ps	<i>(inaudible)</i>	
96.	T	No. Mariah...	
97.	P	Mariah...	
98.	T	<b>L-ahhar wahda.</b> Mariah, Charlot u Kaya. Go find your partners. <b>Ha nara</b> everyone.	<b>The last one.</b> <b>Let me see everyone.</b>
99.	Ps	<i>(inaudible)</i>	(Pupils try to pair up with pupils having the matching flashcard).
100.	T	Mariah... Polly forgot a ...?	
101.	P	<i>(inaudible)</i>	
102.	T	Good. Adam, Dad forgot a...?	
103.	P	Toothbrush.	
104.	T	Good. Owen, Jack forgot a...?	
105.	P	<i>(inaudible)</i>	
106.	T	Good. Haitem. Mum forgot a...?	
107.	P	<i>(inaudible)</i>	
108.	T	Go sit down. Hands across. Thank you.	

109.	Ps	.. Hands across. One, two, three...	(Lots of noise throughout. Some laughter, chairs scraping)
110.	T	I'm going to put up the word and you have to tell me the object. Silence children. <b>Ha naraw.</b> Hands up. Polly. Polly forgot a...?	<b>Let's see.</b>

(L.Obs.1.94-110)

Therefore, in this extract Lisa used the pupils' motivation to participate in the activity in an attempt to get them to be quiet. This does not always prove to be a successful strategy because the pupils who already had a turn knew that they would not be called upon again and so were not interested in paying attention and being quiet. In fact, the noise level rose as the pupils became more restless and talkative. The transcription also showed this since due to the noise levels in class I could hardly hear or understand what some of the pupils said.

In the extract below Lisa drew on Maltese to explain that she would erase the first part of the song. She switched to English for 'song' in the otherwise Maltese utterance. In the next sentence she told them to put their books away and to sit quietly (with hands across) so she could see how well behaved they were. In line 135 Lisa sounded irritated and commented on the noise in class. It was not a simple observation on her part, but a signal to the pupils to be quiet. She waited for them to settle down again but the noise only seemed to increase.

133.	T	<b>Mela issa ser inhassrilmom l-ewwel biċċa tas-song.</b> Put away your books now. <b>U hands across ha nara kemm intom bravi.</b>	<b>So I will now erase the first part of the song.</b>  <b>And hands across let me see how well behaved you are.</b>
134.	Ps	<i>(inaudible)</i>	(Lots of noise. Nothing happening in lesson).
135.	T	Hands across. <b>Hawn hafna storbu.</b> What are you doing? I'm going to give you the words just in case you forgot. Rhea... Kaya,	<b>There's a lot of noise.</b>  (Waiting for them to settle down. Noise increased.)

		Rebecca... no... Graziella...	
136.	T2 <sup>32</sup>	Can I have an extra one?	
137.	T	They can share one. Sara, Adam, Mariah, Cachel, Mariah u Jasmin. <b>Mela, ejja</b> , we are going to do the song together. <b>Kaya ha nara</b> how much you remember. <b>Bl-actions b'kollox</b> , ok? <b>Ejja kantaw</b> .	<b>So, come on,</b> <b>Kaya let me see</b> how much you remember. <b>With actions and all</b> , ok? <b>Come on sing (all of you)</b> .

(L.Obs.1.133-137)

Lisa then called on various pupils to try to gain the attention of the class and to select some pupils to come out of their places to stand in front of the class so they could do the action-song together. Lisa used 'mela, ejja' (So, come on) to urge the pupils to get ready to start the song after she had chosen the pupils to come out in front. She encouraged Kaya and instructed her in English and in Maltese. Lisa then addressed the whole group by using Maltese 'ejja kantaw' (come on sing) as she switched on the audio CD to play the song.

### ***Praise and Encouragement***

Lisa seemed to use Maltese 'bravi/u/a' (L.Obs.1.114, 122, 148) and English 'good' or 'very good' (L.Obs.1.69; 88; 102; 104; 106) when she praised the pupils. Her praise during this lesson was generic and only consisted of the equivalent of 'good' or 'very good' in Maltese or English. She did not praise pupils for their effort or behaviour but only when they gave 'the right answer' (usually one word responses) to her questions as can be seen in the examples below.

102.	T	Good. Adam, Dad forgot a...	
103.	P	Toothbrush.	
104.	T	Good. Owen, Jack forgot a...?	
105.	P	(inaudible)	
106.	T	Good. Haitem. Mum forgot a...?	

(L.Obs.1.102-106)

<sup>32</sup> T2 refers to the other student teacher who was sharing the class with Lisa. She was observing this lesson before taking on the pupils for the next lesson.

121.	P	Jack forgot a toothbrush.	
122.	T	<b>Bravu.</b> Sara...	<b>Good boy.</b>

(L.Obs.1.121-122)

The only time Lisa praised the whole class was at the end of the lesson when they finished the song together. She said **'bravi'** (good) (L.Obs.1.148) and then started the prayer before the pupils left the class for their lunch break.

Lisa encouraged pupils to participate and prompted them mostly through the use of Maltese. She used words and phrases such as **'ejja'** (come on) (lines 67, 128, 130), **'ejja ha nara'** (come on let me see) (lines 94, 98, 110), **'ejja ha nara kemm intom bravi'** (come on let me see how good/well-behaved you are) (line 133) and **'ejja tal-ahhar'** (come on it's the last one) (line 146). At the beginning of the lesson Lisa said **'isa'** (come on) twice to encourage the pupils to pay attention and to participate (line 2).

It seemed like she was trying to appeal to them to participate but also to be good and behave through these prompts in Maltese. Maybe she was using Maltese to try to make a connection and build a rapport with the pupils (Camilleri, 1995). However, throughout this lesson she did not seem successful in motivating the pupils enough to gain their attention to hold a successful lesson (Dörnyei, 2001). I think it was a very difficult experience for Lisa if all the lessons she delivered were similar to this one. This was her first English lesson with the pupils, but she had already taught them other subjects the previous week. Thus, we do not know whether classroom management was such a concern when Lisa taught other subjects or if it only happened during the English lesson, or if my presence in class contributed to a strained lesson. Lisa seemed to be trying hard to manage the class and did not give up during the lesson. However, in this lesson her use of Maltese did not seem to make much difference to the situation in class

and she did not seem to reap the benefits of using the L1 as an additional resource to aid learning (Camilleri, 1995; García, 2009; McCarthey and Moje, 2002; Merritt *et al.*, 1992; Lin 1990).

## **7.8 Interview and questionnaire after the first practicum**

At the beginning of the interview after the observed lesson I got the feeling that Lisa was going to go on the defensive about the way the lesson turned out because maybe she was not yet ready to reflect upon her practice at this stage. However, I did realise that after all it would be natural for her to want to prove to herself, and to me, that she could do it and that she was managing well, instead of having to share a lesson that did not really work out according to plan.

Lisa commented on the fact that as animator she was very successful but now realises that this is different from being a teacher in class because ‘in class you need discipline’ (L.Int.2.280-282). Thus, Lisa seemed to be opening up about the difficulties she was experiencing as the interview proceeded and was less on the defensive. In the questionnaire that she completed a couple of months later she identified ‘lack of control over the children’ (L.Q.2.23) as her main weakness during her first practicum.

### **7.8.1 Lisa's views about language use during the first lesson**

According to Lisa the first time she tried to use English as the language of instruction some of the pupils resisted and did not want to participate in the lesson and this led to undesirable behaviour in the class. She said that it is difficult to use English throughout and that the pupils cannot take a whole hour of English. Thus, here she is justifying her use of Maltese as a means to manage the class and in response to the pupils' attitudes or perceived needs.

In line 40 Lisa commented that when giving them a writing task she always felt that she had to explain in Maltese to be certain that they understood the task.

34.	L	<p>During <b>il-lesson ta' l-Ingliż biss u lanqas hemm kompletament. Ipruvvajt emmini.</b> I tried it the first time but there were a couple of children who completely shut themselves down. They just tell you <b>'ma nifhimx' u jiċċassaw,</b> and then they start being a nuisance.</p> <p><b><u>U ma' jifilhux siegħa English biss.</u></b> Infatti il-lessons tiegħi m'humiex siegħa. It-Tutor qaltilna li 45 minutes. Jien ma ngebbidhiex lesson jekk nara li illum saturated it's enough <b>ma ngebbidhiex 45 minutes u bizżejjed.</b></p>	<p>During the <b>English lesson only and then not even completely. Believe me I tried.</b></p> <p><b>'I don't understand' and they stare</b></p> <p><b>And they can't take an hour of only English. In fact my lessons do not last an hour. Our tutor told it should be 45 minutes. I don't drag out a lesson if I see that today is saturated it's enough I don't drag 45 minutes it is enough.</b></p>
35.	JM	<p>So you found that the approach of using English didn't work for you?</p>	
36.	L	<p>English throughout? <b><u>It's difficult. They get bored listening.</u></b></p>	
37.	JM	<p>What sort of lesson would you have done in English only?</p>	
38.	L	<p>Music. Believe me I used English throughout. In music we did 'I am the Music Man' and we acted it and we learnt the vocabulary piano, tambourine, violin, guitar.</p> <p><b>So ittihom barra min hekk vocabulary related to other themes. And the children tghallmuha is-song u fl-istess hin kieku kelli nidhol fil-klassi u nghidilhom x'inhuma instruments, jiftakru li semmejna.</b></p> <p>They know the instruments and they don't know their name. Even though they don't need to know how to write tambourine at this stage, but I'm sure through the song they can tell me 'tambourine'. And I believe that that is an achievement for the children you know. And it's a</p>	<p>"</p> <p><b>So other than that you give them vocabulary related to other themes. And the children learnt the song and if I were to enter the class and ask them the instruments, they would remember the ones we mentioned.</b></p>

		way of enjoying it you know.	
39.	JM	And you don't see a way how you can combine this with English lessons?	
40.	L	<p>Yes. <b>Imma mbaghad</b> when it comes to do the writing <b>dejjem inhoss li rrid nisjega bil-Malti</b>. They need <b>dik il-haġa</b>, it <u>makes them at ease during the lesson</u>. <b>Kif inkellimhom Inġliż biss</b> you sense <u>they feel tense</u>. They feel tense, they are worried, preoccupied.</p> <p><b>Waqt li jekk nużaw il-Malti u iva</b>, and they practice it, is ok. <b>Jippruvaw</b>, I mean <b>id-date filghodu naghmluha bl-Inġliż</b>, <b>naghmlu il-weather bl-Inġliż</b>. <b>Jien naf...</b> we try.</p>	<p>Yes. <b>But then</b> when it comes to do the writing <b>I always feel that I should explain in Maltese</b>. They need <b>that</b>, it makes them at ease during the lesson.</p> <p><b>As soon as I use English</b></p> <p><b>Whereas if I use Maltese they accept</b> and they practice, it is ok. <b>They try, I mean we do the date in English in the morning, we do the weather in English. I don't know ... we try.</b></p>

(L.Int.2.34-40)

Lisa felt that she did use English quite successfully with the pupils during a music lesson about musical instruments and through a song she taught them. So it seemed that when using songs Lisa felt she could use English and that the pupils would not resist the use of the L2. Maybe she thought that when they were enjoying the lesson they would not be focusing on the language used. Maybe she was more at ease when teaching songs because she believed that this to be an area she was confident in since she was training as a soprano.

However, it was very interesting to note what Lisa said about the pupils feeling 'tense' when they were expected to use English and that when she used Maltese she felt that they were more 'at ease during the lesson' (L.Int.2.40). Thus, this indicates that the use of the L1 made the pupils feel safe and at ease while the use of the L2, which they were not used to, felt somewhat threatening (Camilleri, 1995; Ferguson, 2003; García, 2001).



107.	JM	Why do you think that happens?	
108.	L	<b>Anke d-dar</b> it's the attitude, <b>forsi jisimghu hawn hafna</b> sayings, <b>u ghax min jitkellem bl-Ingliż, tismagghom fil-klassi, bl-Ingliż Miss 'tal-pepe' illum?</b> Allura, <b>biex inderrihom dik haġa li l-Ingliż qed tifhimni normali.</b> Ara meta tifla <b>ghedtilha 'sit down' ghax innaqqsilha il-points obdietni u fehmet.</b> Imma jekk <b>nghid din English lesson u sit down jiċċassaw ghax ghedtilhom li English lesson.</b>	<b>Even at home</b> it's the attitude, <b>maybe they hear many sayings, about people who speak English, you hear them in class, in English Miss today to be snobs?</b> Therefore, to get them used to using English as something normal. When I told a girl to 'sit down' otherwise I would reduce her points <b>she obeyed me and understood.</b> But if I say this is an English lesson and sit down <b>they stare because I said it is an English lesson.</b>
109.	JM	So you think there is a bit of resistance to using English?	
110.	L	Yes there is resistance. <b>Ara hemm wiehed, Daniel, imbagħad ilu ġimgha sick illum ġie, dak l-unika wiehed li d-dar jaqra.</b>	<b>There's that boy Daniel, he's been sick for a week but is here today, he is the only one who reads at home.</b>

(L.Int.2.107-110)

According to Lisa the pupils seemed to have a negative attitude towards using English and seemed to associate it with being a 'snob', and therefore not a desirable language for them to identify with. This appeared to be in contrast with Lisa's own views about the role of English. She said she 'loves' English and seemed to equate it with being educated and as something to aspire towards.

Lisa explained that there was only one boy in the class who liked reading and books. She said that he was the only child in the class who would try to speak to her in English (L.Int.2.122). Thus, here Lisa was making the connection between the use of English and enjoying reading, and that it was something she clearly valued. On the other hand Lisa explained that there was another boy who really 'doesn't like English and he makes it clear'. She said that even when they do a song in English 'he mocks it' because it was in English (L.Int.2.118).

Lisa's beliefs that emerge from her own schooling background about the quality of church schools came through here and seemed to be reinforced with regard to the language use and attitudes to language that she experienced with this class during her practicum (Lortie, 1975). She expressed how she saw a great difference ('qabza kbira' in L.Int.2.30) between church schools and state schools. She adds that she did not expect the low level she found and was amazed when during a science lesson they did not know what a 'wall' was.

30.	<p><b>L</b> <b>Ghax</b> at the same time it-teacher has to offer them information. I mean, <b>ghadni ġdida naf, u ghandi hafna idejat, u</b> I'm very green <b>mat-tfal. Kultant inhossni hekk...</b> Plus li at times .. issa they are sweet <b>u drajthom. Imma rajt qabza kbira minn a church school. Qabza kbira kbira.</b></p> <p>Church school <b>jiena kont St A's u l-lesson I enjoyed it ghax inti tghidilhom hekk u huma jghidulek hekk.</b></p> <p>You can have the complete picture in the end, you know.</p> <p>I mean ma' <b>dawn ittihom daqshekk, jieqfu s'hawn.</b> I mean vera they do get what you want them to get, <b>pero, diffiċli,</b> they don't come up with lots of... <b>hekk... diffiċli. Fil-bidu kelli science, I was baffled tant m'inix imdorrija... ma' jafux x'inhu wall.</b></p>	<p><b>Because</b> at the same time it-teacher <b>I am new I know, and I have many ideas and I'm very green with the children. Sometimes I feel that... Plus that at times ... now they are sweet and I am used to them. But I saw a big difference from a church school. A big big difference.</b></p> <p>I was at a church school, St A's, and I enjoyed the lesson I enjoyed it because you tell them something and they tell you something in response.</p> <p>I mean it's true they do get what you want them to get, but it is difficult, they don't come up with lots of... it's difficult. At the beginning I had science, I was baffled because I'm so not used to this... they don't know what a wall is.</p>
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(L.Int.2.30)

Lisa's views about using Maltese during English lessons seemed to have changed after the practicum and now she held that it was appropriate to use Maltese because: 'the children need it to understand clearer' (L.Q.2. 10). It seemed that she no longer emphasised that 'English lessons are for learning English' and 'The more the pupil

hears and participates the more confident she feels in it' (L.Q.1.21) as she had stated earlier. Now she seemed to believe in the need to use the L1 to help the pupils understand. Changes in the beliefs of student teachers are natural since they are trying to make sense of their new experiences in relation to their prior beliefs since beliefs are not static but always in a state of flux. Almarza (1996) and Twiselton (2004; 2006) argue that it is through these challenges to, and changes in, pre-existing beliefs that student teachers grow and develop through teacher education.

As regards language use in class, Lisa said that she used both English and Maltese during English lessons (L.Q.2.11). She explained that the main reasons for her use of code-switching, when teaching English as a second language, were to 'explain a difficult concept or to explain when some children didn't understand' (L.Q.2.21). She also said that it is difficult to use only one language because the children did not understand or know how to speak English. Other reasons for using the L1 included maintaining discipline in class and when she automatically replied in Maltese if pupils spoke to her in Maltese (L.Q.2.21) (Zentella, 1996). However, through the observation of Lisa's lesson the picture I got does not seem as simple and unproblematic as hers. I found that in the lesson I observed, Lisa used code-switching continuously in what seemed to me to be a random or haphazard manner (Jacobson, 1990), mostly in her desperate attempts to gain classroom management.

### **7.8.2 Culture: state or church school**

Lisa felt that the transition from a church school environment to a state school was challenging for her. I think it was a culture shock for her. She said that now she knew the children better they were 'sweet' but still maintained that there was a big difference between the types of schools (L.Int.2.30). Lisa claimed that 'exposure to the language

mainly' (L.Int.2.32) contributed to this notable difference and held that pupils in a church school got more exposure to English and this in her view was something desirable.

However, I think that Lisa's surprise at finding cooperative parents in a state school shows up her prejudice. I got the impression that she thought that the parents of these pupils would not be dedicated or interested in their children's education.

97.	JM	Do they all cut out what they are given for home?	
98.	L	<p>Mostly. Those who don't <b>niprova fil-brejk jaghmluhom mieghi. Pero' sibt hafna</b> cooperative parents.</p> <p>I was amazed <b>ghax ma' ppretendejtx hekk. Hemm hafna li jaghtuk hafna</b> dedication. <b>Tinduna mit-tfal ukoll.</b></p>	<p><b>I try to keep them during break to do them with me. But I found many cooperative parents.</b></p> <p><b>I was amazed I didn't expect it. There are many who give you lots of dedication. You notice from the children too.</b></p>

(L.Int.2.97-98)

Later in the interview she said that some parents of the pupils she taught 'think all education comes from the school... [and] know nothing about books' (L.Int.2.302). Lisa said, 'I was shocked – they don't even read Sunday papers 'cos they don't even have magazines to cut pictures out of' (L.Int.2.30-6).

314.	L	<p><b>Fil-fatt fil-bidu fil-philosophy taghmel</b> teacher's experience <b>u tibda fuq</b> your own, <b>ghax min hemm tibda kollox.</b></p> <p><b><u>Jien trabbejt f'dinja differenti.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Jiena issa qed niskopri li mhux kulhadd bhali.</u></b> Imma sa dan ix-xhar kont nahseb lil forsi ftit <b>differenti.</b></p>	<p><b>At the beginning for philosophy we had to write a teacher's experience and you have to start on your own, because that's where everything starts from.</b></p> <p><b><u>I grew up in a different world.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>I am only now discovering that not everyone is like me.</u></b> But before this month I used to think that maybe <b>only a bit different.</b></p>
315.	JM	I see.	
316.	L	<p><b>Issa church school kont jien (name of school) jigifieri mhux ... jien anki fis-sajf kont naghmel 1</b></p>	<p><b>Now I was in a church school so it's not that ... even during summer I used to spend 1 hour studying</b></p>

	<p>hour nistudja qabel nohroġ nilghab jew nghum. U ma' kontx niddejjaq ghax għaliġa kien normali.</p> <p>Imma <u>dawn it-tfal</u> lanqas imdorrija jaqbd u ktieb aħseb u ara fis-sajf. Tghidilhom jaqraw, min fejn ser iġibu l-ktieb? It's shocking.</p>	<p>before going out to play or swim. I wasn't upset by that because for me it was normal.</p> <p>But <u>these children</u> aren't even used to picking up a book let alone during the summer. If you tell them to read, where will they get a book from?</p>
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(L.Int.2.314-316)

Thus, for Lisa reading and having a literacy-rich home was something so natural to her that she could not identify with these families that to her seem so different and do not share her same values. She was realising just how different the pupils' backgrounds were to hers. She seemed to imply that they did not have any books and would not be able to get a book if they did want to read.

### **7.8.3 Lisa's thoughts about her first practicum**

Lisa expressed her concerns about her inexperience in teaching and her difficulty in adapting to the pupils' due to their different background and the language difficulties present (L.Int.2.30). Lisa kept comparing the Year 2 class in this state school to the church school class her mother teaches.

Lisa held that the experience of TP had changed her idea about teaching in that, 'children develop different than how I developed and I need to adapt to their backgrounds more' (L.Q.2.25). I think here rather than 'developed' I think she was referring to the different culture they were brought up in. Thus she realised that her experiences were different from those of the pupils she was teaching and that she

needed to become more aware of their different cultural and language backgrounds and what these entailed.

Through the practicum she realized that ‘it is not as easy as I thought’ and that teaching needs ‘much thought and attention’ and should be based on ‘a child-centred approach’ (L.Q.2.26). She was looking forward to her next TP period when she would be taking on a class for a 6-week practicum on her own.

#### ***7.8.4 Lisa’s language use observed during the first lesson***

Lisa’s own language use here was evidence of a large amount of code-switching that seemed haphazard or random (Faltis, 1990; Jacobson, 1990). Maybe this ‘flip-flopping’ between languages took place because she was feeling nervous during the lesson since it was her first English lesson with the class, although she had taught them other subjects throughout the previous week. Maybe she was not at ease because I was observing her lesson. She could also have been so concerned with keeping her lesson afloat that she was not putting any conscious thought into her language use at all. Thus, her language use was not clear in the assignment of Maltese or English for different functions. She did use Maltese predominantly for classroom management concerns. However, she seemed to use Maltese haphazardly and did not switch to Maltese at specific boundaries to indicate a transition, to address a child, to clarify a point, to give an explanation or to make an aside. That sort of code-switching could indeed be seen as an additional resource to be drawn on during lessons in a bilingual setting (Camilleri, 1995; Lin, 1990; McCarthy and Moje, 2002). Therefore, Lisa’s language use during the first lesson I observed did not seem to support the sort of code-switching that would be considered ‘responsible’ or desirable during language lessons (Faltis, 1990; García, 2009; O’Neil and Velasco, 2007).

Lisa used lots of intrasentential code-switching that occurred within the sentence or clause (Brock-Utne, 2005; Martinez, 2006) and not intersentential code-switching that takes place when speakers switch language when they take turns or switch at the clause or sentence boundary. The latter type of code-switching is looked upon more favourably as a resource to enhance learning and understanding in bilingual educational settings (García, 2009; Martinez, 2006; Myers-Scotton, 1993; Poplack, 1980). Therefore, I think that Lisa's use of switching between languages during this lesson may go beyond code-switching and could be categorised as code mixing (Fasold, 1984).

Lisa's use and choice of languages during the interview also seemed indiscriminate to me. Maybe this happened due to her feeling anxious about pleasing me, or maybe because she was feeling upset about the unsuccessful lesson she had just finished. Her code switching during the interview left me feeling a bit unsettled and frustrated. She seemed to be flitting from one language to the other for every other word. The language switching did not take place to mark transitions, or a different focus in our conversation, and did not include features Milroy and Muysken (1995) associate with skilled bilinguals or what García (2009) refers to as 'sophisticated language use'. García argues that:

*Without any awareness about language use in education, teachers who are members of bilingual communities will use their two languages in classrooms in ways similar to those in which they use them in the community.*

(2009, p 296)

Maybe Lisa's language use during the lesson and interview are in fact a reflection of her language use outside the school. Maybe in her everyday life she does use Maltese and English in this way. It could be that this seemingly haphazard language use is an indication of shifts and changes in Lisa's identity and identity formation.

Lisa's constant code-switching could also be seen as her way of trying to build a rapport and engage emotionally with the pupils (Camilleri, 1996; Zentella, 1997) whom she felt did not appreciate being spoken to in English and whom she thought may 'resist' her as a teacher if she embodied a language that they felt resistance towards. However, if she were indeed trying to make a link between the pupils' home language and the language of instruction (Van der Walt, *et al.*, 2001) during the English lesson then I believe that she could have employed code-switching in a more linguistically fruitful and appropriate manner especially since this was taking place during an English lesson.

### **7.8.5 Becoming a teacher**

At this stage, after her first year of ITE and her first practicum, Lisa stated that she 'does not know' if she will be a good teacher and this contrasts with her initial belief that she would make a good teacher when asked at the beginning of the ITE programme (L.Q.2.7). She seemed to have lost the certainty she had, and maybe this could be due to her experience of TP where she was thrown off balance because she had different beliefs about and expectations of the pupils and had 'imagined them to be different' (L.Int.2.124).

Lisa said that she enjoyed her practicum and was pleased that she 'managed to see a slight change in children and improved upon personal problems related to teaching'. She felt that she was prepared well but 'not as prepared as I thought I was. The classroom demanded different things' (L.Q.2.16). She affirmed that she would still like to be a teacher because, 'Schooling allows me to reap the benefits of my hard work and be satisfied at the end of the year with my own achievements' (L.Q.2.8). This view was different to her previous reply where she explained her wish to be a teacher because she



loved children, had ample patience and viewed teaching as a vocation. Now her reasons centre more around herself: 'my hard work' and 'my own achievements'.

### **7.8.6 My struggle to make sense of data**

I have to say that I really struggled to make sense of the data from Lisa's first lesson observation, because I could not 'pin it down' and because I felt that I could not give a coherent narrative of what was happening during the lesson Lisa delivered due to the classroom management difficulties and the language use. This actually shows that this data concerning the use of languages in class is not a simple issue but is indeed a very complex one.

### **7.9 Lesson 2: The sound '- our'**

Lisa was posted at a church school in the Southern part of the Maltese Islands for her second practicum. She told me that the headteacher had decided to give her a Year 6 class<sup>33</sup> because she thought that her English was very good and she wanted this class to be exposed to good English. Since this was a church school it was not such a challenge to hold the lesson in English since the pupils were used to employing both Maltese and English proficiently as languages of instruction. Pupils in church schools came from different homes and family backgrounds, but something in common between these pupils and their families seemed to be the recognition of the value of education.

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<sup>33</sup> Student teachers are not frequently entrusted with Year 6 classrooms, since at the end of Year 6 students sit for their 11+ examinations before going to Secondary School.

### 7.9.1 The language of classroom management

After their lunch-break the pupils returned to their class for their English lesson. Lisa was waiting for them and tells them, ‘Go and sit down everyone, **ejja** (come on)’. The Maltese ‘ejja’ seems to be used here to indicate that Lisa expected them to settle down quickly. While they found their places the pupils continued to talk to each other and took some time to settle down. Lisa indicated that she was going to start the lesson by saying loudly: ‘Girls we’re going to do English spelling...Sshhh!’ (L.Obs.2.3). While saying this loudly, Lisa leafed through the text book to find the right page. Moreover, some pupils were still finding their place and talking. Lisa asked the group leaders (there were 5 groups of 6 pupils) to ‘take charge of your groups’. Thus, here Lisa was handing over the responsibility for the pupils’ behaviour to the five group leaders. Therefore, at this point some pupils seemed to take over the teacher’s role as they tried to quieten others so that the lesson could begin. I think here Lisa drew on a successful strategy to help her manage the class. During the first practicum Lisa had significant difficulties with classroom management, but here she seemed to be dealing with this challenge in a different way.

When called upon to ‘take charge’ of their groups, one of the leaders protested in Maltese and said that it was not their group that was making all the noise, and proceeded to try to quieten other groups.

2.	T	Go and sit down everyone <b>ejja</b> .	<b>...come on.</b>
3.	P	(pupils talking amongst themselves)	
4.	T	Girls we’re going to do English spelling... Sshhh!	
5.	Ps	Sshhh...sshhh	
6.	T	Can you please leaders take charge of your groups..	
7.	P	Miss...Miss... <b>mhux ahna...aqtghuha</b>	<b>it’s not us... stop it (to pupils)</b>
8.	T	(Looks at lesson plan and handouts)	
9.	P	(talking)	

10.	T	Leaders put your hands up.	
11.	P	<i>(talking)</i>	
12.	T	Go sit down. Thank you. All right girls.	
13.	P	Miss... An extra one	
14.	T	OK. I want you to open your spelling books. We're doing the one of '- O U R'. words with O U R. [.....]	
15.	P	Miss do we write our name?	<i>Hardly audible</i>
16.	T	Whatever! Do you still ask these questions?! Come on, Ejja. OK. Listen carefully, Ok?	<b>Come on.</b>

(L.Obs.2.1-15)

In line 12 she sounded more assertive and looked at the class when she told the pupils to sit down and then said, 'All right girls...', and then starts with 'OK' to mark the transition from settling down to the real start of the lesson. She used English throughout to remind them the procedure they were to adopt for the lesson since it involved listening to an audio recording on a tape player. A pupil asked her a question about whether to write her name on the handout and Lisa suggested that at this level she should not be asking such a question and chided her gently by saying 'come on' and then translated it into Maltese as well ('ejja'). Other than using 'ejja' twice, Lisa used English throughout this extract.

Having successfully gained the pupils' attention Lisa turned to the tape player to start the audio. As she tried to find the right audio clip she looked at me apologetically and addressed the pupils as follows.

17.	T	Let's see...  Give me a chance to find it `cos I did a mistake ok.
18.	Audio	"...a double O...."
19.	T	No not this one... .... Ok girls. This is the last one and then it will start. Ok?
20.	Audio	"O U R. The vowel sound as in 'pour'."
21.	T	So girls did you hear that? OUR the vowel sound as in pour. It is going to

		sound like /ou/...ok look at my mouth 'pour', 'ou'. Ok so the words we are going to write down... the sound they are going to have is 'ou...' listen to them.
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(L.Obs.2.17-21)

I thought the pupils were exceptionally well behaved as they waited for her quietly for about 7 minutes. So here even when Lisa was under pressure during the lesson she managed to maintain calm and eventually was able to use the audio resources she had planned to use. Once she had sorted the audio clip she resumed the lesson in English.

In the following extract some pupils were talking out of turn and were waving their raised hands at her while calling out 'Miss' hoping that she would choose them to give an example of what 'favour' means. Lisa told the pupils not to talk at once and called on one pupil to give the reply. She did this in English and did not feel the need to switch to Maltese for organisational or discipline matters with this class.

102.	T	Favour. Who knows what the word 'favour' means?	
103.	Ps	Miss...Miss but...Miss...when you... Miss...	<i>(A few pupils try to speak together)</i>
104.	P	...when you make a favour for your mum.	
105.	T	Sshhh! Don't talk all at once.	
106.	P	She tells you to go shopping and you do her a favour...(inaudible)..	
107.	T	Yes, alright. Another one.	

(L.Obs.2.102-107)

In this class Lisa seemed at ease and able to share a light moment with the pupils about 'behaviour' and this was evident when she put up the flashcard 'behaviour' as it was heard on the audio tape. The pupils giggle at hearing and seeing the word 'behaviour' because presumably this was something that teachers were bound to chide pupils for. Lisa smiled at them while she asked them jokingly what they were giggling about. Thus, here I think that she drew on the Maltese 'ehh' (hey?) together with a smile to mark this 'exchange' as a shared joke and as an aside.

94.	T	Ok. So far so good.	
95.	AT	“Behaviour, behaviour”	
96.	T	Behaviour.	<i>(Sticks flashcard of BEHAVIOUR on board)</i>
97.	Ps	<i>(Pupils giggling)</i>	
98.	T	Why are you all giggling on that word? Ehh? <i>(Smiles at pupils)</i>	Hey?

(L.Obs.2.94-98)

### 7.9.2 The use of Maltese and English in this lesson

The extract below commenced with the audio clip presenting the next sound the pupils were to learn as in the word ‘hour’. One pupil asked Lisa whether it referred to ‘hour’. The pupil here used the Maltese word ‘**siegha**’ (hour) to distinguish from ‘our’, as in ‘our house’. Here the pupil was not confused about the meaning of ‘hour’ but was not sure because Maltese speakers of English do not distinguish much between the pronunciation of both these words. Thus, the pupil drew on Maltese to clarify something effectively and efficiently. Lisa then confirmed this and told the pupils that there was a slight difference in pronunciation between both words without drawing on Maltese to explain, which she was used to doing during her previous practicum.

116.	AT	“The vowel sound O followed by a short ER. Like in ‘hour’ ‘hour’.”	
117.	Ps	Miss ‘hour’ <b>siegha</b> Miss?	Miss ‘hour’ <b>hour</b> Miss?
118.	T	Now that is the ‘hour’ as in one hour because the other one is pronounced slightly differently. You will hear it soon.	
119.	P	How Miss?	
120.	T	You’ll hear it soon.	

(L.Obs.2.116-120)

In line 136 the word ‘scour’ was introduced and Lisa said that this was a difficult word and gave them the meaning in English. A pupil mentioned ‘scouring cream’ and then talked about scouring cleaning cream and that her mother always warned her to wear gloves as not to hurt her hands.

127.	AT	“scour, scour”	
128.	T	This is a bit of a difficult word. Scour means to clean.	
129.	P	Miss...scouring cream	
130.	T	Yes we use scouring cream to clean...you know like the Jif.	
131.	P	Eeh.	
132.	P	Miss my mother tells me not to use it because it hurts my hands	
133.	T	It’s an abrasive...it	
134.	P	<b>Jekk tmissu jaharqek.</b>	<b>It burns/stings you if you touch it</b>
135.	P	<b>Veru Miss ...</b>	<b>It’s true Miss</b>
136.	T	Jasmine explain to me in English. This is an English lesson.	
137.	P	Miss my mother tells me not to use it because ... <b>jobrox</b>	<b>...it scratches</b>
138.	T	Because it is an abrasive. Abrasive means it scratches.	
139.	P	My mother tells me to use gloves.	
140.	T	Ok, now girls. Let’s read through them and then we’ll do the first exercise alright? Let’s start reading these...	

(L.Obs.2.127-140)

While Lisa explained that scouring cream was an abrasive, a pupil interjected in Maltese ‘**jaharqek**’ (‘burns your hands’) while another pupil added ‘**it’s true Miss**’ also in Maltese. Thus, the pupils switch to Maltese to add some information and to share their knowledge with the class. At this point Lisa asked the pupils to explain this in English since it was an English lesson. This was the first time we heard Lisa asking or reminding a pupil to use English in this lesson. Maybe the switch happened due to the nature of the topic that related to everyday life in the homes of the pupils, and that maybe also took place in Maltese. In fact the pupil could be repeating what her mother told her because she also said that her mother told her ‘to wear gloves’. Maybe the pupil’s mother usually spoke to her in Maltese and so it was natural for the pupil to repeat this information in Maltese. Although the pupils were accustomed to using both

languages very well at school, only a few pupils attending church schools come from strictly English-speaking family backgrounds.

In the following extract Lisa gave the pupils three additional words that were not part of the audio recording. She explained the three words successfully in English without drawing on Maltese. The pupils on the other hand did use some Maltese to clarify misunderstandings and to ensure comprehension. When Lisa said and wrote ‘flour’ one pupil explained in Maltese that ‘**dak qisu trab**’ (‘it is like dust/powder’) (L.Obs.2.154) but did not give the Maltese translation ‘**dqiq**’ (‘flour’). Lisa uses the word ‘**trab**’ introduced by the pupil to ask her what we do with it to prompt the pupil to give a better meaning while supporting her learning. The pupil did not give any suggestions although there was some background noise and I could not hear what other pupils were saying.

When Lisa introduced the second word ‘sour’ a pupil tried to clarify the word by asking whether it is ‘shower’. Lisa explained that it was ‘sour’ and that it was related to taste. At that point another pupil mentioned ‘sweet and sour’, but here we do not have enough contextual talk about it to decide whether she was remembering the words from a list of opposites that they could have done or relating it to Chinese cuisine.

152.	T	Give me a chance before you continue. We are going to list under these alright? ‘flour’,	
153.	P	<b>Dak qisu trab</b>	<b>It is like powder/dust</b>
154.	T	What ‘trab’? What do we do with it?	What ‘ <b>dust/powder</b> ’?
155.	Ps	<i>(background talking)</i>	
156.	T	We make bread, cakes... ok? ‘Flour’	<i>(Writes ‘flour’ on w/b)</i>
157.	P	Miss and there...	
158.	T	Yes and there is another one ‘sour’.	
159.	P	Shower?	
160.	P	‘sour’.	
161.	T	This means ... you know it has a bitter taste on your tongue. <b>Ehh?</b>	<b>Hey?</b>
162.	P	Sweet and sour...	

163.	T	Yes like sweet and sour.	
164.	Ps	<i>(talking)</i>	
165.	T	Don't talk... don't talk all at once please. Thank you. Sour has a bitter taste on your tongue. And there is the last one... 'devour'. 'Devour'. For example a lion, when he eats something, he devours it. Let me write it down give me chance. De--vour.	

(L.Obs.2.152-165)

In the next extract Lisa explained that there was a mistake in the handout (plain/plane) she had distributed. She went through this with the pupils in English and it took some time because some pupils were not paying attention but were already trying to complete the handout instead of listening to Lisa. In fact Lisa started to explain the third word, 'devour' but then some pupils asked about plain/plane again.

169.	T	Girls listen here...there is a small mistake on that handout...that is why you got confused. Yes. I think spell-check turned it round for me and I didn't realise. 'Plane' is written like this not like this... It is 'plane' not 'plain' because that becomes simple. Can you change it round please?	<i>(Writes on w/b 'plane' not 'plain')</i>
170.	P	Miss... 'devour'?	
171.	T	Think about it. ...yes the 'plane' this one is wrong. Girls did you understand which one? Ok put your hands down. It is written in 7 by mistake like this,	
172.	P	Miss .... 'devour'?	
173.	T	To 'devour' is to eat up all in one piece. Can you work quietly? Now I'm coming around. The 'plane' has changed its course.	
174.	P	<b>Jaqaw</b> 'course'?	<b>Could it be 'course'?</b>
175.	T	Course ... the route... Girls, girls if you are uncertain of a word ... in fact soon we are going to use our dictionary...we have our dictionary. I gave you the one... the plane... the plane was hijacked and they had to change its.....??	
176.	P	What is hijacked?	
177.	T	Hijacked is when people take over a plane and take it to another place...another destination. So if you know the meaning of most of the words ...there are some words you are not	



		certain of. You look them up in the dictionary and here you have the definition. So 'course'... 'the route something such as a ship or a river takes'.	<i>(Lisa looks up the word in the dictionary)</i>
178.	P	<i>(inaudible question)</i>	
179.	T	Off course ... it is the route. Ok so the plane was going to London from Malta and instead ended up in Japan. Ok?	

(L.Obs.2.169-179)

Lisa directed the pupils to use their dictionaries in groups or individually to look up words, and looked up 'course' herself and read out the meaning of the word. It was not clear to me whether she did this to demonstrate the skill of looking up a word or whether she herself was not sure how best to explain this word. However, Lisa managed to explain and give examples while successfully using the target language as in the extract above and in the one below.

In this following extract the pupils were becoming talkative, especially since some of them had to share dictionaries. Lisa was trying to get them to listen because she had not explained all they had to do. In an effort to gain their attention she reminded them once of the *points* she would award them if they behaved well (L.Obs.2.207). She raised her voice to try and talk over the noise in class as pupils discussed and looked up meanings of words together. She reprimanded a group for not having at least one dictionary between them and then says 'Heqq' in Maltese, (accompanied by a gesture that seems to say 'there's nothing I can do about it!') as though to tell them that they asked for a reprimand by not having at least one dictionary available. She once again called on the leaders of the groups to keep the pupils quiet during this activity (L.Obs.2.210).

204.		The aeroplane was hijacked and changed its course.	
205.	T	Exactly. The aeroplane was hijacked and changed its course. It changed its direction.	

		If it was going to England, someone took over the plane and it ended up in Spain. So what you're going to do now is you have some space at the bottom. You are to take out your dictionary quietly and	
206.	P	Miss can we share. We only have one dictionary ...	
207.	T	You can share and work in a group. But quietly. Remember the points. Listen to me... I haven't explained everything. Together you have to find 10 words using the letters OUR somewhere.	<i>(Lisa raises her voice to be heard)</i>
208.	P	...to write sentences?	
209.	T	No just pick the words. Eliza... not even one dictionary between a group? You should have a dictionary. <b>Heqq!</b>	<b>Hmm!</b>
210.	T	Sshhh! Leaders can you do this quietly please. You have another one? Hazel here. You should all have your own dictionary girls.	
211.	Ps	<i>(pupils talking to find words in groups)</i>	
212.	T	Yes you may go <i>[to the bathroom]</i> .  Did you do all the words?	
213.	P	The meaning too?	
214.	T	No not the meaning just the words. You did them? Let me see. OK. Girls those of you who didn't finish here I want you at home to look up 10 words with OUR in the dictionary.	<i>(Started to check the work of a pupil.)</i>
215.	P	<i>(pupils talking)</i>	
216.	T	Ok girls. Put away your English books to start on Maltese.	

(L.Obs.2.204-216)

The extract below showed that despite the lack of attention by some pupils during Lisa's explanation of the dictionary exercise, she did not switch to Maltese to attempt to gain their attention or to ensure they understood their written task. This is quite a difference from her language use with the Year 2 class during her previous practicum. Lisa did not feel that the pupils needed an explanation in Maltese, even though for most of the pupils Maltese was the language most frequently spoken at home.

## 7.10 Lesson 3: How Silk is Made

This comprehension lesson was based around 'How Silk is Made', a text from the Key Comprehensions book that was used by the school.

### 7.10.1 Language use during the lesson

Lisa used English with the pupils throughout this lesson about silk, except for a few utterances by Lisa or the pupils that we will explore in this section. In the first extract from this lesson Lisa was showing the pupils a powerpoint presentation of photos about the production of silk whilst explaining the process to them in English.

3.	T	We're going to talk about silk and, because in the story we have about the silkworm, and how the silkworm does the silk, so we're going to see pictures, real photos of how this is done. OK? This is the way it's done in China. All right? So, the silk starts from a tiny, tiny egg, and the egg, the silkworm starts from an egg and the egg turns into a tiiiiiiiny caterpillar. Can you see they're so small? Sarah, can you see the small caterpillar? Eh? <b>Ikrah id-dudu Cath? Eh?</b>	<b>Hey? The bug is ugly isn't it Cath? Hey?</b>
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(L.Obs.3.3)

### **Use of Maltese**

Lisa switched to Maltese to empathise with a pupil who was making a face while looking at the image of the silkworms on the slide. Lisa showed Cath that she felt the same about the worms too, and therefore the use of Maltese here seems to serve the function of affect to convey empathy (Camilleri, 1995; García, 2009).

Whilst explaining how the moths were killed inside their cocoons not to damage the silk threads one pupil looked disgusted and blurted out '**Jaqq!**' (Yuck!) in Maltese. This use of Maltese to express disgust may indicate that this pupil was expressing herself in the first language that popped into her mouth naturally without any conscious thought

about which language was being used in class at that time. Thus this may indicate that her first language was Maltese, despite the fluent use of English in posing her question. With this class, because they were so fluent in speaking English, it was easy to forget that the pupils usually used Maltese, or Maltese with some English (Me), at home and used both Maltese and English as their languages of instruction at school.

24.	P	So they kill them in there?	
25.	T	Yes. And then they make silk and we wear it.	
26.	P	<b>Jaqq!</b>	<b>Yuck!</b> <i>(Girl looks disgusted)</i>

(L.Obs.3.24-26)

In line 34 Lisa used the Maltese 'Issa' (now) as a discourse marker to mark the transition from one step of the lesson to the next in her otherwise English explanation. While working in groups some pupils spoke Maltese, these exchanges were not loud enough to be recorded and therefore there is no trace of them in the transcription but I could hear the pupils who were close to me discussing in Maltese. When Lisa overheard she asked them to use English. She also reminded them to use English if they asked her a question in Maltese.

### ***Translating from English to Maltese***

During this lesson there were not many instances of translation from English into Maltese, as opposed Lisa's practice during her previous practicum in the state school. In the following excerpt when a pupil asked Lisa what 'harden' means, she gave the Maltese translation but then also provided the meaning in English immediately after.

64.	P	(??) Miss what does 'harden' mean?	
65.	T	Harden, <b>jibbies</b> , it turns hard. So it is a liquid and then when it comes out in the air it turns hard. You know when we did the lesson about changing states from solid to liquid, now here it turns from liquid to solid. Yes Lara...	Harden, <b>it turns hard</b> , it turns hard.

(L.Obs.3.64-65)

In her English explanation she also drew on a learning point they had done in a previous lesson about solids and liquids. Thus, through this example we could also see Lisa's

development of ‘teaching’ as being more than just delivering the lesson but also making links in the curriculum to enhance the pupils’ learning and understanding. According to Twisleton’s (2004) category of student teachers, here we saw Lisa moving away from functioning merely as a student teacher at a ‘task deliverer’ level concerned about surviving until the end of the lesson to being more aware of the purpose of learning tasks and how to set learning objectives for the benefit of the pupils’ learning that were more in line with the categories of ‘curriculum deliverer’ and ‘concept builder’.

Lisa used Maltese to encourage a pupil who was reading her letter in English to the class to continue reading despite some difficulties she seemed to be experiencing in reading the letter out. The pupil may have found it difficult to read the letter because they worked on it in groups and either she was not very familiar with the vocabulary or else she may have been struggling to read someone else’s handwriting. Lisa used ‘ehe’ in Maltese to encourage her and therefore seemed to think that this utterance in Maltese may be more effective in conveying reassurance and encouragement than saying ‘yes’ in English.

144.	T	So with dogs barking...	
145.	P	With cocks crowing...(???) or with a smell....	<i>(Pupils reads her letter)</i>
146.	T	<b>Ehe...</b>	<b>Yes...</b>
147.	P	When a newly hatched worm is..(???) tickle it with a chicken’s feather to ...(???) Regards, Eric Zoo.	
148.	T	Thank you. Kimberly you’re next...	

(L.Obs.3.144-148)

At the end of the English lesson Lisa used English to ask the pupils to take out their Maltese work again and switched to Maltese to tell them that they were now going to do some Maltese. Thus, Lisa’s use of Maltese was indicating the end of the English lesson and provided a link to the Maltese one.

172.	T	I think you have (???) today.... Girls take out your Maltese again... <b>ha nkomplu ftit Malti. Girls...</b>	<b>let's continue with some Maltese.</b>
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(L.Obs.3.172)

### **Use of English**

This lesson was carried out through English as the medium and Lisa successfully provided explanations, instructions and feedback in English. Here I highlight an example of an explanation given by Lisa that drew on objects in class to help pupils understand the meaning of 'hollow'. She could easily have drawn on Maltese if she was not prepared for this explanation or if she felt that the pupils would not understand her explanation. Moreover, she also involved the pupils in this explanation and thus made this learning opportunity more pupil-centred. She held up a pen horizontally to show them the hollow inside and acknowledged a pupil who suggested 'there's a hole'.

97.	T	Constantinople is a place where Turkey is found now. You know where Turkey is right? Now that was Constantinople. Hollow cane... so how is it if it is hollow? Imagine... look let me show you... this is my pen... here is hollow.	<i>(Shows a pen to the pupils)</i>
98.	P	There's a hole.	
99.	T	There's a hole. The cane had a hole throughout. Now Rebecca you continue reading.	<i>(Nods at pupil)</i>
100.	P	(???) To make silk... become important for making... weaving garments..	<i>(Pupil reading from the text)</i>
101.	T	Garments... what are garments?	
102.	P	Miss these...	<i>(Points to her uniform)</i>
103.	T	Yes tell me...you are right you were doing this (pointing to clothes) tell me...	
104.	P	Clothes	
105.	T	Yes clothes. Garments are clothes. Continue Rebecca.	

(L.Obs.3.97-105)

In line 101 Lisa focused on the word 'garments' and asked the pupil what these were. One pupil pointed to her own uniform and Lisa picked up on this and elicited a verbal response from her too.

### 7.10.2 Classroom management

The pupils were quite noisy while they handed in their handouts of the completed writing task, but even so Lisa did not switch to Maltese to chide them. She used English to ask them to sit down, to stop talking and to pass the handouts down without getting out of their seats.

152.	T	Thank you. Now we have heard some of them. Then I will correct them. All right? So pass them down to the front. We're going to quickly, quickly, go over the questions	<i>(Talking while pupils pass handouts forward. Lisa tries to talk over the noise.)</i>
153.	P	Miss...I didn't finish...	
154.	T	It doesn't matter.... Girls sit down...	<i>(Some pupils move out of their place)</i>
155.	P	<i>(Pupils talking)</i>	
156.	T	Girls...girls pass them down here. Girls... (??) Why are you out of your place? ... Don't get out of your place. Pass it down to the end of the tables. Later I will correct it. Thank you. All right girls...for homework you have the comprehension.	<i>(Tries to get them to pass handouts forward in an orderly fashion but girls keep getting up to pass them forward.)</i>
157.	P	Miss... Miss do we have to ... (???)	
158.	T	I am going to explain...	
159.	P	Miss... (???) are we going to (???) for homework	
160.	T	All right. Listen here... Write out the sentences which are true. So all you have to do for homework is to reread the sentences ... all right? You have to reread all the sentences ...ok? ... and decide which are true or not. Let's go through them quickly.	<i>(Lisa raises her voice)</i>
161.	P	But Miss ... true or false..	
162.	T	The ones that are true... you write them. The ones that are true you write them in your copybook. Martha you start reading.	

(L.Obs.3.152-162)

While Lisa was explaining the task the pupils had for homework some pupils were still moving about the class and talking so Lisa raised her voice in an attempt to be heard over the noise and again did not switch to Maltese.

She did not draw on Maltese to manage the pupils and their behaviour as she did so much in the lesson that I observed during her first practicum. When she needed to get the pupils' attention she addressed them in English and seemed to have acquired more confidence and skill in this area. At times she did raise her voice to draw the pupils' attention to something (L.Obs.3.134) but did not seem to feel the need to switch languages for this function.

### 7.11 Final Interview and questionnaire with Lisa

I began by asking Lisa about the teaching practicum she had just finished. She says that this year she was 'very satisfied. Especially in comparison to last year' (L.Int.3.8). I tried to unpick this response further and Lisa replied in length as follows:

9.	JM	What do you think were the factors that make you say this?
10.	L	<p>Maybe I was more prepared; <u>I knew more what I was going into...</u> (inaudible). The students were older, and I realised I work better with older children because they are more knowledgeable on things, so you can start on something that they already know, while the very young ones it was...you know, you think that they know something, then suddenly you realise that they've never heard of it.</p> <p><u>And I felt the difference, a big difference, because with these children I knew the kind of approach that I should take, and besides that it reflected the way I grew up and the way the children grew up.</u></p> <p>I mean, last year's children were Grade II in a Government school, and if they had to read it was only because they were made to read during the lesson and at school, because even if it was maybe homework reading it probably wasn't done or, for example, I remember one child 'cos I really.. "I want to get a book". The others all said "a book...why?" You know he just said I want one of the presents to be a book because I like reading. So... I felt the difference because I remember me, I mean since we were in first year on teaching practice school experience I was not used to teaching, not sure what to expect, the approach...We didn't have many lectures here by then you know we were still halfway through. So now I know the way I should deal because not all children are aware... The first experience I guess, <u>you base on what YOU experienced as a child.</u> Because that is the way you learnt and so it was the way I thought other children learn. As soon as I went there I thought "this is totally different". You know, I mean, I remember working at home, studying at home, reading with my family ...so then finding Grade II children who go home and you tell them find a picture ... the next day and then they can't even</p>



		find a picture...that was you know, not even in that did the parents help. Something they could do... something basic. They would tell me: we don't have magazines, we don't have books. Issa ('Now') I used to try and explain that magazines come nowadays on a door-to-door basis you know they get you a magazine for free...keep them cut pictures from them. Even that was a hassle.
11.	JM	I see.
12.	L	This year....the children, I don't want to say they were in a church school ... well I felt that the school was very helpful. As regards to being in Grade 6, at the beginning I was scared. I mean Grade 6, in a church school. The first thing to do all the schemes of work it was a hassle, a big hassle <i>ghax</i> nothing fits the syllabus <i>kwazi</i> . So you have to...in the beginning you have to get used to what the tutor will accept because I quote from the NMC ok. But I have to quote from the syllabus and that is where I started worrying – 'What am I going to put? This has nothing ...it doesn't fit into this years' syllabus especially like Maltese history that really didn't match. And then I had Roman history so I couldn't, I couldn't...' <p>In government schools they have Social Studies, here I had Geography, I had history and I had Roman history, as three different subjects.</p>

(L.Int.3.9-12)

Lisa said that she felt that she was probably better prepared for the practicum this year since she knew more about what it entailed unlike the previous practicum. Lisa also expressed that she could work better with older pupils since she had a Year 6 class as opposed to the Year 2 class. Then Lisa said that she knew what approach to adopt with the Year 6 church school class as 'it reflected the way I grew up'. Here she was identifying with the pupils in a way she never did with the Year 2 pupils in the state school the previous academic year. Her church school schooling, family background, language profile and values were much more similar to those shared by the pupils in this school. It seemed that Lisa could appreciate their 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992) since she had 'common cultural practices' (Kramsch, 1998) that were similar to those of the church school pupils and not with those in the state school. Lisa explained that now she knew more about teaching and how to relate to different children, but that at the time since it was her first experience it was natural for her to 'base on what YOU experienced as a child' and 'because that is the way you learnt'. Thus, here Lisa was

expressing her insights about teaching and learning that were formed through her apprenticeship of observation or her prior experiences.

These prior learning experiences play an important part in forming our beliefs about teaching and learning (Borg, 2001; Brownlee et al., 2001; Lortie, 1975; McLeod, 2001; Kagan, 1992). As Twisleton (2006) states, one's teaching will be influenced by prior experiences as well as by the level of bilingualism and confidence in the target language. Johnson (1994, p 450) argues that beliefs formed through prior life experiences are very hard to change despite teacher education and will probably be represented as their 'dominant model of action during the practicum teaching experience'.

Through being assigned to a church school for this practicum Lisa confirmed her beliefs about teaching and learning since the environment she was in matched her own and therefore she felt no need to adapt to her surroundings as she may have needed to in a school where she did not share the culture of the pupils and their families. Thus, this placement may in fact allow Lisa to develop a teacher identity that Britzman (2003) would describe as congruent with her personal identity, where she would not need to challenge her beliefs and look at teaching from a perspective that is different. Lisa then explains that she had felt that the church school administration was helpful but that she was frightened of the experience since she was being given the responsibility of taking on a Year 6 class for 6 weeks. I think that Lisa felt that she had to succeed this time since the *Sister* (the headteacher), had placed such faith in her.

### 7.11.1 Language use, schools and culture

The culture of the school was something Lisa appreciated. She felt at ease in the school because it was similar to her own schools and embraced the same philosophy and school ethos. She said that the pupils in her Year 6 class came from Maltese-speaking families. She explained that at school English was used throughout the day for prayers and some lessons. Lisa said that the headteacher decided to assign her to the Year 6 class because she spoke English well and that she wanted the pupils to be exposed to English as much as possible.

71.	JM	And the children you taught this year in Grade 6? Were they from various backgrounds or were they mostly English-speaking, Maltese-speaking?
72.	L	No they were Maltese-speaking. They are all Maltese-speaking.
73.	JM	But they had a positive attitude towards English as well.
74.	L	The school yes, academically it is English-speaking. I mean we use English throughout the day, the prayer...but as children, in fact, one of the reasons Sister gave me Grade 6 class, apart from that the Grade 4 class which another student teacher took was in a twinning project <sup>34</sup> , and last year she was in a twinning project so they gave her that class. But apart from that the Sister had kind of interviewed us and had told me that: ' <u>based on your English you can tackle a Grade 6</u> because I want them to speak in English as much as possible and I want the lessons to be carried out in English. I want to have someone I can rely on to carry this out.' So that is how it happened.
75.	JM	That's a boost also. To know that she felt confident in you. It's a bit scary...
76.	L	After that I said I should have spoken in Maltese not to get the Grade 6 class, you know... but I said ok. First impressions you know... ( <i>laughs</i> )
77.	JM	But it turned out well.
78.	L	Yes. I felt good. In the end I went home and told my mum... 'Ah if I had to teach a Year 6 I'd be happy'.
79.	JM	So you feel that you have found the age-group you would prefer to teach?
80.	L	Yes.
81.	JM	Also the school culture that you feel more comfortable in..
82.	L	Yes definitely. Issa ('Now') it could be also just the school for example has resources available which is excellent.

(L.Obs.3.71-82)

Lisa mentioned different reasons that could have contributed to her feeling comfortable in the school, such as the availability of educational resources. Also the fact that she

<sup>34</sup> This refers to twinning projects supported by the European Union that assist schools to work on projects together.

seemed to have found an age group she prefers to teach. She said that she felt better with 'older students' (L.Int.3.10), students who were more motivated to learn and participate (L.Int.3.114).

The second practicum seemed to have opened Lisa's eyes to the social, cultural and linguistic realities around her. She described her experiences vis-à-vis teaching in state and church schools:

*I had never seen the difference between church schools and government schools before. Now that I have taught in both I still believe that I belong better in church schools, and they give me a sense of belonging, much more than in government schools... Since it is difficult to understand what the children are feeling and their circumstances in government schools, because I feel an alien in foreign territory at times. Despite this I work hard to adapt, and therefore I hope to have no problem with any school or pupils I teach, because I believe in education for all.*

(L.Q.3.25)

She believed that during her previous practicum she had felt that 'language was a barrier' (L.Int.3.114) between her and the pupils. However, I think that it was more than the language; I think Lisa felt more in her element, due to the whole set-up that included the school culture and the pupils' culture, language and attitudes. However, despite her personal preferences she said that she hoped to adapt and therefore be in a position to teach in any type of school because she believed in 'education for all'. Here I think she may have been trying to say the 'right' thing, what was expected of her as a student teacher. However, I'm sure that given a choice she would opt to teach in a church school every time!

### 7.11.2 Becoming a Teacher

When I asked Lisa about becoming a teacher she was open about her concerns and said that last year she had started to doubt her wish to become a teacher and wondered whether she was just taking the ‘safe option’.

47.	JM	Ok. How do you feel now about being a teacher? Have your views changed? Or have you confirmed them?
48.	L	After last year I was <u>scared</u> that I had chosen teaching just because ... I took to the side and said that’s a <u>safe option</u> . That was something I felt last year.

(L.Obs.3.47-48)

After her difficult practicum she may have doubted her choice of career but may have decided to stick it out since she had just switched from Law to Education. I think that teaching may have felt safe to Lisa before her practicum because due to her coming from a family of teachers and through her apprenticeship of observation she may have believed that teaching would be ‘easy’.

In this extract Lisa shares how she grew up with teaching in her family and therefore she felt that it was almost natural for her to choose education. She may also have believed that in choosing her ‘default’ career, her fallback position, she was bound to be good at it. Thus, her difficult experience during her first practicum must have been a disappointing experience for her.

55.	JM	You grew up with it...
56.	L	Yes <u>I grew up with it and it felt safe</u> . It’s something I know... and I’ve always loved children. I felt I went well with children you know. So... last year the only time I felt ok teaching was when we had an environmental assignment and I had carried out the lesson in <u>my mother’s class</u> .
57.	JM	Yes I remember you mentioning that last year.
58.	L	And that was <u>a time when I felt good</u> . Because I felt the goals even though for one lesson, I had set goals and felt I had achieved. While sometimes in the government school last year I felt that I had set goals, maybe because through inexperience and those I had not achieved.

(L.Obs.3.55-58)

She holds that the only positive teaching experience she had that year was when she taught a science lesson in her mother's church school class. Although Lisa does not say as much, I think that it was that one experience that helped her to strive on and not give up on teaching. After the difficult experience during her first year practicum, Lisa describes her second practicum as: 'a breath of fresh air, a sense of hope and a reinforcement of my beliefs that I truly want to become a teacher.' (L.Q.3.26). This comment by Lisa seems to uphold my idea that after her first practicum she needed 'hope' to keep her on track and to reinforce her decision to become a teacher.

As we read in the extract below, Lisa believes that as a pupil she was intelligent but quite a handful and was always striving to get attention and therefore needed teachers who were 'tough' with her and who would not allow her to do as she pleased all the time. Lisa says there was a teacher she really liked because she kept her in check while challenging her to perform better. However, Lisa explains that she does not want to become like her because she believes that the image of her teacher does not match with what she says deems teachers should be like nowadays and does not fit with what 'we are taught now'.

127.	JM	And what sort of teacher do you feel you are or want to become?
128.	L	Ehmm...
129.	JM	Think of teachers who taught you when you were young... primary or secondary school..
130.	L	Well, a <u>teacher who taught me and I really liked is not the kind of teacher we are taught to become now...</u> so I do not intend to become like them. I was a different case on my own cos I needed control. I was an intelligent girl but I was very... not naughty, but I caught on to things quickly so if the teacher was still explaining I would think of a different way to work out a sum for example, or if she says write an introduction I would write three. I was always trying to get attention and I needed tough teachers. And teachers who would not let me do what I want.
131.	JM	To challenge you a bit.
132.	L	Yes to challenge me a bit. I remember I would get 80 in a test and the teacher would say that is not your potential, you can do better while I had other teachers who said 80 is good you know, well done, and so the next

	<p>time I would get 60 because ... <u>a challenging teacher</u> that was the sort of teacher I liked for me. But I know that not all children are the same and now <u>I would like to be a teacher... hands on</u>, you know hands on. I love visual aids I love including children, discussions, I believe a lot in them, and a <u>friendly atmosphere</u> where there is pupil-teacher dialogue, it's still there but it isn't so regimental. The teacher can be in a kind of way a friend, not...never too friendly you know. If you see you are getting to that ...</p>
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(L.Obs.3.127-132)

Lisa states that she would like to be a 'hands on teacher', who uses resources and who involves pupils in dialogue in a friendly environment, without being over-friendly. Thus, it seems that Lisa aims to take a more modern approach to teaching and learning and not perpetuate the traditional schooling she received.

Lisa still feels 'probably one of the reasons I like teaching is because I like children a lot' (L.Int.3.158) and therefore this would seem to indicate that despite two experiences of teaching she is still equating teaching and learning with 'liking children' and with affect and not emphasising the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning and the responsibilities this entails.

In her written response on the questionnaire at the end of her second year of the ITE Programme Lisa says that she thinks that she will be a good teacher and that her reason for wanting to become a teacher is:

*I love the variety offered in the job, I love children and I love a sense of leadership it gives. The fact that you are influential in someone's life.*

(L.Q.3.8)

Thus, she confirms that one of the reasons is affect and caring for the children but adds the aspect of leadership and being influential in others' lives, that is something she did not mention in our interviews or previous questionnaire replies. Maybe this is an aspect

that she is discovering towards the end of the second year once she had more time to reflect on her experiences, or maybe she always thought this but it was something that she had not disclosed to me.

### **7.11.3 Lisa's final beliefs and thoughts about language use in class**

Over the two academic years of this study we can see that Lisa's opinion about language use during English lessons has changed. She now believes that sometimes it is appropriate to use Maltese during English lessons because:

*I think that when you need to explain something like the meaning of a word, sometimes it is easier for the children to understand the exact meaning of a word, through an exact translation of the word in Maltese.*

(L.Q.3.10)

At the beginning of the programme Lisa held that 'the more the pupils use the language the more confident they will feel'. In the final questionnaire she had also showed shifting beliefs as she said that it is acceptable to use Maltese 'for pupils to understand more clearly'. Thus, it seems that Lisa is shifting in her beliefs about the teaching and learning of English as she gains more experience in teaching through the practice placements and also more theoretical knowledge through the degree programme. She seems to be moving away from the idea of exposing the pupils to as much English as possible so they can gain confidence in using it, while emphasising the role of Maltese as the L1 to be drawn on to facilitate learning and understanding.

The use of the L1 while teaching an L2 has been discussed at length and there is no one simple answer. However, there seems to be agreement that the L1 may be used as an effective resource when teaching an L2 to facilitate teaching and learning (Arthur, 1996; Camilleri, 1995; 1996; 2001; Faltis, 1990; García, 2009; McCarthy and Moje, 2002;



Serra, 2007) especially if this is done through what O’Neil and Velasco (2007) refer to as ‘responsible’ code-switching. Merritt *et al.*, (1992) and Lin (1990) also add that the L1 may play an important role in classroom management.

As regards the learning and teaching of English Lisa believes that proficiency in the L2 is beneficial for the pupils and states that:

*I think that it is important that the children are taught the basics, and the grounds of the English language, which the children will essentially need to use in life, and also that will lead them to further education if they would like to continue.*

(L.Q.3.13)

Thus, for Lisa English holds currency as a global language to access further education, but also as a language that is necessary for them to operate in their daily lives. It seems that to Lisa ‘the basics, and the grounds of the English language’ go beyond the remit of functional literacy in the L2, to a more proficient and scholarly mastery of English that one would need to draw on for the pursuit of further education. To Lisa the value of learning and knowing English is undisputed. She clearly ‘loves’ the language, and wishes to transmit this to her pupils as she declares below. She also tries to justify and rationalise this feeling by adding that as a subject English is open to many possibilities related to teaching and learning opportunities.

I think that Lisa assumes that the pupils should share this passion and conviction about English, and if not she may take on a deficit approach towards them. This may also contribute to why she felt so taken-aback by the negative attitudes some pupils displayed to English during her first practicum. Since she ‘loves’ English she may take the pupils’ reluctance to use English as a personal affront. On the other hand Lisa says that she does not have negative feelings about Maltese but that she does prefer to use

English. She believes that it is ‘most important’ for pupils to learn to use Maltese competently because after all it is the language they use in their daily lives.

*I think it is most important that the Maltese language, which we speak and use on an everyday basis, the children learn to use correctly.*

(L.Q.3.12)

Thus, Lisa does not come across as being in favour of English at the expense of Maltese. She herself has stated how she learnt both English and Maltese at home, and how her late father had been a lecturer of Maltese and had even published literary works of his in Maltese.

## **7.12 Conclusion**

Out of the three case studies I researched Lisa’s data confounded me the most. During her first TP she was totally out of her depth as she struggled to deliver her lesson. I think that she was striving to maintain classroom management and gain the pupils’ attention for long enough to deliver her lesson. She used both English and Maltese as languages of instruction but this she did not seem to help. Her language use was not optimum for the teaching of English as the L2, as she switched desperately from Maltese to English and back again throughout the lesson (L.Obs.1) (García, 2009; Faltis, 1990; O’Neil and Velasco, 2007). There did not seem to be any pattern or pedagogical reasoning to justify what to me seemed like random or haphazard ‘flip-flopping’ between languages (Faltis, 1990; Jacobson, 1990). She may have been using Maltese in an effort to motivate the pupils to participate and pay attention (Dörnyei, 2001), but this failed to materialise. Thus, Lisa’s use of the L1 did not yield in any benefits for her or the pupils during this lesson. The second practicum offered a totally different scenario as Lisa adapted very well to the church school and the pupils. She felt she could be herself and was at ease using English as the language of instruction.

The pupils were very attentive and participated in the lessons Lisa delivered. Socially, culturally and linguistically she identified with the school and the pupils and their backgrounds as she shared 'common cultural practices' (Brice Heath, 1983; Kramsch, 1998). This was a setting she understood and appreciated since it was very similar to her own schooling biography and family background. Her 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992) matched those of the pupils in the church school whereas they clashed with those of the state school pupils she taught in her first year practicum. Thus, here we can appreciate how deeply the social, cultural and linguistic contexts influence one student teacher's practices in the classroom.

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## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **Cross-Case Thematic Discussion**

#### **8.1 Introduction to the Themes**

In this chapter I present a discussion of the three case studies in relation to four key themes. I felt that I needed a space to discuss some of the results further and to see them in relation to the three case study participants. This chapter aims to provide the reader with a discussion of results where significant data can be contrasted and compared for the three student teachers as they developed and progressed in their journey to becoming teachers.

Through the themes I aim to focus on areas that emerged from the case studies and that seemed most salient and significant to the research questions (see methodology section 4.3.4 for more detail). I did not have a rigid list of themes as I started the research instead these took shape gradually as the process unfolded within a qualitative constructivist-interpretative framework (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). The themes are gathered broadly under the following headings I listed here and explained in sections below:

1. Language and identity
2. Language and context
3. Language use, practices and beliefs
4. Becoming a teacher and language use

My central theme is the use of Maltese and English during English lessons. The four themes are very much linked to this central theme and are inter-related.

## 8.2 Language and identity

According to McCarthy and Moje (2002, p 231) our identity is not fixed or unchanging, but can be seen to be hybrid:

*Thus, a person's identity is not necessarily incoherent and contradictory...but identity can be hybrid, it can be complex, and it can be fluid and shifting as a person moves from space to space and relationship to relationship.*

The language a student teacher uses in the classroom will be influenced by his/her own language biography as formed through lived experiences, school biography and family background (Brownlee et al, 2001; Camilleri, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Lortie, 1975; McCarthy and Moje, 2002; Twisleton, 2006). However, language use is also determined by the physical space, the social context, the interlocutors and the situation (Borg, 1980; Cabaroglu and Roberts, 2000; Camilleri, 1995; Ellul, 1978; McCarthy and Moje, 2002). Thus, language use in class is tempered by many variables that are related to teachers' and pupils' beliefs, attitudes, practices and identities as well as the social or physical space and context. Here I draw on theories related to language and second language use and teaching as well as theories from the field of sociology and sociolinguistics.

The use of language may say a lot about our identity, about who we are, and where we come from. Language use and choice usually reflect social standing, level of education, our nationality, cultures and even group affiliation. It may also depict what or who we would like to 'become' and what part of ourselves we wish to project or present to our interlocutor or audience (as being: professional, friendly, polite, educated, social status). As we have seen above language used in the classroom usually reflects our own lived experiences, family background and social context.

The match or mismatch between culture and language biographies of the student teachers and the pupils also came into play as illustrated by Lisa's experience as she struggled in the state school 'space' but seemed to fit into the church school culture easily and identified with the pupils and their experiences. According to Moll et al., (1992, p 132) using the pupils' funds of knowledge would entail drawing on the 'knowledge and skills found in local households'.

Lisa does not seem to appreciate the funds of knowledge of these pupils; she seemed to be generalising in her disparaging assumptions about her pupils and equates the different backgrounds and culture of the state school pupils as being not only 'different' to her own but as 'inferior'.

*Well there's a range, most of them are weak students and not very good. There is only one or two who seem bright. I think personal background helps. They don't read. They have problems at home.*

(L.Int.1. 44)

Lisa was the student teacher who in the first year of ITE experienced most tension between her personal identity and the teacher identity she was expected to take on in the state school. As I stated earlier, Lisa was the only participant out of the three who held that she was a balanced bilingual and considered both Maltese and English to be her L1. The state school setting and the pupils who attended the school provided Lisa with a culture shock. She did not feel she belonged in the state school and found that she could not identify with the pupils and their family backgrounds. Lisa constantly drew comparisons between 'them' or 'children like these' (the class of pupils she was assigned) and her mother's church school class, and also viewed the pupils' behaviours, attitudes and competences as lacking when compared to her own as a child (L.Int.1.140;

L.Int.1.176; L.Int.2.118; L.Int.2.30). In this way it could be that Lisa sees her pupils' background as deficit.

*I had never seen the difference between church schools and government schools before. Now that I have taught in both I still believe that I belong better in church schools, and they give me a sense of belonging, much more than in government schools... Since it is difficult to understand what the children are feeling and their circumstances in government schools, because I feel an alien in foreign territory at times. Despite this I work hard to adapt, and therefore I hope to have no problem with any school or pupils I teach, because I believe in education for all.*

(L.Q.3.25)

It was clear that when Lisa taught in the church school during her second year practicum she was in a context she could identify with and knew from her 'lived experiences' and family background, and this was evident in her practice. She felt that the pupils shared her 'love' for English and were well educated and cultured.

*As regards English, I love the language and want to give this love to my pupils. I also feel that the English language allows space for a lot of different activities, lessons and approaches.*

(L.Q.3.9)

Anne and Suzanne did not experience such tensions between their personal identities and their teacher identity or with those of the pupils. Although Anne's schooling had been undertaken in church schools she adapted very well to the state schools she was posted at for her TP placements. Linguistically she could identify with them since she also came from a Maltese-speaking family. Having a father who was a teacher in a state school and having had experience in leading a group of Girl Guides may also have prepared her for this social context. Anne had experienced discomfort due to her lack of confidence in her L2 oral skills when she attended her sixth form college and was determined not to let her pupils experience that as a result of their schooling.



*I don't remember exactly what the lessons were like but we didn't use English to speak to each other.*

(A. Int.1.14)

*I didn't learn to speak English confidently when I was at school...we only read in English.*

(A.Int.1.22)

Here she identified with the pupils' experiences since at the beginning of her 1<sup>st</sup> Year of ITE she herself felt that using English demanded conscious effort and also a level of self-confidence as 'the word comes more easily in Maltese' (A.Int.3.116). Here Anne also points to the dichotomy that seems present in the Maltese educational system where texts are read in English and explained or commented upon in Maltese. I will discuss this dichotomy in relation to Suzanne's language use in class at a later stage.

Thus, since she had gradually become confident in speaking her L2 with friends, she tried her best to expose the pupils to the L2 in a communicative manner during her English lessons. During both TP placements Anne managed to use English to this effect and did not seem to be influenced to switch to Maltese due to her own lived experiences or apprenticeship of observation.

Anne was conscious of her L2 language use and was aware that using either language would be communicating a message about her identity as is evident below in her response during an interview with me:

*Maybe they would think I am a snob or trying to show-off... I feel...I don't know...a bit shy...don't want them to think I'm putting on airs.*

(A.Int.1.10)

Thus, she was concerned about being attributed group affiliation she was not comfortable with: being a 'snob' or being pretentious. Kramsch (1998, p 65) holds that,

*It is widely believed that there is a natural connection between the language spoken by members of a social group and that group's identity.*

This is also linked to Gee's (1996; 1999) notion of a reciprocal relationship between language and identity. Bartlett (2005, p565) also holds that some studies fail to acknowledge the possibility of the 'ongoing, shifting production of literate identities'.

Suzanne also seemed to embrace the same linguistic and social values of her pupils and their families. Suzanne made a conscious effort to use the L2 during English lessons, but unlike Anne, she repeatedly drew on Maltese code-switching to manage the class, to reprimand pupils, to direct activities and also to explain. Basically she used the L2 for the content of the lesson whilst using Maltese for the rest of the talk that took place. Maybe she did this to reduce any perceived distance between herself and her pupils and to build good relationships in the classroom.

In the first interview with me she had said: 'When writing usually I prefer to use English although I do use Maltese as well, when talking I prefer to use Maltese' (S.Q.1.12). Thus, Suzanne may be using language in the classroom just as she does in her daily life outside the classroom, as suggested by Camilleri (1995) and García (2009).

Twisleton (2006) holds that our level of linguistic competence and confidence also influences our language use. This was an area that Suzanne said she needed to improve and seemed very aware of and thus, we cannot exclude this factor when considering her

language use in class. Even as a student at university Suzanne shares her unease when speaking the L2 in front of her colleagues in a lecture or tutorial:

*When we talk in class and somebody is really brilliant in English and then I have to talk and I am not that brilliant in English I feel a little bit hekk (like) ... but that's why. But in secondary and primary it really didn't affect me because everybody was the same.*

(S.Int.1.162)

Here we see the influence of Suzanne's lived experiences on her practice. As a pupil she had learnt English in a traditional manner through: 'Reading from books and doing the corresponding exercises' (S.Q.1.16). She had mentioned that a 'good teacher' she used to love at school did not use enough English in class. Suzanne had voiced the intention not to teach like her because she was very aware of the consequences of not using English for communication in the class (S.Int.1.238). Instead she was adamant that she would use the L2 because:

*...by using English in an English lesson students will feel more confident with the language.*

(S.Q.1.21)

Thus, despite being motivated to use the L2 and being willing to communicate through it, Suzanne seemed to find it very challenging to maximise the L2 use in class. In situations where the student teachers experienced difficulties in the class, especially related to classroom management, they automatically switched to their L1 in their first year.

During the second year practicum Lisa used English to address classroom management most of the time because the church school pupils were able to follow the L2 easily. Anne continued to use English for the English lessons with the occasional use of the L1 judiciously and as an additional resource when necessary as suggested by Atkinson (2002), Camilleri (1995; 1996) and Hashimoto (2002). Suzanne on the other hand

continued the practice of code-switching between the L1 and L2 for talk in the classroom that dealt with the subject content as distinct from other talk related to management and/or relationships. Here despite her linguistic dexterity, she may not be using language in a way that would most benefit her pupils' language learning but seems to be teaching as she was taught and thus reinforcing the deep impact of her own lived experiences and schooling biography on her own practice.

This is clearly the sort of deep and lasting impact our prior learning experiences can have on us and our practice (Britzman, 1986; Pajares, 1992). Johnson (1994) also holds that beliefs formed through prior life experiences are very hard to change despite teacher education and argues that how teachers were taught will influence the manner in which they teach.

### **8.3 Language and context**

The three case study participants used both Maltese and English during their first year and second year TP placements. All three were posted at Maltese primary state schools for their first 2-week practicum. In the 6-week practicum that took place during their second year of ITE Anne and Suzanne were again posted at a state school whilst Lisa was to teach in a girls' church school. In the state schools teachers generally use Maltese as the language of instruction and English, to varying degrees, during the Mathematics and English lessons. In the church school Lisa was expected to use English consistently as the language of instruction during the English lessons. This was not difficult for her since she felt at ease and confident using English.

In Table 8.1 I provide an overview of which language/s was predominant in Anne, Suzanne and Lisa's observed lessons.

**Table 8.1: Languages used by the student teachers during the lessons observed<sup>35</sup>**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Observation 1</b>	<b>Observation 2</b>	<b>Observation 3</b>
<b>Anne</b>	Em (m for reprimand)	Em (m for reprimand)	Em (m for reprimand)
<b>Suzanne</b>	Me (e for some praise & sentences)	Me (some e to explain, management)	M(E) (e for some praise & explanations)
<b>Lisa</b>	Me (e for some praise)	Em	E

The table shows that Anne was consistent in her language use throughout the two practice placements. She used English as the language of instruction during her English lessons and drew on 'some' Maltese for classroom management (A.Int.2.80; 176). This depiction seems to match her own perception since she said that despite feeling 'tense' and self-conscious about speaking in English (A.Int.1b.8) she still managed to achieve her goal of using English as much as possible during her English lessons. She believed in L2 instruction during English lessons because 'the more the students hear the language the more quickly they would get used to it' (A.Q.1.21). In the post-observation interview she said she was 'on the alert always to speak English' because according to her it was so easy to switch to Maltese without realising (A.Int.2.166).

Thus, for Anne the use of the L1 was mainly related to classroom management interventions. Suzanne was freer with her use of Maltese and drew on the pupils' L1 to explain, to praise pupils and to manage the classroom. Like Anne, Suzanne also felt self-conscious about using the L2:

<sup>35</sup> *Language categories adapted from Camilleri (1995) M=Maltese, E=English, Me= Mainly Maltese with some English, Em= mainly English with some Maltese. See section 3.2.5 for more detail.*

*...self-conscious ... really conscious about what I'm saying. And sometimes it doesn't help me because I'm thinking about what I'm saying and what I have to say and I get mixed hekk (like) ...*

(S.Int.1.150)

Lisa on the other hand used mainly Maltese during her first lesson in the state school but then was consistent in her use of English in the church school in her second practicum. At the beginning of this study she reported feeling at ease and confident with either language.

Code-switching from English to Maltese during English lessons may serve a pedagogical function to construct and transmit knowledge, to scaffold learning, to clarify points and give explanations, to translate when pupils do not follow or to teach a new concept that would be difficult for the pupils to grasp in the L2 (Camilleri, 1995; Edwards, 2004; Ferguson, 2003; O'Neil & Velasco, 2007). Switching to the L1 may also serve to establish interpersonal relationships within the class and to reassure pupils (Camilleri, 1995; 2001; Ferguson, 2003) or to address classroom management issues efficiently (Faltis, 1990; Ferguson, 2003). Code-switching, or rather 'responsible code-switching', is viewed as an asset and additional resource for the teacher and pupils to draw on in the classroom (Arthur, 1996; Camilleri, 1995; 2001; Edwards, 2004; García, 2009; Lin, 1990; Merritt et al, 1992; Milroy & Muysken, 1995; O'Neil & Velasco, 2007; Van der Walt et al., 2001).

The use of Maltese and English in class may take on different roles or functions to serve various purposes. The three categories overlap and are not to be regarded as distinct as the table may suggest. One utterance or code-switch may actually serve more than one function concurrently. Ferguson (2009, p 231) points out that

...switches are very often multifunctional, the implication being that it is therefore difficult to allocate a discrete determinate meaning to every switch.

In Table 8.2 I draw on three categories as proposed by Ferguson (2003, p 231-232) to depict the nature and main purposes of the code-switching that took place in Anne, Suzanne and Lisa's classrooms.

**Table 8.2 An overview of the function and frequency of code-switching**

Three categories of code-switching		Lesson 1			Lesson 2			Lesson 3		
		Anne	Suzanne	Lisa	Anne	Suzanne	Lisa	Anne	Suzanne	Lisa
1	<b>Constructing and transmitting knowledge</b>		✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓		✓ ✓		✓	✓ ✓ ✓	
2	<b>Classroom management</b> <i>Management of pupil behaviour, directives and procedures</i>	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓		✓	✓ ✓ ✓	
3	<b>Interpersonal relations</b> <i>Empathy, solidarity and rapport building.</i>	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓		✓ ✓ ✓			✓ ✓	

(✓ = occasional use, ✓✓ = frequent use, ✓✓✓ = very frequent use)

During the first TP Lisa struggled with classroom management difficulties. She drew on intrasentential code-switching (within clauses or sentences) in what appeared to be a haphazard manner that seemed closer to code-mixing than code-switching. Her use of Maltese did not seem to facilitate the learning and teaching process. Rather the lesson transcription gave the impression of a faltering and fragmented lesson with Lisa struggling to gain the pupils' attention and barely managing to get the pupils to listen to the audio CD dialogue. Maybe due to all the difficulties she experienced in this lesson she did not focus on her language use consciously. Thus, her language use during this

lesson did not come across as drawing on code-switching in a skilful or sophisticated manner as proposed by Milroy and Muysken (1995) and García (2009).

Anne on the other hand did not have such challenging classroom management and behaviour issues to deal with and seemed calm and collected. During her lesson she used Maltese sparingly. Through studying the transcripts, Anne's use of code-switching could be said to be more 'responsible' and judicious than Lisa's. Anne's use of Maltese was mostly to deal with classroom management and directives which resulted due to the pupils being seated on cushions during the story-telling session. Anne also drew on Maltese to praise the pupils although she did this in English as well. She did not switch to Maltese to clarify or respond to the pupils' queries, but instead used English creatively to provide simple explanations or examples the pupils could follow (see examples provided in Chapter 5).

Suzanne used both languages during the English lesson observed. She used Maltese to direct the lesson, to explain procedures, to reprimand pupils and also to provide translations and encouragement when pupils experienced difficulties in understanding. She used English for the content of the lesson. Thus, Suzanne seemed to distinguish between the procedure and the content of the lesson. Her practice was skilled and dexterous in that she seemed to instinctively know when to employ either language in this distinction between talk related to content and talk related to maintaining the social relations within the class. Camilleri (1996, p 101) observed that Maltese secondary school teachers also used code-switching to make a difference between the lesson content and 'talk related to the social relations of the classroom'. Maybe Suzanne upholds this dichotomy in her language use due to her feelings in the area of language



proficiency, fluency and confidence in using the L2. This idea is reinforced further by the quotes from Suzanne below.

Suzanne manoeuvred the languages skilfully, but ironically this behaviour seemed to clash with her own stated beliefs and intentions about using English throughout the lesson to expose the pupils to as much English as possible.

*In English I wish that I talked ... used it more as a language. I know how to write etc... I have an Intermediate in English... but I don't use it that much. Sometimes it is not how much you know but how you can use it...*

(S.Int.1.136)

Suzanne was very aware of her own lack of confidence and communicative practice in using English fluently and did not want this to be the case for her pupils.

*I realised how much I lacked in English, you know, and how much I didn't use English, not like other friends. That's why ... and I don't want this to repeat again for the pupils I will teach and for my kids.*

(S.Int.1.238)

However, during the same interview Suzanne acknowledged that she would probably need to use the L1 'You know, to explain things I think that I have to use Maltese' (S.Int.1.216). So here we see that Suzanne was torn between the intention to provide the pupils with as much exposure to the L2 as possible while at the same time using the L1 to ensure they were following and understanding the lesson. The linguistic dilemmas Suzanne faced fed into and also reflected her conflicted view of herself as a teacher. Here we see how language can both reflect but also perpetuate social roles.

In the second cycle of TP Lisa was in her element because she felt she could identify with the pupils in the church school context. She explained that there was a 'big difference between the children' (L.Int.1.140) and her clear preference for the church

school context and her appreciation of their ‘funds of knowledge’ (Moll et al., 1992) is evident below.

*I think that in church schools children are best, in my opinion, I find children have help at home, are willing to learn, they know quite a lot already. At state schools you find an assortment of everything, but most of the children need a bit of pushing.*

(L.Int.1.176)

She used the L2 confidently and consistently during both lessons in the church school I observed because she believed in the English-only policy, that ‘*English lessons are for learning English* (L.Q.1.21). She rarely drew on Maltese and when she did it was to empathise with them, to translate upon a pupil’s request and repeated a word in Maltese to prompt and support a pupil’s learning.

Lisa stuck to English when she needed to address classroom management and even when she raised her voice to reprimand pupils. This was more challenging for the other case study participants because they tended to code-switch to Maltese to address classroom management issues as they arose.

However, Lisa did not need to invest tremendous effort or language awareness to use the L2 throughout the lessons because this was an environment she felt at ease in due to the educational, linguistic, cultural and social context. If she had been placed in a state school for her second practicum she may have struggled with language use and classroom management as she did in her first year. For Anne and Suzanne it was more a case of building upon their first year experiences of teaching in state schools. Thus, they both had to make a very conscious effort to use English themselves as well as to motivate the pupils to use English as the language of instruction. They had to find a way to build and maintain the social relationships in the class and encourage pupils to participate while also exposing the pupils to English during English lessons.

Anne stated that she believed in putting the pupils' needs and learning before her 'need' to use English throughout the English lesson. However, she did not believe in giving up on English at the first difficulty or complaint from a pupil. Anne's teaching over the two practice placements was marked by her 'balanced use' of the L1 and L2 together with the use of strategies and resources that helped her to maximise L2 use in the class. She continually drew on visual aids, body language, voice, rephrasing and paraphrasing together with simple explanations to ensure the pupils were following and understanding the lesson. In her second practicum Anne seemed slightly more open to the use of Maltese as an additional resource to aid L2 learning instead of an evil to avoid at all costs.

Suzanne also used Maltese and English in her second TP. Like Anne she had to make a very conscious effort to use English whilst teaching the L2. However, unlike Anne and Lisa, Suzanne switched to Maltese easily as soon as she encountered any classroom management challenge or a query from a pupil. Suzanne's motivation and willingness to communicate (Hashimoto, 2002) may not have been as pronounced as Anne's. Suzanne seemed to relegate distinct roles to the L1 and L2 in her teaching as she consistently drew on Maltese for classroom management, to communicate and explain. English was used for the content of the lesson (reading, sentences and vocabulary). Here we have an example of a clear dichotomy between language used for content and language used for relationship building and rapport in the classroom. Suzanne was good at switching to Maltese for different functions and this showed an acute awareness of the use of language for social, affective and cultural expression.

In her research Camilleri (1995) found that this sort of L1 use was very common amongst Maltese secondary school teachers as an aid to effective subject teaching in a bilingual context. However, reservations about such an approach are voiced when teaching the L2 as the subject. If, as Saxena (2009) and Polio and Duff (1994) argue, the aim is to teach the language then one should try to maximise the use of the target language through using it for authentic communication in the classroom.

Polio and Duff argue that the use of the L1 may serve to create a ‘comfortable and enjoyable classroom atmosphere, which the teachers by and large consider to be very important’ (p 322). However, they also warn that through using the L1:

*...the students miss useful opportunities to process communicative TL input, to practice new TL structures thoroughly in nonmechanical ways, and also to express and resolve comprehension difficulties in the TL.*

(Polio and Duff, 1994, p322)

Suzanne was good at switching to Maltese for different functions and this showed an acute awareness of the use of language for social, affective and cultural expression. Suzanne used Maltese as the language of instruction most of the time and this reflects her use of language outside the classroom. This concurs with García’s statement below:

*Without any awareness about language use in education, teachers who are members of bilingual communities will use their two languages in classrooms in ways similar to those in which they use them in the community.*

(2009, p 296)

Suzanne was explicit about her preference to use the L1 in her daily life and also her lack of confidence in using the L2. In class she seemed to limit her English to the direct content of the lesson – sentences from books, phrases and vocabulary.

I believe that to teach the L2 effectively Suzanne may need to become more aware of her language use as a resource to aid L2 learning and therefore, to be in a better position to draw on code-switching judiciously during English lessons (Ferguson, 2003; 2009; Nazary, 2008; Van der Walt et al., 2001). Her bilingual approach during other curricular subjects may not be seen as problematic, but when the lesson is 'English' then more attention is called for in the choice of language/s of instruction and the extent or type of code-switching drawn on as Polio and Duff (1994) and Saxena (2009) recommend.

#### **8.4 Language use: practices and beliefs**

At times there seems to be a lack of consistency between what teachers state they do and what they actually do in classrooms (Borg, 2003; Breen et al, 2001). This mismatch between practice and beliefs may also be evident in the perception of language use of teachers or student teachers in a bilingual setting (Lacorte, 2005; Fasold, 1984). A teacher may believe in adopting a communicative approach to the teaching of English but then may draw on practices that seem to go against this approach due to unforeseen events, classroom management issues or the pupils' needs at the time (Thibodeau and Hillman, 2003).

This departure from practice in line with stated intentions or beliefs might be undertaken consciously in order to respond to the situation in a responsible manner. Teachers may engage in practices that do not support their beliefs or intentions about language teaching or learning due to various reasons: maybe their language proficiency levels do not allow for fluent L2 use in the classroom for a whole lesson, context and/or situation, pupils' needs, syllabus requirements, text books adopted by the school, or even classroom management concerns. In L2 teaching teachers may state that they use the L2 all the time throughout the lesson because they may not be fully aware of the

amount of code-switching they are employing (Borg, 2003; Polio and Duff, 1994; Saxena, 2009). It may also be the case that for a teacher who is not very confident or fluent in using the L2, the conscious effort made may lead the teacher to perceive that s/he actually used the L2 throughout the lesson.

Borg (2003; 2006) holds that sometimes teachers' classroom practices do not seem to tally with their stated beliefs, but explains that this does not mean that they are trying to mislead anyone but maybe they may not be fully aware of the complex decisions related to language use that they are taking all the time in the classroom. Here I do not intend this in the spirit of 'catching them out' but in an attempt to understand more about why such a discrepancy seems to exist between our perceived and actual L2 use. Hymes (1974) was one of the first to suggest that this holds for how we think we speak and how we actually speak; it is since the advent of audio recording that we have really become aware of how we do speak in 'natural' situations.

At the outset of this study Anne, Lisa and Suzanne asserted that they would use as much English as possible during English lessons in a bid to expose the pupils to more English with the intention of making them confident and competent users of the L2. In practice however, they found that this was far from a simple undertaking. They found that in schools they had to make allowances according to the pupils' needs, attitudes toward language and the language of instruction they were accustomed to. Suzanne and Lisa discovered that when they encountered difficulties due to classroom management it often deflected their attention from language use and wore down their intentions and energy to persist in using the L2. Their own lived experiences and beliefs also played a part in their teaching behaviour and their use of language in class.

*Pre-service ESL teachers' beliefs may be based largely on images from their formal language learning experiences, and in*

*all likelihood will represent their dominant model of action during the practicum teaching experience.*

(Johnson, 1994, p 450)

Lisa spoke about her own realisation of this and explained how she became aware of the effect of her apprenticeship of observation or her prior experiences after her second practicum. She said that during her first practicum it was natural for her to draw on her own experiences as follows:

*So now I know the way I should deal because not all children are aware... The first experience I guess, you base on what YOU experienced as a child. Because that is the way you learnt and so it was the way I thought other children learn. As soon as I went there I thought "this is totally different". You know, I mean, I remember working at home, studying at home, reading with my family ...so then finding Grade II children who go home and you tell them find a picture ... the next day and then they can't even find a picture...that was you know, not even in that did the parents help. Something they could do... something basic. They would tell me: we don't have magazines, we don't have books.*

(L.Int.3.10)

These prior learning experiences play an important part in forming our beliefs about teaching and learning (Borg, 2001; Brownlee et al., 2001; Kagan, 1992; Lortie, 1975; McLeod, 2001). This was very clear in Suzanne's practice as she switched to Maltese just as her own teachers used to, despite her expressed intention at the outset to use English for interaction and communication. She had stated that she did not want to teach like her traditional teachers who used English 'only to read from the book'.

Anne and Lisa seemed to uphold the monolingual 'English-only' policy to teaching English. Their idealised scenario was to teach English through English without any use of the mother tongue at all. Nowadays this position is contested by researchers who

claim that the exclusion of the L1 in L2 learning situations is not appropriate (Butzkamm, 2003; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation, 2003).

Anne and Lisa did not seem to be in favour of using the L1 during L2 lessons before and during their first year TP placement. Instead they viewed their use of the L1 during English lessons as a weakness, a flaw to be avoided. Suzanne, on the other hand believed that the L1 could be drawn on 'sometimes' to explain especially if the pupils did not understand.

*I think that sometimes I have to use Maltese especially with these kids who I know their English is not that good. You know, to explain things I think that I have to use Maltese. But not using Maltese all the time. I will use English most of the time but if they are not understanding or they feel shaky about it, you know, I will have to explain in Maltese. I think it is nonsense, to keep talking in English when I see they are not understanding anything I am saying. As they are first years...*

(S.Int.1.216)

Thus, it is clear that Suzanne held a strong conviction about the necessity to use the L1, as here she put the pupils' understanding before the NMC recommendation, to teach English through English. She also took into account that the pupils were in their first year of compulsory education (Year 1). Thus, here Suzanne could be seen coming into contact with the reality of teaching and with the complex decisions she had to take about language use to aid the pupils' learning. This was where she used her judgement based on her own experiences as opposed to her role as teacher. This was the conflict that Suzanne was experiencing related to her own language and identity as well as to her personal and teacher identity.

Despite their beliefs in the use of the L2 and their intentions to expose the pupils to English, all three student teachers used Maltese during the English lesson I observed in



their first practicum. Anne seemed to use the L1 'responsibly' and judiciously while Suzanne adopted the stance of using the L2 for the subject content and the L1 for classroom management, directives and explanations. Lisa did not seem to have a discernible pattern to her language use as she used both Maltese and English in a mixed manner in an unsuccessful attempt to manage the class and/or teach the lesson.

However, in their second year after the lesson observations Anne and Lisa seemed more open to the use of 'some' Maltese in the classroom. This may be because they became aware that attempting to use the L2 throughout the lessons was too big a challenge to handle or that they felt it was more 'natural' to draw on some Maltese. Moreover, Anne, Suzanne and Lisa seemed to have become more aware of their pedagogic use of language. Anne seemed open to using 'some Maltese' as an additional resource that the bilingual teacher can draw on and did not refuse, or ignore, pupils' attempts to communicate responses if they found it too difficult to do so in the L2. In the first year there was one instance during the observed lesson where Anne had sounded very irritated at a pupil who had not replied in English and had directed her to use the L2 'or else don't say anything' (A.Obs.1.153).

Suzanne, on the other hand expressed the wish to use more English, but in class found it difficult to forgo her almost automatic use of the L2 for the content of the lesson and the L1 for explanations and all other talk in the class. It seemed that Suzanne was under the impression that she 'used English most of the time' although she explained that she also used Maltese too 'to make sure that they understand' (S.Int.2.84).

Tables 8.1 and 8.2 above contradict Suzanne's claim that she used the L2 'most of the time'. A look at the transcription of the lesson also shows a minimal use of the L2 for

communication and as language of instruction. This mismatch between her self-reported perception of language use and her actual performance may be an indication that using the L2 does require very much effort on Suzanne's part:

*...as I'm not used to it... as I don't speak English... as I don't speak English you know at home, so I'm not so used to speak English, I mean...it's another challenge for me... for me to speak English for about an hour or so.*

(S.Int.3.88)

Maybe the amount of effort invested in her L2 use leaves Suzanne with the impression that she really did use the L2 'most of the time'.

Due to the church school context Lisa did not need to draw on Maltese to facilitate understanding or to build a positive rapport with the pupils. Therefore, in her second practicum she was at ease using the L2 throughout her English lessons. I did not observe her teaching any Maltese lessons in this school, but I think she may have had to make a very conscious effort not to use the L2 when explaining.

*...my Maltese is good, but still I would... if someone said to me choose a language... it would be English because I feel confident in it.*

(L.Int.1.98)

Thus, Lisa's preferred language use could be seen as diametrically opposite to that of both Anne and Suzanne in that to her English was the language she preferred and felt most at ease with. After the second practicum Anne and Lisa seem to have an accurate perception of their own language use in class. Suzanne on the other hand was under the impression that she actually used more English than she did in practice. Maybe her concern with her own proficiency and confidence in using English were keeping her from using English as much as she intended during her English lessons.

## **8.5 Becoming a teacher and language use**

This is a theme that emerged as significant as I closely scrutinised my data. It was not an area I intended to delve into at the beginning of the study. However, every time I interviewed the participants they raised it as a significant issue. Retrospectively, I see this was inevitable since this study took place over two years of a four year programme and the participants developed 'as teachers' in this time. Also, they knew I was involved in tutoring other student teachers so they may have thought that I could encourage or reassure them about their practice (positionality is discussed in Chapter 4). Thus, 'becoming a teacher' was an area of the participants' development and practice that came to the fore as the project progressed. I also began to realise how developing their 'teacher selves' could impact upon their personal identities (Twisleton, 2004; 2006) and thus inevitably also on their use of language in class.

The aspect of development over the course of the two years of their professional training was also important since the student teachers had the opportunity to develop and learn new skills that they could employ during their practicum. They also had the opportunity to teach in two different primary schools during their TP placements. Thus, they enriched their experiences through teaching in different types of schools, different regions of Malta, pupils of different ages, as well as pupils coming from diverse families and schooling backgrounds. This is also the time they may experience tensions between their beliefs and practices that may lead to changes in beliefs and opinions about teaching and language use (Borg, 2006; Johnson, 1994; Pajares, 1992). These beliefs may be about the use of the L1 or L2 in class as well as about their own language preferences, attitudes and proficiency. They may also experience challenges that may lead them to question the path they are following and whether the dream of becoming a teacher is worth pursuing (Britzman, 1986).

Anne and Suzanne shared the dream of becoming teachers and this was what led them to pursue the ITE programme. Suzanne was the first in her family to go to university and she was proud of this as it was a great achievement for her and her family. Anne said that her wish to become a teacher had been with her since she was a child playing school with her dolls.

Lisa had tried to resist becoming a teacher since she hailed from a family of teachers. She had initially taken up Law but then changed to Education. Thus, at the beginning of her ITE she did not appear to have that deep-rooted desire to become a teacher, but instead thought that it was somehow inevitable that she follow this route as her parents and grandparents had done before her. When I asked Lisa about becoming a teacher she was open with me about her concerns and said that in her first year she had doubted her wish to become a teacher and wondered whether she was just taking the 'safe option'. Lisa holds that the only positive teaching experience she had during her first year of ITE was when she taught a science lesson in her mother's church school class. Although Lisa did not say as much, I think that it was that one experience that helped her strive on and not give up on teaching. After the difficult experience during her first year practicum, Lisa described her second practicum as: 'a breath of fresh air, a sense of hope and a reinforcement of my beliefs that I truly want to become a teacher' (L.Q.3.26). Thus, her positive teaching experience in a church school during her second TP placement helped Lisa confirm her wish to become a teacher. Had she been placed in a state school for her second practicum I have my doubts about whether she would have felt the wish to pursue a career in teaching since she had made it very clear that the pupils she had taught had made her feel 'demotivated' and did not match her lived experiences or her idea of what being a teacher entailed.

In her written response on the questionnaire at the end of her second year of ITE Lisa said that she would make a good teacher (L.Q.3.8). She also confirms that one of the reasons was affect and caring for the children but adds the aspect of leadership and being influential in others' lives. This was something she had not mentioned in our interviews or her previous questionnaire replies. Maybe this was an aspect that she was discovering towards the end of the second year once she had more time to reflect on her experiences, or maybe she had always thought this but it was something that she had not disclosed to me before.

### **Role models**

Lisa had a teacher she really liked because she kept her in check while challenging her to perform better. However, Lisa explained that she did not want to become like her because she believed that the image of her teacher did not match with what she believed teachers should be like nowadays and does not fit with what 'we are taught now' (L.Obs.3.130). Lisa thus, was influenced by her teacher but is aware that good practice nowadays requires that she teach differently from this teacher. Hence, Lisa seems to be drawing on practice, theories and ideas that she has learnt through her teacher education whilst developing her 'teacher identity'. It also shows her ability to reflect back and re-evaluate her experiences.

Likewise, Suzanne also said that it was through the influence of one of her teachers that she had developed the wish to become a teacher:

*I think I was influenced by my Year 1 teacher. When I think about it, this issue, because she was young, she was attractive, she had a way how to teach things... you know... and kids become influenced by their teachers. That's why. I used to pretend to be her... and this went on and on and on... Even at school when we had a presentation or something of the sort, my other teachers used to tell me, 'you have a way how to teach', and it boosted me you know... that's why.*

(S.Int.1.192)

Having a role model influenced Suzanne tremendously. Her admiration for her young, attractive and charismatic teacher made her turn this positive experience of teaching/learning into a lifelong desire to become a teacher. This aspiration was reinforced by other teachers recognising and commenting upon features that were 'teacher-like' in her manner during presentations. Probably these occasions also allowed her to 'play' at being teacher as she used to when she was six years old.

According to Anne, the teacher of English she had in secondary school used English more consistently than other teachers she had before. Anne had fond memories of the lessons because she enjoyed these activity-packed lessons and liked the teacher (A.Int.1.18). Anne believed that a 'good teacher' could make a difference in pupils' achievement and subject preference. Despite the 'very good teacher' at secondary level Anne still felt that her lack of confidence in using English was a direct effect of her schooling that emphasised writing and reading the L2 and not oracy skills.

Thus, Anne's pedagogy was directly influenced by the way she was taught, in this case causing her to want to teach in a different manner to how she was taught and not to repeat the mistakes she believed her own teachers made when she was a pupil (Britzman, 2003). Here, Anne's choice of method was affected by her reaction to her own prior experiences and she assumed that the pupils in her class would have the same needs and preferences she had as a pupil.

### ***The bumpy road to becoming a teacher***

Suzanne explained how she reached a crisis point during her practicum when she felt she was not successful in managing the class and was not getting through to the pupils. She felt that she was almost 'wasting' her time and energy because despite all her carefully planned lessons the pupils misbehaved and did not appreciate her efforts

(S.Int.3.49). Suzanne told me how this experience made her doubt whether she wanted to become a teacher. However, despite her reservations, in her response to the questionnaire a couple of months later, she said that she believed that she would be a good teacher and stated that she wanted to be a primary school teacher because 'I feel that I am capable and I have the qualities although I know that through practice I'll improve and be a better teacher' (S.Q.3.8). She believed that her second practicum changed her idea about teaching in that, 'it is not as easy as one might expect. You need to be on the go throughout' (S.Q.3.25). Britzman (2003) holds that usually teaching is perceived as 'easy' due to our extensive apprenticeship of observation and our extensive school biographies. Therefore, the experience of teaching challenged and changed some of Suzanne's preconceived and romantic ideas about teaching that she had acquired through her 'apprenticeship of observation'. Suzanne also realised that it was not easy to teach using the L2 either.

Anne explained that she now felt that she was in a better position to adapt her lesson plans according to how the lesson developed and did not teach strictly according to the lesson plans. This showed a level of operating that went beyond the mere delivery of curriculum to being able to respond in a dynamic way to the pupils' needs and situations as they arose during the lessons (Tochon & Munby, 1993). Twisleton (2006) states that 'novice teachers direct their actions mainly through preordained planning and are much less likely to respond contingently or to even be open to the need to do so'. I think that Anne was the only student teacher out of the three who came closest to this level of teaching in the course of the two TP placement lessons I observed. Anne seemed to be very confident in class and had forged a good relationship with the pupils. She had managed to assert her authority in a friendly but firm manner. Her language skills also contributed to her confidence as she found strategies to assist her in using the

L2. Thus, Anne could focus more on the lessons and planning and on the pupils' needs and responses rather than on surviving till the end of the lesson or day. This in turn allowed her more time to focus and evaluate her language use and how best to present the language lessons to the pupils in a way that fostered positive attitudes to the L2 and motivated them to use English (Dörnyei, 2001; Hashimoto, 2002).

Thus, it seems that while the student teachers were struggling with classroom management, time management or lesson planning difficulties they did not have the time to be aware of, or reflect upon, their own or the pupils' language use during English lessons. Without this language awareness it was very unlikely that the student teachers could attain their targets of teaching the L2 in a manner that enabled the pupils to become fluent users of the language. As indicated previously, teachers may actually believe that they had in fact used the L2 throughout the lesson when audio recordings and transcriptions revealed otherwise (Borg, 2001; Polio and Duff, 1994). Hence, if the student teachers are not even aware of the type or extent of their Maltese and English use during the English lessons, then they cannot evaluate their language teaching realistically and may not attempt to explore different approaches to teaching the L2 in order to improve their teaching (Borg, 2001; García, 2009).

Thus, I believe that this theme about becoming a teacher could be directly linked to the language use by student teachers because taking on the responsibility and professional role of a 'good' primary school teacher entails the use of both Maltese and English during a typical day in class where pupils are taught Maltese and English. Therefore, in class student teachers are required to use both languages (as required by the NMC) despite their own preferences, prejudices, language proficiency, group affiliations,



culture or lived experiences. So how the student teachers recognise and take on this challenge will undoubtedly influence their language use in class.

## **8.6 Conclusion**

Teachers and pupils participate in a complex and ever-changing linguistic milieu as they negotiate meaning, relationships and identities in the classroom. The language used in classrooms, as in society at large, is never neutral or unmarked. The use of Maltese as the L1 and the use of English as the L2 do not always fit neatly and unchallenged within the physical space of the classroom.

The classroom as a 'space' is a meeting point of various cultures, language biographies and identities that reflect the Maltese bilingual society and as such brings with it the challenges that are related to social, cultural and linguistic diversity (García, 2009). The NMC (1999) offers suggestions of how to go about teaching and using both of our official languages in classrooms according to the various subjects taught, but the classroom context involves challenges that are related to knowledge, practices, beliefs and attitudes held by teachers and pupils.

This chapter has served the purpose of bringing together the results pertaining to the three case-study participants for a discussion that spans over their experiences of teaching in Maltese primary schools over the first two years of their teacher education programme. Through this cross-case thematic chapter I discussed the findings of this study in terms of the four key themes: language and context; language and identity; language use, practices and beliefs; and becoming a teacher. The next chapter I present is the concluding chapter.



## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **Conclusion**

#### **9.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I address the research questions and map them onto the main findings of the study. Subsequently I suggest what they might contribute in terms of knowledge and understanding to the field of L2 education and language use. I also put forward possible implications for classroom practice in the area of L2 use in the classroom and make recommendations relevant to the field of primary teacher education in Malta. Furthermore, I discuss limitations of this study and offer suggestions for further research. Finally, I reflect on what this research journey has meant to me, and my own development as a researcher, as a teacher educator and also as a speaker of Maltese and English in Malta.

#### **9.2 Addressing the Research Questions**

Here I list the research questions and indicate which of the main findings below addresses each question. The main findings are presented in four sections that do not follow the chronological order in which the research questions are listed. Therefore to make the connection between the research questions and main findings clearer I include the following table.

**Table 9.1 Main findings and research questions**

<b>Research Questions (RQ)</b>	<b>Main findings (MF)</b>
<p>RQ 1. What influences Maltese student teachers' use of Maltese and English?</p>	<p>MF 3. The language use of student teachers in Maltese classrooms is influenced by personal identity and socio-cultural contexts.</p> <p>MF 4. A mismatch tends to exist between the beliefs and intentions of student teachers to use the L1/L2 and their actual language practices in class.</p>
<p>RQ 2. What influences Maltese student teachers' use of Maltese and English in the classroom?</p>	<p>MF 2. Student teachers use the L1 to deal with classroom management challenges.</p> <p>MF 3. The language use of student teachers in Maltese classrooms is influenced by personal identity and socio-cultural contexts.</p> <p>MF 4. The language use of student teachers in Maltese classrooms is influenced by personal identity and socio-cultural contexts.</p>
<p>RQ 3. Do Maltese and English serve different functions in class? Is there a pattern to this language use during English lessons?</p>	<p>MF 1. There is value in using the L1 as a communicative and pedagogical resource during L2 lessons.</p> <p>MF 2. Student teachers use the L1 to deal with classroom management challenges.</p> <p>MF 4. A mismatch tends to exist between the beliefs and intentions of student teachers to use the L1/L2 and their actual language practices in class.</p>

### **9.3 Main findings of the study**

- 1. There is value in using the L1 as a communicative and pedagogical resource during L2 lessons.**

Despite expressing the belief in using the L2 in class as much as possible, in their practice the three case-study participants used code-switching in their lessons and later asserted that they believed that sometimes it is necessary to use Maltese to ensure pupil learning and understanding. During the lessons observed the L1 served the purpose of

scaffolding learning, explaining difficult concepts, encouraging participation and putting pupils at ease and reducing language anxiety. This is in line with findings in the literature (Camilleri, 1995; 1996; Faltis, 1990; Ferguson, 2003) and addresses the third research question about the functions of the L1 and L2 in the primary classroom. Thus, the use of the L1 may also serve the purpose of encouraging ‘willingness to communicate’ due to reduced anxiety of communicating in their L2 (Horowitz, 2001; MacIntyre, 2007) and simultaneously increasing the communicative use of the L2 use in the classroom. Allowing some use of the L1 can be beneficial in showing the pupils that their L1 is respected and valued and that L2 use in the classroom does not entail undermining the national importance or group affiliation or culture of the pupils and their families (Brown, 2000; Butzkamm, 2003; Kramsch, 1998; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Moll et al., 1992; Nation, 2003). Moreover, through acknowledging and appreciating their funds of knowledge the teacher is already fostering a positive rapport that could also be drawn on in winning over their cooperation in L2 lessons and also as a valuable source of themes to include in lessons (Marshall et al., 2010).

Also, the findings indicate that the use of the L2 at ‘all costs’ is not relevant, appropriate or in the best interest of the pupils and their learning. Valuable learning opportunities may be missed due to a rigorous implementation of an ‘English-only’ policy in primary schools. As illustrated through the episode when Anne rebuffed a pupil’s Maltese response as follows:

*Not in Maltese, try and say something in English ok...or else  
don't say anything...*

(A.Obs.1.153)

As discussed previously (in chapters 5 and 8), in such a situation Anne could have acknowledged the reply and turned it into a learning opportunity. Instead the pupil was not encouraged to participate and her correct reply (albeit in Maltese) was not valued. I

think this was a finding that really made me re-evaluate my own belief in the ‘English-only’ policy during L2 lessons that I was originally in favour of. This was the **key finding** that made me see things through a different perspective; one that would allow me to do more than lip-service to the ‘judicious’ and ‘responsible’ use of the L1 in teaching the L2. Hence, ironically it was through the missed opportunity for the use of Maltese as a pedagogical resource that I faced my assumptions about language learning and/or teaching and language as actually used in classrooms to meet pupils’ needs. It was then that I realised the real value of the L1 for teachers and pupils as they turned to Maltese to facilitate the teaching/learning situation.

Thus, when advocating ‘English-only’ one should think about how many valid and valuable opportunities for learning, as well as for communication and rapport may be lost in the process (Cook, 1999; Saxena, 2009). I now have the necessary evidence to support the use of the L1 as an additional pedagogical resource in the classroom (Camilleri, 1995; 1996; Lin 1990; McCarthy and Moje, 2002; Merritt *et al.*, 1992).

## **2. Student teachers use the L1 to deal with classroom management challenges.**

This is a pattern that emerges clearly in the classroom practices of Suzanne and Anne in both their teaching placements and Lisa in her first teaching placement. The use of the L1 to address classroom management was not a surprising finding as such L1 use has frequently been found to be a common purpose behind code-switching internationally (Auerbach, 1993; Camilleri 1996; Faltis, 1990; Ferguson, 2003; Lin, 1990; Merrit *et al.*, 1992). This finding addresses the third research question about the functions of the L1/2 in the classroom and the patterns of this language use. Suzanne also takes this pattern further in using the L1 to direct the lesson as well as to provide any explanations while using the L2 for the lesson content.

**3. The language use of student teachers in Maltese classrooms is influenced by personal identity and socio-cultural contexts.**

The language use of these student teachers in Maltese classrooms is influenced by factors such as home language use, schooling biography and lived experiences, attitudes to language and perceived levels of confidence and proficiency in using the L2. Thus, this finding is closely tied to the first and second research questions that focus on what influences the student teachers' use of Maltese and English in and outside of the classroom.

The tendency is for student teachers to use language in the classroom as they do in their daily lives unless they are aware of their own language use and focus on the L2 as language and medium of instruction. This reflection of language use in daily life on language use in the classroom echoes findings by researchers such as Camilleri (1995), Polio and Duff (1994), Garcia (2009), Polio and Duff (1994) and Saxena (2009). The context or socio-cultural setting also plays an important part in language use as illustrated through Lisa's experiences in a state and church school. Lisa was very much in her element when she could use English most of the time as the language of instruction during the English lessons as well as other lessons (except Maltese of course) in the church school where she was posted for her second practicum. However, during the course of the first lesson in a state school that I observed Lisa teach as well as during the second interview (about that lesson and experience) with me, Lisa used an abundant amount of code-switching. Thus, I can only deduce from the observations and from her responses during the interviews and on the questionnaire that her dominant language was English with some Maltese. Anne on the other hand was very aware of her own language use in her daily life and in the classroom and thus seemed able to use

the L2 as planned during her lessons despite Maltese being her first language and the most 'natural' language for her to use. Suzanne used more Maltese and this reflected her language use in daily life with her family and friends and also through her extensive 'apprenticeship of observation' of the language use of her own traditionalist teachers.

Thus, the three case-study participants varied substantially in their language use within the classroom although they did have some trends in common (such as the use of Maltese for classroom management in state schools). If there is such disparity between three individuals who at first glance appear similar (white, Maltese, female, same age bracket, and university students who want to be primary school teachers) then it is clear that we cannot generalise about language use across the island. Thus, one person's experience or views about language are not better than another's but they are all just different and have different outcomes.

**4. A mismatch tends to exist between the beliefs and intentions of student teachers to use the L1/L2 and their actual language practices in class.**

This finding deals with all three research questions: what influences the student teachers' use of the L1 and L2 in and outside of the classroom and what sort of function was served through the use of Maltese and/or English in the classroom and whether there was a pattern to this language use.

Suzanne holds that she uses the L2 'all the time'. Thus, her perception of her own language use and her actual use of English in the classroom do not tally as I discovered through comparing her self-reports with the transcriptions of the lesson observations. This tension between perception and practice may be a result of her having invested energy and conscious effort into using her L2 that makes her think that she did actually



use the L2 throughout. Lisa also believed in the use of the L2 in the first year practicum but due to the situation in class and due to her difficulty in adapting to the school and the pupils' socio-cultural identity she did not always use English. During Lisa's second practicum in the church school this mismatch was not evident since the context matched her own preferred language use. Anne on the other hand did not seem to experience such tensions or mismatches between her beliefs and intentions and her actual use of language in the classroom during the first or second TP placement.

My conclusion here is that it seems difficult for student teachers to develop an awareness of their language use as to when, how and to what extent they draw on the L1 while teaching the L2 (Borg, 2001; Fasold, 1984; Lacorte, 2005; Polio and Duff, 1994). It is not easy, in a bilingual culture, to always notice which language one is using all the time, especially when in a new potentially stressful situation, such as the classroom. Here therefore, I do not argue in favour of using the L2 but want to point to the necessity of heightened language awareness regardless of which one of the languages one is using, teaching or learning.

#### **9.4 Contribution to knowledge and understanding in the field of L2 teaching in bilingual primary school settings**

##### ***On an international level***

- i) This small-scale qualitative research provides a context-specific study related to classroom bilingualism through the use of language by student teachers during L2 English lessons in primary school classrooms.
  
- ii) The Maltese bilingual setting is particular in that it does not feature a diglossic situation where one of the languages is used for a high or low function in society. Both are official languages and operate, to varying extents, in all spheres in the

daily life of the Maltese population. The L1 is shared by the teacher and pupils in class and is not a minority language as in some international literature about bilingual education. This said, there nevertheless do exist values and attitudes which are attributed to the use of either language in different parts of the island as discussed earlier in Chapter 3 where I sought to shed light upon the local context of the study.

- iii) This study also provides a corpus of naturally-occurring language use in English as L2 lessons in Maltese bilingual primary school classrooms.
  
- iv) The findings generated through this research can contribute to the debate concerning World-Englishes. This is an area I did not focus upon directly in the case studies but that I am aware of. Malta is a post-colonial country but so far has resisted accepting the idea that the English or Maltese English spoken by many on the island constitutes a regional or localised 'variety'. According to Bonnici (2010) accepting that the English spoken in Malta is a 'variety' of British English is viewed as 'undesirable' by the Maltese. It is interesting to note that in the course of this research none of the student teachers referred to Malta's British colonial past or how this may have impinged on their language use or attitudes. The three student teachers held positive attitudes towards both languages even though they usually had a preferred language that they used in their daily lives.

### ***On a local level***

- v) On a local level this study depicts how both languages are actually drawn on by the student teachers and pupils in the process of teaching and 'meaning-making' in the L2 primary school classrooms.

- vi) I also wish to contribute to the local language debate and offer suggestions about how both languages can be ‘exploited’ to the advantage of the pupils and teachers in primary schools without prejudice or inhibition (Camilleri, 1996; Probyn, 2005). The popular perception one gets through the media is that people believe that if attention is given to Maltese then English standards will fall and if we invest in English then we are not being patriotic and that levels of Maltese will decline. I think it is important to stress the balance of the use of the L1 and L2 in classrooms according to the subject being taught. Thus, I would be very much in favour of subjects such as mathematics being taught through Maltese (although the NMC recommends English) or through a bilingual medium. In the case of such subjects understanding is of utmost importance. However, I tend to be in favour of a balance that gradually shifts towards more English when teaching English, with Maltese being used ‘judiciously’ to facilitate learning and to foster a positive rapport and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom.
- vii) The study provides samples of actual L1 and L2 classroom language that can be used during ITE to create more ‘language awareness’ amongst student teachers. Thus, the audio data and transcriptions could be used (through obtaining the permission of the case-study participants) to provide examples of what constitutes ‘good practice’ in relation to L2 language teaching in Maltese classrooms.
- viii) The study highlights the use of Maltese and English as important resources that teachers and pupils can draw on to enhance their teaching and learning. The use of Maltese in class does not necessarily entail less exposure or learning of English when planned well and used with a reasonable level of language awareness. The L1 or mother tongue should be accessible in the L2 learning context because it has many positive functions to offer that may increase the ‘quality’ of teaching that in

many cases outnumber the benefit of 'quantity of exposure' argument of a monolingual top-down 'English only' policy.

## **9.5 Implications for practice: the use of English in the classroom**

After having presented the main findings and outlined the contribution to knowledge and understanding that a small-scale study such as this can offer, here I will highlight some implications for practice in the field of L2 teaching and learning in Maltese classrooms.

- i) To use both languages as a resource and not attempt to avoid code-switching at all costs. Study shows that despite all intentions code-switching will take place anyway especially when the pupils and teachers share a common L1, so it is better to use the L1 to our advantage as an additional resource to draw on instead of viewing it as a last resort.
- ii) Show how through careful lesson planning and increased language awareness the L1 and L2 can be used effectively (for teaching/learning, management issues or relationship building).
- iii) More use of communicative and activity-based teaching/learning that creates more opportunities for the authentic use of the L2 in the classroom.
- iv) Move from teaching only content in English and all explanations in Maltese to a more balanced use of language in the L2 class through support by the L1 when and where necessary.

## 9.6 Recommendations for ITE

Currently, I do not think these student teachers are being provided with enough opportunities to become aware of and to reflect critically on their beliefs about and attitudes towards their L1 and L2. Therefore, I propose the following:

- i) Provide more opportunities for raising L1 and L2 language awareness amongst student teachers. This would entail creating opportunities to support and encourage student teachers to discuss their language needs and perceptions of competency and confidence in using the L2 in classrooms openly.
- ii) Provide language improvement courses especially in L2 speaking skills and confidence building.
- iii) Provide opportunities to carry out observations and to teach in different types of schools where the L1 or L2 are used to varying extents to be better prepared for the classroom reality in relation to L1/L2 use. Thus, expose student teachers to schools and contexts that they can easily identify with and others that may challenge them and offer opportunities for growth through becoming familiar with schools and communities that are different from their own.

Therefore, opportunities need to be created for student teachers to become aware of and to reflect upon their own language use, attitudes, and beliefs and lived experiences in relation to both Maltese and English and to recognise how these may impact upon their personal and professional identities. Student teachers would benefit from developing an awareness of their strengths and areas to improve in the light of both languages. This could enable them to seek assistance to improve before being expected to teach the

language. This aspect in the Maltese ITE was found to be lacking as Suzanne's experience highlights. Her concern about her L2 use was constantly being brought to the fore as she struggled to become more confident in using her L2 as a communicative tool. Anne also commented on her self-consciousness when speaking in English at the beginning of the study. However, since she made a conscious effort to improve her spoken L2 through using it with a group of English-speaking friends, she soon felt more at ease using the L2 in class. However, this concern was still with her as she said that in planning her lessons she would rehearse how to give simple explanations in English if the pupils did not understand. Thus, her careful and meticulous planning also helped her to maximise her use of English in class.

I think that the interviews with me were perhaps the first opportunity Anne, Suzanne and Lisa had to reflect and talk openly about their language use and how they felt about using and teaching their L2. Maybe more such opportunities (maybe in the form of 'conversations' with tutors) together with more on-site support during their TP could help them become more aware of any prejudices, difficulties and challenges and help them address these in a constructive manner to help them mature and grow as prospective teachers and language users (Pajares, 1992). Otherwise they may run the risk of never really becoming aware of some of the attitudes and beliefs they hold that may influence their teaching directly or indirectly (Cabaroglu and Roberts, 2000; Nesper, 1987). Thus, they would not be in a situation to confront, change or consciously accept these beliefs and attitudes and this could prevent them from becoming 'effective teachers' (Twisleton, 2003, Britzman, 1986; 2003; Sendan and Roberts, 1998).

It is through a process of becoming aware of ourselves and our experiences, and then acknowledging how these have influenced us and contributed to forming our identities, that we open ourselves to learning that at the beginning may seem to contrast with our previously held beliefs and knowledge (Kagan, 1990; Twisleton, 2004; Weinstein, 1990). Doolittle, Dodds and Placek (1993) discuss pre-service teachers and the persistence of their beliefs about teaching during their formal training.

Another way to address this is to create opportunities for student teachers to record and transcribe a sample of their own language lessons and then discuss them with a tutor or a peer as a 'critical friend'. This could encourage them to become more aware of their own language use': when and why they code-switch L1 and L2, the pupils' response to L1/L2, their tone of voice, volume and pitch. They could maybe also video-record themselves teaching to view their gestures and how these can be drawn on to increase comprehension in L2 lessons and to study the non-verbals of the pupils as the L1 or L2 are used.

Student teachers would also benefit from more opportunities to carry out observations and teach in different types of schools where the L1 or L2 are used to varying extents (Eg: state school and church school) to challenge the student teachers and introduce them to a slightly different culture and schooling system than they experienced as pupils themselves. Lisa, may have benefitted from the same process of awareness-raising and reflection on the matter of socio-cultural contexts within state and church schools.

On the level of language proficiency and confidence the research points towards the need for more speaking and listening practice amongst student teachers and maybe more

stringent use of language proficiency tests for those who want to teach in bilingual primary schools.

At primary school level language policies should be proposed for primary schools taking into consideration the complex bilingual scenario, maybe moving towards a graded and gradual immersion in the L2 as pupils move from primary to secondary school levels or as they become more confident in their use of the L2.

### **9.7 Limitations of this study**

One limitation of case study research is that it does not produce results or conclusions from which one may generalise. However, I also perceive this limitation as a strength since the aim of this study was to conduct in-depth case-studies of three student teachers as they navigated their way to becoming teachers, as I was able to carry out rich and detailed analyses.

Another limitation is that this study was limited to observations of lessons within the classroom. Observing the same student teachers using language in other settings and contexts, such as the home, social clubs or campus may have provided valuable data to mirror findings in the classroom. This would help to balance out the effect of ‘spaces’ or ‘domains’ and made the data richer and more complete for each participant. Instead I relied on self-reported data that I obtained through interviews and questionnaires. Valid data could have been collected also by studying. The written language use of the student teachers could have been studied, especially digitally mediated texts such as blogs, emails and texts which tend to resemble spoken language closely.



I regard the lack of a multimodal analysis of the linguistic and paralinguistic data generated in the classroom as a weakness of this study as Jewitt (2008) and Taylor (2006) have shown how beneficial such an analysis can be. I audio recorded the observed lessons and interviews. To counter the limitation posed through the lack of video-recording I wrote notes of some paralinguistic features (gestures, intonation and volume, board-work, facial expressions) in my field-notes during the lesson observations. My decision not to include video-recording of the lessons was not due to doubts about its benefits but stemmed from the difficulty of obtaining such access in schools due to newly introduced data protection legislation (enacted in Malta in December 2001 and brought into force in 2003) as I explained in chapter four. At the time many schools were refusing access to researchers due to some misinterpretation of this legislation and sometimes took it to extremes. Thus, given the prevailing uncertainty I did not want to embark on my research and risk having to stop half-way through due to schools changing their minds about access or new headteachers with different interpretations of the Data Protection Act being assigned to schools. Also, the richness of the data gathered would have limited further the scope of the project.

The duration could have been extended to 4 years of the ITE instead of 2 years to document any language changes and beliefs as well as record any development in language proficiency or confidence in using the L2 over the duration of the programme. Observations over the whole duration of the ITE could throw light on how the student teachers react to different schools and settings over the following two years of their ITE studies and how they grow as teachers and adapt, or not, to such different contexts.

It would have been ideal to have all three student teachers teach in state schools as well as church schools to study whether their language use would change according to the

school context. This was a feature that was beyond my control since all student teachers are assigned to schools by the Education Directorate in collaboration with the Office for Professional Practice within the Faculty of Education.

Another limitation may be that the three participants may have told me what they thought I would like to hear during interviews and may have modified their teaching to please me during observations. However, I can only assume that what they told me reflects their thoughts and beliefs and that their practice in classrooms was not 'put on'. I discussed this issue in more detail in the methodology chapter.

## **9.8 Suggestions for further research**

Having carried out this study I think that further research that could stem from this are the following:

- i) The language use of teachers could be studied in various domains (with friends, at university lectures/meetings, social clubs and homes).
- ii) A quantitative study of teachers and pupils in different schools and geographical areas and their language use. This would provide a statistical measure of the amount of code-switching and the functions of code-switching during English lessons and other lessons too.
- iii) A study of student teachers' beliefs and attitudes before and after TP, and also before and after academic theory-based programmes to see if there is any change in beliefs and attitudes through both or either variable. One can do this through setting up an experimental design and having a control group.

- iv) To study whether there is a direct correlation between L1 and L2 use and scores of standardised language proficiency tests and levels of confidence in language use.
- v) Follow-up the participants once they are novice teachers in school to study whether their language use changes or develops depending on the school context and whether they adopt any clear language policies in the their class.
- vi) A similar study through using video-recording to enable a multimodal analysis of the classroom data. This would enable the analyses of paralinguistic features that could be drawn on in meaning-making in classrooms, especially since in foreign and second language classrooms gestures are usually exaggerated to convey meaning.
- vii) The use of simulated recall interviews through utilising lesson transcripts and audio/video-clips to discuss the lesson observations with teachers or student teachers. Such an approach would be ideal in obtaining feedback about decisions as related to their beliefs and practices in connection with language use and beliefs about learning/teaching language.

## **9.9 My journey**

Looking back over the six years of this research process I realise that this has been a worthwhile journey. There were times when I experienced tensions in the process and direction of the research, especially when I had to choose between travelling down a qualitative or quantitative path. The uncertainty of carrying out research without any rigid or a priori categories was quite unsettling for me. This open and very flexible approach to research and to data analysis with ‘emerging themes’ was quite a challenge to me since I had previously felt at ease working with quantitative data. However, now I am truly glad that I did opt for the qualitative aspect and feel privileged to have been

allowed the opportunity to delve into the lives of Anne, Suzanne and Lisa as they were in the process of 'becoming teachers' and experiencing teaching for the first time.

This study has made me face some assumptions I held with regard to language use, particularly the use of the L1 in teaching the L2 in primary school classrooms. I also become more aware of how my dual role as researcher as well as teacher educator was played out in the assumptions I held and also in the way I would interpret and analyse the data. Hence, I think it was important for me to recognise these assumptions, question them and try to trace where they came from. In facing my own beliefs and assumptions regarding the use of the L1 and L2 and how these are used in my daily life with friends and family and how this may influence language beliefs and use in my professional role also made me aware of how others may experience or perceive the use of the L1 or L2 in their lives. Therefore, this was a valuable exercise for me as a Maltese and English speaker, as a teacher educator and as a researcher.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Questionnaire 1A

Dear Student,

I'm researching issues related to teaching and language in a bilingual environment. It would be helpful if you would take a few minutes to think about this and complete the questionnaire. The data are to be used as a basis for a PhD dissertation and will focus on the whole 1<sup>st</sup> Year B.Ed cohort and not individuals. The material will be reported anonymously and confidentiality is assured.

Thank you.  
Josephine Milton

### A. Personal Data

1. Gender: Male  Female

2. Nationality:

3. Age:

4. Please complete the table below according to the schools you attended as a student:

	State	Church	Independent	Other
Preschool				
Primary				
Secondary				
Post-secondary				

5. Hobbies or interests:

### B. Language Profile

6. First language (L1) is: Maltese  English  Maltese & English  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Second language (L2) is: Maltese  English  Maltese & English  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Rate yourself on the skills below by ticking (✓) the appropriate cells.

	very confident	confident	not confident	weak
Reading Maltese				
Writing Maltese				
Speaking Maltese				
Understanding spoken Maltese				
Reading English				
Writing English				
Speaking English				
Understanding spoken English				

9. During the B.Ed course do you want to improve any of the above skills? Yes  No   
Specify

10. Do you ever feel embarrassed or uncomfortable when speaking your L2? Yes  No  Sometimes

If you answered *yes* or *sometimes*, why do you think you feel this way? Please tick (✓) the statements you agree with and select your L2 by underlining Maltese or English.

- I don't feel confident when speaking Maltese / English as L2
- I didn't get the opportunity to practice speaking skills in L2 at school
- My friends will think I'm trying to show-off if I use Maltese / English
- I think I sound silly when speaking Maltese / English
- I don't want people to think I'm a 'snob'
- I think in L1 and find it difficult to translate in my mind while I speak.
- I feel that I shouldn't need to speak in my L2
- I'm afraid of making mistakes
- I feel inadequate when speaking with native-speakers of my L2
- I don't feel that I am really bilingual
- I fear that friends will make fun of me

Please give any other reasons for avoiding the use of Maltese or English:

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11. Which language/s do you use in the following situations? Kindly tick (✓) accordingly.

NB. If you write emails in Maltese to a friend and in English to another friend you should mark both *Maltese* and *English*. If you use both languages in the same email chose either *Maltese with some English* or *English with some Maltese* as appropriate. The option *Other* is available if you use a language that is not English or Maltese.

	Maltese	English	Maltese with some English	English with some Maltese	Other
At home with family					
To write assignments					
To text (send an sms)					
With friends					
To read for enjoyment					
When I'm angry					
To write emails					
To count					
To ask questions during a lecture					
To write a shopping list					

13. Please add comments about any of the above

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### C. Language Learning Experiences

13. Which was your favourite subject when you were at school?

- Maths                       Maltese                       English                       Physical Education   
Religion                       Social Studies                       Other  \_\_\_\_\_

Give the reasons for your choice:

14. Please circle the number on the scale, with 1 being *Very Positive* and 6 *Very negative*.

- a) Was your experience of learning Maltese as a pupil positive? Very positive 1 2 3 4 5 Very negative  
b) Was your experience of learning English as a pupil positive? Very positive 1 2 3 4 5 Very negative

15. How were you taught Maltese as a pupil?

16. How were you taught English as a pupil?

### D. Teaching in Primary School

17. Do you think you will be a good teacher?    Yes                       No                       I don't know

18. I would like to be a Primary School teacher because:

19. Which subject/s would you prefer to teach most? Mark 1-6 in order of preference (1 is most and 6 is least).

Maths \_\_\_\_\_                      Maltese \_\_\_\_\_                      English \_\_\_\_\_  
Religion \_\_\_\_\_                      Social Studies \_\_\_\_\_                      Physical Education \_\_\_\_\_

Give any reasons for your choice/s.

20. Do you think a Primary School teacher should be fluent in reading, writing and speaking Maltese and English?

Yes                       No                       Not necessarily

Give reasons.

21. Do you think it is appropriate to use Maltese during an English lesson? Yes  No  Sometimes   
Please give your reasons:

22. Do you think it is appropriate to use English during a Maltese lesson? Yes  No  Sometimes   
Please give your reasons:

23. What do you think is most important when teaching Maltese?

24. What do you think is most important when teaching English?

### **E. Teaching Practice**

25. Are you looking forward to your Teaching Practice? Yes  No

26. Do you think you will be successful in your Teaching Practice? Yes  No   
Please give your reason/s.

27. What aspects of teaching are you looking forward to most?

28. Is there anything you are not looking forward to during your Teaching Practice?

29. What do you think will be expected from you by:

- i) the pupils -
- ii) the parents -
- iii) the class teacher -
- iv) the school -
- v) the University Tutor/s -

\*Name:

Email:

Date:

\*Please note that you are not *required* to give your name. However, at a future date I intend to invite a small sample to participate in case studies. A name or contact email would enable this and would be greatly appreciated.

**Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.**



## Appendix 2: Questionnaire 1B

Dear Student,

I'm researching issues related to teaching and language in a bilingual environment. It would be helpful if you would take a few minutes to think about this and complete the questionnaire. The material will be reported anonymously and confidentiality is assured.

Thank you.  
Josephine Milton

### A. Personal Data

1. Gender: Male  Female

2. Nationality:

3. Age:

2. Please complete the table below according to the schools you attended as a student:

	State	Church	Independent	Other
Preschool				
Primary				
Secondary				
Post-secondary				

### B. Language Profile

3. First language (L1) is: Maltese  English  Maltese & English  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Second language (L2) is: Maltese  English  Maltese & English  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Rate yourself on the skills below by ticking (✓) the appropriate cells.

	very confident	confident	not confident	Weak
Reading Maltese				
Writing Maltese				
Speaking Maltese				
Understanding spoken Maltese				
Reading English				
Writing English				
Speaking English				
Understanding spoken English				

6. Do you think your proficiency in any of the above skills has changed during this academic year?

Yes  No

Comments:

## C. Teaching in Primary School

7. Do you think you will be a good teacher?      Yes                       No                       I don't know

8. I would like to be a Primary School teacher because:

9. Which subject/s do you prefer to teach most? Mark 1-6 in order of preference (1 is most and 6 is least).

Maths \_\_\_\_\_

Maltese \_\_\_\_\_

English \_\_\_\_\_

Religion \_\_\_\_\_

Social Studies \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Education \_\_\_\_\_

Give any reasons for your choice/s.

10. Do you think it is appropriate to use Maltese during an English lesson? Yes       No       Sometimes   
Please give your reasons:

11. Do you think it is appropriate to use English during a Maltese lesson?      Yes       No       Sometimes   
Please give your reasons:

12. What do you think is most important when teaching Maltese in Primary School?

13. What do you think is most important when teaching English in Primary School?

## D. Teaching Practice

14. Did you enjoy your Teaching Practice? Yes  No

15. Do you feel you were successful in your Teaching Practice? Yes  No

Please give your reason/s.

16. How prepared were you for TP? Very well  well  not well  Not at all

Please add any comments here:

17. What did you like most about TP?

18. What didn't you like about TP?

19. Which language/s did you use during Maltese lessons?

Maltese

English

Maltese & English

20. Which language/s did you use during English lessons?

Maltese

English

Maltese & English

21. What were the main reasons for code-switching when teaching English as a second language?

*Please number the following on a scale with 1 being the most common reason.*

\_\_\_\_\_ a) To explain a difficult concept

\_\_\_\_\_ b) To explain when some children don't understand

\_\_\_\_\_ c) When I don't have a picture to explain new words

\_\_\_\_\_ d) To maintain discipline in class

\_\_\_\_\_ e) When children speak to me in Maltese I automatically reply in Maltese

\_\_\_\_\_ f) It is difficult to use one language only

\_\_\_\_\_ g) the children do not know how to speak Maltese/English

\_\_\_\_\_ h) the children don't understand Maltese/English

\_\_\_\_\_ i) when I don't have enough time for the lesson

\_\_\_\_\_ j) I feel that I can express myself better in Maltese

\_\_\_\_\_ k) I used English throughout the English lessons

\_\_\_\_\_ k) Others: \_\_\_\_\_

22. What do you think your main strengths are?

23. What do you think your main weaknesses are?

24. What would you do differently next Teaching Practice?

25. Has the experience of teaching changed any of your ideas about teaching? Yes  No   
Please explain.

26. Please describe what this first teaching experience meant to you in a few words:

27. Are you looking forward to the next Teaching Practice? Yes  No

\*Name:

Email:

Date:

\*Please note that you are not *required* to give your name.

**Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.**

## Appendix 3: Questionnaire 2

Dear Student,

I'm researching issues related to teaching and language in a bilingual environment. It would be helpful if you would take a few minutes complete the questionnaire. The material will be reported anonymously and confidentiality is assured.

Thank you.  
Josephine Milton

### A. Personal Data

1. Gender: Male  Female

2. Nationality:

3. Age:

2. Please complete the table below according to the schools you attended as a student:

	State	Church	Independent	Other
Preschool				
Primary				
Secondary				
Post-secondary				

### B. Language Profile

3. First language (L1) is: Maltese  English  Maltese & English  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Second language (L2) is: Maltese  English  Maltese & English  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Rate yourself on the skills below by ticking (✓) the appropriate cells.

	very confident	confident	not confident	Weak
Reading Maltese				
Writing Maltese				
Speaking Maltese				
Understanding spoken Maltese				
Reading English				
Writing English				
Speaking English				
Understanding spoken English				

5. Do you think your proficiency in any of the above skills changed during these two academic years?

Yes  No

Comments:

## C. Teaching in Primary School

7. Do you think you will be a good teacher?      Yes                       No                       I don't know

8. I would like to be a Primary School teacher because:

9. Which subject/s do you prefer to teach most? Mark 1-6 in order of preference (1 is most and 6 is least).

Maths \_\_\_\_\_

Maltese \_\_\_\_\_

English \_\_\_\_\_

Religion \_\_\_\_\_

Social Studies \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Education \_\_\_\_\_

Give any reasons for your choice/s.

10. Do you think it is appropriate to use Maltese during an English lesson? Yes       No       Sometimes   
Please give your reasons:

11. Do you think it is appropriate to use English during a Maltese lesson? Yes       No       Sometimes   
Please give your reasons:

12. What do you think is most important when teaching Maltese in Primary School?

13. What do you think is most important when teaching English in Primary School?

## D. Teaching Practice

14. Did you enjoy your 6 week Teaching Practice? Yes  No

15. Do you feel you were successful in your Teaching Practice? Yes  No

Please give your reason/s.

16. How prepared were you for TP? Very well  well  not well  Not at all

Please add any comments here:

17. What did you like most about TP?

18. What didn't you like about TP?

19. Which language/s did you use during Maltese lessons?

Maltese

English

Maltese & English

20. Which language/s did you use during English lessons?

Maltese

English

Maltese & English

21. What were the main reasons for code-switching when teaching English as a second language?

*Please number the following on a scale with 1 being the most common reason.*

\_\_\_\_\_ a) To explain a difficult concept

\_\_\_\_\_ b) To explain when some children don't understand

\_\_\_\_\_ c) When I don't have a picture to explain new words

\_\_\_\_\_ d) To maintain discipline in class

\_\_\_\_\_ e) When children speak to me in Maltese I automatically reply in Maltese

\_\_\_\_\_ f) It is difficult to use one language only

\_\_\_\_\_ g) the children do not know how to speak Maltese/English

\_\_\_\_\_ h) the children don't understand Maltese/English

\_\_\_\_\_ i) when I don't have enough time for the lesson

\_\_\_\_\_ j) I feel that I can express myself better in Maltese

\_\_\_\_\_ k) I used English throughout the English lessons

\_\_\_\_\_ k) Others: \_\_\_\_\_

22. What do you think your main strengths are?

23. What do you think your main weaknesses are?

24. What would you do differently next Teaching Practice?

25. Has the experience of teaching changed any of your ideas about teaching?      Yes       No   
Please explain.

26. Please describe what this second teaching experience meant to you in a few words:

27. Are you looking forward to the next Teaching Practice?      Yes       No

28. Is there anything you would do differently in your next Teaching Practice?      Yes       No   
Please explain:

\*Name:

Email:

Date:

\*Please note that you are not *required* to give your name.

**Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire**



## Appendix 4: Ethics Form for the University of Malta

### Request for Approval of Human Subjects Research

Please type, or print legibly with black pen. You may follow this format on separate sheets or use additional pages if necessary.

<p>FROM: <i>(name, address for correspondence)</i></p> <p><b>JOSEPHINE MILTON</b>          Dept of Primary Education, Rm 217          Faculty of Education</p> <p>TEL.: (removed)          E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:josephine.milton@um.edu.mt">josephine.milton@um.edu.mt</a></p> <p>COURSE AND YEAR: <i>Academic Staff</i></p>	<p>PROJECT TITLE:</p> <p>Investigations into the impact of          Primary School student teachers'          language biographies on their use          of English as L2 in the classroom.</p>
<p>ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE:  <i>(include grant or contract number if known)</i></p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>FACULTY SUPERVISOR'S NAME:</p> <p><b>Dr Julia Davies</b>          University of Sheffield, UK.</p>
<p>DURATION OF ENTIRE PROJECT:          from <u>October 2005</u> to <u>Dec 2010</u></p>	

<p>1. Please give a brief summary of the purpose of the research in non-technical language.</p> <p>This study sets out to investigate the impact of student teachers' language backgrounds/biographies on their use of English as L2 in the Primary Classroom. The development of student teachers' cognitions about language use and language teaching in the classroom will be explored through a longitudinal study over a period of two academic years.</p>
<p>2. Give details of procedures that relate to subjects' participation</p> <p>(a) How are subjects recruited? What inducement is offered? <i>(Append copy of letter or advertisement or poster, if any.)</i></p> <p>Subjects are invited to participate in the survey on a voluntary basis. For case-studies the participants will be volunteers. If more than 4 potential participants volunteer, I will attempt to choose participants according to their different language and schooling backgrounds according to responses in the questionnaires. To be able to do this, a note at the end of the questionnaire <i>(attached)</i> invites them to write their name or email if they were interested in participating in a further study.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No inducements offered.</p>

- (b) Salient characteristics of subjects – number who will participate, age range, sex, institutional affiliation, other special criteria:

The participants of the survey will be student teachers enrolled in a 4-year B.Ed (Hons.) degree as their Initial Teacher Training Course with the Department of Primary Education, within the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta.

Number of participants for the survey – ca. 35-40 (depends on number of 1<sup>st</sup> years and whether they wish to participate).

Number of participants for case-studies – 3 or 4

Age range: over 17 years

- (c) Describe how permission has been obtained from cooperating institution(s) – school, hospital, organization, prison or other relevant organization. (*Append letters.*) Is the approval of another research ethics committee required?

Cooperating institution is the Faculty of Education, particularly the Dept of Primary Education. Permission from Head of Dept of Primary has been granted (*see attached email*).

- (d) What do subjects do, or what is done to them, or what information is gathered? (*Append copies of instructions or tests or questionnaires.*) How many times will observations, tests, etc. be conducted? How long will their participation take?

A general picture of student teachers' language backgrounds and cognitions about language teaching in primary school will be presented through a **survey** (*questionnaire attached*) of a cohort (1<sup>st</sup> Year B.Ed Primary). From the survey cohort, a small number of individuals (3 or 4) will be invited to participate in a series of **case studies**. The case studies will be undertaken to obtain a more detailed and intimate picture of individual student teachers' language cognitions and experiences. **Observations** during Teaching Practice placements and interviews will be held with the case-study participants.

Timeframe is of 2 academic years.

- Survey – conducted with cohort at 3 stages of the research
- Interviews – 5 for each case-study
- Observations – 3 for each case-study

(e) Which of the following data categories are collected?

Data that reveals – race or ethnic origin	YES/NO
political opinions	YES/NO
religious or philosophical beliefs	YES/NO
trade union memberships	YES/NO
health	YES/NO
sex life	YES/NO
genetic information	YES/NO

3. How do you explain the research to subjects and obtain their informed consent to participate? (If in writing, append a copy of consent form.) If subjects are minors, mentally infirm or otherwise not legally competent to consent to participation, how their assent is obtained and from whom is proxy consent obtained. How is it made clear to subjects that they can quit the study at any time?

During the first stage of the research participants are given a questionnaire to complete on a voluntary basis. At the top of the first page of the questionnaire (*attached*) there will be a note to explain the focus of the study and to assure participants of confidentiality issues. Case-study participants are invited to participate in the research and will be required to sign a consent form (*attached*). They will be allowed to withdraw from the study at any point.

4. Do subjects risk *any* harm – physical, psychological, legal, social – by participating in the research? Are the risks necessary? What safeguards do you take to minimize the risks?

Subjects do not risk any harm by participating in this research.

I will ensure participants of confidentiality at all stages of the research. No data that could identify individuals will be disclosed. All names used will be fictitious. Audio recordings will be stored safely and any questionnaires with names on will be coded and names or email addresses will be removed after the selection of the case study participants.

I will ask the Teaching Practice office not to assign me as TP tutor to any of the students participating in the case-studies to avoid any conflict of interest.

5. Are subjects deliberately deceived in *any* way? If so, what is the nature of the deception? Is it likely to be significant to subjects? Is there any other way to conduct the research that would not involve deception, and if so, why have you not chosen that alternative? What explanation for the deception do you give to subjects following their participation?

I will tell participants that I am interested in their use of language. However, I will not say that during some interviews I may be looking out for specific elements of their language use (eg: code-switching or code-mixing while speaking) as this may alter their behaviour and language use. Also, due to the qualitative nature of the main part of the research I will not have a pre-planned agenda of what to focus on as that will develop and become clearer through observations and interviews. I would give the participants the same reason.

6. How would participation in this research benefit subjects? If subjects will be “debriefed” or receive information about the research project following its conclusion, how do you ensure the educational value of the process? (*Include copies of any debriefing or educational materials.*)

At the end of the research the participants will be informed about the outcomes of the study. I will discuss issues that are beneficial to the development of participants and that may assist them in improving their language use. Maybe the results will help to raise their awareness about their own language use in general, and during oral exchanges with pupils in class. Where requested these comments will be made in positive terms and on an individual basis during a scheduled meeting.

## **Appendix 5: Consent Form**

### **CONSENT FORM**

#### **Brief about the research project:**

This study sets out to investigate factors that influence student teachers' use of English as L2 in the Primary Classroom. The development of student teachers' cognitions about language use and language teaching in the classroom will be explored through a longitudinal study over a period of two academic years.

#### **As a case-study participant your contribution to this study will involve:**

- i) being interviewed by the researcher on an individual basis 3 to 4 times over a span of two academic years;
- ii) being observed during your Teaching Practice Placement 3 times during the two years;
- iii) completing a questionnaire at 3 points during the research.

#### **Confidentiality and ethical issues**

At all times confidentiality will be assured. No data that could identify you as an individual will be disclosed. All names used will be fictitious. Audio recordings will be stored safely and any questionnaires with your name on will be coded. You also retain the right to withdraw from the study at any point.

After reading the above, I agree to participate in this research.

Signature