

## **Sample Proposal: Dialogue 2**

### **Title (10 Words)**

#### **L1 in the L2 Classroom: What Should Teachers Do?**

### **Description (300 Words)**

EFL/ESL teachers have long been urged or even mandated to not use or allow students to use their L1s in class. However, many admit that have always allowed L1, regardless of policy. Today teachers' choices are being validated as the so-called monolingual principle or assumption is called into question (Hall & Cook, 2012).

The debate about whether or not to use L1 is particularly an issue in classes where students and teachers all share the same language and/or culture, as is often the case in EFL teaching contexts (Hall & Cook, 2012). More teachers are acknowledging their own use of learners' L1 as one of many tools or resources available in the classroom, rather than considering it a distraction or a detriment to learning (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Gierlinger, 2015). Across various contexts and linguistic backgrounds, researchers have found some common functions or purposes of teachers' use of L1 in the classroom (Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Echevarria & Graves, 2015; Tavares, 2015).

Moreover, even in classes with students from multiple language backgrounds, L1 use can become an issue. If two or more students share a common L1, they may want to use it to, for example, facilitate group work. This has generally been frowned upon, with some programs even "punishing" use of anything other than the target language.

Here, however, issues of empowerment and equity come into play. What happens to a student in this type of classroom when no one shares his/her L1? What about teachers' use of some students' L1s but not others? Is there a particular level of proficiency beyond which L2-only policies could or should be enforced? These are some of the questions that will be discussed in this session.

### **Abstract (50 Words)**

Teachers have long been urged or even mandated to not allow students' L1s in L2 classrooms. However, many admit that they do use L1, regardless of policy. Researchers today are questioning this L2-only approach and validating teachers' choices. We will discuss the two positions and the possibility of compromise.