

# Teaching English as the third language: The case of young Boyash Romanian speakers in Croatia

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**TEACHING ENGLISH AS THE THIRD LANGUAGE: THE CASE OF  
YOUNG BOYASH ROMANIAN SPEAKERS IN CROATIA**

Master's Thesis

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**POUČAVANJE ENGLESKOG KAO TREĆEG JEZIKA: SLUČAJ  
MLADIH GOVORNIKA BAJAŠKOG RUMUNJSKOG U HRVATSKOJ**

Diplomski rad

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## Contents

Abstract .....	1
1. Introduction .....	2
2. Theoretical background.....	3
2.1 Third language acquisition and multilingual pedagogy .....	3
2.2 Previous studies on multilingual pedagogy .....	6
2.3 Examining classroom discourse frames .....	11
2.4 The status of the Boyash and their education in Croatian society today .....	14
3. Study.....	20
3.1 Aim.....	20
3.2 Sample.....	20
3.3 Procedure.....	21
4. Results and discussion.....	22
5. Conclusion.....	43
6. Suggestions for Further Research.....	46
7. References .....	47
Summary .....	54
Appendix .....	55

## **Abstract**

Multilingual pedagogy has become a popular teaching approach across the world since students are often multilingual speakers. This study focuses on a class of young Boyash Romanian speakers in Croatia who are learning English as their third language. The Boyash are an ethnic minority group living in Croatia, who speak Boyash Romanian as their mother tongue, whereas Croatian is Croatia's official language, and the official language of schooling. The three languages used in the classroom were English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian, and the study looked into how the three languages were arranged according to the four classroom discourse frames proposed by Pennington (1999b): lesson frame, lesson-support frame, institutional-support frame, and commentary frame. The study also aimed to capture the teacher's perspective related to teaching the Boyash students. The English lessons were observed and recorded, and a semi-structured interview was conducted with the teacher. The results showed that neither of the four classroom discourse frames contained a single language, since the classroom represents a multilingual environment. Extensive code-switching between English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian was present during English lessons. Croatian and Boyash Romanian were used for clarification, disciplining the students and giving feedback, but also for dual-referencing and motivating the students. It was difficult to predict how the classroom would be different if the students had another language as their mother tongue, but the teacher would surely have more access to materials if it were a language that was researched more than Boyash Romanian. Moreover, the students could be more motivated if they came from a community which gave a greater importance to children's education and encouraged them more than the Boyash generally do.

Key words: the Boyash, classroom discourse frames, code-switching, multilingualism, multilingual pedagogy, third language acquisition

# 1. Introduction

In today's globalized world, where people communicate with citizens of other countries almost on a daily basis, and travel frequently, knowing a foreign language has become almost unavoidable. Children learn foreign languages in countries all over the world, and this is the case in Croatia, too, where students start learning a foreign language as early as in the first grade of primary school. They can choose to learn another foreign language as early as in the fourth grade or later on, so multilingualism “does not present an exception but the rule” (Cenoz and Jessner, 2009, p. 121) in Croatia.

However, there are students in Croatia who start learning a foreign language in the first grade, and this, in fact, is not their second language (L2), but their third language (L3), since their mother tongue is not Croatian. The focus of this diploma paper are learners of English as a third language (L3) who speak Boyash Romanian as their mother tongue and Croatian as their second language (L2).

The first part of the paper will provide the theoretical background of the study. It will include necessary discussions concerning the notions relevant for the topic, starting with a theoretical background for acquiring the third language and multilingualism, as well as presenting studies on multilingual pedagogy which were previously carried out. Moreover, the model of classroom discourse frames proposed by Pennington (1999b) will follow, and the theoretical framework will be concluded with the presentation of the status of the Boyash in Croatian society today. More specifically, this diploma paper will examine classroom discourse in a multilingual classroom, following a model of classroom discourse frames which Pennington (1999b) introduced in her paper “Framing Bilingual Classroom Discourse: Lessons from Hong Kong Secondary School English Classes”. This diploma paper will try to examine how the three languages, English, Boyash Romanian and Croatian, are used during English lessons in a multilingual classroom in order to utilize learners' knowledge of Boyash Romanian and Croatian as much as possible to improve their knowledge of English and establish communication in the classroom. The paper will also investigate a teacher's perspective of teaching English to speakers of Boyash Romanian as opposed to teaching English to students whose mother tongue is another language.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1 Third language acquisition and multilingual pedagogy

When it comes to language knowledge, it was not always considered that speaking two or more languages was an advantage. It was believed that acquiring two languages at an early age would lead to attrition of a child's mother tongue and even negatively affect a child's mental development. In this light, bilingual children were perceived as being in an unfavourable position when compared to monolingual children. However, beliefs have changed and a significant amount of research on the second and third language acquisition, as well as on multilingualism, has been carried out. De Angelis (2011, p. 219) argues that "prior language knowledge is beneficial to the language learning process" and that "children should be encouraged rather than discouraged to learn languages".

According to Oxford dictionaries, *multilingual* refers to "speaking or using several different languages". Therefore, in order to become multilingual, one has to be able to speak or use two or more different languages; however, when trying to define multilingualism, a problem arises since there is no general agreement on what multilingual ability means exactly and "there is no precise definition of the degrees of language competence" (Ruiz de Zarobe & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2015, p. 394). Nevertheless, there are many proposed definitions, as well as many classifications of this complex and dynamic process. On the one hand, Cook (1994) defines multilingualism simply as a "state of knowledge of a mind that knows two languages", whereas Wei (2013, p. 26), on the other hand, makes the distinction between multilingualism as a phenomenon related to a person or a society, and defines multilingualism as "the coexistence, contact, and interaction of different languages" which "may take place at the societal or individual level".

As researching second and third language acquisition became more and more popular, the need to establish a relevant terminology arose as well. One way of naming the acquired languages was chronologically, referring to languages as L1, L2, L3 and so on, which was a common practice according to Hammarberg (2009). Speakers, in that case, become monolingual, bilingual, trilingual, and so on as the result of requiring languages, but multilinguals are to be seen as "having a specific intricate multilingual system that is not merely a sum of various monolingual systems" (Kemp, 2007, p. 243). However, learning a



mother tongue first, then learning L2, and learning L3 only after L2 is not always the case, in other words, a multilingual's language acquisition cannot always be followed as if it happened on a linear timescale. This is why De Angelis (2007) saw "third or additional language acquisition" to be appropriate because it does not presuppose that L3 is necessarily the third language in order of acquisition, but, in fact, L3 can refer to any language beyond L2. Moreover, Hammarberg (2009) explains that the term third language, or L3, is used for a non-native language, specifically one that is acquired after the acquisition of both one or more L1s, mother tongues or languages acquired during infancy, and one or more L2s, languages acquired after infancy. Once bilingual, a speaker's language acquisition process changes, and Jessner (1999) argues that the increasing complexity of cross-linguistic interaction, the importance of metalinguistic awareness in an L3 acquisition process and the increased pressure from language attrition and relearning are the reasons why Third Language Acquisition (TLA) has to be differentiated from Second Language Acquisition (SLA). It is considered that bilingual students use more learning strategies than monolingual students, and are able to weigh the effectiveness of these strategies because they are experienced language learners (McLaughlin & Nayak, 1989, as cited in Molnár, 2008). Moreover, when a speaker is learning an L3, the learner is no longer a beginner when it comes to learning a foreign language, which is the case with SLA. What interests many researchers is whether bilingual speakers have any advantages in learning another language when compared to monolinguals, and, according to Jessner (1999), the developed cognitive skills in language learning while learning an L2 can speed up the language learning process later. As Aronin and Singleton claim (2012, p. 82), researchers share a consensus on why multilinguals, as compared to monolinguals and bilinguals, are in a better position. Aronin and Singleton (2012) state that multilinguals have larger linguistic repertoires, may develop new language learning skills, tend to use learning strategies more frequently and seem to have enhanced metalinguistic awareness. Bilinguals and multilinguals are not only in a better position when it comes to learning new languages, but their language maintenance skills are, according to Cenoz and Jessner (2000), developed at a higher level which serves for better language awareness, as well as metalinguistic awareness. According to Kemp (2001), multilinguals learn the grammar of a language faster, and are also, according to Cook (1994), better at problem-solving and better at distinguishing form from meaning. However, the advantages of bilinguals and multilinguals that are mentioned are not a rule since there are individual factors in language learning, for example, the level of proficiency and the age of acquisition affect how much these benefits will influence a bilingual or multilingual speaker's competence.

Many foreign language teachers choose to use solely the language that they teach during their lessons. However, according to Jessner (2008, p. 40), “teaching across languages presents a promising didactic tool of multilingual teaching, whatever languages are involved in the learning process”. This is where the role of teachers becomes decisive, because whether teachers choose to incorporate other languages that students know or are in the process of learning, determines whether their entire language potential is used. Otwinowska (2014, p. 98) claims that since teachers possess the competence of language analysts and language educators, as well as the linguistic competence, their position is distinguished from that of other proficient language users who only have the linguistic competence. According to Neuner (2004, as cited in Haukås, 2016), multilingual pedagogy is “a learner-centred approach [which] aims to develop students’ language awareness and language learning awareness across the languages that students know” (p. 12). Moreover, Haukås claims (2016) that “learning multiple languages is best enhanced when learners are encouraged to become aware of and use their pre-existing linguistic and languages learning knowledge” (p. 1-2). However, a teacher cannot simply decide to start teaching according to multilingual pedagogy, there are some qualities that teachers should be aware of when attempting to incorporate multilingualism in their classrooms. These are presented as one of the research findings on multilingual pedagogy which is further discussed in the second chapter of the theoretical background.

What should also be mentioned is vertical and horizontal bilingualism. According to Wei (2005, p. 460), vertical bilingualism is “a situation in which someone is bilingual in a standard language and a distinct but related language or dialect”, whereas horizontal bilingualism refers to separate languages, for example, being proficient in Croatian, English and Romanian. On the one hand, Beerkens (2010) states that “dialects are not accepted in education, professional life, governmental bodies, and even in several sports and cultural organisations” (p. 56). Moreover, Beerkens links dialectal speech to older people who live in villages, and claims that the number of dialectal speakers is decreasing. On the other hand, Spigarelli carried out research which proved that students who use dialectal speech in classrooms develop better communicative competence (as cited in Turza-Bogdan, 2013, p. 27). Nevertheless, the preservation of dialects is generally advised, so it is up to the teacher to decide whether to allow dialectal speech in the classroom or not. However, De Angelis (2011) stresses that literacy is necessary for the positive effects of multilingualism to manifest, especially when it comes to home languages, meaning dialects as well. Therefore, the

decision whether to implement dialects in lessons is not always an easy one to make, especially when students do not know how to read or write yet.

## **2.2 Previous studies on multilingual pedagogy**

According to Dekker and Young (2008, p. 183), “information from intergovernmental agencies, such as UNESCO and other UN-related groups, indicates that there is an increasing social and political support for multilingual education”. Since multilingual education has been adopted as an aim in many schools all over the world and students learn other languages apart from their mother tongue, multilingual pedagogy has emerged as an approach that focuses on the student and “the student’s L1 as the ‘greatest asset any human being brings to the task of L2 learning’” (Butzkamm and Caldwell, 2009, p. 66, as cited in Wang, 2011, p. 59). Jessner (2008, p. 272) states “that development of a multilingual repertoire or multilingual development: changes over time; is nonlinear; is reversible, resulting in language attrition and/or loss; and is complex”. As a student learns more languages, a process of language attrition might occur as a result, and according to Jessner (2008, p. 271), language development implies both acquisition and attrition of a language. Moreover, research has shown that “language attrition or loss appears more often in multilingual than in bilingual contexts” (2008, p. 271). As it is natural for students to “constantly seek for similarities between languages” (Ringbom, 2007, as cited in Lindqvist, 2019, p. 98), the students develop their metalinguistic awareness. Jessner and colleagues (2016, as cited in Lindqvist, 2019, p. 90) state that the pupils’ metalinguistic awareness is enhanced if a multilingual approach is implemented and that assists the language learning process. Furthermore, apart from noticing similarities and differences between languages, languages that students know also influence one another. As Lindqvist (2019) claims, “cross-linguistic influence occurs both at the lexical and the grammatical level, although lexical CLI dominates” (p. 98). More than one language is spoken in multilingual classrooms and Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009, p. 66, as cited in Wang, 2011, p. 59) believe that teachers use students’ mother tongue to establish a “Language Acquisition Support System”. Using different languages during lessons sparked researchers’ interest. Various studies on multilingualism have shown, as Jessner (2008, p. 271) writes, that students rely more on their L2 than on their mother tongue, as it was expected. Falk and Bardel (2011, as cited in Lindqvist, 2019, p. 89) found that learning L2 and L3 has more cognitive and situational similarities than learning L3 and L1, meaning that foreign languages

influence the learning of L3 more than one's mother tongue does. When learning an L3, "the languages pupils resort to are languages they have learned, or rather, are learning, in school, i.e. other foreign language" (2019, p. 96). By resorting to other languages, a phenomenon of bilingual or multilingual speech known as code-switching characterizes language production. Auer (1998, p. 1) defines code-switching as "alternating use of two or more 'codes' within one conversational episode", meaning two or more languages. As they resort to other languages, students often code-switch between them and according to Safont Jorda (2005, p. 36, as cited in Dégi, 2018, p. 105), code-switching is an important feature of multilingual speech, and previously learned languages help when learning additional languages. Therefore, even if L2 has been proven to play a greater role when learning L3, students can code-switch between all languages from their linguistic repertoire, including their mother tongue. As Muñoz-Basols (2019) claims, multilingual students are provided with "a range of nuances, an array of new possibilities for subtlety, dimensionality, and shades of meaning that not only enrich their translation, but also provide greater exactitude to their work" (p. 16). Additionally, according to Swain (1986, p. 101, as cited in Wang, 2011, p. 84-84), relying on all languages that they know assists speakers' academic and emotional well-being.

Using students' L1 during L2 lessons interested researchers and, according to Wang (2011, p. 84), Cook (2001) was the first to discuss the issues of using mother tongue in L2 classes. Cook (2001, as cited in Wang, 2011, p. 97-98) states that teachers should have the following four factors in mind when deciding on whether or not to include students' L1 in L2 lessons: efficiency, which refers to something being done more effectively by using L1, learning, which refers to improving L2 learning by using L1 as well, naturalness, which refers to students feeling more comfortable when using L1, and lastly, external relevance, which refers to mastering specific L2 uses that are not exclusively connected to school by using both languages. Wang (2011) gives an overview of several researchers' proposed purposes of using L1 in an L2 classroom. He concludes that all researchers recognized that using L1 was important when teaching L2 grammar, translating vocabulary, managing classroom tasks, and establishing the interaction between students and teachers. Even though it can be seen that there are many possible purposes for L1 in L2 classroom, Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009, p. 18, as cited in Wang, 2011, p. 88) point out that some teachers feel guilt when they use L1 in L2 classes. Apart from the possible feelings of guilt, "multilingual classroom implies specific challenges for the teacher" (Lindqvist, 2019, p. 90). Since a multilingual classroom can be challenging for some teachers, Haukås (2016, p. 2-3) lists some requirements for language

teachers that De Angelis (2011), Hufeisen (2011) and Otwinowska (2014) previously proposed:

They should be multilingual themselves and serve as models for their learners. They should have a highly developed cross-linguistic and metalinguistic awareness. They should be familiar with research on multilingualism. They should know how to foster learners' multilingualism. They should be sensitive to learners' individual cognitive and affective differences. They should be willing to collaborate with other (language) teachers to enhance learners' multilingualism.

Jessner (2008, p. 270) states that it is necessary to investigate multilingual development in order to evaluate language development; therefore, substantial research that focuses on multilingual pedagogy has been carried out over the last decades and some of it will be presented below. According to Druzhinina and Zashikhina (2019, p. 124), multilingual pedagogy “shows positive dynamics results of its innovative conceptual ideas application”. Moreover, the findings are more than useful for any foreign language teacher because, as Gonzalez and Rothman (2017, as cited in Lindqvist, 2019, p. 98) claim, if more research findings on multilingualism and third language acquisition were implemented into multilingual classrooms, this would contribute to the learning of the third language. Cook (2005, as cited in Dégi, 2018) stresses that foreign language teachers should make their foreign language classrooms “a place where the language learners can fully function with their total language system”, and teaching according to multilingual pedagogy “stresses the importance of previously learnt languages in the foreign language learning process” (p. 21-22).

Several studies on multilingual pedagogy are presented in order to demonstrate how multilingualism is perceived and performed in classrooms across the world. Cenoz (2005) focused on bilingual and trilingual education in the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain, where both Basque and Spanish are official languages; however, Basque is a minority language. Cenoz (2005, 43) stated that since Basque was used as one of the languages for instruction in schools, the number of Bascophones was growing, as well as the number of publications written in Basque. Moreover, Cenoz researched the effect of bilingualism in the context of learning English as the third language and found that the students who had achieved the highest level of bilingualism proved to be the most successful in acquiring

English. What is more, Cenoz (2005, 47) found that parents encouraged multilingual education. Haukås (2016) examined Norwegian teachers' beliefs on multilingualism in order to analyse their decision-making during lessons and she found that teachers regarded "multilingualism not only as positive for learners but also as a tool to help learners find linguistic links between the L3 and previously learned languages" (p. 14). Furthermore, Haukås (2016, p. 2) found that the teachers believed that students should use all languages that they know. Another important finding from Haukås's research is that the same learning strategies should not be used when learning an L2 and L3 because the process of learning them is different (2016, p. 12-13). Even if the teachers did recognize the importance of the connection between L3 and other languages that the students knew when teaching, Haukås (2016) stated that "the use of the multilingual pedagogical approach [stopped] there because they [did not] tend to reflect on previous language learning experiences with their students" (p. 14). Haukås (2016, p. 14) added that the beliefs that the teachers reported did not have to represent their actual teaching practices in their classrooms. Lindqvist's (2019) study, as opposed to Haukås's which focused on the teachers, focused on the students. More specifically, her study explored Swedish students' multilingualism and how it affected them when learning French as an L3. Lindqvist (2019, p. 98) found that when the students learned French, other languages that they spoke were present. Lindqvist (2019, p. 99) stated that both Swedish as their L1 and English as their L2 influenced vocabulary and grammar when writing in French. As the results proved cross-linguistic influence between the three languages, Lindqvist (2019) stated that "more focus should be put on CLI and multilingualism within the language teacher programs in order to increase future teachers' awareness of multilingual learners' language learning and use" (p. 99). Furthermore, Lindqvist (2019, p. 98) found that other languages that students started learning after French, in upper grades, were used when learning French as an L3. Conclusively, Lindqvist (2019, p. 99) stressed that when teaching an L3, it should be noted that the multilingual classroom is a reality. Torpsten (2018) decided to focus her research on Swedish students who were not born in Sweden. While Torpsten was carrying out her project, the situation in Sweden changed. When she started to carry out her project Swedish was the only language that was allowed to be used in Swedish classrooms (2018, p. 109). However, the minority students had the right to receive tuition in their mother tongue education after school. As the situation in Sweden changed, other languages apart from Swedish were introduced into classrooms, and Torpsten (2018, p. 109) even stated that students who recently started attending school in Sweden were encouraged to use the language that they knew the most when writing because they could express their knowledge

more easily that way. Iversen, on the other hand, carried out research on the role of minority students' L1 when learning English in Norway. Iversen (2017, p. 43) found that the students noticed no attempts made by their teachers to implement the other languages that the students knew when teaching English. Some of the reasons were that the teachers did not know their L1s and there were even those who did not care about students' origins. Nevertheless, the students claimed that their teachers approached them and offered help if they did not understand something, but this was not always enough (2017, p. 43). Moreover, the minority students provided examples of their teachers helping them by explaining grammar rules or what they had to do in a task. One teacher made an effort to include some simple expressions in one student's mother tongue. Iversen (2017) concluded that "many teachers [were] content as long as they [provided] all students – monolingual and multilingual – with the same instruction" (pp. 44). Kafle (2014) examined practitioner perspectives on multilingual pedagogy when it comes to teaching English in Nepal, where most students' English proficiency was very poor, and translating to Nepali was necessary. Kafle (2014, p. 54) stated that because of their low proficiency students had difficulties when writing their exams at the end of the semester; however, Kafle (2014, p. 60) stressed that "English teachers should not only focus on examinations success, but also teach to enable students to use the language beyond the classroom". Furthermore, Benson (2010) conducted a research on how multilingual African contexts caused a change in teaching practices. The three countries included in the research, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Ethiopia, were all developing multilingual education programmes (2010, p. 324). In Guinea-Bissau, Portuguese was the only language used in schools, and Benson (2010, p. 325) claimed that that was the reason why only a small percentage of children enrolled in primary schools, less than two thirds of students completed their primary school education and almost a half had to repeat a grade. In Mozambique, mother-tongue bilingual education became an option for students in 2002, whereas in Ethiopia, primary school education was exclusively in students' mother tongue. By comparing the three countries, Benson (2010, p. 335) concluded that multilingual pedagogy needed to be "reconstructed to capitalise on the strengths of learners, teachers and the linguistic communities that are being served, offering much more equitable learning opportunities for all". Taylor (2008, p. 112) explored multilingual pedagogy in Québec, where some teachers decided to include their students' mother tongues because they realised that their students knew "so much as part of their culture through their language" and they did not need to "teach them [globally salient forms of expertise and affiliation] from scratch, [they] just need to connect them", which multilingual pedagogy allowed them to do. Conteh (2007,

p. 464) examined multilingual classrooms in England and noticed that the teachers whose mother tongue was not the same as the students' mother tongue, perceived the value of bilingualism differently. However, Conteh (2007) claimed that there was extensive code-switching in some classrooms and that using code-switching caused that activities "progressed smoothly and all the children took part with interest and enthusiasm" (p. 468). Conteh (2007, p. 468) explained that using both the mother tongue and the target language gave "both languages equal status" when teaching. Conteh argued (2007, p. 469) that bilingual teachers' skills and knowledge need to be recognised in order to improve the achievements of ethnic minority students. Lastly, Aggarwal (2013) conducted a study in India which focused on the teacher's role as a learner when teaching students who did not have the same mother tongue as the teacher. According to Aggarwal (2013, p. 62), the teacher gave the freedom to the students to use their mother tongue and that enabled the students to answer more freely. Moreover, Aggarwal (2013, p. 62) noticed that "flexibility in the classroom seating arrangement led to informal groups of mixed age-group children and minimal intervention of the teacher", which is not directly tied to multilingual pedagogy, but still is a relevant finding. Furthermore, there was a teacher included in the study who did not know the students' mother tongue, but was willing to learn it. According to Aggarwal (2013), the teacher's "sensitivity towards the children's language allowing freedom of usage of that language in class had a positive impact on the learning of English" (p. 63). The mentioned studies show how multilingual pedagogy is applied and perceived by teachers across the world, how countries differ in allowing using L1 in schools and in teaching foreign languages and that multilingual contexts call for changes in teaching practices.

## **2.3 Examining classroom discourse frames**

More research on classroom discourse was carried out by Pennington who focused on a bilingual classroom. Pennington "was among the first to employ a frames approach to reveal the coexisting but often conflicting layers of talk" (Luk, 2017, p. 178). By observing lessons in Hong Kong and Great Britain and listening to lesson recordings, she developed her own model of classroom discourse, the model consisting of four communicational frames. According to Pennington and Hoekje (2014, p. 165), a discourse frame is "a way of perceiving and conceptualizing a situation, event, or activity that gives it a certain meaning and provides a basis for interpreting its significance" and the four frames Pennington (1999b)



introduced are lesson frame, lesson-support frame, institutional-support frame and commentary frame. In order to explain the functioning of the four discourse frames, institutional and vernacular discourses, or frames of talk, should be defined first. According to Pennington (1999b, p. 54), institutional discourse is connected to educational institution and its participants, which means that certain activities, as well as genres and interlinked roles occur in school as an institution. On the other hand, vernacular discourse conveys “more new information and is in comparison to institutional acts less prestructured and predictable” (1999b, p. 55). Moreover, Pennington (1999b) states that vernacular discourse is connected to the community outside the school, and it is used for the negotiation of meaning and of new ideas. According to Pennington (1999a, p. 98), vernacular acts are considered to be more spontaneous and provide more new information, as opposed to institutional acts which are characterized by displaying knowledge in patterns typical for exchanges made between students and teachers. Pennington (1999b, p. 55) states that school’s functions and participants are connected to the community outside of the educational institution and, because of that, both institutional and vernacular types of discourse are appropriate in the school setting. Pennington (1999b, p. 55) further adds that “where the goal is language learning, a productive linking of vernacular and institutional talk increases authentic communication”. Nevertheless, this relationship between vernacular and institutional discourses does not always have to be positive: “Vernacular discourse has the potential to enrich institutional discourse in a productive ‘feeding’ relationship, as when community agendas and language are used to develop school agendas and language, or to work against them in a counterproductive ‘bleeding’ relationship, as when the agenda and language of the institution does not represent the interests of community members” (1999b, p. 55).

The first frame or the “innermost” one as Pennington describes it, is the one which carries the content of the curriculum and that makes it “most removed or ‘sheltered’ from outside influences and so the frame which most supports the use of the second language” (Pennington, 2002, p. 157). In this frame, students’ participation is likely to be highly restricted because the teachers attempt to control the class, and because students have low proficiency and fear making errors (Pennington, 1995a, and Lai, 1994, as cited in Pennington, 1999b). However, inside this frame, the teacher can pose questions or repeat them in the mother tongue and with that encourage the students in order to elicit responses from students who might not feel comfortable to speak using their L2 (1999b, p. 59). Dual-naming or dual-referencing may come up as a strategy in the lesson frame, meaning that the teacher may

provide or try to elicit translation equivalents from the students to “help to establish multiple connections among concepts that can enrich students’ understanding” (1999b, p. 59). Another possible solution for increasing students’ participation and encouraging them to talk more is pair work or working in small groups. Pair work and group work can “increase their ‘ownership’ of education as well as their participation in the second language” and “give the students more control over talk” (1999b, p. 60). Yet, both pair work and group work could lead to students using mother tongue more than the second language, and with that switch the communication from the lesson frame into the lesson-support frame (1999b, p. 61). Pennington (2002, p. 157) explains that a lesson-support frame is characterised by clarification, disciplining the students and correcting them in order to move back into the lesson frame. That is the reason why, in the lesson-support frame, “the teacher traditionally takes the role of authority figure and instructional manager” and is in charge of “generating productive interaction” (1999b, p. 61). Furthermore, Pennington (1999a) states that institutional interaction occurs within the lesson frame and lesson-support frame. Moreover, according to Pennington (2002, p. 162), every verbalization that fits into the lesson-support frame is connected to the lesson support frame. Since Pennington examined secondary school classes in which teachers and students shared the same mother tongue, in the lesson-support frame both the students and teachers sometimes used their mother tongue, talking to each other, as Lin (1996, p. 66, as cited in Pennington, 1999b, p. 62) states, “cultural member to cultural member”. Moreover, Pennington (1999b, p. 62) claims that the fact that the teacher also uses the mother tongue as well, suggests that these verbalizations do not belong in the lesson frame, but in the lesson-support frame. Even further from the lesson frame, there is an institutional-support frame, which serves to convey messages related to the larger school agenda and serves to “maintain a broader educational structure” (2002, p. 157). Both the lesson-support and institutional-support frames, can, according to Pennington (2002, p. 157), be seen as the support to the lesson frame and the school as an institution. When it comes to the institutional-support frame, teachers may also opt to use student’s mother tongue “as a way (cooperatively) to ensure understanding for messages perceived as very important or as a way (less cooperatively) to save time for what are seen as more important activities” (1999b, p. 63). Lastly, the commentary frame, even called “the outermost frame”, is the furthest away from the lesson frame and the one which is influenced by the popular culture and vernacular language the most (2002, p. 157). It is exactly this frame that is used for “expressing reactions to and opinions of people, events, and other talk, both in the classroom and in the world at large” (1999b, p. 93). Pennington (1999b, p. 65) states that this frame causes “behaviour-

modification directives” which serve to move the communication during lessons back to the lesson frame. However, Pennington (1999b, p. 65) warns that teachers should modify students’ behaviour in time, for if they turn to using behaviour-modification directives “after the students have gone some distance in developing this alternative line of talk it becomes difficult to reinstate the lesson frame and to reclaim the teacher’s controlling position in the institutionally ratified hierarchy of teacher and students”.

Moreover, Pennington (2002) brings up possible problems that could come up when gathering data for analysing classroom discourse frames. Firstly, she (2002, p. 169) states the process of gathering and analysing data necessary for examining classroom discourse frames takes a lot of time, and is technically challenging; however, it is still worthwhile because it aims to broaden teachers’ views and provide a new perspective when it comes to classroom discourse frames (p. 170). Moreover, Pennington (2002) explains that when transcribing talk from lessons, there is a dilemma whether to include all talk that occurs during lessons or only the talk relevant for the topic of research. She (1999a, p. 92) suggests that all talk that is recorded and audible should be analysed. Moreover, Pennington (2002, p. 166) recognizes that the gathered and analysed data can be presented in various ways that display patterns which can help teachers become aware of classroom discourse frames and languages used during their lessons. Furthermore, Pennington (p. 169) adds that “the approach to analysing classroom discourse in terms of frames of communicative activity can help move apprentice teachers away from a limited, unrealistic and often idealised centre-stage view of the classroom”. Additionally, Luk (2017, p. 178) states that Pennington’s classroom discourse frames show “how students contested to have voice and to achieve a balance between structure (which exercises control and constraint over talk) and agency (which emphasizes freedom of choice and consciousness)”.

## **2.4 The status of the Boyash and their education in Croatian society today**

The Boyash are a branch of the Roma, who are, according to the European Commission (as cited in Sime, Fasseta & McClung, 2017), “Europe’s largest and most impoverished ethnic minority” (p. 1). The Boyash are an ethnic group living in several European countries, Croatia being one of them. According to Olujić and Radosavljević (2013), the Roma in Croatia speak some varieties of Romanian, *romani chib* or Albanian, but the Boyash specifically speak Boyash Romanian, which Dezső (2009, p. 95) describes as “an

archaic version of Romanian”. However, according to Radosavljević (2009), Boyash Romanian is in fact a Romanian dialect that has kept some archaic elements since it is geographically isolated, and therefore has a rare contact with the Romanian language. Nevertheless, according to Radosavljević (2016), the Boyash often refer to their language as “romski”, meaning Romani language (*romani chib*), because they identify their ethnicity with the name of their language. Moreover, a great number of them do not even know that they speak a variety of Romanian, which often leads to certain misunderstandings and manipulations. Furthermore, Olujić and Radosavljević (2013) argue that there are three Boyash dialects which are differentiated both linguistically and geographically. These dialects are similar; however, there are both phonological and morphosyntactic differences between them (2013, p. 1). Moreover, depending on the region, Croatian dialects influence the three Boyash dialects, and standard Croatian language also plays a role. Radosavljević (2009) states that Croatian influences Boyash Romanian because it is the language of the environment, and because it is “used in mass media and institutions” (2013, p. 5). Radosavljević (2012, p. 447) explains that this is the reason why some speakers of Boyash Romanian use code-switching. Furthermore, he claims that code-switching “could indicate a level of uncertainty” in the use of their own, Boyash, system.

According to Radosavljević (2012, p. 437), the Boyash in Croatia make up a significant percentage of the Roma national minority, but nevertheless, they are a minority group which has not been researched enough. They have settled in northwestern, central and eastern Croatia (2012), mainly in Međimurje County and Baranja (Turza-Bogdan, Cvikić, Svetec, 2016, p. 186). Radosavljević (2016, p. 188) argues that during the Second World War, Međimurje and Baranja were not part of the territory of the Independent State of Croatia, and by settling there, the Boyash avoided extermination camps and the possibility of dying in the camps. According to Sorescu-Marinković (2008, p. 209), the Boyash as a minority have a strong group cohesion, regardless of the fact that they are settled in different parts of the country. Sorescu-Marinković (2008, p. 188) estimates that there are between 10,000 and 13,000 Boyash in Croatia, 3,000 of them living in Baranja and 5,000 living in Međimurje. However, according to Turza-Bogdan and colleagues (2016), those numbers are higher and they estimate that there are around 11,000 Boyash in Međimurje County alone. Moreover, 13% of the primary school students in Međimurje are Boyash, which is about 1,400 students (Turza-Bogdan et al., 2016, 96). The reason why the numbers of the Boyash in Croatia are estimated is the fact that a significant number of them do not want to be identified as Roma

publicly (Forray & Mohacsi, 2002, as cited in Katz, 2006, p. 248), so it is not known how many of them are not even registered. However, Radosavljević (2012, p. 439) claims that more than a half of registered Roma in Croatia are Boyash. Radosavljević agrees that the numbers are estimated, and states that there are about 10,000 to even 20,000 Boyash in Croatia according to his field research and some estimations provided by Boyash associations.

To say that Boyash standards of living are below average in Croatia is an understatement. A significant number of the Boyash live off welfare and many of them earn some money by begging, while some even turn to illegal activities such as stealing. Lapat and Miljević-Riđički (2019, p. 61) list illiteracy, lack of interest, alcoholism and neglect as some of the difficulties which Roma students face on a daily basis. Lapat and Miljević-Riđički (2019, p. 60) add that UNICEF has found that more than two-thirds of Roma preschool children do not have their own bed, toys or picture books. Moreover, they previously had to face extreme racism (Katz, 2006, p. 248), even in the form of slavery, and hateful antigypsyism is an on-going problem (2006, p. 248). According to Filipović and colleagues (2010), “racism, xenophobia, and negative stereotypes have all led to an almost complete segregation and ghettoization of Romani communities by majority populations in the host countries” (p. 267). Sime and colleagues (2017) add that the Roma are “exacerbated by their systematic exclusion from education” (p. 2). Not only do all the problems listed above cause Roma students to feel unaccepted and uncomfortable in classrooms (Filipović et al., 2010, p. 267), but they also face difficulties already when they start school because they do not know Croatian. Not knowing Croatian, which is the official language in schools, is, according to Stathopoulou and Kalabasis (2006, p. 237), just one of the cultural conflicts which the Roma students have to face when they enter a classroom. According to Turza-Bogdan and colleagues (2016, p. 97), preschool is obligatory for all future students in Croatia for at least 3 to 10 months; however, the Boyash still have little or no knowledge when they enrol into primary schools (Turza-Bogdan et al., 2016, p. 95). Turza-Bogdan and colleagues (2016, p. 96) state that the problem is that The Primary School Curriculum (Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia, 2006) does not require any differences to be made when teaching students whose mother tongue is not Croatian, even though “a number of international conventions stress the right for minority language children to receive education in their own language” (Bakker & Daval-Markussen, 2013, p. 34). Furthermore, Bakker and Daval-Markussen (2013, p. 35) argue that “governmental and non-governmental agencies stress the importance of language for minorities, sometimes as a barrier, and sometimes as an

asset in connection with the education system”, which suggests that minority languages are not viewed as having a solely positive or negative role in education. According to Beijer (1997), in Sweden, for example, minority language students have the right to receive tuition in their mother tongue, even if they do not speak that language at home, whereas in Hungary, as Kazt (2006, p. 249) writes, there are schools for Boyash students only where lessons are taught in Boyash Romanian. Moreover, Dezső (2009, p. 96) points out that Romani languages are implemented into schools in Hungary more than they are in other European countries. Nevertheless, it is not only in Croatia that the Roma do not receive education in their mother tongue, but they are taught in the majority language in, for example, Serbia (Filipović, Vučo & Djurić, 2010) and Greece as well (Stathopoulou & Kalabasis, 2006). Another problem that arises in Croatia is forming classes since the Roma make up more than 70% of students in several schools in Croatia (Lapat & Miljević-Ridički, 2019, p. 60). The reason why this is an issue is that the Boyash sometimes complain about attending all-Boyash classes and explain that they feel segregated. On the other hand, the Croatian complain about having mixed Croatian and Boyash classes because the presence of the Boyash allegedly slows down the education of the Croatian students. On top of it all, even though primary education is obligatory in Croatia, a significant number of Roma students do not finish their primary school education because some Roma students have to repeat grades, and are allowed to leave school at the age of fifteen – before finishing their eighth-grade education (2019, p. 61). As there are many problems when it comes to Boyash students’ education, Lapat and Miljević-Ridički (2019) write about a research project which was carried out in ten European Union member states, one of them being Croatia. As a part of the research, Roma parents could state what support they could use to improve their children’s education. Some of the answers they provided were “extra classes (mainly Croatian language classes), taking children’s deficient knowledge of Croatian into consideration, more support in preventing children quitting school, material support (apart from financial support) in the form of books and school meals, respecting differences (instead of segregation) and preventing peer violence” (Lapat & Miljević-Ridički, 2019, p. 60-61). As books and materials were one of the parents’ suggestions for improving their children’s education, it is important to mention that, during the last two decades, Croatian researchers and linguists have made great progress when it comes to materials in Boyash Romanian and other Romani languages. For example, a handbook for learning Boyash Romanian, as well as a Boyash Romanian-Croatian dictionary containing around 300 words, have been written by Petar Radosavljević. Moreover, according to Međimurje’s local newspaper Međimurje, workshops for teachers working with Boyash

students were organized in Međimurje County in 2017, so that the teachers could learn the basics of Boyash Romanian. The workshops were also led by Radosavljević, as well as two Boyash assistants. Furthermore, in the year of 2019, an experimental curriculum was developed. According to Reyn Croatia, which is a network that supports Roma children, the curriculum aims to further implement the Boyash Romanian language, as well as the Boyash culture, into the lessons for students that attend upper grades of primary school (from fifth to eighth grade) in Međimurje County. These are only some examples, and their contribution should be recognized, since up until thirty years ago, Boyash Romanian speakers did not even attend school (Marušić, in print, p. 4), whereas now significant effort is put into increasing the quality of their of education. The reason why Boyash Romanian plays such an important role is the fact that it is “one of the means that Romany people mobilize to preserve and strengthen their own identity as a distinct cultural group in a time of radical change” (Stathopoulou and Kalabasis, 2006, p. 234). However, Stathopoulou and Kalabasis (2006, p. 235) point out that not all teachers who work with Boyash or Roma students are aware of how important their mother tongue is to them. Stathpoulou and Kalabasis (2006, p. 235) claim that oral tradition is a very important linguistic feature for the Boyash due to the lack of a written Roma language. Stathopoulou and Kalabasis (2006, p. 235) add that many Roma students do not have enough contact with written language, and even point out that many homes have no books, which is almost unimaginable for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century Europe. Moreover, Dekker and Young (2008, p. 184) state that research has shown that “quality language education occurs most effectively when the learner begins to read and write in their first language – the language of the home and community – and when the learner transitions in a structured manner to other languages of wider communication used for education in the nation”, which puts Boyash students in an undesirable position since they learn to read and write in Croatian first because Boyash Romanian is not taught in Croatian schools. However, in the year of 2020, a new subject called “Language and culture of the Roma national minority” was officially introduced into the model C of the national curriculum. As it can be seen in Narodne novine, Croatia’s official gazette for publishing the national curriculum, the subject will be introduced into both primary and secondary schools, and will be taught from the 2020/2021 school year. The language used during the lessons depends on whether the minority students speak Boyash Romanian or Romani language (*romani chib*). Apart from learning to read and write, the students’ linguistic and cultural identity will be formed and developed, and they will also have a chance to learn about important people and events regarding their culture, as well as understand cause-and-effect processes that have influenced the current position of the Roma.

This shows an important progress for the Roma, as well as the Boyash, in Croatia, especially when it comes to their education.



### **3. Study**

#### **3.1 Aim**

The study looked into the languages used during English lessons when teaching young Boyash Romanian speakers who attend a Croatian school where the official language of instruction is Croatian. As mentioned earlier, classroom discourse frames as presented by Pennington have not been applied to a multilingual classroom yet, only to bilingual ones, so this study was of an exploratory character and aimed to provide answers to the following questions:

Research question 1: How are English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian arranged according to the four classroom discourse frames during English lessons?

Research question 2: How does teaching young Boyash Romanian speakers differ, according to teacher's perspective, from teaching speakers whose mother tongue is another language?

#### **3.2 Sample**

The study was conducted in one first grade of primary school, composed of 13 young English learners, all of whom are of Boyash ethnicity and are seven years old. Their English teacher was also included in the study. Girls made up 26% and boys 74% of the class. All students spoke Boyash Romanian as their mother tongue, Croatian as their L2 and English as their L3. All students had started learning Croatian the previous year while attending preschool, and depending on how long they went to preschool the time spent studying Croatian ranged from 9 to 16 months at the time when this study began. The participants are referred to as Students and Teacher, and pseudonyms are used as well in order to ensure their anonymity. Moreover, all students spoke Boyash Romanian at home and some spoke some Kajkavian dialect instead of the standard Croatian language as well.

Furthermore, a semi-structured interview with the students' English teacher was conducted. The teacher, a female, was 35 years old and held a university degree. Her mother tongue was Croatian. She graduated from the Faculty of Teacher Education, homeroom

teacher majoring in English. She had a ten-year working experience as an English teacher and had been working at the same school. Moreover, since she started working she had been working with Boyash Romanian speakers, but she had not always taught all-Boyash classes. The teacher learned some Boyash Romanian while working with the Boyash students.

Apart from the students and the teacher, a Boyash assistant also took part in English lessons. The Boyash assistant, a female, was primary school educated and was 40 years old. Her mother tongue was Boyash Romanian. Croatian was her L2, and she had learned some English while attending English lessons with the classes she assisted. She had been working as a Boyash assistant for 10 years. She was assigned as the Boyash assistant specifically in that class of Boyash Romanian speakers and she was present during lessons for all subjects. She was the class' assistant during their whole first grade of primary school.

### **3.3 Procedure**

The qualitative approach of this study took form of observing and tape recording six English language lessons, as well as conducting a semi-structured interview with the English teacher. The lessons were observed over the course of two months; however, the students had no lessons for a period of a month and a half due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so all lessons that were recorded were held one after another according to the class' schedule. By recording the lessons, the discourse in the classroom was later analysed according to Pennington's four discourse frames. However, the lessons were recorded using only one device, therefore some of the distant talk between the students was inaudible.

The semi-structured interview with the teacher was held right after the last lesson was observed, so that the questions posed would not influence the teacher's practices during the lessons. During the interview, the teacher was asked to give her opinion on how the students' mother tongue affected her and her teaching practices, how she decided which language to use during lessons, and how she maintained the balance between English, Croatian, and Boyash Romanian. In the follow-up questions, the teacher was asked to state which language she used when doing certain activities during the lessons, such as assigning homework or teaching new vocabulary. Moreover, the teacher commented on languages concerning students' spontaneous talk and disciplining the students, as well as raising students' motivation and encouraging them to participate. Furthermore, she was asked to describe how she perceived

her multilingual classroom and how the students adjusted to speaking English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian during English lessons, since English was their only subject where three languages were used. The teacher was also asked a series of questions about her own learning of Boyash Romanian and the help she received from the institution. Moreover, she was asked to comment on how teaching the Boyash was different from teaching students whose mother tongue was Croatian or any other language.

#### 4. Results and discussion

The results are analysed according to the two research questions of the study.

*Research question 1: How are English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian arranged according to the four classroom discourse frames during English lessons?*

As already mentioned, English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian were all used during English lessons of the observed class. In the excerpts presented here, what was said in Croatian is written in italics, whereas the Boyash Romanian is in bold with English translations in parentheses. The analysed data was presented in excerpts which were chosen because of their relevance for the study, meaning that they fitted into different classroom frames. Moreover, more excerpts represented the same discourse frame; however, they were presented as a part of the study because they demonstrated the use of different languages for various purposes. Excerpt 1 happened at the beginning of one of the observed lessons, when the teacher started the lesson by greeting the students and asking them how they are feeling.

Excerpt 1 (The teacher was waiting for the students to get seated after the break.)

Teacher: *Jesmo konačno svi na mjestima?* ('Are we all in our seats finally?') Stand up!

Stand up. Hello!

Students: Hello!

Teacher: How are you? *Kako ste?* ('How are you?')

Students: *Dobro!* ('Good!')

Teacher: *Reci* ('Say') 'I'm fine'.

Students: I'm fine.

Teacher: *Pitajte vi mene*, 'how are you?' ('You ask me, "how are you?"')

Students: How are you?

Teacher: I'm fine, thank you.

Excerpt 1 demonstrated how the teacher established communication with the students by extensive code-switching between Croatian and English. The teacher started the lesson by using both Croatian and English, and encouraged the students to use English as well, to which they switched without complaints. This seemed to be the case in the classroom rather often, the students had a tendency to answer questions in Croatian and the teacher had to remind them to speak English. Excerpt 1 belonged to the commentary frame, as it was not related to the content of the curriculum, nor did it aim to clarify the content of the curriculum or discipline the students. It was simply an introductory part of the lesson which served to establish communication between the students and their teacher. Excerpt 1 showed how vernacular discourse was used at the beginning of the lesson when the students and the teacher expressed how they were feeling. Excerpt 2 showed an interaction during one of the lessons and was chosen because it showed how English and Croatian were used inside the lesson frame.

Excerpt 2 (The class played a game where the teacher held a picture of an instrument without looking at the picture, she showed it to the class and guessed which instrument was in the picture. The class had to confirm whether the teacher was right or not.)

Teacher: *Uh, sad sam vidjela, neće varati.* ('Uh, I have seen it now, I will not cheat.')

No cheating, no cheating. A recorder?

Students: *Ne!* ('No!')

Teacher: Yes or no?

Students: No!

Teacher: No. A trumpet?

Students: *Da!* ('Yes!')

Teacher: Yes or no?

Students: Yes!

Teacher: Yes! Okay.

Excerpt 2 was a lesson-frame exchange, as the class was doing an activity connected to vocabulary and answering questions. The teacher expected from the students to say what they knew in English and allowed them to speak Croatian when they could not express what they wanted to say in English. She also used English for simpler expressions and for vocabulary

for which she was sure that the students had learned before, and opted for Croatian when communicating a message that they might not have understood in English.

Excerpt 3 (After finishing one activity, the teacher suggested a game for the next activity.)

Teacher: *Može jedna igra kratka?* ('How about a short game?')

Students: *Može.* ('Okay.')

Teacher: Let's play a game. *Ajmo igrat' igru.* ('Let's play a game.')

Excerpt 3 was also a lesson-frame exchange, the teacher posed a question in Croatian and did not expect from the students to provide the answer in English. She encouraged them by allowing them to use Croatian and by using it herself. Moreover, she offered them a Croatian translation for "let's play a game", just to make sure that all students understood what was about to go on in the classroom. Much of the communication during lessons was based on the teacher talking the most and the students answered by using a word or two, as seen in Excerpts 2 and 3. Furthermore, the teacher often said the meaning behind an expression and asked the students only to repeat the words that she had just said. An example of this was Excerpt 4.

Excerpt 4 (The class was revising vocabulary connected to food.)

Teacher: Do you like carrots? *Volite* carrots? ('Do you like carrots?')

Students: *Da.* ('Yes.')

Teacher: Yes. *Recite* "I like carrots". ('Say "I like carrots".')

Students: I like carrots.

Teacher: We eat carrots, *jedemo mrkve.* ('We eat carrots.')

*Jesti kažemo* "eat carrots". ('We say "eat carrots".')

Students: Eat carrots.

Teacher: *A jedemo kad smo gladni. Kako kažemo da smo gladni na engleskom?* I'm hungry. ('And we eat when we are hungry. How do we say that we are hungry in English?')

Students: I'm hungry.

Teacher: I'm hungry. Okay, *a kako kažemo da smo žedni?* *Recimo*, we drink juice. I'm thirsty! ('Okay, and how do we say that we are thirsty? For example, we drink juice.')

Students: I'm thirsty.

As the class was talking about expressing thirst and hunger, Excerpt 4 also fitted into the lesson frame since it carried the lesson. The excerpt showed that the students already knew that the teacher expected them to repeat after her. However, the problem that arose, according to the teacher, was that they sometimes also repeated phrases such as “answer the question” and “repeat after me” which were not meant to be repeated. This meant that they were aware that they often had to repeat what the teacher said in English, but they also repeated something even if they did not understand what it meant, meaning that the teacher could not be sure whether the students understood her just by asking them to repeat a phrase. Moreover, this might have suggested that the students were not used to this kind of repetition or to hearing the phrase “repeat after me”.

Excerpts 1-4 were examples of communication during lessons when only English and Croatian were used. However, Boyash Romanian was often used during the lesson as well. It should be noted that the teacher and the students referred to Boyash Romanian as “romski”, meaning Romani language, they did not specify that they are using Boyash Romanian. The teacher claimed that “there is no ‘too much’ Boyash Romanian or ‘too much’ Croatian during English lessons, there is only as much as it is necessary for the students to understand English, the words that they have to acquire that day”. According to the teacher, if she did not use Croatian or Boyash Romanian as much, the aims and outcomes of the lesson would not be achieved. The following Excerpt 5 showed how new vocabulary is frequently taught in the class.

Excerpt 5 (The students were learning body parts for the first time. The teacher showed a picture a body part, said the body part in English and the students repeated after her.)

Lesson frame	Lesson-support frame	Commentary frame
1	Teacher: Touch your mouth, <i>dodirni svoja usta. Kad kažem</i> “touch your mouth” <i>znači</i> “ <i>dodirni svoja...</i> ” (‘Touch your mouth. When I say “touch your mouth” it means “touch your...?”’)	
2	Student1: <i>Usta.</i> (‘Mouth.’)	
3	Teacher: <i>I onda ono što kažem.</i> (‘And	

then touch what I say.'). Mouth, *usta*  
(‘mouth’), nose, *nos* (‘nose’). Okay?  
*Touch your nose.*

[two students chatting -  
inaudible]

4

Teacher: *Dečki.*  
*Koncentriraj se.*  
(‘Boys.  
Concentrate.’)

5 Teacher: Touch your nose.

6 Student: Nose.

7 Teacher: *Reci* “nose”. (‘Say “nose”.’)

8 Students: Nose!

9 Teacher: Touch your ears.

10 Student2: Ears.

[the two students  
continue whispering -  
inaudible]

11

Teacher: *Kam ti*  
*gledaš? Možemo se*  
*skoncentrirati? Da*  
*naučimo reći sve*  
*dijelove tijela. Da*  
*znamo na engleskom*  
*reći dijelove tijela.*  
(‘What are you  
looking at? Can we  
concentrate? So we  
can learn how to say  
all body parts. So  
that we know how to  
say all body parts in  
English.’)

- 12 Teacher: *Jel' imate na romskom možda kako kažete "oči"?* ('Do you have a word to say "eyes" in Boyash Romanian?')
- 13 Students: **Oć! Oć!** ('Eye! Eye!')
- 14 Boyash assistant: **Oć je jedno oko, a oći doj.** ('Oć is one eye, and oći is two.')

- 15 Students: **Oći.** ('Eyes.')
- 16 Teacher: *Kako?* ('How do you say it?')
- 17 Student3: **Ureć.** ('Ears.')
- 18 Teacher: **Ureći nije to, ureći su uši, jel da?** ('Ureći aren't eyes, ureći are ears, right?')

They continue to discuss Boyash Romanian equivalents for English body parts.

- |    | Lesson frame   | Lesson-support frame  | Commentary frame |
|----|--|---|------------------|
| 19 | Teacher: <i>Kako kažemo na romskom "usta"?</i> ('How do we say "mouth" in Boyash Romanian?') |   |                  |
| 20 | Students: <b>Buz!</b> ('Lips!')  |   |                  |
| 21 |  | Teacher: <i>Ne, buz su usne, lips, a usta?</i> ('No, buz are lips, and mouth?') |                  |
| 22 |  | Boyash assistant: <b>Gu...?</b><br>[Starts pronouncing the word for mouth]      |                  |
| 23 | Students: <b>Gură! Gură!</b> ('Mouth! Mouth!')   |   |                  |



- 24 Teacher: Okay, mouth. English, *ajde*  
(‘come on’), mouth.
- 26 Students: Mouth.

The innermost frame that is connected to the lesson was the one in which the three languages were intertwined the most during the English language lessons. Boyash Romanian was also acceptable in the lesson frame since it was the students’ mother tongue. Moreover, this excerpt showed how the lesson frame and the lesson-support frame were intertwined when the need to discipline students arose (“What are you looking at? Can we concentrate?”), and how English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian were used in the lesson frame, whereas only Croatian and Boyash Romanian were used in the lesson-support frame. Boyash Romanian was used by both the Boyash assistant and the teacher to correct the students, whereas Croatian was used only by the teacher when she closed the commentary frame opened by the two students. Right after closing the commentary frame, she continued the lesson by switching to the lesson frame and by doing that stopped them from using vernacular discourse during the lesson and encouraged them to use institutional discourse related to the lesson. Moreover, Excerpt 5 represented several important findings about this particular class and the communication between the participants. Firstly, not only did the teacher allow Kajkavian dialect in the classroom, but she also used it herself at times, as seen in the excerpt: “*Kam’ ti gledaš?*” (‘What are you looking at?’). Since the teacher’s reaction to the students chatting was immediate, she probably used Kajkavian automatically because she used the dialect more than the standard outside the classroom, therefore, she reached for the dialect sooner than the standard. This is important because it showed that the teacher allowed the students to use the Kajkavian dialect, which is predominately spoken in Međimurje County. The students had a better chance of hearing and learning the Kajkavian dialect than the standard outside the classroom and the teacher set an example that producing speech is welcome in the classroom, even if they used the Kajkavian dialect which is familiar to them. Secondly, the excerpt demonstrated that the teacher decided to elicit Boyash Romanian equivalents of the words that they were learning in English when she noticed that some students were not paying attention and were bothering other students. Therefore, the teacher employed dual-naming or dual-referencing as a strategy, which is also seen in several excerpts that follow. However, instead of turning to Boyash Romanian right away, the teacher still tried to speak only English and Croatian when teaching vocabulary. When she noticed that the boys who were disturbing

other students had not yet calmed down, she interested them by posing questions about their own mother tongue. Moreover, the excerpt showed that the students did not know all basic vocabulary in Boyash Romanian, even though it was their mother tongue. Additionally, it showed that the teacher's knowledge of Boyash Romanian was sufficient to correct them and that she was able to notice that they had said the wrong word; however, it was still the Boyash assistant who told the students the plural of the noun "eye" and started to pronounce the noun "mouth" to help them remember. What is more, students sometimes mixed up expressions in Boyash Romanian, as seen in Excerpt 5 and presented in Excerpt 6 as well:

Excerpt 6 (The class was revising vocabulary about food which had been taught during the previous lesson.)

Teacher: Apples, apples. *Kako to ono kažemo na romskom?* ('How do we say that in Boyash Romanian?')

Student1: **Paradikă, paradikă!** ('Tomatoes, tomatoes!')

Student2: **Măr, măr!** (Apples, apples!')

Teacher: *To nije paradikă, tomatoes je paradikă, to je măr.* ('It's not paradikă, tomatoes is paradikă, this is măr.')

Excerpt 6 was a lesson-support exchange that demonstrated the teacher correcting the students and providing clarification by using Croatian. Moreover, the excerpt showed how the teacher was including the students' mother tongue when they were revising vocabulary which was relatively new to them, since only one lesson before had been dedicated to vocabulary connected to food. Even though it was possible for the students to say the incorrect word in Boyash Romanian when asked to provide an equivalent, there was no need for the Boyash assistant to intervene in the lesson because the teacher's knowledge of Boyash Romanian was adequate to correct the students. However, according to the teacher, school as an institution helped the employees who work with the Boyash students by organising Boyash assistants to take part in the lessons: "I could not imagine working without the Boyash assistant all the time, there were days when she was absent and I could not always work like that. I feel safer when she is present, the students feel safer when she is present. They feel close to her because she is with them during all subjects, they trust her." Excerpt 7 exhibited how the Boyash assistant participated during one of the lessons.

Excerpt 7 (The students were about to start a new activity, a task in their books. The teacher explained what they have to do.)

Teacher: *E sad imamo jedan zadatak. Uzmite pencil, take a pencil. Take a pencil, ajde.* Viktor, listen, take a pencil, *imaš? Spremni?* ('And now we have a task to do. Take a pencil. Take a pencil, come on. Viktor, listen, take a pencil, do you have it? Ready?')

Students: *Da.* ('Yes.')

Teacher: Okay. *Morat ćete napisati u kružice onaj broj koji čujete kod sličice. Znači idemo na sličicu a, prvo nemojte pisati. Pokažite sličicu a, vidimo a? Ovo tu. Što je to?* Ears. *Recite "ears", uši. Ponovite, "ears"!* ('Okay. You will have to write the number that you hear into the circle next to the picture. So let's go to picture a, don't write right away. Point to the picture a, can we see a? This one here. What is it? Ears. Say "ears". Repeat, "ears"!')

Students: Ears!

Teacher: Number one, *broj jedan, nešto od ovoga, ja ću reći "number one - nose" i tamo napišete kod te sličice broj jedan.* ('Number one, number one, one of these, I will say "number one – nose" and you have to write number one next to the picture.')

Boyash assistant: [inaudible] ... **să cînji dă nas, akolo faş broj, znači, kare-j...**

[inaudible] ('...touches her nose, you put a number there, the one which...')

Student1: *Jedan.* ('One.')

Excerpts 5 and 6 showed how Boyash Romanian was used only for dual-naming inside the lesson frame and correction inside the lesson-support frame. Excerpt 7, on the other hand, was tied to the lesson-support frame because the teacher and the Boyash assistant clarified what the students had to do during the activity. It demonstrated that even though the teacher used Croatian to tell the students what it was exactly that they had to do because they would not fully understand it in English, the students still looked at the teacher rather confused, therefore the Boyash assistant stepped in and explained to the students what was expected of them in Boyash Romanian. Excerpt 7 showed that both Croatian and Boyash Romanian were used in the lesson-support frame. The teacher did not know Boyash Romanian enough to say the whole sentence, she stated herself that her knowledge was on the level of words and some phrases, therefore, the fact that the assistant was Boyash, and not of some other ethnicity, greatly contributed to the quality of Boyash Romanian that was spoken during the English lessons, as well as the students' understanding of what they had to do during an activity. The following excerpt also confirmed the importance of the Boyash assistant's role during English lessons.

Excerpt 8 (The class revised colours, the teacher held pictures of paint cans of a certain colour and the students had to say which colour was in the can. She held red and waited for them to answer.)

Student1: Red!

Teacher: *Bravo, Tea! Kako je to na romskom?* ('Well done, Tea! How do we say that in Boyash Romanian?')

Students: *Crvena! Crvena!* ('Red! Red!')

Teacher: *Ne postoji drugi naziv?* ('Is there no other term?')

Student2: *Ne.* ('No.')

Boyash assistant: **Rošje.** ('Red.')

Students: **Rošje, rošje.** ('Red, red.')

Teacher: *A koji naziv vi koristite doma, rošje ili crvena?* ('And which term do you use at home?')

Some students yell "rošje" and others "crvena".

Teacher: *Koji više koristite? Kako više govorite, "rošje" ili "crvena"?* ('Which do you use more? What do you say more, "rošje" or "red"?')

Students: *Crvena, crvena!*

Teacher: *Zbilja?* ('Really?')

Boyash assistant: *Mislim, imamo poseban naziv, ali više koristimo...* ('I mean, we do have our own term but we use...')

Teacher: *Više koristite hrvatski, aha, dobro.* ('You use the Croatian one more, uh-huh, okay.')

Excerpt 8 was a lesson-support exchange as well, it was an example of the Boyash assistant providing the students with an equivalent in their mother tongue, cultural member to cultural member. Since the students used Boyash Romanian and Croatian both inside and outside the classroom, they sometimes could not remember the Boyash Romanian equivalent even though they had probably heard it at home. If there were some students who had not yet heard the Boyash Romanian term, they had a chance to hear it during the lesson. Learning a word that is in one's mother tongue during English lessons is a positive outcome – the students learn an expression in minority language and with that improve their proficiency in Boyash Romanian, similarly to Cenoz' (2005) finding where students improved their proficiency in a minority language because it was the language of instruction in some schools. As Radosavljević (2012, p. 447) claims, some Boyash may use code-switching as a sign of uncertainty when using

their mother tongue and hearing some Boyash Romanian words during the lessons might help reduce that uncertainty.

Furthermore, according to the teacher, she sometimes questioned the students about expressions in Boyash Romanian in order to motivate them to remember English vocabulary, as seen in Excerpt 9.

Excerpt 9 (The class started an activity and teacher explained to the students what they had to do.)

Teacher: *Imamo pet košara*, five baskets. *Recite* “five baskets”. (‘We have five baskets, five baskets. Say “five baskets”.’)

Students: Five baskets.

Teacher: *U svaku basket moramo draw, nacrtati, nešto, ono što piše na basket, što piše na košari. I sad u košaricu nacrtajte*, in the basket draw apples. *Što su* “apples”? (‘In every basket we have to draw, something, what is written on the basket. And now draw in the basket, in the basket draw apples. What are “apples”?’)

Students: *Jabuke! Jabuke!* (‘Apples! Apples!’)

Teacher: *Kako smo ono rekli da je* “jabuka” *na romskom? Naučite me.* (‘How do we say “apple” in Boyash Romanian? Teach me.’)

Student1: **Măr, măr!** (‘Apple, apple!’)

Teacher: *A jesi ti zapamtio na engleskom* “apples”? (‘And did you remember that it is “apples” in English?’)

Student1: *Da, da!* (‘Yes, yes!’)

Teacher: *Odlično, ja na romskom, a ti na engleskom.* (‘Great, I remembered the word in Boyash Romanian, and you remembered it in English.’)

The last sentence of the excerpt was an example of how the teacher stimulated her students to remember the English equivalents: “We also sometimes ‘compete’ who will remember more words, if I will be the one who remembers more Boyash Romanian words, or if they will remember more English words. It motivates them a lot.” By pretending that she did not already know how to say a word in Boyash Romanian, she provided the students with a challenge that made them more attentive and cooperative during the lesson. The teacher claimed that the students felt proud when they knew a word in Boyash Romanian and got the chance to teach her something. This showed that the teacher did not only motivate the students by establishing a competition between them and herself, but she also took the

students' linguistic culture into account. This was beneficial from the sociolinguistic perspective of the students' identity construction since their mother tongue was in an unfavourable position and using Boyash Romanian in activities during English lessons could have helped the students to accept their mother tongue and identity. The following excerpt also showed the teacher motivating the students.

Excerpt 10 (The class continued doing the activity with baskets.)

Teacher: *Ajmo dalje, četvrta košara, basket. Daj slovo po slovo pročitaj.* ('Let's continue, the fourth basket. Read letter by letter.')

Student1: P-E-A-R-S.

Teacher: *Odlično, pears. Da li te to podsjeća na jednu romsku riječ?* ('Excellent, pears. Does that remind you of a Boyash Romanian word?')

Students: **Pera! Pera!**

Teacher: *Evo, slično je! Evo, lako je, baš je lako. Pravi Englezi ćete biti.* ('There you go, it is similar! It is easy, it is really easy. You will be just like the real English.')

As shown in Excerpt 10, the students did not always notice the similarities between the languages on their own, so the teacher brought their attention to these similarities: "It is unavoidable not to use two or sometimes three languages when teaching a word, a phrase or a sentence. My whole teaching is based on that, especially the first few activities regarding the new vocabulary." Excerpt 10 exhibited how the teacher used Croatian within the lesson-support frame in order to motivate the students: "There you go, it is similar! It is easy, it is really easy. You will be just like the real English." Moreover, the teacher claimed that she also tried to make the students aware of other similarities in pronunciation when trying to help the students remember a word that was being taught, as showed in Excerpt 11.

Excerpt 11 (The class was revising animals. Students looked at the picture of a duck, but could not remember what the animal was called in English.)

Teacher: *Kak' se ona glasa?* ('What sound does it make?')

Students: Quack, quack, quack!

Teacher: Quack, quack, quack! Okay, *jel' vas to podsjeća na duck, duck, duck?* ('Okay, does that remind you of duck, duck, duck?')

Students: *Da.* ('Yes.')

Teacher: *Ajde, probajte, duck, duck, duck.* ('Come on, try, duck, duck, duck.')

Students: Duck, duck, duck.

Teacher: *E, ona se zove, znači kažemo*, “duck”. *Recite* “duck”. (‘It is called, we say, “duck”. Say “duck”.’)

Students: Duck.

Teacher: Duck, okay, *zapamti*. (‘Duck, okay, remember.’)

Excerpt 11 was again a lesson-support exchange where the teacher explained to the students how associations served to remember a word by using Croatian. When asked to comment on maintaining the balance between languages that she used, the teacher stated that even though all three languages were combined during the lessons, she did feel that Croatian dominated others: “Sometimes I have to ask them to speak English, when I notice that they are using Croatian or Boyash Romanian for something that they should know how to say in English, simple expressions. Sometimes the shift to English works, and sometimes it does not. At least when they answer the question in any language, I get the feedback and I know that they understand me.” By answering the teacher’s question in any language the students confirmed that the teacher conveyed her message successfully. On the other hand, if the students only repeated a phrase, the teacher did not get that confirmation, as stated earlier and this justified the teacher’s reasoning behind allowing the students to answer in any language. However, the teacher encouraged the students to use English when she believed they were capable of doing so or when English was needed to acquire English expressions. The following excerpt was an example of a successful switch to English.

Excerpt 12 (The class was doing an activity where they had to draw and colour fruit.)

Teacher: *Kako ćemo obojati jabuke, najčešće su jabuke...?* (‘What colour will we colour the apples, apples are mostly...?’)

Student1: *Crvena*. (‘Red.’)

Student2: *Crvena*. (‘Red.’)

Student3: *Crvena*. (‘Red.’)

Teacher: In English, please.

Student4: Red!

Teacher: Red, yes! *Tako je*, red apples. (‘That’s right, red apples.’)

This excerpt belonged to the lesson frame, at first, the teacher waited for any student to say the word in English and when no one did, she explicitly asked them to answer the question in English since they should have acquired vocabulary for colours by then and one student

answered right away, confirming the teacher's presumption that they knew the English equivalent. In the following excerpt, the students continued to use Croatian when answering questions, even though the teacher asked them to use English.

Excerpt 13 (The class was doing an activity where they had to guess which of the three mixed cards representing food was the first one in the line without seeing it, the teacher demonstrated the activity.)

Teacher: Okay, *sad imam* eggs, tomatoes and juice, *i sad ću to*, I'll mix it, *pomiješat ću*. And let's try, *sad ću ja pogodit*, *nemojte mi reć*, *recite* yes or no. ('Okay, now I have eggs, tomatoes and juice, and now I will, I'll mix it. And let's try, now I will try to guess, don't tell me, say yes or no.')

Students simultaneously yell both yes and no.

Teacher: *Ako pogodim*. Umm, juice? ('If I guess. Umm, juice?')

Students: *Ne*. ('No.')

Teacher: No, say no, *reci ne*. ('No, say no, say no.')

Students: No.

Teacher: Umm... Tomatoes?

Students: No.

Teacher: No? Then... eggs?

Students: *Da*. ('Yes.')

Teacher: Yes or no?

Students: Yes, yes!

Teacher: Yes, yes, okay, *pogodila sam*, okay. Who wants to try? *Tko želi pokušati*? ('I have guessed correctly, okay. Who wants to try?')

This excerpt belonged to the lesson frame because the discourse was tied to the curriculum. Moreover, it showed that the teacher had to remind the students to answer in English repeatedly because they automatically answered in Croatian, despite the fact that she had told them to use English only a few seconds earlier. This also confirmed the teacher's claim that the shift to English was not always successful, at least not right away as seen in Excerpt 13.

As the students in the class were seven years old, they sometimes lost their motivation and interest rather quickly, which did not come as a surprise considering their age. Side verbalizations happen in every classroom, and the teacher stated that they are usually quiet and do not cause problems: "Blabbering does slow us down a bit, but we mostly get back to



the topic quickly. If they have difficulties concentrating, it takes us longer, but they are already used to certain students who interrupt the lesson.” If the students were not motivated or were not cooperating, the teacher sometimes decided to use an activity like singing a song or playing a game and she had noticed that the guessing game motivated them the most. When there was need for modifying students’ behaviour discipline-wise, the teacher stated that she first used English to calm the students down: “I tell them ‘stop it’ or ‘pay attention’, and if they are chatting I give them *the* look and just say ‘thank you’ and it often works. If any bigger conflicts between the students come up, the Boyash assistant joins me in calming them down.” Moreover, she added that if the students were doing something slowly, she used English, whereas the Boyash assistant also used Boyash Romanian to help speed up the students, meaning that both English and Boyash Romanian were used in the lesson-support frame. This could be seen in the following Excerpt 14:

Excerpt 14 (The students were late for class after the break.)

Teacher: **Pă friș! Pă friș** *je brzo?* (‘Pă friș is quick?’)

Boyash assistant: Yes.

Teacher: Quick! **I șăs! Sjedni.** (‘And șăs! Sit down.’)

Boyash assistant: **Mîndru șăs. Lijepo sjedni.** (‘Sit nicely.’)

Teacher: **Mîndru?** (‘Nicely?’)

Student1: **Mîndru, mîndru!** (‘Nicely, nicely!’)

Teacher: **Mîndru. Dobro. Jesmo spremni za rad? Pă friș,** quick, quick! (Nicely.

Okay. Are we ready to work? Quick, quick, quick!)

Excerpt 14 depicted the teacher asking the Boyash assistant for confirmation, as well as her learning a new word in Boyash Romanian. The reason why this was important was the fact that this was exactly how the teacher had learned everything she knew how to say in Boyash Romanian, directly from her students or the Boyash assistants, she had not used any Boyash Romanian-English or Boyash Romanian-Croatian materials: “I have no additional materials and as far as I know, there are none. I would gladly use them, though.” She expressed her need for bilingual picture books, but also stated that anything related to Boyash Romanian language that she could use during her lessons would be useful. In relation to seminars or workshops about working with Boyash students, she said that she had attended one seminar which focused on teaching students whose mother tongue was not Croatian: “There were some examples related to the Boyash, but I do not consider myself ‘educated’ after one

seminar, so I would say that I am self-taught. Any additional education is useful, but I would not like to attend lectures about teaching the Boyash, I would like to hear specific suggestions or solutions on how to work with them.” The lesson-support frame was represented in Excerpt 14 and all three languages were used, as opposed to Excerpt 5 when the teacher used only Croatian to modify the students’ behaviour and Boyash Romanian to correct the students. With that said, all three languages were used in the lesson-support frame during English lessons, depending on the situation and which language was suitable for the teacher to use in order for the students to understand her. The teacher stated the following about spontaneous talk in English and Boyash Romanian: “There is no spontaneous talk in English because the students have not reached that level of proficiency yet. There is a lot of spontaneous talk in Boyash Romanian because it is their mother tongue, and if I understand it, I react, and if the students argue, the Boyash assistant takes over.” During one of the observed lessons, a student got up from his seat and walked over to another student who was having difficulties doing the task that the teacher assigned the students to do individually. The excerpt was not presented because the conversation between the two students was inaudible; however, while observing it could be seen that the student was explaining to another student what he had to do in Boyash Romanian and even telling him what he had to write letter by letter. The two students continued to talk unrelated to the lesson in Boyash Romanian, laughed, and then the teacher addressed the student who was not in his seat in Croatian: “*Luka! Luka, njemu rješavaš, a sebi još nisi.*” (‘Luka, you are doing his work and you have not done your own yet.’) After hearing this, Luka returned to his seat. Since this blabbering was of playful character, the Boyash assistant did not have to intervene, and Croatian was sufficient for the teacher to discipline the students, close the commentary frame and return to the lesson frame.

When it came to the institutional-support frame, mostly Croatian was used. While observing and recording one lesson, the headmaster came to the classroom at the beginning of the lesson, addressed the students and gave them a message about a change in their schedule in Croatian. The students responded by using Croatian as well. It was important for the students to fully understand the message about the change in the schedule, and Croatian was used, as the official language of schooling, for other institutional-support exchanges as well. Even though all institutional-support messages were firstly communicated in Croatian, the teacher stated that they were also repeated in Boyash Romanian by the Boyash assistant in order to prevent any miscommunication. When it came to other important information that did not necessarily fit into the institutional-support frame, the teacher stated that she always used

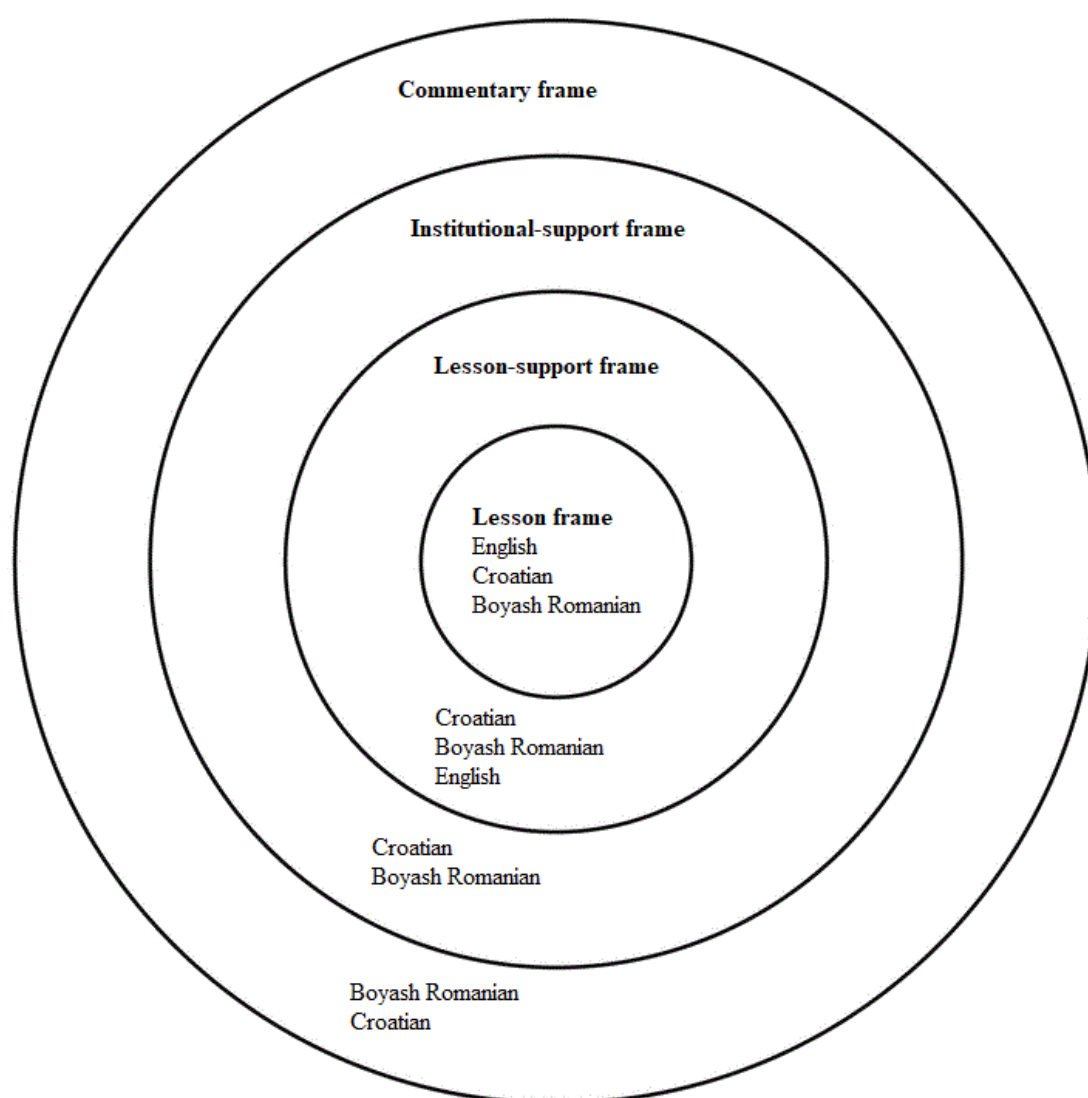
Croatian to inform the students of any quizzes or assignments that would be graded: “In the first grade I always use Croatian to announce that we will be writing a quiz. I only say ‘we are doing a test’ in English and I use exactly the word ‘test’ because it is the same as in Croatian. The Boyash assistant repeats what I say several times in Boyash Romanian as well, to make sure that they understand when and how the quiz will take place.” Not only would it take longer to explain something important in English, but the first grade students also would not understand it. However, the teacher saying at least “we are doing a test” in English showed that she made an effort to incorporate English whenever she could. The teacher reported on using languages when performing various activities during lessons as seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Languages used by the teacher while doing certain activities during lessons

Activity	Language
Teaching grammar rules	Croatian
Teaching new vocabulary	English, Croatian, Boyash Romanian
Giving feedback	English, Croatian, Boyash Romanian
Announcing a quiz	Croatian, Boyash Romanian, English
Assigning homework	-
Making school-related announcements	Croatian, Boyash Romanian

Table 1 showed that teaching grammar rules was the only activity which was taught by using only one language, Croatian. According to the teacher, the possible reason why grammar was not further explained in Boyash Romanian by the Boyash assistant could have been that the Boyash assistant did not know or understand English grammar enough to convey grammar rules to the students. Teaching new vocabulary, on the other hand, was performed by using all three languages; however, sometimes only the combination of English and Croatian was used as seen in several excerpts above. The difference between the languages used when teaching grammar rules and vocabulary showed that there was no rule which languages were used inside which discourse frame, since both grammar rules and vocabulary were directly tied to the curriculum and therefore belonged to the lesson frame. There was also no rule regarding which language was used when it came to giving feedback, which fitted into the lesson-support frame, because English was adequate when only pronunciation was corrected, whereas Croatian and Boyash Romanian were needed when something had to be further explained or exemplified. Apart from giving feedback, Croatian was used mostly inside the

lesson-support frame by the teacher, whereas Boyash Romanian was used by the Boyash assistant. Croatian was used by the teacher when correcting, clarifying something or disciplining the students required using sentences and expressions longer and more complex than, for example, “stop it”. The combination of Croatian and Boyash Romanian worked best when the teacher and the Boyash assistant noticed that the students needed additional clarification. In the lesson-support frame, English was used when saying only one phrase, such as “pay attention”, was enough. The reason why there was no language stated for assigning homework was that the class typically did not get homework. According to the teacher, around 90% of the class did not do it even if they only had to draw something. Making school-related announcements belonged to the institutional-support frame, therefore Croatian and Boyash Romanian were suitable because they were used for in-depth explaining as the student’s mother tongue (Boyash Romanian) and the official language of schooling (Croatian). All of the excerpts which were presented in the study together demonstrated that there was not a specific language used in one frame due to the multilingual nature of the class, as shown in Picture 1.



Picture 1: Languages used for the four classroom discourse frames

*Research question 2: How does teaching young Boyash Romanian speakers differ from teaching speakers whose mother tongue is another language?*

In the previous part of the study, it was presented how English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian were used during English lessons. However, the teacher stated that she mostly did not actively think about the language that she was using during English lessons: “I used to think about the language that I was using, but I got into the habit of using all three languages. I use Croatian the most, then comes English, and lastly Boyash Romanian.” She relied on her intuition and her experience to choose the language; however, she added that she would think even less about which language to choose if she was teaching a class in which all students

were Croatian. Moreover, if all students in the class were Croatian, Boyash Romanian would be removed from all four classroom discourse frames, causing the institutional-support frame and commentary frame to possibly consist of only Croatian. The teacher mentioned an “experiment”, as she called it, which she had decided to do five years ago. The teacher used only English when communicating with the students, whereas the Boyash assistant assigned to that class used only Boyash Romanian. The teacher claimed that the combination of using only English and Boyash Romanian worked well at first and was interesting; however, the students became frustrated with time because they could not understand everything. That is the reason why she continued to use all three languages since then. Furthermore, when answering the question about how the situation would be different if the students were speakers of another language instead of Boyash Romanian, she claimed: “Their environment has a great influence, they would probably write their homework because someone would support them, and I would have more access to materials, it would be easier to connect with their language and culture, which is of interest to me because the whole class has the same ethnic background. It would be a lot different.” If the students spoke a language such as Italian or Hungarian, the teacher could attend a foreign language school and learn the student’s language, she would also have more access to materials to incorporate into her English lessons, as there were far more materials in Hungarian-English or Italian-English than Boyash Romanian-English. Nevertheless, if the students were speakers of another language as their L1, the four discourse frames could still contain more languages inside individual frames, although not necessarily. This was difficult to predict and depended on several factors, maybe the most important one being the students’ proficiency in languages spoken in the classroom. Moreover, if the students had Croatian as their mother tongue they would share the same mother tongue with the teacher and there would not be a need for the Boyash assistant to participate in English lessons. Nevertheless, the teacher emphasized that she enjoyed working with her Boyash students: “I am very happy when I get to teach them something new, somebody has to and I do it gladly”. Moreover, the teacher described the multilingual classroom as “interesting, dynamic, full of possibilities” and claimed that there were many advantages of their multilingual classroom: “The students learn English, I learn Boyash Romanian, they are motivated if we use Boyash Romanian, we have fun.” When asked about her motivation for the use of the three languages during English classes, the teacher stated that clarification and making sure that the students understood what was being taught were the reasons why she allowed and used the three languages. However, the teacher did not mention the students’ identity construction as one of the reasons why Boyash

Romanian was included during the lessons to such an extent. Nevertheless, the students, according to the teacher, perceived English lessons as exciting, they were playful and joyful and had fun because many games and songs were included in the English lessons. Yet, the teacher claimed that the students' home environment unfortunately demotivated them. According to the teacher, the students felt that their community did not recognize the importance of education and that was why they did not use the full potential of their multilingualism. Nevertheless, even if they did not do their homework, the students were more than ready to participate during the lessons, and although the tape recordings could not show this, almost all students raised their hands whenever the teacher asked a question. However, this had not always been the case, the students were more relaxed and motivated at the time, as the school year was coming to an end, than they were when they had first started attending school because they had gotten used to some typical school activities and to the multilingual setting of the English lessons. Furthermore, the teacher also had to adjust to working with the Boyash over time: "It was difficult when I first started working with the Boyash, I thought that I had to follow the national curriculum unconditionally, but I realised that is impossible because I work with children who start learning Croatian only a few months before they start learning English. Ever since we adjusted the teaching and lessons to them, it is better. Both for me and for them." This adjustment mostly indicated using Croatian and Boyash Romanian during English lessons, but speaking more languages during English lessons was not everything that differentiated the observed class from other first grade primary school English classes. The teacher stated that she had to adapt the assessment scale for quizzes that the students wrote and help them while they were writing quizzes by explaining what they had to do. This showed that her approach was experientially best suited for the students regardless of what was proposed by the English language curriculum requirements and recommendations. Nonetheless, the teacher noticed that the situation had been getting better during the last several years and believed that this is because Boyash students went to preschool longer than they used to: "There are those who did not attend preschool regularly and they lag behind other students, but the general progress can definitely be seen, even if it is little and happening slowly." She also mentioned that from September of this year four Boyash students who attended an all-Boyash class would start having optional English lessons in fourth grade, which had never been the case before, the students never wanted to enroll in an optional subject. This, as well as the fact that the Boyash went to preschool for a longer time than they used to, indicated an improvement in their attitudes towards education.

## 5. Conclusion

The study aimed to answer two research questions, how English, Croatian and Boyash Romanian were arranged according to the four classroom discourse frames during English lessons, and how teaching young Boyash Romanian speakers differed from teaching speakers whose mother tongue was another language. The analysis of the excerpts from the observed lessons according to the four discourse frames revealed that there was no frame consisting of only one language because the students were not proficient enough in English or Croatian to use only these languages.

The lesson frame exchanges consisted of all three languages, Croatian and Boyash Romanian were mainly used for dual-referencing. Moreover, it was noted that the students sometimes did not know basic Boyash Romanian vocabulary, they mixed Boyash Romanian words and even used Croatian terms, signifying code-switching between Croatian and Boyash Romanian at home. Furthermore, during the observed lessons the teacher spoke a lot, and much of the communication inside the classroom consisted of the teacher saying a phrase or an expression in English and the students repeating it. This was not always found successful because the students sometimes repeated what they did not understand. That is why the teacher preferred allowing the students to use any of the three languages to answer her questions, so that she could get the feedback from the students on whether they understood her. The teacher reported that she used as much Croatian and Boyash Romanian during English lessons as necessary for the students to understand English expressions and achieve the aims and outcomes of the lesson. However, the teacher still tried to employ as much English as possible without affecting clarity for the students, for example, by asking them to switch to English for all expressions that they should have known. The switch to English sometimes worked and sometimes did not, and the students persisted in answering in Croatian at times. Dual-referencing, in the context of this class, sometimes implied referencing between three languages, not only two as was the case in Pennington's observed classrooms. Boyash Romanian was often used in order to motivate the students, the teacher developed several games which served to make the students more cooperative and attentive, such as competing with them whether she would learn more Boyash Romanian words or if they would learn more English words. This, as well as the fact that the teacher learned all Boyash Romanian directly from the students, confirmed her role as a learner of Boyash Romanian inside the English classroom. Moreover, the use of Boyash Romanian in the classroom



allowed the students to construct their linguistic identities. The lesson-support frame exchanges during the observed lessons mainly consisted of correction, disciplining and clarification. Correction was carried out by using all three languages, since English was used for correcting pronunciation, and disciplining and clarification were mostly performed in Croatian by the teacher and in Boyash Romanian by the Boyash assistant when necessary. Furthermore, it was shown that the teacher's knowledge of Boyash Romanian is sufficient to correct the students at times, while the Boyash assistant as a native speaker helped out when the teacher's knowledge was not enough. As Pennington stated that mother tongue was acceptable in the lesson-support frame, both Boyash Romanian as the students' mother tongue and Croatian as the official language of schooling were used in the observed class. Boyash Romanian and Croatian were used exclusively in the institutional-support and commentary frames because the students' proficiency was not appropriate for conveying important messages in English or for them to spontaneously talk in English. The Boyash assistant helped clarify what was necessary, but the importance of her role was also noticed in providing the students with some Boyash Romanian expressions as well, and with that, also improving their proficiency in their mother tongue, and not only fixing possible miscommunications during English lessons. Apart from allowing Boyash Romanian in her classroom, the teacher also allowed the Kajkavian dialect to be used and with that allowed the students to speak Croatian in the form which was most familiar to them, as well as helped preserve the Kajkavian dialect. All of the findings analysed according to the four discourse frames showed just how complex the multilingual environment of the classroom is.

The second research question focused on how teaching speakers whose mother tongue was another language, be it Croatian or any other, differed from teaching young Boyash Romanian speakers. It was found that if the students spoke Croatian, the teacher would think less about which language to use when communicating with the students and Boyash Romanian would be excluded from all discourse frames. However, if the students had another language as their mother tongue and not Croatian, the teacher would possibly include that language into classroom discourse frames. Apart from that, it was found that it would be easier for the teacher to find and use any extra materials that would include the students' mother tongue during lessons, and also to connect with the students' culture which would be of interest to her if all student in the class were of the same ethnic background. Moreover, the teacher could attend lessons in that language in a foreign language school if she wanted to

improve her students' L1, whereas she could only learn Boyash Romanian during English lessons, directly from her students and the Boyash assistant.

## **6. Suggestions for Further Research**

Some of the limitations of the study that should be taken into consideration when conducting a study similar to the one presented in the paper are the following: the number of observed and recorded lessons is low, and the fact that the lessons were recorded might have modified the teacher's or the students' behaviour. Moreover, the study focused on only one class of Boyash students, and looked into the perspective of only one teacher whose teaching practices could differ from those of other teachers working with Boyash Romanian speakers. Since the study used a small sample, no general conclusions could be made, and larger samples could provide more realistic findings. Furthermore, the study looked into linguistic aspect of teaching English as the third language to young Boyash Romanian speakers, and even though the sociolinguistic aspect was mentioned, it was not the focus of this study. Another study could also focus on the linguistic aspect, and it would not necessarily have to follow Pennington's model of classroom discourse views. What is more, the findings of the study could be useful for the Boyash as a minority group and for teachers working with them, but since the study did not tackle the students' perspective, a similar study could be carried out, and include interviews with students. The interviews with students could help understand students' perspective of learning English as the third language, and how speaking the three languages during English lessons influenced them. The interview with the teacher which was conducted for this study could also be improved by adding questions which would focus more on motivation behind using the three languages during English lessons. The interview could also be changed in a way that the stated questions would provide answers related to sociolinguistics and students' identity construction. This study will hopefully serve as a reference to any future research connected to teaching English as the third language to a class of young Boyash Romanian speakers, or to studies focusing on applying Pennington's classroom discourse frames to multilingual environments.

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## Summary

U ovom radu istraživačkog karaktera analiziran je diskurs tijekom nastave engleskog jezika prvog razreda u kojem su svi učenici mladi govornici bajaškog rumunjskog kao materinjeg jezika. Tijekom nastave engleskog jezika koriste se engleski, hrvatski i bajaško rumunjski jezik od strane učiteljice, učenika i romske asistentice. Transkripcije diskursa sa satova engleskog analizirane su prema modelu Marthe C. Pennington koji se sastoji od okvira lekcije, okvira podrške lekciji, okvira podrške institucije i okvira komentara. Utvrđeno je da se engleski, hrvatski i bajaški rumunjski kombiniraju tijekom nastave engleskog jezika kako bi se, osim poučavanja engleskog jezika, učenicima sadržaj dodatno pojasnio, te za ispravljanje, motiviranje i discipliniranje učenika.

Ključne riječi: okviri razrednog diskursa, poučavanje trećeg jezika, Romi Bajaši, višejezična učionica, višejezičnost

## Appendix

Main interview questions:

Are you affected by the ethnic background of the students?

Thinking about your practices and habits during your lessons, specifically teaching English in the first class primary school of young Boyash speakers, do you always actively think about the language you are using when addressing your students during lectures? Why? Would you say you think about it more than you would in an all-Croatian class? How do you decide which language to use when communicating with the students during the lessons? Do you ever feel indecisive when it comes to choosing the language to use?

How does their ethnic background affect your teaching? What impact does the fact that the 13 students who are in that class do not know Croatian well have on your teaching practices during the English lessons? How do you deal with situations when you cannot fully understand what your students are saying, or if you notice that they do not understand you?

How do you ensure that you and your students do not use Boyash Romanian or Croatian too much during the English lessons? Do you ever feel like you use one language more than you should, and if so, could you provide some examples?

In what way does using two or more languages for expressing the same phrase or sentence improve the quality of your teaching? What are the best examples of scenarios in which you repeat the same expression in several languages? I will now ask you about certain activities, could you please name the language that you use while performing them: assigning homework, teaching new vocabulary, giving feedback, making any announcements about quizzes or anything school-related. When giving feedback, have you found that using a particular language works best or does shifting between languages provide enough clarity for the students? Why is that so?

Which strategies do you find effective when encouraging students to participate during lessons? Which patterns of using different languages, according to your experience, work better, for example, when motivating or inviting students' participation? Do you use different strategies or language combinations to teach grammar rules versus vocabulary?

When trying to ensure that your students understand what they are being taught, are there any other methods that you use except from switching between languages?

How do any side verbalizations made by the students affect the flow of your lessons? How does the use of Croatian and Boyash during the lessons affect modifying the students' behavior discipline-wise in order to return back to the topic of the lesson? When it comes to different languages, how do you perceive students' spontaneous talk and how do you react to it?

How do you perceive your multilingual classroom? What advantages and disadvantages of such a dynamic classroom would you point out? Have you ever been judged for using Croatian and Boyash during English lessons? Do you think this would be different if the Boyash speakers were speakers of a different language?

How do the students perceive and respond to multilingual communication during English lessons, since this is the only multilingual class they have in school? Have you noticed a change in their behavior since they started learning English in this setting, compared to now, eight months later?

How have you, personally, adapted to working with a class of young Boyash students? Have you always implemented both Croatian and Boyash into English lessons or have you changed your practices along the way?

Do you use any extra materials to improve your Boyash or to prepare your lessons? If you do use any, has this been the case since you started teaching Boyash students? Have you ever attended any workshops or seminars related to teaching Boyash students or are you self-taught? Do you consider additional education helpful? Do you need any help from the institution? Can you think of anything else that you would need help with?

If the students were native speakers of a different language, would the classroom interaction be different? If it was a language that you could, for example, study in a foreign language school, how would that situation be different from this one, where you learned a minority language by interacting with your students?