

# The Code-Switching Dimension of Guided Fantasies in Young Learner L2 Classroom

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The paper reports on a study of young L2 (second language) English learners' dual code use as activated through a series of specially designed guided fantasies. The original concept of guided fantasies as a monolingually organised relaxation technique was extended to the area of bilingual reception and production. The goal was to examine the relationship between child imaginative faculty and a tendency to transfer understandings across the L1 (first language) and L2. The research consisted in exposing a class of 10 nine-year-old children to eight guided fantasies expected to playfully attract their conscious attention to language properties and enable them to profit from L1 knowledge in L2 learning. The data were collected through the heuristically oriented qualitative study drawing on participant observation accompanied by field notes and recordings of student behaviours. The findings highlighted guided fantasies in their redefined form as a useful tool for encouraging young learners to rely on L1 competence in making sense of L2 underlying principles.

*Keywords:* code-switching, guided fantasies, cognitive sponge, interdependence hypothesis, cognitive structuring, engagement with language

## Introduction

Despite a large body of research data (Antón & DiCamilla, 1999; Chavez, 2003; Kramsch, 1998; Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2004) revealing that the L2 learning process sprouts and develops on the ground of L1/L2 interplay, the L2 remains the lingua franca of foreign language classroom, which is in accordance with Ortega's (2010) claim that applied linguistics is still embedded in a monolingual bias. As a result, ELT (English Language Teaching) methodology keeps treating the L1 as a hindrance in L2 learning, thus stigmatizing it or at best giving it little pedagogical value (Macaro, 2001) and limiting its use to less than 10% of class time (ACTFL, 2008). However, deciding on the "exclusive target-language use endeavor" (Levine, 2011, p. xiii) is synonymous with banning from L2 classroom the L1 which is students' cognitively and socially dominant language that constitutes a considerable part of their learning experience.

The present paper aims to examine the possibilities of moving language teaching practices from, to put it in Kramsch's (1998, p. 24) words, a native speaker norm-based "pedagogy of the authentic" to a "pedagogy of the appropriate" which espouses the idea of dual code use (code-switching). Therefore, I plan to create favourable conditions to the systematic, overlapping verbal use of L1 and L2 materials emerging from intersentential and/or

intrasentential switches. I chose to concentrate on guided fantasies as the tool for fostering code-switching behaviours in a group of children aged nine. After having read a variety of guided fantasies, known as a Neuro-Linguistic Programming monolingual ELT technique for delivering metaphors to students (Revell & Norman, 1997), and after having observed young learners' natural curiosity about language properties, it occurred to me that its scope and impact might be broadened so as to link the power of imagination and need for play to engagement with language as understood by Svalberg (2009). This is why I decided to redefine the concept of guided fantasies and in consequence invent a series of bilingually structured stories for the purpose of encouraging children's positive thinking, speaking, and acting intended to invite them to reflect on language as object and make stimulating L1/L2 comparisons. Accordingly, guided fantasies thus constructed are expected to imaginatively and playfully feed into young learners' cognitive state of language-focused attention, affective orientation of willingness to discover language rules and social process of sharing new linguistic experience. The second, complementary aim of the study is theoretically grounded as it refers to the empirical verification of Cummins' interdependence hypothesis (1978) stating that L1 knowledge and use reinforce L2 knowledge and use.

### **Related Literature**

There is ample empirical evidence that children are not only lively and spontaneous language learners exhibiting the need for play and implicit instruction, as emphasised in most primary L2 teacher's guides or handbooks (Brewster, Ellis, & Girard, 2003; Phillips, 2002; Scott & Ytreberg, 2000; Vale & Feunteun, 1996), but that they are also little scientists, reflective analysts, question askers, and acute observers of L1/L2 systems willing to come up with their own ideas empowering them to gradually switch from knowledge-telling to knowledge-transforming strategies (Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1985; Sternberg & Spear-Swerling, 1996; Wadsworth, 1996). Children are shown as learning by discovery rather than by being told, hence the importance of appealing and supporting their heuristic willingness to ask questions for clarification and responsiveness to cognitive structuring defined as the provision of a suggestive structure for analytical and/or imaginative thinking (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, & Campione, 1983; Gallimore & Tharp, 1997).

Young learners bring into L2 classroom an array of skills constituting the dynamically developing cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in their mother tongue which can be drawn on in the assimilating and understanding of a new language (Cummins, 2000). This very relationship of L1 experience and L2 learning is what Cummins' interdependence hypothesis (1978) is centred on: the FLA (First Language Acquisition) and SLA (Second Language Acquisition) processes, no matter how different surface features they may exhibit, are psychologically intertwined. Cummins further claims that enabling children to concurrently learn their L1 and L2 through intellectually demanding tasks is of enormous advantage to them since, as added by Datta (2007), the alternate, purposeful use of two languages within a single stream of speech is likely to reinforce young learners' cognitive flexibility and enhance the perception of language as a rule-based system of symbols. The ability to perceive the languages in technical terms, i.e., to think and talk about how they work leads to the development of metalinguistic awareness in children. The interdependence between the L1 and the L2 has been confirmed and proved by other researchers discussing the phenomenon in question with regard to both spoken and written language (Bialystok, 1991, 2009; Gregory & Williams, 2000; Kulick & Stroud, 1993;

Mor-Sommerfeld, 2002; Pennington, 1997; Verhoeven, 1994, 1999; Wagner, 1993). It deserves to be mentioned that the said findings concern children's eagerness to learn ESL (English as a Second Language) via a wide variety of first languages including Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Hebrew, Bengali, or Tok Pisin.

Datta (2007, p. 21) refers to the child's overall L1 competence and learning experience as a *cognitive sponge* that helps them to make sense of the L2 through the performance of such language functions as questioning, analysing, inferring, or hypothesizing. Teaching the L2 with reliance on L1 potential is the concern of numerous authors (Cummins, 2007; James, 1996; Lyster, Collins, & Ballinger, 2009; Swain & Lapkin, 2002; Zawodniak, 2013) who raise the issue of fostering and engaging learners' CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) in making L1/L2 comparisons. Their first language is, therefore, viewed as a cognitive tool for effective L2 learning to be capitalised on in the teaching process (Datta, 2007).

## **The Study**

### **Aims**

The study sets out to achieve two major aims which are as follows: (1) To determine whether guided fantasies functioning in the present author's redefined version can encourage children's dual code use and draw their conscious attention to L1/L2 properties; (2) To verify Cummins' interdependence hypothesis that L2 learning runs parallel to and profits from L1 competence.

### **Participants and Procedure**

The study involved a class of 10 nine-year-old students from a primary school in Zielona Góra, Poland, who at the outset of the procedure had been learning English for two years and a half. The study was extended over the length of eight weeks during which I, as the teacher/researcher, taught the children 16 lessons (two per week) devoted to the exposure to eight redefined guided fantasies—RGF (see Appendix A), five of which were of my own design, while the remaining three, i.e. no. 1, 2, 3, were adapted from Revell & Norman's stories (1997, pp. 23, 68, 119). RGF, constituting the eight odd number lessons were divided into two sections read by the teacher/researcher at the beginning and at the end of the lesson, its main, medium part being occupied with the talk about language on a comparative L1/L2 basis accompanied by the children's searches for the ending of the story. RGF were successively followed by a series of back-up activities—BA in the eight even number lessons intended to take advantage of the previously covered texts as the playful springboard for pre-teaching new lexical items and/or grammar rules included in the next guided fantasy. The assistance offered to the learners was heuristically underpinned and cognitively structured so that they could inventively examine the rule-governed nature of language (see Figure 1).

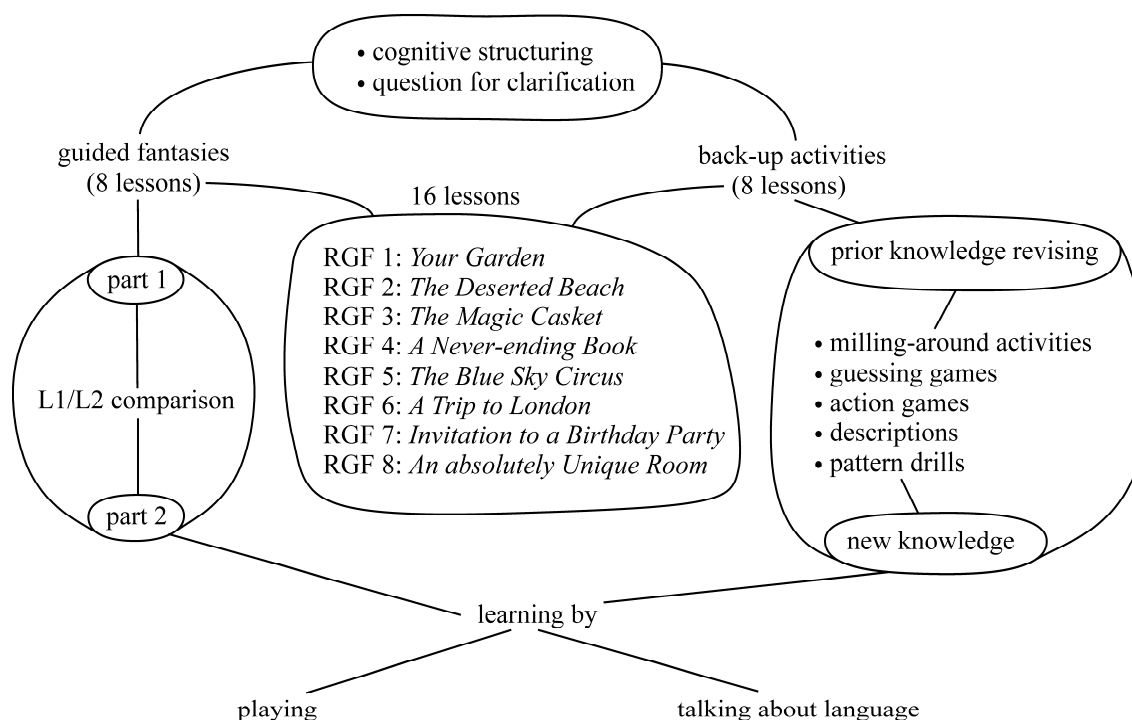


Figure 1. Research procedure.

### Guided Fantasies Redefined

As mentioned above, I propose a redefined concept of guided fantasies (see Figure 2) as bilingual, Polish-English stories aiming to communicate positive emotions expected to facilitate the transition from imaginative thinking to its operational counterpart. Strictly speaking, the children's unconscious mind-underpinned, playful interpretation of the stories is meant to create conditions conducive to the conscious mind-underpinned, exploratory discussion of L1/L2 formal properties which underlies engagement with language. It needs to be added that RGFs draw on intersential switches, the L1 fragments of which include words and phrases that would be difficult for the subjects to understand in English as well as the ones whose differences from their L2 equivalents might inspire the students to examine them in a comparative way.

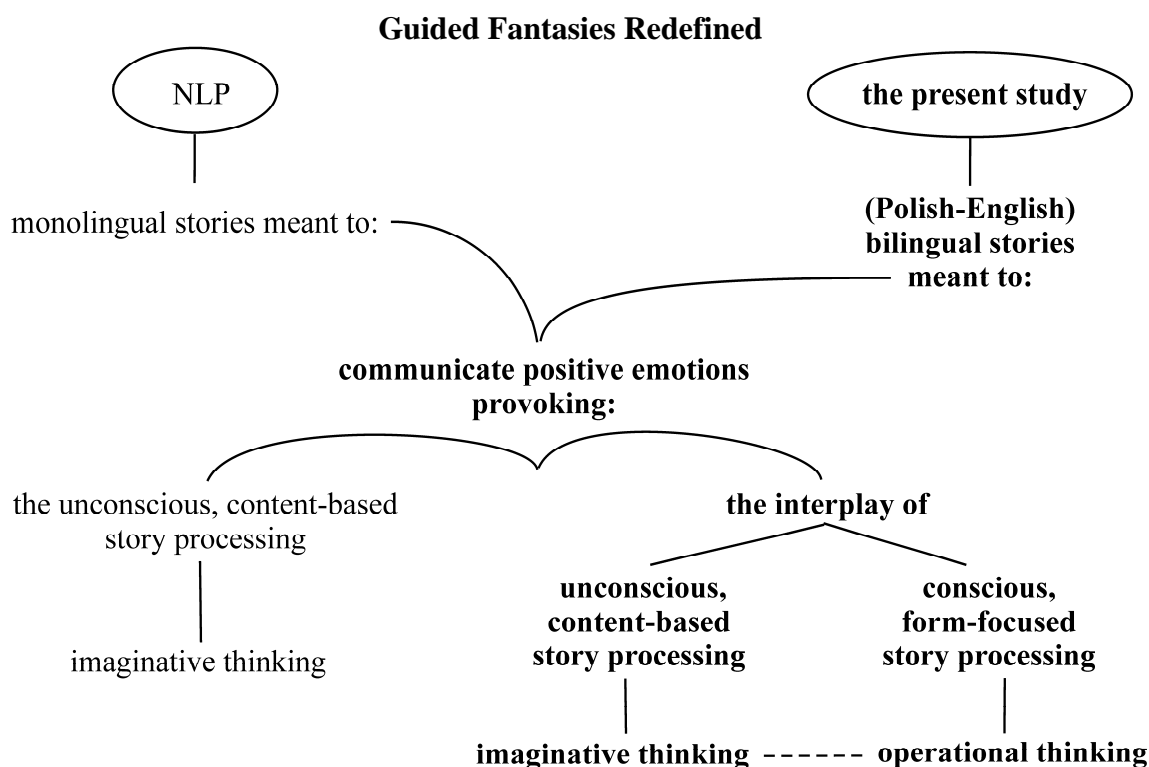


Figure 2. Guided Fantasies Redefined.

### Methodology

Research data were obtained from the explanatory case study where the single investigated instance in action was a class of 10 nine-year-old students viewed as constituting a miniature social entity. The case study was designed to describe and explain the young learners' language behaviours in the evaluative (confirmatory or non-confirmatory) light of Cummins' interdependence hypothesis (1978). The research in question was of an idiographic nature as it embarked on providing the understanding of a specific language phenomenon, namely, responsiveness to bilingual input examined in a small group of individuals. The case study was based on the participant, close-to-the data observation documented through the inductively organized field notes that were joined by the analysis of transcriptions of the audio-recorded comments made by the children as a result of exposure to redefined guided fantasies.

### Findings and Discussion

The focus of this section is on the findings derived from two lessons devoted to the discussion of RGF 6: *A Trip to London* and preparation for RGF 7: *Invitation to a Birthday Party*, whereas the results obtained from work on all the other stories will be referred to via shorter and more concise comments indicative of the children's most typical responses and behaviours.

#### RGF 1: Your Garden (*Ogród twoich marzeń*)

While deciding on what plants they would like to grow in their own gardens, the children paid attention to sense-related verbs and their being followed by adjectives rather than by adverbs as it is in Polish (see Extract 1

where “S”, as in all other extracts cited below, indicates the student, “SS” refers to more than one student and “T/R” stands for the teacher/researcher).

**Extract 1.**

**S1:** Proszę pani, tam był błąd: powinno być “it tastes so well”, a nie “so good”.

[Teacher, there occurred an error in the text; we should say “it tastes so well”, not “so good”.]

**T/R:** Why?

**S1:** Bo nie mówi się “to smakuje dobry”, lecz “dobrze”.

[Because you can not say “it tastes good” but “t tastes well”.]

**T/R:** Tak się mówi po angielsku.

[This is what it’s like in English.]

**S1:** Czyli jeśli powiem “it tastes well”, to będzie błąd?

[So if I say “it tastes well”, I will make an error?]

**T/R:** Tak.

[Yes, you will.]

**S2:** Pani ma rację. Pamiętacie piosenkę z filmu o Asterixie i Obélixie?

[The teacher is right. Do you remember the song from the film about Asterix and Obélix?]

**SS begin to sing:** I feel good!

The children were evidently struck by the difference in the use of adjectives and adverbs in Polish and English in certain collocations, and they enjoyed having found a song from the French film titled “Asterix & Obélix: Mission Cléopâtre” confirming the rule just encountered. They also made a few remarks about the double noun-verb function performed by the English sense-related words “smell”, “touch”, “taste” as opposed to the Polish “zapach/wąchać”, “dotyk/dotykać”, “smak/smakować” respectively. This little discovery was followed by the subjects’ quest for other two-function words, which culminated in such examples as “water”, “work”, and “rest”.

**RGF 2: The Deserted Beach (*Pusta plaża*)**

The learners were involved in talking about what they had felt while walking along the seashore. They asked me to acquaint them with the English equivalent of the Polish “mewa” (“seagull”), which encouraged them to make an indirect reference to the compound nature of the said word and this, in turn, inspired me to provide the learners with a cognitive structure for thinking about and seeking other English words of the same kind, as seen in the extract below:

**Extract 2.**

**T/R:** W tym opowiadaniu pojawił się jeszcze jeden taki wyraz i wy go dobrze znacie. Powiem więcej: przed chwilą sami go użyliście.

[In the story you’ve just heard there was another word of this kind and you know it very well. I’ll be more precise; you have just used it.]

**SS:** Jaki wyraz?!

[What word?]

**T/R:** Pomyślcie o długim, miłym spacerze, który zakończyliście przed chwilą, a znajdziecie odpowiedź na

to pytanie.

[Think about a long, nice walk you finished a while ago and you'll find the answer.]

**SS:** Seashore!

**S1:** Seashore, seagulls—I tu, i tu jest “sea”.

[...both words include “sea”.]

**T/R:** Yes, you're right. Jest jednak dużo innych wyrazów składanych z dwóch części, w których nie znajdziecie “sea”. Zdziwicie się jeśli powiem, że znacie te wyrazy bardzo dobrze i często ich używacie.

[However, there are many other words like that and they do not consist of “sea”. You'll be surprised if I tell you that you know them very well and use them quite often.]

**SS:** Naprawdę? Co to za wyrazy?

[Really? What words are these?]

**T/R:** Rozejrzyjcie się wokół siebie; na pomieszczenie, w którym siedzicie i wszystko będzie proste.

[Look around; have a look at your desks and at the place you're sitting, and everything will be clear.]

**S1:** Classroom! Dlaczego na to wcześniej nie wpadłem?

[Why didn't it occur to me earlier?]

**T/R:** A teraz spójrzcie na mnie i pomyślcie o rzeczy, której używam za każdym razem, gdy się spotykamy. Właściwie trudno by mi było obejść się bez niej.

[And now look at me and think about a thing I use every time we meet; actually, I couldn't do without it.]

**SS:** Whiteboard. A w niektórych klasach jest blackboard!

[And in some classrooms there are blackboards!]

The learners managed, therefore, to search their prior knowledge for more compounds and were satisfied with the final result. It deserves to be noted that some of them were effectively using intrasentential switches like the one mentioned in the above extract.

### **RGF 3: The Magic Casket (*Magiczna szkatułka*)**

The subjects were divided into two groups, one trying to imagine and describe the owner of the magic casket, another discussing purposes for using caskets. The content-oriented work smoothly overlapped the form-focused comments made by the children with reference to the comparative degree of adjectives and Saxon Genitive. Consequently, they remarked that it is simpler to compare adjectives in English than in Polish (e.g. *big – bigger* vs. *duży – większy*; *small – smaller* vs. *mały – mniejszy*; *tall – taller* vs. *wysoki – wyższy*). The pupils also added that the apostrophe, which they referred to as a little tail, is as magic as the casket since, unlike in Polish, it allows for the omission of the owned (e.g. *My casket is bigger than Marek's* vs. *Moja szkatułka jest większa od szkatułki Marka*). Then they asked me to acquaint them with the English equivalent of the Polish *kupować* (buy) used in RGF 3 and noticed that it sounds identical with the already known *bye*. This made the children look for other homonymous or homophonic English words (e.g. *like, book, spring; meet* vs. *meat*) and examine the Polish language from the same perspective (e.g. *mina – facial expression/mine, kawka – coffee/jackdaw, różyczka – a little rose/ German measles, świnka – piglet/mumps*). Finally, the learners engaged in rhyming the *buy* with English and Polish words (e.g. *cry, why, my; kraj – country/homeland, raj – paradise, daj – give*) and creating funny, intrasententially arranged verses, for instance: *I love my kraj, it's a raj* (*I love my homeland, it's a*

paradise).

#### **RGF 4: A Never-ending Book (*Nigdy niekończąca się książka*)**

The subjects enjoyed the possibility of cooperative deciding on and changing some of the details constituting the RGF 4 content (e.g. furniture colours, book cover, or book printing duration). Some of them made reference to the German fantasy film *The Never-ending Story* and its relationship with an unusual, mysterious book, which encouraged the whole group to think about and provide the characteristics of magic objects (e.g. the flying carpet, Aladdin's lamp, Harry Potter's wand). The children were amazed to discover that the structure of the word *bookcase* is the same as that of its Polish equivalent *biblioteczka*. They also commented on the homonymous nature of the word *book* and tried to find similar sounding items in Polish, like *buk* (*beech tree*), *Bóg* (*God*), *Bug* (*name of the river*); this made me sensitise them to the vowel /ʊ/, which has no phonological correlate in their mother tongue, as opposed to /u:/ which is easier for Polish students to assimilate. In consequence, the learners engaged in searching for other words of that kind (e.g. *look, good, put, foot*) and practicing their pronunciation in short, often funny and/or tricky sentences based on the /ʊ/ vs. /u:/ distinction (e.g. *Look at this soup. Isn't it good?; Choose the best book; Don't buy this food, it is not good*).

#### **RGF 5: The Blue Sky Circus (*Cyrk pod błękitnym niebem*)**

The children eagerly put themselves in the shoes of a circus manager and tried to imagine whom they would employ and what animals they would tame. They enjoyed arguing not only about the kinds but also about the number of animals they would like to keep, claiming that the more the better for the popularity of their circus as well as for its financial status. The attention of a few learners was attracted to the word *circus* which they associated with London's West End road junction—*Piccadilly Circus* they had an opportunity to see during their visit to the capital of Great Britain. Since the sound /ɜ:/ occurring in *circus* is often mispronounced by Polish students, i.e., pronounced the way it is spelt, I decided to treat that remark as the point of departure for explicitly instructing the subjects in that respect and asking them to find other words including the said sound. As a result, the subjects retrieved from their memory a nice collection of words (e.g. *shirt, skirt, bird, girl, thirty, sir*) which they began to repeat together and then, after two boys had recalled a formerly covered and practised song "Ten Little Teddy Bears", they took to singing it using repeated words as semantic substitutes for the word *bears*. Additionally, three other children made up a tongue-twister (*She should show a short shirt*), which entailed their colleagues' endeavours to act as individual competitors repeating the phrase one after another and waiting for its authors' final judgement indicating the winner. One more comment referred to profession-related nouns in English (e.g. *owner, tamer, juggler, dancer*) which were said to have a similar structure as opposed to their Polish counterparts respectively (*właściciel, pogramca, żongler, tancerz*).

#### **RGF 6: A Trip to London (*Podróż do Londynu*) (see Appendix B)**

**The children's behaviour between the beginning and ending of RGF 6.** RGF 6 is an invitation to the imaginary trip and visit to London and as such it encourages the children to solve a few problems like preparing an interview with Queen Elizabeth II, deciding on the kind and size of luggage, creating the itinerary or specifying ticket details.

The subjects' work began with a vivid speculation about the hypothetical winner of the English language competition in their class, which resulted in attempts to check one another's L2 knowledge as shown in extract 3.



**Extract 3.**

**S1:** Kto przyjdzie do tablicy i napisze *pustynia* i *deser*?

[Who would like to go to the blackboard and write the words: *desert* and *dessert*?]

**S2, S3, S4, S5 are raising their hands.**

**S1:** OK, Basia, go to the blackboard please.

**S2 (Basia) is writing the words:** *desert* and *dezert*.

**S1:** Czy to jest dobrze napisane?

[Has she written the words correctly?]

**SS:** Nie, tam jest błąd.

[No, she has made an error.]

**T/R:** Where's the error—in the first or in the second word?

**S3:** In the first.

**T/R:** Are you sure?

**SS:** No, in the second.

**S1:** Kto by chciał poprawić ten wyraz na tablicy?

[Who would like to go to the blackboard and correct the word?]

**S4, S5, S6, S7 are raising their hands.**

**S1:** Krystian, popraw ten wyraz na tablicy.

[Krystian, correct this word on the blackboard.]

**S4 (Krystian) is writing the word:** *dessert*.

**S5:** Kto wymyślił wtedy takie fajne zdanie?

[Who made such a nice sentence then?]

**S6:** Ja! *Let's have a good dessert on the desert.*

[That was me!]

**T/R:** Czy pamiętacie, czym się różni angielski deser od polskiego?

[Do you remember the difference between the English and Polish dessert?]

**SS:** Tak! Angielski deser jest większy, bo ma podwójne *s*.

**T/R:** Say it in English please.

**S4:** The English dessert is bigger because...ma podwójne *s*.

[...because...it includes double *s*.]

In this extract, the children referred to RGF 2 (*desert/dessert*), thus revising part of the material covered on that occasion. As a result of having been provided with a structure for thinking, they recalled and imaginatively described the difference between the two aforementioned words. At the same time, they meaningfully code-switched to compensate for missing knowledge; intending to bridge this lexical gap, the learners asked me to introduce the word *double* and immediately used it to continue examining one another's L2 competence, which consisted in competitive looking for English words comprising double letters. This time they decided to work in teams, each tries to outperform their rivals by finding and presenting the largest number of such words (e.g. *summer, dinner, better, winner, sitting*).

Some remarks were made with respect to the newly introduced verb *pack* and its relationship with the

already known noun *packet*, and the words' resemblance to the Polish *pakować/paczka* (in terms of the way they sound and initial letters) was noted. While working on the interview with the Queen, the subjects commented on lack of gender in "would like to" as opposed to the Polish *chciał**by**m* (masculine) vs. *chciał**a**by*m (feminine). A few more inquisitive children noticed that this rule applies to more examples, which led to the whole group's another comparative search (e.g. *bigger* – *wiekszy/wieksza*; *I was* – *byłem/byłam*; friend – *kolega/koleżanka*).

**The children's behaviour between RGF 6 and RGF 7.** The children were busy talking about their shopping in London and discussing the things they would like to buy (e.g. a bike, a computer, a Paddington Bear). They also tried to imagine what it would be like to go by a double-decker bus, which encouraged them to compare adjectives in relation to Polish buses and other means of transportation (e.g. *faster*, *bigger*, *nicer*, *noisier*). The pupils wanted to know new English words like *passenger*, *get on/get off* and willingly debated their formal properties with reference to the synonymous structures in Polish (e.g. *passenger* vs. *pasażer*; *get on/get off* vs. *wsiadać/wysiadać*). They were keenly interested in phrasal verbs, i.e., in the role of prepositions ("funny short words" is what they called them) acting as verb attachment. Prompted by my suggestions, the learners recalled similar expressions (e.g. *switch on/switch off*; *come in/go out*, *put on/take off*) and remarked that those "funny short words" decide whether a given activity is going to begin or end (e.g. *get on/get off* – beginning/end of a trip; *switch on/switch off* – beginning/finishing to watch a TV movie). Finally, they divided themselves into two groups acting out particular phrasal verbs in response to each other's commands.

As regards the preparation for RGF 7, it was planned to pre-teach such phrases and structures as *have a good time at the Birthday party*; *When were you born?*; *invitation/invite*. First, answering my question what they would like to wish their friends on different occasions, the subjects referred to RGF 6 and the need to wish a nice trip to London. They were surprised to see that this time the Polish phrase is shorter (*Przyjemnej podróży do Londynu* vs. *Have a nice trip to London*), which made them more aware of the fact that certain English words (e.g. *have*) might be carriers of more than one basic meaning. They appeared to have transferred this knowledge to the practical level of thinking what else they would like to wish and came up with a few examples like *Have a good dessert*; *Have a nice walk*; *Have a wonderful vacation*. Concerning the *be born* phrase, the children found it difficult to understand its reliance on the linking verb *be*, due to lack of a structurally corresponding form in Polish where *I was born* is a separate, autonomous verb *Urodziłem się*; hence the initial erroneous omission of *be* (i.e., *I born in May*). However, after my having advised the learners to search their memory for similar, earlier covered phrases (e.g. *be interested in*; *be afraid of*), the issue ceased to be problematic for them. When asked to pronounce the word *birthday*, three pupils' wrong, spelling-determined guess was dominated by the correct production of other learners who made logical reference to the previously discussed items of the same kind (see RGF 5). It turned out to be a good opportunity for the cooperative creating and repeating of another tongue-twister: *Birds have birthdays too*.

#### **RGF 7: Invitation to a Birthday Party (*Zaproszenie na urodziny*)**

The subjects joyfully accepted the opportunity to make a list of guests to be invited to Cathie's (i.e., the story's main character's) birthday party. Since they did not like the clothes Cathie was wearing, they decided to change them for which reason they asked me to introduce the English phrase *dress up as*. The children noticed that it was based on the already well-known and often used word *dress*, adding that almost the same word (*dres*)

exists in Polish, though its meaning is different (*tracksuit*) and thus indirectly referring to the interlingual phenomenon labelled false friends. Similarly, after being acquainted with another new word—*recipe* (*przepis* in Polish), they discovered its structural resemblance to the Polish word *recepta* standing for *prescription*. On that occasion two children recalled the earlier learnt word of the same kind, namely *cabinet* which in Polish is confused with *gabinet* (*surgery*). Moreover, the pupils revealed interest in *dress up* as a phrasal verb, which culminated in the successful search for other lexical items encompassing the “funny short word” *up* (*get up, wake up, stand up*).

#### **RGF 8: An Absolutely Unique Room (*Niezwykły pokój*)**

RGF 8 appeared to inspire the children to describe their own rooms and compare them in terms of size, colour, and furniture which word they wanted me to introduce. They found it difficult as, unlike its Polish equivalent (*mebel/meble*), it occurs only in the singular. Following my suggestion, they looked for other, formerly covered words not used in the plural and managed to recall *money* and *hair*. Talking about the furniture made the subjects remark that some words are more general than others, the reflection resulting in yet another search enabling them to study the already known items (i.e., *family, flower, fruits, animals*) from a wider, semantically relevant perspective and therefore engaging their cognitive resources and attention consciously paid to word relationships (hypernymy and hyponymy). Once again, similarly to the discussion of RGF 2, the learners displayed overt interest in RGF 8-related compound words which they juxtaposed with their Polish counterparts as shown in the extract below.

##### **Extract 4.**

**S1:** Jak patrzę na wyraz *armchair*, od razu wiem, co on znaczy.

[The very look at the word *armchair* makes me know what it means.]

**SS:** No pewnie, to jest krzesło z ramionami, a *bathroom* to jest pokój do kąpieli. Jakie to proste!

[Sure! It is a chair with a pair of arms, while bathroom is a room where you can take a bath. How easy!]

**S2:** A jak byście byli Anglikami, to rozumielibyście co to jest po polsku *fotel* i *łazienka*?

[And if you were English, would you understand the meaning of *fotel* (armchair) and *łazienka* (bathroom)?]

**SS:** No coś ty. U nas jest jak zawsze trudniej.

[Not in the least. It's more difficult in Polish, as usual.]

**T/R:** Nie bądźcie takimi pesymistami. W niektórych polskich wyrazach łatwo odgadnąć znaczenie. What about *bedroom* in Polish?

[Don't be so pessimistic. There are some Polish words whose meaning can be easily detected.]

**S3:** No tak, *sypialnia*, ale dlaczego nie *spalnia*?

[Yes, *sypialnia* (bedroom) but why not *spalnia*?]

**SS:** A *klasa*? Albo *kolczyk*? W angielskim jest prościej.

[And what about *klasa* (classroom) or *kolczyk* (earring)? It's easier in English.]

Extract 3 reveals the children as careful observers and investigators of L1/L2 structural and semantic characteristics. The above exchange of comments shows their perception of English as a more logically organised language.

## Conclusion

This study sets out to examine whether redefined guided fantasies, as presented above, could release children's potential for switching between L1/L2 codes, and as a result, encourage them to capitalise on L1 knowledge in L2 learning. The results revealed RGFs as the tool for building a bilingual bridge between young learner imaginative and operational thinking, and thus enabling playfulness to act in concert with conscious, exploratory, willingly shared reflections on L1/L2 rules and properties. Hence it is reasonable to assert that the learners were truly engaged with both languages as little scientists and cooperators. While joyfully participating in a range of thematically diversified activities (e.g. the ones referring to growing plants, managing a circus, interviewing the Queen or furnishing the room), the pupils paid explicit attention to the similarities and differences between the Polish (L1) and the English (L2) languages with regard to their grammatical (e.g. adjective comparison, singular vs. plural forms of words), semantic (e.g. homonyms, homophones, compound words) and phonological (e.g. sounds problematic from a Polish learner's of English perspective) features. RGFs also turned out to sensitise the children to incorrect language forms and made them aware of language difficulties as often arising from lack of one-to-one correspondence between the L1 and the L2. It is interesting to notice that both intersentential and intrasentential switches took place, the former being used by me when talking about language and instructing the students, the latter being the inventive product of the subjects' own work (i.e., tongue-twisters, light verses). The present study confirmed, therefore, the interdependence hypothesis for the children's linguistic behaviours were indicative of the transferability of knowledge from one language to another.

Further research could concentrate on exploring the extent to which RGFs impact grammatical accuracy and/or motivate self-correction and/or peer correction. It could move towards data triangulation including the statistical measurement of students' response to RGFs with reference to the reached level of external validity. In this way, a more eclectic methodology of the research could develop a nomothetic law and in consequence add to its universality, generalisability, and significance.

The role of children's L1 knowledge in the learning and understanding of the L2 is hard to overestimate and for this reason it is worthwhile to intentionally blur the borders between the two codes in L2 classroom so that young learners could meaningfully bring their prior, mother tongue-determined experience into the area of foreign language use which aim was achieved by redefined guided fantasies.

## Note on Contributor

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### Appendix A: The List of Guided Fantasies

- (1) *Ogród twoich marzeń (Your Garden)*
  - (2) *Pusta plaża (The Deserted Beach)*
  - (3) *Magiczna szkatułka (The Magic Casket)*
  - (4) *Nigdy niekończąca się książka (A Never-ending Book)*
  - (5) *Cyrk pod błękitnym niebem (The Blue Sky Circus)*
  - (6) *Podróż do Londynu (A Trip to London)*
  - (7) *Zaproszenie na urodziny (Invitation to a Birthday Party)*
  - (8) *Niezwykły pokój (An Absolutely Unique Room)*
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### Appendix B: Redefined Guided Fantasy 6

#### Appendix B1: A bilingual version

*Podróż do Londynu*

*(A Trip to London)*

Part 1

Weź głęboki oddech i upewnij się, że siedzisz wygodnie w wyprostowanej pozycji. **Close your eyes and relax.**

Za chwilę spełni się jedno z twoich marzeń. **Imagine you are going to visit London with your best friend. What's your best friend's name?**

W ubiegłym tygodniu wzię-liście/-łyście udział w konkursie języka angielskiego. **You are the winners and a trip to London is your prize. Here are your tickets. Congratulations!**

Wyjeżdżasz już jutro. **You don't have too much time.** Pora rozpocząć pakowanie już teraz. **What do you want to put into your suitcase?** Czy już skończy-łeś/-łaś? Podnieś walizkę. Co czujesz? **Is it heavy?**

**Now look at your ticket.** Co jest tam napisane? Czym pojedziesz do Londynu? Czy przedtem był-eś/-aś już zagranicą? Czym podróżował-eś/-aś?

**There are many beautiful places in London. What would you like to see?** Przygotuj listę miejsc wartych zobaczenia. **Would you like to see the Queen?** Co byś chciał-a jej powiedzieć?

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## Part 2

**Imagine shopping in London. What would you like to buy?** Jak zapytasz się sprzedawcy o cenę? A co powiesz, gdy będziesz chciał-a kupić czekoladowe lody?

**And now imagine you are in London.** Siedzisz w piętrowym autobusie. Jak się w nim czujesz? **Is it very fast? Look around and see: how many people are there on the bus?**

**Look at your watch. What time is it in London? And what time is it in Poland?**

Twoja podróż do Londynu zbliża się do końca. Czy podobała ci się? Weź jeszcze jeden głęboki oddech i wsiądź do samolotu. **Now open your eyes and...welcome to Poland.**

**Appendix B2: A monolingual version**

*Podróż do Londynu*

*(A Trip to London)*

## Part 1

Take a deep breath and make sure that you are comfortably seated in **an** upright position. **Close your eyes and relax.**

In a moment one of your dreams will come true. **Imagine you are going to visit London with your best friend. What's your best friend's name?**

Last week you took part in the English language competition. **You are the winners and a trip to London is your prize. Here are your tickets. Congratulations!**

Wyjeżdżacie już jutro. **You don't have too much time.** You must begin packing your things right now. **What do you want to put into your suitcase?** Have you finished? Pick your suitcase up. How does it feel? **Is it heavy?**

**Now look at your ticket.** What does it say? How are you going to get to London? Have you ever been abroad? How did you travel?

**There are many beautiful places in London. What would you like to see?** Make your own list. **Would you like to see the Queen?** What would you like to tell her?

## Part 2

**Imagine shopping in London. What would you like to buy?** If you want to ask the shop assistant about the price, what will you say? And what will you say if you want chocolate ice cream?

**And now imagine you are in London.** You are sitting on the double-decker bus. How does it feel? **Is it very fast? Look around and see: how many people are there on the bus?**

**Look at your watch. What time is it in London? And what time is it in Poland?**

Your trip to London is going to end. Did you like it? Take another deep breath and get on the plane. **Now open your eyes and...welcome to Poland.**