

THE PLACE OF L1 AND NON-NATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN THE ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) CLASSROOMS

English Teacher, Tolga SARICA, MA
Havsa Atatürk Secondary School
t.sarica22@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0003-4503-2156

Abstract

This study includes teachers' and students' perspectives about L1 use and native/non-native teachers entering the EFL classes besides investigating the correlation of students' Turkish and English lesson scores. 120 students were given a questionnaire (including five point-likert scale) while 4 teachers were interviewed. The data was examined via Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 20). To compare two variables, T-test; more than two variables One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA); for the correlation of the language scores, Pearson Correlation Coefficient were employed. The results revealed a positive correlation between the students' Turkish and English language scores. For the use of mother tongue, learners and educators do not have negative attitudes when used judiciously and to a reasonable extent. Most of the teachers in this study prefer native speakers with the knowledge of students' L1 and local teaching adaptation while students have no dominant preference about their teachers being native or non-native.

Key words: Native/non-native teachers, L1 use, language scores, positive correlation

INTRODUCTION

There are different views about the use of mother tongue in the field of foreign language education, which have been going on for years. While some of them have positive manners about the use of L1 in the class as (Phillipson, 1992; Auerbach, 1993; Schweers, 1999; Cook, 2001) others have reservations or refusals about it. Such researchers as (Atkinson, 1987; Nunan and Lamb, 1996; Krashen, 1982; Chambers, 1991; Stanley, 2002; James and Bourke, 1996; Hammerly, 1991) objected to the utilization of L1 by stating that there is not any place for L1 during the process of learning a language (cited in Erdogan, 2015:18). Hence, whether to include or exclude L1 of the students in the classroom has not been positioned to a single side and is still on debate. Nonetheless, recent studies as this one stand for the reasonable use of L1 in the class. Indeed, so far various types of approaches and methodologies have emerged trying to inquire and put the role of the native language use in the right place during foreign language teaching and learning process. This study touches an ongoing controversial debate about the use of L1 in the EFL classrooms via teachers' valuable integration of an interview and learners' precious views of this issue including also native and non-native teacher factors of language teaching and the correlation between the success of Turkish lesson and English lesson scores depending on the notion that L1 is an integral component in the process of language learning in the context of supporting teaching and learning. According to some researchers such as (White and Ranta, 2002; Lightbown and White, 2005; Forman, 2012; Spada and Lightbown, 1999) native language of the students may be used as an assisting device in foreign language teaching and learning environment.

These researchers argue that L1 may be indispensable in learning a foreign language as long as it is not used exaggeratedly as this may cause students not to be sufficiently exposed to foreign language and may slow down language learning. Since excessive use of L1 can also result negatively such as different syntactic structure, phonetics and morphological texture of both languages. Thus, teachers must know all the negative points and take all its pros and cons into consideration that means they should be aware and conscious during teaching process. However, teachers can turn this situation in their favor such as taking advantage of the similarities as cognates or other grammatical, morphological, phonetic, alphabetical or cultural points. This was explained in "contrastive approach" which implies the favorable and unfavorable side effects of using mother tongue. Until this approach emerged there had been a long period including different kinds of methods and approaches refuting each other. Cook (2008) stated that the last century witnessed various methods in language teaching

such as Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method and Task-Based Learning Method that abstained from the exploitation of students' L1 in the classroom. This movement created a new understanding called the "Monolingual Approach" that considered the target language as "the core" for the teaching process by backing up the "comprehensible input theory" of Krashen (1982). The assertors of this opinion also believe that learners acquire another language as they obtained their mother tongue (Cook, 2001: 408). As the process of L1 learning, it is the same for L2 learning in terms of the way how a baby learns without any need for translation to learn a language. The main idea is actually separate second language from the mother tongue during learning a language. Since, the English-only policy claims that learning a second language must happen via itself again rather than depending on the mother tongue. (Kahraman, 2009: 20). Depending on this thought, which rejects mother tongue in teaching, Monolingual Approach advocates the thought that "the best teacher is the native speaker". However, what is surprising is that this instinctive thinking that has not been proven is still accepted by certain areas in the world. This transition in language teaching posed a dilemma of native English speaking teacher's (NEST's) and non-native English speaking teachers (Non-NEST's). Herewith, the native English speaking teachers (NEST's) obtained an unfair popularity not only in the US but also in all parts of the world. Native English teachers were thought to be the ideal models in some skills such as listening, pronunciation, speaking and therefore it has been seen more resourceful to support learners' pronunciation, listening and their speaking skills. (Benke & Medgyes, 2005). Besides, native speakers are thought as the highest authority of what is correct or valid in language structure and culture. Hence, they can be a great source of whetstone for their learners through creating a real native/non-native interaction with students. And depending on these beliefs the advocates still keep going insisting on thinking that Non-NEST's have poorer speaking competencies and less information about the culture of Western people compared to the native English speaking teachers (NEST). But they reckon without the fact that this is not the case we can generalize in all contexts since some studies show that they ever and anon fail to establish rapport in the class with their students over and above they have difficulty in a local educational field as they are not used to the curriculum and teaching models.

In reaction to the "Monolingual Lingual Approach" the mother tongue inclusion broke out in the teaching language pedagogy and came as the subject of discussions. And this revolutionary movement refused the application of English-only in the teaching area and advocated the sustaining role of students' mother tongue during foreign language classes. Depending on this strong belief they claimed that non-native teachers are the best models for their learners since they lived the same process while learning language and know the potential difficulties that their students may live. As there is not any experimental proof to support the idea that a native instructor would be the ideal one (Phillipson, 1992: 185). Moreover, for the application of mother tongue Auerbach (1993) indicates that L1 use in the classroom "has been laundered and confirmed theoretically by inquiries and accepted pedagogically, However, its exclusion is an unproved hypothesis" (as cited in Brooks-Lewis, 2009: 217). Several studies also revealed that starting the lesson with the mother tongue of the students gives them a sense of security, makes them feel relaxed and comfortable and this helps the learners express their opinions and triggers their willing to participate actively in the learning process with no hesitation (Schweers, 1999: 7). Based on the findings in this study learners and teachers may benefit from the L1 with a planned and systematic inclusion of it. Activities including discussions or theme-based communication parts of the lesson might be more susceptible to engage target language rather than mother tongue. (Levine, 2003:351). As Levine (2003) states that the structure and the content of the lesson and the materials used in the activities determine whether to use L1, L2 or both of them appropriately in the class to make learning more efficiently and qualified for the learners. As Kim and Elder (2005) stated that the sort of activities during the lesson affects the selection of the language and its amount for the teacher. Cook (2001) claims that there are different grounds to show the need for utilizing L1 in EFL classes such as " checking the meanings of words or sentence structures, explaining some grammatical points, maintaining discipline, arranging tasks and activities, easily getting in touch with students individually (cited in Güneş, 2015: 13). On the other hand, to touch on another point Cook (2008) reminds that code-switching is an ordinary process in learning a second language. For this fact, the utilization of the mother tongue during the class cannot be inconvenient. By emphasizing the quantity of L1, MacDonald, C. (1993) points that when teachers depend to an excessive amount of L1, due to the little exposure the target language might be inhibited. Therefore, teachers should consider the pros and cons before deciding on whether

to use or how much they use the mother tongue, target language or both of them in a combined way in the classroom in order to provide the best and efficient learning service for their students.

In line with the information obtained on the usage of the L1 in the EFL classrooms, non-native teachers are the reason of preference in terms of comforting learners (psychological effect), creating deeper interactions (sociological effect), responding their students instant learning needs faster (cognitive effect) when compared to the native English speaking teachers. Several studies show that students matter the quality of teaching containing assignments that serve the purpose, well prepared lessons related to the curriculum, comprehensive exams and teaching grammar points effectively more than a native teacher's ideal accent or advanced speaking skills. And also, students' view in several studies show that personality is more important than nationality. All these detailed information gathered from the field and this study make valuable contributions to the discussion about the place of mother tongue and the non-native English speaking teachers in the EFL classroom via pointing the following questions:

- 1- Is L1 a need for the secondary school teachers while teaching in the EFL classes?
- 2- What are the views and manners of learners and educators about the utilization of mother tongue?
- 3- Does L1 help students relief, feel more comfortable and diminish their anxiety?
- 4- What do learners and teachers think about native/non-native teachers?
- 5- What are the pros and cons of native/non-native teachers entering the class?
- 6- What is the correlation of "Turkish lesson score and English lesson score?"

METHODOLOGY

To reveal the responses of the inquiries about this study, two types of instruments consisting of qualitative and quantitative methods were used for collecting data. The reason for this was to go beyond the statistical percentages and numbers and also give the answers to the questions "why and how". As quantitative methods by itself may not always be sufficient in order to reflect deep implications and may be restricted with the numerical results. A quantitative datum is gathered via a questionnaire that was given to students studying in a secondary school in the 2'nd term of 2018-2019 academic year while the qualitative datas are collected through an interview conducted to four English teachers working at the same school (Havsa Atatürk Secondary School) in the same year. It is preferred due to the the number of the teachers since it is challenging to apply to large number of participants. Also qualitative research provide an opportunity for the interpretation beyond what is given and makes it possible to infer and reveal the underlying opinions of the participants. (Punch, 2005: 242). Beside going beyond the numbers, percentages and underlying thoughts, using both of the instruments for collecting data (when the structure of the study allows) also increases the reliability of the research. The interview questions consist of two parts. The first part of the interview derives from a part including participating teachers' demographic information. The next part consists of 10 open ended questions where the participating teachers are free to reply the questions the way they interpret. The other tool employed in this study in order to collect data, is a questionnaire wherefrom the numerical instructions were obtained via a five point Likertscale, open-ended and close-ended multiple-choice questions. The survey is not a nationally accepted one but a customized one created by the researcher himself with the belief to reflect the participants' views and realities better. The questionnaire was given to 120 students studying at 5'th, 6'th, 7'th, and 8'th grades in the same state secondary school in 2018. Though at first being created in English in case of any hesitation or misunderstanding due to the proficiency level of the students, it is also translated into Turkish.

Table 1: Outline of the Questionnaire

Sections	Outline
I. Background information about the participants	Age, gender, grade, weekly English hours at school and year of English learning experience.
II. 12 questions (5 Point Likert scale) are asked to reveal the use of Turkish and students' attitudes towards their mother	Including social and psychological needs, comprehensible input, cognitive skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking

tongue use and its cognitive effects in English classroom activities *	activities, grammar points and vocabulary learning.
III. 5 closed-ended questions are asked about students' opinions of their mother tongue use and the use of English in the classroom.**	Including the usage and dosage of English and L1 in the classroom in terms of the opinions of learners about their teachers and themselves.
IV. 9 multiple-choice questions asked to find students' opinions about the mother tongue use in the classroom and how it affects students and their teachers.***	Including the usage of target language for some specific reasons, the correlation between success in English and Turkish lessons, the advantages and disadvantages of L1 use in the classroom.

Note: *The questions in this part include the learners' attitudes, utterance and codeswitching depending on the bilingual approach, humanistic approach in terms of the students psychological barriers** Students opinions towards the use of English (if they support English only policy or bilingual approach)*** When teachers tend to use L1 (code-switching), the percentage of L1 use in the class and correlations between English and Turkish language skills (whether there is negative or positive language transfer).

Participants

In order to examine and find responses to the questions of research posed in this study, 120 students were picked up randomly and voluntarily from Havsa Atatürk Secondary School ages ranging from 10 to 14 years, attending the grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. From each grade, 30 learners took part in the study with 15 males and 15 females from each grade. The levels of the students were for the 5th and 6th grades A1; for the 7th and 8th grades A2 which was determined by the MONE as shown below.

Table 2: Proficiency Levels and Target Skills for Each Grade Determined by The MONE

Proficiency level	Grade	Target Skills	Activities/Strategies
A1	5	Speaking & Listening Restricted reading Restricted writing	Role plays and Drama
	6	Speaking & Listening Restricted reading Restricted writing	
A2	7	Firstly: listening & speaking Secondly: reading & writing	Theme
	8	Firstly: listening & speaking Secondly: reading & Writing	

This study approaches to the viewpoints of learners as significant and valuable as teachers. The data and findings were represented by 120 students that can be considered as a large scale. And thus, the sample can represent the universe well. Their wishes and choices will help educators to support their students better. Four teachers working at the same school were chosen voluntarily to response the questions of the interview. There were just four teachers to take part in, but if there had been more teachers working at the school, they would definitely be requested for participating in the interview.

Table 3: Background Information of the Interviewed Teachers

Participants	Ages of teachers	Genders of teachers	Departments of teachers graduated from	Experience years of teachers
Teacher1	38	Female	ELT (certification program)	13
Teacher2	32	Male	English language teaching	8
Teacher3	36	Female	English language teaching	15
Teacher4	31	Female	English language teaching	4

FINDINGS

After collecting the data, it was investigated both qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative datum was examined via the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 20). In order to reveal the result of the items compared with 2 variables One-Way ANOVA was used and for more than 2 variables T-Test was employed. In order to determine the correlation between the scores the students got from Turkish and English lessons, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was utilized. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure reliability and validity. Hence, to supply reliability and validity of the questionnaire 5 items were deleted and 2 were altered. On the other hand, some necessary modifications were done through re-writing some items to prevent any uncertainty. For the 26 items in the survey the value of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was evaluated 0.80 as shown in the table below:

Table 4: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Results of the Learners' Questionnaire

	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients
Student Attitudes	12	.80
English practice in the class	5	.70
L1 usage in the class	9	.74
Total	26	.80

In addition to the reliability test "construct validity" of the instrument was evaluated via factor analysis where all the variables from the questionnaire were taken into account. With 26 item the validity score 0.721 shows that all the variables supports and fit each other very well. As presented in the table below:

Table 5: KMO Test Results for the Validity Check of the Questionnaire

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.721
	Sig	.000
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Items	26
	Df	120

The data was investigated via the method of coding which means that teachers taking part in the interview were enciphered as "teacher1, teacher2, teacher3, teacher4" The analysis expected to reveal the use of L1 (Turkish) of the students in the foreign language classroom conditions. And attitudes and approaches of the students towards the usage of the first language (Turkish) in addition to the cognitive effects of L1 application. Moreover, students' views/manners about the use of mother tongue in the classrooms were tried to bring to light besides their ideas about the way their mother tongue impacts their learning of a foreign language in terms of social, cognitive and psychological aspects. In order to bring to light the correlation of students scores they got from Turkish and English lessons', the researcher benefited from (PCC) and the value of alpha was $p=0.000 < \alpha=0.05$ that proves is a high correlation.

Analysis of Students' Views

One of the hypothesis was about the relationship of students' ages, their grades and the usage of English in the class during the lessons. Students' replies were $p=0.004 < \alpha=0.05$ for the factor of age, $p=0.002 < \alpha=0.05$ for the factor of grades to the evaluation of One-Way ANOVA that shows a major differences among the variables. The mean score of the participants whose ages were 10 was $m=1.4667$, whereas $m=1.7267$ for the students with the age of 14 which proves that students that are older need to hear English more than the students that are younger. Due to their English levels, the younger ones require their mother tongue more in the classroom when compared to the older ones. The mean score of the learners studying at the 5'th class was evaluated as $m=1.5267$, whereas it was measured $m=1.7333$ for the students studying at the 8'th class from which we can infer that the higher their grade is, the more they expect to hear English since there is a positive correlation between the variables for the age groups.

Table 6: The Manners of the Learners Towards the Praxis of English (the Target Language) in the Classroom

Age	N	Mean	Sig.
10	3	1.4667	
11	26	1.5154	
12	22	1.6182	.004*
13	39	1.6103	
14	30	1.7267	
Total	120	1.6167	
Grade			
5	30	1.5267	
6	30	1.6200	
7	30	1.5867	.002*
8	30	1.7333	
Total	120	1.6167	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

**Minimum Level 1 for the usage of L1 Mean<1.5

*** Maximum Level 2 for the usage of English Mean>1.5

Table 7: Responses of Participants to the Questionnaire

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I am not sure	I agree	I strongly agree
S1. I never use Turkish during speaking activities.	14 11.7%	20 16.7%	43 35.8%	30 25.0%	13 10.8%
S2. I can understand clearly whenever our teacher explains grammar in Turkish.	2 1.7%	11 9.2%	14 11.7%	35 29.2%	58 48.3%
S3. I understand better when our teacher explains new vocabulary items in Turkish.	4 3.3%	2 1.7%	16 13.3%	38 31.7%	60 50.0%
S4. I understand and memorize better when the words are similar to Turkish.	10 8.3%	5 4.2%	17 14.2%	36 30.0%	52 43.3%
S5 I understand better when our teacher translates the reading passages/texts into Turkish.	6 5.0%	8 6.7%	18 15.0%	43 35.8%	45 37.5%
S6. I can understand easily when our teacher presents the classroom activities and instructions in Turkish.	3 2.5%	16 13.3%	27 22.5%	41 34.3%	33 27.5%
S7. I can understand better when our teacher gives clues in L1.	3 2.5%	5 4.2%	33 27.5%	37 30.8%	42 35.0%
S8. When switching to a new topic I can understand better if our teacher explains in Turkish.	7 5.8%	7 5.8%	20 16.7%	44 36.7%	42 35.0%
S9. In group work activities during the lesson I speak Turkish with my classmates.	7 5.8%	20 16.7%	18 15.0%	34 28.3%	41 34.2%
S10. At any part of the lesson whenever I hear Turkish, I pay more attention and feel the desire to participate.	10 8.3%	13 10.8%	26 21.7%	42 35.0%	29 24.2%
S11. I feel more comfortable when I have the opportunity to speak Turkish in classroom activities.	7 5.8%	15 12.5%	28 23.3%	31 25.8%	39 32.5%
S12. I have difficulty in producing sentences in English whenever I think of it in Turkish.	3 2.5%	16 13.3%	27 22.5%	41 34.3%	33 27.5%

Note: S= statement

The 1st statement 34 (28.4%) of the students disagreed about the utilization of their mother tongue while speaking activities whereas 43 (35.8%) of the students agreed and 43 (35.8%) of them stayed refrained. In the following case 93 (77.5%) of the learner think that they can figure out better as long as they are explained in Turkish by their teachers during teaching grammar. Out of these answers 58 (48.3%) strongly agreed and 35 (29.2%) just agreed that if their teacher switch to the mother tongue (code switching might be useful) they understand easily especially when they were instructed about grammar points. The next statement showed that 98 (81.7%) of the students are in agreement with the opinion that they comprehend easier when their teacher presents new vocabulary in L1. 88 (73.3%) from the students pointed that they grip and keep in mind better and easily when they are given words alike Turkish (cognates). The 5th statement revealed that 88 (73.3%) from the participants have the same idea that they comprehend better when they are given translation of any text and reading passages into their L1 and out of these 88 (73.3%) answers, 43 (35.8%) agreed, 45 (37.5%) strongly agreed. The following statement presented that of the students 33 (27.5%) see totally eye to eye with the statement that they grasp better when they are presented the activities in the class and instructed in their mother tongue by their teachers. 41 (34.3%) out of the participants agreed whereas 16 (13.3%) of them disagreed and 27 (22.5%) of them were not that certain about this statement. The subsequent information showed that 79 (65.8%) of the students fathom better when they are given clues in their mother tongue. Of the students 86 (71.7%) agreed and 42 (35%) of them agreed totally; out of them 44 (36.7%) only agreed the notion in the 8th case that before skipping to a new subject, they can comprehend better when their teachers make it understandable for the learners by using their mother tongue. For the ninth statement of the students 75 (62.5%) accepted that in activities that requires group work they incline to utilize their mother tongue to interact with their classmates, whereas 27 (22.5%) of them did not accept the same opinion. From these 27 (22.5%) responses 20 (16.7%) students disagreed and 7 (5.8%) students strongly disagreed the usage of mother tongue while taking part in activities that requires group works. 71 (59.2%) of the students agreed For the 10th statement that they are more solicitous and willing to take part in the activities when they hear their L1(Turkish) while 26 (21.7%) of the learners were not sure about this. 70 (58.2%) of the participants agreed for the 11th statement that they feel more comfortable when are free to speak Turkish in the class. For the last statement totaling, 74 (61.8%) students pointed that they it is challenging to create new sentences in English whenever the students think about it in their mother tongue while 22.5% of them were not sure about this issue.

On account of revealing the positive and negative effect of L1 in the classroom depending on the social, psychological and cognitive factors, these statements above were presented to students. The cognitive effect of L1 takes place in the statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 12 and as a result, 66,6% of the participating students accepted that students' mother tongue has positive effects on their understanding, keeping vocabulary in their mind, and comprehending the important points of grammar or written texts. Also they utilize from L1 in some activities for instance; reading, writing and speaking. However, 13.5% of them disagreed this opinion which means for some of them L1 has negative effects on these issues. For the social effect, in statement 9, of students 62.5% indicated that they utilize from L1 to communicate with their friends in group work activities. Out of them 28.3% agreed and 34.2% strongly agreed while 22.5% of them disagreed. in statement 11, for the psychological effect of L1, most of the students (61,8% out of them 25.8% agreed and 32.5% strongly agreed) stated that they feel more relaxed when they employ L1 while 18,3% of them disagreed.

Question 1. Who Should your English teacher be?

The first question in the fourth part of the survey asked students if they prefer in the class a native English teacher or a non-native teacher. And with the rate of 60.8%, the students pointed that they can be a native or non-native speaker whereas 20% of them expressed that their teacher should be native. And 19.20 % of the learners preferred non-native teachers. It may be inferred from the responses of the learners that with no dominant preference of their teachers being native or non-native their expectation is only to be understood by their teachers, to be able to express themselves and understand the points they are confused but still there is a fact that low level proficiency level and graders want to hear L1 in the class that supports the reality of a need of non-native English teachers.

Question 2. When do you need more L1 during the lesson?

The second question posed to learners asked “When do you need more L1 during the lesson?” And of the student 48.30% pointed when they do activities including vocabulary; out of the participating students 46.70% expressed that they did not actually require their mother tongue during any activity whereas 5% of them emphasized during speaking activities. These responses boost the need of L1 for the vocabulary teaching especially in low proficiency level of students.

Question 3. Does your teacher refer to L1 to maintain discipline?

The following inquiry asked “Does your teacher refer to L1 to maintain discipline in the classroom?” Of the students 98.4% responded that their teachers benefit from L1. Out of the students 56.7% stated that teachers sometimes refer to L1 and 41.7% pointed that their teachers always refer to L1, while 1.6% of them highlighted their contrary beliefs by stating that their teachers do not refer to L1 to maintain discipline.

Question 4. When does L1 provide an advantage for you?

The next question asked “When does L1 provide an advantage for you?” 42.5% of the participating students pointed to interact with their friends and make sure about understanding instructions, while 28.3% of them stated just to interact with their friends and 29.2% of them stated just to make sure about understanding the instructions. No matter whether to interact or understand instructions they point that they use L1 for certain cases in the class to provide an advantage.

Question 5. When does L1 provide a disadvantage for you?

The question five asked the students “When does L1 provide a disadvantage for you?” With the percentage of 27.5% the students emphasized while making sentences in English, of the participants 19.2% stated that it constitutes a disadvantage to use L1 during speaking English and 53.3% of them stated both producing sentences and speaking English is accepted negatively. As Turkish is in some points different from English it prevents learners in terms of making syntactically correct sentences, learning the meanings of some words, and it might cause wrong usages (negative transfer) and as speaking it is time consuming to think in Turkish and translate it into the target language.

Question 6. How much do you use L1 in the classroom?

The following inquiry asked “How much do you use L1 in the classroom?” Of the students 16.7% indicated 0-29%, of the students 38.3% stated about 30-69% and 45% of the students explained that they utilize their mother tongue about 70-100% of the time in the classroom through the lesson which presents that learners use L1 during the lesson more than L2. Due to the examination system students cannot always find any chance to speak during the lesson. It is a fact that causes students to fall by the wayside especially for the 8th graders although they need to hear more English.

Question 7. How much do you think L1 should be used in the classroom both by teachers and learners?

The last question in this part asked “How much do you think L1 should be used in the classroom both by teachers and learners?” Of the students 18.3% circled the option of 0- 29%, out of the students 32.5% stated 70-100% and the rest that is 49.2% of the students stated that mother tongue of the students should be employed in the classroom through the course, 30-69% of the time by learners and teachers. Most of the students indicated that they demand to see the use of mother tongue 0-29% and 30-69% of time and this study shows that the high proficiency level learners are the ones that want to hear L1 less.

Also their English and Turkish scores were asked in order to reveal whether there is any direction or correlation and the English and Turkish lesson score were evaluated via the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. And the result showed $p=0.000<\alpha 0.05$ which means there was a significant correlation between the two variables and $r=0.858$ value showed a high correlation between English and Turkish scores in a positive way. That is the more successful a student in Turkish lesson is, the same is s/he in English as well.

Analysis of Teachers' View

1. Is L1 a necessity or obligation in teaching foreign language?

For two teachers participating the interview it is an obligation to employ mother tongue in the classroom due to the system of nation-wide centralized examination. Since it is compulsory in order to enter in a qualified high

school. Additionally, of the participants two teachers stated that it is significant to use L1 in the classroom because of different proficiency levels students have. Indeed, all the participants accepted that mother tongue application is essential in the classroom. They actually revealed different facts lying behind the use of L1 in the secondary schools. One of the reasons for using L1 is the nation-wide exam that all the students graduated from a secondary school should take and show relatively good success in order to enter a qualified school. In addition to this, the others focused on the matter that non-homogeneous proficiency levels of the learners in the class and school which make L2 instruction pretty hard.

2. Does the use of L1 provide advantages or disadvantages for the educators in teaching foreign language? Why?

Three of the teachers believe that mother tongue may provide some benefits for them in some ways for instance; making the instructions understandable for the younger students having lower level of proficiency and supports learners' understandings. Teachers also indicated that using mother tongue provides some benefits as creating positive manners and feelings on students not only at school but also out of the school. Based on the notion that although it is not the same in particular but it is structurally similar in general, one of the teachers stated that learning a foreign language is not that easy without having good command of ones' own language and on the other side it is easier to learn a second language if learners know their own language well. That teacher expressed that s/he promotes his/her student's L1 in order to support the improvement of L2. Albeit partly, the participants have come up with the idea that L1 use in the classroom might constitute a disadvantage for students during learning process due to the fact that they may not be exposed to the target language sufficiently if teachers let L1 diminish their L2 practice.

3. Does the use of L1 provide advantages or disadvantages for the learners in teaching a foreign language? Why?

All the participants taking part in the interview stated that L1 may provide some utility such as giving clear instructions for lower grades and students having lower proficiency levels and dominate the classroom by maintaining discipline, setting good rapport and establishing positive feelings for the lessons, activities, their friends and for their teachers in and outside of the class. They stated that L1 use have some benefits while teaching vocabulary and some grammar points. Though having expressed some negative reasons about the use of L1 yet, this time we can see that they tried to approach from positive point of view about the use of L1 in the class for learners. Though seeming as an inconsistent assessment we can infer from the expressions that they actually desire to proceed to employ L1 more in during their teaching process or owing to the fact that they have to utilize from L1 for many cases.

4. In which cases do you need L1?

Two of the teachers pointed out that they benefit from mother tongue when they teach grammar and when they come across new words. They also admitted that code-switching must take place since it is a natural process in learning a language. One of the teachers emphasized that L1 might be useful while teaching new words given at the starting of the units particularly for the lower levels in order to save time rather than trying to make them find out the meaning of the words. They claimed that L1 is more effective to provide discipline for the teachers. They also indicated that L1 is practical for clarifying missing parts when giving instructions. Hence, all the participants regard mother tongue as a tool to instruct students better particularly in vocabulary teaching and explaining grammar points, saving time, maintaining discipline. Indeed, they put forward the reasons why they tend to use L1 and in their classrooms.

5. Does the proficiency level of the classroom affect your rate of L1 use?

All the participating teachers acknowledged that when it comes to decide how much to use L1, the major factor is the level of the class and students. Except for the 8'th grades since regardless of the highest proficiency level in secondary schools in Turkey students mother tongue (L1) is the main instrument to instruct the students at the level of 8 due to the examination system because teachers save time when they give information directly via their mother tongue. One of the teachers pointed to the fact that no matter the level of the classroom is s/he

utilizes from L1 more than the target language while other participants indicated that the use of L1 rises in lower classes and reduces in classrooms with higher level of proficiency.. Almost all the teachers pointed that they employ L1 due its being a necessity. The fundemantal issue is to what extent of Turkish is used in the class instead of the target language (English) and the outcomes of this decision for teachers and learners.

6. To what extent do you think L1 should be used in the classroom in teaching foreign language? Why?

Despite of the fact that the preferred amount of the mother tongue differs among teachers, all of them agreed that the use of mother tongue is inevitable. However, it should be used judiciously and not more than L2. Whether the answers of the participant are unbiased or not, the important point is that all of them consider L1 as a significant tool for teaching. By highlighting the correlation between L1 and L2 they warned that the uztilizaiton of L1 should not exceed the application of the target language in the classroom. Otherwise, the outcomes might go beyond its aim.

7. Do you refer to L1 in the classroom to maintain discipline?

Besides the other perspectives and reasons, all teachers stated that they benefit from L1 in order to maintain the classroom discipline while one of them stated that s/he utilizes less compared to the others' expressions. However, as a consequence, mother tongue is acknowledged as an important instrument for discipline and classroom management by all teachers.

8. In which language skill(s) do you need more L1 when teaching foreign language?

Of the participants 3 teachers taking part in this inquiry stated that L1 is beneficial while grammar teaching and boosting students' writing skills, two participants also pointed that L1 is a helpful tool for vocabulary teaching. Hence, teachers benefit from mother tongue during either explainin vocabulary or teaching grammar. We can infer that L1 is employed during the teaching process including the language competencies. So, it is an essential part of giving instruction in language teaching.

9. Who do you think should teach foreign languages, native or non-native educators? Why?

Among the participants 3 teachers believe that native teachers should lecture the learners for some reasons occasions since they can create more positive attitudes as being a model of that language from the first hand for the students by adding that they can teach the cultural points better as they come from within that culture. Out of participants one teacher also emphasized that native English sepaking teachers may only be effective for the students in Turkish education system provided that they start teaching from the 2'nd class up to the 8'th class. Otherwise they will not be beneficial for their learners. Contrary to these opinions, one of them supported the idea that non-native English speaking teachers should teach their students due to the fact that their learners sometimes need to be clarified for some instructions they do not understand and using L1 saves time when following the curriculum and another aspect is a possible cultural barrier between the learners and their foreign teacher. These statements seem contradictory since all teachers supported the use of L1 in the classroom for instructions. Nevertheless; they expressed that it would be better if native English speaking teachers should enter the class rather than Turkish teachers. So, these two ideas negate each other. At first glance it can be asked that should L1 be a really essential instrument as they proposed in their statements for instructing the students in the secondary school language classes? If so, then how could a foreign teacher engage in the class? They actually tried to state that a native speaker ought to have a proven didactical subject knowledge for the secondary school curriculum beside orientation training for the Turkish education system. They should also have a good command of students' mother tongue with a score such as B2-C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as in some countries in Europe such as Germany, Switzerland and Denmark.

10. Is the effect of L1 positive or negative for the students when learning a foreign language?

With different point of views, the participants shared their ideas about the advantages and disadvantages of L1 while obtaining another language for students. Two out of four teachers believe that mother tongue impacts learning a language positively due common grammatical reasons and similar words (cognates) in both languages. Nevertheles, one believes that because of its different syntax mother tongue has a negative impact on learning the target language (English) whereas one of the participants stated that when it comes to learning it has both

positive and negative effects. However, they highlighted that the quantity of L1 should be planned well since the students need sufficient exposure to English in order to advance their language skills. To support the idea one of the teachers emphasized that mother tongue of the students should be employed at a medium degree since when the students go out of the class they do not have the opportunity to practice English. As a conclusion, all teachers were consistent about the importance of L1 by paying attention about the amount they apply so as not to hinder their English exposure.

DISCUSSION

With the changing perspective of language education since the beginning of language teaching now the modern world is desperate for orally proficient speakers of a language rather than just knowing its grammar rules. This is the result of popularity of communicative based language teaching experiences taken place since 1980's unlike GTM which was used before. This reactionary revolution demonized the use of L1 and considered the L1 use as a big sin until the direct method was put forward a new topic of discussion on "whether English alone or mother tongue accompanying English would be the ideal choice for efficient teaching, and who should be better for the students Nests or non-Nests" has been wickered. This has been a proceeding argument till the role of L1 and non-native English speaking teachers re-evaluated in the field of teaching language. And the latest research in a supportive way of this study revealed the use of L1 in the class might not actually be a sin when employed judiciously as it had been thought before. However, it would not be that easy to break this bias as Deller & Rinvoluceri (2002) stated that using mother tongue in the class is like swimming towards a resistible flow and against the ebb and flows of western's 30 years long, "Ortodoxy of Direct Method" (cited in Kılavuz, 2014: 93). Putting aside the the argument whether to use L1 in the classroom or not we had better discuss the amount and effective use of it in order to be more beneficial for language learners. 2 out of 4 participating teachers stated the L1 is a must due the proficiency levels of the learners while the other 2 pointed its compulsion due to the nationwide centralized examination system applied in Turkey. As the students pointed all of the teachers participated in the interview have the same opinion that L1 provides advantages in some cases such as maintaining discipline, making instructions more understandable especially for the lower proficiency level student. Also it helps establish positive attitudes towards lessons with less anxiety, make communication easier with friends for students, make the students more willing to participate in the classroom activities and make it easier to express their needs. As to the native/non-native English speaking teacher issue three of the participants inclined to state that native teachers should enter the language classes instead of a non-native English teacher (taking into account some conditions such as in-service and orientation trainings besides the requirement of Turkish language knowledge) especially in higher grades stating that they would be more knowledgeable about the cultural points while one of the teachers expressed that native English speaking teachers might be beneficial on condition that they start teaching children from the 2nd class up to the 8th class. But all the participants furthered the opinion that short term native teachers might fail. Trying to make the learners be the best English speakers of today seems to be a contradictory issue as the studies reveal that both preparing students ideally for the centralized exam and taking time off practicing speaking are conflicting facts. On the other hand one of the participants asserted that non-native English speaking teachers would be beneficial for clarifying instructions, saving time due to the curriculum and centralized examination and for understanding the students' culture and their learning process of a second language.

According to the survey applied to the students, learners can comprehend better and simpler when they are instructed especially in some difficult grammar subjects in students mother tongue. Furthermore, the students pointed that they can understand the new vocabulary items more easily when explained in L1. Also the similar words to Turkish are easier to keep in mind especially for the lower proficiency level learners. And they benefit more when the passages/texts are translated into L1 particularly in reading activities while in speaking activities it is vice versa. Students indicate the fact that they are more alert and they feel more like taking part in the classroom activities when they hear their mother tongue. In addition, they express that they feel cushioned and assured when they have the opportunity to speak L1 in the class. As their teachers stated the learners agreed the opinion that L1 is very helpful to clarify instructions, make up for misunderstandings and present classroom

activities in advance by adding that it has also some advantages such as comprehension, memorizing the new words they learn, understanding important grammar points and structures. For the social effect of mother tongue on students they point out that they tend to use their L1 to get in touch with their classmate during the classroom activities which helps them maintain the communication with the others and create better relationships. In terms of the psychological effect of their mother tongue they pointed the fact that that they feel more comfortable in the class and it helps diminish their anxiety. Teachers in the classroom should enhance the utilization of L2 however; in the meanwhile they must employ mother tongue when it is required on account of making their students feel cosier. (Nazary, 2008: 145). This study revealed the phenomenon that the higher the students' level of proficiency is; the more they need to hear and tolerate English as the previous studies in the literature from which we can infer that the higher grades can expose to an increased L2 practice in the classroom more than the younger students. This factor (level of grade and proficiency of the students) is actually a determining point of L1 and L2 preference both for teachers and for students. This study also presented the result that Turkish lesson marks and English lesson marks of the students have a positive correlation that supports each other. Indeed, learners in this inquiry did not have any dominant preference for a native teacher or non-native English speaking teacher rather than nationality they care about personality and they just want to be understood and feel valuable. Both sides of participants of this study are open to native or non-native teachers and they have no bias about any options in language teaching and learning context. However; there is a reality lying here that the inclusion of the mother tongue in foreign language classrooms should not be considered as disadvantageous when employed judiciously in a planned and organized way.

CONCLUSION

The perspectives of students and teachers towards the use of L1 created its own defacto standing behind the benefit of mother tongue not only for learners' cognitive, psychological and social process they undergo but also for teachers being a time saving, clarifying, maintaining discipline tool. And their responses presented that using mother tongue is neither a sin nor an enemy as some say. Instead it is a savior and supporter for language teaching practice in English lessons as long as it is used properly by teachers. Of course there are still some who oppose this idea by arguing monolingual approach for some reasons because of the idea that when L1 is spoken during learning process it deformats its nature. But still pedagogy requires to be formulated again with research as this one. It is pretty valuable to listen learners and language teachers in order to analyze these subjects better and deeply by considering their needs, expectations, difficulties they face or their suggestions for solutions as they are the ones who are in the kitchen. Both side of participants candidly expressed their perceptions and notions about mother tongue as a contributing source and facilitator in language learning and teaching process. Of course, further studies will make these arguments more illuminative by listening and investigating both side as two substantial components of learning and teaching language. We cannot ignore the importance and necessity of L1 usage in EFL classes but with a massive caution against over or misuse of L1 while practicing L2. The biggest issue is actually to keep the balance of the use of mother tongue during the classes for teachers as designing and planning their courses and for students as practicing it in the classroom activities. Related to the support of L1 use in the classroom as presented the benefit of L1 use it would be better for the learners to be taught by a non-native teacher in terms of clarification of instructions and misunderstanding, releasing learners when they stuck, making them feel more secure and comfortable, diminishing their anxiety especially during classroom activities and games. The native teacher might not live the process of learning a language which means that in case of any problem (students live sometimes, pschological and social problems) s/he might not be able to diagnose the problem correctly and make the necessary treatment. Because s/he did not live the learning process of any language while a non-native teacher lived almost the same process not only psychologically, cognitively and socially but also grammatically though being the best model of learning a second language for their students non-nests are still perceived as inadequate (Benke & Medgyes, 2005).The study shows that the lower graders demand more Turkish especially for clarification of instructions and when learning vocabulary whereof we can infer that they would benefit more from a non-native teacher on condition that the use of the students mother tongue (Turkish) in the classroom must be planned consciously, judiciously and reseanable for use in pedagogy. We should also take into consideration the high positive correlation between the Turkish

language score and English language score using which proves that L1 may not prevent learning L2 on the contrary, it may help student understand the target language better when used comparatively while teaching grammatical rules, vocabulary even cultural points etc. Hence, both of the languages can be used to reach the goals and outcomes in teaching context, when needed to boost learning and provide the needs of learners. Since being a good teacher is not only knowing the students individually but also understanding their needs. All in all, before defending or rejecting L1 use in the classroom we had better consider educational defactos and situate our teaching position in this way with these realities. This study viewed L1 use and the support of non-native teachers might be better for teaching experience and providing learners' needs during their learning adventure. Of course the argument of L1 inclusion or exclusion in the classroom will not end but recent research in this field shows that more systematical and principled way of L1 inclusion will proceed to boost the practice of teachers. As a consequence, teachers should give the chance to their native language in the classroom and apply to the teaching area to some extent, judiciously and rationally in order to ensure the most effective learning for their learners.

REFERENCES

- Atkinson, D. (1987). The mother tongue in the classroom: A neglected resource? *ELT Journal*, 41(4): 241–247.
- Auerbach, E. (1993). Reexamining English only in the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(1): 9-32.
- Benke, E. & Medgyes, P. (2005). "Differences in Teaching Behaviour between Native and Non-Native Speaker Teachers: as Seen by the Learners". (Ed.: E. Llurda). *Non-Native Language Teachers: Perceptions, Challenges and Contributions to the Profession*. New York: Springer, 195-215.
- Brooks-Lewis, K.A. (2009). Adult learners' perceptions of the Incorporation of their L1 in foreign language teaching and learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 30(2): 216-235.
- Chambers, F. (1991). Promoting use of the target language in the classroom. *Language Learning journal*, 4(1): 27-31.
- Cook, V. (2001). *Second language learning and language teaching*. London: Arnold.
- Cook, V. (2008). *Second language learning and language teaching*, (4th ed.). London: Hodder Education.
- Deller, S. & Rinvoluceri, M. (2002). *Using the mother tongue: Making the most of the learner's language*. London: Delta Publishing.
- Erdogan, S. (2015). Use of L1 in EFL Classes and teachers' and learners' opinions on the Issue (a case study in a Turkish state primary school) (Master's thesis). *Ufuk University Graduate School of Social Science, Ankara*.
- Forman, R. (2012). Six functions of bilingual EFL teacher talk: animating, translating, explaining, creating, prompting and dialoguing. *RELC Journal*, 43(2): 239-253.
- Güneş, G. (2015) *Turkish EFL Students' and Teachers' Perspectives on the Use of L1 in English Classrooms* (Master's Thesis). *Çağ University Institute of Social Science, Mersin*.
- Hammerly, H. (1991). *Fluency and accuracy: Toward a balance in language teaching and learning*. England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- James, C. & Bourke, J. (1996). Mother tongue use in bilingual/bidialectal education: Implications for Bruneian Dwibahasa. *Journal of Multilingual Quarterly*, 27(1): 9-32.
- Kılavuz, Y. (2014). *Student and Teacher Attitudes Towards the Use of the Mother Tongue in English Language Classes* (Master's Thesis). *Çağ University Institute of Social Science, Mersin*.
- Kahraman, A. (2009). *The Role of L1 Use in Improving Affective and Cognitive Factors in English Language Classrooms* (PhD Dissertation). *Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences, Ankara*.
- Kim, S.H.O. & Elder, C. (2005). Language choices and pedagogic functions in the foreign language classroom: a cross-linguistic functional analysis of teacher talk. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(4): 355-380.
- Krashen, S.D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Levine, G.S. (2003). Student and instructor beliefs and attitudes about target language use, first language use, and anxiety: Report of a questionnaire study. *The Modern Language Journal*, 87(3): 343-364.
- MacDonald, C. (1993). *Using the target language*. Cheltenham, UK: Mary Glasgow Publications.
- Nazary, M. (2008). The role of L1 in L2 acquisition: Attitudes of Iranian university students. *Novitas-ROYAL*, 2(2): 138-153.

- Nunan, D. & Lamb, C. (1996). *The self-directed teacher; managing the learning process*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Punch, K.F. (2005). *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, (2nd ed.). London: SAGE.
- Schweers, C. W. Jr. (1999). Using L1 in the L2 classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, 37(2): 6–9
- Spada, N. & Lightbown, P. M. (1999). Instruction, first language influence and developmental readiness in second language acquisition. *Modern Language Journal*, 83(1): 1–22.
- Spada, N., Lightbown, P. M., & White, J. L. (2005). The importance of form/meaning mappings in explicit form-focussed instruction. In A. Housen & M. Pierrard (Eds.). *Current issues in instructed second language learning*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 199-234.
- Stanley, K. (2002). Using the first language in second language instruction, *Social Science*, 6(3): 97-103.
- White, J. & Ranta, L. (2002). Examining the interface between metalinguistic task performance and oral production in a second language. *Language Awareness*, 11(4): 259-290.

Makale Geçmiři	<i>Geliř:</i> 28. 08.2022	<i>Kabul:</i> 21.02.2023	<i>Yayın:</i> 28.02.2023
Makale Türü	Arařtırma Makalesi		
Önerilen Atıf	Sarıca, T. (2023). The place of L1 and non-native language teachers in the english as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms. <i>Journal of Research in Education and Teaching</i> . 12 (1), p.p. 80-93.		