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TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS L1 USE IN  
ENGLISH CLASSROOM IN THE CONTEXTS OF TURKEY AND  
KYRGYZSTAN

A MASTER'S THESIS

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MAY 2019

## BİLDİRİM

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17.07.2019

İmza

Prof. Dr. Ömer Faruk TUTKUN

Enstitü Müdürü

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout the writing of this thesis paper I have received a great deal of support and assistance from my teachers, parents, family and friends. Their continuous support helped me to complete this study.

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Firdevs KARAHAN for her support, patience, encouragement and her insightful comments on my thesis paper. I am particularly grateful to my co-supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Banu İNAN-KARAGÜL for her patient guidance, valuable and useful feedback through the development of the current thesis.

I am also indebted to teachers from Atatürk University especially to Prof. Dr. Halim ULAŞ, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Engin KURŞUN and Res. Asst. Meryem ÖZDEMİR who did their best to help me to come to the final stage of this thesis paper despite their extremely busy schedule.

Finally, I am sincerely grateful to my father, mother and brother who have encouraged me to realize my dream to study abroad, for their financial and emotional support throughout my years of study. Special thanks and lifelong gratitude is directed to my beloved husband. His constant encouragement, understanding and patience helped me to complete my study.

Without the contribution of the aforementioned people the accomplishment of this thesis paper would not have been a reality.

## ABSTRACT

### TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS L1 USE IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM IN THE CONTEXTS OF TURKEY AND KYRGYZSTAN

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Sakarya University, 2019

In an attempt to achieve perfect English language proficiency, all learners face the same issue: the inevitable use of their L1 in an English classroom. Various studies have identified different attitudes and reasons for teachers' and students' L1 use in English classroom.

The aim of this thesis paper is to identify teachers' and students' attitude towards L1 use and reveal the reason for their particular attitude through the use of the open-ended questionnaires. Teachers' attitude was distinguished in terms of *teachers'* and *students'* L1 use. Apart from that teachers' questionnaires attempted to identify activities that are best carried out through L1 and TL. Students' perceptions were distinguished in terms of their attitude towards *bilingual* approach to English learning based on their experience in learning English and *teachers'* L1 use. Along with this, students' questionnaires attempted to reveal the benefits and drawbacks of L1 use. As this study comprises teachers and students from universities of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan the difference between their attitudes has been also investigated. Qualitative data obtained from the questionnaires was collected, coded and analyzed with the help of the NVivo12 software program.

The research findings revealed that overall attitude of teachers towards *their own use* of L1 is positive. Results obtained from teachers' survey revealed that majority of teachers from Turkish context tend to have more positive attitude with regard to *teachers'* L1 employment than their Kyrgyz colleagues. Moreover no considerable difference has been observed in terms of the teachers' attitude towards *students'* L1 use. Similarly no substantial difference has been observed between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers towards *students'* use of L1. Finally, activities best carried out through L1 and TL based on the teachers' view have been listed and discussed.

Students' survey results revealed that majority of students had bilingual approach to English learning. However between those who found it beneficial and not beneficial there is only slight difference. Results indicated that Kyrgyz students were more in favor of bilingual approach to English learning than Turkish students. In terms of the students' attitude towards *teachers'* L1 use majority of students expressed their positive view. In attempt to identify the difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz students towards teachers' L1 employment survey findings revealed no sufficient difference. Finally, possible benefits and drawbacks of L1 suggested by students have been listed and discussed.

Research findings also revealed that teachers and students employed L1 mainly for pedagogical reasons. Results also suggest that limited and judicious use of L1 can be served as a facilitating tool to improve TL proficiency.

**Key words:** Attitudes, L1 (Turkish and Kyrgyz), TL (English), reasons, benefit, drawback.

## ÖZET

### ÖĞRETMENLERİN VE ÖĞRENCİLERİN İNGİLİZCE SINIFINDA ANADİL KULLANIMI İLE İLGİLİ GÖRÜŞLERİ (TÜRKİYE VE KIRGIZİSTAN ESASINDA)

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Sakarya Üniversitesi, 2019

İngilizceyi en üst seviyede öğrenmek için tüm öğrencilerin aynı ve benzer olaylarla karşı karşıya kalmaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle İngilizce sınıfında anadilin kullanımı kaçınılmaz hâle geldiği görülmektedir. Bir birinden farklı ve çeşitli çalışmaların neticesinde İngilizce sınıfında ana dili kullanıp kullanmadığına dair farklı tutum ve nedenleri belirlenmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, öğretmenlerin ve öğrencilerin İngilizce sınıfında anadil kullanmaya yönelik tutumlarını belirlemek ve nedenlerini ortaya koymak için açık uçlu anket yolunu amaç edinmiştir. Öğretmenlerin tutumları, öğretmenlerin ve öğrencilerin ana dil kullanımı bakımından ayırt edilmiştir. Bunun dışında öğretmenlerin anketleri yoluyla, sınıfta aktivite yaparken hangi durumda en iyi anadil ve İngilizce ile gerçekleştirilmesi sorusu sorularak somut yanıt elde edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin İngilizce öğreniminde bilingual yaklaşımına olan tutumları sorularak adlıği deneyimlere dayanarak yanıtlamaları amaç edinmiştir. Aynı zamanda öğrenciler tarafından öğretmenlerin ana dil kullanmak ile ilgili tutumların istenmiştir. Çalışmamız, Türkiye ve Kırgızistan'daki üniversitedeki öğretmen elemanların ve öğrencilerin katılması sonucunda tutumlar arasındaki fark tespit edilmiştir. Anketlerin sonucunda elde edilen nitel veriler toplanmış, analiz edilmiş ve Nvivo 12 yazılım programı ile kodlanmıştır.

Araştırmamızın bulguları, öğretmenlerin kendi ana dil kullanımlarına yönelik tutumlarının olumlu olduğunu ortaya koyulmuştur. Öğretmenlerin anketinden elde edilen sonuçlar Türkiye bağlamındaki öğretmenlerin çoğunluğunun, öğretmenlerin ana dil istihdamı konusunda Kırgız meslektaşlarına göre daha olumlu bir tutum sergileme eğiliminde olduğunu ortaya koyulmuştur. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin, öğrencilerin ana dil kullanımına karşı tutumu konusunda da önemli bir fark gözlenmemiştir. Benzer şekilde Türkiye'deki öğretmenler ile Kırgız öğretmenlerin öğrencilerin ana dil kullanımına yönelik tutumları arasında da önemli bir fark gözlenmemiştir.

Sona doğru gelince öğretmenlerin görüşlerine dayanarak ana dil ve İngilizce üzerinden gerçekleştirilen etkinlikler listelenmiş ve tartışılmıştır. Öğrencilerin anket sonuçları, öğrencilerin ekseriyeti İngilizce öğrenmeye iki dilli bir yaklaşıma sahip olduğunu ortaya koymuşlardır. Bununla birlikte faydalı ve yararlı görmeyenlerin arasında sadece küçük bir fark olduğu gözlenmiştir. Kırgız öğrencilerin İngilizce öğrenmeyi Türkçe'den daha çok iki dilli yaklaşım lehinde olduklarını belirttiği dikkat çekicidir. Öğrencilerin ana dil öğretmenlerine yönelik tutumları bakımından ana dil kullanımı öğrencilerin olumlu görüşlerini ifade etmişlerdir. Türk ve Kırgız öğrencilerin öğretmenlerin ana dil istihdam anketi sonuçlarına yönelik tutumları arasındaki farkı belirleme girişiminde yeterli bir fark olmadığı ortaya çıkmıştır.

Sonuç olarak, öğrenciler tarafından önerilen ana dilin olası yararları ve sakıncaları listelenmiş ve tartışılmıştır.

Ayrıca öğretmenlerin ve öğrencilerin İngilizce sınıfında anadili tercih etmesi pedagojik nedenlerle kullandıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. Sonuçlar ayrıca ana dilin sınırlı ve mâkul bir şekilde kullanılması İngilizce yeterliliğini arttırmak için kolaylaştırıcı bir araç olarak kullanabileceğini göstermiştir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Tutumlar, Anadil (Türkçe ve Kırgızca), İngilizce, Nedenler, yararı, zararı.





*To My Sweet Baby Girl, Aybilge.*

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The role of the English language nowadays is essential in every sphere of our life. Realities of our life show that English is occupying more and more space in people's professional and everyday lives. It does not matter whether you want to become an engineer, architect, designer or pilot, knowledge of English is always welcomed. English plays an essential role in global trade, business, tourism, aviation, education and in international communication. It is estimated that there are about 380 million people who speak English as their first language (L1) whereas the number of users of English as their second language (L2) is more than a billion (Clyne and Sharifian, 2008).

Clyne (1992) states that English is a pluricentric language “with different norms – phonological, morphosyntactic, lexical, pragmatic applying to different national varieties” (cited in Clyne and Sharifian, 2008). The pluricentricity of English can be distinguished by circles. According to Kachru (1986) there are 3 circles of English: Inner Circle (IC), Outer Circle (OC), and Expanding Circle (EC) (cited in Clyne and Sharifian, 2008). Clyne and Sharifian (2008) go on to explain that as a result of the globalization process “in some OC countries, such as Singapore and India, English is becoming a first language for a sizable number of speakers”. Apart from this number of countries from Expanding Circle transform into Outer Circle countries, thus the status of English is also changed from EFL into ESL (Graddol, 1997 cited in Clyne and Sharifian, 2008, p.28.5).

There was a need to review the role and status of English and identify whether the process of globalization of the English language has a positive or negative effect on second and foreign language learners. Prodromou (1999) expresses his view towards this topic negatively. He states that even though English has reached the status of international language and is spoken all over the world there are cases where many languages are disappearing because of this globalization process. He argues that English should not play the role of “destroyer” but of a partner language that goes along with other languages (cited in Murakami, 2001). It is reported in Hall and Cook (2012, p.272) that the expansion and rise of the English language expose to danger other languages. Nation (1990) holds the same opinion that the avoidance of L1 represents mother tongue as a second-sort of language, and has a negative psychological outcome for learners (cited in Tang, 2002).

Moreover it can be observed that most of the learners try to reach native speaker proficiency, which has been termed as “native speaker syndrome” as a model for imitation (Murakami, 2001). However the imperative role of the monolingual approach, as well as the learners’ desire for native-like proficiency, play a destructive role in establishing the status of non-native English speakers despite the fact that “not all native-speaker English is widely comprehensible, stylistically diverse, literate or eloquent” (Hall and Cook, 2012, p.273). Phillipson (1992) comments on the above mentioned view and states that not all native speakers are ideal teachers of the target language (TL); there can also be some cases where non-native speakers are more proficient teachers as they are more acquainted with all the process of learning L2 or FL. He goes on to explain that the notion of ‘native teacher’ is quite ambiguous and complicated and it is quite difficult to determine which nation does speak pure and true English (cited in Miles, 2004).

In an attempt to achieve perfect English language proficiency, all learners face the same issue: the inevitable use of their L1 in an English classroom. Sert (2005) describes the process of shifting from one language to another as a common phenomenon in foreign language classrooms. Learners always feel need for their native language, whether willfully or subconsciously when they want to be understood in a foreign language setting (Amorim, 2012).

As a result of current debates the role of L1 is being revised and reassessed. Cook (1999) strongly argues that more attention should be given to L1 and more effort should be made to change the image of L2 users as deficient learners. Van der Walt (1997) believes that the employment of students’ L1 will help to avoid the extinction of those languages. Nation (2003) who was the first to use the term ‘A balanced approach’ also calls for the respect towards learners’ L1 and avoid things making the image of L1 more inferior than English.

Moreover current research and language practice indicates the decline of the imperative role of the English only method (Auerbach, 1993). Similarly Voicu (2012) comments that the English Only method of teaching that was practiced for a long time is now being replaced by a more flexible method where English still takes most of the classroom time but L1 is not excluded at all. To the contrary, it is used as an important teaching and learning tool.

Besides, survey research findings, as well as other studies on L1 use in FL classrooms, reveal positive attitudes among teachers as well as students’ towards L1 use and its benefits in language acquisition. For instance, in the study carried out by Weng (2012,

p.9) the results of the attitude survey show that students are satisfied with the teachers' use of L1 and reveal that it helped them to "understand complex concepts", difficult grammar rules, understand new vocabulary and "reduce anxiety". Thongwichit's (2013) research findings show that students had positive attitude towards L1 use and reported that L1 was mostly beneficial and efficient in their struggle against affective filters.

Among several methods that have been checked for their effectiveness in FL learning, Laufer and Shmueli (1997) observed that L1 translation came up as the most efficient one. Cole (1998) also examined the importance of L1 translation and concluded that instead of wasting time and effort on explaining an unknown word it would be better to use the translation in order to save time and avoid stress. It has also been found out in Cook (2001) that L1 fosters the process of vocabulary comprehension and grammar learning. Çelik (2008) suggests L1 use for maintaining discipline problems, like warnings. He points out students do not react to the warnings in TL in the same way as in L1. These and other studies show that L1 integration is supported by learners, practitioners and researchers (Auerbach, 1993).

### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

Although the issue of using L1 in English language classrooms is currently under investigation by many second language researchers, little research is found in the context of English being taught as a foreign language (EFL) in Turkic countries like Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. Current studies have focused on whether L1 should be used in FL classroom and to what extent however third factor should be taken into account like *who* should use L1, whether teacher or student (Dailey O-Cain and Liebscher, 2009). Thereby, this study is going to make its own contribution to foreign language learning and tried to identify teachers and students' attitudes towards L1 and learn whether it plays the role of a facilitator or distracter at the high institutions of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. This study is also going to identify whether there is a difference between the perception of Turkish teachers/students and Kyrgyz teachers/students. Activities best carried out through L1 and TL as well as benefits and drawbacks of L1 use in EFL classroom will be also investigated in this dissertation with the help of open-ended questionnaires.



## 1.2 Purpose and the significance of the study

The main purpose of this study is to identify teachers' and students' attitude towards L1 use from two different contexts. Sufficient number of studies on L1 attitude has been conducted in Turkey however little research is found on this topic in Kyrgyz context. Therefore this study is going to make its own contribution to this field and draw researchers' attention to explore this area in Kyrgyzstan as well. This paper will also reveal participants' reason for their L1 employment and identify the difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz participants.

Present studies that have been conducted in Kyrgyzstan investigated language attitude from the different perspectives. And these research studies are too far from the current study in its content. Thus this study is going to make its own contribution to this area and present a new research niche for EFL researchers.

Besides, findings of this study obtained from the questionnaires may be used as a reference for Kyrgyz instructors or curriculum developers for further investigations of this issue and improvement of language program in Kyrgyzstan as well.

## 1.3 Research questions

This study aims to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the teachers' attitudes towards *Teachers'* and *Students'* L1 uses in EFL classroom?
  - a. Is there a difference between the attitudes of Turkish teachers and Kyrgyz teachers towards their own use of L1 and students' use of L1?
2. What activities should be carried through L1 and TL according to teachers' view?
3. What are the students' attitudes towards Bilingual approach based on their prior experience of learning English?
  - a. Is there a difference between the attitudes of Turkish students and Kyrgyz students towards bilingual approach?
4. What are the students' attitudes towards *teachers'* L1 use in EFL classroom?
  - a. Is there a difference between the attitudes of Turkish students and Kyrgyz students towards teachers' use of L1?
5. What are the benefits and drawbacks of L1 use according to students' view?

#### **1.4 Limitations of the study and recommendations for further research**

This study has number of limitations that has to be taken into consideration for further researches. First of all, the number of participants from both context (Turkey and Kyrgyzstan) is too small in order to generalize their attitude to larger populations therefore these findings do not represent the attitudes of all University teachers and students both in Turkey and Kyrgyzstan.

In addition, all survey participants were strictly teachers and students of English language departments consequently teachers and students from other departments and major could have different perspectives towards this issue. Moreover considering and examining the effect of other variables on participants' attitude, like: gender, age, type of institution (private/state), English proficiency, teaching experience and others would yield interesting results.

Finally, the study was limited with only a qualitative data collection instrument. Participants' responses were gathered through the use of the open-ended questionnaires. Use of other data collection tools would present more extensive and concrete data about participants' attitudes. Moreover current questionnaire focused only on participants' *attitude* and *reasons* towards the use of L1 in English classroom. However further researches may also examine their attitude towards the *amount of L1 use* in English classroom or *motivation* for instance.

#### **1.5 Definition of terms**

**Attitude:** This term is used in order to indicate individuals' point of view, perception and beliefs with regard to particular subject. In this study it has been distinguished into positive and negative.

**Monolingual:** Monolingual approach as well as monolingual way is used interchangeably in this study. This term refers to indicate the method of complete exclusion of L1 and employment of English Only strategy in English classroom.

**Bilingual:** Bilingual approach as well as bilingual way is also used interchangeably in this study. This term refers to indicate the possibility of L1 employment in foreign language classroom.

L1: In Chapter I and II of this paper L1 indicates First language, Mother Tongue and native language interchangeably. However in III, IV and V Chapters L1 stands for the survey participants' native language, that are Turkish and Kyrgyz (Russian).

L2: In Chapter I and II L2 alternates with FL and TL.

TR: It is an abbreviation for Turkish. It is used to indicate survey participants from Turkey

KG: It is an abbreviation for Kyrgyz. It is used to indicate survey participants from Kyrgyzstan



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1 The role of attitude in language learning

The role of non-intelligence factors in TL language learning has been studied by many researchers. It is believed that the acquisition of second and foreign languages is influenced by factors such as “motivation, attitude, anxiety, learning achievements, aptitude, intelligence, age, self-identity, personality, and so forth” (Hashwani, 2008, p.121). Of these, attitude and motivation are considered to be the most important ones (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). A close link between motivation and attitude can be observed in the studies by Gardner (1985) who claims that attitude has an effect on the learner’s motivation while motivation influences language learning.

One of the factors that we are going to focus on is attitude. The role of attitude in language acquisition and the learning process has been studied both by first and second language researchers. Researchers revealed that TL success is not only connected to a learners’ intelligence, but also to their attitude. In other words: “learning language should be approached primarily as a social and psychological phenomenon rather than as a purely academic one” (Eshghinejad, 2016, p.3). Baker (1992) describes attitude as “a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behavior” (cited in Al-Tamimi and Shuib, 2009, p.33). Most of the time attitude is formed at home through interaction with parents, peers and different members of society (Gardner, 1985 and Liu, 2014). Gardner (1985) explains that a positive attitude towards a particular language may lead to successful language learning, while a negative attitude may lead to failure and disappointment. It is also reported that a positive attitude can be brought about with the help of the motivating and educational methodology, as well as a skillful and responsive attitude to the learners’ feelings from the teacher.

Although attitude is an individually-driven trait, Kumaravadivelu (2006) identifies two important factors that build up one’s attitude: environmental and pedagogic. Environmental factors include “the global, national, social, cultural, political, economic, educational, and family contexts” (p.42). For instance, social context includes “a range of language-learning environments such as the home, the neighborhood, the classroom, and the society at large” (p.43). Among these above mentioned settings the neighborhood and

the classroom have been found to have a positive effect on L2 learning. Wong-Fillmore (1989) in his study found that social context is a good medium for learners to communicate with proficient speakers of L2 (cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Educational context “shapes language policy, language planning, and most importantly, the learning opportunities available to the L2 learner” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p.44).

It is also believed that there are 3 components of attitude: behavioral, cognitive and affective (Eshghinejad, 2016). The behavioral component of attitude is related with one’s behavior and reaction in particular situation. The cognitive component of attitude deals with a person’s previous knowledge and beliefs. And the affective component of attitude deals with one’s feelings and emotions. Feng and Chen (2009) report that every learning process involves some kind of emotions that are drawn from the activities students and teachers deal with.

A learners’ success or failure is not only determined by their attitude, but also by their motivation. According to Gardner (1985), L2 attitude is closely interrelated with the level of motivation. Gardner (1985) defines motivation as “a combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language” (p.10). In other words, a positive attitude and wish to learn language is not enough until the learner strives and makes an effort to learn the language. Thus, it can be said that motivation in language learning requires an integrated approach. While the combination of high motivation and positive attitude leads to success (Eshghinejad, 2016).

## **2.2 The role of L1 in different approaches and methods**

The role of L1 in English language learning has always been the main topic of discussion and debate for many researchers. It can be observed that there is still an ongoing discussion on whether or not to use L1 in FL/ L2 classrooms. Several methods and approaches appeared to defend or exclude its use from foreign language classrooms. The following section will give a brief overview of these approaches and methods within the scope of the use of L1 argument.

### *Grammar translation method*

Chastain (1988) reports that the grammar translation method (GTM) was also known as a Classical method as this method was firstly employed in teaching and learning Classic languages like Latin and Greek (cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000). She goes on to describe

that the study of TL grammar would lead to a better understanding of native language grammar, and enhance communication and writing skills. Little attention is given to listening and speaking skills. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000) the practitioners of this approach used to suppose that, by mastering TL grammar and vocabulary, a learner will be capable of reaching their main goal which is to be able to read literature in TL. A student's native language plays an important role in language acquisition as classroom instruction is given only in L1. Students' L1 is mainly used during translation, memorization of native language equivalents, and teaching grammar.

#### *Direct method*

Because of the inefficiency of the Grammar translation method, the Direct method (DM) appeared and became popular. Larsen-Freeman (2000) explains in her book that the use of visual aids and demonstrations, and no permission of translation, distinguished the GTM from the DM. In comparison with the Grammar translation method the Direct method puts more emphasis on speaking and vocabulary, and less on grammar. The main principle of the Direct method is to teach students to communicate and think in TL. Students' L1 does not play a main role in TL acquisition. The use of mother tongue (MT) and translation is totally forbidden in the classroom. New vocabulary is taught inductively with the help of examples in TL, pictures and body language.

#### *Audio-lingual method*

The Audio-lingual method (ALM) is similar to the DM as they are both considered part of the oral-based approach. However, the former makes use of drills. L1 and TL are viewed as having their own unique system that consists of the following levels: "...phonological, morphological, and syntactic. Each level has its own distinctive pattern" (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p.46). The teacher serves as a model for imitation. More emphasis is put on students' oral skills. Learning is processed through habit formation, drills and repetition. It was believed that L1 impedes TL learning and a contrastive analysis of both languages may help to identify those distracting parts.

#### *Silent way*

Since the Audio-lingual method was criticized by many scholars, the Silent way emerged. Chomsky argues that "language must not be considered a product of habit formation, but rather of rule formation" (cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p.53). In other words, it says that in language learning, learners should rely on their own cognitive knowledge. One of its

main tenets is that “Teaching should be subordinated to learning” (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p.53-54). Students’ L1 is not wholly abandoned from the classroom; it is used at early levels for giving feedback and instructions, and teaching pronunciation.

### *Desuggestopedia*

Desuggestopedia is a method introduced by Georgi Lozanov and is also considered as an affective-humanistic approach (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). The author suggests that the rationale behind language learning inefficiency is the fear of failing. She goes on to explain that, according to Lozanov, this method assists learners in overcoming learning barriers and increasing their self-confidence in language learning. The students’ L1 is used here when needed and with every session its use is decreased.

### *Community Language Learning*

The Community Language Learning (CLL) method makes teachers treat their students as a “whole person” (Larsen-Freeman 2000, p.89). In other words, such factors as “students’ feelings, physical reactions, instinctive protective reactions, and desire to learn” are of the same importance for teachers as their intellect (p.89). The teacher plays the role of the “counselor” (p. 89), who treats students with more understanding and support. The students’ native language is employed at the initial stages and serves as “a bridge from the familiar to the unfamiliar” (p. 101). However, in a classroom where students come from various linguistic backgrounds, conversations are processed in TL. “Pantomime, pictures and the use of target language synonyms” are used in order to convey meaning for the unknown words (p.102).

### *Comprehension approach*

The Comprehension approach is an umbrella term for such approaches as: Natural approach, Lexical approach and Total Physical Approach (TPR). It is described in Larsen-Freeman’s (2000) book that these approaches give more attention to listening comprehension. It is believed that after learners receive comprehensible input, production will appear gradually. It is the same as how children learn to speak. Firstly, they receive a lot of listening input, then they begin to speak, and their speech gradually improves. In the Lexical approach the teacher pays little attention to a student’s production skills and puts more emphasis on comprehensible input. Larsen-Freeman (2000) describes in her book that one of the main tenets of TPR is the development of the students’ comprehension rather than the development of their production skills. Using actions and body movements

are considered to be the best way to convey meaning, it is also believed that creating a fun and relaxing atmosphere enhances students' learning process. It is also worthy of remark that in this method speaking skills are of more importance than writing skills. The role of the native language is important at the initial stages; however its usage is minimized as the instructions become clearer.

#### *Communicative approach*

The Communicative approach, or communicative language teaching (CLT), started in the 1970s with the aim of developing students' communicative skills (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Communicative competence is emphasized more than linguistic competence. She proposes its main tenets as follows: TL is just a medium for communication but not the object of learning, authentic materials must prevail, group work and games are always welcomed, fluency should be desired over accuracy. It can be concluded that to use language is more important than to know that language. The teacher plays the role of the facilitator whose aim is to prompt communication. Use of the native language is not banned totally, but TL should be used in almost all classroom activities even for "explaining activities to the students or in assigning homework" (p.132).

#### *Content-based instruction*

Content-based instruction (CBI) is a method of implementing content from other subjects into a language course. It is a perfect medium for those who want to develop their language skills as well as their academic knowledge (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Content-based instruction shares the same principles and tasks with the communicative language approach in that "classrooms should focus on real communication and the exchange of information" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.204). The role of L1 in Content-based instruction is very minimal as all the academic assignments are done in TL through the use of authentic materials. Tasks usually involve all four skills which encourages students to not only speak in TL but also to think in TL (Madrid and García Sánchez, 2001; Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

#### *Task-Based Language Teaching*

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is a teaching approach that makes use of real-world tasks as the central unit of language instruction. The general assumption of TBLT is that learning is done through interaction and communication with the help of meaningful and purposeful tasks. There is a broad definition of the word "task"; according to Richards and



Rodgers (2001, p.224) “a task is an activity or goal that is carried out using language, such as finding a solution to a puzzle, reading a map and giving directions, making a telephone call, writing a letter or reading a set of instructions and assembling a toy”. Swain (1985) attaches importance to comprehensible output and states that properly selected tasks fulfill both input and output requirements (cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Tasks are also “believed to foster processes of negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation that are the heart of second language learning” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.228).

Similar to the Communicative approach “conversation” is the main purpose of TBLT, so that learners can use language outside the classroom. Thus the role of L1 is diminished and learners are encouraged to be exposed to a TL environment as much as possible.

This section discussed different approaches and methods that have been developed throughout the history of TL acquisition. It has been observed that each of the method has its own peculiarities and drawbacks as well as its own position towards L1 employment. Some of the approaches encourage L1 use in English classroom however some of the approaches prohibit. More extensive discussion about the reasons for L1 prohibition and avoidance takes place in the next chapter.

### **2.3 Monolingual approach**

Throughout the history of language methods and approaches there have always been two contradictory views about L1 use. Some approaches were in favor of L1 use and others were strictly against it. In this section I will discuss each approach separately, including its pros and cons as well as the reasons for their emergence.

The twentieth century was the time of prosperity in language teaching when a lot of theories and revolutions were made in language acquisition (Hall and Cook, 2012). This period is also known as the era of “Great Reform” (Hawkins, 1987, cited in Cook, 2001). Early research in investigating the role and use of TL in the classroom dates back to the 1960s and 1970s. The monolingual approach to language learning gained its popularity at the end of nineteenth century and it was believed that TL was best acquired without the use of L1. The main principle of monolingual approach was to resemble L2 learning to L1 acquisition, in other words it was believed that L2 acquisition should occur in the same way as children acquire their L1, without any reference to their native language (McMillan and Rivers, 2011). Teachers placed more emphasis on fluency while grammar and the use

of L1 were ignored. It is also reported in Cook (2001, p.404) that “spoken language is more basic than written, explicit discussion of grammar should be avoided, and language should be practiced as a whole, rather than as separate parts”.

Various methods and approaches to language learning like the Direct and Communicative methods, the Natural approach as well as the Audio-lingual methods have emphasized the importance of TL use (Thompson, 2006). For the last two decades L1 avoidance has been linked with the emergence of the CLT approach since from that time interest towards L1 as well as its “usefulness” and “values” have been ignored (Ma, 2009, p.59). Cummins (2007) discusses three main assumptions of monolingual approach and also indicates that these assumptions are best reflected in direct, audio-lingual and audio-visual approaches as well as in communicative language teaching, first: (a) Teaching should occur only in TL; (b) No use of translation is allowed; (c) TL and students’ L1 has to be distanced from each other especially in immersion and bilingual classes. Voicu (2012) also presents some other principles of monolingual approach, they are: (a) L2 learning should be similar to L1 acquisition; (b) L1 and L2 should be distinguished and separated; (c) the role and place of L2 in the classroom should be emphasized by means of its constant use.

Howatt (1984) comments on the following by stating that principles of monolingual approach has made a lot of changes in the language teaching of the twentieth century and served as a basis for the emergence of other methods and approaches (cited in Cook, 2001).

### **2.3.1 Reasons behind the use of monolingual approach**

There are several reasons which could have led to the emergence of monolingual approach. Some of them are going to be discussed in the following section.

Cook (2001) reports that since 1880s majority of teaching approaches started to follow the principles of Direct method in an attempt to avoid L1 use. So that in twentieth century anti-L1 propaganda has occupied a special place in language teaching methodology.

This era also known as *Reform Movement* has suggested following goals:

- “(a) Emphasis on spoken language; training in phonetics essential for teachers. (b) All teaching to be done in the target language; translation to be avoided. (c) Inductive approach to rules of grammar: language samples first, rules later. (d) Learners should hear the language first before seeing it in written form. (e) Words should be presented in sentences and sentences should be practiced in meaningful

contexts and not be taught as isolated, disconnected elements” (Mahapatra, 2014, p.109-110).

He goes on to explain its assumption and states that more emphasis was put on oral speech; L1 was considered to hinder thinking in TL; English should not be learned by using isolated words but with complete sentences; grammar should be taught inductively; teaching of phonetics could yield good pronunciation and establishing direct link between the TL and concrete object. As a result crucial changes were made in language methodology and completely new “natural” methods of teaching were introduced. The main assumption of which was to learn language in the same way as children acquire their native language (Mahapatra, 2014).

Meiring and Norman (2002, p.27) in their paper present different reasons which could have led to the emergence of the Monolingual approach. They declare that tendency to TL supremacy takes its roots from Direct Method and emerged as a reaction against the grammar-translation method and its tenets. As a result, significant changes in language methodology occurred like the exclusion of L1 and prohibition of translation, unknown words were taught through the use of pictures, images, drawings and associations (Tamura, 2006). She goes on to explain that proponents of DM emphasized the importance of spoken language over accuracy.

Another reason proposed by Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) is that teachers with low TL proficiency over relied on L1 use so that MT use began to be associated with teachers’ incapability while ample use of TL would mean high proficiency of TL. It was also believed that L1 interferes with FL learning because: (a) it was supposed that frequent employment of L1 will become a common habit for teachers and students; (b) L1 may confuse the process of FL learning; (c) Language transfer between L1 and FL may have a negative influence due to the existence of false cognates or other differences in syntactic structure of the sentences; (d) L1 use in FL classroom impedes comprehensible input (Voicu, 2012).

From the discussions above it can be observed that the role of L1 in the monolingual approach has been diminished and underestimated. Ping and Ma (2009) explain that it happens mostly because of pedagogical, practical and socio-linguistic reasons. The pedagogical reason for L1 avoidance according to Schweers (1999) is the enhancing of L2 exposure and the improvement of “communicative competence in TL” (cited in Ma, 2009, p.59). The practical reason behind the L1 banning according to Fodor and Thevenaz (2005)

is the issue of immigrant learners who came from varied backgrounds to learn English, so that trainers in their attempt to avoid the discrimination of one's language preferred to use English (cited in Ma, 2009). "Linguistic imperialism" proposed by Phillipson (1992) is another rationale for employing *English Only* which stands for the "political" power of English (cited in Ma, 2009, p.59).

Laufer and Shmueli (1997) suggest two reasons for teachers L1 avoidance: the first is multilingual classes where students do not share one common language and the second reason is teacher simply ignore learners' L1 although the classes are monolingual.

Auerbach (1993) argues that the reason for teachers L1 evasion is pressure that comes from school policies and pedagogical demands. She reports that because of this pressure teachers' L1 integration is seen as something terrible making them feel guilty. However Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) believe that some teachers avoid L1 in English classroom simply because they try to follow the demands of language policy. They also propose that some teachers do not share common L1 with their learners and thus prefer to speak strictly in TL. In order to avoid this issue authors recommend future teachers to be proficient in students' L1 as well.

### **2.3.2 Views about monolingual approach as a distracting tool**

However, nowadays we can observe that some hegemonic principles of monolingual approach are being revalued and criticized for some particular reasons. This view is also supported by Auerbach (1993) who indicates that the rationales behind the English only policy are no longer convincing and pedagogically grounded. Recent research results provide more evidences in favor of L1 use. The discussion below presents those principles of monolingual approach that are being criticized and opposed for their impracticability.

One of the main tenets of Direct and Natural approach that requires TL learning imitate L1 acquisition has been criticized by several researchers as well as Cook (2001) who argues that it is difficult to implement it in real life as both of them belong to two different language situations (cited in Sadeharju, 2012). Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) propose that one of the reasons for that- is the lack of time. According to them TL acquisition is conducted in a limited amount of time and requires more time and effort while L1 acquisition occurs in more natural way since learner's childhood. Thus it is unreasonable to say that TL learning should resemble L1 acquisition. One of the other reasons is the

distinction between the acquisition processes of both TL and MT languages. Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) in their discussion on the differences between L1 and TL learning suggest several arguments for that: (a) FL learners lack the opportunity to interact face-to-face with more proficient TL speakers, (b) learners are unable to practice TL sufficiently because of no appropriate context for that, (c) learners feel relaxed when they are able to switch to L1 whenever they feel the need for that, so that this process decreases the amount of TL use in turn, (d) the status of L1 and TL in learners' mind influences their learning process and, (e) the last one, TL learning greatly differs from L1 acquisition in that in the former learners come to the classroom with prior linguistic knowledge while the L1 acquisition process takes place from the very beginning and in more close intercommunion.

Another piece of evidence that criticizes one of the other principles of the monolingual approach is proposed by Timor (2012, p.9) who claims that the monolingual approach to language learning is not supported "theoretically or practically" and proposes several "psycho-linguistic arguments" that support the use of MT by teachers: (a) Teachers' use of students' MT does not hinder students' TL learning as they already possess established MT "language basis" that according to Cook (2002, cited in Timor, 2012) due to L1, learners treat FL tasks with more responsibility; (b) TL and MT language systems are not separate as it used to be considered before, that's why Timor (2012, p.9) asserts that "FL teaching should match the invisible processes in the brain and should not be separated from the MT"; (c) TL learning is comprised of "cognitive, social, and emotional factors that are inseparable and equally related to the MT and the FL".

There is a common belief that teacher' use of TL positively affects the students' TL learning efficiency. For instance, studies by Carroll, Clark, Edwards and Handick (1967) and Wolf (1977) suggest a positive correlation between teachers' use of TL (French) and students' proficiency in that language (cited in Thompson, 2006). However, this view was contradicted by Macaro (2001) in his study with pre-service teachers. He has found that there is no relation between the teacher's and students' L1 employment nor does a teacher's TL use have any noteworthy influence on students' TL employment.

In the study by Hall and Cook (2012) it is reported that the rationale behind the reassessment of monolingual approach was the practical needs in language teaching. The role of the learning context (ESL or EFL) should be taken into account as an important factor in establishing learning approaches. Murakami (2001) argues that the ESL strategies

are not appropriate for an EFL context. He points out that those English lessons that are mostly conducted by non-native speakers of English in a monolingual context are more effective than lessons conducted by native speakers in multilingual or ESL context. Similarly, Phillipson (1992) also contradicts the common view about the benefits of absolute exposure to TL. He claims that it is not an ideal method for acquiring new language, according to him there are other factors that play a more crucial role such as: “quality of the text material, trained teachers, and sound methods of teaching” (cited in Miles, 2004, p.9). Moreover Khati (2011) is convinced that employing English only for giving instructions and explanations does not always guarantee a successful comprehension of the tasks.

All this goes to show that learning a language combines a variety of activities that are of the same importance and none should be ignored for the sake of effective learning and teaching. The only possible conclusion to be drawn from all this is that although current approaches and methods promote the maximum use of TL, current research findings show that L1 is still employed to deal with difficult grammar, explain new words and concepts and give instruction; for translation activities; for classroom management, to reduce stress, allow students express themselves and to establish solidarity with students and etc (Khati, 2011; Afzal, 2013; Hamidi and Sarem, 2012).

Atkinson (1993) also supports this view and reports that despite the negative pressure on L1 by most of the current literature, it is still used by teachers for “clarifying meaning, saving time in their teaching and motivating students” (cited in Bensen and Çavuşoğlu, 2013, p.80). Similarly to this, Cook (2001) and Lucas and Katz (1994) declare that although the use of students’ own language has been completely banned by many language policies it was still employed in many different teaching and learning contexts.

## **2.4 Bilingual approach**

As a result of the debates against L1 exclusion from FL classroom this section is going to present a more detailed discussion of why and how L1 can be employed in FLA positively. It is also going to present views supporting L1 use and related studies on its employment.

#### **2.4.1 Views supporting L1 use**

It has been reported that the increase in the interest towards L1 use started in the 1990s (Lasagabaster, 2013). Recent findings on second language acquisition show that this issue needs more research and reassessment (Hall and Cook, 2012). Research studies reveal that L1 may be used as facilitating and supporting strategy to improve TL acquisition process, this view is also supported by the following scholars as well like, Hamidi and Sarem (2012), Schweers (2003) and Tang (2002). Tang (2002, p.41) for instance has revealed in his study that Chinese (L1) “plays only a supporting and facilitating role” meanwhile the main language of the classroom is still English (TL). Most of the learners prefer exclusive TL use and wish that Chinese should be used only when needed and should take no more than 10% of the classroom time. Study results conducted by Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) suggest that L1 can be served as a psychological tool especially in the meaning – focused activities as learners could deliberate about the task and assist each other during the task accomplishment.

Anton and DiCamila (1988) have revealed similar results concerning the positive use of L1 use in joint interactions. They indicate that L1 facilitates efficient task completion especially in group activities.

Nation (2003) believes that the employment of L1 for classroom management and translation activities can enhance TL proficiency. He also highlights the efficiency of bilingual dictionaries as well as the use of borrowings in order to expander the learners’ vocabulary. He goes on to discuss about the role of L1 and indicates that L1 should be accepted as any other tool just like: pictures, demonstration or real objects to facilitate TL learning. He states that L1 exclusion would mean the exclusion of other tools as well.

Similarly, Murakami (2001) indicates that the judicious use of L1 can be used as a facilitator that he terms as “bridging”. Respect towards a students’ mother tongue and their background are one of the main tenets of “Bridging”. Çelik (2008, p.4) is of the same opinion, he acknowledges L1 as a factor that builds students’ identity and calls for the respect of students’ native language and background culture. Piasecka shares the same view and reports: “If the learner of a second language is encouraged to ignore his/her native language, he/she might well feel his/her identity threatened” (cited in Schweers, 2003, p.34).

Atkinson (1987) for instance, highlights the importance of translation by stating that it is one of the favored tools of most learners. Nation (2003) comes to the same conclusion that among all methods for learning new vocabulary, translation has always seemed to come up as the most efficient one. Similarly, Ross (2000) emphasizes the significance of translation and recognizes it as a fifth skill since it enhances comprehension between foreigners. The similar support is addressed towards the use of dictionaries, it is mentioned in his study that learners cannot benefit from monolingual dictionaries in a sufficient level, as majority of learners still lack a sufficient amount of vocabulary. Laufer and Shmueli (1997) remark that it should not be concluded that bilingual dictionaries are more superior than monolingual, they go on to explain that sometimes learners need direct translation of new words in order to get concrete meaning and avoid some doubts about it.

Views about the benefits of translation to L1 are also supported by the research findings of the study conducted by Storch and Aldosari (2010), wherein it is reported that students had positive views towards L1 use and L1 was used for social, cognitive and pedagogical reasons. They have also revealed that L1 used mainly for task management and vocabulary discussions.

Findings of the study provided by Timor (2012, p.13) demonstrate that both elementary school teachers as well as secondary school teachers had a positive attitude towards MT use and it was revealed that students' MT was mainly employed for explaining grammar and checking reading comprehension.

To put the whole matter in a nutshell these and other views of the researchers confirm Timor's (2012) view that the monolingual approach to language learning is not supported either theoretically or practically. The most sensible conclusion is given by Timor (2012, p.13) who suggests that these findings should go beyond the scope of research and studies and gain more recognition among policy makers who should also take into consideration "teaching practices" along with "theories" and "worldwide trends" when making rules concerning the language of instruction.

#### **2.4.2 Reasons behind the L1 use**

The following section is going to discuss the reasons of switching to L1 both by teachers and students. Different factors influencing the process of switching to L1 have been presented.



Nation (2003) proposes following reasons of learners L1 use: (a) learners refer to L1 when they have poor English proficiency; (b) it is natural process for L2 learners; (c) because of the feeling of embarrassment and the last, (d) absence of interest.

Flymann-Mattsson and Burenhult (1999) also suggest some other functions when teachers refer to L1, the first function is (a) Topic Switch: it refers to the case when the teacher switches from TL to L1 according to the topic of the dialogue; (b) Affective Function is the second factor that causes teachers' code-switching. Teachers switch to L1 in order to express their emotions and establish good relationship with the students; (c) Repetitive Function: the teacher switches to students' L1 in order to convey the meaning of the TL and provide clarity for something important. For example, giving instructions for some important and difficult tasks in L1 can provide more clarity and comprehension among FL learners. Another reason is proposed by Polio and Duff (1994) they state that teachers code-switch because of little experience and knowledge to adjust their talk respectively.

As for Nation (2003) learners' use of L1 in a monolingual context is a normal process and suggests several reasons for that; (a) Nation states that it is a natural process when students speak the language they share with other learners; (b) L1 does not need any effort for managing communication and; (c) L2 can serve as an obstacle for introverted and unconfident students.

In addition to this, an interesting result was obtained from the global survey conducted by Hall and Cook (2013, p.27). It shows that teachers tend to use 'own-language' in low-level classrooms of state schools rather than in private. Moreover, it was found that experienced teachers are more inclined to use "own-language"; they propose that the rationale behind this can be the impracticability of English-only method in real classroom conditions. Study results conducted by Khati (2011) revealed several reasons for teachers' and learners' code-switching, they are: (a) learners' inhibition and fear of being mistaken to mispronounce some complicated words in front of the whole classroom; (b) lack of sufficient exposure to TL communication in the classroom; (c) and others, like: interference of L1; teachers' neglect towards learners' use of L1; learners' individual intellection; learners' negative perception of L1 and teachers' unconstructive feedback. Another remarkable result is obtained from his study was that learners from government-aided schools employed more L1 in comparison to those students from private English medium schools. This result goes along with the findings of Hall and Cook in the year

2013; in their case study teachers used L1 in low-level classrooms of state schools rather than in private.

All in all, it must be acknowledged that L1 employment takes place in every TL class for some particular reasons and it is inevitable to exclude it from English classroom totally.

### **2.4.3 Required Use of L1**

From the discussions above we could observe that L1 has some facilitating and supportive functions for TL acquisition. This section is going to discuss these functions and present suggestions for positive use of L1 obtained from the research findings of some scholars and researchers. For instance, study results conducted by Kern (1994), revealed some positive uses of L1 for reading tasks, he states that L1 enhances learners' comprehension skills, helps to memorize and catch the meaning of the text (cited in Macaro, 2001). Voicu (2012) in her paper also presents some appropriate uses of L1. She suggests that L1 is beneficial for beginner learners; L1 can also be employed for translation activities, as long explanations according to Voicu waste classroom time. She goes on to explain that sometimes it is much efficient to give a direct translation of the word or employ visual aids; it also can be used to distinguish and compare similarities and differences between L1 and TL; for semantic translation of proverbs, idiomatic expressions and finding their analogs in their own language, as well as for translation of songs into L1 or acting jokes. According to Voicu (2012) the use of L1 for the aforementioned activities may result better comprehension of topic and reduce classroom anxiety. She also suggests L1 for classroom management, teaching difficult grammar concepts and for giving feedback to learners' errors. Another research finding provided by Kayaoğlu (2012) suggests that L1 helps to improve reading and writing skills and it was found beneficial for teaching vocabulary and grammar. Mart (2013) requires using L1 for teaching and learning problems, vocabulary comprehension and for understanding difficult concept.

More expanded suggestion for L1 use is given by of Cook (2001, p.418):

“provide a short-cut for giving instructions and explanations where the cost of the L2 is too great; to build up interlinked L1 and L2 knowledge in the students' minds; to carry out learning tasks through collaborative dialogue with fellow students; to develop L2 activities such as code-switching for later real-life use”.

Similarly Atkinson (1987, p. 243-244) recommends L1 for the following activities:

“eliciting language (all levels), checking comprehension (all levels); giving instructions (early levels); co-operation among learners, discussions of classroom

methodology (early levels); presentation and reinforcement of language (mainly early levels); checking for sense and testing”.

Piasecka (1988) have also identified some other beneficial uses for L1 in a foreign language classroom, like:

“Negotiation of the syllabus and the lesson; Record keeping; Classroom management; Scene setting; Language analysis; Presentation of rules governing grammar, phonology, morphology and spelling; Discussion of cross-cultural issues; Providing instructions or prompts; Explanation of errors; and Assessment of comprehension” (cited in Mart, 2013, p.12).

The conclusion to which this discussion leads to is that L1 use should not be always accepted as hindrance or deficiency to TL learning process. Research findings show that that on the contrary when it is used judiciously and efficiently it can be used as facilitating instrument to encourage FL learners as well as affective and pedagogical tool to enhance students’ TL proficiency.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Overall design of the Study

In the present study the qualitative method of research was employed with the help of open-ended questionnaires. One of the advantages of the qualitative research method is that it helps to gain concrete and more detailed data about the values, beliefs, emotions, attitudes and behaviors of specific individuals (Mack, MacQueen, Namey, Quest and Woodsong, 2005). In addition, the employment of open-ended questionnaires provides broad and rich answers to the questions due to the less formal interaction between the researcher and respondent (Mack et al., 2005). The survey employed in this study consists of two parts: demographic questions and questions concerning participants' attitude towards L1 use in an English classroom. As this survey includes open-ended questions, the use of the NVivo12 computer software program in order to code and aid data analysis was found to necessary.

NVivo is a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS), the main function of which is not to analyze but to facilitate the process of qualitative data analysis (Zamawe, 2015). He goes on to explain that in contrast to statistical software programs qualitative software programs cannot analyze data. The responsibility of dealing with the analysis of qualitative data still remains under the control of the researcher. Similarly Ishak and Bakar (2012, p.95) point out that the main function of NVivo is "to ease data management and data analysis processes and make it more manageable as well as rigorous". They go on to explain that "NVivo or any other qualitative software are just tools that will assist the researcher in undertaking an analysis of qualitative data" (p.95).

In other words NVivo is a device that helps to put all the data into one project, then sort and code it into relevant nodes so that a researcher can easily analyze data and have quick access to all survey content at the click of a button.

#### 3.2 Settings and Participants

The questionnaires were collected from the universities of Sakarya and Kocaeli in Turkey, and the universities of Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan. Participants of this survey were teachers and

students of the English Language and Literature, English Language Teaching and Simultaneous Translation departments. Among survey respondents participating from Kyrgyzstan specifically, there were participants from all the different departments except for English Language Teaching, as there is no English Language Teaching Department in the universities of Kyrgyzstan. In contrast, all the Turkish survey participants were teachers and students of the English Language Teaching department.

This study was carried out with the participation of teachers and students from the universities of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. As this study aimed at learners' and teachers' view towards L1 use in an English classroom, only students and teachers of English Language and Literature, English Language Teaching and Simultaneous Translation departments were asked to participate in the survey. The total number of teachers is 41 and the total number of students is 35. Participants were chosen randomly.

Data on teachers were gathered from the universities of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. The teachers' data was categorized according to their gender, type of institution they work for, degree of education, teaching experience and the English proficiency they teach most. All teachers were qualified English language teachers with different degrees of education, ranging from a Bachelor's degree to PhD.

The study included 41 teachers from both universities of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. 21 teachers participated from the universities of Turkey and 20 teachers participated from the universities of Kyrgyzstan.

It is worth noting that both Kyrgyz and Russian languages are spoken and understood quite well in Kyrgyzstan, meaning that in the following survey analysis "L1" refers to both Russian and Kyrgyz languages as well. This note is applicable only for survey participants from Kyrgyzstan.

Table 1 presents demographic information about teacher participants.

Table 1

*Demographic Information About Teacher Participants*

	Gender		Type of institution		Degree of Education				Total
	Male	Female	State	Private	BA	Dip.Spc	MA	PhD	
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Turkish	13	8	21	0	10	0	6	5	21
Kyrgyz	1	19	9	11	1	8	7	4	20

As illustrated in Table 1, the number of female and male teachers in Turkish context is almost equal, with male teachers prevailing slightly over female teachers, while in the Kyrgyz context it can be seen that female teachers constitute almost 95% of the total number of respondents. All teacher participants from Turkey reported that they work in state universities. 9 teacher participants from Kyrgyzstan responded that they work in a state university, while the other 11 teacher participants stated that they work in private universities. As for their degree of education, 10 teachers from Turkey reported that they hold a Bachelor’s Degree (BA), while the number of teachers holding a BA from Kyrgyzstan is only 1. The number of teachers holding a Master’s and PhD degree is also close in both countries. As it is shown in Table 1, the number of Turkish teachers holding a Master’s degree (MA) is 6 while the number of Kyrgyz teachers holding a MA is 7. Finally, 5 participants from Turkey and 4 participants from Kyrgyzstan hold PhD degrees. Apart from that, 8 teachers from Kyrgyz universities reported that they hold a Diploma of a Specialist. It is worth clarifying that a Diploma of a Specialist is a degree that is given after 5-years of education in the Higher Education Institutions of Kyrgyzstan. This education system is common for all post Soviet countries.

Table 2

*Teachers' Distribution According to Their Teaching Experience*

Number of years	From 0 to 10 years	From 11 to 20 years	From 21 to 30 years	Total
Turkish	9	8	4	21
Kyrgyz	10	8	2	20

As it can be observed from Table, 2 the length of a teachers' teaching experience has been classified into 3 categories: from 0 to 10, from 11 to 20, and from 21 to 30 years. As it can be seen from Table 2, the majority of teachers from Turkey and Kyrgyzstan reported that they have got 0-10 and 11-20 years of teaching experience. 4 of the participants from Turkey and only 1 participant from Kyrgyzstan declared that they have been teaching for 21 to 30 years.

Table 3

*Teachers' Distribution According to English Proficiency They Teach Most*

English proficiency	Beginner to Pre-Intermediate	Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate	Advanced	Beginner to Upper-Intermediate	Intermediate to Advanced	All levels	Total
Turkish	10	4	5	1	1	0	21
Kyrgyz	4	8	1	2	4	1	20

As it is illustrated in Table 3, the majority of the participants from the Turkish context teach beginner to pre-intermediate levels. 4 of the participants teach Intermediate to Upper-intermediate levels, and 5 of the participants teach Advanced level. 1 of the participants of the Turkish questionnaire reported that he/she teaches levels starting from Beginner to Upper-Intermediate, and 1 of the participants reported that he/she teaches levels starting from Intermediate to Advanced.

Concerning participants of the Kyrgyz questionnaire the largest number of teachers teaches Intermediate to Upper-intermediate levels. 4 of the participants reported that they teach Beginner to Pre-Intermediate level while other 4 participants declared that they teach Intermediate to Advanced levels. 1 participant teaches Advanced level and 2 of the teachers reported that they teach Beginner to Upper-Intermediate levels. Only 1 teacher from the Kyrgyz questionnaire stated that they teach all levels.

Data obtained from the students' questionnaires was distributed according gender, type of institution they study, English proficiency and TL learning experience and placed into tables.

The questionnaires were delivered randomly to the university students of Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. Participants in the study were strictly university students of English Language and Literature, English Language Teaching and Simultaneous Translation departments.

The students' survey includes 35 students participating from Turkish and Kyrgyz universities. 15 students participated from the universities of Turkey and 20 students participated from the universities of Kyrgyzstan. The participants varied in their gender, type of institution they study in, English proficiency and TL learning experience.

Table 4

*Demographic Information About Student Participants*

	Gender		Type of institution		English proficiency			Total
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Private</u>	<u>Beginner to Pre-Intermediate</u>	<u>Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate</u>	<u>Advanced</u>	
Turkish	4	11	15	0	0	2	13	15
Kyrgyz	1	19	16	4	0	7	13	20

As illustrated in Table 4, the total number of male participants is 5, and that of female participants is 30. The number of student participants also differs according to the type of institution they study at: all respondents participating from the universities of Turkey reported that they study in a state university, while 16 of the respondents participating from



the universities of Kyrgyzstan reported that they study in a state university and 4 of them declared that they study in private universities. According to the level of English language proficiency, the majority of the participants from both contexts replied that they have advanced level of English. 2 participants from Turkey and 7 participants from Kyrgyzstan reported that they have Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate level of English. None of the participants from either contexts have Beginner to Pre-Intermediate level of English.

Table 5

*Students' Distribution According to Their Experience of Learning English*

Number of years	From 1 to 5 years	From 6 to 10	From 11 to 15	Total
Turkish	0	2	13	15
Kyrgyz	7	8	5	20

According to the experience of learning English participants were classified into 3 categories: from 0 to 5 years, from 6 to 10 and from 11 to 15 (see Table 5). As it can be observed from Table 5, most of the student participants from the Turkish context reported that they have 11 to 15 years of experience in learning English. Only 2 of the participants from Turkey have 6 to 10 years of English language learning experience.

Concerning student participants from Kyrgyzstan, 7 of the participants have been learning English for 1 to 5 years, 8 of the participants have been learning English for 6 to 10 years, and finally 5 of the participants have been learning English for 11 to 15 years.

### **3.3 Data collection and data collection instrument**

The data was gathered from the universities of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. The questionnaires were administered and collected in May, 2015 in Turkey and in March, 2015 in Kyrgyzstan.

An open-ended questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. It consists of two sections: the first section of the questionnaire includes demographic questions about participants and the second section includes open-ended questions. The second part of the participants' questionnaires consists of four items. The first two items of the teachers'

questionnaire was borrowed from the Yildirim and Mersinligil (2000) with some slight modifications. The first, third and fourth items from the students' questionnaire were adapted from the interview questions conducted by Ping and Ma (2009) with some amendments. Other items from the teachers' and students' questionnaire were developed based on the research questions of the thesis paper.

In addition to this, all the questionnaire items were prepared in English considering the fact that this study mostly focuses on English language teachers and students with a high English proficiency level. All the participants were informed that data obtained from this survey will be used only for academic purpose.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

In this section the analysis of the data gathered from the universities of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan both by teachers and students is presented. In total, 21 teachers and 15 students took part from the universities of Turkey and 20 teachers and 20 students participated from the universities of Kyrgyzstan in the given study. This study employed a qualitative approach to data analysis. Handwritten versions of the questionnaires were transferred into Word documents and all the questionnaires were imported into the NVivo12 software program. Related excerpts from each survey were coded into the relevant nodes. Coding is the process of managing and organizing related extracts from word documents into containers called *nodes* (Zamawe, 2015). "Nodes are a representation of variables that a researcher is interested in in his or her study" (Ishak and Bakar, 2012, p.99).

Data obtained from the open-ended survey was analyzed in detail before being transferred into codebooks through the NVivo12 software program. A codebook is a "compilation of codes, their content descriptions, and a brief data example for reference" (Saldana, 2009, p.21). Finally, the data from the codebooks was transferred into tables with the number of participants (N) and references (R). Some other abbreviations were employed in the tables, like: TR and KG which stand for Turkish participants and Kyrgyz participants respectively.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Interpretation of the findings from the teachers' questionnaire

In this chapter research findings obtained from the questionnaires concerning teachers' attitudes towards their own and students' use of L1 are presented and discussed. The reasons behind their attitude have also been investigated. Activities best carried out through L1 and TL have been listed and discussed as well.

##### 4.1.1 Teacher's attitude towards their own use of L1

The first research question aimed to reveal teachers' attitude toward *teachers'* and *students'* L1 use in an English classroom. This section displays the survey results of the teachers' belief regarding their own use of L1. To answer the first research question on a teachers' attitude towards their own use of L1 in an English classroom, a qualitative analysis of the survey findings was made. The survey results are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6

*Teachers' Attitude Towards Their Own Use of L1*

Teachers' attitude	N	R
Positive	25	25
Negative	16	16

Table 6 illustrates the number of references and total number of teachers participating from Turkish and Kyrgyz universities. The study revealed that a considerable number of teachers (25) have a positive attitude towards a teachers' L1 use in an EFL classroom. A minority of teachers (16) had a negative attitude with regard to their own use of L1. These findings are similar to the findings of Yıldırım and Mersinligil (2000) which also revealed teachers' positive view towards their own use of L1. Teachers who had a positive view emphasized the importance and necessity of L1 use in an EFL classroom and reported that L1 can be employed with beginner and elementary level students; to create a comfortable

and stress free atmosphere, to explain complex grammar rules, increase motivation, save classroom time and increase students' comprehension. However most of them pointed out that it should be used in a limited and judicious way and should be reduced gradually.

*TR Teacher 5: "In general as a teacher you have responsibilities to create a natural environment of target language and help students adapt themselves to it. However, when students have difficulties in understanding, L1 may be tolerable. It should be very limited".*

*TR Teacher 3: "I am of the opinion that there is definitely room for L1 use in a L2 English classroom. However, the frequency and amount of it is something to be considered very carefully. It should always be used for a reasonable reason. The ultimate aim of every instructor must be to reduce the amount of L1 use gradually, though".*

*TR Teacher 13: "I think it depends. Some students feel more secured at the very beginning of their classes and they can express their feelings a lot better. It is quite important to keep up coherence in the class. Regarding this adaptation period, we can use L1 in the class at minimum level. However, later on we must diminish the usage of L1 as much as possible".*

These findings were in line with some other related studies on this topic. Research study results provided by Alshammari (2011) in Saudi Arabia revealed that 69% of teachers used Arabic for different reasons and this identified their positive view towards its use. The questionnaire results of a study provided by Tang (2002) show positive attitudes of Chinese teachers towards L1 use in an English classroom. According to the results of his study 72% of the teachers reported their positive view towards the use of Chinese.

16 teachers who had negative views were strongly against L1 use in an EFL classroom and pointed out that there is no benefit of its use in English classroom.

*KG Teacher 1: "My attitude towards Teachers' use of L1 in an English classroom is negative because it doesn't benefit Ss' target language learning. If teachers use only TL during the lessons and all lessons are conducted only in TL, students will learn better and faster".*

#### 4.1.1.1 The difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers towards their own use of L1

Data obtained from the teachers' survey revealed that there is a considerable difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers. The majority of respondents from the Turkish context (18) tend to have a positive view, while the majority of respondents from the Kyrgyz context (13) tend to have a negative attitude towards teachers' L1 use in EFL classroom (see Table.7).

Table 7

*Teachers' Attitude Towards Their Own Use of L1 According to Their Nationality*

Teachers' attitude	Turkish	Kyrgyz	Total	R
	N	N	N	
Positive	18	7	25	25
Negative	3	13	16	16

Teachers from the Kyrgyz context proposed several reasons for their negative attitude with regard to L1 use by teachers. The teachers mostly responded that students will get used to L1 and will further rely on teachers' prompts. According to the teachers' view, students should not only talk in TL but also think in TL. They also argued that L1 use makes a lesson theoretical whereas conducting lessons in TL makes lessons more practical.

*KG Teacher 13: "In my opinion, teachers have to speak in the language they are teaching. Children don't have any other opportunity except in classes".*

*KG Teacher 2: "I think teachers should always use only TL or at least try to reduce the use of L1, as I think that in using L1 students may get used to translating from L1 to TL and it's bad for the quality of TL acquisition".*

The Turkish colleagues proposed their own reason for their positive view towards the use of L1 in an English classroom. They expressed their preference towards L1 use mostly for beginner level students; to save time, provide better comprehension and clarification, increase motivation and to teach grammar.

*TR Teacher 10: “I have been teaching English for about 14 years. In the beginning of my career I was trying not to use L1 a lot. But I noticed the fact that Turkish students cannot be easily motivated in a lesson when they don’t understand. Now I use L1 whenever I need to, especially while explaining grammar. To me, grammar should be taught through the mother tongue, particularly for beginners, but later it can be changed”.*

*TR Teacher 15: “As an English teacher I sometimes prefer to use L1, especially when I teach grammar. In beginner classes, using L1 is almost a must. Since they’re not familiar with the TL and they have very limited knowledge of TL vocabulary I use L1. In my opinion, particularly for beginner students, using L1 saves time and the students have a better understanding of the things I teach”.*

#### **4.1.2 Teachers’ attitude towards students’ L1 use in English classroom**

The teachers’ questionnaire sought to reveal teachers’ attitude towards learners’ L1 use as well. Whether they encourage or oppose to students’ L1 employment in English classroom. To answer this research question qualitative data obtained from teachers’ questionnaire was analyzed. The results are illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8

*Teachers’ Attitude Towards Students’ L1 Use*

Teachers’ attitude towards students’ L1 use	N	R
Positive	21	21
Negative	20	20

As it can be observed from Table 8 there is no considerable difference between teachers’ views towards students’ use of L1. The number of teachers (21) with a positive view slightly dominates the number of teachers (20) with a negative view. The teachers with a positive attitude towards a *student’s* L1 use highlighted the supporting and facilitating role of L1, however they have pointed out that it should not be overused and must be diminished with time.

To understand the rationale behind the teachers' positive view several reasons were proposed; according to some teachers' beliefs, L1 is beneficial when: students have limited English proficiency; when there is no alternative except L1; when students do not know the English equivalents of some words; when students have difficulty with grammar rules or new vocabulary; when students feel stressed and when students work in pairs. Below, a more detailed discussion of their reasons is presented:

#### *Students' poor English proficiency*

Teachers replied that L1 is acceptable primarily for students with weak English proficiency so as to deal with their comprehension problems.

*TR Teacher 13: "As I mentioned above, the level of the students is quite crucial. If they're low beginners it is inevitable that they will use L1 a lot in class. As far as I am concerned it doesn't do much harm in the first weeks. Teacher should warn the students gently and may ask them to say the things they cited in English again. This situation should be improved as the weeks go by".*

*KG Teacher 15. "When it comes to students' use of TL, it is possible at the beginning of the course. When they cannot produce any TL yet, in order to figure out whether they can understand the teacher, it is possible to let them use L1. In addition, when they are in a silent period it is forgivable to give them chance only to reply, but not talk".*

#### *L1 as a last resort*

Teachers responded that L1 can be employed by students when there is no other alternative left except for L1.

*TR Teacher 11: "Likewise, students might use L1 in TL classrooms but once again only when there is no more alternatives which might be applied by the use of TL. Nevertheless, some topics and comparative structural (grammar) courses might be a good practice for students to use both languages. But, generally speaking we should make them use TL as much as they can. Only by giving them more opportunities can they improve themselves. Thus the use of TL as a means of communication is a must".*

*TR Teacher 3: "Students can depend on L1 use when it's pedagogically acceptable. There is nothing wrong with an instructor using an interaction in L2 with the student responding in L1 when necessary. Again, it should be made very clear to the learners that they are supposed to increase the amount of L2 use for their communication purposes and that L1 should only be used when it's impossible for them to express themselves in L2".*

### *Translation of unknown words or dealing with tough grammar rules*

Teachers also responded that students may be allowed to use their own language to teach grammar or translate the meaning of unknown words.

*KG Teacher 18: "In some cases it's all right for Ss to use Russian language in order to understand the meaning of the words. Mostly I insist on using only English language".*

*KG Teacher 9: "I don't think using L1 is very beneficial except sometimes when they use it to translate unknown vocabulary. It helps teachers see if the student understands it right".*

*TR Teacher 2: "Depending on the type of work students are dealing with. My attitude towards students' of L1 is changeable. If they are involved in a communicative activity the use of L1 might hinder their progress. But if they are dealing with the rules of TL or discipline issues or translation activities, it might be used".*

### *L1 as a solution to overcome feeling of anxiety and fear*

Teachers reported that the employment of L1 by students at the beginning of the course will make students feel comfortable, relaxed and more motivated.

*TR Teacher 16: "Students who try very hard to speak English as often as they can at the beginning of the course give up and get disappointed which cause serious problems for that students. Instead, students should be encouraged to use TL slowly by asking questions such as "How do you say that in TL?"".*

### *Pair work activities.*

According to teachers' responses students may be allowed to use L1 when they are engaged in pair work activities so that strong students can help weak students by using their own language.

*KG Teacher 18: "Sometimes it helps weaker students, when a teacher has grammar lessons, strong students help weaker ones. It is better to understand in their native language than to understand nothing. A teacher can speak in the language they are teaching but students can't. It usually works in mixed level classes".*

Teachers who were not in favor of L1 use by their students indicated that L1 prevents students from fluency and TL practice. Teachers stated that practice is the main key of learning a foreign language, so teachers should not deprive students of it. It has also been suggested that prohibition of L1 and setting rules for MT exclusion will lead to positive results and increase TL learning efficiency.



*KG Teacher 8: “The teacher should set the rule not to use L1 in class and keep making Ss speak TL saying that in this lesson she/he doesn’t understand Russian or Kyrgyz (L1). If Ss do use L1 it won’t benefit them, they won’t have any progress”.*

*KG Teacher 17: “In my classrooms students are not allowed to use L1 in their learning progress. “speak only in English” is one of the important rules which is decided by students at the beginning of the year. By breaking one of the rules students punish themselves by having extra homework...”*

*KG Teacher 14:” I think that the prohibition of the native language would increase the efficiency of learning target language...”*

#### **4.1.2.1 The difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers towards students’ use of L1**

This research question aimed to identify whether there is a difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers towards the students’ L1 use in English classroom. According to Table 10 it can be observed that findings of the survey did not show a great variation between Turkish teachers and Kyrgyz teachers with regard to their attitudes concerning students’ L1 use. The number of teachers who had a positive attitude and those with a negative one is quite close. Out of 21 participants who had a positive attitude 12 were Turkish teachers and 9 were Kyrgyz teachers. Out of 20 participants who were not in favor of L1 use 11 were Kyrgyz teachers and the other 9 respondents were Turkish teachers. In any case the number of Turkish teachers (12) supporting students’ L1 use slightly exceeds the number of their colleagues (9) from the Kyrgyz context. Among teachers who had a negative attitude the number of Kyrgyz teachers (11) slightly prevails over their Turkish colleagues (9).

Table 9

*Teachers’ Attitude Towards Students’ L1 Use According to Their Nationality*

Teachers’ attitude towards students’ L1 use	Turkish	Kyrgyz	Total	
	N	N	N	R
Positive	12	9	21	21
Negative	9	11	20	20

Survey analysis did not reveal any difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers with regard to students' L1 use. Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers reported same reasons for their positive and negative view. Turkish teachers reported that they allow their students to use L1 when they encounter with the following reasons: students' weak English language proficiency, lack of vocabulary, difficult grammar rules, translation activities, difficulty in explaining or expressing themselves, to provide motivation and as a last resort. Kyrgyz teachers reported that they support students' employment of L1 when learners have just started learning English, when students have problems with understanding grammar rules, for translation activities, for group co-operations and as time saving tool.

Both of the parties reported similar reasons for their positive view towards students' L1 use, like students' English proficiency, grammar issues and translation activities. However Turkish teachers had some extra uses for L1 employment, saying that learners may refer to L1 when they do not have enough vocabulary to express themselves or explain something. The teachers went on to explain that sometimes they allow learners to use L1 in order not to destroy their motivation for learning. This may be because a teacher's continuous correction and call for only TL use may intimidate learners. The teachers also indicated that students may refer to L1 as a last resort in situations when they really feel need for their native language.

*TR Teacher 18: "I am not, for sure, in favor of using L1 both by students and instructors in language classes. However, as I believe the most significant part and may be the most difficult one to provide is motivation for language learners, for the sake of it L1 use might be needed".*

Concerning Kyrgyz teachers' reasons, they were not eloquent as their Turkish colleagues. Except for similar activities that we had discussed above Kyrgyz teachers added that students may use L1 to facilitate each other. It means that stronger students may help weaker students to explain the materials they did not understand during the classroom. Teachers also reported that sometimes they allow their students to use L1 when they want to save time and quickly generate ideas. This may be because teachers have a loaded lesson schedule and very little time to cover all the classroom topics.

*KG Teacher 10: "Some of my students from time to time use L1 and it is unreasonable to deny this fact. However, the teacher should not act as if s/he doesn't understand their*

students. L1 may be used to save time or to generate the ideas from Ss fast where there is a necessity”.

*KG Teacher 18: “Sometimes it helps weaker students, when teacher has grammar lessons, strong students help weaker ones. It is better to understand in their native language than don’t understand nothing. Teacher can speak in the language they are teaching but students can’t. It usually works in mixed level classes”.*

Both Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers who were against L1 use by students believed that L1 deprives students’ from TL exposure and TL practice. Teachers believe that students should be encouraged to use English all the time regardless the type of the activity they are dealing with.

#### **4.1.3 Activities best carried out through L1 according to teachers’ view**

In order to answer this research question teachers were asked to list activities that are best carried out through L1 and TL. Findings of the survey are illustrated in Table 10. Survey analysis revealed that majority of teachers suggests L1 for explanation of grammar rules (22) and for translation activities (14).

*TR Teacher 1: “Teaching grammar can be carried out through L1 in order to avoid misunderstanding if it is necessary”.*

*TR Teacher 13: “Actually, I don’t prefer activities that promote the usage of L1. I think this shouldn’t be the aim of any activity in an English learning class. I generally explain grammatical topics (if the level of class is low) in L1 if necessary”.*

6 of the participants necessitated L1 use for creating comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. Different classroom activities like using humor, employing warm up activities and games, conducting simple every day dialogues or discussions were suggested as a clarification for their answer.

*TR Teacher 13: “In fact in some situations L1 gets quite necessary. For example, to motivate the students during the warm-up stage I sometimes use L1. Also, to deal with some trouble in class, L1 usage becomes a must”.*

*KG Teacher 10: “It is my belief that L1 may be used in the activities that give students an incentive to lead a discussion that is “stress free”. In other words, some students may not know all the words and they are Russian or Kyrgyz words to communicate their ideas. This should not be banned since it creates a natural flow of ideas”.*

6 teachers expressed their belief that L1 is beneficial for classroom management. 4 of the teachers suggested L1 use for explaining difficult and abstract concepts, like idioms, figurative language and sayings used in both cultures.

*KG Teacher 10: "The only thing we need to bear in mind is that it may complement the classroom management, but under no circumstances should it be a dominant vehicle of communication. This way L1 may be used to some extent".*

*TR Teacher 11: "Activities which include cognates might work. Studying idioms and on figurative language may require the use of L1 sometimes. Talking about the uses of sayings in both cultures might be fruitful".*

3 of the teachers responded that L1 can be successfully employed for comparing similarities and differences between L1 and TL in terms of grammar or exploring cognates, and the last 2 participants preferred L1 use for checking comprehension.

*TR Teacher 6: Drawing students' attention to the similarities and/or differences between the two languages when there a need or giving a brief explanation in the L1 to clarify or explain an area of difficulty in grammar or vocabulary will aid comprehension. This will benefit students' TL learning.*

*TR Teacher 19: Occasionally. It can work with the young learners and /or beginner learners with problems in comprehension. Sometimes it can be used to attract their attention and also helps the teacher to check comprehension.*

Taking into account that amongst the total number of participants there was another group of teachers who had a negative attitude towards L1 employment it is worth pointing out that 6 of the participants reported that none of the activities should be conducted in L1.

*TR Teacher 4: "If it is a foreign language class, activities should be carried out in L2, too".*

*KG Teacher 13: "If you learn a foreign language all the activities should be carried out in TL".*

Table 10

*Activities Best Carried Out Through L1 According to the Teachers' View*

Activities best carried out through L1	N	R
Explanation of grammar rules	22	25
Translation activities	14	19
Creating 'stress free' atmosphere	6	9
None	6	6
Classroom management	6	9
Explanation of difficult and abstract concepts	4	5
Comparison of L1 and TL	3	4
Checking comprehension	2	3

As illustrated in Table 10, a sufficient number of activities was proposed by teachers where L1 can be successfully employed. These findings are consistent with those of Solhi and Büyükyazı (2011) and Mahmutoğlu and Kıcıır (2013). Mahmutoğlu and Kıcıır (2013) also aimed to identify teachers' and students' perceptions on MT use and situations where L1 can be used. Research findings of their study revealed that teachers and learners support L1 in EFL classrooms and L1 can be used to understand the meaning of unknown words and explain tough grammar ideas.

#### **4.1.4 Activities best carried out through TL according to teachers' view**

Teachers' survey also aimed to find out activities that should be conducted through TL. Survey findings revealed the following list of activities that are best carried out through TL according to teachers' view (see Table 11).

Table 11

*Activities Best Carried Out Through TL According to the Teachers' View*

Activities best carried out through TL	N	R
All activities should be in TL	17	17
Activities promoting speaking skills	9	9
Discussions	7	7
Functional language	6	6
Reading activities	5	6
Drills	3	3
Task-based activities	2	2

As it can be observed from Table 19 the number of teachers who think that TL should be employed for *all activities* is 17. Although this number does not represent the view of the majority of teachers, around half of the number of teachers suggests that all activities should be carried through TL. They explain their responses by stating that the main purpose of a FL classroom is to make students not only communicate in TL, but also live that language's culture and be exposed to a TL environment as much as possible.

*KG Teacher 1: "I think all activities are carried out best in TL. As I have mentioned above, best learners must speak, communicate and think in TL".*

*KG Teacher 17: "For me all activities in English classroom the use of TL is necessary. Students learn the language easily and quickly when they feel and live that language's culture. In our case, our students can only practice the English language with each other in the classroom. Therefore, I do not have exact activities where the use of TL is a must, because my English classrooms are monolingual".*

9 of the teachers replied that any kind of activities that promote speaking skills should be employed in a FL classroom; however the teachers did not provide any concrete information about these activities unfortunately except for drama and pair/group work activities. 7 of the teachers responded that different types of discussions should be carried out in TL, like discussions about a passage or video or conducting debates.

*TR Teacher 20: "Drama, speaking, pair/group work activities".*

*TR Teacher 1: "Discussion about a passage or a video should be carried out in target language during the whole process. Because learners should be encouraged to use TL rather than L1".*

6 teachers suggested that functional language can be successfully performed in TL so that students can practice basic conversations in their daily speech. 5 of the participants think that reading activities which are conducted in TL improve students' creative thinking. Drill and task based activities complete our list of the activities that should be taught in TL.

## **4.2 Interpretation of the findings from the students' questionnaire**

In this section the research findings obtained from the students' questionnaires are presented and discussed. The students' attitude towards a bilingual approach to English learning, as well as their attitude towards teachers' use of L1, is shown. The benefits and drawbacks of L1 use in an English classroom have been discussed.

### **4.2.1 Students' attitude towards Bilingual approach based on their prior experience of learning English**

In an attempt to identify students' attitude towards the Bilingual approach of learning English, students were asked whether their English classes were conducted in a bilingual or monolingual way. The students were asked to answer this question relying on their prior experience of learning English: whether it was at school, English courses or at university.

The findings of the survey revealed that majority of the students (35) had a bilingual approach of learning English. In an attempt to investigate whether it was beneficial or not the survey results identified that 14 of the participants think that it was useful, which implies their positive view towards L1 use. However, 19 of the participants think that it was not useful, which indicates their negative attitude towards L1 use in English classroom. Only 2 of the participants reported that he/she was taught English in a monolingual way and declared that he/she found it beneficial. These findings once more serve as evidence that in current practice it is difficult to employ an English Only method for an EFL setting and totally exclude L1 from a FL classroom.

According to this study's findings we can observe that there is only a slight difference between those who have found it beneficial (14) and those who found it not beneficial (19) (see Table 12).





Table 12

*Students' Distribution According to the Method of Learning English*

Bilingual and Monolingual way of learning English							
Bilingual way of learning English				Monolingual way of learning English			
Beneficial		Not beneficial		Beneficial		Not beneficial	
TR	KG	TR	KG	TR	KG	TR	KG
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
4	10	11	8	0	2	0	0

The students presented the following reasons as a rationale for their supporting view towards bilingual approach.

*Students' limited English proficiency.*

Students preferred bilingual education mainly because of their low level of English proficiency.

*KG Student 8: "Beneficial. In my school English we were taught in both languages, because we had no base at all, we couldn't understand English well..."*

*KG Student 9: "At school I was taught in a bilingual way. I think it was beneficial as our levels of English were not high. However, after having a sufficient level, it is a good idea to teach in a monolingual way".*

*Possibility to compare L1 and TL*

It is another reason students found the bilingual approach beneficial. Bilingual English classes gave the opportunity for students to be able to compare their own language structure with TL or other language structures.

*KG Student 12: "In my previous school English was taught in a bilingual way. It was beneficial for me because it was easy to acquire language by comparing it with my own mother tongue".*

*KG Student 4: "In my previous schools English was taught in bilingual way and I think it was beneficial for me, because I was able to compare English with all the languages I knew. I can even say that learning English in a bilingual way helped me to learn more about my Second or Third languages, because the translation of some words to my mother tongue or L2, L3 widened my language knowledge in general".*

### *Learning the meaning of unknown words.*

Students also responded that the use of L1 in an English classroom helped them to understand the meaning of unknown words or ideas.

*KG Student 15: "In my school English was taught in a bilingual way. Yes, I think it was very useful for me. Why? Because I could understand the meaning of themes. Everything was clear for me".*

*KG Student 16: "English was taught in a bilingual way. The teachers teaching me English language would sometimes explain in Russian or Kyrgyz when I didn't understand the meaning of the word or the idea. I think it helped me in learning English because my level was low so if they taught me in a monolingual way I wouldn't have learned it".*

The benefit of the Bilingual approach for beginner ESL learners has been also supported by Hemmindinger (1987, cited in Auerbach, 1993). She states that it serves as an affective filter to for beginner learners to deal with culture and language shock.

To identify why students found the bilingual approach *not beneficial*, the following reasons were provided. Students reported that they were not in favor of the Bilingual approach mainly because of the unlimited the amount of L1 use in English classroom. Student participants also confessed that there were cases when English lessons were completely provided in their L1.

Here are the reasons of their negative attitude towards bilingual classes.

#### *Lack of TL exposure*

Students reported that because of the fact that English lessons were completely conducted in their L1 students felt the lack of exposure to TL.

*TR Student 14: "It is taught monolingual (only Turkish). It was not beneficial. They didn't expose us to the target language".*

*TR Student 5: "It was taught in bilingual way. It was not definitely beneficial for me because I couldn't speak any sentence of English when I came to university. The amount of exposure was too limited."*

#### *No practice.*

Participants replied that because of no exposure to TL they were not able to practice their English. Students complained that their speaking and listening skills were low because of the very little TL input.

*TR Student 3: "I was taught in a monolingual (only Turkish) way and it wasn't that beneficial unfortunately. Since only the teacher spoke English and didn't make us speak the target language, although we know the rules almost completely we still couldn't speak it."*

*KG Student 18: "When I studied at school we used to be taught in Russian (so in bilingual way). I think it wasn't useful, because not everything could be translated from English and there wasn't any language practice."*

Students who had a negative attitude towards bilingual way of English learning generally reported that in their bilingual classes L1 was not employed rationally, most of the time teachers overused L1 and the amount of TL use was too low so that they could not benefit from these classes. However students from both parties (positive and negative) mainly concluded that L1 should be used judiciously and occasionally and its amount should be decreased by the time that students reach sufficient proficiency in English.

#### **4.2.1.1 The difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz students towards the bilingual approach based on their prior experience of learning English.**

The findings from the students' questionnaire revealed that 10 students from the Kyrgyz context found bilingual approach beneficial and only 4 students from the Turkish context found it distracting.

About half of students participated from Kyrgyzstan (10) found the bilingual approach to English language learning beneficial for the following reasons: L1 enables students to compare and contrast their mother tongue with TL; L1 helps to understand the meaning of unknown words and learn grammar rules, and lastly L1 is useful for beginner level students.

*KG Student 16: "English was taught in a bilingual way. Teachers taught me English language sometimes when I didn't understand the meaning of the word or the idea they explained me in Russian or Kyrgyz language I think it helped me in learning English because my level was low so if they taught me in monolingual way I wouldn't learn it".*

*KG Student 12: "In my previous school English was taught in a bilingual way. It was beneficial for me because it was easy to acquire language by comparison with my own mother tongue."*

Turkish students indicated that they were in favor of the Bilingual approach in English classroom because of their weak English proficiency.

*TR Student 6: "In a bilingual way. But mother tongue was superior. I wish English had been superior bilingual way was beneficial as we were beginner."*

However, the majority of Turkish students (11) indicated that they could not benefit from the Bilingual approach in their English classroom because of little exposure to TL. Students reported that they were disappointed with the amount of L1 use in their English classroom. Because of its overuse students lacked sufficient practice and exposure to TL.

*TR Student 2: "It was taught in a bilingual way but, the use of English rate was really low and the exposure was low, too."*

Students from the Kyrgyz context (8) indicated their negative view towards the bilingual approach because of the unlimited use of L1 and little TL input. Thus, students reported that they could not improve their speaking and listening skills.

*KG Student 13: "I had studies in school specialized in French language, so we didn't have many English lessons, at best once a week. And that single class as I remember was always conducted in a bilingual way. The teacher always used the grammar-translation method, and most of the lesson she was speaking Russian or Kyrgyz. I can not say if it was or wasn't beneficial because I even didn't understand whether it was an English language lesson. The whole 40 minutes-lesson the teacher was speaking Russian or Kyrgyz and only occasionally read something from the English schoolbook. As far as I remember I didn't have any feeling that I was learning English."*

*KG Student 19: "The level of teaching English in my school was low. I would be more inspired even if I were a beginner to hear English pronunciation (speech), would have more practice by speaking. For that reason I couldn't develop my English skills well."*

#### **4.2.2 Students' attitudes towards teachers' L1 use in EFL classroom**

This research question aimed to investigate students' attitude towards teachers' L1 use in English classroom. From the total number of students 25 participants supported a teachers' L1 use and the other 10 students were against the use of L1 by teachers. The survey

findings revealed that a considerable number of students preferred teachers' L1 use for different reasons.

Table 13

*Students' Attitude Towards Teachers' L1 Use*

Students' attitude towards teachers' L1 use	N	R
Positive	25	25
Negative	10	10

Students who supported Teachers' L1 use suggested different reasons for its use in an English classroom. The reasons proposed by the students coincide with the reasons reported by teachers. Students suggested that L1 should be mainly used for students who have low English proficiency or for those who have just started learning English; when there is an urgent need for L1; when there is a difficulty in comprehension or understanding new words; for classroom management and grammar explanation. However, participants agreed on one common point - that the amount of L1 use should be gradually decreased and limited to a minimum.

***Reasons for students' positive view towards teachers' L1 use***

*Limited English proficiency*

Students believe that a teacher's rational employment of L1 for students with poor English proficiency or starters will ease the process of teaching and increase students' comprehension. Thus teachers should share the same L1 with students so that they could employ it when needed. Students also reported that teachers who are not native speakers of English teach English better than native speakers of English as they best understand students.

*KG Student 16: "I think it is up to students. If their level isn't good enough the teacher should teach using L1 in the classroom. When their level good enough for understanding English explanations, then after that a teacher may use TL."*

*KG Student 4: “For me the use of the mother tongue in English lessons does not matter. However, the use of first language in groups of high-level English learners is strange or even not effective for students. In my opinion, the usage of L1 at the beginning level helps both teacher and students to get the new language in an easy way in a short time. On that level, I think both sides benefit.”*

*TR Student 8: L1 should be used of course but in a limited way. People always think that foreign teachers can teach English better but I don’t agree with them. As a Turkish language speaker, Turkish teachers can understand and recognize students’ mistakes and errors easily. As we all know feedback is very important while teaching languages.*

### *Real need for L1*

Students did not report any concrete activity but remarked that L1 can be used in situations where there is an urgent necessity for L1. Mostly it depends on the situation and activity they are dealing with.

*TR Student 2: “It depends from situation to situation, or teaching of skills. But using TL for real life purposes is more important than using L1 in English classrooms.”*

*TR Student 12: “I think a teacher generally should use the target language if there is a need to use L1, then teacher may use L1”.*

### *Problems with comprehension and understanding new words*

The students acknowledged that they do not understand some explanations in English even when a teacher tries to paraphrase or use other techniques to explain new words, terms or other complex ideas. So, in this case, direct translation or a short explanation in the students’ own language could be more beneficial and time saving.

*TR Student 15: “It does benefit because students can’t understand some explanations in English. There is a need to explain them in Turkish”.*

*KG Student 3: “I think teachers should use L1 only when no one understands the new word. It is more beneficial about the terms”.*

### *For classroom management and grammar explanation*

Students reported that L1 can be used for giving instructions or explaining classroom rules. Tough and complex rules of grammar are also best carried out in L1.

*TR Student 5: “I think it depends on the amount of L1 use and the level of students. For lower levels, it is better to give some explanations about classroom rules, instructions for*

*homework. For higher levels, the less it is used, the better it is. It should be used only in really necessary points, not more than that.”*

*KG Student 19: “I think a teacher can use L1 for explaining grammar or the most difficult peculiarities of the TL, because if a T. uses the TL only and students do not understand him, there is no sense in using TL. Everything must be used rationally.”*

### ***Reasons for students’ negative view***

Survey findings revealed that 10 participants out of 35 were completely against the use of L1 by teachers in an English classroom. When they were asked to clarify their answer no concrete reasons were suggested. Students principally reported that English lessons should be conducted only in English language otherwise there is no sense to English lessons. Students claimed that they come to English lessons to be able to communicate in that language in real life. According to this group of students, L1 hinders the process of TL learning.

*KG Student 9: “Usage of L1 does not help students to learn TL faster. At university I have been taught TL without using L1 and I think it is more beneficial.”*

*KG Student 1: “I don’t think L1 should be used in the classroom. Because it doesn’t create a TL environment around students who really crave to learn it fast and properly.”*

#### **4.2.2.1 The difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz students towards teachers’ L1 use**

In order to answer this research question attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz students have been analyzed separately. Survey findings revealed that out of 25 respondents, who had a positive attitude towards teachers’ L1 use, 14 participants were Turkish students and the other 11 participants were Kyrgyz students. Out of 10 respondents who had a negative attitude, 1 participant was a Turkish student and the other 9 were Kyrgyz students.

Table 14

*Students' Attitude Towards Teachers' L1 Use According to Students' Nationality*

Students' attitude towards teachers' L1 use	Turkish N	Kyrgyz N	Total N	R
Positive	14	11	25	25
Negative	1	9	10	10

When participants were asked to explain the reason for their attitude, Turkish students mostly responded that L1 should be used when there is a necessity for it. To be more concrete, students believe that L1 is necessary when learners have difficulty in understanding complex topics, have low English proficiency, and for classroom management. Students reported that sometimes students do not understand when teachers employ TL for explaining difficult topics or concepts. In this case students want them to use L1 in order to increase their comprehension. Students also indicated that classroom rules as well as instructions could be given in students' language as well.

*TR Student 11: "If the learners have important difficulties of understanding at crucial parts, L1 can be used, I think."*

*TR Student 10: "When it is really needed yes. It is really helpful in understanding complex linguistic materials".*

*TR Student 5: "I think it depends on the amount of L1 use and the level of students. For lower levels, it is better to give some explanations about classroom rules, instructions for homework. For higher levels, the less it is used, the better it is. It should be used only in really necessary points, not more than that."*

Although the table shows that a considerable number of Turkish students (15) support teachers' L1, the analysis of their responses indicate that they support its use to some extent. Here are some extracts from their responses presented:

*TR Student 14: "I support L1 use in the classroom to some extent. But, classes should be based on L2 use."*

*TR Student 6: "It is required to use L1 in the classroom to a minimal level. It is beneficial but it shouldn't be high percentage."*



The analysis of Kyrgyz student responses revealed similar reasons for their positive attitude towards teachers' employment of L1. Kyrgyz students reported that L1 plays a facilitating role mainly for beginner level students. It also helps to increase students' comprehension of some difficult grammar rules as well as unknown words.

*KG Student 20: "Partially, yes, it is useful for beginners, those who just began to learn English".*

*KG Student: 12: "I don't mind using L1 while teaching a language at the beginning of the learning process. But it's better not to use L1 for intermediate classes".*

Although students from both context supported teachers' use of L1 to some extent, most of them clarified their responses by saying that L1 should be used in a limited and judicious way, and mainly for students who have comprehension difficulties and low English proficiency. The students also expressed their belief that the use of L1 for upper level students is an undesirable activity.

#### **4.2.3 Benefits of L1 use according to students**

This research question aims at identifying the students' views regarding the benefits and drawbacks of L1 use. In this section, the students responded for what reason they find the use of L1 beneficial and for what reason it should not be used in English classroom. Students expressed different reasons for L1 use and its exclusion. In the following table below, the list of activities proposed by students takes place. According to the students' survey, the use of L1 for these concrete activities increases students' learning efficiency (see Table. 15).

Table 15

*The Benefits of L1 Use in English Classroom According to Students' View*

Benefits of L1 use	N	R
To clarify misunderstandings	8	8
To explain grammar rules	6	8
For translation activities	6	7
To create comfortable atmosphere	6	8
For classroom management	5	6
For beginner levels	4	4
To save time	3	3
To compare TL and L1 peculiarities	2	3
None	2	2
To checking comprehension	1	1
In emergency cases	1	1
To increase students' motivation	1	1

As indicated in Table 15 the number of students' responses was distributed equally and none of the activities represent the view of the majority of students. From the total number of students 8 students believe that L1 should be used for clarifying some misunderstandings in the classroom. When students simply do not understand what teacher says, sometimes they need explanations in their own language. Here are some extracts from their responses:

*KG Student 13: "It is not always useful. But in some cases when a student can not understand material explained in English it is possible to seek help from L1. But it shouldn't be done all the time, just in 'Emergency' cases..."*

*KG Student 13: "It is impossible to explain by synonyms or by action, vision, and teachers are supposed to explain it in their language"*

They also reported that they understand grammar better when it is explained in L1. Other group of the students indicated that in situations when students cannot express themselves, the possibility to refer to L1 helps them feel more relaxed and comfortable. They also believe that L1 strengthens the relationship between the teacher and the learner, repairs communication gaps, provides motivation, encourages students and makes the process of learning easy.

*TR Student 10: "The students feel more comfortable so they would be open to learn the target language. And also, some parts of the lesson would be clearer when they are given in L1".*

Some of the students believe that L1 should be applied for beginner level students to increase their comprehension, as at this level students are more dependent on their own language and need L1 support.

*KG Student 4: "To me, the use of a mother tongue during English lessons does not matter. However, the use of first language in the groups of high-level English learners is strange or even not effective for students. In my opinion, the use of L1 at a beginning level helps both the teacher and students to learn a new language easily in a short amount of time. On that level, I think both sides benefit".*

A different group of the students reported that L1 can be used for classroom management and translation activities. Several students suggest L1 as a tool to save time. For instance, instead of long explanations in English, teachers may sometimes refer to L1.

*KG Student 5: "I think the use of L1 in English class is useful because it might be good for the time management during the class if the teacher has cover a big subject, it is hard to explain everything in L2".*

2 of the students think that L1 can be used in order to compare TL and L1 peculiarities. Other participants reported that L1 should be used to check comprehension, increase students' motivation or for emergency cases. 2 of the students believe that there is no benefit from L1 use and argue that none of the activities should be used in students' own language.

Some items from the above list draw similarities with the findings of the research study conducted by Elmetwally (2012) where students expressed their positive view towards Arabic for the following activities, like: explaining grammar, comparing similarities and

differences between English and Arabic, sharing their view or opinion in Arabic, explaining complex concepts and etc.

#### 4.2.4 Drawbacks of L1 use according to students

Attempting to identify whether students are aware of dangers of L1 overuse and its drawbacks, the students' survey was analyzed. Findings of this research question take place in the following table below. The Table 16 demonstrates the students' views on the possible disadvantages and negative outcomes of L1 use or overuse in English classroom.

Table 16  
*The Drawbacks of L1 Use According to Students' View*

Drawbacks of L1 use	N	R
Deprives students of exposure to TL	10	10
Deprives students of ability to practice TL	9	9
Deprives students of TL environment	7	7
Makes students lazy	6	6
Slow down TL learning process	5	5

Survey findings obtained from students' questionnaire indicate that 1/3 of the students did not support L1 use for the following reasons: it deprives learners from TL exposure, practice and TL environment. Students claimed that English class is the only place where learners have an opportunity to use the language. They believe that the important role of the teacher is to create a suitable TL environment and control the amount of TL and L1 use in the classroom. If these two requirements will not be followed, students will suffer from the lack of TL exposure and practice.

*TR Student 1: "It may decrease the possible amount of target language exposure. Actually it is completely unwise. In other words, the students may feel that the language they learn, is useless. If they are not gonna start using or speaking it with the classroom*

*session itself, then what is the beginning point? Namely, the use of L1 decreases the amount of target language practice”.*

*KG Student 4: “Students need to get used to listening to English language and be able to express their opinions without the use of their mother tongue. The teacher should be able to create an atmosphere as close to the English – speaking environment as possible, so that students can imagine themselves in an English-speaking community”.*

*KG Student 17: “A teacher should make a good atmosphere to motivate children to speak in a foreign language. Especially in a country where the official language is not English”.*

Students reported that if L1 use will not be under teacher’s control it may lead to negative consequences in English classes. Students will over rely on L1 and become lazy. And the worst thing they will not be able to use acquired knowledge of English in real life conditions.

*KG Student 14: “We, as students, become very lazy and will always rely on L1. When we face the real difficulties we will be lost and won’t be able to use the acquired language skills”.*

Some of the students indicated that the overuse of L1 will slow down the process of TL learning and deprive students from progress. Students pointed out that much practice and exposure may lead to better results in English learning process.

*KG Student 19: “If the use of L1 is constant, than students will not have progress, they will stay at one place. TL must be used as much as possible and than students can get results in learning English language. Otherwise, why and how people can learn English if it’s used L1 only? No benefits”.*

Although the research findings revealed the students’ positive attitude towards L1 use in general, findings from the research question concerning the students’ attitude towards the bilingual approach and drawbacks of L1 use show that students are aware of L1 overuse and its negative consequences. The most sensible conclusion we can come to is that teachers and students should know the limits of L1 use. L1 should not be used as a tool for communication in FL classroom but should serve as a facilitating instrument to increase TL efficiency. To do so teachers should be aware of the benefits and drawbacks of L1. As a solution teachers may refer to the relevant researches or literature about the effective use

of L1 in FL classroom or may discuss with their students about the possible outcomes in advance when L1 should be utilized in order to increase TL learning efficiency.



## CHAPTER V

Throughout the history, the role of L1 in TL learning methodology has been argued for several reasons. As practice shows it does benefit for all levels, however under some unknown circumstances its role has been underestimated (Atkinson, 1987). Numerous studies about its exclusion and use in TL class have been discussed in this paper. The research findings as well as classroom realities show that L1 worths a place in English class (Cook, 2001). What is the role of L1, how it can be used in English classroom, what are the attitudes of teachers and students towards its use, these and other issues have been discussed in this paper by exposing ways to make its own contribution to the aforementioned studies. In this respect, attitudes of teachers and students towards L1 use in English classroom from Turkey and Kyrgyzstan have been revealed and discussed. In this chapter the summary of the results was presented. Pedagogical implications and limitations of the study were also included.

### **5.1 Conclusion and discussion of the research findings**

The results of the first research question revealed that teachers have a positive attitude with regard to their own L1 use in EFL classroom. Although most of the teachers emphasized and highlighted the significant and facilitating role of L1, they tend to clarify their answer by stating that it should be used in a limited and judicious way. This finding corresponds with research findings conducted by (Schweers, 2003; Tang, 2002; Jingxia, 2010; Alshammari, 2011, Kim and Petraki, 2009, Timor, 2012). Teachers indicated that L1 should be mainly applied for beginner level students to make them feel more secure, to create a comfortable and stress free atmosphere; to explain complex grammar rules, to create a save classroom time and increase students' comprehension by giving explanations in their own language. Teachers also reported that the important role of every instructor is to gradually decrease the amount of L1 by the time learners' English proficiency becomes sufficient; create TL environment and increase exposure to English as much as possible. The most sensible and satisfactory conclusion we can come to is that teachers use L1 not as a communication tool but as a supporting and facilitating instrument that helps to improve learners' TL proficiency.

This study also tried to identify if there is a difference between the attitudes of Turkish teachers' and Kyrgyz teachers' attitudes towards their own use of L1 in EFL classroom. Findings of the survey indicated a considerable difference between the attitudes of Turkish teachers and Kyrgyz teachers. The results demonstrate that teachers from Turkish universities tend to have more positive attitude with regard to L1 use than their Kyrgyz colleagues. Turkish teachers supported L1 use mainly for the pedagogical reasons, classroom management issues; to increase motivation and teach students with poor English language proficiency. These results draw parallels with the findings of Sariçoban (2010) and Taşkın (2011). The majority of teachers from Kyrgyz context were not in favor of L1 use in English class, because they were afraid that students will develop excessive dependence on L1 prompts. As a result students will not be motivated and become lazy. The main purpose of teachers who were against the L1 use was to make students not only communicate in TL but also think in that language at maximum exposure to TL.

In an attempt to reveal teachers' attitude towards students' L1 use results obtained from this research indicated that teachers split into two camps. One half of the teachers supported students' L1 use and the other half were against its use by students. The number of teachers from both groups is almost close. It was interesting to reveal that in the previous research findings it was found that the majority of teachers had a positive attitude towards *their own* use of L1 but when it comes to students' use of L1 teachers were not so decisive. As a rationale for their positive view with regard to students' L1 use teachers reported that they don't mind when their students refer to L1 if they have limited English proficiency or problems with understanding grammar rules and new words. Teachers also declared that the role of the classroom atmosphere should not be underestimated and stated that they permit their learners to use L1 as a last resort especially when they have difficulties in expressing themselves in order to avoid misunderstandings and stressed atmosphere. According to teachers' view pair work activities could be a good solution for these issues; it might help to create a friendly atmosphere and result, and better understandings of some complex tasks. This view is also supported by Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) who suggest that L1 should not be banned in group and pair work activities as it helps to maintain verbal interaction between the learners.

Other group of teachers who had a negative attitude with regard to students' L1 use claimed that there is no benefit from its use. Teachers are concerned that students will get used to L1 use. They believe that its use hinders students from fluency, practice and



exposure to TL. According to teachers, students should be encouraged to use TL all the time.

The research results did not reveal any concrete difference between the attitudes of Turkish and Kyrgyz teachers towards students' L1 use in English class. Teachers who were in favor of students' L1 use expressed similar reasons for their positive view. Both of the parties indicated that students may refer to L1 when they have poor English proficiency, difficulties with grammar rules and for translation activities. However, Turkish teachers expressed some additional reasons for their positive view with regard to students' use of L1. According to them, L1 should be allowed for those learners who have weak English vocabulary to provide active participation and performance of students regardless of their English proficiency. This might happen due to the fact that most of the students face difficulties in expressing their thoughts and ideas in English language on the score of their poor vocabulary and thus most of the time they prefer to remain silent and passive. Bolitho (1983) explains this as a humanistic method with regard to students when teacher let their learners to express themselves in their own language (cited in Atkinson, 1987). Finally, teachers suggested that learners should be allowed to use L1 as a last resort or just in emergency cases.

Kyrgyz colleagues also suggested several reasons for their positive attitude towards students' L1 use. They believe that students' cooperation in L1 may produce better results than teachers' explanation in TL. This view is also supported by Atkinson (1987) who indicates that sometimes even detailed and clear explanation of a teacher in TL may not achieve better results for students. In such cases students' collaborations in L1 may enhance their comprehension much effectively. Teachers also reported that they allow students to use L1 when they want to save time or quickly generate ideas from students.

Teachers from both parties indicated their negative view towards students' L1 use, mostly because of the harmful effect of L1 overuse. They stated that L1 deprives students from the most important elements of TL learning, like, exposure and practice. Teachers suggested prohibiting, punishing and ignoring L1 use when it is employed by students.

As a conclusion, I would like to add a remark made by Dailey O-Cain and Liebscher (2009) who indicate that we should be concerned neither about the use of L1 nor with the amount of L1 use. But we must concern about *who* should use it, whether a *teacher* or a *student*. Since a different type of strategy is required for each of them.

At the end of the teachers' questionnaire, teachers were asked to list which activities are best carried out in L1 and which activities are best carried out in TL. The survey results demonstrate that the majority of teachers believe that grammar and translation activities should be conducted in L1. Teachers reported that L1 should be used to define the meaning of new vocabulary and explain difficult concepts. Teachers also suggested that L1 helps to create a friendly atmosphere that in turn increases students' motivation and helps to deal with some trouble in class with the help of warm up activities, dialogs and jokes. Teachers also believe that comparing TL and L1 peculiarities as well as classroom management activities, checking comprehension activities are best carried out in L1. The results of this survey question reveal many similarities to the findings of the research study conducted by Shuchi and Islam (2016), which aimed at identifying teachers' and students' attitudes as well as their reasons for their L1 use in the context of Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia.

Attempting to identify what activities should be conducted through TL, the teachers' survey was analyzed. Teachers responded that all activities in English classes should be provided in TL. It is due to those teachers who had negative attitude towards L1 use. It is worthy of remark that teachers suggested TL for all the activities in English class. Another activity proposed by teachers was speaking activities. Teachers also reported that any type of discussions in English classes should be conducted in TL, like discussions about video or passage and debates. According to teachers' view, reading activities, task based activities as well as drills are best conducted in TL. Some of the teachers indicated that practicing functional language in every day speech may enhance students' TL speaking skills.

The research findings obtained from the students' questionnaire revealed that considerable number of students had a bilingual method of learning English. The results of the survey demonstrate that the number of students who found it beneficial and not beneficial is quite close. Students who indicated their negative view towards the bilingual method reported that their English classes were not bilingual at all as the amount of L1 use was really exaggerated. Because of this fact students lacked of TL practice and exposure. Consequently, students were not able to benefit from its use.

Students who were in favor of a bilingual method of learning English expressed their positive views mostly because of their insufficient knowledge of English at that time. The lack of TL vocabulary and practice necessitated students to use L1. Other reason for their preference for the bilingual method was the ability to compare TL and L1 peculiarities.

This view is supported by Schweers' (2003, p.21) study, who indicated that "raising awareness to the similarities and differences between the L1 and the L2, and that the prudent use of L2 in the English classroom affirms the value of our students' L1 as their primary means of communication and cultural expression". Students also preferred bilingual English classes because the use of L1 enabled them to understand the meaning of complex new words or concept. These results draw parallels with the study results conducted by Ping and Ma (2009) where most of the learners preferred bilingual classes for the similar reasons.

The survey findings revealed a slight difference between Turkish and Kyrgyz students who found bilingual approach not beneficial. The majority of Turkish and Kyrgyz students based on their experience of learning English reported that they were not in favor of the Bilingual approach, because L1 was not used rationally and mostly was overused by teachers and students. Moreover, students' use of L1 was not controlled by English language teachers so that they excessively depended on L1 and on teachers' prompts. Students did not prefer the Bilingual approach because of the lack of sufficient practice and exposure to TL.

However, among the students who found the Bilingual approach beneficial the number of Kyrgyz students prevails the number of Turkish students. Kyrgyz students reported that they preferred Bilingual approach to English learning for the following reasons: L1 enables students to compare and contrast mother tongue with TL; L1 helps to understand the meaning of unknown words and learn grammar rules, and at last L1 facilitates beginner level students. Although the number of Turkish students who found Bilingual approach beneficial is too small, they indicated that they could benefit from L1 integration in English class because of their weak English language proficiency.

Results of the students' questionnaire revealed that most of the students supported teachers' use of L1. Students proposed several reasons for their encouraging view towards teachers' L1 use. It is worth mentioning that students' responses coincide with the responses of the teachers concerning the reason for their positive view towards L1 use in EFL class. Students suggest teachers to employ L1 for students who have low English proficiency, for students who have difficulties in comprehension complex topics and understanding new words, for classroom management and grammar explanation, and at last when they feel the need for L1 regardless of the type of activity. This finding coincides

with the findings of Yıldırım and Mersinligil (2000) who have also revealed students' positive attitude towards teachers' L1 use.

Although the number of students who were against the teachers' use of L1 is small the reason for their negative view is presented. Students responded that there is no sense of learning TL when L1 is employed in English class; some students consider it as time consuming while others think that L1 deprives students from TL environment.

Analysis of the data obtained from the students' questionnaire revealed that there is no considerable difference between the attitudes of Turkish students and Kyrgyz students towards teachers' of L1 use. However, it should be pointed out that the majority of students participated from Turkish context (it is about 93%) expressed their positive views towards teachers' application of L1. Kyrgyz students split into two equal groups; first group preferred teachers' use of L1 while the second one was against its use by teachers.

Students from both contexts indicated similar reasons for their positive view towards teachers' use of L1. Both of the parties responded that L1 use is beneficial for learners who have just started learning English. Moreover, students reported that they want teachers to use L1 while explaining complex grammar or difficult topics. Students from Turkish context also indicated that L1 should be used when it is necessary, depending on the situation or type of activity.

Apart from the aforementioned activities, students declared that the use of L1 should be controlled and diminished. From all mentioned above, it follows that students preferred L1 use mostly for pedagogical and psychological reasons.

Students' responses concerning L1 benefits and drawbacks were analyzed and presented. Results obtained from the students' questionnaire revealed that L1 should be employed for clarifying some misunderstandings in class. Most of the time students simply do not understand their teachers when they speak in TL, instead of providing long and useless explanations in English, students believe that the use of L1 can help to increase their comprehension. Similar to teachers' view, students think that the explanation of grammar rules and translation activities are carried the best through L1. Friendly and comfortable atmosphere is also of great importance for students. According to students' responses L1 employment makes them feel more relaxed and comfortable, it also strengthens the relationship between teachers and learners, and restores communication gaps. This view is also supported by Schweers (2003) who claimed that sharing same language with students,

when it is necessary, enhances the tie between a teacher and a learner. Some of the students reported that L1 is a facilitating tool to help beginner level students save time, compare and contrast the similarities and differences between L1 and TL, check comprehension and assist in emergency cases. There were some other proponents of Monolingual teaching, who declared that none of the activities should be carried in L1.

In order to learn whether students are aware of dangers of L1 overuse and possible drawbacks of its use, the students' survey was analyzed. Results obtained from this analysis show that L1 overuse may deprive students from TL exposure and practice. Turkey and Kyrgyzstan are countries where English is taught in EFL context, so that classroom is the only place where students can practice and be exposed to TL. Students also indicated that continuous usage of L1 may destroy the TL atmosphere. Regular prompts in L1 may also have a negative effect on students' performance. They reported that L1 overuse will make students lazy and passive. Finally, students reported that overuse of L1 may also slow down the process of the TL learning.

## **5.2 Pedagogical implications**

The findings of the current study have revealed that although participants had different views towards L1 use in English classes, it is still employed by teachers and students to some extent. However, it was found out that when it is used judiciously L1 can be served as a facilitating tool to improve learners' TL proficiency. Respectively, based on the results of this study the following implications can be made.

The findings of the teacher and student questionnaires suggest that it is more reasonable when L1 is employed by teachers than by students. The reason for this is that teachers based on their professional experience know the limits of L1 use as well as students' needs. In other words, by virtue of their professional experience teachers are more likely to take control of the L1 application and the responsibility for their students. Otherwise, students tend to overuse and over rely on L1. As a solution it can be suggested to set rules concerning L1 use at the beginning of the course by taking into account students' level and needs.

Another implication that can be drawn from this study is to offer the results to educators from Kyrgyzstan. Although the majority of teachers and students from the Kyrgyz context were not in favor of L1 application; the overall findings of the study suggest positive

attitude towards its employment. These results may help to understand the attitude of teachers and students towards L1, identify reasons for its employment and raise their awareness on this issue. This study may also become an impetus for further research in this area in Kyrgyzstan as no EFL researches are found in this context. Future researches in this field may help to draw reasonable conclusions and decisions towards L1 employment based on the perspectives and needs of teachers and learners in Kyrgyzstan.



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## APPENDIX A

### TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Dear Participants,

I would like you to participate in the following questionnaire about teachers and students' attitude towards L1 use in English classrooms. I certify that your responses will be used only on the purpose of the research and assure the confidentiality of the data obtained. It would be pleasure from you if you answer the questions honestly as I believe this study may contribute to researches in this field. Your every response is essential for me.

Thank you for your understanding and contribution.

#### Section one

1. **What is your current position at University:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Nationality :** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Gender:**  
 Male       Female
4. **Type of Institution you teach English**  
 State       Private
5. **Degree of Education you have last completed or currently enrolling:**  
 Bachelor's Degree     Diploma of a specialist     Master's Degree     PhD
6. **Number of years you have been teaching English:** \_\_\_\_\_
7. **The level of your students' English you teach most**  
 Beginner to Pre-Intermediate     Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate     Advanced

## **Section two.**

1 What is your attitude towards TEACHERS' use of L1 in the English classroom?  
Does it benefit students' TL learning or not? How?

2 What is your attitude towards STUDENTS' use of L1 in the English classroom?  
Does it benefit students' TL learning or not? How?

3 In your opinion, what classroom activities are best carried out through L1?

4 In your opinion, for which activities the use of TL is a must? Why?

## APPENDIX B

### STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Dear Participants,**

I would like you to participate in the following questionnaire about teachers and students' attitude towards L1 use in English classrooms. I certify that your responses will be used only on the purpose of the research and assure the confidentiality of the data obtained. It would be pleasure from you if you answer the questions honestly as I believe this study may contribute to researches in this field. Your every response is essential for me.

Thank you for your understanding and contribution.

#### Section one

1. **What is your grade:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Major:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Nationality:** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Gender:**  
 Male       Female
5. **Type of Institution you study English**  
 State       Private
6. **Number of years you have been learning English:** \_\_\_\_\_
7. **The level of English**  
 Beginner to Pre-Intermediate     Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate     Advanced



## Section two

- 1 Based on your prior experience how your English classes were conducted, whether in bilingual or monolingual way?

If it was in bilingual way, did you find it beneficial or not? Please indicate your reason.

If it was in monolingual way, did you find it beneficial or not? Please indicate your reason

- 2 What is your attitude towards TEACHERS' use of L1 in the classroom? Does it benefit students' TL learning or not? How?

- 3 I think use of L1 in the English classroom is useful because

- 4 I don't think the use of L1 in the English classroom is beneficial because

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