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L1 Use in EFL Classes with English-only Policy: Insights from Triangulated Data

SEYYED HATAM TAMIMI SA'D^{*1} AND ZOHRE QADERMAZI²

∞ This study examines the role of the use of the L1 in EFL classes from the perspective of EFL learners. The triangulated data were collected using class observations, focus group semi-structured interviews and the learners' written reports of their perceptions and attitudes in a purpose-designed questionnaire. The participants consisted of sixty male Iranian EFL learners who constituted three classes. The results indicated a strong tendency among the participants toward L1 and its positive effects on language learning; while only a minority of the learners favoured an English-only policy, the majority supported the judicious, limited and occasional use of the L1, particularly on the part of the teacher. The participants mentioned the advantages as well as the disadvantages of the use/non-use of the L1. While the major advantage and the main purpose of L1 use was said to be the clarification and intelligibility of instructions, grammatical and lexical items, the main advantages of avoiding it were stated as being the improvement of speaking and listening skills, maximizing learners' exposure to English and their becoming accustomed to it. The study concludes that, overall and in line with the majority of the previous research studies, a judicious, occasional and limited use of the L1 is a better approach to take in EFL classes than to include or exclude it totally. In conclusion, a re-examination of the English-only policy and a reconsideration of the role of the L1 are recommended. Finally, the commonly held assumption that L1 is a hindrance and an impediment to the learners' language learning is challenged.

Keywords: EFL Classes, EFL Learners, Interview, L1 use, Observation, Perceptions

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Uporaba prvega jezika pri pouku angleščine kot tujega jezika, temelječem na pristopu jezikovne imerzije: vpogled s pomočjo triangulacije podatkov

SEYYED HATAM TAMIMI SA'D* IN ZOHRE QADERMAZI

~ Predstavljena raziskava preučuje vlogo uporabe prvega jezika pri pouku angleščine kot tujega jezika z vidika učencev (stari od 14 do 22 let). Triangulacija podatkov je zajemala opazovanje pouka, polstrukturirane intervjuje fokusnih skupin ter pisna poročila študentov o njihovih zaznavah in odnosu, pridobljenih z namensko sestavljenim vprašalnikom. V raziskavo je bilo vključenih šestdeset iranskih učencev moškega spola, kar predstavlja tri razrede. Rezultati kažejo, da so med udeleženci prisotni močna nagnjenost k uporabi prvega jezika in njegovi pozitivni učinki pri učenju jezika. Le manjšina učencev je imela raje pouk, ki je temeljil samo na uporabi angleščine, večina pa je podprla smiselno, omejeno in občasno uporabo prvega jezika s strani učitelja. Obe skupini sta omenjali prednosti in tudi slabosti uporabe/neuporabe prvega jezika. Največja prednost in glavni namen uporabe prvega jezika naj bi bila v primerih pojasnjevanja in razumevanja navodil, pri poučevanju slovnice in besedišča. Glavne prednosti neuporabe prvega jezika naj bi se izražale v obliki izboljšanja govornih in slušnih zmožnosti, povečanja izpostavljenosti študentov angleščini in privajanja nanjo. Na podlagi rezultatov te raziskave, ki so tudi skladni z večino predhodno opravljenih raziskav, lahko sklenemo, da je smiselna, občasna in omejena uporaba prvega jezika boljši pristop pri poučevanju angleščine kot tujega jezika kot pa popolna izključenost oziroma izključenost prvega jezika. V sklepu je podan predlog za ponovno presojo pristopa, ki temelji na izključni rabi tujega jezika pri pouku angleščine, in ponovni premislek o vlogi prvega jezika. Na koncu se postavi pod vprašaj splošna domneva, da prvi jezik predstavlja oviro in zavira učenje jezikov.

Ključne besede: pouk angleščine kot tujega jezika, učenci angleščine kot tujega jezika, intervju, uporaba prvega jezika, opazovanje, zaznave

Introduction

The debate over the use of L1, i.e. the students' mother tongue, in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes remain a topic of heated debate. Historically, in effect, the issue of L1 might be said to be as old as the history of English language teaching, dating back to the introduction of the Grammar-Translation Method (GMT) as a language teaching method in which the recourse to the learners' mother tongue was one of the major tools for language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2003). As a result, reminiscent of the old GMT, L1 use is viewed to be counterproductive, especially in settings where communicative language teaching is practiced (McMillan & Rivers, 2011). While some researchers have called for the abandonment of L1 use in EFL classes, others have stressed the facilitative role that L1 can play in such classes (e.g., Afzal, 2013; Auerbach, 1993; Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Jafari & Shokrpour, 2013; Khreshneh, 2012; Mart, 2013). Despite these contrasting views concerning the effect of L1 in EFL classes, the widely held assumption has been that the presence of the L1 is "worrying" and more detrimental than beneficial (Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Mart, 2013). As such, attempts have been made to avoid using the L1 in language classes at any costs through using mime, gesticulation, pictures, etc., as witnessed in such language teaching methods as the Direct Method (Richards & Rodgers, 2003). Some researchers (e.g., Forman, 2005) have argued for a middle policy, one in which both the L1 and the L2 can contribute to the learning context; therefore, using both should be a priority, particularly when the learning setting is an EFL context. According to Brooks-Lewis, (2009), incorporating the person's L1 is one way of recognizing the students' prior knowledge, which (according to some scholars such as Dewey (1939)) can be a means of recognizing the person him/herself.

Theoretical Background

The inclusion or exclusion of L1 from EFL classes has attracted the attention of a myriad of researchers (Alshammari, 2011; Auerbach, 1993; Jarvis, 2000; Kafes, 2011; Kavaliauskienė & Kaminskienė, 2007; Khreshneh, 2012; Levine, 2003; Rayati, Yaqubi, & Harsejsani, 2012; Spada & Lightbown, 1999; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003; Wells, 1999). The majority of these researchers have argued that using the students' L1, whether by the students or the teacher, can facilitate language learning (e.g., Jafari & Shokrpour, 2013; Kafes, 2011; Mart, 2013) although a small number of studies suggest that language learners may also be reluctant to use their L1 (Nazary, 2008). The assumption has long been that the

learners' mother tongue should be abandoned, and its use discouraged. Over two decades ago, Auerbach (1993), contrary to the common assumption, took a different approach and cast doubt on the widespread English-only policy, relating it to an ideological perspective rather than a scientific basis. In this regard, Auerbach (1993) stated, "we need to recognize that respect for learners' languages has powerful social implications" (p. 30). Other studies have examined the L1 influence on L2 learners' interlanguage lexical reference (Jarvis, 2000), the relationship and interaction between L1 influence and developmental sequences in francophone children (Spada & Lightbown, 1999), the effect of previous exposure to theories and research on student teachers' code-switching in secondary schools (Macaro, 2001), the relationship between target language and first language use and anxiety (Levine, 2003), and the use of L1 in communicative approach settings (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003), among others.

More recently, research has focused on the support gained from L1 use. In a discussion of the facilitative role of L1, Sipra (2007), for instance, undertook a study of bilingualism as a factor conducive to the learning process of English as a foreign language in Pakistan, on the assumption, as a starting point, that the use of the mother tongue will not only hinder the communicative ability of the learners but will also foster it. Using a number of qualitative data-gathering tools, such as questionnaires and interviews and based on a historical analysis, Sipra (2007) concluded that bilingual teachers are better equipped with teaching aids compared with monolingual teachers.

The issue of the mother tongue has been examined in Arabic contexts as well. Khresheh (2012), for instance, inspected Saudi Arabian EFL teachers' and learners' use of Arabic in English classes from various levels, and found that although such use stems from the learners' low proficiency at beginner levels, at advanced levels it might be related to the learners' cultural norms. In addition to the learners' attitudes, teachers' perceptions of L1 use have also been the subject of some research. McMillan and Rivers (2011), for example, investigated the attitudes of native-English-speaker teachers in Japan toward L1 use in a Japanese university where the official policy was "English-only". They showed that teachers viewed L1 use positively. McMillan and Rivers (2011) further argued that selective use of the L1 can "play important cognitive, communicative, and social functions in L2 learning" (p. 252). Linking L1 to motivation, Spahiu (2013) speculated that disregard for the students' mother tongue might be de-motivating. Rayati et al. (2012) examined the role that L1 can play in the collaborative interaction of the learners and its effect on the construct of Language-Related Episodes (LREs) in pair and group work. Their study revealed that, contrary to the widely held assumption that pair and group work

causes learners to use more L1, which is detrimental to their learning, the L1 has potential socio-cognitive positive effects on language acquisition. Kafes (2011) investigated the effect of using L1 on the university students' speaking skills in an English intensive course. The study concluded with an emphasis on "judicious and systematic, careful as well as minimal use of L1" as being facilitative and conducive to the EFL classes. Lasagabaster (2013) considered the beliefs of 35 in-service teachers about the use of L1 in CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) classes in Colombia. The results demonstrated the teachers' positive attitudes in this regard and their tendency to view L1 use as supportive in building up learners' lexicon and fostering their metalinguistic awareness. In another recent study, Jamshidi and Navehebrahim (2013) also confirmed the facilitative role of L1 in an Iranian context. They observed that the use of Persian as an L1 in the language class increased the enjoyment and confidence of the learners, explicating that "using L1 in an L2 context plays a crucial role for learners to organize, enhance and enrich their speech" (p. 190).

This study aimed at exploring Iranian EFL learners' attitudes toward L1 (Persian) use, by means of gathering triangulated data, in EFL classes in which an official, strict English-policy is practiced and maintained.

Research questions

This study aimed at finding answers to the following research questions:

- RQ1: Do Iranian EFL learners hold positive attitudes toward L1 use in EFL classes?
- RQ2: What are the reasons that Iranian EFL learners give for favouring the use of L1 in EFL classes?
- RQ3: What are the reasons that Iranian EFL learners give for avoiding the use of L1 in EFL classes?

Methodology

Participants

The participants consisted of 60 elementary EFL learners, only males, aged between 14 and 22. The majority of the participants had passed at least three semesters of English classes, with every semester lasting, on average, from 18 to 20 sessions and each session at least one hour and at most one hour and a half. In the institute where the data were gathered, the participants studied two sessions a week with each session lasting one hour and forty-five minutes.

The participants also stated that they had started learning English at the ages between 12 and 15. They studied in three different classes with each class consisting almost of an equal number of students, i.e. 20. As regards their L1, they spoke Persian and had similar educational and ethnic backgrounds. They studied in a well-known Iranian language institute, which promoted an English-only policy.

Instruments

The data were gathered through triangulation; i.e. by means of three distinct data-gathering tools: class observations, questionnaire, and semi-structured interview. The content validity of the last two tools was verified by two experts in applied linguistics; based on their comments, the necessary modifications were applied to the instruments. It is noteworthy that, considering the low proficiency of the participants, the researcher had to conduct the interview and administer the questionnaire in Persian. The instruments used in this study are described in more detail below.

Class observation

Three classes were observed once a week for one semester. The semester lasted for 20 sessions, and each session was one hour and forty-five minutes. During these observations, the students' reactions towards their peers' or the teacher's L1 use in the classroom were assessed according to a checklist devised to this end.

Open-ended Questionnaire

Another instrument employed to tap into the participants' attitudes toward L1 use was their responses to two open-ended questions asking them to express views in general terms, declaring whether and why they agreed or disagreed with the use of L1. They were required to provide at least one major reason for their (dis)agreement.

Focus group semi-structured interviews

The researcher carried out semi-structured interviews with the students at the end of the semester to tap more deeply into their attitudes. The focus group interviews were conducted at the end of the semester with 40 participants constituting two groups. Each group was then divided into two further groups: those who agreed to and favoured the use of L1 and those who were against using it. Therefore, four interviews were carried out in total. Each interview was

10–15 minutes in duration. The participants each expressed their views regarding the advantage as well as the disadvantages of using the L1 in EFL classes.

Procedure and data analysis

The setting of the study was a language institute in which the policy was English-only; neither the students nor the teacher were allowed to use the L1 when they were in the class. Some learners, however, occasionally deviated from this policy and used their L1, Persian. This study is qualitative with frequencies offered at times for more elaboration of the data gathered. The reasons given by the participants are gathered and analysed according to the recurrent themes found in their responses to the questionnaire and the interviews.

Results and discussion

The current study aimed at investigating the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners toward the use of L1 (i.e., Persian) in EFL classes through data gathered by means of a variety of ways: class observations, written reports of their attitudes and semi-structured focus group interviews. The results of each of these data collections are presented below.

Insights from class observation

The observations of three classes in a period of one semester revealed some interesting points concerning the students' reactions to the use of L1 in the class in which an English-only policy was implemented by the language institute. The first point is the objection of some students to the use of L1 either by the teacher or the other students. This objection was voiced mainly by the frequently repeated phrase, "No Persian". This objection was, however, raised more frequently when the students used the L1 than when the teacher employed it. This might be indicative of the fact that the students viewed the teacher's use of L1 to be for the sake of the benefit of the class and not because of his frustration or limited English proficiency, while the students' use of L1 might have been viewed to reflect their lack of perseverance in using English. In other words, they probably viewed their teacher's use of L1 as beneficial for the class to proceed and their classmates' use of L1 as detrimental to the atmosphere of the class. This assertion is further corroborated by the findings of the interviews (see below) in which the interviewees emphasized that if Persian was to be used in the class, then the teacher's share of such use must be more significant compared to that of the students.

Questionnaire: Students' responses and emerging recurrent themes

The present study aimed at investigating the role that language learners' L1 can play in EFL classes. In other words, it examined the advantages and the disadvantages that using L1 in EFL classes can have with regard to the learners' language learning enterprise. The transcripts of the participants' views given below have been taken from the participants' verbal reports, which they offered prior to the interviews. The first research question addressed the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners toward L1 use. Figure 1 displays the results of the frequencies of these positive and negative attitudes.

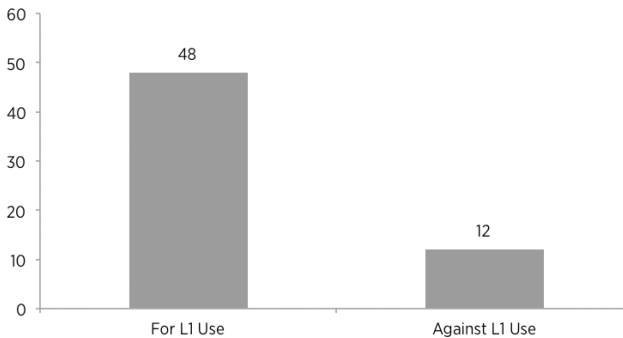


Figure 1. Participants' views of L1 use

As can be seen, while 48 participants (80%) agreed to the use of L1, only 12 of them (20%) did not agree. Therefore, in general, there is a positive attitude among the participants toward L1 use in EFL classes. The results support Brooks-Lewis (2009), who described the learners' attitudes toward L1 use as "overwhelmingly positive" and in favour of the incorporation rather than the exclusion of its use. Furthermore, the findings are in line with Yao (2011), whose study demonstrated Chinese EFL learners' and teachers' positive attitudes toward their teachers' code-switching in EFL classes. The results are, nevertheless, contradictory to those of Nazary (2008), who reported on the Iranian learners' reluctance in the use of L1. The results are also in keeping with Pablo, Lengeling, Zenil, Crawford, and Goodwin (2011), who reported that only a small number of their participants were against using their L1.

Figure 2 displays the reasons given for using L1 in EFL classes. This issue was addressed in the second research question. It is noteworthy that some participants mentioned more than one reason for favouring or discouraging the use of L1, which is why the sum of the individuals who have expressed these reasons (i.e. 66) is greater than the total number of the participants (i.e., 60) as shown in Figures 2 and 3.

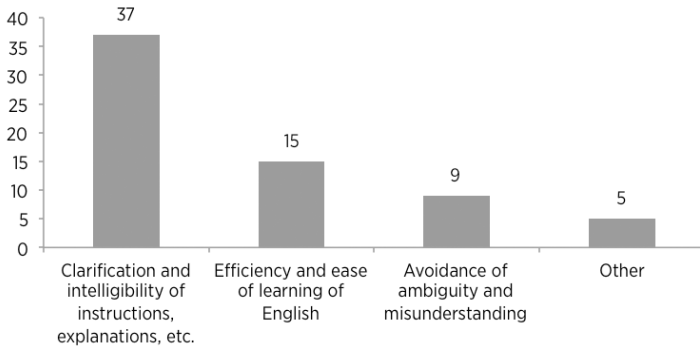


Figure 2. Participants' reasons for favouring L1 use

Figure 2 indicates that L1 use revolves mainly around the issue of clarifying linguistic points (grammatical, lexical, etc.) and for the sake of intelligibility and comprehensibility of those points to the learners. Research on conducted in various contexts, whether Arabic (Alshammari, 2011), Iranian (Jafari & Shokrpour, 2013) or Chinese (Yao, 2011), has supported the points raised above. In the Arabic context, Alshammari (2011) undertook a study of Saudi Arabian university teachers' use of native Arabic and found that Arabic was used mainly to make language comprehensible, including vocabulary and grammar. In the same vein, the fact that the mother tongue use should be for the purpose of making language clear was also found to be true of Saudi Arabian teachers in Al-Nofaie (2010). The above results support those findings obtained by Jafari and Shokrpour (2013), whose study demonstrated the participants' positive attitudes toward the teacher's use of L1 in explaining grammar, vocabulary, giving instructions, among others.

L1 use seems to be more related to learners' proficiency levels. It seems that there is a common opinion among learners in various EFL contexts that learners should be allowed to use their mother tongue, particularly when they are still at the beginning stages of language learning while learners should be discouraged or even banned from using their L1 at advanced levels. In this connection, discussing the use of L1 in an Arabic context, Khresheh (2012), for example, found that this point is valid with Saudi Arabian language learners. This finding is in line with some of the views of the present study such as the following:

Daniel: *I believe that teachers should not be strict on beginner learners when they use Persian, because their proficiency has not developed yet, but when it comes to advanced learners, I think teachers should be stricter on them.*

It has been said that the learners' mother tongue can be used more efficiently when teaching and explaining grammatical points and vocabulary items (Yao, 2011). Figure 2 shows that the participants viewed L1 as a facilitating means of clarifying instructions, for instance. Unexpectedly, this finding, however, is not in keeping with Yao (2011) in that Yao's study demonstrated that Chinese teachers did not hold positive views of the beneficial role of code-switching in explaining grammatical points or vocabulary items. However, the results are in line with the views of the Chinese learners in Yao's (2011) study of code-switching.

Mahan: *This semester you and some of my classmates sometimes used Persian. Unlike the previous semesters when the students and the teacher used only English in the class, this semester I felt so comfortable in the class because I could easily understand what the teacher and my classmates said.*

One of the major reasons for favouring the use of L1 in EFL classes was said to be the fact that it made learning English easier and more efficient, as the following transcription indicates:

Ali: *I do learn better when the teacher uses Persian sometimes when I don't get what he says. But when only English is used in the classroom, I sometimes get confused.*

This might be related to the fact that the participants had viewed the use of L1 as a means of comparing and contrasting the two languages (i.e. L1 and the target language) and consequently as a way of better learning English. Brooks-Lewis (2009), in further explicating this point, stated:

The incorporation of the L1 allows for its comparison and contrast with the target language and thereby the incorporation of the learner's prior knowledge and experience in the relation of what is being learned to a known reality, offering a starting point for language learning. (p. 228)

The next most frequently cited reason was that using L1 can result in better understanding and thus aid in the avoidance of ambiguity and misunderstanding. This finding supports Yao's (2011) results, which revealed that Chinese teachers and learners considered the role of the L1 to be contributing to more understanding and clarity than misunderstanding.

One further point raised in the literature about the beneficial role of the use of L1 is that it can be utilized as a means of enforcing discipline in the classroom (e.g., Yao, 2011). This point, however, was not of much significance to the participants of the current study. Perhaps it can be said that the participants were more interested in the pedagogical benefits of the L1 rather than its disciplinary or emotional effects. Another issue explored here was the reasons offered against using L1 in EFL classes. This was the focus of the third research question. The results are seen in Figure 3.

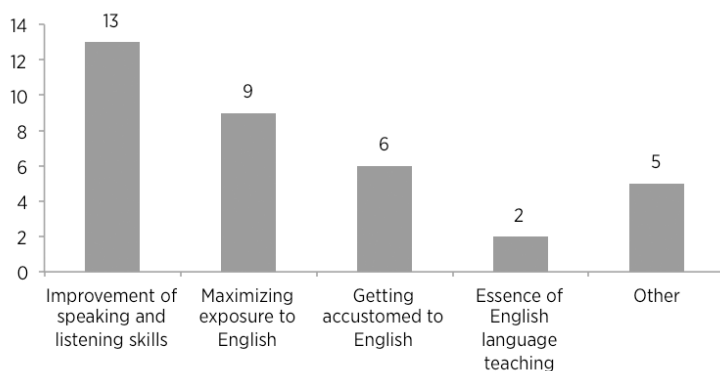


Figure 3. Advantages of avoiding L1 use in EFL classes

Figure 3 indicates that the participants deemed the improvement of the speaking and listening skills as a result of avoiding the use of L1 to be the major contribution in this regard. Such a view concerning the positive effects on language skills might not be unexpected, as research has been positive in this regard (e.g., Nurul Hidayati, 2012). The participants' views are, however, not fully in line with Kafes (2011) in that while Kafes' study found that the use of L1 facilitated and improved the students' speaking skills, some participants of the present study viewed the abandonment of L1 as helpful in improving their language skills. The participants' perception that using Persian in EFL classes is self-contradictory is also remarkably similar to the attitudes of the Arabic participants in Alshammari's (2011) study. Furthermore, the results support the arguments raised by native-English-speaker teachers in Japan against the use of Japanese in McMillan and Rivers (2011). One argument, for example, stated that the potential for more negotiation of meaning increased if an English-only policy was followed, while another was that learners would overuse L1 as a result of a teacher's L1 use.

Interviews: Learners' views

The interviews conducted showed that there was a high level of unanimous consensus among the interviewees on the advantages as well as the disadvantages of using the L1 in EFL classes. That is, both the proponents and the opponents of L1 use each mentioned similar views in this regard. The major disadvantage of using L1 was said to be the fact that using the L1 in an EFL class was simply "contradictory" in that, the participants asserted, as the name EFL suggests, such a class is a setting where English is the object and focus of study. This finding is similar to the reason offered by the subjects in McMillan and

Rivers (2011) who did not construe the use of the mother tongue as suitable for the university setting. In addition, they stated that using English exposes them to it more and more while using the L1 will most probably deprive them of such exposure. The following views were outstanding in this regard:

Daniel: *We've come to an English class not a Persian class. Using Persian contradicts the very essence and purpose of English language teaching and learning. In the way, an English class is the only place where we can get an opportunity to use English, and if we use Persian that will simply deprive us of this opportunity.*

This indicates that the students had developed a “feeling”, an “intuition” or simply an “attitude” as to what it means to them to be in an EFL class. This, in general, might be indicative of the effect that the regulations and policies of an institute can have on language learners’ perceptions. Another advantage was said to be the fact that using the L1 will in all probability lead to the students’ getting used to it. One view in this regard is as follows:

Armin: *The moment that the teacher gives the students the green light to use Persian in the class they won't let it go. They'll use it more and more as they feel it's easier to speak Persian than to use English. Then, the teacher won't be able to control the class, and everyone will speak Persian.*

The interesting point concerning the interviewees’ responses was that even those participants that had, at the outset of the study when reporting their beliefs regarding L1 use, declared their reluctance to grant the teacher or the learners the permission to use Persian, now acknowledged the usefulness of the L1. This finding is similar to the results obtained by Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) who stated that “even the learners who did not use their L1s reported in the interviews that the L1 could be a useful tool” (p. 767).

There was a unanimous consensus among the majority of the interviewees, however, that the use of the L1, whether on the part of the learners or the teacher, should be limited and kept to a minimum and only when highly needed should the learners/teacher use the L1 as a last recourse. As regards the areas of language in which L1 should be used, if it is to be used at all, almost all the participants agreed that these areas had better be grammar and vocabulary. They also stated that mostly low-proficiency learners must be allowed to use their L1 by their teachers. These findings are in agreement with the views of the teachers in McMillan and Rivers’ (2011) study, in which interviewees were asked about the amount of time that can be allowed for mother tongue use and that for target language use. Again, almost all the interviewees agreed to a 10% for the former and 90% for the latter. The interesting point was that the participants declared that the reverse was most often followed in all the other

language institutes in which they had studied English before. This shows that language learners are generally (and fortunately) in favour of the maximal use of the target language in EFL classes and that, consequently, language teachers will not be faced with resistance on the part of the learners if they wish to establish and maintain a policy promoting language learners' maximal use of the target language.

Conclusion

The findings of this study further corroborate the claims made by second language theories as regards the facilitative role that using L1 can have in EFL classes. For instance, Auerbach (1993, p. 20) stated that "its use reduces anxiety, enhances the affective environment for learning, takes into account sociocultural factors, facilitates incorporation of learners' life experiences, and allows for learner-centered curriculum development". The incorporation of L1 has been also been deemed valid as a means of recognizing and respecting the learner as well (Brooks-Lewis, 2009). This results in more engagement of the learners in the decision-making process, which is beneficial to them, according to Mouhanna (2009). Mart (2013) concludes that "L1 remains a natural resource in L2 learning" (p. 13) and asserts that using the L1 is inevitable. Despite this argument, language teachers should bear in mind the prerequisites cited in the literature about the use of the learners' L1 and apply them with caution since what seems to be a facilitative tool for language learning can, when applied inaccurately and inappropriately, become a counterproductive factor, leading to the learners' over-reliance on it. Rather sharply, Spahiu (2013) stated that "there is neither a scientific nor a pedagogic reason to exclude L1 from the teaching process" (p. 247). In practical terms, an awareness of the reasons students have for using their L1 can help their teachers manage the classroom better, improve discipline, respect their students' attitudes and acknowledge their ways of thinking. Teachers are also recommended to take notice of the fact that learners' use of L1 can have roots in, among a variety of other factors, their cultural norms, as some studies have testified to this fact (e.g., Al Sharaeai, 2012; Khresheh, 2012).

In conclusion, based on the findings of the current study, the judicious, systematic and limited use of the L1 where needed is advocated, as has been demonstrated by a large number of other research studies (Alshammari, 2011; Elmetwally, 2012; Sipra, 2007; Spahiu, 2013). The findings suggest that this use must be limited to the clarification of explanations, linguistic points (e.g., grammatical, lexical, etc.), activities, instructions, and so on. Furthermore, a word of caution is in order here, particularly for teachers. Apart from the highly

acknowledged positive outcomes of the L1 use mentioned in the literature, based on the cautionary statements of the participants, it is argued that the use of L1 can have its negative outcomes such as the learners' becoming accustomed to it early on in language learning. Finally, it is argued that what is needed is a reconsideration of the English-only policy as this notion may have not developed out of scientific research but based on ideological perspectives, as noted by Auerbach (1993).

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Appendix A: Observation Checklist

No.	Item	Yes	No
1	The teacher reacts negatively to the students' use of the L1.		
2	The students react negatively to their classmates' use of L1.		
3	The teacher reacts positively to the students' use of the L1.		
4	The students react positively to their classmates' use of L1.		
5	The teacher uses the L1 for explaining grammatical points.		
6	The teacher uses the L1 for explaining vocabulary items.		
7	The teacher uses the L1 when asking for clarification in grammar, vocabulary, etc.		
8	The students ask their teacher about a disciplinary problem in class.		
9	The teacher uses the L1 to exercise discipline in the class.		
10	The teacher uses the students' L1 to create fun, e.g. to tell funny jokes.		

Appendix B: Learner Questionnaire (Translation)

- Do you agree that Persian is allowed to be used by the teacher/learners in English classes?
 - Yes, I do.
 - No, I don't
- If your response to the previous question was "Yes", then provide a reason for your agreement, please.
- If your response to the previous question was "No", then provide a reason for your disagreement, please.

Appendix C: Focus Group Interview (Translation)

- How do you think that your classmates/teachers will evaluate you if you speak your mother tongue in the class?
- Where do you think the teacher is allowed or should use Persian?
- Where do you think the students are allowed or should use Persian?
- Do you think it is useful or harmful to use Persian in the class?
- How much of the class time should be spent speaking Persian and English? Give a percentage, please.
- If you agree that Persian can be used in the class, then what is the share of the teacher and the students in speaking Persian? Give a percentage to each, please.
- In which areas (grammar, vocabulary, etc.) can the teacher/students use Persian?

8. Based on your experience as language learners, where do you think the students/teacher use Persian in the class?
9. Do you think students should be allowed to use Persian wherever they like to do so? Why or why not?

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