T. R.
GAZIANTEP UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES TEACHING
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM

LEARNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE USE OF L1 IN ENGLISH CLASSES: A SAMPLE OF SALAHADDIN UNIVERSITY

Master's of Arts Thesis

ATTAA LATEEF GALALI

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I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

LEARNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE USE OF L1 IN ENGLISH CLASSES: A SAMPLE OF SALAHADDIN UNIVERSITY

ATTAA GALALI
MA Thesis, English Language Teaching Program
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Two main opposing approaches exist regarding the impact of first-language (L1) use in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language (EFL): the monolingual and bilingual approaches. Some linguists assume that students' L1 should be banished from their English classes, whereas others assert that it facilitates the process of learning a target language (TL).

The purpose of this study was to investigate learners' attitudes towards L1 use in their English classes, both by the students themselves and by their teachers. The current study also determined which factors caused the learners to switch from the TL to their L1.

This study was conducted at Salahaddin University, Erbil, at the end of the first semester of the 2016-2017 academic year. It employed a mixed-method approach of data collection and analysis. Two hundred and fifty-eight EFL learners of both genders participated in the quantitative data collection, which consisted of two-parts Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ) later analysed via SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The qualitative data were collected via face-to-face Semi Structured Interviews (SSIs) conducted with eight EFL learners, and content analysis was subsequently employed for its analysis.

The findings revealed that participants had a slightly positive attitude towards the use of their L1 in the facilitation of their TL learning. By referring to current theories of TL acquisition and reviewing recent literature, it can be inferred that learners' L1 has a necessary and facilitating role in acquiring a foreign language (FL).

ÖZET

İNGİLİZCE SINIFLARINDA ÖĞRENCİLERİN L1 KULLANIMINA İLİŞKİN TUTUMLARI: SELAHADDİN ÜNİVERSİTESİ ÖRNEĞİ

ATTAA GALALI
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Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. EMRAH CİNKARA
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İngilizcenin, ikinci veya yabancı dil olarak öğrenim ve öğretiminde ana dilinin (L1) kullanımına yönelik temel iki farklı görüş vardır: Sadece ikinci dil kullanılmasını savunan tek dilli eğitim yöntemi ve ana dil ve yabancı dilin kullanılmasının gerekliliğini savunan iki dilli eğitim yöntemi. Bazı dil bilimcilere göre İngilizce derslerinde öğretmenin ve öğrencinin ana dil kullanımını yasaklanmalı, bazılarına göre ise ana dil kullanımı, yabancı dil öğreniminde büyük bir destek sağlayabilir.

Bu araştırmanın temel amaçlarından bir tanesi yabancı dil öğretiminde öğrenciler ile öğretmenlerin ana dil kullanımına yönelik tutumlarının belirlenmesidir. Bir diğer amaç da öğrencilerin hedef dil kullanımını bırakıp ana dil kullanımına geçmesini sağlayan faktörleri ortaya koymaktır.

Bu araştırma Selahaddin Üniversitesi′nde 2016-2017 eğitim ve öğretim yılının ilk döneminin sonunda yapılmıştır. Araştırmada nicel ve nitel verilerin toplama ve incelemesinde karma araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Verilerin toplanmasına 258 kız ve erkek öğrenci katılmıştır. Nicel veriler, iki bölümden oluşan bir anket aracılığıyla toplanmış ve SPSS programıyla incelenmiştir. Nitel veriler ise, sekiz öğrenci ile yüz yüze görüşmeler yapılarak toplanmış ve içerik analizi yapılarak incelenmiştir.

Elde edilen bulgular, katılımcıların yabancı dil öğreniminde ana dilin kullanılmasına dair olumlu tutuma sahip olduklarını ortaya koymuştur. Elde edilen bulgular ışığında ve daha önce yapılan araştırmalar ve hedef dilin kullanılmasına yönelik teoriler göz önünde bundurulduğunda, öğrencilerin ana dil kullanımının yabancı dil öğreniminde özendirici ve gerekli bir rolü olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğrenimi, ana dil kullanımı, hedef dil kullanımı, öğrenci tutum ve görüşleri.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

ESP: English for Special Purposes

FL: Foreign Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

MT: Mother Tongue

RQ: Research Question

SSIs: Semi Structured Interviews

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TL: Target Language

LATL1UQ: Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Presentation

This chapter examines the use of learners' first language (L1) in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms. It considers language-teaching methodologies concerning L1 use as well as learner attitudes toward these approaches. The study's central problem and goals, overall significance, and assumptions as well as limitations are subsequently presented.

1.2 Background of the Study

English language plays an important role in almost every aspect of life these days, therefore, the interest of learning English as a second/foreign language has grown for the last few decades (Hasman, 2000). In addition, English has become a universal language and a means of communication. People with different cultures and linguistic backgrounds communicate for many purposes through English. Further, English has become "a key part in educational strategy in most countries" (Graddol, 2006. p. 70). Therefore, governments attempt to help their citizens to be effective users of English.

However, learning a second/foreign language comes along with language teaching methods and approaches, therefore, the medium of instruction is one of the most important issues that should be taken into consideration. In this regard, two main opposing approaches exist regarding the impact of L1 use in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign or second language: the monolingual and bilingual approaches. Some experts (Krashen, 1982; Ellis, 1984; Yaphantides, 2009) consider the use of L1 as a hindrance in the target language (TL) learning process. On the other hand, the latter (Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Phillipson, 1992; Prodromou, 2002; Swain &

Lapkin, 2000; Vanderheijden, 2010; Wechsler, 1997; Deller & Rinvolucri, 2002) see learners' L1 as a facilitating tool in learning the TL.

Further, throughout the history of EFL instruction, numerous teaching methods have been employed in order to aid the learning process. The first recognized method, the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), particularly emphasizes the use of learners' L1 in improving their second-language acquisition. Freeman (1986) described GTM as strictly depending on the use of L1 in all communication and explanation occurring between educators and learners. The method involves the translation of all instruction-related sentences and vocabularies into the learners' L1, with learners' success being measured by how successful these translations may be.

Although GTM is the oldest English-language teaching (ELT) method and has received due criticism, some educators still utilize it because they are unable to teach effectively in the TL. A later-developed method which is completely opposite to GTM is known as the Direct Method. It prohibits the use of L1 in interactions occurring between learners and their teachers. Other less polarized teaching methodologies in terms of L1 use are the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach, Audio-Lingual Method and Silent Method, which allowed L1 use only in the facilitation of language-learning on an as-needed basis.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The use of L1 in EFL classrooms continues to be a controversial issue among educators, who question whether it should be utilized at all or, if so, in which situations. Numerous scholars have examined this topic. For example, Cook (2001) questions the traditional view that the L1 should be avoided by students and educators during the learning process. He proposes that, instead, the L1 may be utilized as a tool for conveying meaning, explaining grammar, and devising learning strategies.

Freeman (1986) similarly regarded L1 use as an opportunity to create a more effective learning environment. In her work *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching,* she noted that, according to GTM, almost everything should be translated from the TL to students' L1. Additionally, Auerbach (1993) stated that the use of L1 enables learners to acquire the TL more quickly than if it were not employed at all. Other scholars such as Polio and Duff (1994) identified the most obvious reason for

L1 use is the negotiation of meaning. For example, L1 use by both educators and learners may clarify difficult concepts (Schweers, 1999), especially those related to grammar. Rodrigues and Oxbrow (2008) determined that students prefer this use during grammar discussion.

Despite the plethora of research surrounding the topic of L1 use by educators and learners, no studies have yet to incorporate the perspectives of EFL learners at Salahaddin University in Iraq. These learners' inability to utilize properly the TL in their classrooms is one motivation for their dependence upon the L1 for classroom interactions. For other reasons, as well, some of these students switch from English to their L1 while learning. This study examines these students' perspectives regarding their L1 use in the classroom as well as their opinions regarding L1 use by their teachers. As non-native English teachers often prefer to communicate with their students via their native language, this study examines learners' perspectives regarding why their teachers choose to do so—specifically whether students attribute this use to teacher inadequacy in the TL or other reasons.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the perspectives of EFL learners at Salahaddin University regarding the use of their native language in their EFL classes. For this purpose, the following research questions are considered:

1. What are the attitudes (reasons and opinions) of EFL learners towards the use of L1 in English classes at Salahaddin University?

2. What do learners think of the teachers' use of L1 in their EFL classes?

3. Do the learners in the four grades (freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors) have different attitudes towards the use of L1 in EFL classes at Salahaddin University?

4. Do males and females have different attitudes towards the use of L1 in EFL classes at Salahaddin University?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Since learners are a key factor in the learning process, many studies were carried out to investigate their attitudes towards the use of L1 in EFL classes. The researcher is not aware of any studies carried out at Salahaddin University to investigate their attitudes towards the use of their L1 in EFL classes. Therefore, the current study attempts to bridge this gap.

The first purpose of this study is to provide insight concerning why EFL learners at Salahaddin University tend to use their L1 rather than English. Kramsch (1992) believed that teachers need to be aware about the similarities and differences between learners' L1 and the TL in terms of semantic, morpho-syntactic and discourse level. Learners rely on their L1 backgrounds to master the logic and organization principles behind the use of L1. Therefore, teachers also need to be cautious that learners rely on their L1 as a starting point during learning a TL (Ellis, 1985)

Secondly, this research will also illuminate the perspectives of these learners regarding L1 use in their EFL classes, identify why it is preferred to the TL of English in their classes, and provide useful information for their teachers why students prefer L1 use to English use in their classes.

Another major significance of the study is to illuminate the perspectives of EFL learners at Salahaddin University regarding their teachers' use of L1 during second language (L2) learning process.

In addition, this study will investigate the attitudes of students regarding L1 use by their teachers. It is intended that this study's results will aid teachers in determining the situations in which their students prefer to utilize the L1 rather than the TL. Consequently, EFL teachers at Salahaddin University and similar contexts will have more clear information about which ELT methods are appropriate for encouraging their students to use the TL in their classes.

Further, this study will also illuminate the different attitudes of males and females and the four grades (freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors) towards the use of L1.

1.6 Assumptions

It is assumed that all participants answered the Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ) sincerely because they were sufficiently informed regarding the nature of this study.

1.7 Limitations

The following may be considered limitations of this study:

1. This study examines learners' perspectives only within the Department of English Language and Literature.

2. This study considers only participants studying at Salahaddin University in Erbil/Iraq.

3. This study investigates solely learners' perspectives and does not consider those of teachers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Presentation

First language (L1) use in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes is a topic which has been much-debated by both educators and learners. Two main opposing perspectives have emerged: that entirely against L1 use (e.g., Krashen, 1982; Ellis, 1984; Yaphantides, 2009) and that supporting it (e.g., Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Phillipson, 1992; Prodromou, 2002; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Vanderheijden, 2010; Wechsler, 1997; Deller & Rinvolucri, 2002). This section explores various studies conducted regarding L1 use in EFL classrooms.

Most studies concerning L1 use have examined it in terms of use by teachers and consequently have focused on teachers' motivations for either utilizing or abandoning the L1. However, few studies have considered L1 use from learner's perspectives, and none have been conducted at Salahaddin University in Iraq. The current study attempts to address this gap.

The review of literature concerning L1 use in EFL classrooms is divided into six sections. The first section provides a historical background of the issue, including both opposing approaches—the monolingual and bilingual approaches—, while the second section examines previously conducted studies. The third part considers the roles of students' L1 in EFL classes, namely the pedagogical, sociological and socio-cultural roles. The fourth part concerns the advantages of utilizing students' L1 in EFL classes, including the humanistic element, preferred language strategies, and time-saving device.

The fifth section pertains to teachers' attitudes towards L1 use in EFL classes (i.e. their perceptions towards the use of L1 in learning a target language), and the final part emphasizes the necessity of acknowledging learners' attitudes towards L1 use in their classes.

2.2 A Historical View of the Issue

Auerbach (1998) explained that general opinion regarding L1 use in EFL classrooms has regularly shifted among scholars. Several hundred years ago, L1 use was a nearly universal issue and was accepted. Known as *bilingual teaching*, methods employing the L1 prioritized written over verbal communication. However, later during the 19th century, emphasis shifted toward spoken language as *monolingual teaching* became prevalent. Due to the mass migration of people globally, especially from Europe to America, student demographics among EFL learners changed—teachers no longer necessarily shared a common L1 with their students, who now were mixed in terms of their L1 (Hawks, 2001). Consequently, for many teachers the medium of teaching became the target language (TL).

Phillipson (1992) stated that, during the colonial teaching period, English became the predominant culture of the British colonies and the people who had moved to America. These individuals were forced to assimilate in order to obtain a better life. Thus, the English language gained its superiority over all other languages. It also led to the standardization of an "English-only" policy in classrooms. Pennycook (1994) explained that economic as well as political factors played a significant role in the rise of the monolingual approach, as did the preference for native English speakers as teachers.

The monolingual approach was supported by Philipson (1992). He believed that the TL should be the only means of communication in the classroom in order to increase TL exposure for students. He proffered the following five key "policies" of successful language teaching:

1. English must be taught in a monolingual classroom.
2. The ideal teacher is a native English speaker.
3. The earlier English is taught, the better.

4. The more English used in the classroom, the better.

5. If other languages are used, English standards will drop (Phillipson, 1992, p. 185).

The above policies led to the development of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach, which dominated modern language teaching. The CLT Approach strictly follows the monolingual approach in its claim that language exists for communication. Many linguists who follow this approach believe that the TL should be the sole medium of instruction in the classroom (Wringe, 1989).

Nunan (as cited in Pacek, 2003) stated that many researchers now believe that seeking a perfect language-teaching method for all situations is futile. Many methods can be used in different situations and settings. If teachers exclude students' L1 from their learning, they will sacrifice numerous techniques for teaching the TL.

2.2.1 The monolingual approach

Attitudes towards L1 use in TL classrooms shifted in the beginning of the 20th century. The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) failed to improve learners' communicative competence in the TL and thus began to decline in use.

On the other hand, the monolingual CLT Approach increased in popularity during 1970s and 1980s. As mentioned previously, this approach focuses on teaching the TL monolingually (i.e., all classroom communication should be in the TL). Pennycook (1994) stated that the CLT Approach tries to avoid using learners' L1.

Yaphantides (2009) stated that institutional policies can play an important role in some teachers' adoption of an "English-only" policy. He explains that some teachers believe that the exclusive use of learners' L1 enhances and quickens their TL acquisition.

The monolingual approach seeks to banish the L1 from TL classrooms, as it is assumed that learners lack sufficient opportunities to practice the TL outside of the classrooms (Duff & Polio, 1990; Edstron, 2006). According to this perspective, acquiring the TL is similar to acquiring the L1; thus, students should be immersed in the TL. Krashen (1982) stated that adopting a "natural approach" requires exposing learners to the TL through meaningful communications. Moreover, Ellis (1984) argued

that teachers should utilize the TL even when giving instructions and managing their classrooms. He criticized teachers who switch to learners' L1 while explaining lessons or introducing activities.

Although the monolingual approach has been supported by some researchers and linguists, it has been opposed and criticized by others (Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Phillipson, 1992; Prodromou, 2002; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Vanderheijden, 2010; Wechsler, 1997). Firstly, it is criticized due to its perceived impracticality. Phillimpson (1992) stated that most teachers are non-native speakers and do not possess the same levels of proficiency in the TL. He also mentioned that TL acquisition is facilitated by the quantity of exposure. Thus, trained teachers, an effective assessment system and coursebook material are key factors in effectively learning an L2.

Secondly, although supporters of the monolingual approach believe that learning the TL is similar to acquiring the L1, many critics claim that this has not been proven true. Age differences has been identified as a factor differentiating the two. Brown (2007) asserted that there are differences in the process of learning an L2 between children and adults. He believed that children can learn two languages simultaneously, but adults require systematic learning involving the mastery of grammatical points and comparisons between their L1 and TL languages.

Thirdly, the monolingual approach has been criticised due to its failure to distinguish between the concepts of EFL and English as a second language (ESL). Richards & Schmidt (2002) differentiated the two by explaining that ESL refers to language that is used alongside the L1 in everyday life. They also stated that ESL refers to the use of the TL in a country in which English is vital to education, business and government communities. For instance, in western counties such as Canada, the US and Australia, ESL learners are obliged to use the L2 in the classroom. In these settings, learners have different language backgrounds, so there should be a common language for communication and giving instruction. On the other hand, Abbott (as cited in Mesthrie, 2012) explained that EFL describes contexts in which English is not an important means of communication. An EFL class describes a class in which

learners share the same L1 background. These learners communicate in formal settings rather than outside of class.

Fourthly, Swain and Lapkin (2000) claim that banishing L1 from TL classrooms is an unjustified decision. They believe that L1 use has a positive impact on learning the TL. They also asserted that banishing the L1 means denying learners the opportunity to use cognitive tools while learning complex TL linguistics. In addition, when the learners become more fluent in the TL, the level of L1 reliance decreases (Vanderheijden 2010; Prodromou 2002).

Finally, Wechsler (1997) claimed that the L1 always exists in ESL/EFL learners' minds; thus, an "English-only" policy does not allow them to get benefit from this circumstance. Furthermore, Anton and Dicamilla (1999) as well as Slavin (2006) stated that low-level TL learners utilize their L1 during collaborative work to understand difficult concepts. Thus, if the L1 is forbidden, learning opportunities are limited.

As demonstrated above, the monolingual approach has been widely criticized for its banishment of L1 use, which inevitably persists in learners' minds.

2.2.2 The bilingual approach

Auerbach (1993) asserted that one assumption of English Language Teaching (ELT) is that learners acquire the TL more quickly and effectively the more they are exposed to the TL, in which case they begin to think in the TL. Several researchers began to re-examine the roles of L1 in learning a TL. Deller and Rinvolucri (2002) compared the L1 to a womb in which the TL is born. Therefore, banishing the L1 from TL classrooms is impractical. Macaro (2001) and Wills (2007) believed that the L1 is a useful tool for TL acquisition, and Hitotuzi (2006) stated that imposing an "English-only" policy in the classroom does not mean banishing the L1 from learners' minds.

Atkinson (1987) argued that learners' L1 is a neglected resource in monolingual English classes. He and Auerbach (1993) encourage language researchers to re-evaluate their beliefs regarding L1 use.

The supporters of L1 use (e.g., Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Cook, 1999; Cummins, 2007; Mahmoud, 2006; Nation, 2003; Schweers, 1999) illuminate the

benefits of utilizing the L1. Cook (1999) claimed that the L1 is a classroom resource for providing authentic learning opportunities to students; therefore, it should be regarded as a means of maximizing and enhancing TL learning. Auerbach (1993) believed that the L1 can be used as a meaning-making tool and a way of exposing learners to the TL. In addition, Mahmoud (2006) stated that L1 use is a strategy for fulfilling the gap in communicating in the TL. This strategy advancess learners' acquisition of the TL.

2.3 The Use of First Language

Almost all studies that have been conducted in this area have focused on the advantages and disadvantages of L1 use in EFL classes. Vivan Cook's (2001) *Using the First Language in the Classrooms* is one of the most prominent works pertaining this matter.

In his study, Cook discussed different points of view regarding L1 use. He stated that the L1 can be a useful element for improving fluency in the TL and opposed the common belief that TL acquisition mirrors L1 acquisition. He claimed that when TL learners make connections and analyse language use in comparison with the L1, they use different techniques from the techniques they had used while acquiring the L1.

Cook stated that teachers utilize students' L1 when teaching new vocabularies and that students utilize their L1 when checking the meaning of new vocabularies. The L1 is also useful in explaining grammatical structures and saving time as well as effort on behalf of teachers. This is acceptable, he claims, as long as the L1 does not dominate classroom interactions.

Tang (2002) conducted a study of the attitudes of teachers and students regarding L1 use in EFL classes in Chinese schools. He focused on the frequency of L1 use. The data collection procedures were questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. He found that the most common reason and highest amount of time behind the use of L1 was to explain the meaning of new vocabularies, and the lowest allocated time was to explain grammatical structures. On the other hand, most participants (more than 70%) including both teachers and students believed that the L1 (Chinese) should be used in English classes, with different points of view about when

to use it. Most students thought that the L1 should be used to explain language items, while most teachers believed that it should be used to practice new phrases and expressions in the TL. Tang also claimed that almost 69% of the students benefitted from the use of their L1. Moreover, his study demonstrated that most teachers and students thought that the L1 should be used for about 5% of class time.

Levine (2003) conducted a study of the attitudes of university students and teachers pertaining the use of L1 and the TL. The study employed an online questionnaire, and the participants were first- and second-year students of French, Spanish and German. The participants were both native and bilingual English speakers. The research showed that students and teachers utilized the students' L1 to clarify classroom activities, manage their classes and enforce class policies. The L1 was also used to explain grammatical structures. The study also showed that the L1 was used for topics having no connection to classroom activities. The study displays the similarities between English and other languages when they are taught as an L2. The case of teaching other languages is similar to that of teaching the English language when they are taught as an L2. Finally, the study showed that the students believed L1 use to be helpful for learning the TL. They believed that their anxiety increases alongside increased TL use.

Bouangeune (2009) conducted a comparative research study of two groups concerning L1 use to observe the degree of improvement between the two groups. The study took place in Laos (a country in southeast Asia between China and Cambodia), and he used two groups: an experimental and a control group. The L1 was used as a means of giving instructions and translating new words for the experimental group, while it was not allowed for the control group. The results demonstrated that the experimental group had exhibited higher success and improvement than the control group. Bouangeune related this success and improvement to the effective use of students' L1 as well as accurate translations of new vocabularies.

Kovacic and Kirinic (2011) conducted a study of teachers' and students' opinions regarding whether the L1 (Croatian) should be used or avoided in English for Special Purposes (ESP) classrooms. The research showed agreement between both teachers and students that the L1 could be used moderately in ESP classes to achieve

learning purposes. The research also indicated some different perceptions between students and teachers regarding situations in which the L1 should be used. 56% of the students declared that they preferred to use their L1, while 45% of the teachers gave the same answer. About, 51% of the students preferred their teachers to use their L1 moderately. Moreover, about 73% of the students thought that L1 use is beneficial for improving TL learning, while 80% of the teachers shared this idea. As with other studies, most participants believed L1 use to be helpful in explaining grammatical issues and difficult concepts.

2.4 The Role of L1 in English Classes

The role of L1 in ESL and EFL classes has been a hotly debated issue. Some teachers and linguistic experts assume that L1 does not have a place in the TL learning process because it does not make the full use of the TL. According to Cook (1992) learners use of their L1 while learning a TL, therefore, an instructor should not neglect L1 from learning the TL. This section presents three main roles of L1 while learning and teaching English as EFL or ESL; the pedagogical, the sociological and the socio-cultural roles.

2.4.1 The pedagogical role

The results of past studies indicate that students' L1 plays an important role in learning a TL. Atkinson (1987) stated, "Although the L1 is not a suitable basis for a methodology, it has, at all levels, a variety of roles which are at present, consistently undervalued" (p. 5). Similarly, Prodromou (2002) described L1 use as a 'reservoir' in that L1 supports TL learning for students. Bolitho (1983) explained that students attend English classes with some language backgrounds; thus, EFL teachers should take advantage of students' native language. Stern (1992) continued that learners inherently make references to their native language; therefore, the TL is learned by making references to the students' L1. Similarly, Gabrielatos (2001) stated that students use their L1 to understand the logic and structures of the TL. Swan (1985) even exaggerated that no one can learn a TL without referring to his/her native language.

Other previous studies have emphasized the role of translation in TL acquisition. Murakami (1999) stressed the importance of translation in TL classes, describing translation as a useful tool for making comparative analyses between the

TL and students' L1. Moreover, Titford (1983) stated it is important for learners "to relate form and function in their L1 to form and function in the [TL]."

Numerous language scholars have discussed the relationship between students' native language and the TL in terms of "universal grammar." Chomsky (1976) explained that "the grammar of a language consists of universal principles" (p. 5). Thus, all the present languages in the world share a number of grammatical structures. According to Chomsky's idea, knowledge from students' native language can be transferred into TL acquisition. Building on the previous idea, Towel and Hawkins (1994) indicated that learners transfer some grammatical properties into the grammar of the TL, Ringbom (1987) asserted that learners use their own grammatical knowledge to understand the grammar of the TL, and (Atiknson, 1987; Harbord, 1992; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1992) demonstrated that transferring knowledge from the L1 to the TL is a strategy utilized by almost all foreign language (FL) learners in most situations.

2.4.2 The sociological role

Richard-Amato (1996 as cited in Langer, 2001) noted that learning an L2 is influenced by classroom environments and the people who speak it. Generally, students' perceptions of the TL culture have a great influence on their performance. Langer (2001) argued that students can be motivated by engagement in meaningful communication which incorporates their L1. He continues that if the use of L1 is banned, students might feel neglected and unimportant.

Shamash (as cited in Auerbach, 1993) stated that students can take risks in English while being allowed to use their native language. Auerbach concluded that student's native language provides a sense of security and enables them to express themselves. According to her point of view, L1 use in English classes is a way of removing psychological barriers. Likewise, Janulevicine and Kavlaliauskiene (2002) believed that allowing L1 use enables learners to manage anxiety, build confidence and become more autonomous.

In summary, the previous studies have emphasized that L1 use enables learners to feel more secure, creates a comfortable learning environment, and enhances TL acquisition.

2.4.3 The socio-cultural role

Students' native language plays a socio-cultural role in FL acquisition. Podromou (2002) explained that L1 use enables students to make connections between their native culture and the TL culture. Moreover, classroom cultures are related to many classroom activities. Widdowson (1996) explained that classroom culture and that of the surrounding society are interrelated, thus allowing students to use their L1 help them authenticate the TL. Similarly, Auerbach (1993) believed that allowing L1 use is a useful way for students to evaluate differences within the same society (cultural diversity).

2.5 Advantages of Using L1 in English Classes

L1 use in English classes has several benefits. Atkinson (1987) mentioned three of them, which are presented below.

2.5.1 Humanistic element

Atkinson (1987) explained that allowing learners to use their native language in EFL classes is a 'valuable humanistic element." Humanistic views allow students to use their native languages so as to express themselves more clearly and be more comfortable. Harbord (1992) stated that eliminating L1 use has only negative consequences. He also believed that a humanistic view is a very reasonable attitude towards the use of learners' native language. He gave the example that a teacher should ignore a student's question, "How can I say?". The clear danger of this strategy (depending on the L1) is that it ruins learners' autonomy as they switch to the native language automatically.

2.5.2 Preferred learning strategy

According to Atkinson (1987), learners' wishes should be taken into consideration so as to enhance their learning processes. Many EFL learners like to use their native language in English classes. Schweers (1999) conducted a study of Spanish learners' attitudes towards L1 use in EFL classes, and more than 88% preferred the use of native language. It is difficult to ignore their wishes, but teachers should know when to use the L1.

2.5.3 Time saving device

The use of students' native language is a valuable time-saving strategy (Green, 1970; Atkinson, 1987; Tudor, 1987). However, the aim should not be only to save time while switching to the native language. Rather, as Duff stated, "The [L1] should be used to provoke discussion and speculation, to develop clarity and flexibility of thinking, and to help us increase our own and our students' awareness of the inevitable interaction between the L1 and the TL that occurs during any type of language acquisition" (p. 8).

2.6 Teachers' Attitudes towards Using L1

Many studies have focused on teachers' perceptions and justifications for L1 use in their English classes. Krieger (2005) stated that in a multilingual classroom, using the L1 is not the essential means of interaction. He also mentioned that it makes students feel that they can depend on their native language for communication rather than facilitating TL acquisition. He thought that students use their L1 despite whether they are allowed by their teachers. He also believed that teachers should do their best to help students determine when to use their L1 and when to avoid this use.

Lin (2005) elaborated the issue of how learners' attitudes are affected by the teachers' use of learners' native language. He determined that that an "English-only" policy in classes with students majoring in English is more important than one in classes with non-major students. Almost all the teachers agreed to use the L1 with non-major students. This study demonstrated that the teachers used their L1 in different ways (as single words and complete sentences). The study also indicated that the amount of teachers' L1 use depended on students' levels. They used students' L1 more frequently with elementary students than with relatively more advanced students such as university students.

Koucka (2007) examined L1 use by teacher trainers. Her study indicated that teacher trainers used the L1 too frequently. She also determined that the teacher trainers used L1 in fourteen different situations ranging from lesson introductions to feedback. The study also indicated that the L1 was used more when giving instructions and translating new words than in any other situation.

Al-Hadrhami (as cited in Borg, 2008) conducted a study on the use of Arabic in English classes and how it affects the learning process. He held interviews with EFL teachers and observing their classes. The study demonstrated that teachers utilized the L1 in translating new ideas, concepts, and vocabulary terms as well as for classroom management and instructional purposes.

Al-Buraiki (2008) conducted a study on teachers' perceptions of their L1 use in English classes. The results were similar to those of previous studies, as giving instructions and explaining new concepts and vocabularies were the main reasons behind L1 use. Most participants (teachers) believed that L1 use can aid students in acquiring fluency and it can facilitate English language acquisition. They also thought that L1 use is a time-saving techniqe, as it takes a longer time to clarify concepts in the TL.

Kim and Petraki (2009) conducted a study of teachers' perspectives regarding L1 use. The research took place in Vietnam and utilized a mixed method of data collection by incorporating questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. Two types of English teachers were examined: native and non-native English teachers. The research determined that native English teachers used students' L1 less frequently than did non-native English teachers. On the other hand, both teachers and students agreed that students' L1 can be used while presenting new vocabularies and expressions, explaining grammatical points and managing classrooms.

Campa and Nasaji (2009) conducted a study concerning the teaching of German as an L2 in Canada. Two classes of two different teachers were videotaped and audio-recorded. The aim of the recordings was to identify situations in which the L1 (English) was used by the two teachers. The most common situation was translation from German to English. Checking the meaning of new words was also another situation, as was the comparison between the two languages. Giving instructions, classroom management and interactions between the students and the teachers took place in the L1. The study showed that L1 use was also influenced by students' culture. When discussing something related to the students' culture, the teachers used the learners' L1. The research also showed that an experienced teacher used the L1 less frequently than did the novice teacher.

Mahmoudi and Amirkhiz (2011) implemented a study in Iran which examined the amount of L1 use in EFL classes. The research investigated two teachers using two different ELT methodologies. The first teacher based his teaching on GTM, relying on translation from the TL to the students' L1. Therefore, L1 use was quite high. The other teacher utilized CLT, and L1 use was remarkably lower than with the first teacher. The teachers stated that the students' parents gave priority to obtaining high grades over language acquisition itself. In this case, the teachers were forced to use the L1 rather than the TL.

Hidayati (2012) conducted a study of the use of the Indonesian language. The aim of the study was to determine the nature of the correlation between L1 use and students' participation as well as comprehension in EFL classes. The teachers who participated in the study used the L1 about 30-49% of class time. The study showed a positive correlation between the amount of time using the L1 and students' interactions. When teachers spent a high amount of time using the L1, the interactions were high, and vice versa. The study did not find any new reasons behind students' use of their L1. The results were similar to those of previous studies. Teachers had used the L1 to explain grammar points, present new vocabularies and facilitate social interactions with and among students.

2.7 Learners' Attitudes towards Using L1

Learners' attitudes regarding L1 use is valuable, as they are directly involved in learning the TL. Nevertheless, their views have not been sufficiently examined, especially in Iraq. They usually are not considered alone, but rather in connection with their teachers' attitudes.

Satio and Ebsworth (2004) conducted a study of L1 use among Japanese students. The students preferred teachers who know their native language because they found L1 use to be helpful. They wanted their teachers to explain ideas and present new vocabularies in their native language. The study also indicated that the students were shocked while being taught by native English speakers who did not allow them to use the L1 in their classes.

Sharma (2006) conducted a study of the use of the Nepali language in Nepal's secondary schools. The study concentrated on the frequency of L1 use and the attitudes

of teachers and students regarding L1 use. The study showed that students employed their L1 more frequently than did teachers (ranging from 52-64%). Only one percent of the students wished their teachers to use their L1 frequently during class. The research exhibited some contradictory results among students due to various points of view. About 46% of the learners thought that the L1 should be used in about 5% of class time. Nevertheless, the study indicated a negative correlation between their wishes and their deeds, as the learners tended to use their native language more frequently than they had wished.

Hung's (2006) study of students' attitudes towards L1 use in a writing class at a university in Taiwan found that the learners believed their teachers should use the L1 to explain grammatical points, brainstorm ideas and explain difficult concepts. The learners also believed that the use of L1 should not comprise more than 25% of class time. They thought that if teachers were to use the L1 frequently in their writing classes, their attention to the teachers would be less.

Nazary (2008) conducted a study of students' attitudes towards L1 use among Iranian University students. The study indicated that the learners did not prefer to use their L1 in English classes. Moreover, learners with various proficiency levels had different perceptions towards the use of L1. On the other hand, about 72% of the learners preferred to have a teacher who could speak their native language.

Mahmoudi and Amirkhiz's (2011) study of L1 use in EFL classes involved low- and high- level students of English. Both levels of students agreed that the interactions should be in English and not in their native language.

Another study conducted by Afzal (2012) on the effect of L1 on active and passive vocabularies indicated opposite results. The study indicated that when Persian equivalents are provided in addition to English definitions, the vocabularies became more active.

Alshammari (2011) conducted a study concerning the use of Arabic among university-level EFL learners. The results showed that approximately 61% of the learners thought that Arabic should be used in their EFL classes. Moreover, nearly 69% of the teachers had the same idea. Nearly 54% of the students thought that L1 use is beneficial in terms of explaining new vocabularies, while 5% thought that the L1 is

useful when giving instructions. Most of the teachers shared the belief that L1 use is time-saving. An interesting point is that 21% of the participants (both teachers and students) thought that the L1 should always be used in EFL classes.

Finally, in his study concerning teacher attitudes, Hidayati (2012) determined that 36% of learners believed that the L1 should be used for nearly 30% of class time. Students claimed that they became confused and, consequently, disinterested when English was over-used in their classes.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Presentation

This chapter presents information on the context of the study, the research design, participants and instruments utilized to collect and analyse the obtained data

3.2 Context

This study was implemented at Salahaddin University in Erbil/Iraq. Salahaddin University is the oldest and largest public comprehensive university in the region. It is the educational home to more than 26,000 undergraduates and more than 900 graduate students. The university offers more than 75 undergraduate majors and award degrees at the Certificate, Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral levels. The programs of study include Engineering, Science, Law & Politics, Agriculture, Business and Administration, Physical Education, Art and Sociology, Fine Arts, Languages, Religion, and Teaching Methods. Salahaddin University employs more than 1700 academic staff and 4,000 administration and professional staff ("About Salahaddin University-Erbil," 2017).

3.3 Research Design

The current research is a descriptive study which considers the frequency of each item in terms of gender and grade. The study follows a mixed method of data collection and analysis in order to obtain more reliable results. The data were gathered from two different methods: the quantitative data were collected via Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ) consisting of two parts; reasons and opinions, and the qualitative data were collected through face-to-face Semi

Structured Interviews (SSIs) with participants. The answers were transcribed and analysed via content analysis.

As mentioned previously, this study deals solely with the perspectives of learners concerning first language (L1) use in their classes and aims to clarify these perspectives for teachers. Detailed information and comparisons are made among participants in terms of gender and grade.

3.4 Participants

Participants included 258 randomly-selected English as a foreign language (EFL) students at Salahaddin University, all of whom possessed the same linguistic background in English. Figure 1 below presents the gender information of the participants.
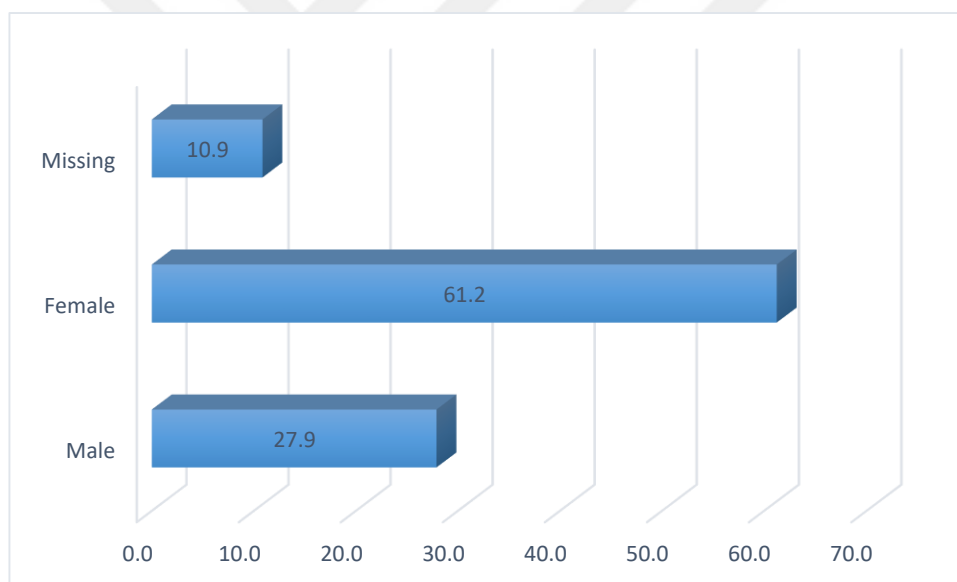
Figure 1. The gender information of the participant

61.2% of the participants were female, while 27.9% were male. About 11% of the participants did not state their gender. Participants' ages were between 17 and 31 years.

Samples were chosen from all four grades of English study. Figure 2 below displays information regarding the scale of the participants' grades.
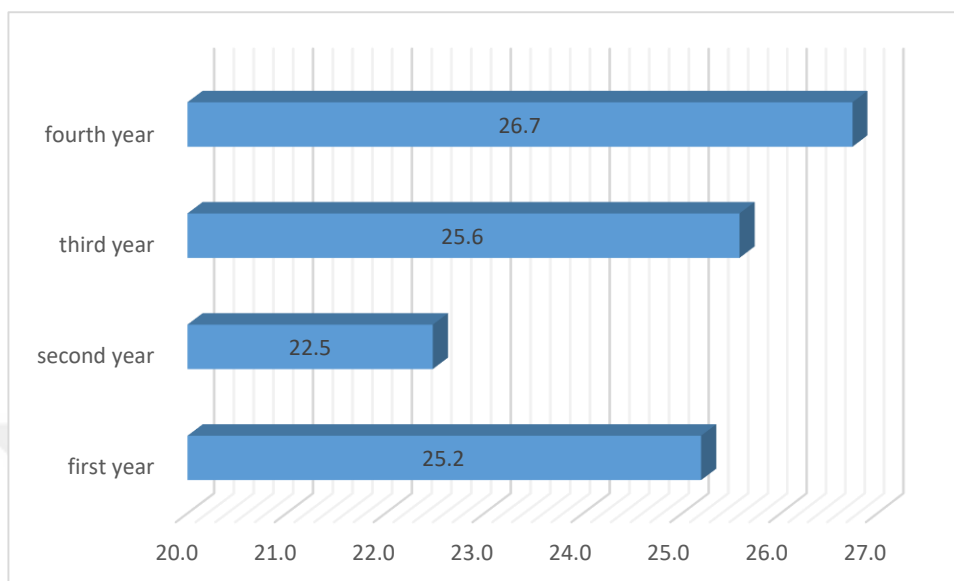
Figure 2. Participant grades

The current research consists of 25.2% (65) first-year students, 22.5% (58) second-year students, about 25.6% (66) third-year students, and 26.7% (69) fourth-year students. As you can see, the largest number of the participants were studying in their fourth years.

3.5 Instruments

Two main tools were employed to secure data for the current study: LATL1UQ as a quantitative technique and the SSIs as a qualitative one. Below is a detailed description of both tools.

3.5.1 Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ)

The first phase of data collection was a LATL1UQ which was developed by Al Sharaeai (2012). The first part of the LATL1UQ addressed ten reasons behind learners' use of their L1 (see Appendix A). The participants were asked to rate the frequency of each reason in terms of "always", "usually", "sometimes" and "never". The second part of the LATL1UQ consisted of ten learners' opinions regarding L1 use in their EFL classes. The participants were asked to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each opinion (see Appendix A). The reliability test was applied, and the results are displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Reliability Statistics for the LATL1UQ

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items and categories
Reasons	.798	10
Opinions	.746	10

3.5.2 Semi Structured Interviews (SSIs)

The second phase of data collection involved face-to-face Semi Structured Interviews (SSIs) (see Appendix B). Dee Leeuw (2005) states that conducting interviews is the oldest method of data collection, and Cresswell (2009) states that interview questions can build a connection between the researcher and participants. Interviews also can help the researcher to gain deeper insight into participants' views on the concerned issue. This phase consisted of eight questions pertaining the same topics which had been discussed in the survey. The participants of this study were asked to state how long they had been studying English, in what types of situations did they use their L1 in class and what did they think about a teacher using their L1 to teach English. The SSIs provided the qualitative data and assured the researcher that almost all participants had answered all LATL1UQ items sincerely.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The quantitative data were collected at the end of the first semester of the 2016-2017 academic year during regular class hours (see Appendix A). The LATL1UQ was implemented in the English language only. It was distributed to 258 students who had demonstrated interest in participating in the research. The researcher administered to participants a brief orientation regarding the aims of this study. They were informed that the study was only for academic and research purposes. All 258 distributed LATL1UQ were returned complete.

On the other hand, the qualitative data were collected from learners who had demonstrated interest in being interviewed. Only eight learners were selected for the SSIs, and they represented all four grades of study—two learners in each grade. All the SSIs were conducted in English. They were audio-recorded and later transcribed for analysis (see Appendix C).

3.7 Data Analysis

As the present study employs a mixed research method (i.e., quantitative and qualitative), the results of the LATL1UQ (i.e., the quantitative data) were analysed by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to determine the most common reasons and opinions among learners' points of view (in other words, analysing frequencies). On the other hand, the SSIs (i.e., the qualitative data) were analysed by transcribing the SSIs and content analysis was subsequently employed for its analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1 Presentation

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses of collected data from the Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ). The first part examines the results of the qualitative data collected via a two-part LATL1UQ, and the second part provides the results of the quantitative data (the face-to-face Semi Structured Interviews (SSIs).

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

This section displays the results of the LATL1UQ, which was comprised of two parts: students' reasons and opinions towards their use of the first language (L1) in their classes. The LATL1UQ consisted of 20 items, which were divided into two parts. The first 10 items dealt with students' reasons behind their use of the L1, while the next 10 items dealt with students' opinions regarding L1 use in their classes. Each item of the LATL1UQ is discussed separately.

4.2.1 The results of the first part of the LATL1UQ

This section presents the results of the first part of the LATL1UQ. This part contained ten statements, and the aim was to explore English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' reasons behind using the L1 in their classes. Learners' responses were indicated on a frequency scale of "always", "usually", "sometimes" and "never".

The first statement sought to determine the extent to which students utilize their native language while attempting to understand new information. Often, students find difficulty in understanding new information presented by the teacher or text, so they

switch to the L1 in order to ask their peers for help. The results of this item indicate how often students use their L1 while explaining a new point to a classmate. Figure 3 illustrates the frequency of using the L1 while students are dealing with or explaining a new point in a lesson.
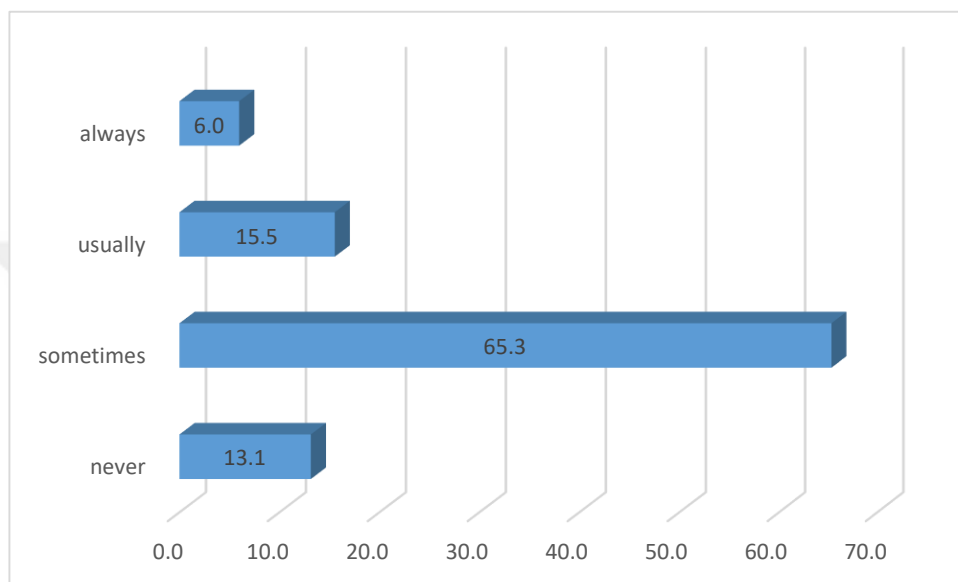
Figure 3. I speak my first language in English class because I am explaining a new point in the lesson to a classmate.

Many previous studies (e.g., Koucka, 2007; Al-Buraiki, 2008; Kim & Petraki, 2009; Hung 2006) have demonstrated that students' L1 is utilized by teachers and students to clarify new information. As cited in the second chapter of this paper, it was one of the most common reasons behind using students' L1 in EFL classes. By switching to the L1, students and teachers can save a lot of time in class.

As indicated by Figure 3, 6% of the participants stated that they always use their native language while explaining a new point in a lesson to a classmate, while 13.1% stated that they never use the L1 to deal with new information in learning the target language (TL). 15.5% usually switch to the native language on the same issue, and 65.3% use their native language while dealing with new information in learning the TL.

Figure 4 concerns the extent to which EFL learners at Salahaddin University use their native language while talking with their friends in a point that is not related

to the class. The results of this item indicate the extent to which students practice the English language with their friends outside of class.
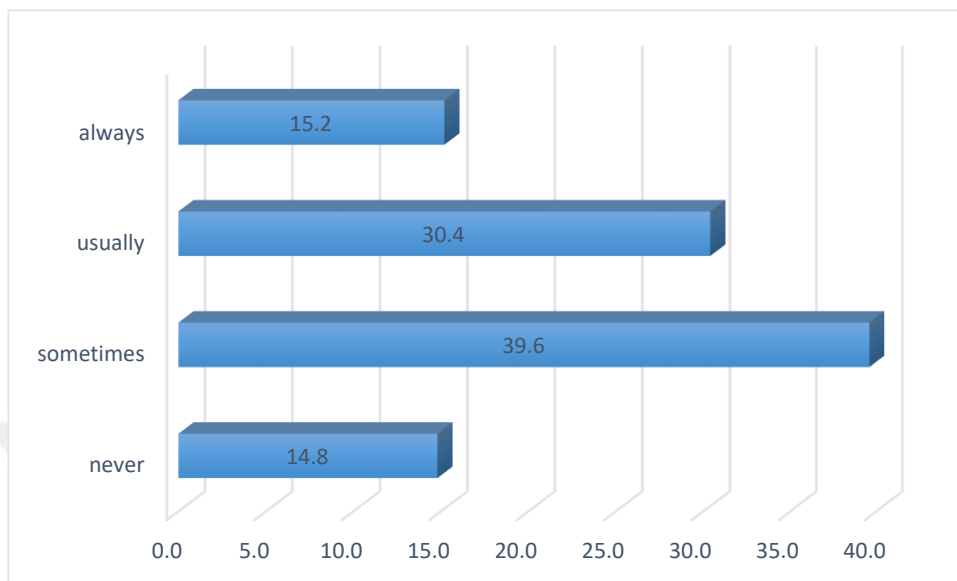
Figure 4. I speak my first language in English class because I want to chat with my classmates about topics that may not be connected to class.

As seen in Figure 4, 14.8% of the participants stated that they never use their native language to chat with their classmates outside of class, while a greater percentage showed that they do use the L1 when they talk with a classmate about topics that are not related with the lesson. For example, 15.2% of all participants stated that they always use their native language in the same situation. In addition, 30.4% stated that they normally use the L1 in casual speeches among themselves.

Figure 5 below presents results concerning how learners communicate with each other while attending their EFL classes.
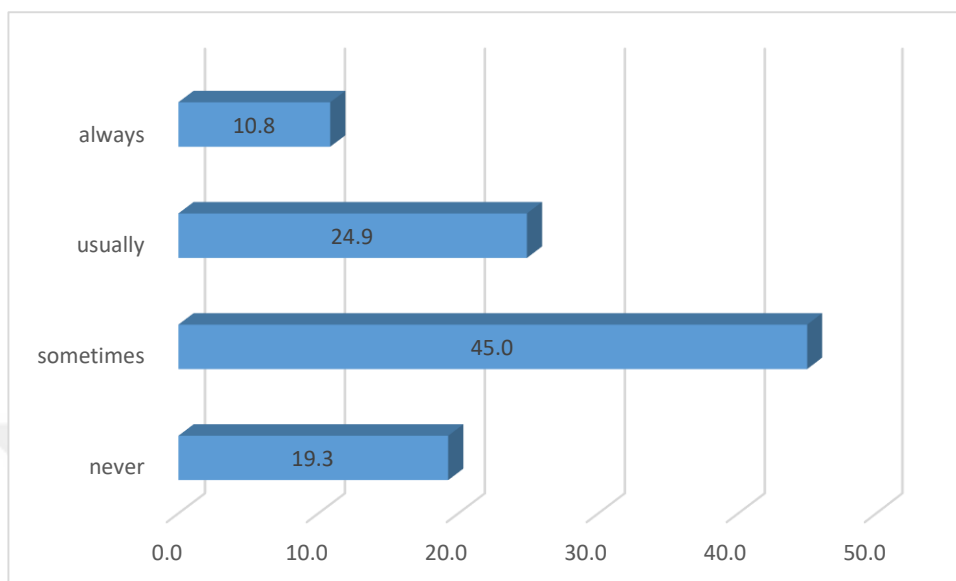
Figure 5. I speak my first language in English class because I need to ask a classmate to explain a point in the lesson for me.

Understanding all the points in a lesson is crucial; thus, this item aims at determining the extent to which EFL learners at Salahaddin University use their L1 while asking a classmate to explain a point during a lesson.

Figure 5 illustrates that 19.3% of the participants tend to avoid using their native language and, as they claim, they communicate in the TL while asking a classmate to clarify a point during class. About 11% stated that they always communicate with their classmates in their native language to ask their classmates to explain a point that they cannot understand from the teacher. In addition to this, about 25% stated that they usually communicate in their L1, while the same issue is concerned. Approximately half of the participants stated that they sometimes use their native language and sometimes use the TL for the same issue.

Vocabulary knowledge is essential for understanding oral and written English. From personal experience, EFL learners at Salahaddin University think that if they do not know the meaning of some words, then they cannot understand what a sentence means. Therefore, sometimes they utilize their L1 to check the meaning of a new word or concept in class. Figure 6 below displays the results regarding the extent to which EFL learners at Salahaddin University rely on their L1 to deal with unknown words and concepts during an English lesson.
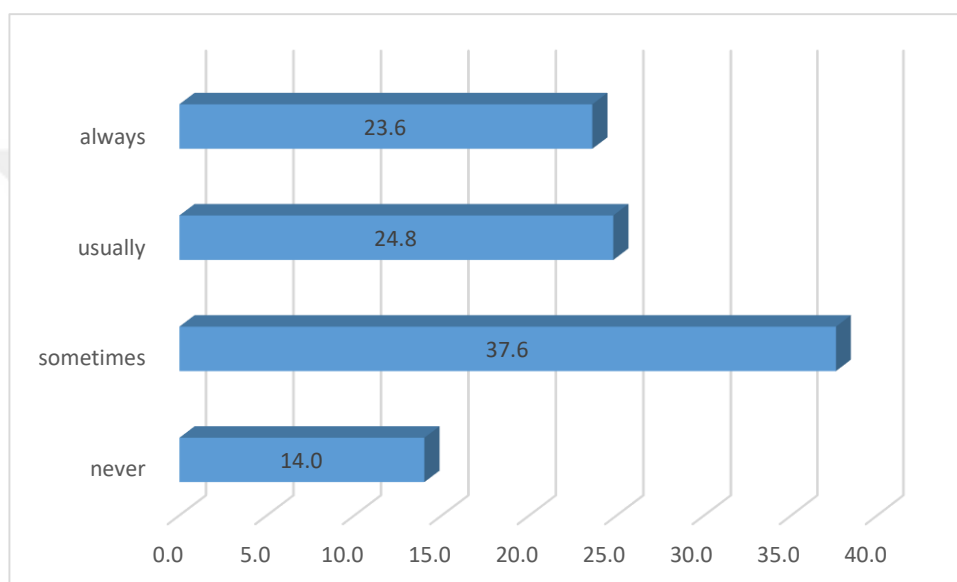
Figure 6. I speak my first language in English class because I need to check the meaning of a new word or concept during the lesson.

The results of Figure 6 reveal that only 14% of the participants do not depend on the L1 in order to check the meaning of a new word or concept in a lesson. 86% use the L1 for the same issue but to different extents. 23.6% seem to be too dependent on the L1. Results also indicate that 24.8% of the participants usually depend on the L1, whereas 37.6% stated that they sometimes use the L1 for learning a concept or checking the meaning of a new vocabulary term. All in all, the results of this item shows that a great number of the participants tend to be too dependent on the L1 regarding this issue.

Figure 7 concerns the extent to which EFL learners at Salahaddin University use their native language while facing some difficulties in finding the correct word or phrase at the time of speaking the TL. This is also known as a "Compensation Strategy" in learning a TL.
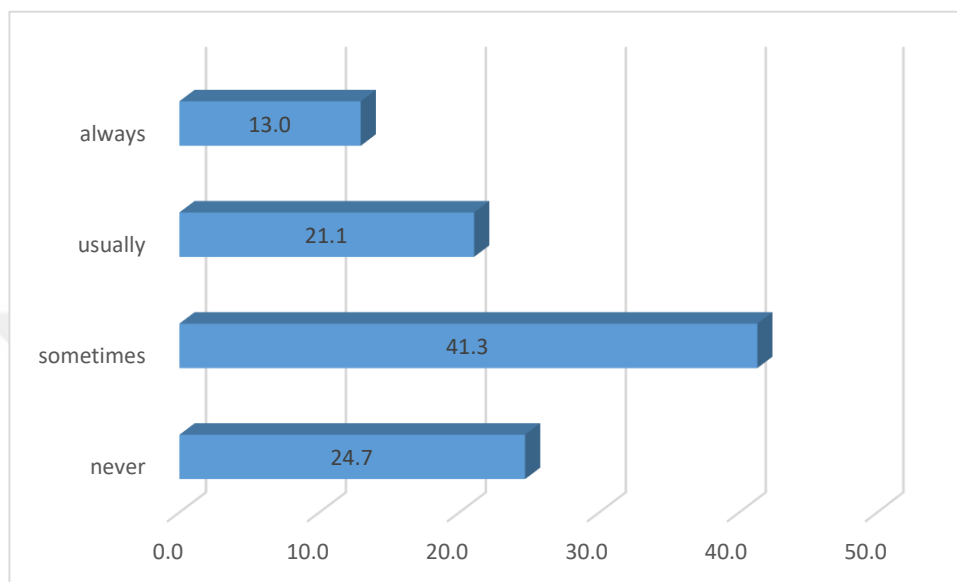
Figure 7. I speak my first language in English class because I cannot think of the correct word in English when talking to my classmates.

Figure 7 shows that 24.7% of the participants oppose the idea of using their L1 while communicating in the TL. 13% stated that they always switch to their native language when they communicate in the TL and face some difficulties in finding appropriate words and phrases to overcome difficulties and express themselves more effectively. Nearly 21% stated that they usually switch to the L1 while speaking the TL with their classmates. On the other hand, the results also reveal that 41.3% of the participants are not highly dependent on referring to their L1 when they face difficulties in communicating in the TL. They stated that they sometimes use their native language while communicating with their classmates.

Pair or group work is one the most common communicative tasks in language teaching and learning as it requires interaction between or among learners. Most of the time, EFL learners use their native language among themselves while performing certain tasks unless they are obliged to switch to the TL.

Figure 8 presents information on whether the EFL learners at Salahaddin University communicate in the L1 or the TL while performing a language task.
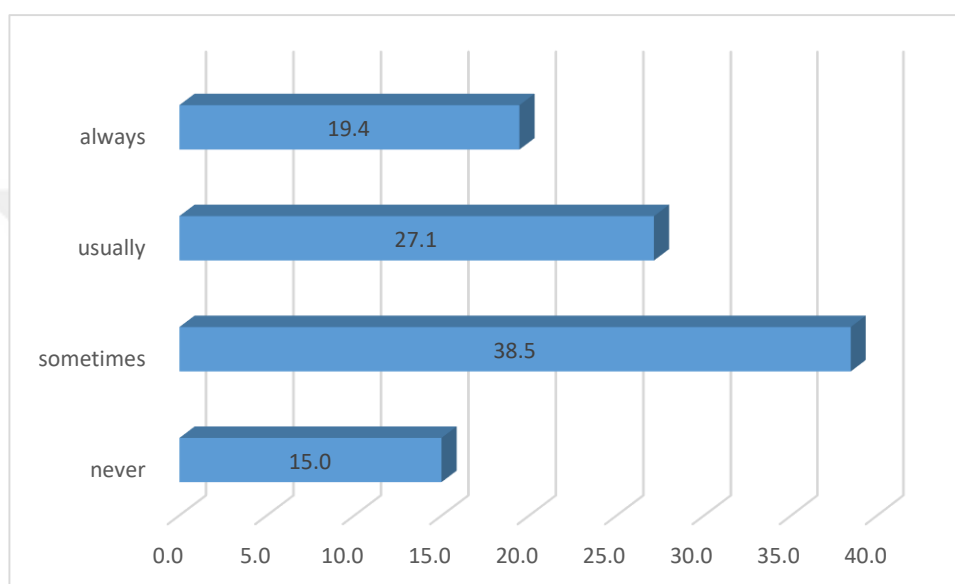
Figure 8. I speak my first language in English class because my classmates start talking to me in my first language while we are working on a task.

Figure 8 demonstrates that only 15% of the participants never communicate in their L1, even when they are performing a task in the TL. The results also indicate that nearly 20% of the participants always use their L1 while completing tasks. In addition, 27.1% stated that they usually communicate with their classmates in their native language while doing tasks. In comparison, the percentage of the participants who tend to use their L1 is much higher than that of the participants who use the TL while performing language tasks in their classes. On the other hand, 38.5% stated that they sometimes use their L1 for the same issue. This indicates that they also sometimes use the TL.

Figure 9 presents information regarding the extent to which EFL learners at Salahaddin University use their native language while discussing some certain personal things during class. The results contribute the idea of the practice amount in the TL among the learners.
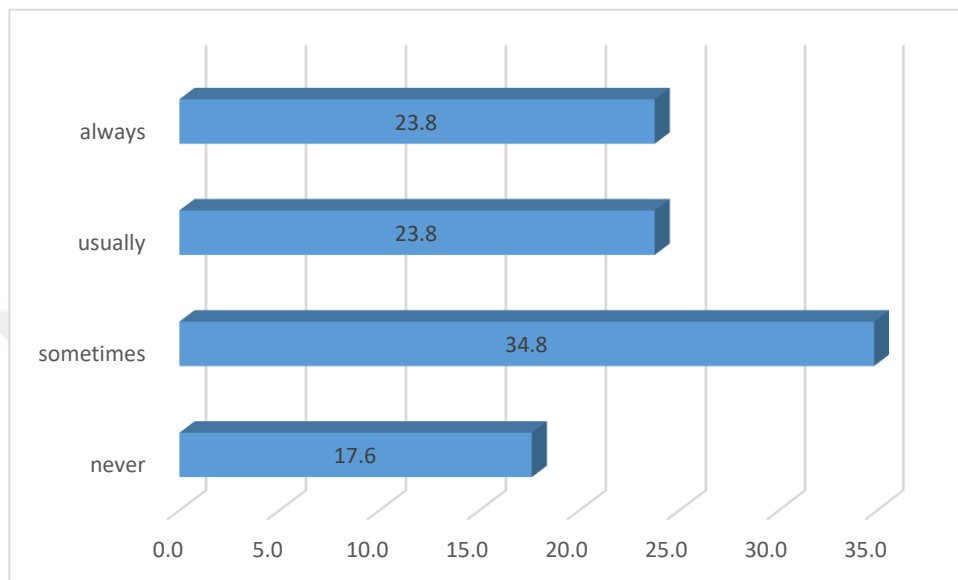
Figure 9. I speak my first language during English class when I talk about personal things with my classmates.

Figure 9 shows that 17.6% of the participants do not use their L1 to talk about personal issues (i.e. they discuss the personal issues in the TL). On the other hand, the figure reveals that nearly 47.5% of the participants use their L1 but to different extents. 23.8% stated that they always communicate in the L1, while the same percentage stated that they normally use their L1. In addition, 34.8% shared that they sometimes use their L1 while discussing personal issues (i.e. they also sometimes discuss in the TL).

Figure 10 displays results concerning whether EFL learners would like to finish their classroom tasks faster by communicating in their L1 or prefer to communicate in the TL so as to perform the task and practice their language even when it becomes more time-consuming.
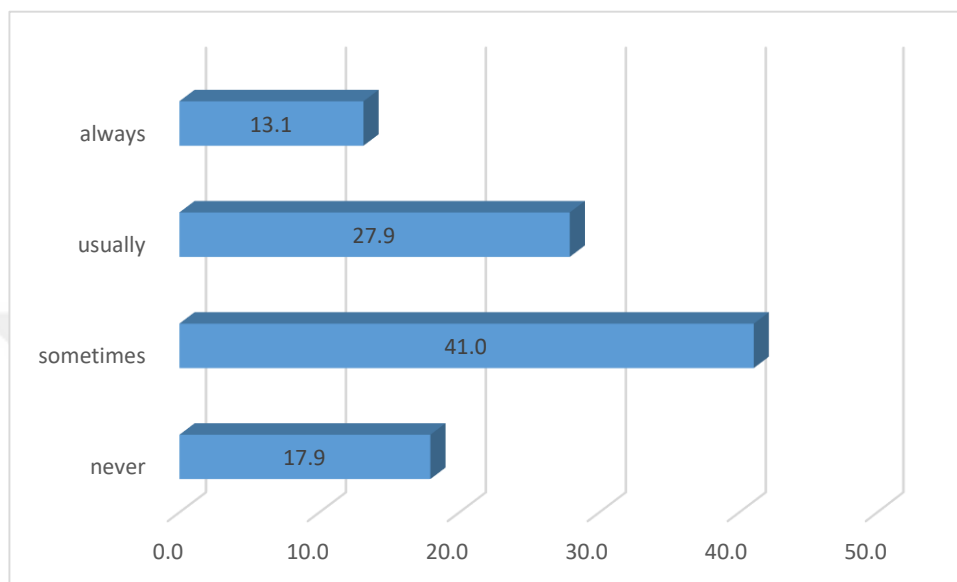
Figure 10. In English class, I speak my first language with other members of my group who speak my first language because we want to finish class activities faster.

Figure 10 reveals that nearly 18% of the participants emphasized that they do not use their native language while working in groups. On the contrary, nearly 13% shared the idea of always using their native language on the same issue. Likewise, nearly 28% stated that they usually communicate in their L1 while working in groups in order to complete the task more quickly. On the other hand, 41% stated that they sometimes use their native language while doing group work to complete the tasks more quickly (i.e., they also sometimes use the TL even if they spend more time).

Figure 11 concerns the relationship between the use of learners' L1 and their culture. Some EFL learners believe that if they neglect their L1, it will be regarded as a bad image of their culture, and they will become too imitative.
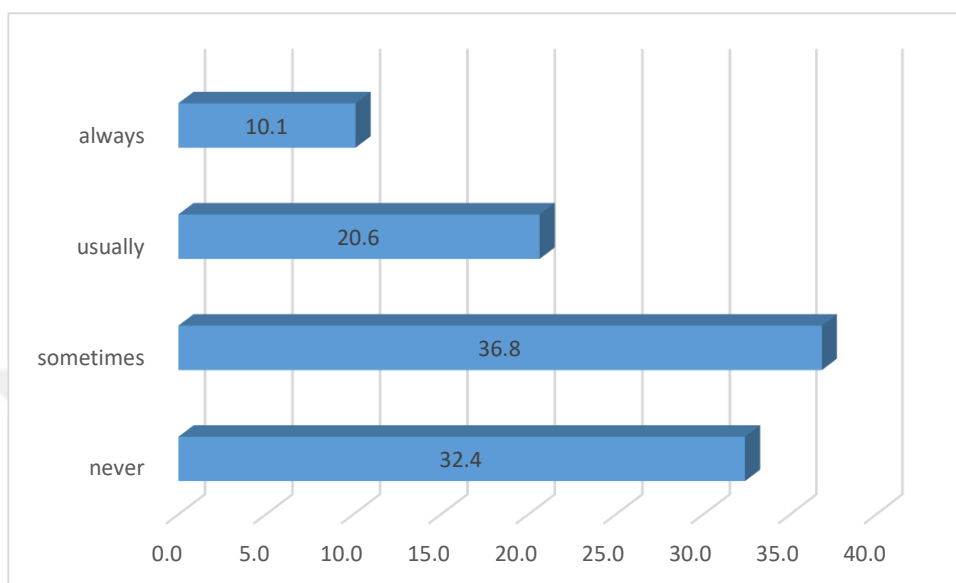
Figure 11. I speak my first language with my classmates during English class because it makes me feel more connected to my culture.

The result of Figure 11 reveal that 32.4% of the participants do not believe that if they use their native language, they will be more connected to their culture (i.e., the use of L1 has nothing to do with being connected to their culture). On the contrary, more than 36% have an opposite idea. In other words, 10.1% of the participants stated that they always use their native language to feel more connected to their culture, and 20.6% of the participants stated that they usually use their L1 to feel more connected to their culture.

Figure 12 below presents results pertaining why EFL learners' at Salahaddin University tend to utilize their L1 while communicating with their classmates. The reason could be due to their inability to express themselves well in the TL, for example to find correct words or phrases in the TL.
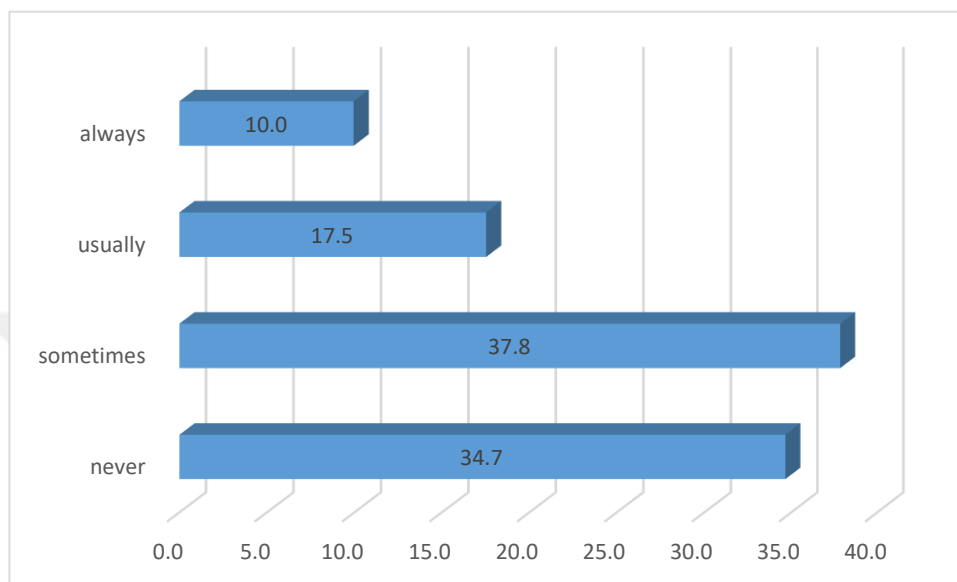
Figure 12. Because I can't think of the words in English, I speak in my first language, even when others may not understand me.

As Figure 12 indicates, nearly 35% of the participants stated that they do not use their language due difficulties in finding the correct words or phrases to express themselves accurately. In other words, this percentage of the participants does not have many problems in word or phrase choices. On the contrary, only 10% always use their L1 when experiencing the same difficulties. Moreover, a greater percentage (17.5%) shared that they usually speak their L1 for the same reason, regardless of whether they are understood by others. As usual, the greatest percentage (37.8%) stated that they sometimes use their L1 and sometimes do not.

4.2.2 The results of the second part of the LATL1IQ

This section presents the results of the second part of the LATL1UQ. The second part contains ten statements concerning EFL learners' opinions and perceptions towards the use of L1 in their classes. Learners' responses are indicated on a scale of "strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree" and "strongly disagree".

Figure 13 displays results pertaining learners' preferences of having a teacher who can or cannot understand their native language. This issue reminds us of bilingual and monolingual approaches in language teaching.
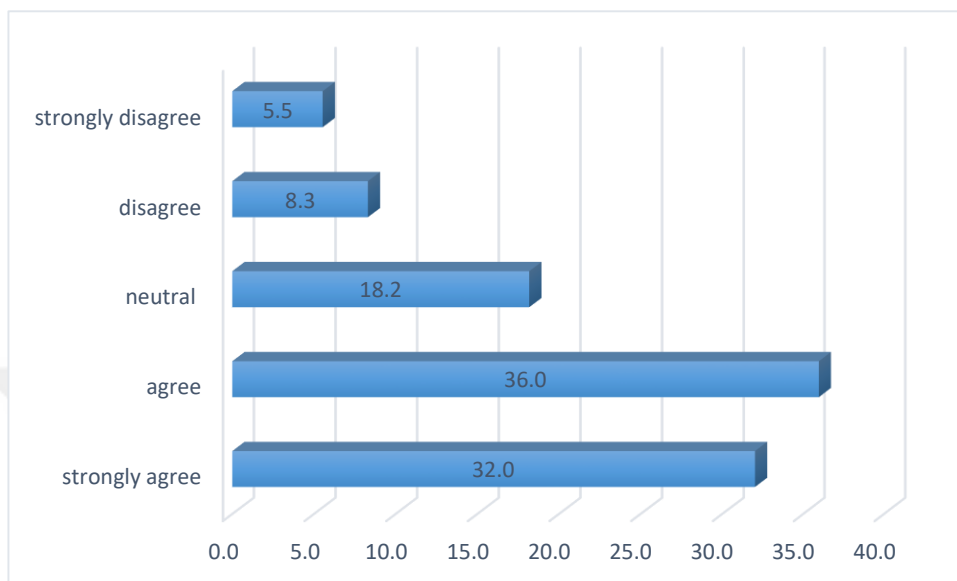
Figure 13. In English class, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my first language.

As demonstrated by Figure 13 above, 68% of the participants agree that it is best to have a teacher who can understand their L1. 32% of them strongly agree and 36% agree on the same issue. On the contrary, about 13% stated that they disagree with this idea. 5.5% stated that they strongly disagree and 8.3% stated that they disagree. On the other hand, 18.2% of the participants expressed a neutral and indecisive opinion.

Figure 14 displays the extent to which EFL learners prefer to sit next to a classmate who can speak their L1. This simply means that these learners who have the same idea would like to communicate in their L1 instead of in the TL.
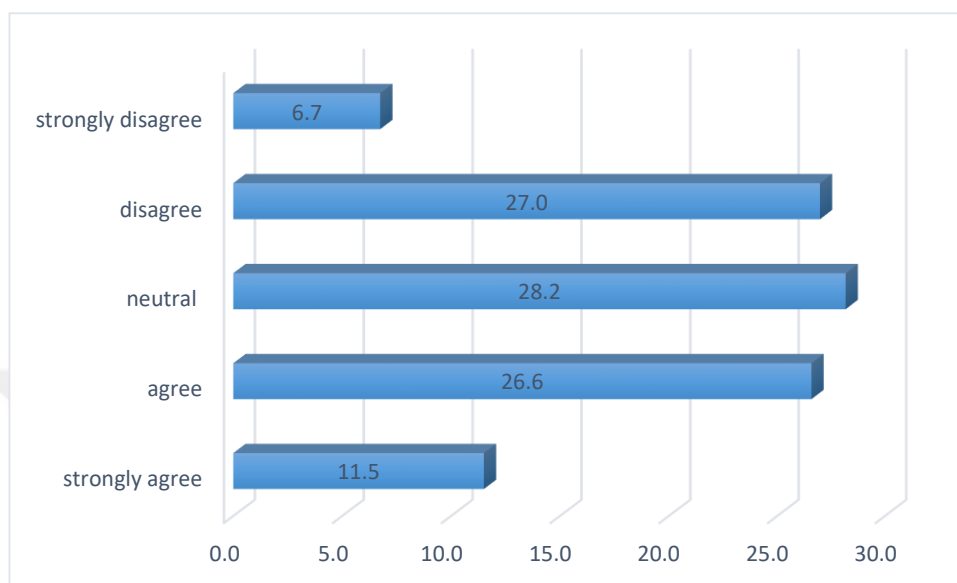
Figure 14. I would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my first language in English class.

Figure 14 reveals that 28.2% of the participants do not have decisive opinions and are neutral towards this belief. At the same time, around 38% agree to sit next to a classmate to communicate in their L1. 11.5% stated that they strongly agree, while 26.6% stated that they agree. On the other hand, more than 33% showed disapproval and disagreement with the belief. 6.7% of all participants showed that they strongly disagree, while 27% disagree with this perception.

Figure 15 displays the results of students' opinions regarding the monolingual approach. Learners' own language might play a significant role in learning the TL, but EFL learners at Salahaddin University might have another way of thinking.
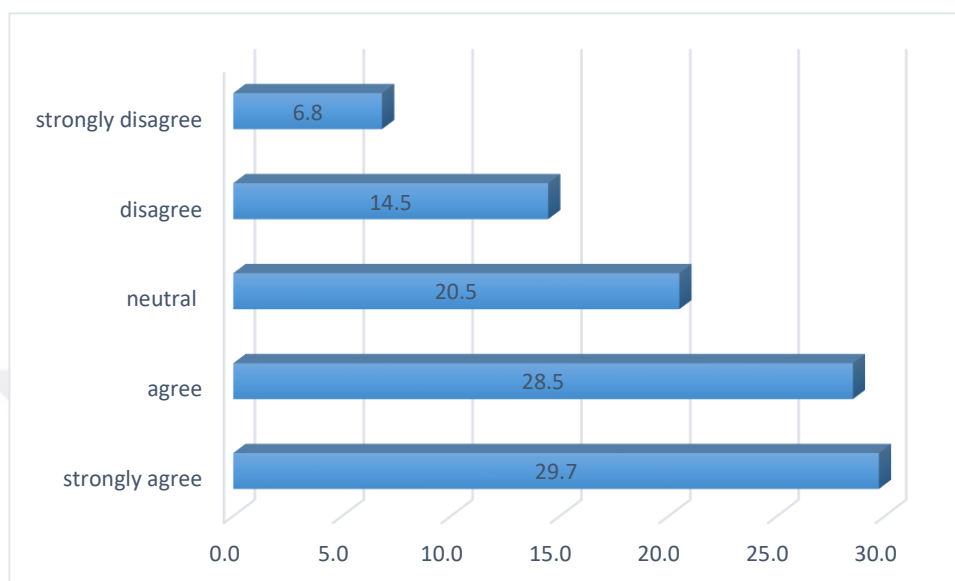
Figure 15. I think my English class should have an ""English-only" policy." (This means only English is allowed in the English classroom).

Figure 15 reveals that around 20% of the participants were indecisive, and their points of view are not taken into consideration. So, they think neutrally towards imposing an "English-only" policy. On the other hand, results indicate that more than 58% favour an "English-only" policy in their classrooms (i.e., they prefer to sit in a class in which L1 use is not allowed). 29.7% stated that they strongly agree with the idea of teaching English monolingually. Moreover, 28.5% stated that they agree on the same issue. On the contrary, a lower percentage of the participants (around 21%) expressed their disapproval, and they do not agree on imposing an "English-only" policy. 14.5% expressed that they disagree on excluding their L1 from learning the TL, while 6.8% stated that they strongly disagree on the same issue.

As EFL learners' levels improve, they become more fluent in English. Therefore, Figure 16 below presents results concerning learners' attitudes towards an "English-only" policy as their language skills improve. In other words, students might prefer a monolingual class when they become more fluent in the TL. The case might be opposite for beginner students.
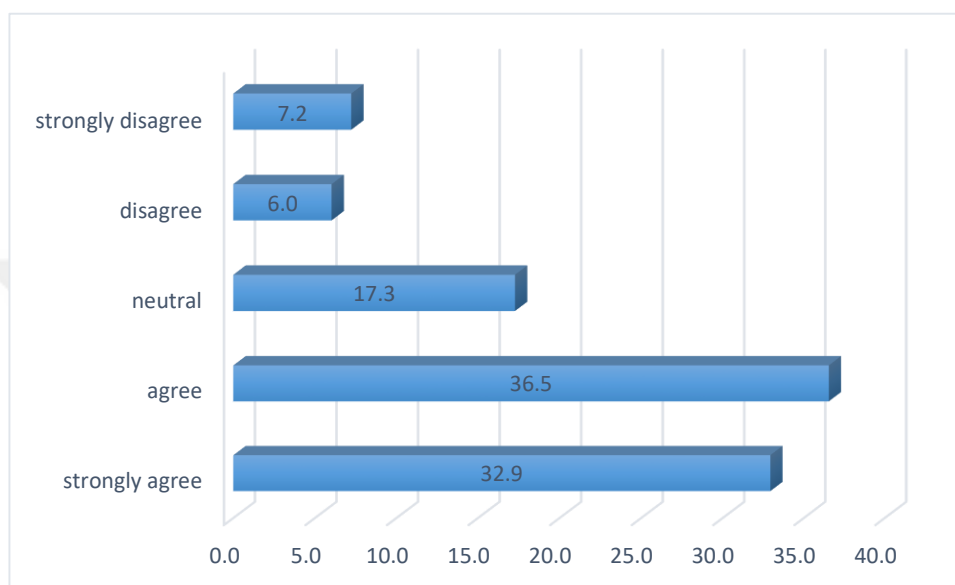
Figure 16. As my English improves, I am becoming more comfortable speaking only English in English class.

Figure 16 shows that around 17% of the participants have a neutral belief, and they do not have a decisive opinion towards the present issue. Approximately 70% prefer monolingual classes when their language skills improve (i.e., they indirectly state that they did not prefer a monolingual class when they were beginner students). 32.9% stated that they strongly agree with this opinion. In addition, 36.5% agreed on having a monolingual class. In contrast, only 13% revealed that they do not agree with taking class in which their L1 is banished, even if they become more advanced in the TL. This might be due to other reasons such as feeling more connected to their culture or preferring to communicate in their L1 with people who share the same L1. 7.2% of the participants strongly disagreed, while 6% stated they disagree on the same issue.

Figure 17 below displays results concerning EFL learners' opinions on allowing them to use their L1, when needed. A wide number of bilingual teaching methods allow learners to use their L1 with some restrictions.
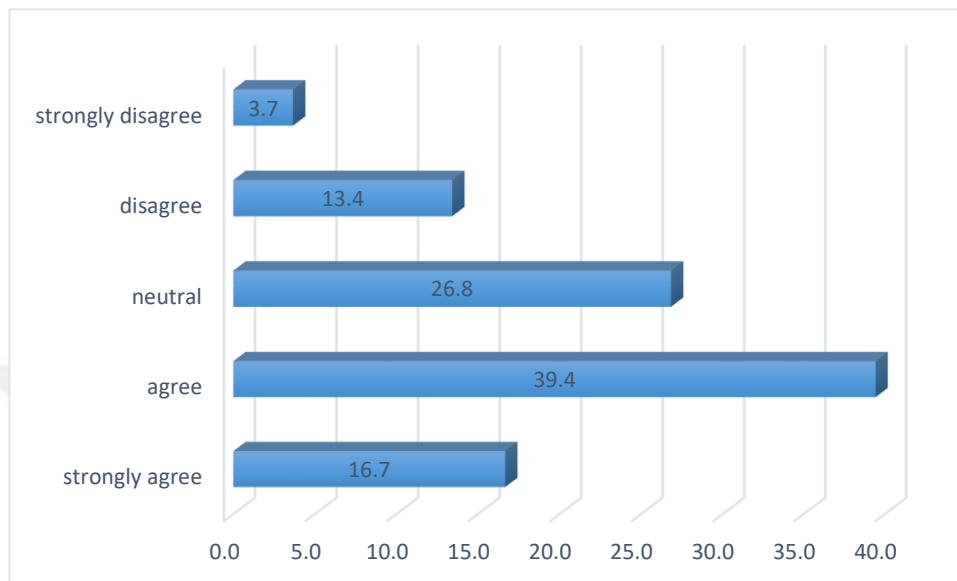
Figure 17. I want to be able to speak my first language in English class when I feel I need to.

Figure 17 shows that 26.8% of the participants have a neutral opinion towards this statement. On the other hand, more than 56% stated that they agree that they should be allowed to refer to their L1 to facilitate their learning process. 16.7% expressed that they strongly agree, and 39.4% agree on the same issue. On the contrary, around 17% revealed that they do not agree with using their L1, even when they need to. 13.4% stated that they disagree, while only 3.7% stated that they strongly disagree.

Figure 18 below presents results on whether EFL learners at Salahaddin University prioritize classroom tasks or practicing the TL outside of language tasks.
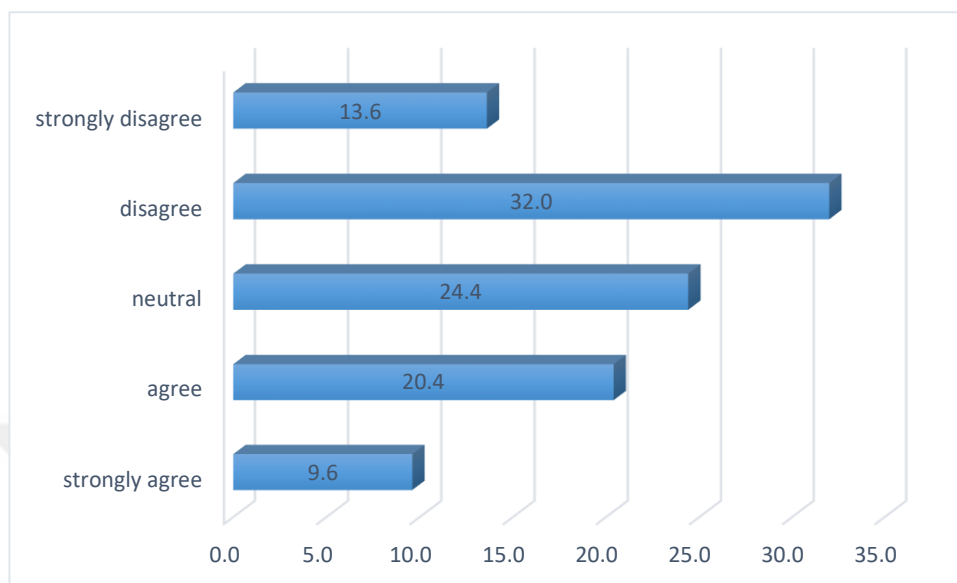
Figure 18. It's not important to speak only English in class as long as I am completing the course tasks.

Figure 18 reveals that 30% of the participants prioritize completing the course tasks rather that practicing the TL. 9.6% stated that they strongly agree, while 20.4% agreed on the issue. Moreover, they revealed that it is not important to speak English apart from course tasks. In contrast, 45.6% showed that they disagree with the idea of speaking English while performing course tasks. 32% stated that they strongly disagree, while 13.6% revealed that they disagree with this opinion. On the other hand, 24.4% had a neutral opinion towards the same issue.

Figure 19 below presents the results of learners' opinions regarding dictionary- and L1 resource-use during their classes.
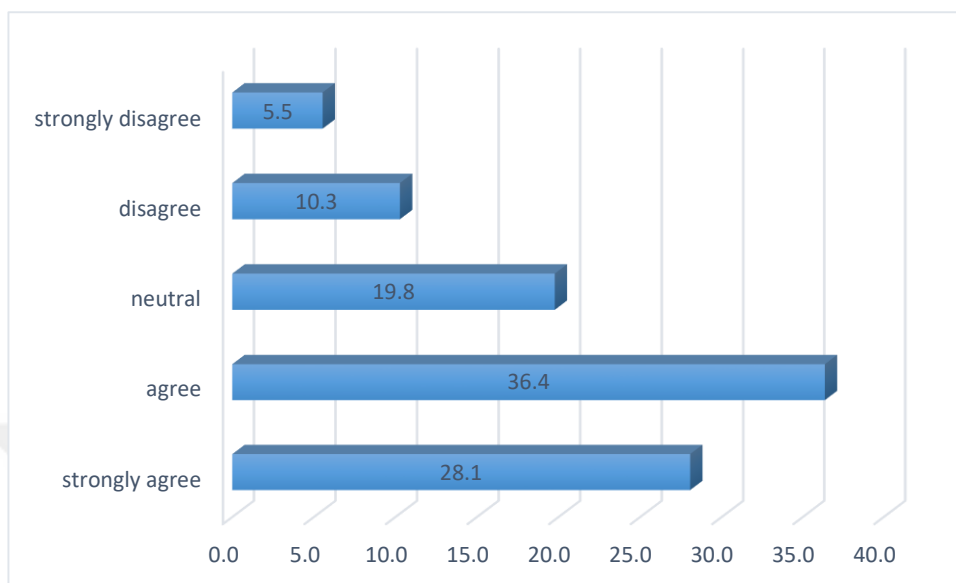
Figure 19. Using dictionaries and resources in the first language should be allowed in English class.

Figure 19 reveals that around 20% of the participants have a neutral opinion pertaining this issue. The results also show that around 16% disagreed the allowance of resources and dictionaries in their classes. 5.5% stated that they strongly disagree on the same issue, while 10.3% of them revealed that they do not agree with the idea of allowing students to use dictionaries and resources in their L1 due to unknown reasons. On the contrary, around 65% of the participants expressed agreement with allowing learners to use resources and dictionaries during English classes to improve their TL skills. 28.1% stated that they strongly agree with the same idea, while 36.4% revealed that they agree with this idea.

Figure 20 below displays results on whether EFL learners at Salahaddin University allocate using the TL to speaking classes or use their L1 during classes or other activities in the TL apart from speaking classes.
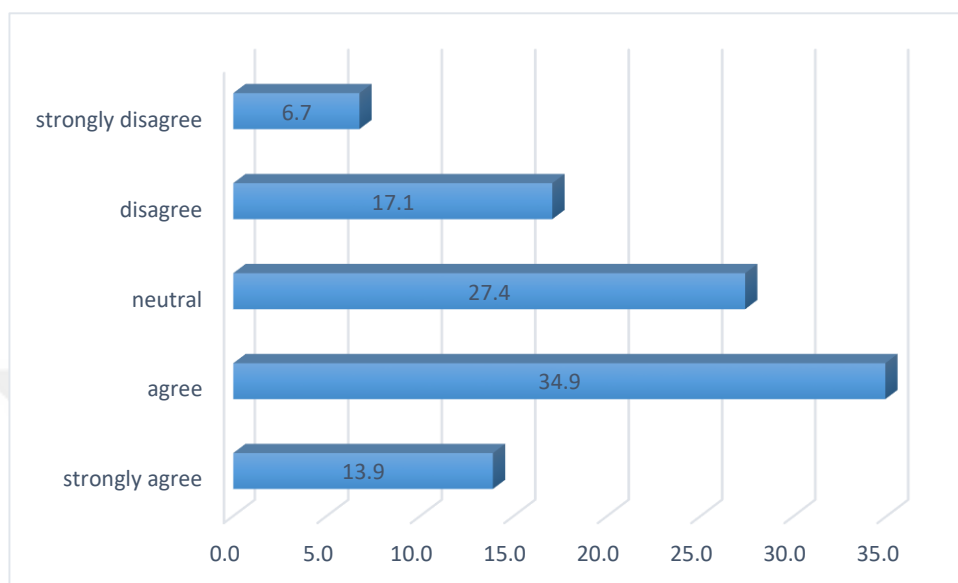
Figure 20. Speaking my first language with my classmates between and during class activities should be okay as long as the course is not a speaking class.

Figure 20 indicates that 27.4% of the participants think neutrally on the issue. On the other hand, around 24% disagree with idea of using their L1 during English classes and doing certain activities in the TL outside of speaking classes. They believe that referring to the L1 is not a proper choice and this perception should not be taken into any consideration. 17.1% of the participants stated that they disagree with this idea, while 6.7% showed their strong disagreement on the issue. On the contrary, around 49% revealed that it is completely normal to communicate in the L1 outside of class activities or in classes apart from speaking. They agree that is acceptable to use their L1 while not attending a speaking class. 34.9% stated that they agree, while 13.9% stated that they strongly agree.

Figure 21 below presents results concerning whether EFL learners at Salahaddin University use their language or the TL more often during their English classes.
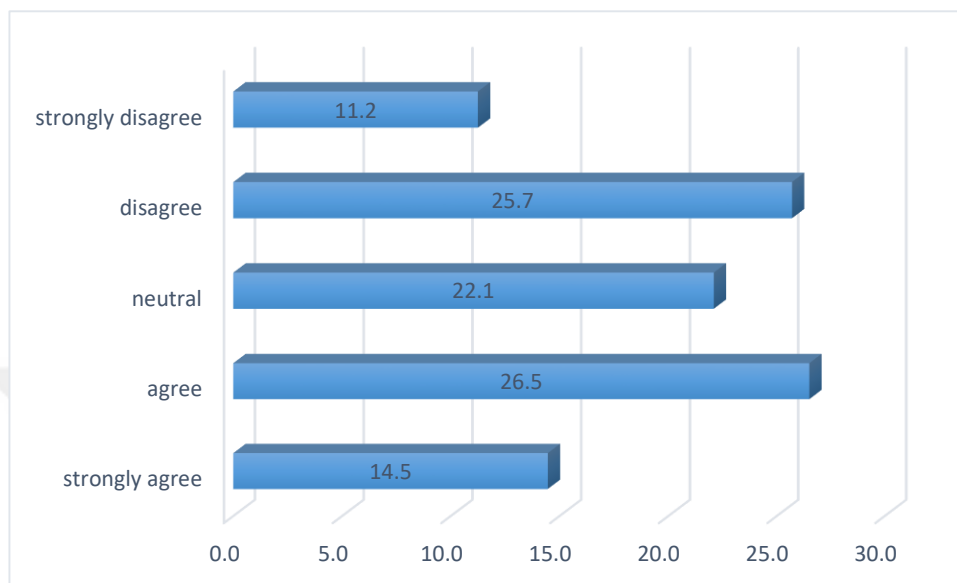
Figure 21. I think I speak in my first language more often than I speak English in English class.

Figure 21 indicates that 41% of the participants believe they use their L1 more frequently than the TL in communication. 26.5% stated that they agree, while 14.5% stated that they strongly agree with the statement. On the contrary, around 37% stated that they do not use their L1 in English classes (i.e., they use the TL more frequently than their L1 in English classes). 11.2% stated that they strongly disagree with this statement, while 25.7% disagree with the statement. On the other hand, 22.1% think neutrally and, again, they do not have an effective decision on the issue.

Imposing an "English-only" policy sometimes causes EFL learners to feel ashamed and nervous due to their inability to express themselves sufficiently. Some claim that if they speak only in the TL, their classmates will make fun of them. Therefore, Figure 22 presents information regarding the extent to which EFL learners at Salahaddin University agree or disagree with this statement.
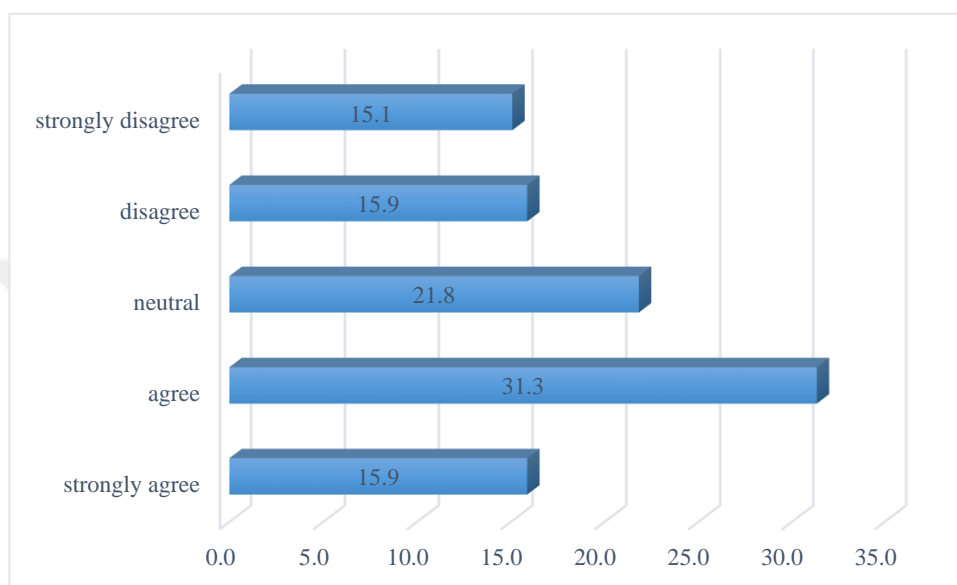
Figure 22. Having to speak English only in class makes me feel nervous.

Figure 22 reveals that more than 47% of the participants believe that avoiding the use of their native language in English classes makes them feel worried and nervous. On the contrary, 32% think that speaking only in the TL does not cause them to be nervous and worried.

4.2.2 Grade differences

This part of the study investigated whether the four grades (freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors) have different attitudes (reasons and opinions) towards the use of L1 which might have existed among the four grades in terms of reasons and opinions. For this purpose, descriptive statistics test was conducted. The tables 2 and 3 below clarify the results.

Table 2

LATL1UQ means of freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors in terms of reasons.

Reasons	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
1- I speak my first language in English classes because I am explaining a new point in the lesson to a classmate.	2.16	2.28	2.07	2.11
2- I speak my first language in English classes because I want to chat with my classmates about topics that may not be connected to class.	2.68	2.35	2.50	2.31
3- I speak my first language in English classes because I need to ask a classmate to explain a point in the lesson for me.	2.12	2.32	2.38	2.25
4- I speak my first language in English classes because I need to check the meaning of a new word or concept during the lesson.	2.85	2.62	2.57	2.30
5- I speak my first language in English classes because I cannot think of the correct word in English when talking to my classmates.	2.32	2.14	2.28	2.13
6- I speak my first language in English classes because my classmates start talking to me in my first language while we are working on a task	2.50	2.25	2.73	2.52
7- I speak my first language during English classes when I talk about personal things with my classmates.	2.73	2.46	2.37	2.56
8- In English classes, I speak my first language with other members of my group who speak my first language because we want to finish class activities faster.	2.44	2.36	2.24	2.39

9- I speak my first language with my classmates during English classes because it makes me feel more connected to my culture.	1.79	2.33	2.14	2.07
10- Because I can't think of the words in English, I speak in my first language, even when others may not understand me.	1.80	2.10	2.04	2.14

Table 2 demonstrates that when the level of the EFL learners improve, they become less dependent on using L1 while *checking the meaning of a new word or concept during the lesson in,* for instance freshmen learners are too dependent on L1 comparison with other grades (M=2.85) whereas the seniors do not depend too much on L1 on the same issue (M=2.30). It also displays that the freshmen switch to their L1 more than the other grades to *finish class activities faster* (M=2.44). Further, the table also reveals that the freshmen communicate in their L1 more in comparison with the others while *chatting with their classmates about topics that may not be connected to class* (M=2.68). In addition, the freshmen tend to use L1 more than the other grades while *they cannot think of the correct word in English* (M=2.32) whereas the seniors tend to use L1 less than the others. Moreover, the juniors tend to use L1 more than the others to *ask a classmate to explain a point in the lesson* (M=2.38), interestingly, the freshmen are less interested in switching to L1 on the same issue.

Table 3

LATL1UQ means of freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors in terms of opinions.

Opinions	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
1- In English classes, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my first language.	2.07	2.08	2.21	2.36
2- I would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my first language in English classes.	2.88	2.85	3.07	2.80
3- I think my English classes should have an ""English-only" policy." (This means only English is allowed in the English classroom.)	2.82	2.33	2.28	2.17
4- As my English improves, I am becoming more comfortable speaking only English in English classes.	1.87	2.53	2.31	2.04
5- I want to be able to speak my first language in English classes when I feel I need to.	2.22	2.43	2.72	2.51
6- It's not important to speak only English in class as long as I am completing the course tasks.	3.25	3.05	3.21	3.23
7- Using dictionaries and resources in the first language should be allowed in English classes.	1.89	2.46	2.46	2.35
8- Speaking my first language with my classmates between and during class activities should be okay as long as the course is not a speaking class.	2.17	2.89	2.78	2.86
9- I think I speak in my first language more often than I speak English in English classes.	3.17	2.74	2.96	2.80
10- Having to speak English only in class makes me feel nervous.	2.37	2.81	3.01	3.08

Table 3 demonstrates that the juniors (M=2.21) and seniors (M=2.36) are less interested than the freshmen (M=2.07) and sophomores (M=2.08) in having a teacher *who can understand their L1.* Further, the juniors and seniors tend to accept *English-only policy in their classes* more than the freshmen and sophomores. Moreover, the freshmen and sophomores believe that *imposing English-only policy makes them to feel nervous* more than the other grades do. These results reveal that English-only policy is more applicable with high levels (i.e. low level learners should be allowed more to refer to their L1 to better improvements). Interestingly, the four grade learners seem to have a similar view of refusing speaking English is only important *while dealing with course tasks* (i.e. they believe that English should be practised even beyond the course tasks). In addition, the freshmen are in favour of *using dictionaries and resources in their L1* (M=1.89) in English classes whereas the sophomores and juniors are less interested in being allowed to use resources and dictionaries in EFL classes (M=2.46). Moreover, again the freshmen tend to believe more than the others to refer to their L1 when needed to facilitate the learning process (M=2.22).

To sum up, the freshmen should be allowed to switch to their L1 while learning the TL to facilitate the learning process and to eliminate psychological barriers they might face.

4.2.3 Gender differences

This part of the study examined whether the males and females have different attitudes (reasons and opinions) towards the use of L1 which might have existed between them in terms of reasons and opinions. For this purpose, descriptive statistics test was conducted. The tables 4 and 5 below clarify the results.

Table 4

LATL1UQ means of male and female participants in terms of reasons.

Reasons	Males	Females
1- I speak my first language in English classes because I am explaining a new point in the lesson to a classmate.	2.20	2.14

2- I speak my first language in English classes because I want to chat with my classmates about topics that may not be connected to class.	2.56	2.42
3- I speak my first language in English classes because I need to ask a classmate to explain a point in the lesson for me.	2.32	2.27
4- I speak my first language in English classes because I need to check the meaning of a new word or concept during the lesson.	2.60	2.57
5- I speak my first language in English classes because I cannot think of the correct word in English when talking to my classmates.	2.30	2.22
6- I speak my first language in English classes because my classmates start talking to me in my first language while we are working on a task	2.46	2.58
7- I speak my first language during English classes when I talk about personal things with my classmates.	2.44	2.59
8- In English classes, I speak my first language with other members of my group who speak my first language because we want to finish class activities faster.	2.43	2.34
9- I speak my first language with my classmates during English classes because it makes me feel more connected to my culture.	2.07	2.10
10- Because I can't think of the words in English, I speak in my first language, even when others may not understand me.	2.12	1.96

Table 4 displays that the means of the all items from the first part of the LATL1UQ are very close to each other, therefore, males and females almost have the same attitudes towards the use of L1 in English classes.

Table 5

LATL1UQ means of male and female participants in terms of opinions.

Opinions	Males	Females
1- In English classes, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my first language.	2.40	2.14
2- I would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my first language in English classes.	3.00	2.85
3- I think my English classes should have an ""English-only" policy." (This means only English is allowed in the English classroom.)	2.29	2.42
4- As my English improves, I am becoming more comfortable speaking only English in English classes.	2.16	2.16
5- I want to be able to speak my first language in English classes when I feel I need to.	2.40	2.56
6- It's not important to speak only English in class as long as I am completing the course tasks.	3.12	3.25
7- Using dictionaries and resources in the first language should be allowed in English classes.	2.32	2.37
8- Speaking my first language with my classmates between and during class activities should be okay as long as the course is not a speaking class.	2.93	2.57
9- I think I speak in my first language more often than I speak English in English classes.	3.08	2.86
10- Having to speak English only in class makes me feel nervous.	2.93	2.88

Table 5 reveals that females (M=2.14) have a more positive attitude than males (M=2.40) *to have a teacher who can understand their L1*. Interestingly, both males and females have the same belief towards *becoming more comfortable as their English improves* (M=2.16). Further, females (M=2.57) have a more positive belief than males (M=2.93) on communicating in the L1 outside of class activities or in classes apart from speaking.

4.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

This section analyses and reports the findings of the qualitative data. The qualitative data were collected through the SSIs with eight EFL students at Salahaddin University. The participants represented all four grades of study in an English department. Students One and Two represented freshmen, Students Three and Four represented sophomores, Students Five and Six represented juniors and Students Seven and Eight represented seniors. The SSIs questions were comprised of eight different questions that were rewordings of the LATL1UQ items.

As mentioned earlier, eight EFL learners who demonstrated their interest in being interviewed participated in the qualitative data collection (i.e., the SSIs). Each grade was represented by two participants. The learning time-period of the interviewees varied—some of them had just begun learning English, while others had been studying English for ten years. All the SSIs participants were males. The qualitative analyses provide answers to the first two research questions as stated in chapter 1 part 4.

4.3.1 Research question 1: What are the reasons behind the use of L1 in EFL classes at Salahaddin University?

The first research question aimed at determining learners' reasons for utilizing their L1 in classes. All the participants stated that they sometimes use their L1 during English lessons regardless of their grades and levels of proficiency. Table 6 displays an example of the codes, extracts and themes of learners' use of L1 in English classes.

Table 6

Themes of learners' use of L1.

Code	Extracts	Themes
Learners' use of L1	Participant 3 "When I have grammar classes I have to use my native language sometimes. Because there are some things that should be clarified in my first language and the teacher of grammar sometimes has to compare between the grammar of English and the grammar of my native language. Participant 4 "I think it is necessary to use your first language when explaining a rule in grammar."	- to clarify grammatical points
	Participant 6 "In cases that you cannot express yourself in the English language." Participant 8 "In situations that are complex to me to explain the subject." Participant 5 "When I do not know the English word." Participant 1 "I'm using my first language when I do not understand some questions from the teacher." Participant 2 "Sometimes I have a question to ask my teacher and I don't know how to ask in the second language (L2)." Participant 1 "I'm not very good in English that's why I use my native language."	- to better express themselves
	Participant 6 "… for example you have translation lesson, you have to talk in your fist language."	- to translate

Table 6 demonstrates that EFL learners at Salahaddin University tend to use the L1 for three different reasons: to clarify grammatical points, to express themselves properly as well as during translation classes.

4.3.1.1 Clarifying grammatical points

Numerous language experts have discussed the relationship between learners' L1 and the TL in terms of "universal grammar." Chomsky (1976) explained that all the present languages in the world share a number of grammatical structures. Therefore, knowledge from learners L1 can be transferred into TL acquisition. Further, Ringbom (1987) asserted that learners use their own grammatical knowledge to understand the grammar of the TL. In addition, transferring knowledge from the L1 to the TL is a strategy utilized by almost all foreign language (FL) learners in most situations (Atiknson, 1987; Harbord, 1992; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1992).

In this regard, the results of the SSIs display that two out of the eight participants stated that they need to use L1 in grammar classes. They think that they do not understand all the grammatical points in the TL, and sometimes they suggest that their teachers should make linguistic comparisons between the two languages. The participants use compensation strategy while facing difficulties in expressing themselves in the TL.

Extract 4.1

Participant 3 "When I have grammar classes I have to use my native language sometimes. Because there are some things that should be clarified in my first language and the teacher of grammar sometimes has to compare between the grammar of English and the grammar of my native language.

Extract 4.2

Participant 4 "I think it is necessary to use your first language when explaining a rule in grammar."

4.3.1.2 To better express themselves

Oxford (2000) viewed the learners' use of L1 as a useful tool to compensate the shortcomings in both comprehension and production stages. Therefore, learners can comprehend and produce the TL despite the shortcomings through using their L1. In this regard, L1 serves as a facilitating tool in the process of becoming more proficient users of the TL.

Similarly, the results of the SSIs demonstrate that six of the interviewees mentioned that they use their native language when they cannot properly express themselves in the TL and when they face difficulties in communicating with their teachers in the TL because of their low proficiency levels. Below are some extracts.

Extract 4.3

Participant 6 "In cases that you cannot express yourself in the English language."

Extract 4.4

Participant 1 "I'm using my first language when I do not understand some questions from the teacher."

Extract 4.5

Participant 2 "Sometimes I have a question to ask my teacher and I don't know how to ask in the second language."

Extract 4.6

Participant 1 "I'm not very good in English that's why I use my native language."

4.3.1.3 To translate

Furthermore, translation classes require the use of the L1. Translation is taught during the third and fourth grades of English study at Salahaddin University. Thus, a third-year student mentioned that they are obliged to use their L1 while attending translation classes.

Extract 4.7

Participant 6 "… for example you have translation lesson, you have to talk in your fist language."

4.3.2 Research question 2: What do EFL learners think of the teachers' use of L1 in EFL classrooms at Salahaddin University?

The second research question aimed at determining learners' beliefs towards their teachers' use of L1. All participants stated that their teachers use the L1 in their classes regardless of grade or class. Table 7 displays the themes of learner's beliefs towards teachers' use of L1 in English classes.

Table 7

Themes of learners' beliefs towards teachers' use of L1.

Code	Extracts	Themes
Advantages of teachers' use of L1	Participant 4 "It is really useful. Using my native language for grammar is necessary."	- explaining grammatical points
	Participant 3 "The teacher of grammar sometimes has to compare between the grammar of English and the grammar of my native language."	
	Participant 2 "Yeah, I think it's useful because my English is not advanced. I think it is better to us."	- low-proficient learners
	Participant 2 "I think it is better to us."	
	Participant 1 "Finally, I would like to say to my teachers to use only the second language because it is better for us for learning English language."	- exposing learners to the TL
Disadvantages of teachers use of L1	Participant 7 "It's distracting because we shift from one language to another language. It's just like doing two different things."	- distracting attention
	Participant 8 "Teachers' use of L1 is wrong."	

The results of the SSIs demonstrate that teachers' use of learners' L1 could be beneficial in three different circumstances: while explaining grammatical points, to help low-proficient learners to be more proficient users of English and exposing learners to the TL as much as possible. On the other hand, teachers' use of learners' L1 might distract learners' attention from the process of learning the TL. In this regard, this section displays the results of the SSIs on learners' perspectives on teachers' use of L1.

4.3.2.1 Explaining grammatical points

The results of the SSIs demonstrate that two of the interviewees believed that teachers' use of L1 is useful for explaining grammatical points. Further, they suggested that their teachers should refer to their L1 background and make linguistic comparisons while teaching grammar. Below are some extracts.

Extract 4.8

Participant 4 "It is really useful. Using my native language for grammar is necessary."

Extract 4.9

Participant 3 "The teacher of grammar sometimes has to compare between the grammar of English and the grammar of my native language."

4.3.2.2 Low-proficient learners

Wilkins (1974) suggested that using learners' L1 is sometimes beneficial especially when the use of the TL causes confusion and ambiguity.

The results of the SSIs support the use of L1 for low-proficient learners to facilitate the TL learning process. One of the interviewees mentioned that it is useful because of his low proficiency in the TL.

Extract 4.10

Participant 2 "Yeah, I think it's useful because my English is not advanced. I think it is better to us."

4.3.2.3 Exposing Learners to the TL

Auerbach (1993) asserted that one assumption of English Language Teaching (ELT) is that learners acquire the TL more quickly and effectively the more they are exposed to the TL, in which case they begin to think in the TL. Therefore, it decreases learners' dependency on the L1. The results of the SSIs show that an interviewee suggests that their teachers should expose learners to the TL and he believes that they should use only English to improve learner's language skills.

Extract 4.11

Participant 1 "Finally, I would like to say to my teachers to use only the second language because it is better for us for learning English language."

4.3.2.4 Distracting attention

On the other hand, two of the participants believed that the use of L1 distracts their attention in English classes. One of them thought that using the L1 alongside the TL is like doing two different things at the same time, which he felt to be inappropriate.

Extract 4.11

Participant 7 "It's distracting because we shift from one language to another language. It's just like doing to different things."

The results of the SSIs demonstrate that three of the interviewees believed that

4.4 Summary of the Findings

The first research question regarded the most and least common reasons concerning learners' use of their L1 among EFL learners at Salahaddin University. To analyse this research question, the mean of each individual reason were considered. As a result, the most and least reasons were determined. Table 6 shows the findings of the most common reasons by EFL learners at Salahaddin University.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for the Most Common Reasons Behind Using L1.

Reasons	Mean
I speak my first language in English classes because I need to check the meaning of a new word or concept during the lesson.	2.58
I speak my first language during English classes when	2.53
I talk about personal things with my classmates.	
I speak my first language in English classes because my classmates start talking to me in my first language while we are working on a task.	2.51
I speak my first language in English classes because I want to chat with my classmates about topics that may not be connected to class.	2.46
In English classes, I speak my first language with other members of my group who speak my first language because we want to finish class activities faster.	2.36
I speak my first language in English classes because I need to ask a classmate to explain a point in the lesson for me.	2.27
I speak my first language in English classes because I cannot think of the correct word in English when talking to my classmates.	2.22
I speak my first language in English classes because I am explaining a new point in the lesson to a classmate.	2.14
I speak my first language with my classmates during English classes because it makes me feel more connected to my culture.	2.08
Because I can't think of the words in English, I speak in my first language, even when others may not understand me.	2.02

As seen in the table 8 above, *checking the meaning of a new word or concept during the lesson* constituted the most common reason behind learners' use of L1 compared with the other reasons (M=2.58). In addition, *talking about personal things with classmates* (M=2.53) *and classmates start talking to each other in their L1 while they are working on a task* (M=2.51) were also among the most common reason. On the other hand, *inability to think of the words in English* (M=2.02) was the least common reasons behind EFL learners' use of L1 at Salahaddin University.

On the other hand, the most and least frequent opinions of EFL learners concerning their use of L1 in EFL classes at Salahaddin University were analysed by considering the mean of each individual opinion. As a result, the most and least opinions were determined. Table 9 shows the findings of the most common opinions by EFL learners at Salahaddin University.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for the Most Common Opinions Behind Using L1.

Opinions	Mean
It's not important to speak only English in class as long as I am completing the course tasks.	3.19
I think I speak in my first language more often than I speak English in English classes.	2.92
I would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my first language in English classes.	2.90
Having to speak English only in class makes me feel nervous.	2.82
Speaking my first language with my classmates between and during class activities should be okay as long as the course is not a speaking class.	2.67
I want to be able to speak my first language in English classes when I feel I need to.	2.47
I think my English classes should have an ""English-only" policy." (This means only English is allowed in the English classroom.)	2.40

Using dictionaries and resources in the first language should be allowed in English classes.	2.28
In English classes, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my first language.	2.19
As my English improves, I am becoming more comfortable speaking only English in English classes.	2.18

As seen in the Table 9 above, *it's not important to speak only English in class as long as I am completing the course tasks* constituted the least common opinion on learners' use of L1 compared with the other opinions (M=3.19). In addition, *I think I speak in my first language more often than I speak English in English classes* (M=2.92) *and I would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my first language in English classes* (M=2.90) were also among the least common opinions. On the other hand, *as my English improves, I am becoming more comfortable speaking only English in English classes* (M=2.18) and *in English classes, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my first language* (M=2.19) were the most common opinion behind EFL learners' use of L1 at Salahaddin University.

Further, the results of the qualitative data revealed that L1 can be used for three different reasons; clarifying grammatical points by making references to learners' L1 linguistic backgrounds, overcome shortcomings in the TL and in translation lessons. In addition, the EFL learners of the current study demonstrated that teachers' use of L1 is a beneficial tool for low-proficient learners, exposing learners to the TL and while explaining grammatical points in English classes.

In sum, the results of the quantitative and qualitative data showed that mother tongue did have its place in FL teaching and learning process. According to the results of the face to face-to-face SSIs, four EFL learners supported the use of L1 in classrooms and they regarded L1 as a facilitator and an encouraging tool for FL learning process.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1 Presentation

The primary purpose of this study was the exploration of learners' attitudes towards the use of the first language (L1) in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes. This section discusses the results of the research questions. First, the key findings of the Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ) will be discussed to diagnose the most and least common reasons and opinions of EFL learners concerning the use of L1 in EFL classes. Second, it also discusses the views of EFL learners at Salahaddin University concerning their teachers' use of L1 in their English classes. In addition, the current section also discusses whether the four grades (freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors) have different attitudes (reasons and opinions) towards the use of L1 which might have existed among the four grades in terms of reasons and opinions. Finally, it also discusses the different attitudes of males and females, if any, towards the L1 use in English classes.

5.2 Discussion of the First Research Question

The first research question aimed at determining learners' reasons for utilizing their L1 in classes. The results of the LATL1UQ suggest that the learners hold a slightly positive attitude towards L1 use in English classes on an as-needed basis. Generally, this finding corresponds with that of previous studies conducted by (Hung, 2006; Al-Hadrhami, 2008; Al-Buraiki, 2008; Kim & Petraki, 2009; Campa & Nasaji, 2009; Al Shammari, 2011; Hidaytati, 2012) which similarly conclude that participants hold favourable attitudes towards L1 use in EFL classes.

In the quantitative component of this study, the LATL1UQ developed by Al Sharaeai (2012) and the Semi Structured Interviews (SSIs) were administered to examine participants' attitudes towards L1 use in EFL classes. The findings of the first research question have demonstrated that most participants are in favour of using the L1 to check the meaning of an unknown word or concept during an English class. The results correspond with those of (Hung, 2006, et al), which indicate that there is a general agreement that learners' L1 is commonly used to deal with unknown words or concepts while teaching and learning EFL.

Furthermore, the findings of Hidayati's (2012) indicate that the participants stated that they widely use their L1 in social interactions while talking about personal things with their classmates as well as the case with the current study. The results of the LATL1UQ and the SSIs suggest that EFL learners at Salahaddin University commonly use their L1 for talking about personal things with their classmates.

In addition, the findings of Campa and Nasaji (2009) support those of the current study. They conducted a study concerning the teaching of German as a second language (L2) in Canada. Two classes of two different teachers were videotaped and audio-recorded. The aim of the recordings was to identify situations in which the L1 (English) was used by the two teachers. The most common situation was translation from German to English. Similarly, the results of the LATL1UQ and the SSIs demonstrate that learners' L1 is also widely used to translate from the target language to L1, especially during translation lessons. The findings of the current study are in line with the findings of Hidayati (2012). The results of the current study reveal that L1 is used to facilitate social interactions with and among students.

Similar to (Kim and Petraki's, 2009; Hung's, 2006; and Katis', 2011) findings, EFL learners at Salahaddin University believe that the use of their L1 is beneficial and necessary for explaining grammatical points and in comparing learners' L1 with the TL during English classes. In this regard, Bolitho (1983) stated that EFL learners attend English classes with the pre-existence of their L1 in their minds; thus, ignoring their L1 during English classes is unjustified. Campa and Nasaji (2009) discovered that teachers employ learners' L1 to compare the two languages as a means of facilitating TL learning. Similar to Bolitho (1983) and Campa and Nasaji (2009), the

participants of the current study stated in the SSIs that their teachers should compare their L1 with the TL in order to booster understanding of the TL.

5.3 Discussion of the Second Research Question

The second research question investigated the views of EFL learners at Salahaddin University concerning their teachers' use of L1 in their English classes. L1 use is viewed as a compensation strategy. Oxford (1990) stated that learners utilize their L1 as a way to overcome their shortcomings while communicating in the TL. In this light, L1 plays a prominent role in facilitating the TL learning process.

The findings of the second research question are similar to those of previous studies (Satio & Ebsworth, 2004; Hung, 2006; Nazary, 2008; Khati, 2011; Alshammari, 2011). Despite the different contexts in which these studies were conducted, the results indicate that EFL learners generally have a positive concerning towards their teachers' use of L1 in their English classes.

Further, Nazary (2008) emphasized that learners do not prefer to speak in their L1, yet at the same time they prefer to have a teacher who can understand their L1. Khati (2011) believed that EFL learners can use their L1 as needed to facilitate the TL learning process.

The findings of Satio and Ebsworth (2004) support those of the current study. They determined that learners prefer to have a teacher who can understand their L1. They believe that the teachers' use of L1 is helpful and beneficial. In this regard, the results of the LATL1UQ demonstrate that the participants of this study hold the same opinion.

5.4 Discussion of the Third Research Question

The third research question investigated whether the four grades (freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors) have different attitudes towards the use of L1 which might have existed among the four grades. It was found that the freshmen tend to rely on their L1 more than others due to their limited linguistic background. They become less dependent on the L1 as they become more fluent in the TL. On the other hand, the findings of the current research question have not been compared with other studies because there are no other similar studies dealing with that side of the issue.

5.5 Discussion of the Fourth Research Question

The last research question examined whether the male and female participants have different attitudes towards the use of L1 which might have existed among them. It was found that males and females almost have the same attitudes towards the use of L1 in English classes. On the other hand, the findings of the current research question have not been compared with other studies because there are no other studies dealing with different attitudes of male and female participants towards L1 use in EFL classes.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Presentation

This chapter summarizes the aim and implementation of the current study. It also illuminates the most important findings and consequent pedagogical implications. It also suggests future research possibilities. Finally, it describes how the current investigation has impacted the researcher.

6.2 Conclusion

The current research investigated learners' attitudes towards the use of their first language (L1) in English classes at Salahaddin University. It also attempted to determine any statistically significant differences between males and females and among the four grades of study. Furthermore, the study determined the most common reasons for L1 use among participants, focusing as well on learners' opinions towards the use of L1 in their classes.

A mixed-method approach was employed for data collection. 258 English as a foreign language (EFL) students were surveyed to obtain the quantitative data, while eight EFL learners were interviewed to collect the qualitative data. In light of the research questions specified in chapter 1 part 4, the obtained data from the Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ) were analysed and interpreted into percentages by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The qualitative data were transcribed and analysed via content analysis.

The results of the current study indicate that EFL learners had slightly positive attitudes towards the use of L1 when it aimed at facilitating target language (TL)

learning, especially for low-level learners. The participants stated that if the L1 is excessively used, it distracts their attention from learning the TL; therefore, it minimizes learners' exposure to the TL and increases their dependency on the L1.

The findings also revealed that the most common reason behind learners' use of L1 is to check the meaning of unknown words and phrases during their English classes as well as to understand grammatical points. Moreover, the findings showed that the participants used their L1 to make a bridge between their L1 linguistic backgrounds and the linguistic culture of the TL. In addition, talking about personal things was cited as one of the most common reasons for using the L1.

Furthermore, EFL learners at Salahaddin University had an overall positive attitude toward teachers' use of L1 in their English classes. Moreover, the learners preferred teachers who could communicate in their L1.

The findings showed that participants believed that the monolingual approach, which focuses on an "English-only" policy, is not beneficial, especially among low-level learners. On the other hand, an "English-only" policy seemed to be highly favoured by high-level learners.

In addition, the learners highlighted the following learning occasions during which L1 use might be beneficial—when learning new vocabularies, when attempting to understand difficult concepts and when mastering grammatical points. It might also be beneficial to raise learners' awareness of the similarities between the linguistic backgrounds of the two languages.

The findings of this study support the limited use of L1 to maximize learners' exposure to the TL. Both monolingual and bilingual approaches do not seem sufficient; instead, a more balanced approach towards L1 is needed which maximizes and recognizes the L1 as a beneficial classroom tool. Learners' L1 may be tolerated, especially among low-level learners who lack TL proficiency. However, this use may be limited as learners gradually become more confident in using the TL.

To conclude, the present study contributes to the long-standing debate among English Language Teaching (ELT) scholars concerning monolingual and bilingual approaches by examining learners' perspectives regarding this issue. It is hoped that

the findings of this study will create a better learning environment for participants which considers the roles of L1 use in EFL classrooms.

6.3 Pedagogical Implications

This study has numerous pedagogical implications for learners and teachers. As discussed in the previous chapter, the learners involved in this study acknowledge the value of their L1 as a facilitator in learning the TL.

6.3.1 Implications for learners

The findings of the current study support the limited use of L1 to maximize learners' exposure to the TL. Due to learners' limited linguistic backgrounds in the TL, low-level learners need the support of their L1 in order to be exposed to the TL. Therefore, L1 use aids learners in several circumstances.

Moreover, Prodromou (2002) believes that the use of L1 has been promoted for several procedures such as explaining difficult concepts, checking comprehension, vocabulary clarification, or raising learners' self-confidence. In this regard, the findings of the current study suggest that learners can use their L1 to understand grammatical points, especially among low-level learners and to overcome the shortcomings while communicating in the TL, which is viewed as a compensation strategy. Further, they can use their L1 to check the meaning of a new word or concept during an English lesson in order to learn faster and easier. Further, learners should expose themselves to the TL as much as possible in order to cope with learning the TL.

6.3.2 Implications for teachers

The findings of the current study can improve both teacher professionalism and students' performance and motivation. Classrooms that offer using L1 are probably a better environment for learning the TL, therefore, the distance between teachers and learners is reduced.

However, utilizing the L1 does not mean translating all classroom activities into learners' L1. Rather, it should be viewed as a tool to be employed on an as-needed basis. When the L1 is excessively used, learners tend to believe that they cannot cope

with learning the TL. Therefore, learners should be exposed to the TL as much as possible.

According Newmark (1991) learners' L1 can be a valuable tool if it is used appropriately for teaching English as a foreign or second language (L2) regardless of the proficiency level of the learners. In early stages, it can be a useful tool in terms of using class time effectively and economically.

Further, similar to the findings of other studies (Satio & Ebsworth, 2004; Hung, 2006; Nazary, 2008; Khati, 2011; Alshammari, 2011), the results of the current study reveal that having a teacher who can fulfil learners' needs is crucial for providing a better classroom environment, improving learners' performance and motivation in the classroom. Therefore, teachers can use the L1 while dealing with unknown or difficult words and concepts for better comprehension.

In addition, teachers can utilize these findings to help reduce the amount of L1 use in their English classes. They also can better understand learners' attitudes towards L1 use while attending their English classes. Consequently, the results of this study may assist teachers in modifying their ELT methodologies in order to enhance their students' learning.

Finally, the findings of this study support both monolingual and bilingual approaches do not seem sufficient; instead, a more balanced approach towards L1 is needed which maximizes and recognizes the L1 as a beneficial classroom tool. Learners' L1 may be tolerated, especially among low-level learners who lack TL proficiency. However, this use may be limited as learners gradually become more confident in using the TL.

6.4 Future Research Possibilities

The findings of this study have revealed that EFL learners at Salahaddin University have overall positive attitudes towards the use of L1in their English classes. Based on the results and limitations, there are a lot of possibilities for this study to be elaborated in the future.

Firstly, the participants of this study were all EFL learners. Another study might investigate teachers' attitudes and determine the relationship between their

points-of-view and reasons for L1 use. In this regard, a similar study could be implemented with samples including both teachers and learners at Salahaddin University.

Secondly, it would be beneficial to adopt an additional data collection tool, e.g. pre- and post-observations of classrooms. This would provide the findings with more validity. Another study may also be conducted to determine the extent to which L1 use facilitates TL learning. A quasi-experimental study could be implemented to secure the necessary data. Heffner (2004) explained that quasi-experimental study determines the impact of a specific reason on participants. This requires the researcher to divide participants into two different groups: a control group and an experimental group. An "English-only" policy could be imposed on the control group, whereas limited L1 use could be allowed for the experimental group. A pre- and post-test could be performed to determine the achievement of the participants.

6.5 Professional Impact

The researcher has been influenced by the current study in different ways. It has aided the researcher in acquiring deeper insight into effective EFL methodologies concerning language use. More specifically, the researcher has become better informed about the roles of L1 in teaching a TL. Overall, the researcher has become more aware of how language-teaching methodologies and approaches may affect and guide teaching practices.

At the same time, the present study has improved the researcher's investigative skills. The researcher now can identify learning problems and find appropriate solutions through collecting and analyzing necessary data. In addition, the researcher has become more confident in conducting similar and improved studies in the future.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.

Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ)

APPENDIX A
LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE USE OF LI IN ENGLISH CLASSES:
A SAMPLE OF SALAHADDIN UNIVERSITY
Learners' Attitudes towards L1 Use Questionnaire (LATL1UQ)
Adopted from (Al Sharaeai, 2012)

Gender: Male ☐ **Female** ☐ 　　　　　**Age:** _____

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Grade: _____

Part One:

Please read the following statements that show a number of reasons why Kurdish EFL students speak their first language in their **EFL classes**. How often do these reasons apply to you when **YOU ARE** in your English classroom?

1. **I speak my first language in English class because I am explaining a new point in the lesson to a classmate.**

A) always 　 B) usually 　 C) sometimes 　 D) never

2. **I speak my first language in English class because I want to chat with my classmates about topics that may not be connected to class.**

A) always 　 B) usually 　 C) sometimes 　 D) never

3. **I speak my first language in English class because I need to ask a classmate to explain a point in the lesson for me.**

A) always 　 B) usually 　 C) sometimes 　 D) never

4. **I speak my first language in English class because I need to check the meaning of a new word or concept during the lesson.**

A) always 　 B) usually 　 C) sometimes 　 D) never

5. **I speak my first language in English class because I cannot think of the correct word in English when talking to my classmates.**

A) always 　 B) usually 　 C) sometimes 　 D) never

6. **I speak my first language in English class because my classmates start talking to me in my first language while we are working on a task.**

A) always 　 B) usually 　 C) sometimes 　 D) never

7. **I speak my first language during English class when I talk about personal things with my classmates.**

A) always 　 B) usually 　 C) sometimes 　 D) never

8. **In English class, I speak my first language with other members of my group who speak my first language because we want to finish class activities faster.**

A) always   B) usually   C) sometimes   D) never

9. **I speak my first language with my classmates during English class because it makes me feel more connected to my culture.**

A) always   B) usually   C) sometimes   D) never

10. **Because I can't think of the words in English, I speak in my first language, even when others may not understand me.**

A) always   B) usually   C) sometimes   D) never

Part Two:

Please read the statements below that show different opinions and preferences ESL students have about using their first languages in **English classrooms**. Please indicate to what extent **you agree or disagree** with these opinions.

1. **In English class, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my first language.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

2. **I would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my first language in English class.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

3. **I think my English class should have an ""English-only" policy." (This means only English is allowed in the English classroom).**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

4. **As my English improves, I am becoming more comfortable speaking only English in English class.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

5. **I want to be able to speak my first language in English class when I feel I need to.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

6. **It's not important to speak only English in class as long as I am completing the course tasks.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

7. **Using dictionaries and resources in the first language should be allowed in English class.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

8. **Speaking my first language with my classmates between and during class activities should be okay as long as the course is not a speaking class.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

9. **I think I speak in my first language more often than I speak English in English class.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

10. **Having to speak English only in class makes me feel nervous.**

A) strongly agree   B) agree   C) neutral   D) disagree   E) strongly disagree

APPENDIX B. The Semi Structured Interviews (SSIs)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

L1 in EFL Classes: Interview questions

1. In what grade you are? How long have you been learning English?
2. Do you use your first language in class? How often? Why?
3. In what types of situations do you use your first language in class?
4. How comfortable are you using your first language in class?
5. Do you prefer speaking English or your first language in English class? Why?
6. Does your teacher ever use your first language in class? If so, is it useful? Distracting? What do you think about a teacher using your first language to teach English?
7. Where do you use your first language outside of English class? Do you prefer speaking your first language or English outside of English class? Why?
8. Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about your experience using your native language versus English in English classes?

APPENDIX C. Interview Transcriptions

Interview Transcriptions

STUDENT A

1. I'm in first grade.

2. I'm using my second language because I am in English department. Sometimes I use my primary language my native language

3. I'm using my first language in some situations that I do understand some questions from teacher or anything like that.

4. I'm not comfortable to use my first language I like to use the second language English. I'm not very good in English that's why I use my native language and of course I'm not comfortable with it.

5. I prefer to use second language which is English in my classes I want to improve my English skills.

6. I use my native language in grammar classes.

7. Of course my teachers use my first language. Of course it is distracting because I think it is not good to use my first language English department. I think it is not good to use my first language from teachers. It's more better to use the second language.

8. I'm using my first language is Kurdish in everywhere because I'm living here right now. I prefer to use the second language outside of English classes but many people don't understand English that's why I use my native language Because I want to improve my language skills.

9. Finally, I would like to say to my teachers to use only the second language because it's better for us for learning English language.

STUDENT B

1. I am in first year in English department.

2. Sometimes I use my first language and my friends use the first language because we need it.

3. Sometimes I have a question to ask my teacher and I don't know how to ask in a second language that's why I'm using my first language in English classes.

4. Yeah I'm comfortable to use my native language.

5. I prefer using English language in English classes because we must learn it.

6. To complete tasks we use first language.

7. Yeah I think it's useful because your English is not advanced. I think it is better to us.

8. Sometimes I use with my friends outside of English classes. I prefer English language because we have to learn it.

9. That's all. I just want to say that we should learn English step by step

STUDENT C

1. I am in second grade. I started to learn English at college.

2. Sometimes and I can say really because I am a student in English department I have to speak English because when I'm graduated, I will be asked to use English not my first language. If I use my first language or I will get to it and it will be a habit so I don't want to do that.

3. When I have grammar classes I have to use my native language sometimes. Because there are some things that should be clarified in my first language and the teacher of grammar sometimes has to compare between the grammar of English and the grammar of my native language.

4. I don't feel like a comfortable person because I want to get used to English language my own language.

5. I prefer English. As I said I am a student in English department and I'm here to learn English not my first language I learn my native language from childhood and I'm here to learn another language which is English.

6. As I said in grammar and when my friends ask me some questions and comparing between my first language and English language.

7. Yes, and it depends sometimes it's useful and sometimes it's not sometimes I distract my attention we talk in English we get used in this language even outside of classes. In grammar it is good in conversation and literature and in presentations is bad it is not good to use first I wish to teach English.

8. Sometimes my friends and I use English outside of English classes. I certainly prefer English because I am in English College every day I have to develop my abilities in English on my confidence by speaking.

9. The most important thing is that we don't have to give up despite our difficulties in learning the second language. And we have to think in the target language in English classes and speak in that language.

STUDENT D

1. I am in second grade. it's been a long time when I was at grade 10 I started to learn English.

2. I do use my native language explaining something that should be explained in Kurdish and you have to compare our language with English and to know the difference between the two languages.

3. Explain a work order explain a rule and I think it's necessary to use your first language in the classroom.

4. I'm comfortable with it.

5. We should use all of them in the classroom when we want to learn English that doesn't mean to forget about your first language that's why we have to use both of them in the classroom at the same time.

6.

7. Yeah of course they use it. It is really useful. Using my native language for grammar is necessary to explain grammatical rules and something that cannot be explained only in English so, they have to use Kurdish as well.

8. With my friends sometimes we use English. I prefer both of them but mostly English because it's our speciality.

9. We need to use our native language in cases that a word in English has many meanings so we have to make the meanings clear in our native language.

STUDENT E

1. I'm the third grade of English department. That's been five to six years I've been learning English.

2. Sometimes I'm using it because I'm in a class that I am obliged to use it Because I don't know every words in the second language which is English.

3. I could say the same answer. Sometimes when I am up life to use Kurdish word and I don't know the English word.

4. Yeah sometimes I'm comfortable that I'm using my native language.

5. Actually the English one Because I am a student of English department So I have to learn it step by step and day after day That's why we use English more benefitly.

6. Specially in the literature Because in Leticia the result is Converse that I cannot understand them.

7. Yeah sometimes. We can say both of them. 94 levels for students in English proficiency that's why sometimes teachers use their native language. For those students are good in English using Kurdish inside English classes it's not very good. Not bad

8. When I'm talking with my classmates. We could use both of them but I prefer English. Yes, I am an English student that's why I have to learn it and use it very well.

9. English is a very interesting language that covers worldwide Are there is a universal language in my opinion everyone should have some information about this language. We should use English more than native language.

STUDENT F

1. I'm in the third grade of heart College I've started on the 1st or 2nd is called that wasn't very serious from there so I could say for 7 years.

2. Sometimes I get asked by my classmates and when that's when a teacher is obliging me to translate something I have to talk to my first language.

3. I explained for example you have a translation lesson you have to talk to your first language also there are some other cases that you cannot express yourself in the English language so you use your first language.

4. I'm quite confident using my first language because it's my mother tongue language.

5. Actually prefer English climate cause it's a private language full of topics iPhone cover with your teachers Amazon classmates.

6. Again I have to repeat myself for the translation lessons and when I asked in my First Language by my classmates.

7. Since we are learners of English he (teacher) has to go easy on us and use our first language in English classes in case that he knows that we don't stand from English language. Yeah it is quite useful and sometimes even distracting. Useful as you can understand the topic much better and distracting because opening new topics and forgetting your main topic. I think it is a good way of explaining the topic I think the teachers should use this method of teaching.

8. Almost everywhere at home, with friends, with classmates and anywhere. I would rather use English language. it's a habit that we use our first language. Yes sometimes you're with your friends and they say come on let's talk in our first language.

9. Yeah it in my experience I noticed that some students of English have difficulty in expressing themselves in English in my opinion Express Yourself in the target

language better you have to see some movies and pay attention to dialogues between people.

STUDENT G

1. I'm in the fourth grade I've been learning English for 12 years.

2. Yeah I use it because sometimes I just love to use my first language.

3. When I'm bored I use my first language I just don't want to use English

4. I'm comfortable using my native language.

5. For sure I prefer to use English language because you feel that you're capable of doing something different rather than using just your first language in English classes.

6. I think it's unnecessary to use your first language because we need to be advanced and prepared.

7. Yes, sometimes for example; when something is hard or difficult for the students to understand, the teacher will explain it in Kurdish. It's distracting because we shift from one language to another language. It's just like doing two different things. It's a bad thing because if we don't know how to express ourselves in English then how will we be able to do that in the future? Using English language is the best thing.

8. I chat with foreign people like British and American people so I just video chat with them and that's why I use English outside of the classes. I prefer to speak English language but because of the mentality of people they are saying that this person is bragging and he tries to show off by speaking English language that's the main reason I do not speak English outside classes. Mostly I speak Kurdish just like I'm forced to speak in my native language.

9. …….

STUDENT H

1. I'm in the fourth grade. I have been learning English for five years.

2. Sometimes I use it because of my friends speak in my first language.

3. I use my first language in such situations that are complex to me to explain the subject.

4. I'm comfortable because it's my first language my native language.

5. I prefer to speak English to improve my experience.

6. Show tasks that I don't understand the teacher explains something.

7. The use my first language but not very much. They use it for making jokes not for explaining the subject. I don\y like my teachers to use L1. It's wrong.

8. When I meet Kurdish people. I prefer to speak English outside of the classes. Speaking English is better because English is an international language.

9. That's all

CURRICULUM VITAE

Attaa Lateef Galali was born in Erbil, the Northern part of Iraq, in 1990. He graduated from English language and Literature department at Salahaddin University in 2013. He speaks English fluently and he has survival Turkish skills. He has been working as an English language teacher since 2013.

ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Attaa Lateef Galali Kuzey Irak Erbil şehrinde 1990 yılında doğmuş. O Selahaddin Üniversitesinin Diller Fakültesinde İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümünde 2013 yılında mezun olmuş. Attaa mükemmel bir şekilde İngilizce konuşabilir, aynı zamanda Türkçenin başlangıç şekilde konuşabilir. Kendisi 2013 yılından itibaren İngilizce öğretmeni olarak devam ediyor.