THE ROLE OF L1 IN EFL AND ESL CLASSES:

A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The use of the first language (L1) in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom can serve various purposes to facilitate language learning. Accordingly, the role of L1 in EFL and ESL classes has been debated in the history of English Language Teaching (ELT) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) for many decades. However, employing L1 as a teaching tool in language classrooms is often discouraged. This article aims to explore the role of L1 in EFL and ESL education, drawing upon an extensive body of empirical evidence. It seeks to illustrate how teachers can strategically leverage learners' L1 as a pedagogical resource within the classroom setting, as well as explore the different functions that L1 can serve or can potentially serve in language classrooms. Additionally, the study briefly addresses the concerns raised by researchers regarding the potential negative impacts of using L1.

Keywords: L1 use, EFL classes, ESL classes, Language learning

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EFL VE ESL SINIFLARINDA L1'İN ROLÜ: BİR LİTERATÜR TARAMASI

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Özet

Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce (EFL) ve İkinci Dil Olarak İngilizce (ESL) sınıflarında ana dilin (L1) kullanımı, dil öğrenimini kolaylaştırmak amacıyla farklı amaçlarla kullanılabilir bir kaynaktır. Bu bağlamda, L1'in EFL ve ESL sınıflarındaki işlevi, İngilizce Dil Öğretimi (ELT) ve İkinci Dil Edinimi (SLA) disiplinleri içerisinde uzun yıllardan beri süregelen bir tartışma konusu olarak varlığını sürdürmektedir. Ancak, dil sınıflarında L1'in öğretim aracı olarak kullanımı genellikle önerilmemektedir. Bu akademik çalışmanın amacı, geniş bir ampirik kanıt yelpazesi temel alınarak, L1'in EFL ve ESL eğitimindeki rolünü araştırmaktır. Bu kapsamda, öğretmenlerin, öğrencilerin L1'ini pedagojik bir kaynak olarak sınıf içinde nasıl stratejik bir biçimde kullanabileceğini göstermek ve aynı zamanda L1'in dil sınıflarında hizmet edebileceği veya edebileceği potansiyel işlevleri keşfetmek amaçlanmıştır. Bununla birlikte, çalışmada, L1 kullanımının olası olumsuz etkilerine ilişkin araştırmacılar tarafından dile getirilen endişelere de kısaca değinilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: L1 kullanımı, EFL sınıfları, ESL sınıfları, Dil öğrenimi

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INTRODUCTION

The greatest distinctive feature of human beings is their ability to communicate. Through language, people convey their feelings and thoughts as human beings. Language is the fundamental medium through which people connect and interact, enabling them to form relationships, share knowledge, and engage in social interactions.

What has also been significant to humanity is knowing an additional language. It is undeniable that when people learn a second language, they can broaden their perspectives, discover greater job opportunities, have a broader platform to express their political opinions and religious beliefs (Cook, 2008). Throughout history, people learned different languages for a variety of reasons. In today's world, the emergence of globalization and the developments in technology and communication have led to an increase in international relations necessitating the knowledge of at least one foreign language. Undoubtedly, one of the languages that people seek to learn is English since it is one of the dominant languages worldwide.

Although learning another language is important, it can sometimes be challenging for the learners. People have attempted to acquire L2 through a variety of methods. However, as suggested by many second language acquisition (SLA) researchers, there is no best teaching method for a second or a foreign language. (Larsen-Freeman, 2011; Prabhu, 1990; Saville-Troke, 2012). As discussed by Saville- Troke (2012), the issues about what the L2 learner knows, how the learner acquires L2 knowledge, and why some learners are more successful than others do not have an agreed answer since there are different linguistic, psychological and social perspectives which vary within each other as well as between them.

In recent decades, there has been a growing body of literature re-evaluating the use of the first language (L1) in the context of second and foreign language teaching and learning (Cook, 2001; de la Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Edstrom, 2006; Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Macaro, 2001; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003; Saruwatashi, 2020; Hanif, 2020; Algazo, 2022; Taner & Balıkçı, 2022). These researchers have explored the potential benefits of judicious L1 use, challenging the traditional view that strictly restricts L1 in the language learning process.

When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that there are many studies on the role of L1 in L2 classrooms. Regarding the significance and controversy of the issue, there is still a need to investigate the topic. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to compile different perspectives and present findings from the studies regarding L1 use in L2 classrooms through a literature review and to draw a conclusion on the role of the native language in EFL / ESL classrooms. In the forthcoming discussion, we will delve into the significance of utilizing the learners' native language (L1) in the context of second language education, supported by empirical evidence gathered from diverse educational settings. It is essential to acknowledge that the focus of this article centers specifically on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. In this context, EFL classrooms are characterized by students learning English within their home countries and typically sharing the same first language. While there are instances where EFL classrooms may include learners who do not have a common language, the primary focus of this article will revolve around exploring the advantages and disadvantages of L1 use in EFL classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

First Language, Second Language and Foreign Language

It is important to define some key terms to be more apparent. Native language, or mother tongue, is defined as a language that is acquired naturally in early childhood, usually because it is the primary language of a child's family (Saville-Troke, 2012). It is also recognized as the first language (L1) and throughout this paper the term L1 will be used to refer to the native language. The terms foreign and second language are frequently used to refer to two distinct concepts. A second language usually implies that the learner lives in the environment in which that language is spoken (Gass & Selinker, 2008) whereas a foreign language is a second language that is learned so that it might be used for future travel purposes or other cross-cultural communication situations, or that it might be studied as a curricular requirement (Saville-Troike, 2012). A target language refers to the language being learned in a general sense. The distinction between a second language and a foreign language is beyond the scope of this study, so L2 will be used as an umbrella term to refer to any language acquired by a person in addition to his mother tongue (UNESCO as cited by Cook,2008).

In order to enhance clarity, it is imperative to expound upon certain key concepts. The term "native language," also referred to as the" mother tongue", denotes a language naturally acquired during early childhood, primarily due to its prevalence in the child's family environment (Saville-Troke, 2012). It is also commonly identified as the individual's first language (L1), and throughout the entirety of this document, the abbreviation L1 will be employed to indicate the native language.

The terms "foreign language" (FL) and "second language" (SL) are often used to distinguish between two distinct linguistic concepts. SL typically implies that the learner resides in an environment where the language is commonly spoken (Gass & Selinker, 2008). On the other hand, FL pertains to a second language that is acquired for potential future travel or for effective cross-cultural communication situations. Alternatively, it might be studied due to curricular requirements (Saville-Troike, 2012). The concept of a "target language" pertains to the language being actively learned in a general context. Given that the nuanced difference between SL and FL is not within the purview of this study, the term L2 will be utilized as an overarching expression encompassing any language acquired by an individual in addition to their native tongue (UNESCO, as cited by Cook, 2008).

The Use of L1 in EFL / ESL Context

Historical Background

Before delving into the arguments supporting and opposing the use of L1 in L2 context, it is crucial to take a brief glance at the historical background of L1 use in the L2 classroom. By examining the historical trajectory, we can better understand the current perspectives and debates regarding the role of L1 in L2 learning environments.

The role of L1 in EFL / ESL classes is one of many unresolved topics in English language education. Until the first half of the 20th century, the dominant method of teaching languages was the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), which made frequent use of L1 and translation from/to L1. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed a variety of approaches and methods in the field of language teaching. Grammar Translation Method (GTM) had been the dominating method of teaching languages. As

international affairs, political changes and, consequently, interest in modern languages on rose, learning and teaching foreign languages successfully became more and more critical. With the issue of effective teaching of an L2 at hand, the Reform Movement was born. GTM focused on accuracy rather than fluency, and thus, L1 was used as the medium of instruction and for translation of texts. On the contrary the Reform Movement grew as an opposition to GTM, rejecting the use of L1 in L2 classrooms and advocating the study of the spoken language over written forms. Teaching new meanings through establishing associations within L2 was favoured (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Then Gouin's Direct Method was introduced, supporting that classroom instruction be conducted exclusively in L2 and avoiding translation.

Like the Direct Method, The Audio-lingual Method (ALM) was also an oral-based approach. However, ALM has a strong theoretical base in linguistics and behavioural psychology. The use of L1 in the classroom was strictly restricted since the habits in L1 would interfere with the students' attempts to acquire L2 (Larsen-Freeman, 2011).

As part of the Comprehension Approach, Krashen' and Terrell's Natural Approach emphasized students' developing basic communication skills through receiving meaningful exposure to the target language (comprehensible input) (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Similarly, James Asher's Total Physical Response bases its argument on the theory that L2 acquisition is the same as L1 acquisition. Though TPR can be introduced in L1, it is hardly ever used throughout the teaching process.

There were also more tolerant approaches which mainly targeted use of L2 in classes, but also allowed L1 use for a variety of purposes. Caleb Gattegno's Silent Way, for instance, utilizes L1 when giving instructions and during feedback sessions. Moreover, in Desuggestopedia, L1 is used, when necessary, specifically to make meaning more apparent. L1 enhances security to allow students to express their feelings in Community Language Teaching (CLL). Although the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) asserts that L2 should be used at all instances, it also allows for reasonable use of L1.

With the emergence of Direct and Audiolingual Methods, L1 use in L2 classrooms were almost banished since the teacher was seen responsible for providing the students with a good model for imitation (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Silent Way, Desuggestopedia and Community Language Learning brought using L1 back mainly for the purposes of giving instructions, providing feedback and a bridge from the familiar to the unfamiliar. However, from 1970s on, Communicative Approach has become the most influential approach in teaching languages restricting the use of L1 in the classroom so that the learners can be exposed to L2 as much as possible to develop communicative competence in L2 (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Even though the "L2-only" view in L2 classes is still popular today, there have been influential researchers in SLA research, who have criticized this view and have supported that code-switching contributes to scaffolding practices in language classrooms (Tunçay, 2014).

The Case for L1 Use in the L2 Classroom

The existing literature on L1 use in second language acquisition (SLA) suggests that when used appropriately, the L1 can enhance the learning experience rather than hinder it. There are some reasons that support the integration of L1 when teaching a second or foreign language. Yavuz (2012) found that teachers use L1 mainly for methodological issues in their classes. The need to instruct and control the learners due to the overcrowded classes, the necessity for the learners to prepare for tests, the urge to energize students when they lack interest, and teaching abstract vocabulary caused the teachers to switch to L1. Taşçı and Aksu Ataç (2020) found that EFL teachers utilized L1 for different purposes as giving instructions, translating, managing the class, checking comprehension and providing feedback. Kohi and Lakshmi G. (2020) revealed that teachers showed great enthusiasm to use L1 with the purposes for utilizing L1 for content translation and explanation, class management, and achievement of the affective and social functions of language use. Timuçin and Baytar (2015) found that codeswitching occurred most frequently for the purpose of translation, checking comprehension, giving directions and instructions, and explaining grammar respectively.

L1 is most utilized for translating unfamiliar words and clarifying intricate grammar rules that learners struggle to grasp (Jingxia, 2010). The periodic

use of L1 to elucidate complex terminology, vocabulary, grammar, and instructions in classrooms led to a more than twofold increase in learners' overall exam scores and reduced anxiety levels, compared to environments where L1 was prohibited (Boustani, 2019; Bruen & Kelly, 2014). Hence, disallowing L1 fosters insecurity and sluggish progress, whereas allowing its usage facilitates learning, significantly boosting learning performance and fostering confidence in a relaxed classroom setting. Furthermore, as an integral part of learners' identities, encoding prior learning and life experiences, L1 serves as a scaffold for L2 learning (Bismilla, 2011), making it the most important ally a foreign language can have (Buztkamm, 2003). In a study conducted by Mohammadi Darabad et al. (2021), an examination was conducted into the application of the L1-based elicitation method for evaluating L2 performance. The objective was to establish the validity of using this technique to assess the transfer of language skills. The outcomes of their research indicated that the L1-based elicitation technique indeed proved to be a valid means of evaluating L2 performance. In essence, across diverse levels and contexts, L1 serves multiple functions, from aiding comprehension and enhancing language skill performance to facilitating the transfer of previous knowledge to L2 and foreign language acquisition. Theories simply prescribe what should or should not be done in the classroom. However, the actual implementations in the L2 classrooms have urged methodologists to conduct further studies and reconsider the role of L1 in English Language Teaching.

One of the influential researchers allowing space for L1 inclusion in the classroom is Vivian Cook. In the realm of language acquisition and bilingualism, Cook emphasizes a crucial distinction between L2 learning and L1 acquisition, emphasizing the necessity of maintaining a clear demarcation between the two. His perspective posits that these two linguistic processes diverge significantly. Cook further delves into the concept of code-switching, diverging from the notion that it should be avoided. Instead, he defines it as the seamless transition between two languages within a conversation, particularly when both interlocutors possess command over both languages. Notably, he enumerates a range of compelling rationales underlying code-switching: Firstly, code-switching can serve as a means of reporting someone else's speech, effectively

reproducing dialogue in its original linguistic form. Secondly, it can serve the purpose of interjecting into a conversation, allowing for a smooth transition between languages for specific emphasis or stylistic effect. Additionally, code-switching is utilized as a tool for highlighting information, directing attention to crucial details. It can also facilitate a shift to a topic that aligns more appropriately with the linguistic characteristics of one language. Furthermore, code-switching enables a change in the speaker's role within a discourse, facilitating dynamic shifts in communication dynamics. Cook also notes its role in qualifying the topic, refining the context through linguistic choice. Another application of code-switching is the ability to single out an individual and direct speech exclusively at them, creating a personalized communication experience. Lastly, Cook acknowledges that code-switching can stem from a lack of knowledge regarding a specific linguistic form in one language, leading to a seamless incorporation of elements from another language. This perspective, as presented by Cook in 2008, underscores the intricate interplay between languages in bilingual communication and challenges traditional notions that might advocate for the strict separation of linguistic codes. Cook's insights pave the way for a more nuanced understanding of the multifaceted nature of language use and its flexibility in various communicative contexts. (Cook, 2008; p. 176).

Ernest Macaro (1997, as cited by Cook, 2008) denoted five factors that most caused L1 use:

1-   Giving instructions about activities.

2-   Translation and comprehension check.

3-   Individual comments to students during group / pair work activities.

4-   Providing feedback.

5-   Class management and sustaining discipline.

In the classroom, the use of the first language (L1) can take on several roles. One primary way is when the teacher employs L1 to convey the meanings of words or sentences to facilitate comprehension. Additionally, L1 can be utilized by the teacher to explain intricate grammar concepts, aiding students' understanding. Another facet is the role of L1 in organizing the

class – teachers might resort to their native language to manage the classroom effectively or provide clear instructions for various teaching activities. Furthermore, L1 can even be integrated into testing procedures. Beyond the teacher's involvement, students themselves also engage with L1 within the classroom setting. They might purposefully use L1 as an integral part of the main learning activity, leveraging it as a tool for comprehension and expression. Furthermore, students might incidentally resort to L1 during different classroom activities, further highlighting its versatility and natural incorporation within the learning process (Cook, 2008: p. 185). Auerbach (1993) also believes that L1 provides a sense of security for the learners and allows them to express their opinions and feelings. She further denotes that only after giving this security, can the learners be ready to be challenged in L2. Besides these reasons, some of the main reasons for using L1 are presented below in detail:

Activity / Task Explanations and Classroom Management

The L1 can be utilized to clarify instructions, provide necessary explanations, and effectively manage classroom activities. By employing the learners' familiar language, teachers can ensure better comprehension and smooth execution of tasks (Saruwatashi, 2020). According to Macaro (2001), using L1 is often necessary for providing procedural instructions for activities in the classroom. The terms "activity" and "task" are often used interchangeably, referring to language-based activities with a focus on meaning. De la Campa and Nassaji (2009) found that the occasional use of L1 to set up complex activities can benefit students and provide additional learning opportunities.

Students themselves have emphasized the importance of incorporating L1 when elucidating intricate tasks (Bruen & Kelly, 2017). A survey-based investigation conducted among university students unveiled that the utilization of L1 for imparting activity instructions played a pivotal role in enhancing comprehension and minimizing perplexity (Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008). Swain and Lapkin (2000) noted instances where learners harnessed L1 as a tool to streamline task advancement and proficiently administer tasks. This emphasizes that learners themselves recognize the utility of L1 in optimizing task understanding and accomplishment.

Furthermore, Littlewood & Yu (2011) and Macaro (2001) both found that using L1 for task management and classroom control aids teachers in creating a framework for learning, upholding discipline, and ensuring effective classroom management. Teachers express discipline and highlight its seriousness to students in their native tongue. The initial explanation of grading procedures and operating in the target language are both aided by L1 use in classroom management (Edstrom, 2006). Additionally, the L1 is used to address technological difficulties in the classroom (De la Campa & Nassaji, 2009). In order to assure comprehension, efficiency, discipline, and to accommodate a variety of requirements and situations, the L1 is frequently employed in classroom management.

Teaching Vocabulary

L1 has a significant role in vocabulary translation and comprehension. It is considered efficient for introducing new words (Turnbull, 2001) and focusing on vocabulary (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Çelik (2003) found that using L1 saved time and eliminated the need for additional materials required in other vocabulary teaching methods. However, it is worth noting that despite these advantages, the use of L1 for vocabulary instruction is not widely practiced. According to García Mayo and Hidalgo (2017), L1 serves cognitive and social functions by providing essential vocabulary that promotes communication and language learning in the L2. Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney's (2008) study found that the L1 helps students understand and memorize words, with 83% of participants appreciating teachers who translated vocabulary. Carson and Kashihara (2012) discovered that students with lower proficiency levels had a stronger preference for L1 definitions of new words. Additionally, Nation (2003) concluded that direct learning of L2 vocabulary through word cards with L1 translations is highly effective. In her study Çelik (2020) revealed favorable assessments regarding the advantages of L1 in improving comprehension of input, enhancing vocabulary and grammar learning, and increasing awareness of language acquisition. Additionally, participants noted reduced feelings of anxiety and stress, which boosted their motivation to engage in communication and active participation. These consistent findings across the literature reinforce the role of L1 in enhancing vocabulary comprehension.

Teaching Grammar

In addition to vocabulary, the L1 is utilized to introduce new grammar and enhance comprehension (Carson, 2014). Carson (2014) conducted questionnaires with university students and found that they preferred having L1 support when it came to understanding grammar. Bateman (2008) observed that many student teachers in his study considered the learners' native language as a valuable tool to ensure comprehension. Turnbull (2001) recognizes the effectiveness of swiftly reverting to the L1 to explain challenging grammatical ideas or unfamiliar terminology. According to Bruen and Kelly (2017), the use of L1 for explaining complex grammatical forms received good feedback from both teachers and students, with teachers seeing it as a *"positive resource that can effectively assist the language learning process."* Usadiati (2009) found that when Indonesian was utilized with English to explain present perfect tense norms and its impact on writing, there was a greater success rate of 80% as opposed to a 45% success rate. These research results from the literature demonstrate the value of L1 as a tool for enhancing grammar learning.

Reducing Affective Barriers

It has been discovered that teachers' usage of L1 has been effective in the classroom. A study on English teachers by Yavuz (2012) revealed that they favoured using L1 to calm learners' tension and remove psychological barriers prior to instruction. The usage of L1 by Japanese EFL students in North America to promote a pleasant classroom culture was also observed by Oga-Baldwin & Nakata (2013). Using L1 in the classroom, according to Jenkins (2010), can make learning less scary. Additionally, it has been noticed that learners and teachers often use the learners' native language to demonstrate group identity and solidarity (Sampson, 2012). However, it can be argued that teachers unconsciously use code-switching for affective purposes. For example, Farzana (2017) discovered that although teachers had positive views on L1 use and employed it in their classrooms, they were unaware of the specific reasons behind using L1. This lack of awareness may hinder the full utilization of this valuable resource. In a study concerning the influence of L1 on Taiwanese college students, Liao (2006) reaches the conclusion that employing L1 and incorporating translation

within a language classroom proved advantageous in diminishing learning-related anxiety and enhancing learners' motivation.

Using learners' native language can help decrease anxiety and stress, create a more enjoyable learning environment, build confidence, and establish a positive relationship between teachers and students. These social elements are crucial for motivating students and enhancing their achievements (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013). Unlike the previous cognitive and pedagogical reasons for L1 use, reducing affective barriers adds a humanistic aspect to the equation. Brown (2014) dedicates an entire chapter to affective factors in his book Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. He emphasizes the significance of anxiety in second language acquisition, stating that it is closely tied to self-esteem, self-efficacy, inhibition, and risk-taking. Students can overcome these barriers by alleviating foreign language anxiety and becoming more productive and successful language learners. Auerbach (1993) discusses the advantage of using L1 to reduce affective barriers. Similarly, de la Campa and Nassaji (2009) found in their studies that L1 use *"reduces anxiety and enhances the affective environment for learning"*. This concept is also linked to students feeling more comfortable using L1 when discussing specific topics and functions (Cook, 2001).

Benefits of Using L1 in EFL / ESL Classes

There have been studies supporting the use of the first language (L1) in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, starting with Dodson (1967) who advocated for a bilingual method around five decades ago. De La Campa and Nassaji (2009), in their study, found that the use of L1 can facilitate the learning of a second language (L2). They suggest employing L1 based on their research on two German teachers teaching German in Canada, where L1 was found to be a supportive tool for learning. The study identified 14 different purposes for which teachers used L1. However, it remains a question as to who utilizes L1 more frequently, the teachers or the learners. Cummins (2007), on the other hand, argues that L1 is not an obstacle to learners' progress towards proficiency. Jadallah and Hasan (2011) propose a cautious approach to L1 use. They suggest that while L1 should not be ignored, precautions must be taken before utilizing it. According to their view, the use of L1 should be appropriate, purposeful, and strategic. Not every instance of L1 used in the classroom contributes to

learning. Without paying attention to the reasons behind using L1, its use may have no impact. In contrast, Turnbull (2018) concludes that many teachers who reject the use of L1 lack experience in learning a foreign language themselves. The study suggests that teachers and learners can both make use of L1 in the classroom, especially at lower proficiency levels. However, at advanced levels, the benefits of L1 may not be as significant as in the lower levels. It is therefore recommended to minimize the use of L1 to the greatest extent possible at advanced levels. Additionally, Gaebler (2014) asserts in a study that teachers of advanced learners can also employ translanguaging to ensure smooth interaction and comprehension for the listeners, to and address a lack of vocabulary. Furthermore, Centeno Cortés and Jiménez (2004) believe that for higher-level problem-solving scenarios, advanced learners can utilize L1.

Negative Effects of the Use of L1 in L2 Classrooms

In the realm of EFL classes, the role of using L1 continues to be a subject of ongoing debate and contention. Researchers' perspectives on L1's presence within these environments diverge, with some vehemently opposing its use and advocating for its complete exclusion from EFL instruction. This stance is grounded in the belief that incorporating L1 in EFL classrooms yields detrimental effects on students' language learning endeavors. Scholars like Ellis (2008) emphasize the limited significance of L1 in EFL contexts, cautioning that excessive reliance on L1 might hinder the acquisition of the target foreign language. Kavaliauskiene (2009) postulates that L1 usage can mislead students into assuming direct correlations between L2 structures and their L1 counterparts, potentially leading to misinterpretations. Pan and Pan (2010) further argue that employing L1 interferes with the acquisition of the second language, while Kim and Elder (2005) advocate for an exclusive English approach in EFL instruction, aiming to cultivate language skills akin to those of native L2 speakers. Bruen and Kelly (2014) also advise against excessive L1 use, as they posit that overreliance on it limits exposure to the target language and fosters dependence during the L2 acquisition process (Rolin Ianziti & Varshney, 2008; Ellis, 2005).

Cook (2001) aligns with this stance by advocating for the omission of L1 from L2 classrooms. Moreover, Deller and Rinvolucri (2002) caution educators about the implications of integrating L1 into the L2 learning

journey. Turnbull's study (2018) delves into these ramifications and encounters viewpoints that challenge the use of L1 in educational settings. He contends that L1's presence in the L2 classroom restricts exposure to L2 and could potentially engender laziness and excessive dependency on L1. Conversely, proponents assert that heightened exposure to L2 yields superior learning outcomes. The contradictory assertions found in Deller and Rinvolucri's study from 2002 highlight the potentially harmful effects of including L1 in L2 learning processes. They support a monolingual approach to language instruction, arguing that since more exposure to the target language invariably results in improved skill, the only way to truly improve language competency is through dedicated use of L2. This ongoing discussion sheds light on the complexities and nuanced issues regarding the inclusion of L1 in EFL classes, ultimately influencing the pedagogical environment. The comprehension, anxiety, and language development needs of learners can all be met by a balanced integration of L1 and L2, while also ensuring that they get the essential skills in the target language. In order to maximize language acquisition outcomes, educators and curriculum designers must traverse the complexities of the L1 debate.

Implications For Teacher Training

After providing a brief overview of the role and significance of L1 in second language education and its influence on the learning process, it is now pertinent to examine its implications for the training of language teachers. Despite numerous empirical studies advocating for the use of L1 as a pedagogical tool, there appears to be a gap in the dissemination of this research to teachers (Copland and Neokleous, 2011). It can be argued that teachers often lack clear and sufficient guidance on effectively and systematically incorporating L1 in EFL classrooms.

It should be a top priority for training programs to give educators a thorough understanding of both the theoretical underpinnings and real-world applications of L1 research. Investigating instructors' attitudes and convictions toward the usage of L1 is also crucial (Hanif, 2020). Many educators think it's detrimental to include L1 in language classes. For example, a study on high school English instructors done in South Korea discovered a link between the teachers' beliefs and their actual usage of L1 (Liu et al., 2004). In the realm of language education, there exists a common

concern regarding the use of L1 (the native language) in instructional settings. In fact, many educators are hesitant to implement L1 in their classrooms due to various negative sentiments. For instance, a study conducted on 18 international students who were enrolled in a UK-based MA TESOL program revealed that 11 of them felt guilty about using their native language to teach L2. This suggests that there is a need to educate teachers about the benefits of using L1 in language instruction and the various pedagogical, cognitive, and affective roles it can serve. It is crucial for educators to understand the potential advantages of incorporating L1 and how it can enhance the learning process. In order to achieve optimal learning outcomes, teachers must also have access to efficient methods and tactics for integrating L1 into their teaching practices. This way, they can confidently choose when to code-switch and make their classrooms inclusive and productive for their students. By providing teachers with this information and guidance, the stigma surrounding the use of L1 can be reduced, and they can adopt a more assured approach to integrating it into their language instruction.

CONCLUSION

In this study, an extensive examination was conducted to explore the significant advantages of incorporating L1 in EFL/ESL classrooms. The review encompassed various published empirical studies from different regions of the world, encompassing diverse student and teacher populations. The purpose was to shed light on the concerns, practices, and attitudes surrounding the utilization of L1 in EFL classrooms. The study delved into the multifaceted functions that L1 serves in foreign language classrooms. It underscored the importance of recognizing and leveraging the potential of L1 as a pedagogical resource for enhancing language learning outcomes. The findings emphasized the need for the integration of L1 in teacher education programs to equip educators with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively incorporate L1 in EFL classrooms. By considering research from a global perspective and exploring the perspectives of both students and teachers, this article aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. It sought to contribute to the ongoing discourse on the use of L1 in EFL classrooms and to advocate for its purposeful and strategic integration in foreign language **education**.

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