

How To Prevent EFL Learners Switching To Their Mother Tongue?

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Abstract

In EFL classes, because of various reasons, language learners usually switch to their mother tongue in speaking courses where the medium of the class is not only English. Therefore, this action research study was a modest attempt to investigate the differences in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in terms of their speaking motivation and target language use in a classroom where they have a foreign language teacher. The current study was conducted on 10th grade students in a private high school in Samsun. The participants of current research were 9 high school students who took the speaking courses from a Nigerian English language teacher during four weeks. The researchers' semi-structured observation and structured interview sessions were employed to obtain qualitative data. Based on the observation and interviews, the results showed that the students were more motivated to speak English and less tend to switch their mother tongue when the English-only policy was followed by the teacher. In the setting, where the teacher employed English as a medium of communication, the students also broke down the prejudices against speaking English. Furthermore, it was found that foreign English language teachers had motivating effects on the students.

Keywords: Code-switching, foreign language, speaking, mother tongue

Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğrencilerinin Konuşurken Ana Dile Geçişlerini Nasıl Önleyebiliriz?

Öz

İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği sınıflarda öğrenciler, çeşitli nedenlerden dolayı, sadece İngilizcenin sınıf dili olarak kullanılmadığı konuşma derslerinde, genellikle ana dillerine geçiş yaparlar. Bu yüzden, bu eylem araştırması çalışması, yabancı dil öğretmeninin bulunduğu bir sınıfta yabancı dil öğrenen öğrencilerin konuşma motivasyonları ve hedef dil kullanımları açısından farklılıkları araştırmaya yönelik bir girişimdir. Bu çalışma Samsun'da bir özel okuldaki 10. sınıf öğrencileri üzerinde yürütülmüştür. Araştırmanın katılımcıları dört

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hafta boyunca Nijeryalı bir İngilizce öğretmeninden konuşma dersleri alan dokuz lise öğrencisidir. Araştırmacının yarı yapılandırılmış gözlemleri ve yapılandırılmış görüşme toplantıları, nitel veri elde etmek için uygulanmıştır. Gözlem ve röportaja dayanan sonuçlar, öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşmaya daha fazla motive olduğunu ve sadece İngilizce politikası öğretmen tarafından takip edildiğinde ana diline daha az geçiş yaptıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Öğretmenin İngilizceyi iletişim aracı olarak kullandığı sınıfta öğrenciler aynı zamanda İngilizce konuşmaya karşı olan önyargıları da yıkmışlardır. Ayrıca, yabancı İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öğrenciler üzerinde motive edici etkileri olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Ana dil, dil değişimi, konuşma, yabancı dil*

Introduction

Effective communication in the target language is a fundamental goal in the foreign language learning and teaching process. Learners should be able to express themselves clearly and engage in meaningful interactions. From this perspective, the English Language Teaching Curriculum is designed to foster communicative skills among learners (Ministry of National Education, 2018). It is expected for learners to use English actively, productively, and communicatively. Speaking is a productive skill, and it is regarded as more complex when it is compared with other skills (Bailey & Savage, 1994). Learners need to have both accuracy and fluency in order to speak efficiently. Speaking requires both a certain level of linguistic knowledge about grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation of a language and the ability to use it (Seçer, 2010). Although the importance of speaking skills has been emphasized for years, learners still have serious difficulties in speaking (Kasap & Power, 2019). Due to various reasons, learners often reject participating in speaking courses. Lack of motivation and confidence, low interest, and having limited knowledge to speak are some of the problems that teachers may encounter in EFL classes.

The difficulty of speaking English is generally explained by EFL learners with the statement “I can understand English but I can’t speak” (Coşkun, 2016). When the teacher speaks to learners in English, students can comprehend the messages but they prefer switching to their mother-tongue to express themselves. While students often prefer using their first language (L1) due to the reasons such as having difficulty in finding proper vocabulary, and not knowing how to arrange sentences (Shen & Chiu, 2019), teachers often prefer switching to L1 for checking understanding, translating, explaining grammar and managing class (Al-Adnani & Elyas, 2016). In line with the reasons of teachers and students for code-switching, it can be inferred that L1 can be used as an efficient strategy during the language learning and teaching process (Gulzar, 2014). Despite having positive impact on the students, the use of mother tongue may cause some undesired consequences (Mularsih & Satyarini, 2022). The students may become dependent on L1. Atkinson (1987) asserts that it is common for students to communicate with their teachers in their mother tongue, even if they are capable of conveying their messages in the target language (cited in Mahmutoğlu & Kıcı, 2013). Students may get into the habit of switching to mother tongue when L1

is accepted as a class language besides second language (L2). Teachers' considerate attitude towards the use of L1 can cause the students to switch to their mother tongue continuously. In other words, classroom language can affect the students' code-switching tendency. That's why the effects of using only English as a classroom language are investigated in this research. There is limited empirical research which investigates how an English-only classroom environment, especially which is facilitated by a foreign English teacher, impacts students' motivation and code-switching tendencies. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effects of having a foreign English language teacher and employing an English-only policy in EFL classrooms. This research provides the significant analysis of how English-only policy influences EFL learners' speaking motivation, use of the target and native language, which will contribute to the discussions on the role of mother tongue in foreign language classes.

Speaking Skill

Language skills are divided into two groups: receptive and productive. Speaking is a productive skill (McCarthy & Walsh, 2023) and refers to the ability to effectively using language to express ideas, opinions, information, and emotions. Batang (2016) defines speaking as an interactive process which requires production, reception, and analysis of information. Therefore, speaking is an essential ability to getting and conveying messages. Knowing a language is generally associated with using the language in a communicative way, and that's why English language learners and teachers are expected to put emphasis on speaking skill. Speaking skill is one of the most paramount elements for using English communicatively. Therefore, as it is in the foreign language teaching curriculum of Turkey, the main aim of language teaching and learning process is to make learners speak English. However, improving speaking ability in English is not an easy process. Speaking is regarded as one of the most challenging parts of the foreign language learning and teaching process because speaking is more than the act of making a speech to an audience (Oxford University Press, 2015). Richard and Renandya (2002) state that knowledge of grammar and semantic rules is not sufficient to be able to speak a foreign language. It necessitates the average achievement in many sub-skills. According to Lackman (2010), accuracy, appropriacy, discourse-makers, fluency, functions, turn-taking, range of words, responding and initiating, relevance, repair and repetition are micro-skills that should be taught in language classes instead of expecting students to just "speak". Torky (2006) emphasizes the competences which is required for language learners to effectively communicate in the target language, including linguistic competence, discourse competence, and pragmatic competence. Additionally, Octaviana (2021) highlights the importance of strategic competence in ensuring the continuity of speech.

Discourse competence: Discourse competence consists of two key elements, which are cohesion and coherence. Cohesion means the unity of speech in terms of structural and lexical elements, while coherence refers to the unity in terms of

semantic and pragmatic features. Discourse competence is the ability to speak by producing connected sentences and ideas that meet the standards of cohesion and coherence (Erton, 2017). It is the ability to be able to cope with socio-cultural, pragmatic and linguistic aspects of the target language in an effective and appropriate way.

Linguistic competence: Canale and Swain (1980) define linguistic competence as grammatical competence because it embodies the language knowledge about structures. Linguistic competence refers to the theoretical and abstract rules of the language, such as grammar, lexis, semantics, and syntax (Altay, 2016). Chomsky (1965) defines it as the unconscious data of the speaker or the listener about the language itself. Being linguistically competent is more than having knowledge about the abstract concepts of the language. It requires the ability to use them actively, cognitively, and communicatively. Linguistically competent speakers can speak in a well-formulated way.

Pragmatic competence: Pragmatic competence deals with the underlying meaning and context. Thomas (1983) defines pragmatic competence as being able to comprehend language in context and to use it to accomplish particular goals. Having pragmatic competence prevents the emergence of misunderstandings. Pragmatic competence encompasses the illocutionary act, which refers to the intention of the speaker. Understanding the illocutionary act of the speaker and responding appropriately are the key elements to engaging in communication.

Strategic competence: Strategic competence is the capacity to effectively convey one's intended messages to communicative partners, particularly when difficulties or misunderstandings emerge during the communication process (Alem, 2020). Speakers who have enough knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, may struggle to continue communication (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991). The significance of strategic competence lies in its integral role as a problem-solving mechanism within the communication process (Seong, 2014).

Harris (1974) divides speaking into five components, which are comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency;

Grammar: Grammar encompasses the rules of word combination, word formation, rules for the arrangement of words into phrases and sentences, and rules for meaning (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams, 2013). Grammar is a part of speaking which helps to convey messages accurately and in a meaningful way. It is necessary for speakers in order to be able to express complex ideas in a correct way.

Vocabulary: Vocabulary refers to the words, including meanings, which are used to express intended messages (Azizah, 2016). It allows more precise communication. Insufficient vocabulary knowledge leads to limited expression and comprehension of thoughts and emotions (Hadi, 2017). It is a barrier for the foreign language learners

who have difficulty in speaking. Therefore, enriching vocabulary is a key factor in order to be able to speak in the target language.

Comprehension: According to RAND Reading Study Group (2022), comprehension is about understanding the meaning of spoken or written language during interaction in a simultaneous way (cited in Pardo, 2004). In order to be able to maintain communication, comprehending the intended messages is crucial.

Pronunciation: Pronunciation deals with the way the speaker produces a word in a correct way (Otlowski, 1998). It is the knowledge of how the words in the target language should be produced. Having certain features of pronunciation allows for clearer and more intelligible communication among speakers (Shaetzel, 2009). In order to be understood by others, speakers must know how to pronounce the words in the target language.

Fluency: Fluency is the ability to speak smoothly and spontaneously (Mujizat, 2016). Fluent speakers do not use pauses as much as possible To maintain your audience interest while speaking, fluency plays a vital role.

Developing speaking skills, especially in the target language, is not easy in a foreign language context because of the limited exposure to English outside the classroom setting (Cuartas Alvarez, 2014). Therefore, mastering these sub-skills may be difficult for English language learners. Speaking English is not based on real-life setting in countries where English holds the position of foreign language. Unlike in a natural setting, in a classroom setting, learners have limited time to develop their language skills (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Students do not have many opportunities to develop their language skills. They do not hear and speak English outside of the classroom. As a consequence of these limitations, speaking is one of the most problematic issues in the language learning process for EFL learners. In the study of Aydoğan and Gönen (2020), which was conducted on EFL students, it was revealed that the EFL students' most problematic language skill was speaking. In the same vein, Dinçer (2017) claims that most of the EFL students do not have enough speaking proficiency to engage in basic communication. Almost every study that has been conducted on speaking includes a section relating to the EFL students' limited speaking performance, but no exact solution has been reached yet.

Code-Switching

Code-switching refers to the alternating two or more languages, different linguistic varieties, as well as various speech patterns (Hymes, 1977) and the use of two or more languages interchangeably by bilinguals (Milroy & Muysken, 1995). Poplock (1980) classifies code-switching as tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching. In tag switching, words or tag phrases from another language are followed by the grammatical rules of the sentence accurately. If an English teacher says "It is an enjoyable activity, değil mi?" (a Turkish tag phrase) instead of "isn't it?", it is an example of tag-switching. In inter-sentential switching, the speaker starts

a sentence with one language but switches to a different language while starting another sentence or clause. A speaker may finish his/her speech about traveling in English and start his/her new sentence related to the same topic in Turkish. The study result of Amiri and Abdollahi Saryazdi (2024) showed that teachers most frequently use inter-sentential switching in classroom context. Furthermore, intra-sentential switching takes place in a sentence. The speaker starts a sentence with one language but uses adjectives, adverbs, nouns, discourse markers, or phrases from another language in the same sentence.

Code-switching is highly used by bilinguals and multilinguals (Dykes, 2018). Code-switching among bilinguals promotes communication and allows bilinguals to express their thoughts efficiently (Masna, 2020). Code-switching is also a part of foreign language classes. However, whether it is beneficial for the learning/teaching process or not has not been answered yet, and this dilemma has been the interest of many scholars from different majors (Hussein, Saed & Haider, 2020). While code-switching is sharply criticized by some scholars because it involves the use of L1 in EFL classes, some scholars state that teachers and students should use L1 because it has some advantages. In the case study of Yıldız and Bergil (2021), they investigated EFL students' and teachers' points of view on code-switching and revealed that language switching has supporting functions for both students and teachers. Sert (2005) explains that code-switching supports the communication of information, enhances social interaction, and serves a communicative purpose by acting as a tool for conveying meaning.

Cook (1999) asserts that more importance should be attached to L1 and the perception of insufficient learners regarding the L2 users should be changed (cited in Akulova, 2019). On the other hand, Krashen (1985) states the importance of target language use in the foreign language learning process by saying that acquiring a language requires understanding messages and receiving comprehensible input. Moreover, Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis highlights the importance of exposure to the target language for language acquisition. In accordance with the same idea, the study of Alessa (2023) reveals that the teachers believe using target language while presenting linguistic items, supports students in developing target language thinking.

Teachers have different tendencies to use code-switching depending on the content of the course. Different studies have been conducted on the perspectives of language teachers towards code-switching. Kayaoğlu (2012) stated in his research that the teachers are in agreement regarding the students' switching to their mother tongue in grammar courses. However, teachers are more hesitant to use L1 in speaking courses. In the study of Mahmutoglu and Kıcıır (2013), the analysis of the students' and teachers' questionnaires revealed that the students supported the use of L1 usually (%33), while the teachers thought that L1 should be used seldom (%40). As grammar courses involve abstract concepts and structures, teachers feel in need of giving

explanations in L1 in order to make grammar structures more understandable. In contrast to grammar courses, language switching is generally avoided in speaking courses. Because interaction in English has a primary aim in the speaking courses, teachers do not prefer using code-switching much. This view is supported by the study of Burdujan (2022), which shows that the teachers least prefer using the mother tongue in speaking courses (%1.6), while they mostly prefer L1 in grammar courses (%80.9). These results are also in line with Bilgin's (2016) statement that code-switching occurs most frequently in relation to grammar teaching.

Reasons for code-switching

According to previous scholarly studies, both teachers and students use code-switching due to various reasons in foreign language classes (Erdem, 2024; Iyitoğlu, 2016). Teachers' main reasons for code-switching are mostly for pedagogical and affective functions (Aksoy Çınar, 2024). Teachers use code-switching while checking understanding, giving instructions, explaining grammar, and managing class (Timuçin & Baytar, 2015). Students are generally in need of mother tongue for clarification of some lexical items and rules about grammatical forms (Tamimi Sa'd & Qadermazi, 2015). Teaching a foreign language with the English-only policy may be time consuming. Instead of wasting their limited time, teachers make use of L1. Students switch to their mother tongue due to reasons such as low motivation to use the target language, low level of English proficiency, and self-confidence. In the study of Şener and Korkut (2017), they investigated the teacher trainee's perceptions about L1. The outcome of the study was that L1 might be useful as a teaching strategy in order to foster communication and active participation in language classes. This also encourages the social-relationship between teachers and students. Besides the reasons such as checking comprehension, reviewing lesson, and correcting the students, teachers also utilize code-switching for building a good relationship with students (Temesgen & Hailu, 2022). Students do not feel themselves close to teachers whom they can not understand well. Code-switching enables the creation of a stress-free classroom environment. According to the results of the study of Ali and Mwila (2021), teachers get reply to their questions better when code-switching is used. Moreover, while managing the classroom, teachers generally tend to use L1. Teachers want to ensure that their instructions about the activities and classroom rules are understood well. When the students believe that their target language proficiency level is insufficient to complete a language task, they are more likely to switch their mother tongue (Öz & Karaazmak, 2019). Nikolov (2024) states that students switch to L1 during pair work to encompass the gaps in vocabulary, to maintain smooth and fluent communication and to offer clarification. Using the target language requires effort. The students with low motivation do not want to display this effort. Language learners may not feel comfortable using the target language because they are afraid of their classmates (Chand, 2021) and they do not have self-confidence. Especially the beginners tend to use their mother tongue as an emotional support and check their comprehension by translation (Bahrani & Soltani, 2012). In these situations, students

who have difficulty in expressing themselves in the target language, see switching to their L1 as a saviour.

Pros of using code-switching

Code-switching has some benefits for learners and teachers in terms of foreign language learning and teaching processes (Murtiningsih, Munaworah & Hidayatulloh, 2022). It helps bridge the gaps for students with low English proficiency (Moetia, Kasim & Fitriani, 2018). Foreign language students may have difficulty comprehending the subject matter and instructions during the lesson due to their lack of knowledge in the target language. In such cases, teachers benefit from L1 in order to cope with language barriers (Shinga & Pillay, 2021). In other words, code-switching has a role as a compensation strategy. The missing parts which take place during the lesson can be completed through this way.

It is believed that in EFL classes, allowing the use of L1 rather than following a strict monolingual policy, creates a stress-free environment where they can speak without anxiety (Nurhamidah, 2018). Forbidding L1 may cause pressure on the students and increase their anxiety levels. As it is suggested in the Affective-Filter Hypothesis by Krashen (1985), high anxiety levels negatively affect the learning process. Teachers should create a positive environment during the lesson. Code-switching brings comfort to EFL classes.

It can be used in EFL classrooms to support students with limited language proficiency, enhance teaching effectiveness, express complex ideas, and manage the class (Puspawati, 2018). Code-switching should not be forbidden because it facilitates the learning and teaching process (Horasan, 2014). Code-switching is time-saving and prominent for the limited classroom time. While introducing a new grammar topic, teachers can explain the abstract concepts in L1 rather than spending time on finding the simplest ways of explanation. Therefore, they do not waste their valuable classroom time and avoid misunderstandings.

Greggio and Gil (2007) also concluded that the use of the mother tongue had positive effects on the interaction among students and teachers. As Baker (1995) claims, code-switching helps bring cooperation into the language class. It should not be regarded as interference in the foreign language learning process. Students with low proficiency levels can also participate in classroom discussions and communicate with their peers rather than being silent during the conversation with the help of the code-switching option.

Cons of using code-switching

While code-switching is suggested by some scholars due to its certain benefits, its use in language classes is also highly criticized. One of the most frequently discussed problems of code-switching is that it may result in limited language development. According to Şenel (2010), there is a consensus that L1-based foreign language classes have a limited effect on the development of foreign language competence.

Excessive use of code-switching refers to limited input in the target language. L1 restricts valuable exposure time in foreign language classes (Sen, 2010). The same argument was asserted by Alrabah (2015), who concluded in his research that code-switching may have negative impacts on the students' target language input and output due to the less target language exposure. If EFL students do not receive enough comprehensible input, they can hardly increase their target language knowledge. Students who are accustomed to teachers that utilize L1 become unable to effectively benefit from L2 input (Keller, 2016).

Excessive reliance on the first language can lead to the fossilization of interlanguage structures (Selinker, 1992), thereby hindering progress in language acquisition. Furthermore, valuable instructional time is wasted when the mother tongue is used instead of the target language (Weschler, 1997). In EFL classes, classroom hours are valuable because the classroom is the only place where students can practice English. Outside of the classroom, they do not hear or speak English. Therefore, code-switching can be regarded as a waste of time in EFL classes. It is believed that teachers and students should practice and talk about English as much as possible in the class to reach ultimate language development. In EFL contexts where learners have limited opportunities to the L2 outside the classroom, it is essential to maximize the exposure of the L2 (Nation, 2003). The development of proficiency in the target language, especially in speaking and listening, can be impeded by an over-reliance on code-switching. This is due to the fact that when faced with difficulties, learners may switch to their mother tongue, which restricts the immersion experience necessary for language acquisition (Ng & Gurdarshan Singh, 2024; Littlewood & Yu, 2011).

According to Cummins (2007), the use of L1 may lead students to disengage from the target language and consequently limit their proficiency and acquisition in the target language. When EFL students are exposed to the target language to a limited extent, speaking English may turn into a complex task for them (Oradee, 2012). Insufficient practice in speaking English may lead to a lack of speaking proficiency. The act of over-reliance on code-switching may impede the development of proficiency in the target language, and as learners derive the greatest benefit from sustained and meaningful exposure to L2 input (Thao & Tam, 2024).

One of the other important issues with regard to code-switching is that it may cause students to be dependent on L1 in EFL classes (Moqbel, 2022). Such dependency may lead to poor language development and low motivation to engage in target language communication, and negatively affect the overall learning components (Sun & Yang, 2024). When L1 is integrated into the class for some specific purposes, such as teaching grammar or checking comprehension by the teachers, students start expecting the use of L1 in every lesson, whether the activity is grammar- or speaking-based. They may expect their teachers to provide a translation for every language piece. Furthermore, according to Bensen and Çavuşoğlu (2013), over-reliance on

code-switching can also adversely affect students' ability to become autonomous, and they begin to depend on teachers' L1 translations or explanations.

Method

Research Design

The study adopted the action research design, which is one of the qualitative research designs. Action research is one of the research methodologies that investigates a particular issue with the direct participation of the researchers to solve the problems that they experience during their teaching-learning processes (Lufungulo, Mambwe & Kalinde, 2021). In the study, a Nigerian English facilitated a speaking course for the same class during four weeks. Each week, the lessons were held once a week, and they lasted 60 minutes. The themes of the lessons were predetermined. The themes were "Introduction", "Nigerian and Turkish Culture", "Touristic Destinations in the World", and "Technology". The second and third week themes were chosen according to the students' interests because they were very interested in culture. The purpose of the study is to investigate how English-only policy and foreign English teachers affect students' motivation, English use, and tendency to switch to their mother tongue. Therefore, the study addresses the following questions:

1. How does an English-only policy in an EFL context affect students' motivation to speak in the target language and code-switching behaviour?
2. What are the effects of having a foreign English language teacher on students' tendency to use English and switch to their mother tongue?

Participants

The study was conducted on nine students from a 10th grade class at a private high school in Samsun. All of the students had been learning English since the second grade of primary school. The participants were all male and at the same age; therefore, age and gender differences were not evaluated in the current study.

Data Collection and Analysis

In this study, qualitative data was collected. Qualitative data was collected through structured interviews, which were conducted with the volunteer participants, and semi-structured observations. The study employed multiple qualitative data collection method to ensure data richness.

In a setting where the classroom language was only English, students' tendencies to use English, their performance, and their use of their native language were observed through semi-structured observation by the researcher in the role of participant observer. The researcher recorded these observations through taking notes about the speaking performance of the students after each lesson. Thematic analysis was conducted on the observation data to identify recurring patterns.

Structured interviews were conducted with all nine participants. The interview began with the main question: "Do you believe you can communicate in English with

others now?" This was followed by three follow-up questions: "Did you have a negative attitude towards speaking English in the past?" "Does your motivation towards speaking increase after the 4-week speaking course?" and "What do you think about having a foreign English teacher that you can just communicate in English? Is it motivating for speaking English?". The primary aim of conducting an interview was to obtain verbal feedback and gain further information about their motivation for speaking and self-confidence. The interviews were conducted in Turkish which allowed the students to feel relaxed so that they could explain themselves more explicitly. To encourage the students to honestly and freely express their ideas, their personal information was not recorded. The collected data through interview was divided into sub-categories according to the descriptive content analysis.

The Miles and Huberman Model (1994) was followed in the analysis process. This model encompasses the main phases which are data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing and verifying the conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). All interview data was transcribed and observation data were divided into themes for data collection. Then, relevant themes were identified, and redundant information was excluded in the data reduction process. The data were presented in tables so that the findings could be easily interpreted. The findings obtained from the observation were compared with the interview findings to validate the conclusions. To improve the reliability and validity of the findings, the researcher discussed the findings with a colleague. Furthermore, it was aimed to provide a deep analysis of the participants' experiences and enhance reliability of the findings by integrating multiple data sources.

Findings

The findings of the study are presented in two themes: observations and interview.

Observations

During the research, the researcher implemented semi-structured observations and took notes each week. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data.

Table 1.

Thematic Analysis of The Semi-Structured Observations

Weeks	Observation of Student Behavior	Student Motivation	Classroom Environment	Language Usage
Week 1	Students were reluctant to speak in English and passive.	Low motivation because of the new classroom environment and foreign language teacher.	The teacher was more dominant while speaking which limited the communication between the teacher and the students	Most students tended to use their mother tongue. A limited number of English vocabulary was used.

Week 2	Some students started trying to express themselves in English. They were more willing to speak.	Interesting discussion topics drew the attention of the students and slightly increased their motivation.	The students who were interested in culture, interacted with the teacher. Minority of the students became active.	Although the majority of the students preferred expressing their ideas in their native language, some of them started engaging in discussions in English.
Week 3	Even the students with low motivation participated in the class discussion. Less code-switching was observed. The proficient ones expressed themselves confidently.	Students' desire to engage in communication in English increased even for those with limited proficiency level.	The classroom environment became more active with the teacher's guidance and the participation of proficient students.	A significant number of students preferred speaking in English instead of the mother tongue.
Week 4	The participation and motivation of all students increased. Most of the students preferred speaking in English instead of the mother tongue	Students were more confident and their motivation reached its highest level to use the target language communicatively.	The teacher continued English-only language policy. Students became more comfortable in this new environment.	Most students interacted with their teacher and classmates in English. Switching to their mother tongue reduced.

According to the observation of the researcher, there was a notable increase in student motivation to speak English, accompanied by a gradual decline in the use of their mother tongue over the course of the study. Although the students were shy and rejected speaking English, they got more motivated in a classroom environment where they did not have any choice except for using English. When the participation of the students in the first and last week was compared, it was clearly shown that the students were more motivated and active users of English. They started getting used to using

English as a communication tool. Over time, they nearly never switched to the mother tongue because they knew that the classroom language was only English.

Interview

The descriptive content analysis technique was used to code the common themes in the students' responses.

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics According To The Themes

Participants	Negative Attitude Towards Speaking	Increase In Learner Motivation	Motivating Effects of Having a Foreign English Language Teacher
S1	✓	✓	✓
S2		✓	✓
S3		✓	✓
S4			✓
S5		✓	✓
S6	✓	✓	✓
S7	✓	✓	
S8		✓	✓
S9		✓	✓
f	3	8	8
%	33.33	88.88	88.88

As it is seen in Table 2, three themes were developed from the statements of the participants during the interview. The themes “*motivating effects of having a foreign English language teacher*” and “*motivating effects of having a foreign English language teacher*” ranked with a ratio of 88.88%. The high ratio of these themes shows a lot about the positive effects of the speaking course process with a Nigerian English teacher. The statements of the participants on these themes are as follows:

Motivating effects of having a foreign English language teacher

“...It both increases our motivation and is good for the lessons. Taking language courses in the class where English is used completely is better...” (S1)

“...If I have a sufficient proficiency level in language, a foreign English teacher is beneficial...” (S2)

“...Having a foreign English teacher increased my motivation towards speaking. When the teacher does not know Turkish, I feel obliged to speak English...” (S3)

“...Taking speaking courses from a foreign English teacher was actually good. If there is a chance, I want to continue the lessons...” (S4)

“...When you have a foreign English teacher, you understand that you have sufficient proficiency to express yourself. It motivates you...” (S5)

“...At the beginning, I had difficulty in the lessons with a Nigerian English teacher but then, I got used to the situation. It was great... It increases motivation...” (S7)

“...Being able to speak with a foreign English teacher increased my self-confidence...” (S8)

“...If you have a foreign English teacher, you must speak in English, you do not have any way to express yourself... You compel yourself to speak, and it develops your English...” (S9)

The statements of the students prove the effectiveness of a foreign English language teacher in speaking courses. Being in a situation where they have to speak in English to engage in classroom interaction directs them to use the language. Realizing that they can communicate with a foreigner increases their motivation. According to the statements, it was found that getting the students off from their comfort and obliging them to speak led to the active use of English.

Increase in learner motivation

“...After the speaking course process with the Nigerian teacher, I realized that I could speak English...” (S1)

“...We decided to download an application “DUOLINGO” to improve our English after the lessons...” (S2)

“...During the speaking course process, I thought speaking English was more enjoyable after I was able to express myself...” (S3)

“...I have already spoke in English... But I did not speak with my foreign friends for a while; therefore, I had a chance to practice... the lessons were good...”(S5)

“...After the speaking lessons, my desire towards speaking increased, I became more brave...” (S6)

“...Thanks to the speaking lessons, I realized I need to know more vocabulary and grammatical rules...” (S7)

“...the lessons felt me better. I understood that I could speak...” (S8)

“...I can speak English at an average level but my motivation increased a little bit more... The interaction in the class was good, and I participated in...” (S9)

As it can be seen in the statements of the participants, most of them think that the speaking lessons increased their motivation to use language. The lessons increased their awareness about their English proficiency level. While the ones who can speak English communicatively enough gained self-confidence, the ones who think that their English level is insufficient gained a desire to learn English, improve their

speaking. This theme confirmed that using only English as a classroom language had positive effects on the students' speaking motivation.

Negative Attitude Towards Speaking In The Past

"...I always used to think that I would say something wrong..." (S1)

"...I had a negative attitude towards speaking in the past..." (S6)

"...I did not have much negative attitude, but I did not know English, and I was not trying to learn..." (S7)

The third theme that was obtained from the students' responses was "negative attitude towards speaking in the past". It ranked with the ratio of 33.33%. Due to various reasons, such as low interest, anxiety of using incorrect grammar or vocabulary items, or fear of being laughed at by their classmates, the student may have a negative attitude towards speaking English. Also, the students who had demotivation did not feel compelled to use the target language because the classroom language was not only English. In speaking lessons, they usually used to stay silent or tend to use mother tongue in order to express themselves in the class.

Discussion and Conclusion

One of the most debated issues in foreign language teaching is the use of the mother tongue (Çolakoğlu Saburlu, 2019). The use of the mother tongue in foreign language teaching divides scholars on its advantages and disadvantages. While some scholars support the integration of mother tongue to make lessons less ambiguous and regard it as an valuable learning source for students (Sampson, 2012; Yavuz, 2012), others assert that it limits target language exposure and wastes the valuable teaching period (Alshehri, 2017; Al Hosni, 2014).

The findings of this study indicate that following English-only classroom policy prevent students switching to their mother tongue by increasing their speaking motivation. In the beginning, the participation was low, but after a while the students were accustomed to the new classroom environment and became the active participants of the lessons. Having a foreign English teacher has a major impact on this result. Communicating with a foreign English language teacher enhances students' motivation and develops a positive attitude towards the language itself (Şahin, 2005). According to Savran Çelik and Aydın (2018), keeping the EFL apart from L1 is the only way to achieve acquisition-like learning. To achieve this, the integration of foreign English teachers into speaking courses should be supported as the study results suggest. When students and teachers do not share the same mother tongue, students are less exposed to their native language, which increases target language exposure.

Although engaging foreign language teachers in speaking courses is very effective, it is not possible to integrate them to all EFL contexts. Therefore, language teachers who share the same mother tongue with their students should be conscious about the use of mother tongue. They do not need to forbid the mother tongue in the

class; however, they should avoid excessive use of it. In the study of Paker and Karaagaç (2015), the results indicated that sometimes, the use of mother tongue is definitely required. Code-switching tendency may depend on the proficiency level of students. Öz and Karaazmak (2019) concluded in their research that students who have a low proficiency level stated that they have a positive attitude towards using L1. Furthermore, Yüzlü and Atay (2020) revealed that the students exposed to L1 use performed better while speaking in L2 than those exposed to only L2. Ahmad and Jusoff (2009) also revealed that code-switching increased the comprehension level of the students and directly influenced their success. In other words, increased comprehension motivates to participate in the class discussion. Therefore, if it is required, teachers can benefit from L1; however it should not be the communication language in the class. L1 should be switched only if its functionality is highly important (Utomo & Swartono, 2020).

In light of these outcomes, EFL teachers should use the mother tongue in their classes strategically. They can benefit from switching to L1 to foster comprehension, communication, and participation in the class (Memory, Nkengbeza & Liswaniso, 2018). The importance of the mother tongue in language teaching cannot be neglected; however, determining when and to what extent teachers should use it is crucial. Teachers should be aware that allowing its use frequently can result in overuse (Kaynardağ, 2016). In alignment with the findings, Orfan (2023) recommends that EFL teachers revisit their use of the mother tongue and use it carefully to enhance students' language learning process and avoid the negative outcomes of excessive use of L1. Similarly, Jogulu (2024) emphasizes in his study that teachers should aim to balance using L1 as a teaching source and promoting target language use.

Finally, the findings reveals the significance of target language exposure and motivating learning environment in EFL context. An English-only classroom policy and the integration of foreign English teachers can reduce code-switching and positively affect students' target language learning process if it is applied properly. Meticulously designed lesson plans which emphasize the key elements such as students' self-confidence, motivation and language needs are crucial in achieving this.

Limitations of The Study

This study has certain limitations. The number of participants in this study was limited. The research can be implemented on larger groups to reach more reliable results.

Ethical Considerations

This study received ethical approval from the Ondokuz Mayıs University Social and Humanities Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval reference no: 2024-216, dated 29.03.2024). This study involved conducting a survey with high school students. Parent permission certificates and voluntary participation forms were obtained from the participants. The participants were informed about the confidentiality of their names and responses. There is no conflict of interest.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Konuşma becerisi, İngilizce dili eğitiminde başlıca önem taşıyan becerilerden bir tanesidir. Düşüncelerin, duyguların ifade edilebilmesi, karşı tarafla iletişimde olabilmek için hedef dilde yeterli konuşma becerisine sahip olmak gerekir. Konuşma becerisi içerisinde bazı alt becerileri barındırmaktadır. Torky (2006) bu alt becerileri dil yeterliliği, söylem yeterliliği, edimbilim yeterliliği olarak ayırırken, Harris (1974) dil bilgisi, kelime, telaffuz, akıcılık ve kavrama olarak sıralamıştır. Konuşma becerisinin istenilen seviyeye ulaşabilmesi için bu alt becerilerin de geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu da konuşma becerisinin gelişiminin karmaşık bir süreç olduğu anlamına gelmektedir. Konuşma becerisini geliştirmek, özellikle İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği ve öğrencilerin İngilizceye sınırlı saatlerde maruz kalabildiği dil sınıflarında daha da güçleşebilmektedir (Cuartas Alvarez, 2014). Öğrencilerin yeterli konuşma becerisine sahip olmamasının bir sonucu olarak; ana dil, yabancı dil sınıflarında hem öğretmenler hem de öğrenciler tarafından kullanılmaktadır. Yabancı dil sınıflarında dil değişimin yararlı mı faydalı mı etkiye sahip olduğuyla ilgili farklı görüşler vardır. Cook (1999), Horasan (2014) ve Baker (1995) ana dilin, yabancı dil sınıflarındaki pozitif etkilerini ortaya koyarken, Selinker (1992) ve Oradee (2012) ana dil kullanımının yabancı dil öğrenim sürecini olumsuz etkileyebileceğini ileri

sürmüştür. Yabancı dil sınıflarında ana dil kullanımının pozitif veya negatif bir etkiye sahip olup olmadığıyla ilgili hala kesin bir sonuca ulaşılammıştır.

Öğretmenler öğrencilerin kavramasını kontrol etmek, talimat vermek, dilbilgisini açıklamak ve sınıfı yönetmek için ana dile geçiş yaparlar (Timuçin & Baytar, 2015). Bunlara ek olarak, yabancı dil sınıflarında ana dil, öğrencilerin derse aktif katılımını sağlamak, rahat bir sınıf ortamı oluşturmak ve öğrenci ile öğretmen arasındaki iyi ilişkiyi kurmak için öğretmenlerin dil öğretim sürecinde kullandığı bir stratejidir. Diğer yandan öğrenciler, motivasyon ve özgüven eksikliği, İngilizce konuşma yeterliğinin düşüklüğü gibi sebeplerle ana dile geçiş yapmaktadır. Düşük İngilizce yeterliğine sahip öğrenci, derste görevleri tamamlayabilmek için ana dil kullanma eğilimindedir (Öz & Karaazmak, 2019). İngilizce konuşmak çaba ve cesaret gerektirdiği için düşük motivasyonlu ve özgüven eksikliği yaşayan öğrenciler ana dili bir kurtarıcı olarak görürler.

Sınıflarda ana dil kullanmanın hem pozitif hem de negatif etkileri vardır. Öğrencilerin dilsel yetersizliklerinin üstesinden gelerek, dersin konusunu, talimatlarını anlamasını sağlar (Shinga & Pillay, 2021). Öğrencilere sadece İngilizce dili kullanabilecekleriyle ilgili katı kural koymak yerine ana dil kullanabilmelerine de izin vermek, öğrencilerin kaygı seviyesini düşürdüğü için doğrudan öğrenme süreci için fayda sağlamaktadır (Nurhamidah, 2018). Dil değişimi zor konuların, soyut kavramların, karmaşık ifadelerin açıklanmasında kısıtlı ve değerli ders süresinin boşa harcanmasının önüne geçer. Farklı İngilizce düzeylerine sahip öğrencilerin derse katılımına da imkan sağladığı için öğrenciler arasındaki etkileşimi artırır (Greggio & Gil, 2007). Diğer bir taraftan, İngilizce yabancı dil sınıflarında ana dil kullanmak öğrencilerin kısıtlı hedef dile maruz kalmasına sebep olup dil gelişimini olumsuz etkileyebilmektedir. Kısıtlı ders süresinin ana dil kullanılarak geçirilmesi verimsiz kullanım olarak görülmektedir (Weschler, 1997). Daha az İngilizce konuşmak, daha az hedef dilde pratik yapmak anlamına geldiği için, öğrencilerin dil gelişimini olumsuz etkiler. Öğrencilerin dil değişimine izin vermek onları ana dillerine bağımlı hale getirebilir ve sürekli İngilizce derslerinde ana dillerini kullanmak istemeleriyle durum sonuçlanabilir (Moqbel, 2022).

Araştırma, nitel araştırma desenlerinden eylem araştırması modelini benimseyen bir çalışmadır. Bu çalışma, öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşma motivasyonlarını ve İngilizcenin sınıf dili olarak kullanılmasına yönelik düşüncelerini ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla yapılandırılmış görüşme soruları ve araştırmacının çalışma süresince tutacağı gözlem raporlarını yöntem olarak kullanmıştır. Araştırmanın katılımcılarını Samsun’da bulunan bir özel okuldaki toplam 9 lise 10.sınıf öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Dört hafta boyunca öğrencilerin konuşma derslerine Nijeryalı İngilizce öğretmeni girmiştir. İletişim dilinin yalnızca İngilizce olduğu bir ortamda öğrencilerin İngilizceyi kullanma eğilimleri, performansları ve bu sınıftaki ana dil kullanımları araştırmacı tarafından yarı-yapılandırılmış gözlem yoluyla gözlemlenmiş ve her hafta için gözlem raporu tutulmuştur. Dört haftalık süreç sonunda öğrencilerle

yapılandırılmış görüşme yapılmıştır. Elde edilen nitel veriler betimsel içerik analizine göre alt kategorilere ayrılmıştır ve gözlem sonuçları temalara ayrılmıştır. Analiz aşamasında Miles ve Huberman (1994) modeli takip edilmiştir. Geçerlik ve güvenilirliği sağlamak için analiz sonuçları başka bir öğretmene yorumlatılmış ve iki veri sonucu kıyaslanmıştır.

Bulgular öğrencilerin ana dil geçişlerini önlemek için sınıf dilinin İngilizce olması gerektiğini göstermektedir. İngilizceye ne kadar çok maruz kalırlarsa, hedef dili kullanma motivasyonlarının da o kadar artmaktadır. Öğretmenin sınıfta iletişim dili olarak sadece İngilizceyi kullanması, düşük motivasyonlu öğrencilerde dahi olumlu sonuç vermiştir. İngilizceyi iletişimsel olarak kullanabilen öğrenciler hedef dilde etkileşimde olabildiklerini görünce motivasyonları artarken, düşük dil yeterliğine sahip öğrencilerin eksiklerini farkına varıp hedef dili öğrenmek ve konuşmak için isteğinin arttığı görülmüştür. Öğrencilerin sadece İngilizce iletişim kurabildikleri bir yabancı İngilizce öğretmenlerinin olması onların hedef dili konuşmak için çaba göstermelerini sağlamıştır. Bunun sonucunda iletişim kurabildiklerini görmeleri kendilerine olan güvenlerini ve motivasyonlarını arttırmıştır. Elde edilen veriler doğrultusunda, öğrencilerin dil becerilerinin gelişmesi için sınıf dilinin İngilizce olarak belirlendiği sınıfların daha faydalı olabileceği tespit edilmiştir. Sınıfta iletişim dilinin sadece İngilizce olabilmesi için en iyi yollardan bir tanesi yabancı İngilizce öğretmenlerini sürece dahil etmektir. Öğrencileriyle ortak ana dile sahip İngilizce öğretmenleri belirli durumlarda ana dilden faydalanabilirler. İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği sınıflarda, ana dil bir öğretim stratejisi olarak kullanılabilir, ancak sadece gereken durumlarda kullanılması gerekir.