Teacher trainees' awareness regarding mother tongue use in English as a foreign language classes

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Abstract

This study explores the views, perceptions and suggestions of teacher trainees regarding L1 use in foreign language classes and search for their awareness of the issue. A qualitative research design was employed. The data were gathered by means of 5 open-ended questions. The findings revealed that most of the participants preferred mostly target language in classes. They thought that excessive use of L1 deprives learners of the chances of practicing oral skills and developing communicative competence.

1. Introduction

L1 use in the foreign language classroom has been a controversial issue, which was informed by different theories. Some theories of L2 acquisition, such as the interactionist view, do not approve of L1 use in classroom, and emphasize that learners should receive maximum exposure to L2 (Dailey-O'Cain&Liebscher, 2015). However, from the socio-cultural perspective, L1 can serve as a facilitator to teach difficult concepts, to explain grammar or vocabulary, and to provide discipline. Recently, a consensus that L1 cannot be banned from the foreign language classroom seems to have been reached. However, there is still disagreement on how much and when to use L1 (Dailey-O'Cain&Liebscher, 2015).

The shift from the aforementioned L2 acquisition theories are also reflected in a range of methods. Grammar translation method proposes that meaning is made clear by translating it into the students' native language. However, the Direct Method does not favor L1 use in language classes. The followers of this method believe that students should associate meaning with the target language directly (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Similarly, the advocates of the Audio Lingual Method believe that learners' native language can delay or limit the students' attempts to master the target language. The humanistic approaches, such as Silent Way and Suggestopedia, are less strict in that learners' native language is used to give instructions, help students improve their pronunciation, and make the

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meaning clear. In the same vein, Community Language Teaching and Total Physical Response methods pinpoint that security can be initially enhanced by means of students' native language.

Theories of L2 acquisition mentioned above have been interpreted by different methodologists and some suggestions and recommendations for how teachers might deal with L1 use in foreign language classrooms have been given. Some of them hold the view that target language use in second and foreign language classes should be increased as much as possible, and teachers should be sensitive to excessive L1 use in foreign language classes (Ellis, 2011; Gabrielatos, 2001; Gardner, 2000; Gardner & Gardner, 2000; Harmer, 2001; Parks, 2015). Ellis points out that in foreign language contexts, learners can only find time and opportunity to hear or speak the target language in the classroom, so L1 should be used as little as possible. Gardner & Gardner, too, strongly recommend using L2 more than L1. Similarly, Parks suggested that the use of the target language in classes should be increased by using different materials, task-based activities, dictionaries, hand gestures and miming strategies. In the same vein, Harmer (2001) favors the idea that students should use the target language in the classroom, and he sees it as wasting of time when students are not using the target language. He also points out that students will imitate their teachers and feel free to use L1 if teachers use L1 so often.

On the other hand, Cook (2001) is against the view that L1 should be avoided in the classroom by teachers and students, and describes several ways in which L1 can be used positively by them. He believes that teachers can use L1 as a classroom tool to convey meaning, explain grammar, and organize the class, and for students to use as a part of their learning and strategy use. According to him, deciding to use L1 instead of L2 should depend on some conditions; efficiency (if something can be done more effectively in L1); learning (if it will help students' learning); naturalness (if students feel more comfortable as in natural code switching); and external relevance (if it will help students use the target language better outside the classroom) (p413). Therefore, it is suggested that the teachers should use L1 or L2 as a result of a "dynamic interaction based on evidence and reflection" (Macaro, 2005, p.82).

Since the debate about L1 use in foreign language classes has gained great attention, research studies regarding L1 use in second and foreign language classes are abound in literature. Some of them aimed at listing the occasions where L1 use is appropriate; the reasons and situations when, how and why teachers and students switched to their mother tongue (Harbord, 1992; Elridge, 1996; Üstünel, 2009; Gulzar, 2010; Kafes, 2011; Salı, 2014). The findings of some studies on L1 use found no harm, and some others found evidence that among bilingual students code switching can be beneficial and effective in foreign language classes (Macaro, 2005; Deckrow, 2005). In some other studies, teachers' attitudes towards using L1 are investigated (Sarıçoban, 2010; Solhi&Büyükyazı, 2011; Salı 2014). In addition, in Schweers (1999) and Kayaoğlu (2012) learners' attitudes were identified. Overall, the research indicates that both teachers and learners believe that L1 should not be used extensively but it can be allowed and a moderate use of L1 can be even beneficial. Parks (2015) explored the experiences of the pre-service ESL teachers in terms of their efforts to increase the use of the target language during a school practicum. According to her findings; the activity setting might have a facilitating or constraining effect on such efforts.

The first studies on Turkish students' L1 use were mostly conducted in bilingual classroom contexts outside Turkey, in European countries such as Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Denmark (Arnfast&Jørgensen, 2003; Treffers-Daller, 1998). In these studies, Turkish speaking youngsters' bilingual behaviors, and the variability in the code switching styles of Turkish-German students were investigated. It was found that their L1 use behaviors were similar.

In recent years several researchers have attempted to investigate the reasons of L1use in foreign language classes and views of the teachers about L1 use in different Turkish settings (Salı, 2014;

Özçelik, 2013; Üstünel, 2009; Paker&Karaağaç, 2015; Timuçin&Baytar, 2015). Salı (2014) tried to explore teachers' perspectives on the use of L1. The findings explored that academic functions of L1 use outnumbered the other major functions of L1. One of the most frequently expressed reasons of L1 use was providing explanations. In her study, Üstünel (2009) investigated sequential organization of teacher-initiated and teacher induced code switching and the results and implications of the study revealed that code switching had twelve pedagogical functions, namely dealing with procedural trouble, dealing with classroom discipline, expressing the social identity, giving Turkish equivalents, translating into Turkish, dealing with lack of response in English, providing a prompt for English use, eliciting Turkish or English translation, giving feedback, checking comprehension in English, providing meta-language information, and giving encouragement to participate.In a similar study, Özçelik (2013) found the following among the reasons of language shift; the inappropriateness of targeted gains in activities and the learning level, the lecturers' positive or negative outlook on the use in the class, and the level of the language the teachers use, contribution, the artificiality of the class environment and also the effects of English as the foreign language. Still another study is by Timuçin and Baytar (2015) in which L1 is used for pedagogic functions such as translation, checking understanding, directions, explanations and classroom management. In the same vein, Paker&Karaağaç (2015) found that the instructors used L1 most for rapport-building purposes, making the meaning or topic clear, and explaining difficult concepts.

Teachers' views, beliefs, perceptions and students' attitudes about L1 use in classes were also examined (Kahraman, 2009; Raman and Yiğitoglu, 2015; Sarıçoban, 2010; Yatağanbaba and Yıldırım, 2015). Yatağanbaba and Yıldırım investigated Turkish language teachers' L1 use and found that all the teachers used L1 to varying extents in their classrooms. The results of interview analyses also showed that the teachers found L1 use useful for language learning; however, they also emphasized that L1 should not replace L2 in the classroom. In his study, Sarıçoban investigated both the attitudes of university students towards using L1 and why, when, how much the target language should be used. His findings indicated that majority of the students had positive attitudes towards using Turkish in an English class. However, some thought that using L1 made little contribution to their learning English. Next, Raman and Yiğitoglu looked at the code switching instances of novice teachers' and their students' perceptions regarding language shift. The analysis of the data revealed that both teacher and student participants perceived code switching as a positive contributor to teaching and learning environment. The main educational functions were; to create a feeling of connectedness, to foster learning, to form a bridge between L1 and L2, to put forward teacher's inner voice, to express feelings, emotions, and abstract concepts, to facilitate comprehension, and to keep students engaged in class. Kahraman's study was different from the ones exemplified above in the way that it showed that L1 use was not only effective in clarifying meaning or making clear some incomprehensible topics but could also decrease learners' language anxiety, and it is an important psychological motivation. Another outcome of his study was that participants' evaluation of their own opinions and desires by comparing themselves to others changed in a positive way after L1 use in language classes.

In conclusion, the review of the literature showed that although a number of studies have investigated the issue, only few have focused on teacher trainees' beliefs and views. The researchers of the present study hold the view that as well as the perceptions of in-service teachers and students regarding L1 use in foreign language classes, the perceptions of trainees are also important, because they are already in the process of forming their ideas. Their awareness can help them to find a balance between L1 and target language use in their classes. In this respect, the trainees were asked to reflect on their real classroom experience related to teachers and students' L1 use incidences and develop their own philosophies on the issue. This study hopes to contribute to the cumulating knowledge regarding the L1 use in the foreign language classrooms.

1.1. Research questions

The present study investigates the views, perceptions and suggestions of teacher trainees regarding L1 use and aims to explore their awareness about L1 use in foreign language classes. To achieve this aim, the following research questions were posed:

RQ1. What are the views, perceptions and suggestions of trainees regarding L1 Use?

RQ2. What is the awareness level of the trainees on L1 use in foreign language classes?

2. Method

In this study, a qualitative design was adopted. The trainees did an observation task based on their practicum experiences. Their answers for the task were analysed according to two different qualitative data analysis procedures to enhance reliability. The first research question was posed to analyse the data according to Fairclough's (2003) discourse analysis model while the second one is posed to use content analysis procedure. The aim was to achieve a more elaborate understanding of the trainees' views, perceptions, suggestions and awareness levels regarding L1 use.

2.1. Sample / Participants

The participants of the study include a total of 41 ELT senior trainees at a state university in Turkey; 11 males and 30 females. The trainees took the practicum course which included doing observation tasks and writing reports based on their observations as a part of their school practice in the fall term of 2015-2016 academic year. The practicum was held in the state schools in the city center and English lessons at various levels were observed by the trainees. The trainees were informed that their answers would be used in a research study after they completed the task and oral consent of the trainees was taken. The task required the trainees to observe their mentor teachers' lessons and try to interpret why, when and how in-service teachers and students used L1 (Turkish) during the language classes. Since all the trainees had similar cultural and educational background, that is, they came from similar learning environments as they observed, the reports they handed in after doing the task included high quality information about the trainees' views, perceptions, suggestions, and awareness levels.

2.2. Instrument(s)

The written submissions by the trainees, which were a part of the requirements of the School Experience course,were collected and used as qualitative data. Their task included five open-ended questions regarding L1 and L2 use in foreign language classes they had observed. The questions were developed by a team of experts from the ELT department (See Appendix A).

2.3. Data collection procedures

The trainees' reports after one of the observation tasks were used as the data in this study. These reports were written for the third phase of the three-phase task. In order to give greater context, the complete procedure is described below;

2.3.1. Phase One: Discussion

Before beginning the task, the trainees received a theoretical lesson from the tutors at the ELT department. Within this class hour they were instructed about the use of L1 in the language classroom; the reasons why teachers try to use or limit L1 use were exemplified; they were made to discuss about

advantages and disadvantages of using L1; and they were asked to reflect on their L1 use experience in their past foreign language learning years. After pair-work and group-work discussions, they were asked to read the research article which was on overusing L1 in the classrooms, and they were to think on the findings of the research paper (Bawcom, 2002).

2.3.2. Phase Two: Doing Observations

Trainees attended the classes as groups of five and observed the teachers and students in real classes and using an observation task scheme, they wrote down the occasions of L1 use clearly, the reasons of L1 use, and when L1 shift occurred in details. In Turkey, L1 is generally not frowned upon by teachers and institutions (Sarıçoban, 2010; Solhi&Büyükyazı, 2011; Salı 2014). It is normally used for many functions by both the teacher and the students (Salı, 2014; Özçelik, 2013; Üstünel, 2009; Paker&Karaağaç, 2015). The amount of L1 varies from teacher to teacher and institution to institution. In some classes L1 is used extensively whereas in some others the teacher encourages more L2 use than that of L1.

2.3.3. Phase Three: Writing the report

After the observations, the trainees were asked to reflect on their observations and think about the benefits and drawbacks of L1 use in the classes they had observed. The trainees were also asked to think about their personal views, perceptions, suggestions related to L1 use. They were required to respond in the form of a written report which included some open ended questions. The written reports were carried out individually by each trainee and submitted in the following week. These reports were used as the data for this study.

2.4. Data analysis

The trainees' written reports regarding L1-L2 use were evaluated qualitatively by employing two qualitative analysis techniques; Fairclough's (2003) discourse analysis model, and content analysis. In addition, descriptive statistics were used to see how the frequencies of the statements are distributed among the participants. The data analysis procedures are detailed below.

First of all, the reports on the observation task were carefully grouped, such as examples from the classroom practices which favor L1 use and criticize L1 use. Then, the written discourse was clarified by eliminating repetitions and digressions. In order to increase the credibility of the research, qualitative data were systematically analyzed by employing two different qualitative analyses. The researchers did not impose preconceived theoretical schemes on reality; rather they tried to extract the reality from the concepts. For conformability, the two researchers made available full details of the data on which they based their claims and interpretations.

The data were first analyzed via discourse analysis using Fairclough's (2003) model. Accordingly, the researchers entered a code when a piece of data showed, implicitly or explicitly, a unit of meaning related to the information they were looking for regarding the research question. If the code was in favor of L1 use, it was marked with a plus (+) sign near the code, and if it was opposing to L1 use, a minus sign (-) was used. A total of 333 codes were entered. The concepts view, perception and suggestion were operationalized according to their dictionary definitions. For views, the researchers looked for positive or negative evaluations of the phenomena. The evaluations can be in the form of an adjective (good, bad), noun phrase (good thing), a verb (he avoided), adverb (wonderfully) and exclamations (Fairclough, 2003, p.172). In order to identify perceptions, the researchers looked for evidence of observation and causality. In terms of vocabulary, they looked for "words which distinguish different levels of commitment to truth" such as modal adverbials (certainly, probably) for truth, participial adjectives (required, supposed, allowed) for obligation and conjunctions (since, for, because) for causality (Fairclough, 2003, p.170). The researchers looked for markers of

modalization(must, should) and grammatical mood (will, would) to identify the suggestions in the data. In addition, they made use of hedges and other linguistic pragmatic and semantic features as they analyzed the data.

Fairclough's discourse analysis method is often criticized to be too dependent on the patterns of linguistic features since it is largely based on Systemic Functional Linguistics, and as a result of this, it is argued that it misses the effects of social context, thus missing the big picture for the details (Poole, 2010). In order to overcome possible shortcomings of the detailed analyses, the second research question is posed. In order to answer it, the researchers employed a more holistic approach to determine the overall awareness levels of the trainees. Since employing more than one analysis on the same set of data is one of the ways of triangulation, the researchers also aimed to increase the validity and the reliability of the results. In addition, in qualitative studies like this one, the results cannot be generalized; however, the findings in the literature can serve as a checking point for reliability. Thus, similar findings in the literature are also presented along with the findings emerged from this research in order to increase credibility.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. *RQ1. What are the views, perceptions and suggestions of trainees regarding L1 Use?*

Firstly, the researchers examined all the answers in terms of text structure in order to delineate the topics within the data. As a result of the analysis, the codes were clustered around 19 different themes, which were then grouped under 3 main headings to facilitate the discussion of the findings. These were (i) themes related to the purposes of using L1 or L2; (ii) themes related to pros and cons of using L1 in the L2 classroom; and (iii) themes related to how much L1 should be used in the L2 classroom.

3.1.1. *Purposes of using L1 or L2*

The trainees commented about in which situations L1 use was more favorable. The first theme occurred repeatedly in favor of L1 use while in the others there were opposing views about whether to use L1 or L2. Table 1 shows the distribution of these themes in the data.

Table 1. Purposes of using L1 or L2

Theme	Views (n)	Perceptions (n)	Suggestions (n)	Codes n (%)	Trainees n(%)
(+) L1 when students do not understand	21	17	19	57 (17.11%)	32 (78%)
(+)L1 for instructions	5	1	9	15 (4.5%)	10 (24.3%)
(-)L2 for instructions	0	0	3	3 (0. 9%)	2 (4.8%)
(+)L1 to teach grammar points and vocabulary	10	5	8	23 (69%)	12 (29.2%)
(-)There is not a Turkish equivalent for every word in English	2	0	0	2 (0. 6%)	2 (4.8%)

The first of the three famous pitfalls of using L1 in Atkinson's (1987) much cited article is that "the teacher and/or the students begin to feel that they have not 'really' understood any item of language

until it has been translated" (as cited in Harbord, 1992, p.351). Our trainees seem to have fallen into that pitfall even before they actually enter the profession. There was nearly a consensus between all of the trainees on the issue of L1 use when students do not understand (78% of the trainees). Often, the trainees claimed that young learner or beginner classes would not understand because their level is low thus they would make use of L1 in such situations. It appeared in the answers of many trainees in all three forms; as views, perceptions and suggestions the most frequently (n (views) = 21; n (perceptions) =17, n (suggestions) = 19). The distribution of codes to each category evenly is due to the fact that many learners, just like the one in excerpt 1 below, presented their views or perceptions and then reinforced it by asserting that they would also do the same in their own teaching.

Excerpt 1 L1 when students do not understand

Trainee 37   *(+) It is related to students' L2 level. If they are good at it, it doesn't matter if you use L1 or not.*

(+) But if they cannot understand what you are talking about they cannot understand anything so that is a big problem.

(+) I decide to use L1 according to my students' L2 level and their age.

Another issue was the language of instructions. Instruction was one of the functions of L1 in Gulzar's (2010) and Yatağanbaba&Yıldırım's (2015) studies. In our study, however, there were differing opinions. While 10 trainees (24. 3%) contend that L1 must be used for giving instructions, there were two others (4. 8%) who thought that instructions must be given in L2. When explaining their choice, the trainees who supported the use of L1 emphasized the importance of understanding the instructions well as seen in excerpt 2. The trainees with the opposite view, however, perceive instructions as a way of increasing the amount of L2 (excerpt 3).

Excerpt 2 L1 for instructions

Trainee 20   *(+) We must use L1 while giving instructions because students may not understand the instruction when it is in English.*

Excerpt 3 L2 for instructions

Trainee 10   *(-)At least the teacher should have used L2 when he gave directions to the students such as "Write down your notebooks."*

Trainee 14   *(-) I would use more English for example "Please open the page 25" as like*

The use of mother tongue for the purposes of teaching grammar and vocabulary is mentioned by 29.2% of the trainees. The total number of codes in this category made up 6.9% of the whole data. It was mentioned 15 times as views or perceptions and eight times in the form of suggestions. Again, we can argue that the distribution of the theme to the three categories reinforces its importance. Excerpt 4 is presented to exemplify this case.

Excerpt 4 L1 to teach grammar points and vocabulary

Trainee 39   *(+) Students can understand the rules of the target language if the teacher uses L1. If the teacher tries to use L2 to explain rules or necessary things the whole class will not understand.*

(+) I will explain the rules in L1 (like the tense rules)

(+) and I will also explain the meaning of new words in L1.

Similarly, in Kayaoğlu's (2012) study, nearly all of the participants advocated the use of L1 for grammar; but not so much for vocabulary. In our study, too, there were two trainees (4. 8%), who mentioned a view against using L1 for teaching of vocabulary by saying that it might not be possible to find an exact translation for every word. The following excerpt includes perceptions from both trainees' answers.

Excerpt 5 There is not a Turkish equivalent for every word in English

Trainee 26   *(-) The drawback is I have observed that the teacher has difficulty about basic meaning because some words' meaning does not exist in Turkish.*

Trainee 27   *(-) But the use of L1 can be a drawback because the teacher sometimes couldn't find an exact meaning for that word in L1.*

3.1.2. The Pros and Cons of Using L1 in the L2 classroom

The trainees pointed out both the benefits and drawbacks of using L1 in the classroom. The themes indicated three benefits and four drawbacks of using L1. In addition, one theme indicated the benefit of not using the L1. The benefits and drawbacks that the trainees put forward are summarized in Table 2.

As can be seen, the codes clustered in the perceptions column rather than the views or suggestions columns. Thus, it can be concluded that learners arrived at these contentions based on their observations of the classrooms.

Table 2. Pros and cons of using L1 in FL class

Theme	Views (n)	Perceptions (n)	Suggestions (n)	Codes n (%)	Trainees n (%)
(+)L1 use increases motivation and participation.	2	19	9	30 (9%)	18 (43.9%)
(+)L1 use leads to the feelings of relaxation and security, and decreases anxiety.	5	14	3	22 (6.6%)	15 (36.5%)
(+)L1 use saves time.	2	4	0	6 (1. 8%)	5 (12.1%)
(-)L1 use limits the chance of practicing L2 and causes lack of communicative competence.	8	24	10	42 (12. 6%)	23 (56%)
(-)L1 use limits the time students get exposed to L2.	4	5	2	11 (3. 3%)	10 (24.3%)
(-)L1 use limits using L2 in real learning environments.	1	1	3	5 (1.5%)	4 (9.7%)
(-)L1 use causes students become dependent on L1.	2	5	0	7 (2.1%)	7 (17%)
(-)When L1 is not used, students will get accustomed to using L2	1	10	1	12 (3.6%)	10 (24.3%)

A total of 18 trainees (43. 9%) mentioned that using L1 increases motivation in their answers. 30 codes fall under this theme, which makes 9% of all 333 codes, and 19 of the 30 codes in this theme were identified as perceptions.

Excerpt 6 L1 use increases motivation and participation (perceptions)

Trainee 3   *(+) using L1 made students confident*

(+) students tried to attend the lesson more

(+) And also they feel more willing and try to attend.

Trainee 16   *(+) They joined the lesson more.*

According to excerpt 6, it appears to be the trainees' perception that the trainees saw a positive link, even a causal relationship, between students' motivation and the mother tongue use. This is also found and mentioned in many other studies. In Elridge's (1996) study, it is underlined that banning L1 completely from the classroom may accelerate the language development but it also can decrease the motivation of the students. The perceptions in this category indicated that the lesson would be more motivating, less boring, and the students would be more interested in the lesson or more confident to speak if the lesson is conducted in the mother tongue.

There were two instances in the data where the perceptions were coupled with an evaluative statement. These instances are shown in excerpt 7.

Excerpt 7 L1 use increases motivation and participation (views)

Trainee 27   *(+) The benefits of L1 for the students are that they can understand and speak easily when L1 is being used.*

Trainee 39   *(+) Also it is easier to motivate students in L1.*

In the excerpt from the views indicating that L1 use increases motivation and participation, we can see trainee 27 attaches to her observation that it was actually a "benefit" of using L1. Trainee 39 states his positive view that it is easier to motivate the students if L1 is used.

The motivating effect of L1 use was mentioned also in the form of suggestions. As can be seen in excerpt 8 below, trainees 13 and 19 suggest using L1 for the purpose of motivating students and making the lesson more attractive to participate.

Excerpt 8 L1 use increases motivation and participation (suggestions)

Trainee 13   *(+) Because of not being boring they can speak in L1 when they cannot speak in L2.*

Trainee 19   *(+) We should sometimes use L1 in the classroom for motivating the students, making some explanations or some jokes to attract the attention of the students.*

The second positive side of using L1 was mentioned as its facilitating effect on the establishment of a secure learning environment. The number of trainees who mentioned this theme was 15 (36.5%) and it made up 6. 6% of the codes (n=22). Just like the first one, this theme was expressed most frequently in the form of a perception (n=14) rather than view (n=5) or suggestion (n=3). The following excerpt presents one example from each type.

Excerpt 9 L1 use leads to the feelings of relaxation and security, and decreases anxiety

Trainee 28   *(+) It makes students comfortable. It is an upside for their learning environment.*

Trainee 4   *(+) L1 use could provide students more comfortable and stress free environment.*

Trainee 11   *(+) If a teacher talks only in English they can be shy, scared. In order to relax them I would speak in Turkish*

L1 is perceived and viewed as something that affects the feelings of security in the classroom for the better, thus advisable. This is also found by other researchers. Schweers (1999) found that if we deny the students' native language, they might feel their identity threatened. In another study, it was found "statistically evident that the acceptance, valuing active, systematic and judicious use of the students' mother tongue reduces anxiety, and enhances affective environment for learning a foreign language" (Kahraman, 2009, p.107).

Another advantage of using L1 according to trainees' views and perceptions is that it saves time. But the time-saving characteristic of using L1 was mentioned by only five trainees (12. 1%). Harbord (1992) mentions L1 as a time-saving device among the less useful strategies of making the best of the mother tongue. Teachers use it for teaching vocabulary or eliciting a word by its L1 equivalent. According to him, if this strategy is used too much, students will get the impression that word-by-word translation is possible. Although he admits that it is a valid way of teaching vocabulary, he advises using it together with other techniques. In our data, none of the trainees suggested explicitly using L1 to the end of saving time. The codes belonging to this theme were in the form of views or perceptions. Moreover, the learners who viewed it as advantage preferred to cite from their readings instead of using their own words (excerpt 10).

Excerpt 10 L1 use saves time

Trainee 2	*(+) It can be time saving.*
	(+) it is sometimes easier and more efficient to give a translation of a vocabulary item or an explanation of a grammar point in the mother tongue.
Trainee 5	*(+) Instead of long explanation in the target language, it is sometimes easier and more efficient to give a translation of a vocabulary item or an explanation of a grammar point in the mother tongue.*

To summarize, the data contains three advantages for using L1; motivating the students to participate, providing a secure atmosphere and reducing anxiety, and saving time. The drawbacks on the other hand, are more in number and mentioned by more trainees. The data contains four drawbacks of using L1. The one which was mentioned the most frequently (56% of the trainees) was that it limits the chance of practicing and thus deprives learners of the chances of practicing oral skills and developing communicative competence. This perception seems to be rather strong because the learners mentioned it in their views as well as their perceptions and also they suggested not using L1 in order to avoid this pitfall. For example, in the following excerpt, trainee's views, perceptions and suggestions can be seen.

Excerpt 11 L1 use limits the chance of practicing L2

Trainee 2	*(-) it is not good to use their mother tongue more than L2 because this prevents their development of L2.*
Trainee 1	*(-) But they couldn't have enough time to practice L2.*
Trainee 9	*(-) I wouldn't use L1 so much because my students must at least try to speak.*

The second drawback of using L1 in the classroom according to the trainees is that it also limits the time of exposure to L2. Especially in the foreign language context, the classroom is the only place that the students can get exposed to the language. Trainee 19 tapped on this issue by expressing his view and continuing to suggest that L1 use must be limited.

Excerpt 12 L1 use limits the time students get exposed to L2

Trainee 19   *(-) but using L1 during the whole lesson is too bad for students.*

(-) they must be shown how to use the words in context and they must be exposed to the target language for acquisition.

The third drawback is related to the previous one in that both of them are about exposure; the former about the amount of it and the latter about the consequence of it. More precisely, five of the trainees (12. 1%) mentioned their concern that if L1 is used, the learning will not be natural. For example, trainee 5 in the following excerpt suggests making an effort to use L2 based on the perception that it provides a real learning environment. Looking at the greater context of the entries, it is understood that by "real learning" the trainees meant the environment that supports natural acquisition as a result of exposure to the language.

Excerpt 13 L1 use limits using L2 in real learning environments

Trainee 5   *(-) I will make an effort for using L2 since it provides them more authentic and real learning environment.*

The aforementioned three limitations of L1 are mentioned many trainees in many forms. In fact, they comprise the bulk of the codes in this category. This intensity can be attributed to the education they received in the previous years, which generally favored communicative approaches. In all excerpts 10, 11 and 12, the main arguments against the use of L1 in the literature are echoed.

As the last drawback the trainees observed is the debilitating effect of using L1 in the classroom. As trainee 33 points out in excerpt 14, the students can begin to fear from L2 for the mere reason that they are not used to it.

Excerpt 14 L1 use causes students to become dependent on L1

Trainee 33   *(-) However students were dependent on L1 because of overusing.*

(-) They felt anxiety when the teacher started to use L2. Students didn't want to use L2 because they have never been exposed to L2.

In addition, 24.3% of the trainees also asserted that if the teacher insists on using L2 constantly, the students will eventually get used to it and the extra stress will fade away. Kafes (2011) reached at exactly the same observation. He looked at functions of L1 and the most common one was to facilitate teacher student communication and relationship. This finding was also supported by the fact that L1 is used less and less as the weeks progressed. He observed that the students became more secure thus needed less L1 (Kafes, 2011). An example entry is in excerpt 15.

Excerpt 15 When L1 is not used, students will get accustomed to using L2

Trainee 25   *(-) Students would get used to using and understanding foreign language after a while.*

3.1.3. How much L1 should be used?

The other themes that appeared in the data were grouped under a third main heading called "How much L1 should be used"? The themes consist of different answers to this question. They vary on a continuum between never and always. However, the lines separating the opinions were very blurred,

thus the researchers tried to pay further attention to the exact words that the trainees chose as they mentioned about their position.

As seen in Table 3, the majority of answers are in the form of suggestions. This finding is not surprising since the trainees are projecting their views into their future practices in most of the answers. Moreover, the reasons that explain their choices often went into other categories in the form of views and perceptions.

Table 3. How much L1 should be used?

Theme	Views (n)	Perceptions (n)	Suggestions (n)	Codes n (%)	Trainees n(%)
(+)We can't teach the target language without L1.	4	0	5	9 (2. 7%)	7 (17%)
(+)Teachers should find a balance between L1 and L2	0	0	11	11 (3. 3%)	7 (17%)
(+)Use L1 when necessary.	2	0	17	19 (5. 7%)	13 (31.7%)
(-)We should use L2 more	6	2	15	23 (6. 9%)	13 (31.7%)
(-)Using L1 should not be allowed	2	0	15	17 (5.1%)	13 (31.7%)
(-)There are other techniques Ts should employ to minimize L2 use	0	1	10	11 (3. 3%)	11 (26. 8%)

As Üstünel (2009) points out, mother tongue can be unavoidable for teachers, and more importantly, for learners in the foreign language classrooms.In addition,Kayaoğlu (2012) also reported that some teachers began the profession in a determined way not to use L1, but their views changed as they gained experience. They found out that they could not do without L1 after some time. In our study, seven trainees (17%) argued that L1 is indispensable to the L2 classroom. As exemplified in excerpt 16, the trainees justified their view with the fact that mother tongue is a part of the students' identity and personal history.

Excerpt 16 We can't teach the target language without L1.

Trainee 26   *(+) I favor using L1. Because every teacher has to use L1. It doesn't matter which language is.*

(+) The students grew up with mother tongue and they are accustomed to this. So they can learn with L1 more easily and more permanently.

In addition, 7 trainees (17%) mentioned that L1 and L2 must be used in a balanced way in terms of proportion. These trainees' aimed to get the best from both choices. Excerpt 17 presents a typical example.

Excerpt 17 Teachers should find a balance between L1 and L2

Trainee 3   *(+) I can't say I will only use L2 but I will try to make a balance between L1 and L2.*

(-) If the lesson is only in L1 students will not be able to communicate with L2.

(+) but if it is only L2, students won't understand most of the lesson.

A total number of 13 trainees (31.7%) held the view that there are some certain tasks which must necessarily be done in the mother tongue. They claim that they would limit the mother tongue only to

the accomplishment of these necessary things. For a demonstration of this theme, the following excerpt is chosen since the suggestion is reinforced by attaching an example right after it by each trainee.

Excerpt 18 Use L1 when necessary

Trainee 32   (+) Teacher can use L1 in very hard situations like fighting between students.

Trainee 37   (+) In middle classes, I would use L1 only while giving critical points if they need.

Trainee 41   (+) L1 should be used only when a new grammar point is given.

A very similar theme was using L2 more than L1. The difference between the previous theme and this one lies in that there are not tasks assigned to L1. On the contrary, the emphasis is on the teacher's effort to stay in English and avoid the mother tongue use by the learners in this theme. 31,7% of the trainees got this theme in their answers.

Excerpt 19 We should use L2 more

Trainee 18   (-) But if I were the teacher I would try to using L2 generally, not L1.

(-) I would encourage the students to speak L2.

Trainee 29   (-) Teachers should use mostly L2 in the class as soon as possible.

The other extreme of the continuum is the theme saying L1 should not be allowed at all. There were 13 trainees (31. 7%) who suggested that L1 should be banned from the L2 classroom.

Excerpt 20 Using L1 should not be allowed

Trainee 9   (-) English used in the classroom must be compulsory, so the students will be able to learn the language.

In other studies, almost the same answers were received for how much L1 use was acceptable. For example, in Sarıçoban's (2010) study, only the minority said no for the use of L1. In the same vein, Solhi&Büyükyazı (2011) also asked the same question and they got the same answer as we did from the majority: Not extensive, but some use of L1 can be allowed and even beneficial.

11 of the trainees (26. 8%) expressed their suggestions in a different way. This group mentioned some strategies to minimize the L1 use in the classroom. This is in line with Elridge's (1996) view that if we want our students to speak more English, then we should concentrate on ways of increasing the amount of English; not on reducing the amount of Turkish. Interestingly enough, the trainees' answers indicated that even the materials choice can be a factor in avoiding L1. In addition, using foreigner talk instead of L1 is suggested as a way of increasing target language time.

Excerpt 21 There are other techniques Ts should employ to minimize L2 use

Trainee 34   (-) If he was using L2 in the classroom more by using podcasts, videos or any of the speaking and listening materials, there would not be any difficulty for using L2.

Trainee 4   (-) When they don't understand the language I would use the more basic words, mimics, and body language.

To summarize, under three main headings of (i) pros and cons of using L1; (ii) Purposes of using L1 or L2; and (iii) How much L1 should be used; a total of 19 themes were found. These themes were explained and exemplified with excerpts from the data. The theme which was mentioned the most was "L1 when the students do not understand", which was under the second main heading. The most frequent theme of the first main heading was "L1 use limits the chance of practicing L2 and causes lack of communicative competence". Under the third main heading, trainees favoring minimum or no use of L2 were more than those who supported the use of L1.

3.2. RQ2. What is the awareness of the trainees on L1 use in foreign language classes?

The researchers handled only the 5th questions in the observation task once more and subjected it to content analysis. The 5th question was "What is your philosophy about using L1?" This time a more holistic approach was taken. In this way, the researchers aimed to increase the validity of the findings. Taking a step back and handling the answers as whole, researchers aimed to eliminate the tunnel vision effect that may result from detailed critical analysis of the answers.

The impact that prior language learning experience has on preservice teachers is a highlighted subject in teacher education area in recent years (Borg, 2005). In this study, too, one of the aims was to help trainees develop awareness on L1 use in foreign language classes by teachers and students, see real problems and examples, and by reflecting on these samples and their previous background to have an L1 use philosophy.

When the data were analyzed by focusing on the fifth question in the observation task and considering the overall answers, the following results were identified; Analysis results shed light on the reality that most of them (86.6%) were convinced with L1 use in language classes, and only 4 of the trainees (13.4%) disfavored native language use (See Table 4).

Table 4. Trainees' L1 use preference

Gender	Yes L1 in class	No L1 in class
Male	11	-
Female	26	4

Although they are in minority (13.4%), there are trainees who do not favor using L1 in their classes, and they seem to be determined not to use L1 in classes when they teach themselves. They believe in the role of exposure to the target language, and they are convinced that without using the target language it cannot be learned. Some of the trainees seem to be annoyed by the teachers who frequently used the students' native language in language classes. The excerpts below include the philosophies of such trainees:

Excerpt 22 Trainees who do not favor using L1 in their classes

Trainee 9   *"English used in the classroom must be compulsory, so the students will be able to learn the language. If L1 isn't used, students will be able to use and learn the language more effectively. Students will be able to use L2 in their social life too. I wouldn't use L1 so much because my students must at least try to speak. My philosophy in using L1 in language classroom is that no matter what the result is I won't let L1 use in classroom, because they have to learn not".*

Trainee 17   *."It seems that using L1 has benefits in terms of the students' confidence but I don't agree with that. It has no benefits. Using L1 just delays using L2 and speaking skills. If L1 was not used, whole class tried to speak in English. And this is good for them. At the beginning it could be difficult for them but then they will get used to using L2. ....It is really difficult to apply any*

language philosophy in Turkey. Students hate English or anything about English. I think at first I'm going to present English livelily. Then I'm going to apply my philosophy in using L1. If students enjoy while using L2 in the classroom speaking in English all the time in the classroom won't be so hard for them".

Trainee 33   *"... students were dependent on L1 because of overusing. They felt anxiety when teacher started to use L2. Students didn't want to use L2 because they have never exposed to L2. If L1 was not used I think it could be better. The more they exposed to L2 the better level their English will become. But it should be done from the beginning of the term. Students shouldn't be used to using Turkish in the lesson".*

Table 5. Differences among L1 advocates

	Male	Female	Total	%
Mostly supporting L1 (+)	5	9	14	37.8
Mostly opposing L1 (-)	6	13	19	51.4
Equal number of supporting (+) and opposing (-) statements	-	4	4	10.8
				100

As can be seen in Table 5 among the 37 trainees, a considerable diffidence of opinion is observable. More than half of the trainees (51.4 %) used more statements opposing the use of L1. They seemed to believe that limited number of native (L1) language use will be more beneficial in foreign language classes. The excerpts of those are presented below.

Excerpt 23 Trainees mostly opposing L1 (-)

Trainee 18.   *"85 % of lesson went on using L1 so it was not beneficial for learners. ıt is really difficult to speak in the target language all the time because students do not understand and can't speak in English. But if I were the teacher I would try to using L2 generally, not L1. I would encourage the students to speak L2…. It is not adapted for learner to speak in their mother tongue during all lessons. It is not useful and beneficial and motivating. If L1 is overused, there are problems in teaching and learning".*

Trainee 22.   *"Using L1 in the class was encouraging the students. They can clearly express themselves, but in second language they cannot express themselves. They lack from self -confidence. But it causes discouragement in the class. They need to practice and expose to the second language. Without the second language use they cannot improve speaking proficiency. If the first language was not used students could speak and practice the language. …They could understand the instructions easily. They could solve their language problems and they could get proficiency about the second language… I use transitions between two languages. If only use the second language the students can be dispirited to the language learning. I don't want to lose my students. They must be motivated and I can catch their interest. So I want to use the first language when it is needed. It is my point of view about using L1 in the classroom".*

As can be seen from the excerpts above, trainees were aware of the pros and cons of using L1 in the foreign language classes. Trainees' personal beliefs are in line with Deckrow (2005), who found evidence that among bilingual students code switching can be beneficial and effective as a teaching, learning, and communicative strategy in both oral and written form. It can be considered that trainees

have benefitted from the theoretical courses that they have taken in their departments. They were critical about excessive use of L1 of the teachers and students in classes. In this respect, they can be assumed to have developed an L1 philosophy by reflecting on their experience in different classes. They seemed to have developed ideas that they will use L1 in their classes in a systematic way without overusing it. They are also aware of the fact that without using the target language students cannot develop communicative competence. It is really promising to observe that prospective teachers are mostly compatible with language teaching educators such as Harmer (2001) who favors the idea that students should use the target language in foreign language class.

According to the findings of the study, a number of advocates of L1 use (37.8%) had more (+) statements supporting L1 use. They strongly thought that use of Turkish (L1) would bring comfort, ease of learning, and contribute learning the language better. They expressed that they are fully aware of the benefits of using L1 with lower levels. These findings are in line with the findings obtained in Sarıçoban's (2010) research study, in which he states that learners need their native language to comprehend the new concepts, vocabulary and materials, which they do not know.

Excerpt 24 Trainees mostly supporting L1

Trainee 8	*"If students don't understand anything, then I would use Turkish. I am aware that it is an English lesson. But also I know that these students are under normal level. If I see that students don't understand, and answer none of my questions, then I would prefer to use Turkish".*
Trainee 10	*"The teacher used L1 for feedback sometimes and the students understood the teacher easily thanks to L1… I will use in beginning classes but not always".*
Trainee 14	*"I think we should use the L2 according to the level of students…. L1 must be used of course but not all the time".*
Trainee 19	*"If there is a big misunderstanding of a subject then mother tongue can be useful to explain. We should sometimes use L1 in the classroom for motivating the students, making some explanations or some jokes to attract the attention of the students. But using L1 during the whole lesson is too bad for students".*

As well as those given above, the data analysis also made clear that there were some statements of the trainees (10.8 %), which were equal in number. These trainees clearly supported a balanced use of Turkish and English in classes. Excerpts of those are below;

Excerpt 25 Trainees with equal number of supporting (+) and opposing (-) statements

Trainee 3	*"…I can't say I will only use L2 but I will try to make a balance between L1 and L2. If the lesson is only in L1 students will not be able to communicate with L2 If the lesson is only in L1 students will not be able to communicate with L2."*
Trainee 22	*"…I use transitions between two languages. If only use the second language the students can be dispirited to the language learning. I don't want to lose my students. They must be motivated and I can catch their interest. So I want to use the first language when it is needed. It is my point of view about using L1 in the classroom".*
Trainee 24	*"…As far as I have observed making a bridge between L1 and L2 is important. Our main purpose should be using L2 but when L1 is necessary we should use it otherwise the students may feel confused".*

According to the results of the study, 22% of the trainees did not seem to approve of their mentors' using too much Turkish in classes. A similar impression exists in many previous studies; Salı (2014) states that teachers in her study did not seem to have a policy regarding L1/L2 use, and that training them are necessary. Gulzar (2010) expressed that teachers do not know the limits and how to use L1 constructively. Çelik (2008) also highlights the "need to consider carefully the reasons for opening their doors to L1 use, and must examine its necessity and benefits for their individual situations" (p.84). It is also Gabrielatos's (2001) view that L1 has a place in ELT methodology but learners and teachers should pay attention to excessive L1use in foreign language classes and be aware of its limitations.

According to Roberts (1998) craft/ apprenticeship based on teacher education has the view that teacher learning is imitative in process and model-based in content. In this model the trainee works with a master teacher in school and imitates and models the mentor teacher and takes him as a model. The trainees in this study observed many examples of L1 use, which they considered "good or bad" and developed action-system knowledge by themselves. In other words, our trainees' direct personal experience in real classes and reflecting on this experience helped their conceptual development. One of the main models of teacher development is the Reflective Model. The trainees observed lessons, recalled their past experience and then reflected on observations and it is probable that this will provide them continuous improvement in their future practices in classes.

Excerpt 26 Trainees who do not approve of their mentors' excessive use of L1

Trainee 18	*" ...But if I were the teacher I would try to using L2 generally, not L1. I would encourage the students to speak L2... If L1 is overused, there are problems in teaching and learning".*
Trainee 29	*"...Teachers always use L1 in the class and it is so wrong. Students cannot make a sentence in English they cannot understand the questions and they cannot answer the questions. They are used to use of L1 usage. They do not know how to speak English and this is very bad situation. Teachers should use mostly L2 in the class as soon as possible".*
Trainee 33	*"At some part of the lesson L1 can be seen beneficial. But teacher and students overuse L1 in the lesson. There is too little L2 use in activities. This problem is immediately realized by teachers because the students become dependent on L1".*

In conclusion, it was observed that they do not favor the extreme use of L1 in foreign language classes. This is a pleasing case, since several researchers (Gardner & Gardner, 2000; Cook, 2001; Atkinson, 1987; Sarıçoban, 2010) pay attention to this issue and inform that only limited use of L1 can help learners get maximum benefit from the activities and tasks carried out in the target language.

4. Conclusions

This study aimed to explore the views, perceptions and suggestions of teacher trainees regarding L1 use in foreign language classes. Additionally, it searched for the awareness of the trainees regarding L1 use. 41 ELT senior teacher trainees were the participants of the study. Most of the trainees agreed that using L1 can be beneficial in some situations. However, they also were convinced that mostly target language ought to be preferred since excessive use of L1 limits the chance of practicing and thus deprives learners of the chances of practicing oral skills and developing communicative competence. These findings seemed to be consistent with the findings of the previous studies, which contributed to the reliability of the study. Almost the same themes emerged from the analysis of our data. In that respect, this study has contributed to the cumulating knowledge regarding

the L1 use in the foreign language classrooms. The consistency of our findings with those of the other studies also proves the effect of the teacher training, and that it is possible to shape teacher's perceptions and views even before they enter the profession. In that respect, the importance of the quality of the teacher education programs is highlighted.

As for the awareness, the common philosophy holds that trainees will use L1 in their classes in a systematic way without overusing it. They are also aware of the fact that without using the target language students cannot develop communicative competence. Thus, the trainees seemed to have developed consistent philosophies as a result of their teacher education. However, the researchers of the present study want to add that just confirming that L1 use is unavoidable or necessary will not solve the problem. It is more important to train the prospective teachers to use L1 in ways that contributes to target language learning. Therefore, in a further study, the trainees can be observed as they actually teach lessons. In this way, the reasons limiting their ability to use the target language and the concerns of the language learners can be revealed.

To conclude, the researchers of this study share the view that it is beneficial to increase competent teacher cognition in pre-service teachers before they start to work in the field as professionals. During observations in real language classes, trainees focus was on L1 use in foreign language classes, and then they reflected on their experience related to teachers' and students' use of the L1, which gave us a chance of understanding what trainees thought, believed and what kind of L1 use philosophy they developed. Since this research sets an example for the usefulness of such tasks, it is hoped to do contribution to the foreign language teacher education field.

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Appendix A. The open-ended questions that the trainees answered

Answer the following questions after the observation:

1- What were the instances (if any) of using L1 in the classroom? Write clearly if L1 is used by the 1- teacher or the students.

2- In the instances (if any) of L1 use, what were the advantages and disadvantages you have noticed?

3- If L1 was not used, what advantages and disadvantages have you noticed?

4- If you were the teacher in the class you observed, would you adapt the same techniques of using L1? Why yes?/Why no? Please explain.

5- After your attending the classes, what can you say about your "philosophy in using L1" in language classes?

Öğretmenadaylarınınyabancıdilolarakİngilizcedersindeanadilinkullanımınailişki nfarkındalıkları

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı öğretmen adaylarının yabancı dil olarak İngilizce dersinde ana dilin kullanımına ilişkin görüş, algı ve önerilerini ortaya çıkarmak ve bu konuyla ilgili farkındalıklarını araştırmaktır. Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma modeli uygulanmıştır. Veriler 5 açık uçlu soru yardımıyla toplanmıştır. Bulgular, öğretmen adaylarının çoğunun derslerde daha çok hedef dili tercih ettiğini, ana dilin fazla kullanılmasının öğrencilerin konuşma ve iletişim becerilerini kazanmalarına engel olacağını düşündüklerini göstermektedir. Ana dilin fazla kullanılmasının öğrencilerin konuşma ve iletişim becerilerini kazanmalarına engel olacağını düşünmektedirler.

Anahtar sözcükler: Yabancı dil eğitimi; ana dil; hedef dil; dil değiştirme; öğretmen eğitimi

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