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Editors' Message

Dear Readers,

The second volume of the TOJELT is ready with the first issue. In this issue, you will read the recent research on ELT.

We sincerely thank all board members and the referees for their efforts that increase the quality of the TOJELT and hope that the TOJELT will be a leading international journal.

With regards,

Dr. Ahmet Selçuk AKDEMİR

Editor-in-Chief

Frequent testing: What are the real impacts of frequent quizzes on students, teachers, and instruction?

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Abstract: Frequent testing in education has been a popular research topic since the beginning of the 20th century, but it has rarely been discussed in the field of English as a Foreign Language. The review of the literature illustrates that the studies done on frequent testing in other fields mostly highlight the benefits of frequent testing while some of the findings suggest several drawbacks. This paper aims to look into teachers' and students' perceptions of frequent testing in an EFL setting, at Middle East Technical University, Northern Cyprus Campus, School of Foreign Languages' Preparatory program. The data are collected with student and teacher questionnaires where the respondents are expected to evaluate the given perception on a five-point Lickert scale and interviews with volunteer teachers. The aim is to cross check the major conclusions on the benefits and drawbacks of frequent testing with students' and teachers' perceptions of frequent quizzes to find whether those conclusions can be considered valid in an EFL context. The results show that the teachers' perceptions of frequent quizzes at METU, NCC, SFL, Preparatory Program are in line with the literature, and the respondent teachers do not have big problems with the frequency of quizzes as far as their quality and effectiveness are assured. The students, on the other hand, admit that frequent quizzes positively affect their learning and retention skills, but they do not agree that frequent quizzes help with exam anxiety or make any contribution to their attendance or study habits, and their performance.

Keywords: *language assessment*, *test frequency*, *testing effect*, *frequent testing*, *quizzes*

1. Introduction

"… [T]ests and examinations – at the right time, in the right proportions – have a valuable contribution to make in assessing learners' proficiency, progress, and achievement," but testing is abused "when tests invade essential teaching space, when they are not the final stage of a process of learning but become the beginning, middle and end of the whole process" says Luke Prodromou (2006), in his 1995 *ELT Journal* article, "The backwash effect: from testing to teaching" (p.209). But what is that "right proportion?" How frequent the tests should be given? When do tests become the end instead of the means to teaching and learning? What happens if this is the case? These were the questions I had in my mind when I decided to look into the issue. When I scanned the literature on frequent testing, I realized that although there is a considerable amount of research on the impacts of frequent tests on instruction, students, and their achievement in particular academic fields and levels, it has rarely been a focus of discussion in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

There is no doubt that testing is integral to teaching and can support students and their learning, but there are conditions for this to happen. In their book, entitled *Classroom assessment: Supporting teaching and learning in real classrooms,* Taylor and Nolen (2008, p.8) define four conditions for assessment to support students and their learning as follows:

1. Assessment events should occur frequent enough that the teacher can see "whether the instruction is successful and who may need additional support."
2. Assessment tools should "give students clear ideas about what is important to learn and the criteria or expectations for good work" and should be aligned with instruction.
3. Assessment processes should comprise feedback "so that students know what they have learned and what they still need to learn."
4. Assessment decisions should be accurate in that grades accurately "reflect what students have learned."

When tests are planned and administered with these criteria in mind, in other words, when they are frequent enough to observe learning, clearly matching with instruction, accompanied by feedback, and accurately measuring learning, they are proper tools to support and measure learning. However, in a language classroom, when tests focus too much on the form rather than the use, when testing values accuracy more than learners' development, language learners may miss the point that the language they are learning is a living entity, with which some real people read, write, play games, watch movies, and communicate with each other. Similarly, when tests serve only for summative purposes, language learners may lose their focus while they are striving for getting better grades rather than learning the language.

Middle East Technical University, Northern Cyprus Campus, School of Foreign Languages' Preparatory program, with its large student and instructor body and with its practice of frequent quizzes as a testing tool gives a proper case to look into the situation. At Middle East Technical University, Northern Cyprus Campus, School of Foreign Languages' Preparatory Program, there are two types of quizzes: unannounced (pop-quizzes) and announced quizzes. The total number of quizzes given in a 16-week semester may differ from 15 to 20. Those quizzes are short exams, usually 15-20 minutes (not exceeding 30 minutes). In 2015-2016 academic year, quizzes contributed 16-20% to the yearly achievement grade-the determiner for whether or not the student will sit in the proficiency exam.

With this picture in mind, and in an attempt to find out the real impacts frequent testing on the students and their learning, the instructor and the instruction in the language classroom, this study looks into student and teacher perceptions of frequent testing at METU, NCC, SFL. It is hoped that the findings will shed light on how preparatory school students and teachers view the effects of frequent testing on variables such as students' class attendance, establishment of study habits, level of anxiety, level of learning and retention of the taught material, quality of the provided feedback and effectiveness of instruction.

2. Literature Review

Testing effect has always been a focus of interest throughout the 20th century. There is a vast amount of research looking into benefits of frequent testing in various fields of study which is collated successfully in several studies. The discussion in this paper is based on two of them: Roediger, Putnam and Smith's (2011, pp. 1-36) book chapter, "Ten benefits of testing and their applications to educational practice," and Kuo and Simon's (2009, pp. 156-160) literature review in their article, "How many tests do we really need?"

Roediger et al. (2011, pp. 1-36) examine 10 benefits of testing with reference to preceding literature in a chapter where they argue that "tests can serve other purposes [than assessment] in educational settings that greatly improve performance":

Table 1: "10 benefits of testing"

1) The testing effect= retrieval aids later retention
2) Testing identifies gaps in knowledge
3) Testing causes students to learn more from the next learning episode
4) Testing produces better organization of knowledge
5) Testing improves transfer of knowledge to new contexts
6) Testing can facilitate retrieval of the information that was not tested
7) Testing improves metacognitive monitoring
8) Testing prevents interference from previous material when learning new material
9) Testing provides feedback
10) Frequent testing encourages students to study

Note. From Roediger et al. (2011; p.4)

In a similar fashion, taking its stand on Bangert-Drawns, Kulik, and Kulik's 1991 summary of the literature that came up between 1929 and 1989, in their study, Kuo and Simon (2009, pp. 156-160) analyze the frequent testing research in different contexts. Kuo and Simon's analysis brings several advantages into surface, but in addition to those advantages there are also a number of disadvantages and pre-requisites being discussed.

The literature reviewed in these two studies is much more comprehensive, but within the scope of this paper, what we are going to look into is limited to the points highlighted in the table below:

Table 2: Major benefits and drawbacks of frequent testing in the literature

Frequent Tests		
Benefits	• Improve students' attendance • Encourage regular and more effective study periods • Reduce anxiety • Facilitate learning and retention • Provide both teachers and students with feedback • Increase students' exam performance • Are favored by students	• Consume class time • Produce superficial/ rote learning • Boost recall of only the tested material • May decrease the quality of feedback — **Drawbacks** **Two pre-requisites for the efficacy of frequent testing:** • Immediate/ constructive post-test feedback • Overlapping items between exams (quizzes and midterms/ final exam)

Note. Collated from Roediger et al. (2011, pp. 1-36) and Kuo and Simon (2009, pp. 156-160)

As it can be observed on Table 2, these studies mostly highlight the benefits of frequent testing while talking about a few drawbacks and pre-requisites for them to be effective. Taking those findings as a starting point, cross checking them with student and teacher perceptions of frequent testing at METU, NCC, SFL, this study looks at whether those defined benefits and drawbacks can be considered valid in an EFL context. So as to avoid repetition, details of the relevant literature will be given in the "Key findings and discussion" section.

3. Method

As the aim is to cross-check the conclusions gathered from Roediger et al. (2011) and Kuo and Simon (2009)'s summary of the literature on frequent testing with students' and teachers' perceptions in our context, first, two questionnaires were built up: one for the students and the other for the teachers. A five-point Likert Scale was used for both questionnaires. The responses were scored from 1, "strong disagreement," to 5, "strong agreement," and 3, "not sure" given for the neutral position.

The student questionnaire was made up of two sections where the students evaluated the benefits collated from the studies given above with a given prompt: "Thanks to frequent quizzes…" for the first section and "If there were not this many quizzes…" in the second section (see the appendices for the questionnaires). Student questionnaire was administered to 312 students in class. They were given 10 minutes to respond the questionnaire.

The teacher questionnaire was more comprehensive compared to the student one. It had four sections. The first section was a list of above mentioned benefits collated from above mentioned studies. The second section was built upon Prodromou's article, "The backwash effect: from testing to teaching." More than 20 years ago, in this article Prodromou (1995/2006) calls attention to how teachers sacrify from their teaching for the sake of testing:

> Many teachers, trapped in an examination preparation cycle, feel that communicative and humanistic methodologies are luxuries they cannot afford… Sound teaching practices are often sacrificed in an anxious attempt to 'cover' the examination syllabus, and to keep ahead of the competition. (p.209)

So as to find about whether the SFL instructors feel trapped in the way Prodromou describes, the items in this section were adapted from Prodromou's (1995/2006) discussion of testing practices that cause negative "backwash" effects on teaching where he argues that tests damage teaching practices when they:

1. Are built on fragments of language and skills which are easier to test (p.210);
2. "Deny learners' thinking time" (p.211);
3. Value "only the right answer" disregarding language development processes (p.211);
4. Are not matching with curricula and teaching pedagogy (pp. 209-13).

Therefore, in this section, the teachers responded to situations such as: "due to their inherent nature, frequent tests/quizzes are assessing isolated, sentence level samples of language…" or "…are valuing accuracy more than language development…" (see Appendix 2).

In the third and fourth sections, to find about teachers' perception of an ideal situation, the items were given with two prompts "fewer tests would" and "quizzes work better if…" , respectively. In an attempt to give the questionnaire a scope for "the ideal," teacher-based-assessment and its applications which are well defined in Davison and Leung's 2009 (pp. 395-396) article were utilized to shape the items in these two sections:

1. Integrates the teacher into the assessment processes;
2. Conducted by the learners' own teacher;
3. Applied and adapted to meet the teaching and learning objectives of different classes and students;
4. Integrates learners into the assessment;
5. Gives way to immediate and constructive feedback;
6. Stimulates continuous evaluation and modification of teaching and learning.

Accordingly, in the third section, the teachers responded to situations like: "fewer tests would allow more comprehensive feedback; and in the fourth section they were given situations like: "quizzes work better if [they] are used to evaluate/ modify assessment procedures to optimize teaching and learning" (see Appendix 2).

In addition to the above mentioned four sections where the respondents were expected to evaluate given situations using a 5-pointLickert-scale, "any other comments/opinions" box was also incorporated in the teacher questionnaire. The questionnaire was shared with the teachers in its online version via an email asking for their volunteer response to the questionnaire and inviting volunteers for a follow-up interview.

The questionnaire was sent to more than 50 teachers, but there were only 22 respondents. The participants were anonymous. Only 6 of them responded to "any other comments/ opinions" section. Last, but not the least, 4 teachers, 2 of whom novice with 3 to 5 years experience, the other two experienced with more than 15 years, volunteered to give interviews. Interviews were semi-structured and each took about 30 minutes.

For the analyses of the results, an online survey software was used. As the student questionnaire was administered on paper, the responses were manually entered in the system. Teacher questionnaire was already designed and administered using the same software, so the responses were gathered online. The initial quantitative analyses for both questionnaires were done using the analysis tool of the online survey software. You can find the results being discussed with reference to the literature in "Key finding and discussion" section below.

4. Key Findings and Discussion

4. 1. Attendance

Frequent testing is usually thought to be encouraging students' attendance, and research (Fitch, Drucker, & Norton 1951; Hovell, Williams, & Semb 1979; Wilder, Flood, & Stromsnes 2001) shows that "students tend to attend more class sessions when frequently scheduled quizzes or tests are implemented" (as cited in Kuo, & Simon, 2009, p. 156).

In our situation, it would not be wrong to say that teachers see frequent quizzes as attendance builders as 86% (including 41% strongly agree) of the participant teachers agree that frequent quizzes improve students' attendance. However, the student respondents do not agree with their teachers: While 52% (including 19% strongly agree) of the students say they would still care about attending classes regularly if there were not this many quizzes, only 36% of the students (but 22% strongly believe so) say they would not care much about their attendance if there were not this many quizzes (see Figure 1):
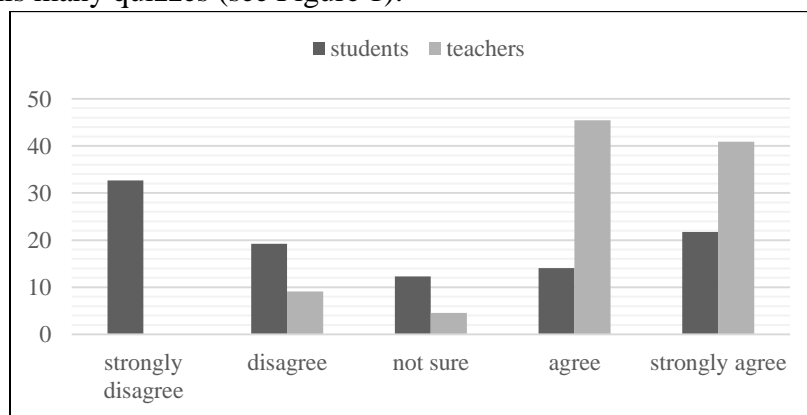
Figure 1: Students' vs. teachers' responses to "Frequent tests improve attendance."

There is no doubt that ensuring students' attendance is important in language courses, and frequent quizzes, both announced and unannounced ones might really encourage regular attendance to classes, which however, cannot be a valid reason for frequent testing because overemphasis on this aspect can easily cause to undervalue or disregard important aspects of language classroom assessment listed by Talor and Nolen (2008, p.8) such as logical frequency of assessment events and appropriateness of tools, processes and decisions.

4. 2. Regular and effective study habits

Frequent testing advocates argue that frequent tests lead to regular and more effective study habits, which is corroborated by the studies done by Azorlosa and Renner (2006), Marchant (2002), Mawhinney, Bostow, Laws, Blumenfeld, and Hopkins (1971). Accordingly, "students reported more regular study periods motivated by frequent testing" (as cited in Kuo, & Simon, 2009, p.156).

However, in our case, it seems that this is more like what teachers think: Although the participant teachers agree that frequent quizzes boost students' study habits and motivate regular study periods with 55% (including 9% strongly agree), the students are rather less sure about this benefit. While 31% of the students agree that frequent quizzes improved their study habits, and they study more regularly and effectively, 39 % students (including 8% strongly disagree) disagree with this situation, and 30% of the students say they are not certain (see Figure 2).
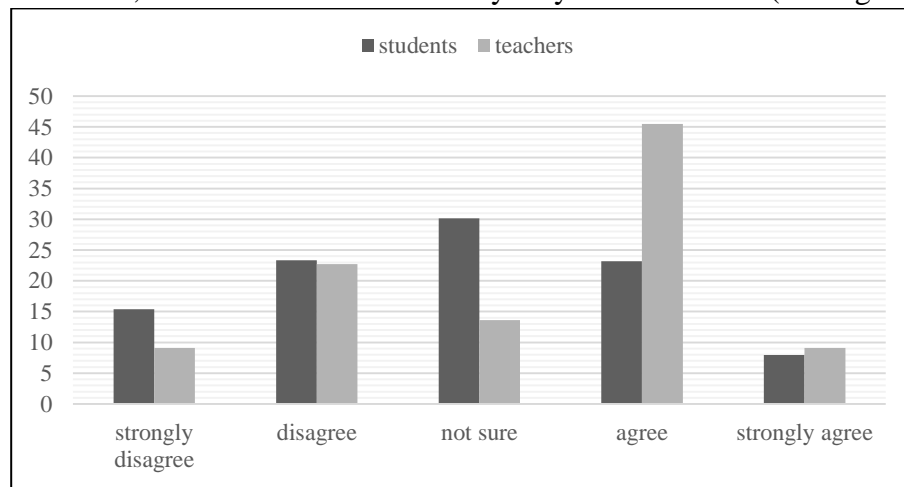
Figure 2: Students' vs. teachers' responses to "Frequent tests encourage regular and effective study habits."

There might be a variety of possible reasons behind this picture that need consideration: It might be because of the motivation loss due to low performance, or not getting quality feedback on their performance. It might also be about poorly communicated and/or mismatching value given to quizzes. Likewise, it might be also about mismatching teaching, learning, and assessment objectives. One of the teachers interviewed linked this situation to the importance attached to testing:

> **Teacher A:** I find my students so stressed. Tests stress the students out so much. It is the importance attached to it not the numbers [number of tests]. Quizzes are not motivating the students [students' regular study habits], and [this is mostly due to] the testing philosophy the school has where mistakes are harshly penalized.

4. 3. Exam anxiety

As Kuo and Simon (2009, p. 160) cited (Azorlosa & Renner, 2006; Galassi, Frierson, & Siegel, 1984; Graham, 1999; Kika, McLaughlin, & Dixon, 1992; Kling, McCorkle, Miller, & Reardon, 2005; Landrum, 2007; Leeming, 2002; Marso, 1970), "frequently tested students have reported a reduced level of anxiety, attended more class sessions, and felt generally more prepared for exams." This is quite possible because in ideal circumstances, if there are frequent quizzes, students will be attending more classes; attending more classes they will feel readier and more confident about the exams they are taking; when they feel readier and more confident about taking exams, they will feel less anxious about the exams they are taking.

However, in our situation, there is not a strong consensus on whether or not frequent testing reduces exam anxiety: 45% (including 27% strongly disagree) of the teachers and 40% (including 18% strongly disagree) of the students do not think this is the case, 23% of the participant teachers, 34% of the students agree that taking frequent tests reduce students' exam anxiety. Surprisingly, 26% of the students and 32% of the teachers say they are not sure, which should also be taken in the account.

Reducing exam anxiety cannot be a realistic objective for frequent testing, but if frequent tests work properly, it is very possible to talk about the above mentioned chain of benefits. As, in our context, the students and teachers do not think that frequent tests are reducing exam anxiety, it will be wise to reconsider assessment objectives, structure and procedures to see whether there is something not working properly.

4. 4. Learning the course material

As mentioned above, frequent quizzes can suitably lead to a domino effect, with which we can talk about a chain of benefits: "educators generally agree that both increased attendance and frequent study periods represent behaviors that tend to facilitate learning of course material" (Kuo, & Simon, 2009, 156), so frequent quizzes should help better learning of the course material.

In our context, 69% (including 33% strongly believe so) of the students say they would still care about the course material if there were not this many quizzes, so it seems that frequent tests do not add to the importance attached to the course material from the students' point of view. However, both students and teachers seem to value frequent tests in terms of their contribution to students' learning: 60% of the students (including 11% strongly agree) and 55 % of the participant teachers (including 41 % strongly agree) agree that frequent tests/quizzes help students' learning and relating the course material to their learning.

Although there is not a great consensus, as 30% of the students disagree and 32% say they are not sure, 40% of the students agree that it is thanks to frequent quizzes that they feel more motivated to learn/ to study. In contrast, 50 % of the participant teachers (including 14% strongly disagree) do not think that taking frequent tests helps students' motivation to learn. One of the instructors who volunteered for an interview explains why this is not the case:

> **Teacher A:** I don't think it is the number but the importance attached to it. We could have a pop quiz every other day. If it was purely for motivation or feedback purpose, it would not be a problem. But when they have to take these tests to be qualified for the proficiency exam … I find my students so stressed. I would not care about the number. They [frequent tests] could be perfect motivational tool if students just see how well they perform.

It is obvious that neither the students nor the teachers are completely negative about the frequent quizzes. It seems that frequent testing might really facilitate better learning of the course material or motivate students' learning when it is valued as a teaching/ learning tool with carefully revised assessment policies and procedures.

4. 5. Retention

Educational psychologists believe that "people remember material better after several short periods of practice separated in time ("spaced" or "distributed" practice) compared to one long period of practice ("massed" practice) even when the total number of repetitions is the same in both learning conditions" (as cited in Kuo, & Simon, 2009, p.157). Likewise, according to Roediger et al. (2011, p.1), repeated retrieval:

1. enhances better retention of the new material compared to not testing or even to studying;
2. produces knowledge that can be retrieved flexibly and transferred to other situations;
3. leads to easier retrieval of related information, at least on delayed tests.

When this is the case, frequent quizzes should be working very well in the language classroom, and in our situation, the teacher and student responses support the literature: Both teachers and students do agree that frequent quizzes help to improve students' memory and retention skills as 55 % of the participant teachers (including 41 % strongly agree) and 57% of the students agree (including 17% strongly agree) that frequent quizzes help to improve students' learning and memory skills. However, the picture is not as bright as it seems according to a teacher's interview comment:

> **Teacher B:** But students are constantly reminded of the assessment [with frequent quizzes]. [This is] exam oriented not learning. They are only focused on passing the proficiency [which has] very little connection between what they are learning. They see it just like another school subject.

Frequent tests may well serve the purpose with a careful choice of what is tested and how it is tested. However, if the tests do not test the right skills and types of knowledge in the right way, they may encourage rote learning of the tested material, in which case it may become inevitable that students see them only as a ticket to pass the course, which makes it impossible to talk about real learning of the language.

4. 6. Feedback

Research on frequent testing highlights the value of feedback. Bangert-Drowns, Kulik and Kulik (1991) draw attention on the premise that frequent testing provides teachers with "more opportunities to correct student errors and reward good performance, and give students good indication of what they have learned" (p. 89). However, when students are tested frequently, if there is no posttest feedback given about learning, and if frequent tests are "no more than indicators of a final high stakes summative test, or if they are components of a continuous assessment scheme so that they all bear a high-stakes implication, then the situation can amount to no more than frequent summative testing" (Black, & Dylan, 1998, p. 36). Supporting this, Kuo and Simon (2009) cite Addison's 1995 study where he demonstrated that the presence of a posttest feedback "helps students learn the material better" and conclude that especially for the low performing students it is "crucial to provide feedback and/or remedial instruction after every test" (p. 158).

In our case, the students trust frequent quizzes as a tool to monitor their learning and their progress. They believe that, thanks to frequent quizzes, they can see their weaknesses and strengths (78%). Similarly, they agree that frequent quizzes help them keep track of what exactly

they are learning (70%) and show them what is important and what they need to study (63%). About feedback they are receiving from the teachers, they still feel that they can better communicate and ask for/receive help from the teacher(s) thanks to frequent quizzes (68%), but when it comes to whether the teacher(s) can see their strengths and weaknesses, they are less certain (48%) (see Figure 3).
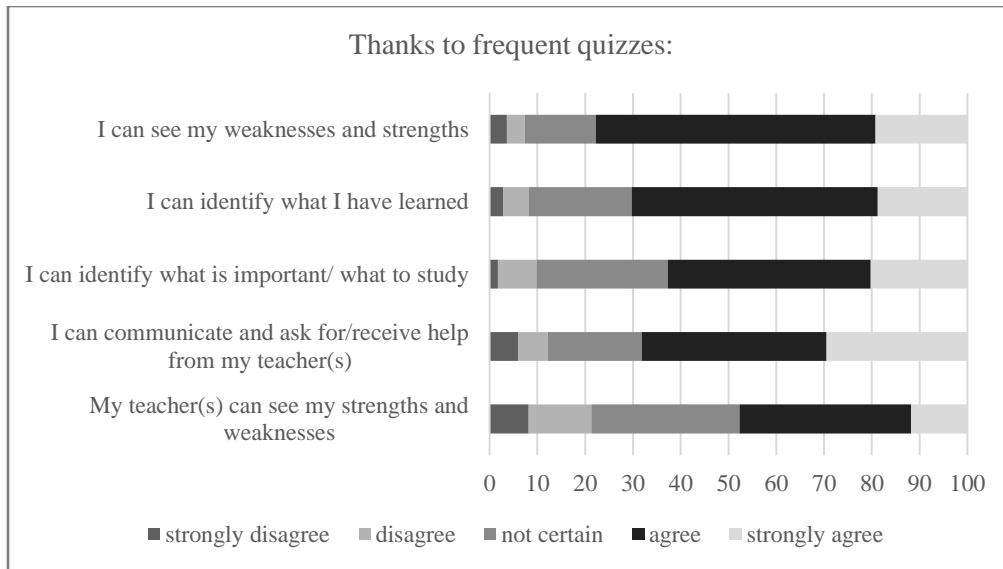
Figure 3: Students' perspectives on self and teacher evaluation and feedback.

It is not surprising that the participant teachers agree with the literature acknowledging that frequent quizzes work better if they offer immediate and constructive feedback (95%). Similarly, they agree with the students as 50% of the teachers believe that frequent quizzes increase students' metacognition and improve the ability to monitor their own progress. In the same vein, 77% of the teachers believe that frequent quizzes help teachers monitor students' learning. However, they are less optimistic than the students about the communication and collaboration between the students and teachers as 45 % of the teachers do not think frequent quizzes lead to improved communication and collaboration between the teacher and students. One teacher sums up the situation in the comment box on the questionnaire well:

> **Anonymous Teacher Comment:** Focusing too much on language accuracy especially in quizzes testing reading or listening skills seem to be a hindering effect on student learning. Moreover, students lose interest in the quiz feedback if they are tested frequently. Another important factor in taking the feedback given after the test is that when they get feedback too late from the instructor, unless they are extremely self-motivated learners, they lack the motive to take the feedback seriously. They don't remember the tasks to bother themselves anyway.

This is most probably why there is a high consensus among the participant teachers that fewer quizzes would offer better assessment of learning, 59% (including 14 % strongly agree) and more comprehensive feedback, 73% (including 27 % strongly agree). A teacher's interview comment explains this finding very well:

> **Teacher C:** Frequent testing, frequent feedback must be important, but the problem is the students are not taking it. They look at the mark [which is] not providing students with feedback. Would be useful if it was for feedback,

monitoring learning. Maybe, not the frequency but the rationale, the methodology [is the problem].

4. 7. Performance

As mentioned earlier, repeated retrieval is important in learning the new material, which is why, it is not possible to disregard the role of frequent testing on students' exam performance. Nevertheless, there are still some important factors to consider to be able to talk about its effectiveness.

Kuo and Simon's meta-analysis (2009) shows that in most of the studies, frequent tests are usually found to have no or not significant effect on students' final exam performance (p.157). In addition to that, according to Bangert-Drowns, Kulik and Kulik (1991) better exam performance does not always mean better learning because "students might direct their efforts on performing better on tests rather than learning" (p.89). Corroborating this idea, Tan (1992), in his study, evidenced that "frequent summative tests were having a profound negative influence on [first year medical students'] learning." He suggests that if the tests are only measuring "low-level skills," they will eventually establish a "hidden-curriculum" which will inhibit "high-level conceptual development" in the absence of which "students cannot apply theory to practice" (p. 255).

On the other hand, in their meta-analysis, Kuo and Simon (2009, pp. 157), highlight the fact that taking "section tests" prior to final exam is beneficial for better final exam performance, in other words, any number of tests is better than taking no tests. However, there is no linear correlation between the number of tests and final exam performance and that a student is successful on "section tests" does not guarantee a better final exam performance. Similarly, they also underline the fact that frequent tests lose their effectiveness beyond a certain number of tests, more than 1 and 2 tests in a semester, for instance, may cause the performance to decline again. Another interesting point in their analysis is that when the questions in frequent tests overlap with those in the cumulative final exam, they are more likely to lead to better final exam performance.

Kuo and Simon (2009) also quote some studies (Graham, 1999; Kika, McLaughlin, and Dixon, 1992) which offer "some indirect evidence suggesting such a link between test frequency and level of student performance. Mid- to low-performing students demonstrated a larger gain in learning outcome when the number of tests had been increased." With reference to those studies, they conclude that "lower-achieving students may benefit more from frequent testing than do higher-achieving students since the latter group tend to do well consistently across exams regardless of test frequency," and they suggest that "for the low performers to benefit from frequent testing, it would then be crucial to provide feedback and/or remedial instruction after every test" (pp. 158-159).

Student questionnaire responses to whether they are getting better grades in high stakes situations thanks to frequent quizzes shows that the students do not believe frequent quizzes help them perform better in bigger exam situations: While 42% (including 19% strongly disagree) say that this is not the situation, 33% of the students (including 7% strongly agree) agree that they are getting better grades in the mid-terms thanks to frequent quizzes, and 26% say that they are not certain. The teachers, on the other hand, are less sure about whether frequent quizzes lead to better student success as 32% (18% strongly disagree) of the participant teachers disagree that frequent quizzes help to improve student success, and 55% of them say that they are not sure about this.

However, the participant teachers are more obviously leaning towards the negative side when the discussion is about the effectiveness of frequent testing. For instance, 64% (including 14% strongly agree) of the participant teachers do agree that frequent quizzes boost recall of what is tested, but may harm the recall of what is not tested. Similarly, 68% (including 27% strongly agree) of the participant teachers do agree that frequent quizzes are producing rote learning, which is most probably due to the test and assessment procedures practiced in the program: 64% (including 32 % strongly agree) of the participant teachers do agree that frequent quizzes are assessing isolated, sentence level samples of language by means of M/C, gap fill or transformation type of questions; 91% (including 50% strongly agree) of the participant teachers do agree that frequent quizzes are valuing accuracy more than language development and form more than content. The fact that 59% (including 14% strongly agree) of the participant teachers agree that fewer quizzes would offer better assessment of learning also shows that they do not believe in the effectiveness of the frequent tests given (see Figure 4).
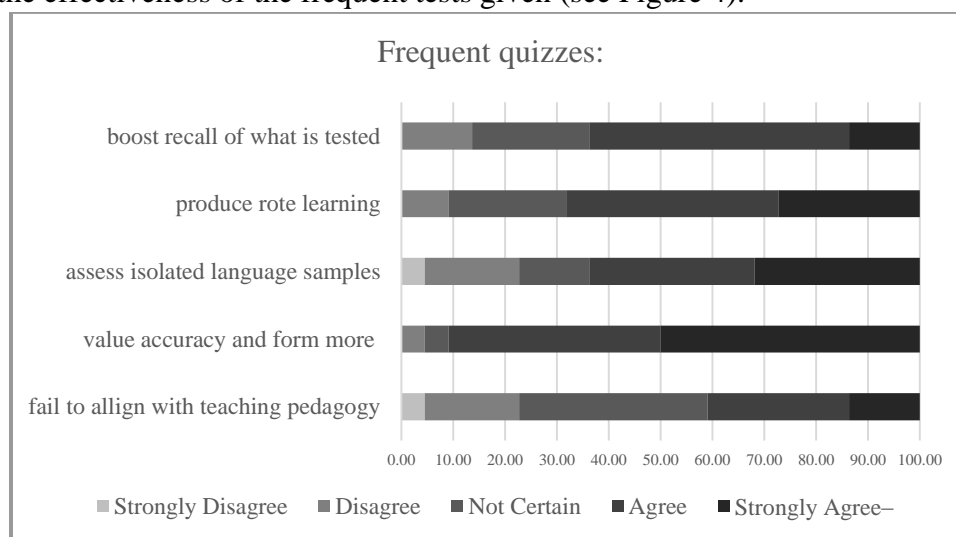
Figure 4: Teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the frequent quizzes.

To sum up, in our situation, neither the students nor the teachers trust frequent quizzes as exam performance builders. The teachers believe that what is valued in the quizzes is leading to superficial learning, and/or the quizzes are not assessing real learning, which is most probably why the participant teachers are this much negative about the effectiveness of the frequent quizzes:

> **Teacher B:** I don't think the quizzes assess learning in the best possible way. [They are] not designed in the best way. When you have this many quizzes, of course you can see the students' progress, but how well/how fair they are graded when they [the quizzes] are this many [is an issue].

4. 8. Instructional effectiveness

Although advocates of frequent testing may think that it is a well-spent time, there is no doubt that tests given in class time takes valuable time away from instruction. In conclusion to their meta-analysis, with reference to four studies where students' attitudes towards test frequency was measured and was found that students "had a more favorable opinion of their instruction when they were tested more frequently," Bangert-Drowns, Kulik and Kulik (1991)

suggest that frequent testing can "improve the effectiveness of the instruction," (p. 97) and may help creating a more positive atmosphere in the classroom (pp. 97-98).

To see the effect of the frequent quizzes on the instruction in prep school at METU, NCC, I raised several questions to both students and teachers on the survey. When I asked the students whether they would pay less attention to class-work or homework if there were not this many quizzes, 72% (including 34% strongly believe so) said they would still be paying this much attention. Likewise, as given earlier, 69% said they would still care about the course material if there were not this many quizzes.

When I asked the teachers whether they think frequent quizzes are consuming class time, take time away from other critical classroom activities, there was no notable consensus. On the other hand, three of the teachers who volunteered to give interviews expressed some positive feelings about the class time given to quizzes:

> **Teacher B:** I find it relieving at times, especially with my problematic class. When you have motivational problems… sometimes, the quiz time gives the teacher some time to reflect on… break time… during which you don't have to do much…

As opposed to this, they all mentioned how uneasy it is to teach with frequent quizzes. For example, the same teacher said:

> **Teacher B:** However, most of the time, it is a pain because you cannot do what you are going to do, and you cannot do it next hour because they will be talking about the quiz. Or you will need to give them a warm-up activity next lesson at the beginning. Can mess up the whole morning. Difficult if you have something you need to finish with.

It seems that the problem is not limited to the time the quizzes are given. Frequent quizzes seem to have an effect on teaching and instruction in pre-and post-quiz situations as well. Although there is no noteworthy agreement or disagreement on whether frequent quizzes improve their teaching or not, 45 % (including 14 % strongly agree) of the participant teachers agree that fewer quizzes would allow more time for preparation, teaching and learning; and 41 % (including 14 % strongly agree) do agree that frequent quizzes are failing to align assessment procedures with curricula and teaching pedagogy. What's more, 59% (including 32% strongly disagree) of the participant teachers do not think frequent quizzes help to improve students' active participation in the classroom. One teacher explains why this is the situation:

> **Teacher D:** The teacher's job as the observer and/or facilitator of learning, but [with the quizzes] we are losing this opportunity as we are simply watching them performing we cannot facilitate or observe learning; and when we talk about this many quizzes, over time, you build up a number of hours with lost opportunities.

In our context, the majority of the students are coming from the Turkish education system where there is too much emphasis on testing and exam performance, which is why it will not be surprising if they favor frequent tests. However, students' responses in this particular situation do not back up this assumption. Similarly, although the teachers volunteered to give interviews have made some positive comments about the class time given to the quizzes, the points raised are not strong enough to justify the frequency of the quizzes. Likewise, the teachers' responses to the questions relevant to instructional effectiveness show that they are not positive about frequent quizzes' contribution to the instruction.

5. Conclusion

The results show that the teachers at METU, NCC, SFL, Preparatory School are mostly in line with the literature on frequent testing, but when the question is about the level of anxiety or effectiveness of the instruction, there is not any significant consensus. However, from the students' perspective, except for their positive impact on their learning, retention and self-monitoring skills, frequent quizzes do not make any big contribution to their attendance and study habits, level of anxiety or performance (see Table 3):

Table 3: Summary of findings in comparison with the literature

The impact of frequent tests on	In the Literature	For the Students	For the Teachers
Attendance	Positive	"no" or "not significant"	Positive
Study habits	Positive	"no" or "not significant"	Positive
Anxiety	Positive	"no" significant consensus	"no" significant consensus
Learning	Positive	Positive	Positive
Retention	Positive	Positive	Positive
Feedback	Positive	Positive	Positive
Performance	"no" or "not significant"	"no" effect	"no" effect
Instruction (from students' point of view)	Positive	"no" effect	"no" significant consensus

In brief, the teachers trust frequent quizzes as attendance builders although the students repudiate their teachers. Similarly, while the teachers are more positive about frequent quizzes' capacity to encourage more regular and effective study habits, the students have doubts about this situation. However, while leaning towards the negative side, both the teachers and the students are mainly not sure about whether the frequent quizzes help to reduce students' exam anxiety or not.

The majority of the students and the teachers agree that frequent quizzes help better learning and relating the course material and improve students' memory and retentions skills. Likewise, both parties believe that frequent quizzes help teachers' monitor students' learning and help students see their own progress, but the teachers have some concerns about the effectiveness of the feedback in frequent quiz situations. In addition, frequent quizzes are not thought to be facilitating better student performance at high stakes situations. Finally, the students do not seem to be favoring frequent quizzes in this particular situation, and the teachers believe fewer quizzes would have a positive effect on the instruction.

It is unfortunate that the participant teachers do not trust the efficacy of the frequent quizzes as they think they can easily produce superficial/ rote learning and boost recall of only the tested material, and they agree that fewer tests would offer better assessment of learning as they would allow giving more comprehensive tests and offer more time for grading.

There are, of course, limitations to this study: First of all, although the idea was to find about teacher and student perceptions of frequent quizzes, the data I collected via student and teacher questionnaires mainly hold quantitative characteristics rather than being qualitative. The

interviews I conducted with four of the participant teachers allowed me to move closer to the qualitative end, but I did not interview any students at this stage. Although the questions in both surveys appear to hold content, internal and external validity, the number of teacher respondents to the questionnaire might reduce the validity in terms of sample representativeness. Conducting the surveys again with different groups of students and teachers to test the reliability was not possible at this stage due to practical and logistical reasons.

Despite its limitations, this study shows that frequent tests given in a language classroom demand careful consideration. Be it qualitative or experimental research, it is obvious that the impacts of frequent testing in a language classroom require closer analysis. In conclusion, if this much emphasis to testing is needed to be given, then those tests should serve a formative function with a greater emphasis on the opportunities for effective feedback and students' self-monitoring of their learning. Testing objectives and tools should be well chosen to make sure frequent tests serve the right purpose. Only then, it may be possible to justify the amount and frequency of the quizzes and get the possible benefit out of them.

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Appendix 1
Student Questionnaire
Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following items:

Thanks to frequent quizzes	1 Strongly	2 Disagree	3 Not certain	4 Agree	5 Strongly
1. I feel less anxious about the mid-terms/ final exam.					
2. I can better understand what I have learned.					
3. I can better identify what is important/ what to study.					
4. I can see my weaknesses and strengths and the points I need to					
5. My teacher(s) can see my strengths and weaknesses and monitor my					
6. I can communicate and ask for/receive help from my teacher(s).					
7. I feel more motivated to learn/study.					
8. I learn better and find it easy to relate the course material with my learning.					
9. My learning and memory skills have improved.					
10. I am getting better/ have already got better grades in the mid-term and the					
If there were not this many quizzes	**1 Strongly**	**2 Disagree**	**3 Not certain**	**4 Agree**	**5 Strongly**
11. I wouldn't care this much about my attendance.					
12. I wouldn't care this much about the course material.					
13. I wouldn't pay this much attention to class-work or homework.					

Appendix 2

Teacher questionnaire
Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following items:

Frequent tests/ quizzes:	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Not certain	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Not certain	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
1. Provide students with feedback.					
2. Reduce student anxiety, students feel more comfortable/relaxed or prepared for the mid-terms or the final exam.					
3. Help student motivation.					
4. Help students learning and relating the course material and do better in the exam.					
5. Help to improve students learning= retention or learning skills.					
6. Boost students' study habits; motivate regular study periods.					
7. Increase students' metacognition and improve the ability to monitor their own progress.					
8. Students attend more classes.					
9. Help students' active participation.					
10. Help to improve communication and collaboration between the teacher and students.					
11. Improve students' achievement.					
12. Help to improve teaching.					
13. Help to monitor students learning.					

However, due to their inherent nature, frequent tests/quizzes …	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Not certain	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
14. Boost recall of what is tested, but it may harm the recall of what is not tested.					
15. Are producing rote learning of a superficial sort not in a deep fashion.					
16. Are assessing isolated, sentence level samples of language by means of M/C, gap fill or transformation types.					
17. Are valuing accuracy more than language development and form more than content.					

18. Are failing to align assessment procedures with curricula and teaching pedagogy.					
19. Are consuming lecture time= take time away from other critical classroom activities.					

Fewer tests would:	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Not certain	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
20. Allow giving more comprehensive tests					
21. Offer more time for grading					
22. Offer better assessment of learning					
23. Allow more comprehensive feedback.					

Quizzes work better if:	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Not certain	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
24. The teacher is integrated fully into the assessment process including planning, assessment, evaluating performance, and making decisions based on results.					
25. Conducted by and under the direction of the learners' teacher (not external assessor).					
26. Applied and adapted to meet the teaching and learning objectives of different classes and students.					
27. Integrate learners into the assessment. Utilize self and peer assessment in addition to teacher assessment.					
28. Offer immediate and constructive feedback.					
29. Used to evaluate/ modify assessment procedures to optimize teaching and learning.					

Towards a receptive paradigm in foreign language teaching

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Abstract: There are a growing number of language teaching experts and practitioners who assert that the Communicative Language Teaching has failed to meet the expectations of language teachers and students. The article attributes this failure to the theories of "language" and of "language learning" underlying the Communicative Language Teaching. Particularly problematic in this regard is the general human learning theory of "cognitivism", which, when applied to language teaching, encourages production practice from the very beginning on the basis of the domain-general assumption that practice makes perfect. Studies on language acquisition, however, have demonstrated that when learners are allowed to remain silent at the beginning level and are given ample amount of input, their subsequent language development is much faster and healthier. Currently, there is a paradigm shift in the making, a shift towards receptive methodologies. Research highlights the importance of receptive experience in language development via extensive listening and reading, and strongly suggests that use of our general learning ability does not work well for language acquisition. Rather, optimal language acquisition, first and second, is the result of the functioning of a domain specific mental capacity nourished via rich receptive experience, not through premature production practice.

Keywords: *Communicative Language Teaching; paradigm shift; language acquisition; modularity; receptive skills.*

1. Introduction

Throughout the history of foreign language teaching, three major methods have been dominant: the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), the Audiolingual Method (ALM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The moves from GTM to ALM, and from ALM to CLT can be viewed as major paradigm shifts realized to achieve success in teaching foreign languages. It looks like, however, that the latest paradigm represented by CLT has not produced the desired result as there are a growing number of language teaching experts and teachers who have articulated their discontent with CLT (Andrewes, 2005; Bax, 2003; Sheen, 1994; Swan, 1985), a methodology which is "currently in the process of being packaged up in readiness for the dustbin of history" (Hunter & Smith, 2012, p. 430).

On the eve of a potential paradigm shift in foreign language teaching, we need to understand what went wrong with the previous one(s) and refrain from the mistakes made by CLT (and its predecessors). There is no single, monolithic CLT as it "means different things to different people" (Harmer, 2007, p. 69). It is no surprise therefore, that there have been a variety of explanations as to why CLT has "failed to fulfill its promise" (Sheen, 1994, p. 127). The

underlying reasons for failure cited in the literature range from a less heavy emphasis on grammar to cultural factors such as production-oriented CLT's inappropriateness in Confucian Heritage Communities, where silence is considered golden. Accordingly, the suggestions for solutions vary from a heavier emphasis on "focus on form [but not on form*s*]"(Long, 1988, p. 136) to context-dependent language teaching (Bax, 2003; Saengboon, 2006). In other words, there is a considerable level of confusion as to what the source of problem is, and how to solve it. This paper is an attempt to seek the roots of the problem in the underlying theoretical approach of CLT and its predecessors (namely, their theories of language and of language learning).

2. Language Theory of CLT: Communicative Competence

Before analyzing the highly controversial issues concerning the language theory underlying CLT, an analogy will be made to clarify the main line of argumentation, i.e. to extract the main issues out of the chaos of trivia: In the early 1970's, British officials were alarmed with the increasing number of traffic accidents caused by foreign drivers. The problem did not exist with those foreigners who got their first driver's license (L1) in England but with those who had received their L1 in countries with right-hand traffic. To solve this problem, the British officials thought it necessary that a new driving course ought to be designed by means of which non-native drivers would get a second license (L2) for driving safely in England. The government undertook this plan and assigned two experts of English License Training (ELT) to design the course: Henry Littlefit and Stephen Bird. Before Henry and Stephen actually designed the course, they had a long discussion about the main principles. Their discussion was as follows:

Stephen: I think the reason why foreign drivers drive unsafely in England is because of their left-hand driving skill, which is unsuitable for the left-hand traffic in England. To pick up an "L2", they basically need to master right-hand driving skill. If we focus on this problem in our new course, I believe traffic accidents by foreign drivers will be greatly reduced.

Henry: I believe this is just one part of a bigger problem. Driving is a much more complex skill involving more than a proper orientation. The ability to interpret English traffic signs in their proper context is at least as important as having a right-hand driving skill.

Stephen: You are right. But, our non-native drivers already know the meanings of traffic signs, which they learned while obtaining their L1. There is no need to teach those universal signs again.

Henry: You cannot say that they are all universal. For instance, the "STOP" sign is not the same in every country. Other countries use a different word for the word "STOP".

Stephen: Yes, but all stop signs are six-sided almost everywhere in the world. So even if they cannot understand the meaning of stop, they know it means "STOP" by the shape of the sign. I don't think more than a small percentage of accidents are caused by such differences.

Henry: The percentages are not important. What I want to emphasize is the complexity of driving, and the urgent need to set up an authentic exercise field where there are genuine English cars, houses, schools and even English pedestrians. Only then will they be able to realize the real meaning of traffic rules in England and learn how to drive safely in England. You're oversimplifying the complex task of driving. We need to teach driving as a totally new skill in its new context.

Such a debate has probably never taken place but, even if it had, it is highly unlikely that British officials would follow Henry's advice and set up a driving course where they make foreigners practice those aspects of driving that they have already mastered, while the real problem stems from improper orientation. In the field of foreign language teaching, however, a

similar discussion has taken (and is still taking) place (see the discussion between Swan (1985) and Widdowson (1985) for a typical example) and many educational institutions and teacher training programs around the world have opted for a methodology (i.e. CLT) which tries to put the emphasis on those aspects of language already mastered by L2 learners.

This undue emphasis is an offshoot of the underlying theory of language adopted by CLT. Ever since the British Council adopted CLT as its basic approach to language teaching in the early 1970's (Richards, 1984, p.16), Dell Hymes' theory of Communicative Competence (CC) has become one of the most fashionable ideas in foreign language teaching. The literature has witnessed repeated instances of the assertion that knowledge of language is not simply the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, but that linguistic competence is just one portion of a larger competence, which also includes pragmatic, discourse (and also strategic) competencies. The importance of discourse-pragmatic rules are exaggerated to such an extent that the under-emphasis on these rules in formal classroom context is presented as the major reason for the ineffectiveness of foreign language teaching:

> *Communicative language teaching stresses that in order to be effective language users, learners need to know about more than the formal system of the target language—they must also know how to use the language in socially appropriate ways. (Vásquez & Sharpless, 2009, p. 6)*

We have been told that even when an L2 learner knows the grammatical and lexical (i.e. linguistic) aspects of an utterance, s-he may not decipher its intended, contextual meaning without the aid of discourse-pragmatic (socio-linguistic) rules:

> *It is possible for someone to have learned a large number of sentence patterns and a large number of words, which can fit into them without knowing how they are put to communicative use. (Widdowson, 1978, p. 18-19)*

For instance, the statement "It is hot in here" might be a neutral comment, a request, a warning, an invitation to take off clothes, or what-not, depending on the context in which the statement is uttered. And its proper interpretation cannot be achieved through an analysis of its lexical and grammatical content only. In that sense, Hymes' CC is more comprehensive than other linguistic theories (including Chomsky's), which basically limit themselves to the morpho-syntactic domain.

From a linguistic perspective, of course, there is nothing wrong with this broader and more comprehensive view of language. After all, it is apparent that the same utterance might have different meanings in varying contexts in every language. What is less apparent, however, is whether a significant portion of L2 learners' problems in learning a new language stem from such discourse/pragmatic factors.

Any L2 learner of normal intelligence would have no major difficulty in interpreting the statement "It is hot in here" as a request, when it is uttered by a sweating person pointing to a window. After all, a literal translation of this statement would probably have the same contextual meaning in his/her own language. If s-he were to misinterpret the speaker's real intention, then s-he would probably commit the same mistake in his/her L1 as well. That is, context-dependent utterance interpretation rules are, to a large extent, universal like traffic signs and "main categories of communicative acts … are available in any community" (Rose & Kasper, 2001, p. 5). What is language-specific and needs to be mastered in learning a new language is its grammar and lexicon (like left/right-hand driving orientation in our analogy). As long as an L2 learner decodes grammatical and lexical content of incoming input using his/her linguistic competence, s-he will rarely have difficulty in assigning its contextual meaning:

> *Foreigners have mother tongues: they know as much as we do about how human beings communicate. The 'rules of use' that determine how we interpret utterances ..... are mostly non-language-specific, and amount to little more than the operation of experience and common sense. The precise value of an utterance is given by the interaction of its structural and lexical meaning with the situation in which it is used. (Swan, 1985, p. 5)*

This does not necessarily imply that we should design our L2 courses with a major focus on grammatical structures (an issue which will be discussed later in the article). The argument here is that basing our language teaching practice upon the premises of CC is invalid. It is one thing to assert that communication would be incomplete without discourse/pragmatic competence, yet another thing to claim that foreign language teaching would be incomplete if these discourse/pragmatic rules are not taught to students (who already know nearly all of them). Following a line of reasoning similar to that of CLT advocates, one might as well claim that we should teach our students how to send messages from their language centers (like the Broca's area) in their brains to the articulators, a kind of (neuro)linguistic competence without which even communicative competence is almost useless. Teaching of discourse-pragmatic rules is not much more relevant than the teaching of such neurolinguistic rules, both of which are automatically handled by the brain/minds of every normal human being, including L2 learners.

There are of course some discourse/pragmatic rules that show variation from one language/culture to another, such as some turn-taking conventions (e.g. overlapping is not so appropriate in some cultures, like Japanese, whereas it might be a sign of friendly-talk in others). But such culture-specific rules hardly constitute the major problem of L2 teaching and learning. In most cases L2 acquirers have enough knowledge to discover the inappropriateness of, say overlapping in Japanese, as this is also inappropriate at least when talking to superiors in most cultures. Just like the non-native driver in England who can read the shape of "stop sign" (if not the word "stop" itself) using his/her prior knowledge of traffic rules, an L2 acquirer of Japanese would infer that "overlapping" is quite restricted in his/her target language as compared to his/her L1. And even if they do not, that is, even when non-natives do not exactly conform with the social appropriacy rules in the target language community, native speakers are reported to exercise considerable tolerance toward such mistakes when they realize that their interlocutors are non-natives, whose "diverging behavior may be seen as unproblematic or even particularly likeable" (Kasper, 1997, p. 117).

In short, Communicative Competence might be an insightful "linguistic" theory in explaining how language works in a broader social context but it seems to be not so helpful in determining the main goals in foreign language teaching and learning. If the main aim in the aforementioned driving course is the mastery of proper orientation in getting an English License, then in language learning the main aim should be the acquisition of linguistic competence, i.e. that part of communicative competence which does not exist in the minds of L2 learners (not those parts that they already know).

3. Learning Theory of CLT: Cognitivism

Of the two theories underlying CLT's approach, learning theory is of more practical value and is more responsible for the level of success (or failure) experienced, than the language theory that we have covered so far. After all, the impact of the theory of language assumed by the Communicative Approach (i.e. CC) is not felt very strongly beyond the syllabus construction process, during which CLT-oriented course book writers prepare hybrid syllabi of notions and

functions combined with structural elements of linguistic competence. As notional-functional aspects of the syllabi (representing discourse-pragmatic aspects of CC) have already been mastered by learners, the major emphasis in actual classroom practice is placed once again on teaching the elements of linguistic competence (which has always been the case throughout the history of foreign language teaching).

It is basically the linguistic competence which really matters but, as has been mentioned before, the importance of linguistic competence should not necessarily lead us to a grammar-oriented language teaching methodology. Although grammar (and vocabulary) is a central target, the question is "how best to arrive it" (Baretta, 1987, p. 85). At this point the role of learning theory comes into play. After all, it is the learning theory underlying a method which specifies how the language content must be presented by teachers and mastered by students. And this is the soft belly of CLT, which gives birth to major problems.

CLT theorists are not very clear on their perspective on language learning. Since "little has been written about learning theory" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 161), this theoretical void has been filled by one of the most common learning theories of recent times: Cognitivism (Thornbury, 2006, p. 172). It is at this point that the new paradigm represented by CLT has taken another wrong turn, which ultimately led to the same trap that the GTM and the ALM had fallen into. Despite some differences among themselves, representatives of these three major methodologies (i.e. GTM, ALM and CLT) view language acquisition as an instance of general human learning, rather than adopting a domain-specific approach which would respect the unique nature of language acquisition.

In fact, cognitivism is a powerful learning theory in the field of psychology, which explains a lot about general human learning. Problems arise, however, when it is applied to the unique domain of language acquisition. Cognitivism views human "brind" (brain and/or mind) as a homogeneous mechanism processing language using the very same domain-general principles that are used in other cognitive domains. Such a domain-general approach is not only peculiar to cognitivism but observed also in earlier learning theories which laid the foundations of CLT's predecessors. With its "tabula rasa" perspective, for instance, behaviorism (the learning theory underlying ALM) denied the presence of any domain-specific mental capacity for language processing as well:

> *Neither the Piagetian [cognitivist] nor the behaviorist theory grants the infant any innate structures or domain-specific knowledge. Each grants only some domain-general ... processes .... [which] are held to apply across all areas of linguistic and non-linguistic cognition. (Karmiloff-Smith, 1995, p. 7)*

Similarly, GTM's obsession about teaching verb conjugations reminiscent of the style of teaching multiplication tables in math classes reflects the same domain-general mentality. According to all these domain-general learning theories, learning math or any other skill (like driving, touch-typing, etc) are basically similar to learning a (second) language. Here is a typical cognitivist account of SLA:

> *To learn a second language is to learn a skill, because various aspects of the task must be practiced and integrated into fluent performance. This requires the automatization of component subskills (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 133)*

This cogntivist perspective underlies the PPP (Presentation, Production & Practice), which is the most common version of CLT in the language teaching market (Stern, 1992, p. 188; Thornbury, 2006, p. 37). PPP is the embodiment of cognitivism in language teaching, a methodology in which target structures are presented, practiced and produced as if the mastery of

linguistic rules were fundamentally similar to the mastery of the rules of math. Such a PPP approach is not very different from the behavioristic ALM since "the idea that 'practice makes perfect' is fundamental to cognitive learning theory" (Thornbury, 2006, p. 173) as well.

From a learning theory perspective, therefore, the move from GTM to ALM and from ALM to CLT do not represent major paradigm shifts since all three methodologies have tried to exploit the general human learning mechanism instead of activating the language specific system in the human brind. It is quite likely that the causal factor which was responsible for the GTM's and the ALM's failure, is now at work undermining the CLT. If this theoretical perspective problem is not solved in the post-CLT era, it is likely that vicious cycle of successive unsuccessful methodologies would not be broken and that the upcoming paradigm shift would lead to yet another stillbirth in foreign language teaching. The basic argument in this paper is that the failure experienced in CLT-based methods (and its predecessors) stem from their domain-general approach ignoring the peculiar nature of language acquisition, a process which is handled by an innate device specifically designed to process and produce language in its own way.

4. Unique Nature of Language Acquisition

The claim that language has a life of its own within human brind is not a new one. Its roots can be traced back to the 19th century when patients with a specific type of brain-damage were found to have lost some of their language skills while their non-linguistic cognitive capacities remained intact. The mismatch between linguistic and non-linguistic cognitive capacities are further confirmed by people with Chatterbox or William's Syndrome, who display advanced language skills in spite of serious mental problems (Cromer, 1991). A curious case in this regard is that of Christopher, a linguistic savant who, despite his severe mental problems, "can read, write and communicate in any of fifteen to twenty languages" (Smith & Tsimpli, 1995, p. 1). Such cases fly in the face of cognitivism, which views brind as a homogenous system having no room for an independently functioning language module.

Even more compelling evidence in favor of an innately-wired, independently functioning, domain-specific linguistic mechanism comes from child language acquisition. Despite their systematic and collaborative studies over a century, linguists have not decoded the grammar of any human language in its entirety yet, using their advanced cognitive capacities (i.e. their domain-general problem solving skills), while a single child decodes (and starts using) the very same grammar of his/her mother tongue within a few years. This urges many linguists to attribute children's amazing linguistic accomplishment to the presence of an inborn linguistic capacity in human genetic make-up:

> [W]e're struck between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, the expressive variety of language demands a complex mental grammar that linguists can't entirely figure out. But on the other hand, children manage to acquire this grammar. Thus, in a sense the Genetic Hypothesis is a move of desperation ... it's the only answer anybody has been able to think of. (Jackendoff, 1993, p. 33)

According to these nativist linguists, it is thanks to a domain-specific language system (which is generally referred to as the Language Acquisition Device-LAD) that children outperform adult linguists in deciphering the complexities of language and become successful in reaching full attainment in first language acquisition.

From a cognitivist perspective, however, the resort to a domain-specific device for language acquisition is not plausible as it violates one of the basic principles of scientific

philosophizing called *Occam's Razor*, which urges scientists to seek simplicity in their theories. With a single powerful learning mechanism which handles any type of learning including language acquisition, cognitive theory looks like more compatible with Occam's Razor. In other words, cognitivism seems to meet the simplicity requirement while nativism sounds "ad hoc" with many of its domain-specific modules (one for language, another for music, etc.) in addition to a general learning system.

Cognitivists, in fact, do not negate the presence of innate principles as long as they are valid across domains; their reaction is towards the domain-specific innate knowledge or mechanisms. In his famous discussion with Chomsky, Piaget (1980) suggested that "If one wants to introduce innateness into language, why not introduce it into the symbolic function in its totality, and finally into anything that is general" (p. 167) reflecting his domain-general cognitivist perspective.

In fact, Chomsky also respects Occam's Razor as evidenced in his "minimalist" attempts to seeks economy (thus simplicity) within the language domain (Chomsky, 1995). But Chomsky and other nativist linguists underline the significance of explanatory power before meeting the simplicity condition of Occam's Razor: in order for competing theories in a given domain to be tested on the simplicity ground, they first need to be able to "account for the facts" observed in that domain. That is, only after the rival theories are equal in terms of their explanatory power can we use Occam Razor's simplicity requirement as a litmus test in ruling out the more complex (or cumbersome) theories. At this point, nativists assert that cognitivism cannot account for the amazing speed of children in acquiring their mother tongue(s). Left to his/her "immature" domain-general cognitive capacities, no child would be able to decipher the complex grammar rules of his/her L1 within a lifetime:

> *[A] child may well not have grasped the property of conservation of volume nor be able to perform but the most rudimentary arithmetic calculations, yet will have the knowledge linguists formulate as the binding principles, none of which is explicitly taught (Carston, 1988, p. 41).*

Even if the child had the mature cognitive capacity of a highly intelligent adult, the nativist assumption would be reasonable since a large community of highly intelligent linguists have not deciphered the grammar of any human language in its entirety yet. The question to be asked here is "why not?" If there is just a single learning mechanism (like the domain-general learning system of the cognitivists) responsible for all types of learning, then both linguists and children should be using the very same mechanism in dealing with language. Considering the collaborative studies of linguists, there is much more (domain-general) cognitive capacity involved and thousands of times more linguistic data available to the linguists, as compared to a child working singlehandedly on his/her L1. If both sides were using the same mechanism (and there is only "one" mechanism according to cognitivism), linguists should spend much less time than a single, cognitively immature child to discover the underlying grammar rules of a language, while the case is exactly the opposite. The only plausible explanation for this paradox is that children and linguists are exploiting "different" mechanisms: (a) linguists are using their domain-general cognitive system for their conscious/explicit analysis of grammar and (b) children are tapping their LAD. Without the help of a rich mechanism like the LAD, acquisition of a language by children would not be just difficult but next-to-impossible, according to nativist linguists:

> *Language is not merely difficult to learn with only general cognitive strategies, it is virtually impossible. This is one important reason for attributing an innate domain-specific language faculty to children. (Bley-Vroman, 1989, p. 44)*

5. LAD in second language acquisition (SLA)

The ongoing debate between the nativists and cognivists is nothing more than a theoretical issue having almost no practical value from a child language acquisition perspective. Unaffected by who is right or wrong in this debate, children just keep picking up their mother tongue(s) as they always do. This is like the discussion among the astronomers as to whether Pluto is a planet or not. No matter how they categorize it, Pluto continues to revolve around the sun as always.

When it comes to "second or foreign" language learning and teaching, however, the discussion between the two camps gets utterly important: depending on which side is more dominant, language teaching practices around the globe are shaped accordingly. Coursebooks and teacher training programs are designed in line with the principles of the dominant perspective. And for the last a hundred plus years, the dominant perspective in the field of foreign language teaching has been shaped by non-nativist theories, all of which have been reluctant to accept the presence of mental or cognitive instincts in human brind, including the LAD. Despite some differences, behaviorism and cognitivism (the learning theories of ALM and CLT, respectively) are alike in view of the fact that "[n]either the Piagetian [cognitivist] nor the behaviorist theory grants the infant any innate structures or domain-specific knowledge" (Karmiloff-Smith, 1995, p. 7).

5.1 Critical period hypothesis (CPH) and the vicious cycle

The influence of cognitivist theories is felt even more strongly in foreign language teaching since many nativists, who believe in the existence of the LAD in child language acquisition, join the cognitivist camp when they try to explain post-pubescent SLA. In other words, both cognitivists and (many) nativists believe that adults or adolescents have only one mechanism to learn a new language: the domain-general learning system with which we learn math and all other skills. Therefore, the LAD which is supposed to be the key to success in child language acquisition, is hypothesized to atrophy after a critical age, and learners in formal instruction environments are supposed to learn the rules of their L2 as if they are dealing with any other complex skill.

A fundamental argument in favor of the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) is based on the common failure observed in post-pubescent L2 learning. While children experience almost no difficulty in their effortless acquisition of a new language, adults seem to spend years or even decades to learn an L2 without reaching ultimate attainment, most of the time. The curious thing, here, is that this common failure is observed most typically in educated societies, where adults or adolescents try to learn an L2 in the formal context of classrooms. In the uneducated societies of the third-world, however, successful bilinguals or even polyglots are quite common. In the highly multilingual areas of Africa and South America, "where almost every individual is polylingual" (Sorensen, 1967, p. 670), people do acquire other languages through natural techniques without any resort to formal instruction:

> *Perhaps there is no place in the world where so many people speak more than one language than in Africa…. In learning various African languages these people have never enjoyed the presumed benefits of printed grammars, ... or instruction in how to learn other languages, ... This African way of language learning is ultimately the best way to*

acquire a foreign tongue, for it is the natural way—the way children learn. (Nida, 1982, p. 42)

In fact, the natural way mentioned above is not peculiar to African people only. People all over the world who follow the same "natural" path in learning an L2 are entitled to rekindle the victory of children or of multilingual African people. To give a specific example from the literature Julie, an American lady married to an Egyptian man, is one such successful L2 learner who acquired Arabic after puberty through natural means without instruction. Even in the field of native-like accent attainment, which is not considered necessary in critical period discussions, she managed to develop an almost accent-free speech in her L2. More than half of Arabic native speakers (8 out of 13) listening to her voice on audiotape thought she was a native speaker of Arabic (Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi & Moselle, 1994), which lends further support to the assumption that post-pubescent L2 learners "do" have access to the very same mechanism that children enjoy.

Julie is one of thousands of successful L2 learners throughout the world who have achieved native-like proficiency in L2, learners whose mere presence weakens the CPH. Nonetheless, the presence of millions of other post-pubescent learners who cannot attain success despite their best efforts in formal/instructed L2 learning contexts needs to be accounted for, as well. If the LAD is available in post-puberty learners' brinds, why can some tap it while others can't? The answer is probably hidden in the context or the methodology of language teaching: it is highly likely that the "common failure" problem stems from the "common" language teaching practices in the educated societies, where languages are taught by using misguided methods which do not make use of the natural linguistic capacity. In other words, the commonly applied methods such as GTM, ALM and CLT, whose underlying approach is based on the denial of innate language system, have produced unsuccessful learners. And the case of these "failed" learners further reinforced the belief in CPH. There seems to be a vicious cycle going on here; the denial produces the failure, the failure fuels further denial. And those living outside this vicious cycle are living in the oases of multilingualism, like the ones in Africa or South America.

There have been some theorists who argue that this vicious cycle can be broken by applying proper methodologies and a main aim in this paper is to highlight their ideas whose influence has so far remained marginal in the language teaching practice, if not in its literature. Nativist theorists such as Stephen Krashen, Sascha Felix and Marvin Brown have always maintained that "adults can access the same natural language acquisition device that children use" (Krashen, 1982, p. 10) but that success depends on the methodology that L2 learners follow.

5.2 Acquisition-Learning distinction

According to Krashen, adults or adolescents can follow two distinct paths in developing competence in a second language: acquisition and learning. Acquisition is a subconscious process handled by the LAD and triggered by exposure to comprehensible input. It is the process through which learners (or more properly, "acquirers") like Julie attain success in SLA.

Learning, on the other hand, is the process of consciously analyzing the rules of an L2, using the very same domain-general mechanism (of the cognitivists) that we all exploit in learning math or any other skill. The problems that we experience in language learning/teaching emanate basically from methodologies like GTM, ALM and CLT used in classroom language teaching, all of which have so far followed the "learning" path, on the assumption that there is only one mechanism to learn everything, including language. This explains why African people

are superior in picking up new languages: they are free from the adverse effects of misguided methodologies as they acquire their L2 outside the classroom context.

Classroom context per se, however, is not necessarily a bad place to acquire a language according to Krashen. Provided that formal instruction is properly designed in line with the principles of acquisition, one can acquire a new language faster in class than s-he can in the natural environment. If classroom teaching practice provides ample amount of comprehensible (and preferably compelling) input, then formal learners can even outperform naturalistic learners like Julie. But if classroom is a place where learners try to consciously practice rules of their L2 as if they are studying math, then the end result is doomed to be less than satisfactory.

Krashen's ideas have so far been marginalized by the dominant cognitivist perspective, which views conscious learning and subconscious acquisition not as two distinct processes, but as two closely related functions of the same underlying mechanism. The common belief is that conscious learning represents the initial phase which is followed by subconscious acquisition after sufficient amount of practice. Krashen, on the other hand, hypothesizes that acquisition is handled by an independently functioning LAD, whose processing is impenetrable through conscious learning/teaching attempts, being susceptible only to comprehensible input. He formulates this impenetrability principle in his oft-criticized statement "Learning does not become acquisition". This brings us to the "Interface versus Non-Interface" controversy, which lies at the core of major discussions in our field.

5.3 Interface versus non-interface discussion

Krashen claims that consciously learned rules of an L2 (Learned Competence=LC) cannot enter into one's subconscious storage (i.e. Acquired Competence=AC) through practice. LC and AC represent two distinct knowledge systems between which there exists no link or interface (Krashen, 1985). Krashen's Non-Interface Position, can be schematized as follows:
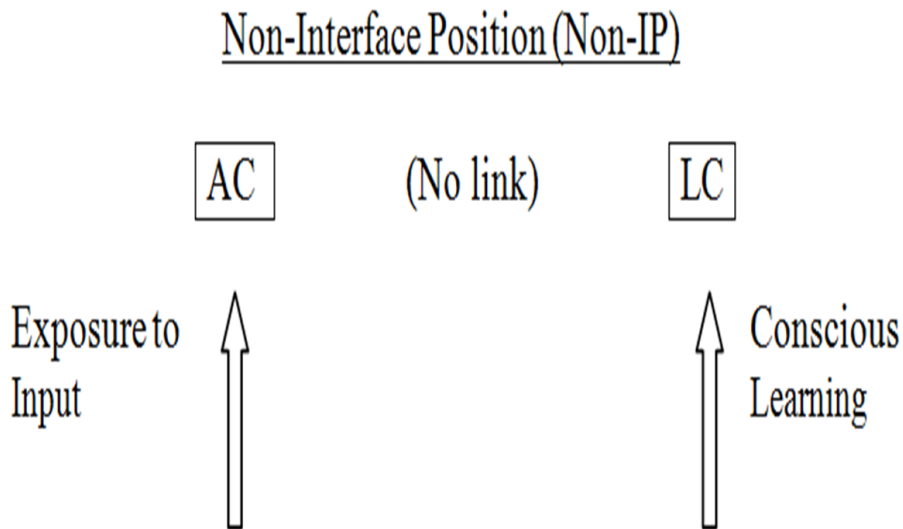

Figure 1. Non-Interface Position (Non-IP)

Cognitivist theorists, on the other hand, believe that consciously learned rules can become subconsciously acquired through practice. This is called the Interface Position, which is schematized below:

Interface Position (IP)

Practice

AC ------------------------------------ LC

Exposure to Input

Conscious Learning
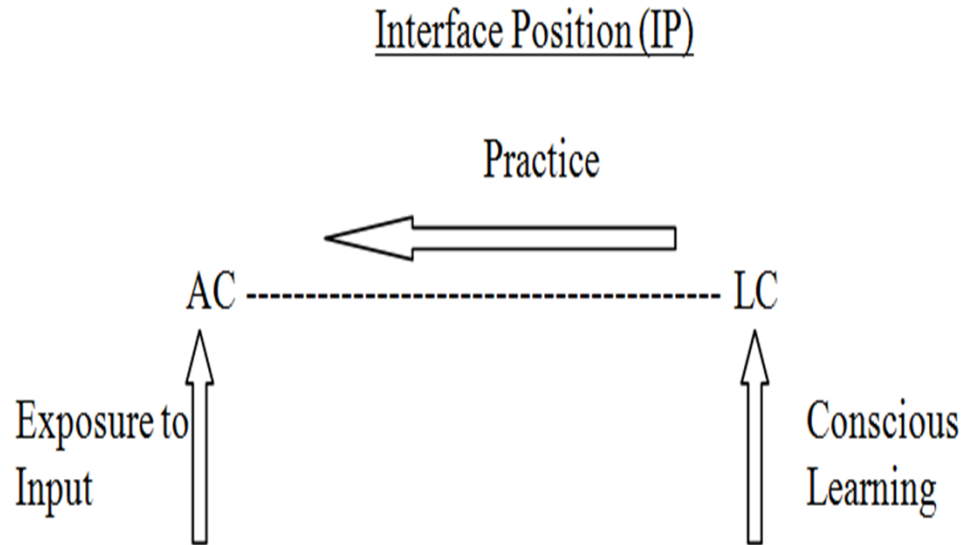
Figure 2. Interface Position (IP)

There are two pathways which lead to the development of acquired competence, according to IP. The first is through exposure to input (though the processor is the domain-general learning system, rather than the LAD). The second is through conscious learning and practicing. While the second path is the main pathway exploited in the classroom context for the cognitivist-minded IP advocates (and thus for the CLT advocates), non-IP suggests that this is a dead-end since practice does not improve acquired competence.

For many IP advocates, the transition from LC to AC is more than apparent. As a former IP advocate, Sharwood-Smith (1981), for instance, had once asserted:

> *While the empirical evidence for the impermeability and primacy of the acquisition device in the second or foreign language learners is hotly contested, there is every reason to accept the older, intuitively attractive version which says that explicit knowledge may aid acquisition via practice.(p. 167)*

The intuitive appeal of IP stems basically from the observation that L2 learners do learn certain rules first and then use these rules automatically without conscious effort, which is an indication of acquisition. The critical issue here is whether their acquisition is due to "conscious learning and practicing" or because of "exposure to input". Krashen asserts that the "learn-and-then-acquire experience" does not represent a causal relationship but a temporal one, the real cause being the input received in the meantime. By using his input hypothesis, Krashen can, in fact, account for every observation which seemingly supports IP, such as the apparent superiority of formal learners over naturalistic learners, or of elder learners over younger learners. In all cases where formal instruction is found to be beneficial, input is also there to account for the results. Enhanced comprehensibility of input is the key factor, according to Krashen, which accounts for the superiority of formal or elder learners (rather than form-focused instruction or learner's advanced cognitive capacities exploited in classroom context) (Krashen, 1985). How are we, then, to discern the real causal factor which leads to acquisition? There is one safe way to remove the confound: seek cases where one of the factors, i.e. input or conscious learning/practicing, does not work. And this leads us to examine the results of studies revealing

the natural order of acquisition, which cannot be changed through conscious teaching/learning attempts.

That some consciously learned and practiced rules do not necessarily become subconsciously acquired is shown by dozens of morpheme studies during the 1970's and quite a few other studies at the syntactic level during the 1980's (For an extensive review of related research see Ellis, 1990). These studies have all shown that no matter how grammatical structures are presented and practiced in class, L2 learners follow a universal syllabus, irrespective of their L1 background and acquire the L2 rules in a predetermined order, which is not parallel to the teaching order dictated by the teachers or course-books:

> *Formal learners develop their language stepwise despite the scheduling of the teaching [and], more importantly, in the same order as has been found for natural acquisition. (Pienemann, 1989, p. 71-72)*

There have been some attempts to account for the natural order from a cognitivist perspective on the basis of domain-general principles such as complexity, frequency, perceptual salience or processing difficulty (Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2001). In such cognitivist accounts, it is implied that there is no need to talk about a domain-specific device controlling the order of language acquisition since similar orders can also be observed in other domains, orders which are the outcomes of domain-general principles rather than domain-specific ones. In learning touch-typing, for instance, the reason why certain letters are learned earlier than others is because letters such as "a" are more frequently encountered/used than letters such as "x". When an order of letter learning is found in touch-typing, no one concludes that there is a domain-specific, innate device for learning touch-typing. So, the argument goes, we should not assert the presence of a domain-specific LAD on the basis of natural order of language acquisition.

What seems to be forgotten in such an argument is that in other domains, when you increase the frequency of a certain item, you can internalize/learn it earlier than normal. For instance, if you persistently practice the "x" letter on the keyboard before you practice "a", nothing prevents you from learning "x" earlier than "a". In language acquisition, however, this is not the case (at least for certain morpho-syntactic rules). In an experimental study, Ellis (1989) tried to obtain a sequence different from the natural order by changing the order of presentation and by increasing the emphasis on late-acquired rules. Nonetheless, he found that his subjects still followed the natural order, which shows the independent functioning of the LAD, free from the influence of conscious teaching/learning:

> *A comparison of this sequence with that reported for naturalistic learners ... revealed no difference, despite the fact that the order in which the rules were introduced and the degree of emphasis given to rules in the instruction differed from the naturalistic order... The results of this study support the claim that the classroom and naturalistic L2 acquisition ... follow similar routes (Ellis, 1989, p. 305).*

It was thanks to such research results that former IP advocates such as Sharwood-Smith changed their camp and eventually adopted the non-IP position:

> *Thirty years of research has not produced any really hard evidence that making people aware of formal features of the second language has any significant long-term effect on their grammatical development. (Sharwood-Smith, 2008, p.1)*

A basic reason why former IP advocates like Sharwood-Smith had to change their position was that IP could not explain why L2 learners cannot acquire simple (late-acquired) and much-practiced rules like the 3rd person singular "-s" even after extensive practice in class, an

observation which Non-IP explains with ease, thanks to the impenetrability principle mentioned above. The following is the statement of this impenetrability principle again by Sharwood-Smith:

> *The processing of the PSs [phonological structures] and SSs [syntactic structures] takes place beyond the range of conscious introspection and so any attempt to influence its operations directly, by explicit input enhancement, say, is doomed to failure, and so far this is supported by mainstream research in SLA. (ibid, pp.10-11)*

Krashen suggests that the only data that the LAD is susceptible to is comprehensible input. Once a message is understood, the LAD is automatically triggered and starts analyzing the grammatical content of the incoming messages at a subconscious level. The only way, therefore, to develop subconscious grammar (i.e. AC) is through the LAD's own processing of incoming messages, when the learner's conscious focus is on meaning, not on form. The processing of form (i.e. grammatical aspects of input) by the LAD occurs at a subconscious level and is immune to conscious intervention. This explains why L2 students experience difficulty in the classroom context; the heavy emphasis on "conscious" teaching/learning in formal grammar instruction does not provide the relevant data that triggers the LAD. Learners may develop their LC in classroom context to some degree but conscious knowledge of grammar is of little use in natural, fluent, meaningful communication:

> *The grammatical structure that our minds assemble in milliseconds on-line in order to process utterances (for production or comprehension) is absolutely inaccessible to conscious introspection. One might say that it just has to be so for extremely fast and efficient language use to be possible. (Sharwood-Smith, 2008, p. 11)*

During fast and efficient language use, people consciously focus on meaning, not on form. But grammar is still right there, in their utterances. Since the human brind can consciously focus on only one thing at a time and since the conscious focus is busy dealing with meaning (not with form) during natural communication, grammatical aspects of our utterances have to be provided automatically by our subconscious knowledge of grammar, i.e. AC. Therefore fluency in production is possible only with advanced AC, not with consciously learned rules practiced in a formal classroom context.

So the problem mentioned by Widdowson (1978), quoted above (i.e. L2 learners' inability to put their consciously learned rules into communicative use) does not necessarily stem from L2 learners' less-than-sufficient discourse-pragmatic competence but from their inadequate subconscious linguistic competence. Success in SLA can be attained when L2 learners follow the unique path of acquisition by obtaining ample amount of comprehensible input, not by trying to convert their conscious LC into subconscious AC through extensive practice. In other (non-linguistic) cognitive domains, practice may make perfect in turning consciously attained rules into automatic usage, but not in language acquisition, a process handled by a domain-specific module immune to all other types of data but comprehensible input.

5.4 Impenetrability of LAD

The reason why conscious knowledge of grammar cannot affect the acquisition process (or the LAD) can be explained through Fodor's modularity theory as well. According to Fodor (1983) a defining characteristic of domain-specific, innate modules is that they are "informationally encapsulated" (p. 37). That is, they are susceptible only to their own specific data and not to others. To give an example from the visual domain, even if you know that the

Muller-Lyer illusion shown below is an illusion, you cannot help seeing first line longer than the second:
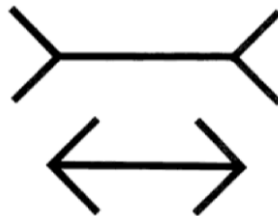

Figure 3. Muller-Lyer illusion

You may measure the two lines with a ruler to make sure that the two lines are equal in length but this conscious information about their equality (which represents irrelevant data for visual processing) cannot enter into your subconsciously functioning visual module and change its processing. There seems to be a kind of firewall around the visual module to ensure its seamless and speedy processing, free from the intervention of domain-general central processors, where conscious information resides. As is the case in vision, language is also handled by a domain-specific and informationally encapsulated module (i.e. the LAD), which does not allow conscious knowledge of grammar to change its processing.

5.5 The trigger for the LAD: Input or output?

If conscious learning and practicing cannot change the LAD's processing, the next question that comes to mind is 'What triggers the LAD, then?' The answer is input, which is the sine qua non of real language development:

> For the knowledge system of a particular language to grow, the acquirer must have exposure to instances or exemplars of that particular language. Without such exposure language development will not take place (Schwartz, 1993, p. 148).

> [A]cquisition occurs in response only to positive evidence, that is, the language that the learner hears in his/her surrounding, ambient environment. (Piske & Young-Scholten, 2009, p. 8)

As depicted in Figure 2 above, cognitivism also acknowledges the fact that L2 learners can develop their subconscious knowledge through exposure to input. But this confession is not reflected into practice in CLT classes. Rather than following the input route, CLT advocates tend to pursue the alternative way supposedly leading to AC development through production (or output) practice. The underlying assumption here is that production practice makes perfect and that "it is only through practice that the skill becomes automatic" (Thornbury, 2006, p. 173). However neither production practice nor grammar explanations trigger the LAD:

> Output practice is not the data upon which the developing system relies for growth. Nor is the explanation about grammar provided by the instructor or the textbook. Explanations are information about language, but they are not the language data themselves. (VanPatten, 1996, p. 59)

Research conducted over a course of several decades has repeatedly shown that input-based language instruction is more successful than others (Asher, 1965; Burger, 1989; Dziedzic, 2012; Hafiz & Tudor, 1990; Hammond, 1989; Işık, 2000; Lafayette & Buscaglia, 1985; Lee, 2007; Mason, 2006; Pippins & Krashen, 2016; Robb & Susser, 1989; Sari, 2013; Smith, 2006; Varguez, 2009; Watson, 2009; Wolfe & Jones, 1982—This is only a partial list; for more detailed

information on the superiority of receptive methodologies see Dupuy, 2000; Krashen, 1982, 2003).

One can, of course, assert that there is even a longer list of studies which support the superiority of form-focused or production-based instruction (Norris & Ortega, 2000). When these studies are examined closely, however, it is seen that some serious research design problems are involved and that the presumed advantage of instruction is an artifact of the instruments tailored to tap "conscious learning" not "subconscious acquisition". After analyzing research findings which seemingly support form-focused or production-based instruction, Truscott (2015) concludes that

> probably the clearest, most consistent finding is that the success of the treatment is a function of the way that learning is measured. When the tests are amenable to the use of consciously held knowledge, particularly when they encourage learners to focus on the correct use of the instructed knowledge, the typical finding is that the instruction was very beneficial. When learners are required to demonstrate their learning [i.e. acquisition] in spontaneous, communicatively oriented tasks, where the focus is on meaning rather on the instructed form, the observed effects are quite limited ..... This is a point that Krashen has made all along ...and time and further research have only served to strengthen it. (p.134)

As Truscott notes, Krashen (2003) came to this conclusion after an examination of studies which claimed that grammar teaching works (see also Krashen, 1999). To remove potential confounds from research design, Sarı (2013) has tested Krashen's prediction that even without production practice L2 learners can proceed along the interlanguage path faster than others provided that they receive ample amount of input. In his comparison of a reception-oriented Natural Approach class with a control group going through a PPP instruction, Sarı deliberately excluded production practice and minimized grammar instruction throughout the treatment period, during which the control group received integrated-skills instruction forcing production from the beginning as advised by the CLT. The results demonstrated that the experimental group receiving input-based instruction outperformed the controls not just in receptive skills but also in productive skills plus grammar, which were not emphasized during the treatment at all. Thanks to such research results, major institutions like the Turkish military have abandoned CLT methodology and have adopted "comprehension-based approaches which are being applied in all educational institutions in Turkish Armed Forces" (Turkish Military Academy, n.d., par.1).

While the safest thing to do, in the light of all these results, is to follow the acquisition path through exposure to input (whose safety is acknowledged even by the cognitivists themselves), the common practice in the CLT-based foreign language instruction is to pursue the alternative path which goes through conscious learning and production practice (see Figure 2), a path whose existence is debatable at best.

Despite all these massive amount of research results against it, output-oriented CLT (especially its PPP version) is still the dominant methodology "in one form or another all over the world" (Harmer, 2007, p. 68). As a method which "is not directly aligned with SLA research" (Piske & Young-Scholten, 2009, p. 14), the CLT has shown indifference toward research from the very beginning;

> British CLT did not take its inspiration from SLA research. That is partly because SLA research developed after CLT was already quite advanced, and partly because, even

when more published research on SLA was available, British applied linguists sometimes had strong reservations about its relevance. (Lightbown, 2002, p. 530)

6. Factors behind the popularity of CLT

If not theoretical vigor nor empirical support, what then is behind the popularity of CLT? There are multiple reasons why CLT has maintained its popularity for decades despite its major weaknesses. A major reason, which sometimes goes unnoticed, is economic rather than academic in nature. CLT has enjoyed not only the support of giant foreign language teaching companies which have designed their coursebooks in line with the principles of PPP, but also the support of governmental institutions with budgets of millions of pounds such as the British Council. The following remarks in an article titled "The Secret Life of Methods" is worth mentioning here:

The British Council has for many years served the interests of British methodologists by providing an instant and international outlet for their ideas, as well as funds to present their latest speculations at international forums and conferences. It is doubtful if communicative language teaching …. could have been established so rapidly without the Council's help. (Richards, 1984, p. 16)

The purpose here is not to accuse British Council or any other institution for supporting this or that methodology. After all, everyone is free to support whichever method seems most effective. But, it is worth underlining the fact that, as has been experienced in other branches of science throughout history, the field of foreign language teaching is not immune to non-academic influences, which may unfortunately result in considerable waste of time, effort and human resources in teaching foreign languages.

7. Future prospects

Despite the huge economic resources behind it, the PPP version of the CLT is doomed to disappear sooner or later, due to its weaknesses explained above. The recent tendency among CLT circles is to move towards the task-based CLT (Porcaro, 2011), which is free from one of the weaknesses of the PPP: form-focused instruction. With its form-free and meaning-based instructional philosophy, task-based CLT is more in tune with the functioning of the LAD, which works best when learners' conscious focus is on meaning (not on form). However, task-based CLT falls short of providing the ideal environment for natural language acquisition as it heavily relies on production practice rather than receptive experience even in beginning-to-intermediate levels (Aslan, 2016). Again the assumption is the good old principle of "practice makes perfect", whereas the real cure should be sought in receptive experience (i.e. getting ample amount of input through extensive reading and listening), which is the only real nourishment for LAD:

All cases of successful first and second language acquisition are characterized by the availability of comprehensible input. (Larsen-Freeman & Long 1991, p. 142)

Successful L2 acquirers are those who receive ample amount of input before they start producing output (Postovsky, 1982). To give an iceberg analogy, the bulky part underneath the sea surface represents the amount of input one needs to receive in order to bring to the surface the tip of the iceberg, which represents one's productive capacity. The Natural Approach, TPR (Total Physical Response), TPRS (Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling), and other comprehension-oriented methodologies respect the principle of "comprehension precedes production" and allow students to keep silent during initial stages of SLA, while task-based CLT

joins PPP in their common attempt to turn the iceberg upside down by urging the students to practice from the very beginning, at a time when they have received insufficient input. In other words, task-based CLT is not much different from its sister PPP in that they both try to force production at the early stages of L2 development. Therefore, the palliative shift towards task-based CLT is not likely to bring the desired success in language teaching.

The arguments presented here suggest that real success in language teaching will be achieved with methods which would not only be form-free in their design but would also provide ample amount of input before expecting students to produce. The current excitement over task-based CLT, therefore, might result in another wrong-turn. Before jumping on yet another bandwagon, L2 teachers and learners around the globe should double-check the theoretical vigor of the new derivatives of CLT, if they do not want to lose a few more decades.

8. Conclusion

In establishing its underlying approach, CLT has borrowed the most popular theories from two parent disciplines: "Communicative Competence" from linguistics and "Cognitivism" from psychology. Despite their popularity and insightfulness in their respective fields, these two theories are shown to be either irrelevant or misleading when applied to the field of foreign language teaching.

It is predicted that real success in foreign/second language education can only be attained with methods respecting the domain-specific characteristics of language acquisition. So far, major methodologies including CLT have tried to exploit a domain-general learning mechanism which proved insufficient in deciphering the complexities of language. Until we start using our domain-specific language capacity by activating it through receptive experience rather than output practice, language teachers and students around the globe are not likely to achieve the desired level of success in teaching/learning new languages. If we are to attain efficiency in foreign language teaching, we as language teachers should design our teaching practices in light of sound theoretical reasoning inspired by research findings, not through fashionable ideas unsupported by scientific inquiry. In other words, it is high time that we stop following the CLT bandwagon and move towards a receptive paradigm, which would respect the peculiar nature of language acquisition and teaching.

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English Language Teaching to Syrian Refugees in Transit

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Abstract: Despite the fact that most refugees are spending years in transit before finally settling, very little is being done during this time to address the language needs they will face on arrival. Consequently, the process of adapting to a foreign language and culture becomes longer and more arduous for people who have already endured much trauma. Previous ELT studies largely target the country of resettlement and cannot adequately inform teachers who work in a transitional, non-English-speaking context. This paper seeks to glean from the few studies that do address this underlying concern as well as bringing together research into a number of factors that contribute to making the English classroom a valued place for refugees. It focuses specifically on the case of Syrian refugees in the context of Turkey, highlighting the need for English-language teaching before resettlement. It then addresses some of the administrative, cultural, and psychological challenges pertinent to this situation in order to heighten teachers' awareness and empathy. Finally, a suitable response is suggested including an inclusive approach to the Turkish language and culture, fostering healing from trauma, a rethink of curriculum choices, and a flexible methodology in the classroom.

Keywords: *language needs, Syrian refugees, teaching challenges, trauma, Turkey*

1. Introduction

The conflict in Syria has confounded the governments of the world and stretched the resources of major organizations to breaking point. Since March 2011, over a quarter of a million Syrians have been killed and almost 12 million have been displaced – 6.5 million within the country and 4.8 million who have fled elsewhere ("About the crisis," 2016). Footage of fatal sea crossings and hostile border confrontations captures the desperation of refugees to find safety and a better life. This new life may be better, but it will involve significant cultural and linguistic challenges. For over 2.5 million refugees currently in Turkey ("Regional: Total," 2016), the uncertainty surrounding their future could so easily perpetuate the frustrations and trauma previously experienced. They might easily become disillusioned and directionless. I hope that by evaluating the need for English language and culture education for Syrians in transit, this essay can propose an approach to teaching that is both effective and sensitive in preparing refugees for resettlement. I have limited the scope of this essay to Syrian refugees in transit who are displaced throughout Turkey. The vast majority of current research focuses on teaching English to asylum seekers who are already resettled (see Hubing, 2011, for an exception). Very few studies have been done on the need for English-teaching in transit and the challenges encountered in such situations. Consequently, I have gleaned most significant points from an ESL context.

It is clear that the Syrians who have been displaced need a safe home. The United Nations and many countries are coordinating efforts to help them find such a home. Around a million Syrians have already fled to Europe with the largest numbers concentrated in Serbia and Kosovo (313,314) and Germany (306,703). Table 1 shows that of the one million applications for asylum in Europe, over half are to countries where over 50% of people are English-speakers ("List of countries," n.d.; "Syria Regional: Europe," 2016). Table 2 shows that, even on a worldwide scale, well over 75% of the pathways for admission are to countries where, again, over 50% of people speak English. However, it also shows that the high numbers of applications in Table 1 may not necessarily result in permanent resettlement for all those asylum seekers ("Resettlement," 2016).

Table 1 - Syrian Asylum Applications in Europe

Country	Asylum Applications*
Germany	306,703
Sweden	107,966
Austria	38,385
Netherlands	30,698
Denmark	19,433
Belgium	15,744
Norway	13,993
Switzerland	12,822
UK	9,292
Greece	5,615
Cyprus	3,464
Finland	1,581
Total	**565,696**

*excludes countries with fewer than 1,000 applications

Table 2 - Resettlement and Other Admission Pathways for Syrian Refugees

Country	Projected Total of Admissions
Australia	5,800*
Austria	1,900
Belgium	475
Canada	48,089
Denmark	390
Finland	1,900
Germany	42,063
Ireland	724
Luxembourg	60
Netherlands	500
New Zealand	850
Norway	9,000
Sweden	2,700

Switzerland	6,700
United Kingdom	20,000
United States of America	38,843
Total	**179,994**

* Australia has pledged an extra 12,000 places over several years, but some of these will be for Iraqi Arabs.

1.2. The value of teaching refugees English before resettlement

Both of these tables clearly show that the English language is transferrable to more contexts than any other language. The statistics are helpful in determining the value of English teaching pre-settlement while in the country of transit. If more refugees could arrive with basic English, the adjustment could be faster, less traumatic, and less expensive to the receiving country where they are resettled.

In Hubing's (2011) uniquely focussed paper "Language Learning and Transit Refugees in Turkey", he comments on the many well-documented benefits of knowing English on entering the host country (pp. 10-14). These include acculturation, a sense of continuity, better adjustment to schooling, fewer problems with discrimination and mistreatment, and the greater chance of getting income assistance. Despite the obvious benefits of language learning to integration, the US does not typically include English teaching in its official pre-settlement process for Syrian refugees in Turkey (pp. 29-30). Opportunities to receive formal or informal language assistance from NGOs and other organizations are limited and, outside the major cities, even fewer options exist (p. 33).

1.3. The need for Turkish

However, the apparent need to learn English is just a small part of the overall picture. The total number of Syrian refugees is 4.8 million, and just over half of these are in Turkey ("Regional: Total," 2016). Turkey has more refugees than any other country in the world, provoking understandable concern for the effect these numbers will have on already high levels of youth unemployment and the feeling of permanence among refugees ("Beyond aid," 2016). For while refugees might hope to settle in a country where English is spoken, the potential for very long delays to resettlement make it difficult to plan for the future. A study done in New Zealand found that refugees had spent on average 15.3 years in transit camps alone (Benseman, 2012). It is difficult to know if the situation has improved, but these figures suggest the need for teachers to bear in mind that the majority of refugees will not be resettling or staying in English-speaking countries any time soon.

Since displacement in Turkey may continue for some time, these Syrian refugees would see more immediate benefit and security from learning Turkish. Hubing (2011) states that this language barrier "contributes to the isolation of refugee communities" (p. 30), but in spite of the opportunity for immersive language learning, refugees have little chance for formal Turkish-learning support (p. 38). Hubing's study demonstrates that many refugees lack the motivation or support to develop the necessary language skills for survival in Turkey, let alone for moving to an English-speaking country. He also emphasizes the lack of both educational and vocational opportunities in Turkey, which is backed up by the *Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan* (2016), which states that: "As of late 2015, almost 400,000 of an estimated 663,1382 Syrian refugee children (6-17 years) in Turkey are not enrolled in formal education programmes" (p. 43).

2. Challenges facing teachers of English to refugees in transit

2.1. Practical considerations

Every language course has its challenges, so considering the background of the learners and the limitations of teaching environments, it is hardly surprising that teaching refugees includes innumerable obstacles to effective learning. Wachob and Williams (2010) refer to numerous classroom challenges in refugee schools beginning with practical concerns such as small, dingy rooms and inadequate resources. Students who no longer have the support of an intact family become ill-disciplined, disrupting the learning process. Another important factor is the recruitment and training of teachers, especially if they were volunteers or fellow-refugees who lacked qualifications. Finn (2010) also refers to the transience of teachers (and students) as having a direct impact on student attendance. "Attendance turbulence" caused by very fluid courses, absenteeism, and open-enrollment policies diminishes the motivation for consistent attendance and the sense of continuity in learning. Without diagnostic testing, students end up joining an unsuitable level and slowing down the other students. However, Finn suggests that teachers will do anything to avoid causing already-traumatized students more stress or pressure (p. 590). Another administrative issue can be the lack of a quality curriculum due to inadequate funding.

2.2. Cultural considerations

There is of course a danger that limited resources can provide an excuse for overlooking more fundamental concerns. These include how teachers can prepare for the cultural and psychological dimensions of teaching Syrian refugees. An oversimplified view of their culture could lead to numerous cultural conflicts within the classroom, whereas even basic information about Syrian refugees can enable teachers to have greater empathy and sensitivity. The Cultural Orientation Resource Center has written a backgrounder that can help fill such a need ("Refugees from Syria," 2014). It explains that Syrian refugees are from multiple ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, which, prior to the conflict, interacted harmoniously together. However, the political views leading to their displacement may give rise to tension and heated discussion. Significantly, Europe and the US previously supported the government opposition. Previously, Syria itself was a model of a community that welcomed refugees, so the poor living conditions and frequent discrimination Syrians face in Turkey must be bewildering.

"Refugees from Syria" (2014) describes the gender roles of Syria's largely patriarchal society (pp. 6-7), in which class and education influence the social and professional freedoms of women. Older men are the family decision-makers, though this needn't mean absolute control. Family values include love, support, responsibility, honor, and supervision. Other values practiced are hospitality and generosity. Devout Muslim women do not socialize with or even shake hands with unrelated men, though physical affection is demonstrative between those of the same gender. Syrian parents are very involved with their children's education and children have a natural respect for teachers. Marriages are arranged, and boys and girls as young as 15 and 13 respectively may be married. The British Council (2015) reports that early marriage, along with child labour, has increased since the conflict.

"Refugees from Syria" (2014) explains that though school attendance was still low in some areas prior to the conflict, the adult basic literacy rate is quite high, being over 90% for men and over 77% for women (p. 3). All Syrians speak the local dialect of Arabic and most can read and write in Modern Standard Arabic, but very few have more than a basic knowledge of English or any other foreign language (p. 4). The ethnic minorities (such as the Kurds and Armenians)

may struggle to read and write in Arabic, though they speak it fluently. They often speak their own language too. Just as with language, religion in Syria had been a fairly non-contentious issue, as the national celebration of both Muslim and Christian holidays showed. For some it is a private matter and for the devout, a more apparent part of their lives. Either way, it is closely tied to ethnicity and conversions are rare (p. 5).

Evidently, there are a wide variety of practical, educational, and cultural issues which those teaching refugees will face. Yet if these seem challenging for the teacher, the adjustments refugees themselves must make are significantly harder. Barnett and Antenucci (2009) describe the multiple transitions into unfamiliar contexts which refugees must encounter. On entering the host country, they are required to participate in different "communities of practice" such as employment, health services, and youth culture (pp. 2-3). They must make language choices depending on the act of participation and must take into account both the situational context and the wider cultural context. We must not forget that some of the refugees who will be navigating these tricky cultural waters are semiliterate and most will feel culturally isolated (d'Anglejan, 1983, p. 125), which means teachers must be willing to adapt.

2.3. Psychological considerations

Beyond the basic adjustments that must be made, refugees face three forms of stress as described in Benseman (2012) and Finn (2010): migration, acculturative, and traumatic. The stresses of moving suddenly and of trying to function in a new culture are important for language teachers to empathize with. However, the trauma caused by human cruelty is at another level, affecting an individual for years, and often decades, to come. "Refugees from Syria" (2014) states that "almost every Syrian refugee will have lost family or friends in the war" (p. 12). It is hardly surprising that studies have shown high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) amongst these refugees. The long-term effects of PTSD include interpersonal difficulties, memory loss, sleep loss, survivor guilt, depression, low self-worth, a mix of flashbacks and denial, chronic anxiety, loss of concentration, loss of trust, and often lapses into withdrawal and grief (Finn, 2010; Stone, 1995). There is also an increased likelihood of substance abuse and family conflict. Whilst the effects depend on the individual's capacity to cope (Medley, 2012), it is very apparent that trauma survivors of all ages will struggle in education – especially in learning a new language (Finn, 2010).

3. Suggestions for effective English teaching to refugees in transit

This paper has so far considered important reasons why refugees would benefit from learning English and various factors which make this difficult. This final section will attempt to draw together some of the findings and make suggestions for teaching English more effectively to refugees in transit. A report by the British Council Director in Syria, Joel Bubbers, notes that education is seen as the key strategy by UNICEF, host governments, donor agencies, and NGOs ("Beyond aid," 2015). He says:

> *...education delivered in a safe environment can provide recovery, healing and empowerment for the vulnerable. At the same time it can drive the long-term recovery process in households and communities by providing a sense of normality and hope for the future, as well as a means to build bridges in host communities.*

3.1. The importance of Turkish language and culture

In Turkey, there is a clear need for these bridges with the local community to counter the isolation, lack of welfare access, and limited opportunities for work and education. The general lack of support is particularly apparent in language learning, with immediate and long-term repercussions. The importance of learning Turkish must be stressed for the immediate situation, but in the long-term refugees who gain a basic knowledge of English will be in a better position to adjust to the new environment wherever they are settled.

Since it may be some time before refugees are resettled, English classes should only introduce Western culture in moderation and should raise awareness of Turkish culture as much as possible. The students will all be at various stages of culture shock, although many may be unaware. Explaining this phenomenon and certain coping mechanisms can go a long way in assisting adjustment to life in Turkey, and, ultimately, the place of resettlement. Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011) introduce the idea of creating a positive experience through reflecting on "things I can do with other people," "things I have already done here," and so on (p. 110). They encourage teachers to help students get to know their host country through using cultural stimuli in the classroom (p. 128), learning the history and social conventions, and developing a profile of a typical national (p. 110). Having Turkish language helpers, or even learners, in the EFL classroom would provide another perspective and enhance the use of role play for recognizing cross-cultural miscommunication (p. 134). All of these ideas are good preparation for resettlement also.

3.2. Affirmingand accomodating the home culture of students

At the same time, too much focus on other cultures could reinforce the sense of detachment and alienation felt by the Syrian refugees. The classroom should primarily be a place that explores and reaffirms the personal identity of these students. Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011), in discussing this issue, suggest that students create a collage representing their personal identities and share this with the class (p. 82). Since different ethnicities may be represented, teachers must manage the discussion of controversial issues from a neutral starting point and with fairness (p. 183). Case studies allow students to discover assumptions and stereotypes they have about different cultures, preparing them to reduce cultural conflicts and respect diversity (pp. 114-117, 175). However, teachers should not needlessly raise controversial subjects simply for the sake of teaching certain language skills. Instead, teachers should work as much as possible within the structures and boundaries of Syrian culture. This includes: providing the option for single-gender classrooms; giving breaks at prayer times; reserving judgment on cultural norms like teenage marriage or corporal punishment; not pressing a new cultural norm for roles; saving face; adjusting to collectivist learning styles; and accepting the role a teacher has in a high power distance culture. Teachers will have to learn the impact of Syrian culture on how grief is expressed, whether verbally or non-verbally, openly or unnoticeably (Stone, 1995, p. 54).

3.3. Finding healing in the classroom

As previously stated, ESOL teachers should expect that most of the Syrian refugees they are teaching will have faced some degree of trauma. Caution is necessary to accept that "teachers clearly have neither the training nor the resources to be therapists or counsellors" (Stone, 1995). Confidentiality and trust are at least as important as in a healthcare setting ("Refugees from Syria," 2014), but what should teachers do when their students want to discuss emotionally charged topics? Should they, as Finn (2010) suggests, "keep students in the present rather than

returning to a painful past" (p. 592)? Such an approach, as Finn herself hinted at, can lead to teachers who are constantly burdened with trying to create a stress-free environment (p. 590). The priority above all these discussions should indeed be a safe environment for the survivors as Medley (2012) emphasizes. Nevertheless, language learning naturally involves taking risks, though it is critical these do not go beyond the capacity of the individuals. Suggested steps for creating a healthy environment are: having a predictable routine, avoiding high risk activities, doing choral practice, using face-saving correction and group participation, and introducing new task types gradually (Medley, 2012, pp. 116-117). On a more practical level, Finn (2010) considers important an awareness of how the physical space of the classroom, such as few windows or crowded desks, might make students feel (p. 591).

All the concerns for safety should only serve to enhance the creation of a community where internal healing can take place, as Medley (2012) and Stone (1995) indicate. An important aim for the classroom is for students to redevelop trust with others and themselves. It will take time for them to regard themselves as equal members of the classroom and to share social and emotional support within this community of practice. The social context of the classroom is therefore a significant stepping stone toward competence within society at large (Finn, 2010). Sharing stories within the classroom gives students the opportunity to find meaning in the traumatic events and their reactions to them, instead of suppressing their painful memories. If this is left until resettlement, it may already be too late for survivors to mourn their traumas, which, according to Medley (2012) "locks the wounded person in a cycle of victimhood and potential violence" (p. 119). Teachers should make sure students feel under no obligation to share and be ready to move on quickly from certain topics. For there may even be an association with torture when students are called upon to speak in class. But as students voluntarily discuss such topics as refugee camp routine or incessant bombing, the teacher becomes a learner and discovers what to avoid, integrate, or affirm (p. 119). Articulation in itself can be transforming and the supportive feedback given by the teacher can encourage constructive examination of thoughts and feelings. A part of this multi-staged process of healing may involve the sensitive integration of material that encourages forgiveness (p. 122). Stone (1995) emphasizes that recovery ultimately requires that survivors let go and move on (p. 56).

3.4. Curriculum choices

Determining curriculum goals and content is particularly difficult when teaching refugees in transit. The study above assumes that a curriculum is based on functional competency, a method commonly used for refugee learners that avoids the use of form-focused teaching and instead focuses on teaching specific language needed for performing functions within society (d'Anglejan, 1983; Kleinmann, 1984). Little (2008) affirms the value of this approach for refugees by describing language learning as "inseparable from the learners' induction into basic arrangements and practices of […] culture and society" (p. 2). However, despite the potential strength of this method in equipping learners to function within their new culture and society, critics like Tollefson (1986) point out that it is the values and attitudes of the curriculum writers that determine how success is defined and assessed, versus an empowerment of the learners to discover for themselves what language competencies they believe necessary (p. 661). For example, analyzing the content of much functional-competency based material gave him the impression that its users were seen as no more than passive citizens with low employment aspirations. Little (2008) addresses this critique to some extent when he suggests the need within the functional method for a flexible syllabus with no fixed learning goals, materials, or

procedures, thereby enabling learners to discover their own language needs over a period of time (p. 2).

3.5. Teaching methodologies for a unique context

While the relation of the language choice to the act of participation has been widely discussed in regard to the teaching of refugees (see also Barnett & Antenucci, 2009, p. 5), teaching ESL to refugees in a pre-settlement context requires a discussion in its own right. It must be acknowledged that refugees in transit will not be in a position to discover their English language needs over time by utilising the target language in society. Therefore, the functional method is far more applicable to the teaching of the Turkish language in this particular context. Perhaps, then, it is best to avoid a curriculum that is so functionally-driven and find an alternative with more immediate value, but Tollefson's (1986) alternatives, grammar- or task-based approaches, do not go far enough (p. 662). What might be more suitable is a curriculum that focuses on building the confidence of the students as successful language learners, rather than competent English users. Seufert (1999) draws attention to communication, decision-making, interpersonal, and life-long learning skills. This could be done through using a variety of methodologies; providing a safe and fun learning environment; incorporating short- and long-term goals; teaching language learning strategies; using student-generated or -chosen texts and topics; and being flexible with the use of learning space and time (see Finn, 2010, pp. 591-592).

Seufert (1999) encourages the use of mixed approaches to "meet the needs and learning styles of a class." This sees value in starting with real-life issues (theme-based), linking language to topics of interest (participatory), using shared events and experiences (language experience), whilst not neglecting the place for grammar translation, real-life tasks (functional), and created tasks (task-based). Medley (2012) proposes a multiple intelligences approach, since children in particular acquire a language best through a range of input, such as sport, music, and drama (pp. 115-116). For higher level students, a more typical communicative-language-teaching (CLT) approach will likely be a more natural fit, and some may even desire instruction in English for academic purposes (EAP). There could still be a place for a stronger focus on functional language and/or literacy in a fast-track course for refugees officially awaiting re-settlement (e.g. Minnesota Literacy Council, 2012).

3.6. Teaching practicalities for a unique context

The logistical challenge of teaching refugees in transit calls for some creative thinking. Benseman (2012) describes the value of bilingual language tutors (BLTs) who assist the class teacher. BLTs act as role models, are sensitive to social or cultural issues, provide administrative support, and generally enhance the educational experience. Libas-Novell (1985) provided a teacher training plan for selected refugee trainees to be equipped with the tools to teach other refugees English. A similar approach is suggested by Hubing (2011) for teaching refugees in Turkey where formal language courses are often impractical in the satellite cities (pp. 50-52). Community instructors from the refugee community could be paid to teach other refugees, though training would be necessary. The other alternative Hubing suggests is the distribution of free bilingual learning materials to enable self-directed learning (p. 51). If teachers can be found, they may not be suitably qualified or equipped for the integration of methodologies described above. Textbooks provide a helpful structure, but many will be too situated in British/American culture. While an EFL textbook from Syria may seem more appropriate, on closer inspection, it presents a Syria that will never be recovered, and therefore could be emotionally challenging for students (Hasan & Raddatz, 2008). Another option is an EFL textbook from Turkey, a selection

of which are considered in a survey by Kırkgöz and Agcam (2011). They are shown to include a balance of source, target, and international culture.

3.7. *Assessing learner needs*

A fundamental concern resulting from all these observations and conclusions regarding the way forward has to be the adequate assessment of needs as part of course planning and development. Diagnostic testing has its use in English level placement, but when teaching English to refugees, many equally significant factors come into play. A needs analysis with straightforward questions and written in the L1 can address cultural factors in the classroom, experience of trauma, prospects for future resettlement, and level of general education. The "European Language Portfolio" (Council of Europe, 2016) may be useful to this end. Its three sections are: a language profile and history; a language biography for goal-setting and reflection; and a language portfolio for evidence of growing proficiency. It fulfils what Little (2010) sees as the ongoing process of negotiating and clarifying needs which will guide the teaching and learning that takes place (pp. 2-3). He also suggests that students should play a big part in curriculum choices. See Appendix A which features a sample needs assessment that tries to capture this purpose and expressly evaluate the needs for Syrian refugees in transit.

4. Conclusion

This essay has shown that the high numbers of Syrian refugees to be resettled in English-speaking countries demonstrate the need for English-language learning while still in Turkey. This does not negate the need for the local language, since resettlement may be years away, but it does beg the question why English-language learning lacks so much support. In addition to basic administrative challenges including the commitment and training of teachers, cultural and psychological factors such as family and gender roles, political and ethnic divisions, religion, and PTSD, also affect what can be taught and how. Nevertheless, the study of English can bring meaning and belonging to Syrian refugees, as they learn to appreciate other cultures and especially their own. The classroom can be a safe place to share stories and find healing, though risk, conflict, and controversy must be avoided. In terms of methodology, teaching English to refugees in transit will require a flexible approach with far less focus on functional competency. Such an approach is best served by the consistent use of needs analyses with the students. By caring for the needs of the Syrian refugees and being flexible in attaining them, English teachers in Turkey can do immeasurable good for their healing and sense of purpose.

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Appendix A: Needs Analysis for Syrian Refugees in Transit

Name (in English script as well if possible):
Age:
Male/female:
Country of Origin:
Native Language:

Current Situation
1. Do you have family members with you? Yes/ No
2. Do you want them to learn English as well? Yes/ No
3. Do you know what country you want to be your final destination? Yes / No
    o If yes, where?
    _____
4. Do you have friends or family you could stay with in that country? Yes/ No
5. How long have you been in Turkey? _____ months/years
6. How long do you expect to stay in Turkey for?
    o Less than one year
    o Less than five years
    o More than five years

Education/Work Experience
7. What level of education have you completed?
    o PhD
    o Masters
    o Undergraduate
    o High School
    o Not completed high school

In the Classroom
13. In which ways do you prefer learning language?
    o Lecture
    o Work-books
    o Computer programs
    o Group activities
    o Games
    o Conversation
    o English TV, films, books, songs, etc.
    o Other:_____

14. Please tick any of the following things that you would NOT be comfortable with:
    o A class with both male and female students
    o A teacher who is the opposite gender to yourself
    o Working with classmates who are a different gender, religion, social status, age or race (please specify if applicable)
    o Conversations with classmates as a part of learning
    o Making a presentation in front of the class
    o Classmates looking at and assessing your work
    o Other:_____

15. What sorts of things would you like to learn about?
    o "Survival" language (making conversation, asking for directions, etc.)
    o Western culture (traditions, holidays,

8. Can you read and write Arabic? Yes/ No
9. Can you read and write English? Yes/No (write Yes/No in English here)
10. Can you read and write Turkish? Yes/No
11. What previous experience do you have with English (and for how long)?
    o English-immersion school (___months/years)
    o In-school lessons (___ months/years)
    o Private lessons (___ months/years)
    o Travel (___ months/years)
    o Living abroad (___ months/years)
    o Other:_____ _____ (___ months/years)
12. What type of work do you have experience in or other skills do you have?

famous people, etc.)
    o Academic English for university
    o English for a particular job (please specify if applicable)
    o Other: _____

Past Experiences
16. Have you experienced trauma? Yes/ No
17. Have you lost a close family member? Yes/ No
18. Does any trauma in your past affect your ability to function in everyday life? Yes/ No
19. Please list any topics you would rather not discuss in class due to your past experiences.

Appendix B: Needs Analysis for Syrian Refugees in Transit (Arabic Translation)

الأسم
اسمك باالغة الأنكليزي
أنثى / ذكر
بلدك
لغتك

الوضع الحالي
1 هل لديك عاءلة؟   نعم / لا
2 هل تريد بأن يتعلموا الغة الانكليزي أيضا؟   نعم / لا
3 بأي بلد ترغب بأن تعيش؟
4 هل لديك أقارب أو أصدقاء تستطيع ا لالقامة معهم؟   نعم / لا
5 ما هي مدة اقامتك في تركيا؟   سنة/ شهر
6 كم سنة تتوقع أن تقيم في تركيا؟   ـ أقل من سنة
أقل من 5 سنوات
    –   أكثر من 5 سنوات

الثقافة / خبرات العمل

7 الشهادات التي تحملها   دكتورا
ماجستير
شهادة جامعية
شهادة ثانوية
شهادة ابتداءية

8 هل تستطيع الكتابة و القراءة باللغة العربي؟   نعم / لا
9 هل تستطيع أن تقرأ و تكتب اللغة الانكليزي؟   yes / no
10 هل تستطيع أن تقرأ و تكتب اللغة التركية؟   نعم / لا
11ما هي قدراتك في اللغة الانكيزي
هل تعلمت الانكليزي في مدرسة تتكلم الانكليزي؟   سنة / شهر

51

دروس في المدرسة   سنة / شهر

دورات في اللغة   سنة / شهر

سفر   سنة / شهر

العيش في بلد أجنبي

12ما هي مهنتك؟ و هل لديك خبرات أخرى؟

في الصف

في أي طريقة ترغب في أن تتعلم اللغة؟

محاظرة

كتاب تماريين

برامج كومبيوتر

أنشطة جماعية

ألعاب

محادثة

محطات تلفزيونية باللغة الانكليزي, أفلام, كتب,أغاني, الخ

14 ضع علامة على ا لأسئلة التي **لا** ترتاح لها خلا ل وقت التعليم في الصف

1صف مختلط اناث و ذكور

2 معلم / معلمة

3 العمل في الصف مع تلاميذ من غير جنس , دين, بيئة, عمر, أو لون؟ أرجوا أن تكون الاجابة واضحة

15 ما هي الاشياء التي ترغب بأن تتعلمها؟

"لغة للعيش", للمحادثة, اسئلة عن الاتجاهات للطرق.الخ

الثقافة الغربية, الحضارة, الأعياد, أشخاص مشهوريين .

لغة أكاديمية للجامعة.

لغة لآي عمل, أرجوا التحديد.

الخبرات السابقة.

16هل اختبرت أي صدمة؟   نعم / لا

17هل فقدت أحد أقربائك المقربيين لديك؟   نعم / لا

18هل هنا ك أي صدمة اختبرتها تؤثر على قدراتك و حياتك اليومية؟   نعم / لا

19أرجوا ذكر النقاط التي لا ترغب مناقشتها في الصف؟

The L1-based integration towards the in-class support in an international classroom of Thailand

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Abstract: The native-speaker fever influences the expansion of international schools all over Thailand and this incident brought about learning difficulties to students who have low English proficiency as students' language ability is related to their academic success in many aspects. This mixed method research aimed at (a) investigating the practical ways that students' L1 can be used in an international school context, (b) clarifying what learning situations that international school teachers and students function the L1 in the context, (c) and exploring the attitudes of international school teachers and students towards the implementation of students' L1. 40 students were randomly selected using simple random sampling; while sixteen teachers were chosen purposively as the insights from the multiple angles could be discovered. Thus, five research instruments were used to collect the data in this study including: perspective questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and non-participant classroom observation. The results revealed that; students and teachers at the research site have different ways of thinking when they applied L1 in their lessons, reading and writing skills allowed the careful application of L1 to help students learn better, teachers use of Thai in facilitating students' learning; however, they insisted that students' L1 should be purposively used only when necessary, and the overall students' attitudes towards L1 use in their lessons went to the positive side.
Keywords: *L1 use, language transfer, mother tongue-based instruction, international school*

1. Introduction

According to students' language ability is related to their academic success in many aspects (Cohen, 1998); thus, Thai students who have low English proficiency and study at an international school will surely encounter adjusting difficulties to the new environment of an international school in both academic and cultural aspects. Specifically, they find themselves in an educational environment where the teaching style, the language used in the instruction and learning context are different from their former experiences in terms of expectations, learning support and academic requirements (Bureau of International Cooperation Strategy, 2006). What makes the situation even worse is the diversity of language background that implies a complexity of a wide range of communication: two languages and literacy needed in teaching and learning context which lead to high frustration, confusion and stress amongst non-English speaking

background students trying to master the language of their disciplines and communicate with confidence and competence in the English tertiary environment (Alptekin, 2002).

One more similar investigation was presented by Nguyen (2011). This scholar studied the challenges of learning English in Australia. Students from selected Southeast Asian countries were chosen including: Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia. The study revealed that international students, who have low English proficiency and are unprepared for the language barrier, have faced learning difficulties during studying in Australia. This paper also discovered the challenges of Vietnamese, Thai, and Indonesian students in learning English at one of the largest language centre in Australia. Therefore, Thai students, who have faced language problem while they are studying in Australia, are counted as examples of the students from a public school in Thailand.

In addition to the above mentioned, it is in line with the present situation of international schools in Thailand: the parents are overlooking their children's English proficiency and rapidly move their kids from a public school into an international school. As a result, the incident brings about learning difficulties when ones have low English proficiency but are to study all subjects at an international school which are taught in English. Here comes the introduction to the issue "Is there a role for the use of students' first language in an international school setting?" This interesting question brings the researcher to the statement of the problem of this current study that how can learners overcome their learning difficulties in the environment which they may not understand all content taught in the lessons? (Mangubhai, 2006) It is inarguable to claim that the language barrier is one of the major learning difficulties the learners faced in the target language classroom: in this case is the English language. Moreover, using only the target language in the classroom may demotivate the learners to participate in classroom activities as they would be bored due to the doubtfulness in communication (Liu, Ahn, Baek, & Han, (2004).

Since less participation is paid during the lessons, the learners' learning ability would be decreased automatically: being in such a discouraged environment in which only the target language is used will be harmful to the learners who have low proficiency in the target language (Roberton, Line, Jones, & Thomas, 2000). It is important that the appropriate knowledge of what proportion and how to balance the effective ways to use L1 must be presented through academic research. Then instructors could be able to manage to use students' first language in the target language setting moderately. Since this current research focuses on the international school setting, it is considerable to investigate the appropriate ways that students' L1 can be used in order to improve students' learning ability; especially the ones whom are called "zero English."

1.1 Research Purposes and Research Questions

The purposes of this study are as follows:
1. To investigate the practical ways that L1 can be used to facilitate teaching and learning in an international school context.
2. To explore what learning situations which international school students use their L1 to help them learn better.
3. To expose native-speaker teachers' and nonnative-speaker teachers' attitudes about the use of students' L1 in the classroom in an international school context.
4. To reveal international school students' attitudes towards the incorporation of L1 in their lessons.

This current investigative study is designed to answer the below questions.

The L1-based integration towards the in-class support in an international classroom of Thailand

1. What are practical ways that L1 can be used to help international school students learn better?
2. What are learning situations in which international school students use their L1 to help them learn better?
3. What do native-speaker teachers and nonnative-speaker teachers think about the use of students' L1 in their classroom at an international school context?
4. What are international school students' attitudes towards the incorporation of L1 in their lessons?

Relatively, little research attention so far in Thailand seems to have been devoted to consideration of the use of students' L1 functioning as a tool to overcome learning difficulties in an international school context. Therefore, it is indispensable to get into the real context in order to apprehend the present situation of the issue being investigated. What impact is this drive for an incorporation of students' L1 having in the classroom?, what challenges are teachers and students facing in the instruction?, and how to adequately implement students' mother tongue in an international school setting? These urgent questions need to be answered as it seems there is no clear guideline has been established regarding how native and nonnative teachers can balance the use between students' first language and a target language in order to improve students' learning ability and to facilitate students to handle with their learning difficulties.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. The role of students' L1
L1 vs Target language in an international school context

Although some teachers and researchers support an English- only policy in the EFL class, some advocate a bilingual approach to be implemented using the learners' L1 as a helpful tool to facilitate their learning. The issue of whether L1 should be used in the English class has been debated for several years. Both proponents and opponents propose rationales to support their beliefs. As Turnbull (2001) states that proponents of English-only in the class stress the benefits of the quantity of exposure to the target language: they firmly believe that L1 should be completely excluded in the class, and that there is room for students' L1 in the class. They also suppose that to maximise the exposure to the target language (TL) can lead to language learning attainments in the form of successful and confident language use.

Furthermore, a question has occured: what is the appropriate amount of TL to be applied in class? And is there any proper place or time for L1 use to facilitate the acquisition of the TL (Turnbull, 2001)? On the other hand, the supporters for L1 use have strong belief in the Threshold Hypothesis proposed by Cummins (1979). The hypothesis of the Threshold Hypothesis is that an individual's achievement in an L2 relies heavily on the level of his mastery of his native language. Therefore, the most positive cognitive effects come about when both languages are highly developed. In addition, in contrast to the "time on task" concept in which presents the idea of the greater the quantity of instruction in L2, the better the educational result will be, so instruction via the learner's L1 does not cause any harmful outcome on development in the TL (Cummins, 2000). It seems like the answer of the issue will not be concluded in short time, thus empirical studies are necessary to support whatever the answer is going to be promoted.

Evidence Against English-Only Instruction

According to Nation, the use of L1 in foreign language teaching creates a friendlier atmosphere than English-only in the class. An appropriate use of L1 offers a familiar and effective way for the learners in order to engage the learning materials, which will save time and keep the learner motivated, especially for learners who have limited English proficiency (Nation, 2003). One of the most obvious arguments for English-only instruction is that the employment of L1 will slow down the acquisition of the TL. Yet, there is a number of research evidences to against this argument. As Jingxia (2010) conducted a research on the topic of "Teachers' Code-Switching to the L1 in EFL Classroom." The investigation was undertaken at three Chinese universities aiming to find out the general situation of code-switching to Chinese as well as attempting to test positive role of the use of Chinese in the EFL classroom. The findings revealed that the switching to L1 is prevalent in the EFL classrooms of some Chinese universities and that it plays a positive role in the teaching and learning of English language. The previous research indicates that there seem to be some room for L1 use in the target language context; in other words, a careful use of students' L1 may be beneficial towards teaching and learning at an international school context.

Miles (2004) carried out two experiments for his study. All the students were male between the ages of 18 and 19, and non-English majors. The participants had studied English for six years at secondary school in Japan considering Japanese as their L1. They were of the three bottom classes after taking the placement test. All the teachers were experienced native speakers and some of them could speak Japanese. In the first experiment, Miles observed three classes for five months. English-only was implemented in one class; in the second class, students were allowed to speak only in Japanese; and in the third class, both the teacher and the students could talk in Japanese. The result of the experiment indicates that L1 use can help students learn English.

To further test the claim that L1 use could facilitate learning, Miles (2004) carried out a second experiment. In this experiment, only one class was selected because both the teacher and students were able to speak Japanese. Four separate lessons were given to the class and Japanese was used in two lessons out of the four; during the rest lessons, teacher and students were strictly prohibited to use Japanese. The first lesson was conducted as usual and Japanese was used when necessary. The following week, another lesson was taught without Japanese being available. The aim of the investigation was to see how much learners had learned at the end of both weeks. Then the two-week cycle was repeated in the reverse order with the remaining two lessons. The results of the tests showed that the average score for the class was improved. According to his findings, Miles contends that L1 use does not hamper learning; instead, L1 use in the class actually assists learning. In a similar study, after reviewing two studies about university-level students' and teachers' opinions towards the use of L1 in the class, Cianflone (2009) concludes in line with the previous study that using L1 is a preferable option for both teachers and students seem when it comes to explaining grammar rules, vocabulary items, and difficult concepts for general comprehension; thus L1 can facilitate the teaching and learning process. The conclusion also affirms the idea that using L1 may help acquire the TL.

Studies against L1 Use

Though many studies have disclosed positive perspectives in support of L1 use in the English class, some studies are in opposition to it. Mangubhai (2006) even assert that immersion language teaching is one of the most powerful ways to acquire a second language; in other words, "English-Only" approach is the best tool to help students learning L2. He claims that the reason why a limited amount of L2 learning occurs in the EFL classroom is because there is such a

limited amount of L2 input offered to students; hence the more L1 the teacher speaks, the less L2 input is available to the students in the class. To avoid this, the amount of L2 input should be raised substantively. As Prodromou (2002) investigated 300 Greek participants' attitudes on L1 use. The participants were divided into three groups regarding to different levels of proficiency: elementary, intermediate, and advanced. The findings show that the low English proficiency students were more willing to accept the idea of using L1. In contrast, the higher English proficiency students had a negative attitude toward L1 use in the class; specifically, they doubted of L1 use in the classroom.

Another investigation conducted by Nazary (2008) exploring 85 students' Attitudes towards L1 use as well as studied the relationship between students' proficiency levels and their attitudes toward L1 use: the L1 of these participants was Farsi. Based on the participants' English proficiency level, they were chosen from elementary level, intermediate level, and advanced level. Moreover, the study indicated that all participants attended extracurricular programs to improve their general English at Tehran University. The research findings suggest that Iranian university students were reluctant to utilize their L1 in learning English. From the three proficiency level mentioned, most of them disagreed on the importance of L1 use. They tended to think that maximising exposure to English was the best way to sharpen their English proficiency. In addition, the comparison among the elementary, intermediate, and advanced level students revealed that the students of intermediate English proficiency had a tendency not to employ their L1 in class activities. They did not expect their teachers to speak L1 when delivering lectures, either.

Lately, scholars seem to separate into two major groups which are positive supporters and the dissenters. Some researchers encourage practitioners to use L1 to facilitate their students' learning in a second language environment, but the others try to push out the conceptual idea of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in which to have students interact with only L2 during the lessons. These two opponents have been colliding for their victory for almost a decade (Wongsathorn et al., 2002). It is not an easy question to be answered though; therefore, the result of this research will, at least, provide an empirical evidence to confirm such issue being discussed in an international school setting. Since it was mentioned, this investigation is an empirical study so that the findings of this study can be used to call for the attention from the authorities, whose influence is to develop and improve the educational system, to pay more consideration on the notion of student's first language.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Context and Site
The setting of the study was conducted at the international school where the researcher works: it is one of the most popular international schools in the Northeast of Thailand. The school employs British curriculum and it was certified by Cambridge University. It is a medium size school with less than two hundred students. There are eighteen native speaker teachers from various countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, China, and etc.; also the school is supported by sixteen Thai staffs including teachers and TAs. Most of the students in all year groups are Thai: the students at the research context have wide range of differences in terms of English proficiency background. Some are native English-speakers, some are bilingual, some are Thai with good native-like proficiency, some are just capable of communicating in English fairly and some are considered as "zero English" e.g. new students. To be more specific, "zero English" refers to the students who are deficient in the English language:

thus students are taken out of a particular subject and study basic English in the ESL Department instead.

At the school, all subjects are instructed in English accept the Thai language and the Thai culture class; hence, being deficient in the English language can be considered as a problematic issue in the context being studied. However, most subjects are provided with a TA who can speak both Thai and English that students' L1 can be used during the lessons if it is needed. As the researcher has described, you can see briefly how students' L1 was implemented in the research context.

3.2. Research design

To pursue the purposes of the study, the researcher employed a mixed-method research procedure consisting of both quantitative and qualitative methodology (Dörnyei, 2003) to collect the data in this current research. Mixed methods research is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative (e.g., experiments, surveys) and qualitative (e.g., focus groups, interviews) research (Kinn&Curzio, 2005). This approach was used as it provides a better understanding of the research problem than either of each alone. By mixing both quantitative and qualitative research approach, the researcher gained in breadth and in-depth understanding and corroboration; while, offsetting the weaknesses inherent to using each approach by itself (Kelle, 2006).

3.3. Participants

As the researcher intended to discover all directions of the data from multiple angles of the participants, there were four major groups of participants including native English-speaker teachers (NET), nonnative English-speaker teachers (NNET), high English proficiency students (high achiever) and low English proficiency students (low achiever).

There were eight native English-speaker teachers (NET) combining both experienced and in experienced in teaching ESL and EFL students at the research context. Since the NETs were not able to communicate in Thai, the researcher would like to examine how they perceived the use of students' L1 in the context. Also, the notion from different angles could be discovered to avoid bias in the study. Turn to the population of the nonnative English-speaker teachers (NNET), there were eight NNETs chosen from the research context: all of them are able to communicate in English proficiently. As NNETs are Thai who passed through the stage of learning English and their experience in teaching at an international school in ESL and EFL context: the notion being gathered from them would be useful in studying the incorporation of students' L1 in the context being studied.

Another group of the participants in this study was the students; there were totally 131 students in all year groups at the research context. The researcher randomly chose eight students from Year 3&4, Year 5&6, Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 to be studied simply because the in-class support is mainly conducted in these classrooms: as most of the low English proficiency students are attending in these year groups. Again, both high achiever and low achiever students were chosen to participate in this study in order to gain in-depth notion about the implementation of the students' L1 in the context.

All participants were selected by employing two sampling techniques: firstly, the student participants were chosen by simple random sampling as there was a small number of the population. Therefore, the lucky draw technique was used to ensure that all population had an equal chance to be chosen. The second sampling technique was the **purposive random sampling** in which its major role is to capture a wide range of perspectives from the participants. The basic

principle behind maximum variation sampling is to gain greater insights from the context by looking at it from all angles. This can often help the researcher to identify **common themes** which are evidences across the sample (Tongco, 2007). NETs and NNETs were chosen based on the maximum variation sampling to capture a wide range of perspectives from both NETs and NNETs. The following data below presents the specific details of the participants from each group:

Table 3.1

The conclusion of the participants in the study

Teachers	Native English-speaker teachers	Nonnative English-speaker teachers	Sampling technique
	8	8	Purposive Random Sampling
Students	High achievers	Low achievers	Sampling technique
	20	20	Simple Random Sampling

3.4. Data Collection

The study was conducted in three sessions and the research instruments used in each session was discussed accordingly:

The data in the first session were collected using the quantitative method which is the perspective questionnaire: the questionnaires were used with international school teachers and students to see how they perceive the role of L1 in an international school context. The questionnaire was adapted from the attitude of using native language (Korean) in ELT classrooms of Kim and Petraki (2009) and Liao's (2006) investigation conducted about the student participants' belief towards the use of L1 in their classroom. Meanwhile, the questionnaire for the students contains two parts which are general information and 44 questions about the participants' beliefs towards the use of L1 in their learning process.

Next, the qualitative method was implemented in the second session: the semi-structure interview was conducted with the teachers and students whom were randomly selected from the whole participants. A set of the interview questions provided five questions asking about teachers' attitudes towards the use of L1 in their teaching; also, they will be asked in what ways L1 can be used practically in their instruction. Moreover, further questions can be used in order to collect other interesting issues related to the use of L1 at an international school, thus the researcher will be free to collect such data during the interview. For the teachers and high achiever students, the researcher interviewed them in English since all of them were able to communicate in English. On the other hand, the interview questions were translated into Thai when the researcher interviewed the low achiever students as they were more comfortable to do the interview in English due to their language barrier. Moreover, using Thai helped them to express their answers more clearly and accurately.

The last session was incorporated with another qualitative method which is the classroom observation check list: the non-participant observation was divided into three sets in order to investigate different levels including beginner to pre-intermediate level, intermediate level, and upper-intermediate to advanced level. The researcher wrote down all data which occurred during the classroom activities, also the researcher's perspectives were noted alongside with the actual incidents that are performed by both students and teachers in the classroom in order to see the reflection of the use of students' L1 in the instruction as well. Both teachers and students were observed in all year groups being studied, also the researcher conducted several observations in order to get an accurate result.

Moreover, an informal pilot study was conducted with a small group of the teachers and students at the researcher's home institution. Conducting a local pilot study permitted the researcher to ask the participants for suggestive feedback on the research instrument and it also helped eliminate the author biases (Mason, 2006). Once the pilot research instruments were modified by using educational expert's feedback, all research instruments were used to collect the data from the participants in the study.

Table 3.2
Data collection of the study

Session	Research Instrument	Participants
1.	Perspective Questionnaire for student participants	• Administer all perspective questionnaires to both teacher and student participants
	Perspective Questionnaire for teacher participants	• Allow the participants to take the questionnaire home since accurate answers are needed
2.	Semi-structured Interview for student participants	• 2 foreign teachers (both experienced and inexperienced in ESL/EFL context)
	Semi-structured Interview for teacher participants	• 2 Thai teachers (both experienced and inexperienced in ESL/EFL context) • 4 high achievers • 4 low achievers
3.	Classroom Observation Check list	• Teacher and students participants from each Year group will be observed 3 times (50 minutes each time) • The observation will last 3 weeks

3.5. Data Analysis
The data analysed in this recent study primarily included 56 questionnaires from teacher and student participants, 8 semi-structure interviews (both teachers and students), and 10 Classroom observations. The result from the questionnaires, interviews and observations were submitted to the participants in order to confirm reliability. A combination of deductive and inductive approaches was used for the analysis of both types of data (Patton, 2002).

SPSS Programme

The SPSS is specifically made for analyzing statistical data from, firstly, the perspective questionnaire in which to be administered to all participants; it offered a great range of methods, graphs and charts: it helped the researcher to present a clearer picture of the result of the study. Secondly, the programme was used to calculate the result of the classroom observation check list in order to present a clearer picture of the correspondence amongst the research instruments used in the earlier steps. Moreover, such graphs or charts worked well with numbers; especially for people who do not enjoy statistics. Meanwhile, general programs may offered other procedures like invoicing and accounting forms, but specialised programs are better suited for this function (Benefit of SPSS, n.d.).

Coding

The interview data analysis was conducted by repeated reading the transcripts gathered from the interview then the researcher coded the repeated data according to the participants' explanation of their perspectives towards the interview questions. The coding was coded deductively by using priori categories derived from the literature review and the research questions. Also, the inductive coding was used to identify the concepts which form all categories. Next, the inductive process continued to identify and carefully improved such categories.

There were three steps in coding the transcript from the interview including open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Firstly, the open coding was done by using the markers with different colours to high light the sentences related to each other. Then the researcher applied the axial coding in the second step: the coloured sentences were grouped according to the research questions as the researcher will considered the relationship among those coloured sentences and put them into the same category. The last step was selective coding. Once all coloured sentences were put into the same category considering the relationship amongst them, all chunks of the data belonged to the same category were gathered together and were refined to develop to theoretical themes. Additionally, repeating comparisons, revisions, and modifications were made in order to validate the categories and themes (Patton, 2002).

4. Results

4.1. Native and nonnative speaker teachers' sensitivity to language difficulty from learners' perspective

The data from this current investigation revealed that both native and nonnative speaker teachers agreed towards the use of students' L1 in the research context. Everybody agreed to use Thai as teaching and learning tool in order to enhance students' learning ability. In addition to this agreement of the students' L1 use at an international school, teachers and students advertised several practical ways which were useful in overcoming learning difficulties that occurred during the instructions at the research site.

The outstanding practical ways according to the research findings were, firstly, inexperienced teachers advocated the use of students' L1 at the beginning stage of the instruction which is to give instruction; however, experienced teachers, who have been teaching in the ESL and EFL context, saw the drawbacks of giving the instruction in Thai. Secondly, all inexperienced teachers saw the benefit of telling the meaning of words or expressions of the target language in students' mother tongue and over a half of the participants, in terms of experienced teachers, found students' L1 is good for clarifying English sentences. Another good

point was both experienced and inexperienced teachers emphasised that classroom management and the encouragement of students' discipline should not be incorporated with the students' mother tongue. Thirdly, the students, both high achievers and low achievers, agreed to use their L1 to explain the complicated content such as grammar rules and sentence structures. High achieving students strongly agreed to use the mother tongue to explain the content being taught in the classroom. Additionally, low achiever students were more comfortable to use their mother tongue to ask and express their thoughts in the classroom. Once they had confidence to ask and talk, they would be moved on to another step in their learning pathway.

In summary, both high achievers and low achievers sometimes had different ways of thinking when they applied their mother tongue in their lessons. Those practical ways presented above show significant practices in terms of facilitating teaching and learning at an international school.

4.2. Students' L1 use in different language skills

The format of this section was divided into four minor sections based on the four skills of learning a language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Firstly, the results showed an unusual finding as the data from the low achievers was different when the researcher asked the same question: high achievers' and low achievers' incorporation of their L1 in listening skill. High achievers agreed that they used L1 to translate when they listened to English; they also asserted that mentally translating English into Thai helped them to understand more. Surprisingly, low achieving students gave the different data under the same question: the result from the questionnaire showed that low achievers strongly disagreed about the use of Thai translation in their mind while they were listening to English. However, more than half of the low achievers strongly agreed that the mental translation of English bettered their comprehension when they listened to English.

Secondly, move on to the speaking skill which is considered as the highest expectation from the parents in moving their children to study at an international school; one of the most interesting research findings under this research question was both high achievers and low achievers did not think of what they would like to say in Thai then translated it into English; however, they just expressed their sentences in English while they were speaking. Even though the participants did not think in Thai first when they wanted to speak English; there were several learning situations that they used their L1 to better their learning ability. For instance, a participant from the low achiever group described the way he used his mother tongue to ask questions in the classroom during the questionnaire quite clearly. As mentioned earlier, both high achievers and low achievers seemed to use Thai to help them in speaking skill: especially the low achieving students who needed more English support. In the regard of this finding, it can be concluded that asking questions and continuing the conversation are important skills to be incorporated with students' L1 in an international school context.

Thirdly, the researcher would like to introduce the use of students' mother tongue in reading skills. In terms of reading skills, the researcher found that Thai translation was helpful for the low achieving students as they described detailed information about the use of their L1 in reading skill. The low achievers indicated that they used their L1 to help them learn better and most of the interviewees in the low achiever group told the researcher that after they read English passages, they used an available Thai translation to check their comprehension. Moreover, both high achieving students and low achieving students learned English idioms and phrases by reading their Thai translation. Furthermore, both high achieving students and low achieving

students thought that English-Thai and Thai-English dictionary were important to help them with the reading skills.

Finally, the researcher will present the implementation of students' mother tongue in writing skills. The previous research findings showed that the students in the research context used their L1 in different ways as well as to have different perceptions towards the same issue as they were from different groups. However, both high achievers and low achievers worked together in the same situation. Moreover, the interviewees from both groups explained how they used L1 in writing skills that they always took notes in Thai while the teacher taught them in the classroom; also, they wrote Thai translations in their book as well.

In summary, both high achievers and low achievers used their mother tongue to facilitate themselves in different language skills. However, there were two skills which were very similar to each other in terms of incorporation with students' mother tongue: reading and writing skills allowed the students to think carefully and they could take time in order to apply their L1 to help them learn better. This is why both skills were similar when it came to using L1 in helping students achieve reading and writing skills.

4.3. ESL/EFL experience affects the use of L1 in the lessons

The attitudes of both native and nonnative speaker teachers towards the use of students' L1 in their instructions at an international school were presented in this section. According to the data collected from both questionnaires and interviews, the teachers from both groups agreed that the use of Thai helped students to learn at an international school; likewise, both experienced and inexperienced teachers had the same attitudes towards the incorporation of students' L1 in their instruction. This can be concluded that teachers support the use of students' mother tongue as a helpful tool to enhance their teaching in the research context.

Even though both native and nonnative speaker teachers agreed to use L1 with low achieving students, they did not support the use of L1 with the students at all time. All experienced teachers strongly agreed to use L1 with low English proficiency students; also, they agreed so far not to use Thai with low achieving students at all time in the classroom. Surprisingly, half of all experienced teacher firmly disagreed with the use of students' mother tongue with intermediate level students; on the other hand, all participants from the inexperienced teachers' side advocated the use of L1 with intermediate level students.

All in all, native and nonnative speaker teachers had varying attitudes towards the use of students' L1 in their lessons. Some results may reflect similar attitude such as the incorporation of L1 with beginner students; however, some may not end up with the same conclusion like the use of mother tongue with intermediate students. Furthermore, experiences seem to affect the attitudes of the corporation of the students' L1 for both native and nonnative speaker teachers; therefore, it is critical to distribute ample experiences to novice international school teachers about how to effectively implement student's' mother tongue for teaching in heterogeneous classroom at an international school and yet experienced teachers are responsible in sharing their notion about what it is like when students' L1 can be useful in the classroom.

5. Discussion of the Findings

5.1. The effects of ESL/EFL experiences on the integration of students' L1

As the research findings presented in the previous section, the researcher has presented many perspectives regardingthe use of students' L1 in an international school context. Actually, both native and nonnative speaker teachers had almost the same attitudes towards the use of

mother tongue in their instruction and more than 50% of the agreement went to the positive pendulum. However, there were a few issues on which the participants from the two groups did not make the same conclusion. Interestingly, most of the time in which native and nonnative speaker teachers ended up with the different conclusion; the factor which took the important role was ESL and EFL experience. The research findings indicated that native and nonnative speaker teachers felt differently about the use of L1 with intermediate students. Native speaker teachers felt guilty to use L1 with intermediate students; however, nonnative speaker teachers advocated using students' mother tongue in the classroom.

5.2. The use of mother tongue on pedagogical purposes

Furthermore, the researcher would like to point out the issue of guiltiness concerning the use of students' L1 in the instruction at an international school. As the conclusion of Halasa and AI-Manaseer's study suggested that nonnative-speaker teachers have no need to feel guilty using their mother tongue in the classroom if they make a decision to use L1 based on pedagogical reasons (Halasa&AI-Manaseer, 2012). Moreover, Ahn (2010) adds that students' first language is believed to be a helpful tool in terms of enhancing learning ability as long as it is pedagogically used. She points out that students' L1 facilitated teaching activities in the target language classroom; however, she emphasised that teachers should not overuse L1 during the instruction.

According to the above investigations, they point out that both native and nonnative speaker teachers do not need to feel guilty to use students' L1 in the classroom as long as the L1 use is based on the academic purposes. It is in line with the findings of this current research, they point that most experienced teachers did not feel guilty to use students' L1 in the classroom. The findings showed that the native speaker teachers use L1 to help them better their classroom activities; however, they disagreed to use L1 to encourage students' discipline. The researcher brought this research finding to be discussed at this stage in order to make a clear conclusion that both native and nonnative teachers accept the advantage of using students' L1 in the classroom in the research context.

To support the research findings mentioned above, Miles (2004) carried out a study on teachers' and students' perspectives towards the advantages of students' mother tongue on pedagogical purposes. The students had studied English for six years at secondary school in Japan and considered Japanese as their L1. They were of the three bottom classes after taking the placement test. Further to this, the teachers were experienced native speakers and some of them could speak Japanese. Miles observed three classes for five months. English-only was implemented in one class; in the second class, students were allowed to speak only in Japanese; and in the third class, both the teacher and the students could talk in Japanese. The results of the experiment indicated that L1 use can help students learn English.

Furthermore, Dietze, Dietze, and Joyce (2009) investigated a survey study to explore the attitudes of 21 English language teachers from J. F. Oberlin University in Japan on their use of L1 (Japanese) in their classes based on pedagogical purposes. All the teachers were qualified in English language teaching with master's degrees or above. The research findings indicated that the careful use of L1 during the instruction could improve students' achievements. They also made good use of L1 when necessary to help students learn based on their students' English proficiency levels and switched between the two languages when they felt it was necessary. Those teachers with bilingual capabilities strengthened the notion that the use of L1 makes acquiring L2 easier and more effective.

Nevertheless, the integration of students' L1 in an international school context should be based on only educational purposes in which it is considered a helpful tool to facilitate teaching and learning.

5.3. The benefits of students' L1 seen by native speaker teachers

One more crucial point to be discussed is the alimentation of using students' mother tongue in an international school context from the native speaker teachers rather than from the nonnative speaker teachers. In addition to McMillan and Rivers (2011), they conducted a research exploring native-English speaker teachers' attitude towards the "English Only" at a Japanese university. They administered an attitudinal survey of 29 native –English speaker teachers instructing English classes at university level: the university policy emphasised on the "English Only" concept thus students were taught using L2 in EFL context.

Not surprisingly, different conceptual arguments were found among the participants. For instance, thirteen participants made comments against the use of students' mother tongue; also five foreign teachers stated that prohibiting L1 use in the classroom provided more opportunity to negotiate for meaning in the target language (TL). In contrast, twenty native-English speaker teachers acknowledged that students' first language could be used in the English lessons to facilitate and to ensure successful communication between students and teachers. The overall result showed, interestingly, that most native-English speaker teachers, twenty-two out of twenty-nine agreed with the idea of selective use of students' first language in which to be compatible with Communicative Language Teaching approach in EFL setting. The result of this investigation is in accordance to the research finding of this current study.

5.4. The advantages of students' L1 transfer during the transition period

In the regard of this current study, the researcher looked into both teachers' and students' angles in teaching and learning in an international school context: the researcher now presents the notion found from the students. The research findings from all three research instruments showed that high achievers and low achievers had different attitudes towards the use of their mother tongue in several learning situations.

The outstanding examples according to this regard are that the students had different attitudes towards the use of L1 in the English speaking lessons. As high achievers strongly disagreed to the use of L1 in their instruction; in contrast, low achievers were willing to be able to use their mother tongue in all subjects. Another good example is when both groups perceived the use of L1 in different learning functions such as asking questions during their lessons: one piece of data from the interviews revealed a low achiever student stated that *"If I cannot use Thai to ask questions in my classroom, I will not ask any thing and keep silent."* Furthermore, another low achiever student said that *"This is helpful when I ask question because I can ask what I really want to know and the teacher can answer the right point."* Additionally, the researcher noticed from the classroom observation that low achiever students were more comfortable to participate in classroom activities if their Thai was allowed in such activities.

From the findings presented above, it can be implied that students' L1 should be purposively used with low achiever students at the beginning stage in order to bridge the transition between Thai-speaking and English-speaking classroom. Once the newcomers (low achiever students) get settled in the new environment and move from the beginner level to intermediate level, teachers can be sure that English can be used with them firmly. In doing so, teachers will be able to break down the language barrier students carried with them when the first day of moving to a new school. Furthermore, the use of students' L1 can be purposively

incorporated with low achiever students as it will be helpful to facilitate students' learning ability as well as will make students more comfortable at the beginning stage of leaning at an international school.

Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) presented their research findings in line with the above discussion that even the learners who did not use their L1s reported in the interviews that the L1 could be a useful tool, especially in more meaning-focused activities such as the joint composition task. They noted that the shared L1 could enable them to discuss the prompt and structure of the composition in more depth and thus complete the task more easily. They felt that the L1 would be less useful in the text reconstruction task, which was the more grammar-focused task. Our data suggest that some use of the L1, even in an L2 setting, could be useful.

Furthermore, a study of Hopkins (2003) supported the research findings of this section, he found that some of the students in the English-speaking classroom felt uncomfortable to participate in different classroom activities because they did not understand the native teachers' L2 and they would like to understand the correct meaning of words and phrases used in the classroom. As the sequences of participants in the study were not able to comprehend the subject matter, they were not capable of achieving their homework or classroom assignments. On the other hand, high English proficiency students felt comfortable with the native speaker teachers' pedagogy and there was no evidence pointing in the direction of higher achieving learners (faster leaners) feeling more at ease with L2 exclusivity.

Moreover, the use of the L1 may assist learners "to gain control of the task" (Brooks &Donato, 1994, p. 271) and work with the task at a higher cognitive level than might have been possible had they been working individually. Thus, in Vygotskian terms, we postulate that the learners may have been extending their zone of proximal development (Lantolf, 2000). Only when learners gain a shared understanding of what they need to do can they proceed with the task. The use of the L1 could also help learners provide each other with definitions of unknown words more directly and perhaps more successfully. The results suggest that L2 teachers may need to reevaluate views concerning the use of the L1 in L2 group and pair work.

The investigation conducted by Nazary (2008) presented the opposite side of students' attitudes towards L1. He explored 85 students' attitudes towards L1 use as well as undertaking a study of the relationship between students' proficiency levels and their attitudes towards L1 use: the L1 of these participants was Farsi. Based on the participants' English proficiency level, they were chosen from elementary level, intermediate level, and advanced level. The study indicated that all participants attended extracurricular programs to improve their general English at Tehran University. The research findings suggested that Iranian university students were reluctant to utilize their L1 in learning English. From the three proficiency level mentioned, most of them disagreed on the importance of L1 use. They tended to think that maximising exposure to English was the best way to sharpen their English proficiency. In addition, the comparison among the elementary, intermediate, and advanced level students revealed that the students of intermediate English proficiency had a tendency not to employ their L1 in class activities. They did not expect their teachers to speak L1 when delivering lectures, either.

In summary, the research findings had presented various discussions to provide the notion of how to integrate students' L1 use in an international school context in which should be based on only academic purposes. Therefore, a careful guideline is always needed to conduct an appropriate teaching and to facilitate students' learning ability. This current research had introduced such notion for all international school associates as well as authorities to see significant points of the integration of students' L1 in an international school context.

5.5. Discrimination against student's mother tongue: nonnative speaker teachers' perspective

According to the several interviews and classroom observations, the researcher noticed that most native speaker teachers supported the use of L1 in their lessons as they thought L1 was an important tool to help students understand what they were taught in the classroom. A significant piece of evidence to support this statement is the quote taken from the interview of a native speaker teacher explaining that *"I do not see any disadvantages of using L1 in my classroom since there are some low English proficiency students who are not yet ready for the mainstream classroom. So, I ask my TA to help these students by using Thai to explain the subject content."* In contrast, most of nonnative speaker teachers agreed with the idea of 'English Only"; as you can see from following quotation *"The only reason that the parents move their kids here is to have them learn English, so for the general thing like managing the classroom should be in English as I think the students should be in English speaking environment."*

The previous strong quotation against the L1 being use in the English-speaking classroom is in line with several research studies advocated the so called "English Only" approach. In spite of many studies have disclosed positive effects on the incorporation of students' L1 used in the L2 class, some studies are in opposition to it. Mangubhai (2006) even asserts that immersion language teaching is one of the most powerful ways to acquire a second language; in other words, "English-Only" approach is the best tool to help students learning L2.

He claims that the reason why a limited amount of L2 learning occurs in the EFL classroom is because there is such a limited amount of L2 input offered to students; hence the more L1 the teacher speaks, the less L2 input is available to the students in the class. To avoid this, the amount of L2 input should be raised substantively. This is in accordance with the investigation of Prodromou (2002), 300 Greek participants were studied on attitudes towards the L1 use. The participants were divided into three groups regarding to different levels of proficiency: elementary, intermediate, and advanced. The findings show that the low English proficiency students were more willing to accept the idea of using L1. In contrast, the higher English proficiency students had a negative attitude toward L1 use in the class; specifically, they doubted L1 use in the classroom.

However, the research findings presented above are diverse and different from the investigation of Kim and Petraki (2009). The investigation revealed that there was a division between the native speaker and nonnative speaker teachers about benefit of students' mother tongue. Nonnative speaker teachers saw very little benefit in the students' L1 use and avoid L1 use in the classroom, even though it affected their classroom management and lead to student confusion. In contrast, native speaker teachers recognized the importance of L1 and L2 use, although they acknowledged their excessive use of L1 due to their lack of confidence. This could have detrimental effects in both classes as noted in the observations and as perceived by the students. The lack of the L1 option, especially with mixed ability students, could lead to cultural misunderstandings and can create an unsupportive environment where there is a lack of sympathy and negotiation on both sides.

Furthermore, Lily and Yinon (2008) studied the novice teachers 'concerns about students' mother tongue in the target language classroom. The study showed that an important insight gained from novices' numerous concerns with the use of L1 pertains to the crucial function that they attributed to the use of mother tongue in the foreign language lesson, as a channel for establishing relationships with their pupils, as a strategy for maintaining control and for conveying empathy towards pupils who exhibit difficulties in learning a foreign language. The use of L1 for these purposes suggests something about novices' shared effort to survive their first

year of teaching, by resorting to students' mother tongue as a strategy in the process of building their new professional image.

It is convincing that nonnative speaker teachers feel guiltier when they use students' mother tongue in the instruction; in the meantime, native speaker teachers are willing to employ students' L1 in achieving classroom activities. With this regard, it can be inferred that nonnative speaker teachers need supportive insights about effective roles of students' mother tongue in the target language classroom. They may be more comfortable to use L1 with low guiltiness if they are told to incorporate students' mother tongue and to confirm the preference of students' L1 in the classroom by native speaker teachers.

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