

Using the Kurdish language in the EFL classrooms: An investigation of teachers' and students' perceptions and attitudes between two institutes in Sulaymaniyah city

American Journal of Creative Education

Vol. 6, No. 1, 1-12, 2023

e-ISSN: 2706-6088



Corresponding Author

Zanyar Nathir Ghafar^{1,2}

Akam Azad Mohamedamin³

¹ESP Department, National Institute of Technology, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan Region, Iraq.

²Department of Nursing, Kurdistan Technical Institute, Sulaimaniyah, Kurdistan Region, Iraq.

³Email: Zanyareng92@gmail.com

³Faculty of Arts, English department, Soran University, Soran, Kurdistan Region, Iraq.

³Email: akam.azads8@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Studying and applying English as a foreign language in Kurdistan Region has been used in academic and non-academic fields. The use of the first language (L1) in Learning English in a nation where it is not the primary language is known as English as a foreign language (EFL). For instance, since English isn't the Nation's official language, students in Iraq studying it are categorized as EFL students. Sessions are a source of ongoing debate among professionals and academics throughout the globe, especially whether it helps or hinders English teaching. The researcher wants to see whether the Kurdish language helps teach English in academic places. Two institute students were selected randomly. This research focused on classroom dynamics regarding the amount of L1 usage in English lecture halls in Kurdistan. This study aimed to show instructors' and students' opinions and attitudes on using first-language and second-language classrooms. The two teachers and two high and two low-achiever students were interviewed, and the lessons were watched and videotaped for six sessions. The results revealed that using Kurdish too often can demotivate learners. Thus, the students who were questioned expressed their displeasure with the inappropriate usage and use of L1 in L2 lessons. This study examines applying the first language in EFL Iraqi Kurdistan institutes. Scholars and EFL instructors throughout the globe have discussed how utilizing L1 in EFL classrooms may be an aid or a burden, depending on how we look at it.

Keywords: Attitudes, English as a foreign language, Kurdish language, Kurdistan technical institute, National institute of technology, Student's attitudes, Teachers' perceptions.

DOI: 10.55284/ajce.v6i1.832

Citation | Ghafar, Z. N., & Mohamedamin, A. A. (2023). Using the Kurdish language in the EFL classrooms: An investigation of teachers' and students' perceptions and attitudes between two institutes in Sulaymaniyah city. *American Journal of Creative Education*, 6(1), 1-12.

Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Funding: This study received no specific financial support.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

History: Received: 24 October 2022/ Revised: 8 December 2022/ Accepted: 28 December 2022/ Published: 11 January 2023

Publisher: Online Science Publishing

Highlights of this paper

- Studying and applying English as a foreign language in Kurdistan Region has been used in academic and non-academic fields.
- EFL teachers feel they must use their L1 while teaching English. They must know whether L1 helps or hurts EFL teaching and learning.
- Studying the use of the native tongue in EFL programmes in Iraqi Kurdistan.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the pre-service programme introduction to the word English language teaching (ELT) is to familiarise students with many facets of the career of teaching English as a foreign or second language has altered throughout the ages regarding first language (L1) usage and instructors judge each class on how to teach. Foreign language (FL) instructors must decide whether to employ L1 in EFL sessions or avoid it altogether to prevent affecting the acquisition of the target language (TL). Studies either affirm or refute the usage of L1 in EFL instruction. In the past, both languages were still taught in the classroom. As more research is conducted on whether it supports or condemns the use of L1 in EFL classes, a more sophisticated approach to teaching foreign languages (TFL) has emerged as the dominant method. To be or not to be" has always been the question about L1 in L2 classrooms. Diverse models of L2 acquisition provide different assumptions concerning L1 utilization in L2 courses.

On the one hand, Some academics have passionately opposed the use of first and second-language learning courses due to the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (Atkinson, 1987). On the other hand, Nation (2003) claimed that L1 is an effective instrument for simplifying communication). However, there have been warnings about using L1 too much (Nation, 2001). A few different schools of thought have advocated for unilingual methods, claiming that learning in both first and second language are equivalent and suggesting that the highest L2 activation and lowest L1 sensitivity are crucial. The teaching of L2 is impeded by distraction from information in L1 (Cook, 2001; Krashen, 1981). As pointed out by Nation (2003) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) language, educators take exception to the idea that L1 should be eliminated from L2 classes. It has been suggested that using L1 carefully and in a well-planned way might have positive benefits (Cook, 2001). The attitudes and opinions of professors and students in L2 classrooms regarding utilizing L1 demand specific consideration. Many examples from foreign studies show that the usage of one's language in ELT practice differs depending on the situation.

Nevertheless, there does not seem to be a lot of similar research and studies done on Kurdistan high schools, which remarkably have this difficulty. This research aims to fill this gap. It is crucial to analyze Sulaymaneyeah institutes since English is the language of teaching in universities. The resources are in English in most of the institutions at the university. Different nations and circumstances have sought the views of both instructors and students on the mother tongue as presented in Language learners' lessons (as will be detailed in the evaluation of the relevant material below). The perspectives of college students in Kurdistan have been analyzed in this research (Nazary, 2008), but high school students and instructors have not. This study reflects instructors' and students' perspectives and attitudes toward utilizing the English language curriculum at the institute level; L1 is covered. According to Pokharel (2001), The words "first language," "mother tongue," and "native language" are all used to refer to the language that a baby acquires since that is the language used in his community and the region where he resides.

Consequently, L1 refers to the first language a learner acquires. In this research, words such as "mother tongue," "first language," and "native language" or "tongue" are all synonyms for one another. will be used interchangeably; nonetheless, it is feasible to argue that there are cases in which they refer to distinct concepts. Because of the importance of the university level in Iraq's educational system, this research focused on institutes-level students. The

institute program serves as a bridge that prepares pupils for higher education and the transition between secondary and college education. As a result, here is where the best-qualified educators often instruct. As a result, learners at this level may be expected to have a more vital perspective on English classrooms, having studied the language for more than sixteen years and under various teaching methods and approaches to learning (at both inferior and high-ranking from elementary schools to institutes/universities).

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

It has long been a topic of discussion in the area of language education whether or not instructors of second or foreign languages should include students' native tongues in their lessons. A few hundred years ago, the predominant teaching method was bilingual schooling. Greek or Latin might be studied using one language (L1) in conjunction with another (L2), and translation was the primary education technique. On the other hand, there was a trend in the 19th to teach only one language.

Al-Nofaie (2010) investigated the perspectives of instructors and students at a Saudi girls' intermediate school about using Arabic in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lessons. The data for this research was collected via questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observation, including the participation of three instructors and thirty participants. According to the results, instructors and students favoured implementing Arabic-language instruction in the lecture hall. For the following reasons, the participants used Arabic while teaching beginning and low-ranking students: teaching new vocabulary, explaining grammatical concepts, and providing test instructions.

Oflaz (2009) conducted a research project in Turkey that included two surveys with 60 English language instructors and 100 students and interviews with five students from the School of Foreign Languages at Gaziantep University. He noticed that teachers and students prefer to employ L1 in class as long as it does not interfere with L2 learning. Observation and interviews were conducted. Nazary (2008) gathered data for his study on students' attitudes toward using their native language (L1) at Iranian universities. His research revealed that the students had a pessimistic outlook on integrating L1 into their English classes, which led him to reach this conclusion.

Another research identical to this one was conducted by Tang (2002) with Chinese speakers in China. According to Tang (2002), who contrasted results with Schweers, "both analyses demonstrated that the mother language was employed by most of the instructors evaluated and that both students and teachers reacted favourably toward its usage." This has to do with how often professors were questioned. The study's conclusions indicate that the limited and deliberate use of learners' first languages (L1) in English classes may be advantageous for the teaching and learning process and has no impact on the students' access to target languages (TL).

Anh (2012) investigated Vietnamese university instructors' opinions about using Vietnamese (L1) in English instruction. The information was gathered via both a semi-structured interview and a questionnaire. The findings showed that using L1 sparingly while teaching English is sometimes necessary. All participants in this research supported using the mother tongue in the classroom. They said L1 was a part of their instructional strategy and may benefit their students. Atkinson's book presents a concept comparable to the mother language as "a useful tool for teachers" (Atkinson, 1987).

Using one's mother tongue in Arabic-speaking surroundings has also been investigated as a research topic. Alshammari (2011) investigated how EFL students and teachers used Arabic in Saudi Arabian universities by conducting questionnaires and interviews. The data indicated that 61% of the students agreed that L1 should be utilized; around 5% of the students considered that L1 is beneficial when providing instructions, and 54% said L1 should be used to teach new terms. The students' suggestion that L1 should be applied in EFL classrooms was supported by about 69 percent of the instructors. Only 7.3% of instructors said Arabic was beneficial for delivering

directions, whereas 51% said it was crucial to convey complex ideas, 25.7% to explain new words, and 16% to explain grammatical problems.

Schweers (1999) interviewed Students and professors of English as a Foreign Language at his Puerto Rican institution using a questionnaire regarding their opinions about using L1 and L2 in the classroom. He discovered that using students' native language in English classrooms improves teaching and learning for 88.7% of students and 100% of professors. A high proportion of learners (86%) believe L1 should be used while addressing complex topics, and 67% feel "less lost" after using L1. According to Schweers (1999), L1's limited and selective usage is justified by its positive effects on schooling and mental health.

Using L1 in the instruction of L2 in the Iranian setting, Nazary (2008) surveyed Tehran University to inquire about students' views regarding the application in L2 classes. The author found that Iranian university students were reluctant to use their L1 in L2. (English) lectures in direct contrast to prior research results. The gap between the two groups prompted the present book's writers to research students enrolled in pre-university programs. As a direct consequence, the teachers' attitudes will also be stimulated.

In a different piece of research, Alzamil (2019) investigated how educational institutions that teach English to students for whom it is a foreign language also use the students' native language. This study examined the various approaches schools use while instructing children who speak English as a foreign language. To get information on the students' viewpoints about using their native language while concurrently obtaining competency in English as a foreign language, the researcher mainly relied on questionnaires as the principal data collection technique.

Larasaty, Wati, and Roudlah (2021) discovered encouraging findings on students' attitudes toward using their native languages in the English as a Foreign Language setting. On the other hand, a wide range of opinions expressed by students on the application of their native tongue in the setting of Indonesia was uncovered. Because of the 22 students attending class XI at an Islamic senior high school, a qualitative research design approach was used for this study. This choice was made because of the nature of the data being collected. This conclusion contradicts the results of the two investigations that came before it, which is not surprising given that the degrees of engagement in each of those studies were distinct. However, Larasaty et al. (2021) looked into high school students. The researchers have focused on emerging with a similar topic because the results of those other studies differed. Since this kind of research hasn't been done much, especially in Indonesia, the researchers are interested in finding out what students in junior high school think.

Qiong (2017) said that perception is an example of becoming aware of or recognizing information from the senses. This study aimed to determine which language classmates prefer to use when learning English in an EFL classroom. This was done to determine how students feel about using their first language.

According to Al-Ta'ani (2019), 72% of students and 54% of teachers agree that incorporating Arabic in the EFL classroom is essential. Most study participants agreed that contentious or complex religious, traditional, traditional, and political issues need to be addressed in EFL lessons using the students' native languages. When Arabic was used in an EFL classroom, pupils often responded far more warmly than their lecturers (Al-Ta'ani, 2019). A significant percentage of students said that studying Arabic helped them understand multifaceted concepts and exposed them to new vocabulary and grammatical conventions.

The debate about using L1 in EFL classes reveals a dichotomy that EFL instructors portray while they do their everyday tasks. Teachers often use L1 as a linguistic and fundamental tool for enhancing classroom management. The seeming discrepancy between instructors' professed views and their classroom teaching behaviours only exacerbates the paradox. Teachers' wishes for using L1 are at odds with the accompanying classroom procedures. Therefore, investigating teachers' views on their usage of their native language (L1) in EFL classroom settings offers

an excellent foundation for exploring the roles of native language (L1) in instructing L2 (Alrabah, Wu, Alotaibi, & Aldaihani, 2016).

Most EFL teachers acknowledged that they sometimes spoke in their students' native tongues while teaching new vocabulary, building strong connections with them, and clarifying words with ambiguous meanings (Alshehri, 2017). These scholars believe that L1 may aid foreign language learning when used effectively. This is in line with recent studies showing the need to use L1 for various activities in EFL classes. For example, L1 is essential for clarifying syntax, vocabulary, and unclear meanings (Alshehri, 2017). According to recent studies, using L1 is vital for assignment planning and language interpretation. This is true despite the opinion of some educators that English ought to be the primary language in EFL courses. However, these studies demonstrate that teacher preparation does not encourage using students' native languages (Alshehri, 2017). In the direction of meeting the educational demands of their students, teachers are advised to employ L1. This does not mean L1 should be the only language spoken in class. More frameworks that outline when and how L1 should be utilized must be created (Alshehri, 2017). Additionally, teachers want to learn more about the advantages of adopting L1.

There are several benefits to using L1 in the EFL lesson. One of them is that it's advantageous for students and teachers to develop relationships since they speak the same first language. According to Getie (2020), students with excellent interactions with their teachers and peers tend to have more favourable attitudes regarding L2. This is in contrast to students who have less contact. For example, Sari, Santosa, and Adnyani (2020) discovered that students continue to include terms from their native tongue in their English utterances. In the past, several instructional approaches, such as Natural Method and Direct Teaching, have prohibited students from speaking their home tongues in foreign language lessons.

According to Turin (2017), using L1 in foreign language classrooms may foster a sense of camaraderie between students and teachers and increase students' comfort levels. Also, he claimed that since L1 is not allowed in class, some pupils may be reluctant to voice their concerns. The uneven outcomes have led to various perspectives and attitudes concerning the use of L1 in L2 lessons. According to Tsang and Lo (2020), students' views are good, and they advise making the material understandable in both the students' L1 and the target language to avoid misunderstanding.

Akowuah, Patnaik, and Kyei (2018) interviewed ten students in Ghana, and the results indicated that four students established that the usage of their L1 influenced their habits and brought about detrimental consequences on their performance in the English language. Even though Piper, Zuilkowski, Kwayumba, and Oyanga (2018) did not explicitly mention the particular effects that using L1 had on the students' English learning, they still concluded that using L1 was not beneficial for students when it came to learning English. This was based on the findings that they had uncovered. However, De Luca (2018) maintained that one's first language (L1) should be improved when learning a second language (L2) since the advantages exceed the negatives; hence, they urged that it should never be abandoned.

Overall, using students' L1 in EFL classrooms may benefit students and instructors in various ways, such as providing students with a feeling of security while in class and developing rapport between students and the instructor. On the other hand, if learners ignore how they're using it, it may negatively impact their performance in English and cause them to become too dependent on their L1 rather than the target language. As a result, it is essential to research how students perceive the use of their L1 in EFL classes to determine what advantages this has for students and what teachers should do to maximize students' English ability even though they are using their L1 while learning English.

2.1. Study Questions

2.1.1. This Study is Organized on the Two Questions Given Below

1. Is using Kurdish in the classroom detrimental or beneficial to EFL learning?
2. What are the views of institutes' English instructors and students regarding applying first and second language in classrooms?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

Teachers and students from the National Institute of Technology and the Kurdistan Technical Institute were randomly chosen to participate in this research. These two letters, A and B, are referred to the institutes' names. Both institutions were located in prosperous regions of Sulaymaniyah. Typically, the most renowned instructors are picked to teach at these institutes. These academic institutions often employ outstanding lecturers. Three courses have been selected from classes (A) at the (NIT) is abbreviated to the National institute of technology was founded in (2018) NIT is a private, non-profit school whose goal is to educate a generation that will contribute to the development of our society by instructing and preparing them in a variety of courses in their major that would help them to succeed in their profession. In addition, on February 19, 2018, the National Institute of Technology was established by Official Order No. 2085, which the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Kurdistan Regional Government issued. Four classes from classes (B) at the Kurdistan Technical Institute (KTI) was established on 19/10/2015 by the ministerial decree No. 21923, which wants to take part in this historical and national responsibility. Although the Kurdistan Technical Institute was established promptly, a leading institute was necessary for the stage, as Kurdistan's students needed a modern institute with a contemporary program. Six of the seven courses had similar instructional methods, while one was unique. The researchers randomly picked one of six groups (part A) based on statistical data to assess the strangeness (part B). The Observations section will describe the teaching strategy used by both systems. However, class A had thirty pupils. There were 22 students between 18 and 20 in class B, and two lecturers taught. The researcher interviewed two lecturers and four students to determine the findings presented in this study.

3.2. Tools

In this study, a qualitative research approach was used. The information was acquired via two different methods: classroom observations and interviews with students and teachers. The purpose of classroom interpretations was to demonstrate the number of interviews the researchers chose because of their value in illuminating participants' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. The length of the interviews with the students and teachers in L1 was 10 minutes (Kurdish). After that, the interviews conducted in Kurdish were translated into English to ensure correctness.

3.3. Findings

Before diving into the study's specifics, it is essential to understand that the researchers discovered "astonishing originality" throughout the way English was presented in the two Institutes. All the teachers did the same thing: "teach grammar" once and "teach reading" another time during the week. Below is a short description of the classes at each institute and the interviews.

3.4. Classes (A) Observation in NIT

The instructor emphasized reading, grammatical exercises, and translation from what has been seen in class. The instructor included the student-selected new terminology in the lesson. Terms and their L1 counterparts were on the board for the reading comprehension session, and the students wrote them down as quickly as possible. There was no group discussion or pre-reading. The primary thing we accomplished in class was translating from the second tongue into the first language word for word and phrase for sentence. In addition, the instructor did not disregard grammatical explanations of specific terms in each paragraph.

Moreover, the translation often led to a group debate on the grammatical roles of the words in specific phrases. The instructor was preoccupied with translating words and phrases into L1 in grammar sessions that could scarcely be mistaken for a Kurdish course. For example, the instructor may write a statement on the board and ask students to collectively translate Each phrase into L1. Generally speaking, the teacher taught the Kurdish students to handle sentences by first translating them into L1 and then identifying the nature of the words, such as active or passive.

The equivalent of 67% of the 120 minutes of lessons in class (A) was exclusively Kurdish, with the other 30% devoted to reading the text aloud, reading grammatical tasks by the learners and teacher, and intermittent attention to pronunciation. The lesson was boring; there was little diversity or excitement in the language tasks. The lone voice was the teacher's, although they had no power throughout the class. Some students were working on tasks for various topics, while others were conversing. Not to add that the most repeated elements in our movies which students who were uninterested in the subject yawning and checking the time often.

3.5. Classes (B) Observation in KTI

Classroom B Observations this session's teaching methodology was distinct from class A's. The instructor established the mood for the reading comprehension session by posing pertinent questions to the students in plain English and then offered the pupils a few minutes of quiet reading time. Following the silent reading, students inquired about the meaning of difficult words. The teacher emphasized transferring to L1, fundamental definitions of the phrases in English, and English equivalents. Also, substantial use was made of various audible tools, including Presentation software with comforting melodies) to promote increased use of L2 and less reliance on L1.

In contrast to classroom A, the instructor in this class devoted methodically to noting the students' pronunciation. The fundamental concept of grammar correction was written down on the whiteboard, and the instructor tried to communicate it to the class in L2 and sometimes even L1 by illustrating the point with examples from everyday life. Students were then permitted to read their completed work aloud to the class. The final tasks were then read aloud to the course by the students. After finishing their work, the students could read their final assignments out loud to the rest of the class. In the six sessions, class B had 120 minutes of instruction, or around 35% of that time was spent on Kurdish, with the other 65% dedicated to silent reading, word definitions, student sentences, group work, class discussion, and pronunciation exercises.

3.6. Interviews

Consider the answers to the following questions: individual interviews with two teachers and four students in both institutes were done to get insight into the attitudes and points of view held by both teachers and students. These interviews aimed to understand students' and teachers' attitudes and perspectives.

1) Is Using Kurdish in the Classroom Detrimental Or Beneficial to EFL Learning?

3.6.1. Teacher A: At NIT Institute

I am forced to communicate with my students since they do not speak English well enough to understand me most of the time, so I usually talk to them in my first language. The students are used to this pattern, prioritizing learning in the first language (L1) rather than the second language (L2). Some parents and Students are unhappy when classes are taught in a second language because they fear that doing so will make it more difficult for their pupils to understand the material being taught, which would, in turn, affect the student's performance on standardized tests. This describes the way English is taught in our institute right now. It is not a dream place to learn and teach English.

3.6.2. Teacher B: At KTI Institute

I only use my Mother tongue when needed since it provides second-language students with a non-threatening context. I utilize L1 to assist students in understanding my English explanations. However, it is not easy to get accurate feedback from your pupils since some students do not comprehend what you yet claim to, and I feel that the current English teaching approach now used in Kurdistan academic places will not get us anywhere since interpretation into L1 is already an established practice in our classrooms and will continue to be so. I have no problem with students using their native language in advanced courses; I am opposed to the overuse of L1. It should only be used when and where necessary.

2) What Views of Institutes' English Instructors and Students Regarding Applying First and Second Language in Classrooms?

3.6.3. Teacher A: At NIT Institute

Explaining things in the students' L1 helps them comprehend will be better. Learners' level and background determine L2 usage. Once you divide the group, you may teach them depending on their requirements, status, and satisfaction. There is no way to tell who is better at English in English class. In this scenario, stringent L2 usage hinders L2 learning. It reduces student involvement. Under the present conditions, In terms of English teaching in Kurdistan, I believe that applying the first language to teach a second language is a good strategy since this style is popular with students and families, which you know because they are satisfied with this trend. You know student and family contentment is essential for the promotion and other teacher advantages.

3.6.4. Teacher B: At KTI Institute

The excessive use of L1 should not affect instruction in L2. When L2 fails, use L1. Students and families push me. To "stand for ethics" is a responsibility that falls on my shoulders as a conscientious educator. It is crucial to deal with issues at work professionally while putting feelings for the family to the side. All the students who were questioned agreed that L2 should be used during EFL lessons. Do English courses employ L1? The professors of English do not speak L1. When is it OK to use the L1 form?

3.6.5. The High-Achieving Student at the (NIT) Institute

Institute is the only place where I can develop and apply abilities related to the English language. Consequently, it would be beneficial for our teacher to communicate with us using that language. Since our Kurdish lecturers teach English and Kurdish literature, our English class runs quite similarly to our Kurdish academic session. The English course is not something that interests me in the least. We all like conversing in English since it is a language that a majority of people will need to be able to understand and utilize in the future.

3.6.6. The Low-Achieving Student at the (NIT) Institute

Our lecturer prefers to communicate with us in Kurdish rather than English. People have the misconception that we cannot converse with them in English. I feel we have a sufficient vocabulary and knowledge of English grammar, but we do not know how to utilize this knowledge when conversing. Because such a large population speaks Kurdish, we do not even have the opportunity to use English throughout our time studying English at school. We do not need to think or speak in English since we are not compelled to do so. During the English lesson that we are taking since our English teachers do not want us to do either of those things.

3.6.7. The High-Achieving Student at the KTI Institute

Since our previous lecturers had already prepared everything for us, the only item that moved about in the classroom was the quantity our old professors had previously designed and brought in. I believe that a greater focus in English education needs to be placed on the ability to speak and have conversations in the language. We are fortunate because our English class is entertaining and highly active. Our instructor promotes active participation in class as well as the use of English language skills. Using both auditory and visual assistance, she provides a more engaging learning environment for her students. Because I have such a good time in our English class, I hope it does not end any time soon.

3.6.8. The Low-Achieving Student at the KTI Institute

Kurdish helps us grasp tricky English words and grammar. To compare grammatical issues in both languages, Kurdish should be applied more than English. Our ex-teachers spoke everything in Kurdish, even basic stuff in Kurdistan. Students in almost the same class may have different English skills; some may have private tutors or attend English institutes. These pupils have no English problems. Kurdish helps pupils who cannot afford expensive schools. Despite my poor English, our new instructor inspired us to study English.

4. DISCUSSION

This section discusses and explains questions based on the initial results. This research aimed to monitor two classrooms for the amount of L1 usage and to reflect students' and instructors' views about utilizing L1 in L2 courses. Researchers concluded after observing seven different English classes that six English classes used the same teaching methodologies, for instance, the grammar-translation method. At the same time, one was radically different activities, such as teamwork and using audio-visual methods of ELT in Class A, were randomly chosen to compare with Class B. Teachers and students were interviewed to get insight into their attitudes and perspectives. The instructor in class A argued in favour of L1, widely used in Kurdistan institutes. The researcher gave reasons for his choice to misuse L1, including the course book's syllabic structure and content, the English competency of her students' classes, time, parent satisfaction with school teaching tactics, etc. Ellis (1984) advised minimizing L1 use. The lofty and the down-achieving students think similarly about exploiting the first language in English language classes. Both high and low performers agreed that L2 should come first. This finding completely contradicts Butzkamm (2003) argument, which stated that "as ability in the foreign language improves, the employment of the mother tongue becomes obsolete, and the FL will stand on its own two feet." This finding starkly contrasts Butzkamm's argument, which can be found here (p. 36). In addition, the results of this research contradict specific findings produced by other researchers in other nations, which suggest that L2 learners prefer to utilize L1 when in the circumstances demanding L2 (Al-Nofaie, 2010; Brooks-Lewis, 2009). Furthermore, direct interaction with instructors would reveal that most of them would

agree that utilizing L1 less is better for comprehending FL. The teachers also claimed that L1 should not be used too much and only when necessary.

On the other hand, in the current study, an overwhelming majority of the teachers who took part in this investigation used Kurdish in their English language classrooms and expressed a positive attitude toward using the language. The use of Kurdish was found to be beneficial in various ways throughout the English language course. Using L1 to explain grammatical points, using it when teaching new vocabulary, clarifying complex concepts or ideas, and delivering directions are all tasks that became much easier due to using Kurdish. Despite this, it is possible to ascertain, by having in-depth conversations with teachers, that the vast majority of them would agree that using only a limited amount of L1 is more effective for acquiring an understanding of FL. This can be determined by the fact that it is possible to decide that using only a limited amount of L1 is more effective. Thus, it is necessary to determine whether or not the great majority of educators agree that using just a tiny quantity of L1 is more beneficial. Using the method described previously in this paragraph, one may carry out the necessary steps to arrive at this conclusion. In addition, the teachers suggested that L1 shouldn't be used excessively but only when it is required to do so. Because the two statements indicate the same thing and meaning, this advice is equivalent to the suggestion that L1 should be used sparingly. The outcomes of the study demonstrated that student-teachers were unanimous in their opinion that teaching was challenging and that being in a new environment may be nerve-wracking. The student teachers were unprepared for a number of the challenges that they would face. The student teachers went through many challenges throughout their classroom experiences, but they also picked up a lot of valuable abilities as a result of those experiences. The lack of technological resources in the classroom, the usage of L1 in the classroom, enormous classroom sizes, children with special needs, the challenge of controlling the students, and the difficulty of responding to difficult questions were all cited as hurdles. As they attempted to embrace a new technique that required the use of L2 as the primary language of instruction, this presented them with some significant difficulties.

This indicates that L1 use or avoidance in Kurdish EFL lessons remains a significant problem. [Freeman \(2011\)](#), however, asserts that when appropriately used, L1 may be helpful and time-saving in various settings, such as when elaborating on a challenging grammatical or vocabulary concept. The problem becomes much more severe when educators realize they cannot accommodate students with various learning styles. When some students already have a deeper understanding of the material, it may be challenging for the instructors to convey that knowledge to the rest of the class. Because of this, clever students often make up the majority of the student body and frequently put their professors to the test by giving questions that seem to have no easy answers. Nobody wants to deal with anything like this in their classroom, regardless of how long they've been teaching or how much experience they have.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, most EFL instructors believe that they must utilize their first language (L1) while teaching English. However, they must know whether employing L1 benefits or harms EFL teaching and learning. This study examined the effects of using L1 in two institutes (NIT & KTI) in Sulaymaniyah city. Another point to conclude is the link between how the teachers feel and what they do in the classroom. There were clear signs of teachers' attitudes in how they taught, which fits using [Richards and Rodgers \(1982\)](#) theory that instructors' classroom approaches may be seen as a representation of their assumptions and beliefs about language and how it is handled to learn. Finally, and at least, the research might be evidence of a teacher's deciding function in a classroom. In terms of the current study, despite teacher A's claim that 'other' circumstances were reducing their efficiency, the effectiveness of instructor B, who was instructing in related environments, demonstrated how a teacher might successfully employ the least to the most significant benefit. The results of this study not only confirm those of other studies on the

significance of L1 in EFL classrooms are reviewed, but the authors also provide new data about the potential of developing it and the extent to which L1 is advantageous for EFL students when learning the language in a classroom context.

REFERENCES

- Akowuah, J. A., Patnaik, S., & Kyei, E. (2018). Evidence-based learning of students' performance in English language in Adu Gyamfi senior high school in the Sekyere South District of Ghana. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 4(1), 1503577. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2018.1503577>
- Al-Nofaie, H. (2010). The attitudes of teachers and students towards using Arabic in EFL classrooms in public schools-A case study. *Novitas-Royal*, 4(1), 64-95.
- Al-Ta'ani, M. H. (2019). The use of arabic (L1) in the EFL class rooms: How do Umm Al Quwain teachers and students perceive It. *International Journal of Contemporary Education*, 2(2), 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.11114/ijce.v2i2.4229>
- Alrabah, S., Wu, S.-h., Alotaibi, A. M., & Aldaihani, H. A. (2016). English teachers' use of learners' L1 (Arabic) in college classrooms in Kuwait. *English Language Teaching*, 9(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n1p1>
- Alshammari, M. M. (2011). The use of the mother tongue in Saudi EFL classrooms. *Journal of International Education Research*, 7(4), 95-102. <https://doi.org/10.19030/jier.v7i4.6055>
- Alshehri, E. (2017). Using learners' first language in EFL classrooms. *IAFOR Journal of Language Learning*, 3(1), 20-33.
- Alzamil, A. (2019). The Effects of the use of first language on learning English as a second language: Attitudes of Arabic EFL learners. *Arab World English Journal*, 10(3), 192-201. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no3.13>
- Anh, K. H. K. (2012). Use of Vietnamese in English language teaching in Vietnam: Attitudes of Vietnamese university teachers. *English Language Teaching*, 3(2), 119-128. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v3n2p119>
- Atkinson, D. (1987). The mother tongue in the classroom: A neglected resource? *ELT Journal*, 41(4), 241-247. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/41.4.241>
- Brooks-Lewis, K. A. (2009). Adult learners' perceptions of the incorporation of their L1 in foreign language teaching and learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 30(2), 216-235. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amn051>
- Butzkamm, W. (2003). We only learn language once. The role of the mother tongue in FL classrooms: Death of a dogma. *Language Learning Journal*, 28(1), 29-39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571730385200181>
- Cook, V. (2001). Using the first language in the classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57(3), 402-423. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.57.3.402>
- De Luca, C. (2018). Mother tongue as a universal human right. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 20(1), 161-165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17549507.2017.1392606>
- Ellis, R. (1984). *Classroom second language development: A study of classroom interaction and language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Freeman, D. (2011). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Getie, A. S. (2020). Factors affecting the attitudes of students towards learning English as a foreign language. *Cogent Education*, 7(1), 1738184. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331188x.2020.1738184>
- Krashen, S. (1981). Second language acquisition. *Second Language Learning*, 3(7), 19-39.
- Larasaty, G., Wati, A., & Roudlah, R. (2021). Students' perception of first language usage in EFL classroom: A case of senior high school students. *Journal of English Language and Language Teaching*, 5(1), 37-51. <https://doi.org/10.36597/jellt.v5i1.10025>
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nation, P. (2003). The role of the first language in foreign language learning. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 5(2), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.26686/wgtn.12560333.v1>

- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nazary, M. (2008). The role of L1 in L2 acquisition: Attitudes of Iranian university students. *Novitas-Royal*, *2(2)*, 138-153.
- Oflaz, Ö. (2009). *Teachers and students' views on using mother tongue in ELT classrooms*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Gaziantep University, Gaziantep, Turkey.
- Piper, B., Zuilkowski, S. S., Kwayumba, D., & Oyanga, A. (2018). Examining the secondary effects of mother-tongue literacy instruction in Kenya: Impacts on student learning in English, Kiswahili, and mathematics. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *59*, 110-127. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2017.10.002>
- Pokharel, B. R. (2001). *Applied linguistics* Kathmandu: Jupiter Publishers and Distributors.
- Qiong, O. (2017). A brief introduction to perception. *Studies in Literature and Language*, *15(4)*, 18-28.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. (1982). Method: Approach, design, and procedure. *Tesol Quarterly*, *16(2)*, 153-168. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3586789>
- Sari, P. P. N., Santosa, M. H., & Adnyani, N. L. P. S. (2020). Investigating junior high school students' errors in using English past tense: A look from technological and sociological foundations. *ETERNAL (English, Teaching, Learning, and Research Journal)*, *6(2)*, 245-258. <https://doi.org/10.24252/eternal.v6i2.2020.a5>
- Schweers, J. W. (1999). Using L1 in the L2 classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, *37(2)*, 6-9.
- Tang, J. (2002). Using the L1 in the English classroom. *Forum*, *40(1)*, 36-43.
- Tsang, A., & Lo, F. (2020). Bilingual education through a pluri-centric approach: A case study of the effects of simultaneously learning two languages on L1 and L2 reading and writing proficiency. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, *67*, 100927. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2020.100927>
- Turin, T. (2017). Usefulness of using mother tongue in foreign language classroom. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, *5(8)*, 27-36.

Online Science Publishing is not responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability, etc. caused in relation to/arising out of the use of the content. Any queries should be directed to the corresponding author of the article.