

A Study on Afghan EFL University Teachers' Views and Beliefs on Using Persian in English Language Classes

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ABSTRACT

The debate over the role of the first language (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms has persisted for decades. It began in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a period during which the use of the native language in language learning settings was permitted. Numerous researchers and educators have investigated the impact of using the mother tongue in EFL/ESL teaching environments, resulting in a wide range of perspectives. Some scholars view the use of the first language (L1) in the EFL classroom as beneficial, while others contend it hinders the learning process. Meanwhile, another group debates the extent to which L1 should be utilized in EFL settings. This research aimed to explore "A Study on Afghan EFL University Teachers' Views and Beliefs on Using Persian in English Language classes" within the Afghan context. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect responses from 20 teachers across 13 universities in Afghanistan. The results showed that the participants supported the careful application of Persian for teaching and learning new vocabulary, clarifying grammar, offering explanations when students fail to comprehend English, detailing complex instructions, elucidating the distinctions between Persian and English rules, and believed that employing Persian enables students to grasp the teachers' instructions more clearly.

INTRODUCTION

The use of L1 in EFL classroom has been an argumentative issue for a long time. So many researchers and practitioners have come up with different ideas and perceptions regarding the use of L1 in the EFL/ ESL classroom. Some considered that the use of L1 in EFL classrooms can facilitate the process of learning, whereas others believed that the use of L1 in EFL classrooms can debilitate or impede the process of learning. Furthermore, they emphasized that the learners of EFL must be exposed to English, since the aim of the students is to learn the English language. The researchers who were prone in using of L1 considered the amount of its use in EFL classrooms, they showed tendency in judicious and moderate use of L1 in the language classrooms. Therefore, the current research is going to explore the views and beliefs of Afghan EFL teachers towards the use of L1 in EFL classes.

Background of the Study

Bley (1990) defined the claim of existing similarities between the acquisition of L1 and EFL/ L2 by representing some differences between children's acquisition of L1 and L2 and adults' learning. He asserted that the innate ability that the children possess to acquire their L1 disappears in adulthood. Furthermore, he claimed that the knowledge that children have about their L1 is zero when they learn it, unlikely, adults rely on their L1 to learn EFL/L2. Nicholas and Lightbown (2008) stated that the second language acquisition for a child will happen before age 3 and there will be a gradual

development for the process of their learning which is realized as (adult second language acquisition) which happens almost after age 7.

Moreover, Bley-Vroman pointed out that the motivation and extent of exposure to the language are more in children acquiring L1 than in adults learning L2. Accordingly, Cook (2001) stated that L1 acquisition process is absolutely separate than L2 learning process. According to Krashen (1992) (Almohaimeed, & Almurshed 2008) asserted that exposure to comprehensible input maximizes the learners' opportunity to acquire the language. Additionally, he pointed out that comprehensible input might take place by facilitative effective factors, such as great encouragement and self-reliance. Gass, and Selinker (2008) pointed out that learners rely so much on their first language in a Second language learning. Anton and Dicomilla (1998) stated that the use of L1 in the language classroom is useful as it aids in the process of learning and completion of task and it makes social cognitive space in which the learners will have the ability to assist each other throughout the duration of task. So many target language (English) learners consider the use of L1 necessary in the learning process in the classroom as they have interaction with teachers and peers (Villamil, & Guerrero, 1996). Seng and Hashim (2006) stated that the learners with low proficiency level usually have problems in representing or verbalizing their opinions confidently and accurately through the target language (English), so they need to go back to their L1.

Mahmoudi and Amirkhiz (2011) conducted a study

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towards (the use of Persian in the EFL classroom). The study took place at Pre-university Level in Ahvaz, Iran. The aim of their study was to find out the both learners and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the use of L1 in EFL classrooms. They observed and video-taped the classes for 6 sessions, and also they implemented an interview with students. Their findings from observation and video-taped classes revealed that the over use of Persian in their classes will have a negative effect on students, and will demotivate them. Similarly, the result of the interviewed learners showed that they were dissatisfied with excessive use and domination of L1 in their English classes.

Schweers (1999) (Mahmoudi, & Amirkhiz 2011) carried out a research to find out the frequently use of Spanish (L1) in English classes. The study took place at the University of Puerto Rico. The result of his research revealed that nearly all the students are in favor of using L1 in their English classes. The students thought that the use of L1 could lead them to better understanding of texts, and will cause the learners to be more comfortable in communication.

They also added that use of L1 can lead the learners to positive attitudes towards learning English and motivated them to learn more English.

General Goal of the Study

The aim of this research was to investigate A Study on Afghan EFL University Teachers' Views and Believes on Using Persian in English Language classes. The research was conducted in context of Afghanistan where English Language is considered as a foreign language and English class is the only place for learners to be exposed to English. The participants of this study were university teachers. Therefore, the researcher strives to answer the following research questions:

Main Questions (Specific Questions)

1. What are the situations in which teachers are prone to use Persian in EFL classrooms?

Sub-Questions (General Questions)

1. Does Persian use facilitate or debilitate the process of English learning?
2. Does Persian have a positive or negative effect on EFL students?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The debate about using or not using of L1 in EFL/ESL classes is not a new issue. Practitioners and researchers are perpetually trying to ascertain their view regarding the use of L1 whether it is used as essential or deleterious subject in EFL/ESL classrooms. Some researchers viewed the use of L1 in foreign language classrooms as essential and believed that the use of L1 can assist learners with the process of Learning, while others believed that the use of L1 and L2 classes hindrance and alleviates the learners' exposure to the target language.

Some of the studies have considered that the use of L1 can facilitate in EFL classrooms, whereas some other researchers look that L1 use in EFL classrooms will impede the process of L2 learning. Harbord (1992) pointed out that the idea of not using mother tongue in the language teaching class goes back to beginning of the twentieth century, with the emersion of the direct method which was invented by Francois Gouin.

The premise of the direct method was to avoid the learners to use their mother tongue in EFL classroom, and made them to speak in the target language. In 1880, Gouin discovered that learning language was a matter of changing perception to conception and then using language to represent concepts. He came up with this knowledge that the method of teaching is based on insight. The view of this method was that the L2 is acquired in the same way that the first language (L1) is acquired by children (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

According to Deller and Rinvoluceri (2002) the mother tongue is the womb from which the second language is born (cited in Kayaoglu, Oztuk, & Akbas 2010). Bhooth *et al.* (2014) stated that L1 can be used as a learning strategy to translate new words, define concepts and help each other in their groups. Additionally, they pointed out that teachers can use L1 in the EFL classroom as a pedagogical strategy to facilitate students learning and to maximize their engagement in the classroom. Similarly, Palmer, (1965, p. 125) considered using L1 in the English learning process to be harmless and "in many cases positively beneficial." Furthermore, Atkinson (1987), Harbord (1992), and Scrivener (2005) stated that L1 use can have positive effect on the teaching of English Language and the process of learning if it is used properly (Hanáková & Metruk, 2017). However, the maximum use of EFL is encouraged since EFL classroom is the only context for language learners to be maximized for EFL exposure (Littlewood & Yu, 2011). Furthermore, they pointed out that if language teachers refer to first language of the learners, the comprehension amount in English will reduce. Ma (2009) stated that the use of L1 can be as a scaffolding instrument for the learners of EFL which might affect positively in EFL output.

In contrast to the above ideas, the proponents of monolingual approach view that L1 doesn't play a significant role in the EFL/ESL classroom that it might dispossess students of valuable input in the EFL/L2 and hinder the progress of learning (Bouangeune 2009, Ellis 1985 & Auerbach, 1993; Bhooth *et al.*, 2014).

Ellis noted that too much L1 use could "deprive the learners of valuable input in the L2" (1984). Similarly, Mattioli (2004) stated that students will not be able to see the target language exchanges if they are continuously referring on their L1s. In addition, Cook (2001) stated that although L1 does sometimes have a role of "creeping in as a guilt-making necessity", it should be used systematically and deliberately in the classroom.

Bouangeune (2009) pointed out that many of English language teachers are not in favor of using L1 in EFL

classrooms, based on the tenets that the learners should be exposed to the target language and English should be taught in English which would increase their knowledge of that language and speed up their learning.

Cook (2008) stated that EFL/ESL teachers might refer to learners' L1 for two main reasons: conveying meaning and representing the meaning of Lexical items or sentences. L1 can be used in EFL classrooms for multiple purposes, such as giving instruction, especially at the early levels, to ensure that everyone fully understands what to do (Cole 1998; Tang 2002; Machaal, 2012 & Atkinson, 1987).

The Role of First Language in EFL Classroom

A lot of research has been done in the field of L1 use in English classrooms by many researchers and language teachers. The most focus of this research was on teachers' and learners' perceptions towards the use of L1 in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, it was talked about the amount of L1 use in language classes.

Krashen (1981) claimed in his book "Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning" that the interference of the native language leads the learners to mistakes in performance, and hinders acquisition.

Taylor (1997) pointed out that the influence of first language may be the reason of low acquisition. If so, L1 use can be resolved or at least decreased in Language classroom.

Atkinson (1987) stated that the important advantage of L1 use in EFL classroom that may facilitate the acquisition and learning is translation, which can be seen as a positive aspect in learning.

Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Role of L1 Use in EFL Classrooms

Numerous studies have been conducted on teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards L1 use in EFL classrooms. The findings of the studies revealed different beliefs regarding the use of L1 use in language classes. Most of the researchers considered it essential in language classrooms and pointed out that the use of L1 in EFL classes can assist the process of learning whereas some others didn't agree with the use of it in the English classrooms, and believed that the use of L1 in language classes will hinder the process of learning.

Krieger (2005), (Galali& Cinkara, 2017) asserted that the use of L1 in multilingual classroom is not essential. He also stated that the use of L1 in English classroom makes the learners feel that they rely on their native language for communication rather than facilitating the process of the target language learning. He believed that teachers should do their best to assist the learners realize when to utilize L1 and when to prevent its use in the classroom.

Lin (2005, as cited in Galali and Cinkara, 2017, p.2) argued that the attitudes of the learners are affected by teachers' use of students' L1 in the classroom. He defined that an "English-only" policy plays the significant role in classes with learners who majoring in English than ones who are not majoring in English. His study revealed that nearly

all the teachers are in favor of using L1 with non-major learners. Furthermore, he pointed out that the amount of L1 use by teachers is based on the levels of students. The teachers used learner's native language more frequently with elementary students than advanced level.

METHODOLOGY

Research Background

The nature of the current study is exploratory-quantitative-statistical research. According to Grotjahn (1987) (Mackey & Gass, 2005) exploratory-quantitative-statistical research is a type of research where the method of data analysis is statistical and the manner of data collection is non-experimental. The data of the current study was analyzed statistically and the data was collected through a questionnaire in google form format. Therefore, the aim of this research was to find out Afghan EFL University Teachers' Views and Believes on Using Persian in English Language classes. The researcher strived to explore their attitudes and perceptions on use of Persian in English classrooms and how they treat with the use of Persian in their classrooms. In this sense, the current research found out the situations in which the teachers are prone to use Persian in their classrooms and also explored their attitudes and perceptions that whether the use of L1 has a positive or negative effect on students. Furthermore, this explored the attitudes and perceptions of the participants that whether the use of L1 facilitates or debilitates the process of English learning.

Research Questions

The current research is attempting to answer the following research questions:

Main questions (Specific Questions)

2. What are the situations in which teachers are prone to use Persian in EFL classrooms?

Sub-questions (General Questions)

3. Does Persian use facilitate or debilitate the process of English learning?

4. Does Persian have a positive or negative effect on EFL students?

Subjects

The current research was conducted to find out the attitudes of and perceptions of the 20 Afghan EFL teachers from 13 different universities of Afghanistan that all of them were male. The EFL teachers were with various English educations and from variety majors (MA in TESL, MA in Literature, MA in Linguistics, and BA in general English). There was one PhD participant in this study while there were sixteen MA and three BA teachers. The teachers were with various ages of 25 to 40 years. The targeted teachers had five to fifteen years of experiences of teaching English as a foreign language at different universities in Afghanistan, as eleven of these participants had one to five years of teaching experiences while five

respondents were with six to ten years of experiences and four of them had eleven to fifteen years of TEFL experiences.

Instrument

In this research, a questionnaire was adopted from related previous studies (Nazary 2008, Bhooth et al 2014, Mohebbi and Alavi 2014, Alsied 2018, & Mahmud 2018) that they all conducted studies on EFL teachers’ and students’ attitudes and perceptions towards use of L1 in EFL classroom in context of Iran, Malaysia, and Bangladesh. The adopted questionnaire was modified by the researcher according to his study. The same questionnaire with little changes was carried out among participants “Teachers in order to explore Afghan EFL teachers’ views and believes towards L1 (Persian) use in EFL classrooms. It was a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree & strongly agree) which was designed in google form.

Procedure of Data Analysis

The data obtained from questionnaire of teachers were analyzed through IBM SPSS 22. The form of the data in this research is quantitative, since there are thirty items in the questionnaire in the format of 5-point Likert scale without any open-ended questions. The method of the data analysis was statistical and the manner of the data collection was non-experimental. The outcomes from the data obtained were presented in tables within their percentage, frequency (number of respondents), Mean, and Standard Deviation “SD” for each option “Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, strongly agree”,

of each statement. The result of each statement was interpreted under the tables and also the overall result from each table was discussed as a conclusion at the end of the interpretations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained through the teachers’ and students’ questionnaire were analyzed to find out their attitudes and perceptions towards L1 “Persian” use in EFL classrooms. The following tables show the outcomes emerging from the data obtained in this research according to the statements in the questionnaire. The tables represent the results of the analysis with percentage of agreement, Frequency “number of the respondents” Percentage, Mean, and SD “Standard Deviation” for every statement. Furthermore, the response of each statement in tables was interpreted under the tables and finally the overall result from each table was concluded.

Data Analysis (N= 20)

Response to the First Research Question

1. What are the situations in which teachers are prone to use Persian in EFL classrooms?

The first research question aimed find out the attitudes and perceptions of the teachers towards the situations that they are in favor to use Persian.

Table 1. represents the response to the first research question with details.

As illustrated in table 1, the first statement sought to find out whether the teachers considered the use of Persian useful to teach new vocabulary or not. 70% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed “55% agreed

Table 1: Main Questions: Teachers’ Attitudes and Perceptions towards Persian Use in Developing Learners’ Comprehension

Item No	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD
1	Using L1 (Persian) is useful to teach new vocabulary.	F 0	F 6	F 0	F 11	F 3	3.55	1.099
		P 0%	P 30%	P 0%	P 55%	P 15%		
2	Using L1 (Persian) is helpful to explain grammar.	F 1	F 5	F 1	F 9	F 4	4.05	.826
		P 5%	P 25%	P 5%	P 45%	P 20%		
3	Using Persian in EFL classroom helps to provide clarification when learners do not understand English.	F 0	F 1	F 3	F 10	F 6	3.65	.813
		P 0%	P 5%	P 15%	P 40%	P 30%		
4	Using Persian is helpful in explaining difficult instructions.	F 0	F 1	F 3	F 7	F 9	2.70	1.380
		P 0%	P 5%	P 15%	P 35%	P 45%		
5	Persian helps the learners to understand the instruction of teacher clearly.	F 0	F 3	F 2	F 14	F 1	3.65	1.235
		P 0%	P 15%	P 10%	P 70%	P 5%		
6	Using Persian is useful in explaining the differences between Persian and English rules.	F 1	F 5	F 3	F 11	F 0	4.20	.894
		P 5%	P 25%	P 15%	P 55%	P 0%		
7	The only way to learn an English word completely is to know its meaning in Persian.	F 5	F 5	F 3	F 5	F 2	3.20	1.005
		P 25%	P 25%	P 15%	P 25%	P 10%		

Note. The first SD stands for “Strongly disagree”, D stands for “disagree”, N stands for “Neutral”, A stands for “Agree”, SA stands for “Strongly agree, F stands for “Frequency, P stands for “Percentage”, M stands for “Mean”, and the last SD stands for “Standard Deviation”.

and 15% strongly agreed” and were prone to use Persian while teaching new vocabulary, while 30% of participants disagreed with the statement and were not in favor of using Persian to teach new vocabulary and finally the “Mean” of the response is 3.55%.

Response of teachers to the second statement which dealt to find out whether the teachers perceived the use of Persian useful to explain grammar or not. The majority of the respondents “65%” agreed and strongly agreed “45% agreed and 20% strongly agreed with the use of Persian to explain grammar, while 30% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed “25% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed” with the statement and did not consider the use of Persian helpful to explain grammar, on the other hand a small percentage of “5%” them had a neutral opinion towards the statement. The result of the response in this item shows the “Mean” of 3.50.

As shown in the third statement which meant to ascertain the attitudes and perceptions of the respondents towards the use of Persian to provide clarification when the learners don’t understand English. As many as 40% of the respondents agreed with the statement, 30% of them strongly agreed, while a small percentage of “5%” disagreed with the statement and on the other hand 15% had a neutral opinion towards the statement, and finally the result of the response in this item came out with the “Mean” of 4.05.

As seen in the fourth statement which sought to detect the perceptions of the respondents whether the use of Persian is helpful in explaining difficult instructions or not. 80% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed “45% strongly agreed and 35% agreed” with the statement and believed that the use of Persian is helpful to explain difficult instructions, whereas a small percentage of “5%” disagreed with the statement and on the other hand the percentage of “15%” had a neutral opinion towards the

statement. The result of the response in this item shows the “Mean” of 4.20.

The fifth statement aimed to find out the attitudes and perceptions of the teachers whether the use of Persian helps the learners to understand the instruction of teacher clearly or not. A high percentage 75% of the participants agreed and strongly agreed “70% agreed and 5% strongly agreed”, whereas 15% of the participants disagreed and on the other hand 10% of them had a neutral opinion towards the statement, and finally the result of the response in this item came out with “Mean” of 3.65.

As seen in statement sixth which sought to ascertain the attitudes and perceptions of teachers whether the use of Persian is useful in explaining the differences between Persian and English rules or not. As many as 55% of the respondents agreed with the statement and believed that the use of Persian is useful to explain the differences between Persian and English rules, while a percentage of “30%” the participants strongly disagreed and disagreed “25% strongly disagreed and 5% disagreed” with the statement and on the other hand 15% of the participants had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the result of the response in this item shows the “Mean” of 3.20.

In sum up, the results in table 4.1., indicate that the majority of the teachers (more than 69%) have tendency to use Persian in EFL classroom for the purpose of explaining difficult instructions, providing clarification when learners do not understand English, teaching new vocabulary, explaining grammar, explaining the differences between the rules of Persian and English, and believed that use of Persian helps the learners to understand the instruction of teacher clearly.

The teachers’ response to item one in table 2. shows that 50% of the respondents agreed with the statement and believed that the use of Persian in EFL classroom encourages and comforts learners, while 25% of them

Table 2: Teachers’ Attitudes and Perceptions towards the Role of Persian in the Language Classroom

Item No	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD
1	Using Persian in EFL classroom encourages and comforts learners.	F 2	F 3	F 5	F 10	F 0	3.15	1.040
		P 10%	P 15%	P 25%	P 50%	P 0%		
2	Using Persian in EFL classroom is useful to build rapport with learners.	F 2	F 3	F 3	F 10	F 2	3.35	1.182
		P 10%	P 15%	P 15%	P 50%	P 10%		
3	Using Persian in EFL classroom can save time in lengthy task explanations.	F 2	F 3	F 3	F 10	F 2	3.45	1.050
		P 10%	P 15%	P 15%	P 50%	P 10%		
4	Using Persian in EFL classrooms makes teaching and learning easier.	F 1	F 6	F 3	F 9	F 1	3.35	.875
		P 5%	P 30%	P 15%	P 45%	P 5%		
5	Using Persian is useful for learners to express themselves when they do not have appropriate English words.	F 1	F 3	F 4	F 10	F 2	3.45	.999
		P 5%	P 15%	P 20%	P 50%	P 10%		
6	Using Persian in EFL classroom makes the learners disappointed.	F 0	F 7	F 6	F 7	F 0	3.35	1.182
		P 0%	P 35%	P 30%	P 35%	P 0%		
7	Using Persian in English classroom decreases the opportunity of using English.	F 0	F 5	F 3	F 12	F 0	3.15	1.089
		P 0%	P 25%	P 15%	P 60%	P 0%		

8	Using Persian is useful in giving individual help to learners.	F 0	F 5	F 3	F 12	F 0	3.00	.858
		P 0%	P 25%	P 15%	P 60%	P 0%		
9	Students feel more comfortable when teacher talks to them in Persian.	F 1	F 3	F 3	F 12	F 1	3.35	.875
		P 5%	P 15%	P 15%	P 60%	P 5%		
10	Using Persian in EFL classrooms prevents the learners from thinking in English.	F 1	F 4	F 1	F 11	F 3	3.55	1.146
		P 5%	P 20%	P 5%	P 55%	P 15%		

Note. The first SD stands for “Strongly disagree”, D stands for “disagree”, N stands for “Neutral”, A stands for “Agree”, SA stands for “Strongly agree, F stands for “Frequency, P stands for “Percentage”, M stands for “Mean”, and the last SD stands for “Standard Deviation”.

disagreed and strongly disagreed “15% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed” and on the other hand 25% of the respondents had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the result of the response in this item shows the “Mean” of 3.15.

In response to the second statement shows that 50% of the teachers agreed, 10% strongly agreed with the statement and believed that the use of Persian in the EFL classroom is useful to build rapport with learners, while 15 % disagreed, 10% strongly disagreed with the statement and on the other hand 15% of the respondents had a neutral idea towards the statement and finally the result of the response in this item shows the “Mean” of 3.35. As illustrated in item three, it is in the same line with the second statement and shows that the teachers believed that the use of Persian in EFL classroom can save time in lengthy task explanations.

As seen in item four, 50% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed “45% agreed and 5% strongly agreed” with the statement and believed that the use of Persian in the classroom makes teaching and learning easier, whereas 35% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement and on the other hand 15% of them had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the result shows the “Mean” of 3.15.

The participants’ response to item 5, 8, and 9 shows their great attitudes and perceptions towards the use of Persian as useful tool for learners to express themselves when they do not have appropriate English words, to give individual help to learners, to feel more comfortable when teacher talks to them Persian. As seen in item five, 50% of the participants agreed, 10 strongly agreed with the statement and believed that the use of Persian by students is useful to express themselves when they face with lack of appropriate English words, while 15% disagreed, 5% strongly disagreed with the statement and on the other hand 20% of the respondents had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the result of the response in this item shows the “Mean” of 3.45.

As illustrated in the last item, 65% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed “55% agreed and 15% strongly agreed with the statement and believed that the use of Persian in EFL classroom prevents the learners from thinking in English, whereas 20% of the participants disagreed, 5% strongly disagreed with the statement and on the other hand a small percentage of “5%” had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the result of the response in this item shows the “Mean” of 3.55.

In sum up, the result in table 4.2 indicate that 56% of the participants are in favor of using Persian in EFL classroom for multiple purposes (encouraging and comforting learners, building rapport with learners, save time, making teaching and learning easier, expressing themselves “students”, and helping the learners individually) but on the other hand a percentage of (55%) the participants believed that the use of Persian in EFL classroom makes the learners disappointed, decreases the opportunity of using English and prevents learners from thinking in English. Therefore, it can be resulted that the teachers showed tendency in judicious use of Persian in EFL classroom.

Response to the Second and Third Research Questions

1- Does Persian use facilitate or debilitate the process of English learning?

2- Does Persian have a positive or negative effect on EFL students?

The second research question aimed find out the attitudes and perceptions of the teachers towards the use of Persian in EFL classroom that whether its use facilitates or debilitates the process of English learning and the third research question aimed to find out whether it has a positive or negative effect on students in EFL classroom. As illustrated in table 3, the first statement aimed to find out the perceptions of the teachers whether the use of Persian facilitated the process of English learning in the classroom or not. 30% of the respondents agreed, 5%

Table 3: General Questions: The Role of Persian use in the Process of English Learning

Item No	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD
1	Using L1 (Persian) in EFL classroom facilitates the process of English learning	F 3	F 6	F 4	F 6	F 1	2.80	1.196
		P 15%	P 30%	P 20%	P 30%	P 5%		

2	Using L1 (Persian) in EFL classroom debilitates the process of English learning	F 0	F 8	F 8	F 1	F 3	2.65	1.089
		P 0%	P 40%	P 40%	P 5%	P 15%		
3	Using L1 (Persian) in EFL classroom has a positive effect on students.	F 2	F 10	F 1	F 7	F 0	2.95	1.050
		P 10%	P 50%	P 5%	P 35%	P 0%		
4	Using L1 (Persian) in EFL classroom has a negative effect on students.	F 1	F 6	F 1	F 8	F 4	3.40	1.273
		P 5%	P 30%	P 5%	P 40%	P 20%		

Note. The first SD stands for “Strongly disagree”, D stands for “disagree”, N stands for “Neutral”, A stands for “Agree”, SA stands for “Strongly agree, F stands for “Frequency, P stands for “Percentage”, M stands for “Mean”, and the last SD stands for “Standard Deviation”.

strongly agreed with the statement and believed that the use of Persian in EFL classroom facilitates the process of English learning, while 45% of the participants disagreed and strongly disagreed “30% disagreed and 15% strongly disagreed” with the statement and believed that Persian use does not facilitate the process of English learning, and on the other hand 20% of the respondents had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the response in this item came out with “Mean” of 2.80.

As shown in the second statement which aimed to ascertain the attitudes and perceptions of the teachers whether the use of Persian in EFL classroom debilitates the process of English learning or not. 5% of the respondents agreed, 15% of them strongly agreed with the statement and believed that the Persian use debilitates the process of English learning, while 40% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and believed that the use of Persian does not debilitate the process of English learning, on the other hand 40% of the participants had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the result of the response in this item came out with the “Mean” of 2.95.

The third statement dealt to find out the attitudes and perceptions of the teachers whether the use of Persian has a positive effect on students or not. As the response shows, 35% of the participants agreed with the statement and believed that the use of Persian in EFL classroom has a positive effect on students, while 60% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed “50% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed” and believed that the Persian use does not have a positive effect on students, on the other hand 5% of them had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the result of the response in this item shows the “Mean” of 2.65.

As shown in the final statement, which aimed to ascertain the attitudes and perceptions of the teachers whether the use of Persian had a negative effect on students or not. 60% of the participants agreed and strongly agreed “40% agreed and 20%” strongly agreed” with the statement and believed the use of Persian has a negative effect on students, while 35% of the participants disagreed and strongly disagreed “30% agreed and 5% strongly agreed” with the statement and believed that Persian use does not have a negative effect on students and on the other hand a small percentage of “5%” had a neutral opinion towards the statement and finally the result of the response in this

item shows the “Mean” of 3.40.

In sum up, the result in table four demonstrate that 60% of the teachers believed that the use of Persian has a negative effect on students in EFL classroom and also from the “mean” of first and second statement, in can be concluded that the use of Persian debilitates the process of English learning, but the participants were in favor of judicious use of Persian.

CONCLUSION

The use of first language in EFL classroom has been an ongoing debate for a long time. It goes back to the late 1970s and early 1980s when the use of mother tongue was allowed in the language classrooms. Through the history of EFL instructions, several methods have been utilized in order to assist the process of English learning. Some of the methods (Grammar Translation Method/ Classical Method) encouraged the use of L1 in EFL classroom but some of them (Direct Method, Audio Lingual Method) prohibited the use of L1 in EFL classroom and insisted the use of the target language in the classroom. Furthermore, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) advocates for minimizing the use of the learners’ first language (L1) in EFL classrooms to maximize exposure to English, rather than completely rejecting it. Similarly, methods like Community Language Learning (CLL) and the Silent Way permit the use of L1 only when necessary to facilitate language learning.

The study concludes that teachers support the careful use of Persian in EFL classrooms to aid in teaching and learning new vocabulary, explaining and understanding grammar, clarifying instructions, and highlighting differences between Persian and English. Teachers believe that using Persian judiciously in specific situations enhances the English learning process.

The findings indicate that respondents generally viewed the overuse of Persian in EFL classrooms negatively. They believed it reduces students’ exposure to English, hinders the learning process, and fosters laziness. Specifically, 60% of teachers felt it decreased opportunities to use English, and 70% thought it prevented students from thinking in English. These perceptions align with Littlewood and Yu’s (2011) view that maximum use of EFL is crucial, as the classroom is often the primary context for language learning, and reliance on the first language diminishes English comprehension.

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