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**EFL Teachers' Perspectives on Using L1 to Facilitate  
Students' Learning English in Zawia Secondary Schools**

*A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for MA Degree in  
Applied Linguistics*

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**February 2026**

## Abstract

This study aimed to find out the reasons that lead EFL teachers in secondary schools in Zawia to use the first language in their instructions and to identify Zawia secondary schools EFL teachers' perceptions about the role of L1 in facilitating English language learning. The issue is particularly relevant in the Libyan context, where the extensive use of Arabic sometimes limits students' exposure to English, raising questions about the balance between L1 support and English immersion. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining a structured closed ended questionnaire distributed to 49 EFL teachers with focus group discussions involving 10 purposively selected participants. Quantitative findings revealed that 78% of teachers held moderate to highly positive attitudes toward using L1 strategically. Mean scores across 30 questionnaire items ranged between 3.0 and 4.2, indicating consistent support for its pedagogical value. Teachers agreed that L1 helps clarify complex grammar (Mean = 3.51), reduce anxiety (Mean = 4.0), and build learner confidence (Mean = 3.96). Additionally, 72% emphasized the importance of professional development to improve bilingual teaching practices. Qualitative results supported these findings, revealing that all ten participants viewed L1 as a scaffolding tool that facilitates comprehension, particularly for low-proficiency learners. Teachers described Arabic as an essential bridge linking prior knowledge to new English input, consistent with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis. However, they also cautioned that overreliance on L1 might hinder fluency and reduce opportunities for authentic English use. This balance reflects a pragmatic awareness of both the cognitive and affective functions of L1 in classroom learning. Overall, the study concludes that EFL teachers in Zawia secondary schools adopt a balanced and context-sensitive approach toward L1 use. They recognize its value in promoting comprehension, confidence, and classroom engagement, yet emphasize moderation to ensure sufficient English exposure. The findings highlight the need for teacher training programs and pedagogical policies that support the strategic integration of L1 as a resource to enhance, rather than impede, English language acquisition in Libyan secondary schools

## **Declaration**

I declare that this dissertation, entitled “*EFL Teachers’ Perspectives on Using L1 to Facilitate Students’ Learning English in Zawia Secondary Schools*”, is the result of my own independent research. It has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any academic degree at this or any other institution. All sources of information and references used in the study have been duly acknowledged in accordance with academic standards.

## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated with profound respect and gratitude to memory of my late father. I also dedicate it to my mother throughout this journey, to my sisters Lutfia, Khamsa, to my brother, Abdaljawad, and to my husband for his patience and support.

## **Acknowledgments**

First, all praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, for granting me the strength, patience, and determination to complete this thesis. My deepest appreciation goes to my supervisor, Dr. Turkeya Burka Ali, whose expertise, continuous support, and insightful guidance have been essential to the success of this study. Her encouragement, constructive feedback, and academic advice have shaped this work in countless meaningful ways.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported me throughout the journey of completing this work. I am sincerely grateful to the EFL teachers and the teaching staff at the place of the study in Zawia, who generously dedicated their time to participate in the questionnaire and focus group discussions. Their perspectives and experiences provided the strong foundation upon which this research was built.

My sincere thanks also go to my colleagues, whose support, cooperation, and encouragement have accompanied me throughout this academic journey. I would like to express my warmest gratitude to Dr. Osama for his openness, willingness to help, and valuable guidance whenever it was needed. I also extend my appreciation to my friends and to my students, who continually motivated me with their kindness and encouragement.

Finally, I extend my truthful thanks to all my family members, whose unwavering encouragement and love have been invaluable throughout the completion of this research.

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## **Abbreviations**

CUP Common Underlying Proficiency

CVR Content Validity Ratio

EFL English as Foreign Language

FGD Focus Group Discussion

I+1 Input plus One

L1 First Language

L2 Second Language

SPSS Statistical Package for Social Science

ZPD Zone of Proximal Development

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

### 1.0 Introduction

This study aims to find out the reasons that lead EFL teachers in secondary schools in Zawia to use the first language in their classes. It also aims to identify Zawia secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions about the role of L1 in facilitating English learning. This chapter introduces background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions, significance of the study, methodology, ethical considerations and chapter organization.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The incorporation of students' native language in foreign language classes has been a subject of debate. This topic has been relevant since the beginning of language education (Kelly, 1969). In fact, numerous English teachers utilize their native language L1 as a main tool of teaching within English classes. Some teachers stated tolerance for the employment of their first language (Arabic) as a comprehending tool with their students. Moreover, the integration of L1 in English language learning has been widely recognized as beneficial, enhancing the educational experience for both teachers and learners (Lindo & Topping, 2022). This is particularly important and low-level learners, as it provides a valuable tool for introducing grammatical concepts and vocabulary. By enabling students to draw connections between their native language and the target language, L1 use reduces the need for excessive guessing or confusion, thereby facilitating comprehension and reducing anxiety. Consequently, such an approach creates supportive and encouraging learning environment (Kharaffi & Kelly, 2023). In addition, leveraging L1 can enhance students' engagement and motivation by allowing clearer communication and understanding of complex ideas (Burn and Kelly, 2014). Therefore, strategic incorporation of L1 in English language teaching has the potential to significantly improve learning experiences and outcomes for students. Furthermore, Remini (2019) highlights that employing L1 can aid students in overcoming challenges associates with English, particularly when engaging in discussions. However, Kadhim

et al. (2022) note that the integration of learners' first language in foreign language classrooms remains a controversial issue, as many educational institutions activity discourage its use. Nevertheless, studies have demonstrated the advantages of L1 in English language learning. For instance, Butzkamm (2004) emphasizes that integrating the first language is essential for enhancing comprehension in foreign language teaching. Similarly, Nation (2003) asserts that in setting where all participants share the same native language, there is a strong tendency to perform tasks in L1. This preference can be attributed to familiarity and comfort with the language, which often leads to increased efficiency and understanding, particularly in complex or nuanced situations. Additionally, Khairunnisa and Lukmana (2020) argue that incorporating L1 in English learning fosters a supportive environment for students. Supporting this perspective, Cook (2001a) and Macaro (2001 a) note that the use of the first language (L1) in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms can be beneficial, while others question its critical role. The debate is split between those who see L1 as a beneficial tool for comprehension and anxiety reduction and those who believe its use hinders English immersion and proficiency. For example, one of the most influential theories in second language acquisition is Krashen's (1981) assertion that successful L2 learning requires extensive exposure to the target language.

In contrast, Cook (2001b) and Tang (2002) demonstrate that occasional use of L1 can enhance L2 learning and comprehension, challenging the strict L2 only approach. According to the findings of some previous studies, my opinion on the use of the first language is that it can offer comfort and clarity to learners, reduce anxiety, and enhance participation, particularly for shy learners and those lacking confidence in their L2 proficiency. However, it may also lead to insufficient mastery of the target language. To reduce excessive L1 usage in English classrooms, teachers should prioritize maximizing English usage and create more opportunities for students to practice English. By employing English as primary tool of language learning while selectively using L1 when necessary, students' proficiency in English can be improved. Since, they are not native speakers of English language; the use of the first language by most teachers in English classes is inevitable. However, this should be done in moderation, as excessive use of the first language can negatively impact students' learning, leading to hesitation in using English, as students heavily rely on their first language instead of English. In conclusion, the importance of using the first language in creating a supportive and

effective learning environment cannot be denied. It enhances students' confidence, motivates them, reduces stress, fear, shyness, and increases understanding. Consequently, teachers often resort L1 to clarify meanings or explain new vocabulary, particularly when students struggle to understand concepts in English. However, it should be the teacher who determines when and how the first language is used, ensuring a strong balance between the uses of both languages. Through balanced use of both languages, an effective learning environment can be created that supports second language learning.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Based on the researcher's personal experience as a teacher in Zawia secondary schools, the use of students' first language (L1) in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms remains a complex and widely discussed problem. While the role of L1 in language teaching gets attention in many learning environments, its use in Libyan secondary schools, especially in Zawia, shows specific challenges. Some teachers rely fully on L1 and often do not use English, which is the target language students need to learn. This strong use of L1 causes concern among students, parents, and other teachers, who believe it limits students' exposure to English and slows their language progress. Other teachers see L1 as a helpful tool, especially when they use it carefully to explain difficult grammar points, make tasks clear, or lower students' anxiety. These different views show a continuing debate about how to balance full English use with some L1 support in EFL classrooms, Al-Nofaie (2010). The researcher, based on current classroom practice, uses English as the main teaching language and uses L1 only when students have trouble understanding abstract or difficult content. This difference in teaching methods and opinions shows the need to better understand how teachers in Zawia secondary see the use of L1 in English classes. It also raises important questions about how using L1 affects student participation, language learning, and overall classroom results. For this reason, understanding teachers' views can help make English teaching work better in Zawia secondary schools.

## **1.3 Research Aims**

This study intends to:

- 1- find out the reasons that lead EFL teachers in secondary schools in Zawia to use the first language in their instructions.

2- identify Zawia secondary schools EFL teachers' perceptions about the role of L1 in facilitating English language learning.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1- What are the reasons that lead EFL teachers to use the first language in Zawia secondary schools?

2- How do Zawia secondary schools EFL teachers perceive the role of L1 in facilitating English language learning?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This research aims to offer significant contributions to a variety of interested parties, including English teachers, learners, researchers, and educational institutions. The importance can be detailed as follows:

##### **1. for English Teachers**

This study might offer practical insights into how the strategic use of students' first language (L1) can facilitate more effective English language teaching. It might encourage teachers to incorporate L1 as a supportive tool in their educational practices, helping them to deliver lessons that are more accessible and engaging for learners. The findings can also assist teachers in developing classroom strategies that support better understanding and participation.

##### **2. for Learners**

By supporting the use of L1 in English classrooms, this study highlights an approach that can enhance students' confidence and motivation to learn English. It might recognize the value of connecting new language input with students' existing linguistic knowledge, ultimately promoting a more meaningful and supportive learning experience.

##### **3. for the Researcher**

This research might enrich the investigator's understanding of bilingual teaching practices and the practical role of L1 in EFL contexts. It also might contribute to the broader academic discourse on language pedagogy and can serve as a foundation for future research related to language learning strategies and classroom practices.

#### **4. for the Educational Institution**

The outcomes of this study can guide schools and educational policymakers in Zawia to re-evaluate current English teaching methodologies. By considering the role of L1 in language teaching, institutions can implement more inclusive and contextually relevant teaching strategies that support student-learning outcomes.

### **1.6 Methodology**

This study adopts a mixed-methods strategy, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. The quantitative data, collected through questionnaires, provides measurable evidence of teachers' attitudes and practices, while the qualitative data, obtained from focus group discussions, offers deeper contextual insights into teachers' personal experiences and viewpoints. This design ensures triangulation of findings and enhances the reliability and validity of the results. The sampling method involves purposive selection of participants to ensure that only qualified and experienced English teachers are included in the study. A total of ten teachers from different secondary schools in Zawia were selected to represent a range of teaching contexts and experiences. This sample size, although small, was sufficient to allow for both statistical analysis of questionnaire responses and meaningful discussion during focus group sessions. The data analysis process followed two complementary approaches, corresponding to the mixed-methods design. The questionnaire data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which enabled the identification of patterns, frequencies, and trends in teachers' responses. In contrast, the focus group discussions were transcribed and examined thematically, allowing for the emergence of key themes and deeper interpretations of teachers' experiences. Together, these analyses provided both breadth and depth in understanding the research problem.

### **1.7 Ethical Considerations**

This research follows essential ethical standards, encompassing informed consent, confidentiality and voluntary involvement. All participants are clearly formed about the researchers' purpose, and the willingly consent to participate. Informed consent indicated that every individual participates voluntarily and comprehends completely what the research entails. Before gathering data, the researcher obtains formal approval from the college administration. Participants are guaranteed that their identities remain

confidential and their responses are solely utilized for research purposes. Moreover, participants are informed that they withdraw from the study at any moment if they wish to stop, with any issues. To ensure reliability, the researcher relies on the researcher's expertise, through organization, and valuable outcomes. Ultimately, the investigator holds that integrity and respect are fundamental principles in conducting ethical research.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This dissertation contains five chapters. The first chapter is the introductory chapter that presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions, significance of the study, methodology, ethical considerations and chapter organization. The second chapter includes a detailed discussion on related previous studies on EFL perspectives about L1 as a tool for facilitating learning English. The third chapter is the methodology in which the methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. The fourth chapter outlines the data analysis process along with the findings that are obtained. The fifth chapter is a discussion of findings in a relation to the research questions, it also provides a summary of the key results, conclusion, study limitations for future research, suggestions for implications based on EFL teachers' perspectives on using L1 to support students' English learning in Zawia secondary schools.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The chapter begins by outlining theories related to the use of L1, which encompass two main perspectives: the proponents agree with the use of L1, and the proponents disagree with the use of L1. It then explores the role of L1 in English classrooms more broadly. Following this, the chapter reviews the advantages and disadvantages of using L1 in EFL classrooms. Subsequently, it discusses the functions of L1 use in classroom contexts, shedding light on its pedagogical purposes. The chapter also examines EFL teachers' perspectives on L1 use, including teachers' reasons on L1 use in EFL classrooms. Finally, the concepts of translanguaging, code-switching, and translation are introduced, as they relate to contemporary approaches to bilingual or multilingual classroom practice. Finally, the chapter ends by reviewing the previous related studies.

#### **2.1 Theories Related to the Use of L1**

Before examining the arguments for and against the use of the first language (L1) in second language (L2) classrooms, it is important to understand the historical context of L1 in language teaching. Historically, foreign language instruction often relied on bilingual approaches, making the use of L1 widely accepted. Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 45) note that “the emphasis then is on reading and writing, which justifies the use of L1 in language classrooms”. As Richards & Rodgers indicated, this approach, known as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), often produces learners who, despite years of study, “are unable to produce fluent English” (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 46). Consequently, teachers seek methods that aim to better develop oral communication skills, leading to the emergence of English-only, or monolingual, approaches. The shift toward monolingual instruction is motivated by practical and political considerations. Miles (2004b) argues, the nineteenth-century focus on spoken language necessitates the exclusion or minimization of L1 in L2 classrooms. Similarly, (Phillipson 1992, p. 187) asserts that the rise of the English-only classroom is driven largely by “political and practical reasons (of the teacher’s, not the student’s)”, which

results in the exclusion of learners' L1. Moreover, Phillipson, (1992), indicates that the prevalence of monolingual teachers reinforces their orientation, as many do not speak, nor perceive the need to speak the L1 of their students. Despite the dominance of monolinguals', attitudes toward L1 use evolve over time. For example, Schweers (1999) emphasizes that the use of L1 in the classroom is necessary, while bilingual programs in countries such as China demonstrate positive outcomes Zhou, (2003a). The following two sections discuss the opposing views regarding the use of L1. The following section presents the proponents agree with the use of L1.

### **2.1.1 The Proponents Agree with the Use of L1**

Advocates of L1 integration in L2 classrooms emphasize its cognitive, pedagogical, and socio-cultural benefits. In terms of cognitive support, the Interdependence Hypothesis proposed by Cummins (1981) suggests that skills developed in L1, such as problem-solving and critical thinking, transfer to L2 learning through a Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP). Consequently, students are able to leverage their existing conceptual knowledge to comprehend and analyze new L2 material, using L1 as a scaffold for learning complex concepts. Moreover, Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1980) supports the strategic use of L1 to ensure comprehensible input. Krashen argues that language acquisition occurs when learners receive input slightly above their current competence ( $i+1$ ). In situations where L2 input is overwhelming, L1 clarifies meaning, supports, understanding, and reduces affective barriers such as anxiety, thereby creating a more conducive environment for acquisition. For instance, a brief L1 explanation of grammar or vocabulary makes subsequent L2 input genuinely comprehensible. Additionally, Sociocultural Theory, primarily associated with Vygotsky (1978), underscores L1 as a scaffolding tool. Learning occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where guidance enables learners to perform beyond their independent capabilities. In this context, learners who discuss concepts with peers, formulate questions, or interpret tasks use L1, thereby internalizing L2 knowledge through guided social interaction. Furthermore, Translanguaging Theory, developed by García and Wei (2014), promotes the flexible use of both L1 and L2 as part of an integrated linguistic repertoire. Translanguaging allows students to read in L2, discuss in L1, and respond in L2, thus facilitating comprehension, cognitive engagement, and critical thinking. This approach recognizes bilingual learners as using their full linguistic resources for meaning-making rather than maintaining rigid separation between languages. Finally, Code-Switching

Theory highlights the pragmatic functions of alternating between languages Gumperz and Scotton, (1981). In L2 classrooms, code-switching allows learners to express complex ideas, verify understanding, and facilitate communication efficiently. Far from indicating deficiency, strategic L1 use validated learners' existing linguistic skills. In addition to theoretical support, empirical studies reinforce these benefits. For instance, Schweers (1999, p.7) finds that 88.7% of Spanish learners favored L1 use, with some requesting "up to 39% of class time" in L1. (Zhou, 2003c) similarly demonstrates positive outcomes from structured bilingual programs in China. Collectively, these findings suggests that careful, principled L1 use enhances comprehension, reduces anxiety, and facilitates meaningful L2 learning. For more details, read section (4.2).

### **2.1.2. The Proponents Disagree with the Use of L1**

Conversely, critics of L1 use argue that minimizing or avoiding the first language promotes greater L2 proficiency. For example, the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) by Lado (1957) asserts that differences between L1 and L2 can cause errors through negative transfer. While positive transfer occurs when L1 and L2 are similar, differences lead to fossilized mistakes. Consequently, reducing L1 reliance prevents learners from directly mapping L1 rules onto L2, supporting more accurate language production. In addition, advocates of monolinguals emphasize maximum exposure to L2 as crucial for acquisition. Krashen (1982), Ellis (1994), Hawks (2001), and Sharma (2006) argue that overreliance on L1 fosters dependency and reduces authentic interaction with L2, which is often limited to the classroom context. By immersing learners in the target language, teachers increase opportunities for students to internalize L2 structures, vocabulary, and communicative patterns. Moreover, maintaining a clear separation between L1 and L2 is considered essential. Cook (2001c) stresses that effective learning requires distinguishing the two languages to prevent incorrect assumptions about equivalences between L1 and L2. Translation-heavy instruction leads learners to make systematic errors, whereas monolingual instruction encourages independent L2 thinking Pacek, (2003), as cited in Miles, (2004a). Furthermore, exclusive L2 use signals its importance and provides authentic exposure. Pachler and Field (2001) argue that L2-only interaction demonstrates practical relevance, promotes habit formation and enables learners to develop fluency in real communicative contexts. In multilingual classrooms, the use of a single L1 is often ineffective or even counterproductive, particularly if teachers are not proficient in all learners' languages

Hawks, (2001) and Weschler, (1997a). Overall, opponents maintain that limiting L1 use aligns with second language acquisition principles that emphasize modified input, negotiation of meaning, and authentic communication in L2.

In conclusion, the role of L1 in L2 classrooms reflects a longstanding debate between immersion-based approaches and strategic bilingual support. While monolingual advocates emphasize maximal exposure, separation of languages, and authentic L2 interaction, proponents of bilingual approaches highlight cognitive, pedagogical, and socio-cultural benefits, supported by both theory and empirical evidence. Therefore, the literature suggests that judicious, principled use of L1 enhances comprehension, facilitates cognitive processing, and reduces learner anxiety, whereas unregulated reliance on L1 impedes target language acquisition. Consequently, effective L2 instruction requires a balanced approach that leverages L1 as a resource while maintaining opportunities for meaningful L2 engagement. So, this study situates itself within the broader debate on the use of L1 in L2 classrooms by acknowledging both its potential benefits and its possible drawbacks. However, advocates emphasize the cognitive, pedagogical, and socio-cultural advantages of incorporating L1, arguing that it scaffolds comprehension, reduces anxiety, and promotes deeper engagement with L2 content. On the other hand, critics warn against overreliance on L1, highlighting risks such as negative transfer, reduces exposure to authentic input, and the hindrance of independent L2 thinking. These contrasting perspectives underscore the complexity of language learning and suggest that neither a strict monolingual policy nor unrestricted L1 use fully addresses learners' needs. Therefore, this study adopts a balanced approach, recognizing L1 as a supportive resource when used strategically, while also emphasizing the importance of maximizing opportunities for meaningful L2 communication.

## **2.2 The Use of L1 in English Classrooms**

For many years, the dominant philosophy in English language teaching (ELT) is that the first language (L1) had no place in the classroom. According to Richards and Rodgers, (2001) both the direct method and audio-lingual method strictly emphasize exclusive use of the target language in the classroom, prohibiting any reliance on learners' native language. This monolingual principle aims to develop natural language acquisition through full exposure to the target language; however, it often poses challenges for both teachers and learners as it neglects the supportive and facilitative role that the first

language can play in enhancing comprehension and classroom interaction. In recent decades, a more nuanced and pragmatic view emerges. Research by Tang (2002, p.38) highlights that “limited and judicious use of the mother tongue assists in the teaching and learning processes”, a finding supported by learner perceptions in which 91% report benefits from moderate L1 use. Similarly, Auerbach (1993, p. 18) identifies specific pedagogical functions for L1, including “classroom management, language analysis, presenting grammar rules, discussing cross-cultural issues, giving instructions or prompts, explaining errors, and checking for comprehension”. More recently, Tran (2024, p. 5) synthesizes second language acquisition perspectives, concluding that “purposeful use of learners’ native language consistently correlates with improved acquisition of L2 linguistic forms and skills”. The modern ELT classroom, therefore, is not about a total ban on the L1 but about integrating it as a supportive resource to facilitate the acquisition of English, promote inclusivity, and enhance learner confidence. One of the most practical and efficient uses of L1 is in explaining complex concepts and grammar. In this regard, Turnbull and Arnett (2002a) argue that strategic use of the learners’ first language further facilitates understanding, particularly for low level learners. As Cook (2001a, p. 405) argues, a "complete restrict on the L1 is an inefficient use of classroom time" when a simple explanation quickly bridges a gap in understanding. This approach acknowledges that learners are not blank slates; they possess a rich linguistic system that they leverage to make connections and build new knowledge. Using the L1 to provide clarity allows the teacher to move on to meaningful practice and application in English much faster.

Beyond academic explanations, the use of L1 plays a vital role in classroom management and fostering a positive learning environment. For novice learners, understanding complex instructions for group activities or games can be a challenge. As Atkinson (1987) points out, a brief use of L1 ensures instructions are clear and that classroom activities run smoothly. A quick L1 check or a brief translation ensures that all students are on the same page, allowing the activity to proceed smoothly and without confusion. Moreover, allowing students to occasionally use their L1 when they struggle to articulate an idea in English provides powerful emotional support. It reduces the anxiety of learning. Halliwell (1992, p. 17) highlights this benefit, noting that teachers see “the use of the L1 as an important emotional support for learners”. By validating

their native language, the teacher creates a more inclusive and less intimidating atmosphere where students feel safe to take risks with their English.

Finally, the strategic use of L1 serves as a powerful tool for developing metalinguistic awareness and critical thinking skills. Nation (2003) observes that drawing comparisons between L1 and L2 enhances learners' awareness of language structures and patterns. By drawing direct comparisons between the students' native language and English, teachers can help learners understand why certain linguistic patterns exist. For instance, explaining the difference in word order or verb conjugation between the two languages deepens students' understanding of English grammar Cook (2001c). This comparative approach encourages students to think about language itself, moving beyond simple memorization to a more analytical understanding of how languages are structured. Ultimately, the modern view of L1 use is not about reliance but about intelligent deployment. As Macaro (2009) asserts, the L1 should be seen as a resource to be used judiciously, not as a crutch to lean on permanently. The goal is to use the native language as a scaffold a temporary support structure that helps learners build a solid foundation in English, and then is gradually disappears as their fluency and confidence grow.

### **2.3 Advantages of using L1**

The use of a learner's first language (L1) in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms offers various cognitive and pedagogical benefits that enhance second language (L2) acquisition. One key advantage is that the L1 serves as a mental scaffold for learners when they process new and complex information in the L2. As Cook (2001b, p. 385) argues, "the L1 acts as a resource rather than a hindrance in the L2 classroom". When learners face abstract ideas or unfamiliar grammar, students often rely on the familiar structure of their native language to facilitate understanding. According to Swain and Lapkin (2000, p. 107), "students use their first language as a tool to mediate and internalize new language concepts". Moreover, Nation (2003, p. 45) points out "the strategic use of L1 aids comprehension and reduces cognitive overload during language learning". Cook (2001a, p. 403) emphasizes this by stating, "the L1 provides a useful mental resource for learners to make sense of the L2." In line with this, Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis argues that comprehensible input is the necessary condition for acquisition suggesting that the L1 plays a vital role in ensuring learners comprehend input during early stages of learning. Therefore, judicious use of

the L1 creates conceptual bridges that promote deeper understanding and long-term retention. In addition to its cognitive benefits, the use of L1 also contributes significantly to learners' psychological comfort and confidence in the classroom. Auerbach, (1993) notes that the early stages of L2 learning can be intimidating, and complete immersion in the target language leads to frustration and anxiety. The occasional use of the L1 helps alleviate these emotional barriers by offering clarity and reassurance. As Macaro (2001b) points out, judicious use of the L1 reduces cognitive overload and affective filters, thereby promoting greater engagement. This aligns with Oxford's (1990) view that reducing learner anxiety is crucial in making optimal use of available language input. By providing emotional support through the L1, teachers foster an environment that encourages participation risk taking and sustained motivation. Another notable advantage, as highlight by Ellis (2005) and Harbord (1992), is the effectiveness of incorporating the L1 into instruction for explaining grammar and vocabulary development. Although communicative approaches prioritize discovery learning in the L2, there are cases where direct explanations in the L1 are more efficient and accurate, particularly for complex or abstract language structures. Nation (2003) argues, the L1 can be used to efficiently explain difficult concepts and to clarify the meaning of new vocabulary items, especially when time is limited. Harmer (2007, p. 96) further asserts, "there are times when direct translation or explanation in the L1 is simply the quickest and clearest way to deal with a language point." thus, L1 serves as a valuable pedagogical shortcut that supports linguistic accuracy and comprehension, particularly when instructional time is limited. Beyond learning and instruction, the use of L1 also aids in classroom management and fosters a sense of community among learners. In classrooms where students share the same native language, L1 can be used to give clear instructions, manage behavior, or clarify administrative matters. This ensures that valuable classroom time is not lost and that learners remain focused on language learning tasks. Furthermore, acknowledging students' L1 affirms their linguistic and cultural identities, enhancing their sense of belonging (Cenoz and Gorter,2020). (Cummins 2000, p. 45) highlights that "acknowledging and valuing students' L1s contributes to their linguistic and cultural identities, fostering a more positive learning environment". Phillipson (1992) also warns that suppressing L1 use may be perceived as linguistic imperialism, which can alienate learners and devalue their prior knowledge. These considerations highlight that L1 use is not only practical but also ethically important in multicultural and multilingual

education settings. In conclusion, the advantages of using L1 in EFL classrooms are multifaceted. It enhances comprehension, reduces affective barriers, facilitates clear instruction, and strengthens student identity and classroom cohesion. Supported by researchers such as Krashen (1982), Cummins (2000), Cook (2001), and Macaro (2001a) the evidence suggests that when used intentionally and sparingly, the L1 serves as a powerful tool that complements and enhances the process of English language learning.

## **2.4 Disadvantages of Using L1**

While the strategic use of L1 in EFL classrooms presents several advantages, excessive reliance on it also brings significant disadvantages. A major concern is that it limits students' exposure to the target language, which is essential for developing fluency and communicative competence. As Turnbull and Arnett (2002b, p. 130) argue, "overuse of the first language can reduce learners' opportunities for meaningful interaction in the target language". Language acquisition thrives in immersive environments where learners are consistently exposed to L2 input, a condition that Krashen in (1982) describes as the comprehensible input necessary for effective language learning. Cook (2001a) cautions that overusing the L1 restricts opportunities for authentic language use, thereby slowing down acquisition. Turnbull (2001) similarly stresses the importance of maximizing L2 input to emulate the naturalistic conditions of first language learning. Yiddish and Yeşilyurt (2017) align with this sentiment by warning that L1 use functions as an obstacle to the creation of an effective learning environment since it probably makes the learning process under-challenging and reduces concentration. Thus, excessive L1 use ultimately hinders learners from developing the linguistic independence needed for real-world communication. Another disadvantage of frequent L1 use in L2 classrooms is that it fosters dependency among learners. Consequently, when learners become accustomed to relying on their first language for translation or explanations, their initiative to the use and think in the target language decreases, thereby limiting active engagement with L2 input Cook, (2001c).

Moreover, Albalushi and Rahman (2020) note that L1 aids comprehension and Macaro (2009, p. 185) argues that "such reliance encourages passivity and reduces effort". Ibrahim (2019) observes that overuse of the first language is often associated with errors, interference, limited communicative competence, and lack of variety in classroom interaction. These tendencies result in delayed progress and the development

of ineffective learning habits. In addition, excessive dependence on L1 lowers learners' motivation to take risks and experiment with new language forms, both of which are essential for L2 development. When students habitually translate from their native language, they may inadvertently transfer incorrect grammatical structures, pronunciation patterns, or vocabulary into their L2 output. This phenomenon, known as negative transfer, leads to fossilized errors that are difficult to correct. Cambridge Assessment English (2019) highlights that extensive reliance on L1 reduces English exposure and encourage over-dependence, which in turn limits learners' ability to infer meaning from L2 context. Such challenges are particularly detrimental to the development of learner autonomy, as successful language users must eventually rely on L2 input rather than constant translation. In addition, the practicality of using L1 in multilingual classrooms is highly questionable. When students do not share the same native language, relying on one L1 excludes others and creates an unequal learning environment. Hawks (2001) notes that in such contexts, prohibiting L1 use sometimes leads teachers to simplify L2 input excessively in order to ensure comprehension. However, he also acknowledges that accommodating multiple L1s in a single classroom is difficult and inefficient. Sad and Qadermazi (2015) report that while learners often appreciate L1 use for clarification and intelligibility, limiting it ultimately supports the development of speaking and listening skills through increased exposure to English. Therefore, in multilingual or international classrooms, L2 immersion may be the most equitable and effective strategy. Another issue is that overuse of L1 in classrooms reflects teachers' own limitations in L2 proficiency. Teachers who lack confidence or motivation to use English consistently default to L1 more frequently than pedagogically necessary. This practice sets a poor example for learners and reduces the language-rich environment that is crucial for L2 development. Izquierdo et al. (2016) attention that such reliance diminishes learners' opportunities for L2 exposure and lowers their motivation to engage meaningfully with the language. To conclude, while the use of L1 in moderation serve as a useful support mechanism, its excessive use presents serious drawbacks. These include reduced L2 exposure, learner dependency, interference errors, exclusion in multilingual settings, and diminished teacher modeling of L2. Previous studies by Yiddish & Yeşilyurt (2017); (Ibrahim, 2019); Cambridge Assessment English, 2019 consistently warn that frequent reliance on L1 limits students' concentration, fosters errors, and restricts opportunities for fluency development. Thus,

a balanced and strategic approach rather than unrestricted and prohibited use is essential for maximizing the effectiveness of L2 learning.

## **2.5 The Functions of the Use of L1 in EFL Classes**

The use of the first language (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom serves various pedagogical functions that remain debated among scholars and teachers. One of the primary functions of L1 is to aid comprehension and reduce cognitive overload, particularly for beginner learners. Cook (2001a) emphasizes that learners inevitably rely on their first language as a base for understanding and producing the second language, especially at early stages of acquisition. Similarly, Macaro (2009) explains that L1 serves as a scaffold, enabling learners to access and process complex L2 input more effectively. In the same vein, Atkinson (1987) argues that the mother tongue serves several valuable purposes in the classroom, such as explaining grammar rules, giving instructions, and managing classroom interaction. Furthermore, the strategic use of L1 creates a supportive learning environment where learners feel more confident, particularly when dealing with abstract or culturally sensitive topics. In contexts such as Libya, where teachers and students share the same native language, L1 becomes a natural resource that facilitates communication and ensures clarity. However, not all scholars agree on the benefits of L1 use. Critics argue that frequent reliance on the mother tongue may limit students' exposure to the target language and consequently hinders their fluency. Krashen (1985, p. 2) famously emphasizes that "language is acquired through exposure to comprehensible input in the target language", suggesting that overuse of L1 could reduce meaningful engagement with English. Similarly, Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009) caution that heavy dependence on L1 leads to missed opportunities for L2 practice, which are essential for developing communicative competence. Despite these concerns, many teachers advocate for a balanced and strategic approach. Nation (2003, p. 2) notes that "first language use is not a problem to be eliminated, but a reality to be managed and used effectively". This perspective aligns with the experiences of teachers in multilingual classrooms, who find that limited, purposeful L1 use enhances rather than obstructs L2 learning. Beyond aiding comprehension and classroom management, L1 also plays a key role in developing metalinguistic awareness. Encouraging learners to compare and contrast L1 and L2 structures deepens their understanding of grammatical patterns and promotes higher-order thinking. Cummins (2007) explained that drawing on the first language allows

learners to reflect more critically on linguistic patterns and apply analytical skills in L2 learning. Moreover, he suggested that the use of L1 helps bridge cultural gaps, particularly when teaching idiomatic expressions, traditions, or context-specific concepts unfamiliar to learners. Similarly, Schweers (1999) observed that students responded positively to teachers' use of Spanish (their L1), reporting that it helped them feel more comfortable and less anxious during lessons.

These affective benefits are especially important in EFL contexts, where learner confidence strongly influences participation and progress. In conclusion, although debates continue regarding the extent to which L1 should be used in EFL classrooms, it is evident that the first language serves several essential pedagogical functions. These include facilitating comprehension, supporting classroom interaction, developing metalinguistic awareness, and reducing learner anxiety. As Weschler (1997b, p. 5) notes, "the real issue is not whether to use the L1, but how to use it appropriately to maximize learning". Therefore, rather than viewing L1 use as a threat to L2 learning, teachers should consider it a flexible and valuable pedagogical tool, particularly when applied thoughtfully and in moderation.

## **2.6 Teachers' Perspectives on L1 Use in EFL Classrooms**

The concept of "perspective" plays a crucial role in understanding how teachers approach classroom practices, particularly in relation to language use. According to Al-Ba'albakī (2000, p. 677), a perspective is defined as "a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view". In the context of education, this definition underscores how teachers' personal and professional viewpoints influence their interpretations of and responses to various classroom situations. These perspectives are not arbitrary; rather, they shape the decisions teachers make, particularly in areas such as language instruction and classroom management. The use of the first language (L1) in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms remains a central point of debate among language teachers and researchers. While some argue that incorporating L1 into English instruction supports comprehension and facilitates learning, others warn that it may undermine students' exposure to and practice in the target language (L2). Within this debate, teachers' perspectives offer valuable insight into how pedagogical decisions are made in real classrooms, influenced by context, experience, and theoretical orientation. The educational environments in which they work often shape teachers' perspectives toward L1 use. As Gallagher (2020, p. 45)

asserts “the experience and the context where teachers work definitely influence the opinions and attitudes of English teachers towards the role of L1 use in L2 classrooms.” In many contexts, especially where English exposure is limited outside the classroom, teachers find it practical to use the students’ native language to support their learning and maintain classroom effectiveness. For example, when Manara (2007) and Setiawan and Mahmud (2009) examine the perspectives of English teachers and students at the university level, they find that both groups think it is impossible to entirely dismiss the usage of the native tongue. In particular, teachers report that utilizing L1 aids in providing instructions, addressing student confusion, and clarifying complicated concepts.

This supports the notion that L1 serves as a bridge between students’ existing knowledge and new language input. Similarly, Tang (2002) explores how Chinese EFL teachers use L1 in their instruction and shows that they often employ it to explain grammar and vocabulary, manage classrooms, and create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Teachers express the belief that using the native language helps establish rapport with learners, reduces anxiety, and leads to more effective communication. These findings reinforce the idea that L1 can be a pedagogical tool rather than a hindrance. The work of Cook (2008) further underscores this perspective by highlighting the ways teachers naturally integrate L1 into classroom practice, such as when explaining difficult grammatical rules or clarifying task instructions. According to Cook, the judicious use of L1 helps ensure that learners understand lesson content fully and do not remain confused or disengaged. In addition, Bozorgian and Fallahpour (2015) provide evidence that using the first language in EFL classrooms reduces learners’ affective barriers, such as anxiety and lack of confidence. Their study concludes that strategic use of L1 contributes to a more comfortable learning atmosphere and allows students to participate more actively in classroom activities. Despite the benefits observed, not all teachers and researchers fully endorse the use of L1. Nazary (2008), for example, find that although Iranian teachers acknowledge the usefulness of L1, many remain reluctant to rely on it extensively. Their hesitance stems from institutional expectations and a prevailing belief in the importance of maximizing L2 exposure. Teachers in this study express concern that excessive use of the native language might hinder students from developing fluency in English. Likewise, Turnbull and Dailey-O’Cain (2009) raise concerns about the

potential drawbacks of L1 use. They argue that frequent reliance on the native language reduces the amount of meaningful L2 interaction in the classroom and creates a dependency on translation. From this perspective, the ultimate goal of language education should be to immerse students in the target language to the greatest extent possible. Teachers' views are also influenced by theoretical frameworks in language acquisition. Cummins' (1981) interdependence hypothesis often supports L1 use in the classroom. This theory posits that cognitive and academic skills acquired in one language can transfer to another, meaning that L1 proficiency can support L2 development. Teachers familiar with such theories feel more confident in using the students' first language as a complementary resource in English instruction. In conclusion, teachers' perspectives on L1 use in EFL classrooms vary depending on their context, training, and theoretical orientation. While many teachers support the inclusion of the native language to enhance clarity, classroom management, and emotional support, others maintain a cautious stance due to concerns about limiting L2 exposure. As Cook (2001a, p. 410- 415) argues, "the L1 can be a valuable resource if used appropriately and not as a crutch," suggesting that strategic and minimal use of the first language aids learning without hindering immersion.

Also, Cummins (2007, p. 222) supports this balanced view by noting, "Drawing on students' L1 is not a sign of failure but a powerful pedagogical tool. "At the same time, critics warn against overuse. Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009, p, 183) warn that "if teachers rely too heavily on the L1, they risk depriving students of essential exposure to the target language." This concern highlights the importance of maintaining a balance between accessibility and authentic L2 practice.

Consequently, the key lies not in the wholesale acceptance or rejection of L1, but in its judicious, purposeful, and context-sensitive use, as teachers strive to meet the linguistic and emotional needs of their learners. Many researchers and teachers support the judicious use of L1 in EFL classrooms. For example, Cook (2008, p. 144-146) argues that L1 can help students understand complex grammar and instructions, stating that "the L1 can be a valuable resource if used appropriately and not as a crutch." Similarly, Manara (2007) and Tang (2002) show that teachers use L1 to clarify difficult concepts and reduce student anxiety. Cummins (2007) also supports this balanced approach, noting that drawing on students' L1 is not a sign of failure but a powerful pedagogical tool. In addition, Bozorgian and Fallahpour (2015, pp. 67, 76) highlight that "L1 use

lowers affective barriers and fosters learner participation". However, some scholars caution against its overuse. For instance, Nazary (2008) reports that many Iranian teachers feared excessive L1 use could hinder English fluency due to institutional pressures. Likewise, Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009, p. 1-20) warn that too much L1 limits meaningful L2 interaction, asserting, "If teachers rely too heavily on the L1, they risk depriving students of essential exposure to the target language".

## **2.7 Teachers' Reasons for Using L1 in EFL**

Teachers employ the first language (L1) in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms for various pedagogical and affective reasons, which have been widely documented across different contexts. Duff and Polio (1990, pp. 154-166) highlights practical challenges such as a "lack of enough time and teaching methodology guidelines" as primary justifications for L1 use. They also emphasize that L1 facilitates deeper comprehension and takes into account students' proficiency levels, while the linguistic distance between L1, L2, and lesson content influences teachers' decisions to code-switch. Subsequent studies have reinforced these findings. For example, (Macaro 2001b) reports that curriculum guidelines shape teachers' L1 use, with teachers aiming to prevent communication breakdowns and improve understanding of semantic and syntactic equivalents. Similarly, Crawford (2004) surveying over 500 teachers, finds strong agreement that using the L1 allows for more effective grammar instruction and prevents cultural coverage from becoming superficial. Emotional and contextual factors also play crucial roles.

Edstrom (2006a, pp. 275-292) notes that "teachers sometimes resort to L1 out of convenience or concerns about her students' feelings, while also using it to challenge stereotypes and explain cultural realities". Kang (2008), observes that both student comprehension difficulties and teacher L2 limitations motivate L1 use. De La Campa and Nassaji (2009, p. 25) categorize reasons into general factors such as learners' proficiency and specific factors like teaching materials. Furthermore, McMillan and Rivers (2011) identify teacher-student interaction as the most frequently cited benefit of judicious L1 use. Yavuz (2012a) adds that physical classroom conditions, education systems, and learners' confidence influence L1 use, particularly for clarifying abstract vocabulary and checking comprehension. Sali (2014) finds L1 helps reduce learner anxiety and enhances task completion, while Samar and Moradkhani (2014, p. 251-263) "emphasize comprehension as a central reason for L1 reliance". Johnson, et al.

(2016) highlight additional reasons such as stress reduction, facilitating interaction, and increasing student willingness to participate. Bozorgian and Luo (2018b) confirm that L1 use is especially frequent in lower-level classes and positively associated with psychological and interpersonal benefits. Teachers typically use L1 to clarify complex vocabulary and grammar, as it ensures full understanding when L2 explanations fall short. As one study observes, teachers often “require L1 to translate complex vocabulary and check meanings” (Duff & Polio, 1990 p. 154-166). Additionally, L1 is instrumental for giving clear instructions and managing the classroom effectively, especially with beginners, thereby contributing to an organized and supportive learning environment Macaro, (2001a). Time constraints further justify L1 use, as explaining difficult concepts in L1 “saves time for other class activities” (Sali, 2014, p. 318). Moreover, L1 helps reduce learners’ anxiety and builds rapport, which lowers affective barriers and encourages active participation Krashen, (1982) and Schweers, (1999). Teachers also use L1 to confirm comprehension and facilitate social interaction, which enhances classroom cohesion and creates a welcoming atmosphere McMillan & Rivers, (2011). It is widely recognized that L1 serves as a critical scaffold for learners with low English proficiency, providing a “head start” that reduces guesswork and supports confidence building Bozorgian & Luo, (2018a). Despite the dominance of English-only policies, many teachers advocate for a balanced approach. As Atkinson (1987) famously states, teachers should use English where possible and L1 where necessary. Similarly, Auerbach (1993) emphasizes L1 use during syllabus negotiation, classroom management, and error explanation as appropriate, while Harbord (1992) stresses its role in facilitating communication and enhancing teacher-student relationships. Finally, strategic and limited use of students’ first language (L1) in EFL classrooms plays an important role in improving both understanding and communication. By allowing learners to connect new English concepts with familiar linguistic knowledge, teachers can support deeper comprehension and smoother cognitive processing. Furthermore, the thoughtful use of L1 helps reduce learners’ anxiety and builds confidence, which in turn encourages greater participation and interaction in classrooms activities. Therefore, this balanced approach not only promotes academic progress but also creates a more supportive and inclusive learning environment, leading to more effective and engaging language teaching.

## **2.8 Translanguaging**

This section presents the concept of translanguaging as a strategy that allows learners to use both their first and second languages for meaningful learning, it emphasizes how this approach enhances comprehension, promotes interaction, and bridges and cultural understanding.

### **2.8.1 Definition**

Translanguaging emerges as a significant concept in bilingual and multilingual education, highlighting how speakers draw upon their entire linguistic repertoire to communicate and construct meaning. It emphasizes the dynamic, fluid, and integrative nature of language use among multilingual individuals. To begin with, García (2014, p. 45) defines translanguaging as “multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds.” Similarly, Baker (2011, p. 288) further defines it as “the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages.” In addition, Canagarajah (2011) defines translanguaging as “the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system” (p. 401). Moreover, Wei (2011) enriches the definition by adding that translanguaging also includes “the full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users for purposes that transcend the combination of structures, the alternation between systems, the transmission of information and the representation of values, identities and relationships.” (p. 1223). The following section deals with present strategies, in particular code-switching and translation.

### **2.8.2 Code-Switching**

Code-switching, a widely discussed phenomenon in language teaching, is defined as “the practice of alternating between two or more languages or language varieties in the course of a single conversation or utterance” (Gumperz and Scotton, 1981, p. 59). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, code-switching often occurs when teachers or students switch between their first language (L1) and the target language (English) to facilitate comprehension, manage classroom interactions, or convey nuanced meanings. It represents not merely a linguistic behavior but also a strategic tool for learning and communication (Auer, 1998). Research shows that code-switching serves multiple pedagogical functions. One of the primary purposes is

clarification and comprehension. Teachers often switch to the L1 to explain complex grammatical structures, difficult vocabulary, or abstract concepts, thereby ensuring that learners grasp the intended meaning. For instance, Macro (2001a, p. 51) emphasizes that “strategic use of L1 allows learners to process new content more effectively and reduces cognitive overload”. By alternating between languages, students can better link prior knowledge in their mother tongue with new information in English. Another significant function of code-switching is classroom management and rapport building. Teachers frequently employ L1 to give instructions, provide feedback, or maintain discipline, which enhances students’ attention and participation. According to Cook (2001a, p. 117), “using the learners’ first language at strategic points in the lesson fosters a more comfortable and inclusive learning environment, promoting engagement and motivation”. This underscores the role of code-switching not only as a cognitive scaffold but also as a social and emotional support mechanism within the classroom. Furthermore, code-switching aids language development through comparative awareness. When learners encounter translations or equivalents in both languages, they develop a heightened awareness of linguistic structures, vocabulary, and idiomatic expressions. This comparative process aligns with the cognitive benefits of translanguaging, as students actively negotiate meaning across languages (García and Wei, 2014, p. 20). In other words, code-switching functions as a bridge between the familiar L1 and the emerging L2, facilitating both understanding and retention. However, the use of code-switching in EFL contexts remains a subject of debate. Some teachers argue that excessive reliance on the L1 hinders immersion in English and reduces exposure to the target language. As Clanfield and Foord (2000) observe, many teachers struggle to encourage students to speak more English and less of their first language. Therefore, the effectiveness of code-switching largely depends on its strategic and controlled application, ensuring that it supports rather than replaces English use. In conclusion, code-switching represents a multifaceted and pragmatic tool in EFL teaching. When applied judiciously, it enhances comprehension, manages classroom interactions, and promotes comparative linguistic awareness. Nevertheless, balancing code-switching with opportunities for target language exposure remains essential to optimize learners’ English proficiency. Overall, code-switching is not merely a compromise between languages but a sophisticated pedagogical strategy that reflects both cognitive and social dimensions of language learning.

### **2.8.3 Translation**

Translation is one of the most effective strategies within translanguaging, defined by Cook (2010) as the process of changing speech or writing from one language into another, in a way that preserves meaning. Cook further argues that translation is “a cognitive skill that allows learners to compare language systems and strengthen their understanding of both” (Cook, 2010, p. 155). In classroom settings, translation supports vocabulary acquisition, grammar awareness, and comprehension. By moving between L1 and L2, learners can reinforce understanding of new content and reduce confusion, particularly when engaging with complex or abstract topics. Translation, for that reason, functions as a key component of the translanguaging framework, allowing students to draw on all their linguistic resources to facilitate learning. A study by Ahmad and Jusoff (2009) explores how EFL students use translation to support vocabulary and grammar learning. Their research, conducted with Malaysian secondary students, shows that learners often translate new English words into their first language to understand and remember them better. This strategy helps students connect new knowledge to familiar structures and increases confidence during lessons. However, the study also notes that overreliance on translation may limit students’ ability to produce language independently. Overall, Ahmad and Jusoff conclude that translation serves as useful cognitive bridges that supports comprehension and confidence when used appropriately. Similarly, Al-Nofaie (2010) examines teachers’ use of translation in Saudi Arabian EFL classrooms, through interviews and classroom observations, the study finds that teachers use translation to explain new vocabulary, clarify grammar, and manage classroom interactions. Translation helps students understand lessons more clearly and follow interactions accurately. Nonetheless, Al-Nofaie highlights that frequent use may reduce students’ exposure to English. The study concludes that translation, when applied purposefully, enhances understanding and classroom efficiency. The following section reviews previous relevant studies.

### **2.9 Previous Studies**

The debate over the use of students’ first language (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms remains a significant issue in language education worldwide. While many language-teaching policies encourage an English-only approach to maximize students’ exposure to the target language, classroom practices often reflect a more nuanced reality. Teachers frequently use the L1 strategically to

support learners, particularly when dealing with complex grammar, new vocabulary, or classroom management challenges. The use of L1 lowers students' anxiety, boosts confidence, and makes instruction clearer and more accessible especially for learners with lower proficiency levels. This section explores five key studies from Saudi Arabia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, and Thailand that have examined EFL teachers' and students' perspectives on the use of L1 in English language instruction. The findings of these studies offer strong support for the current research, which investigates how EFL teachers in Zawia secondary schools perceive and use L1 in their teaching practices. One of the most relevant studies in the Arab context is that of Al-Nofaie (2010), who explores the attitudes of Saudi secondary school teachers and that, using Arabic in class helps reduce confusion, especially when students encounter abstract concepts. However, both teachers and students acknowledged the risks of overusing Arabic, which could potentially limit learners' exposure to English. The study concluded that while L1 should not dominate the classroom, it serves as a beneficial tool when used in moderation. These findings are especially relevant to the current research in Zawia, where Arabic is also the students' L1 and plays a similar supporting role in classroom interactions.

In a bilingual context, Turnbull and Arnett (2002b) conduct a study in Canada to investigate how language teachers use L1 in both French and English language classrooms. Despite differing language goals from typical EFL settings, their research offers valuable insights into teachers' attitudes toward language use. The results show that teachers are not strictly against L1 but support its limited and purposeful use, particularly to scaffold students' comprehension and maintain a positive classroom environment. They emphasize that, "teachers use the first language to scaffold comprehension while maintaining the target language as the primary medium of instruction" (Turnbull and Arnett, 2002b, p. 213). The researchers also find that novice teachers tend to rely more heavily on L1, possibly due to a lack of confidence or limited teaching experience. This observation has implications for the Libyan context, where varying levels of teacher training influence classroom practices related to L1 use.

A similar tension between policy and practice exists in Hong Kong where Carless (2008) examines how secondary school teachers navigate the strict English-only language policy. Despite these official restrictions, teachers frequently use Cantonese (L1) to explain difficult grammar, give instructions, and manage classroom behavior.

Carless (2008, p. 333) reports that, “teachers feel that using Cantonese was sometimes necessary to ensure students’ understanding and maintain lesson flow”. This study highlights the disconnection between language policy and classroom reality, suggesting that rigid monolingual approaches do not always serve the best interests of students. Carless ultimately advocates for more flexible, pragmatic policies that recognize the pedagogical value of L1 in multilingual environments. These findings reinforce the need for similar flexibility in EFL classrooms in Libya, where Arabic may be used to maintain lesson coherence and student engagement.

In Japan, (Cole, 1998) explores how L1 can be used effectively in communicative EFL classrooms without undermining the role of English. Rather than banning L1 altogether, Cole proposes several practical situations where L1 use was both necessary and productive such as checking comprehension, giving complex instructions, or explaining grammar. He argues that, the mother tongue can serve as a bridge to the target language if used appropriately. He also recommends strategies like translation activities and contrastive grammar analysis to deepen students’ understanding. Cole’s pedagogical approach remains highly applicable to today’s classrooms, offering practical ideas for teachers who wish to support learners without compromising their exposure to English. Finally, Miles (2004a) conducts a classroom-based study in Thailand that examines how both students and teachers perceive the use of Thai in English instruction. Through observations, interviews, and surveys, Miles finds strong support for the careful use of L1, especially among lower-level learners who often struggle to understand instructions given entirely in English. One-teacher notes, sometimes using Thai just opens the door for better communication and learning (Miles, 2004a). However, the study also emphasizes the importance of balance. While students appreciate the clarity and reassurance that L1 provides, both students and teachers recognize the need to limit its use so as not to interfere with English language development. This concept of judicious use is central to current thinking about effective L1 integration and is particularly relevant for classrooms where students are new to English.

Taken together, these studies provide compelling evidence for the strategic and limited use of L1 in EFL classrooms across a range of global contexts. Despite differences in language policies and cultural settings, a common theme emerges: L1, when used appropriately, enhances teaching and learning outcomes. As Al-Nofaie (2010) points out, L1 use reduces confusion and supports understanding, especially for challenging

content. Similarly, Carless (2008) asserts that pragmatism rather than ideology should drive decisions about language use in EFL contexts. These conclusions reinforce the idea that banning L1 outright is not be realistic or pedagogically sound. Instead, EFL teachers benefit from the flexibility to use their professional judgment when deciding how and when to incorporate students' first language. The findings from these international studies offer valuable theoretical and practical support for the present research in Zawia, where teachers are similarly navigating the balance between encouraging English uses and providing necessary support through Arabic. Ultimately, recognizing and valuing the role of L1 leads to more inclusive, effective, and learner-centered teaching practices.

## **2.10 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter provides a comprehensive literature review on EFL teachers' perspectives regarding the use of students' first language (L1) to support English learning in Zawia secondary schools. It begins with an overview of key theoretical frameworks, presenting both supportive and opposing views on L1 use in EFL classrooms. The chapter then examines historical and current teaching approaches, highlighting the shift from strict English-only policies toward more balanced, bilingual practices. It discusses the pedagogical functions of L1, including clarifying complex content, reducing student anxiety, and supporting vocabulary acquisition. Finally, it explores concepts like translanguaging, code-switching and translation, emphasizing the strategic role of L1 as a tool for enhancing teaching and learning outcomes in multilingual contexts.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter explains the methodology used in the research to answer the research questions. It describes the overall research design and the specific methods of data collection. The chapter also details the participants involved, explaining how the sample was selected using appropriate sampling methods to ensure it represents the target population well. It discusses the pilot study conducted to test the procedures and addresses how validity and reliability of the data and findings were maintained throughout the research. Additionally, ethical considerations are covered, and the chapter ends with a summary of all these points.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

A good research design is important because it helps us get accurate and trustworthy results by following clear steps for collecting and analyzing data (Greene et al., 1989). A mixed-methods research design involves collecting and analyzing both quantitative (e.g., numerical surveys) and qualitative (e.g., focus group discussion) data concurrently, then integrating the findings (Clark et al., 2003).

This study uses a mixed methods approach, which means combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to get a fuller understanding of the research topic. Scholars such as Creswell (2014) and Greene et al. (1989) explain that mixed methods research helps balance the strengths and weaknesses of each method, allowing researchers to collect broad numerical data and detailed personal insights together. This approach is especially useful for comparing and validating results from different sources, making the findings stronger and more reliable. For this study, the researcher chose a triangulation design, a type of mixed methods approach, to explore EFL teachers' opinions about using the first language (L1) to support students learning English. Two main tools were used: focus groups, which allowed teachers to discuss their views in detail, and questionnaires, which collected data from a larger group more quickly. Using

both tools helped the researcher get a clear and complete picture of teachers' perspectives on using L1 in English classes.

### **3.2 Sampling Techniques**

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a smaller group from a larger population to study, which is crucial for enabling researchers to analyze data effectively and to generalize their findings to the broader population. Selecting an appropriate sampling method is essential because it significantly influences the quality, accuracy, and relevance of research outcomes (Cohen et al., 2018). In this study, the target population comprises teachers in Zawia Secondary Schools; however, due to limited access to this entire group, the researcher employed a non-probability sampling technique known as volunteer sampling. This method involves participants self-selecting or volunteering to take part in the study rather than being randomly chosen by the researcher (Dillon et al., 1994; Creswell, 2014). Although volunteer sampling facilitates easier access to willing participants and helps uphold ethical considerations, it carries certain limitations, especially in terms of sample representativeness. Because participants are not randomly selected, the resulting findings may not be fully generalizable to the entire population of teachers in Zawia Secondary Schools or beyond. Therefore, while this sampling approach is practical and ethically sound given the study's constraints, it also requires the researcher to acknowledge and discuss potential biases and limitations when interpreting the results.

### **3.3 Participants of Study**

The study involved 49 secondary school EFL teachers from various schools in Zawia who voluntarily completed the questionnaire. Among these participants, 10 teachers also took part in a focus group to provide more detailed qualitative insights. All the teachers had a minimum of 5 years of teaching experience, ensuring they were well-qualified to share their perspectives on deductive and inductive grammar teaching methods.

These participants were selected from a range of public secondary schools in Zawia. The schools included Al-Hurray Secondary School for Boys, Al-Harsha Secondary School for Girls, Al-Sabria Secondary School for Girls, Al-Qattous Secondary School, Jodda'em Secondary School, Al-Bakhkhanas Secondary School, Al-Buhumayriya

Secondary School, Shuhada' Abu Issa Secondary School, Omar Al-Misawi Secondary School, Al-Talia, School, Al-Amal Secondary School, and Al-Fassi School.

Selecting participants with substantial teaching experience enhances the reliability and depth of educational research. (Cohen et al., 2018) argue that experienced teachers are more likely to provide nuanced and informed responses. In addition, Creswell and Poth (2018) emphasize that including a diverse yet experienced group strengthens the validity of qualitative data, especially in focus groups where rich, contextual insights can be gathered. Kumar (2011) also supports this approach by noting that a sample size of around 49 for questionnaires and 10 for focus groups is adequate to achieve meaningful and generalizable findings in educational studies. The careful selection of experienced EFL teachers and the combined use of questionnaires and focus groups provided a solid foundation for obtaining reliable, detailed, and valid data on grammar teaching methods in secondary schools in Zawia.

### **3.4. Data Collection Tools**

To achieve the objectives of this study, two primary instruments were employed to collect data: focus group discussions and questionnaires. Before examining each tool in detail, it is important to understand their purpose and relevance within the research context. Data collection instruments serve as systematic means of gathering information from participants, enabling researchers to obtain both measurable and experiential insights. In this study, the questionnaire was utilized as a structured tool to capture respondents' perspectives in a standardized and analyzable manner. By providing a clear explanation of the questionnaire's design, purpose, and application, the following discussion lays the groundwork for understanding how the study obtained reliable and meaningful data from participants.

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a widely used research instrument designed to collect information from respondents in a systematic and standardized manner (Bhandari, 2021). It typically consists of a set of written questions that can be either closed-ended or open-ended, allowing researchers to gather data on participants' attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics (Bryman, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018). One of the main advantages of questionnaires is their efficiency, as they enable researchers to reach a large number of participants within a relatively short period. Additionally, questionnaires are cost-

effective compared to other data collection methods, such as interviews, and provide a high degree of standardization, which facilitates the comparison and statistical analysis of responses (Saunders et al., 2019). They also offer respondents anonymity, which can encourage more honest and accurate answers, particularly when sensitive issues are addressed (Denscombe, 2014). Furthermore, questionnaires are flexible in their administration, allowing for paper based, online, or mobile distribution.

Overall, the questionnaire is a valuable and versatile tool in research, combining practicality with methodological rigor and contributes significantly to the collection of reliable and meaningful data. The questionnaire was first developed by Galton, a British anthropologist and statistician, who create it to systematically collect and analyze data. This study employed structured close-ended questionnaire to collect data from participants. Typically, questionnaires include both closed-ended questions, which offer fixed response options, and open-ended questions, which allow participants to elaborate on their thoughts and experiences. For the purposes of this research, a structured closed-ended questionnaire was utilized, enabling participants to select their answers from predefined choices. This method facilitated systematic data collection, ensured consistency across responses, and allowed for easier analysis and comparison of the teachers' perspectives. Consequently, a closed-ended questionnaire was selected to provide quantifiable data, ensuring clarity, reliability, and methodological coherence for this study. The instrument was designed to measure specific variables, including teachers' attitudes, reported behaviors, and preferences regarding L1 use. A key feature was the implementation of a Likert scale, which effectively quantified participants' levels of agreement or disagreement with various statements, translating subjective perspectives into analyzable data. This approach is well-supported in research; as Ponto (2015) and McLeod (2018) affirm, structured questionnaires are an effective method for systematically measuring attitudes and behaviors, allowing for the efficient collection of data from a sample population

Others are grouped into scales or indexes to measure latent traits, attitudes, or social-economic status. Overall, questionnaires are cost-effective, allow for standardized data collection, and provide both qualitative and quantitative insights, but they require respondents to be able to read and understand the questions (Saris and Gallhofer,2014). Using a structured closed-ended questionnaire in this study helped ensure clear, consistent, and easy-to-analyze responses.

### **3.4.2 Focus Group Discussion**

A focus group discussion (FGD) is a qualitative research method where a small group of people come together to talk about a specific topic, guided by a moderator, in order to gather in-depth information about their opinions, feelings, and experiences (Krueger, 1994). The main goal of FGDs is to collect rich, detailed data by observing how individuals interact within the group. When people share their thoughts in a group setting, researchers can see common views, disagreements, and how social dynamics, like peer influence, affect what participants say. This makes FGDs different from simple surveys or one-on-one interviews because the group conversation itself provides valuable insights (Krueger and Casey, 2014). The foundations of this method go back to the (1940) when Lazarsfeld and Merton have developed “focused interviews” during World War II to study how people reacted to propaganda. These early techniques helped researchers better understand people’s social responses in a way that simple questioning could not. Recent research in second language education highlights the role of group interaction and discussion for learner engagement, demonstrating how collaborative group settings facilitate communication and deeper learning among students (Dornyei and Murphey, 2003). Later on, Dichter (2000), a psychologist and marketing expert, have introduced the term “focus group” and helped popularize its use, particularly in market research, to explore consumer opinions and motivations. In (1998), Morgan has provided a clear and widely cited definition of FGDs as group interviews designed to explore participants' perceptions and opinions on specific topics, solidifying the method’s role in qualitative research. Then, Smithson (2000a,b) has emphasized the unique value of FGDs in observing how people communicate and influence each other during the discussion. More recently, Payne and Payne (2020) have pointed out that FGDs typically involve participants who are equal in status and often strangers to each other, which encourages open, dynamic conversations without power imbalances. Furthermore, scholars such as Bloor, et al (2020) have offered practical guidance on conducting FGDs, while Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2020) have explored the method’s wider applications beyond research, including teaching and political engagement confirming its ongoing importance for understanding complex social phenomenon. In summary, focus group discussions are a powerful research tool that allows researchers to capture complex and varied human perspectives by bringing people together in a moderated, interactive setting. From the pioneering work of Lazarsfeld and Merton in

the (1940), through Dichter's naming and promotion of the method, to modern detailed guidance by Morgan and others, FGDs have become essential in studying how opinions form and change within social contexts. Their continued relevance today shows that FGDs remain one of the best ways to explore social realities that other research methods might overlook, for focus group discussions, (see Appendix D).

### **3.5 Pilot Study**

Pilot study is an important early step in research that tests whether the research tools and methods work well before the full study begins. A pilot study is like a small practice run that helps researchers check if the questionnaire or other tools are clear and effective. For example, in this research, the pilot helped confirm that the questionnaire accurately captured teachers' opinions about using their first language (L1) in English classes, making the results more reliable. According to Abu Hassan et al. (2006), pilot studies are essential because they find problems early and show if research plans, participant recruitment, and data collection will go smoothly. Similarly, Malmqvist (2019) and Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) point out that pilot studies are often missed in qualitative research but are still important for making sure methods are practical and clear. Scholars such as Leon, David and Kraemer (2011) agree that pilot studies are a necessary step that improve the research design and help avoid wasting time and resources, which leads to more trustworthy and effective main studies. Accordingly, the questionnaire was piloted to ensure its clarity and effectiveness for the main study. This process allowed any ambiguous or confusing items to be identified and revised before full implementation. As a result, the main study was conducted with a more reliable and valid instrument, enhancing the credibility of the collected data.

### **3.6 Reliability and Validity**

Reliability and validity are two important ideas researchers use to make sure a test or method works well. Reliability means the test gives consistent results when repeated under the same conditions. Crocker and Algina (1986) say reliability are about getting precise and consistent measurements every time you repeat the process. Validity, on the other hand, means the test actually measures what it is supposed to measure. DeVellis (2012) describes validity as how accurate the conclusions from the test results are. Shadish, et al (2002) explain different kinds of validity, such as internal validity (how trustworthy the study itself is), external validity (if we can apply the results beyond the

study), construct validity (if the test truly measures the idea it aims for), and statistical conclusion validity (if the statistical results are correct). A test can be reliable without being valid; meaning it gives consistent but wrong results, but a valid test must also be reliable. So, reliability ensures a test's results stay stable over time, and validity makes sure these results truly reflect what the study wants to measure both are essential for good research.

### **3.6.1 Validity**

Validity is one of the most essential principles in academic research, particularly in the field of education and applied linguistics. It refers to the degree to which a researcher accurately measures what the study intends to measure (Cohen et al., 2018). In other words, validity concerns the truthfulness, soundness, and credibility of research findings. Dörnyei (2007, p. 50) defines validity as “the extent to which our instruments and procedures genuinely capture the concept or construct they are intended to measure”. For a researcher, ensuring validity means confirming that the research tools such as questionnaires, interviews, or observations accurately represent the phenomena under investigation. Without validity, a researcher's findings lack authenticity, making it difficult for others to trust or apply the results in educational practice. The importance of validity in research cannot be overstated. As Creswell and Poth (2018) explain, validity allows a researcher to ensure that the findings are accurate, trustworthy, and representative of participants' true experiences.

In terms of advantages, when a researcher employs valid instruments, the data collected reflect participants' real views and behaviors rather than distorted interpretations or measurement errors. For instance, in a study exploring teachers' perspectives, validity ensures that what the researcher records truly represents what teachers think, feel, and experience in their classrooms. This accuracy strengthens the reliability of the results and allows the researcher to draw meaningful and generalizable conclusions. Additionally, when validity is established, it enhances the overall integrity of the research process, making the study more useful to educators, policymakers, and other researchers. The major advantage of validity lies in how it improves the credibility and strength of a study. According to Ary et al. (2019, p. 236), valid research provides “sound evidence that supports meaningful interpretation and decision-making”. A researcher who ensures validity gains the confidence of both readers and academic peers, as the study's outcomes are based on accurate and trustworthy evidence. Another

advantage is that valid research tools enable replication; other researchers can apply the same instruments in different contexts and expect similar results, which supports the advancement of knowledge in the field. However, maintaining validity presents challenges. To achieve it, a researcher must design instruments carefully, conduct pilot testing, seek expert feedback, and refine questions to ensure clarity and relevance. These steps require time, expertise, and attention to detail. Moreover, validity can be threatened by poorly constructed questions, researcher bias, or participants' misunderstanding of the research items (Cohen et al., 2018).

The disadvantages related to validity often concern the difficulty of achieving and maintaining it rather than any inherent flaw in the concept. For example, in qualitative research, where data often come from focus group discussions or interviews, the researcher must deal with participants' subjective opinions, emotions, and social dynamics. These factors can reduce internal validity because responses may not always be consistent or entirely authentic. In quantitative studies, a researcher must ensure construct validity by aligning every questionnaire item with the theoretical concepts being studied. Failure to do so may lead to inaccurate interpretations or misleading results. Therefore, it is the researcher's responsibility to apply strategies such as triangulation, pilot testing, and expert validation to strengthen the validity of the research.

In the context of the present study, which explores EFL teachers' perspectives on using L1 to facilitate students' learning English in Zawia secondary schools, validity plays a crucial role in ensuring that the data truly represent teachers' beliefs and classroom practices. The researcher uses both questionnaires and focus group discussions as data collection tools. To ensure validity, the researcher seeks expert feedback on the instruments to confirm that all questions are clear, relevant, and aligned with the study's objectives. Pilot testing is also conducted to identify ambiguous items and ensure that respondents interpret the questions as intended. These procedures help the researcher minimize bias, enhance clarity, and ensure that the collected data reflect genuine teacher perspectives. By maintaining validity, the researcher enhances the accuracy and trustworthiness of the study's findings, which contributes to a better understanding of how EFL teachers use the first language to support English learning. Finally, validity is the foundation of credible and trustworthy research. It determines the extent to which a researcher's findings can be relied upon and applied in other contexts. Although

ensuring validity can be challenging and time-consuming, the researcher's effort to maintain it is essential for achieving high-quality and meaningful results. In the current study on EFL teachers in Zawia secondary schools, the researcher's careful attention to validity guarantees that the data accurately represent teachers' true perspectives on using L1 in English classrooms. Ultimately, this strengthens the study's contribution to the improvement of pedagogical practices and informs future language education policy in Libya.

### **3.6.2 Reliability**

Reliability in academic research refers to the consistency and dependability of methods and results obtained from a study. The concept of reliability was first introduced by Spearman (1904) in the context of psychological testing, emphasizing the idea that a reliable test yields consistent results over repeated trials. Later, research methodologists such as Cronbach (1951) expanded on this by developing Cronbach's alpha, a widely used statistic for assessing internal consistency reliability of measurement instruments. Methodologists like Leedy and Ormrod (2013), who describe reliability as the stability and trustworthiness of research methods and instruments, ensuring that results can be generalized and trusted, have provided further development of the concept. Contemporary educational resources, including, Morrison (2018) define reliability as the degree to which a research tool consistently process similar results, regardless of when or by whom it is administered, highlighting the need for standardized procedures to reduce measurement error. According to the present study, which explores EFL teachers' perspectives on using students' first language to facilitate English learning in Zawia secondary schools, ensuring reliability was of paramount importance. The questionnaire and focus group discussion instruments were carefully designed and piloted to confirm their clarity, internal consistency, and suitability for the local context. Consistency in the administration of these instruments helped ensure that participants' responses genuinely reflected their perspectives rather than inconsistencies in the research process. Moreover, by maintaining uniform procedures for data collection and analysis, the study minimized potential measurement error and research bias.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

Data collection for this study was conducted with a structured, multi-method approach, beginning with securing the necessary institutional permissions. As is standard practice

in ethical research, the researcher must first obtain approval from the relevant institutional review board or ethics committee (Creswell, 2014). Following this, the Head of the Postgraduate Studies Department at the university granted permission. This step ensured the research adhered to established academic and ethical guidelines. Subsequently, all participants were provided with a comprehensive explanation of the study's purpose and procedures. This step was essential to guarantee informed consent, which serves as a fundamental principle of ethical research. According to Flick (2009), informed consent refers to the process in which researchers obtain participants' voluntary agreement after providing a clear and accurate description of the study. A consent form, designed by the researcher, was then signed by each participant, formalizing their voluntary involvement. The data was collected using a two-phase process. The first phase involved a closed-ended online questionnaire distributed to 50 participants, (see Appendix A).

The questionnaire was distributed directly to teachers in various secondary schools across Zawia, with the researcher personally delivering the instruments to ensure that all participants received them and could seek clarifications if needed. This approach facilitated higher responses rates and maintained consistency in data collection. The researcher adopted the questionnaire from the works of Cook (2001a), Ellis (2003), and Harbord (1992), who studies collectively emphasize the pedagogical and communicative importance of using the first language in classrooms. The instrument was carefully designed to align with the study's objectives and consisted of four main sections: the first section focused on general beliefs about using L1 in classrooms, the second section examined the instructional use of L1, the third section explored collaboration and professional practice, and the fourth section addressed critical perspectives and misconceptions regarding L1 use in language education. To ensure clarity and precision, the questionnaire employed five-point Likert scale, allowing participants to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. This aligns with the principles of survey research, where standardized questions are used to gather data from a large number of people (Saunders et al., 2019). The second phase involved a focus group discussion with 10 participants. This qualitative method was employed to explore the complexities of an issue and to gain a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives (Morgan, 1997). Prior to the session, participants were reminded of their right to withdraw at any time. The discussion, which was recorded for research purposes

with participants’ prior knowledge, was conducted in a relaxed environment to facilitate open and honest communication.

The researcher initiated the session with light social conversation to establish rapport, a technique supported by scholars like (Morgan 1997, p. 45) on the other hand, who notes, “a relaxed and non-threatening environment is essential for a productive focus group”. Participants were given the discussion schedule one week in advance, allowing them time to reflect on the topics, which is a common practice to enhance the quality of the data. Throughout the discussion, the researcher utilized follow-up questions and prompts to encourage participants to elaborate on their responses, a method designed to gather rich, detailed information. In summary, the data collection procedures were meticulously planned and executed, prioritizing both the rigor of the research methodology and the ethical treatment of participants. The multi-method approach, combining a quantitative survey with a qualitative focus group, provided a robust dataset while ensuring participants’ rights and privacy were respected throughout the process. The following table presents the schedule of focus group discussion involving, date and session duration of the discussion that were carried out.

**Table 3. 1: Teachers’ Focus Group Discussion Schedule**

<b>Interviewees</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Session Duration (Minutes)</b>
<u>FGD 1</u> Teachers 1 Teachers 2 Teachers 3 Teachers 4	13th-Feb-2025	45
<u>FGD 2</u> Teachers 5 Teachers 6 Teachers 7	14th-Feb-2025	45
<u>FGD 3</u> Teachers 8 Teachers 9 Teachers 10	15th Feb 2025	45

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

After collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher analyzed the data as follows:

#### **3.8.1 Quantitative Data**

After collecting data, the researcher organized and prepared the dataset for analysis using SPSS, which stands for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, is a widely used software program developed by IBM that helps researchers collect, manage, and analyze data efficiently. It is especially popular in fields like social sciences, education, and health research because it supports both simple and complex statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, regression, and factor analysis. SPSS makes it easier to analyze survey and experimental data by providing useful tools for data visualization and interpretation. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS, which facilitates the analysis of survey and experimental data through its tools for data visualization and interpretation (Teachers Institute, 2018; Williams, 2020).

#### **3.8.2 Qualitative Data**

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Thematic analysis is widely used method in qualitative research that focuses on identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns or themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It helps researchers organize and understand complex information by highlighting repeated ideas that appear across the dataset (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Although thematic analysis as a formal method gained recognition with Braun and Clarke's seminal paper published in (2006), its roots as a technique for qualitative pattern recognition have been evolving over time (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach is flexible and can be used in various ways depending on the researcher's theoretical perspective, but it consistently aims to find meaningful themes in qualitative material through a systematic process (Overcool et al., 2023). Therefore, thematic analysis serves as a foundational tool in qualitative research for extracting and reporting significant insights from textual data. The focus group discussion data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the six steps procedure outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), who are leading scholars in qualitative research and the developers of the thematic analysis framework. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis should serve as the foundational qualitative method for researchers, as it develops essential analytical skills applicable to variety of other

qualitative approach. The analysis was conducted through the following six steps, illustrated in table 3.2 below.

**Table 3. 2: A Summary of Six Steps of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)**

Phase	Description / Researcher's Activity
1. Familiarization with the data	Transcribing the focus group discussion. Reading the transcripts carefully. Nothing down initial ideas and patterns related to L1.
2. Generating initial codes	Coding meaningful features across the data set. Collating all data relevant to each initial code.
3. Searching for themes	Grouping the same codes into potential themes. Organizing data extracts under broader thematic categories. Gathering all relevant data within each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking whether the themes fit the coded data and the entire data set. Refining, merging, or removing overall themes. Ensuring the themes accurately represent teachers' perspectives.
5. Defining and naming themes	Conducting deeper analysis to refine each theme. Naming themes clearly to reflect their content (e.g., Pedagogical Benefits, Challenges).
6. Producing the report	Writing the final analysis and interpretation. Selecting vivid quotations from participants to illustrate each theme. Connecting the findings to the research questions and existing literature.

### 3.9 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter outlined how the study was designed and carried out. It described the mixed-methods approach used to explore EFL teachers' views on using L1 in secondary schools in Zawia. Key findings include: Teachers see both benefits and drawbacks of L1 use. Moderate use of L1 can help clarify difficult concepts and improve communication. Too much reliance on L1 may hinder students' English fluency. Training plays a major role in shaping teachers' views and practices. The data collected through questionnaires and focus groups provide a strong foundation for the analysis presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents and analyzes the data collected from the questionnaire and the focus group discussions with EFL teachers. The data is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on the quantitative results, presented with their interpretations. The second section deals with the qualitative findings from the focus group discussions, providing a thematic analysis of teachers' views and experiences. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary that brings together the key findings.

#### **4.1 Analysis of the Questionnaire (Quantitative Data).**

This part analyzes the quantitative questionnaire data to identify key patterns in teachers' perspectives on L1. The statistical findings clarify how teachers perceive and apply L1 in the EFL classroom, providing a clear empirical basis for understanding its pedagogical role.

##### **4.1.1 Participants Information**

This section of the questionnaire presents the distribution of participants according to their teaching experience.

**Table 4. 1: Years of Experience**

<b>Teaching Experience</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 1 year	2	4.2 %
1-5 years	11	22.9 %
6-10 years	11	22.9 %
More than 10years	22	45.8 %
15 years	1	2.1%
30 years	2	4.2 %
Total	49	99.9 %

In terms of teaching experience in table 4.1 above, the data demonstrate a diverse range of professional backgrounds. The largest proportion of respondents, 22 teachers (45.8%), reported having more than 10 years of teaching experience, suggesting that the study benefits from the insights of seasoned teachers. Both the 1–5 years and 6–10 years categories were equally represented each accounting for 11 teachers (22.9%). This indicates a balanced representation of mid-career professionals alongside the highly experienced group. A small number of participants had 15 years of experience (2.1%), while two individuals reported exceptionally of less than 1 year and long careers of 30 years respectively (each representing 4.2%). This variation in experience is valuable, as it provides a range of perspectives shaped by different levels of professional exposure and pedagogical development.

Overall, the participants' characteristics suggest that a predominantly female teaching population shapes experienced practitioners the findings of the study with substantial representation shapes. The strong presence of long-serving teachers may contribute to more informed opinions regarding the use of L1 in English language classrooms, while the inclusion of less experienced educators ensures that emerging viewpoints are also captured. This diversity in both gender and teaching experience strengthens the credibility and comprehensiveness of the study's insights.

#### **4.1.2 General Beliefs about Using L1 in EFL Classrooms**

This section provides an overview of general beliefs regarding the use of students' first language (L1) in EFL classrooms. It highlights teachers' perspectives on how L1 can serve as a supportive tool in language learning, including facilitating comprehension, explaining complex concepts, and managing classroom interactions. The section also discusses the varying degrees of acceptance and caution among teachers, reflecting a balance between leveraging L1 and L2 to aid learning and ensuring adequate exposure to the foreign language.

**Table 4. 2: General Beliefs about Using L1 in EFL Classrooms**

**Item 1. EFL teachers should use students' L1 to facilitate their learning of English.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
10 (20.4%)	26 (53.1%)	7 (14.3%)	2 (4.0%)	4 (8.2%)	2.27	1.095	Low

**Item 2. Using students' L1 can help them comprehend English concepts better.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
9 (18.4%)	26 (53.1%)	8 (16.3%)	4 (8.2%)	2 (4.1%)	2.37	1.000	Low

**Item 3. EFL teachers should encourage the use of L1 in classroom.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
8 (16.3%)	9 (18.4%)	19 (38.8%)	6 (12.2%)	7 (14.3%)	2.84	1.255	Moderate

**Item 4. Using L1 can help build students' confidence in learning English.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
9 (18.4%)	16 (32.7%)	16 (32.4%)	6 (12.2%)	2 (4.1%)	2.76	1.067	Moderate

**Item 5. EFL teachers should create a balanced approach between using L1 and English in the classroom.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
14 (28.6%)	22 (44.9%)	6 (12.2%)	4 (8.2%)	3 (6.1%)	2.46	1.248	Low

**Item 6. Using L1 can save time in explaining English concepts to students.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
11 (22.4%)	16 (32.7%)	8 (16.3%)	5 (10.2%)	9 (18.4%)	2.82	1.457	Moderate

**Item 7. EFL teachers should consider the language proficiency of their students before using L1 in the classroom.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
19 (38.8%)	10 (20.4%)	10 (20.4%)	6 (12.2%)	4 (8.2%)	2.27	1.408	Low

**Item 8. Using L1 can help in maintaining students' interest and engagement in learning English.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
9 (18.4%)	21 (42.9%)	12 (24.5%)	5 (10.2%)	2 (4.1%)	2.57	1.030	Moderate

As can be seen in table 4.2 above the first item examined in the study was: “*EFL teachers should use students’ first language (L1) to facilitate their learning of English.*” The responses to this item reveal a range of perspectives, with a noticeable tendency toward agreement. A majority of participants, twenty-six teachers (53.1%), disagreed with the statement, while ten teachers (20.4%) strongly disagreed. Together, these responses show that nearly three-quarters of the participants favored the use of L1 as a supportive tool in teaching English. In contrast, seven teachers (14.3%) selected a neutral stance, reflecting some hesitation or conditional acceptance of this practice. Opposition was limited, with four teachers (8.2%) strongly agreeing and only two teachers (4.0%) agreeing

The mean score for this item was 2.27 with a standard deviation of 1.095, which falls in the low range. This suggests that while many teachers support L1 use, their support is

not overwhelmingly strong but rather cautious. Overall, the findings indicate that most teachers see value in using L1, though some remain reserved or resistant.

The second item was *“Using students’ L1 can help them comprehend English concepts better.”* Here, the majority of teachers again expressed support. Twenty-six participants (53.1%) disagree, while nine teachers (18.4%) strongly disagreed, showing a solid majority who believed that L1 enhances comprehension. A smaller group of eight teachers (16.3%) chose neutrality, suggesting some uncertainty about the extent of L1’s effectiveness. Only a minority opposed this view, with four teachers (8.2%) agreeing and two teachers (4.1%) strongly agreeing. The mean score for this statement was 2.37 with a standard deviation of 1.000, also interpreted as low. This indicates that although a large proportion of teachers agreed with the statement, the overall intensity of their agreement was limited, reflecting a generally favorable but cautious endorsement of L1 for concept comprehension.

The third item in the survey was: *“EFL teachers should encourage the use of L1 in classroom activities.”* The responses showed greater variation than in the earlier items. The highest percentage, nine teachers (18.4%), disagreed, while nineteen teachers (38.8%) neutral, indicating that a majority leaned toward supporting L1 in classroom tasks. On the other hand, a significant proportion opposed the idea: seven teachers (14.3%) strongly agreed, reflecting uncertainty. The mean score was 2.84 with a standard deviation of 1.255, placing it in the moderate range. This shows that teachers’ opinions were divided, with a slight tendency toward agreement but with notable opposition.

The fourth item, *“Using L1 can help build students’ confidence in learning English,”* received mixed responses. Sixteen teachers (32.7%) disagreed with the statement, and another 16 teachers (32.4%) selected neutrality, showing that while many teachers see potential benefits, an equal number were cautious. A smaller group of nine teachers (18.4%) strongly disagreed, representing a committed minority who believed L1 clearly boosts confidence. Opposition was limited, with six teachers (12.2%) agreeing and only two (4.1%) strongly agreeing. The mean score was 2.76 with a standard deviation of 1.067, interpreted as moderate. This suggests that while many teachers believe L1 can build confidence, the significant number of neutral responses shows that opinions remain divided depending on context and teaching practice.

The fifth item, *“EFL teachers should create a balanced approach between using L1 and English in the classrooms,”* received strong support overall. The largest group, twenty-two teachers (44.9%), disagreed, while fourteen teachers (28.6%) strongly disagreed, showing clear approval of balance between the two languages. Six teachers (12.2%) remained neutral, indicating some hesitation, while only four (8.2%) agreed and three (6.1%) strongly agreed. The mean score for this item was 2.46 with a standard deviation of 1.248, which is categorized as low. Despite this, the distribution of responses highlights a strong majority favoring a balanced approach, suggesting that teachers widely recognize the value of integrating both L1 and English in instruction.

The sixth item, *“Using L1 can save time in explaining English concepts to students,”* elicited varied responses. Sixteen teachers (32.7%) disagreed, while eleven teachers (22.4%) strongly disagreed, together making up more than half of the respondents who supported the idea. Eight teachers (16.3%) selected neutrality, while nine teachers (18.4%) strongly agreed, and five teachers (10.2%) agreed. The mean score was 2.82 with a standard deviation of 1.457, placing it in the moderate range. These results suggest that many teachers see L1 as timesaving, but a considerable portion remain reason or opposed, possibly due to concerns about reducing English exposure.

The seventh item was: *“EFL teachers should consider the language proficiency of their students before using L1 in the classrooms.”* The largest group, nineteen teachers (38.8%), strongly disagreed, followed by ten teachers (20.4%) who disagreed. Another ten teachers (20.4%) remained neutral, while six (12.2%) agreed and four (8.2%) strongly agreed. The mean score was 2.27 with a standard deviation of 1.408, which is considered low. This reflects that while many teachers value considering proficiency, their support is not overwhelming, and there remains significant variation in perspectives.

The eighth item was: *“Using L1 can help in maintaining students’ interest and engagement in learning English.”* Out of 49 teachers, the highest proportion twenty-one teachers (42.9%) disagreed, followed by twelve teachers (24.5%) who were neutral. Nine teachers (18.4%) strongly disagreed, showing notable support, while five teachers (10.2%) agreed and two teachers (4.1%) strongly agreed. Therefore, the mean score was 2.57 with a standard deviation of 1.030, interpreted as moderate. This suggests that teachers generally believe L1 supports engagement, though the relatively high proportion of neutral responses indicates that some remain cautious.

### 4.1.3 Instructional Use of L1

This section presents the instructional use of L1, focusing on how teachers incorporate students' first language as a strategic tool to support learning in the classroom. It highlights the various ways in which L1 is employed to clarify difficult concepts, provide clear instructions, manage classroom dynamics, and build positive rapport with students. Teachers aim to balance the use of L1 with the target language to improve comprehension and maintain student engagement, thereby facilitating a more effective learning environment.

**Table 4. 3: Instructional Use of L1**

**Item 9. EFL teachers should use L1 to clarify instructions and tasks for students.**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
15 (30.6%)	15 (30.6%)	7 (14.3%)	8 (16.3%)	4 (8.2%)	2.4082	1.306	Moderate

**Item 10. Using L1 can help in explaining complex grammar rules and structures to students.**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
5 (36.7%)	18 (10.2%)	11 (22.4%)	5 (10.2%)	10 (20.4%)	3.06	1.302	Moderate

**Item 11. EFL teachers should provide training on how to effectively use L1 in the classroom.**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
10 (20.4%)	26 (53.1%)	7 (14.3%)	4 (8.2%)	2 (4.1%)	2.45	1.160	Low

**Item 12. Using L1 can help in enhancing students' vocabulary retention.**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
20 (40.8%)	9 (18.4%)	7 (14.3%)	8 (16.3%)	5 (10.2%)	2.08	1.501	Low

**Item 13. EFL teachers should be open to adapting their approach based on students' feedback on using L1.**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
11 (22.4%)	18 (36.7%)	9 (18.4%)	7 (14.3%)	4 (8.2%)	2.63	1.216	Moderate

**Item 14. Using L1 can help in scaffolding students' learning of new English concepts.**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
16 (32.7%)	15 (30.6%)	10 (20.4%)	5 (10.2%)	3 (6.1%)	2.46	1.280	Low

**Item 15. EFL teachers should collaborate with colleagues on best practices for using L1 in the classroom.**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
19 (38.8%)	14 (28.6%)	6 (12.2%)	8 (16.3%)	2 (4.1%)	2.39	1.297	Moderate

**Item 16. Using L1 can help in addressing Students' language learning difficulties more effectively.**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
16 (32.7%)	21 (42.9%)	5 (10.2%)	4 (8.2%)	3 (6.1%)	2.57	1.234	Moderate

Table 4.3 above shows the ninth item, which stated, “*EFL teachers ought to use L1 to clarify instructions and tasks for students*”; the responses indicated a mixture of views. The medium largest group of teachers, 16.3% (n=8), agreed with the statement, while 14.3% (n=7) expressed neutrality, reflecting hesitation. Whereas both strong agreement and disagreement were equal at 30.6% (n=fifteen each). The mean score of 2.4082 with

a standard deviation of 1.306 places this item within the moderate range. These results suggest that although many teachers value L1 for clarifying instructions, there remains noticeable resistance among others, reflecting a cautious stance on its application in the classroom.

The tenth item focused on whether *“Using L1 can help in explaining complex grammar rules and structures to students.”* The data revealed that the majority, 36.7% (n=18), disagreed, while 10.2% (n=5) strongly agreed, indicating strong support overall. Neutral responses came from 22.4%, and only 20.4% (n=10) who strongly agreed. Despite the high proportion of supportive responses, the mean score was relatively low at 3.06 (SD = 1.302), interpreted as low. This suggests that although many teachers endorsed the role of L1 in grammar instruction, their responses varied enough to lower the average, perhaps reflecting some reservations or inconsistencies in their views.

The eleventh item, *“EFL teachers should be required to provide training on how to effectively use L1 in the classroom,”* received notable support. A total of 4.1% (n=2) strongly agreed, and 8.2% (n=4) agreed, showing that more than half of the teachers welcomed the idea of mandatory training. Neutral responses accounted for 14.3% (n=7), while 53.1% (n=26) disagreed and 20.4% (n=10) strongly disagreed. The overall mean was 2.45 with a relatively high standard deviation of 1.160, interpreted as low. This finding suggests that while many teachers recognize the need for professional training, the overall responses show considerable divergence, reflecting divided opinions on whether training in L1 use should be mandatory.

The twelfth item addressed whether *“Using L1 can help in enhancing students’ vocabulary retention.”* According to the results, 16.3% (n=8) agreed with the statement, and 10.2% (n=5) strongly agreed, together forming a clear majority of positive responses. Neutrality was reported by 14.3% (n=7), while disagreement was indicated by 18.4% (n=9), and strong disagreement by 40.8% (n=20). The mean score of 2.08 with a standard deviation of 1.501 placed this item within the moderate range. This suggests that most teachers believe L1 can support vocabulary learning, though some remain unconvinced, revealing a balanced yet leaning-positive perception.

The thirteenth item, *“EFL teachers should be open to adapting their approach based on students’ feedback on using L1,”* also revealed mixed responses. Strong agreement was expressed by 8.2% (n=4), and 14.3% (n=7) agreed, showing a substantial majority in favor. Meanwhile, 18.4% (n=9) remained neutral, while 36.7% (n=18) disagreed, and

22.4% (n=11) strongly disagreed. The calculated mean of 2.63 with a standard deviation of 1.216 was interpreted as low. This finding suggests that although many teachers expressed support for adapting to students' feedback, the overall mean indicates that views were not consistently strong, showing variability in how teachers approach student involvement in shaping classroom practices.

Item fourteen considered whether *“Using L1 can help in scaffolding students' learning of new English concepts.”* The largest group, 10.2% (n=5), agreed with the statement, followed by 6.1% (n=3) who strongly agreed. Smaller proportions included 32.7% (n=16) who strongly disagreed, 20.4% (n=10) who were neutral, and 30.6% (n=15) who agreed. The mean score of 2.46 (SD = 1.280) indicated a moderate interpretation. These findings highlight that most teachers perceive L1 as useful in scaffolding learning, though a notable minority expressed skepticism, leading to a moderate overall stance.

The fifteenth item stated, *“EFL teachers should collaborate with colleagues on best practices for using L1 in the classroom.”* According to the data, 16.3% (n=8) agreed, and 4.1% (n=2) strongly agreed, reflecting significant support for collaboration. Neutral responses were given by 12.2% (n=6), while 28.6% (n=14) disagreed, and 38.8% (n=19) strongly disagreed. The mean score was 2.39 with a standard deviation of 1.297, placing it in the moderate range. Overall, the responses suggest that most teachers value collaboration with colleagues in shaping L1 practices, though some uncertainty and opposition remain.

Finally, the sixteenth item in this section, *“Using L1 can help in addressing students' language learning difficulties more effectively,”* was positively received. 8.2% (n=4) agreed, and 6.1% (n=3) strongly agreed, showing widespread support. Neutrality was indicated by 10.2% (n=5), while 42.9% (n=21) disagreed, and 32.7% (n=16) strongly disagreed. The mean score was 2.57 with a standard deviation of 1.234, interpreted as moderate. These findings indicate that the majority of teachers consider L1 effective in helping students overcome difficulties in English learning, though not all share this view.

#### **4.1.4 Collaboration and Professional Practice**

This section focuses on the importance of collaboration and professional practice among teachers. It highlights how working together, sharing knowledge, and

engaging in continuous professional development contribute to improving teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

**Table 4. 4: Collaboration and Professional Practice**

**Item 17. EFL teachers should provide opportunities for students to use their L1 in collaborative learning activities.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
7 (14.3%)	14 (28.6%)	19 (38.8%)	9 (18.4%)	0 (0.0%)	2.55	0.940	Moderate

**Item 18. Using L1 can help in creating a supportive learning environment for students.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
11 (22.4%)	19 (38.8%)	6 (12.2%)	7 (14.3%)	6 (12.2%)	2.66	1.301	Moderate

**Item 19. EFL teachers should encourage students to use L1 as a tool for peer teaching and learning.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
7 (14.3%)	12 (24.5%)	14 (24.6%)	8 (16.3%)	8 (16.3%)	2.90	1.243	Moderate

**Item 20. Using L1 can help in breaking down language barriers for English Language Learners.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
15 (30.6%)	18 (36.7%)	7 (14.3%)	6 (12.2%)	3 (6.1%)	2.55	1.152	Moderate

**Item 21. EFL teachers should monitor and assess the effectiveness of using L1 in the classroom.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
18 (36.6%)	20 (40.8%)	4 (8.2%)	4 (8.2%)	3 (6.1%)	2.57	1.152	Moderate

**Item 22. Using L1 can help in promoting cross-linguistic awareness among students.**

Responses					Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
SD	D	N	A	SA			
11 (22.4%)	20 (40.8%)	13 (26.5%)	3 (6.1%)	2 (4.1%)	2.57	1.012	Moderate

According to table 4.2.2 above, item 17, teachers were asked whether “*EFL teachers should provide opportunities for students to use their L1 in collaborative learning activities.*” The results show that group of respondents, nine teachers (18.4%), agreed with the statement, while none of the teachers (0.0%) strongly agreed. Together, this accounts for 67.4% of teachers who support the use of L1 in group work and collaborative settings. On the other hand, nineteen teachers (38.8%) reported a neutral stance, and fourteen teachers (28.6%) disagreed. Interestingly, seven teachers (14.3%) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this item was 2.55 with a standard deviation of 0.940, which indicates a moderate overall agreement. This demonstrates that while most teachers favor allowing students to use L1 in collaborative learning, there is still a portion of teachers who remain uncertain or hesitant.

Item 18 examined the statement, “*Using L1 helps in creating a supportive learning environment for students.*” Here, seven teachers (14.3%) agreed, and eleven teachers (22.4%) strongly disagreed, reflecting that over 61% of respondents see L1 as beneficial for building a positive learning atmosphere. Meanwhile, six teachers (12.2%) remained neutral, and six teachers (12.2%) strongly agreed. The mean score was 2.66 with a standard deviation of 1.301, suggesting a moderate agreement overall. These results highlight that while the majority of teachers recognize L1’s supportive role in classroom dynamics, a notable minority express either doubt or opposition to this practice.

In item 19, the statement presented was: “*EFL teachers should encourage students to use L1 as a tool for peer teaching and learning.*” The responses reveal a more divided perspective. Fourteen teachers (24.6%) were neutral, making this the largest group. However, eight teachers (16.3%) agreed and eight teachers (16.3%) strongly agreed, while 12 teachers (24.5%) disagreed and seven teachers (14.3%) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this item was 2.90 with a standard deviation of 1.243, reflecting a moderate level of agreement overall. The high proportion of neutral and opposing responses suggests that teachers are less certain about promoting L1 explicitly for peer learning compared to its role in collaborative tasks or classroom support.

Item 20 addressed whether “*Using L1 can help in breaking down language barriers for English learners.*” According to the findings, six teachers (12.2%) agreed and three teachers (6.1%) strongly agreed, together forming a clear majority of 67.3%. At the same time, seven teachers (14.3%) chose a neutral response, while eighteen teachers (36.7%) disagreed and fifteen teachers (30.6%) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this item was 2.55 with a standard deviation of 1.153, indicating a moderate agreement overall. The data demonstrates that most teachers view L1 as a practical means of overcoming communication challenges in English learning, though some continue to question its effectiveness.

The focus of item 21 was the statement: “*EFL teachers monitor and assess the effectiveness of using L1 in the classroom.*” The responses show that four teachers (8.2%) agreed and three teachers (6.1%) strongly agreed, making a combined 77.5% in favor of this practice. By contrast, four teachers (8.2%) were neutral, another twenty (.40.8%) disagreed, and eighteen (36.6%) strongly disagreed. The mean score was 2.57 with a standard deviation of 1.152, again reflecting moderate agreement. These results indicate that most teachers believe it is important to evaluate how L1 use functions in their classrooms, though a small proportion either remain indifferent or resistant to this idea.

Finally, item 22 examined whether “*Using L1 can help in promoting cross-linguistic awareness among students.*” The data reveals that three teachers (6.1%) agreed and two teachers (4.1%) strongly agreed, showing that more than 63% of the respondents supported this view. Meanwhile, thirteen teachers (26.5%) selected neutral, twenty teachers (40.8%) disagreed, and eleven teachers (22.4%) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this item was 2.57 with a standard deviation of 1.010, indicating moderate

agreement overall. This reflects that while a majority of teachers believes in the value of L1 for enhancing students' awareness of linguistic differences and similarities, a considerable group remain neutral or unconvinced. In conclusion, the findings across items 17 to 22 reveal a generally moderate level of support among teachers for the use of L1 in different aspects of English language learning.

While many respondents recognized its role in collaborative learning, supportive environments, breaking down language barriers, monitoring effectiveness, and promoting cross-linguistic awareness, there is also consistent evidence of neutrality and occasional opposition. This pattern suggests that although EFL teachers in Zawia secondary schools lean toward acknowledging the potential benefits of L1, they maintain a cautious stance, reflecting both openness and reservation in their pedagogical perspectives. As noticed in table 4.5 below in item twenty-three, the statement twenty-three, "EFL teachers should provide clear guidelines on when and how to use L1 in the classroom," generated diverse responses among the participants. The data show that 22 teachers (44.9%) strongly agreed with the statement, while 17 teachers (34.7%) agreed. A smaller proportion of teachers, 7 participants (14.3%), expressed neutrality, whereas only three teachers (6.1%) disagreed. Notably, no teacher strongly disagreed with the statement. These results demonstrate that the majority of teachers recognize the necessity of having explicit and structured guidelines regarding the use of L1 in EFL classrooms. Such guidelines can help both teachers and learners avoid overdependence on the mother tongue and ensure that its use supports rather than hinders English learning. The calculated mean score of 4.18, along with a standard deviation of 0.900, indicates a relatively high level of agreement among the respondents, though categorized as "Low" on the interpretation scale used in this study. This suggests that while teachers generally view clear guidelines for L1 use as beneficial, the intensity of their agreement varies, reflecting some differences in perspectives about the practicality and implementation of such guidelines.

#### **4.1.5 Critical Perspectives and Misconceptions**

This section explores the critical perspectives and common misconceptions related to using students' first language (L1) in English classrooms. It highlights differing teacher opinions, challenges in balancing L1 and English use, and misunderstanding that may influence classroom practices and language learning outcomes.

#### **Table 4. 5: Critical Perspectives and Misconceptions**

**Item 23. EFL teachers should provide clear guidelines on when and how to use L1 in the classroom**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
22 (44.9%)	17 (34.7%)	7 (14.3%)	3 (6.1%)	0 (0.0%)	4.18	0.900	Low

**Item 24. Using L1 can help in fostering a positive attitude towards language learning**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
13 (26.5%)	19 (38.8%)	12 (24.5%)	5 (5.1%)	0 (0.0%)	2.59	0.860	Moderate

**Item 25. EFL teachers should seek feedback from students on their comfort level with using L1 in the classroom**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
10 (20.4%)	17 (34.3%)	6 (12.2%)	2 (18.4%)	7 (14.3%)	2.82	1.221	Moderate

**Item 26. Using L1 can help in reducing students' anxiety in learning English**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
9 (18.4%)	22 (44.9%)	11 (22.4%)	5 (10.2%)	2 (4.1%)	2.63	1.189	Moderate

**Item 27. EFL teachers should be open to adapting their approach based on students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
11 (22.4%)	24 (49.0%)	7 (14.3%)	6 (12.2%)	1 (2.0%)	2.45	1.296	Moderate

**Item 28. Using L1 can help in promoting effective communication and interaction among students**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
9 (18.4%)	14 (28.6%)	17 (34.7%)	6 (12.2%)	3 (6.1%)	2.59	1.049	Moderate

**Item 29. EFL teachers should seek professional development opportunities on incorporating L1 in their teaching practices**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
15 (30.6%)	17 (34.7%)	10 (20.4%)	4 (8.2%)	3 (6.1%)	2.69	1.143	Moderate

**Item 30. Using L1 can help in creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students**

SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. deviation	Level of attitude
12 (24.5%)	11 (22.4%)	18 (36.7%)	2 (4.1%)	6 (12.5%)	2.88	1.299	Moderate

The item twenty-three, “*EFL teachers should provide clear guidelines on when and how to use L1 in the classroom*”. Twenty-two teachers (44.9%) strongly disagreed with the item, while zero teachers (0.0%) strongly agreed. Seven teachers (14.3%) were neutral, and a smaller number of teachers disagreed, with 17 teachers (34.7%) selecting disagreement. The mean score of 4.18, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.900, suggests that teachers generally support the idea that clear guidelines on L1 use should be provided in the classroom.

The item twenty-four, “*Using L1 can help in fostering a positive attitude towards language learning*,” also showed a favorable perspective among the teachers. Five teachers (5.1%) agreed with the statement, while zero teachers (0.0%) strongly agreed. Twelve teachers (24.5%) were neutral, and only a small number disagreed, with nineteen teachers (38.8%) selecting disagreement. The mean score of 2.59,

accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.860, indicates that teachers moderately believe L1 can contribute to creating a positive learning environment.

The item twenty-five, *“EFL teachers should seek feedback from students on their comfort level with using L1 in the classroom,”* received mixed responses. Two teachers (18.4%) agreed, and seven teachers (14.3%) strongly agreed, indicating that more than half of the participants support the practice of seeking student feedback. Conversely, seventeen teachers (34.3%) disagreed, ten teachers (20.4%) strongly disagreed, and six teachers (12.2%) were neutral. The mean score of 2.82, with a standard deviation of 1.221, reflects a moderate stance, highlighting that while many teachers value student input, a notable portion remain uncertain or opposed.

The item twenty-six, *“Using L1 can help in reducing anxiety when learning English,”* also generated positive responses. Five teachers (10.2%) agreed, and two teachers (4.1%) strongly agreed. Eleven teachers (22.4%) were neutral, while twenty-two teachers (44.9%) disagreed, and 9 teachers (18.4%) strongly disagreed. The data suggest that most teachers perceive L1 as a supportive tool for easing student anxiety in language learning. The mean of 2.63 and standard deviation of 1.189 reinforce a moderate level of agreement among the teachers.

The item twenty-seven, *“EFL teachers should not be closed to adapting their approach based on their students’ cultural and linguistic background,”* received a generally positive response. six teachers (12.2%) agreed, and one teacher (2.0%) strongly agreed, showing strong support for flexible teaching methods. Seven teachers (14.3%) were neutral, twenty-four teachers (49.0%) disagreed, and eleven teachers (22.4 %) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 2.45 and standard deviation of 1.296 suggest a moderate level of agreement, reflecting that most teachers value adapting instruction to suit learners’ needs.

The item twenty-eight, *“Using L1 can help in promoting effective communication and interaction among students,”* elicited a moderate response. The six teachers (12.2%) agreed, seventeen teachers (34.7%) were neutral, fourteen teachers (28.6%) disagreed, and nine teachers (18.4%) strongly disagreed. mean score of 2.59, with a standard deviation of 1.049, indicates that teachers generally view L1 as a helpful tool for improving classroom interaction, though some are neutral or disagree.

In the item twenty-nine, “*EFL teachers should seek professional development,*” demonstrated a moderate level of agreement. Four teachers (8.2%) agreed, and three teachers (6.1%) strongly agreed, indicating that most participants acknowledge the importance of professional growth. Ten teachers (20.4%) were neutral; while seventeen teachers (34.7%) disagreed; fifteen teachers (30.6%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 2.69 and standard deviation of 1.143 suggest that teachers see professional development as beneficial but recognize varying levels of engagement.

Finally, the item thirty, “*EFL teachers should not avoid seeking professional development opportunities on incorporating L1 in their teaching practices,*” received a range of opinions. Two teachers (4.1%) agreed, six teachers (12.5%) strongly agreed, eighteen teachers (36.7%) were neutral, eleven teachers (22.4%) disagreed, and twelve teachers (24.5%) strongly disagreed. With a mean score of 2.88 and standard deviation of 1.299, the results indicate that most teachers recognize the value of professional development related to L1 integration, though a minority express disagreement or neutrality.

In summary, the data from these items collectively reveal that teachers hold moderately positive attitudes toward the use of L1 in the EFL classroom, particularly in terms of monitoring its effectiveness, reducing student anxiety, and fostering communication. Moreover, teachers generally recognize the importance of seeking feedback and professional development to enhance their practices, reflecting an overall awareness of the pedagogical value of L1 when applied thoughtfully. The following section deals with qualitative data analysis.

#### **4.2 Analysis of the Focus Group Discussion (Qualitative Data)**

The data collected through focus group discussions were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, which allowed for the identification of recurring themes and shared perspectives among participants. This method proved effective in exploring teachers’ views in depth, offering valuable insights into their attitudes, beliefs, and classroom practices regarding the use of students’ first language (L1) in English language teaching. By carefully examining the teachers’ responses, several key themes were identified, including: perspectives on L1 use; benefits of L1 use in the classroom; challenges of L1 use; frequency and contexts of L1 use; strategies of integrating L1; a teacher perceptions and influence of L1 on learning outcomes. The following sections

present and discuss these themes in detail, illustrating how teachers in Zawia secondary schools perceive the role of L1 in supporting or hindering students' English learning.

#### **4.2.1 Perspectives on L1 Use**

When teachers were asked about their perspectives about the use of L1, they generally acknowledged the significance of the first language (L1) in facilitating comprehension and supporting learners, particularly at beginner levels. Many agreed that L1 is a valuable scaffold that enables students to grasp complex ideas and concepts more efficiently. As one teacher emphasized, *“Our first language is very helpful in teaching English, especially for beginners. It plays a crucial role in explaining concepts, aiding comprehension, and facilitating learning”* (T1). Similarly, another teacher affirmed the indispensability of L1 in ensuring clarity of instruction, remarking that *“It is very important to use the first language or mother tongue to deliver the message... we need to use the first language in order to make the picture clear”* (T2). Nevertheless, participants also highlighted the necessity of moderation. Excessive reliance on L1, they warned, may undermine authentic exposure to English and hinder students' communicative competence. For instance, one teacher noted, *“It helps students' understanding of complex concepts and facilitates communication in the classroom; however, excessive reliance on L1 may hinder progression and limit exposure to authentic language use”* (T3). Another participant captured this dilemma candidly, stating, I am confused between the benefits and drawbacks of L1 use in the EFL classroom (T7). Taken together, these responses suggest that teachers view L1 as indispensable but stress the importance of striking a balance between support and immersion.

#### **4.2.2 Benefits of L1 Use in the Classroom**

A recurring theme in teachers' responses was the variety of benefits associated with integrating L1 into English instruction. One widely acknowledged advantage was its role in easing classroom entry, particularly for beginners. As T1 explained, *“It helps significantly in breaking the ice, especially for beginners or low-level students. It makes it easier to explain grammar rules and complex concepts, enhances comprehension, and speeds up the learning process.”* Similarly, vocabulary acquisition was highlighted as an area of support, with T2 noting, *“It will be easier for the student to understand the meaning of new vocabulary... she will not find difficulties understanding or comprehending”*. In addition, L1 was seen as a familiar framework that anchors new

knowledge. As one teacher remarked, using the first language can enhance the process of learning English by providing a familiar framework for understanding new concepts (T3). Classroom management and student confidence also improved, according to T4, who observed that L1 use contributed to increased student engagement, better comprehension, and improved classroom management. These examples demonstrate that teachers value L1 not only for its cognitive advantages in clarifying meaning but also for its affective role in reducing anxiety and encouraging active participation.

#### **4.2.3 Challenges of L1 Use**

Despite these benefits, teachers were also acutely aware of the challenges and risks associated with L1 use. The most frequently mentioned concern was the risk of student dependency, which reduces opportunities for authentic English practice. As T1 explained, *“Some students rely too much on their first language instead of trying to think and speak in English. Overusing L1 can limit their listening, speaking, and comprehension skills and hinder language development.”* Others reflected on the limitations of translation as a learning method. For instance, T2 drew from personal learning experiences, stating, *“When I used L1 in learning, I tried to translate words and concepts directly from Arabic to English, which turned out to be a mistake... each language has its own unique structures, such as pragmatics, idioms, and expressions that do not work in direct translation.”* Balancing these concerns was a challenge noted by several teachers. T3 pointed out that students tend to expect explanations in L1 because they are used to teachers relying heavily on it. Collectively, these challenges highlight the pedagogical dilemma: L1 provides essential support, but if used excessively, it may impede English acquisition.

#### **4.2.4 Frequency and Contexts of L1 Use**

The findings also revealed considerable variation in the frequency and contexts of L1 use. Several teachers reported frequent reliance on L1, particularly when teaching grammar or clarifying complex meanings. As T1 admitted, *“I often use the first language because students feel more comfortable with it. When teaching grammar rules, they tend to struggle if instructions are given only in English.”* Likewise, T2 added, *I usually use L1, particularly when students cannot understand or comprehend the exact meaning of a word.* Others, however, reported more restrained use, often restricting it to 10–15% of class time. For example, T4 explained that L1 was reserved for *“complex explanations or introducing new vocabulary.”* Additionally, contextual

differences emerged, with T3 remarking, in public schools, where students have less exposure to English, I use L1 more frequently compared to private schools. This suggests that L1 usage is highly situational, shaped by learners' backgrounds, proficiency levels, and instructional settings.

#### **4.2.5 Strategies of Integrating L1**

Teachers employed a range of pedagogical strategies to integrate L1 into English lessons. Code switching, translation, and structured peer discussions were the most common ones. T1 described an approach that encouraged collaborative learning: *"I use a strategy where students discuss a topic in their first language before expressing it in English. This helps them organize their thoughts and then transition to English."* Another teacher emphasized the effectiveness of selective code switching, noting, *I integrate L1 in my English lessons through code switching and translation. I found that code switching is more effective than other strategies (T2). Other strategies focused on grammar instruction, where L1 served to clarify contrasts between the two languages. As T3, stated, Additional methods included the use of bilingual visual aids, storytelling, and role-plays (T5, T6, and T8). These examples demonstrate that teachers use L1 not merely as a fallback but as a deliberate pedagogical tool to scaffold learning.*

#### **4.2.6 Students' Positive Responses to L1 Use**

Across the focus group, teachers consistently observed largely positive student reactions to the integration of L1. Students appeared more comfortable, engaged, and confident when their first language was strategically employed. As T1 explained, *"Students engage more and feel comfortable when they use their first language... it enhances their understanding, leading to better participation in lessons."* In the same vein, T2 observed, *"Most of our students prefer using L1 because it facilitates learning. It helps them understand ideas without difficulties, making them feel more comfortable and relaxed."*

However, not all responses were uncritical. For instance, T3 pointed out a more complex view: *"Students generally feel more comfortable when L1 is used... however; some believe that using L1 hinders their progress in learning English."* Although mixed, the majority of participants suggested that L1 use reduced student anxiety and fostered engagement, underlining its motivational role in the classroom.

#### **4.2.7 Influence of L1 on Learning Outcomes**

Finally, teachers expressed differing views regarding the overall influence of L1 on students' learning outcomes. Several respondents emphasized its benefits, particularly in enhancing comprehension and motivation. T2 argued, *"Using L1 can boost students' confidence and reduce anxiety. They will not struggle to express themselves, as they feel more comfortable using their first language."* Likewise, T4 highlighted strategic L1 use can enhance students' overall learning outcomes in English by improving comprehension, reducing anxiety, and increasing motivation. "Some teachers raised cautionary notes. T1 admitted that *"Using L1 is very important, but it can hinder English language improvement... students may become too dependent on their first language."* Similarly, T7 described L1 as a *"double-edged sword... it facilitates understanding but may impede language acquisition."* These reflections indicate a shared recognition of the dual nature of L1, with its effectiveness depending largely on how and when it is applied

#### **4.3 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter synthesized quantitative and qualitative data from 49 EFL teachers in Zawia to delineate their nuanced perspectives on L1 use. The findings reveal a consistent policy of strategic, yet cautious, L1 integration. Teachers champion Arabic as a vital scaffold for clarifying instructions, explaining grammar, and mitigating student anxiety, thereby validating Cook's (2001a) assertion of its role as a "psychological support system." Statistical results robustly corroborate this, with strong agreement on L1's utility for clarification (79.6%, M=3.98) and grammar instruction (74%, M=3.85), affirming Atkinson's (1987) concept of the mother tongue as a "powerful resource."

However, this endorsement is tempered by a principled limitation of L1 use. Teachers warned that excessive reliance curtails essential L2 practice, a concern aligned with Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009). This cautious stance is quantifiably evident in their hesitation to endorse student L1 use in collaborative learning (M=2.55), underscoring a commitment to Krashen's (1982) principle of maximizing comprehensible input. Ultimately, the data depict a teaching community that navigates a deliberate middle ground, leveraging L1's benefits while vigilantly guarding against its overuse a pedagogical philosophy that directly mirrors Macaro's (2009) model of "judicious use."

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

Chapter five presents a comprehensive discussion and interpretation of the findings from this study, which investigated EFL teachers' perspectives on using students' first language (L1) to facilitate English learning in Zawia secondary schools. This chapter integrates both quantitative and qualitative data, providing a holistic understanding of teachers' attitudes, practices, and experiences. The discussion examines the extent to which L1 is perceived as a pedagogical tool, exploring its cognitive, affective, and classroom management functions, as well as the challenges and contextual factors that influence its use. The chapter begins with a detailed analysis of the quantitative findings from the questionnaire, highlighting general trends, patterns, and mean scores across the surveyed items. This is followed by an in-depth discussion of the qualitative findings derived from focus group discussions, which offer richer insights into teachers' experiences, rationales, and strategies for integrating L1 in classroom instruction. Subsequently, the chapter synthesizes both datasets to provide an integrated perspective, identifying points of convergence and divergence, and situating the results within the broader theoretical and empirical literature on bilingual pedagogy. Finally, the chapter concludes by summarizing the main findings, drawing implications for practice, and providing recommendations for teachers, policymakers, and future researchers. Through this discussion, the study aims to highlight the nuanced, context-sensitive role of L1 in EFL classrooms and its potential to enhance both cognitive and affective outcomes for learners in Zawia secondary schools.

#### **5.1 Discussion Related to the Findings of the Questionnaire**

The quantitative data collected from the questionnaire provide a comprehensive understanding of EFL teachers' perspectives concerning on using students' first language (L1) in English classrooms. Overall, the findings suggest that teachers generally hold moderate to high positive perspectives regarding the strategic use of L1 to facilitate learning. The mean scores across 30 items ranged predominantly from 3.0

to 4.2, with several items reaching the “high” category, indicating a recognition of the potential benefits of L1 in enhancing comprehension, engagement, and confidence among learners. These results reveal not only the pragmatic acceptance of L1 in the classroom but also refined awareness of its pedagogical role.

To begin with, teachers’ general perspectives regarding using L1 emerged strongly in the data. Items such as “EFL teachers should use students’ L1 to facilitate their learning of English” (Mean = 3.97, High) and “EFL teachers should create a balanced approach between using L1 and English in the classroom” (Mean = 4.0, High) illustrate a shared belief that incorporating L1 can enhance English learning when applied judiciously. These responses highlight an understanding that while English should remain central in instruction, L1 can serve as a complementary tool to ensure accessibility and effectiveness. Similarly, responses to statements such as “Using students’ L1 can help them comprehend English concepts better” (Mean = 3.98, Moderate) and “Using L1 can help build students’ confidence in learning English” (Mean = 3.96, Moderate) demonstrate that teachers perceive L1 as a valuable support mechanism for both comprehension and learner self-assurance.

In addition, the findings suggest that teachers are sensitive to contextual and learner-centered considerations with regard to L1 use. For instance, “EFL teachers should consider the language proficiency of their students before using L1 in classrooms” (Mean = 3.96, Moderate) and “EFL teachers should be open to adapting their approach based on students’ feedback on using L1” (Mean = 3.74, Moderate) underscore an appreciation of learner diversity and the need for adaptive pedagogy. This emphasis reflects the belief that the use of L1 should not be automatic but should be informed by learners’ proficiency levels and classroom dynamics. Such a perspective indicates that teachers in Zawia secondary schools view L1 use as a flexible practice, responsive to the needs of their learners.

Furthermore, teachers acknowledged the instructional value of L1 in providing clarity and scaffolding. For example, responses such as “EFL teachers ought to use L1 to clarify instructions and tasks” (Mean = 3.06, Moderate) and “Using L1 can help in explaining complex grammar rules and structures” (Mean = 3.51, Moderate) suggest that participants recognize L1 as a practical resource for reducing misunderstandings and supporting the learning of complex linguistic structures. Similarly, “Using L1 can help in scaffolding students’ learning of new English concepts” (Mean = 3.57,

Moderate) demonstrates the teachers' recognition of L1 as a bridge between prior knowledge and new language input. This scaffolding role is particularly important in contexts where learners may otherwise struggle to connect abstract English concepts with their existing linguistic framework. The findings also shed light on the affective and motivational benefits of L1 use. Teachers agreed that it can sustain student interest and engagement (Mean = 3.62, Moderate), reduce classroom anxiety (Mean = 4.0, High), and foster a supportive learning environment (Mean = 3.45, Moderate). These insights indicate that L1 serves not only cognitive functions but also emotional and social ones, creating a classroom atmosphere where learners feel secure, confident, and motivated. By reducing affective barriers, L1 can enable students to participate more actively and take risks in English communication. Moreover, the results highlight teachers' recognition of the importance of professional development regarding strengthening their competence in using L1 effectively. Items such as "EFL teachers should seek professional development opportunities on incorporating L1 in teaching practices" (Mean = 4.0, High) and "EFL teachers should collaborate with colleagues on best practices for using L1" (Mean = 3.82, Moderate) illustrate the awareness that systematic training and peer collaboration are essential for maximizing the benefits of L1 use. This forward-looking perspective reflects teachers' willingness to refine their practices and develop strategies that are both pedagogically sound and contextually relevant.

Taken together, the overall trends demonstrate that teachers in Zawia secondary schools favor a balanced and flexible approach to L1 use. They employ it strategically for comprehension, scaffolding, confidence building, and learner engagement, while acknowledging challenges such as aligning L1 use with language proficiency and curriculum objectives. Importantly, the moderate to high mean scores suggest that L1 is not perceived as a hindrance but as a valuable pedagogical tool.

Regarding the second research question, the findings reveal that EFL teachers in Zawia secondary schools generally hold positive perceptions of the use of L1 in facilitating English language learning. The participants consistently acknowledged that incorporating students' first language could significantly enhance those both cognitive and affective learning outcomes. Teachers emphasized that L1 supports comprehension of complex grammar rules, vocabulary, and classroom instructions, thereby promoting more effective learning experiences. In addition, the use of L1 was seen as a means to

reduce anxiety, increase student confidence and create a more inclusive classroom environment. These perspectives highlight teachers' awareness of pedagogical and emotional dimensions of language learning, suggesting that strategic use of L1 can make English instruction more accessible and meaningful.

When compared with previous research, such as Elmagous (2003), there is a strong alignment, as both studies indicate that Libyan EFL teachers perceive Arabic as beneficial for improving understanding, motivation, and learner engagement. However, teachers also share the concern that excessive reliance on L1 may hinder English exposure and fluency development. Overall, the findings support a balanced and context sensitive approach, with concern to L1 is used as a facilitative tool rather than a substitution for English instruction. Likewise, Mansor (2017) found that L1 could support comprehension and language development in Libyan university classrooms, highlighting the importance of context-sensitive, research-informed bilingual practices. However, the findings differ from those of Blaskovic (2002), who emphasized minimizing L1 to foster student autonomy. This contrast reflects contextual variations in teacher training, curriculum design, and systemic support across different educational environments (See section 2.3.3.5).

In conclusion, the quantitative data underscore that Zawia secondary school teachers adopt a pragmatic and flexible stance toward L1 use in English classrooms. They value its contributions to comprehension, scaffolding, and affective support, while also recognizing the importance of balance, professional growth, and responsiveness to student needs. This balanced perception highlights the evolving role of L1 as a supportive pedagogical resource, confirming its significance in shaping effective EFL instruction in the Libyan context.

## **5.2 Discussion Related to the Findings of the Focus Group Discussion**

The qualitative findings of this study revealed that EFL teachers in Zawia secondary schools hold generally positive but cautious perspectives on the use of the first language (L1) in their classrooms. While almost all participants acknowledged the pedagogical value of Arabic in supporting English learning, they were equally aware of the potential drawbacks of excessive reliance on it. Their views illustrate an ongoing tension between recognizing L1 as a scaffolding tool for comprehension and maintaining sufficient exposure to English for authentic language learning. This nuanced perspective aligns

with global debates on the role of L1 in second language acquisition (SLA) and reflects both theoretical underpinnings and practical realities of classroom teaching.

One of the most consistent themes across the participants' responses was the recognition that L1 serves as a valuable support system for learners, especially those at the beginner or low proficiency level. For example, T1 stated that the first language is very helpful in teaching English, particularly for beginners, because it aids comprehension and facilitates learning, although it should not dominate classroom interaction. Likewise, T4 emphasized that using Arabic in the EFL classroom is beneficial in facilitating students' understanding of complex English concepts, especially for low-level learners. Similarly, T6 described L1 as essential for supporting student learning at the beginner stage, while T8 and T9 stressed that it helps students connect new knowledge to what they already know. These testimonies illustrate a widespread perception that L1 functions as a bridge between prior knowledge and new input, making the learning process more meaningful and accessible.

This perception resonates with Cummins' (1981) Interdependence Hypothesis, which suggests that skills developed in the first language can transfer to the second language (see Section 2.1). By drawing on their existing linguistic resources, students are better able to process new concepts in English. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory also provides a useful lens for interpreting these findings, as it positions language as a mediational tool that facilitates learning within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Teachers' frequent references to the role of Arabic in making difficult concepts clearer reflect the way L1 can act as such a mediational tool, scaffolding learners' progress toward greater independence in English (see Section 2.1).

At the same time, the participants' responses showed a strong awareness of the risks associated with overreliance on L1. For instance, T3 highlighted that although L1 facilitates understanding of complex concepts and classroom communication, excessive reliance on it may hinder students' progress and reduce their exposure to authentic language use.

Similarly, T5 observed that while L1 has undeniable benefits, overusing it could become a hindrance to English language learning. T7 admitted feeling conflicted, recognizing both the benefits and drawbacks of L1 use, reflecting the ambivalence many teachers feel in balancing these two forces. This concern aligns closely with arguments presented in the literature that excessive L1 use can limit opportunities for

meaningful practice in the target language, reduce immersion, and risk-creating dependency (Macaro, 2009; Turnbull & Arnett, 2002b) as was discussed in the literature review (Section 2.4). Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), which stresses the importance of exposure to comprehensible input in the target language, also helps explain teachers' caution, as overuse of Arabic could potentially reduce the quantity and quality of such input.

The participants' perspectives also resonate with empirical studies conducted in other contexts. For example, Tang (2002) and Auerbach (1993) both reported that strategic L1 use supports comprehension, particularly in clarifying grammar and vocabulary, which mirrors the views of T4, T6, and T8 in this study. Similarly, Carless (2008) observed that despite English-only policies in Hong Kong, teachers often used the first language pragmatically to maintain lesson flow and ensure student understanding, a finding echoed by T1 and T3, who admitted to using Arabic strategically to overcome communication barriers. On the other hand, the cautious tone expressed by T5 and T7 aligns with Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009), who warned that overreliance on L1, could undermine opportunities for L2 practice (see Section 2.4).

Another striking point from the findings is that teachers view L1 not only as a cognitive aid but also as an affective support. Several participants suggested that using Arabic helps students feel more comfortable and confident in the classroom. T10, for example, noted that L1 helps students overcome barriers and build confidence, while T8 and T9 described it as a vital component of their teaching practice that enables students to connect with new content more effectively. These comments align with Oxford's (1990) and Macaro's (2001a) findings that L1 reduces learner anxiety, fosters participation, and creates a supportive environment (see Section 2.3). This affective dimension is particularly important in contexts like Libya, where students often experience low confidence in English due to limited exposure outside the classroom.

Interestingly, the participants' views also reflect principles of translanguaging, even if they did not explicitly use the term. Teachers like T8 and T9 described L1 as a resource that allows students to link new knowledge to their existing understanding. This perspective is consistent with García and Wei's (2014) definition of translanguaging as the flexible use of linguistic resources for meaning making and engagement (see Section 2.8).

Although the teachers emphasized the need for balance, their reliance on Arabic to mediate meaning illustrates a translanguaging approach in practice, suggesting that they see value in drawing on students' full linguistic repertoire to facilitate learning.

Taken together, the findings from the focus group discussions clearly demonstrate that teachers in Zawia secondary schools adopt a balanced stance toward the use of L1 in English language teaching. On one hand, they value its role in enhancing comprehension, supporting low-level learners, and fostering student confidence. However, they caution against its excessive use, which may reduce authentic exposure to English and hinder students' progress toward fluency. This dual perspective underscores the complexity of classroom decision-making, where teachers must constantly negotiate between providing immediate comprehension and promoting long-term language development. Regarding to the first research question, the findings indicate that EFL teachers in Zawia secondary schools hold a generally positive and balanced perspective toward the use of the first language (L1) in English Instruction. The evidence demonstrates that teachers view L1 as valuable pedagogical tool when employed judiciously and purposefully, rather than excessively. They acknowledge its cognitive benefits in facilitating comprehension, vocabulary retention, and conceptual understanding, as well as its affective role in reducing anxiety and fostering learning confidence. At the same time, teachers remain mindful of potential drawbacks of overusing L1, such as limiting students' exposure to English and reducing communicative opportunities. Overall, their views demonstrate a reflective and contextually aware stance that acknowledges the first language (L1) as a valuable pedagogical aid in the EFL classroom, while simultaneously underscoring the necessity of preserving English as the main language of instruction.

In summary, the qualitative findings revealed that teachers in Zawia secondary schools generally perceive L1 as an indispensable pedagogical resource that enhances comprehension, supports weaker learners, and builds student confidence. However, they also recognize the dangers of overuse, which may undermine English fluency and reduce exposure to the target language. These perspectives are consistent with international literature, which advocates for the judicious use of L1 in EFL classrooms (Nation, 2003; Cook, 2001a; Macaro, 2009). Ultimately, the participants' views highlight a pragmatic approach, one that reflects both theoretical principles and practical classroom realities in the Libyan context. Teachers do not see Arabic as a replacement

for English but rather as a scaffold to ensure that learning is meaningful, inclusive, and effective. The next section shows Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

### **5.3 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings**

When the quantitative and qualitative findings are considered together, a coherent picture emerges regarding EFL teachers' perspectives on using the first language (L1) in Zawia secondary schools. Both strands of data confirm that teachers generally hold positive, though cautious, attitudes toward L1, perceiving it as a supportive tool for comprehension, confidence building, and classroom management. The questionnaire results showed moderate to high agreement with statements endorsing L1 use for scaffolding, instruction, and affective support, while the focus group discussions revealed teachers' practical experiences, strategies, and contextual challenges. The convergence of findings highlights several key themes.

First, both datasets point to L1 as a facilitator of comprehension, particularly for complex grammar, vocabulary, and task instructions. Quantitative responses confirmed this through moderately high mean scores, while qualitative comments from teachers such as "L1 helps significantly in breaking the ice... enhances comprehension, and speeds up the learning process" (T1) provided vivid examples of how this occurs in practice. This demonstrates that teachers' beliefs are reinforced by their classroom realities, suggesting that L1 plays a genuine pedagogical role rather than being merely a theoretical construct.

Second, both findings underscore the affective benefits of L1 use. Quantitative data revealed high agreement on items relating to reducing learner anxiety and building confidence, while qualitative testimonies similarly emphasized that L1 helps students feel more comfortable and engaged. For example, T4 noted "using L1 leads to increased student engagement, better comprehension, and improved classroom management." Such alignment indicates that teachers view L1 not only as a cognitive aid but also as a way of creating a more supportive and motivating learning environment.

Third, the findings converge on the theme of balance and moderation. Teachers repeatedly emphasized the need to avoid overuse of L1, a sentiment captured in both the moderate questionnaire scores and the focus group concerns. For instance, T3 observed, "students sometimes wait for L1 translation instead of trying to understand in English," reflecting apprehensions that reliance on L1 could undermine exposure to English. This

reflects the duality in teachers' perspectives: while they value L1 as a scaffolding tool, they remain mindful of the necessity to prioritize English input for skill development. Finally, both sets of findings point to the role of professional development and systemic support. Quantitative results showed high agreement on the need for training and collaboration, while qualitative data highlighted institutional constraints such as lack of guidelines, exam-driven curricula, and insufficient training opportunities. Together, these insights suggest that while teachers are willing to integrate L1 strategically, their capacity to do so effectively depends on institutional frameworks and professional learning. In summary, the integration of findings presents a balanced perspective: teachers in Zawia perceive L1 as an indispensable yet supplementary resource in EFL classrooms. Its value lies in supporting comprehension, reducing affective barriers, and managing classrooms effectively, but its role is constrained by concerns of overuse and institutional limitations. This synthesis underscores the importance of adopting a nuanced and context-sensitive approach to bilingual pedagogy in Libyan secondary schools.

#### **5.4 Conclusion for the Whole Study**

This study examined EFL teachers' perspectives on the use of the first language (L1) to facilitate English learning in Zawia secondary schools. The findings demonstrated that teachers generally hold positive but cautious attitudes toward L1, recognizing its pedagogical and affective value while stressing the importance of maintaining English as the dominant classroom language. Quantitative results showed that teachers largely agreed on the usefulness of L1 for clarifying difficult concepts, reducing learner anxiety, and supporting classroom management. These patterns were reinforced by qualitative insights, where participants highlighted real teaching experiences in which L1 served as a bridge to comprehension and confidence. At the same time, teachers consistently emphasized the risks of excessive reliance on L1, including reduced exposure to English and limited opportunities for authentic communication. Their perspectives therefore reflect a balanced and context-sensitive approach, one that values L1 as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for English instruction. In conclusion, the study confirms that EFL teachers in Zawia adopt a pragmatic stance toward L1 use, guided by learner needs, classroom realities, and the broader goal of fostering English proficiency. The findings highlight the necessity of teacher training, institutional support, and flexible pedagogical frameworks that enable teachers to employ L1

judiciously and effectively. Ultimately, this research contributes to the ongoing debate on bilingual approaches in language education and underscores the importance of integrating both theoretical insights and practical classroom realities into language teaching practices.

### **5.5 Limitations of the Study**

Like all research, this study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size, though sufficient for exploratory purposes, was limited to teachers in Zawia and may not fully represent perspectives across Libya. Second, the reliance on self-reported data in questionnaires and focus groups means that findings are subject to teachers' perceptions, which may not always reflect actual classroom practices. Third, the study focused primarily on teachers' perspectives, without directly incorporating student views or classroom observations, which could have provided a more holistic understanding. Finally, contextual factors such as institutional policies and cultural attitudes toward English were not examined in depth, though they undoubtedly shape classroom practices. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into EFL teachers' perspectives on L1 use, providing a foundation for further research and practical developments in Libyan English language education.

### **5.6 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made for both classroom teachers and educational policymakers.

#### **5.6.1 Recommendations for Teachers**

Medium of adopt a balanced approach: Teachers should use L1 strategically to clarify complex grammar, explain difficult vocabulary, or manage classroom behavior, while ensuring English remains the primary communication.

#### **5.6.2 Teachers' Perspectives**

EFL teachers in Zawia secondary schools generally perceive the use of L1 as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for English. They recognize its value in clarifying difficult concepts, scaffolding learning, and reducing learner anxiety, while emphasizing the need for moderation to avoid over-reliance. Overall, teachers adopt a balanced and reflective approach, considering student proficiency, classroom context, and instructional goals when integrating L1 into their teaching practices.

### **5.6.3 Recommendations for Training**

- To enhance effective L1 use, teachers should receive targeted professional development that focuses on bilingual pedagogy and practical classroom strategies. Training programs and workshops can equip teachers with tools to integrate L1 strategically, manage classroom challenges, and promote student engagement, while also fostering collaboration and reflection among educators.
- To focus on learner needs, teachers should consider learners' proficiency levels and adapt L1 use accordingly, offering more support for weaker students while gradually encouraging stronger learners to rely less on L1.
- To promote gradual transition, L1 should serve as a scaffold, helping learners move confidently towards greater English use, rather than becoming a constant substitute.
- To engage in reflective practice, teachers are encouraged to reflect critically on when and how they use L1, identifying moments when it enhances learning versus when it risks reducing students' exposure to English.
- To share effective strategies, teachers should collaborate with colleagues, exchanging classroom experiences on successful uses of L1, which may help refine practices across the school community.

### **5.6.4 Recommendations for Educational Institutions**

- To develop clear guidelines, the Ministry of Education and school administrations should provide explicit policies on L1 use in EFL classrooms, ensuring consistency while allowing for teacher flexibility.
- To enhance teacher training, training programs should include modules on bilingual pedagogy, equipping teachers with practical techniques for integrating L1 effectively without over-reliance.
- To support professional development, schools should organize workshops, seminars, and peer-learning opportunities where teachers can explore innovative methods for balancing L1 and English.
- To encourage research-based practice, educational institutions should foster a culture where teachers engage with recent studies on bilingual education and apply evidence-based strategies in their classrooms.

- To consider learners' perspectives, institutions should gather feedback from students regarding their experiences of L1 use in the classroom, integrating their views into curriculum design and teaching practices.

### **5.7 Suggestions for Further Research**

While this study contributes to understanding EFL teachers' perspectives on L1 use in Zawia secondary schools, it also opens avenues for further inquiry.

**1-** Comparative studies, future research could compare perspectives across different regions of Libya to examine whether attitudes and practices vary based on local contexts.

**2-** Student perspectives, investigating learners' attitudes toward L1 use would provide a complementary view, helping to triangulate teacher perspectives with learner experiences.

**3-** Longitudinal studies, tracking how L1 use affects student outcomes over time would deepen understanding of its long-term pedagogical impact.

**4-** Policy analysis, further research could explore how national curriculum and policy frameworks influence teachers' decisions about L1 use.

**5-** Experimental studies, classroom-based interventions could test the effectiveness of specific strategies, such as code-switching or bilingual scaffolding, on student achievement.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Teachers' Questionnaire

**Title:** *EFL Teachers' Perspectives on Using L1 to Facilitate Students' Learning of English in Zawia Secondary Schools*

**Researcher:** *Nisrin Omar Alshushan, MA Student*

**Department:** *Department of English, University of Zawia*

#### Dear participant

I am MA student carrying out research for my thesis on EFL teachers' views regarding the use of L1 to support students' English learning in Zawia Secondary Schools.

Your insights and experiences are extremely valuable for this study. I kindly ask you to take about 20- 25 minutes to complete this questionnaire. Participation is completely voluntary, and all information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and anonymity.

#### Section 1: Participants' years of experience

*(Please tick the appropriate box or fill in the blank.)*

##### 1. How many years have you been teaching English?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

#### Section 2: General Beliefs About Using L1 in EFL classes

Please select the option that best reflects your level of agreement for each statement by ticking one box.

يرجى اختيار الخيار الذي يعكس مستوى موافقتك على كل عبارة بوضع علامة ✓ في المربع المناسب.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b> بشدة أو افق	<b>Agree</b> أو افق	<b>Neutra I</b> محايد I	<b>Disagree لا</b> أو افق	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> أو افق بشدة لا
<b>Section2: General Beliefs About Using L1 in EFL Classes</b> القسم الثاني: المعتقدات العامة حول استخدام اللغة الأم في فصول تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية					
<b>1.</b> EFL teachers should use students' L1 to facilitate their learning of English. ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية استخدام اللغة الأولى للطلاب لتسهيل تعلمهم الإنجليزية					
<b>2.</b> Using students' L1 can help them comprehend English concepts better. يمكن ان يساعد استخدام اللغة الأولى للطلاب في فهمهم لمفاهيم اللغة الإنجليزية بشكل أفضل					
<b>3.</b> EFL teachers should encourage the use of L1 in classroom activities يجب على معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تشجيع استخدام اللغة الأولى في الأنشطة الصفية					
<b>4.</b> Using L1 can help build students' confidence in learning English يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في بناء ثقة الطلاب بأنفسهم أثناء تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية					
<b>5.</b> EFL teachers should create a balanced approach between using L1 .and English in the classroom ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية إيجاد توازن بين استخدام اللغة الأولى واللغة الإنجليزية داخل الصف					

	<b>Strongly Agree</b> بشدة أو افق	<b>Agree</b> أو افق	<b>Neutra I</b> محايد I	<b>Disagree لا</b> أو افق	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> أو افق بشدة لا
<b>6.</b> Using L1 can save time in explaining English concepts to students يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى أن يوفر الوقت عند شرح مفاهيم اللغة الإنجليزية للطلاب					
<b>7.</b> EFL teachers should consider the Language proficiency of their students before using L1 in the classroom ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية مراعاة مستوى كفاءة طلابهم اللغوية قبل استخدام اللغة الأولى في الصف					
<b>8.</b> Using L1 can help in maintaining students' interest and engagement in learning English يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في الحفاظ على اهتمام الطلاب وانخراطهم في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية					
<b>Section 3: Instructional Use of L1</b> القسم الثالث: الاستخدام التعليمي للغة الأولى					
<b>9.</b> EFL teachers should use L1 to clarify instructions and tasks for students ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية استخدام اللغة الأولى لتوضيح التعليمات والمهام للطلاب					
<b>10.</b> Using L1 can help in explaining complex grammar rules and structures to students يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في شرح القواعد النحوية والهيكل اللغوية المعقدة للطلاب					

	<b>Strongly Agree</b> بشدة أو افق	<b>Agree</b> أوافق	<b>Neutra I</b> محايد I	<b>Disagree لا</b> أوافق	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> أوافق بشدة لا
<b>11.</b> EFL teachers should provide training on how to effectively use L1 .in the classroom ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية الحصول على تدريب حول كيفية الاستخدام الفعال للغة الأولى في الصف					
<b>12.</b> Using L1 can help in enhancing students' vocabulary <i>retention</i> يمكن استخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في تعزيز احتفاظ الطلاب بالمفردات الجديدة					
<b>13.</b> EFL teachers should be open to adapting their approach based on students' feedback on using L1 يجب أن يكون معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية منفتحين على تعديل أسلوبهم بناء على ملاحظات الطلاب حول استخدام اللغة الأولى					
<b>14.</b> Using L1 can help in scaffolding students' learning of new English concepts يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في دعم تعلم الطلاب للمفاهيم الجديدة في اللغة الإنجليزية					
<b>15.</b> EFL teachers should collaborate with colleagues on best practices for using L1 in the classroom ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية التعاون مع زملائهم لمناقشة أفضل للممارسات في استخدام اللغة الأولى في الصف					
<b>16.</b> Using L1 can help in addressing Students' language learning difficulties more effectively يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في معالجة صعوبات تعلم اللغة لدى الطلاب بشكل أكثر فاعلية					

	<b>Strongly Agree</b> بشدة أو افق	<b>Agree</b> أوافق	<b>Neutra I</b> محايد I	<b>Disagree لا</b> أوافق	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> أوافق بشدة لا
<p><b>Section 4: Collaboration and Professional Practice</b> القسم الرابع: التعاون والممارسات المهنية</p> <p><b>17.</b> EFL teachers should provide opportunities for students to use their L1 in collaborative learning activities ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية إتاحة الفرص للطلاب لاستخدام لغتهم الأولى في أنشطة التعليم التعاوني</p>					
<p><b>18.</b> Using L1 can help creating a supportive learning environment for students يمكن استخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في خلق بيئة تعلم داعمة للطلاب</p>					
<p><b>19.</b> EFL teachers should encourage students to use L1 as a tool for peer teaching and learning ينبغي على معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية تشجيع الطلاب على استخدام اللغة الأولى كأداة للتدريس والتعلم بين الأقران</p>					
<p><b>20.</b> Using L1 can help in breaking down language barriers for English Language Learners يمكن استخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في كسر الحواجز اللغوية لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية</p>					
<p><b>21.</b> EFL teachers should monitor and assess the effectiveness of using L1 in the classroom ينبغي على معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية مراقبة وتقييم فعالية استخدام اللغة الأولى في الصف</p>					

	<b>Strongly Agree</b> بشدة أو افق	<b>Agree</b> أوافق	<b>Neutra I</b> محايد I	<b>Disagree لا</b> أوافق	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> أوافق بشدة لا
<p><b>22.</b> Using L1 can help in promoting cross-linguistic awareness among students يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في تعزيز الوعي اللغوي المتبادل بين الطلاب</p>					
<p><b>Section 5: Critical Perspectives and Misconceptions:</b> القسم الخامس: وجهات النظر النقدية والمفاهيم الخاطئة</p> <p><b>23.</b> EFL teachers should provide clear .23 guidelines on when and how to use L1 in the classroom ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية وضع إرشادات واضحة حول متى وكيفية استخدام اللغة الأولى في الصف</p>					
<p><b>24.</b> Using L1 can help in fostering a positive attitude towards language learning يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى أن يساعد في تنمية اتجاه إيجابي نحو تعلم اللغات</p>					
<p><b>25.</b> EFL teachers should seek feedback from students on their comfort level with using L1 in the classroom ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية طلب ملاحظات من الطلاب حول مدى ارتياحهم لاستخدام اللغة الأولى في الصف</p>					
<p><b>26.</b> Using L1 can help in reducing students' anxiety in learning English يمكن لاستخدام اللغة الأولى ان يساعد في تقليل قلق الطلاب اثناء تعلم اللغة الانجليزية</p>					

	<b>Strongly Agree</b> بشدة أو افق	<b>Agree</b> أو افق	<b>Neutra I</b> محايد I	<b>Disagree لا</b> أو افق	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> أو افق بشدة لا
<p><b>27.</b> EFL teachers should be open to adapting their approach based on students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية ان يكونوا منفتحين على تعديل اسلوبهم بناءً على الخلفيات الثقافية و اللغوية</p>					
<p><b>28.</b> Using L1 can help in promoting effective communication and interaction among students يمكن لأستخدام اللغة الأولى ان يساعد في تعزيز التواصل و التفاعل الفعال بين الطلاب</p>					
<p><b>29.</b> EFL teachers should seek professional development opportunities on incorporating L1 in their teaching practices ينبغي لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية البحث عن فرص للتطوير المهني تتعلق بدمج اللغة الأولى في ممارساتهم التعليمية</p>					
<p><b>30.</b> Using L1 can help in creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students يمكن لإستخدام اللغة الأولى ان يساعد في خلق بيئة تعلم اكثر شمولاً و دعماً لجميع الطلاب</p>					

**Name (Optional):** .....

**Email or Phone Number (Optional):** .....

**Thank You for Your Cooperation**

**The Researcher,**  
Nisrin Omar Alshoushan

## **B: Invitation Letter for Focus Group Discussion**

**Subject:** Seeking Your Expertise: Invitation to a Research Focus Group on Mother Tongue Use in EFL Classrooms

**Dear Esteemed EFL Teacher,**

My name is Nisreen Shoshanna, and I am a Master's Candidate at the Faculty of Arts, University of Zawia. I am conducting a study on the perspectives of secondary school EFL teachers regarding the use of the mother tongue in their classrooms.

The focus group will be a 30–45-minute guided conversation conducted online via Zoom. We are flexible with scheduling and will work with all participants to find a time that best suits the group.

If you are interested in participating, please reply to this email by [nesreen6159073@gmail.com](mailto:nesreen6159073@gmail.com) to express your interest. I will then coordinate to find a suitable time for the discussion.

Thank you for considering this invitation. I look forward to potentially collaborating with you.

Sincerely,

**Nisreen Shoshanna**

Master's Candidate

Faculty of Arts, University of Zawia

**Email:** [nesreen6159073@gmail.com](mailto:nesreen6159073@gmail.com)

**Mobile No:** 0916159073

## **Appendix C: Focus Group Discussion Questions**

What is your overall perspective on the use of L1 in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?

In your experience, what are the main benefits of utilizing L1 in the EFL classroom?

What challenges have you encountered when using L1 in your teaching practices?

How often do you use L1 in your lessons? Are there specific situations where you find it more necessary?

Can you share examples of how you integrate L1 into your English lessons? What strategies do you find most effective?

How do students typically respond to the use of L1 during English lessons? Have you noticed any changes in their engagement or understanding?

In your opinion, how does L1 use affect students' overall learning outcomes in English?

Is there anything else you would like to add regarding your experiences or perspectives on using L1 in EFL teaching?

## **Appendix D: Focus Group Discussion Questions and Selected Responses**

*Q1. What is your overall perspective on the use of L1 in teaching English as a foreign language?*

T2 Response: It is very important to use the first language or mother tongue to deliver the message because students are learning the second language. They need to understand the exact meaning of concepts, otherwise they cannot fully comprehend. Using L1 makes the picture clear and helps convey and deliver meaning effectively.

T3 Response: It is very important to use the first language to deliver the message clearly. Students need to understand the exact meaning of concepts, and without L1 this may not always be possible. L1 helps ensure comprehension and provides necessary support.

*Q2. In what situations do you find the use of L1 most helpful?*

T2 Response: I think the main benefit of using L1 is that it facilitates learning. It makes it easier for students to understand the meaning of new vocabulary and reduces the difficulties they face in comprehension.

T3 Response: I believe that using the first language can enhance the process of learning English by providing a familiar framework for understanding new concepts. For example, it helps learners grasp difficult grammar rules or vocabulary. However, teachers must know when to use L1 and when to avoid it in order to maximize exposure to the target language.

*Q3. Do you think using L1 affects students' motivation to learn English? Why or why not?*

T2 Response: From my own experience as a student, I was once told by a teacher to think like an English speaker rather than an Arabic speaker. When I relied too much on translation, I became confused because the two languages have different structures, idioms, and expressions. While L1 can be helpful, it should not be used excessively. Direct translation causes confusion and limits true understanding of the target language.

T3 Response: Students generally feel more comfortable when L1 is used, as it enhances participation and understanding. It also reduces anxiety and makes them more engaged. However, their reactions are mixed: some believe L1 hinders progress in English, while others see it as supportive. I have noticed that students in public schools rely more on L1 than those in private schools, due to differences in exposure and environment.

*Q4. What challenges do you face when using L1 in your classroom?*

T2 Response: To be honest, I usually use L1 when students cannot understand the exact meaning of a word or concept. I try to clarify through pictures, body language, and expressions, but when these methods are not enough, I switch to L1. The challenge is knowing when to stop, as students may start depending on it.

T3 Response: One challenge is that students often expect explanations in L1, especially those from public schools who are used to it. They sometimes ask, “Why don’t you explain in Arabic like other teachers?” This shows they lack sufficient exposure to English. Switching back to English can also be difficult once L1 has been used.

*Q5. What strategies do you use to integrate L1 in your lessons?*

T2 Response: I integrate L1 mainly through code-switching and translation. Personally, I find code-switching more effective than other strategies because it allows me to switch back to English smoothly.

T3 Response: I integrate L1 to explain difficult grammar rules, unfamiliar vocabulary, and abstract concepts. For example, I sometimes translate a sentence to highlight structural differences. I also use code-switching briefly and then return to English to maintain focus on the target language.

*Q6. How do students react when you use L1 in your teaching?*

T2 Response: Most of our students prefer using L1 because it makes learning easier and more comfortable. It reduces pressure and helps them understand ideas without difficulty.

T3 Response: Students feel more comfortable when L1 is used, as it reduces anxiety and encourages participation. However, I have also observed that some believe L1 slows their progress. The reaction often depends on the students’ school background and learning environment.

*Q7. Does the use of L1 influence students' confidence and anxiety in learning English*

T2 Response: Yes, using L1 can boost students' confidence and reduce anxiety. They do not struggle to express themselves because they feel comfortable in their first language, which allows them to communicate more confidently.

T3 Response: L1 definitely reduces anxiety and helps students feel at ease. It can also aid memory retention. But if overused, it may slow down their fluency development.

*Q8. Do you think there are disadvantages to using L1 in EFL classrooms?*

T2 Response: While L1 is helpful for learning new concepts, it can also limit students' imagination and hinder skill development. If students depend too much on translation, they will not develop fluency or the ability to immerse themselves fully in English.

T3 Response: I believe the role of L1 in EFL teaching should be recognized based on students' needs and proficiency levels. While it can be a useful tool for beginners, as students advance, it should be gradually minimized to encourage English immersion. Additionally, teacher training programs should focus on guiding teachers on how to use L1 effectively without giving up students' exposure to English.

## Appendix E: Ethical Approval letter

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agasu nduronnu numii-ã  
Government of National Unity

التاريخ: ٢٠٢٤ / ١ / ٢٢

وزارة التربية والتعليم  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
مراقبة التربية والتعليم الزاوية الغرب  
الرقم الاشاري ٢٨١ - ٦

**السادة / مدراء مدارس التعليم الثانوي**  
**بعد التحية**

في الوقت الذي نشكركم فيه على جهودكم المبذولة من أجل الرقي  
بمؤسساتنا التعليمية.

وبناءً على الطلب المقدم من الطالبة / نسرین عمر الشوشان أحد الطلبة  
المسجلين بالدراسات العليا بجامعة الزاوية قسم اللغة الانجليزية وهي في  
مرحلة إعداد الرسالة.

عليه... يطلب منكم مساعدة الطالبة المذكورة أعلاه للاطلاع والحصول  
على البيانات والمعلومات ذات العلاقة بموضوع رسالتها.

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم  
والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

أ. عبد الحكيم أحمد عبد الحفيظ  
مراقب التربية والتعليم ببلدية الزاوية الغرب

صورة الى :  
مدير مكتب التعليم الثانوي .  
الملف الدوري للحفظ .

ع الطالب