

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE USE ANXIETY IN TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDE

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### ABSTRACT

In order to find out students' and teachers' views about foreign language use in different contexts and the relationship between FL (Foreign Language) use and foreign language use anxiety and students overall motivation to learn FL, an empirical study had been done between 62 first-years English Language Teaching students of Hacettepe and English Language and Literature students of Selcuk universities, as well as 21 English Language instructors from both universities. The results of the study represented that in some cases students didn't like to use FL; also, students who had moderate motivation, showed more interest in university requirements and FL culture. Analysis of the data revealed relatively positive relationship between FL use and FL-use anxiety.

**Key Words:** Foreign language use, Foreign language use anxiety, Motivation in learning.

### INTRODUCTION

Today, English language plays a vital role in the world. The need for this language also reflected in school and university settings of the most of the countries that look for prominent position in the world. Since the advent of the communicative approach, in the most of the curricular documents designed by schools or universities, English language teachers have been encouraged to use FL in the classroom. Even though there is no pedagogical evidence to show that more foreign language input results in more effective acquisition, only the stress on teachers' quantity of foreign language use remains.

So, it is needed English language teachers create an environment in which students achieve success in learning. Unfortunately, nowadays, most of the instructors productively and professionally have not developed distinctive approaches in foreign language (FL) use and first language (L1) use in the classroom setting. Their preferred approaches based on training, knowledge of the first or second language acquisition (SLA), literature, official policy, and classroom experiences (Hall, 2003). These approaches can't help students to succeed in FL learning; therefore, it makes questions on, how much FL must be used and in what contexts, as well as how much the instructor expects students use FL in the classroom (Levine, 2003).

In answer to these questions natural approach point out that the language should be used in "communicative situations without recourse to the use of the native language" (Krashen, 1983: 9). This view of the foreign language use in the classroom language also suggested in most of the SLA researches, especially studies dealing with input and interaction (e.g., Brooks, 1990; Ellis, 1999; Gass, 1997; Johnson, 1995 cited in Levine, 2003). Moreover, in order to cope with pedagogical difficulties, most of the teachers put emphasis on the need for learners to experience and use only the foreign language (FL) in classrooms. So, they increasingly have stressed the importance of interaction and negotiation of meaning and form (Long 2000; Pica 2002, Lin 2000).

whereas these studies put emphasis on the extensive use of FL in the classroom, some of the other studies (Long 2000) support that the use of L1 at the classroom enhance students' comprehension, maybe as a result, as Swain (2000) claimed, teachers should integrate L1 and FL to mediate students understanding of the task; to

mediate their FL learning; and to create the affective environment needed to get the task done. Generally they have suggested diverse remedies including use of L1 along with FL has been proposed for various pedagogical reasons (Medgyes, 1994 cited in Kang, 2008).

While some of researchers accepted as true the use of both L1 and FL, they emphasized L1 should not be over-relied on, but it should be of secondary importance, and should be used relevantly and selectively (Castellotti and Moore, 1997; Nation, 1997 cited in Levine, 2003). Consequently most of them accept first language use because of various pedagogical reasons as: promotion of transition to L2 use (Shamash, 1990), improvements in meaning negotiations (Swain, 2000), better L2 comprehension (Turnbull, 2001), and construction of authentic learning environments (Cook, 2001).

In look for teachers' or students' preferences of FL use in classroom setting, different researchers got different results, Castellotti (1997) investigated L1 use by four secondary school teachers of FL Spanish and English, he claimed that L1 contributed to the learners' better comprehension of FL inputs (cited in Kang, 2008). Kim (2002) asserted that students who didn't use the first language had low level of proficiency and inadequate motivation. With considering all of these underlying assumptions, achieving optimal levels of FL and L1 use is important in foreign language programs.

With the aim of finding teachers' and their students' views of foreign language use in the classroom and relationship between students language use and language use anxiety, current study represents the empirical studies to present the results of questionnaires that are completed by FL students and FL instructors. The purpose at this stage is to identify what are students and instructors beliefs about FL use in the classroom\_ with a central focus on the students' responses\_ then aims to find the relationship between FL use and their anxiety in using FL. The following questions will be answered in the study:

- 1 How does reported FL use differ for different interlocutors?
- 2 How does reported FL use differ in different communicative contexts?
- 3 How do instructors and students perceive FL-use anxiety, particularly in different communicative contexts?
- 4 What is the relationship between FL use and FL use anxiety?

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Participants

The questionnaire was administered to the students with the help of their teachers. It submitted to the 62 first year ELT and ELL students of Selcuk and Hacettepe Universities and 21 language teachers of Selcuk and Hacettepe Universities in Turkey. Below table clearly represents the number of participants in two categories.

Students N=62	Hacettepe ELT students	32
	Selcuk ELT students	30
Teachers N=21	Hacettepe ELT teachers	5
	Hacettepe ELL teachers	6
	Selcuk ELT teachers	5
	Selcuk ELL teachers	5

### Instruments

The questionnaire that is used in this study is designed by Levine (2003). It is aimed to understand students' views on the desirability of using the foreign language. And estimation of FL use in classes, and the teachers' attitudes to use the FL are also investigated.

The data are grouped into 5 categories based on first year university students' and foreign language instructors' attitudes. The purpose is to identify similarities and differences between students and teachers attitudes but the central point of study is on the students' views; so, the causes of the variation will be explored. In order to address the research questions, this case study compiled information from questionnaire. In analyzing the 32 items, a statistical technique (SPSS 16.0) is used to identify whether the percentages and

graphs of two groups on a variable differed or not. The data collected from questionnaire were categorized into 2 tables (only look for students attitudes), and 3 graphs, each tables look for students' and teachers' tendencies in English language learning settings.

### Procedures

The article is divided into six sections; the first section is about the extent of students' motivation to learn foreign language and the second part looks for students' primary reason to learn other language and third part studies students and teachers' attitude about foreign language use between different interlocutors. Forth part studies students' and instructors' estimation of foreign language use in different contexts. In these parts I carry out factors analysis to see respondents' consistency. Respondents also estimated the percentage of time they actually use the foreign language on a five-points scale (less than 20%; 20%-40%; about 50%; 60%-80%; over 80%).

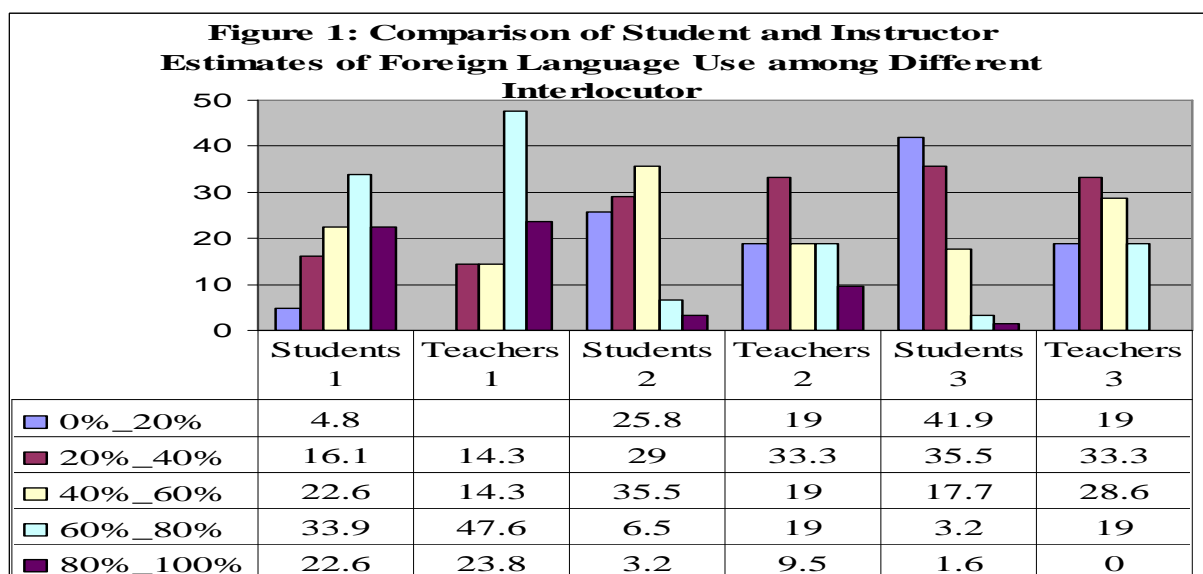
In other part I look for students' and teachers' attitude towards foreign language use anxiety. In the end I examine students' and teachers' views about foreign language and first language uses in the classroom, in these parts (third and forth parts) teachers and students express the level of agreement with answer to five point Likert scale that is scale ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. And the last part of the article looks for the relationship between foreign language use and foreign language use anxiety.

### RESULTS

The below sections provide descriptions of students' and teachers' attitudes about foreign language use in English classes. These descriptions highlight different instructional attitudes between universities' students and teachers, and how much the students adapted foreign language learning.

#### Students' and Instructors' Foreign Language Use among Different Interlocutors

This part represents graphically estimation of FL used by different interlocutors (student with student and student with instructor); in other words, Students and instructors report **1**. Their views about the use of L1 and FL by their teachers **2**. The amount of FL use when they speak with their teachers, **3**. The use of FL when they communicate with their classmates. ( In graph the numbers that are besides instructor and student e.g. student1 refers to first question , in other words in students 1 we get the answer for instructors' attitudes about the amount of FL use when communicate with their students in the classroom and students' attitudes about their instructors foreign language use when communicate with them")



### 1. Instructors' views about the amount of FL use when communicate with their students in the classroom and students views about their instructors foreign language use when communicate with them"

As graphically figure 1 reveals 33.9 percent of students believed "their instructor use the FL to communicate with them about 60%\_80% of the time in the classroom" and 22.6% of students claimed their instructors use FL about 80%\_100%, whereas instructors graph shows, nearly half of the instructors (47.6%) use foreign language between 60%\_80% of time. Results suggest that, most of the instructors comparatively experienced high amount of communication with their students in the foreign language and relatively their students agreed with their claims.

### 2. Students' and Instructors' views about "students foreign language use when communicate with their instructors"

Second category of graph deals with students' and instructors' views about "FL use when communicate with their instructors". Results of this part indicates 35.5% of students claim "they use the FL to communicate with the instructor about 40%-60% of the times in the classroom" while 33.3% of teachers estimated students use of FL\_ when they communicate with them\_ between 20%-40% and only 19% of instructors confirmed students response.

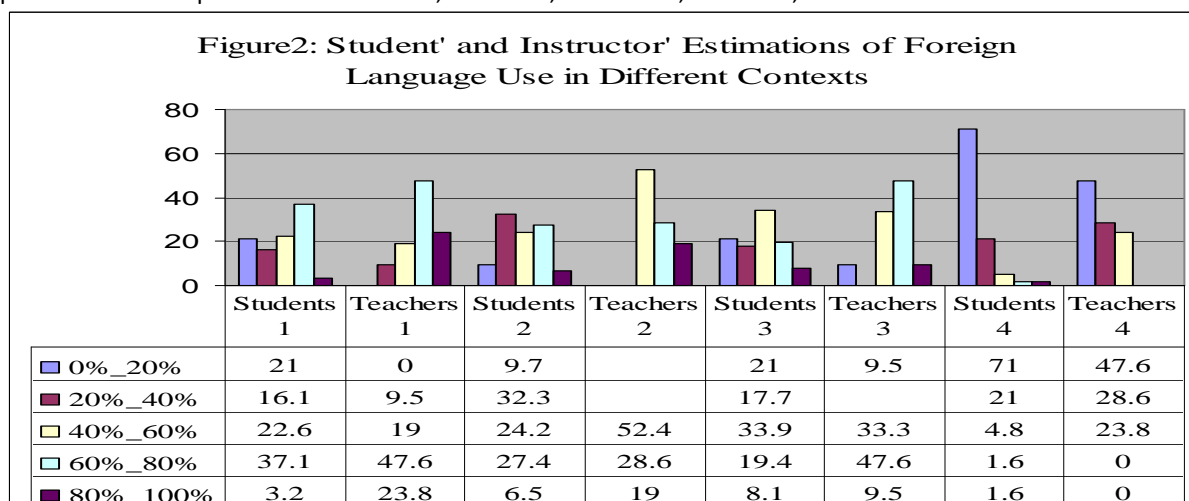
### 3. Students' and Instructors' Views about "students foreign language use when they communicate with their classmates"

In the next item of graph\_ asked instructors and students to estimate the amount of FL used by students when speaking with each other\_ two groups reported similarly. 41.9% of students claimed that they used the FL 0% \_ 20% of the time when communicate with their classmates; likewise, 33.3 % of the instructors reported that their students used the FL 0% to 20% of the time when speak with each other. These data reveals that students use less FL when they speak with their classmates,

To make summery, first graph reveals that, students used less FL when they communicated with their classmates and used more FL when communicated with their instructors; and claimed the most FL use by their teachers in FL classroom. Maybe FL use by students when they speak with their classmates causes to timidity and shyness. These data perhaps reject by the works of Ingram and O'Neill's who find (2002) that two-thirds of the students in their study sought more active, real-life use of the FL with their teachers.

### Students' and Instructors' Estimation of the Foreign Language Use in Different Contexts

This part represents the frequencies of estimated FL use in different contexts, at this point the table of frequencies measure students' and instructors' views toward use of topic-based/thematic activities, 1. When communicate in FL, 2. When communicate about tests quizzes and other assignments, 3. When speak about grammar and its usages, 4. when communicate with each other out of the classroom. For the comparison, five-point scales are represented as 0%-20%; 20%-40%; about 50%; 60%-80%; over 80%



### 1. Students' and instructors' Views about the Use of the FL to Communicate within Topic Based/Thematic Activities

First category of figure 2 represents students' and instructors' attitudes about the use of FL to communicate within topic-based /thematic activities. As table reveals in fact the most of instructors (47.6 %) reported using English as the main medium of communication in topic based/thematic based activities about 60%-80% of the time and 23.8% of them reported use FL about 80%-100% of the time on those activities. Also 37.1% of students placed themselves as the proficient user of FL in thematic/topic-based activities. Perhaps these kind activities create more enjoyment and cooperation in the classroom, consequently have an effect on both group preferences.

### 2. Students' and Instructors' Views about the Use of FL When Discussing or Working on Grammar and its Usage

The second part of the table represents 52.4% of instructors "use the FL to communicate about grammar and usage" about 40%-60% of the time whereas only 24.2% of students accepted this time to spend on these activities and 32.3% of them expressed they use FL to speak about this subjects between 20%-40% of time.

### 3. Students' and Instructors' Views about the Use of FL to Discuss about Tests, Quizzes and Other Assignments

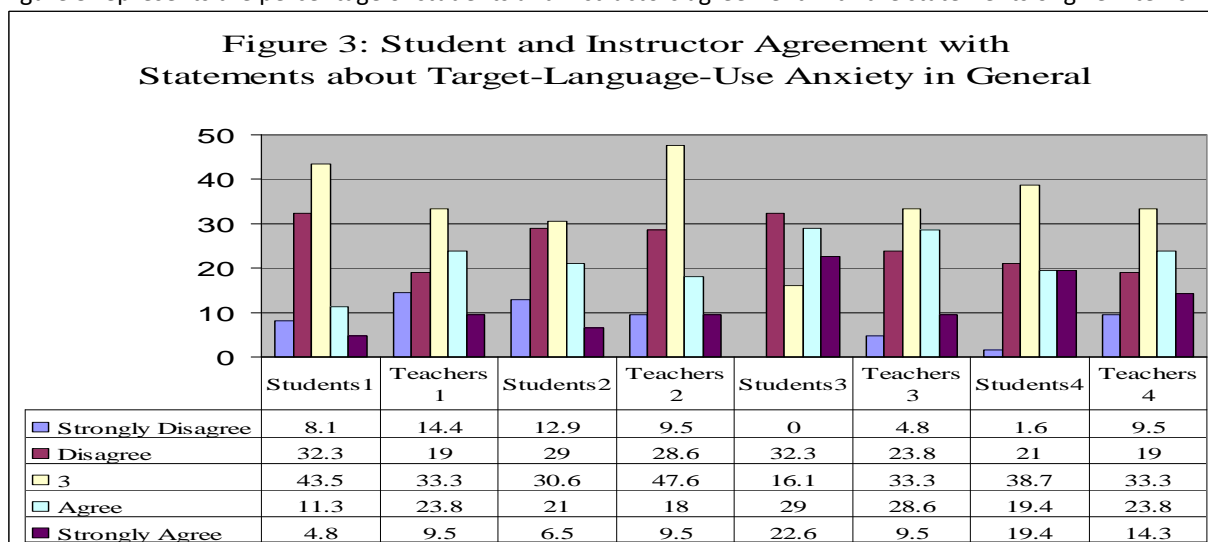
In the response to third item of table, as we see the FL use among first year students not differ as much as might be expected. 33.9 % of students stated moderate attitude toward the use FL to communicate about tests, quizzes, and other assignments. While the greatest difference was in their teachers' responses, 47.6 % of instructors reported dominant use of the FL about 60% to 80% of the time.

### 4. Students' and Instructors' Views about the Use of FL to Communicate with each other Outsidess of the Class Time

In this category most of the students expressed their rejection toward the use of FL outsidess of the classroom, in other words, respondents reported they prefer to have limited exposure to FL use out of the classroom, and their teachers claimed students used the FL quite sparingly across a classroom learning cycle. 71% of students reported they didn't use the FL to communicate with their instructor outside of class time (e.g., office hours, in the hall, before or after class) about 0%-20% of the time, therefore they see the classroom may be the only opportunity to practice English communicatively, and 47.6% of teachers accepted this response that they didn't use FL to communicate with their students outside of class time.

### Students' and Instructor' Agreement with Foreign Language Use Anxiety in General

Figure 3 represents the percentage of students and instructors agreement with the statements of given items.



### 1. Students' and Instructors' Views about "students find communication in foreign language frustrating"

The first part of the figure 3 shows 40.4 % of students disagreed with the statement that claims "they generally find trying to communicate in FL frustrating" and 43.5 % stated neutral response, while 33.4 % of teachers disagreed with this view that claims "students generally find trying to communicate in FL frustrating" and same number of instructors (33.3%) claimed students find trying to communicate in FL frustrating.

### 2. Students' and Instructors' views about "students generally feel uncomfortable or anxious speaking the FL during activities about FL topics (family, weather, FL culture, literature, sports, etc)"

In response to second part of table of frequency in figure 3, students and instructors revealed quite different perceptions, 31.9% of students claimed that they didn't feel uncomfortable or anxious speaking the FL during activities about FL topics (family, weather, FL culture, literature, study abroad, sports, hobbies, daily routines, etc.) and 30.6% reported neutral response and 27.5% agreed with this item. Most of the instructors gave neutral answer to this part, 38.1% of teachers rejected students uncomfortable or anxious feeling speaking the FL during activities about FL topics and 47.6% reported neutral response and 27.5% accepted this view.

### 3. Students' and instructors' views about "students generally feel uncomfortable or anxious using the FL when working on, discussing, or asking questions about grammar and usage"

Turning to the responses of item about FL-use anxiety in discussing or asking question about grammar and its usage 51.6% of students claimed agree or strongly agree that students feel anxious using the FL when working on, discussing, or asking questions about grammar and usage and 38.1 % of teachers confirmed this view. These results reveal that instructors knew their students inclinations in using less FL and more mother tongue about these kind activities.

### 4. Students' and instructors' views about that "students generally feel uncomfortable or anxious using the FL when working on, discussing, or asking questions about tests, quizzes or other assignments."

In forth item of figure 3, greater part of the students (38.8%) agreed with the statement that they feel anxious in using the FL when working on, discussing, or asking questions about tests, quizzes, and other assignments, maybe the use the FL discourage interventions/interruptions from students and 38.7% of students gave neutral response, but as the data reveals 33.3% of instructors gave neutral response and 38.2% of them accepted this view and claimed their students feel anxious when using FL in discussing about tests or quizzes, they added that their students like to use more first language in these kind activities.

### Students Overall Motivation to Learn Foreign Language

Above graphs examined students' and instructors' views towards language use, but for better understanding of students need, this part of article examine their overall motivation to learn foreign language. Students responded to one item of 48 items that dealt with their motivation. The below tables indicates students responses.

Table 1: Students Overall Motivation to Learn Foreign Language

N=62	Extremely High	High	Moderate	Weak	Extremely Weak
Students motivation to learn foreign language	12.9	29	58.1	0	0

As table 1 reveals students didn't have weak motivation to learn FL, 12.9% of them claimed they have extremely high motivation to learn FL and 29 % of them stated they had high motivation and 58.1% of them reported that their overall motivation to learn FL is moderate. This percentage of having motivation in FL learning support their FL learning and cause they encourage themselves to have essential amount of self confidence and self-management to learn foreign language.

### Students Best or Primary Reason to Learn Foreign Language

In this part respondents express their reason to learn FL with choice one of the five points in given questionnaire. Below table (2) represents the results of students' primary reason to learn foreign language.

Table 2: Students Best or Primary Reason to Learn Foreign Language

N=62	University requirement only	University requirement and personal interest in the language/culture	Personal Interest in the language	It is my family preference	I don't know
Students best or primary reason to learn FL	6.5	83.8	6.5	0	3.2

The results of table 2 shows majority of students (83.8%) agreed to university requirement and personal interest in the language/culture. So, the students who supported University requirement and personal interest in the language/culture as best reason to learn foreign language were significantly more likely to support their learning and had more ideal to find career in their future life.

### The Relationship between Foreign Language use and Language Use Anxiety

This part of study indicates the correlation between students' view about foreign language use and their views about foreign language use anxiety. The level of correlation represents in below table.

Table 3: correlation between Foreign Language use and Language Use Anxiety

		Language Use	Anxiety
Language Use	Pearson Correlation	1	.308
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.022
	N	62	62
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.308	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	
	N	62	62

The finding represents that there isn't high correlations between Language use and anxiety ( $r = .308$   $p < .01$ ,  $n=62$ ), it may be that a different instrument would be needed to gauge these relationships. The research results showed that anxiety was experienced by First year university students and had debilitating effects on students' foreign language use; also data reveals students who have language use anxiety have the fear of possible miscommunication in FL at university. I think data have strong concern with students' level and varieties in their responses, but there is one possible claim that students negative attitudes that they can't speak in foreign language seemed to compound their images as unsuccessful learners.

## DISCUSSION

This study looked for students' and instructors' attitudes about FL use in different contexts and with different interlocutors. The factors analysis in each categories represented that in some cases teachers had different ideas about the amount of foreign language use and they had negative attitudes about their students feeling. To find the cause of these attitudes, this article tried to look for other factors which influenced students' attitudes towards FL use. The first table that deal with students attitudes, looked for students overall motivation to learn FL. The analysis of students' attitudes towards FL use revealed majority of students lacked high motivation and were undecided about language use. May be the cause of students lack of self confidence



in language learning is the lack of potential to promote engagement, and comprehensible input to involve them in negotiation of meaning and classroom activities with their teachers and classmates.

The first figure of the study that examined students and instructor foreign language use among different interlocutors, most of the students reported their teachers use FL most of the time, as most of the research revealed this relatively high input in foreign language classrooms is crucial as it provides the learners' principal, even only, source of live, "scaffolded input" (Pica, 2000), namely, if teachers exposed their students to more FL sources, more highly students developed language skills. In second part of the figure one, near to the half of the students expressed they use the FL to communicate with the instructor about 40%-60% of the time in the classroom while only minority of teachers accepted students view and claimed that their first year students use foreign language rarely. I think in response to this item of figure 1 students weren't realist in their response or the teachers are looking for more language use in the classroom, and in the last part that referred to the students FL use when communicate with their classmates, students claimed they rarely use FL to communicate with their classmates, and teachers confirmed students views. In this part of the study we considered that students used less foreign language in their classroom and had more inclination for using first language to express their ideas and as we saw in first item of figure 1 teachers exposed and showed more input to their students to be more open to the idea of speaking in the foreign language, but student themselves express their inability to communicate in FL, maybe their weakness in using FL can be explained with their level at their universities.

In response to the second figure of study which looked for students and instructors estimation of the foreign language use in different contexts, student expressed that they disliked to use FL when they speak out of the classroom and prefer to speak more about thematic or topic based activities, and teachers claimed that they often use foreign language in thematic based activities and in the cases of quiz most of the times and in teaching grammar, sometimes use FL. Here the main points are why near to half of the students prefer to use foreign language only in communication about thematic based activities and less about grammar and its usage, or speaking and discussing about test and quiz and asking question, maybe students moderate dislike about grammar use or discussing about quiz and test rooted in their teachers regular use of foreign language or dogmatic exclusion of L1 in these subjects which lead to resentment, frustration and the build-up of affective factors which are well known to be the enemy of effective FL learning, but as we see teachers themselves rejects extensive use of FL in teaching grammar or speaking about quiz. The other possible results that we can get from this comparison can be, maybe teaching grammar in FL creates misunderstanding in some main points, and other possibility about students' negative attitudes about use of FL can be clarified with their level or their lack of knowledge to get complete meaning of instruction. Namely use of FL in these kind subjects decrease students understanding about the topic; so, students preferred their instructors use first language to be more clear and deductive or use interlingual process in which student L 1 use contributes to effective collaborative dialogues, and encourage students to cooperates in such activities. As Swain(2000) claimed teachers should integrate L1 and L2 to mediate students understanding of the task; to mediate their L2 learning; and to create the affective environment needed to get the task done.

In third figure of the article that considered student anxiety in language use, the results indicate that near to the half of the students disagreed with the statement that claims "they generally find trying to communicate in FL frustrating, and their instructors indicated relatively same response about their students, but in response to second part of same table of frequency in figure 3 the students and instructors revealed quite different perceptions, a number of students claimed that they didn't feel uncomfortable or anxious speaking the FL during activities about FL topics (family, weather, FL culture, literature, study abroad, sports, hobbies, daily routines, etc.) and for the most part of them reported neutral response and some of them accepted feeling , in this part we see that teachers had an unclear view about students foreign language use about these topics.

Turning to the responses about FL-use anxiety in discussing or asking question about grammar and its usage most of students claimed agree or strongly agree that students feel anxious using the FL when working on, discussing, or asking questions about grammar and usage and near to the half of the teachers confirmed this view. In other item of figure3, most of the students agreed with the statement that they feel anxious in using



the FL when working on, discussing, or asking questions about tests, quizzes, and other assignments and same number of the instructors gave the same response. In sum, as we see only in 3<sup>rd</sup> category of figure 3 teachers didn't give the same ideas with their students about students view about speaking in FL topics. Generally in this part we see that students felt anxious when he use language to discuss about grammar and quiz, it seems that they fear of making mistakes (worrying about tenses and agreements) and perhaps less inclined to take risks with the language while speak about grammar. Classroom language is that collection of phrases used for communication among teacher and students. While emphasis is usually placed primarily on the foreign language, classroom language, too, can be an invaluable way of promoting English as real communication, student involvement in the lesson, and active language learning skills; here we see that teachers relatively, knew students weakness and strength in these points; therefore, they can be more active to reduce their anxieties.

The last part of the article looks for correlation between language use and language use anxiety in students response to these items. The finding represents that there isn't high correlations between Language use and anxiety ( $r = .308$   $p < .01$ ,  $n=62$ ). The research results showed that anxiety was experienced by First year university students and have debilitating effects on students' foreign language speaking, this results indicate students who had high anxiety use less foreign language in their classrooms, may be the relatively high anxiety in FL use is the lack of first language in classroom or teachers extensive use of foreign language in the classroom. Here we see that student liked use L1 when they encounter with complex linguistic form and open-endedness of the tasks undertaken. Cook (2001) believed that teacher must create environment which students use FL on the grounds that the goal of language programs is to produce "genuine L2 users" who "are able to operate with two language systems". He (2001) claimed that student - teacher FL talk did not lead to higher quantities of student FL talk. Likewise infrequent, short bursts of L 1 use by the teachers did not seem to increase learners' use of their mother tongue. Therefore, the role of teachers for maximizing FL use and at the same time granting to use of L1 during the instruction sound functions.

On the basis of the findings of the study, this paper ends with some pedagogical recommendations to reduce anxiety and to encourage more use of foreign language in classroom. The implications for classroom practice include ways of dealing with foreign language speaking anxiety and suggestions to make speaking the foreign language less stressful for anxious students.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article looked for instructors' and students' attitudes about FL use in different context and with different interlocutors and the anxiety that students dealt with when they use FL and the correlation between language use and foreign language use anxiety. Data analysis represents majority of students had moderate motivation to learn language and their best reason to learn other language is personal interest in foreign language culture and language, maybe, with this response they want to find good career in their future life.

In answering to the first question, first figure indicated teachers mostly use foreign language when speak with their students and half of the students responded they sometimes use FL when they speak with their instructors. In second and third figures of the study which considered students' and instructors' attitudes towards the FL use in different contexts, most of the students expressed they mostly use FL when they speak about thematic based activities, and less in discussing about grammar and quiz, while most of the instructors' claimed they use foreign language whenever possible. Whereas, it is accepted that foreign language use is key factor in language development, but in third figure we saw in students' response to language use anxiety questionnaire a good number of students expressed their anxious feeling, and most of their teachers stated their awareness about their students' feelings in these subjects, at this point the role of teachers in encouraging the students to use foreign language are very crucial.

As the most of the studies represent most of the teachers are worried that if they try to use only the foreign language, some students will fail to understand and to learn. However, it is very difficult for students to become confident users of the language if the teacher is continually swapping from one language to the other,

or translating each utterance. Clearly, all these concerns or students negative feelings about language use suggest that teachers need to be realistic and pragmatic. All of teachers have their own particular teaching styles, but they need to work towards an appropriate, consistent and balanced use of the foreign language by both teachers and students in the classroom.

The immediate practicality and frequency of language use in classroom help students regard English as real communication and develop their confidence in both their English abilities and in themselves as active individuals. It takes planning and self-discipline on the part of the teacher, but seeing the students get more involved in the class let a student believe that he/she can successfully learn the foreign language. In other words encouraging a really good communicative atmosphere in the classroom from the start at all levels may go some way to proving to the students that making mistakes is part of the learning process and that language can be communicatively meaningful even when not always totally grammatically correct.

Finally, the findings of this study underscore the need for concrete, theoretically motivated guidelines, the need for more pedagogical tenets for FL classroom planning, and guidelines that indicate which behaviors facilitate FL learning and which behaviors weaken it.

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