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The Use of the Mother Tongue when Teaching English to Young Learners.

The case of Second Year Middle School.

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Dedication

To my dear parents, friends and everyone who have encouraged and supported me.

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Abstract

The use of the mother tongue when teaching a foreign language to young learners has been a topic of discussion for several researchers. Some scholars claimed that it affects the target language acquisition. However, others assumed that it is useful in some particular situations. The purpose of this study is to investigate the way teachers teach English to young learners and whether they use the mother tongue in the classroom when teaching. In addition, it examines the situations in which teachers use the learners' own language. In this study, two basic research instruments were used. A questionnaire for teachers of young learners and an observation for second year middle school classrooms. The findings revealed that despite the fact that teachers of young learners focus on the process of acquisition, they use the mother tongue as an aid in some situations like talking to individual learners, explaining difficult grammar rules and maintaining discipline. Further, this research have shown that a limited use of the mother tongue does not reduce the amount of exposure to English but rather can be helpful.

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List of Abbreviations:

ZPD Zone of proximal Development.

L1 First Language.

TL Target Language.

MT Mother Tongue.

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General Introduction:

Teaching English to young learners has been of particular concern, the role of the teacher is extremely crucial. The English teacher needs to consider the characteristics, needs and interests of young learners. It is also important to be aware of the language he uses when teaching them. On the one hand, he has to use comprehensible words because the teacher's talk is main source of input for young learners. On the other hand, the teacher sometimes switches to the learners' mother tongue to convey the meaning. There have been many theoretical arguments for and against the use of learners' own language in the foreign language classroom. The use of the mother tongue has been traditionally thought to be harmful for learners (Krashen, 1982 and Willis, 1992). However, there are other researchers like Inbar-Lourie (2010) and Atkinson (1993) who claimed that it can be useful in some situations.

The prominent reason behind choosing this particular topic is reading. It is claimed that the grammar translation method is an old method that uses the mother tongue, but it is no more used because it is not effective. An emergence of new approaches aims at developing the learners' communicative competence and exposes them to the target language. However, the mother tongue is still used by some teachers especially when dealing with beginners who do not have the basics of the English language. Hence, it is important to investigate the situations in which the mother tongue is used when teaching young learners.

Several foreign language studies show that the use of the mother tongue in the English classroom varies in different situations; each teacher uses it in different contexts. Therefore, the major aim of this research is to investigate the situations in which teachers use the mother tongue when they teach English to young learners. In addition, the minor aim in this study is to identify the way teachers teach English as a foreign language to young learners in the second year middle school. This research does not deal with the amount of the mother tongue used in the English classroom. Rather, it focuses on the situations in which the mother tongue is used by teachers of young learners.

Teaching young learners a foreign language is one of the most challenging professions. It requires teachers who know the way young learners learn a new language as well as the ability of using the appropriate language when teaching them. This research

deals with the way young learners learn English and explores the issue of using the mother tongue in the classroom when teaching them. On this basis, this research seeks to answer three main questions; first, how should teachers teach English as a foreign language to young learners? Second, is the use of the mother tongue by teachers of young learners useful or harmful? Third, what are the situations in which teachers of young learners use the mother tongue?

It is hypothesized that teaching English to young learners may be a demanding profession; it needs well-trained and competent teachers. In addition, the use of the mother tongue may be harmful because young learners are beginners and need to hear English as much as possible. Further, the teacher should avoid the use of the mother tongue in all situations, he need to utilise the English language only.

To conduct this research work, two types of data collection tools have been used; a direct observation that aims at observing the teachers' use of the mother tongue in different situations when they teach English as a foreign language to young learners. In addition, a questionnaire is prepared to investigate they way teachers teach young learners and examines the situations in which they use the mother tongue in the classroom.

This research investigates the use of the mother tongue when teaching English to young learners. It consists of three chapters. Chapter one is about a theoretical overview of the use of the mother tongue when teaching young learners, it is divided into two parts; the first part deals with teaching young learners, it includes the definition and characteristics of young learners, the way they think and understand and the process of learning and acquisition. In addition, it highlights the role of the teacher, teacher's talk and the language input. Further, it presents some techniques that make the input comprehensible to learners. The second part deals with the use of the mother tongue in the classroom; it discusses the mother tongue as a useful component including translation and some advantages. Moreover, it presents it as a harmful component highlighting the overuse of it by both teachers and learners. Finally, it includes the importance of the target language in the classroom.

The second chapter aims at investigating the issue of using the mother tongue in the classroom when teaching young learners and notice whether it affects the process of acquisition; it presents the description of the methodology of this research including the

observation and the questionnaire. First, it deals with the description of the observation followed by the analysis of the results. Second, it includes the description and the analysis of the questionnaire which is conducted to teachers of young learners who teach English in the second year middle school (Algeria).

The third chapter presents the findings and includes the discussion of the results. First, it deals with the discussion of the observation, the questionnaire and the general discussion of the findings. Then, it gives some recommendations to teachers about how to teach young learners effectively and how to use the mother tongue appropriately. The population of this research is teachers of young learners who study in the second year middle school; two teachers and thirty-seven students were observed within two different classes in Zian Djillali middle school. In addition, the questionnaire is directed to seven teachers from two different schools in Oued-Rhiou; Ziane Djillali and Miloud Mansouria middle school (Algeria).

Chapter One:

The Use of the Mother Tongue when
Teaching Young Learners

Introduction

The use of the mother tongue in foreign language teaching has been one of the major points of conflict, especially when dealing with young learners. There has been a clash of opinions about whether or not to use the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom. Some researchers assumed that mother tongue should be abandoned entirely because learners should be exposed to the target language. On the other hand, other researchers claimed that the learners' mother tongue can be used in some situations and that it has an important role to play in the classroom.

This chapter is about a theoretical overview of the use of the mother tongue in teaching young learners; it is basically composed of two parts. The first part seeks to highlight teaching young learners which is considered challenging and demanding because the teacher has to consider the type and age of those learners. This part includes the definition and characteristics of young learners, the way they think and understand, in addition to processes of their learning and acquisition. Moreover, it sheds light on the role of the teacher, teacher's talk and the language input. Further, it gives some techniques that make the language input comprehensible to young learners.

The second part is about the use of the mother tongue in the classroom. First, it deals with the mother as a beneficial element in the foreign language classroom including translation and some of its advantages. Then, it discusses the harmful impact of the mother tongue including its overuse by both teachers and learners. Finally, this chapter highlights the use of the target language in the young learners' classroom.

1-Teaching Young Learners

Teaching young learners a foreign language is a demanding profession; it requires teachers who recognize the characteristics, the needs, and interests of the learners. The aim of this part is to provide an overview of teaching young learners. First, it introduces the definition of young learners, their characteristics and their cognitive development. Then, it presents their process of foreign language acquisition. In addition, it highlights the role of the teacher mentioning the way he should talk to his

learners and importance of the language input. Further, it gives some techniques for the teacher to make his speech comprehensible to learners.

1-1 Definition and Characteristics of Young Learners

Young learners are usually children between six and thirteen years of age, Phillips (1999) defined young learners as pupils from first year of formal schooling to fourteen years' old. She claimed that children at the same age differ in maturity because they are influenced by many factors like their culture, environment, intelligence and interest (1999:05). Different children have their different weaknesses, strengths and prefer different learning styles, but they have some common characteristics like their enthusiasm for learning and the curiosity about the world around them. Harmer (2007:82).

When young learners learn a foreign language, they have already learned their mother tongue. They come to the classroom bringing a variety of skills and characteristics that help them in learning English as an additional language. In relation to this, Harmer claimed that young learners differ from adults in learning a language in the following ways:

- a- They respond to meaning even if they do not understand individual words.
- b- Their understanding comes not just from explanation, but also from what they see and hear and, crucially, have a chance to touch and interact with.
- c- They find abstract concepts such as grammar rules difficult to grasp.
- d- They generally display an enthusiasm for learning and a curiosity about the world around them.
- e- They have a need for individual attention and approval from the teacher.
- f- They keen to talk about themselves and respond well to learning that uses themselves and their own lives as main topics in the classroom.
- g- They have a limited attention span; unless activities are extremely engaging, they can get easily bored, losing interest after ten minutes or so. (2007:82).

Additionally, Halliwell (1992) argued that young learners have some existing skills that enable them to learn another language, they can understand the overall meaning of a sentence without necessarily understanding the meaning of each word. It means that they grasp the general meaning. Then, they learn directly rather than indirectly because their capacity of conscious learning is not developed, Harmer (2007) explained this

phenomenon saying that: *“They take information from all sides, learning from everything around them rather than only focusing on the precise topic they are being taught”* (2007:82). In addition, young learners tend to create new grammatical forms and concepts when they want to communicate and express themselves. Moreover, Halliwell (1992) maintained that those learners have a sense of fun, play and imagination, they learn successfully when they are enjoying themselves, and this is the reason why they are usually so enthusiastic and positive about learning. (1992:3-4).

In the same context, Slattery and Willis (2001) highlighted some characteristics of young learners, they indicated that young learners are developing very quickly as individuals, they learn in different ways, by watching, listening, imitating and doing things. In addition, they are not able to understand grammatical rules and explanations about language because they do not prefer abstract thinking. In addition, young learners refer to their mother tongue to talk about what they understand because this helps them learn. Besides, they are able to produce the sounds they hear and like to imitate the way adults speak. Moreover, these learners are curious, like to play and use their imagination. Furthermore, they feel comfortable with routines and enjoy repetition. Finally, they need varying activities because they get bored easily. (2001:148).

Scott and Ytreberg (1990) indicated other characteristics of young learners. They are as follows:

- a- Their basic concepts are formed. They have very decided views of the world.
- b- They can tell the difference between fact and fiction.
- c- They ask questions all the time.
- d- They rely on spoken words as well as the physical world to convey and understand meaning.
- e- They are able to make decisions about their own learning.
- f- They have definite views about what they like and do not like doing.
- g- They have a developed sense of fairness about what happens in the classroom and begin to question the teachers' decision.

h- They are able to work with others and learn from others. (1990:3-4).

From these characteristics, it can be understood that young learners have their own world, they are enthusiastic and active learners, understand more through gestures and physical movements (using eye contact, hands and ears). In addition, they like to imitate, play and to be involved in all the activities. The teacher then, has to make a difference between teaching adults and young learners and take into account the characteristics and needs of young learners, in addition to the way they think and understand.

1-2 Young Learners' Thinking and Understanding:

It is generally agreed that the way of teaching young learners mainly depends on their developmental stage. It is important to know how young learners develop their knowledge and understanding because knowing the way they learn can maximize the foreign language learning opportunities. There are many theories that have described the way young learners progress, among them Piaget (1972) and Vygotsky (1962).

Piaget's study of children's intellectual development is very important; it is the most influential in educational theory. Piaget (as cited in Harmer) suggested, "*Children start at the sensory-motor stage, and then proceed through the intuitive stage and the concrete-operational stage before finally reaching the formal operational stage where abstraction becomes increasingly possible*". (2007:82).

Piaget believed that babies learn about their environment during the sensory-motor stage. This is followed by the intuitive stage which is characterized by the language development and the use of symbols. He considered young learners who are children between seven to eleven years of age are in the concrete-operational stage that is build on the earlier understandings, it allows young learners to use their past experience. Finally, the formal operational stage, it begins from adolescence to adulthood.

Piaget as (cited in Cameron, 2001) considered children and young learners as active learners because they construct knowledge, learn through taking actions, and solve problems. In addition, they develop thinking when their thoughts come from internalized actions, which means that their intelligences develop by adapting the world. The Piagetian theory differentiated two ways in which the child's cognitive development can take place:

assimilation and accommodation. The process of assimilation happens when the new actions can be integrated and take place without any change in the child because he uses his previous knowledge to deal with a new situation. Accommodation, on the other hand, involves the extended knowledge of concepts that allows children to recognize the new information. It happens when the existing knowledge does not work and need to be changed. As described by Piaget, both accommodation and assimilation are mental processes that work in a complementary way, they work with each other to give an awareness of the world, and organize children's' knowledge and understanding. Cameron (2001 :2-3).

Vygotskys' theory differs from the one of piaget, Vygotsky gave more emphasis to the culture and environment in which children grew up, and how it influences the way they think.

For Piaget, the child is an active learner alone, while for Vygotsky, he is an active learner when he interacts with others. The essential element in his theory is social interaction; he believed that the society plays a significant role in the child's cognitive development. Social interaction happens when two or more people interact with each other in order to learn. It means that in teaching young learners, the classroom environment need to be full of interaction, between both the teacher and the learners, and among learners through collaboration. As a result, it is proved that the teacher who encourages discussion is helping his learners to think critically, construct knowledge and understands more.

Another important element in the theory of Vygotsky is the zone of proximal development (ZPD) which is defined by Raymond as follows: "*The zone of proximal development is the distance between what children can do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistance*" (2000:176).

In other words, learning happens when someone with more knowledge like parents or teachers helps the learner to progress. This ZPD gives new meaning to intelligence, it suggests that learners should be judged on what they can do with the help of an adult rather than what they are capable of doing by their own. The zone of proximal development depends on the social interaction and the environment including parents and other adults, who are considered as models and guiders to young learners. Learning to do and learning

to think are both reached by the assistance of adults, because the more the child takes advantage of the help of others, the broader ZPD would be. Cameron (2001:5-6).

Additionally, Phillips (1999) claimed that the young learner develops a range of skills when he is learning in the classroom and in the time spent out of school. These skills are as follows:

- a- The Intellectual skills of describing, drawing conclusions, using the imagination, hypothesizing, reading and planning.
- b- The physical/motor skills of coloring, painting, cutting, folding, gluing and writing.
- c- The social skills of sharing, co-operating, making decisions together, and appreciating how individual contributions can make successful whole.
- d- Learner independent skills such as tasks, getting information, trying things out and evaluating results. (1999 :6)

The young learner should be encouraged to enhance these skills, the teacher should consider the development of the whole child rather than focusing narrowly on teaching the language, he has to be aware of his learners in order to give them opportunities to practice and enhance such skills.

Based on the development theories of young learners, it can be understood that learners go through various developmental changes from infancy to adulthood, these changes and stages need to be taken to consideration when teaching young language learners. The teacher has to use effective learning strategies that work best with them. In addition, he has to facilitate the language to his learners and help them to express what they want to say because it helps in understanding how young learners learn and acquire the new language.

1-3 Young Learners' Learning and Acquisition:

Young learners learn languages differently from adults. They learn the new language easily and quickly and are able to become competent language speakers of the target language using two processes acquisition and learning. Krashen (1981) (as cited in Brown, 2000) stated that "*Learning cannot become acquisition and fluency in a second/*

foreign language is due to what learners have acquired, not what they have learned'
Brown (2000:256).

Krashen (1982) suggested that a distinction can be made between the two processes of learning a foreign language acquisition and learning. Acquisition refers to the subconscious process of picking up a language by being exposed to it, this process is similar to the way young children acquire their first language, they are not aware of the fact that they are developing their ability about language. Language acquirers are not conscious about the rules of the target language because they just use it for communication, where the emphasis is on the meaning rather than the form. On the other hand, learning refers to the process that involves grammar rules, memorization and conscious thinking about the structure of the language. Unlike acquisition, learning focuses on the form and not the meaning of the message conveyed. He asserted that foreign language learners should attempt to acquire the linguistic rules of the new language subconsciously and naturally, like a child who acquires his mother tongue.(1982 :10).

In the same context, Krashen et al (1987) (as cited in Ellis, 2012) suggested that teachers should focus on the acquisition instead of learning when teaching young learners. They reach some conclusions claiming that older children learn more than younger ones if they are exposed to the new language, they can achieve a higher proficiency more than adults when time and exposure are taken into account. (2012:19).

It is generally believed that young learners are better language learners, they learn an additional language easily, they acquire the language unconsciously because they are unaware of the rules, and they just focus on the meaning. This process is similar to first language acquisition; young learners rely on their feeling about what is correct and what is not, even if they do not know the rule. Harmer (2007) gave some conditions that help for the acquisition of the language. First, young learners need to hear the target language as much as possible; they have to be surrounded by that language. The second condition is that the teacher has to provide the right kind of exposure, it means using the appropriate language that can be understood by learners. The third condition is that the teacher needs to create opportunities and motivate his learners in order to help them in communication using the target language in real situations. (2007 :46-47).

Acquisition occurs when young learners comprehend how to use the language, Vygotsky (1978) (as cited in Hudelson, 1991) argued that acquisition takes place when learners figure out how the new language works; the learner makes and tests hypotheses about the language. For that reason, the teacher should use the language correctly through employing short and simple sentences. In addition, Vygotsky (1978) indicated that the language acquisition takes place in social context, in this case, the teacher should use the target language for interaction in the classroom and he has to try to make natural conversation with young learners as if they were in the society. Hudelson (1991:256).

As has been noted, young learners acquire more than they learn, they acquire the new language effectively if they are surrounded by meaningful, simple and understandable input, they should be given time to sort out the language they hear in order to comprehend it, then, use it for their own expressive purposes. Unlike adult learners who use their conscious knowledge to learn a language, young learners acquire the new language subconsciously. The teacher in fact has a significant role in helping young learners' acquisition, he need to prepare and plan lessons that fit his learners' needs and interests. He has to adapt his teaching to his learners' age since it can guide him to design activities, choose materials and select appropriate teaching strategies.

1-4 The Role of the Teacher:

Teaching Young learners a foreign language has been of particular concern, it is considered a as a rewarding, challenging and demanding profession. Brown (2000:90) has stated: "*It takes very special person to be able to teach children effectively.*" The role the teacher has is extremely important because teaching this type of learners recommends effective teaching strategies that fit their age, characteristics, needs and interests depending on their developmental stage.

It is already mentioned from the characteristics of young learners that they understand best through body movements and senses like hearing, touch and vision. It is important to use them when teaching, Halliwell (1992) argued that teachers should make use of gestures intonation, demonstration, actions and facial expressions as a support to the spoken language to convey the meaning accurately (1992:4). Similarly, Scott and Yterberg (1990)

supported this idea of including movements and senses because relying only on the spoken language is not enough. They have stated:

Most activities for young learners should include movements and involve the senses. You will need to have plenty of objects and pictures to work with, and to make full use of the school and your surroundings. Demonstrate what you want them to do. (1990:5)

Phillips (1993) also stressed the importance of illustration, she mentioned that vocabulary is learned effectively when the meaning of the new words is illustrated by a picture or an action, because words that are used in context are likely to help learners memorizing (1993:74). Further, Phillips emphasized the role of motivation in teaching English to young learners, she considered the teacher as responsible to create enjoyable activities. Furthermore, she stated some basic points that the teacher should respect. First of all, the activities should be simple for the learners to understand. Then, the tasks should fit their abilities. In addition, the activities have to be mainly orally because listening is a very important skill for children as well as practising the language in the classroom. (1993:5).

When teaching young learners an additional language, the teacher has to consider some principles that help learners to learn effectively. Cross (2007) highlighted these principles claiming that the teacher has to explore the new culture and make learners build an attitude towards learning. Then, he should encourage them to be familiar with the new language, environment and to feel good about their own identity. (2007:25). Young learners learn the language effectively when the teacher encourages them to make contribution in their mother tongue. The teacher should give his learners opportunities to practice the language, and to repeat the new words and phrases to learn them. Learning is achieved when young learners are introduced to the new language through playing; it is considered as a helpful tool for a successful teaching to children. Moreover, the teacher needs to give sufficient time when he asks his learners to respond orally. Further, it is important for the teacher to organize group work and provide motivation, challenge and support since young learners like sharing and collaboration. (ibid)

In the same context, Moon (2000) identified some conditions that help young learners acquiring the foreign language. First, it is important to give the appropriate time to young learners in order to learn English. Then, the teacher has to make his learners hear a lot of target language by being exposed to it both inside and outside the classroom. In addition, the language used by the teacher should be varied using spoken and written forms. Also, using meaningful input by the teacher is a crucial element in making learners understand and enhance their learning opportunities. Furthermore, the teacher has to establish English as the means of communication and interaction; he should focus on the meaning of the language used rather than the form. (2000:1-2).

The teacher has to be aware of the learners' basic physical and psychological needs, he has to provide the care, patience and flexibility because starting to learn English at an earlier age may not bring automatic improvements to proficiency levels, the teachers' awareness of his learners should adapt and meet the challenges that face them. Harmer argued that teachers of young learners should be professionals and competent language users of the foreign language in order to provide the right kind of input; he emphasized also the role of teachers' pronunciation precisely because children imitate a lot. (2007:83).

The English teacher has to be open-minded, adaptive and has a sense of humour. In addition, he should develop certain abilities like singing, acting, drawing and using mimes because young learners rely on the physical world to obtain the meaning. Teacher's greater responsibility is to develop a positive attitude toward his learners, respect them and treat them equally because they have a developed sense of fairness, and they need to know that their teacher likes them.

Another important responsibility is helping pupils to feel secure as it encourages them to feel anxiety-free in learning. Scott and Yterberg (1990:10) have stated:

Once children feel secure and content in the classroom, they can be encouraged to become independent and adventurous in the learning of the language. Security is not an attitude or ability, but it is essential if we want our pupils to get the maximum out of the language lessons.

In other words, a safe learning atmosphere is important for young learners because it helps them to focus and pay attention to the teacher. Learners' security is necessary; it supports the learning and brings success to each individual learner. Further, Brown (2000) emphasized the role of the teacher when dealing with young learners; he claimed that the teacher has to develop specific skills and intuitions. Therefore, he highlighted five categories that help them doing their job. First, the intellectual development, it is mentioned that young learners understand concrete things; they do not support abstract thinking. According to Piaget (1972), children up to the age of eleven are still in the concrete operation stage, they are in an intellectual development. Therefore, the teacher has to avoid using difficult grammar rules and abstract terms. It is preferred to use repetition, drilling and simple examples. Second, the attention span which is one of the prominent differences between adults and children. Young learners usually have short attention span when the teacher uses boring materials or difficult activities. It is the teachers' role to make lessons interesting, lively and fun; it is important to vary the activities, use humour and animation to attract children's' attention and engage them to learn. Third, the sensory input in consideration to this kind of input, activities should vary in terms of its nature, including the visual and auditory modes because children learn through senses. The teacher has to design lessons that contain physical activities such as totally physical response, playing games and role plays. In addition, the use of non-verbal language is important since children understand more through gestures, facial expressions and touching. Moreover, the use of sensory aids like audio-visual aids, pictures and music is very effective for learning

The fourth category is affective factors. The teacher needs to help his learners to overcome some mistakes because children are very sensitive and fragile. Then, he should be patient, firm and support them as much as he can. Also, elicitation is an effective technique especially with passive learners; it gives them opportunities to practice the language. The last category is the use of authentic and Meaningful language. The language used by the teacher should be understood and comprehensible to learners, also it needs to be authentic; Little et al (1988) (as cited in Cook, 2008) supported this idea and gave two justifications for the use of authentic language. The first reason is that learners will be motivated and the second is acquisition-promoting content which means that authentic language provides a rich source of natural input for the learners to acquire (2008:159). In addition, the teacher should also integrate the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and

writing) in order to help learners see connections and learn the language as a whole. Brown (2000:87.90).

Furthermore, Harmer (2007) presented some conclusions about the way the classroom of young learners should be. First, the classroom needs to be organized with colourful painting; it is preferable to provide enough rooms for various activities like group work and role plays. Second, young learners like discovering. The teacher should use activities that activate their imagination like puzzle, drawing and acting. Finally, the effective classroom includes playing in addition to learning because using games enable children to learn and develop social and cognitive skills. Young learners learn best when they have fun and enjoy themselves (2007:83).

To summarize, teaching children a foreign language brings a number of challenges. The teacher should be highly skilled to understand cognitive development of the learners and recognize their needs and interests. In addition, he has to reach their world and help them to develop thinking and understanding about the new language. The teacher's main role is to establish conditions for his learners like creating activities that serve their needs and increase their motivation in order to practice the language successfully. Further, the nature of teachers' input and the time he spends talking can influence the learners' language acquisition.

1-4-1 The Teacher's Talk:

The study of the language that the teacher uses in the language classroom has captured the attention of many researchers. The language used by teachers plays an important role because the success of teaching as well as the students' learning depends mainly on the way the teacher talks to his learners. Through the teacher's talk, the teacher can pass his knowledge, organize the classroom and give activities. Many definitions of teacher's talk have been given by different researchers, Sinclair and Brazil (1982:10) defined it as "*The language in the classroom that takes the major portion of class time employed to give directions, explain activities and check students' understanding*".

In other words, the language used by the teacher in the classroom is the source of the input. It is employed to instruct language communication and organize activities and create interaction with the learners and check their comprehension. Additionally, Ellis (1985) formulated his view about teacher talk and argued that it refers to the special language used by the teacher in front of the students in the classroom. (1985:145).

Richards (1992:147) mentioned that teacher's talk is very crucial for the teaching process. He claimed that it is important for communication and interaction because it is the simplification of the style and the speech of the teacher in order to fit learners' level. Cook (2008) similarly considered it as a particularly important element in the language classroom because it makes up around 70 per cent of the classroom language. In addition, he clarified that the teacher has to know how to use the language while teaching. He has to manage the class through a type of language, at the same time letting students acquire another type. Moreover, he has to adapt his grammatical structure and vocabulary according to his learners' level. (2008: 156).

From these definitions, it is understood that teacher's talk in the language classroom is a communicative activity in which the teacher talks and interacts with his learners to develop their foreign language proficiency. Further, it plays a significant role in the process of foreign language learning. Nunan (1999) supported this idea, he stated:

Teacher talk is of crucial importance, not only for the organization of the classroom but also for the processes of acquisition. It is important for the organization and management of the classroom because it is through language teachers either succeed or fail in implementing their teaching plans. In terms of acquisition, teacher talk is important because it is probably the major source of comprehensible target language input the learner is likely to receive. (1999:189).

The way the teacher talks to his learners is essential for learners' language acquisition especially young learners who need to receive input as much as possible. In addition, it is useful for managing the classroom and can determine the teachers' success or failure in his proficiency. In the same context, Walsh (2006) indicated that the language used by the teacher is an interactive device because learning is effective when the teacher understands

the link between his talk, interaction and learning opportunities (2006:169). Additionally, Rowe (2004) considered the teacher's talk as the most habitual and examined aspect of the classroom. He asserted that the teacher's language is difficult because it is linked to other aspects of the classroom events (2004:10).

Further, Harmer (1998) maintained that the way the teacher talks to learners is one of his important skills; the teacher should adapt his language according to the audience. He illustrated the teacher and young learner with parents and their children. Parents simplify the language to their young children in order to make it comprehensible and understood regarding their age and capacities, the teacher should act like parents and use physical movements, gestures, expressions and mime as an aid for his learners particularly young learners who are beginners (1998:3). Finally, repetition, reformulation, elaboration and comments are important features in the teacher's classroom talk because the teacher has to modify the form of the language in order to pass the knowledge of the lesson to all students including interaction, repetition and feedback Cullen (2002:122).

For the foreign language young learners, the teacher should expose his students to the target language. This kind of language refers to the teacher's talk that is crucial for the acquisition of the new language; it creates interaction between the teacher and his learners. Therefore, the teacher should be wise and select the appropriate language that makes them understand and feel comfortable. He has to talk consciously in the classroom in order to facilitate learning and improve students' level. Further, it is important to provide the optimal comprehensible input for young learners.

1-4-2 The Importance of the Language Input

All theories of foreign language acquisition argue that learners have to be exposed to a considerable amount of the target language. This language that the learner receives is called the language input which is important for the acquisition process mainly for young learners who need many opportunities to hear the language. The input hypothesis is the central concern of Krashen's five hypothesis of language acquisition. Krashen (1982) (as cited in Brown, 2000) argued that the language learner must receive comprehensible input

through reading and listening to the target language, this input should be slightly above their current level Brown (2000:256).

It is important for the acquirer to obtain the right kind of input that fits his level, the input that is meaningful, challenging and leads to the improvement of his competence. The input hypothesis is defined by Krashen (1982) as follows: “*We acquire by understanding language that contains structure a little beyond our current level of competence ($i + 1$). This is done with the help of context or extra-linguistic information.*” (1982:21).

In other words, the learner acquires the language by understanding the input that is a little beyond his level. Krashen described the learner's present level as i , and the level that follows as $i+1$ that is the language that follows the learner's level of competence. In addition, Vanpatten and Benati (2010:36) have stated: “*In the vast majority of theories and approaches to second language acquisition, input is a critical variable as it is a major data source for the language learner.*”

The language learner needs a source of information to acquire the language, the input is extremely important for this process. The teacher has to expose his learners to meaningful and comprehensible input, Krashen (1982) suggested that learners acquire the new language effectively when they receive input that is slightly above their level, as a result students will use their learning strategies such as guessing the meaning of words from the context. Additionally, he took a very strong position emphasizing the importance of input; he considered comprehensible input as all that is necessary for learners to acquire the target language successfully (1982:21).

The teacher should consider the significance of the language input because when learners are exposed to that input, they will get opportunities to develop their capacities, skills and knowledge. Gass and Slinner (1994) mentioned a distinction between input and intake, they described input as “*all exposure to the language*” and defined intake as “*what is actually internalized*”; this means that the input is what learners receive, and intake is what they understand and comprehend. For this reason, it can be said that not all input leads to successful language acquisition, the input needs to be comprehensible. Gass and Slinner emphasized this view stating that: “*Without understanding the language, no learning can take place. Although understanding alone does not guarantee that learning will take place, it does set the scene for learning to take place*” (1994:200)

In order to make acquisition happen, it is essential that the nature of input adapt the level of learners' understanding. Krashen (1981) supported this idea and presented three categories of input that help learners to acquire the language; teacher's talk, foreigner's talk and interlanguage. First, the teacher's talk refers to the classroom language that is used to instruct activities, explain, and manage the learning environment. Second, the foreigner's talk is defined as "*The simplified input native speakers give to less than fully competent speaker of their language in communicative situations.*"(1981:121). Third, interlanguage is imperfect foreign language that students speak; for example, when the learner is asked to speak in an oral activity in the target language classroom. Further, Krashen (1981) hypothesized that simple codes like teacher's talk, foreigner's talk and interlanguage are very important and useful in achieving initial levels of fluency (1981:124).

The teacher must expose his young learners to the target language providing input, this type of learners need opportunities to listen and read the new language. As mentioned before exposure to input is not enough because the quantity of input is crucial; it should be meaningful, understood, challenging and comprehensible to learners.

1-4-3 Making the Input Comprehensible:

The teacher should present meaningful input to his learners in order to make them understand, he should adapt his language, at the same time provide challenging input that is slightly beyond the learners' level. Also, the teacher can use the context and other support provided with his input. In addition, he should vary the quality of input. Linse (2005) suggested different ways that can be helpful for teachers to make the input comprehensible to young learners. These techniques are as follows:

- a- Set the stage. Provide context. For example, if the teacher is going to talk about farm animals, he may want to put up a bulletin board of a scene with pictures of cows, chickens, horses and other animals.
- b- Build schema by relating a new topic to the students' prior knowledge and experience.

- c- Provide a variety of input and a variety of visual, auditory and tactile input. Use props, realia and pictures. Use freely boxes (boxes with tactile items inside that children can feel and touch, such as items that are hard, soft, furry, smooth, metal and headphones at listening centers are often neglected but good source of input.
 - d- Make the classroom language rich with environmental print such as labels on the wall, posters with words and children's books.
 - e- Model each instruction as it is given. Be sure to give only one instruction at a time so that children can directly link the instruction with the actual directions.
 - f- Use language while performing different actions. For example, when opening a child's thermos, one could say: "I am opening your thermos for you, it is really hard"
- Linse (2005:13)

It is through making the input meaningful that language learning becomes beneficial; the teacher can make his learners acquire the target language effectively through simplifying the input and making it comprehensible. When the teacher modifies his speech to adapt the learners' level, he is helping them to provide answers. On the other hand, when learners ask for clarification, they are giving feedback for the teacher to make the input appropriate and understood

Successful learning to young learners is achieved when the teacher identifies their basic characteristics and needs. This part clarified the definition and characteristics of young learners, the way they think and understand, the role of teacher including the importance of the target language input. To summarize, teaching young learners requires specific skills and intuitions. The teacher should be aware of the fact that teaching young learners is different from teaching adults; he must consider their particular characteristics and cognitive development. In addition, he has to know how to use the kind of input that is clear and comprehensible because teacher's talk is the main source of input for learners. Another important factor is that the teacher should select the appropriate language for his young language learners.

2- The Use of the Mother Tongue in the Foreign Language Classroom:

The use of the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom has attracted a considerable amount of attention of many researchers; it has been a subject of debate. Numerous researchers claimed that the use of the mother tongue influence the foreign language learning negatively, they limited teachers to use the target language only when teaching. However, other researchers maintained that it can be beneficial and useful if it is used wisely.

The aim of this part is to provide a theoretical overview of the use of the mother tongue in foreign language teaching. It first deals with the mother tongue as a useful component in the classroom. Second, it presents some advantages of its use and highlights the use of translation. Then, it discusses the mother tongue as a harmful component including its overuse by teachers and by learners. Finally, this part deals with the importance of the target language use when dealing with a foreign language classroom.

2-1 The Mother Tongue as a Useful Component in the Classroom:

Generally, the term ‘mother tongue’ is defined as a language learnt before any other language. The mother tongue, first language and native language are essentially all the same though there are some instances when they mean different things. Pokharel (2001) defined it as follows: “*First Language, mother tongue and native tongue are common terms for the language which a person acquires first in his childhood because it is spoken in the family and/or it is the language of the country where he is living.*” (2001:201).

Teaching a foreign language requires teachers who give much importance to the learners’ level age and background. The mother tongue then is one of the main elements that have to be considered in the language classroom. Therefore, researchers gave many reasons for its use claiming that it has a useful role in the process of foreign language teaching and learning. Cook (2001) described the use of the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom as “*A door that has been firmly shut in language teaching for over a hundred years*” (2001:403).

Cook (2001) considered many arguments that linguists and teachers have about the topic. He claimed that first and foreign languages have two different systems and characteristics. Thus, learners should separate the two languages. In addition, he compared the process of the acquisition of the languages and assumed that when learners acquire

their first language, they do not use other language. In contrast, he considered the use of the mother tongue as positive by pointing out some contexts where it can be used positively in the foreign language classroom. He claimed that teachers can use the mother tongue for a number of reasons like teaching and explaining grammar, managing the classroom, checking the meaning and maintaining contact with the students. In the same context, Inbar-Lourie (2010) claimed that the connections between the new language and learners' previous knowledge could enhance the learning achievement because when students use the mother tongue, they are constructing knowledge. In addition, they will be involved in the learning process (2010:353).

Atkinson (1987) claimed that the use of the mother tongue brings a valuable element into the classroom because it enables learners to express themselves freely and allow them to say what they really want to say. In addition, when young learners have a limited vocabulary in the target language they can refer to the mother tongue. Forcing students to use the target language all the time may prevent them from participation. Therefore, teachers should encourage their learners to use the mother tongue when they have difficulties using the target language (1987:242). Moreover, Atkinson (1993) suggested some areas where the mother tongue can be supportive. First, it is beneficial in the lead in stage to save time because this stage should be quick; it also helps the teacher to make sure that all students have understood the situation. Second, the teacher can use the mother tongue to elicit information from the students when they face difficulties or they do not have enough vocabulary. Elicitation using the mother tongue is better than not at all. Third, the mother tongue is useful when giving instruction especially at lower levels or when teaching young learners. Some activities have difficult instruction; the use of students' mother tongue then is useful. Further, Atkinson clarified that a limited use of the mother tongue at the right time can be helpful for instance, when the teacher organizes group and pair work, correct students' mistakes or when giving feedback (1993:26).

Several studies about students and teachers' attitudes towards the use of the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom have demonstrated that both teachers and students support the use of the mother tongue when teaching. Schweers (1999) investigated the use of Spanish in English classes; he found that almost all of the students believed that the mother tongue is needed in the classroom because it provides better understanding of the target language. He also suggested that the mother tongue enables learners to develop a

positive attitude towards the foreign language. In addition, he indicated that the complete elimination of the mother tongue might be inappropriate and frustrating particularly with young learners (1999:10). In the same context, Nation (1990) supported this idea; he found that the prohibition of mother tongue would give more pressure on students and influence their learning negatively. Another study of Littlewood and Yu (2001) that suggested that teachers switch to the students' mother tongue in particular situations; first, when establishing social relationships with learners or communicating complex meaning to ensure students' understanding. They added that the MT can be used to save time, for instance to explain difficult grammar rules, give meaning to unknown words and maintain control over the classroom environment (2001:68). Furthermore, Brooks-Lewis argued that the mother tongue could be a useful resource for foreign language teaching because it promotes students' confidence in the classroom. In addition, it makes learning easy, meaningful and enjoyable (2009:234).

Many scholars have become increasingly aware of the role of the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom. Auerbuch (1993) as cited in Tang (2002) acknowledged the positive role of the mother tongue, she identified the following possible uses : classroom management, language analysis, presenting rules that govern grammar, discussing cross-cultural issues, giving instructions or prompts, explaining errors, and checking for comprehension. Similarly, Nation (2003) emphasized the significance of the mother tongue as a helpful device, he stated: "*The L1 needs to be seen as a useful tool that like other tools should be used where needed but should not be over-used*" (2003:5). In the same context, Tang (2002) supported this idea. He claimed that the mother tongue can aid and facilitate learning and teaching of the foreign language. His research highlighted that a limited use of the learners' mother tongue in English classes does not reduce the exposure to the target language, but rather can help the teaching process (2002:37).

There are some situations where the use of the mother tongue is necessary. First, the teacher can use the mother tongue to convey or check students' comprehension because when they receive the input, they recognize the meaning using both the mother tongue and the target language. Then, the mother tongue can be useful when explaining difficult grammar rules when students are unable to understand. In addition, the teacher can use the mother tongue for organizing the tasks when students find difficulties in understanding the instruction of a task. It is a very useful technique because it leads to the effective learning.

Moreover, there is a need to maintain control in the classroom; therefore, the teacher can switch to the mother tongue in order to create a safe learning atmosphere. Further, the teacher can use it to maintain contact with individual student for instance when providing feedback or giving personal remarks to students. Furthermore, it can be used for testing because when the teacher tests students, he is testing their abilities in addition to their understanding of instructions. In contrast, the use of the mother tongue should be minimized, except some specific situations like working within activities. Cook (2001:144-147).

At the light of these studies, it is clear that there is a general agreement on the reasonable use of mother tongue in the foreign classroom. It seems that it provides a sense of confidence on the part of students because it facilitates the acquisition of the target language and paves the way for learning. Many researchers believed that the mother tongue could be used as a mediating tool between teachers and students; it is helpful to create meaningful communication and encourages learners to express themselves effectively.

2-1-1 The Use of Translation:

In the last few decades, there has been an increasing interest in the translation practice in foreign language classrooms. Translation is seen as a helpful tool in the process of teaching a new language, it can be used as an aid to facilitate students' learning of the target language and teachers can use it as a technique when necessary.

According to Atkinson translation leads learners to focus on meaning and think comparatively, it helps them realize the differences between the target language and their mother tongue. Consequently, they will avoid many typical mistakes. It should be also mentioned that translation is a real-life activity, as learners might need the skill of translating from the mother tongue to the target language and vice versa in their future. Additionally, he said that sometimes learners feel frustrated when they are asked to carry out a discussion or a role play in the target language because they do not really understand, in this case, translation can be used as a technique to help them getting in the conversation (1987:245).

Translation in the foreign language classes is a pedagogical tool that enriches learners' competences. Duff (1989:6) stated that "*Translation happens everywhere, all the time, so why not in the classroom*" Duff gave several reasons for using translation in the classroom. First, he claimed that the mother tongue shapes the way we think, it cannot be ignored. Therefore, the use of translation helps students to understand better. Then, the second reason is highlighted in the following statement: "*Translation is a natural and necessary activity. More so, indeed, than many of the fashionable activities invented for language learners*" (1986:6). It means that translation is an important activity and teachers should consider it in the classroom. In addition, Duff maintained that translation helps learners to communicate in two ways; from the target language to the mother tongue and vice versa. Finally, he considered translation as a useful tool that develops some quantities in language learning, he had stated:

Translation develops three qualities essential to all language learning: accuracy, clarity, and flexibility. It trains the learner to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to convey what is meant (clarity). This combination of freedom and constraint allows the students to contribute their own thoughts to a discussion that has a clear focus on the text. Duff (1989:7)

In other words, Duff (1989) maintained that translation develops three important quantities that are essential for language learning and trains learners to search flexibility for the most appropriate words to convey clarity (1989:6-7). Additionally, Atkinson (1993) highlighted the role of the bilingual dictionary, he said that this kind of dictionary that gives lists of words and translations in the two languages (the mother tongue and the target language) could be helpful for learners because it combines translations and examples. Atkinson said that it has a significant role for young learners and beginners as it helps them know new words. He added that the use of the bilingual dictionary is supportive for learners who have a lack of vocabulary and those who are unfamiliar with the target language. It is the simplest solution for them (1993:95). Similarly, Nation (2003:4) supported the idea of using the bilingual dictionary, he claimed that it has useful information and can simplify the language for lower proficiency learners.

To summarize, translation is an important domain in language teaching. The teacher should involve it when necessary to develop learners' autonomy and raise language

awareness. Translation is a useful device in the foreign learning process, it is considered as an aid to enhance learning, promote understanding and enrich vocabulary.

2-1-2 Some Advantages of the Use of the Mother Tongue:

Many researches has shown that besides translation, the mother tongue has several advantages, it can be used in some particular situations in order to make learners engaged in the learning process, and helps them understanding more effectively.

Al-Hinai (2011) highlighted some advantages of using the mother tongue in the classroom; he summarized the ideas of other researchers. First, the use of the mother tongue reduces learners' anxiety and creates a relaxing safe learning atmosphere. Second, it is a means of bringing the learners' cultural background knowledge into the classroom. Third, it enables the teacher to check understanding and simplify the instructions. Four, it is a facilitating tool for the tasks when it is used to explain the meaning of abstract and difficult words. Also, the mother tongue can be helpful for introducing the differences of grammar and pronunciation between the target language and the mother tongue (2011:1).

Butzkamm (2003) as cited in Judallah highlighted presented other advantages and Hassan (2011:6) they are as follows:

- a- The mother tongue gives a sense of security and helps learners to be stress-free.
- b- A foreign language friendly asset people bring to the task of foreign language learning.
- c- The use of the mother tongue saves learners from a feeling of frustration they might have within their foreign language learning.
- d- The mother tongue techniques allow teachers to use richer and more authentic texts, which mean more comprehensible input and faster acquisition.
- e- All-newly-acquired and foreign language items have to sink roots in our minds which are eventually deep enough for the items to function independently of the mother tongue.

The mother tongue can be a learning tool to observe the differences and similarities between the two language systems. In addition, it can help in creating a safe environment for learners especially beginners if teachers use it appropriately and wisely. It is a

supporting technique for learners. However, it involves a risk because it can discourage the target language practice and communication.

2-2 The Mother Tongue as a Harmful Component in the Classroom:

There are many researchers who criticized the use of the mother tongue and supported the monolingual approach which bans the mother tongue from the classroom, they believe that using the target language only increases the chances for learning and creates a realistic language environment for learners. However, they claimed that the use of the mother tongue affect the learning process negatively. Consequently, they suggested that language teachers should speak only the target language in the classroom particularly when teaching young learners and beginners.

The supporters of the monolingual approach suggest that learners should be exposed to the target language as much as possible in order to be able to think using it. Sharma (2006) stated that *“The more students are exposed to English, the more quickly they will learn; as they hear and use English, they will internalize it to begin to think in English; the only way they will learn it is if they are forced to use it.”* (2006:80).

Additionally, Cook (2001) who is not a supporter to this approach identified three principles of using the target language only. First, It is considered that the acquisition of the target language is similar to the process of the child’s acquisition of his mother tongue; this process is based on the exposure of the language. It is commonly believed that the language classroom is often the students’ only exposure. Therefore, the language teachers need to minimize the use of the mother tongue. Then, the distinction between the two languages is the key for successful learning. Finally, the teacher needs to make his learners aware of the importance of the target language by using it all the time (2001:412). Moreover, Campla & Nassaji claimed that the exclusive use of the target language is the only way to teach a new language, hence, the use of the mother tongue should be excluded from the classroom (2009:743). In regards to Cook’s second principle, the supporters of the monolingual approach have considered translation between the target language and the mother tongue harmful because it encourages the belief that there is one equivalent for each word between the two languages. Unlike the researchers who claimed that the mother tongue is useful, the supporters of the monolingual approach believed that the two languages should be separate and distinct. Concerning the Cook’s last point, it is shown

that the use of the target language only can demonstrate its importance and portray its usage. Furthermore, Harbord in Campa and Nassaji (2009:743) argued that the use of the mother tongue by teachers in the foreign language classroom is a sign of their insufficient training.

Atkinson (1996) who supported the use of the mother tongue in the classroom, stated that *“Every second spent using the L1 is a second not spend using English! And every second counts!”* (1996:12). He presented some examples where the use of the mother tongue is inappropriate. First, in listening activities, the mother tongue can be destructive because it might break the concentration of the learners. Second, drills and games, requires the use of the target language only because the main objective of these techniques is to let the learner practice the language. Third, creative activities where the students are asked to produce original examples using the target language, the use of the mother tongue in this situation would struggle learning. It is also recommended that learners, instead of translating, they have to express themselves, and should be encouraged to search for words they already know to express the same thought. Atkinson (1993:32-38). In the same context, Krashen (1982) suggested that there is no difference between the acquisition of the mother tongue and the foreign language. According to him, infants acquire the mother tongue by listening to the spoken language that is meaningful by being exposed to considerable amount of the target language. Furthermore, Turnbull (2001) in Hall & Cook (2012) pointed out that the teacher should use as much target language as possible in the classroom because it is the place when students spent only a short period of time. He believed that the exclusive use of the target language in the classroom is a useful tool for the successful learning of a language (2012:292).

To conclude, some researchers believed that the use of mother tongue by the language teachers is harmful for many reasons. First, when the teacher uses and allows the use of the mother tongue, students will take it as a habit and use it inappropriately. Then, using the mother tongue decreases the amount of the comprehensible input that is needed for the acquisition of the target language. Further, when using it regularly, the learners will be confused and make mistakes because the two languages differ in terms of structure and system. Therefore, the teacher should consider these drawbacks and try to minimize the use of the mother tongue.

2-2-1 The Overuse of the Mother Tongue by Teachers:

The use of the mother can help learners understand how the target language works, if it is used in an appropriate way. However, it should be used only in particular situations because it can be harmful for learners if it is overused by teachers. Atkinson (1987:246) listed the following problems of overusing the mother tongue in the classroom:

- a- The teacher and the students begin to feel that they have not really understood any item of language until it has been translated.
- b- The teacher and the students fail to observe the distinctions between equivalence of form, semantic equivalence, and pragmatic features, and thus oversimplify to the point of using crude and inaccurate translation.
- c- Students speak to the teacher in the mother tongue as a matter of course, even when they are capable of expressing what they mean.
- e- Students fail to realize that during many activities in the classroom it is essential that they use only English.

In other words, the mother can be seriously superfluous when the teacher begins to feel that he needs to use it regularly to make things clear. In addition, when the teacher gets the habit of translation, they can use inaccurate equivalents. Then, if the teacher overuses the mother tongue in the classroom, his learners will imitate him and use it even when they can use the target language.

The mother tongue is considered as a risk when the teacher presents new vocabulary without trying to use simple words in the target language. Scrivener (2005) suggested some solutions to encourage teachers to use the target language instead of the mother tongue when presenting new vocabulary; for instance, using miming, facial expressions, drawing, flash cards, diagram and graphs (2005:235). Additionally, Atkinson (1996) presented situations in which the mother tongue can be overused. First, when giving instruction, the teacher sometimes uses the mother tongue even if the instruction is simple. In this case, Atkinson emphasized the importance of the target language because using the mother tongue too much makes young learners consider the target language as something happens only in drills, instead, he advised teachers to use mimes and gestures (1996:16). Scrivener

(2005:90) shared the same idea, he advised teachers to use short and clear instruction with demonstration or illustration. Then, Atkinson (1996) presented another reason for the overuse of the mother tongue which is the teacher's lack of confidence or the fear of students' mistakes. He suggested that even the teacher's imperfect use of the target language is beneficial than overusing the mother tongue, also he added that making mistakes is a part of learning (ibid). In addition, Atkinson claimed that many young learners actually understand their teachers much earlier than their ability to speak, therefore, it is important for the teacher to expose his learners to the target language and avoid the unnecessary use of the mother tongue (ibid p15-17).

The overuse of the mother tongue by teachers can become harmful for young learners because they need to listen to the target language as much as possible. Atkinson (1993:13) stated that: "*Quite simply, too much use of the L1 is probably the simple biggest danger in any monolingual class*". Therefore, the teacher should be aware and use the mother tongue appropriately without affect students' learning.

2-2-2 The Overuse of the Mother Tongue by Learners:

Foreign language teachers need to be careful about the use of the appropriate language when teaching young learners because if the teacher overuses the mother tongue, it can become an obstacle for the creation of an effective learning environment.

Many situations occur in which learners imitate the teacher and use the mother tongue instead of the target language; it can be seriously harmful and influence their learning. Willis (1992) claimed that learners should be allowed to use the target language only in the classroom, she considered the use of the mother tongue by students without permission as a signal of danger (1992:xiv). In addition, Atkinson (1996:49) highlighted two reasons for the use of the mother tongue by learners. He claimed that they overuse it either when the teacher gives unclear instructions or when they finish the activities before the given time. Therefore, it is important that teachers should be careful when giving instructions and planning the time. Similarly, Scrivener (2005) indicated various reasons that lead young learners to overuse the mother tongue, he presented them from a learners' perspective. He has stated:

Because it is easier to speak my own language. Because the teacher always corrects me if I speak English. Because I do not want to get it wrong in front of others. Because it is not 'in' to speak in English. Because the teacher is only pretending not to understand my own language. I need to use my own language because I cannot say what I want in English. Because the teacher cannot hear me – so why should I bother? Because it is silly to speak English. It is much easier to communicate in the language we all understand. (2005:100-101)

In other words, Learners might feel embarrassed when they use the mother tongue because they are unfamiliar with the target language, Scrivener (2005) advised teachers to create a supportive learning atmosphere and decrease the use of the mother tongue. He suggested some helpful ideas for foreign teachers. Firstly, the teacher can make the classroom a motivating place to learn by surrounding learners by English posters, pictures and listening materials. Then, it is better to clarify the matters to learners such as classroom rules, stages of the lesson and the aim of each activity. In addition, the teacher can encourage learners to use the target language by giving a positive feedback to any effort using it (ibid).

Although these ideas have limited success, they can be beneficial to avoid the overuse of the mother tongue. It is important to minimize the use of the mother tongue by learners; the teacher has to expose them to the target language in order to develop their confidence using the language and motivate them to learn, also he can encourage them to think in the target language in early stages.

2-3 The Importance of the Target Language in the Classroom:

Learners cannot learn a new language without listening to a considerable amount of the target language. The teacher should be aware of its importance, he should know when to use it and when not. In addition, he needs to use a range of options to encourage learners to use it as much as possible.

Atkinson stated that *"If English is not the main language in the classroom, the learners are not going to learn very much English"* (1996:12). Thus, it is advised to use the

target language as the primary language even if the mother tongue has a useful role. Additionally, there are many reasons for the maximum use of the target language. According to Inbar-Lourie (2010), learners exposure to the target language “*Can bring about language learning gains in the form of effective and confident language use, as well as intercultural competence*” (2010:352). When learners are exposed to the target language, they will be encouraged and motivated to learn because they gain a self confidence in the language. Similarly, Willis (1992:xiii) highlighted the importance of practicing the target language as much as possible, she clarified that the aim of learning a language is to be able to communication in real life situations. Therefore, the use of the target language in the classroom helps learners to be familiar with the language. Further, Willis mentioned that when teaching beginners, gestures, tone voice, and facial expressions are more essential than the actual words when the teacher communicate with young learners (ibid).

Moon (2001) discussed the importance of using the target language as the main language in the classroom when teaching young learners. He claimed that it increases the amount of exposure and then enables them to receive sufficient comprehensible input that is essential for the process of acquisition. It also motivates students to learn and encourage them to think. Further, the use of the target language can develop learners’ fluency and enables them to think using the target language in early stages (2001:63).

When dealing with young learners, it is important for the teacher to develop some strategies for the use of the target language as the main language classroom in order to build up children’s confidence using it. The teacher has to obtain certain interaction skills and use appropriate words because young learners do not have all the basics of the target language. The teacher’s talk is the main source of input that is needed to acquire the language. Additionally, the teacher needs to use simple language and formulate messages in a way that fits the learners’ level because learners learn when they are involved and they may refuse to learn if they do not understand. Moon suggested some ways that can be used by the teacher to help his young learners to understand. First, the teacher can introduce a game if the learners do not comprehend. He can also write down what he said and repeat it in another way. Second, he can encourage them by making them aware of the importance of using the target language in the classroom. Third, in order to know whether the language

used is comprehensible, the teacher can record himself analyze his talk then, identify the language and simplify it. Moreover, he can observe other teachers and notice their use of language (ibid).

When the teacher establishes English as the main language in the classroom, he is improving the learners' listening skill which has a significant role in learning a language. Young learners have a limited number of lessons; therefore, they need to listen to the teacher using the target language as much possible. As a result, young learners will be familiar with the language system and structure Willis (1992:1). Harmer supported this idea, he said that teachers should respond only to the use of the target language and keep reminding students that it must be predominant in all the lessons. (2007:178). Further, Atkinson (1996:12) claimed that listening to the target language is important because it helps learners acquiring new language items unconsciously. Willis highlighted other examples of the importance of listening to the target language:

At the end of the year, a class taught English mainly in English, will have learnt how to listen to the flow of English, to infer points from intonation and stress. They will be familiar with using to the language for two-way communication, asking as well as answering questions; they will have acquired patterns and lexis they have not specifically been taught, owing to the repetitive nature of classroom situations. They will learn to recognize advanced structures at an early stage. This will be a great help to them later when they are asked to produce these structures themselves. (1992:1).

Furthermore, Willis (1992) maintained that foreign language teachers should consider some key points. In the first place, learners should be aware of the importance of the target language in the classroom. The teacher has to explain that practice is important for successful learning; he has to motivate them using the target language. In addition, it is equally important to tell students that making mistakes is a natural part in learning a new language. In addition, encouragement and praise for those who use the target language is needed. Finally, Willis emphasized the significance of communication because when dealing with young learners, gestures, demonstrations and non-verbal communication when necessary are crucial without the need for translation. (1992:xiii-3).

The use of the target language in foreign language classroom is essential for young learners' learning, it is perceived to be one of the fundamental conditions for language acquisition. When the teacher is aware of its importance, his learners will develop the ability to communicate using it and this is the main purpose of learning a language. As Atkinson (1993:4) pointed out: "*Failure to engender enough use of the target language in the classroom is one of the major methodological reasons for poor achievement levels in language learning*". Therefore, the successful learning is linked with the use of the target language as the main language in the classroom.

Conclusion:

Teaching young learners a foreign language needs competent and experienced teachers who know the characteristics, the cognitive development and the way these learners learn a new language. In addition, this profession requires teachers who are aware of the use of appropriate language in the appropriate situation because the use of the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom is a controversial issue; some researchers believed that it affects the learning process negatively. However, others claimed that it could be useful if the teacher used it appropriately in certain situations. Moreover, the use of the target language is important, it should be the main language used for communication and interaction in the foreign language classroom. The first part of this chapter provided an overview of teaching young learners. First, it presented the definition, the characteristics and the cognitive development of young. Second, it introduced the process of their foreign language acquisition. Third, it highlighted the role of the teacher, teacher's talk and the language input. Further, it dealt with some techniques that make the input comprehensible to young learners. The second part clarified the issue of using the mother tongue from two different perspectives; as useful and harmful for young learners. First, it dealt with the mother tongue as a useful component and presented some advantages including the use of translation. Then, it discussed the use of the mother tongue as a harmful component highlighting its overuse by both teachers and learners. Finally, this part dealt with the use of the target language in the foreign language classroom. The following chapter will be the practical part that investigates the use of the mother tongue when teaching young learners.

Chapter Two:

Data Presentation and Methodology

Chapter two

1- Introduction:

The first chapter presented a theoretical background about the use of the mother tongue in teaching English to young learners. The present chapter aims to investigate this issue focusing on the situations in which teachers use the mother tongue in the classroom. It provides the description of the methodology of this research including the classroom observation and the questionnaire. This chapter will be devoted to the essential practical part. First, it includes the description of the observation followed by the analysis of the results. Second, it presents the questionnaire that aims at finding out teachers' use of the mother tongue in the second year middle school classrooms, and then the discussion and the analysis of the results of the questionnaire will be in details.

2- Methodology:

Methodology is the practical way to achieve the aim of a research, it enables the researcher to explain the nature of the data and select the appropriate methods to process the collected data in order to generate the findings at the end of the research (Leedy, 1993). The methodology simplifies the way when dealing with problematic topics such as using the mother tongue in teaching. The observation and the questionnaire are the data tools chosen for this study. The observation is prepared to collect qualitative data and the questionnaire is planned to collect quantitative data in order to gain deeper understanding and obtain credibility.

The observation was conducted to second year Ziane Djillali middle school, Relizane, Algeria. The choice of the population is due to many reasons, second year students are young learners and this is a part of the present research. Young learners are beginners, thus the use of the mother tongue by their teachers is controversial. On the one hand, the English language is a new foreign language to them, and they do not know a lot about it. On the other hand, they have to be exposed to English in order to acquire it. It was helpful to work on two classes; the first class consists of 33 students while the second consisted of 36 students. The age of learners was between '11 and 13' years old, the two classes were observed between 19th and 26th February at Ziane Djillali Middle school. Through the

observation, I focused on the situations in which the Algerian dialect was used; therefore, I attended two classes with two different teachers.

The questionnaire is mainly designed for teachers who are in charge of teaching young learners in order to investigate their use of the mother tongue when teaching. In this study, the questionnaire is designed for teachers purposefully because they take the task seriously and provide accurate information. The sample of the questionnaire consisted of seven teachers in order to investigate the use of the mother tongue in their classes when teaching young learners. In addition, the questionnaire investigated the way teachers teach English to young learners.

2-1 The Observation:

Observation is a systematic method that helps to collect both rich and in depth qualitative and quantifiable data. The present study is about ‘the use of the mother tongue in teaching young learners, two classes of second year middle school (two teachers and Sixty-three students were observed) from two different classes. The process of observation took a week; three hours for each class i.e. six lessons. We needed more time but they started exams.

In order to gather information, a direct observation was employed which means that all participants know about the research presence and that they are observed. The observation in this research is structured because a set of objectives and an observation table that enables me to obtain numerical data was prepared in advance. The focus is on the situations in which the Algerian dialect is used and not on the amount of time spent using it in the classroom. In addition, recording was used in order to write down all the Algerian dialect utterances used by teachers in the classroom.

An observation table was created to write down every occurrence of the teachers’ use of the Algerian dialect. Some of the examples used by Camba & Nassaji (2009) who examined the use of the mother tongue are formulated and used in the observation, for instance the use of the mother tongue in elicitation, comprehension check, humour, explanation, giving instruction and evaluation. The observation sheet consisted of fourteen categories, and included the use of the mother tongue in three areas interaction, language and managing the classroom. When gathering data, an extra sheet was used concerning the

basic information like the teacher’s gender, years of teaching, number of learners and the materials used in the classroom.

2-2 The Analysis of the Results:

After the collection of data from the two classes of second year middle school, the results are presented according to the use of the Algerian dialect by teachers in three areas: interaction, language and managing the classroom. The results include all the observed lessons taught by each individual teacher.

a- Interaction:

The graph bellow represents the use of the Algerian dialect by the two teachers within classroom interaction. The results of the two classes are presented in the graph.

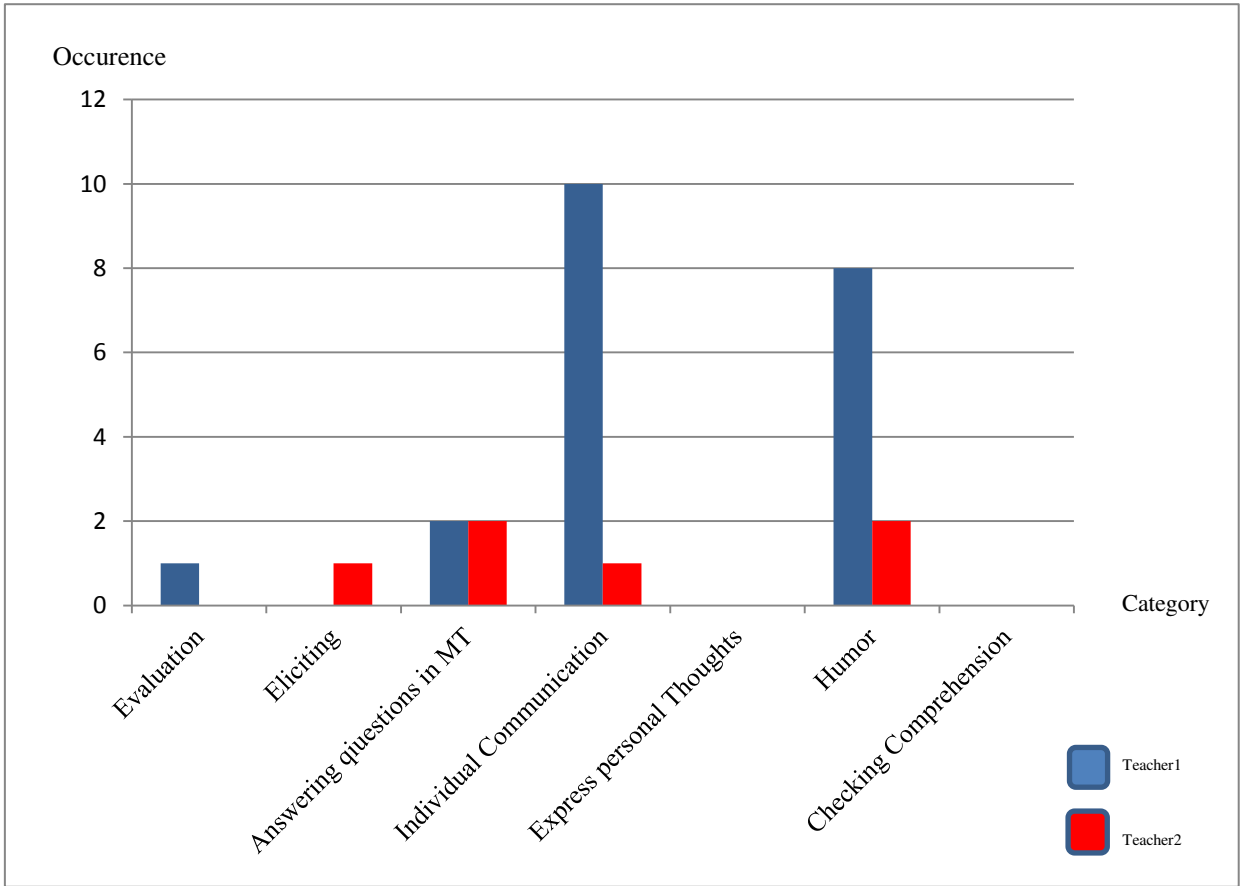


Figure 1: The Use of Algerian Dialect by the two Teachers for Interaction.

As it is evident from the graph, the most frequent situation in which the mother tongue is used in classroom interaction is individual communication with learners. Teacher 1 used the Algerian dialect ten times in the three lessons altogether. However, teacher 2 used it just once for this category. Very similar number (eight times) occurred also in the category of humour by teacher 1. On the other hand, teacher 2 used it just twice for making humour in the classroom. Another category that is the use of the mother tongue to answer students' questions in which both teachers used it twice. In addition, teacher 1 did not use the mother tongue to elicit information from students. Teacher 2 used it once. Moreover, teacher 1 used the mother tongue once for evaluating his learners, whereas teacher 2 did not use it for this purpose. Both teachers did not use the mother tongue neither for explaining personal thoughts nor for checking students' comprehension.

b- Language:

The graph bellow represents the distribution of occurrence of the mother tongue (the Algerian dialect) by the two teachers in the area of language; results from both classes which were observed are presented in the graph.

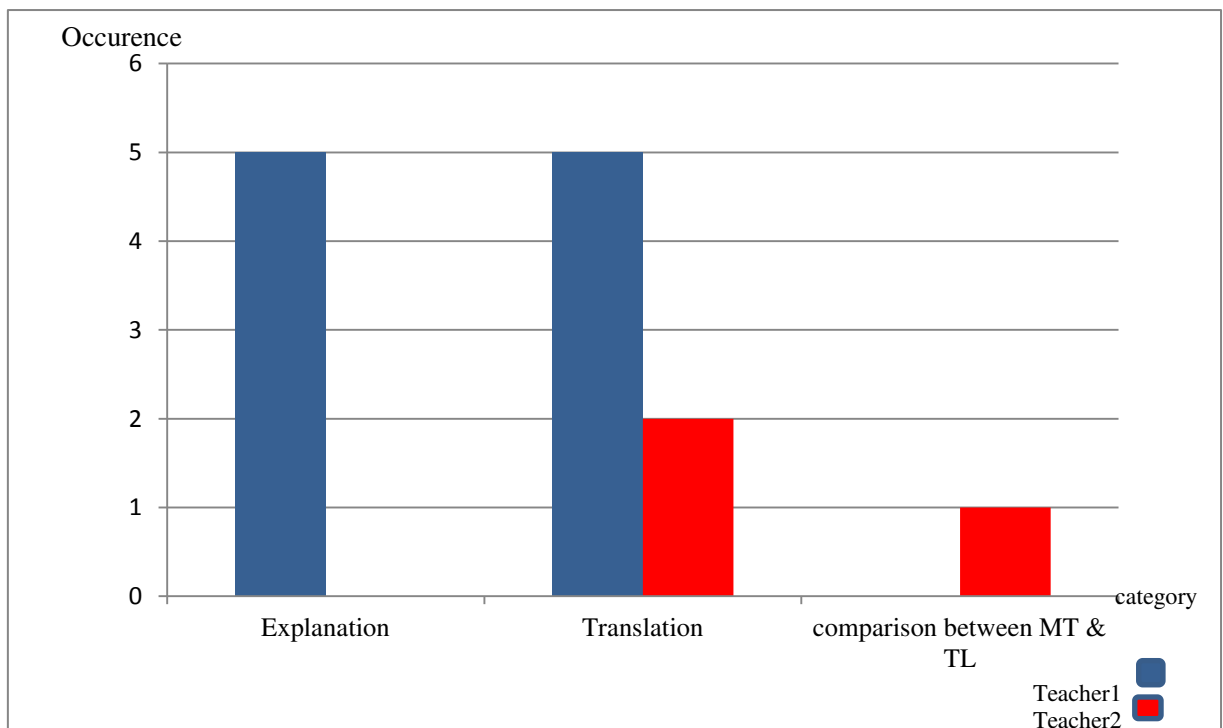


Figure 2: The Use of the Algerian dialect by the two Teachers for Language.

In the three observed lessons taught by teacher1, the Algerian dialect occurred five times in the category of explanation for instance, when he explained the use of ‘s’ and ‘es’ in the plural form and when talking about the deletion of the subject in the imperative form. However, teacher 2 did not use the mother tongue to explain grammar. Similarly, teacher 1 used the translation of unknown words like ‘mint’, ‘insomnia’ and ‘to draw’ five times whereas Teacher 2 used it twice, when translating the words: request and duty. In contrast to the use of the mother tongue for the purpose of explanation and vocabulary translation, teacher1 did not use the mother tongue to compare between the two languages (the Algerian dialect and English). Teacher two used Arabic twice to compare the structure of the two languages.

c- Managing the classroom:

The distribution of Arabic used by both teachers within the observed lessons in the area of managing the classroom is presented in the following graph:

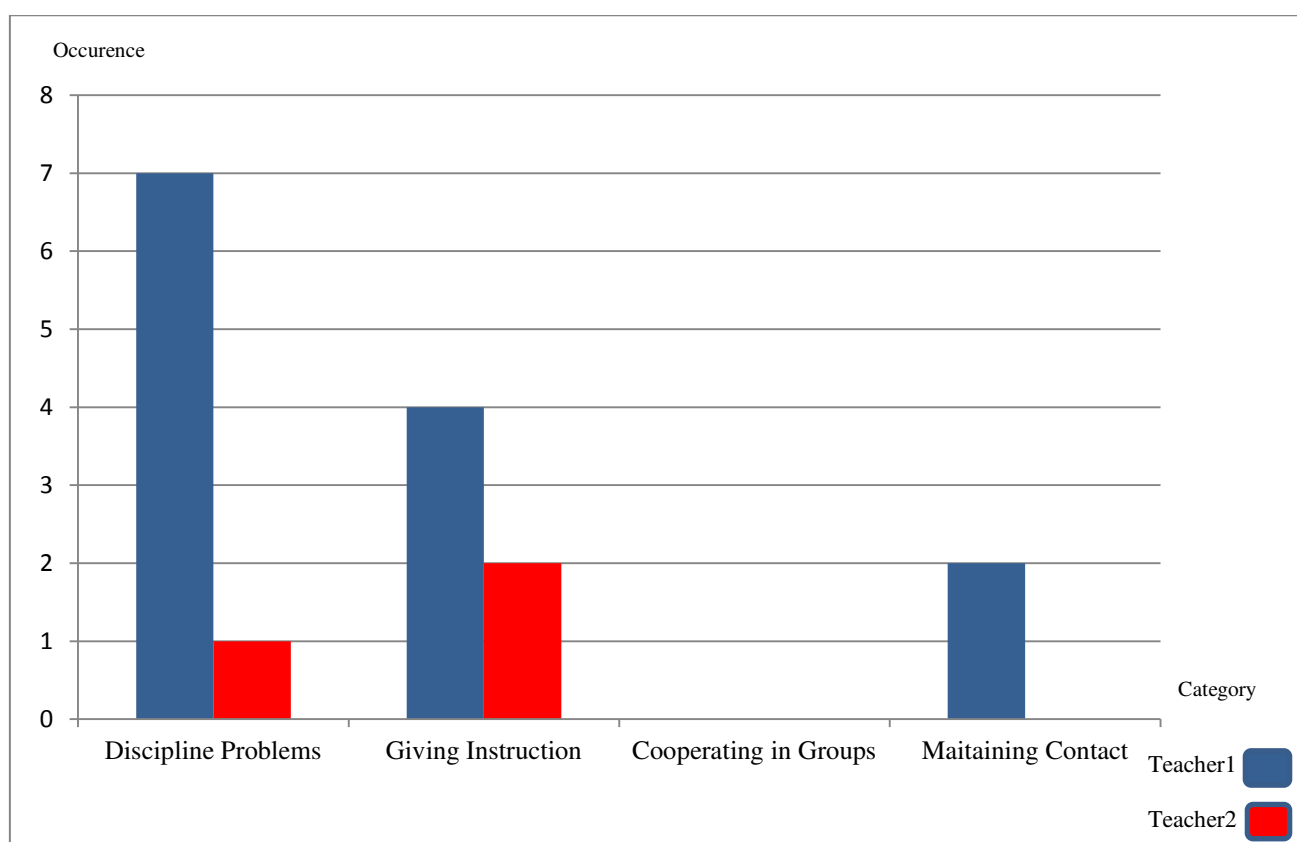


Figure 3: The Use of the Algerian dialect by the two teachers for Managing the Classroom.

As it is clear from the graph, the most frequent occurring category of the mother tongue used by teacher 1 was for managing discipline problems (seven times). According to the additional note in the observation sheet, discipline problems occurred because one class is noisy. There were two learners who disrupt the lessons, and this naturally leads the teacher to more frequent use of the mother tongue when dealing with such a situation. In contrast, teacher 2 used Arabic once when a learner interrupted her when explaining because he was talking loudly.

In the second category of using the mother tongue when giving instructions, Teacher1 used the Algerian dialect four times to clarify the instruction for an activity. However, teacher 2 used it twice when she wanted to simplify the instruction for her learners. Additionally, teacher 1 used the mother tongue twice for the purpose of maintaining contact with young learners, one time when she gave them the marks of the test and another time when she asked them why do we say “taken” and not “taked”. Teacher 2 did not use the mother tongue for this purpose. Moreover, both teachers did not use the Algerian dialect for managing group work because there were no collaborative activities in all the lessons.

d- The Most Common Situations of the Use of the Algerian Dialect:

In order to identify the most common situations of the mother tongue use and to say in which categories the mother tongue was used more frequently by both teachers. It is necessary to look at the overall use of the Algerian dialect in all the lessons. The total numbers of occurrence of the mother tongue use within the individual category in all the observed classes altogether are presented in the following graph. Further, it highlights the varying amount of the use of the mother tongue by teachers.

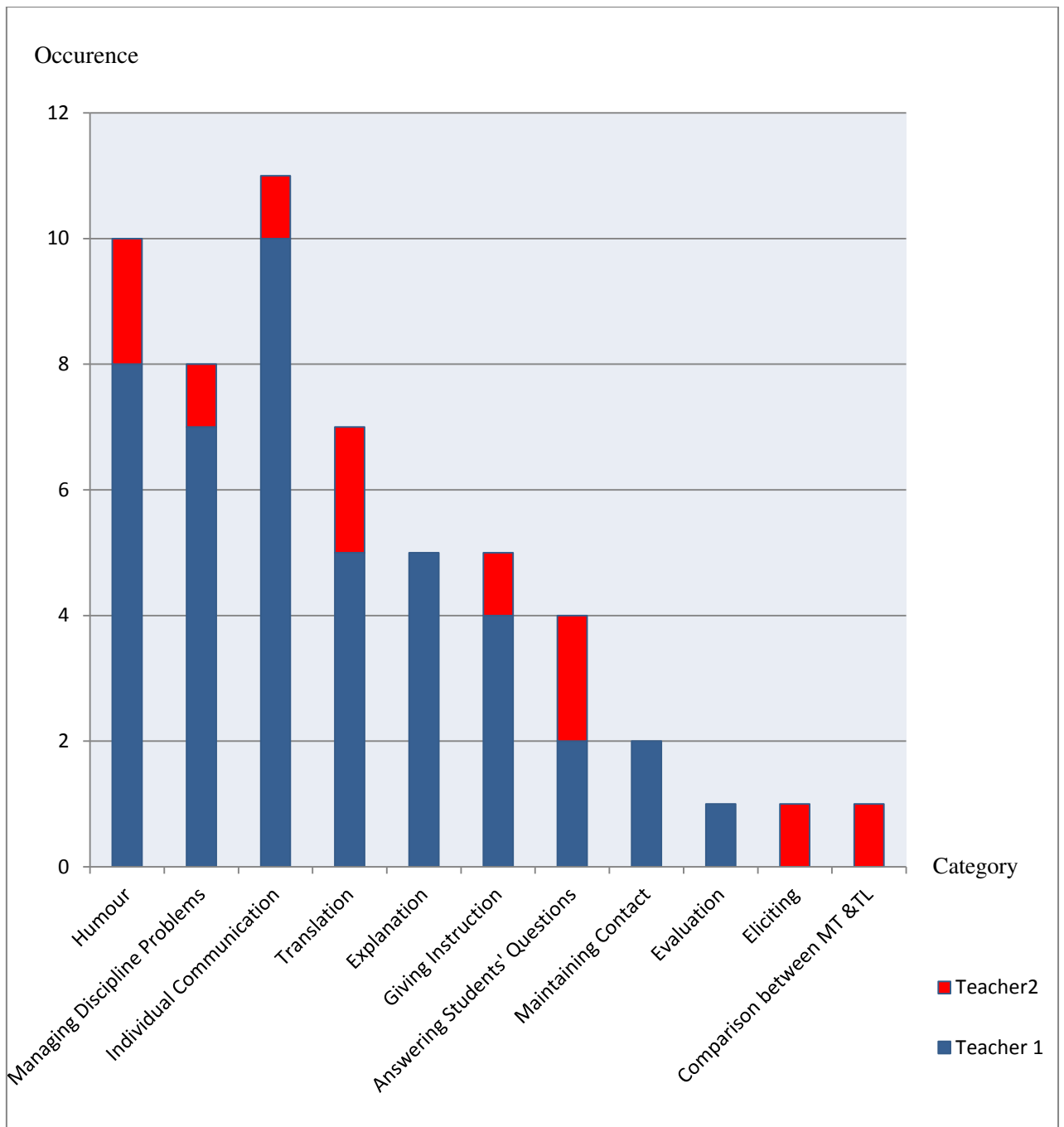


Figure 4: The Most Common Situations of the Use of the Algerian Dialect by both Teachers.

As it is evident from the graph above, great differences in the use of Arabic between the individual categories are evident. While in some situations the mother tongue was used less than ten times, in others it occurred more in all the observed lessons altogether. When speaking about any of the observed categories, it is noticed that there are some differences in the use of the mother tongue between each individual teacher; this contributes in varying

degree to the total number of the Algerian dialect occurrence. As it is visible in the graph above, the use of the mother tongue by the two teachers is not balanced. Also there is a distinction between the uses of Arabic between the two teachers; teacher 1 used it more frequently than teacher 2.

To identify the categories in which the mother tongue is commonly used, it can be claimed that according to the present research the situation with the most frequent use of the Algerian dialect is *individual communication*, which was used 'ten times'. Similar numbers appeared in other situations too, namely the category of *humour* 'eight times' and *managing discipline problems* 'seven times'. In addition, the other categories *translation*, *giving instruction*, *explanation* were used 'five times' for each category during the whole lessons.

Another statement can be made by the other categories in which Arabic was used but did not occur in all classes i.e. sometimes are used by a teacher in a class and not used by the other teacher. These categories are: *answering students' question*, *maintaining contact*, *elicitation* and *comparing Arabic with English*. Additionally, there were some situations in which Arabic was not used completely in all classes, these situations are: *checking comprehension*, *cooperating in groups* and *expressing personal thoughts*. Therefore, it can be summarized that from the categories presented in the observation, the mother tongue is most frequently used for humour, managing discipline problems, individual communication, translation and explanation.

2-3 The Questionnaire:

The questionnaire is designed for English teachers who are experienced in teaching young learners. The sample consists of seven teachers from two middle schools in Relizane Algeria. Four teachers from 'Ziane Djillali middle school' and three from 'Miloud Mansouria middle school'. The questionnaire aims at investigating the way they teach young learners and whether they use or avoid the Algerian dialect in their classroom. Teachers' questionnaire consists of 11 questions classified under two sections. The first section is about teaching young learners whereas the second section deals with the use of the mother tongue in the classroom. The questionnaire involves different types of questions; "closed questions" which requires from teachers to answer by 'yes' or 'no' or

tick up the right answer from a set of options. “Open ended questions” requires giving a full statement.

2-4 The Analysis of the Questionnaire:

Background knowledge:

a- Gender:

Options	Number	Percentage
Male	2	29%
Female	5	71%

Table 01: Teachers’ Gender.

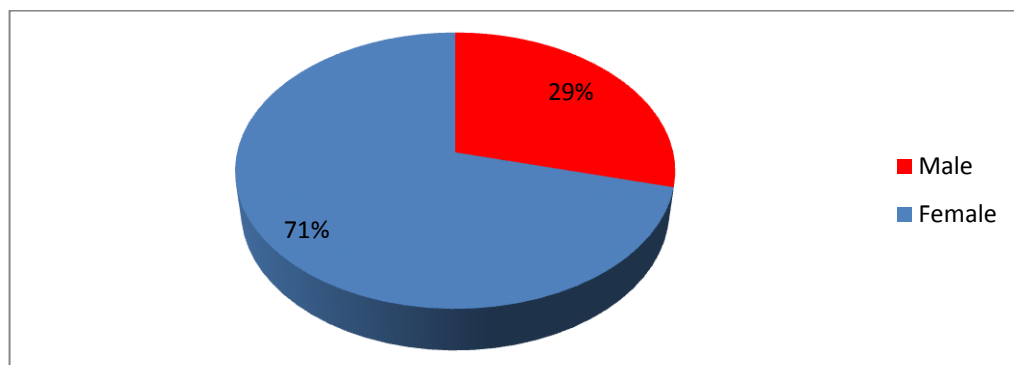


Figure 05: Teachers’ Gender.

From the table above, it is clear that most participants are female. It is recorded that five (71%) female teachers out of (7) have participated in this questionnaire while only two (29%) male teachers have answered it. Different genders may reflect different ways of using the language when teaching.

b- Years of Experience:

Years of Experience	Number	Percentage
(1-10)	2	29%

(10-20)	2	29%
(20-30)	3	42%

Table 02: Years of Teaching Young Learners.

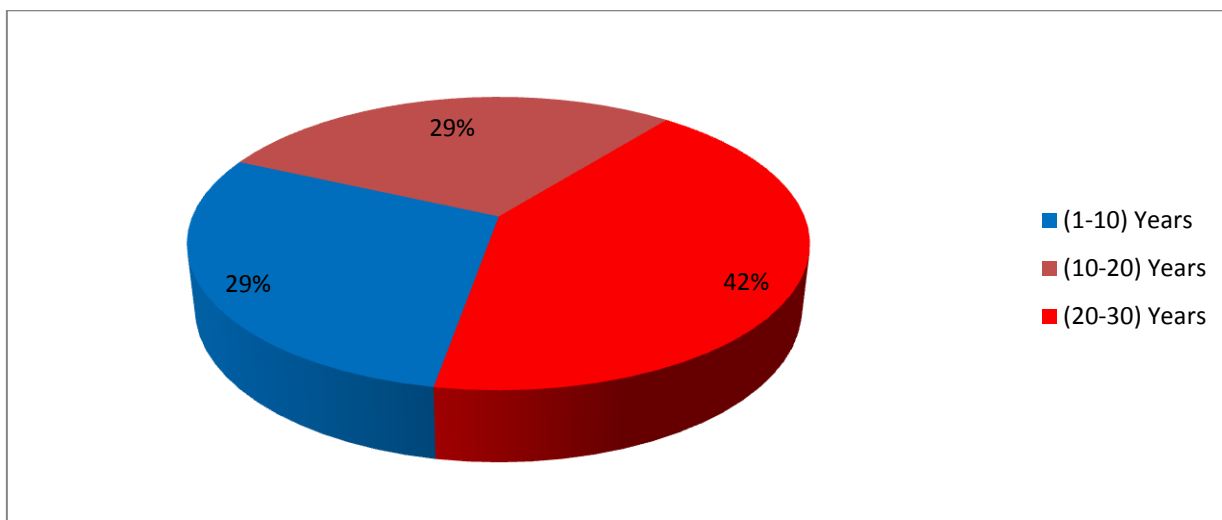


Figure 06: Years of Teaching Young Learners.

The aim of this question is to know teachers' experience in the domain of teaching young learners in the middle school. Through the table above, the majority of the teachers who participate in this questionnaire (42%) have taught English to young learners more than twenty years, this means that they now a lot about young learners. However (29%) of the participants taught English from one year to ten and another (29%) taught it between ten to twenty years. The experience may play a role in determining to what extent teachers know about their learners.

Section One: Teaching Young Learners.

Question 01: Do you think that young learners learn a new language like adults or teenagers?

Options	Number	Percentage
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Yes	1	14%
No	6	86%

Table 03: The Difference between Young Learners and other Learners.

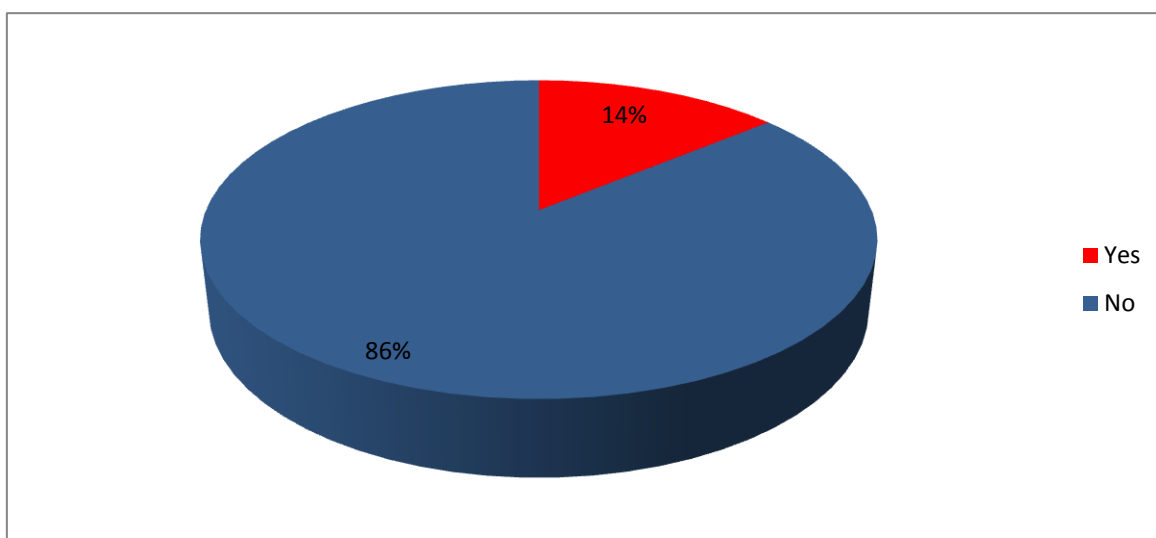


Figure 07: The Difference between Young Learners and other Learners.

The aim of this question is to see teachers' perspectives of whether young learners differ from other learners in learning or not. As shown in the table (03), the majority of teachers (86%) claimed that young learners learn differently from adults or teenagers, whereas one teacher considered that they learn similarly.

Only (04) teachers have given explanations, their arguments are the following:

- Young learners learn differently from other learners because they have less experience and find difficulties more than adults find.

- Their mind is still young, they acquire the new language, however, adults and teenagers learn it.
- Young learners learn the new language differently, they like to play. In addition, they are motivated and less shy than other learners are.
- The teacher who claimed that young learners learn like other learners said that they are all new language learners and there is no difference.

Question 02: What do you focus on when teaching young learners?

Options	Number	Percentage
Acquisition	6	86%
Learning	1	14%

Table 04: Young Learners' Learning and Acquisition.

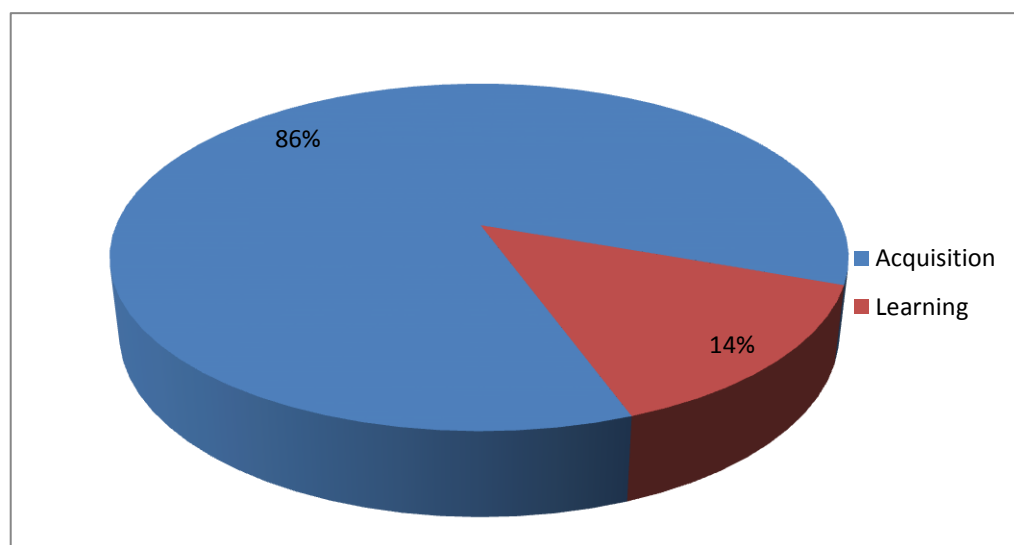


Figure 08: Young Learners' Learning and Acquisition.

Acquisition is the subconscious process of picking up a new language by being exposed to it; however, learning is a conscious process that uses abstract thinking. This question aims at finding out what teachers of English focus on when teaching young learners. As mentioned in the previous table, the majority of the participants (86%) claimed that they focus on acquisition rather than learning when teaching young learners. However, one teacher (14%) answered that he concentrates on learning and not acquisition.

Question 03: What is the kind of input you use when you teach young learners?

Options	Number	Percentage
Easy	3	43%
Challenging	4	57%
Comprehensible	0	0%

Table 05: The Kind of Input Used when Teaching Young Learners.

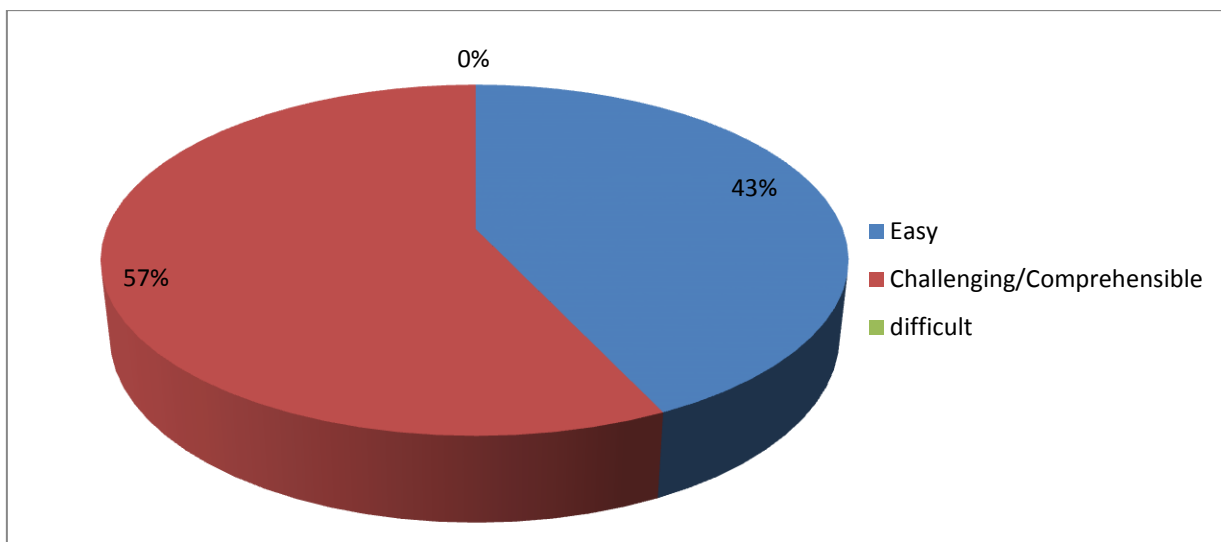


Figure 09: The Kind of Input Used when Teaching Young Learners.

The purpose of this question is to know the kind of input teachers use when teaching young learners. As mentioned in the table above, there are four teachers who state that the kind of input they use is challenging and comprehensible which means that young learners understand the language that is a little beyond their level. However, three teachers claimed that they use the input that is easy and very simple since they are beginners.

Question 04: Do you face difficulties when you teach young learners?

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	5	71%
No	2	29%

Table 06: Teachers' Difficulties when Teaching Young Learners.

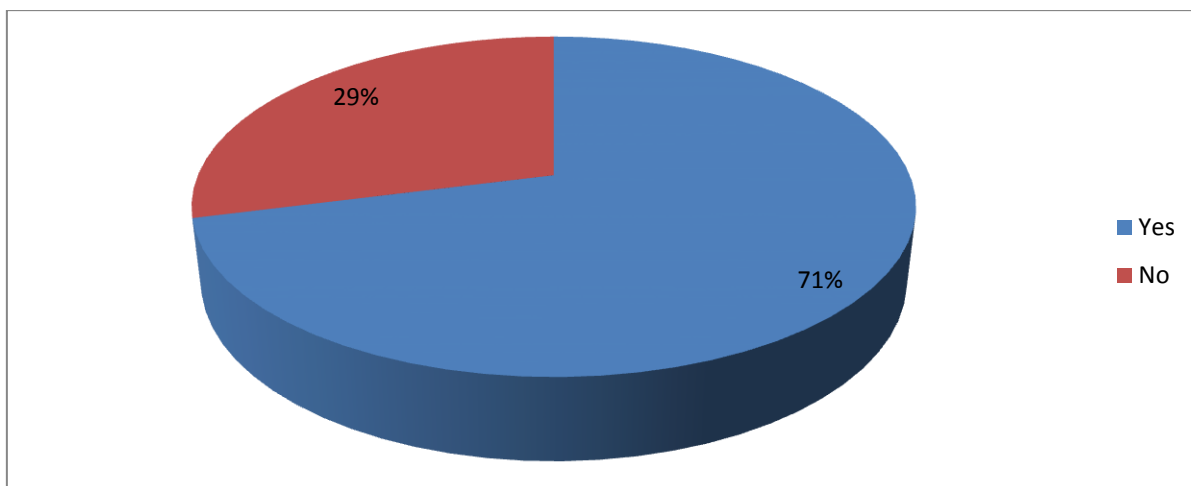


Figure 10: Teachers' Difficulties when Teaching Young Learners.

The aim of this question is to see whether English teachers have difficulties when teaching young learners or not. The table above summarizes the results obtained. (71%) of the participants claimed that they face difficulties when dealing with young learners. Against, (29%) argued that they do not face any difficulty when teaching them.

The arguments given by the teachers who answered “yes” are the following:

- Young learners like to work in groups using games, but they make noise and sometimes cannot agree with each other.
- They have difficulties in the pronunciation of the English letters and words; they do not distinguish between French and English.
- They ask questions a lot and interrupt the teacher when explaining.
- They cannot understand grammatical rules easily.
- They take a long time comprehending and understanding the English structure and lexis, they need much time because English is a new language for them; they are not yet familiar with its system.

Section Two: Using the Mother Tongue in the Classroom.

Question 05: Do you think that the mother tongue should be used in the classroom when you teach young learners?

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	86%
No	1	14%

Table 07: The use of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom.

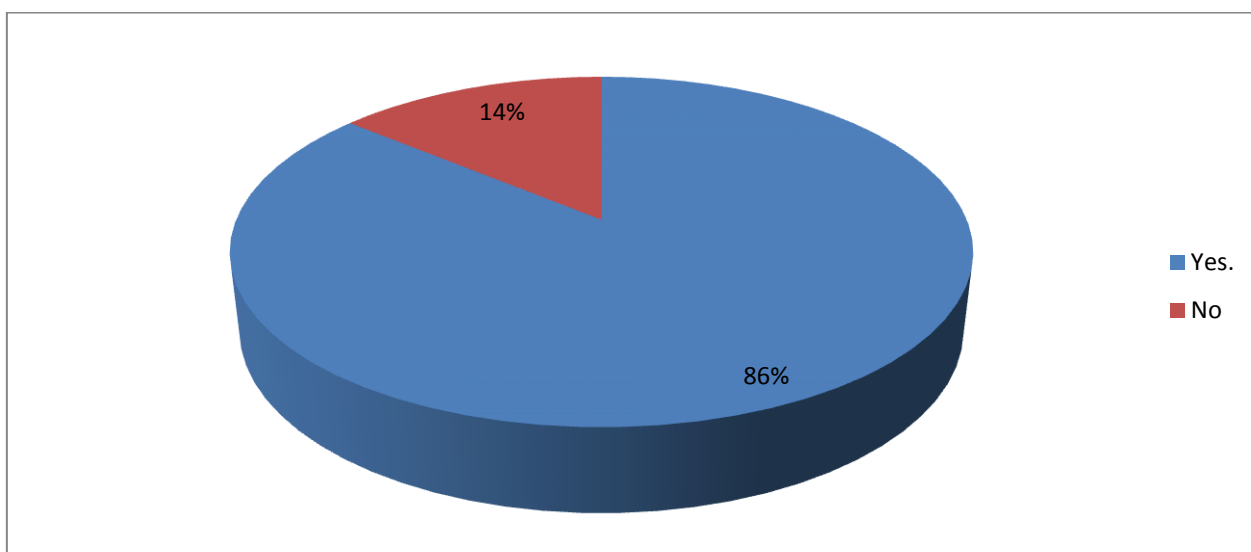


Figure 11: The Use of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom.

The use of the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom is controversial. In order to see whether teachers use it or not, this question was designed. The table above shows that most of teachers (6) answered 'yes' because they think that the mother tongue is a part of the foreign language teaching especially with young learners. In contrast, one

teacher claimed that the mother tongue should not be used in the English classroom. Therefore, it should be excluded.

Question 06: Tick the box of the statement/statements that summarize your view of the use of the mother tongue in the classroom.

- a- I use the mother tongue because it is helpful for young learners.
- b- I avoid the use of the mother tongue.
- c- English should be the main language in the classroom.
- d- English should be the only language in the classroom.

Options	Number	Percentage
a	2	29%
c	1	14%
a+c	3	43%
b+d	1	14%

Table 08: Teachers' Perspectives of the Use of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom.

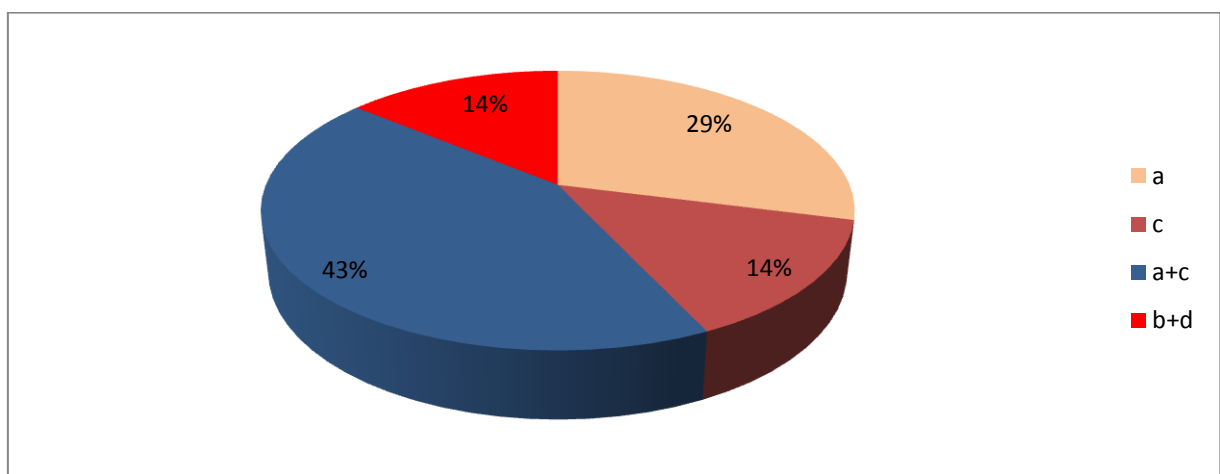


Figure 12: Teachers' Perspectives of the Use of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom.

The aim of this question is to know the teachers perspectives of the use of the mother tongue when teaching young learners. According to the results obtained from the table above, three teachers chose 'a and c' they think that the mother tongue is helpful for young learners but English should be the main language in the classroom. Two teachers have selected 'a', they think that the mother tongue use is useful for teaching. In addition, one teacher chose 'c', he argued that English should be the main language in the classroom. However, other teacher chose 'b and b', he claimed that using the mother tongue in the classroom should be excluded and that English should be the only language in the classroom when teaching young learners.

Question 07: Tick the box of the activities in which you use the mother tongue.

Option	Number	Percentage
Explain Vocabulary+ Individual Communication	1	14%
Explain vocabulary + Humour	3	44%
Maintain Discipline + Explain Grammar Rules	1	14%
Giving Instruction	0	0%
Giving Feedback	0	0%
All of them	1	14%
None of them	1	14%

Table 09: The Different Situations of the Use of the Mother Tongue by Teachers.

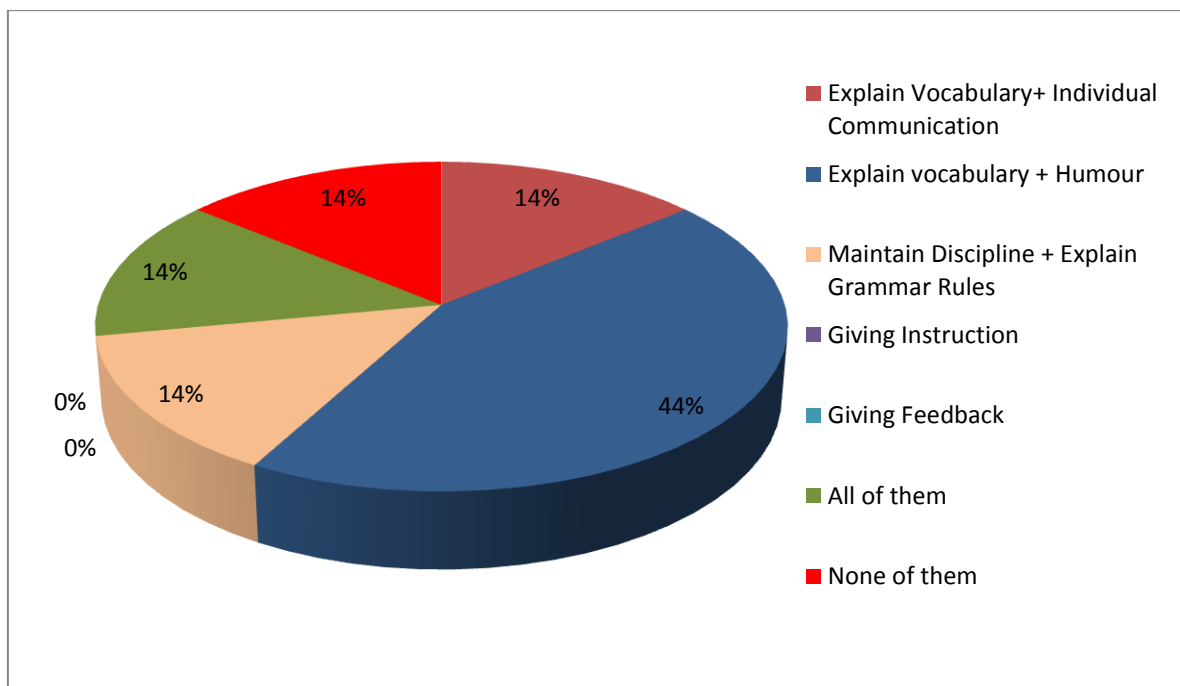


Figure 13: The Different Situations of the Use of the Mother Tongue by Teachers.

This question aims to find out the situations in which teachers use the mother tongue when teaching young learners, the table above summarizes the teachers' answers. The majority of teachers (44%) use the mother tongue 'Arabic' in the classroom for explaining difficult vocabulary items and humour. However, one teacher (14%) claimed that he uses the Algerian dialect for explaining difficult vocabulary and talk to the individual learner. Additionally, one teacher (14%) uses the mother tongue to maintain discipline and explain difficult grammar rules. Further, one teacher (14%) claimed that he uses 'the Algerian dialect for all the situations suggested. In contrast, one teacher (14%) argued that he does not use the mother tongue for any of the situations.

Question 08: How often do you use translation in the classroom when teaching young learners?

Options	Number	Percentage
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Always	0	0%
Often	4	57%
Rarely	2	29%
Never	1	14%

Table 10 : Teachers' Use of Translation in the Classroom.

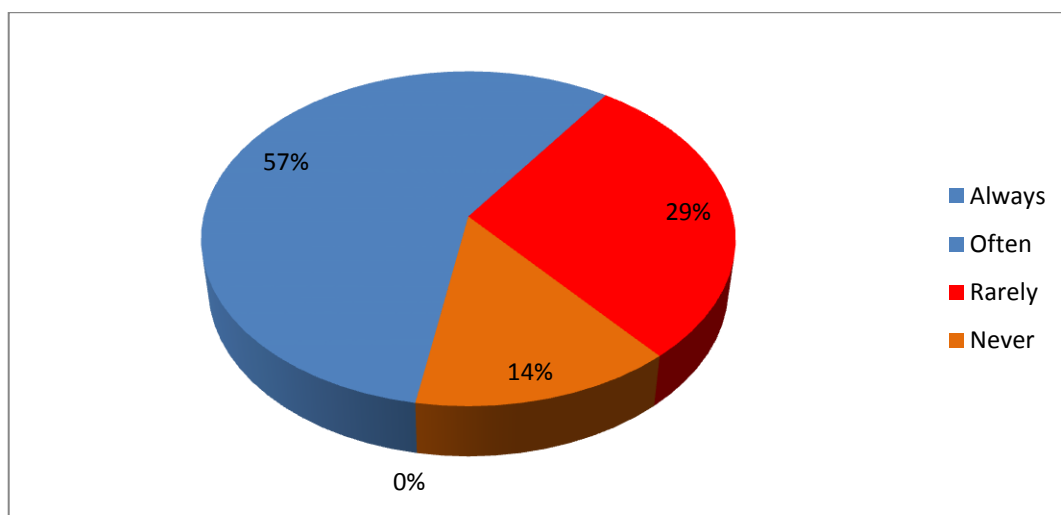


Figure 14 : Teachers' Use of Translation in the Classroom.

The use of translation in the English classroom depends on the teacher. From the table above, it is clear that four participants (57%) often use translation in the classroom whereas two teachers (29%) rarely use it. Only one teacher (14%) claimed that he never uses translation when teaching young learners.

Question 09: What are the situations in which you allow your young learners to use the Algerian dialect in the classroom?

Options	Number	Percentage
Use Bilingual Dictionary	1	14%
Prepare Tasks in the Classroom	0	0%
Ask Questions	0	0%
Work in groups	3	43%
Use Bilingual Dictionary + Work in Groups	3	43%

Table 11: The Use of the Mother Tongue by Young Learners.

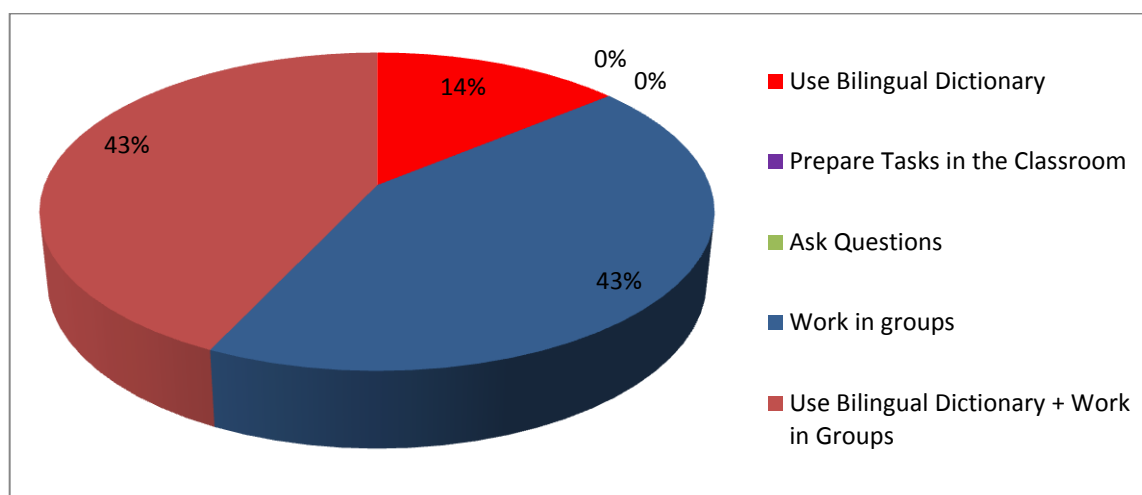


Figure 15: The Use of the Mother Tongue by Young Learners.

It can be seen from the table (11), three teachers (43%) allow young learners to speak using the Algerian dialect only when they work in groups. However, one teacher (14%)

claimed that he allows the use of the bilingual dictionary, and this is the only situation in which his learners use the mother tongue. In addition, three teachers (43%) maintained that there are two situations in which young learners can use Arabic: Working in groups and using the bilingual dictionary. In contrast, no one of the teachers allow learners to use the mother tongue when preparing tasks in the classroom or when asking questions.

Question 10: Do you think the use of the mother tongue in the classroom has a negative impact when teaching English to young learners?

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	7	100%
No	0	0%

Table 12 : The Negative Impact of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom.

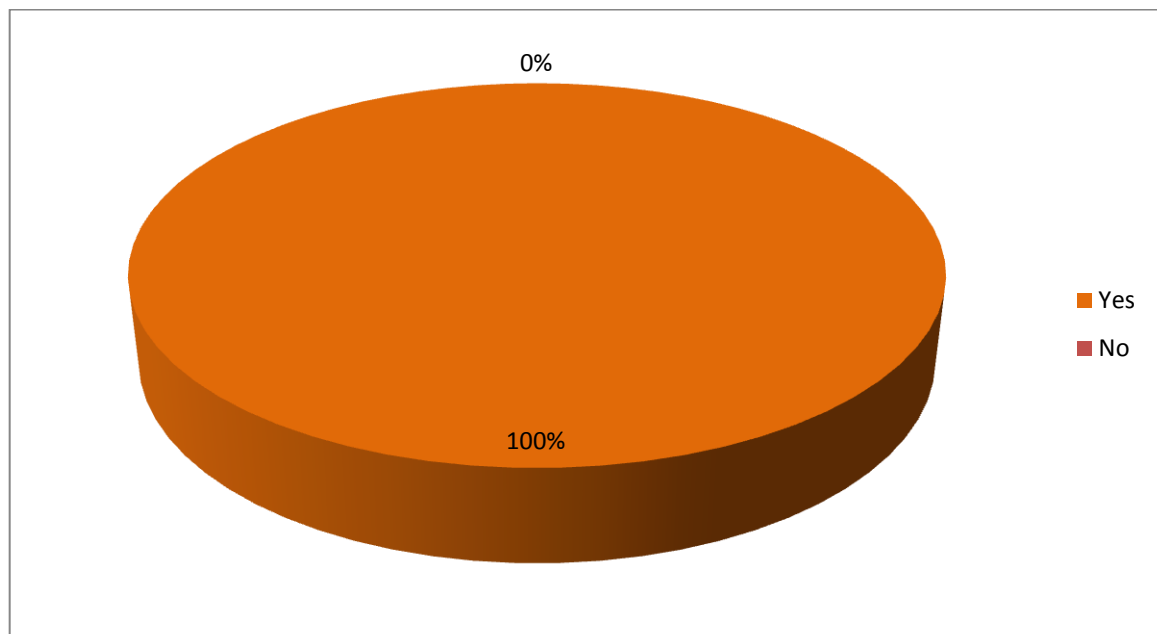


Figure 16: The Negative Impact of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom.

From the table above, it is clear that all teachers consider the negative impact of the mother tongue on teaching young learners. They all mentioned that it can be harmful for the process of language acquisition.

Each teacher gave an explanation for his choice; the arguments given are the following:

- Two teachers shared the same idea; they claimed that the mother tongue is harmful when the teacher uses it more than he uses English in the classroom, as a result young learners will not acquire English successfully.
- One teacher maintained that the mother tongue has a negative impact because it reduces the exposure of the target language.
- One teacher claimed that using the mother tongue may limit their abilities and their creativity because it does not enhance their level in English.
- Two teachers explained the negative effects of using the mother tongue, they stated that when the teacher overuses Arabic, young learners will imitate him and use it even when they are able to use English.
- Other teacher clarified that the use of the mother tongue is harmful because it makes young learners think in the mother tongue and make mistakes because English and Arabic have different systems.

Question 11: Would you like to give other comments about the mother tongue in teaching English to young learners?

Only five teachers have answered this question, their answers are the following:

Teachers	Answers
Teacher 1	The use of the mother tongue has a positive and a negative impact when teaching English to young learners. The teachers should be wise and know when to use it and when not.

Teacher 2	The use of the mother tongue is helpful for young learners; it reduces anxiety and engages them since they are beginners. However, it can become a risk if the teacher does not monitor his speech and knows the suitable situations for its use.
Teacher 3	It is very useful to use the mother tongue when the use of gestures and body language is not enough, but relying a lot on the mother tongue can affect young learners negatively.
Teacher 4	Using the mother tongue in the classroom when teaching young learners decreases the exposure of English and can be an obstacle for the acquisition of the new language.
Teacher 5	The use of the mother tongue has two impacts; a positive one because it enables the teacher to save time and convey the meaning in a comprehensible way. The mother tongue can have some negative effects if the teacher utilizes it inappropriately.

Table 13: Teachers' Perspectives of Using the Mother Tongue in the Classroom.

As mentioned in the table (13), only five teachers have answered, one teacher stated that the use of the mother tongue has a negative and a positive impact on teaching young learners; he claimed that the teacher needs to know when to use it as a helpful device and when to avoid it. Another teacher claimed that using the mother tongue is helpful for the teaching process, but the teacher has to monitor its use. Additionally, other teacher maintained that using the mother tongue is very useful when the use of body language and gestures is not enough; he added that it can be harmful when the teacher misuses it and rely on it most of the time. One more teacher disagreed with the use of the mother tongue when teaching young learners, he claimed that it reduces the amount of exposure to English and can be considered as an obstacle for the acquisition of the new language. Further, one teacher declared that using the mother tongue has two effects when teaching young learners: a negative effect that is the inappropriate use by teachers in some situations. However, the positive impact which is saving time and facilitating the teacher's responsibility when he wants to convey the meaning of difficult words.

3- Conclusion:

Throughout this chapter, the data collected using the selected instruments were analyzed. The present chapter provides the description and the analysis of both the observation and the questionnaire. It is clear that the Algerian dialect is used sometimes in the English classroom when teaching young learners, specifically in some situations where the uses of the mother tongue serves numerous different categories. The main aim was to identify the situations in which teachers generally use students' mother tongue in the classroom; therefore, two classes with two different teachers were observed in order to record the occurrences of the Arabic language in English classes when teaching young learners. The data collected using the observation was analyzed using statistical graphs. In addition, the questionnaire which was designed for teachers includes two sections that are teaching young learners and the mother tongue in the classroom. The data analysis of the teachers' questionnaire was presented through statistical tables and graphs that show percentages. The following chapter will show the results and present some recommendations for the use of the mother tongue in the English classroom when teaching young learners.

Chapter Three:

Findings and Recommendations

Chapter Three

1- Introduction:

The present research is about the use of the mother tongue when teaching English to young learners, teachers' views are important to test our hypotheses. Based on the results of the data tools used in this research, this chapter deals with the results of both the observation and questionnaire. In addition, it suggests some recommendations for teachers about how to deal with young learners and how to use the mother tongue appropriately.

2- Discussion of the Results and Findings:

The discussion of the findings helps to explore the final conclusions and solutions. In this research, a classroom observation and a questionnaire were chosen to collect data. In this section, we will discuss the differences found in the answers of teachers and the observation in order to compare them with the perspectives of researchers concerning the use of the mother tongue when teaching English to young learners.

2-1 Discussion of the Findings of the Observation:

The classroom observation indicates that English teachers use the mother tongue in some situations when they teach young learners. In the area of interaction, Arabic was used more frequently in some situations like for humour and individual communication. However, it is used less frequently for the purposes of evaluation, elicitation and answering students' questions. In contrast, teachers do not use the mother tongue for checking comprehension or expressing personal thoughts.

The mother tongue is used in three categories in the area of language. The first one is explanation, teachers use Arabic to explain difficult grammar rules when they feel that young learners do not understand. This idea confirms the one of Littlewood and Yu (2001:68) who argued that the use of the mother tongue for the purpose of explaining difficult grammar points is useful because it saves time and enables the teacher to convey the meaning of the rule appropriately in a comprehensible way particularly with young learners and beginners. The second category is translation; teachers used it to give an

equivalent in Arabic to make learners get the meaning. Similarly, many researchers considered translation as a pedagogical tool that is used to clarify the meaning of new vocabulary items. For instance, Atkinson (1987:245) supports the use of translation by English teachers. He claims that it enables learners to focus on the meaning and realize the differences between the mother tongue and the target language. In the same context, Duff (1989:9) stated that "*Translation happens everywhere, all the time, so why not in the classroom*". The third category, the use of the mother tongue to compare the TL with the MT, one teacher used Arabic for this purpose. Al-Hinai (2001:1) believed that the mother tongue can be useful in introducing the differences between the two languages.

The results of the observation in the area of managing the classroom indicates that the mother tongue is used by teachers in many different situations; first, teachers use the mother tongue to maintain discipline problems when young learners interrupt them or make noise, this idea confirms what has been mentioned by Littlewood and Yu (2001). They argued that the mother tongue is beneficial to maintain control over the classroom in order to create a safe learning atmosphere (2001:68). Second, the Algerian dialect is rarely used to give instruction. Teachers try to simplify the language used for instructions, but since young learners have a limited vocabulary and need to understand it in order to do the tasks; teachers are obliged to use the mother tongue. This idea is similar to the one of Atkinson (1993) who claimed that among the useful situations in which the mother tongue is beneficial is when giving instructions, especially with young learners (1993:26). Third, one teacher used the mother tongue once to maintain contact with the learners because when students are engaged with the teachers, learning will take place successfully. Butzkamm (2003)(as cited in Judallah & Hassan , 2011:6) highlighted that the use of the mother tongue by teachers to maintain contact saves learners from feeling frustrated and anxious. Four, none of the teachers used the mother tongue for managing group or pair work. Although young learners like to learn by sharing as mentioned by Scott and Ytreberg (1990:4), teachers do not use collaborative activities like pair and group work.

To identify the situations in which the mother tongue is used more frequently by teachers, and to answer the main question of this research, it can be stated that: according to the results of the observation, the most frequent situations in which teachers use the mother tongue is individual communication. In addition, teachers used the Algerian dialect for humour. Teachers prefer to use the learners' mother tongue when they give jokes or

when they try to make learners laugh. This is due to the fact that young learners are beginners who are not able to understand jokes in English because of the differences between the two cultures. Moreover, teachers also use the mother tongue to maintain discipline problems when young misbehave. When the teacher uses English for discipline problems, young learners do not understand. Therefore, the use of Arabic is effective to save time and energy. Then, translation is used sometimes when the use of simple words and gestures is insufficient. Finally, explanation is a situation in which one teacher used the mother tongue several times. It can be claimed that the use of Arabic is effective because it helps to convey accurate meaning.

Comparing the results of the observation with what has been discussed by many researchers in the theoretical part, it can be said that the mother tongue is used frequently by teachers in the situations in which researchers consider it as a useful component for instance; to save time, create a learning atmosphere, organize the classroom, giving instruction and translation. On the other hand, using simple English instead of the use of translation enables learners to express themselves and to search for words and be creative. Atkinson (1993:32). Also, Willis (1992:xiii) claimed that mimes, gestures and facial expressions are more essential than the words the teacher uses in the mother tongue. Similarly, Moon (2001:63) maintained that using the body language instead of the mother tongue can help young learners to understand, they will be exposed to think in English and be aware of its importance. From the observation, it can be concluded that teachers of young learners use the mother tongue more frequently in the following situations: individual communication, humour, maintain discipline problems, translation and explanation. On the other hand, the mother tongue is not used when checking comprehension, cooperating in group work and expressing personal thoughts.

2-2 Discussion of the Findings of the Questionnaire:

The questionnaire was designed for teachers of young learners and it is divided into two sections: teaching young learners and the use of the mother tongue in the classroom. First, the results mentions that (71%) of teachers are females and (29%) are males. This may be because females are more interested in studying English. However, males often choose to carry on scientific studies. Then, the years of experience plays an important role in determining whether teachers are competent enough to teach young learners. Most of the

participants in the questionnaire are experienced teachers; three of them taught English to young learners more than twenty years.

The first section of the questionnaire is about teaching young learners, the first question shows that most of teachers (86%) think that young learners learn differently from other learners. The results confirm the idea of Harmer (2007:82) who claimed that young learners learn differently from adults and teenagers because they have different characteristics. Teachers share the same idea, they said that young learners have different needs and are less experienced than other learners are; also, they like to learn through playing. In the same context, Halliwell (1992:3) argued that these learners are enthusiastic and like to enjoy themselves.

Most of teachers claim that they focus on the process of acquisition rather than learning when teaching young learners. They see that these learners cannot think in an abstract way. As it already mentioned in chapter one, Krashen (1982) distinguished between learning and acquisition; acquisition that refers to the subconscious process of picking up a language by being exposed to it, however, learning refers to the conscious process that involves grammar rules and conscious thinking (1982:10). Krashen added that teachers should focus on acquisition rather than learning when dealing with young learners because they need to be exposed to the target language.

As it is already mentioned in chapter one, teachers of young learners should use the input that is slightly above the level of learners. Krashen (1982) emphasized the role of the language input and argued that the teacher should produce comprehensible input since it is necessary for the process of acquisition. He stated that learners acquire by understanding the language that contains structure a little bit beyond their current level of competence ($i+1$). This is done with the help of context and extra-linguistic information (1982:21). There were some teachers (57%) who claim the same thing i.e.: they use the kind of input that is understood, but challenging to young learners. However, there were some teachers (43%) who said that they use easy input and not challenging, they think that using this kind of input is the best way to make these learners understand.

The majority of teachers claim that they have certain difficulties when teaching young learners. The reason might be the lack of training, knowledge or materials. The justifications given by the teachers in the questionnaire show that these learners like to play

and make noise in the classroom. This is justified by Harmer (2007:82), he said that they are enthusiastic and curious about the world around them. In addition, other teachers claim that young learners do not understand grammar rules of English because it is different from Arabic. Slattery & Willis (2001:148) highlighted the reason behind the difficulty of comprehending grammar, they claim that this kind of learners do not support abstract thinking.

The results of the first section confirms our hypothesis which states that teaching young learners is a demanding profession because it requires teachers who are competent in English, experienced and aware of the learners' characteristics, needs and interests. As mentioned by Brown (2000:90), many challenges face teachers of young learners. He stated that *"It takes very special person to teach children effectively"*.

In order to teach English effectively, the teacher has to consider some key principles that help to do his job effectively. He should be familiar with the characteristics of young learners, know their way of understanding and thinking. In addition, he should be aware of the fact that they acquire and not learn. Further, the teacher needs to consider the right kind of input that is comprehensible; not easy, not difficult. Finally, the English teacher of young learners needs to be patient, flexible, confident and highly skilled in order to overcome the difficulties.

The majority of teachers (86%) clearly provided positive answers concerning the use of the mother tongue in the classroom when teaching English to young learners. Teachers' answers confirm the ideas of many researchers like Cook (2001:403) who emphasized the role of the mother tongue in the English classroom; he believed that it has a role in some situations. Additionally, Atkinson (1987:242) shared the same idea; he claimed that the mother tongue is a humanistic element that is needed in the foreign language classroom. Further, Littlewood and Yu (2001), Auerbuch (1993) and Nation (2003) also agree with the mother tongue use in some particular situations.

What is assumed from sixth question is that teachers of young learners have different perspectives about the use of the mother tongue and the use of English, as mentioned before it is a controversial issue in the context of teaching English as a foreign language. Several teachers claimed that the mother tongue use is useful, but English should be the main language in the classroom. This idea supports what Atkinson (1993) highlighted in

the first chapter; he suggested that the mother tongue is beneficial but needs to be limited by teachers; it should be only used when necessary because the focus is on the target language. In contrast, other teacher claimed that the mother tongue is harmful for young learners and English should be the only language in the classroom. Referring to Krashen (1982), the use of the MT is superfluous because it affects the process of acquisition and reduces the amount of exposure.

It can be reported that there are many situations in which the mother tongue is used, teachers use it differently and not for the same purposes. The majority of teachers use the students' MT to explain new vocabulary items and humour. This means on the one hand, young learners are new language learners; they need to comprehend the meaning of new words, this idea was presented by Littlewood and Yu (2001:68), they claim that the mother tongue is useful for clarifying the meaning of unknown words. On the other hand, humour is essential for teaching foreign languages because giving jokes and making learning fun leads learners to change their mood positively and be engaged with the teacher. Young learners do not know much about English to understand jokes in English. Therefore, teachers use Arabic for humour when teaching English to these learners. In addition, one teacher maintains that he uses the mother tongue to control discipline problems and explain difficult grammar rules. Auerbuch (1993) (as cited in Tang ,2002) supported the use of the mother tongue and consider that it is beneficial for these two situations. Furthermore, one teacher argues that he does use students' own language for the suggested situations. In contrast, one teacher says that he uses the mother tongue for explaining vocabulary, humour, maintaining discipline, explaining grammar rules, giving instruction and feedback.

Translation is a helpful tool in the process of teaching a new language especially for young learners. Duff (1989:6) stated that "*Translation happens everywhere, all the time, so why not in the classroom*". He added that it is an activity that should be included in the classroom. Therefore, many teachers claim that they often use it when teaching young learners. The answers given by teachers about the situations in which they allow their learners to use the mother tongue show that; some teachers allow their learners to use the mother tongue when they do group work because young learners cannot discuss using English. Also, they allow students to use the bilingual dictionary. Atkinson (1993) highlighted the role of this type of dictionaries; he claimed that it is useful since it helps

learners to know and understand the meaning of new words accurately. Similarly, Nation (2003) argued that the bilingual dictionary simplifies the language for lower proficiency levels and beginners. Teachers do not allow their learners to use Arabic to ask questions or prepare tasks in the classroom.

All teachers agree that the mother tongue can have a negative impact on young learners. Their justifications show that they consider it harmful when it is overused. Atkinson (1987:246) argued that when the teacher begins to feel that he should refer to the mother tongue regularly to make things clear; it can be harmful to learners because it is overused. In addition, other justification shows that the inappropriate use of the mother tongue can reduce the exposure of English; this confirms the idea presented by Campa & Nassaji (2009:743) who claimed that the exclusive use of the target language is important for the process of acquisition.

Teachers gave different ideas concerning the issue of using the mother tongue when teaching young learners, most of them agree that it has a positive and a negative impact. Therefore, the teacher has to know when to use it and when to avoid its use. Others claim that it can be replaced by the use of the body language to convey meaning because it is considered as an obstacle for the acquisition of the new language. Further, one teacher maintains that it is helpful when the teacher feels that it is necessary. However, it is harmful when using it inappropriately in some situations.

2-3 General Discussion of the Findings:

The results of this research prove that teaching young learners is different from teaching adults and teenagers. It is a demanding profession that needs experienced and competent teachers. As Brown (2000:90) has stated “*It takes very special person to be able to teach children effectively*”. The teacher has to know the characteristics, needs and interests of young learners. In addition to the way they think and understand because it is important in determining the methods, techniques, materials...etc. Then, the teacher has to distinguish between the two different processes; learning and acquisition. He needs to know that young learners acquire more than they learn because they do not support abstract thinking. This later confirms the idea of Krashen (1982) about acquisition and learning.

The teacher plays an important role when teaching young learners; he has to develop certain skills in order to overcome the difficulties he may face. In addition, he needs to be aware of using the right kind of input that should be comprehensible to young learners, and a little bit beyond their current level. The results of the questionnaire highlighted that teachers face some difficulties with young learners; this proves the idea of Harmer (2007:83). He argued that teachers should be professionals and competent language users in order to provide the appropriate input. Further, care, patience and flexibility are needed with young learners.

From comparing the results of the observation and the questionnaire, it is reported that teachers of young learners support the use of the mother tongue in some situations; they have different perspectives about this issue. The majority believe that the mother tongue is useful for teaching young learners but English should be the main language of the classroom. This supports the ideas of many researchers. (Cook, 2001, Atkinson, 1987 and Littlewood and Yu ,2001). In contrast, few of them believe that the mother tongue should be excluded from the English classroom and young learners should be exposed to the target language only in order to acquire it. This idea is similar to those presented by Turnbeell (2001) and Krashen (1982).

The use of the students' own language is beneficial in some situations because teachers used it in the following areas:

a- humour:

It is shown that teachers use the Algerian dialect for humour; the mother tongue can be used because they are beginners and cannot understand jokes in English. This idea confirms the one of Halliwell (1992), she argued that young learners have a sense of fun and learn when they enjoy themselves.

b- Explaining Difficult Grammar Rules:

Teachers use the mother tongue to explain difficult rules when they feel that young learners do not understand, this point is justified by Slaterry & Willis (2001:148) who claim that young learners are not able to understand difficult grammar points about the new language easily because they do not prefer abstract thinking. The use of the mother tongue in this situation is beneficial.

c- Explaining new vocabulary and Translation:

Teachers often use the mother tongue to give equivalents to the new English words. In addition, teachers allow their learners to use the MT to talk with their classmates when doing group works. This idea proves what Vygotsky in Cameron (2001) has mentioned. He maintained that young learners need to interact with others to learn. Therefore, the classroom environment needs to be full of interaction between young learners. Young learners cannot interact with their peers using English; the mother tongue can be an aid for these learners.

d- Individual Communication:

It is clear that teachers use the Algerian dialect when talking to individual learners because there are different types of learners, and some of them feel anxious if the teacher talks to them in front of other classmates.

e- Manage Discipline Problems:

Since young learners are enthusiastic and active learners, they do noise and like to express themselves in front of others, the use of the mother tongue in this situation is useful.

In contrast, teachers do not use the mother tongue in the following situations: checking comprehension, cooperating in groups and expressing personal thoughts. Further, the results assume that the student' own language is rarely used to maintain contact, evaluation, elicitation, giving instruction and comparing the mother tongue and the target language.

Although the majority of teachers believe that the use of the mother tongue is helpful in some particular situations, all of them claim that it has a negative impact on young learners. They argued that it reduces the use and the amount of exposure of English, supporting the idea of Krashen (1982). In addition, it can become a danger if it is overused. It limits the abilities, creativity and language acquisition. Atkinson (1993:13) mentioned that the teacher should be aware and use the mother tongue only when necessary. He stated

that “*Quite simply, too much use of the L1 is probably the simple biggest danger in any monolingual class*”.

This research has some similar points with Tang’s research (2002), he found that a limited use of the mother tongue cannot affect the process of acquisition and does not reduce the learners’ exposure to English, but rather can be helpful. This idea refutes our hypothesis which states that “the use of the mother tongue should be excluded from the classroom when teaching young learners”.

3- Suggestions and Recommendations:

Based on the findings obtained from the data tools of this research, the following suggestions can help English teachers when they teach young learners, in addition to some recommendations that can aid them to deal with the issue of the mother tongue use in the classroom when teaching young learners.

3-1 Teaching Young Learners:

3-1-1: Know your learners:

Teachers should increase their understanding about young learners, including their background knowledge, educational experience and needs.

- a- Be familiar with the characteristics of young learners.
- b- Know how young learners learn and understand.
- c- Distinguish between the two processes: acquisition and learning.
- d- Be aware of the role of the teacher in helping young learners to acquire English.

3-1-2 Increase Learners’ Attention Span:

As Harmer (2007) claimed, young learners have a limited attention span. Therefore, the teacher should find solutions to attract their attention and help them to be engaged to learning. Nunan (2010:10) gave some suggestions that help them to deal with the short attention of young learners.

- a- Vary activities.

- b- Cater different learning styles: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.
- c- Be aware of the physical and mental difficulties of individual learners.

3-1-3 Motivate Young Learners:

One of the skills that English teachers should bring to the classroom is the ability to motivate learners. Nunan (2010:09) presented some strategies that can help teachers for maintaining motivation, the suggestions are as follows:

- a- Make the learning goals explicit.
- b- Select content to which learners can relate.
- c- Scaffold the learning process.
- d- Personalize the learning process.
- e- Encourage group/collaborative learning.
- f- Provide opportunities for authentic communication.

The teacher can use a plenty of techniques to motivate learners, for instance, he could vary the materials and give praise. In addition, he can use short role-plays, flash cards, songs and stories. Moreover, creating a competition between learners is an effective way to motivate them, like games that are fun and can motivate and engage the students.

3-1-4 Create Routines:

Young learners learn better when they are following routines because it helps to save time and make learners do it quickly. Cameron (2001:10) claimed that routines that happen every day in the classroom could maximize the learning opportunities and provide occasions for meaningful language development. When the teacher creates routines in the classroom, young learners know what is expected from them. In addition, routines facilitate teaching and learning and save time. The following situations may help teachers to create routines in the classroom. In the beginning of the day, distribution and collection of papers, signaling for attention, late arrival, asking questions, entering and exiting the

classroom. Slaterry and Willis (2001:148) argued that young learners feel comfortable with routines and enjoy repetition because children benefit from knowing the rules and being familiar with the situations in the classroom.

3-1-5 Create Fun in the Classroom:

Young learners like to learn when they are enjoying themselves and having fun. It is preferable for the teacher to engage his learners with fun activities. Games can be used as warm up activities. In addition, using stories is an effective technique to teach young learners. Paul (2003:74) claimed that teachers can integrate stories in the course and ask his learners to memorize them, tell it to other or play it on a tape because stories can encourage interaction. Further, the use of songs can be effective because children like them. The singing activities can provide young learners with the opportunities to acquire new words.

3-1-6 Use Collaborative Activities:

Learning is a social process and the use of collaborative activities is effective to young learners. Scott and Yterberg (1990:04) claimed that young learners like to work with others and learn from other learners. Therefore, grouping young learners together in order to work in groups is effective because most children like to have others around them. The use of collaborative activities can make learners learn from each other. Equally, it can raise their self-esteem, motivation and self-confidence.

3-1-7 Use Different ways to teach Grammar:

Teaching grammar to young learners is a demanding task, it obliges learners to think about the language abstractly. When we refer to the characteristics of young learners, it is mentioned that they do not like abstract thinking. Therefore, the teacher needs to use different techniques to teach grammar. First, he can employ the eclectic approach that is a desirable, coherent and pluralistic approach, which entails different learning activities depending on the learners' needs. Mellow (2000). By using the eclectic approach, the different learning styles of learners are considered. In addition, the teacher could create meaningful communication to teach grammar because communication can develop the

learners' social skills, their thinking and creativity. Second, it is important for teachers to teach grammar in context because this helps young learners and give them more opportunities to use and understand English in real situations. Moreover, children need to learn the new structure and rules of English in depth because they have to feel that they are learning something needed for every day communication Phillips (2003:182). Further, the teacher can use pictures and colourful images to teach new grammar items like nouns and verbs. Third, there are two ways to teach grammar; the inductive way in which the teacher does not provide the grammar rule first for instance, he can provide his learners with a text that include new grammatical structure. However, in the inductive way, the teacher explains the new grammatical rules and structure first. Finally, Screvenir (2003:65) claimed that young learners do not really learn the new structure the first time. The more times they are exposed to it, the more sense it will give to them. Therefore, teachers should organize several activities that contain many grammar items in order to maximize the learning opportunities.

3-1-8 Manage the Classroom Effectively:

It is clear that young learners make noise because they are enthusiastic and active learners. Teachers do not want to have discipline problems in their classroom. Therefore, they need to follow some steps in order to control the classroom and create a safe learning atmosphere. First, teaches should establish some rules to control students' misbehaviour. Harmer (2007:158) claimed that teachers should explain the rules the first day of school to young learners. It is important to put warning signs of disruption and act immediately. In addition, when the behaviour problem occurs, it is essential to find out what the problem is, Cohen et al (2005:304) highlighted that the teacher has to dislike the behaviour not the learner. Moreover, the physical organization of the classroom is important and changing the rooms' map physically may make the classroom more attractive and reduces the learners' anxiety. The teacher can consider different seating arrangement for different activities. Screvenir (2005:87) argued that changing the learners' arrangement has many benefits because it helps them to cooperate and interact with each other.

3-1-9 Encourage Young Learners to Communicate Using English:

Paul (2003:77) presented some principles that teachers of young learners have to consider when teaching young learners to speak and communicate using English. They are as follows:

a- Introducing and practicing patterns in ways that feel meaningful to children, such as in games, in situation where the children genuinely want to express themselves, and through personalization.

b- Practicing new patterns in combination with the other patterns the children have learned, so that they can internalize them more easily.

c- Giving the children many opportunities to guess how to use the patterns with flexibility in new situations.

d- Giving the children confidence to speak out in front of others by talking independently with other children and the whole class.

e- Building the children's inner strength to deal with confusing and new situations, by presenting them with puzzles to overcome and solve, and making sure, they are finally successful.

f- Focusing on the question forms of new patterns, so the children can ask about things they do not know. They can learn *who is it?* Before or at the same time as learning, *it's a cat*, and, *what's she doing?* Before or at the same time as learning *she's sleeping*.

3-1-10 More Recommendations:

- Be patient and tolerant because young learners have poor discipline awareness.
- Try to establish a friendly and relaxed learning atmosphere in which young learners feel comfortable, competent and secured.
- Create routines that young learners can recognize.
- Plan a series of extra activities per lesson that you can use if you finish before time.

- Try to simplify the activities in order to help learners understand what is expected from them, at the same time set time for each activity.
- The activities should be different using individual, pair and group work, quiet, active...etc. because young learners get bored easily.
- Set rules to keep discipline, there are some properties that are given by Henson & Helleson (1999) that are the following:
 - a- Establish a list of rules during the first few class meeting.
 - b- Keep the list short and clear.
 - c- Focus on the learners' behaviours needed to achieve the lessons' goals.
 - d- State the consequences for breaking the rules and rewards for following them.
- Use both verbal and non-verbal skills to manage the classroom such as the voice tones and eye contact.
- Motivate learners by focusing on what they do satisfactorily or well more than what they do badly.
- Be fair and consistent with all learners, do not favour some over others.
- Use games and songs as activities to motivate young learners to learn.
- Try to produce a clear and accurate pronunciation because young learners imitate.
- Use as much English as you can to expose young learners to it.
- Know how and when to use the mother tongue appropriately and carefully.

3-2 The Use of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom:

- Use the mother appropriately, carefully and only when necessary.

- Keep speaking English as much as possible to expose your learners to the target language.
- Encourage your learners to use English in the classroom.
- Be aware of the fact that maximum use of English increases the chance for giving young learners much exposure to it.
- Design tasks and activities that fit the level and understanding of young learners.
- Make your learners aware of the importance of using English in the classroom.
- Use short and simple expressions in order to minimize the use of the mother tongue.
- Try to plan the lessons in a way that makes your learners acquire English as much as possible.
- Involve your learners and engage them through warm-up activities to facilitate their learning.
- Use different materials as an aid because it helps young learners to understand quickly.
- Use comprehensible input that is meaningful to learners, at the same time challenging and slightly above their level.
- Provide a variety of input using visualizations, gestures, and non-verbal clues, in addition to auditory and tactile input.
- Activate the learners' background knowledge and visuals to convey the meaning.
- Teach grammar inductively and present it in context like using stories and short texts.
- Show realia, graphs, photos, multimedia representations.

- Use technology and videos because it helps young learners to create their own mental images of the new structure.
- Use paraphrasing and rephrasing to ensure young learners' understanding.
- Speak clearly and use accurate pronunciation.
- Encourage young learners to use English when they are doing group or pair work.
- Determine how much and how often the mother tongue should be used.
- Use repetition and repeat key words and phrases more than one time in different contexts.
- Try to separate between the mother tongue and the target language.
- Avoid the use of translation as the first solution to clarify the meaning.

4- Conclusion:

This chapter includes the discussion of the findings of the data obtained from the observation and the questionnaire. In addition, it presents some recommendations about teaching young learners and the use of the mother tongue in the classroom. The data obtained from both the observation and the questionnaire shows that teachers have some difficulties when they teach English to young learners, and they use the mother tongue in different situations. It is recommended that teachers of young learners should be familiar with their characteristics, interests and needs; they have to be patient and tolerant because teaching young learners is a demanding and challenging profession. Further, teachers need to be aware of the use of the mother tongue and use it only when necessary.

General Conclusion:

This study explores the use of the mother tongue in the English classroom when teaching young learners. There are many arguments for and against the use of the mother tongue in the classroom. On the one hand, the learners need to be exposed to the target language. On the other hand, they have to comprehend the language that is used by the teacher. Therefore, this research aimed at investigating the teachers' use of the mother tongue when teaching young learners. The theoretical part presented the perspectives of researchers concerning teaching young learners and the issue of using the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom. The main purpose of the practical part was to identify the way teachers teach young learners and examine the situations in which they use the mother tongue. Thus, two classes from second year middle school taught by two different teachers were observed. In addition, a questionnaire was conducted to seven teachers of young learners in order to provide more in depth results.

The results presented show that teaching English to young learners is a challenging and demanding profession, it requires competent teachers who are familiar with the characteristics, needs and cognitive development of their learners. The role of the teacher is extremely important because he has to use the right kind of input that should be comprehensible to learners. Moreover, it has been discovered that English teachers employ the mother tongue in the classroom for various reasons. Although teachers of young learners are the primary source of input and responsible of maximizing its use, they have a positive attitude towards the use of the mother tongue. They often use it as a facilitative tool for a variety of purposes.

Great differences appeared in the different situations in which teachers use the mother tongue. While some teachers employed the Algerian dialect frequently in some areas, others used it for different reasons or did not use it at all. According to the present research, most of teachers believe that English should be the main language in the classroom. However, they use the learners' own language in some particular situations. The situations in which teachers use the mother tongue more frequently are: Explaining difficult grammar rules, explaining new vocabulary items, humour, talking to individual learners, and managing discipline problems. In contrast, teachers did not use the mother tongue for expressing personal thoughts, cooperating in groups and checking comprehension. Further,

they rarely used it for evaluation, maintaining contact with learners, elicitation, giving instruction and comparing the two languages.

Each teacher used the mother tongue for different situations; this highlights the fact that English teachers are responsible of making the right choice between the use of the mother tongue and the target language. Further, teachers allow their learners to use the Algerian dialect when they work in groups and when they use the bilingual dictionary. The present research shows that a reasonable and an appropriate use of the mother tongue can be helpful because it facilitates both teaching and learning.

It can be concluded that teachers need to be aware of the needs and interests of young learners in order to teach them effectively. In addition, English teachers may take advantage of the mother tongue and use it appropriately when necessary rather than completely prohibiting it from the classroom. Moreover, the teacher is the only one who can make the decision about to use the mother tongue in the different situations depending on the learners' level, needs and learning strategies.

The place of the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom requires further investigations that may involve larger sample and extra data tools like interviews and learners' questionnaires. It would be interesting, for example to examine the amount of the mother in the classroom and compare it with the use of the target language. Further research can test the use of the mother tongue when teaching adults or teenagers.

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Appendixes

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is a data collection tool for a research work; it aims at investigating the use of the mother tongue when teaching English to young learners. You are kindly requested to answer the following questions and share your experience with us, because it will be of much help for the completion of this work. Please, make a tick in the corresponding box and give full statement when necessary; more than one answer is sometimes possible.

Background Knowledge:

Gender:

Male

☐

Female

☐

Years of teaching young learners:

.....

Section One: Teaching Young Learners

1- Do you think that young learners learn a new language like adult learners or teenagers?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Please, explain why?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2- What do you focus on when teaching young learners?

Acquisition

☐

Learning

☐

3- The kind of input that you use when you teach young learners is?

Easy

☐

Challenging/Comprehensible ☐

Difficult ☐

4- Do you face difficulties when you teach English to young learners?

Yes ☐

No ☐

-If yes, please say what these difficulties are.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Section Two: Using the Mother Tongue in the Classroom

5- Do you think that the mother tongue should be used in the classroom when you teach English to young learners?

Yes ☐

No ☐

6- Tick the box of the statement/statements that summarize your view about using the mother tongue in the classroom.

- e- I use the mother tongue because it is helpful for young learners. ☐
- f- I avoid the use of the mother tongue. ☐
- g- English should be the main language in the classroom. ☐
- h- English should be the only language in the classroom. ☐

7- Here is a list of ways in which teachers might use the mother tongue in the classroom, tick the box of the activities in which you use the mother tongue.

Explain Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Give Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>

Explain Grammar Rules	
Maintain Discipline	
Give Feedback	
Individual Communication	
Humour	

8- How often do you use translation in the classroom while teaching young learners?

Always ☐ Often ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

9- What are the situations in which you allow your young learners to use the mother tongue in the classroom? Tick the box that correspond your answer.

- a- Use bilingual dictionary. ☐
- b- Prepare tasks in the classroom. ☐
- c- Ask questions. ☐
- d- Work in groups. ☐

10- Do you think that the mother tongue has a negative impact when teaching English to young learners?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please explain why.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

11- Would you like to give other comments about the use of the mother tongue when teaching English to young learners?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your Collaboration

The Observation Sheet

Teacher 1

a- Interaction:

The Use of the Mother Tongue	Description	Yes or No	Comments and Examples
Checking comprehension	MT is used to check students' understanding	No	
Evaluation	MT is used to evaluate students.	Yes	علاه washed تنطقوها 't'
Eliciting	MT is used to elicit information from students.	No	
Answer students' questions in the MT.	MT is used to respond learners' questions	2 times	Les composition واه السمانة الجاية - هادي 'c'
Individual communication	MT is used to talk to individual learner	10 times	The teacher goes to the individual learner and whisper using the mother tongue. -ممبعد نفاك -قولي للاستاذة متزديش تبعتي التلاميذ -قاتلاك capital letter
Express personal thoughts	MT is used when the teacher asks students to express their personal opinions.	No	

Humor	MT is used to give jokes in order to make students laugh	8 times	كيفاه نسمو لستوما in English? سلام lestoma - باه تفكر كم 2 Minutes طوماطيش الحارة . - راسي درني ومكاش aspirine شاندير. - ماشي قلتي نحل التاقاة ولا خفتي ملحمام.
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b- Language:

Explaining	The MT is used to explain difficult grammar rules.	5 times	-ماكاش sujet -درك نفهمكم علاه نديرو 's' و ماشي 'es' -نبداد دايمين بل verb -نديرو verb و ممبعد object
Translation	MT is used to translate unknown vocabulary items.	5 times	- Mint نعناع - Insomnia ارق - Use يستعمل - Draw يرسم - - Digestion عسر هضم
Comparison between the other tongue and the target language	The MT is used to compare culture, structure.....etc. between the two languages	No	

c- Managing the classroom:

Discipline problems	MT is used to manage learners' behaviours.	7 times	- أي سايي' 3 times -حبس الطابلة -ما تزيدش تعاود -ماشي قلناك اسكت -بدل بلاستك
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Giving Instructions	MT is used to clarify an instruction or simplify an activity.	4 times	-عاونوني نكتب Paragraph -كتبو بل وحدة -لازم تقولولي بليتتاب -حولو من active لل passive - ديرو not
Co-operating in groups	MT is used to manage group or pair work	No	
Maintaining contact with students	MT is used to maintain contact with students and reduce their anxiety.	2 times	-لازم تريفيزو مليح لل examen -نديركم paragraph ولا لا

The Observation Sheet

Teacher 2

a- Interaction:

The Use of the Mother Tongue	Description	Yes or No	Comments and Examples
Checking comprehension	MT is used to check students' understanding	No	
Evaluation	MT is used to evaluate students.	No	
Eliciting	MT is used to elicit information from students.	Yes	exemple اعطوني وحداخر
Answer students' questions in the MT.	MT is used to respond learners' questions	2 times	هواه - examen راح يكون كيما الفصل لول
Individual communication	MT is used to talk to individual learner	Yes	- شقتلك المرة لي فانت
Express personal thoughts	MT is used when the teacher asks students to express their personal opinions.	No	

Humor	MT is used to give jokes in order to make students laugh	2 times	- كي تبغي تطلب حاجة من عند واحد تفلو بسيف -شكون يخاف مل insects
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b- Language:

Explaining	The MT is used to explain difficult grammar rules.	No	
Translation	MT is used to translate unknown vocabulary items.	2 times	- طلب request -حق duty
Comparison between the other tongue and the target language	The MT is used to compare culture, structure.....etc. between the two languages	Yes	-كيما نقولو بالعربية لو سمحت

c- Managing the classroom:

Discipline problems	MT is used to manage learners' behaviours.	Yes	- كي نكون نهدر ما تهدرش
Giving Instructions	MT is used to clarify an instruction or simplify an activity.	Yes	-كي تكون negative رجعوها affirmative و العكس

Co-operating in groups	MT is used to manage group or pair work	No	
Maintaining contact with students	MT is used to maintain contact with students and reduce their anxiety.	No	

The Observation Sheet - Basic Information:

Teacher 1

School: Ziane Djillali middle school. Oued-Rhiou, Relizene.

Teacher: Mrs Blalta.

Gender: Female

Qualification of teaching: Yes

Years of Practice: 21 years.

Notes:

The teacher is experienced in the domain of teaching, she knows a lot about the profession of teaching and how to deal with young learners. She likes her job and tries to do the best to make learning easier.

Lesson One:

Topic: The Imperative Form.

Number of Learners: 38 learner.

Materials: The board, colour markers.

Notes:

The lesson was about a revision of the use of the imperative form, in relation to the obligation form with 'must'. The teacher used the board to write examples of sentences that include the imperative form with explanation. Then, she asked the students to read them. After that, she gave them a task in which they are asked to turn sentences from the imperative to the obligation form. The classroom was calm and there is participation. The

teacher used the Algerian dialect to communicate with individual learners, humour and explanation.

Lesson Two:

Topic: Expressing daily activities using the present simple.

Number of Learners: 38 learner.

Materials: The board, colour markets.

Notes: The second lesson was about expressing daily activities using the present simple. The teacher wrote some examples on the board and explained them. She uses the course book as a reference. Then she asked her learner to do a task from the book. The classroom was noisy, with little participation. The teacher used drilling as a technique and used the mother tongue to manage discipline problems, clarifying the instruction and humour.

Lesson Three:

Topic: The passive Form.

Number of Learners: 38 learner.

Materials: The board, colour markets.

Notes:

This lesson was about the use of the passive form, the teacher introduced some examples about how to turn sentences from the active to passive form. Then, she asked her learners to repeat and read these examples. The classroom atmosphere was calm and there was some participation. The teacher used the Algerian dialect to maintain discipline problems, talk to individual learners and explaining new vocabulary items.

The Observation Sheet - Basic Information

Teacher2

School: Ziane Dillali middle school.

Teacher: Mrs Bourzakh.

Gender: Female

Qualification of teaching: No

Years of Practice: 4 years.

Notes:

The teacher is a novice teacher; she is not really experienced in the domain of teaching young learners. She is patient, flexible and tries to involve her learners to learn.

Lesson One:

Topic: Expressing Daily Activities.

Number of Learners: 35 learner.

Materials: The board, colour markets and the course book.

Notes:

The lesson was about expressing daily activities. The teacher asked the learners to say the different activities of daily life. Then, she read the set of activities from the course book and asked the learners to repeat after her. After that, she asked them to repeat the activities without referring to the book. She used the mother tongue for elicitation and individual communication.

Lesson Two:

Topic: the Affirmative and Negative Forms.

Number of Learners: 35 learner.

Materials: The board, colour markers.

Notes:

The teacher wrote some examples about sentences in the affirmative form on the board. Then, she asked the learners to read the examples one by one. After that, she asked them, if I do not do these actions what could we say? She helped the learners to turn the sentences to the negative form. Finally, she wrote the rule and gave them an activity. The teacher used the Algerian dialect for humour and comparing the two languages 'the MT and the TL'.

Lesson Three:

Topic: The Imperative Form (Revision).

Number of Learners: 35 learner.

Materials : The board, colour markers.

Notes:

The teacher wrote an activity about transforming sentences from the affirmative to the imperative form. Then, she gave learners time to do the activity. After that, she asked them to write the correction on the board. Finally, she asked learners to read sentences one by one. The teacher used the mother tongue for humour, explaining new vocabulary items and translation.

