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The impact of mother tongue on learning English as a foreign language

Case study of second year foreign languages students of Relizane secondary school

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Academic year 2017/2018

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## **Dedication**

To the memory of my beloved my grandfather Mahiddine BENCHABANE .

To my sympathetic father and thoughtful mother whose love always strengthens my will.

To all my brothers and sisters.

To all the members of my family.

To all my friends.

To special friends Hayet BENKORRECH , Fatima KERDAGH who helped me to achieve this

To all my teachers.

To all psycholinguistics students

To all those who love me.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like first to thank ALLAH for all of his blessings.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Mrs.Faiza Hirech El Harouchi for

Her guidance, support, help and patience.

Special thanks go to Mrs. Fatima El Zohra Khaldi for his precious advices.

I gratefully wish to thank all my teachers to whom I owe all the respect.

I would also like to thank all my colleagues for the nice times that we spent together helping each other.

Appreciations go also to all who helped me in one way or another to realize this work.

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Since the beginnings of the 20th century linguists shown huge interest to develop foreign language teaching methods, the common aim of these strategies is to limit and reduce the negative impact of issues that might face learners and teachers in order to achieve better acquirement of

the target language at the level of the three linguistic skills; reading, writing and especially speaking in which students are struggling from.

The present study investigates one of the major issues that faces foreign language students and affects their learning process, it is the use of first language and its impact of it on their learning process in order to understand the major reasons of student's and teacher's opinions about this phenomenon and how to deal with it by giving some advanced new methods to make learning effective with out that huge impact of the mother tongue.



# Chapter one

## **Introduction :**

In order for people to feel connected to their cultures and homes, they try hard to stay connected with their mother tongues ,holding on to the first language is sort of holding on to your own culture ,as an English student, I have seen thephenomenon of holding on to ones' first language so many times that I decided I wanted to go deeper into that idea ,as a student I have faced students and teachers who spoke Arabic even though they were in an English class.When attempting to ask about the reasons behind that action, many times I was answered with "Because this is my mother tongue. this how most students understand... ." and many views I was surprised by the attitude of some of the students and teachers , even at my class as master 2 students so many of my classmates were trying hard to hold on the first language even when trying to learn English ,It attracts my attention to the whole question of why they speak their first languages while trying to learn English at the same time ?.

In this paper, I will explore students' opinions and habits regarding their use of first language when they are in an English classroom, a place where English is supposed to be spoken. Before going directly into investigating and analyzing students' opinions and habits regarding first language use, we will look at how the first language has been perceived and handled throughout history in English classroom settings ,we will go through some of the teaching methods that either encouraged or discouraged the use of the first language in classrooms ,then we will examine bilingual education and how it affected first language use.

### **1.1 Language Teaching Methods:**

Throughout history many English language-teaching methods have developed, Some were in favor of using first languages and some were not. One of the first English languages teaching methods that encouraged and depended heavily on the use of first language was The Grammar Translation Method. Diane Larsen Freeman (1986) went into a detailed description of this method and other teaching methods in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. She pointed out how the teacher in her class depended heavily on translations from English to Spanish. All the vocabulary and texts that were taught during class were instantly translated into the first language. All the communications and interactions between students and teacher were almost entirely in Spanish. Instructions were given in the first language as well. Students' success was measured depending on how good they were in translating from English to Spanish and vice versa. This method had been used for centuries before teachers and educators started

to think of using different methods. However in many countries teachers still use this method to teach English. Personally, I have seen teachers who used the Grammar translation method during school ,Growing up in a school where teachers used The Grammar Translation Method, students felt attached and inclined to use their first language rather than using English when in the classroom. Along with the huge spread of the Grammar Translation Method to teach English in many countries, other methods developed. Some of these methods almost forbide the use of the first language. One of the methods that did not allow students to use their first language was the Direct Method. In this method students were taught using visuals and direct connections between the language and what it implies. The first language was not used at all in the classroom. Other methods such as audio lingualism, the Silent Way and Communicative Language Teaching did not encourage the use of the first language, but accepted it whenever it was needed to facilitate language learning. Generally, throughout history there have been methods that encouraged teachers and students to use the first language and some that did not allow it. As a result, both teachers and students followed different principles to address this issue. Not having one opinion on how to address it has made it even more confusing to the students to either use it or not as they come through different teachers who either encourage or prohibit it.

In this paper we will see what students' opinions are on the use of the first language. Many of the previous methods dealt with English teaching in settings in which students learned English as a foreign language. However, English education in the United States have had a different approach. As students need to learn English in order to use it on a daily basis either in school or outside, there has been a bigger need for them to learn English faster and better. However, with the huge number of immigrants who do not speak English as a first language, American education has had to come up with different solutions to handle the increasing number of non-speaking English immigrants that kept coming to the United States. They started what was later known as "Bilingual Education."

## **1.2 Bilingual Education:**

One of the first steps that the United States took to deal with the new immigrants was the Bilingual Education policy. Baker (2011) defines bilingualism as the ability to speak one language fluently while speaking another language less fluently. He also defines it as the knowledge of more than one language. The beginning of bilingualism started with the development of the civil rights and people's call for equality in opportunities in education (Baker, 2011). Students had the chance to study the same subjects in school either in English or in their first languages. It was due to the increase in the number of Spanish-speaking population in the 1960s in Florida that some schools started what is now known as bilingual education (Keller & Van Hooft, 1982). Students studied different subjects using Spanish from grade three to grade twelve. As a result of this new movement, many other schools around the United States also started adopting the Spanish-English bilingual education. The level of using Spanish differed in different schools and different classrooms. Some of these schools adopted bilingual education in which students were allowed to study either in English or Spanish. In other schools, teachers used Spanish to facilitate English instructions and communications with the students. The Civil Rights Act in 1964 by President Johnson gave public schools the ability and funding to start bilingual education and develop materials and textbooks that helped improve bilingual education throughout the United States (Lapati, 1975).

Ovando (2003) talked about how bilingual education took different forms, of which immersion education was one. In immersion education, students learn a language that is different from their first language, either English or any other language. In immersion schools an equal number of English speaking students and non-English speaking students study together in order to learn each other's languages. Padilla, Fairchild, and Valadez (1990) mentioned some of the problems that arose with the use of bilingual education in American schools. They talked about how previous research showed that bilingual education did not help raise the degree of education among the students who were enrolled in bilingual programs. They also addressed how bilingual education altogether was challenged by the English-Only policy that perceived bilingual education as a threat to the Americanization notion that had developed at that time.

Donna Christian (1994) pointed out some additional issues connected to bilingual education in the United States in her article “Two-Way Bilingual Education: Students learning via two languages.” First, there was the cost to support these bilingual programs. Schools needed teachers who were bilinguals and were able to communicate and teach in two languages. They also needed curriculum built in two languages. Another issue was that speakers of different languages other than Spanish started to ask for their own languages included in bilingual programs. The United States tried to change from using bilingual education to moving to English as a Second Language classes (ESL) to deal with speakers of other languages. With this movement, a new issue was raised. Was it still OK to use the students’ first language? Research at this point showed that the learners’ first language was considered a hindrance to English language learning; as a result, education policy came up with the “English-Only” policy to prevent students from using their first languages in English classrooms and limit all the communications and interactions to English only.

### **1.3English Only Policy:**

After bilingual education was introduced into the United States, the House of Representatives passed a law making English the official language of the government. English was considered to be the language that would unify the people in the United States into one nation. Some people supported this policy while others were against it and each party had their own reasons. The supporters believed that by speaking one language around the States, people would be more unified and able to communicate. Opponents, on the other hand, believed that choosing English as the official language in the United States contradicted one of the grounding principles of freedom in the United States, which is the freedom to speak your language, and be connected to your own culture (Hartman, 2003).

The idea of using English only in classes was supported by the common notion in the United States in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century about “Americanism” (Kloss, 1977). People in the United States tried to force public schools into teaching in English only. They tried to unite the different races and ethnic minorities in the United States into speaking one language. The government issued several laws against the use of any languages other than English in formal means of communication. However, schools went back to teaching using other languages after World War II (Kloss, 1977).

Supporters of the English only policy tried to find other ways to help the non-English speakers mingle in the English speaking community. To fulfill that goal they

replaced bilingual education and classes with ESL classes. Different schools and different states had their own policies and rules for ESL classes. ESL students took ESL classes ranging from one year to a number of years before joining the school's mainstream classes (Hartman, 2003).

Citrin, Reingold, Walters, and Green (1990) claimed that throughout history, there has been a typical change in the languages of the immigrants to the US. The first generation of the immigrants came in using only their first languages. The second generation was bilingual using English in addition to their first languages while most of the third generation spoke only English. That natural language development supported the English only movement in the US in general and in education in particular.

Giroux (2001) presents the same idea shown in Hartman (2003), that Americans started the English only movement in order to reduce the threat coming from outside with the increasing number of immigrants coming to the US. Both majority and minority linguistic groups in the US felt threatened by each other. The English-speaking majority felt threatened by the increasing number of immigrants who did not speak English and started the bilingual education. This could have led to the US having two or three official languages or even more. The minority groups felt threatened by the English-only movement as it had the potential to eliminate their language and limit its use to personal interactions among its speakers.

As and teachers students were required to use English only in the classroom, it became obvious that students could only speak English in all the interactions in the classroom (Kloss, 1977). However, in spite of these laws preventing teachers and students from using their first languages in ESL classes, first languages have been and still spoken in almost all ESL classrooms. This situation demands an analysis of the reasons and opinions of students about why they keep using their first languages even if classroom rules and education laws did not allow them to do that. Why and when students use their first languages?

#### **1.4 First Language Use in ESL Classrooms:**

There has been a lot of research done in the area of first language use in English classrooms by many researchers and language teachers. Most of this research has studied teachers' opinions about the use of native language in the classroom or the frequency of that usage. There have not been many studies exploring students' perspectives and reasons

for using their first language when they are trying to learn English in English language classrooms.

Vivian Cook (2001) discussed the different ways in which first language(L1) can be positively used in the foreign language classrooms. He looked at the arguments that second language (L2) teachers and linguists have about this topic. He argued that L1 and L2 have two different linguistic systems and characteristics. As a result, students should reduce their use of the L1 in order to fully acquire the L2. Although teachers keep telling students to separate the two languages, learners keep comparing the two linguistic systems as they learn the L2. For that reason, teachers usually encourage students to avoid using the L1 or comparing the two languages. Also, students need as much exposure as possible to the second or target language in order to acquire it. That requires them to use the L2 as much as possible.

Cook also compared acquisition processes of the two languages. When learners learned their first language, they did not use another language to acquire it. Consequently, they should only use the L2 in order to acquire the second language and to reach a level of competency that is close to their level in their first language. He concluded by pointing out some teaching contexts in which the first language can be positively used. Teachers and students can use the first language for a number of reasons such as:

- *Explaining and checking meaning*
- *Explaining and teaching grammar*
- *Class management*
- *Explaining class activities and tasks*
- *Maintaining contact with the students*

Charlene Polio and Patricia Duff (1994) looked at the use of the first language in English classrooms from a different point of view. They looked at the teachers' usage of English as a first language in foreign language classrooms in the US at the university level. They came up with similar results to Cook's about the different reasons for using L1 in L2 classrooms. They

listed a number of possible usages for English as a first language in the foreign language classrooms such as :

- *Classroom management*
- *Explaining grammar*
- *Explaining and checking vocabulary*
- *Building rapport between students and teachers*
- *Explaining ambiguous and difficult concepts*

The most obvious reason for using English in the foreign language contexts as found by Polio and Duff was to negotiate meaning.

Elsa Auerbach (1993) carried out a detailed study on the concept of using English only in the English language classroom. She looked at the two different views of that topic: to either use it or avoid it. She tracked the English-Only movement through history and provided the justifications and reasoning behind that movement. She offered the following justifications for using L1 in the L2 classrooms:

- Students who are unable to participate in English only programs will have an opportunity to study using both their L1 and L2.
- Using L1 reduces barriers to language learning and develops rapport between teachers and students and between the students themselves.
- It is found that students who are allowed to use L1 had acquired L2 faster than students who used only L2 in their classrooms

Auerbach concluded by saying that although there are two points of view to this topic, it is the teachers who ultimately decide whether they need to use the L1 or not. Every classroom is unique and for that reason, the teacher is the best judge to decide whether to use the L1 or to avoid it. Whereas the previous studies looked at the use of L1 from the teachers' points of view, other researchers tried to look at it from the students' points of view.



William Schweers (1999) carried out a study to investigate the reasons and amount of L1 usage in the English classrooms. He investigated the use of Spanish in English classes in the University of Puerto Rico.

Schweers's study found out that about 88.7 percent of the students thought Spanish should be used while all the teachers thought Spanish should be used. This shows a difference between how the two perceive L1 usage in the classroom. However, none of the students thought the teachers should stop using Spanish in the classroom. Most of the teachers and the students agreed that Spanish should be used to explain difficult concepts while the least number of students and teachers agreed that they did not really need Spanish for testing. However, about 6.4 percent of the students thought they did.

In addition, most of the students thought Spanish should be used about 30 percent of the class time while 1.1 percent thought that 90 percent of class time should be in Spanish. About 68.3 percent of the students mentioned that they use Spanish in the English classrooms in order not to feel lost. As we have seen from Schweers' study, there is a difference between what students think and what teachers think.

Another study by Carolina Rodrigues and Gina Oxbrow (2008) looked at the students' beliefs of whether the use of the L1 in English classrooms is a facilitator or a hindrance. The study found out that most of the students said that the use of L1 (Spanish) in the English classroom actually helped them improve their L2. Most of the students agreed that they preferred if the teachers explained the grammar points in their L1 and not in the L2. However, it was not preferred for the teachers to give instructions or carry out activities in the L1. They also preferred for the teacher to point out the similarities and differences between their native language and the L2 they are learning.

## **Conclusion:**

As we have seen in the studies above, most students to some extent agree with the use of the L1 for a number of reasons. This paper will examine the reasons for these preferences and not only what students think is best for them we will also see teachers perspective toward this phenomenon in the next stages .

### **1.5 Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of this study is to give deeper insight into why English language students use their mother tongue in their English classrooms instead of using English. It will look at non-native English students' perspectives and attitudes on their usage of their first language in their English language classrooms. It will explore their thoughts and possible reasons for not trying to use English only and instead using their first languages. The results will help students themselves have a better idea and explanation of their attitudes towards language learning. By realizing their own justifications, they may have a better chance to develop their language skills. The study will also help teachers and educators understand why their students use their first language instead of English in English language classrooms. The results may also help teachers understand in which contexts their students tend to prefer to use their mother tongue and not English, by understanding that, teachers will be better informed about which materials and methods may help their students use English effectively in their classrooms. This may lead to the eventual improvement of the students' English language skills by using English only in the classrooms.

### **1.6 Questions of the study:**

In my study i will try to answer the following questions:

1. What reasons do non-native English students have for using their mother tongue in the English classroom?
2. What students perspectives towards the use of mother tongue within classroom ?
3. To what extent do students are comfortable with the use of first language ?
4. What's teachers opinions on the use of the L1 ?when and why ?
5. What strategies could save this situation and get rid of the use of the mother tongue in English classes ?

# Chapter Two

## **Introduction:**

use of the first language in the second year foreign languages secondary school level. In order to find convincing answers for the reason of using the mother tongue by teachers and learners so that we questioned both parties with various questions and reasons that learners may face in particular. Hoping to reaching results that may help us to reduce the usage of the mother tongue in order to come out with several strategies and methods that may help to improve learner's level and facilitate the teaching process for teachers depending on the graphs and tables we have collected, we will analyze and discuss them to reach the goal.

### **2.1. Description of the Place of Investigation:**

We conducted this work at secondary school in Relizane called " EL JADIDA " by questioning three teachers and students of foreign languages to describe the main reasons behind the use of the mother tongue in English classes.

### **2.2. The Sample:**

It is important to select a sample to this academic investigation to narrow the scope of research the samples are three teachers and students of foreign languages in secondary schools in Relizane.

#### **2.2.1. Students :**

We have investigated in a sample of secondary school's students. We have chosen them because we are focusing on the impact of the mother tongue and the perspective of students toward it.

#### **2.2.2. Teachers :**

The study consists of three teachers of different classes, each one of these teachers has been teaching for a couple of years two of them are new in the domain. Their ideas are the result of their experience in teaching at secondary schools. They also have been interviewed with some questions to see what makes them use first language while teaching and to what extent do they use it and see the opinion and experiences of each one of them.

### **2.3. Methods and materials:**

This chapter is basically aims to describe the tools which compromise the basic part of the research study. It is based on the data collection that has been gathered through the principals of quantitative research in the aim of achieving reliable data which concerns the topic of the study. It consists of questionnaire for students and some questions for students we provide this research tool to highlight the different opinions and views concerning the usage of mother tongue of teachers and students in class and the reasons behind this phenomenon and try to reduce it with some ways and strategies

## 2.4. Research Tools :

### 2.4.1. Description of students' questionnaire:

Describing student's questionnaire it is conducted to see the student's opinions about the first language by giving them a set of reasons or can be said situations to see how do they react on them and how does mother tongue effect their level and there learning from different views ,it consists 7 reasons with different situations , the students are going to answer with "Never, Sometimes, Usually or Always " in the second part of the questionnaire we gave students range of opinions where they need to answer with " strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree "

### 2.4.2. Description of teacher's interview:

To describe teacher's interview it is to figure out teacher's experiences and views through the career of teaching, the difficulties they face with the use of the first language to see whether it works with them or not how it effects the learners and the teachers as well , the interview consists a range of 5 main questions .

## 2.5. Data Analysis:

In this analysis each reason has been analysed separately and many steps have been taken. The data is analysed quantitatively (by means of tables and graphs), and qualitatively (by means of description and explanation of results)

### 2.5.1. Students' Responses:

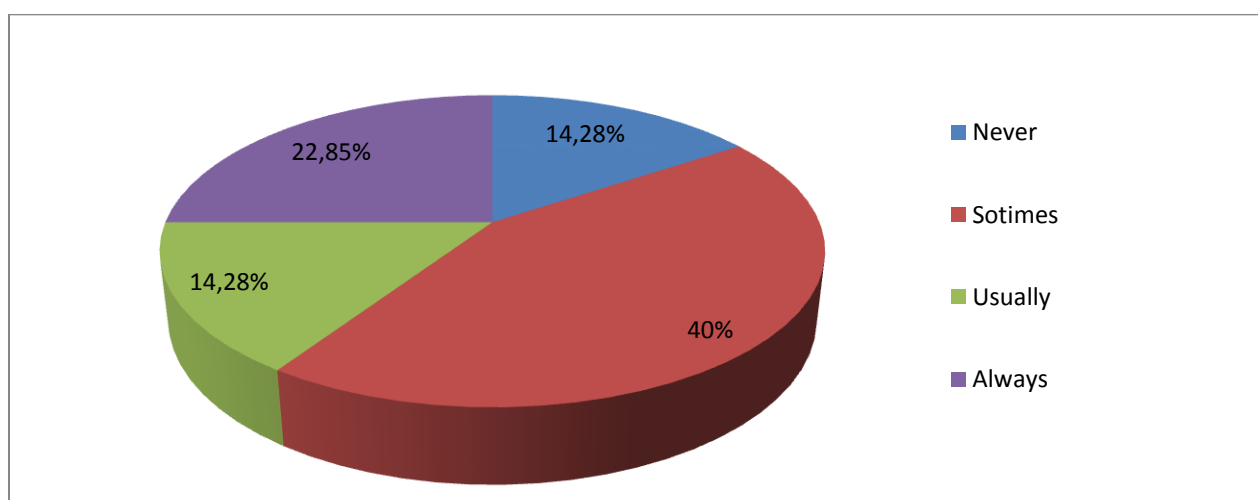
**Q2.1.** From the list of reasons bellow select why and how often do you use your First Language in your English classroom?

**Reason 01:** students' responses,

The reason	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Total
I use my First Language when I am explaining a new point in the lesson to a classmate.	05	14	05	08	35

The percentage	14.28%	40%	14.28%	22.85%	100%
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**Reason 01:** students' responses.

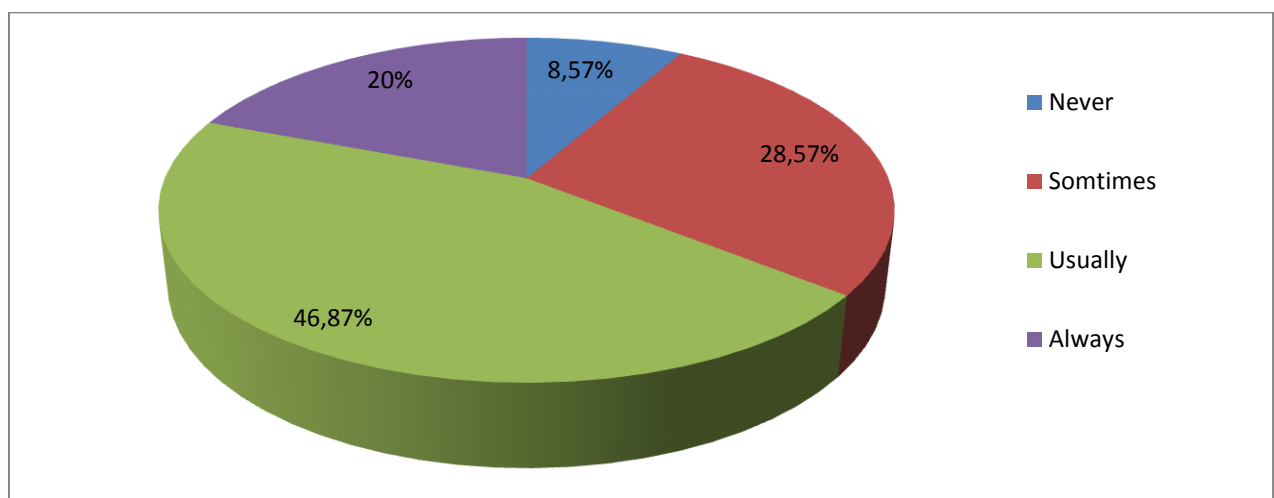


The result in the table shows that (40%) of students use first language sometimes in English class to explain new point in the lesson to a classmate, (22.85%) of them use it always, (14.28%) indicate that they use it usually whereas (14.28%) of them stated that they never use first language to explain new ideas in English class.

**Reason 02:**students' responses,

The reason	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Total
I use my first Language when I want to chat with my classmates about topics that may not be connected to class.	03	10	15	07	35
Percentage	8.57%	28.57%	46.87%	20%	100%

**Reason 02:**students' responses,

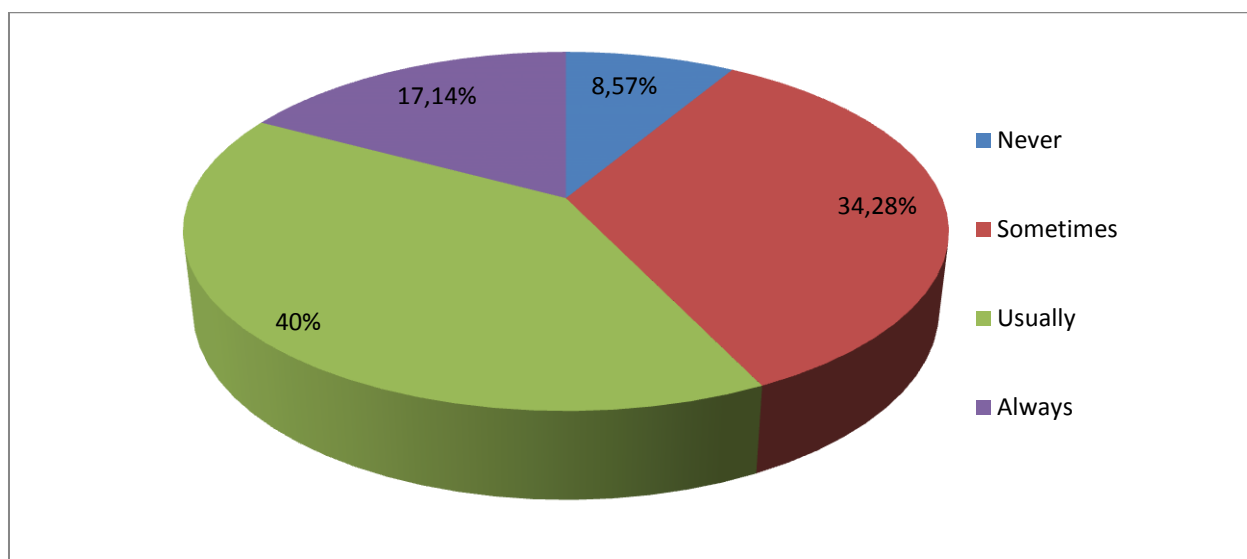


The result shows that majority of students (46,87%) usually use their first Language when they want to chat with their classmates about topics that is not be connected to class others answers were measured (28,57%) sometimes use it and (20 %) always use first language ,(8,57%) never use it .

**Reason 03:** students' responses,

The reason	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Total
I use my First Language when I need to ask a classmates to explain a point in the lesson for me,	03	12	14	06	35
Percentage	8.57%	34.28%	40%	17.14%	100%

**Reason 03:** students' responses,



In the third reason (40%) usually use their First Language when they need to ask a classmates to explain a point in the lesson while (34,28%) sometimes use it when asking a classmate to explain a point (17,14%) always do whereas (8.57%) never use the mother tongue when asking about something in the class

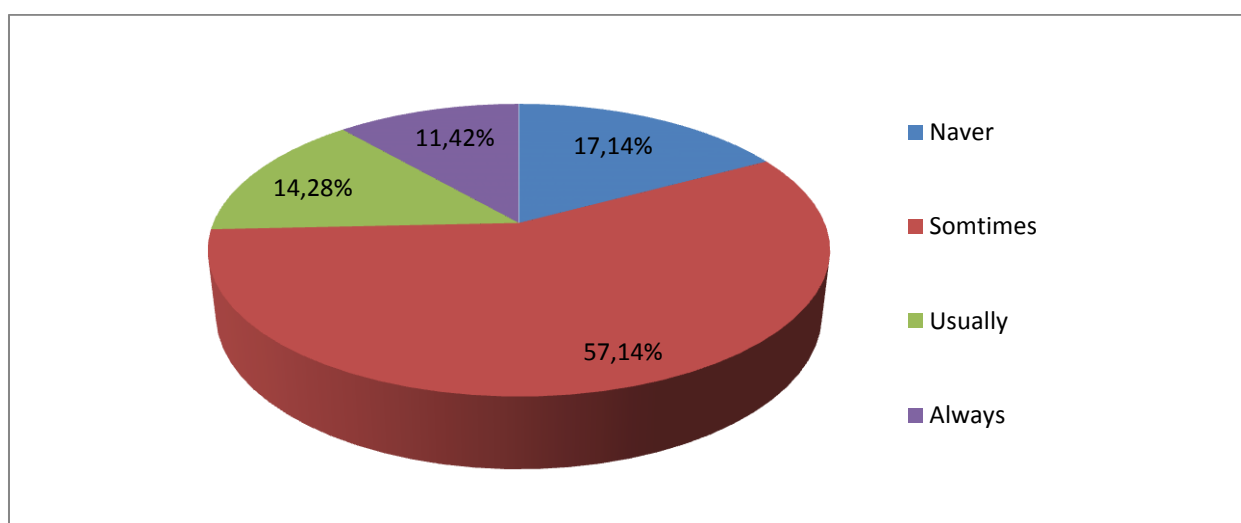
**Reason 04:** students' responses,

The reason	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Total
I use my First Language when I need to check the meanings of a new word or a concept during the lesson.	06	20	05	04	35



Percentage	17.14%	57.14%	14.28%	11.42%	100%
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**Reason 04:** students' responses,

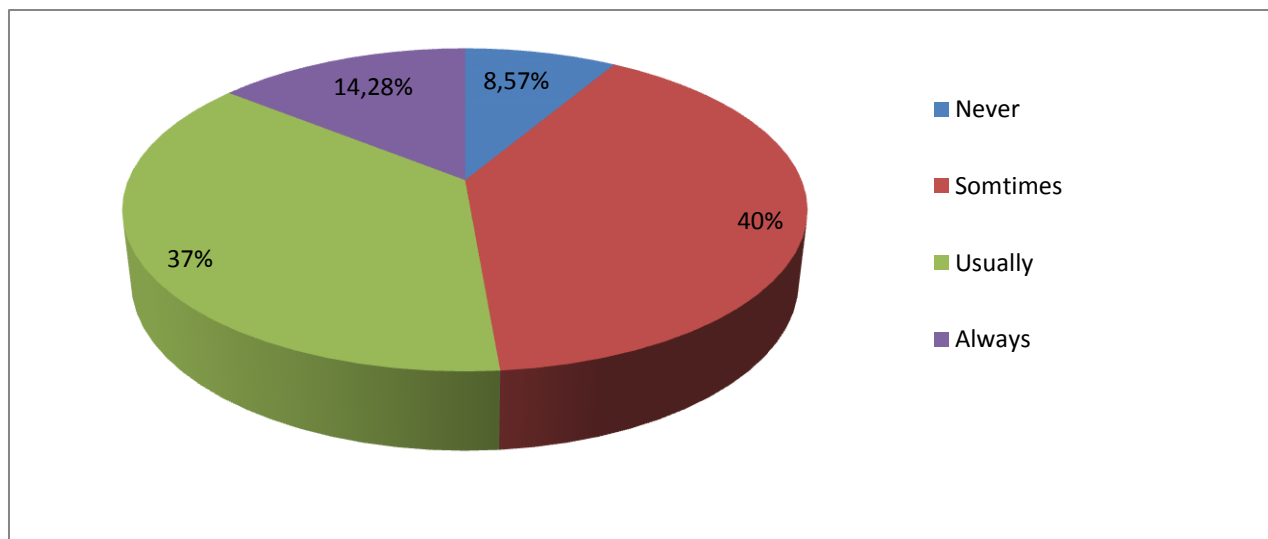


Most of student (57,14%) use the First Language when they need to check the meaning of a new word or a concept during the lesson .(17,14%) never use it and (14,28%)usually do. Less of them (11,42%) always use mother tongue when checking meanings of new words

**Reason 05:** students' responses,

The reason	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Total
I use my First Language when I cannot think of the correct word in English when I talking to my classmates.	03	14	13	05	35
Percentage	8.57%	40%	37.14%	14.28%	100%

**Reason 05:** students' responses,

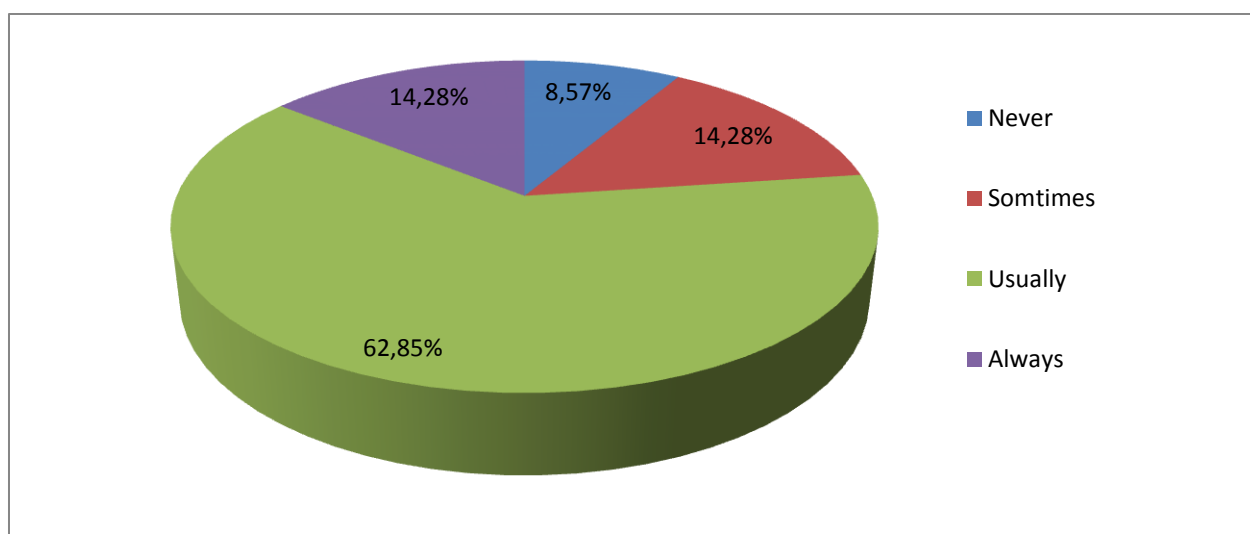


The results in the fifth reason shows that (40%) sometimes use my First Language when they can not think of the correct word in English when talking to their classmates ,when (37%)usually use mother tongue when thinking of the correct word in English and (14,28%) always do .(8.57%) never use it .

**Reason 06:** Students' responses,

The reason	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Total
I use my First Language when my classmates start talking to me in my first Language while we are working on task.	03	05	22	05	35
Percentage	8.57%	14.28%	62.85%	14.28%	100 %

**Reason 06:** Students' responses,

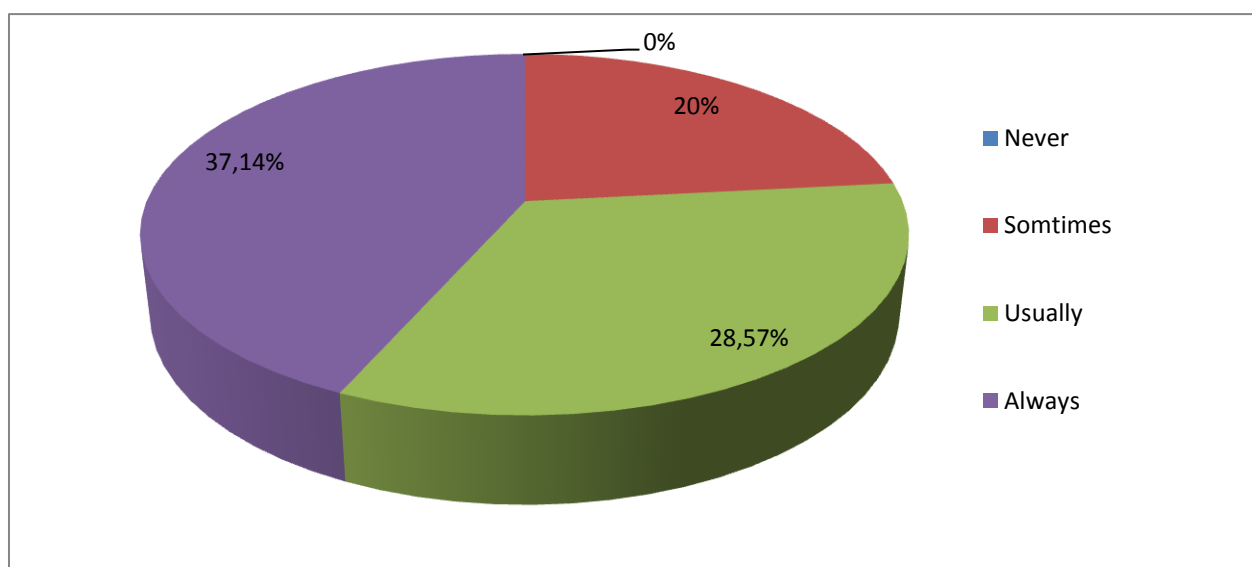


In reason six we see that majority of students (62,85%) usually use First Language when one of classmates start talking to another in their first Language while working on task .however (14,28%) some of them always use it and other sometimes when (8,57%) never use it .

**Reason 07:**students' responses,

The reason	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Total
I use my First Language when I talk about personal things with my classmates.	00	07	10	13	35
Percentage	00%	20%	28.57%	37.14%	100%

**Reason 07:**students' responses,



In reason seven the results shows (37,14%) use the First Language when talking about personal things classmates and (28,57%) always use the mother tongue when talking about personal things .(20%) answered with sometimes , so most of them use the L1 in this case .

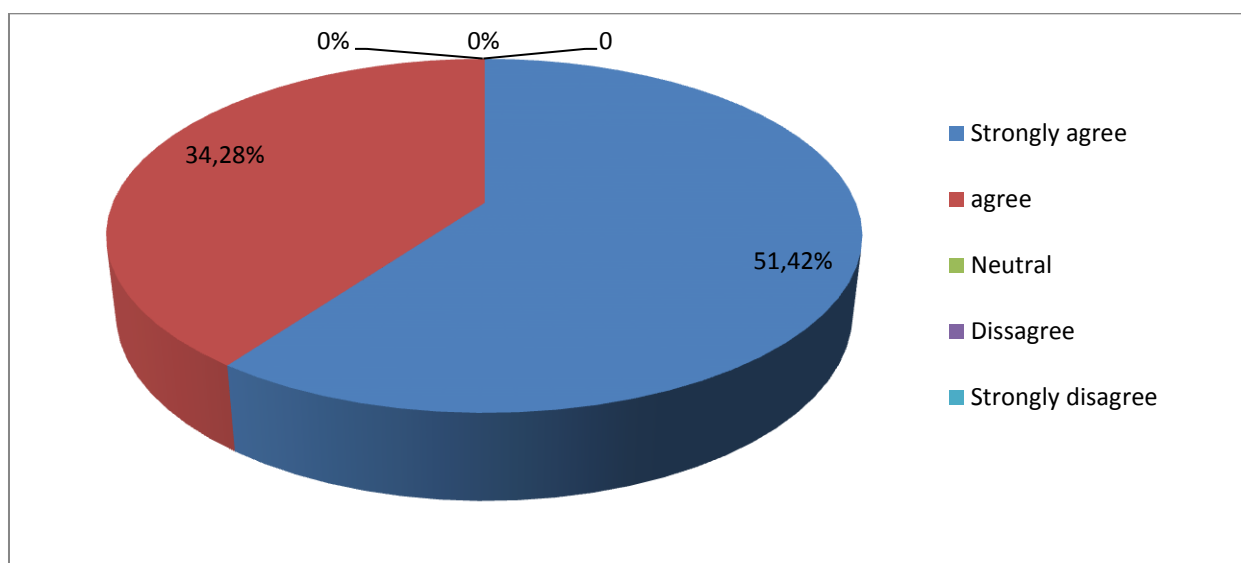
**Q 2.2.** Indicateto what extent you are **agree or disagree** with the set of statements bellow that show different opinions, ESL students have about using their First Language in English Classroom?

**Statement 01:** students' responses,

Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
---------	----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------	-------

In English class, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my First Language.	18	12	00	00	00	35
Percentage	51.42%	34.28%	00%	00%	00%	100%

**Statement 01:** students' responses,



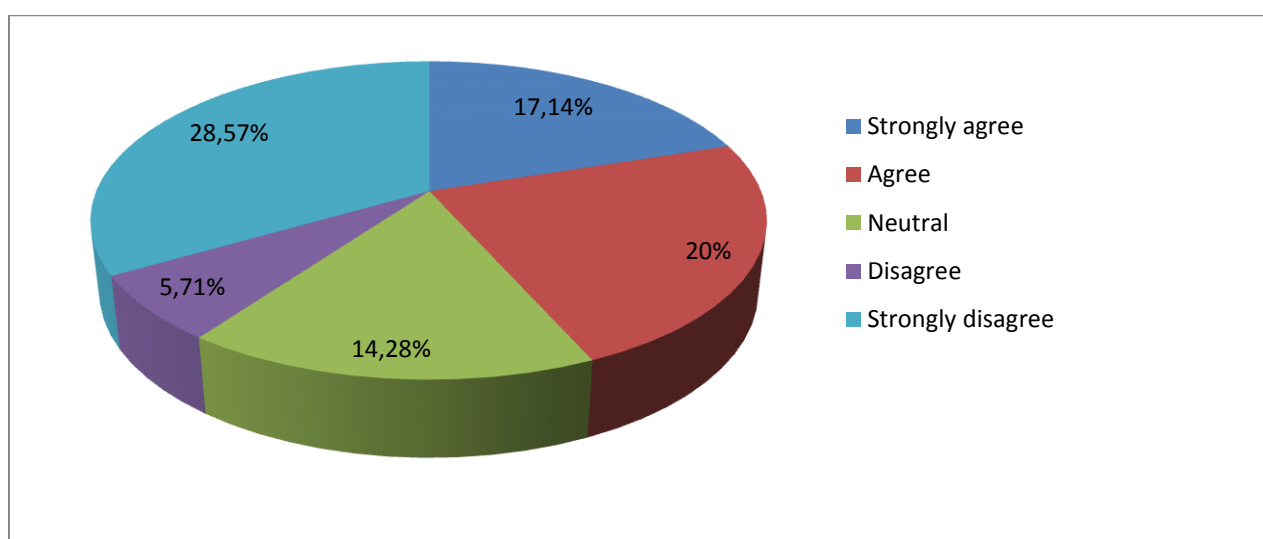
In the first statement of the second part of the questionnaire majority of students answered with strongly agree (51%) on the opinion which says In English class, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my First Language. when (34,28%) just agreed on it .

**Statement 02:** Students' response,

Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total

I would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my First Language in English class.	<b>06</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>35</b>
Percentage	<b>17.14%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>14.28%</b>	<b>5.71%</b>	<b>28.57%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Statement 02:** Students' response,

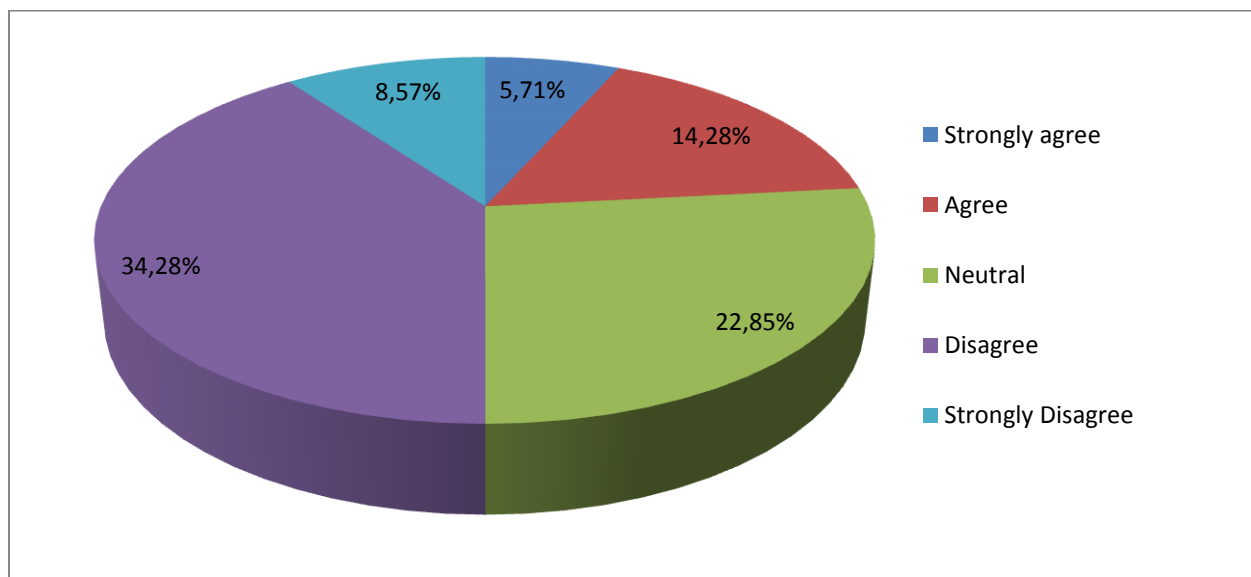


In the second statements which says “ would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my First Language in English class”(28,57%) strongly disagree on that ,(20%) just agreed ,(14.28%) of them chose to be neutral when (17,14%) strongly agree and (5,71%) just disagree .

**Statement 03:** students' responses,

Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
I think my English class should have an “ English Only Policy” ( that means only English is allowed in the English classroom).	<b>02</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>35</b>
Percentage	<b>5.71 %</b>	<b>14.28 %</b>	<b>22.85 %</b>	<b>34.28 %</b>	<b>8.57 %</b>	<b>100 %</b>

**Statement 03:** students’ responses,

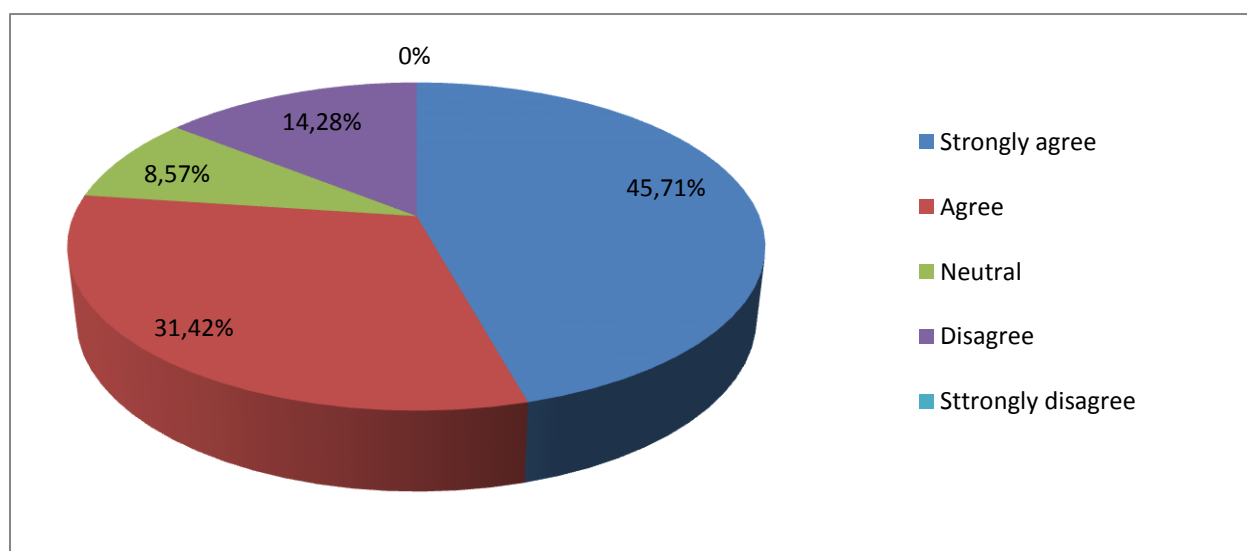


The third opinion shows that (34,28%) disagree on “English only policy ‘ (22,85%) were neutral ,(14,28%) agreed on that (8,57%) strongly disagree and (5,71%) strongly agreed on only English used in classroom .

**Statement 04:**students' responses,

Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
As my English improve, I am becoming more comfortable speaking only English in English class.	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>00</b>	<b>35</b>
Percentage	<b>45.71%</b>	<b>31.42%</b>	<b>8.57%</b>	<b>14.28%</b>	<b>00%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Statement 04:**students' responses,

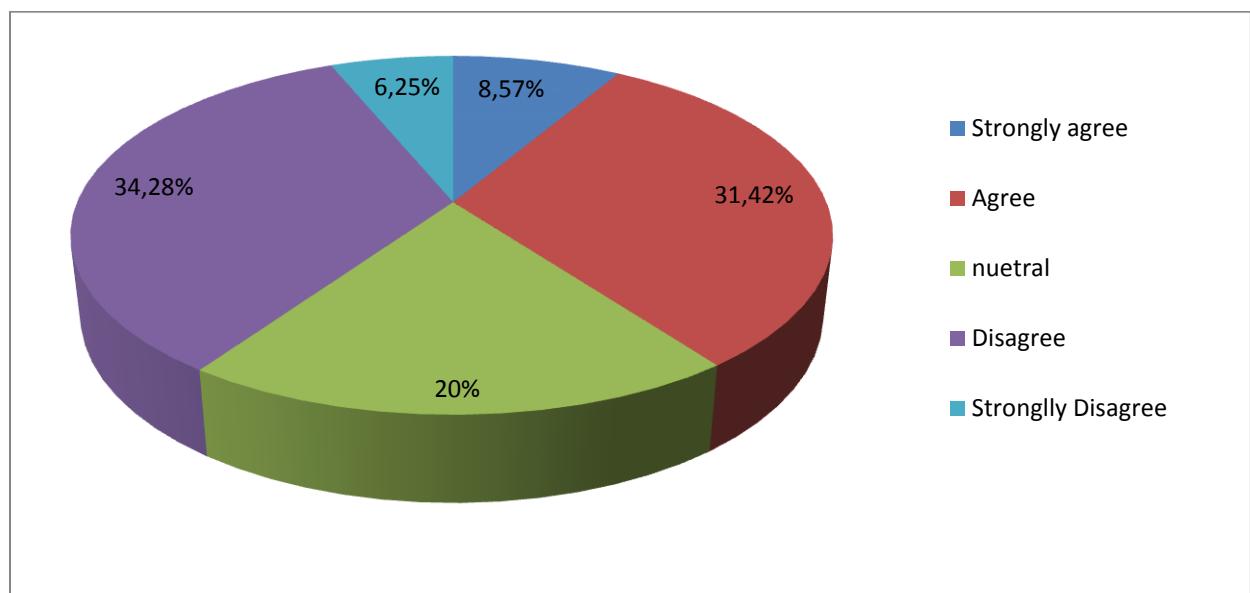


The fourth statement shows that huge number (45,71%)strongly agreed on if their English improved they would feel comfortable with speaking only English (31,42%) just agreed (14,28%) disagree on that and (8;57%) were neutral .

**Statement 05:** students' responses,

Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
I want to be able to speak my First Language in English class when I feel need to.	03	11	07	12	02	35
Percentage	8.57%	31.42%	20%	34.28%	6.25%	100%

**Statement 05:** students' responses,



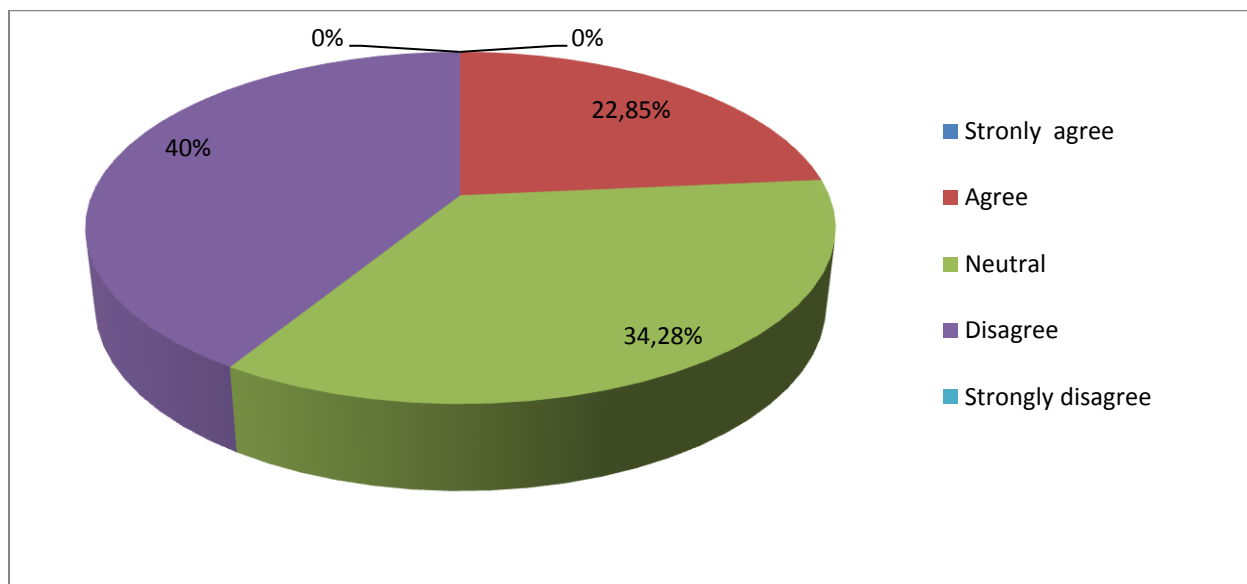
In statement five we see (34,28%) disagree on speaking first language when they need to (31,42%) agreed on that (20%) were neutral ,when(8,57%) strongly agreed and (6,25%) strongly disagree .

**Statement 06:** students' responses,



Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
It's not important to speak only English in class as long as I am completing the course tasks	00	08	12	14	00	35
Percentage	00%	22.85%	34.28%	40%	00%	100%

**Statement 06:** students' responses

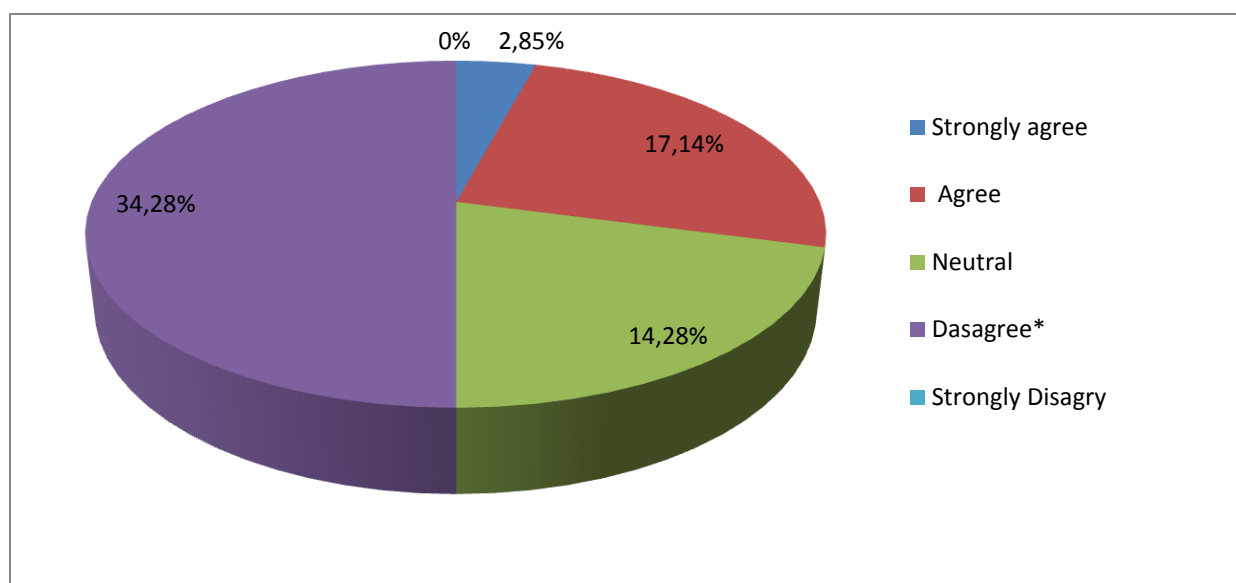


(40%) disagreed on the statement which says that is not important to speak only English as long as they complete the course task (34,28 %) were neutral whereas (22,85%) agreed on the opinion .

**Statement 07:** students' responses,

Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Using dictionaries and resources in the first language should be allowed in English class.	<b>10</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>00</b>	<b>35</b>
Percentage	<b>2.85%</b>	<b>17.14%</b>	<b>14.28%</b>	<b>34.28%</b>	<b>00%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Statement 07:** students' responses,

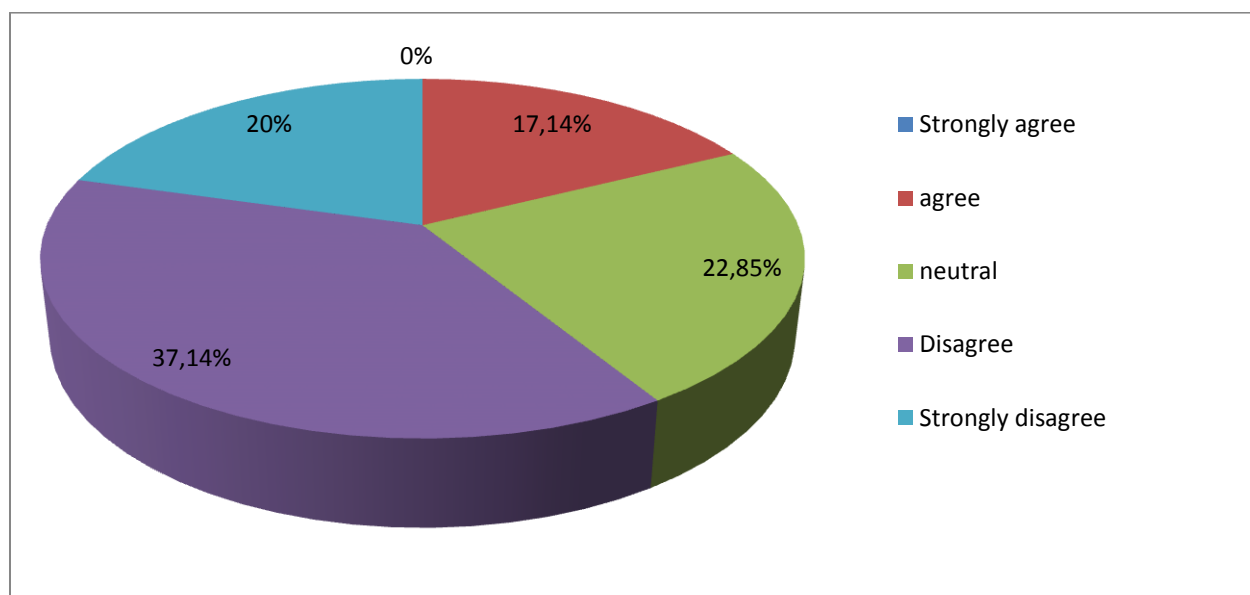


In this the seventh statement its shows that(34,28%) disagree on using dictionaries and resources in the first language should be allowed in English class.(14,28%) were neutral (17,14%) agreed on that and (2.85%) strongly disagree .

**Statement 08:** students' responses,

Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
I think I speak in my first language more than I speak English in English class.	<b>00</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>35</b>
Percentage	<b>00%</b>	<b>17.14%</b>	<b>22.85%</b>	<b>37.14%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Statement 08:** students' responses,



In the last statement (37,14%) disagree on speaking the first language more than speaking English in class (22,85%) were neutral (20%) strongly agreed and (17,14%) just agreed .

### 2.5.2. Teachers Interview :

In the analysis of teachers interview we have done it with three teachers of English each of them teaches a particular stream we started with the teacher of English of foreign languages stream which is the most important case for our study , the teacher was a female she has been teaching for four years , the second teacher was a female as well first time teaching same as the third that was a male, my first question was :

1. Do you use your first language in class? How often? Why?

a-She answered “ *i try my best to minimize the use of the L1 during class but sometime i feel my self oblige to explain things when students do not get the point i am explaining and i always try different ways to make them understand in English by using a very simple English because most of student understand with repetition* ”

b- the second teacher answered on the same questions saying “ *when i first come i faced huge problems with students of scientific branch because mostly all students do not understand English very well they are very weak in terms of vocabulary , so i had to explain in first language* ”

c-the third teacher answered “ *when i came first time it was really hard dealing with them they were very noisy , the lack of communication was a problem for me I teach scientific branch and there are only five who can understand and participate in the class and concerning the usage of the first language I use it to control the class and i use it when its hard for students to understand and sometimes I use French instead of Arabic just to make them understand the lesson* ”

In the first question we see that there are different reasons of the use of the first language teachers who teach scientific branch have almost the same problem which is the issue of understanding ,controlling the class and the gaps they have in English whereas the first teacher was facing problems in understanding only so she had to repeat to make them understand

2..For what tasks do you need to speak your first language in class?

a-answered “ *concerning the task I use first language when explaining a grammar lessons . my students do not understand easily grammar lessons so I use a bit mother tongue*”

b-answered "students of scientific branch do not understand , they have many weaknesses in terms of grammar , vocabulary, spelling mistakes they can not even build a true sentence so first language take place in this case "

c-answered " the task where i need to use first language is when explaining a text ,students see new words so i need to give them synonyms of the words otherwise I translate into first language sometimes but not always "

As we can see in the second question in what tasks you as teachers use first language two of them face problems with understanding , they pointed to grammar lessons whereas the other teacher said that she uses L1 when explaining new vocabulary so we deduce that first language is taking place in tasks they give as well .

3. Do you even explain to your students why you have to speak in English in the class ?

a-answered " when I started my career in teaching English I used to tell my students they have to speak English and they need to make researches with their own and try to improve their English outside class because me as a teacher I can not give them what they need , but students do not make efforts , I always tell them that they need to practice otherwise they will never improve ,I give them home works from time to time but they rely on internet a lot "

b-answered "teaching students of scientific branch is really hard no matter whether you explain why do they need to speak in English or not they are not interested at all they consider English class as an hour to rest and make jokes "

c-answered " explaining to students why do they need to speak only English is very important but students of scientific branches do not take this into account , I try from time to time to make my students speak English only few of them show that they are interested "

from the answers above we see that English teachers who teaches scientific branches are struggling to convey the message why only English must be spoken in the class , as well as student's interests and concerning foreign languages students I have noticed that they depend on their teacher to do everything for them she said that they do not do any kind of efforts.

4. What methods do you use to let your students speak in English ?

a-answered " I let them do plays but not always and speak about personal experiences these kind of methods really works its very beneficial . and this may also require using visual or audio or audio-visual tools like flashcards videos..etc "

b-answered " to make students active in class I give rewards sometimes mostly marks but that make it worst , I give my students home works or researches and let them present it or ask them questions about them selves and make them speak in English ."

c-answered "The easiest way and workable methods I use to make my students speak and understand is just using simple words ,instructions and phrases. Also I try to act and use pictures and gestures, and do what students like for example narrating story ,describing each other they will save time and effort most of time"

In this question we have some similarities teachers are using ways and tricks to make students interact and understand, techers are using plays , pictures ,videos, body gestures and the most important thing the clear language i.e easy vocabulary , teachers said these methods are the best to make students participate .However they admit that they can also be a source of noise and problems.

5. Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about your experience using your native language versus English in English classes?

a-answered " me as a teacher of English language. I can not give everything for the student, especially if they are not interested and making efforts . I have to use the first language from time to time to save the situation"

b-answered "my experience with students of scientific brunch was very difficult , I had to use mother tongue every time especially when the level is very bad in English "

c-answered " i think that the usage of the mother tongue is not a big issue when it is used only by teachers to solve a problem of understanding , but students should never use it otherwise i won't learn , a teacher need to be patient and look for any way that helps him and students to avoid using the first language "

## **conclusion :**

In this chapter and after the practicle work we have done in secondary school with students of English and teachers ,we see that both are struggling with the use of the mother tongue , it has remarkable impact no matter materials and how strategies teachers use first

language is always present which is such a dilemma that need to be solved , most of students just run away from using English , they fear it and do not make any efforts to learn especially students of scientific brunches ,after the answers of teachers we see that teachers feel themselves obliged to use the L1 as an alternative to make students understand and participate .

# Chapter three

After the work we have done in high school with students of foreign languages and English language in terms of the use of the mother tongue in the class and the impact of it on the teachers and students obtained rates and results in the second chapter after the analysis of the data it shows us that the problem is really serious which requires immediate solutions and strategies to reduce this phenomenon, because of the disadvantages of learning that carries with it on the students and not only for the English language the same issue is happening with other languages . In this chapter we will discuss the following results we got , then we try give ways and methods to help students and the English language teachers to facilitate the process of learning without resorting to the use of mother tongue in addition to this we will give some guidance recommended which helped some teachers to learn effectively .

### **3.1 Discussion of findings:**

When conducting the questionnaire of students and teachers, we obtained unsatisfactory results, most of students answered in a random way , because they did not understand the



questions on the basis that they were difficult and incomprehensible. I gave the students in the questionnaire some of the reasons they could face in English class regarding the use of the first language in the class and the lack of communication in English with the teachers. The answers were never clear and the complicity of the students appeared to be clear. They did not understand what was written in the questionnaire despite the simplicity of the language. I came to use the mother tongue by the help of the teacher to understand that their answers were very random and very weak.

\_ One of the reasons we got was fear of student who spoke the language and fell in mistakes which makes them embarrassed .

\_ The lack of participation in the class due to language weaknesses, which prevents them from building a correct and coherent sentence.

\_ Most students use the mother tongue when speaking among themselves in the class and neglect the target language.

\_ When they do not understand something they ask the teacher to explain in the mother tongue so that they can take the idea and this is what teachers they said as well.

\_ Most students resort to use English-Arabic dictionaries instead of English- English dictionaries.

\_ A remarkable percentage of students who translate their ideas using the mother tongue into English.

\_ A large percentage of students use the mother tongue when speaking about personal things.

In the second part of the questionnaire we gave students a group of opinions on the use of the mother tongue and asked them to answer by agree or disagree , we concluded the following results:

\_ The students want a teacher who understands and uses the mother tongue to communicate with him comfortably.

\_ Most students do not want to apply the so-called English only policy they just want the use of the English language to be equal to the use of mother tongue (50/50).

\_ The weirdest thing I face is that most students wish to improve their level in the English language but do not seek to implement it.

\_ Most students want to use the native language when they want and when they need to freely.

\_ They do not care about using English while they have understood the lesson by using the native language and can solve activities.

\_ A high percentage of students who answered with **agree** about speaking in English within the class but the truth is different because the answers were random.

As for the teachers' questionnaire, I asked direct questions about the use of the first language in classrooms. The answers were somewhat frustrating because of the difficulties that teachers face during the process of teaching . The meeting was individual and the same questions were asked to each of them, in relation to this issue of the L1 in classes, but I only took five major questions and that because the problem of timing in order to constraints and shortene the subject and the answers were as follows:

\_ The teachers suffer from the inability to deliver the idea or rather the message to the students using the English language even with repetition, they force them selves to use the first language, especially for the students of science brunches.

\_ Teachers use the first language when interpreting synonyms new vocabulary in general, especially if it is not familiar to students as well as the grammar lessons.

\_ Students depend on the teacher in everything so that teacher does not know how to explain to the students why they should use only English in the classroom and this point is very sensitive to be attention to.

\_ Teachers use several advanced methods such as pictures, videos, plays and researchs to make the student active in the classroom and understand in a fun way, but some pointed out that it may be a source of noise in the classroom.

\_ One of teachers see that the use of the mother tongue by the teachers is not a problem if if it is used from time to time to save a situation.

\_ While others believe that the main reason for using first language by teacher is due to the lack of interest in the student with the English language.

### **3.2 Observations:**

When I did practical survey I didn't face any problems with the teachers or the administration of the secondary school of Relizane. except problem problem of time so some of the teachers did not finish the program yet, but even though I got an appointment from the English language teachers of the foreign languages. When I entered to the foreign languages classe, I noticed so much noise and lack of attention of student which indicates that teacher is not monitoring the class as he suppose to.

What is surprising is the lack of understanding of students' to the questions despite the simplicity of language that indicates that the level is very weak especially since they are in the foreign languages branch. I asked some questions out the subject, such as why you do not use English among you, both inside and outside the class, since you are studying languages? Some of them answered that they were interested in Spanish or French I dont not deny that a few of them seemed to be interested in English, but the majority of them have a catastrophic level.

Most of students were answering questions randomly without reading questions or trying even to understand them. What made me intervene with the help of the teacher to facilitate the language clearly and comprehensively, but despite this I had to use the Arabic and that's just to gain some time.

As for the methods used to teach in relation to the structure was not satisfying to me to some extent. What made me seek for alternatives and new ideas I contacted some of teachers and students through social media ,from inside and outside the country so that I came up with ideas and easy new ways to reduce the use of the mother tongue in the classroom will talk about them in the next stage.

### **3.3 Tasks and strategies:**

In this stage we will mention some of the tasks and methods used by the teachers in the classroom to facilitate the process of teaching without using the first language . We will mention methods used by the teachers of secondary school of Relizan and then we will discuss some methods used by some of teachers and students that i contacted them online

With regard to the reduction of the use of the L1 some of them gave me personal experiences and others gave me their point of view toward this subject.

\_ Starting with Mr.walid weld beldi university teacher who had an experience in the middle school said :

“Switching to mother tongue during the process of learning a language is almost inavoidable, however, the amount of L1 usage can be minimized but taking it off completely would not in my opinion provide a stress and anxiety free atmosphere in your classroom as we can't deny the importance of the mother tongue especially to reach communicative effectiveness, another point is the level of your students, for advanced students it's sure that the amount of L1 code switching will be lower but for the beginners you might leave enough space to students to use their mother tongue whenever they need it. My experience is that I always use the mother tongue with my students even if they have an advanced level of English proficiency just to break the ice and trying to establish a friendly environment which is not always easy in a language classroom, for students English is the second language, they will always depend on some features of their mother tongue in their learning. I sometimes use the mother tongue just to relax students who feel anxious in speaking. some students see the teacher as an alien coming from another planet and I am not even joking, to make them comfortable or as a way to win their trust I use mother tongue by giving a joke or a proverb something very slight just to put them at ease anxiety in English classroom is something very real, however this is only my opinion.”

\_Mr. Amar Serieh English teacher in secondary school :

“The easiest your teaching is , the more your pupils will benefit from you..just use simple words ,instructions and phrases. You will not depend on the mother tongue then. Also try to act and use pictures and gestures, they will save time and effort.”

\_ Mr.Nigaran Abdullah English teacher from Kurdistan :

### **Mark or money ?**

“when i was student our teacher didnt let us talk any other languages except English he use to force us to use only English during the class and if some one didn't apply the rule he/she had to pay money as a punishment or get minuses I paid many times, but later when the class is over we gave all money for charity and we took nice pictures as a souvenir and we learned

many things besides my English improved . method used by Mr.Broosk wish is one the best way to learn in fun way “

\_Mr.Amire Benhammad English teacher in secondary school :

When you are in class , try to simplify things and never use far fetched words . Also, reformulate your questions to make them easier to grasp. More, remember that you can use gestures and gesticulations to clarify the meaning of a word. Remember, it is your decision to use mother tongue and nobody else “

\_ Mr.Hamid Aigoune student of English :

“Use technology,gestures,facial expressions and body expressions,pictures,etc... The use of the mother tongue can only be used when the teacher finds no other techniques to explain a word and there is no problem with this “

\_ Mss.Taous Bouzid English teacher from Tizi Ouzou :

“Actually using the mother tongue is rather beneficial to promote bilingualism and multilingualism. Using learners' competences to a high degree help them to draw a link between their knowledge and the new one, this facilitates the construction of knowledge.”

\_ Another English teacher from Tizi Ouzou said :

“Introduce a situation, asking simple questions to brainstorm the topic the thing that you have not to forget is to write on the board their words and if while brainstorming they use the mother tongue, tell them we say it in English like this then write it directly”

\_Mss.Naimi.N English teacher :

“My advice to you as a teacher is to encourage interaction in classroom and to expose students to native speakers conversations and native environment this motivate students and they try imitate him/her (a model)”

\_Mr.Abou Obaida Tarbakh English teacher from Ouargla :

“Use flashcards and pictures that help students to speak and introduce the keywords of the lesson to help them understand and use them, and each lesson has its typical topic and thematic vocabulary , let your students be familiar with them as introduction to the lesson ‘

### **3.4Recommendations:**

Basing the observation of data collected throughout the questionnaire we must consider the following:

- Students should never be allowed to use first language without the permission of the teacher besides all teachers should know how to monitor the class and impose themselves on students they need to show students that they are the authority in the class.
- When first language is used in teaching English it must only be a tool to describe, explain or simplify English concepts as they do exist in an English speaking society. And it should never be allowed to be considered as a starting point to structure or to form English expressions.
- Students must take classes on communication and idiomatic expressions module in order to keep them much more involved in a pure English cultural environment.
- Teachers need to explain to students why only English must be spoken in the classroom, so many teachers ignore this point which really important.

### **3.5For further research:**

This research has helped to highlight the reasons students have for using first language in the English classroom. It also added to our understanding of their opinions about first language use in the English classes. In addition, it has provided an initial exploration into potential connections between first language and English proficiency level on the one hand and students' attitudes about and reasons for first language use on the other. This research, in other words, has helped pave the road for a long journey to look for other ways and methods to facilitate the process of teaching English without using the first language.



## **Conclusion**

After having analyzed the data collected concerning students' of English in secondary of Relizane responses to the questionnaire, we reached the following conclusions:

First, student of second year foreign language were highly not interested to the target language or even to learn to speak English, teachers were not satisfied with their level. They have difficulties in understanding and other weaknesses in the language in many aspects to precise more in grammar, vocabulary and the four skills so they tend to use the first language especially in speaking. Students do not participate in the class because they fear to fall in mistakes despite the help of teachers, students rely on their knowledge of the native language which makes them translate their thoughts into English word by word

Secondly, they are aware of the influence that followed this problem but even though they insist on the use of the mother tongue they keep complaining about teachers who speak only English within the class, students have no knowledge about the culture of the language which makes them careless about the language this point need to be taken into account in English classes it makes students know what are they learning besides other cultures makes them go out of the circle of their culture its very motivating. Students think in Arabic when they speak English and they interpret meanings based on their cultural background knowledge.

Finally teachers should not to stick only on a certain methods change must take place whenever level is threatened. there are plenty of methods and strategies teachers can implement so teachers must not neglect this point researchs never end there always ways to get rid of the this issue.



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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BeAnActiveTeacherOfEnglish/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1439203536409241/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BeAnActiveTeacherOfEnglish/>

## Thesis Questionnaire

Native language -----

gender -----

Age -----

How would you rate your level of English proficiency?

Low beginner    high beginner    low intermediate    high intermediate    advanced

### Part One:

Please read the following statements that show a number of reasons why ESL students speak their first language (such as Chinese, Spanish or Arabic) in their **ESL** **classes**. How often do these reasons apply to you when **YOU ARE** in your English classroom? Please check the boxes next to each reason:

The reasons	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
1- I speak my first language in English class because I am explaining a new point in the lesson to a classmate.				
2- I speak my first language in English class because  I want to chat classmates about topics that may not be connected to class.with my				
3- I speak my first language in English class because  I need to ask a classmate to explain a point in the lesson for me.				
4- I speak my first language in English class because  I need to check the meaning of a new word or concept during the lesson.				
5- I speak my first language in English class because I cannot think of the correct word in English when talking to my classmates				
6- I speak my first language in English class because my classmates start talking to me in my first language while we are				

working on a task				
7- I speak my first language during English class when I talk about personal things with my classmates.				

## Part Two:

Please read the statements below that show different opinions and preferences ESL students have about using their first languages (such as Chinese, Spanish or Arabic) in **English classrooms**. Please indicate to what extent **you agree or disagree** with these opinions. Please check the boxes next to each statement:

Opinion	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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1- In English class, it is best to have a teacher who can understand my first language.					
2- I would prefer to sit next to a classmate who speaks my first language in English class.					
3- I think my English class should have an “English Only Policy.” (This means only English is allowed in the English classroom.)					
4- As my English improves, I am becoming more comfortable speaking only English in English class.					
5- I want to be able to speak my first language in English class when I feel I need to.					
6- It’s not important to speak only English in class as long as I am completing the course tasks.					
7- Using dictionaries and resources in the first language should be allowed in English class.					
8- I think I speak in my first language more often than I speak English in					

English class.					
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## **Interview Questions: for teachers**

Using L1 in ESL: Interview questions

Native Language: -----

How long have you been teaching English: -----

1. Do you use your first language in class? How often? Why?
  
2. For what tasks do you need to speak your first language in class?
  
3. you even explain to your students why you have to speak in English in the class ?
  
4. What methods do you use to let your students speak in English ?



5. Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about your experience using