

EFL Teachers' Code Switching in Turkish Secondary EFL Young Language Learner Classrooms

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Abstract

This study investigated Turkish EFL Young Language Learner teachers' code switching (CS hereafter) from English to Turkish in their classroom discourse. The data were collected from two different secondary private institutions in Adana and Denizli. In accordance with this aim, three EFL teachers and their fifth-grade intermediate level classrooms were recorded for two class hours via video camera. The recordings were transcribed and explored to see whether these teachers resorted to CS or not, if so, what types of CS they used in their classroom, what the functions of these switches were, and finally if these CS attempts contributed to their learners' language learning or not. Face to face semi-structured interviews were held with three teachers and these interviews were analyzed through content analysis. The results obtained from video recordings and semi-structured interviews showed that all the teachers who took part in this study used CS to varying extents. Moreover, the teachers resorted to *inter-sentential CS* the most in terms of typology in their discourse. The detailed analyses of video recordings revealed that the teachers used CS for 20 different purposes and they employed CS mainly for translation, meta-language, asking equivalence, giving instruction and classroom management purposes. Finally, the results of interview analyses showed that the teachers found CS useful for language learning; however, they cautiously emphasized that L1 should not replace L2 in classroom. In the light of the findings of this research, some suggestions were made to EFL teachers and teacher training institutes.

Keywords: EFL Young Language Learner Teachers, Classroom Interaction, Code Switching, The Use of L1 in Language Learning and Teaching, EFL

1. Introduction

Used interchangeably with L1 or mother tongue in the literature, CS is described as the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent (Poplack, 1980). A considerable amount of literature has been published on the use of CS in bilingual settings, ESL as well as EFL classrooms (Gardner-Chloros, McEntee-Atalianis, & Paraskeva, 2013; Li, 2008; Low & Lu, 2008; Riegelhaupt, 2000; Redinger, 2010; Saxena, 2009). For the past 30 years more information has become provided for the CS practices of bilingual speakers and of adult ESL and EFL learners, especially at the tertiary level (Jingxia, 2010; Mirhasani & Mamaghani, 2009; Van Der Meij & Zhao, 2010; Yao, 2011). In the local context, studies concerning the use of L1 or CS for adult learners have been carried out (Ataş, 2012; Bensen & Çavuşoğlu, 2013; Bilgin & Rahimi, 2013; Şen, 2010; Üstünel, 2004). These studies generally focus on teachers' attitudes or acts of CS at the secondary and tertiary levels. For example, Şen (2010) examined how exactly L1 is used by teachers at a high school to focus on form. After transcribing the instances of CS, teachers were asked why they thought their students used it. Similarly Bilgin & Rahimi (2013) investigated the functions, manner, reasons, and contributions of CS to the learning process of ELT from teachers' perspectives. Twenty teachers working at two Turkish universities were given a questionnaire with regard to their beliefs about acts of CS.

Furthermore, Bensen & Çavuşoğlu (2013) investigated the teachers' use of CS in EFL classrooms in the English Preparatory School of a private university in North Cyprus. Classroom interactions of four different teachers were recorded in order to identify the functions of CS. Follow-up playback sessions were held so as to reveal the perspectives of the teachers on their CSs. Another study conducted at university level by Üstünel (2004) attempts to describe how teachers make use of CS in ESL lessons. This study also reveals the students' responses to their teachers' CS acts and the impact of these acts on their use of TL.

In the same vein, but comparing two different proficiency levels at a Turkish university, Ataş (2012) analyzed the discourse functions and forms of CS used by learners and teachers in EFL classrooms in a case study. The researcher compared the amount of functions used by both parties at different levels. Another case study example investigating the amount of CS in EFL classrooms at a school of languages at a state university comes from Horasan (2014). The author recorded four classrooms consisting of 92 students and 8 teachers in terms of switch types, initiation patterns, and the discourse functions of CS, as well as the perceptions of the participants.

As to the studies concerning YLLs, they have become quite prominent in global settings as well. However, compared to the studies on adult learners, the amount of research about YLLs is sparse (Inbar-Lourie, 2010; Nagy & Robertson, 2009; Qian, Tian, & Wang, 2009). Although there have been several studies with regard to the CS practices of YLLs in an EFL environment in a global context, the number of studies carried out in the Turkish local context is quite limited (Elridge, 1996). In his study Elridge (1996) focused on teachers' attitudes towards CS between Turkish and English in a secondary school context and suggests some implications for teacher training. This piece of research is one of the pioneer

studies designed for investigating the CS acts in late YLL classrooms in a Turkish setting from the perspective of the teachers. Deduced from the problems and available literature stated above, this study aims to fill a major gap, namely, the scarcity of studies in literature concerning Turkish EFL YLL classrooms in the local context. The current research examines the languages chosen (English and Turkish) by EFL YLL teachers. Three secondary fifth-grade EFL classrooms were observed from the perspectives of teachers at two private secondary schools in the cities of Adana and Denizli.

Therefore, this research aspires to answer the following research questions:

1. Do EFL YLL teachers resort to CS in their secondary EFL classrooms in the current study?
2. If so, what types of CS do they use?
3. What are the functions of these teachers' CSs?
4. And finally, does the teachers' use of CS contribute to their learners' language learning?

2. Background

The CS phenomena have long intrigued the researchers; the ones who have examined what triggers such attempts have approached the issue from different perspectives. Investigation of this particular alternation is chiefly based on the question: "*Why that, in that language, right now?*" (Üstünel, 2004). The current study aims to examine CS from classroom perspective. Classroom CS is described the use of more than one linguistic code or language in the classroom by teachers and students. Although classroom CS studies have been diverse in second language contexts (e.g. ESL classrooms) and bilingual education classrooms (e.g. immersion classrooms), the CS studies in EFL classrooms are relatively new compared to bilingual ones. Since the 1990s, CS in EFL classrooms has become a focus of research influenced by developments in classroom interaction, SLA, teacher talk, conversational analysis, pragmatics and the ethnography of communication studies (Qian, Tian & Wang, 2009).

CS studies in EFL classrooms have been carried out in all levels from kindergarten to the tertiary level. In these studies, the attitudes and beliefs of teachers and students have been investigated in addition to the CS functions of the teachers and students from linguistic and discursive perspectives (Amorim, 2012; Liu, Ahn & Baek, 2004). One of the earliest studies carried out in YLL classrooms, Oduol's research shed light upon the underlying reasons for CS's occurrence. Oduol (1987) analyzed elicitation techniques and CS practices of teachers at two primary schools in Kenya. The results showed that the teachers employed CS for maintaining pupil participation in communication, clarifying and emphasizing some aspects, preventing misunderstanding, translating instructions, re-establishing communication, building rapport, tapping pupils' background information, and compensating for pupils' lack of language proficiency.

Another study which investigated the teacher's use of CS was carried out by Qian, Tian and Wang (2009) in a primary school with the participation of two EFL teachers within a six year

project. This case study explored CS practices of EFL teachers in primary classrooms intentionally designed for informing the classroom interaction of YLLs. The analyses displayed that both teachers employed more *inter-sentential CS* than *inter-sentential* or *tag switching*. The teachers used CS also for translating unknown linguistic items, clarifying unclear points, highlighting important points, establishing or re-establishing certain relationships with the students, strengthening solidarity or authority, encouraging or praising students and disapproving the students' performances or behaviors.

One other study investigating the use of L1 by the EFL teacher was conducted by Nagy and Robertson (2009). The study was concerned with how often the teachers used the TL (English) and the L1 (Hungarian), what functions were affiliated with the teachers' language choices, what factors affecting the teachers' language choices were, and how those factors interacted with each other. Nagy and Robertson (2009) found that both teachers employed CS to ensure comprehension, translate new words, give instructions and encourage students to take part in interaction.

Moreover, Inbar-Lourie (2010) explored the language patterns of EFL teachers with different language backgrounds. Specifically, the study attempted to examine the teachers' use of L1 in EFL YLL classrooms. The results indicated that the teachers used CS mainly for catalyzing comprehension, coping with discipline problems, explaining grammar, introducing new concepts, giving a sense of achievement to the child, embedding information from other subjects, and encouraging and comforting the students.

To conclude, this section ends with the most recent study investigating the L1 use of Turkish EFL teachers at three secondary schools in Turkey. Salı (2014) examined the functions of L1 from EFL teachers' perspective. The results indicated that all the teachers employed L1 to communicate the content of the lesson, regulate the classroom interactions, shift the focus of the lesson and build rapport with the students in general.

The studies cited above indicate that although there have been several studies concerning CS in EFL YLL classrooms, the number of these studies are far from satisfying. Therefore, it was aimed to contribute to the literature in terms of CS in EFL YLL classrooms with the current study.

3. Method

This study took place in Çukurova district of Adana and Merkez district of Denizli during 2012-2013 Spring -Semester. These two private secondary schools were chosen on the basis of permission granted by these schools. Due to ethical issues as well as the problems associated with getting teachers' and parents' consent for video recording, these schools were chosen after granting their permission via a letter of undertaking.

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study were selected from two private secondary schools in the city of Adana and Denizli where English is a compulsory school subject since first grade. Convenience sampling was used to select the schools and teachers. The selection of the

participants could be divided into two phases. In the first phase, the teachers and their fifth grade classrooms were chosen after taking consent of school management and teachers taking part in this study at each school. In the second phase of data collection, these three teachers were interviewed to gain deeper understanding of the quantitative data.

Table 1. Summary of the teachers' background information

| | TEACHER F | TEACHER E | TEACHER S |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Age | 40 | 36 | 32 |
| Gender | F | F | M |
| Teaching experience | 18 | 14 | 9 |
| Experience with young learners | 11 | 4 | 4 |
| Educational background | MA | BA | BA |
| Size | 24 | 25 | 26 |

Table 1 illustrates background information about teachers participating in this study. The table also demonstrates that all the teachers have teaching experiences for more than ten years and TEYL experiences for at least four years.

3.2 Research Design

In order to address these research questions both quantitative and qualitative research designs were adopted to reflect the detailed and rich descriptive data collected within this study. Quantitative design was used in order to count the occurrences of CSs by teachers; on the other hand, qualitative design was adopted to meticulously analyze classroom interaction transcriptions.

3.3 Instruments

The data collection tools used for this research were video-recordings and semi-structured interviews. In order to obtain naturally occurring data, 270 minutes were recorded from three classes in total. Following the transcriptions and analysis of recordings, semi-structured interviews were held with three teachers to provide answer to the fourth research question whether the teachers' CS contributes to the learners' language learning or not. The teachers' semi-structured interview questions are:

1. What do you think about the use of CS in EFL YLL classrooms?
2. Do you think it contributes or hinders your students' language learning?

3.4 Procedure

The data analysis procedures were designed in two stages. In the first stage, for the data obtained from video recordings, all the interactions between students and teachers were mainly transcribed in accordance with Jefferson's transcription conventions in Atkinson and Heritage (1984). Since the video recordings were transcribed without using a program, pauses and silences were not exactly calculated. Instead, (.) was used for short pauses and (...) for long pauses. Therefore, in the first stage, the instances of CS were analyzed using Poplack's

(1980) categories of the types of CSs which consist of *inter-sentential CS*, *intra-sentential CS*, and *tag-switching* were applied to the data. Second, the functions of CSs used in teachers' classroom discourses were examined. In the second stage, content analysis was employed to the data acquired through semi-structured interviews. The same steps were followed to transcribe the interview data as in the transcription of video recordings process. In order to analyze the interview data, inductive qualitative content analysis was adopted. Dominant themes emerging from teachers' responses to the interview questions with an explicit focus on the use of CS in English classroom were identified first. Second, their responses were coded under these themes. Third, the results of video recording analyses were combined along with these codes in order to reveal the insights of teacher about CS and its use in their teaching practices.

4. Results

Quantitative analysis of the transcriptions manifested that all the teachers made use of CS to varying extents in their classrooms. In an attempt to estimate the frequency of English and Turkish used by the teachers in each lesson, a frequency count of words in the lesson transcripts was carried out. Although the total speaking time might have been shaped by the nature of the activities carried out in those classrooms, the frequency analysis was helpful to reach an understanding of the interactions. The following table illustrates the word counts of three teachers in detail.

Table 2. Frequency counts of words spoken by the teachers

| Teachers | TL | TL % | L1 | L1 % | Total |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Teacher E | 5139 | 99.4 | 29 | 0.6 | 5168 |
| Teacher F | 3199 | 72.5 | 1212 | 27.5 | 4411 |
| Teacher S | 2866 | 98.4 | 47 | 1.6 | 2913 |

The results in Table 2 demonstrate that Teacher E used the TL most compared to the other teachers. Also, the number of words in L1 was the lowest among other teachers. Although Teacher S did not use L1 a lot, the number of words uttered during the lesson was the lowest in comparison with the other teachers. The difference might have stemmed from the types and duration of the activities in each classroom. Among the teachers, Teacher F used more words in L1 than other teachers.

In order to determine the types of CSs used by the teachers, first, the types of CSs were identified, second, the frequency of each CS type was determined and compared with regard to each teacher's classroom discourse. *Inter-sentential CS* takes place between clauses, sentences, or turns. It was the most frequently used CS type found in the data. Table 3 clearly illustrates the frequency of CS types employed by the teachers in three different young EFL classrooms:

Table 3. The frequency of CS types

| Types | Teacher E | Teacher F | Teacher S |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Inter-sentential CS | 4 | 111 | 7 |
| Intra-sentential CS | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| Tag switching | - | 16 | 3 |

As can be deduced from Table 3, compared to the other teachers Teacher F used CS extensively. Table 3 shows that while Teacher F used *inter-sentential CS* for 111 times, other teachers did not use it as much as Teacher F did. This result might be attributed to the nature of the activities carried out in the classroom and proficiency level of the learners.

Excerpt 1 (Teacher F)

121. T: You don't understand that part. ((She's checking the homework one by one)) OK, what about the other pages? (...) Oki doki (...) I see some parts are missing.

122. S: → *Hocam?*

(Teacher)

123. T: Yes? (.)

124. S: → *Burası da mı vardı?*

(Is this part included, too?)

125. T: → *Vardı. (.) 6. ünitenin hepsi vardı.*

(It was. The whole sixth unit was included)

Excerpt 1 is an example of *inter-sentential CS* between turns. In line 121, Teacher speaks in English, and then in line 122 the student initiates the conversation by addressing her 'Hocam' (Teacher) in Turkish. Although that attempt was not accepted as CS, it prepared the following extension by the student. Despite that attempt, the teacher keeps on speaking in English despite the student's attempt in Turkish. The student takes the turn again and asks his question in Turkish, and the teacher responds to his question in Turkish as well.

When the number of *intra-sentential CS* is compared, it is noticed that Teacher E used it more than the other teachers. This might be explained with the teacher's efforts to speak as much English as possible in her classroom discourse. The following example was recorded in Teacher S's classroom. In Excerpt 2, Teacher S reminds students of what he said previously and keeps on explaining it in English. Then, he switches to Turkish, but he does not translate the question. Rather, he inserts the whole sentence into a Turkish sentence and then goes on in English.

Excerpt 2 (Teacher S)

324. T: For example, remember what I said. I said (.) Chinese is a very easy language and he said (.) I don't agree with you. → *Sordum (.) (I asked) Do you agree with me? diye. I don't agree with you. I think Chinese is a very difficult language (...) OK.*

325. St1: → *Ne söyleyeyim? °(...)*

(What shall I say?)

326. T: For example, talk about your favourite sport. You say for example (.) it is the best sport in the world.
327. St1: I think the best sport is (...)
328. St2: Football!
329. T: Hush!

Excerpt 3 is taken from Teacher F's classroom and it is a good example of *tag switching* by the teachers. In this example, the students try to make questions about the passage in the student's book. There is a disagreement about the structure of the question between the students and the teacher because the answer given in line 353 does not sound correct for the teacher. Then, Teacher F pauses for a few seconds and inserts a discourse marker "bir dakika" to think about the correct question. After that, St1 takes the turn and repeats her question again and at that instant Teacher F realizes the correct answer and confirms the St1's answer.

Excerpt 3 (Teacher F)

352. T: Who will they meet? And next one. What? (.) OK Yeşim.
353. St1: What will film win?
354. T: No (.) what film will win? OK (...) What film will win?
355. St1: What film?
356. T: No, →*bir dakika* (...)
(Just a moment)
357. St1: What will film win?
358. T: Ahhh! The film will win an Oscar. OK (.) what will the film win? OK.
359. St1: Yea:::

Turning now to the functions of the teachers, they are analyzed and exemplified with excerpts taken from the transcribed data. The functions of the CSs used by the teachers are illustrated in Table 4 by comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences.

Table 4. The frequency of CS functions by teachers

| CS Functions by Teachers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| Teacher E | Frequency | Teacher F | Frequency | Teacher S | Frequency |
| making explanations | 2 | translation | 19 | translation | 5 |
| changing the topic | 2 | meta-language | 16 | giving instructions | 3 |
| giving information | 1 | asking equivalence | 13 | giving equivalence | 2 |
| - | - | giving instructions | 13 | asking equivalence | 2 |

Table 4. The frequency of CS functions by teachers (continues)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|----|-----------------------|---|
| - | - | classroom management | 10 | message clarification | 1 |
| - | - | unofficial interactions | 8 | correcting mistakes | 1 |
| - | - | checking exercises | 6 | changing the topic | 1 |
| - | - | affective function | 6 | - | - |
| - | - | making explanations | 6 | - | - |
| - | - | message clarification | 6 | - | - |
| - | - | grammar review | 5 | - | - |
| - | - | confirming | 4 | - | - |
| - | - | changing the topic | 4 | - | - |
| - | - | assigning homework | 4 | - | - |
| - | - | correcting mistakes | 3 | - | - |
| - | - | checking homework | 2 | - | - |
| - | - | procedural explanations | 2 | - | - |
| - | - | checking comprehension | 1 | - | - |
| - | - | correcting pronunciation | 1 | - | - |
| - | - | signaling a humorous situation | 1 | - | - |

When the variety and the number of these functions are compared in Table 4, Teacher F used CS by far the most. Teacher F used CS for translation, meta-language, asking equivalence, giving instruction, classroom management, unofficial interactions, checking exercises, affective function, making an explanation, grammar review, message clarification, confirming, changing the topic, assigning homework, correcting mistakes, checking homework, procedural explanations, checking comprehension, correcting pronunciation, and signaling a humorous situation.

While Teacher E employed CS for making explanations, changing the topic, and giving information, Teacher S made use of CS with the purpose of translation, giving instruction, asking and giving equivalence, message clarification, correcting mistakes, and changing the topic.

The following excerpts are chosen from the most frequently used functions by the teachers for sake of brevity in this study. The analysis of the teachers' CS functions revealed that translation was found to be the most commonly used function used by the teachers (13 times). The excerpt below is a good example of this purpose:

Excerpt 4 (Teacher F)

415. T: They'll stay in a big hotel. Not hotel. Orhan? Orhan you're speaking. Yes, number four? Who will see them?

416. St1: He will see them

417. T: [No]. He will see them? →*Kim görecek onları (...)* A very important-

(Who are going to see them?)

418. St2: →*Öğretmenim*, a film maker-

(Teacher)

419. T: uhuh (...) A very important...

In this example, Teacher F code switches to elicit the correct answer from St1. However, it should be noted that the teacher instantly switches to English, but she is interrupted by another student giving the correct answer. Translation was followed by meta-language function for 16 times in the current data. The following excerpt is taken from Teacher F's classroom:

Excerpt 5 (Teacher F)

765. T: OK, good. So (.) you know space station (.) space ship (.) alien. Do you know the famous alien ET?

766. Ss : Ye:::s

767. St1: Mr. Spock!

768. T: ET? ET or MR. Spock?

769. St2: →*ET kim?*

(Who is ET?)

770. T: →*ET ünlü uzaylılardan birisi.*

(ET is one of the famous aliens)

771. St3: →*Uzaylı biri*

(an alien)

772. T: →*Bilmiyorsunuz (.)*

(You don't know)

773. St3: →*ET film değil mi hocam?*

(Is ET a film, isn't it teacher?)

774. T: →*Evet uzay filmi, sci-fi.*

(Yes, space movie)

In excerpt 5, Teacher F and the students discuss the vocabulary list of the next lesson. The teacher gives an example about the word “alien” and gives some cues about the film, but apparently some students do not know about that film. Then, St2 asks who ET is and this CS leads Teacher F to code switch from English to Turkish and give information about the character.

Asking equivalence was the third most commonly used CS function in the present data. While Teacher F used asking equivalence function for 13 times, Teacher S resorted to CS for that purpose for twice in his discourse.

Excerpt 6 (Teacher S)

522. T: OK, do you agree with me?

523. St1: Do you ag(...)agree with me ? ((mispronounces it))

524. ((students laugh))

525. T: Agree, agree. OK, yes anyway. Go on, yes.

526. St2: Teacher!

527. T: You're right. What's the meaning of you're right? You are right. You are right (.) you are right →*ne demek?*

(what does it mean?)

528. St2: →*Haklısın.*

(You're right)

Excerpt 6 demonstrates that Teacher S tries to convey the meaning of “you are right” and repeats the phrase to make sure that the students understand what it means. Despite asking the meaning of it in English and using the phrase repetitively, he code switches after a short pause.

Giving instructions was another frequently used CS function in this study. It was used 13 times by Teacher F while Teacher S made use of it for three times. In the following example taken from Teacher F, an L1 switch is used to emphasize the urgency of finishing the exercise. Some of the students did not do their homework at home, and since there is not much time left to finish all the exercises on time, Teacher F instructs her students to finish the activity in five minutes. Again, it is noteworthy that the students code switch in response to the teacher's alternation.

Excerpt 7 (Teacher F)

487. T: →*Sen benim kitabımı alıyorsun. Hemen tamamla. Bir ve ikiyi (.) Uhhh it's cold. ((she closes the window))*

(You take my book. Finish it immediately. One and two)

488. Sts: →*Hocam, iyi iyi!*

(Teacher, it's good)

489. T: →*Yapmayanlar için bir beş dakika hemen bir ve iki (.)şurdaki tabloyu tamamla.*
This is your planet.

(Five minutes for the ones who haven't done it, now one and two finish the table there)

490. Sts: →*Bunu ne yapacağız?*

(What are we going to do with that?)

Also, classroom management was a quite frequently used CS function found in the present research. It was used by Teacher for ten times.

Excerpt 8 (Teacher F)

467. T: →*Ceza vermiyorum, kızmıyorum da ama bu ödev konusunda, ödev konusunda biraz daha... Eve yazayım mı sayın veli ödev yapılmamış diye.*

(I don't give punishment, I'm not mad at you, but about this homework issue, some more ... Shall I write dear parent, homework hasn't been done?)

468. Ss: No:::!

469. St1: →*Öğretmenim ben yaptım!*

(Teacher, I did it)

470. T: No (.) → *o zaman ödevler yapılıyor.*

(then, homework will be done)

In Excerpt 8, Teacher F checks the homework assigned in the previous week. As can be seen in the excerpt, Teacher F code switches to warn the students about their homework, and interestingly, the students reply to her in English in line 468. Moreover, this CS instance could be regarded as a threat to the student as well. However, whether it be reprimanding or warning, Teacher F's purpose is to take this unwelcome behavior under control by using the student's L1.

The interview questions shed light upon the transcribed data collected to identify CS types and functions of the teachers from their perspectives. With the help of these questions, the transcribed data along with the teachers' answers reflecting their beliefs about their actual practices made more sense with regards to interpreting the phenomena. The relevant excerpts are the following:

Excerpt 9: "*It is sometimes necessary. It contributes to class environment as long as it is used very limited. To me, we shouldn't use it if there is another way to teach the subject.*"

(Teacher S)

Excerpt 10: "*Using Turkish, but rarely, can be a contribution to teaching. I think that an*

English teacher should use English mostly. And I resort to CS when I really need to and I don't feel guilty for this, because my first aim is to make them want to learn English.” (Teacher E)

Excerpt 11: *“Yes, it is necessary otherwise you can lose the kids’ attention .They may give up listening to you if they do not understand you. The frequency of CS is important. The teacher should it when necessary not all the time. It is a contribution.”* (Teacher F)

In the light of the findings acquired from the teachers’ interviews, the main theme emerging from these excerpts is that CS is a contribution to the classroom environment. However, the consensus among the teachers is that its use should be limited. Teacher S expressed that it is sometimes necessary for the classroom, but apparently he does not favor it much because he believes that if there is another way to teach the TL, MT should not be used. Likewise, Teacher E stated that the use of CS could be a contribution to the classroom environment, yet it should be rarely used. According to her account, she believes that an English teacher should primarily use the TL. However, she added that she does not feel guilty when she resorts to CS since her main goal is to have the students like English. Moreover, Teacher F thinks that CS assists the teacher in maintaining the students’ interest. She restated her concern about the comprehensibility of her instructions and topic presented to the students. Yet, she also mentioned that the frequency of CS is crucial and the teacher should not constantly code switch.

5. Discussion

The findings of the present study demonstrate that all the teachers made use of CS in EFL YLL classrooms within this study. Various studies have shown that CS is used in EFL classrooms on different proficiency levels and grades (Canagarajah; 1995; Gulzar, 2010; Inbar-Lourie, 2010; Lee, 2010; Uys, 2010). For instance, Inbar-Lourie (2010) attempted to investigate the teachers’ use of L1 in EFL YLL classrooms. The present study was carried out on the secondary level in an EFL environment and its results are consistent with another study carried out in another secondary EFL environment in Turkey. In his study, Eldridge (1996) found that the teachers used CS at varying rates. The results of this study also suggest that the teachers used three types of CS: *inter-sentential CS*, *intra-sentential CS*, and *tag switching*. Among these three types, *inter-sentential CS* turned out to be the most salient type of CS. Moreover, the comparison of the three teachers with regard to CS types revealed that *inter-sentential CS* remained in first place. The present findings seem to be consistent with other research which found that *inter-sentential CS* is a common type employed in EFL classroom by teachers. For instance, Qian, Tian, Wang (2009) conducted a small-scale study of CS between Chinese and English in primary English classrooms for analyzing classroom interaction of EFL YLLs. According to the results of this case study, the teachers used *inter-sentential CS* (82%) predominantly. On the other hand, *tag switching* (2%) and *intra-sentential CS* (16%) were used on few occasions.

As to the functions of CS in EFL teachers’ classroom discourse, the findings showed that most of the CS attempts were related to course content (translation, asking equivalence, giving instructions, making explanation, message clarification etc.). For instance, the teachers

used CS for translating unknown words and phrases, or the sentences in a reading passage. Considering the examples in the data, it might be inferred that the teachers used CS because they sensed the linguistic insecurity of the students. To be able to continue the interaction the teachers switched codes and clarified certain points by utilizing the students' MT. Apart from translation, the teachers employed CS for meta-linguistic explanations in the current study. They resorted to Turkish in order to comment on the issues related to the task or give some information about certain elements in a task. In accordance with the present results, the previous studies demonstrated that the teachers used CS for giving meta-linguistic explanations. For example, Rasckha, Sercombe and Chi-Ling (2009) inquired the use of CS by EFL teachers as a strategy. The findings disclosed that the teachers used CS for commenting, evaluating and talking about the task.

Another important function used by the teachers was giving instructions in this study. In accordance with the present results, previous studies demonstrated that one of the most commonly used CS functions was giving instructions. For example, Gulzar (2010) identified the significance of the CS functions used by 406 teachers in Pakistan. One of the common functions used by those teachers was giving instructions in the students' MT. Classroom management is another salient CS function used by the teachers in this study. When the transcriptions of the present study were analyzed, it was noticed that the teachers benefited from L1 with the purpose of maintaining discipline and warning the students about their unwelcome behaviors. Along with the previous studies, the current study suggests that CS is used to as a means of dealing with disciplinary problems, admonishing the students or sustaining an effective classroom environment in a more general sense. Asking and giving equivalence in MT is another function which was widely used CS function in the present data. This function was observed with two of the teachers participating in the study. When the content of the activities in both classrooms was analyzed, it was recognized that the teachers preferred Turkish to explain the words which they could not describe by mimes and gestures. However, on some occasions, it was noticed that the teachers did not even try to give the equivalent of a word by using mimes and gestures. In the observed classes, vocabulary teaching involved short and direct translations of the words. This study produced results which certify the findings of a great amount of the previous research in this field (Lin, 1990; Jingxia, 2010; Qing, 2012). The common point of these studies is that L1 was used to introduce new vocabulary.

Apart from the major findings mentioned above, there are many other functions used by the teachers in this study. These functions are unofficial interactions, checking exercises, affective function, making an explanation, grammar review, message clarification, confirming, changing the topic, assigning homework, correcting mistakes, checking homework, procedural explanations, checking comprehension, correcting pronunciation, and signaling a humorous situation. The majority of these functions are in line with previous studies (Ataş, 2012; Canagarajah; 1995; Eldridge, 1996; Greggio & Gil, 2007; Inbar-Lourie, 2010; Yletyinen, 2004). The comparison of the results of these studies with the current one shows that CS cannot be completely avoided in EFL classroom. It should be accepted that L1 is a reality, especially if it is shared by the teacher as well since the participants are aware that

even if they do not use the TL, they will be understood by the other party. This awareness might lead the participants to deliberately resort to CS. As a matter of fact, the participants clearly expressed in the interviews that they use CS on purpose; in other words, since they know that they have another means to maintain the interaction apart from the TL, they do not hesitate to use it when necessary. However, one critical point should be highlighted here: using CS when necessary is actually shrouded in mystery. Since the notion ‘necessary’ is quite relative and very context and conditions bound, it is highly difficult to justify it.

The last research question of whether the use of CS contributes to YLLs’ language learning was investigated by asking the teachers’ opinions about CS in the classroom. The semi-structured interviews revealed that the teachers agreed upon the necessity of CS, yet they emphasized the fact that the quantity of CS use is crucial. Furthermore, they related this necessity issue to the conditions that emerged in the classroom and believe that the classroom conditions determine the need to use L1. In addition, the teachers regarded CS as an aid to attract the students’ attention and motivate them to learn English as also suggested by Inbar-Lourie (2012), Jingxia (2010), and Salı (2014) in the literature.

6. Conclusion

The present study confirms previous findings and contributes additional evidence that indicates the use of MT is a reality in EFL classes (Butzkam, 2003; Cook, 2001; Lee & Macaro, 2013; McMillan & Rivers, 2011) It is not something that the teachers should avoid at all costs, but it is something that they should not use overdose. A balance should be sought between the use of MT and TL. In line with the results of this study some suggestions are made for teachers and teacher training institutes.

To start with teachers, teacher action research should be encouraged among EFL YLL teachers as a part of professionalism. Action research should be introduced to both novice and experienced teachers via university-school partnerships or experienced volunteer teachers and teacher trainers. By promoting action research, the teachers should be encouraged to analyze their classroom discourse to identify at what points their communication with the learners should be improved. By so doing, teachers would have the chance to observe their classrooms and diagnose the problematic areas in their communication with the learners. Moreover, the teachers should design specific classroom strategies which will be in conformity with the curriculum and the needs of their learners. For instance, if we assume that the teacher wants to determine the communication breakdowns or increase the use of TL in his/her classroom, s/he could develop communication strategies by conducting action research in his/her classroom. An action research could provide useful means to identify the problems develop and test specific solutions for the teachers. These specific strategies or solutions to solve the problem, such as teaching paraphrasing to the students instead of giving translation of the sentences or creating dialogic interactions rather than question-answer drills should be deliberately taught to the students.

Additionally, EFL YLL teachers could promote risk-taking behaviors among language learners. To put it more specifically, the students could be reminded that making a mistake is a part of the language learning process and they should not avoid it. Moreover, the teachers

can integrate technology to engage the language learners in the learning process. Technology can create an environment in which the student could interact with authentic TL and communicative content. Creating interactive and authentic communication could be a big problem in environments which the students' exposure to TL is quite limited. Technology might provide various opportunities for the students in these environments.

Also, the teachers could build a professional community in which they can share their ideas about the use of MT and TL in the classroom. They can collaborate with their colleagues and students about their classrooms' needs in terms of TL use. For instance, EFL YLL teachers might visit their colleagues' classes and give feedback about their use of TL in the classroom. Or the teachers and parents could collaborate with regard to encourage the students to actively take part in language learning process and provide resources which they can benefit from the outside of the classrooms.

Furthermore, the teachers should adapt their discourse to the pedagogic discourse. In other words, the teachers should modify their speech in terms of phonology, word choice, and syntax. So to speak, teacher talk should be simpler, more concise and pronounced more slowly. Likewise, Cameron (2001) stated that it is not easy for children to talk about language because YLLs do not have the access to meta-language as older learners do. Therefore, EFL teachers should adapt his/her language to make explanation about grammar or discourse. To put it more concretely, it should be noted that words are not sufficient for EFL YLLs. The activities should involve movement and senses. Lots of visuals and objects should accompany these activities. By so doing, teachers do not have to resort to the learners' MT all the time.

As to the teacher training institutions, there should be a Teacher Action Research and Classroom Discourse Analysis course at an undergraduate level. At least, these two courses should be included in teacher training curriculum since they are crucial in teacher's professional development. Trainee teachers or practicing teachers should get accustomed to monitor their classrooms from an outside perspective by using a video camera or simply asking a colleague to do so, localize their problems and find specific solutions to solve them. Also, they could be encouraged to keep journals. These journals would be helpful to promote their reflective thinking skills since they provide the teachers an insider perspective. It is assumed that these courses would be helpful for the teacher's continuing professional development starting from the pre-service training to life-long learning of teachers.

This research contributes to the claim that L1 use mainly results from lack of L2 proficiency, but it should be kept in mind that there should be more longitudinal studies to investigate whether it is really to do with lack of TL competence or other variables, such as classroom environment, level of exposure to TL, attitude, motivation, quality of the curriculum and materials, teacher attitudes and qualifications. These aspects could be investigated with different groups of the same level of proficiency for a longer period, perhaps an entire term.

Moreover, replication studies should be carried out in order to ensure that the present results are valid and reliable. By applying the same methods to different participants in other contexts, the results of the current study could be validated. By doing so, the previous results

might inspire new research of CS in different EFL environments. Last but not least, CS attempts of teachers and students should be explored further in order to see whether they create more efficient and long lasting classroom interactions which will pave the way for more advanced TL proficiency for EFL YLLs in the long term. Teachers and learners should realize the power and role of MT in FL learning and benefit from it when it is necessary, but the key issue is to not turn it into an obstacle by overusing it and letting it impede the language learning process. In this sense, teachers have more responsibility than students in terms of consciousness -raising and helping students see the MT not as a life jacket by ignoring students' over reliance on it, but creating meaningful tasks and increasing the use of L2 in EFL classrooms.

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Appendix

Transcription conventions

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 1,2,3... | number of utterances |
| T | teacher |
| St1, St2... | number of students whose names are not known in a conversation |
| Ss | students |
| () | unintelligible word |
| (word) | translation of words and sentences |
| ((word)) | comments by the transcriber |
| - | cut off the current sound |
| : | lengthened sound |
| → | indication of the lines of interest in the transcript (CS moments in this study) |
| [| beginning of the overlapped talk |
|] | at the end of overlapped talk |
| ◦ | quieter than the surrounding talk |
| = | latched utterances |
| (.) | short pauses |
| (...) | long pauses |

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