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The Effect of Awareness and Explicit Knowledge of Mother Tongue Grammar on the Learning of Foreign Language Grammar

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Abstract:
Current views on the importance of mother tongue emphasize that it has a productive role in the teaching/ processes and if it supported in the educational settings, it would lead to awareness and explicit knowledge of mother tongue in which learners experience less difficulty in learning and understanding of different subjects. The present study reports an attempt to investigate the importance of awareness and explicit knowledge of mother tongue in learning English language grammar on Iranian EFL learners. This study was carried out in the teaching/learning context in (East Azerbaijan-Tabriz). The researcher did the investigation with 40 male and female intermediate EFL learners. A pilot study was conducted and a valid test was prepared to be applied as pre and post test before the study. The validity of this test was checked against CELT test. A proficiency test was administered to the participants to make sure of their homogeneity. Then, they were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups. Both groups were taught the same grammar structures. However, the focused grammar structures were taught to the experimental group both in English and their mother tongue. At the end of the course both groups were tested. The results of the independent sample t-test indicated that experimental group did significantly better than the control group. Thus the null hypotheses were rejected and the research questions with positive answers were accepted. At the end of the teachings, a questionnaire including 20 questions was given to the students in the control group who had experienced mother tongue teaching to get their opinions about being taught in their mother tongue. The conclusion underlines the requirement of language awareness in mother tongue to cause a growth in better understanding, to facilitate and to improve teaching/learning situation.

Keywords: Bilingualism, Cultural Awareness, Grammatical awareness, Language awareness

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE MOTHER TONGUE

"Hammerly (1991) estimates that the judicious use of the mother tongue (MT) in carefully crafted techniques can be twice as efficient (i.e. reach the same level of second language proficiency in half the time), without any loss in effectiveness, as instruction that ignores the students' native language" (Hammerly, 1999, as cited in Butzkamm, 2003, pp.36-37).

An individual's mother tongue is a means for a person to participate in the knowledge of the social work. Another influence of the mother tongue is that it causes the reflection and learning of successful social patterns of acting and speaking. It is, in fact, in charge of differentiating the linguistic competence of acting. Language is the most impressive instrument in the progress of any human being. It is the greatest asset we possess. A good understanding of

language is equal with a sound ability to think. In other words, language and thought cannot be separated. Language has an important part in supporting person′s identity and in helping people understand where they fit in the new environment. The acquisition of language is essential not only to person′s cognitive development, but also to their social development and wellbeing. The early years are recognized as the foundation years for person′s development. In particular, the first six years are crucial for young children in developing their first language and cultural identity, and it is during these early years that children build up their knowledge of the world around them (Clarke, 2009).

All the praise that is heaped on the languages as an educational tool is due in double measure to the mother tongue, which should be called the 'Mother of Languages' in which every new language can only be established by comparison with it. Therefore, the mother tongue is, for all school subjects including foreign language learners, a child's strongest ally and should be used systematically. With using the mother tongue, we have (1) Learnt to think, (2) Learnt to communicate and (3) Acquired an intuitive understanding of grammar. The mother tongue is therefore the greatest asset people bring to the task of foreign language learning and provides a Language Acquisition Support System (Butzkamm, 2003).

1.1. The Importance of Maintaining the Mother Tongue or Home Language

One of the greatest gifts to be passed on to children is language. The first language, learned in the home, is extremely important and forms the foundation for all later language development. Parents, family members and early childhood professionals are the most significant influences on the development and maintenance of the first language. Research suggests that knowing one language can help the child understand how other languages work. The maintenance of the first or home language is particularly important for the child's development of a positive self-concept and well-being. Children who have the opportunity to maintain their first language can extend their cognitive development, while learning English [this also can be correct with other languages including Turkish] as a second language. Their level of competence in the second language will be related to the level of competence they have achieved in their first language. Children with a sound knowledge of their first language will be able to transfer skills from one language to another (Clarke, 2009).

The mother tongue opens the door, including its own grammar, to all grammars, in which it awakens the potential for universal grammar that lies within all of us. It is the valuable asset people bring to the task of language learning. For this reason, the mother tongue is the master key to foreign languages, the tool which gives us the fastest, surest, most precise, and most complete means of accessing a foreign language. Successful learners capitalize on the vast amount of linguistic skills and world knowledge they have accumulated via the mother tongue. For the beginner, becoming aware of meanings automatically involves connecting them with the mother tongue – until the FL has established an ever-more complex network for itself (Butzkamm, 2003).

"You can banish the MT from the classroom, but you cannot banish it from the pupils' heads" (Butzkamm, 2003, p.31).

We need to associate the new with the old. To exclude MT links would deprive us of the richest source for building cross-linguistic networks. The well-directed and informative use of lexical and syntactic parallels between the mother tongue and foreign languages taught in schools promotes retention and deepens the understanding of the historical affinity of language and culture (Butzkamm, 2003).

1.2. Importance of Mother Tongue Education

Many linguists and successful bilinguals argue that for multi-cultural societies to support the use of a first language in the learning of young bilinguals in schools is of high importance. Since mother tongue education in the primary years suggests the best introduction to literacy which becomes useful in the acquisition of a second language. Research on L2 acquisition displays that learning another language becomes less problematic, if a child masters the first language in the habits of speech, listening, reading and writing which can be transferred to the learning of the second language. Chaudron (1988) asserts that where the L2 is used as a medium of instruction, learners encounter problems because their task is threefold. Making sense of the instructional tasks presented in the second language, attaining linguistic competence required for effective learning to take place and facing with the problem of mastering the content itself. The report of (1953) UNESCO Committee shows that students learn quickly through their first language than an unfamiliar linguistic medium. As a result, it states that the best medium for teaching a child is the mother tongue through which children understand better and express themselves freely (Tsitsi Ndamba, 2008).

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1.3. Rejection of Learners' Language in the School

When the message, implicit or explicit, conveyed to learner in the school is 'Leave your language and culture at the schoolhouse door', children also leave a central part of who they are; namely, their identities at the schoolhouse door. When they feel this rejection, they are much less likely to take part actively and confidently in classroom instruction (Cummins, 2001).

2. BILINGUALISM

It is obvious that language is a source of communication. Whether this language is Russian, English, Swedish or Sign Language, the importance is that we have some sort of source for human interaction. Knowing many different languages supplies us with enormous possibilities in our contact and understanding of other people living in other parts of the world. This brings us to an important topic, that is to say bilingualism (Nordlund, 2005).

"Bilingualism is often described in broad terms as "the ability to use two languages for communication" (Clad, 2003, as cited in Nordlund, 2005, p.5).

2.1. The Importance of Bilinguality

Bilingualism is the capability to use two languages which involves both understanding and speaking in either language. Some people may feel comfortable using both languages in the same setting and may 'switch' from one to the other easily. There is now worldwide recognition of the social, personal and cognitive advantages of bilingualism. A sound foundation in the language/s of the home increases people's self-esteem and confidence, enhances motivation for learning, increases cognition, strengthens family relations supplies a strong basis for learning the second language. Over 70 per cent of people in the world speak more than one language. Thus for many people it is quite natural to grow up speaking more than one language (Clarke, 2009).

2.2. Objectives of Bilingual Education

The objectives of bilingual education are different. Some schools attempt to achieve an equal level of competence in the mother tongue and the target language, though most do not. Many schools seek to make better their pupils' ability and confidence to use the vehicular language. Many schools put emphasis on inter-cultural competence, searching for establishing connections with other schools in other lands using the target language as a real medium of international communication. Many schools concentrate on the value for future studies, work or leisure of an ability to use an international foreign language. The objectives can be various, but

ISSN 1925-931X

they cannot divert the attention that all these objectives are the opportunity to enhance the room in the school curriculum for the pupils to acquire the vehicular language, without taking time from other subjects (Nixon, 1998).

2.3. The Effects of Bilingualism

There is considerable evidence that the acquisition of two or more languages involves positive consequences for meta-linguistic development and the people who had acquired literacy in two languages did significantly better in the acquisition of a third language than performed people from monolingual backgrounds or those who had not acquired literacy in their home language. A research displayed that the bilinguals scored higher than monolinguals on verbal and non-verbal intelligence tests and indicated a more diversified intelligence structure (Cummins, 1992).

One of the important assumptions considering the efficiency of bilingual instruction is that skills and knowledge learned in first language mother tongue transfer to second language L2. Thus, a person learning about velocity in Spanish is able to transfer this knowledge to English without having to relearn the concepts (Keshavarz, 2004).

When people go on to expand their abilities in two or more languages throughout their primary school years, they catch a deeper understanding of language and how to use it effectively. They possess more practice in processing language, especially when they gain literacy in both, and they are able to compare and contrast the ways in which their two languages organize reality. The research offers that bilingual children may also develop more flexibility in their thinking as an outcome of processing information through two different languages (Cummins, 2001).

More than 150 research studies done during the past 35 years strongly back what Goethe, the German philosopher, once said: “The person who knows only one language does not truly know that language” (Cummins, 2001, p.2).

3. LANGUAGE AWARENESS

Language Awareness (LA) is the common point between languages, i.e. mother tongue, second or foreign languages. Language Awareness focuses on making pupils more aware of the intuitions they hold about their mother tongue, on turning their implicit knowledge into explicit

knowledge. In this type of self-discovery interpretation, LA is seen as a means to bridge the consciousness gap within the individual (James & Garrett, 1991).

Language awareness, according to Donmall, operates on three distinctive levels:

1. The cognitive level which is related to awareness of language patterns
2. The affective level which is related to forming attitudes
3. The social level which is related to the improvement of learners' effectiveness as communicators (Farias, 2005).

3.1. The Scope of Language Awareness

Language Awareness is a holistic concept. James & Garrett (1991) divide the concept of LA into five different domains: The affective, social, power, cognitive and performance domain. From the scope of language awareness, it could be stated that all domains tend to intermingle with one another. Moreover, as James and Garrett point out, this division of LA is a way to clarify and to give a consensus to the meaning of the concept. From a teacher's perspective these domains could also serve to facilitate the LA work in the language classroom as the scope covers many relevant and important aspects of language that could be useful in arising pupils′ awareness (Prtic Soons, 2008).

3.2. Benefits of Language Awareness

Arndt, Harvey and Nuttall (2000) have a concentration on language awareness which present numerous benefits, as following: Firstly, Speakers are appreciative of the complexity of communication through language. Secondly, language awareness suggests a productive path for searching the richness and complexity of language. Thirdly, Speakers are reinforced to regard what is involved in transferring mother tongue skills to another language and make the relationships between languages. Finally, on the practical level LA helps those who are involved in ELT derive a broadened, deepened understanding of how English works. In addition to these four benefits; appreciation, greater understanding of complexity, encouraging speakers to consider transferability, and a broader and deeper understanding of English, LA offers an approach and context that learners find advantageous as they develop a broader and deeper awareness of their own ongoing use of and relation to language itself, whether that language is English or Spanish (Farias, 2005).

4. CULTURAL AWARENESS

Tang (1999) presents the view that "culture is language and language is culture. He says to speak a language well, one has to be able to think in that language, and thought is extremely powerful" (Tang, 1999, as cited in Cakir, 2006, p.154).

It is clear that understanding a language involves not only knowledge of grammar, phonology and lexis but also a certain features and characteristics of the culture. To communicate internationally inevitably involves communicating inter-culturally as well, which probably leads us to encounter factors of cultural differences. Having the points above in the mind it can be concluded that a language is a part of culture and a culture is a part of a language. The two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture (Brown 1994, as cited in Cakir, 2006).

However, as the usage of language is related to social and cultural values, language is regarded to be a social and cultural phenomenon. Since every culture has its own cultural standards for conversation and these norms are different from one culture to another, some of the norms can be totally different and conflict with other cultures′ norms**.** Consequently, communication problems may be found among speakers who do not know or share the norms of other culture. As a result, to solve the communication problems in the target language in the EFL classrooms the learners need to learn the target culture within the syllabus, and the teachers should be sensitive to the learner's fragility so as not to cause them to lose their motivation (Cakir, 2006).

4.1. Significance of Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness increases and enriches communication with other people and adds to the learners' ability to understand themselves as cultural and linguistic beings. Foreign language learning not only is related to the learners' linguistic and functional capacity but to their social and cultural education and awareness (Hanak Hammerl, 2003).

Cultural awareness becomes important when one has to interact with people from other cultures. People see, interpret and evaluate things in a different ways. What is regarded an appropriate behavior in one culture is frequently inappropriate in another one were retrieved from culturosity website in the following link: http://www.culturosity.com/articles/whatisculturalawareness.htm).

4.2. The Relationship between Language and Cultural Awareness

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The beginning point for research on cultural awareness is the assumption that language teaching does not equal teaching a language only, but also involves cultural, political, economical, and societal aspects of the country or countries whose language one wants to learn. Language, as the main communication tool, and language awareness therefore play a significant part in the concept of cultural awareness. Referring to Michael Byram, when it comes to foreign language teaching, it is important to use both the students' first and second language since it is necessary that students are able to understand the concepts of the other culture presented. Therefore, according to Michael Byram, the use of the mother tongue in language teaching can indeed back the development of an understanding of the other language, culture, and of language awareness as such (Hanak-Hammerl, 2003).

5. TEACHER AWARENESS

In relation to L2 education, Thornbury (1997) offers the following definition of the language awareness of teachers: "the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach effectively" (Thornbury, 1997, as cited in Andrews, 2001, p.75).

Based on such an opinion, TLA is essentially concerned with subject-matter knowledge and its impact upon teaching (Andrews, 2001*)*.

Any model of TLA would consider the following:

a. The language knowledge/awareness of the teacher embraces both knowledge of subject matter and 'communicative language. b. The language knowledge/awareness of the teacher is meta-cognitive.

c. Finally, TLA is not just knowledge of subject matter, but both knowledge of subject matter and 'communicative language ability' (CLA), which provides a basis for the tasks of planning and teaching (Andrews, 2001).

6. GRAMMATICAL AWARENESS

In order to be effective, English language teachers must be able to draw on both explicit and implicit knowledge of the language. They must also be able to reflect upon the knowledge of the underlying systems of the language. In Andrews' (1999) theory of grammatical awareness, he (1999) states that grammatical awareness comprises four types:

1. Ability to recognize meta-language, 2. Ability to produce appropriate meta-language terms

ISSN 1925-931X

3. Ability to identify and correct errors, 4. Ability to explain grammatical rules

Each of them focuses on a different part of explicit knowledge of grammar and grammatical terminology. The first is related to recognition of grammatical categories such as preposition, noun and verb. The second is related to production of appropriate meta-linguistic terms containing the ability to provide grammatical terms of a given word / phrase. The third is concerned with identification and creation of error involving the ability to identify and correct faulty sentences or parts of sentences. The final one is related to explanation of grammatical rules which deals with the ability to explain grammatical rules which have been broken (Shuib, 2009).

6.1. The Importance of Having Grammatical Awareness

The language awareness of teachers, i.e. the explicit knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of the language enables them to teach effectively. Andrews (1999) argues that the explicit knowledge about language is an important part of any second language (L2) teacher's language awareness. The importance of having grammatical awareness among English language teachers has been given credit by many scholars for different reasons. Denham and Lobeck (2002), for example, states that many English education textbooks point out those teachers must be aware of certain grammatical fundamentals in order to aid learners recognize patterns of errors. Andrews (2005) argues that teachers should have rich knowledge of grammatical constructions to be in a better position to help young writers (Shuib, 2009).

7. TRANSFER

The part that a learner's native language plays in one's second language acquisition has been under the concentration of many researchers. Language transfer is closely related to behaviorist theories of L2 learning. According to behaviorist theories, the process of language learning is a process of habit formation, and the old habits formed when learning L1 would get in the way of learning new habits in L2, thus leading to errors. Most studies on transfer concentrate on the impact of native language on SLA, though it is correct that L2 may influence L1 and the acquisition of other languages (Ning Guo, 2005).

8. METHODOLOGY

8.1. Participants

The participants were 40 EFL students (male and female) of (17-25) years old on average and all native Azerbaijani Turkish speakers of East Azerbaijan in Tabriz. The subjects in the

control group and the experimental group were all Iranian and they all had already experienced English learning at school and different language institutes.

8.2. Instrumentation

To make two homogeneous groups, the researcher administered the modified TOEFL test, HBJ TOEFL (Jenkins- Murphy, 1987) test corresponding to the intermediate level students. In this research two teacher made grammar tests were utilized both in Turkish (Turkish version) and English (English version). The first test (Turkish version) was prepared to elicit the learners' knowledge of the mother tongue structure. The validity of the second teacher-made test, as a pre-test, was checked against the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) (Saeidi, 2008). This pre-test (the second teacher-made test) checked the knowledge of the learners' English language in both experimental and control groups. As a pre-test, it was first used to determine the background knowledge of the two groups before treatments. Then, after treatments the modified form of this test as a post-test was administered to show the progress of two groups. The third teacher made test was a writing exam. The writing obliged the learners to display their capability to display the knowledge of English language grammar. It was based on a topic, 'Life; past, now and future', to describe a process in which the use of simple present, simple past, present continuous, and future in context was demanded. The used textbooks for instruction were 'Intro - Interchange Third Edition' for adults and young adult learners (C. Richards, 2005) and 'Muasir Edebi Azeri Dili' (Zehtabi, 2001).

Another instrument was a teacher-made questionnaire. It had 20 questions which were given to the learners in the experimental group who had experienced learning in their mother tongue to have their reactions to learn grammar in mother tongue. To validate the questionnaire before presenting it to the learners, the researcher gave the questionnaire to some teachers to check its clarity and understandability.

8.3. Procedure

To be sure about the homogeneity of both groups the HBJ TOEFL (Jenkins- Murphy, 1987) was administered to the learners. The results showed that they were homogeneous. They, then, were randomly assigned to the control group and the experimental group. In experimental group, from the manuals of the teacher from 'Muasir Edebi Azeri Dili', the Turkish grammar (simple present, simple past, present progressive and future) were first taught in Turkish

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language. Teaching in mother tongue in the experimental group was an attempt to create language awareness. The learners had no or very little knowledge of Azerbaijani Turkish language. Then the same grammars, from 'Intro - Interchange Third Edition' were taught in English language to the experimental group. Considering teaching English tenses (simple present, simple past, present progressive and future), both of the groups received the same amount of instruction. In control group, the learners were just taught English grammar in English language. Finally, the learners were provided with a writing exam under the subject of 'Life; past, now and future'.

9. DATA ANALYSIS

The process of the data collection followed these steps: HBJ TOEFL (Jenkins- Murphy, 1987), the pre-test (English version), the first achievement test, writing, the modified post-test, the result of Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Then the results submitted to statistical analysis (vie SPSS software) to find out whether the learners' awareness of mother tongue has an impact on the achievement of foreign language or not. Each group's data were analyzed and the frequencies of marks were calculated. Finally, the obtained frequencies and percentages were put into tables for better depiction and further analytic decisions.

10. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

10.1. Result of the Proficiency Test of the Groups

To construct two homogeneous groups for study, the researcher administered the HBJ TOEFL (Jenkins- Murphy, 1987) to test structure and written knowledge of the learners at beginning of the research (TABLE I).

TABLE I
RESULT OF PROFICIENCY TEST

	Group	N
Result of Proficiency test	**Control**	**20**
	Experimental	**20**

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10.2. Result of the Pre-test of the Groups

Levene's test illustrated the homogeneity of the variances of the two groups. Since the significant level of Levene's Test is (0.911) which is more than (0.5), the (0.911>0.5) it indicated that the two groups, in terms of their variances, are homogenous (TABLE II).

The mean score of pre-test in the control and the experimental groups are (16.32) and (16.20) respectively and the significant level is (0.841). Since the significant level of T-Test (0.841) is more than (0.5), the null hypothesis (the equality of mean scores of pre-test in two groups) is not rejected and the mean of marks in the groups does not carry a remarkable difference, the value (0.841>0.05) illustrates that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups on the pre-test (table: II). Thus, it can be judged that the two groups were homogeneous in terms of their English grammar knowledge, i.e. on the mentioned English tenses prior than the administration of any treatments.

TABLE II

INDEPENDENT T-TEST OF THE GROUPS' PERFORMANCES: PRE-TEST

Result of pre-test	**Group**	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Levene's Test for Equality of Variances**		**t-test for Equality of Means**		
					F	**Sig.**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
	Con.	**20**	**16.3250**	**1.96867**	**.013**	**.911**	**.201**	**38**	**.841**
	Ex.	**20**	**16.2000**	**1.95610**					

10.3. Result of the Turkish Test in the Experimental Group

After having treatment in Turkish language, the first achievement test was administered to the students to assess their knowledge of mother tongue to make sure of their awareness of the taught grammatical cases in Turkish language. Having a grade of 12 and over was regarded as awareness in mother tongue.

10.4. Result of the Post-Test of the Groups

The Levene's Test, therefore, was hired to show the homogeneity of the variances of the two groups (Table: III). Since the significant level in Levene's Test is more than (0.5), the two groups were homogeneous in terms of their variances. Table (III) displays the result of the

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comparison of two groups according to their performances after teaching both with the second teacher made test with its modified form. The mean score of post-test in control and experimental groups are (15.97) and (17.17) respectively and the significant level is (0.018). Since the significant level of t-test (0.018) is less than (0.5), the null hypothesis (the equality of mean scores of post-test in two groups) is rejected. As a result the value (0.018<0.05) illustrates that there is significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups on the post-test (Table III). Thus, it can be concluded that the experimental group with the mean of (17.17) outperformed the control group with the mean of (15.97) on the post-test.

TABLE III
INDEPENDENT T-TEST OF THE GROUPS' PERFORMANCES: POST-TEST

Score of post-test	**Group**	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Levene's Test for Equality of Variances**		**t-test for Equality of Means**		
					F	**Sig.**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
	Con.	**20**	**15.9750**	**1.65811**	**.517**	**.476**	**-2.474**	**38**	**.018**
	Ex.	**20**	**17.1750**	**1.39807**					

10.5. Result of the Writing Exam of the Groups

Regarding the writing, the mean score of learners in writing in control and experimental groups are (15.35) and (16.55) respectively and the significant level is (0.012). Since the significant level of the t-test (0.012) is less than (0.5), the null hypothesis (the equality of mean scores of free writing in two groups) is rejected. As a result the value (0.012<0.05) illustrates that there is significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups on writing (Table: IV). Thus, it can be concluded that the experimental group with the mean of (16.55) outperformed the control group with the mean of (15.35) on writing.

Journal of Academic and Applied Studies
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TABLE IV
INDEPENDENT T-TEST OF THE GROUPS' PERFORMANCES: (WRITING)

Score of writing	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
					F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Con.	20	15.3500	1.56525	.376	.543	-2.624	38	.012
	Ex.	20	16.5500	1.31689					

10.6. Result of the Questionnaire in the Experimental Group

The questionnaire was only given to the students in the experimental group who experienced learning in their mother tongue to indicate their views regarding instruction in their mother tongue. The results of the questionnaire suggest that learners had more positive attitudes towards their mother tongue as the language of instruction. The results also support the significance of education in mother tongue which demonstrated that awareness in mother tongue resulted in more efficient foreign language learning.

11. Discussion

As it was mentioned in the previous chapters, attempt was made to probe into the impact of mother tongue awareness on the performance of EFL intermediate learners on learning English language grammar. Here, control group students were compared with the experimental group students. For the purposes of the study, the experimental group was just taught in their mother tongue.

While teachings in both groups, the most important case noticed in this study was related to students' English language learning. In the experimental group, when students were being taught in English language grammar, thanks to the reason that the learners had already learned these grammars in their own language or in other words they had found awareness in their mother tongue, so while learning they had a clear reference of the taught grammars in their minds to refer. As a result of this superiority, both the teacher and the learners in the teaching-learning processes experienced no serious difficulty. Still, one more point is that since mother tongue

awareness strengthened the students in the experimental group on the specified forms, they gained better results in recognition tasks since such tasks call for some meta-linguistic knowledge. It indicated that the learners who had a treatment in their mother tongue and gained awareness and explicit knowledge in mother tongue were more successful on the learning of foreign language grammar rather than those who lacked this treatment. The final results of post-test (multiple choice questions) and production (writing) indicated that following the use of Mother tongue the scores of the experimental group on recognition (multiple-choice questions) and production (writing) concerning foreign language forms were significantly higher than the scores gained by the control group students. In fact, the factor of not being taught in mother tongue caused the control group students not to score as good as the experimental group students.

Based on the activities done, the whole results seemed to support the general conclusion that the awareness of mother tongue facilitated English language grammar learning and had a significant influence on the learners' achievement in the Experimental group. The results also suggested that a judicious and systematic knowledge of mother tongue presented the teacher with opportunities for equipping the learners with comprehensible and effective knowledge of the target language systems and extended their grammatical performance. This, in turn, assisted learners to notice the gap between the positions of their own mother tongue grammar in particular and the grammar of target language, and ultimately aided learning English language grammar.

As a result, from the data available, the null hypotheses were rejected at .05 levels and the research questions with positive answer were accepted. In other words, analyzing the result of pre-test and post-test administered to the experimental and control groups discredited the stated hypotheses of this study. This fact suggested that mother tongue awareness was productive to the accomplishments of English language grammar learners.

Considering the findings from the outcome of the questionnaire and according to the touchable experience of the learners during the teaching in their mother tongue, it could be observed that the learners found positive attitude towards their mother tongue in which they learned better and received deep understanding of their mother tongue. This fact maintained the impressiveness of awareness in mother tongue which resulted in shifting the students' attitude positively. Therefore, these findings from the study could be a good indication of what could be involved in EFL settings as well as in other schooling situations (educational system of the

country). This meant that the processes required for fair foreign language teaching- learning in specific and a better schooling time through life in general**,** and unless the mother tongue not has been activated within the learners' mind (mother tongue awareness) and the learners not have been provided with in educational setting the successful teaching and learning will not occur.

To summarize, from the evidences taken of this study, it can be said that becoming aware of mother tongue and have conscious knowledge about is quite necessary to acquire the second/foreign language. At last, from the different parts of existing literature including the role of MT in teaching and learning, its importance in education, cultural awareness, grammatical awareness, transfer …and considering that all the discussed factors can be transferred from mother tongue to L2; it can be end up with this outcome the impact of mother tongue in L2 or foreign language is undeniable. So can it be logical to remove this impressive element from the educational life of learners?

12. Conclusion

The findings suggest that learners had a more positive attitude towards their mother tongue and they favored L1 as the language of instruction in educational system. The results of the analyses also showed that the learners' awareness of mother tongue had a positive effect on the learning of English language grammar and the learners who received awareness in mother tongue were more successful than those ones who were not in that setting. In other words, including language awareness approach to grammar instruction did help the learners to acquire a better and comprehensive understanding of how the structures worked and the fact of having to be adapted to a new fashion of learning grammar. The conclusion which can be drawn based on the analyses is that since the learners in the Experimental group received instruction in their mother tongue, they found deeper understanding of their mother tongue and gained language awareness. The deeper understanding of the first language and gained language awareness led to the increased degree of language learning. Therefore, it becomes appropriate to stress that awareness and explicit knowledge of mother tongue should be attached importance and understood in different ways in the language classroom. More importantly, the concept of mother tongue awareness should be explicitly defined and developed in the curriculum with the encouragement of the pupils' meta-cognition at its core.

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