USE OF TRANSLATION IN THE WRITINGS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS LEARNING ENGLISH IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

There are increasing numbers of international students coming to Malaysia every year. One of the problems they face while they are learning English in ESL classrooms is to know whether it is beneficial or not for them to use their native language and translation as a tool for learning the second language. Second language researchers have also currently started to re-evaluate the role of translation and first language (L1) in ESL classrooms.

This research was based primarily on an examination of direct and indirect (translated) essay writing in English by 25 college students from different Russian speaking countries having pre advanced and advanced level of English proficiency. The intension of this research is to investigate the quality of students' writing with and without the use of translation by comparing and analysing their written output linguistically. The main research question in this study is: "How does translation help international students to improve their ESL essay writing?" For the purpose of triangulation, two questionnaires were used, one for the participants and another one for their instructors regarding their beliefs about the use of translation in ESL writing in order to answer the second research question: "What do the students' think about the use of translation and mother tongue or L1 considering it to be a tool for ESL learning?" and the third research question : "What do the students' instructors think about the use of translation and L1 in ESL classrooms?" An oral interview was also conducted to find out about the students' beliefs regarding the use of translation in second language learning. The interview was recorded and transcribed accordingly.

The results show that pre advanced (60%) students benefited more from translation than the advanced students. In the case of the advanced students' writing there was no significant amount of change in their two writing products. The findings also show that

majority of the participants (14), believed that with the use of translation they could write English compositions much better. Considering their instructors' beliefs, it was observed by the reactions of their two teachers belonging to two different generations that nowadays some teachers of the new generation have started to realize the importance of using the L1 in second language learning. On the other hand, the older generation of ESL teachers regard the use of the L1 and translation in the classrooms as a taboo.

The conclusions reached were that both pre advanced and advanced students in their translated writings had traces of Russian dominance according to the Russian translators assisting the researcher in the analysis of the writings. Hence, it is beneficial for the students that their instructors in ESL classrooms provide them suggestions on how the systematic use of translation can serve them. They should be guided to organize their ideas and provide information in a lexically and grammatically acceptable and appropriate way. In fact the findings suggest that there should be a focus on how these students select appropriate vocabulary both for their direct and indirect writing as well as learning to prevent their L1 from dominating their L2 lexis and syntax.

Keywords: **translation, mother tongue, first language (L1), student beliefs, language analysis, English as a Second Language (ESL), writing.**

ABSTRAK

Setiap tahun, bilangan pelajar antarabangsa semakin meningkat. Salah satu masalah yang dihadapi mereka semasa mempelajari bahasa Inggeris dalam kelas ESL (Bahasa Inggeris sebagai Bahasa Kedua) adalah untuk mengetahui sama ada penggunaan bahasa ibunda dan terjemahan untuk pembelajaran bahasa kedua (L2) adalah bermanfaat. Penyelidik bahasa kedua juga kini mula menilai semula peranan penterjemahan dan bahasa pertama (L1) dalam kelas ESL. Penyelidikan kajian ini berdasarkan penilaian penulisan karangan (terjemahan) bahasa Inggeris secara langsung dan tidak langsung oleh 25 orang pelajar kolej dari negara-negara berbahasa Rusia dengan kemahiran Inggeris Pra-Lanjutan dan Lanjutan. Untuk meneliti kualiti penulisan pelajar dengan menggunakan penterjemahan (tidak langsung) dan tanpa penterjemahan (langsung), hasil penulisan mereka akan dibandingkan dan dianalisis secara linguistik. Soalan penyelidikan utama kajian ini ialah: "Bagaimanakah terjemahan dapat membantu pelajar antarabangsa memperbaiki penulisan karangan ESL mereka?" Untuk tujuan penyegitigaan, dua soal selidik digunakan,iaitu satu untuk peserta dan satu lagi untuk pengajar yang menyentuh tentang pendapat mereka berkenaan penggunaan terjemahan dalam penulisan ESL demi menjawab soalan penyelidikan yang kedua: "Apakah pendapat pelajar tentang penggunaan terjemahan dan bahasa ibunda atau L1 yang digunakan sebagai alat pembelajaran ESL?" Soalan penyelidikan ketiga pula ialah: "Apakah pendapat para pengajar pelajar tersebut tentang penggunaan terjemahan dan L1 dalam kelas ESL?" Temu bual secara lisan juga dilakukan untuk mengetahui pendapat pelajar tentang penggunaan terjemahan dalam pembelajaran bahasa kedua. Temu bual tersebut telah dirakam dan ditranskripsikan.

Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pelajar Pra-Lanjutan (60%) mendapat lebih manfaat daripada terjemahan berbanding dengan pelajar Lanjutan. Dalam penulisan pelajar Lanjutan, didapati tiada perubahan besar dalam kedua-dua tugasan penulisan mereka.

Hasil kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa majoriti peserta (14), menganggap penggunaan terjemahan membolehkan mereka menulis karangan bahasa Inggeris dengan lebih baik. Bagi pengajar mereka pula, dapat diperhatikan bahawa segelintir guru generasi baru kini mula menyedari tentang kepentingan penggunaan L1 dalam pembelajaran bahasa kedua. Sebaliknya, guru ESL generasi dahulu menganggap penggunaan L1 dan penterjemahan langsung tidak sesuai digunakan di dalam kelas. Kesimpulannya, pelajar Pra-Lanjutan dan Lanjutan yang mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini menunujukkan kecenderungan dominasi Bahasa Rusia dalam penulisan mereka. Demikian menurut penterjemah Rusia yang telah membantu penyelidik dalam analisis penulisan mereka. Oleh itu, pelajar mendapat manfaat sekiranya pengajar kelas ESL memberi cadangan tentang cara penggunaan terjemahan secara sistematik yang boleh membantu pelajar dalam pengaturan idea dan maklumat dengan menggunakan tatabahasa dan leksikal yang sesuai. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa tumpuan harus diletak pada cara pelajar memilih perbendaharaan kata yang sesuai untuk penulisan langsung dan tidak langsung serta mengelak daripada kecenderungan L1 dalam leksis dan sintaks L2 mereka.

Kata kunci: terjemahan, bahasa ibunda, bahasa pertama (L1), pemikiran pelajar, analisis bahasa, Inggeris sebagai Bahasa Kedua (ESL), penulisan.

Tajuk Kertas Kajian: Penggunaan Terjemahan dalam Penulisan Pelajar Antarabangsa Untuk Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris di Malaysia

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1.Background of the study

There are increasing numbers of international students coming to Malaysia every year. They choose Malaysia as a place to study mainly because of lower fees, a safe and suitable environment, besides using English language in classes for instruction.

These students usually attend private or governmental institutions of higher education. Initially they attend ESL classes in order to improve their proficiency in English language so as to enable them to further their studies in Malaysian colleges and universities. One of the problems they face while they are learning English in ESL classrooms is to know whether it is useful or not for them to use their native language and translation as a strategy for learning L2.

Hence, this study sets out to analyze the writings of the ESL students from mother tongue (L1) to foreign language (L2) in the area of FL and L2 teaching and learning.

For a long time translation and the mother tongue usage was prohibited in foreign language learning and teaching. Although the use of the mother tongue and translation in second language learning has been considered as a "pedagogic immoral act", it is understood that learners have always used both instinctively. In fact, learners believe that the process of second language learning usually happens by filtering the L2 through the structure of L1.

For the same reason, second language researchers have currently started to re-evaluate the role of translation and first language in ESL classrooms. Some researchers have even pointed out to the "manifestations of *Interlanguage* in translation" (Toury, 1979:223).

According to Toury "…the analysis of *interlanguage* forms occurring in translations should form an integral part of any systemic descriptive study of translation as an empirical phenomenon. This is not a mere empirical, observational conclusion. Theoretical considerations strongly support it, and even lead to hypothesizing that *the language used in translation tends to be interlanguage."* (ibid. 225 and 227).

Besides the idea that second language learners instinctively use translation whether they are allowed to use it or not, it becomes relevant to ask the question to what degree does translation help L1 learners to improve in their second language learning.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

The number of international students coming to Malaysia is increasing these days. According to Datin Dr. SitiHamisahTapsir, the Private Higher Education Institutions deputy director-general, "Malaysia is the 11th most sought after country for tertiary education among international students" (www.theborneopost.com). In fact, over 90000 or around 2% of total international student population in the world studied in Malaysia in 2011. The Ministry of Higher Education aims to attract 200000 international students by 2020. These students choose Malaysia as the place for them to pursue their education mainly because of its lower fees compared to Europe, Australia or USA and also due to the peacefulness and the political stability of Malaysia besides its use of English as the medium of instruction at tertiary level. These international students usually aim to improve their English in ESL classrooms first and then further their studies in a pre-university program to obtain their university degrees.

Considering how English is taught in ESL classrooms in Malaysia to local students it should be pointed out that after independence in1957, various efforts have been made by

the government to establish a national system of education. Although Malaysian authority has tried hard to promote Bahasa Malaysia as the national language, by making it the medium of education in National schools, the importance of English was not reduced and, in fact, it remained as the second most important language in Malaysia. English is after Bahasa Malaysia used for their political, economic and cultural requirements.

In Malaysia, code switching in English classrooms is very common due to the diversity of languages being used by the students and instructors who speak the same languages. Earlier investigations by Kow, (2003) and Then & Ting (2009) found that code switching is something that normally happens in ESL classrooms in Malaysia. Code-switching is normally used in order to help students with understanding at all different levels of education, for example kindergarten (Huerta-Macias & Quintero, 1992), secondary schools (Flyman-Mattsson&Burenhult, 1999; Gabusi, n.d.; Rethinasamy&Johie, 2008) and finally university level (Greggio& Gil, 2007; Liu, n.d.).

The International students studying in Malaysia belong to various countries around the world with different mother tongues which are completely distinct from their English instructors' L1 in the ESL classrooms. However, the instructors persist on International students' using the target language in the ESL classrooms, so these students are normally confused as to know whether it is really beneficial or not for them to use their L1 or translation in their ESL lessons.

Some teachers believe that since children acquire their mother tongue without the influence of a second language, therefore, second and foreign language learning should be the same. I myself as an international student, when I was studying in ESL classrooms sometimes really needed to use my English – Persian dictionary. In fact, by linking the new words to my mother tongue (Persian) I could acquire the vocabulary better, but our ESL

instructors prohibited the use of the L1 and expected us to think directly in English. Many of them, in fact, seriously followed the principle that banned the use of the first language in the classrooms.

Hence, the objective of this research is to investigate whether translation and the use of L1 can help International students in their writing or not, which is the most difficult part of L2 learning. In fact, we would like to investigate the differences between the writing products. These writing products are written either directly in English or first in the students' mother tongue (first language) and then translated into English. This research aims to examine the impact of participants' L1 on their writings in English, based on the assumption that translation from the L1 to L2 is beneficial in promoting written work in the L2.

1.3. Research Objectives

The intention of this research is to examine the quality of the writings of participants with and without the use of translation by comparing and analyzing the outcomes linguistically. As a means of triangulation, the study also identified the participants' and their teachers' perceptions regarding the use of translation and the L1 and the way they use this strategy in their learning activities, particularly in writing.

1.4. Research Questions

This study intends to examine the following research questions:

- How does translation help international students in Malaysian tertiary colleges to improve in ESL essay writing?
- What do international students think about the use of translation and their first language in second language learning?
- What do the students' instructors think about the use of translation and first language as a learning tool in ESL learning?

1.5.Scope & Limitations

This research is based upon the hypothesis that the use of L1 and translation in L2 can be beneficial for students and instructors in ESL classrooms. L2 researchers have been paying a good deal of attention to the use of L1 in second language acquisition. There are many studies which have focused on the important functions of learners' first language and second language in language learning (Atkinson, 1987; Levine, 2003; Turnbull, 2001).

Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) showed that Japanese college students' English essays through Japanese translation were considered to be better than those who wrote directly in English. By the use of translation students said that the development of ideas was easier, they could express their opinions more clearly, and could find their needed words more easily

This study will also present the findings based on the evidence of data collected via direct and translated writing tasks, in-depth interview and questionnaires from pre – advanced and advanced international students studying English in Malaysia as well as from their teachers. Data are limited to the population in the current study and cannot be generalized to other populations in other contexts.

In addition to the limitations stated above, another limitation was due to the fact that the researcher's native language was Persian, so she had to use two Russian speaking translators in order to help her in analyzing the participants' Russian writings to see how much their Russian language could affect their translations to English.

Yet, another limitation was the fact that due to internal regulations and policies of the College, the researcher was not able to ask the participants to take the second test on a

separate day. Hence the participants did both their direct and indirect writings on the same day with 15 minutes break between the two types of writing tasks.

1.6.Significance of the Study

It is hypothesized that the answers to the research questions listed above will provide insight into how international students can improve their writing in L2 by the use of translation. It is also expected that this study will help to promote the ESL learners' unconscious use of translation to a high level of awareness as well as to be able to take the best advantage of it in L2 learning. The findings from this study can also help the teachers to choose the best teaching strategies to guide students in making use of the mother tongue in the best possible way. Finally, it is hoped that the findings can be used to improve English language instruction and learning in particular for international students studying ESL in Malaysia.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to examine the role of translation in particular, its advantages and disadvantages in the process of L2 learning, the literature review presented will cover: The notion of translation and L1; Definition of key-concepts associated with the use of L1 and translation in L2 classrooms; Evolution of the use of translation in learning L2 ; Different opinions on the use of translation and L1 in L2 learning; Previous studies on students' beliefs about the use of translation and L1 as a learning instrument; The use of translation and L1 in L2 writing; and finally Literature related to the assessment of ESL writing.

2.1. Notion of translation and L1

Considering the definition of translation, it should be clear that except transferring meaning and expressing messages, translation is a strategy for students to learn foreign languages. Chamot (1987:77) sees the role of translation as "using the first language as a base for understanding and/or producing the second language". In this study, translation means using one language as a base to understand, remember, or produce another language, both lexically and syntactically.

Translation is the most important means of benefiting from our first language. The function of translation in second language and/or foreign language classes has always been a highly debatable issue. The use of the L1 in L2 teaching has been under attack by linguists and teachers since it was first endorsed by the Grammar − Translation method.

L1 in this study is defined as the language a person learns from birth (It is normally acquired naturally in the home). It is the language that a person speaks the best and is normally the basis for his/her sociolinguistic identity. (Bloomfield, 1933).

2.1.1. L1 and its role in language learning

According to certain professionals in second language acquisition the mother tongue plays a vital role in EFL classrooms. Nunan and Lamb (1996), for example affirm that English instructors of monolingual students at basic or elementary English levels realize it to be practically impossible to prohibit the mother tongue. Cook (2001: 189) states that "bringing the L1 back from exile may lead not only to the improvement of existing teaching methods but also to innovations in methodology". Furthermore, Brooks and Donato (1994, cited in Cook, 2001) claim that taking advantage of the mother tongue in second language learning is an ordinary psycholinguistic procedure that helps L2 communication and facilitates spoken communication.

Smith (1994:55), supports bilingual instruction, claiming that instruction in a students' first language provides learners with two positive effects: understanding and literacy. Through their first language, they obtain the knowledge that helps make the target language they are acquiring more comprehensible. "Literacy developed in the primary language transfers to the second language. The reason is simple: because we learn to read by reading—that is, by making sense of what is on the page". More recently in other writings on these subjects, Prodromou (2001) through an online article compared *the mother tongue* in EFL classrooms to a skeleton in the cupboard as "something most people have, in one form or another".

What he has pointed out is very true because "we have for a long time treated the mother tongue as a 'taboo' subject, a source of embarrassment and on the part of teachers, a recognition of their failure to teach properly, i.e. using 'only English'". Due to people's negative perception of taking advantage of the *first language* of ESL learners, non-native English instructors have been utilizing their first language in silence; "the skeleton has been there all the time, we just haven't wanted to talk about it". Further on he points out that the reason for such an attitude towards the use of the L1 in L2 instruction was due to the psycholinguistic or pedagogic framework which did not consider any role for the mother tongue in L2 instruction.

As for Lucas and Katz (1994: 539), they state that "using *native language* in EFL classrooms has psychological benefits in addition to serving as a practical pedagogical tool for providing access to academic content, allowing more effective interaction, and providing greater access to prior knowledge". In fact by valuing the learners' native language, it will certainly increase the students' motivation to learn because they themselves feel being indirectly valued.

Finally Guy Cook, in an interview in London (2011) said: "Knowing and using the students' own language definitely has many advantages. It makes for a less stressful atmosphere, it makes relationships between teacher and students deeper and more genuine, it respects and uses what students know already (rather than infantilizing them), it protects their *first- language* identity and allows them to develop a new bilingual identity, and above all it helps them understand how the new language works." In short, mother tongue/L1 definitely plays a vital role in ESL/EFL classrooms as shown by the benefits and advantages claimed by the various scholars cited above.

Translation is somehow considered to be a cognitive educational strategy (Chamot 1987; Chamot and Kupper 1989; Chamot et al. 1987; O'Malley et al 1985a; O'Malley et al. 1985; Oxford 1990). In this regard, I find it useful at this stage to discuss the definition of *cognitive* and *metacognitive* learning strategies among which translation has been considered as one of these vital strategies in language learning by the above mentioned scholars.

2.2. Definition of Metacognition and Cognition

Metacognition is known as thinking about thinking. This term is usually linked to John Flavell (1979). Flavell (1979, 1987), stated that metacognition is both a metacognitive knowledge and experience. In fact, according to him metacognitive knowledge is acquired understanding of cognitive processes. A type of knowledge that controls cognitive processes. Furthermore, Flavell categorizes metacognitive knowledge as three sorts of knowledge: personal, task and strategy variables. *Metacognitively* aware learners are supposed to be those who are aware of their actions at the circumstances when they have no idea about what action to take. In fact, these people investigate strategies to find out what they should do. Metacognitive strategies kindle one's thinking and can cause deep learning and suitable performance, particularly for the learners who struggle hard. Understanding cognitive processes is the main vital skill that instructors can develop in language learners. Helping the students to develop metacognitive skills along with cognitive skills is among the second language instructor's duties.

Cognition is the act of handling information, using the knowledge, and finally changing preferences. It is the progresses a being applies to establish data, such as obtaining evidence (awareness), choosing (thoughtfulness), demonstrating (accepting) and remembering (retention) data, and finally consuming it.

It could be done naturally or artificially, consciously or unconsciously (Boundless, 2013: 975). In psychology and engineering, it is usually supposed to be processing information in one's mind or brain (Blomberg 2011).

2.2.1. The distinction between Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies

According to Graham (1997:42-43) "The ***distinctions between cognitive and metacognitive strategies*** are important, partly because they give some indication of which strategies are the most crucial in determining the effectiveness of learning. It seems that metacognitive strategies, that allow students to plan, control, and evaluate their learning, have the most central role to play in this respect, rather than those that merely maximize interaction and input … Thus the ability to choose and evaluate one's strategies is of central importance". In fact ***metacognitive*** knowledge is the knowledge acquired regarding cognitive processes, the type of knowledge that helps to control cognitive processes. (Flavell 1979, 1987).

Cognitive and metacognitive strategies are important language learning strategies according to many researchers (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzares,Kupper& Russo, 1985; Oxford, 1990; Skehan, 1989; Wong-Fillmore, 1976,1979). They believe cognitive strategies are mostly related to the individual learning tasks, predictions, translating, summarizing, linking with prior knowledge or experience, applying grammar rules, and guessing meaning from contexts. Flavell (1979), answering a question about the distinction

between cognitive and metacognitive strategies believes that metacognitive and cognitive knowledge might not be different. The difference is in the usage of the information. As already mentioned, *metacognition* is "thinking about thinking" and includes inspection of a cognitive goal's achievement. Cognitive strategies enable the individual to obtain a particular objective, while by metacognitive strategies we can be sure that objectives have been met. Metacognitive activities usually precede or follow a cognitive activity.

In conclusion, although *translation can be considered as a vital learning cognitive strategy* for second language learners, unfortunately, according to Guy Cook "it has become accepted wisdom that translation is artificial, inauthentic, and uncommunicative" (Guy Cook in an interview in London, 2011). Therefore, while some second language instructors look at translation as a suitable tool for students' comprehension and writing, others discourage the use of translation and the mother tongue in the classroom. They believe that thinking strictly in the target language, increases students' opportunity to become confident and perfect in the other language and evades interference from their mother tongue. In other words these people support monolingual instruction in ESL classrooms.

2.3. Evolution of the use of translation in learning second language

In order to understand the role of translation and the use of L1 as a pedagogical tool in teaching and learning of L2, will go through the recent history of language teaching with regard to the status of translation. Actually, from the twentieth century, language teaching started to focus on the point that second language (L2) should be taught without

interference from the students' mother tongue. In fact there have been three interrelated guidelines in this regard such as:

(i) Instruction should be solely in the second/foreign language and there should not be any reference to language learners' mother tongue.

This means in order to acquire L2, students need intensive amounts of L2 (Duff & Polio, 1990; Ellis, 2005; Hendrickson, 1991; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Turnbull, 2001). In other words, language learners need a lot of exposure to the language they are trying to acquire, and instructors must offer only L2. The more exposed to the second language, the more L2 students will learn (Turnbull 2001). In other words, without continuous exposure to L2, students will lose confidence in using the L2 and consequently lose interest to take part in further L2 activities (Rolin − Ianziti & Varshney, 2008). Teaching solely in the target language without interference from students' first language is what the Direct Method prescribed for the language learning.

The Direct Method, also called the Natural approach was developed before the end of the 19th century. It rejected the teaching methods of the ancient **Grammar Translation** approach. The general **aim** of this method was to provide learners with useful knowledge about the target language. The learners should learn how to speak and understand the target language in real life situations.

The teaching methods recommended by the Direct Method emphasized or providing language learners with useful knowledge of target knowledge, due to the fact that it can only be obtained by the direct use of the target language in language learning classrooms. Instead of pushing the language learners to obtain abstract knowledge about rules of grammar, with translations as a test of knowledge, Direct Method researchers believed that

the target language should be learnt just the way children learn their first language within the L2 language learning classroom. This is the reason why this approach was known as the Natural Approach or the Direct Method.

(ii) In ESL classrooms, there should not be any translation between the first and second language.

This axiom was the result of the fact that use of translation in language teaching was regarded as impractical, since the **Grammar *Translation Method*** advocated language teaching mainly by the means of translation and learning of grammatical rules. The Grammar Translation Method was an old method originally used for teaching dead languages. Grammar Translation Method was designed on the basis of a *psychological approach*, a very popular method in 18th and 19th century. It believed that "mental discipline was essential for strengthening the powers of the mind" (Omaggio, 86). For the same reason it was implemented through learning classical texts of the Greeks and Romans. The use of the mother tongue was allowed, vocabulary items were taught as word lists, explanations of grammar was done elaborately and the morphology and syntax were considered to be very important. The focus was mainly on translating sentences from mother tongue to target language and vice versa.

Hence if *Grammar Translation Method* is still being used in some classrooms, it might be due to some of its advantages. Under *Grammar Translation Method*, learners had no difficulties in understanding the lessons since they were carried out in their mother tongue, and saved both teachers' and students' time. On the other hand, there was no focus of speaking in the curriculum as well as giving students an active role in the classrooms.

Finally, there was not any room for communication and content in the **Grammar Translation Method** (Brown, H. Douglas, 2006).

For the above mentioned weaknesses of this method, it was denounced later on in the 50's and early 60's in teaching language with the appearance of *Direct Method* and *Audio-Lingual* Method. The reason for this prohibition was also due to the fact that the dominance of Grammar-Translation Method resulted in students being unable to communicate orally in a fluent way despite studying the language for long periods of time. In fact, it was not a useful learning experience for students due to memorizing huge lists of rules and vocabulary, and it also involved students translating whole literary or historic texts word for word.

Furthermore*, Direct Method and Audio-Lingual Method*, totally prohibited translation and rejected its application in ESL classrooms. *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT),* the very current and most popular approach, supports the idea that the target language is supposed to be practiced in the communicational activities authentically and functionally. Later, in the 1970's – 1980's Communicative approaches to language learning started to consider the use of L1 instruction detrimental and in fact CLT teachers believe that in order for students to attain native-like fluency in a second language, they have to try to think in the target language instead of translating it to their own native language.

"The two languages should be always kept separate" according to Lambert and Tucker (1972). Since that time, this principle has been followed in teaching and learning of second language and most dual language programs. Lambert and Tucker who for the first time noted that French immersion programs involved students in a sort of contrastive linguistics activity like evaluating features of French and English, although both languages were considered strictly distinct for instruction.

When students develop awareness of the structural differences between the L2 and L1, they expand their interlanguage, even though cross – linguistic analysis can complicate the learning process.

The aforementioned assumptions, in fact, reflect what Howatt (1984) meant by the "**monolingual principle",** which focuses instructional use of the target language in order to exclude students' L1. The monolingual principle excluded the native language or the other languages acquired previously. In other words, in the classrooms only the target language was supposed to be both the object and the only instrument of teaching. It entailed the strict avoidance of the students' first language for conveying the meaning as well as the understanding of grammatical rules.

 The *monolingual principle* put emphasis on a general law of learning which says students should only practice to perfect in the target language. The easy way for children's language learning of their mother tongue, is the most fascinating method of language learning in monolingual methodology. This is due to the fact that there is no other language children can fall back on, so, according to monolingual language learning/teaching methodology, foreign languages should also be taught without invoking any other languages. These days, in L2 instruction in many countries, mother tongue use is considered taboo. This is a monolingual principle, that more than 100 years ago was accepted as the *Direct Method,* and it had a lot of influence on different approaches to L2 teaching (Howatt, 1984; Cook, 2001; Yu, 2001).

 In fact, the Direct Method of teaching was developed in reaction to the Grammar-Translation method. It aimed to replicate the natural method of second language acquisition (SLA). All the teaching under Direct Method should be carried out in the target language. Grammar teaching should be done inductively and the main focus was supposed to be only

on speaking and listening. The assumption that second language should be learnt exactly the same way as a first language was the weak point of this method since conditions under which a second language is learnt are completely different from the first language. An emphasis on listening and speaking, maximum use of the target language for all class instructions, and the use of visual objects are among features of Direct Method which can be seen in all classrooms instructed under it.

In this regard, Yu (2001) believed that "the Direct Method imitated the way children learn their first language, emphasizing the avoidance of translation and the direct use of the foreign language as the medium of instruction in all situations". Its main goal was the development of listening comprehension and speaking ability (instead of reading and writing) and "correct pronunciation and inductively acquired grammatical knowledge are insisted upon" (Yu, 2001:176).

The above assumptions were also important in the development of Audio-Lingual and Audio-Visual approaches in 1960s and 1970s. This new method known as Audio-Lingual Method (ALM), included most of the typical features of the earlier Direct Method, plus "habit-forming".   It was also very influential on the language teaching methods and up to the dawn of communicative Language Teaching in the 80s, was deemed an effective approach to L2 teaching / learning. The popularity of this method was also due to the fact that it caused quick success in helping the learners in achieving communicative competence. By the use of extensive mimicry, memorization and repetition of language patterns and forms, students and teachers could obtain the results quite fast. This was counted to be both a sign of strength and weakness of the method since critics gradually started to say that the method did not bring about long-*term* communicative ability for the language learners.

At this stage, the study of linguistics started to change and second language learning began to employ cognitive strategies. With the development of the cognitive psychological conception where L1 knowledge is part of past knowledge, certain authors such as Corder (1967), started to propose different ideas.. Errors were no longer considered as something bad but an important indicator of the learning process. In fact, the Cognitive psychologists discussed some new ideas about learning in general. They claimed that mimicry and learning by repetition was not enough for language learning and consequently they paved the way for the new cognitive methods, following Audio-lingual Method.

The most recent method is *Communicative Approach in Language Teaching*. Its goal is the development of "communicative competence" (Hymes 1972). Hymes coined this term because he intended to add a communicative view of language learning to Chomsky's theory of linguistic competence. Chomsky believed that linguistic theory is primarily based on a perfect speaker community who knows its language very well and memory limitation, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) has no influence on his knowledge of the language in real performance. (Chomsky 1965: 3).

Regarding *Communicative Approach in Language Teaching*, (Cook, 2009, 1: 404) also has stated that:

"Recent methods do not so much forbid the L1 as ignore its existence altogether. Communicative language teaching and task-based learning methods have no necessary relationship with the L1, yet the only times the L1 is mentioned is when advice is given on how to minimize its use. The main theoretical treatments of task-based learning do not for example; have any locatable mentions in the classroom use of the L1. Most descriptions of

methods portray the ideal classroom as having as little of the L1 as possible, essentially by omitting reference to it."

Going back to our previous discussion about ***Translation*** as a learning tool, despite the fact that many foreign language instructors have ignored translation in language teaching, learners still widely use it in their learning (Naiman et al. 1978; Marti Viano and Orquin 1982; Politzer 1983; O'Malley et al. 1985b; Chamot et al. 1987).

These days translation has started to become an important instrument in language learning/teaching, due to its focus on the use of language learners' native language as a provider to progress their language learning. Thus, it is being observed that use of native language also is no more severely forbidden by new second language learning methods (Cook, 2001). Hence, certain second language researchers pay more attention to the benefits of the use of the native language to second language learners. Translation is considered to be the fifth skill to be acquired besides the remaining four basic skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. "Translation holds a special importance at an intermediate and advanced level: in the advanced or final stage of language teaching, translation from first language to second language is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers" (Ross 2000 : 61-66).

Moreover, translation in L2 classroom helps to highlight the differences and similarities between L1 and L2 structures. Translation then is useful for the acquisition of target language, because of its use of authentic materials as well as being interactive and learner-centered. It also promotes the autonomy of the learners (Mahmoud, 2006). Also Alan Duff (1989) with regard to translation stated that: "We all have a mother tongue, or first language. This shapes our way of thinking and to some extent our use of the foreign

language (pronunciation, choice of words, tone, word order, etc.).Translation helps us to understand better the influence of one language on the other, and to correct errors of habit that creep   in unnoticed (such as the misuse of particular words or structures).Translation is a natural and necessary activity. More so, indeed than many of the fashionable activities invented for language learners outside the classroom – in offices, banks, factories, shops and airports – translation is going on all the time. Why not inside the classroom? (Duff, 1989/1996: 6).

2.4. Different studies on the use of translation and L1 in second the language learning

The different studies in regard to the use of translation and L1 in second language learning can help the researcher to get a vast and deep idea of students' perception of their effectiveness in the L2 classroom. The real role of first language (L1) in second language learning has not been defined clearly. A large number of researchers criticize and advocate the use of the L1. A deep and profound definition of L1 and its role in second language learning may be useful in this regard. Hence, it is necessary to examine the existing literature that either support or prohibit the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. It is also necessary to discuss the result of prohibiting the use of L1, in regard to reading, writing, speaking, listening and interactions of the students. As a matter of fact, there are countless arguments supporting the use of L1 in second language learning, just as on the other hand there are also many arguments supporting rich L2 input for students.

2.4.1. Literature supporting the use of translation and L1 in L2 classrooms

This research is based upon the hypothesis that the use of L1 and translation in L2 can be beneficial for students and instructors in ESL classrooms. L2 researchers have been paying a good deal of attention to the use of L1 in second language acquisition. There are many studies which have focused on the important functions of learners' first language and second language in language learning (Atkinson, 1987; Levine, 2003; Turnbull, 2001). In the 19th century, Sweet, the great philologist, recognized the importance of the native language in learning second language. "…begin with knowledge of one's own language. The first preparation for the study of foreign language is the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of the peculiarities of one's own language" (Sweet, 1969: 193). Later on, Palmer (1956: 125), also specialized in the field of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), considers the use of L1 as "perfectly harmless and in many cases positively beneficial ".Also Auerbach (1993), in studying the learning strategies of adult English learners, found out that it is more beneficial to start L2 learning by the use of L1 because they feel more secure this way and can express themselves in some ways that they will not be able to do it in L2.

By using first language as a resource, students can be prepared to perform at higher levels in the target language than without the use of L1 (Alegria de la Colina& Del Pilar Garcia Mayo, 2009; Anton &DiCamilla, 1998). Actually, those who support L1, also encourage the use of translation whereas those who support the sole use of the L2 in the classrooms aim to banish this method.

In a study of low proficiency EFL students, it was noted that performing collaborative practices will help students to reach higher level of performance and motivate them to learn. As a mediating tool, the use of L1 can also help students to collaboratively gain

access to the target language forms and find meanings that cannot be available to them by exclusive individual use of second language (Alegria de la Colina& Del Pilav Garcia Mayo, 2009).

Although the use of the first language as a source can help students in different ways, some teachers are still influenced by other second language researchers that support the idea that the first language must be completely avoided in language learning. They believe students should acquire second language as they learned their first language, without the influence of another language hampering acquisition.

Against these researchers, Cook (2001 : 154) states that second language acquisition is completely different from mother tongue acquisition, since there is already one other language existing in second language acquisition, which does not exist when the child is learning a native language " There is no way in which the two processes can be equated".

Similarly, Hammerly (1994) claims that the programs that mostly focus on the use of second language and avoid native language use are not very successful in reducing errors the students make while using the second language. People naturally think in their own native language, have an awareness of cross-association between languages "for the simple reason that every idea is indissolubly associated with some words or phrases in our own language (Sweet, 1964: 199). In fact, researchers have documented that students use their native language more in the following conditions : group works (Lucas & Katz, 1994); long classes (Marco, 2001); guiding, planning , developing strategies (Alegria de la Colina& Del Pilar Garcia Mayo, 2009; Storch& Wigglesworth ,2003; Swaing& Lapking,2000; Thoms, Liao, &Szustak, 2005); when they negotiate meaning with one another (AlegriadelaColina& Del Pilar Garcia Mayo 2009; Antone& Di Camilla, 1998; Lucas and Katz, 1994; Storch& Wigglesworth, 2003), when they talk privately (Scott &

Del la Fuente, 2000); when they want to focus their attention on understanding grammatical points and the meaning of new words (Swain &Lapkin, 2000; Thomas et al., 2005).

Research has also proved that removing the use of the native language can be both beneficial and damaging (Anton &DiCamilla, 1998; Auberback, 1993; Brock-Utne, 2007; Reeder, Buntain, &Takakuwa, 1999; Scott & De la Fuente, 2008).   It is beneficial because it causes optimal exposure to L2. The students can experience the real language and develop their own kind of language system (Macaro, 2001). At the same time, complete removal of L1 as a communication means can affect the learning process. When students are prohibited from using the L1 and rarely have fluent knowledge of L2, the prohibition can affect their language learning. The negative effects of this prohibition on the use of the L1 can be seen on reading, writing, speaking, listening and interpersonal relationships (Anton &DiCamilla, 1998; Auerbach, 1993; Brock-Utne, 2007; Reeder et al., 1999; Scott & De la Fuente, 2008).

 According to Bowen, a professor and lecturer at Embassy-CES in Hastings England, in the 1970's, people considered the use of first language in the classroom as a bad thing and expected all points to be taught in the target-language in order to let the language learners be exposed to the second language (L2) as much as possible. Bowen, as a matter of fact, in one of his recent articles has stated that "This is fine in principle but, as ever, the reality turns out to be somewhat different. While it is perfectly possible to use only English in class, this approach fails to take account of a number of factors. First of all, a general recommendation of this type tends to originate in the world of the multi-ethnic language class in an English-speaking environment. In this situation it is not only desirable to use English at all times, it is, for the most part, essential, given the mixed linguistic background of the learners. "(Bowen, 2008: 7).

Regarding the usefulness of the mother tongue use in monolingual classrooms he believes that "The mother tongue can be used to provide a quick and accurate translation of an English word that might take several minutes for the teacher to explain and even there would be no guarantees that the explanation had been understood correctly." (Bowen,2008:7)

Considering the use of translation in language learning, research results show the positive and facilitative role of translation and native language in students' language learning. (Baynhan 1983; Titford 1985; Perkins 1985; Ellis 1985; Atkinson 1987; Newmark 1991; Husain 1994; Kobayashi and Rinnert 1991; Kern 1994; Husain 1995; Omura 1996; Prince 1996; Cohen and Brooks-Carson 2001).

Translation can help students to develop different learning strategies. Considering the cognitive strategies, translation contains several ways of learning and producing new languages. Translation is in fact transformation and creation (Rosemary Arrojo, 1986). Regarding memory strategies, it helps language learners to make language associations and trace semantic maps which are necessary in any activities such as translation.

Translation can enhance communicative abilities because users normally share and negotiate meaning related to any particular community and context. Alan Duff, in this regard believes that "Translation develops three qualities essential to all language learning; accuracy, clarity and flexibility. It trains the learner to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to convey what is meant (clarity)" (Duff, 1989: 7).

Finally, Guy Cook in an interview in January 2011 at the International House DOS conference in Lond - 2012 iT's Magazines S.L.) .

2.4.2. Literature supporting the sole use of L2 in language learning

The supporters of L1 use in English classrooms encourage translation and those who support second language acquisition are in favor of its complete banishment. In fact, they believe that for the second language learners in order to become completely proficient, it is necessary to receive a large amount of comprehensible language input (Duff & Polio, 1990; Ellis, 2005; Hendrickson, 1991; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Turnbull, 2001). Furthermore, they believe that learners need more contact with the target language, and this kind of exposure can only be achieved inside the second language classroom, as teachers provide the only second language contribution that learners can obtain (Duff & Polio, 1990).

Turnbull (2001) also announced that learners' L2 proficiency can improve as well as their confidence through an L2 rich approach to learning L2. He also adds that the more L2 students receive, the more L2 they will learn. Ruiz-Funes (2002: 19) also believes focusing only on L2 helps students to learn L2 quickly and successfully. Emphasis on the use of the L2 and limitation on the use of the L1 in L2 education are based on the following: the L2 should be used in teaching to limit the use of L1, also without L2 input, language learners lose their confidence when using L2 and therefore, lose their interest and get discouraged from class participations (Rolin-Lanziti & Varshney, 2008).

Kim & Elder (2008: 167) pointed out that success of an L2 rich approach is depended on the L2 instruction, in a way that produces "an input-rich environment" the students can be provided with "optimal opportunities for meaningful use of the target language". Jespersen (1956) said that students must hear, see, write, read and speak L2 continuously. Communicative Language Teaching is strongly against the use of translation and native language in language learning, as they believe by thinking in the target language, the learners will become more fluent by avoiding interference from their L1.

As well as arguments in favor of the use of mother tongue, there are also many views against the use of translation in the EFL classrooms. Of course it does not mean that they are wrong. Some people, for example, think that there is no point in practicing translation in EFL classrooms at all because it is time consuming and difficult to prepare suitable material for the level of students' proficiency .

2.4.3. Literature supporting simultaneous use of L1 and L2 in target language learning

Besides those who support the use of L1 and translation and those ideologists who condemn its use in ESL classrooms, there are some researchers who believe that the use of L1 and L2 in target language learning should be done simultaneously.

Maximum exposure of L2 to the learners is essential in second language learning but, L1 can also be used alongside L2 as a complement. Turnbull (2001: 153) points out that the use of large amount of target language does not and should not necessarily mean that it is harmful for the instructors to use the L1. "A principle that promotes maximal teacher use of the target language acknowledges that the L1 and target language can exist simultaneously". Furthermore, Stern (1992: 285) believes that "the use of L1 and target language should be seen as complementary, depending on the characteristics and stages of the language learning process".

On the contrary, too much use of L1 does not naturally reduce the learners' L2 exposure. Thus, a balance between L1 and L2 is necessary in application of both strategies. Turnbull (2001) in this regard suggests making a quick switch to the L1 to check if language learners understand a difficult grammatical point or new vocabulary. Teachers must also use the target language as much as possible since the language learners normally spend a limited

time in ESL classrooms and having contact with the target language outside the classroom is not possible for them.

Reineman (2001), in this regard believes that there is not any strict rule for allowing or prohibiting the use of first or target language in the classroom. She states that L1 should be used conditionally. For example, when a new lexical item is being introduced, then the target language can be used alone supported by the use of drawings, mime, etc. But when communicating abstract ideas, there should be permission for the use of L1. She furthermore adds that ESL students' input has to be comprehensible. In using familiar instructional materials, we should use the target language, but for new materials the L1 can be allowed. In fact, students should be permitted to refer to their already known system for learning the second language. But at the same time, they should not be allowed to use their L1 as a security blanket too long.

Connick-Hirtz (2001), also points out to the following factors when deciding to use L1 or L2 for instruction:

- Students' first language

- Students' age

- Students' level of proficiency

- Ratio of teaching time for each student per session

- The period of time the second language is supposed to be studied

- The students' purpose of second language learning

- The students' nationality, whether they are mixed or not

- Institution pedagogical policy

- Educational background of the students

- The social context of teaching the second language.

2.5. Previous studies on students' viewpoint considering the use of translation and L1 as a learning instrument

Considering the learners' beliefs about translation, which is one of the objectives in this research, once again the definition of translation needs to be clarified here.

Except in the case of transferring meaning and expressing messages, translation is a strategy for students to learn foreign languages. Chamot (1987: 77) defines the role of the L1 as "using the first language as a base for understanding and/or producing the second language". In this study, translation means the use of one language as a base to understand, remember, or produce another language, both lexically and syntactically from target language.

Although translation has been facing objections, it still persists in language learning (Naiman, Frolich, Stern, &Todesco, 1978; Politzer, 1983; O'Malley, 1985; Chamot, 1987). Unfortunately, not enough empirical studies have been done regarding learners' beliefs about translation and the use of L1 in English classrooms. Horwitz (1988) in his study pointed out that most of his German and Spanish students (70% and 75%) believed that to learn a foreign language, they should learn to translate from English and 15% of his French students confirmed it.

Prince (1996) also in a study on students' beliefs about translation found out that learning vocabulary in context seems to be an interesting strategy for teachers, but students actively resisted it and believed linking the new words to its native language equivalent is more useful in learning new words.

Some students also believe it is not useful for them to depend on their native language, because their teachers always encourage them to think in the target language. In this regard,

Wen & Johnson (1997), chose ten students in China who majored in English language. They wanted to find out the low and high achievers' differences by interviews, diary studies and strategy use, when they were doing a reading task. They noticed that regarding mother tongue avoidance strategy, the low achievers believed using Chinese language is not bad for their language acquisition, while high achievers believed using Chinese would make their progress more difficult. The researchers concluded that the students need to be persuaded to avoid the conscious utilization of translation.

Hsieh (2000), on the other hand, provided a questionnaire about Taiwanese college students' beliefs about the use of translation who had already studied English for one year. 85% of the students believed that by translation they can notice the consistency and contextualization of English reading text; 73% said that they could learn about the significance of their mother language through translation, 65% said now, they know better about the multiple meaning of some English words, 62% believed translation helped them to increase their vocabulary knowledge of English and reading skills.

2.6. Use of translation and L1 in L2 writing

In this research the focus is mainly on language learners' writing rather than other skills like reading, speaking and listening. Here the intention is to examine second language learners' writing in L2 with the help of L1 and translation. Hence, it is   essential first to know about the writing skill itself, its importance and strategies used by students for producing better writing in the L2.

2.6.1. The L2 Writing Process

L2 writing is a very difficult process for second language learners since it includes thinking, numerous kinds of enlisting, and response performs, restructuring, and finally editing (Zhang 2008). L2 and L1 writing are different, since L2 writers have more than one language available to them (Wang & Web, 2002).

2.6.2. The impact of L1 on L2 writing

Researchers have different views on the impact of the L1 on L2 writing (Lay, 1982, 1988; Brooks, 1985; Uzawa& Cumming, 1989; Cumming, 1989, 1990; Krapels, 1991).

Lay (1982 : 406) during a case study with the participation of four native Chinese-speaking second language writers in English , focused on the writers' think-aloud data, stated that they used their L1 in order to "get a strong impression and association of ideas for the essay". Brooks (1985), also investigating the writing processes of five low proficiency college writers found out that students who had read and written a lot in their own native language could use their L1 competencies when they were writing in English.

Lay (1988), proposed that L1 use could help the thinking procedure and writing in L2. For the same reason, he suggested that L2 learners with limited proficiency in English should with the use of their L1 produce ideas. Cumming (1989) in his case study of 23 Francophone students announced that the students switched a lot between English and French in a second language writing task in English. They said that by the use of their L1 they could search and obtain suitable words, relate cross-linguistic counterparts, at the same time commit linguistic choices in the L2. Also Krapels (1991: 49), regarding L2 writing

process announced that the use of L1 as "a fairly common strategy among L2 writers". Roca's study (1999: 25-27) on five intermediate Spanish EFL writers also showed that the students extensively used their L1 in the process of L2 composition. What the above mentioned L2 writers did was to "expand, elaborate, and rehearse ideas through their L1" and "produce the pretext in L1".

Ten Anglo-Canadian students in another research study who were taking an "intermediate Japanese" course showed the same results (Uzawa & Cumming, 1989). Eight of them used English in order to produce notions, search topics for their writings, develop concepts, and to organize their information when they were writing in Japanese.

There has been a lot of research in order to measure the amount of L1 the students use in L2 writing. More proficient second language learners usually do not seriously rely on their L1 in their writings, because they already possess enough amounts of L2 knowledge in order to be able to think and plan in the target language (Jones & Tetroe, 1987). On the other hand, those with lower proficiency in L2 are very much dependent on their L1 when writing (Arndt, 1987; Cumming, 1989; Raimes, 1985; Uzawa& Cumming, 1989). Also Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) during their research asked 48 Japanese university students to state how much Japanese language they used in their thoughts at direct writing in English. The result showed that 48% of students used 50-75% Japanese language, 27% of participants used 25-50% Japanese and 17% of students used 75% Japanese and only 8% said they used less than 25% of Japanese language. Furthermore, in Cohen and Brooks-Carson's study (2001) 80% percent of 25 intermediate language learners of French said they thought in their L1 (English) "often" or "always" when they were writing an essay in French. 10% of the Spanish-English bilingual students in above research also said that they

were thinking at least "some of the time" in English when they were writing a composition in French.

2.6.3. Strategies in L2 Writing

There have been varieties of writing strategies used in the L2 writing procedure. Second language learners with different level of proficiency usually use different kinds of strategies. Some of these strategies according to Zhang (2008) are often used: ***planning, translation, restructuring, and backtracking.***

- ***Planning***

Regarding ***planning***, writers with different levels of proficiency in the target language use this strategy differently. Akyel (1994) also did some investigation on English compositions which were written according to an English or Turkish discourse plan. In this study, 78% Turkish university students with different levels of proficiency (intermediate and advanced) wrote compositions about three topics: a Turkish culture, American/British culture, and more a general topic. The results obtained from the study showed that the language used for the planning the discourse structure did not affect quality of the plans of higher-proficiency students on the three topics, but it was influential on the plans of lower-proficiency students regarding the Turkish and American/British culture topics.

- ***Translation***

Translation is considered to be a strategy which is most often used by inexpert writers. Gosden (1996) provided data of an interview from a group of Japanese beginners, who were supposed to conduct an investigation into their L2 writing process. Data showed that

some of them wrote the whole paper in L1 and then translated it directly into the L2, by using a phrase-by-phrase translation approach.

Furthermore, Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) showed that Japanese college students' English essays through Japanese translation were considered to be better than those who wrote directly in English. By the use of translation students said that the development of ideas was easier, they could express their opinions more clearly, and could find their needed words more easily.

-Restructuring

This strategy is quite complex and is used for second language writing (Zhang 2008). It is considered to be an alternative syntactic plan when the writer guesses, antedates, or understands that the original plot is not appropriate for linguistic, ideational or precise explanations (Roca et al., 1999).

There are three categories of restructuring tactics. One is **ideational** (Alteration in meaning) which lets the writers express a more suitable idea when they see that the idea they want to express is not the idea that they had actually planned from the beginning. Ideational restructuring aims to convey the writers' modified scheme.

The second one is **textual restructuring** which can help writers to control their structure of written text beyond the clausal level and can be suitable for consistency/organization, literary apprehensions, register necessities, and arranging of data (Zhang, 2008).

The third one is **linguistic restructuring** which is a type of compensation due to absence of L2 linguistic assets or the uncertainty of interlanguage awareness. It is used in the case of

writers having verbal complications, morpho-syntactic misunderstandings, and marking connections between clauses.

- **Backtracking**

Backtracking is the action the writer takes to stock of unsatisfactory expression and to reveal more appropriate form (Manchon, Roca & Murphy, 2000). Manchon, Roca & Murphy announced that backtracking by the use of the L1 and backtracking through L2 were dissimilar arrangements. It means that L2 backtracking is the revising of the quick, revising of the records, and revising of the already inscribed writing, but L1 backtracking is direct translation, translation composed with exclusions besides rephrasing. Direct translation was supposed to be the form of L1 backtracking that was mostly used by writers. Writers in fact showed that they reread their texts very differently. Backtracking was used by writers mostly in narrative tasks in L2, rather than in argumentative discourse (Manchon, Roca & Murphy, 2000).

2.6.4. Previous studies on use of translation in writing (direct and indirect compositions)

This research seeks to adapt and follow the previous research in regard to the use of translation in writing. Hence, it was essential for the present researcher to review the methodology and findings of previous researchers in the area of L1 − L2 translation and L1 use in teaching.

Considering the modalities of communicative competence, writing in a second language is of course a difficult activity. The first serious research in L1 use and its effect on L2 writing started with Lay (1982). She noticed that her Chinese participants in the writing test liked to use their native language when they were writing about a topic which had already been

studied in their first language. In fact she stated that these students used their Chinese language when they tried to find some key words.

Many other studies inspired by Lay tried to discover when and how L1 was utilized by participants at different levels of proficiency in L2 writing (Cumming, 1989; Uzawa & Cumming, 1989; Guo& Liu, 1997; Wang & Cumming, 1989; Guo & Liu, 1997; Wang & Wen, 2002).

Several investigations (Zhai, 2008; Cumming, 1989; Uzawa, 1996; Kobayashi &Rinner, 1992 Cohen & Brooks-Carson, 2001 found translation to be very useful. Cumming (1989) also reported that French beginners used their mother tongue to create content, and expert writers on the other hand, use translation not to produce content but to confirm the suitable choice of words.

Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) studied writings of Japanese college students and found out that their writing was of higher quality when written first in Japanese and then translated to English. In fact, they noticed that translated writings of these people were much better than that of their peers who wrote directly in English. During interviews and questionnaires these students confirmed that their ideas were easier to develop and they could express their thoughts and ideas much easier and more clearly in the L1. The usage of a dictionary was also very useful for them in order to find the proper words for their writing.

Cohen and Brooks-Carson (2001) examined 39 students' writing. They were intermediate learners of French. The students were asked to write two essays one directly in French and the other one first in their first language and then translated to French. The result showed that two thirds of them wrote better directly in French and the remaining one third's translation writing task was better. So, the researchers believed that direct writing in French

is probably the most effective choice for students when they are under time pressure. The researchers also got to the point that regarding quality of content, organization, and style, writers of lower level fluency benefited from translation, while higher-level writers did not benefit much. Totally, it was noticed that syntactic complexity in translated essays was greater than in direct writings. Considering error frequency, students at higher level of proficiency made more errors regarding intended meaning in translation than in direct writing, but there was not any difference seen for students at lower level of proficiency.

In Uzawa's (1996) study, which compared second language learners direct composition writing with the ones translated from first language to the target language, it was evident that students of lower proficiency benefited from the translation task more than those of higher proficiency. They tried hard to use words and expressions that were beyond their levels when they translated.

Only a few research studies among all direct writing tasks have reported the effects of translation of a composition in first language which was then re-written in the L2 (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992; Cohen & Brooks-Carson, 2001). However, there is some evidence showing that translation of native language can have a positive result for some of students in their L2 writing production.

In order to summarize the above research and investigations' findings about the use of all different instruments for promotion of language learning, it should be considered that every instrument can be beneficial only for certain language learners in certain circumstances and levels of knowledge of English . In fact, there are several instruments and strategies which can help second language learners to promote their L2 learning, especially their writings. These include translation, restructuring, backtracking, planning but the most important obligation of instructors and learners is to choose the strategies

which can be helpful and most appropriate. Studying the above literature can be extremely beneficial for ESL instructors to help their students' to improve their second language writing.

2.7. Literature related to assessment of ESL Writing

The most important section of this research was the analysis and comparison of participants' direct and translated writing. In order to evaluate students' L2 writing, it was necessary to review the existing literature on the assessment of L2 writing.

A very challenging part of language testing is assessment of the ESL writings. By direct writing evaluation, it is possible to measure a students' skill to express their ideas in a variety of writing formats. In this regard, the participants' should be concerned about the content, organization of the ideas, and finally applying suitable vocabulary, grammatical structures and syntax. Direct writing evaluation includes all fundamentals of writing.

The design of a suitable writing evaluation, according to Hyland (2003), includes four fundamental essentials: rubric, prompt, liable reaction, and post-task assessment.

- **Rubric** refers to the directions for generating the writing task. The one who writes the test should decide about the materials which should be covered in the rubric. Rubric normally includes information like the format of the task, the allocated time for the writing, and detailed information about how the writing is supposed to be evaluated. It can be about the size of information to be included in the rubric, the number of words participants are supposed to write, and general weighting (Davidson & Lloyd, 2005).

- **Writing prompt.** According to Hyland (2003: 221), the prompt is "the stimulus the student must respond to". Kroll and Reid (1994: 233) on the other hand, identify three main prompt writing evaluations. One is **base prompts** which outline the entire job in direct and very simple terms. *The other one* is *f*ramed **prompts** which provide the essays with a condition that provides a frame for the understanding of the task. Finally **Text based prompts** provide the writers with a certain text to use as a guide in their writings.

- **Liable reaction.** It is teacher's expectation from students in the writing task. Prior to the start of writing an essay, teachers should give a clear picture to the students of the type of reaction they expect the assessment task to produce.

- **Post task evaluation.** At this stage the writing test's effectiveness should be evaluated. Hyland (2003), believes that suitable writing tasks should provide suitable answers to the subsequent questions:

  • Did the prompt properly distinguish differences among my students?

  • Was the reading and evaluation of the essays easy?

  • Could the students write in the best possible way to show all their knowledge?

2.7.1. Assessing ESL Writing-

The writing evaluation could be personalized, holistic and developmental as well as being cautiously quantified and cumulative. The assessment can be either through **student-teacher conferences**, **self-assessment**, **peer assessment**, and **portfolio assessment**.

Since the assessment of participants' direct and indirect writings we used Portfolio assessment, it is necessary to give a precise description of this type of assessment as follows:

- **Portfolio assessment.** By portfolio assessment in writing, it is meant to gather students' writing over time and purposefully, in order to show the procedure of writing stages in a text and consequently the stages of the growth of the writer.

Famous testers such as Paulson, Paulson and Meyer (1991) have provided lists of features that illustrate good portfolios in four vital areas such as:

    1) Assortment of portfolio contents

    2) The guiding principle for assortment

    3) The criterion for evaluation merit and

    4) Proof of student reflection

In this regard it is believed that, without reflection, the portfolio remains

 "a folder of all my papers " (Santos, 1997 : 10).

2.7.2. Formal and Summative Assessment Marking Procedure

Accessibility of resources, amount of time considered for the writings, and the number of teachers and the structure of supervision of the institution are the most vital points to be considered. ESL literature on testing and evaluation includes two diverse sorts of writing scales to evaluate participants' proficiency in writing: **holistic** and **analytic.**

(i)Holistic Marking Scales. Holistic marking is done on the basis of the impression of the marker about the essay as a whole. It is Impressionistic, a global and integrative marking. It is a very quick type of scoring and is considered to be reliable if 3 to 4 testers assess every writing. ESL educators have attested its reliability if carried out with no shortage of time and enough training of the testers. The marking in this case is faster and enables scoring large number of writings in a short period of time. An important advantage of holistic scoring is that it emphasizes the writer's strengths (Cohen, 1994: 315).

Considering the disadvantages of holistic marking, one is that it can be unreliable if the marking procedure takes place within time constraints and with teachers who are not trained in this regard (Heaton, 1990). In addition, Cohen (1994) has cautioned that higher marks are normally awarded only to longer essays. Interpretation of a composite score is also very difficult in holistic marking process. The most important problem is that through holistic marking scale it is impossible to gain any diagnostic information about how the marks were given to the writers. That is why it is quite difficult for the testers to justify the marks they give for different writing tasks. Hence, Hamp-Lyons (1990) believes that holistic marking is very much limited and does not supply us with enough knowledge about a writer's ability to express their intended meaning in the required format.

(ii)Analytical Marking Scales. The type of marking scales used in this research for the assessment of participants' direct and translated writings was the analytical Marking Scale. Through this type of marking "raters offer separate evaluations for each of a number of aspects of performance" (Hamp-Lyons, 1991). Raters score certain aspects of a section of writing and allocate credits to quantifiable criteria. This type of marking scales is generally

more successfully used by inexpert teachers. Furthermore, these scales are more trustworthy for scales with a big point variety.

One of its advantages is that unlike holistic marking, these types of writing scales supply testers with a "profile" of the writers' strengths and weaknesses in regard to their writing tasks. At the same time, it is very trustworthy if carried out by inexperienced instructors who have had little training and have to mark the writings under time pressure (Heaton, 1990).

Beside its advantages experts mention some of its disadvantages. It is time consuming because raters must rate different aspects of a writers' writings. Also since raters consider certain aspects in an essay like **content**, **organization**, **grammar**, and **vocabulary**, therefore, the scores are normally lower in comparison with similar holistically-marked writing.

The most popular analytic writing scale is considered to be the ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs et al, 1981). In this scale five element skills, each concentrating on an essential feature of composition are scored based on their estimated significance: content (30 points), organization (20 points), vocabulary (20 points), language use transferred into mathematical ranges that match to four levels of ,"very poor", " fair to poor " ,"good to average" and "excellent to very good".

2.7.3. Evaluation of the sophistication of vocabulary in ESL Writing

Another important task in our study was to assess the sophistication of the vocabulary used in the translated writings of the participants. Assessment of lexical sophistication is to measure the extent to which a wide-ranging vocabulary is employed (Laufer and Nation,

1995). In fact the amount of lexical sophistication is calculated by the frequency of the words, because low frequency words are measured as more difficult ones and hence more sophisticated.

Although vocabulary is a vital factor in language and can determine writer's awareness in regard to the usage of languages (Schmitt, Schmitt, & Clapham, 2001), however, the time devoted to the instruction and testing of it has been very limited in comparison to other language skills. Although attention paid to it has not been sufficient, evaluation of vocabulary is as important as other skills. Those who are experts in regard to the development of vocabulary believe that vocabulary is essential in language. Therefore, they all confirm that in the process of second language learning, focus on strengthening the vocabulary is of prime importance at all stages. Folse (2003, 2004) and scholars (Lewis, 1993, 1997; Willis, 1990; Willis & Willis, 1989) believed that it is possible to continue with second language learning without the correct syntax or grammar, but when it comes to vocabulary it will be impossible. Furthermore, Folse (2003) believes that with no syntax, meaning is stalled; but with a lack of vocabulary meaning is restricted.

Chastain (1988) believed that being short of the required vocabulary is the most widespread reason of learners' failure to express themselves when communicating with others. Moreover, a rich vocabulary according to Heaton (1990), supplies the learner with a proper capability in reading.

Assessment of lexical richness has been the focus of several research studies for instance, Laufer and Nation, 1995; Vermeer, 2000; Daller et al., 2003; Kormos and Denes, 2004.

(i)Lexical Richness

Read (2000: 197-213), points to the major merits for measuring lexical **density**, **lexical variation**, and **lexical sophistication.**

Lexical density is defined to be the amount of content words in any text. It is important for all ESL writers to be aware of the different writing genres and the lexical items and lexical bundles that each genre requires.

(ii)Lexical variation

It has conventionally been considered as the type-token ratio (TTR), which means the amount of diverse words employed in any text. It enables us to calculate the "range of vocabulary".

(iii)Lexical sophistication

It is the proportion of low-frequency, or "odd", words employed in a text. Laufer and Nation's (1995) explain them to be the number of words in a text that are not considered among the most common 2000 in the language. Meara and Bell (2001), accordingly, produced their own reliable assessment of lexical sophistication in short texts. The measurement is done by dividing the text into 10-word clusters and clarifying the quantity of low-frequency words in each cluster. Very recently, the association of lexical opulence to second language learners' speaking skill has been investigated by Lu (2011). This study was aimed at assessing lexical wealth besides lexical density, sophistication, and variation, with the usage of 25 diverse metrics in the language acquisition. The result of his investigation in regard to manual transcription of a spoken quantity of ESL learners showed that 1) lexical variation or the amount of word types was in high correlation with the testers' measurement of the quality of ESL learners' speaking narratives, 2) effect of the lexical sophistication was very small and 3) lexical mass or indication of amount of lexical words was not related to the quality.

2.7.4. Tools for Assessing ESL writings

According to Batai Laufer and Paul Nation (1995), despite the fact that sophistication of vocabulary is in fact the number of 'advanced' lexical tokens employed in writing, but the label 'advanced' itself is highly depended on how the researcher defines it. The decision to qualify the certain vocabularies to be advanced or not depends primarily on the learners' level of proficiency. Therefore, the lexis in the lexical syllabus of each level should be considered as of prime importance. Also different countries with different educational objectives have various interpretations for 'advanced 'lexis.

Hence, there are considerable tools to help the language teacher in the evaluation of vocabulary. For the researchers including the researcher of this study the Tom Cobb's Compleat Lexical Tutor (www.lextutor.ca) was very valuable. The mentioned website contains three sections: Tutorial, Research, and Teachers. A helpful feature of the Tutorial section is the word lists. Many university instructors know about the academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000) or AWL , containing a list of 570 high-frequency words which emerge in academic texts and further on, The *Compleat Lexical Tutor section, specially vocabulary Profiler*, is the most useful tool for language testers.

2.7.5. Writing Vocabulary Evaluation

The majority of large-scale high-stakes tests evaluate the quality of the vocabulary in the writings of the students. Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughey (1981: 30), in one of the widest analytical scales for writing evaluation pointed out to five scales in ESL Composition Profile. In this well-known instrument, the five scales are: content, organization, language use or grammar, vocabulary and mechanics and rated as follows:

"20-18 EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range; effective word / idiom choice and usage; word form mastery; appropriate register.

17-14 GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range; occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured.

13-10 FAIR TO POOR: limited range; frequent errors or word/idiom form, choice, usage; meaning confused or obscured.

9-7 VERY POOR: essentially translation; little knowledge of English

Vocabulary, idioms, words forms OR not enough to evaluate".

To summarize the literature review and identify the gaps in the literature which provide the justification for this study, should consider that:

- The previous researches were mostly used on participants of the same mother tongue with basic or advanced fluency in the target language. In this study our participants belong to various Russian speaking countries with different mother tongues. Due to the fact that all these different countries have been under the rule of Russia, they consider Russian language as their first language beside their mother tongue and communicate with each other in Russian language.

  They can all speak, write and communicate in Russian language, but with different levels of proficiencies, due to the political, social, geographical and economical individualities of their countries.

- The literature review shows that all previous researches were based on participants writing tasks who belonged to either basic or advanced level of proficiencies, while in this research the participants are on either advanced or pre advanced levels of English proficiency.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Considering the already mentioned background and motivation by previous investigations, this study tried to examine the benefits to be gained when translation is purposefully used in writing by international college students who try to learn English as a second or foreign language.

This research intends to investigate the quality of students' writing with and without the use of translation by comparing and analyzing their written output linguistically. By a way of triangulation, it is intended to find out about the present participants' and their teachers' perceptions regarding the use of translation and the L1 and the way they use this tool in their learning activities, particularly in writing**.**

3.1. Data type and research design

The present research is an empirical study using the qualitative data and interpretative analysis. The participants' direct and translated compositions are analysed qualitatively during this research. An in depth qualitative interview will be used to investigate students' beliefs on translation.

The reason to choose this methodology was because through a qualitative methodology, researcher can attain more appropriate and reliable meanings from the participants' beliefs. In fact it can provide deep, thoughtful answers to the 'how' and 'why' research questions. For the very reason, similarly some scholars in linguistics (Wolfersberger, 2003;

Albrechtsen,1977) have chosen qualitative methodologies for their researches on second language learners' writing strategies .

Previous studies in the same field have used two topics for the writing experiment. The participants were usually asked first to write about one topic directly in the second language and then to write it again with the help of translation (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992; Cohen & Brooks- Carson, 2001). This research was also done in the same manner. However, in this study, the participants were made up of international college students who were given two topics and they were asked to choose one that was more interesting. They were asked first to write a direct composition about the topic and then to write another composition about the same topic in their L1 and this time by the use of a dictionary to translate it into English. An in depth oral interview was conducted to obtain participants' beliefs related to the use of translation from Russian in their English classes.

3.2. Participants

Twenty five Russian speaking international students of pre advanced and advanced level in English from Westminster College in Malaysia were participants in this research. These students were chosen due to the fact that Russian students form the majority of international students in Westminster College. In terms of language proficiency they all belonged to the pre advanced and advanced levels, hence some of them were more fluent than the others. Some of them held different scores of international English examinations such as TOEFL and IELTS.

In previous similar studies, the participants' knowledge of the target language was either very low or very high, and the findings showed that participants of lower level proficiency

in the target language benefited more from indirect writing as they could produce better writing when they used their L1. However, in this study, the objective was to find out how the use of translation and the use of the L1, Russian,   could help students of almost the same high level of proficiency in their L2 writing. The other difference between current participants and previous participants in similar investigations was that in previous investigations participants' level of proficiency in their L1 was the same, but in the current study the participants had different mother tongues and their proficiency in Russian language was not the same, some were more fluent than the others. These students belonged to the countries where Russian language was either their mother tongue or the official, educational language. There were eighteen students over the age of twenty and seventeen students under the age of twenty.

As already mentioned above, an important point in this research was that Russian was the first language of the Russian students but for some of the participants, they had only studied and spoken Russian (besides their mother tongue) as a subject in their school syllabus for longer periods as the others. As the matter of fact, students from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan had studied Russian from primary school as one of their school subjects. However, for other nationalities like Uzbeks, they had a lower knowledge of Russian language, but they still recognized it as their main official language and medium of instruction, besides their mother tongue.

The participants were pre advanced and advanced ESL learners aiming to improve their knowledge of the English language in order to be able to further their studies and to obtain a bachelor degree in Business Administration from the same college.

They were first asked to write a composition directly in English that is without the use of translation. Then they were asked to repeat the same task but this time first, they were

asked to write the composition in Russian and then to translate it into English with the help of a Russian- English dictionary. For an in depth study and for the purpose of triangulation, it was decided to do an oral interview with the students to find out about their beliefs and ideas in this regard.

3.3. Instruments for data collection

3.3.1. Pilot study

Preceding the real study, a pilot study was done with five students. The purpose of the pilot study was to make sure that all the instruments to be used for the data collection such as questionnaires and other tasks were designed correctly and were user friendly. The other reason was to find out about the deficiencies of our research and its instruments before conducting the real research. During the pilot study five students' writing was examined: 3 male and 2 female students participated in the pilot study. They were from Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. They were also asked to answer all the questionnaires about their beliefs, the use of Russian language and translation in the classroom as well as their strategies used for the writing of direct and indirect compositions.

During the pilot study it was noticed that some changes in the questionnaire were necessary, for example, as there was not enough space for students' to write about their opinions more space was left for their answers. Hence, change in the questionnaire made them to be more user friendly for the participants. It was also noticed that the time allocated for the direct writing (45 min.) was quite enough but for indirect writing (translated writing) it was not sufficient. Therefore, for the final study 60 minutes were allocated for indirect writing.

3.3.2. Topics for compositions

There were two topics provided for students' compositions. They were asked to choose the more interesting topic and to write about it. A few factors were considered for the selection of topics such as participants' experience of the topics and also a neutral stance towards the topics.

Before using the topics, the researcher had a conversation with the instructors of the students to ensure that the present topics had never been used in previous writing exercises in the classroom. Furthermore, in order to reduce cultural pressure on the writing of the students, the topics provided for the compositions were neutral in culture. The titles for topics were:

- There are students who decide to study in other countries than their home countries. Why do they decide to do so? What do you think are the reasons for it? Please explain your answer in detail.

- Is there any custom in your country which you think is beneficial for people from other places to adopt? Please explain your ideas by the use of examples.

All participating students found the first topic more interesting and wrote about it.(Appendix A).

3.3.3. Instructions for writing the compositions

Instructional guidelines were provided to the students to make sure that they were completely aware of what they were expected to do during the study. Their first writing was directly in English. They were instructed to write an essay of 150 words directly in English while thinking directly in English in 45 minutes. Then they wrote about the same topic in Russian and rewrote it in English with the help of a dictionary. Their translated writing was also supposed to be 150 words and it had to be done in 60 minutes.

Unlike Zhai Lifang's (2008) study, where students faced a shortage of time for translation writing (only 40 minutes) in this study the allocated time for translated writing was 60 minutes ,similar to Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992), which seemed to be enough. (Appendix B).

3.3.4.   Open Ended questionnaire on Students' direct writing in English as well as the use of translation.

There were 10 open ended questions for the students to answer about the way they wrote their direct composition in English without the use of a dictionary.

Students were also asked to answer another 10 open ended questions about how they used translation for indirect writing in English with the use of dictionary. (Appendix D).

3.3.5.   Oral Interview on Students' beliefs about the use of translation in second language learning:

 Five very successful students and five weaker students were selected for an oral interview according to their previous scores provided by the teachers and the results of their two types of writings. The interviews were recorded. The interview was in fact an additional

source of information for the purpose of triangulation, to know about students' beliefs and opinions about the use of translation and L1 in ESL classrooms. (Appendix G).

3.3.6. Questionnaire about teachers' beliefs on the use of students' L1 and translation in ESL classrooms

The teachers of the above International Students participating in the study were asked to answer seven questions about their beliefs on students' use of Russian language and translation when studying in English classrooms. The questionnaire was prepared for the purpose of triangulation to obtain a deep and diverse data about the subject of research. The teachers were also asked to answer the questions by choosing one of the five levels: strongly agree, agree, not sure, strongly disagree and disagree based on a Likert Scale. (Appendix H).

3.4. Data collection procedure

3.4.1. Prior meeting

Two weeks prior to data collection, I had a meeting with the principal of the college at a prearranged time. After a detailed introduction of the research topic, its objectives and content as well as myself as the researcher, and having submitted the letter issued by the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics of University of Malaya for their permission to allow me to have access to the participants to my study, I was able to arrange the data collection date with the principal.

I asked the principal to allow two Russian-English translators to assist me in this study. One of the Russian translators was on the final stages to obtain her MBA in the same college. She is very fluent in English language. This translator had received her BA degree in Russian language in Kirgizstan so, her knowledge of Russian language was very high as well. She is currently employed as an English teacher in an English institute in Malaysia.

The other translator was originally from Tajikistan. He also obtained his BA in his country in Russian language and his MBA degree in English from the same college as the other translator. After obtaining his MBA he has been employed as a Russian-English translator for a Russian company working in Malaysia.

My meeting with the participants was before the start of the experiment in order to inform them about the objectives of the research and our expectations from them. They were also informed about the duration of the experiment.

For ethical reasons, a letter of consent (Appendix F) was designed and later on was signed by all participants individually before the start of the research. Through this letter, the participants confirmed that their questions had been clearly answered about their participation in the research and the nature of the study. They also confirmed that their participation was voluntarily and that they could withdraw at any time they wanted during the study, and finally their anonymity would be well preserved. Also their data and activities in this research would be confidential and be used only for the present research.

They were told how to answer the questions about their background and two other questionnaires regarding their beliefs and opinions about it. I made sure that all participants were completely aware of all details by asking the Russian-English translators to explain the instructions in Russian to those who still had problems with it. After that, I gave them a

five minute break to prepare their dictionaries and writing utilities and then start with their direct writing in English.

3.4.2. Writing of the two compositions

The writing was conducted on August 5th 2012 at 2.00 pm. The students were told to bring their dictionaries with them for translation. This researcher tried to avoid the same errors about timing, as previous researchers such as Zhai Lifang (2008) did. Unlike the study of Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992), where the participants did much better in translated writing with more refined vocabulary, in Zhai Lifang's research the score of students' indirect writing was much inferior in comparison with their direct writing. Zhai Lifang at the end revealed that it was due to the lack of time (Kobayashi &Rinnert allocated one hour for each writing but Zhai Lifang allocated only 40 minutes for writing a Chinese version and then translated it into English).

The other reason for students' lower quality of translated writings was due to the fact that Zhai Lifang did not allow the participants to use a dictionary for their translated writing, therefore, the participants of her study had the problem of searching suitable synonyms in the second language due to the pressure of time shortage, even in some cases they had to omit their nice words in Chinese in order to be able to finalize their writing task in the target language. For the aforementioned reasons, the participants in this study were given both enough time and also were allowed to use their dictionaries.

They were well aware of how the test would be conducted. The interview about students' opinions and belief's regarding the exam and use of mother tongue in the classrooms was

collected after the writing tasks. They were given the two following topics to write about in almost 150 words:

- There are students who decide to study in other countries than their home countries. Why do they decide to do so? What do you think are the reasons for it? Please explain your answer in detail.

- Is there any custom in your country which you think is beneficial for people from other places to adopt? Please explain your ideas by the use of examples.

All participants chose the first topic. They first started answering the questionnaire about their background, then continued with their direct writing in English, where they were already told to try not to think in Russian and just to think and write in English without the use of a dictionary. Those who finished with their direct writings handed in their writing after 45 minutes. We asked them to go out for a five minute break. After the break they entered the classroom and started writing about the same topic, but this time in the Russian Language. Immediately after finishing the Russian version they were asked to translate their writing into English with the help of a Russian-English or English-Russian Dictionary in one hour. Some of them were carrying with them their Russian-English/English-Russian dictionaries and some others were using their mobile phone dictionaries. During their writing the researcher and the two Russian-English translators who were assisting the researcher during this research tried to walk around the class and answer their questions or problems with the instructions.

When the participants gave us their translated writings, we asked them to answer the questionnaire about the students' beliefs on the use of translation and Russian language in

the ESL classrooms. Two weeks after the writing task, after we have done the preliminary analysis of all the fifty writings and identification of students who have benefited the most and the least from the translation, again we contacted the principal and asked to meet these 10 students on August 20th, 2012 (5 students who benefited the most from the translated writing and 5 students who did not take much advantage of it) for an oral interview which was recorded and later on transcribed. On the same day we asked the two instructors of the above students to fill in the questionnaires about Teachers' beliefs on the use of translation in ESL classrooms.

3.5. Data treatment

The compositions were compared and analyzed by the researcher and then revised/checked by 2 Russian-English translators. The two professional Russian- English translators who were very proficient both in Russian and English were assisting the researcher for the analysis of the two different types of participants' writing. They were asked to read both translations of the participants as well as their Russian writing and let the researcher know first about their proficiency in Russian, the quality of the participants' writings in regard to the translation mode which might cause word by word translation and the influence of Russian language structure on the English writings of the participants. In fact they were asked to clarify if there has been any negative transfer from the dominant language on the final translated writing.

Descriptive language analysis was done on the two types of writing (one direct composition in English and one with the help of translation and dictionary). The 50 compositions of the international students (25 direct compositions and 25 translated compositions) were

analyzed following Zhai Lifang (2008) and Cohen (2002) rubric and adapted and revised by the researcher in the present study. The analysis is based on these three components: Content, Organization and Style.

- **Content**: Details of content and development of the ideas to be measured. It means if supporting ideas seem to be relevant and contribute to the whole and if there is any connection between ideas and the topic.

- **Organization**: How the logics and ideas are clearly stated in a logical sequence.

- **Style**: How students made effective use of vocabulary and sentence patterns, showing variety and range in their written work.

The 50 compositions were analyzed for the 6 analytical subcomponents as following:

- Content of direct compositions.
- Content of translated compositions.
- Organization of direct compositions.
- Organization of translated compositions.
- Style of direct compositions.
- Style of translated compositions.

The two Russian-English translators helping the researcher also went through the Russian writing of the participants, to find out about their fluency in their Russian as well as to answer the following questions regarding the participants' translated writing:

- There is not any negative transfer from the dominant language

- There is a slight negative transfer

- There is moderate negative transfer

- There is extensive negative transfer

- There is very extensive negative transfer

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Presentation of Participants' personal information

Students were asked to write about their personal background such as gender, age, nationality, and mother tongue, their level of proficiency both in Russian and English and the strategies they normally use for their writing in English. The objective eliciting data about the students' background was to find out about any factors influencing their advancement in L2 writing with the help of translation.

In terms of age, there were eighteen students over the age of twenty and seventeen students under the age of twenty. Age was considered of prime importance in this research as it indicated the number of years a participant had been immersed in English or in Russian. There were fourteen female and eleven male students. Considering their nationalities, there were seven of them from Kazakhstan, eight students from Turkmenistan, five from Uzbekistan, two Russian students, two from Kyrgyzstan and one Tatar student. Considering their knowledge of any other languages beside Russian and English some of them mentioned Georgian and German.

With regard to the number of the years they had studied and spoken Russian , among the eight Turkmen students, four of them studied and spoke Russian from very early childhood, two of them said they studied Russian for twelve years, one said he studied Russian for ten years and one said he studied Russian for fourteen years. Among the five Uzbekistani students two of them said they studied Russian for four years and three of them studied

Russian for twelve years. Of the seven Kazakhstani students, three of them said they had studied Russian language since childhood, and the four others studied and spoke Russian for 12-13 years. The two Russian students said they studied and spoke Russian their whole life, and the two Kyrgyzstani students said they studied and spoke Russian since childhood. The only Tatar student also said he studied and spoke Russian for 12 years.

The data reveals that the Turkmen, Kazakhstani and Kirgiz students had the highest knowledge of Russian. Therefore, the Uzbek students' knowledge of Russian was the lowest in comparison with all the other Russian speaking students in our research. However, when they were asked to rate their own knowledge of Russian, twelve of them said they could speak excellent and native like Russian. Seven participants said they spoke Russian very well and six participants considered their Russian language as good.

Answering the question about their knowledge of English language as a second or foreign language, six participants said they studied English for 8-10 years and nineteen participants said they studied English for 3-6 years. Considering their latest TOEFL/IELTS score one Uzbek male student aged 21said he held an IELTS score of 6.5, one Kyrgyz aged 21 male student said he held a TOEFL score of 500, one Turkmen male student aged 21 said he held a TOEFL score of 583, one 24 year old female Kazak student held an IELTS score of 6.00 and finally one Tatar aged 21 male student said he held an IELTS score of 6.00. Hence, according to the college's placement examination the above participants were classified as both pre advanced and advanced levels.

Finally, they were asked about the strategies they usually used to write a composition. Eleven students said they used English for the whole composition. Four students said they wrote first in Russian and then translated it into English. Nine students said they wrote in

English mixed with Russian, but Russian was preferred if they did not have an English model in mind.

The available data from the questionnaire indicates that Russian, Kazakhstani and Turkmen participants had better knowledge of Russian. According to the explanations of the participants themselves as well as the two assisting Russian-English translators, they either studied Russian during almost their whole educational stages, or it was already their mother tongue. Furthermore, those over 20 years of age held higher scores in International English Language Examinations such as IELTS and TOEFL. Although, there were more female participants (14) than male (11), the number of male participants (4) who held higher scores in IELTS and TOEFL was more than the female participant (1).

Those who were over 20 years of age had better knowledge of Russian language because of being more immersed in Russian environment as well as English. Therefore they benefited a lot from translation in their writing.

The advanced participants (12) who were the most fluent ones in English due to longer years of studying English language and holding high international English examination scores, produced writing of a higher quality, and their writing showed fewer grammatical and structural errors. They mentioned that they always wrote their whole compositions in English. Nine students of lower proficiency in English said they always used English mixed with Russian, but Russian was preferred if they did not have an English model in mind. Four other students were again among those who used translation into English. These four students were mostly 16 to 18 years old. They were the least proficient ones in both Russian and English languages in comparison with the rest of the participants, due to their younger age.

The table which summarized the data presented in this section can be consulted in Appendix C .

4.2. Analysis of the 2 compositions

4.2.1. Analysis of the direct and indirect compositions

Analysis of the Direct and Translated compositions was adapted from Zhai Lifang (2008) and Cohen (2002) studies and revised for the present study (Appendix I).

Participants' **Content** of writings were analyzed and compared according to the following descriptive: **1. Details are relevant; 2. Details are irrelevant; 3. Ideas are clearly connected to the topic**; 4**. Ideas are not clearly connected to the topic.**

Then, **Organization** of both the direct and translated writings were analyzed and compared in order to find out if : **1. Ideas and details are logically expressed and sequential;2. Ideas and details are not logically expressed and not sequential; 3. Ideas are clearly expressed; 4. Ideas are expressed unclearly.**

Under the heading of **Style**, we tried to see if in both writing: **1. Vocabulary is sophisticated, effective and appropriate; 2. Vocabulary is not sophisticated, effective and appropriate; 3. There are variety of sentence beginnings, subordinate clauses, discourse markers, and phrases used in the composition; 4. There are no variety of sentence beginnings, subordinate clauses, discourse markers, and phrases used in the composition.**

Considering the **freedom of the writing from translation effect,** we investigated if:**1. There is no any negative transfer from the dominant language; 2. There is a slight**

negative transfer; 3. There is moderate negative transfer; 4. There is extensive negative transfer; 5. There is very extensive negative transfer.

4.2.2. *Composition 1 (Direct Writing):*

4.2.2.1. Content –

Considering the content of direct writings, the objective was to find out about the details of content and the development of the ideas to be measured. It was also necessary to establish connection between ideas and the topic.

Since the participants in our research were of pre advanced and advanced levels of English language and the topic was very familiar to them, it was observed that their ideas were very relevant and were completely connected to the topic. Following are some samples of direct writings with regard to their content:

Student No.3

 Introduction: **"**Many students from different countries choose to attend educational institutes in other countries rather than in their home country. This is becoming more popular now because more and more reasons and opportunities attract young people to other countries."

Body: "If we take our country (Turkmenistan) as an example, it is clear that students want to do their studies in Russian or English language, which are more available abroad than inside the country. It is not just learning a new language and practicing it but living with it. All that gives new opportunities for them to make connections with useful people to open new jobs that they can apply to and be more likely to be accepted."

Conclusion: "There are many reasons influencing students nowadays to study abroad but these ones seem to be the most popular ones".

Student No.1

Introduction: "At present time, education plays a significant role in most people's lives. From year to year it becomes more difficult to find jobs to be well paid, without having high education".

Body: "Today, the problem for most students is to get good education in their home country universities or colleges".

Conclusion: "In my case, I am a foreign student who desires to return back home after graduation from university and use his knowledge and experiences that have gained abroad for the prosperity of his country".

Student No. 18

Introduction: "Nowadays, more and more students study in other countries than their own countries. Now we have a lot of chances to study abroad ".

Body: "In universities abroad there are different kinds of programs that most of students don't want lose this chance ".

Conclusion: "In foreign countries you do not speak your native language and you have to speak other language, so it will make your other languages better and that is why most of students want to study abroad ".

The first two students (No. 3 and 1), were among the students who were quite fluent both in their Russian and English languages. On the other hand, student No. 18 had a lower

proficiency level in comparison with two others both in her Russian and English. Hence, the relevance of their ideas and their connection to the topic of the composition which was "Studying Abroad" is clearly evident. As mentioned previously, by the analysis of the content of direct writings of the students it was possible to make sure that their ideas and comments were related to the topic and in good connection.

4.2.2.2. Organization

In terms of the organization of the writings we tried to investigate whether the logics and points were clearly stated or not in a logical sequence. Again by comparing above mentioned three compositions which belong to two advanced and a pre advanced student, we can easily see how they have initiated their compositions by introducing the topic at the beginning of their writing, then they have all given more explanations to clarify the subject by more examples in the body of the composition and finally how they have concluded their writings by generalizing it.

4.2.2.3. Style

Variety and range of vocabulary and sentence patterns constitute style in the present context. The analyses of the style of students' direct and indirect writing and their differences have been explained in detail and can be consulted further on.

4.2.3. Composition 2 (Indirect Writing)

As already mentioned, unlike the participants in previous research projects, these students all belonged to the pre advanced and advanced levels of English proficiency, and therefore,

in their direct writings and indirect writings there was not any considerable difference observed in terms of content and organization. Their translated writings were also good both in content and organization. For the purpose of greater clarification the translated writing of the same three above students whose direct writings were investigated in terms of content and organization, will be further analyzed in terms of content and organization as follows:

4.2.3.1. Content

Student No. 3

Introduction: "Nowadays, more and more students from different countries travel abroad for their studies. It is becoming more popular and the reason for that is a situation in their life or new opportunities which attract them to travel to another country."

Body: "New places, new friends, new experiences are other reasons influencing them. We see many international students studying in one place and this is another chance to get to know them better and build useful connections."

Conclusion: "As the conclusion it is needed to say that wherever you go and whenever you study, you should not forget where you come from!"

Student No. 1

Introduction: "In modern world, education abroad is becoming more and more popular within high-school youth. This tendency can be explained by lots of reasons."

Body: "In addition to the economic and social factors which influence the decision to go and study abroad, there is a psychological one as well."

Conclusion: "In conclusion, I would like to mention that the most significant advantage of education abroad – wider specter of opportunities to actualize the potential of the personality, partially because of education in foreign country helps millions of people to find their own wishes in the society."

Student No.18

Introduction: "Nowadays, everything is in development as well as students. Students choose studying abroad because they can learn different kinds of languages."

Body: **"**Learning new languages helps the students in different situations. They won't reach to this improvement of language learning in their countries."

Conclusion: "Finally there are two good reasons for studying abroad. One to learn a new language and second reason is that parents who let their children live in other countries help them develop new experience. If they won't live abroad they can't improve their independence."

Again it was observed that all students at pre advanced or advanced level demonstrated good content and organization in their translated writing. Their ideas were relevant to the topic and very well connected.

4.2.3.2. Organization – "The three elements of the compositions (Introduction, Body and Conclusion) were completely relevant and sequentially demonstrated all through the translated writing of above participants of different proficiency in English language. The only difference which can be observed is the difference in the Style of the writing of participant No. 18 (with lower proficiency in English) who benefited from translated

writing and it is obvious in her style of the writing, which will be discussed in detail in the following section of the study.

4.2.4. Differences between Composition 1 and Composition 2

Considering the advanced students' writings there was not any noticeable amount of change in their two versions. Their two types of writings seemed similar and in some cases their direct writings were even longer and with better structure and vocabulary.

Among participants of the pre advanced level (68%), there were eight of them who are between 16 and 21 years old, from Uzbekistan (3), Kyrgyzstan (1), Kazakhstan (16) and Turkmenistan (3) who were not even very fluent in their Russian language due to being too young or not having been immersed in the Russian language as much as the other participants, due to the education policies in their countries. These participants benefited the most from translation, and according to their own comments in the written questionnaires and oral interviews, the translation even helped them in improving their Russian language. Some participants even said that sometimes they did not even understand the content of a question in their school assignments, which by the use of a dictionary they could easily do the assignments and produce and organize ideas both in Russian and English and clearly express them. Therefore, the use of translation and a dictionary (English Russian) somehow, helped them to improve their Russian as well especially in terms of spelling of the Russian words and the different types of antonyms or synonyms.

Regarding the analysis of participants' three writing tasks, it should be mentioned that unlike the participants in previous studies, these students belonged to the Pre advanced and Advanced levels of English proficiency, and therefore in their direct writings when details

of content and development of ideas as already mentioned were measured, it was found that the supporting ideas were relevant and contributed to the whole and there was connection between the ideas and topics. Considering the content and organization of their writing as discussed above, the same thing was evident, even in their direct writing. The arguments and points were clearly stated in a logical sequence.

However, when analyzing their writings to find out about any improvements in their style of writing, there was a considerable amount of change in their translated writings, as there we could find more variety of vocabulary and sentence types.   The students with lower knowledge of English took more advantage of translation and they used more sentence beginnings, subordinate clauses and discourse markers and complex phrases in their translated writings.

4.2.4.1. Evidence of increase in the use of subordinate or dependent clause in translated writing

In total, there were 17 participants of lower proficiency in English out of 25 participants who made up 68% of the total population of the participants. Out of these 17 students of lower proficiency, 15 participants or 60% of the students took advantage of translation in their translated writings. Our assumption about the two other low proficiency students who did not take much benefit from translated writing was the stress from time limitation did not let them concentrate on their task properly. That is the very reason for our suggestion for future research in order to make sure that the research be done at home by the participants to avoid any doubt about the factor of time stress.

Considering the use of subordinate or dependent clauses, they were only used by 4 participants (16%) who were among more fluent students in English. Below are some of the examples:

Student No. 1

"In *addition to the number of economic and social factors which influence the decision to go to study abroad*, there is a psychological reason too."

Student No.3

"To *change their usual life style*, they try to study abroad and have high standard education."

Student No. 4

"In *order to learn a new language and obtain better opportunities for work*, students decide to study abroad."

Student No. 17

 "Students also learn how to live independently, *while studying abroad"*.

4.2.4.2. Evidence of increase in the use of whole sentence modifiers in translated writing

Among fifteen students (60%) who benefited from translation, twelve students (80%) used more whole sentence modifiers such as "Unfortunately, Finally, To start, Actually, Also". It could be concluded that   thinking in Russian gave them the opportunity to connect their sentences more differently than in their direct writing.

Student No. 14

Direct: "In some countries, there are not enough colleges and universities, so the students have to go abroad to study for higher and better education."

Indirect: *"Unfortunately,* some countries can't provide good education to their students, so they have to go abroad to get higher and better education."

Student No. 11

Direct: "*Studying* abroad can sometimes have good and bad results."

Indirect: *"Finally*, we can see that studying abroad can have both good and bad results for some students."

4.2.4.3. Evidence of increase in the use of discourse markers in the translated writings

Further on, ten participants (66%) out of fifteen used more discourse markers such as "On the other hand, Regarding, However, Nevertheless, Moreover, Therefore, In addition, As a result". This increase in the use of discourse markers was both due to the use of a Russian-English dictionary in their writing and also the opportunity of freely thinking in their L1.

Student No. 17

Direct: "Students in my country have a lot of difficulty to learn English. When they go abroad they have to speak English and they learn it very soon."

Indirect: **"**Students in my country usually have difficulty to learn English very well. *However*, when they go abroad, then they have to speak English all the time and will learn it very soon."

The other point which was very much clear in the two writings of these students was the length of their writing. In translated writing they had more ideas to express than in their direct writings therefore, their translated writing were more detailed as well as number of increase inthe words.

A typical word count in a pre-advanced students' direct writing essay was 100 words, while the average word count in an indirect writing essay was 120 words.

4.2.4.4. Evidence of more sophisticated vocabulary in translated writings

Regarding sophistication of vocabulary, their effectiveness and appropriateness, the researcher considered the educational institutes' expectation and the vocabulary syllabus for pre advanced and advanced ESL students primarily.

It was noticed that students with excellent knowledge of Russian as well as L2 used the same type of vocabulary in both direct and indirect writings. Some of them even showed better results in their direct writings which according to their comments in different questionnaires were due to the time stress factor, but in reality they had enough time.

Subjects in the pre advanced level of English could with the use of dictionary write an essay with more detailed and more sophisticated vocabularies in their translated writings.

In order to reflect the vocabulary improvements in the translated writing of those who really benefited from the use of translation, some examples of the observed improvements are presented:

<u>**Par*ticipant No. 19*</u>

Direct Writing: "Nowadays a lot of people are studying abroad because it is a good opportunity for them to study better. "

Indirect Writing: "Nowadays *young generation* is trying to get an opportunity to *obtain perfect education* abroad. "

<u>**Participant No. 16**</u>

Direct Writing: "These days a lot of students decide to study at foreign schools or universities outside their countries and the main reason for the decision is to learn new language or to see the new country and at the same time to get some experience."

Indirect Writing: "Currently *majority* of students *prefer* to *study abroad*. The main reason is to learn a new language or to see a new country and to *obtain* new experience which is *significantly* important in their future lives."

<u>**Participant No. 13**</u>

Direct Writing: "In conclusion, studying abroad gives us good opportunities, but we have many problems that must try our best to solve them and make our dreams come true. I think if somebody has the chance to go to other countries and study must do it and get good education and have good future."

Indirect Writing: "In conclusion, while studying abroad offers us great opportunities for a better future, but it also have *challenges* that we must try our best to *overcome* all problems and make our dreams come true. I think *whoever who has the chance to study abroad must take advantage of it and gain good education and make his/her future more successful.*"

Participant No. 7

Direct Writing: "I think that studying abroad is a good decision for young people and it gives them so many abilities."

Indirect Writing: "I think when students go abroad; they can *obtain* many abilities and diplomas and become *specialists* in their *fields.*"

4.2.4.5. Presence of negative transfer from the dominant language (Russian) in translated writing

Considering the cross-linguistic influence of Russian language on the participants' translated writing, the Russian-English translators, assisting the researcher believed that there was a moderate negative transfer from Russian in all their translated writings as well as in their direct writings in English. Following are some examples of participants' sample compositions to reflect the negative transfers from the dominant language (Russian) in their writings:

- **Student No. 14**

"In our modern life…. young person <u>like</u> ..to study abroad".

"В нашей современной жизни молодому человеку нравится учиться за границей"

In this sentence there is a slight negative influence from Russian language because in Russian there is no subject verb agreement that 's' is to be added to the verbs used for third person singular in present tense as well as articles such as "a", "an", or "the".

- **Student No. 12**

"They can go to any countries in the world and get more experience <u>for</u> develop themselves."

"Они могут поехать в любую страну в мире и получить опыт для саморазвития"

A very direct transfer from Russian to English is evident in this sentence as the proposition 'for' has taken the place of the preposition 'to', which is common in the Russian language.

- **Student No. 14**

"<u>Than</u> more communicate you<u>, than</u> more experienced you would become."

"Чем больше ты общаешься, тем более опытным ты становишься"

This sentence also shows a direct translation from Russian as in Russian we use than in a sentence as above, to indicate comparison. While in English it is supposed to be written as "The more you communicate, the more experienced you will become."

- **Student No. 15**

"Moreover when children far away from their parents, they become independent."

"В добавок, когда дети далеко от родителей, они становятся независимее"

The direct translation from Russian can be seen in above sentence as in Russian language the word 'be' is not used in such a sentence, while in English it is correct to say 'Moreover, when children <u>are</u> far away from their parents, they become independent."

- **Student No. 14**

"When you as   student have   opportunity to see what others have not seen..."

"Когда вы будучис тудентом имеете возможность увидеть то, чтодругие не видели…"

Once again there is a dominant language transfer in this sentence. In Russian language, articles such as 'a', 'an' or 'the' are not used. Hence, the sentence in English language would be "When you as <u>a</u> student have <u>the</u> opportunity to see".

- **Student No.18**

"You can have a high education and addict to the environment…"

Ты можешь олучить высшее образование и привыкнуть к окружающейс реде"

This sentence is also directly translated from Russian to English. The verb 'to addict' is not used to mean 'to get used to' but in Russian semantically these two verbs can be used interchangeably.

- **Student No. 10**

"Studying abroad <u>give</u> "дает" you more possibility to have friends from all over the world." Again the misusing of subject verb agreement's' for the third person singular which is absent in Russian grammar, is being observed in the above sentence.

- **Student No. 11**

"In<u> the first</u>, many countries don't have suitable colleges or universities…".

Во-первых, во многихстранах нет подходящих высшихучебных заведений"

In this sentence also Russian language dominance can be seen in the use of ' In the first' which is common in Russian language, but in English it is usually expressed as : First of all , Firstly or At first .

- **Student No. 11**

"In the future for you will be so easy to work."

"В будущем Вам будет так легко   найти работу"

Once again a negative transfer from the Russian language is evident in the above sentence. This sentence is structurally correct in the Russian language, while in English it should be "Working will be so easy for you in the future" or "You will easily find a job in future".

- **Student No. 18**

"Study abroad was and would be interesting, funny and obviously better."

"Учеба за границей была и будет интересным, веселым и очевидно лучше"

This sentence is semantically correct in the Russian language, but in English it does not make sense. What the participant meant by this sentence is that "Studying abroad was, is and will possibly be interesting, joyful and obviously better…" By the usage of word 'Funny' , the participant meant 'joyful' or 'fun' which has a completely different meaning in English.

The above data indicates that although the use of translation helps the participants to compose better writing in English considering the use of more sophisticated vocabulary and longer compositions, however, the negative transfers from the dominant language is an important problem which needs more attention and investigation. The only people who can

help the students to overcome this problem are the instructors who with their correct guidance and instructions can help the students to write better compositions without any negative transfers from the dominant language. The problem with such negative transfer errors is that they tend to fossilize in the L2.

4.3. Analysis of the questionnaire on students' viewpoints considering the use of translation in their writings:

The students were asked to write about their beliefs on translation. Students' beliefs about the use of mother tongue and translation in second language learning is of great importance in this research, as we believe that it is important to know the students' perception about the use of this instrument. There were 10 questions about the reasons students thought translation was useful in their language learning. They were asked to answer the questions by choosing one of the five answers based on Likert Scale as , strongly agree, agree, not sure, strongly disagree and disagree.

When analyzing the answers, we observed that 19 participants (76%), agreed with the use of translation. 5 participants disagreed and 1 of them was not sure.

Then 16 participants (6%), replied that they finished their English assignments more quickly and saved time by the use of translation, while 6 of them were not sure and three people disagreed with the idea.

Regarding the third question, 13 participants (52%), agreed with the idea that with the use of translation they could produce "Russian-style English", 5 people were not sure and 7 participants (28%) disagreed with it.

Answering the question four "When I am asked to think directly in English, then I will feel more pressured", 8 participants (32%) agreed, 8 participants were not sure and 9 participants (36%) disagreed with it.

In regard to question five, "When my English assignments get more difficult, the more I depend on Russian translation", 15 participants (60%) agreed, 4 people were not sure and 6 participants (24%) disagreed with it.

Considering question number six, "When using Russian translation, I can interact with my classmates in English class in order to complete my assignments", 10 participants (40%) agreed with it, 10 participants (40%) were not sure about it and 5 participants (20%) disagreed with it.

When answering the question number seven "The use of Russian translation may interfere with my ability to learn English well", among the participants 12 participants (48%) agreed, 11 participants (44%) were not sure and 2 participants disagreed with it.

Question number eight was "Russian translation diminishes my amount of English input" 9 participants (36%) agreed with the idea, 11 participants (44%) were not sure, and 5 participants (20%) disagreed with it.

Regarding question number nine "I really feel frustrated when I try to think in English", 5 participants (20%) agreed, 6 participants (24%) were not sure and 14 participants (56%) disagreed with it.

Considering question number ten " Normally one needs to be immersed in an English-speaking culture for a period of time before he/she can think in English" was the last

question that 14 participants (56%) agreed with it, 9 participants (36%) were not sure about it, and 2 participants disagreed with it.

On the whole, the findings confirmed that our participants were not very much influenced by their instructors who prohibited the use of L1 in the ESL classrooms and regarded L1 and translation as obstacles to their learning of English, but at the same time the majority of the participants believed that too much use of translation and L1 was harmful to their improvement in the target language.

4.4. Analysis of open ended questionnaire on students' direct and indirect writings

There were 10 open ended questions for the students to answer about their two types of writings (direct writing without the use of a dictionary and translated or indirect writing).

4.4.1. Open ended questions about direct writing

Answering the first question "Did you find direct English writing easier?" 14 participants (56%), said "Yes", 1 participant said "Yes, but use of native language for assignments and translation sometimes makes it easier". 1 more said "Sometimes yes, sometimes no, depends on the level of assignments." 1 said, "Yes, but sometimes I really need to think in Russian." 4 participants answered "No", while 4 of them said they were not sure.

It shows that those with higher proficiency in English took less advantage of direct writing. Question number two was "When writing directly in English, in which areas did you have trouble?" 1 person said "Getting the idea and Selection of proper words to express my ideas". 7 participants said only "Getting the idea." 2 people said "Clearly organizing ideas".

5 people said "Selection of proper words to express my idea". 4 people said "Usage of correct grammar." 2 people said "Usage of complex grammatical structures. " 1 student said "Clearly organizing ideas, Selection of proper words to express my ideas, and Usage of correct grammar." 1 said "Clearly organizing ideas and Usage of correct grammar". 1 said "Getting the idea, Usage of correct grammar and Usage of complex grammatical structures."

The result indicates that getting ideas and selection of proper words are the most difficult part in direct writing.

Answering question number three "When writing directly in English did you think in Russian? If you did, please say why you turned to Russian?" 13 students (52%) said "No.", 1 said "I usually think in Russian", 1 student said " I did , I know it is not correct but my English is not so good that I can stop thinking in Russian", 1 answered " Yes, because sometimes I cannot express myself without thinking in Russian", 1 said " It is easier to construct the ideas in Russian than in English", 1 said " Yes, because it is easier to get an idea when you think in your mother tongue", 1 said " Yes, because Russian is my mother tongue and I cannot refuse it". And 6 participants did not answer.

Considering above comments of our participants, it is clear that the majority of them tried to think directly in English, but the rest found it not very easy.

In question number four, the participants were asked if "direct writing in English is considered to be more helpful for learning English? If so, tell us how?" Responding to this question, 1 student mentioned " You will not forget the words and sentences that you write directly in English ", 1 said "when writing directly in English you use more words and sentences ", 1 student said " Direct writing develops both thinking and writing skills ' , 1 said " yes, but it is better to use your native language to increase your vocabulary

knowledge ", 1 said " it depends on your type of writing",   9 people said " that is how I can improve my writing ", 1 said " yes by direct writing I can save time"   5 people said " no, we cannot develop ideas through direct writing", and 5 people just said "no".

The majority of students believed that direct writing and thinking is more beneficial for them , while those with lower proficiency in English found developing ideas through direct writing quite difficult.

Finally in question number five they were asked "What do you think are advantages and disadvantages of direct writing in English?"

They answered "it's all advantages because it is time saving, easier, has less time pressure on students" , " it is easier and faster", "it helps to improve our English", " it helps us to improve faster in English", "it helps us because if you want to learn English you have to think , write and speak just in English".

Considering the disadvantages of the direct writing they said : " Finding proper words is difficult" , " phrases in Russian sometimes have deeper meaning and specific emotional effects that we are forbidden to use in direct writing" , " By direct writing it is a little difficult to express words" , " When writing directly , we make more mistakes and our writing is poor in vocabulary ", "It is difficult to convert the ideas directly in English ", " You cannot write your ideas clearly", " it is very difficult to write directly for those with lower proficiency in English" , "sometimes we even find problems with the meaning of the question or topic itself" , " we cannot express ideas clearly by direct writing , because we do not know enough words" , " it might weaken our L1 writing skill, we make a lot of mistakes when writing directly in English."

4.4.2. Open ended questions about indirect writing.

The first question in this regard was "Do you think translated writing is easier than direct writing in English?" Responding to this question 11 students answered "Yes", 14 students answered "No".

Question number two asked them "When you were translating from Russian to English, where did you have trouble with?" 12 participants answered " Appropriate equivalents in English", 8 students answered " Appropriate grammatical structures in English", 4 students said " limitation of time" whereas 1 participant said "I had no problem".

So, finding appropriate equivalents in English seems to be more common in translated writing and of course the time limitation.

Considering question number three "Did you find translated writing more helpful for writing English compositions? Can you explain why?" 11 students said "no" and they explained that " we did not find it more helpful because it takes a long time" , " it is good to be used sometimes not always ", "it causes problems because the sentence structure of two languages are very much different.",

14 students found it useful and said " It is very much helpful as it extends your outlook ", "you can get more ideas and learn lots of new words ", "you can transfer the meaning clearer" , " it helps to learn new words" , " it helps to state the ideas clearer ", "it helps me because I can use my own first language ", "I can memorize meaning of new words easier" , "it even helps me with improvement of my first language(Russian) ".

Again the more advanced students found translation writing useless and time taking and the difference of sentence structure of two languages seemed to be confusing for them.

Next question number 4, "What do you think are advantages and disadvantages of translated writing?" Regarding the advantages they said : " It is easier to organize the ideas ", " it is easier to generate the ideas", " we can use more words in our composition", " we can learn new words" , " we can produce a writing with more words" ," we write compositions clearer and with better content", " there would be a more in-depth writing produced", "you can produce nicer ideas", " It helps learning lots of new vocabulary", " you can get better understanding".

Considering the disadvantages of translated writing they said "there is the time limitation stress ", " it is not good to be done always" , "it is good to be practiced when you have problem with finding new words only ", " sometimes to get to find too many options for writing a meaning for a word that you get confused ", "you have to think in Russian instead of English ", "it is more challenging because of time consumption, loss of meaning ."

Finally answering the question number 5, which asked:"Which one do you prefer, direct writing or translated writing ?" , 12 participants said " Direct writing , because you learn English better", " saves more time" , " it is more helpful", " it is easier" , "it is faster" , and 12 students said " Translated writing , because   It is easier , more useful and production of better quality writing becomes possible", and 1 participant said " it depends on the type of English writing that you have to produce."

The available data in this research proves that 56% of the participants think direct writing is easier, these students are all highly proficient in English, but at the same time, 6 participants disagreed and others said that use of translation is very helpful for doing assignments.

Finding proper words and expression of ideas was the most difficult part of direct writing for students of lower proficiency. Production of complex grammatical structures was also another area of difficulties participants had with direct writing. Nine participants (36%), repeatedly commented that in direct writing they had problems with producing clear organizations of their ideas, selection of proper words and expression of them.

25% of the participants said when writing directly in English they did not think in Russian, 48% said it was not possible for them to stop thinking in Russian. They said otherwise, they could not be able to express themselves. "Construction of ideas is easier in Russian", they said," We cannot avoid it, because it develops both our thinking and writing skills in English."

Regarding the disadvantages of direct writing, the pre advanced students commented that through direct writing it was difficult for them to write the very suitable words, but the use of a dictionary helped them a great deal. Sometimes, phrases in Russian, they said, have deeper meaning and specific emotional effects that are forbidden to be used in our direct writings. They said that they made more errors while writing directly in English and their writing was poor in vocabulary and that they could not express their ideas very clearly. Some of them who were much younger than the others (16-20 years old) and had lower knowledge in English and even in their own L1 said that they sometimes find problems with the meaning of the question itself, but with the use of a dictionary they can easily understand the content of the question and answer it. What they were trying to say was that in fact the use of dictionary also helped them with their L1 . They also believed that a dictionary could help them to develop good ideas in their own language and expression of ideas was not very easy directly in English. They said that they always made lots of mistakes which by the use of a dictionary they could produce better writings both in quality and the length.

4.5. Analysis of oral interview with students about the use of translation in second language learning

For the purpose of triangulation, five students with very high fluency in English who there was not any significant improvement observed in their translated writings and even sometimes their direct writings were better than their translated writings, as well as five students with lower proficiency in English, who did much better with their translated writings were chosen to take part in the following oral interview. Their responses to the questions were recorded and transcribed.

1. **Do your English teachers, parents or classmates encourage you not to use translation and to think directly in English? If so, what do you think about their advice?**

<u>**Advanced Students**</u>

The above students in reply to the above question stated that all their teachers had always advised them not to use Russian and Russian-English dictionary because it would not help them much. They said that they tended to agree with these teachers in thinking that it was better not to use Russian in ESL classrooms at all. They also said that English was their third language after their mother tongue and Russian. Therefore, they needed to use dictionaries and Russian language to learn it. However, later on gradually they should not rely on their Russian anymore and try to stop using it. One of the participants pointed out that even in Uzbekistan their teachers advised them not to use dictionaries and try to think directly in English to learn it better, so, he also thought that it was a correct advice. It seems therefore, that Russian might play an important role in the early stages of learning English, but it should be phased out at a later stage.

One of the participants said that all their teachers always told them not to use Russian and them to think directly in English if they wanted to improve their English as soon as possible.

Some others said that at the beginning it is good to use dictionaries and Russian until Upper Intermediate Level, but after that they should not rely very much on their Russian. One participant also said that all their teachers and even their parents advised them not to use Russian and dictionaries in English language learning, but he was of the opinion that the use of translation and Russian was a very good idea at the beginning stage of learning English. But after a limited period, the learners should not use their Russian anymore.

Some other participants said that although everybody was telling them not to use Russian and translation in the ESL classrooms, but since they were not very proficient yet to know all the words in English, so it was much easier and faster for them to use Russian- English dictionaries. It was very difficult for them to use English - English dictionaries all the time.

2. **English learning students often use translation to learn English, like using dictionaries. How do you do that?**

   Advanced Students

   One participant said at the beginning he used Russian-English dictionaries, then a mobile dictionary and now he uses Google translation when doing his assignments. One said that he never used Russian- English dictionaries, even from the very beginning. He always used English to English dictionaries if he needed to check a word. Another one said that he normally uses translation for his assignments and writings, but rarely uses dictionaries for other activities.

Answering the above question one of the participants said that at the beginning she used Russian-English dictionaries almost for every word she used, but now she only uses Google translation as it is a very helpful tool.

Google translation was used by the majority of the above participants according to their own words**.**

3. **How much influence do you think the use of translation might have on your process of learning English?**

Advanced Students

One participant said that it can slow down the process of second language learning. Another one said it slowed down the language learning process, but gradually students should learn to do their writings without a dictionary and use of Russian. The rest of them said that it is not a good idea to use Russian and dictionaries a lot and rely on their Russian. It would not help them to learn English as fast as they should.

Pre Advanced Students

One participant said it was very helpful to use a dictionary and L1 when one really needed to understand a difficult word. It can even help one to speed up learning new words. Another one said the use of a dictionary and Russian made learning faster, and she said that she liked using Google translation for her assignments, writing and even checking her spellings. Another one said that may be after 10 years of living in the USA and UK , they will no more need to use Russian and dictionaries , but now they need it and there is nothing else they can do.

4. **Students with which level of proficiency do you think can mostly benefit from translation? Why?**

<u>Advanced Students</u>

Most of them said only beginner level students benefit from translation. They believed It was better for them because they did not know much, otherwise they would not understand the new words in an English text. A few others said that it was only useful for Beginner to Upper Intermediate level students. However, they admitted that of course sometimes advanced students might also need to use their L1 and dictionaries for some purposes, but not always. On the other hand, some believed that all levels of students might benefit from translation.

<u>Pre Advanced Students</u>

Most of the above participants believed that students from Beginner to Intermediate levels mostly need to use translation and dictionaries as it helps to make learning become much easier. However, a few other pre advanced participants stated that they thought ESL learners needed to use dictionaries and their L1 to learn English at all levels.

5. **By the use of translation and dictionary which language skills of students do you think will mostly improve? Why?**

<u>Advanced Students</u>

One of the above participants believed mostly the use of the L1 and translation had the greatest impact on writing, because one learned about new words and how to spell them. Another one said that it would not be very beneficial for speaking, since one cannot open ones dictionary all the time when one is speaking, therefore it is much better for writing.

Pre Advanced Students

One student said that he thought it helped students to improve all their skills, especially their writing skills. One of them said that if they did not use the new words learned by dictionaries in real life, then they would forget them.

6. **Do you have any experience regarding the use of Russian and translation that you want to share with us?**

Advanced Students

Talking about their experiences, one of them said that it was suggested by their teachers not to use their L1 and dictionary all the times but they should try to guess the meaning of the unknown words from the context. However, sometimes when during an examination their attempt to infer the meaning of a new word was not correct, then they might waste all their efforts. It means that they might give a totally wrong answer to a question while they knew the correct answer. In some circumstances, they might even give a completely irrelevant answer and lose all the marks. So, it was always beneficial to students to be allowed to check the meaning of the unknown words with a dictionary to avoid losing marks or making embarrassing comments in the classrooms.

Pre Advanced Students

A pre advanced student talked about one of her experiences in this regard and said: "Yes, I have a funny and at the same time sad experience. Once, when I was in Intermediate level, some of my classmates and the teacher were discussing the meaning of the word "Faith" and giving comments about it, which mistakenly I thought if "Faith" meant to be "Give birth". When the class finished and I was going back home with one of my classmates who

was better than me in English. Then she asked about my opinion in regard to the word 'Faith' and the class discussions. When I told her about what I thought about the meaning of for 'Faith', she laughed at me since I had totally misunderstood the meaning of the 'Faith' in English. At first it seemed very funny to both of us and we laughed a lot , but at the end I was happy that my teacher did not ask me to participate in the discussion, otherwise it could have been embarrassing for me and all my classmates would laugh at me . So I think using a dictionary is very useful and saves us from making funny comments and being humiliated by others. Our teachers should not prohibit the use of bilingual dictionaries in the classrooms at all. Also if I knew the correct meaning of the word 'Faith' from the beginning, maybe I could also like the others enjoy the discussion in the classroom and even make good comments about it."

Another friend of hers also pointed out that "Yes, there is one point I wanted to add. Some of us are not even as proficient as others in our Russian language. For example, the students of Uzbekistan do not study Russian language at school as much as Turkmens or Kazakhstanis, therefore, our Russian language is a bit weaker than theirs. When using a dictionary, for the translation of our writings, we usually also improve our Russian language as well. Sometimes we do not know the correct spelling of a word in Russian, which an English – Russian dictionary helps us to learn the correct spelling of the word as well as its synonyms and antonyms and the meaning of the English word itself and its spelling. Also same thing happens when we try to check English word grammar."

The findings from the recorded oral interview with students about the use of translation in second language learning proves that all students , no matter with what proficiency in English or nationality said that their teachers had always encouraged them to use only English and try to think in English if they wanted to improve their proficiency in English.

The students without exception agreed with their teachers' belief and constantly said that they should try to use English in the classrooms and avoid using the L1 in order to improve English faster.

At the same time, it was observed that advanced students believed that the use of dictionary was beneficial for students of lower proficiency but at higher levels of Upper Intermediate and advanced level the students should not use Russian – English dictionaries.

It can also be said that both advanced and pre advanced students believed too much use of Russian language and translation would slow down their improvement in English, but the use of a dictionary is always necessary at all levels of language learning even at the advanced level. Also all agreed that the use of translation was most beneficial for the writing skill of the students , but it could be more beneficial if the students used the vocabulary found in dictionaries in their daily communication in order not to forget it.

Finally, it was observed that some of them told us about their almost sad experiences about misunderstanding of some words in the classrooms that caused to infer the wrong meaning and prevented them from taking part in discussions, only because they were not allowed to use their dictionaries in the classrooms.

One of the students even mentioned that the strict prohibition on the use of their L1 and dictionaries in ESL classrooms sometimes caused them to lose marks due to misunderstanding the topics of writings or answering questions and or being embarrassed in front of other classmates for making irrelevant comments. The above experiences were not very helpful for students learning a new language, especially for beginners. They might cause the students to lose their self-confidence and not to be as participative as they should be in ESL classrooms.

There was another comment about the use of translation by a pre advanced student who was not also very proficient in Russian. He said that the use of a dictionary could help him to also improve both his Russian language and English. He claimed that sometimes by using a dictionary he not only learned the meaning of a new word in Russian, but also learned the correct spelling of the words in these languages as well as their antonyms and synonyms, which can be considered as one of the advantages of the use of translation for the improvement of both languages.

4.6. Analysis of teachers' beliefs on the use of students' first language and translation in ESL classrooms

Two teachers both female, teaching English to these students were requested to answer the questions in the questionnaire about teachers' beliefs on the use of students' first language and translation in ESL classrooms . Teacher A is around 70 years old whereas teacher B is about 35 years old. Below we present their responses to the 7 statements:

Statement number 1: It is useful for students to use translation when doing writing activities from mother tongue to English, Teacher A responded "Perhaps initially and then for a short period of time only, otherwise strongly disagree." Teacher B responded "Agree".

Statement number 2: Use of a bilingual dictionary can help students to translate new words, Teacher A responded "Disagree" and teacher B responded "Agree".

Statement number 3: Translation can be a great tool for students to grasp real meaning. Teacher A:" Strongly disagree", Teacher B: "Not sure".

Statement number 4: It is important to encourage students to speak in English rather than banning them from using their L1. Teacher A responded "Perhaps initially only, Agree", Teacher B responded "Agree".

Statement number 5: In ESL classrooms the students should only use the target language at all the times and even think directly in target language. Teacher A responded "Strongly agree", teacher B responded "Strongly agree".

Statement number 6: Translation is useless in English classrooms and will only waste the students' time and cause delay in their language learning procedure. Teacher A "Strongly agree", Teacher B "Not sure ".

Statement number 7: We (English Instructors) should instruct the students how to use translation in their writing, in order to take the best advantage of this instrument in their language learning. Teacher A responded "Strongly disagree", Teacher B responded "Disagree".

It can be concluded from the teachers' responses above, that teacher B is more open to the use of translation and L1 in ESL classrooms than teacher A. Nevertheless, teacher A just like teacher B believes that it is important to encourage students to speak in English rather than banning them from using the L1 and in ESL classrooms. The students should use the target language at all the times and even think directly in target language.

Hence, we can say that teachers especially those who belong to the younger generation have also started to realize the importance of usage of L1 in second language learning, while some others of the older generation still look at the use of L1 and translation in the ESL classrooms as a taboo. When we look at the students' opinions and beliefs about the use of translation in the classrooms, the same difference of opinion can be observed which might be the result of the different perspectives of their instructors.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following sections discuss the results obtained in this study by focusing on the 3 research questions.

5.1. Research question 1: How does translation help international students participating in Malaysian tertiary colleges to improve in ESL essay writing?

The available data obtained from students in this research show that translation helps the international students to improve in ESL essay writing, especially those of pre advanced level or even at advanced level. The quality of these students' translated writing proved that with the help of translation they tend to become more organized, and produce longer and clearer writing. It has also been quite beneficial for students' improvement of vocabulary as most of them in their questionnaires have indicated several times. Also students of pre advanced level who were weaker than the others in the Russian language due to reasons already mentioned even benefited more from translation and the use of a dictionary in improving their Russian language.

However, the use of translation was not as beneficial for advanced Students as for pre advanced ones. But they also believed that with the help of translation, they could do their assignments better and faster.

In total, 9 students (36%) of 25 participants, in advanced level of English had quite high scores in International English exams, but four of them did not benefit much from translated writing. In fact, they did not even bother to use their dictionaries and their translated writing was not much better than their direct writing, three of them even wrote

better and longer compositions directly in English considering the content, organization and style of their writings. These students were those who had been more immersed in the English culture by living longer in English speaking countries.

According to the two Russian-English translators, assisting the researcher, in the direct and indirect writing of the above advanced level participants in English, there was slight negative transfer from the dominant language. Seven students, four males and three females, who were not very fluent in Russian according to the investigation of Russian-English translators, and were also quite weaker than other advanced students, benefited the most from the translation writing. Their translated writings were much more sophisticated in vocabulary and they contained more variety of sentence beginnings than their direct writings in English. But, according to the Russian-English translators, there was moderate negative transfer from the dominant language in their translated writings.

Finally, eight students five females and three males , aged 19-21-21-19-20-20-23-23- , who were very fluent in Russian but in Pre Advanced level in English, provided more sophisticated vocabulary and better style of writing in their translated writings. Regarding the freedom from the translation effect, the Russian-English translators reported that in their translated writings there was also moderate negative transfer from the dominant language. The following chart will give a full image of the whole students' data and findings about their use of translation and Russian language in this study.

Table 5.1.A holistic summary of data

Number	Age	Nationality	Gender	Russian Fluency	English Fluency	L1 Negative Transfer	Improved essay by use of L1
1	22	Uzbek	M	Very Flu.	Advanced	Slight	not much
2	22	Uzbek	F	Very Flu.	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
3	23	Turkmen	M	Very Flu.	Advanced	Slight	not much
4	19	Turkmen	M	Very Flu	Advanced	Slight	not much
5	21	Turkmen	F	Very Flu.	Advanced	Slight	not much
6	21	Uzbek	M	Very Flu.	Advanced	Slight	not much
7	23	Kazak	F	Very Flu.	Advanced	moderate	Yes
8	23	Turkmen	M	Very Flu.	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
9	20	Russian	F	Very Flu.	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
10	20	Turkmen	F	Very Flu.	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
11	22	Russian	M	Very Flu.	Pre Adv.	Slight	not much
12	26	Kyrgyz	F	Very Flu.	Advanced	Slight	not much
13	19	Kyrgyz	F	Fluent	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
14	21	Kyrgyz	M	Very Flu.	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes

15	24	Kazakh	F	Very Flu.	Advanced	Slight	not much
16	21	Uzbek	M	Fluent	Pre Adv.	Slight	not much
17	20	Tatar	M	Very Flu	Advanced	Slight	not much
18	16	Kazakh	F	Fluent	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
19	18	Turkmen	F	Fluent	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
20	21	Turkmen	F	Very Flu	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
21	21	Kazakh	F	Very Flu	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
22	19	Turkmen	F	Very Flu	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
23	21	Turkmen	M	Fluent	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
24	21	Uzbek	M	Fluent	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes
25	21	Turkmen	M	Fluent	Pre Adv.	moderate	Yes

The aforementioned information shows that participants of Pre Advanced (60%) benefited more from translation than the advanced students.

Regarding the analysis of participants three writings, it should be mentioned that unlike the participants in previous researches, these students belonged to the pre advanced and advanced level of English proficiency, and therefore in their direct writing when we measured the details of content and development of ideas, we found out that the supporting ideas were relevant and contributed to the whole and there was good connection between the ideas and topics.

In terms of the organization of their writing, a similar result was obtained as even in their direct writings the ideas were clearly stated in a logical sequence. But when analyzing their writing to find out about any improvements in their style of writing, there was considerable

amount of change in their translated writing, which exhibits more variety of vocabulary and sentence structure. The students of lower English proficiency gained more advantage from translation. They used more sentence beginnings, subordinate clauses and discourse markers and phrases in their translated writing.

Considering the presence of any negative transfer from the dominant language (Russian) in their translated writing, the Russian-English translators, assisting the researcher believed that there was a moderate negative transfer from Russian in all their translated writing as well as in their direct writings in English.

Regarding the advanced students' writings, there was no significant change in their two writing tasks. Their two types of writings seemed similar and in some cases their direct writing was even better than the translated version.

Among the pre advanced participants, there were eight of them aged 16 to 21 , from Uzbekistan(3), Kyrgyzstan (1), Kazakhstan (1) and Turkmenistan (3) who were not even very fluent in Russian language due to their young age or not having had the chance to be immersed in Russian language as much as the other participants. These participants benefited the most from translation, and according to their own comments in the written questionnaires and oral interviews, the use of translation has helped them to improve their Russian language. Some participants mentioned that sometimes they did not even understand the content of a question in their school assignments. Hence, the use of a dictionary helped them to do their assignments easily as it helped them to organize, produce and express ideas both in Russian and English more clearly. Therefore, translation and the use of dictionary somehow helped them to improve their Russian as well.

The available data also shows that 14 participants thought direct writing was easier. These students were all advanced students, but at the same time, six participants disagreed and others said that use of translation was very helpful in doing their assignments.

Finding proper words and expression of ideas was the most difficult part of direct writing for students of pre advanced level. Production of complex grammatical structures was also another area of difficulties participants had with direct writing. Nine participants repeatedly commented that in direct writing they had problems with producing clear ideas and the selection of proper words and structures for their expression.

Still regarding the disadvantages of direct writing, students of lower proficiency in English commented that sometimes it was difficult for them to find suitable words to be used in their direct writing, thus the use of a dictionary helped them a great deal in this regard. They also said that sometimes, phrases in Russian had deeper meanings and specific emotional effects, and such words and phrases should not apply in their direct writings. They also said that they made more errors while writing directly in English as not only was their writing poor in vocabulary but also they could not express their ideas very clearly. Some of them who were much younger than the others (16-20 years old) and had a lower knowledge of English and even in their own L1 said that they sometimes found problems with the meaning of the question itself, but with the use of a dictionary they could easily understand the content of the question and answer it. What they were trying to say was that the dictionary also helped them to improve their L1. They also believed that a dictionary could help them to develop good ideas in their own language as it is not easy to express ideas directly in English. They always made a lot of mistakes so the use of a dictionary helped them to improve and produce much better writing both in quality and the length.

14% of the participants said that direct writing was not easier than indirect writing. Twelve participants mentioned having problems with finding appropriate equivalents when writing indirectly in English. The other problem that four students have pointed to was the time stress and limitation.

All advanced level students (9) said that they did not find translated writing more helpful because the process was too long for them and it was only good to be used on certain occasions .But at the same time fifteen students of pre advanced level said that translated writing was very helpful to them as it extended their viewpoints, and they could get more ideas through it. It helped them to learn new words as well. It helped them even to improve their own first language as well as their English. They thought that by the use of their own language they could produce longer, clearer and more organized compositions in English.

Regarding the disadvantages of indirect writing, they mentioned mostly the time stress, despite having 1 hour for writing. Although the timing was sufficient, they were very afraid of not being able to finish their writing on time. They also believed that translated writing should not be done always, but only when it was really needed. One of the participants also pointed out that sometimes, you can see several options to express an idea with translation, and therefore, you become more confused.

Considering the advantages of indirect writing, they focused mainly on the point that with translation they could learn more vocabulary and this way of learning helped those not to forget the words learnt. They said that translation helped them to produce more in-depth writings, with better ideas and understanding as well as proper organization of ideas.

To conclude, supporters of translated writing were pre advanced level students with lower proficiency who were also younger than the others. Those with higher proficiency in

English also found it useful when they were doing their assignments. They believed that the use of a dictionary and their L1 helped them to do their assignments faster and with much better quality.

5.2. Research question 2: What do International students think about the use of translation and their first language (L1) in second language learning?

The findings show that the majority of the participants (14) believed that by using translation they could write their English compositions much better. The same number of participants also commented that they could finish their assignments faster and save a lot of time. However, thirteen students out of twenty five commented that the use of translation from Russian to English prompted them to produce Russian style English, while seven people disagreed with this statement.

The most amazing thing was that among the 25 participants, twelve of them (48%) agreed that the use of Russian translation could interfere with their ability to learn English, but at the same time eleven participants said that they were not sure about it and two people completely disagreed. So, almost half of the participants were not sure whether the use of translation might interfere with their ability to learn English, which seems quite unusual in view of the fact that all their instructors had insisted on avoidance of the L1 and translation in their English learning process.

Furthermore, 36% of the students agreed that the use of L1 and Russian translation diminished their amount of English input. They also believed that normally people were required to be absorbed in the culture of the target language for a period of time so as to be able to think only in that language.

On the whole, the findings confirmed that our participants were not very much influenced by their instructors' beliefs that the use of L1 and translation was an obstacle in their learning process, but they also believed that too much use of translation and L1 might be harmful to the improvement of their competency in the target language.

5.3. Research question 3: What do the students' instructors think about the use of translation and first language as a learning tool in ESL classrooms?

Considering the teachers' beliefs on the use of students' first language and translation in ESL classrooms, the data shows that the teachers' ages differ considerably. Teacher A was 70 years old whereas teacher B was 35 years old. Regarding the question number one which asked them if it is useful for the ESL students to use translation when writing, teacher A replied "Perhaps initially and then for a short period of time only, otherwise strongly disagree" whereas, teacher B just agreed. It shows that teacher B, being younger than teacher A, was not so much in favor of restricting the use of the L1 in the ESL classrooms, which might be due to current trends in ESL ideology and methodology, where the focus has shifted to language awareness and consciousness raising.

Regarding question number 2, again when they were asked if the use of bilingual dictionary could help students to translate new words, the two teachers gave completely different answers. Teacher A disagreed whereas teacher B agreed. Again this is further evidence of aforementioned point that two teachers each supported different ideologies regarding the ESL learning and the use of L1 and translation.

Next, when they were asked if translation could be a useful tool for students to grasp real meaning, teacher A strongly disagreed whereas teacher B agreed. Once again we observe that teacher B was more in favor of the use of L1 in second language learning.

Further evidence of the teachers' divergent viewpoints in regard to the use of the L1 and translation was question number 6, which asked if translation was useless in English classrooms and would only waste the students time and cause delay in their language learning procedure. Teacher A strongly agreed while teacher B was not sure. Even when the question was posed if English instructors should instruct the students how to use translation in their writing , in order to take the best advantage of this instrument in their language learning, teacher A replied "strongly disagree" and teacher B replied just "disagree".

Therefore, it can be seen that nowadays some teachers have also started to realize the importance of the use of L1 in second language learning, while some others may be of older generation, still look at the use of L1 and translation in the ESL classrooms as a taboo. When we look at the students' opinions and beliefs about the use of L1 and translation in the classrooms the same disagreement can be observed which might be a reflection of the different perspectives of their teachers.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The present research has a limited objective. It seeks to establish whether or not the learners' L1 and the use of translation from the L1, have a positive effect on the quality of pre-advanced and advanced learners' writing in their L2, English. It is a small- scale study, the findings of which cannot be generalized beyond its immediate context. It investigates two types of writing, Direct and Indirect (translated). The former was written directly in English and the latter was written first in Russian and then translated into English.

The findings of this research revealed that fifteen out of twenty five (60%) participants gained advantage from translated writing and ten Advanced level participants (40%), wrote better in their direct writing. In fact, it showed that the quality of the compositions was very much influenced by the writing modes of the participants as well as their fluency in both first language and the target language. Those with a lower knowledge of English benefited the most from translated writing and there was not any significant difference in the writing of the participants who were more proficient in English. Students' responses to various questionnaires in this research showed that the majority of the students strongly believed and supported direct writing as being more beneficial in their second language learning. Although translation was considered to be quite time-consuming and harmful to their second language learning in the long term, they found translation to be an effective instrument to be used for their English essay writings, especially for students with lower proficiency in English. They said that it helped them to expand their vocabulary as well as to improve their grammar. They took advantage of dictionaries as a L1 reference to help them in this regard. Considering the students' beliefs and comments about the use of

translation and a bilingual dictionary, the majority of learners confirmed that the use of translation and L1 was mostly beneficial for learners at lower levels of proficiency. However, they also believed that since English was their second language, the use of a dictionary was always needed even at very advanced levels. They believed that after staying more than ten years in a country like the USA or UK, they might not need to use their L1 and dictionaries any more.

They also commented on some sad memories. They said that due to the prohibition on the use of a Russian-English dictionary in the classroom, they had experienced some misunderstanding of the topics of the writing tasks or class discussions. Hence, sometimes it led them to be humiliated by others and to feel embarrassed. Furthermore, they said that it could even cause them to lose marks for not being able to answer the questions correctly or sufficiently.

The researcher of this study believes that the above complaints are serious obstacles to students' improvement in their second language learning as they prevent them from participating in classroom discussions and resulted in them losing their self-confidence which is the most important factor in second language learning.

6.1. Limitations of the research

One limitation of the present study as in past similar studies by Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992 ; Brooks, 1996; Ali,1996 ; Zhai Lifang , 2007 was that when the participants were writing directly in English, they were supposed to think directly in English. However, there was no mechanism in this research that could pin point exactly what students meant when they said they thought in their L1 even when they were asked to think and write directly in English.

In their questionnaires, the majority of the participants, especially those with lower proficiency in English and even some of advanced level proficiency in English, confessed that they thought in their L1 while writing directly in English, although they had been instructed not to think in their L1 .They claimed that it was inevitable for them to think in their L1 no matter how much they tried and were told not to do so. Since there was no mechanism that can help to find out whether or not the students thought in L1 as well as how much and how far, researchers are never able to control and measure it. The other point is that when thinking in their L1 and writing in L2, did they think about the content and the organization of their ideas or a mixture of thinking about content, organization of ideas and language material selections or not is another question that should be investigated in future similar studies.

Another limitation of this study was that the researcher was not a Russian speaker herself, thus she had to take advantage of the assistance of two Russian native speakers who were working closely with the researcher. These people were translators of Russian-English texts. With the help of the two Russian speaking assistants, the researcher could analyze the two writings of the participants, and thus see whether in their translated writing there was any sign of dominance of the L1 and if the participants were all of the same fluency level in their L1 (Russian) .

Finally, another limitation was that due to the limitations imposed by the educational Institute where the study took place, the researcher had to ask the participants to do all the writings: direct, Russian and translated writing on the same day. Hence, students had to do three types of writing plus answering two questionnaires on the same day. This was an unfortunate condition imposed by the host college. However, the researcher allowed them to take a short break in between their writing activities in order to reduce their fatigue.

6.2. Suggestions for future research

Although the students were given enough time for the translated writing, and the researcher tried to allocate them enough time so that they did not feel any stress from time limitation, they still claimed that one of the disadvantages of translated writing was the stress from time limitation. Therefore, it is recommended that for future research, participants should be given the possibility of doing both direct and indirect writings at home, as this will ensure that they can do their writing tasks without any anxiety due to time limitation and thus, the results of analyses of both writings will be much more reliable. On the other hand, without supervision, some participants might be tempted to seek external aid.

Furthermore, the process of translated writings involved a few stages. It started first with the participants thinking about the topic in their L1, and then doing the mental translation, which happened only in their minds and finally writing a Russian version of the composition which was later translated into English. Researchers such as Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Friedlander, 1990; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992 suggested that L1 should be best used for planning and organizing of the compositions and the sentential level should be best written in English. Therefore, the writing of the participants would not contain any dominance of L1. This is something that our Russian – English translators who were assisting the researcher were facing when analyzing the students' writings. Hence, both students of high proficiency and low proficiency in their indirect writings had traces of L1 dominance according to the Russian translators. So, it is suggested that as a pedagogical implication, it is very beneficial that instructors in ESL classrooms provide suggestions on the systematic use of translation that can serve for the organization of the ideas and their expression in a lexically acceptable and appropriate grammatical way. In fact, it is suggested that there should be a focus on how these students select appropriate vocabulary

both for their direct and translated writing through translation from the L1 but also needed to be cautioned against the dominance of the L1 structure in their translated writings in L2.

The last suggestion of this researcher for future research in this regard is that all previously mentioned studies and investigations about the use of translation and L1 have focused on college or university students, and never on children's use of translation and L1 in the ESL classrooms .Thus, it would be very beneficial for students to be able to start using L1 and translation from a younger age and to start taking advantage of this useful instrument in ESL learning.

APPENDIX A:

Topics for compositions

Please choose one of the following compositions:

- There are students who decide to study in other countries than their home countries. Why do they decide to do so? What do you think are the reasons for it? Please explain your answer in detail.

- Is there any custom in your country which you think is beneficial for people from other places to adopt? Please explain your ideas by the use of examples.

APPENDIX B:

Instructions for writing the compositions

- Choose one topic.

- Write a direct composition in English. Your composition should be 150 words. You have 45 minutes for writing your direct composition in English.

- Write about the same topic in Russian. You have 45 minutes time for writing your composition in Russian.

- Now, translate your Russian composition to English. You can use a Russian-English dictionary if you want. It should be almost 150 words. You have 60 minutes time to translate.

GOOD LUCK!

APPENDIX C:

Questionnaire regarding students' beliefs about translation

The participants' answers regarding the ten statements about their beliefs on the use of translation in their English writing is summarized as following:

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Strongly disagree	Disagree
1. By the use of translation I can write English compositions much better.	5	14	4	-	2
2. By the use of translation I can finish my assignments quickly and save time.	2	14	6	2	1
3. I think if I translate from Russian to English then I will produce Russian – style English.	3	10	5	6	1
4. When I am asked to think directly in English, I feel more pressured.	10	4	1	8	2
5. When my English assignments get more difficult the more I depend on Russian translation	3	12	4	5	1
6. When using Russian , I can interact with my classmates in English classrooms in order to complete my assignments.	1	9	10	2	3
7. The use of Russian translation may interfere with my ability to learn English well.	1	11	11	1	1
8. Russian translation diminishes my amount of English input.	9	11	4	-	1
9. I really feel frustrated when I try to think in English.	1	3	8	6	7
10. Normally one needs to be immersed in An English speaking culture for a period of Time before he/she can think in English.	3	11	9	1	1

APPENDIX D:

Open ended questionnaire on students' direct and indirect writings

Direct Writing:

1. Did you find direct English writing easier?

2. When writing directly in English , in which following areas did you have trouble:

   A- Getting the idea

   B- Clearly organizing ideas

   C- Selection of proper words to express your idea

   D- Usage of correct grammar

   E- Usage of complex grammatical structures

3. When writing directly in English did you think in Russian? If you did, please say why you turned to Russian.

4. Is direct writing in English considered to be more helpful for learning English? If so, tell us how?

5. What do you think are advantages and disadvantages of direct writing in English?

__Indirect writing__

1. Do you think translated writing is easier than direct writing in English?

2. When you were translating from Russian to English, where did you have trouble with:

   - Appropriate equivalents in English?

   - Appropriate grammatical structures in English?

   - Limitation of time?

3. Did you find translated writing more helpful for writing English compositions? Can you explain why?

4. What do you think are advantages and disadvantages of Translated writing?

5. Which one do you prefer direct writing in English or Translated writing in English? Why?

6. Is there any other point you want to share with us?

APPENDIX E:
Participants' background

No. of Students:	25	
1.Age:	18 participants 20-26 7 participants 16-18	
2. Gender:	14 Female 11 Male	
3. Nationality of participants	Kazakhstani (7)	
	Turkmenistan (8)	
	Uzbekistani (5)	
	Russian (2)	
	Kyrgyzstani (2)	
	Tatar (1)	
4. No. of years studying or speaking Russian as L1.	Turkmens 1 participant 12 years 1 participant 10 years 1 participant 8 years 1 participant 14 years 4 participant since birth	Uzbekistanis 2 participants 4 years 3 participants 12 years
	Kazakhstanis 3 participants Since birth 4 participants 12-13 years	Tataristan 1 participant 12 years
	Russians 2 participants Since birth	Kyrgyzstan 2 participants since birth

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	
5. The participants rated their own Russian language Proficiency as:	3 Turkmens 2 Russians 1 Uzbek 3 Kazakh 1 Tatar 2 Kyrgyz	4 Kazakh 2 Turkmen 1 Uzbek	2 Uzbek 1 Kazak 3 Turk	
	Number	Years	Nationality	
	4 male	8- 10	Turkmens	
	3 female	8- 10	Kazakh	
	4 female	3-6	Kazakh	
6. Participants' knowledge of English:	2 female	3-6	Kyrgyz	
	1 male	3-6	Tatar	
	2 female	3-6	Russians	
	4 female	3-6	Turkmens	
	5 male	3-6	Uzbeks	
	Score	Number	Nationality	Age
7. Students' Latest TOEF/IELTS score	IELTS 6.5 TOEFL 500 TOEFL 583 IELTS 6.00 IELTS 6.00	1 male 1 male 1 male 1female 1 male	Uzbek Kyrgyz Turkmen Kazakh Tatar	21 21 21 24 20

8. Strategies usually used to write a composition	
- English for the whole composition	12 students
-First in Russian and then translate to English	4 students
- In English interchanged with Russian, but Russian is preferred if the English version is not in our mind	9 students

APPENDIX F:

Participants' letter of consent form

I have been informed about the purpose and procedures that will be carried out in this research.

All my questions considering this research have been clearly answered. I am completely aware that I can ask further questions at any time during the research.

I am fully aware that:

- I am voluntarily participating in this research.

- I can withdraw at any time I want.

- At all times during research my anonymity will be well preserved. All my data and activities in this research will be confidential and can be used only for this research.

I agree to participate in the present research.

Name:

Signature: Date:

APPENDIX G:

Oral Interview Guide

1. Do your English teachers, your parents or other classmates encourage you not to use translation to learn English and to think directly in English? If so, what do you think about their advice?

2. English learning students often use translation to learn English, like using dictionaries. How do you do that?

3. What influences do you think use of translation might have on your English learning procedure?

4. What proficiency level of students do you think can mostly benefit from translation? Why do you say so?

5. By the use of translation which language skills of students do you think will mostly be strengthened? Why?

6. Do you have any experience regarding translated or direct writing of English compositions that you want to share with us?

APPENDIX H:

Questionnaire about teacher's beliefs on the use of translation by *students*

1) It is useful for the students to use translation when doing writing activities from mother tongue to English.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Not sure 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

2) Use of bilingual dictionary can help students to translate new words.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Not sure 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

3) Translation can be a great tool for students to grasp real meaning

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Not sure 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

4) It is important to encourage students to speak in English rather than banning them 1from using their L1.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Not sure 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

5) In the ESL classroom the students should only use the target language at all the times and even think directly in target language.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Not sure 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

6) Translation is useless in English classrooms and will only waste the students' time and causes delay in their language learning procedure.

7) Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Not sure 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

8) We (English Instructors) should instruct the students how to use translation in their writings, in order to take the best advantage of this instrument in their language learning.

9) Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Not sure 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

APPENDIX I:

Analysis of direct and indirect compositions (adopted from Zhai Lifang(2008)

Direct Composition No…….

Content:

- Details are relevant

- Details are irrelevant

- Ideas are clearly connected to the topic

- Ideas are not clearly connected to the topic

Organization:

- Ideas and details are logically expressed and sequential

- Ideas and details are not logically expressed and not sequential

- Ideas are clearly expressed

- Ideas are unclearly expressed

Style:

- Vocabulary is sophisticated, effective and appropriate

- Vocabulary is not sophisticated, effective and appropriate

- There are variety of sentence beginnings, subordinate clauses, discourse markers and phrases used in the composition.

- There are not variety of sentence beginnings, subordinate clauses, discourse markers ,and phrases used in the composition

Freedom from translation effect

- There is not any negative transfer from the dominant language

- There is a slight negative transfer

- There is moderate negative transfer

- There is extensive negative transfer

- There is very extensive negative transfer

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