



**Students' and teachers' attitudes toward the use
of learners' mother tongue in English language
classrooms in UAE public high schools**

مواقف الطلاب والمعلمين تجاه استخدام اللغة الأم للطلاب أثناء
دروس اللغة الإنجليزية في المرحلة الثانوية بمدارس دولة الإمارات
العربية المتحدة

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Abstract

There are two opposing approaches regarding the impact of using learners' mother tongue in learning English as a foreign or second language: the monolingual and bilingual approaches. The former adopts the English-only policy and sees learners' first language (L1) as a hindrance that impedes learning English, whereas the latter considers L1 as a valuable tool that may facilitate learning English. The current study examines students' and teachers' attitudes toward the use of students' L1 during English lessons in a UAE context. A mixed-methods approach was used to secure the necessary data. Questionnaires with a five-Likert scale and semi-structured interviews were conducted with both students and teachers. The research findings showed that limited and judicious use of students' first language might be beneficial in learning English as a foreign language. The results also highlighted the drawbacks of excessive use of learners' mother tongue, and how this might negatively affect students' learning. In addition, the pedagogical implications of the current research findings were discussed, as well as some future research opportunities that might move this research forward.

ملخص البحث

هناك منهجان متعارضان فيما يتعلق بالآثار المترتبة على استخدام اللغة الأم للطلاب في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية أو لغة ثانية، وهذان المنهجان هما المنهج أحادي اللغة والمنهج ثنائي اللغة. المنهج الأول يعتمد في جوهره استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية فقط، ويرى أن استخدام اللغة الأم للمتعلمين تعوق تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية، في حين ينظر المنهج الثاني للغة الأم للمتعلمين كونها أداة فعالة من شأنها أن تُسهّل تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. هذه الدراسة الحالية تتناول بالبحث مواقف الطلاب والمعلمين تجاه استخدام اللغة الأم للطلاب أثناء دروس اللغة الإنجليزية في المرحلة الثانوية بمدارس دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. وقد تم استخدام المنهج متعدد الأساليب في جمع البيانات اللازمة، ومن أجل ذلك، فقد تم اعتماد استبانة تتضمن أسئلة موضوعية ذات خمسة اختيارات مختلفة، إضافةً إلى بعض المقابلات شبه المنظمة مع كل من الطلاب والمدرسين لتوفير قاعدة البيانات اللازمة للبحث. أظهرت نتائج البحث أن الاستخدام المحدود والرشيد للغة الأم قد يكون مفيداً في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. كما سلطت نتائج البحث الضوء على عيوب الاستخدام المفرط للغة الأم، وما قد يكون لذلك من أثر سلبي على تعلم الطلاب. وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، قد تمت مناقشة الآثار التربوية لنتائج هذا البحث، فضلاً عن الإشارة إلى بعض فرص البحث المكتملة لهذه الدراسة في المستقبل.

Dedication

Dedicated to my wife, my kids and the souls of my parents.

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Words cannot express how thankful I am to all my friends and colleagues for the support and guidance they gave me throughout the process of this research.

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Chapter One Introduction

Chapter one provides an introduction to the current study. It highlights the growing interest in learning English language as well as the teaching approaches prevailing in this field. Besides, it discusses the significance of the study and the rationale behind it. Finally, it introduces the research questions this investigation will draw on as well as the scope of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

There has been a growing interest in learning English as a second/foreign language over the last few decades. This is due to the important role English plays in almost every aspect of life nowadays, starting from education to business (Hasman 2004). In addition, English has become a global lingua franca and a means of international communication round the world (Brutt-Griffler 1998). It has allowed people from different cultures and linguistic backgrounds to communicate and share their knowledge and expertise. Moreover, English has become “a key part of the educational strategy in most countries” (Graddol 2006, p. 70). This explains the tremendous, on-going efforts governments have exerted to introduce English language as early as possible to their educational systems, in an attempt to help their citizens to be effective users of the target language in the future.

However, learning a second/foreign language comes along with the pedagogical principles governing the way(s) it is taught, i.e. the learning theories and teaching approaches. One of the most crucial issues that should be taken into consideration is the medium of instruction. In this regard, there are two distinctive, opposing approaches in the field of English language learning: the monolingual and bilingual approaches. The former advocates the sole use of the target language (TL), and considers the use of students’ first language as a hindrance in the process of learning the TL. On the other hand, the latter sees learners’ mother tongue (MT) as a beneficial tool that may facilitate and contribute to learning the target language. The difference in perspective between these two approaches led to an unsettled debate regarding the value of using learners’ MT in English language classrooms. It is worth mentioning that first language and mother tongue are synonymously and interchangeably used in this research.

1.2 Significance of the study

Educational policy-makers in a lot of countries seem to have adopted the monolingual approach. Although there is a lot of research that supports the inclusion of learners' MT (Schweers 1999; Swain & Lapkin 2000; Burden 2001; Prodromou 2002; Tang 2002; Al-Nofaie 2010), such pedagogical decisions regarding the exclusion of learners' L1 have been made on 'unexamined and taken-for-granted assumptions' (Auerbach 1993, p. 29). Moreover, there does not seem to be enough evidence that both teachers' and students' input has been taken into consideration.

In the UAE context, English has become the medium of instruction within the tertiary level education. A lot of English language programs in the UAE, if not all, support the notion of English-only environment, excluding learners' L1- Arabic- from English language classrooms (Mouhanna 2009). This notion comes from the assumption that the use of Arabic impedes learning the second language (English in this case). Therefore, in some formal classroom evaluation contexts, teachers are expected to use English exclusively, and, consequently, they are blamed, sometimes penalized, for any reference to Arabic.

Since teachers and learners are the most important key players in the educational process, a lot of studies have been carried out to investigate their perceptions toward the use of learners' MT in learning another language. However, the majority of these empirical studies were carried out either in western or non-Arab countries. Very few similar studies have been conducted in the Arab world in general, and the UAE in particular. The researcher is not aware of any studies carried out in the UAE to explore the attitudes of Emirati public high school students and teachers toward the use of Arabic in learning English as a foreign language. Therefore, the current study is an attempt to bridge this gap in literature.

1.3 Research questions

The aim of this investigation is to explore the attitudes of Emirati public high school students and teachers toward the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. The current study aims to answer to the following research questions:

1. Do Emirati public high school students and EFL teachers hold positive or negative attitudes toward using Arabic in English classrooms?
2. Does students' attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms vary according to their English proficiency level?
3. Are there any learning occasions where using Arabic during English classrooms may be beneficial?

1.4 Scope of the study

The current research has a limited scope, as it confines itself to Grade 10 male students, as well as their teachers, in a technical high school where the study took place and the data obtained through the conducted questionnaires and interviews with them. The research is set out to investigate their attitudes toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms to find out whether the use of students' L1, Arabic in this case, plays a facilitating role in learning English. Grade 10 students are preferred because of their exposure to two different learning contexts: a bilingual environment in their previous school and an English-only environment in their current school.

As has been mentioned earlier, the aim of this study is to explore the attitudes of both learners and teachers toward using learners' L1, Arabic in this case, in English language classrooms. The following chapter looks into the theoretical background and rationale behind allowing or banishing learners' L1 in the TL classrooms. It provides a comprehensive analysis of both the English-only and the bilingual approaches. It also highlights some of the empirical studies that were carried out in various contexts to investigate this topic.

Chapter Two Theoretical framework and literature review

2.1 Introduction

As mentioned in [1.1], there has been a growing interest in English language and its teaching approaches. The two main approaches highlighted are the monolingual and bilingual approaches, also referred to as *monolingualism* and *bilingualism* (Brown 2007). Monolingualism is defined as “[t]he ability to use only one language” (Saville-Troike 2006, p. 191). On the other hand, bilingualism is seen as “the ability to use more than one language” (Gass and Selinker 2008, p. 515). In light of these previous definitions, the monolingual approach embraces the exclusive use of the TL. The bilingual approach, on the other hand, claims that the MT can play a facilitating role in learning a second language (L2). This mismatch in perception toward the value of learners’ L1 has created a pedagogical debate between the two approaches, which has impacted classroom practices. While learning theories and linguists support the English-only approach, a lot of empirical studies, however, suggest that L1 may be beneficial in learning other languages (Anton & Dicamilla 1999; Juárez & Oxbrow 2008; Schweers 1999; Storch & Aldosari 2010; Storch & Wigglesworth 2003; Swain & Lapkin 2000).

The conflict between these pedagogical approaches comes as a result of not reaching a balanced perception toward the use of learners’ L1. The monolingual approach calls for a complete banishment of L1 from L2 classrooms, as this is significantly important to maximize the use of the target language (Ellis 1984; Krashen 1982). Banishing L1 from L2 classrooms might be attributed to the early years of ELT, when English was often taught by native-speaking teachers with little or no knowledge of the students’ L1. On the other hand, the bilingual approach assumes that L1 may be used in almost every classroom occasion; banishing L1 from L2 classrooms means to reject learners’ prior knowledge. Commenting on teachers’ perceptions’ toward the the use of learners’ L1 in English lessons, Auerbach comments that “[t]here seems to be an all-or-nothing view” (p. 15). It is either the excessive use of learners’ MT or it is complete banishment. There seems to be no agreement on a pedagogical approach that acknowledges the potentiality of both theories and builds on them to maximize learners’ opportunities to learn another language and empower them to be autonomous learners.

For this reason, and in attempt to obtain a better and in-depth understanding of the

long debate between these opposing approaches, this chapter provides a historical overview, as it seems to be important. This will be followed by a detailed analysis of the pedagogical theories underlying these two approaches. Finally, light will be shed on a number of studies examining learners' and teachers' attitudes toward the use of the mother tongue in foreign language (FL) classrooms.

2.2 Historical background

The Classical Method, also referred to as grammar-translation method (GTM), dominated the English language teaching (ELT) profession during the 18th and 19th centuries (Richards & Rodgers 2001). It mainly focused on reading and writing, as the second language only served scholastic and academic purposes. This approach was characterized by its heavy reliance on translation and explicit explanations of grammar rules. The target language was minimally used as classroom communication was mainly through L1. In addition, pronunciation was almost given no attention, whereas vocabulary was taught in the form of bilingual lists of separate words (Brown 2007). The vast popularity of this approach was due to the fact that “[i]t requires few specialized skills on the part of teachers. Tests of grammar rules and of translations are easy to construct and can be objectively scored” (Brown 2007, p. 16-17).

Despite its popularity, this school of teaching received tremendous criticism from a lot of researchers and linguists as it only focused on the written skills and totally ignored the spoken aspect of the target language (Brown 2007). Learners were not exposed enough to the target language, which consequently resulted in their inability to use L2 communicatively. Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 7) argue that there have been no attempts in literature to support the GTM as a pedagogical theory, or even “relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory”.

The beginning of the 20th century witnessed the rise of the Direct Method (DM). This approach prevailed due to the political circumstances during this period of time. There was an active immigration wave toward America after World War I. As a reaction, the rise of the Americanization Movement symbolized the anti-foreign sentiment against the new immigrants. The DM was an important factor and an effective way to promote the spirit of unity, patriotism and loyalty. This had a direct impact on ELT, and resulted in excluding learners' native language and solely adopting the L2 as the only medium of instruction (Auerbach 1993). Moreover, due to the

massive immigration waves from Europe, it seemed impractical to rely on the L1 in learning a second language, as there was no shared mother tongue among the immigrant learners. Hence, the target language was adopted for classroom communication. Bostock (1973, p. 41) states “the most frequently asserted benefit of monolingualism is social and political integration, particularly in relation to the assimilation of migrants”. It was also associated with concepts like democracy, loyalty and national unity (Portes and Schauflier 1994).

Phillipson and Pennycook are considered very important theoretical framework authors, as they contributed a lot to the on-going debate between the monolingual and bilingual approaches. Phillipson (1992) suggests that some tenets characterizing the English language teaching go back to ‘*British neo-colonial policies*’. In 1961, the Commonwealth countries, in their conference in Uganda, identified the priorities of English as an international language. Phillipson (1992, p. 185) lists what he calls the five fallacies emerging as a result of this convention:

1. English is best taught monolingually.
2. The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker.
3. The earlier English is taught, the better the results.
4. The more English is taught, the better the results.
5. If other languages are used much, standards of English will drop.

According to Phillipson (1992), the ultimate goal behind these tenets is to maintain the prevalence, supremacy and dominance of English as an international language with all the “explicit and implicit values, [and] beliefs” it represents (p. 73).

As stated earlier, the most important tenet that has had a great impact on the ELT profession is *monolingualism* (Phillipson 1992). It assumes that a language is best learnt through full immersion in TL. To ensure better learning outcomes, the TL should be the medium of instruction in any learning environment. Therefore, learners’ L1 should be completely banned in the L2 classroom, as it seems *unnatural* (Pennycook 1994).

As mentioned earlier, Phillipson (1992) highlights the fallacies characterizing ELT. However, some of them do not seem to have a significant impact on ELT profession now. A lot of empirical studies (Anton & Dicañilla 1999; Juárez & Oxbrow 2008; Schweers 1999; Storch & Aldosari 2010; Storch & Wigglesworth 2003; Swain & Lapkin 2000) have highlighted the drawbacks of banishing L1 from L2 classrooms as well as its potential as a facilitating tool. The idea of portraying the native speaker as

‘the ideal teacher of English’ is not practical as the majority of English language teachers round the world are non-native.

The monolingual approach seems to serve a social and political agenda. The English language has been imposed in most periphery countries for political and social reasons (Canagarajah 1999). English as a medium of instruction is considered an invaluable tool that asserts the supremacy of native speakers, with their cultural and social values, as it “keeps the UK and the US at the centre of ELT” (Rampton 1990, p. 108). Auerbach (1993) argues that banishing learners’ L1 from English L2 classrooms is not based on pedagogical facts; it is rather an attempt to justify and assert the supremacy of the English language. This is true to a large extent, as a lot of western social values are embedded in most of English language textbooks, regardless the social context they are used in.

The historical background given above highlighted the circumstances, which led to the emergence of the monolingual notion. The following section introduces the principles this approach is based on and examines the rationale behind it.

2.3 The monolingual approach

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the ELT profession witnessed a comprehensive change in researchers’ and teachers’ attitudes and beliefs toward second language learning. The GTM started to decline as it failed “to enhance a student’s communicative ability in the [target] language” (Brown 2007, p. 16). This paved the way for the Direct Method to emerge. The prevailing notion was that learners should learn a second language in the same way they acquired their L1 (Brown 2007). Instead of focusing on the written form of the TL, the focus shifted to oral skills. This entailed banishing L1 from L2 classrooms, as it was believed to be more of a hindrance than a facilitating tool toward L2 learning.

The monolingual approach as a pedagogical methodology influenced and contributed to the rise of the Communicative Approach (CA), especially during the 1970s and 1980s. The CA strongly suggests that L2 should be taught monolingually through authentic classroom activities. It also urges teachers to refrain from using their learners’ L1, as such practices are “irrelevant in learning the second language” (Pennycook 1994, p. 169). Consequently, non-native English teachers, who worked in an English-only environment, always felt guilty when resorting to learners’ L1 to

facilitate learning for doing something, they believed, against the principles governing good teaching practices at this period of time (Auerbach 1993; Ferrer n.d.; Atkinson 1987).

It is worth mentioning that teachers' practices are not only governed by institutional policies. Rather, they are shaped by their pedagogical attitudes and beliefs. It is true that educational policy makers in some countries have adopted the English-only notion as part of their institutional policies. However, teachers not only adopt the English-only approach due to institutional pressure, but they also believe that the exclusive use of L2 will enable their students to learn the TL faster than when L1 is allowed (Yphantides 2009).

The monolingual approach has prevailed due to the tremendous support received from researchers and linguists. L2 advocates call for full immersion in the target language and complete banishment of L1 from the FL classrooms. The main reason is that there is a limited opportunity for L2 learners to get exposed to the TL outside the classroom. This makes the quality of L2 input and the quantity of exposure to TL significantly critical (Duff & Polio 1990; Edstrom 2006). Chaudron (1988, p. 121) argues that L2 teachers are urged to maintain a rich TL environment where “not only instruction and drill are executed, but also disciplinary and management operations”. This approach argues that learners should be immersed in the target language, as the L2 learning process is similar to learning the L1. Krashen (1982) suggests adopting a *natural approach* when learning an L2, which requires immense exposure to the target language through meaningful and spontaneous communication. Ellis (1984) emphasizes the importance of using the target language for both instruction and classroom management. He criticizes teachers' choice to use their learners' L1 to explain lessons, organize activities and/or manage behaviour as this deprives L2 learners from valuable input in the TL.

Despite the support obtained from some researchers and linguists, the monolingual approach has received considerable criticism and opposition (Atkinson 1987; Auerbach 1993; Phillipson 1992; Prodromou 2002; Swain & Lapkin 2000; Vanderheijden 2010; Wechsler 1997). Firstly, it has been criticized for its impracticality and the fact that immense exposure to the L2 is not always enough to learn. It is considered impractical because the “majority of teachers of English are non-native speakers” (Phillipson 1992, p. 191-192), and those teachers do not master the target language at the same level of proficiency (Phillipson 1992). Concerning immersion, it is

true that the quantity of exposure to L2 plays a significant role in learning the language (Phillipson 1992). Nevertheless, there are other factors that contribute to learning a language, e.g. trained teachers, an effective assessment system and coursebook material.

Secondly, the monolingual approach assumes that the process of learning a second language is similar to acquiring one's MT. However, this does not prove to be true, as age is one of the determining factors in L2 learning process. Brown (2007) draws on the differences in language learning process between adults and children. When children learn two languages, this happens *simultaneously*. However, this is not the case with adults; whether it occurs in formal or informal settings, adults learn a second language systematically. This involves formulating grammatical rules using their L1 knowledge to guide them to bridge the linguistic gap they cannot fill in L2.

Thirdly, part of the criticism toward the monolingual approach is its failure to differentiate between English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL). ESL refers to teaching English where "the language is necessary for everyday life ... or in a country in which English plays an important role in education, business, and government" (Richards & Schmidt 2002, p. 180). In western countries, e.g. Canada, Australia, and the US, L2 learners are immersed in the TL outside the classroom. In addition, the learners come from different language backgrounds and, consequently, there is no shared L1 among them. Therefore, there should be a common language for instruction and communication in class, which is English. On the other hand, EFL "implies the use of English in a community where it is not the usual means of communication" (Abbott 2001: p. 467). This describes the situation where L2 learners come from the same linguistic background and share the same L1. In this context, learners only learn English in formal classroom settings, as they do not have much contact with the target language in the outside world. Hence, the difference in nature between EFL and ESL necessitates adopting more effective teaching approaches suitable for each context.

Fourthly, the monolingual approach assumes that using L1 limits learners' opportunities to get exposed to the target language. However, banishing L1 from L2 classrooms is an unjustified decision. The judicious use of L1 positively supports learning the target language. Insisting on using L2 during complex linguistic and cognitive tasks means denying learners their right to use a beneficial and valuable cognitive tool they possess (Swain & Lapkin 2000). In addition, students' reliance on

L1 gradually diminishes as they become more competent in the TL (Vanderheijden 2010; Prodromou 2002).

Finally, the English-only approach does not appreciate that the mother tongue always exists in learners' minds even during their EFL/ ESL classes (Wechsler 1997). Whether it is admitted or not, learners, especially the low-level ones, tend to use their L1 during collaborative work at different degrees to scaffold new information and understand difficult concepts (Anton and Dicomilla 1999; Slavin 2006). Swain and Lapkin (2000, p. 768) argue that “[s]tudents always approach learning an L2 with expertise in their L1, and this expertise remains a somewhat unexplored resource”. The total banishment of learners' L1 in EFL classrooms limits learners' learning opportunities and promotes the sense of L2 superiority to their L1. In order to empower L2 learners when they fail to learn, they “should have as many tools as possible at their disposal- in the learning environment- to develop new learning” (Vanderheijden 2010, p. 5).

As has been seen above, the monolingual notion has been subject to a lot of criticism as it has ignored learners' prior knowledge and the fact that L1 already exists in the learners' mind when they approach the TL. The following section explores the bilingual notion and examines the principles it underlies.

2.4 The bilingual approach

There has been a profound assumption in ELT that “[t]he more students are exposed to English, the more quickly they will learn; as they hear and use English, they will internalize it to begin to think in English” (Auerbach 1993, p. 14-15). The only way to help them master the L2 is by forcing them to use it. Any reference to learners' L1 was seen as a sign of unprofessionalism and lacking proficiency. Prodromou (2000, quoted in Hitotuzi 2006, p. 163) claims that learners' L1 has been treated as a “skeleton in the cupboard, (...), 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’”. However, a lot of Practitioners and researchers have started to re-examine the role of L1 in facilitating learning a second language during the last few decades. Deller and Rinvoluceri (2002, p. 4) believe that “the mother tongue is the womb from which the second language is born”. Therefore, it is not practical to banish L1 from L2

classrooms, as learners' L1 can be a beneficial tool for language learning (Macaro 2001; Willis & Willis 2007). Banishing it from L2 classroom does not necessarily mean banishing it from learners' mind, and this will result in impeding learners to think (Hitotuzi 2006). There is no rationale behind using a monolingual pedagogy, as "the very subject we teach is, by definition, bilingual" (Widdowson (2003, p. 154).

Atkinson (1987), who is considered an influential L1 advocate, argues that learners' L1 has been a *neglected resource* in monolingual English classrooms. He identifies the main reasons contributing to the lack of interest in exploring the potentiality of L1 as a classroom resource: 1) negative association between the use of L1 and the grammar-translation method; 2) the fact that one "can only learn English by speaking English" (Atkinson 1987, p. 242); 3) native speakers receiving their teaching training in an exclusive monolingual environment; and 4) finally the prevalence of learning theories promoting the exclusive use of the L2.

Atkinson's (1987) and Auerbach's (1993) writings encouraged a considerable number of professionals and researchers to re-examine their teaching practices and beliefs, and reconsider the role L1 might play and the potential benefits it might bring into L2 English classroom as a facilitating tool. Atkinson (1987, p. 241) blames the "gap in methodological literature" for the feeling of guilt teachers had for allowing their students use their MT in L2 classroom.

L1 supporters (Atkinson 1987; Auerbach 1993; Cook 1999; Cummins 2007; Mahmoud 2006; Nation 2003; Schweers 1999) have identified a lot of reasons justifying the use of learners' first language, which will be suggested below. Whether admitted or not, learners' L1 is used in FL classrooms by some students and teachers. It has the potential as a pedagogical classroom resource to create authentic and relevant learning opportunities in the target language (Cook 1999). It should be seen as an effective classroom resource to enhance and maximize students' learning. Auerbach (1993, p. 20) argues that L1 "allows for language to be used as a meaning-making tool and for language learning to become a means of communicating ideas rather than an end in itself". Instead of ignoring the fact that it exists in the learners' minds, L1 can be used to activate learners' prior knowledge. Besides, the mother tongue, especially for the beginners, is a final resort when communication fails, as "the natural desire to communicate impels learners to use their L1 to fill in gaps in communication, a strategy that successfully moves their acquisition of the L2 forward" (Mahmoud 2006, p. 29). Moreover, allowing L1 in the L2 classroom positively affects students' motivation and

increases their participation, as it reduces learners' anxiety and lowers their *affective filter*.

As mentioned earlier, the bilingual approach assumes that learners' L1 has a significant role to play in English classrooms. A considerable number of studies have been conducted to examine its potentiality. Some of these are highlighted in the section below.

2.5 Empirical studies

There have been a lot of recent empirical studies exploring the role L1 might play in L2 classrooms. They have been conducted in different learning contexts where English was sometimes the L1. Table 1 below summarizes some of these studies.

Table 1: Empirical studies exploring the role of L1 in L2 classrooms

Researcher	Focus	Findings
Schweers (1999)	Role of Spanish in learning English	Raising awareness of the language similarities/differences between L1 and L2 may facilitate learning L2.
Swain & Lapkin (2000)	Role of L1 in facilitating complex classroom activities	Students use L1 (English) for task management, focusing attention, and interpersonal interaction.
Juárez & Oxbrow (2008)	The use of translation as an effective cognitive learning strategy	Students are in favour of using translation activities along with the judicious use of their L1
Storch & Wigglesworth (2003)	Impact of task type on learners' use of L1	L1 is used to clarify and manage the joint composition task, whereas it is used to discuss vocabulary on the reconstruction task.
Storch & Aldosari (2010)	Effect of task type on learners' use of L1 (Arabic) during pair-work activities in EFL classrooms	Weaker pairs use L1 more often than stronger ones. L1 is important in task management as well as serving other cognitive, social and pedagogical functions.
Scott & De La Fuente (2008)	Learners' use of L1 and TL to solve a grammar problem	When allowed to use L1, learners work more collaboratively. Learners also resort to L1 (English) as a scaffolding assistance tool.

L1 supporters believe that there are a lot of possible classroom occasions where using learners' first language could be beneficial. Auerbach (1993) argues that L1 may be beneficially used to manage any situation in the instructional process, which sounds interesting, as she does not seem to have considered the significant importance of L2 input in EFL classrooms. In other words, allowing L1 to be widely used results in tremendous decrease in learners' opportunities to practice the TL. Anton and Dicañilla (1999) suggest that L1 also can be helpful when exploring content in more detail and when shifting from one stage in a lesson to another. Cummins (2007) claims that learners' L1 may play a vital role in promoting L2 proficiency because "it can function as a stepping stone to scaffold more accomplished performance in the L2" (p. 238). Nation (2003) urges teachers to give the due respect to their learners' L1. Otherwise, the learners would feel that their MT is inferior to the TL, which will result in negative attitudes towards the L2. He also suggests adopting a balanced approach, where L1 is perceived as an asset and L2 learning opportunities can be maximized.

A lot of empirical studies indicate that L1 is an invaluable tool that facilitates learning an L2 (Anton & Dicañilla 1999; Juárez & Oxbrow 2008; Schweers 1999; Storch & Aldosari 2010; Swain & Lapkin 2000). However, welcoming the mother tongue to L2 classrooms brings about some risks that should be considered. Exposure to the target language is essential in the process of learning an L2, and the over reliance on L1 minimizes the learners' opportunities to practice the target language (Atkinson 1987; Cianflone 2009). This is particularly crucial in an EFL context where the learners do not have much contact with the target language in the outside world (Turnbull 2001). Consequently, L2 learners will have a very limited opportunity to practice the target language. Duff and Polio (1990) researched how much L2 was used in FL classrooms. The study involved thirteen teachers. Their findings showed that the participant teachers were not aware of the quantity and frequency learners' first language may be utilized in EFL classes, as the use of L2 widely ranged between ten to hundred per cent. It also indicated that, in several cases, a lot of students had a very limited exposure to the target language. Swain and Lapkin (2000) argue that L1 use should be available for learners in the target language classrooms. However, it should not "be actively encouraged as it may substitute for, rather than support, second language learning" (p. 268).

Another major drawback is learners' tendency to rely on MT to understand the TL (Gabrielatos 2001). This may result in impeding "learners' autonomy in FL communication" (Cianflone 2009, p. 2). Atkinson (1987), though he advocates the use

of L1, believes that excessive use of L1 should be avoided. Over-reliance on the mother tongue to understand the L2 may also lead to false generalization about the target language. A lot of learners' linguistic errors when using the L2 can be contributed to L1 interference. Instead, L2 teachers should seek opportunities to maximize learners' use of the L2.

As indicated above, the bilingual approach claims that L1 is an effective classroom resource that facilitates learning. However, it cannot be "a suitable basis for a methodology" Atkinson (1987, p. 247). Instead, there is a need to explore how to incorporate it into teaching as a pedagogical tool that enhances the learning process of another language. Teachers should be aware of the opportunities and drawbacks of allowing the L1 to be used in L2 classrooms. Their decision, therefore, to shift to any of these languages is determined by the learning context (Stern 1992). The relation between the two languages should, hence, be viewed as complementary not opposing.

The studies highlighted above indicate that L1 has the potential as a facilitating learning tool. However, there is still a need to explore learners' and teachers' views in this regard. As mentioned in [1.2], decisions to adopt the monolingual or bilingual approach have been made without taking learners' and/or teachers' input into consideration. Since they are the ones who are directly affected by such decisions, the next section aims to shed the light on some studies that examine their perceptions toward the use of L1 in English classrooms.

2.6 Students' and teachers' attitudes toward using L1 in English classrooms

There have been a number of attempts to examine learners' and teachers' perceptions toward using learners' L1 in FL classrooms. The section below highlights some of these studies, which took place in different learning contexts.

2.6.1: Learners' attitude toward using L1 in L2 classroom

Prodromou (2002) conducted a well-known research investigating the perceptions of 300 Greek students regarding the use of their native language to learn a foreign language (English). The study aimed to find out whether learners' proficiency level affected their attitude toward using L1. The findings revealed that the beginner

students showed a more positive attitude toward the use of Greek in English classes than the intermediate and advanced students. The lower students tended to accept using L1 to a) explain grammar, b) explain differences in the use of L1 and L2 rules, and c) check comprehension. Prodromou (2002) concluded that the students became less reliant on their mother tongue when their level of proficiency improved.

In a similar study conducted in an Iranian context, Nazary (2008) used Prodromou's (2002) questionnaire to examine tertiary students' perceptions of using Farsi in EFL classrooms, and whether their attitudes varied according to their English proficiency. The results showed that the students at the three proficiency levels had a negative attitude toward using their L1 in the L2 classes. In contrast with other studies (Schweers 1999; Burden 2001; Tang 2002; Prodromou 2002), the surveyed students saw a little value in using Farsi to define new vocabulary and explain grammar points. The study findings revealed that students' attitude toward the use of the MT varied according to their proficiency level. In comparison to the other two groups, the intermediate students had a more negative attitude toward the L1 inclusion.

In an attempt to explore students' perceptions of using Arabic in EFL classes, Mouhanna (2009) surveyed 124 students at a foundations English program in one of the UAE tertiary institutions. Mouhanna's study is of special interest, as it took place in a context similar to the current investigation, the UAE. The results indicated that learners' attitudes toward using L1 varied according to their English proficiency level. Level 1 (beginner) students supported more Arabic use in the English classroom than Level 3 (advanced) students. These findings came in line with other studies: the higher the English proficiency level was, the less reliant the students were on L1 use (Prodromou 2002). Mouhanna (2009, p. 15) concluded that, due to "lower level students' high demand for L1 use", there was a need to incorporate Arabic as a pedagogical tool for learning English.

Brooks-Lewis (2009) conducted an interesting study into adult learners' perceptions toward the inclusion of their MT (Spanish) in the L2 classroom. The learners showed overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward using their L1 while learning an L2. They believed that it was beneficial as it made learning English easier. Moreover, they felt that using Spanish acknowledged their prior knowledge as adults. Brooks-Lewis concluded that the inclusion of L1 as a tool to empower learners "is a learner-centred methodology which not only allows but *invites* the learner to become actively and consciously involved in the language learning experience" (p. 234).

Table 2 below summarizes the findings of the studies discussed above.

Table 2: Empirical studies: Learners' attitudes toward using L1 in L2 classroom

Researcher	Focus	Findings
Prodromou (2002)	Learners' perception toward using Greek in learning English	Beginner students showed a more positive attitude toward the use of Greek in English classes than the intermediate and advanced students.
Nazary (2008)	Iranian tertiary students' perception of the use of Farsi in EFL classrooms	Students strongly rejected using Farsi and preferred the sole exposure to English.
Mouhanna (2009)	Tertiary students' attitude toward using Arabic in EFL classes	The higher the English proficiency level was, the less reliant the students were on L1 use.
Brooks-Lewis (2009)	Adult learners' perception toward using Spanish in English classrooms	The learners showed overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward using their L1 while learning an L2.

The above highlighted studies sound interesting. However, they seem to have ignored a crucial factor, which is the frequency of using L1 in the L2 classroom. How often L1 is used determines students' amount of exposure to the target language, which is very essential in learning an FL. This requires a high level of awareness between teachers and student regarding what can be done in L1 and what should be carried out in L2. Duff and Polio's (1990) study showed that teachers were not aware of the frequency learners' MT may be used in EFL classrooms. It also indicated that students' exposure to the TL was affected by the quantity of L1 use.

The coming section focuses on some empirical studies that examined both teachers' and learners' attitudes toward the use of learners' L1 in the TL classrooms. These studies are closely related to the current investigation, as this research explores the attitudes of Emirati public high school students and teachers toward the use of learners' L1, Arabic in this case, during English lessons.

2.6.2: Learners' and teachers' attitudes toward using L1 in L2 classroom

Schweers (1999) investigated the value of using learners' MT (Spanish) in the English classroom at Puerto Rico University. The collected data revealed that the majority of students and teachers had positive attitude toward using Spanish during English lessons. Both teachers and students thought it was appropriate to use L1 to explain difficult concepts, check understanding and define new vocabulary items. However, they did not see a value of using L1 to test. Schweers argued that L2 could "be learned through raising awareness to the similarities and differences between the L1 and L2" (p. 13). He also stressed the importance of bringing learners' L1 back to L2 classes as this would lead to positive attitudes toward learning another language. Limited and judicious use of L1 could be tolerated because of its pedagogical and affective benefits.

Another important study was carried out by Burden (2001). It explored the issue of when learners and their teachers felt there was a need to use Japanese in English classes. The results indicated that there was a general agreement between teachers and students regarding the importance of L1 use in the TL classes. The surveyed teachers and students also believed that it was acceptable to use L1 to explain new vocabulary, give instructions, teach grammar and check comprehension. Burden emphasized the value of occasional inclusion of L1 in L2 classes to meet learners' psychological need of not portraying their MT as an inferior to the TL.

Tang (2002) researched both students' and teachers' attitudes toward using their mother tongue (Chinese) during L2 (English) classrooms. The study findings indicated that students as well as teachers held positive attitudes toward using L1 (Chinese) during English classes. They saw a value of using L1 to discuss difficult grammatical rules and to explain challenging vocabulary items, to practice new phrases and expression. Tang concluded that "limited and judicious use of the mother tongue in the English classroom does not reduce students' exposure to English, but rather can assist in the teaching and learning processes" (p. 41).

In a similar study, Sharma (2006) examined teachers' and learners' attitudes toward using Nepali in EFL classes. The results showed that the students and teachers realized that Nepali should be used in the English classes. They thought that it was important to utilize L1 to explain difficult vocabulary, discuss complex grammar rules, clarify difficult concepts, and practice the use of new expressions and phrases. Sharma

argued that banishing L1 from English classroom would negatively affect students' progress as this would "certainly deprive the students of certain opportunities to learn more and better" (p. 86).

In an Arab context, Al-Nofaie (2010) carried out research to examine the Saudi teachers' and students' attitudes toward using Arabic as a facilitating learning tool in the English classroom. The findings indicated that the study participants had positive attitudes toward using L1 in EFL classes. Both teachers and students were convinced of the value of limited and judicious use of Arabic in English classes. They believed that excessive use of Arabic would hinder their learning and affect it negatively. They also preferred to use Arabic to a) give exam instructions, b) translate new words, and c) contrast between English and Arabic.

Table 3 below summarizes the findings of the studies discussed above.

Table 3: Empirical studies- Teachers and learners' attitudes toward using L1 in EFL classrooms

Researcher	Focus	Findings
Schweers (1999)	Learners' and teachers' perceptions of using Spanish in English classrooms	The majority of students and teachers were in favour of using Spanish. Students believed that using Spanish helped them learn English.
Burden (2001)	Learners' and teachers' attitudes toward using Japanese in English classes	There was a general agreement between teachers and students regarding the importance of L1 use in the TL classes.
Tang (2002)	Students' and teachers' attitudes toward using Chinese during English classrooms	A high percentage of both students and teachers believed that Chinese should be used in English classes. Limited, judicious L1 use does not reduce learners' exposure to TL.
Sharma (2006)	Teachers' and students' attitude toward using Nepali in EFL classes	Both teachers and students had positive attitudes toward using Nepali in English classrooms. Using L1 helped students learn English. Banishing L1 from English classroom negatively affects students'

		progress.
Al-Nofaie (2010)	Saudi teachers' and students' attitudes toward using Arabic in EFL classrooms	Both teachers and students had positive attitudes toward using L1 in EFL classes. Excessive use of Arabic would negatively affect learning English as its over-use would hinder learning English.

The studies presented above and summarized in Table 2 and Table 3 research learners' and teachers' perceptions of L1 inclusion in English classrooms. Despite their different contexts, these studies bear many similarities. Except for Nazary's (2009), they show that students have positive attitudes toward using their TL when learning a foreign language. The participant students believe that both learners and teachers should be allowed to utilize their learners' L1 in FL classrooms. They also indicate that the L1 may be used in different learning situations: teaching grammar, explaining new vocabulary, comparing the L1 and L2 and checking comprehension. These studies also indicate that students' perceptions vary according to their level of English proficiency. The lower level students, in comparison to the advanced ones, tend to have a more positive stand toward the use of L1. On the other hand, teachers, in general, hold a positive attitude toward using learners' MT. However, they are concerned about its over-use as it might hinder learning L2. The surveyed teachers seem to be in favour of limited and judicious use of their students' L1 (Burden 2001; Tang 2002; Al-Nofaie 2010).

As has been seen above, this chapter provided the theoretical background behind the monolingual and bilingual approaches. It also highlighted some empirical studies that explored the value of using L1 in L2 classrooms, as well as other studies examining teachers' and students' attitudes toward using L1 in English classrooms.

The current study aims at exploring high-school students' and teachers' attitudes toward using L1, Arabic in this case, in EFL classrooms. The following chapter will describe the methodology adopted in this research, the study context, participants, data collection instruments, steps of conducting the study, and data analysis procedures.

Chapter Three Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology adopted to carry out the current investigation regarding the attitudes of Emirati public high school students and EFL teachers toward the use of Arabic in English lessons. It highlights the context where this research took place. It also outlines the adopted methodological approach, the study participants, the quantitative and qualitative tools used to collect the data and answer the research questions mentioned earlier: whether students and teachers hold positive or negative attitude toward the use of L during English classes, whether students' attitude varies according to their English level, and the potential learning opportunities where L1 can be used. In addition, it details the implementation process, and the data analysis procedures.

3.1 Context

This study takes place in a government high school in Abu Dhabi, UAE. Public high- school students usually come from a poor English background due to the fact that English is not the medium of instruction. It is just a school subject. The majority of the students are taught English in a traditional way, where the main focus is on vocabulary and grammar. This is clearly reflected in students' inability to communicate effectively in terms of speaking and writing.

The context where this study was implemented is particularly interesting because English is used as the medium of instruction in all disciplines in this school. This decision has been made to prepare students for university studies and save them a one-year foundation program. Moreover, it is a multicultural context as teachers come from different nationalities. During the first academic year, Grade 10 students are enrolled in an intensive general English program in an attempt to improve their proficiency level in English. They are expected to obtain an IELTS score of band 5 by the end of Grade 12. Consequently, students with low English proficiency joining this school face a lot of challenges, especially at the beginning of the first academic year, to cope with the amount of English they are exposed to.

3.2 Participants

3.2.1 Students

The student sample included 120 Grade 10 students, who voluntarily participated in this research. All the participant students were male Emiratis who spent about nine months in an English immersion program at the high school where this research took place. They all came from the same linguistic background as they shared the same MT, Arabic. They studied English as a foreign language in heterogeneous groups. Because they did not have much contact with the target language outside the school, the comprehensible input they were exposed to in English classrooms was substantially important.

In order to select students for interviews, the *Stratified Sampling* typing has been adopted. This type of sampling is considered a mini-reproduction of the population (Sommer 2006). The student subjects were classified into three categories in terms of their English proficiency level according to their Term One English exam marks: beginners (below 60%), intermediate (between 60% and 84%), and advanced (above 84%). The sample included subjects from the three strata to allow comparison. Among those interested students to be interviewed, four were selected: one beginner, two intermediate, and one advanced.

3.2.2 Teachers

The teacher sample comprised 20 English language teachers who work in public high schools. All the participant teachers have English teaching qualifications, ranging from a Bachelor of Arts/ Education to a masters degree, with teaching experience in other contexts outside the UAE of at least three years. All of them are expatriates and belong to different nationalities with different linguistic backgrounds: Jordanian, Egyptian, Canadian, British and South African. They also have had the opportunity to teach in other contexts outside the UAE.

In order to select teachers for interviews, the *Stratified Sampling* typing has been adopted. As mentioned earlier, this type of sampling is considered a mini-reproduction of the population (Sommer 2006). The teacher subjects were classified into two categories in terms of their linguistic background: English native and non-native

speakers. The sample included two subjects from each stratum to allow comparison. Among those interested students to be interviewed, four were selected: a British, a Canadian, a South African and a Jordanian.

3.3 Methodological approach

In order to secure the necessary data for this investigation, a mixed-methods approach was adopted. Such a methodological approach is defined as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie 2004, p. 17). Incorporating techniques from both research traditions gives unique opportunities for the researcher to explore the research area in-depth and obtain a better understanding of its complex nature (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003; Richards 2003; Sydenstricker-Neto n.d.). Instead of limiting the researcher’s choices, integrating multiple approaches leads to reaching creative answers to the research questions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie 2004), as it seems to give the researcher a fuller picture and a greater insight into the investigated area (Silverman 2005).

In this study, surveys as a quantitative technique were used to measure students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards the use of Arabic in the English classroom (closed questions), whereas semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were conducted as a qualitative tool to obtain more insight into this research topic. The questionnaires used and the interviews conducted in this research will be described in detail later in this chapter [3.4].

3.4 Instruments

As mentioned earlier, two main tools were used to secure the data for this study: questionnaires as a quantitative technique and semi-structured interviews as a qualitative one. Below is a detailed description of both tools.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are known for being economical, easy to arrange, and efficient in

terms of time, its low cost and the considerable amount of collected data (Brown 2001; Denscombe 2007; Kagan 1990). In addition, the responses obtained have a high degree of standardization and consistency, as every respondent sees the same questions and responds to the same items (Brown 2001; Denscombe 2007). Moreover, questionnaires are more suitable when addressing sensitive and/or confidential issues, as “assurances of anonymity can be built into questionnaires” (Brown 2001, p. 77).

However, questionnaires have some disadvantages that need to be considered before making the decision to use them. One of the main disadvantages is that questionnaires may be mechanical and superficial as they do not require reflection from respondents or lead to in-depth exploration (Kagan 1990; Brown 2001). In order to avoid such a potential problem, the questionnaires used in this study included a ‘comment’ section on each item as well as a general one at the end allowing respondents to reflect on the investigated issue. Another disadvantage is that the questionnaire data may not be reliable as some respondents may “skip many of the questions or only partially answer some” (Brown 2001, p. 77). Moreover, being distant from the respondents, the researcher cannot ensure the honesty of the responses (Denscombe 2007). That was why semi-structured interviews were adopted as another data collection tool to enable the researcher to obtain truthful and in-depth data.

The Likert-type scale is widely used for its relative reliability, flexibility and ease in construction. It also requires neither statistical assumptions nor judges (Karavas-Doukas 1996). Such a scale provides quantitative data that are accurate, measurable and easy to analyse. It also measures direction and intensity of attitude through inviting respondents to determine to what extent they agree or disagree to a set of statements (Albaum 1997). However, this type of scale is not free of problems. The midpoint is not always easy to interpret. It shows either respondents do not have a clear opinion or are not interested in a particular statement (McDonough & McDonough 1997).

3.4.2 Interviews

Qualitative interviews can be a powerful tool that allows the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the research area. However, this should not be seen as a way of accumulating information; it is rather a technique to “establish a relation with people that enables us to share in their perception of the world” (Richards 2003, p. 50).

Among the different types of interviews, a) structured, b) semi-structured and c) unstructured, the semi-structured one seems to be more convenient for the purpose of this study, as it “combine[s] the flexibility of unstructured, open-ended interview with the directionality and agenda of the survey instrument to produce focused, qualitative, textual data” (Schensul, Schensul & LeCompete 1999, p. 149). A semi-structured interview consists of a set of pre-formulated, open-ended questions related to an area of interest in an attempt to identify and analyse the different factors and variables contributing to a particular research area (Brown 2001; Schensul, Schensul and LeCompete 1999). Unlike questionnaires, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to probe for more information to obtain rich, spontaneous and truthful data (Brown 2001).

3.5 Steps of implementing the study

3.5.1 Students’ questionnaire

A questionnaire was devised to examine students’ attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms (see Appendix A) using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from ‘*Strongly Disagree*’ to ‘*Strongly Agree*’. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts; the first part included 12 items and focused on students’ perceptions (items 1-12), whereas the second part included 8 items and explored the various learning occasions when Arabic could facilitate learning English (items 13-20).

Before implementing the survey, it was translated into Arabic to accommodate students’ different levels of English proficiency, and not to inhibit students from the content of the questionnaire. The translation was revised by an Arabic teacher to ensure the integrity of the questionnaire. Before mass distribution, the questionnaire was piloted on a small group of ten students. The obtained feedback, e.g. rephrasing some items for more clarification, was factored into the survey, and then the final draft was produced.

The final draft of the questionnaire was distributed to all Grade 10 students, 140 subjects, who voluntarily showed interest in participating in this research. The researcher gave the participant students a brief orientation regarding the aim of the investigation. They were informed that their responses would not affect their

coursework marks positively or negatively, as the study was only for academic and research purposes. After close coordination with Grade 10 English teachers, the survey was implemented during the English lessons in the presence of the researcher to facilitate and respond to students' concerns. Among 140 distributed questionnaires, only 120 were returned complete.

3.5.2 Teachers' questionnaire

A questionnaire was created to explore teachers' perceptions toward using Arabic in English classrooms (see Appendix B). Similar to the students' survey, this one used a five-point Likert-scale, and consisted of two main parts. The first part included 8 items and focused on teachers' perceptions (items 1-8), whereas the second part included 12 items and examined the various learning occasions where teachers thought Arabic could be beneficial in learning English (items 9-20).

The first draft of the questionnaire was given to a small group of three English teachers for feedback. Based on the received input, the survey was revised and the draft was produced. The final version of the questionnaire was distributed to 30 English teachers. However, only 20 completed ones were received.

As indicated earlier [3.3], this study adopts a mixed-methods approach that combines techniques from quantitative and qualitative research traditions. Quantitative questionnaires provide measurable data that help analyse students' and teachers' attitudes toward the use of Arabic in EFL classrooms. However, there is a pressing need to investigate the topic in more depth to understand its complex nature (Richards 2003).

For the purpose of this study, and in order to obtain in-depth, rich qualitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both students and teachers regarding their attitudes toward the use of Arabic in EFL classrooms. The process of conducting these interviews is detailed below.

3.5.3 Students' interviews

Among those students who showed interest in being interviewed, and after obtaining their informed consent (see Appendix L), only four were selected. As indicated earlier in [3.2.1], students were categorized into three groups according to their score on Term One English exam. Therefore, it was taken into consideration that

these interviewees should represent students' different levels of English proficiency: beginning (one student), intermediate (two students) and advanced (one student).

A list of 12 pre-formulated, open-ended questions (see Appendix C) formed the basis on which the interviews were conducted. The interview questions drew on students' previous learning experience regarding the use of Arabic when learning English. At the beginning of each interview, the interviewee was reminded that his coursework marks would not be affected, as his participation in this study was only for academic and research purposes. All the interviews were conducted in Arabic to accommodate students' different levels of English proficiency and allow them to express themselves properly. They were audio recorded using a digital recorder and later translated and transcribed for analysis (see Appendix F).

3.5.4 Teachers' interviews

Four interviews were conducted to examine teachers' perceptions toward using their students' L1, Arabic, in EFL classrooms. The teachers who participated in the questionnaire were asked to indicate whether they were willing to be interviewed at a later stage. Among those who showed interest, and after obtaining their informed consent (see Appendix L), four with different linguistic backgrounds were selected: one British, two Canadians with a masters degree and one Jordanian with a doctoral degree. Each teacher had teaching experience of at least 3 years. They also learnt a second/foreign language at a certain stage in their lives.

As indicated earlier, the semi-structured type of interviews was adopted, as it seemed more convenient for the purpose of this study. A list of 12 open-ended questions was used to carry out the interviews and probe for more in-depth data. All the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed later for analysis (see Appendix E for the format of the transcript). The interview transcriptions were given back to the interviewees to confirm originality (see Appendix G).

3.6 Data analysis procedures

In order to analyse the collected data and consequently, answer the research questions mentioned in [1.3], students' and teachers' responses on the five-point Likert

scale questionnaires were tallied. Then the responses were converted to percentages and fractions were rounded (see Appendix H & I). The main reason for using percentage was that it was easy to interpret and, at the same time, provided quantitative, measurable data. On each questionnaire item, the responses marked as ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘disagree’ were combined together to reflect the negative attitude, whereas the ones marked as ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ were combined to indicate the positive attitude. The responses on items 7 and 11 on students’ questionnaire, and items 5, 6, and 8 on teachers’ questionnaire were reversed to reflect the appropriate attitude and maintain the overall consistency. Besides, the qualitative comments provided by the participants on each item were combined together and summarized to obtain rich, in-depth data (see Appendix J & K).

In order to explore the topic of this research at depth and obtain better understanding, the interviews conducted with both teachers and students were transcribed. Then, appropriate sections were presented and discussed.

The data obtained from both questionnaires and interviews were examined, and results were highlighted. In light of the literature review provided in Chapter Two, attempts were made to discuss and interpret the collected data to answer the study research questions and reach sound conclusions regarding students’ and teachers’ attitudes toward using Arabic in EFL classrooms. Also, the findings of this study were linked to similar studies reviewed in Chapter Two.

As mentioned earlier, the aim of this study is to investigate the attitudes of Emirati public high school students and teachers toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms. The following chapter highlights and discusses the findings of the collected data in order to find answers to the research questions stated in [1.3]. It also links these findings to similar studies reported in the literature review.

Chapter Four Research findings

As mentioned in the previous chapter, both students' and teachers' questionnaires and interviews have been adopted to collect the necessary data for the current study. The aim of this chapter is to examine these quantitative and qualitative collected data and highlights the findings of both questionnaires and interviews in light of the research questions: whether Emirati public high school students and teachers have positive or negative attitudes toward using Arabic in English classrooms, whether students' attitude varies according to their English proficiency level, and whether there are any possible learning occasions where using Arabic may facilitate learning English.

4.1: Students' attitude

As mentioned earlier in [3.5], in order to calculate the overall attitude of the students toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms, the students' responses on the questionnaire marked as 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' were combined together to calculate the negative attitude, whereas those marked as 'agree' and 'strongly agree' were combined to indicate the positive attitude. Also, the obtained responses were converted to percentages, as this allowed for easy interpretation.

4.1.1: Students' questionnaire

This section aims at analysing students' responses on the questionnaire in light of the research questions (RQ) stated earlier. As mentioned in [3.4.1.1], a five-likert-scale questionnaire is devised and distributed to one hundred and forty students; only one hundred and twenty students return the survey completed (see Appendix H). It includes twenty items: items from one to twelve focus on students' perception toward using Arabic in EFL classrooms, whereas items thirteen to twenty explore the potential learning occasions where using Arabic during English classrooms may be beneficial.

RQ 1: Do Emirati public high school students hold positive or negative attitudes toward using Arabic in English classrooms?

Figure 4 illustrates the students' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms in percentages. As can be seen from this figure, the surveyed students have an overall positive attitude regarding the use of their MT during EFL classrooms. A high percentage of the students (44%) are in favour of using Arabic when learning English, whereas the responses that indicate negative and neutral attitudes only score twenty eight percent each.

Figure 4: Students' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms in percentages (N=120)

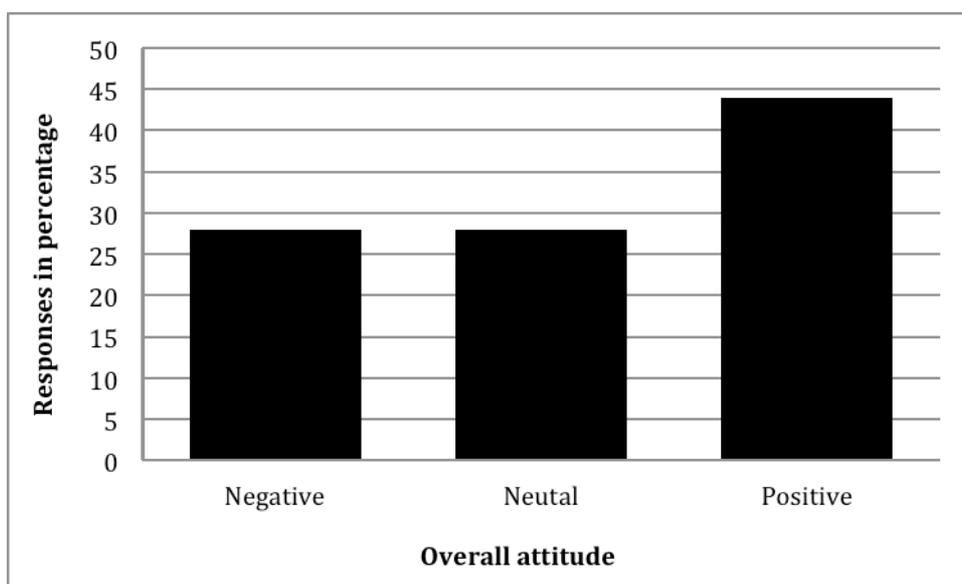


Table 5 shows the students' overall attitude toward using Arabic per item on the questionnaire (items 1-11). As can be seen from this table, the students' responses on items one, four, eight, nine, and ten indicate a positive attitude toward using Arabic. Out of one hundred and twenty students, forty percent think that Arabic should be used in all English classes, whereas thirty four percent do not share them this opinion. A high percentage of the students (44%) indicate that using Arabic in class helps them learn English. Also, forty percent of the students agree that using Arabic motivates them to participate more in English classroom activities. The majority of the students (62%) believe that using Arabic in class helps them learn English better. Finally, forty percent of the student participants believe that using an English-Arabic dictionary helps them to understand the new vocabulary.

On the other hand, items two and seven show a negative attitude toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms. About forty three percent of the students respond

negatively when asked whether they would like their English teachers to use Arabic in class. It seems that students want to be allowed to use L1, but they still appreciate the L2 input they receive from their teachers. In addition, about forty percent do not prefer to use Arabic in English classes, against twenty eight percent who are in favour of that. These negative responses might be attributed to students' recognition of the significant importance and need to maximize their exposure to the target language.

Table 5: Students' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms per item (N=120)

#	Items	Overall attitude		
		Negative	Neutral	Positive
1	Arabic should be used in all English classes.	34%	26%	40%
2	I would like my English teacher to use Arabic in class.	43%	27%	30%
3	I feel more comfortable when my teacher uses Arabic in class.	35%	29%	36%
4	Using Arabic in class helps me learn English.	23%	33%	44%
5	Students should be allowed to use Arabic in class.	22%	40%	28%
6	I understand the lesson much better when the teacher uses Arabic.	39%	21%	40%
7	I prefer not to use Arabic in English classes.	39%	33%	28%
8	Using Arabic motivates me to participate more in English classroom activities.	31%	27%	42%
9	Using Arabic in class helps me learn English better.	25%	13%	62%
10	Using an English-Arabic dictionary helps me understand the new vocabulary.	35%	25%	40%
11	Using Arabic prevents me from learning English.	33%	43%	24%

It can also be noted that the surveyed students do not have a decisive opinion on items five and eleven. They do not seem to be sure whether they should be allowed to use Arabic in class (40%), or whether using Arabic prevents them from learning English (43%). Similarly, the students do not show a significant preference on items three and six. Only thirty six percent of the students feel more comfortable when their teacher uses Arabic in class, in comparison to thirty five percent who do not share the same view. Also, forty percent of the students indicate that they understand the lesson much better when Arabic is used, against thirty nine percent who respond negatively.

Table 6 below shows the students' overall view regarding the frequency of using Arabic in English classrooms. As can be seen from the table, about forty five percent of the students indicate that Arabic should 'sometimes' be used in English classrooms, whereas twenty nine percent mention that it should 'rarely' be used. It also can be noted that three percent mark 'always'. Later, Table 9 shows that this percentage belongs to the beginner-level subjects. This can be attributed to their low level, limited L2 background, and inability to survive in a monolingual classroom without using Arabic.

Table 6: Students' overall view regarding the frequency of using Arabic in English classrooms (N=120)

#	Item	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
12	How often do you think Arabic should be used?	8%	29%	44%	16%	3%

RQ 2: Does students' attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms vary according to their English proficiency level?

As mentioned in [3.2.1], the students were classified into three different groups in terms of their level of English proficiency. Students' marks on Term One English exam were used as the criteria to determine the students' level: beginners (below 60%), intermediate (between 60% and 84%), and advanced (above 84%).

Figure 7: Students' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms by level

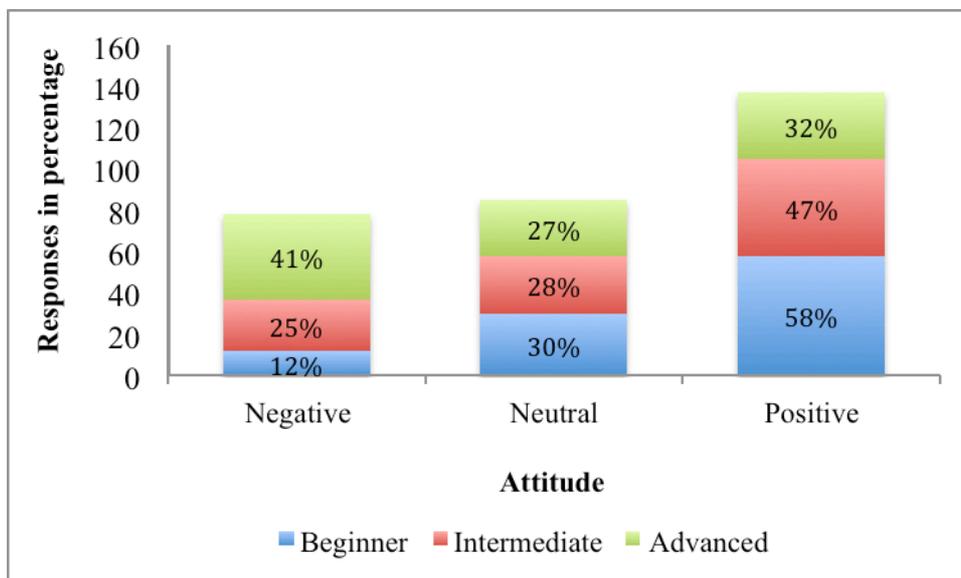


Figure 7 outlines the students' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms by level of proficiency: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. As can be seen from this figure, the students' overall attitude varies according to their proficiency level in English. The results indicate that the beginner- and intermediate- levels show a more positive attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms (56% and 47% respectively). On the other hand, the advanced-level students tend to have a negative attitude toward MT inclusion during English lessons (41%).

Table 8: Students' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms by level

#	Items	Beginners (N=13)			Intermediate (N=77)			Advanced (N=30)		
		<i>Neg</i>	<i>Neu</i>	<i>Pos</i>	<i>Neg</i>	<i>Neu</i>	<i>Pos</i>	<i>Neg</i>	<i>Neu</i>	<i>Pos</i>
1	Arabic should be used in all English classes.	15%	31%	54%	31%	30%	39%	50%	17%	33%
2	I would like my English teacher to use Arabic in class.	38%	15%	47%	39%	30%	31%	56%	23%	21%
3	I feel more comfortable when my teacher uses Arabic in class.	23%	15%	62%	31%	34%	35%	50%	27%	23%
4	Using Arabic in class helps me learn English.	0%	38%	62%	22%	29%	49%	36%	43%	21%
5	Students should be allowed to use Arabic in class.	30%	62%	8%	27%	39%	34%	47%	33%	20%
6	I understand the lesson much better when the teacher uses Arabic.	8%	23%	69%	39%	22%	39%	53%	17%	30%
7	I prefer not to use Arabic in English classes.	15%	54%	31%	39%	31%	30%	53%	30%	17%
8	Using Arabic motivates me to participate more in English classroom activities.	8%	46%	46%	27%	36%	37%	53%	20%	27%
9	Using Arabic in class helps me learn English better.	23%	15%	62%	26%	27%	47%	60%	10%	30%
10	Using an English-Arabic dictionary helps me understand the new vocabulary.	0%	23%	77%	11%	14%	75%	20%	13%	67%

11	Using Arabic prevents me from learning English.	0%	46%	54%	23%	30%	47%	44%	30%	26%
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Table 8 details the comparison among the different levels in regard to their attitude toward using Arabic on each item in the completed questionnaire. As is evident from the table, the advanced-level students respond negatively on most of the items ranging from forty to sixty percent. However, sixty seven percent agree that using an English-Arabic dictionary helps them understand the new vocabulary. On the other hand, the beginner-level students respond positively on almost all the items ranging from forty seven to seventy seven percent. However, they do not seem uncertain whether they should be allowed to use Arabic in class (62%), or they prefer not to (54%). Regarding the intermediate students, they generally respond positively on the questionnaire items ranging from thirty five to seventy seven percent. However, these students have a slightly negative attitude on items two and seven. About forty five percent indicate that they do not like their English teacher to use Arabic in class, while thirty nine percent do not prefer to use Arabic in English classes.

Table 9: Students' view regarding the frequency of using Arabic in English classrooms by level (Beginner N=13 - Intermediate N=77 – Advanced N=30)

#		Level	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
12	How often do you think Arabic should be used?	Beg.	0	15	27	54	4
		Inter.	10	29	47	14	0
		Adv.	17	37	43	3	0

Table 9 shows the students' overall view regarding the frequency of using Arabic in English classrooms according to their English proficiency level. As can be noted from the table, fifty four percent of the beginner-level students indicate that Arabic should 'often' be used in class, while twenty seven percent respond by choosing 'sometimes'. On the other hand, the advanced students think that Arabic should 'sometimes' be used (43%), while thirty seven percent mark 'rarely'. Regarding the intermediate level, forty seven percent of the students believe that Arabic should 'sometimes' be used, whereas twenty nine percent choose 'rarely'.

RQ 3: Are there any learning occasions where using Arabic during English classrooms may be beneficial?

Table 10: Students’ overall view regarding the learning occasions where using Arabic during English classes may be beneficial (N=120)

#	Items	Overall attitude		
		Negative	Neutral	Positive
13	I understand English grammar better when it is explained in Arabic.	26%	18%	56%
14	Arabic should be used to explain new vocabulary items.	19%	21%	60%
15	Using Arabic helps understand the English idioms and expressions.	22%	34%	44%
16	It’s better to use Arabic to explain the differences and similarities between Arabic and English.	22%	27%	51%
17	Using Arabic helps me express my feelings and ideas when I fail to do that in English.	22%	33%	45%
18	Students should be allowed to use Arabic in pair/ small-group work.	18%	27%	55%
19	Teachers should use Arabic to explain difficult concepts.	12%	18%	70%
20	Arabic should be used to facilitate complicated English classroom tasks.	22%	25%	53%

Table 10 below presents the students’ overall view regarding the potential learning occasions where using Arabic in English classrooms may be beneficial. The students show a positive attitude on all the listed items. As indicated in the table above, the students’ positiveness ranges from forty five to seventy percent. The majority of the students believe that their teachers should use Arabic to explain difficult concepts (70%). They also indicate that Arabic should be used to explain new vocabulary items (60%). A high percentage of the surveyed students believe that they understand English grammar better when it is explained in Arabic (56%). With almost the same percentage, the students think that they should be allowed to use Arabic in pair and small-group

work (55%). In addition, Arabic may be used to explain the differences and similarities between Arabic and English as well as facilitating complicated English classroom tasks (51% and 53% respectively).

As mentioned in [3.5], students' comments on the questionnaire items are combined and summarized to enrich the study and explore it in more depth (see Appendix J). The students' comments indicate that they have a positive attitude toward the use of Arabic during English class. In general, they believe that using Arabic facilitates learning and helps them to study English better. They also mention that the lower-level students benefit a lot from using Arabic, as they cannot understand teachers' instructions without resorting to Arabic. However, some students indicate that using Arabic should be kept to the minimum, as it decreases their exposure to English and drives them to be lazier.

The students' comments also highlight a lot of learning situations where Arabic can be used. Arabic may be used to introduce the new vocabulary and difficult concepts, as this saves time. It may also be used to present new grammar rules and show the differences between Arabic and English. Students believe that Arabic is beneficial in pair/group work, as low-level students can get support from the other students.

As has been seen, the previous section reports the findings of the collected data from students' questionnaire in light of the research questions listed in [1.3]. The following section highlights the findings of the data collected from the semi-structured interviews conducted with four of the Grade 10 students, who showed interest in being interviewed.

4.1.2: Students' interviews

The aim of this section is to analyse and report the findings of the qualitative data collected from the interviews conducted with four Grade 10 students. These findings are highlighted in light of the research questions stated earlier in [1.3] regarding students' perception toward using Arabic in English classrooms. The four student interviewees represent the students' different levels of English proficiency: beginning (Student A), intermediate (Student B and C) and advanced (Student D). To secure the necessary data, a list of twelve pre-formulated, open-ended questions (see Appendix C) was used to carry out the interviews and probe for more in-depth data.

Some interview questions drew on students' previous learning experience regarding the use of Arabic in EFL classrooms. All the interviewed students mentioned that Arabic was used a lot in their English classrooms in their previous preparatory school. It was used to cover almost every learning situation starting from introducing vocabulary to socializing with their teachers and other students. Most of the students felt comfortable when Arabic was used, as it was easier for them. Only one student mentioned that he had a negative feeling toward that as there was no challenge, and he did not learn anything new either.

RQ 1: Do Emirati public high school students hold a positive or negative attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms?

When asked whether they think that English teachers should use Arabic in class, two students out of four indicate that it should be allowed, as it helps students, especially the lower-level ones, to stay focused and follow the flow of the lesson. As explained in Extract 4.1 below, Student A says that when Arabic is not used, he cannot follow the lesson.

Extract 4.1:

Interviewer: How do you feel when your teacher uses English only?

Student A: I feel it is difficult to follow what is going on in class. I sit doing NOTHING. I stop following the teacher .. and start daydreaming.

However, the other two interviewees, Student C and Student D, mention that using Arabic excessively discourages students to use the target language and drives them not to pay attention. In Extract 4.2, Student C says that when students get used to using Arabic in class, they wait for the teacher to translate what he explains in English.

Extract 4.2:

Interviewer: Do you think Arabic should be used in English classrooms?

Student C: No.

Interviewer: Why not?

Student C: If Arabic is used very often .. students don't pay attention when the teacher explains in English. They .. they'll wait until he shifts to Arabic. This will make students lazier.

In Extract 4.3, when asked if he prefers to use Arabic in class, Student D mentions that students should use English as much as they can, as this is part of their responsibility as students.

Extract 4.3:

Interviewer: Do you prefer using Arabic in class?

Student D: No. .. It does not make me think. .. Like the new vocabulary I .. prefer working out the meaning instead of being told what it means. It's part of the student's RESPONSIBILITY to use English as much as we can.

When asked whether Arabic should be banned in English classrooms, two students disagree and claim that its use should be limited not banned. In Extract 4.4, Student A, who is a low-level student, comments that students still need Arabic to follow the lesson.

Extract 4.4:

Interviewer: Do you think using Arabic should be banned?

Student A: NO .. definitely not.

Interviewer: Why not?

*Student A: If **COMPLETELY** banned, some students won't be able to cope up with what is going on in class.*

The other two students, however, agree to banishing English from EF classes. They mention that Arabic support may be provided in a form of remedial sessions offered after class time to attend to low-level students' needs. Their tendency to banish Arabic from English classes might be attributed to students' over reliance on Arabic when used, which drives them to be lazier and not to exert efforts to learn the TL.

Regarding the frequency of using Arabic in English classrooms, all the interviewed students agree that it should be kept to the minimum and not exceed five

percent of class time of forty-five minutes. This can be noted in Extract 4.5 when Student B says that Arabic should be rarely used.

Extract 4.5:

Interviewer: In a 45-minute English class, what percentage in terms of time do you think Arabic may be used?

*Student B: It should be **RARELY** used. .. I'd say 5% and **ONLY** when needed.*

The conducted interviews with the students show that they seem to be aware of the potential drawbacks of using Arabic during English classes. They admit that excessive use of Arabic limits their opportunities to use English, as they get used to it. It also demotivates and drives them to be lazier.

RQ 2: Does students' attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms vary according to their English proficiency level?

Examining the data collected from the four conducted interviews, it becomes apparent that low-level students show a more positive attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms than intermediate and advanced students. Low-level students feel more comfortable and less intimidated when Arabic is used. This is evident in Extract 4.6 when Student A says that using Arabic does not make him feel embarrassed.

Extract 4.6:

Interviewer: How did you feel when Arabic was used?

Student A: When Arabic was used, I always felt comfortable. I was able to understand what was going on in class and .. and I did not feel embarrassed.

They also believe that using Arabic 'sometimes' helps them follow the lesson, and not to be left behind. In Extract 4.7, Student A justifies the need to use Arabic saying that low-level students get involved in the lesson when Arabic is used.

Extract 4.7:

Interviewer: Do you think that Arabic should be used in English classrooms?

*Student A: Yes, ... **SOMETIMES**.*

Interviewer: Why?

Student A: Not every student can understand 100% of what is said in English. ... Using Arabic helps me stay focused.

On the other hand, intermediate and advanced students do not seem to prefer the use of Arabic in English classrooms. They believe that it is more beneficial if teachers use only English. This is well illustrated in Extract 4.8 when Student D says that they learn better when only English is used.

Extract 4.8:

Interviewer: How do you feel when your teacher uses only English?

*Student D: I benefit a lot when my teacher uses English only. .. It's true it's A **BIT** challenging .. especially at the beginning .. but we get used to it.*

In Extract 4.9, when asked whether Arabic should be banned, Student C agrees. However, he says that remedial classes may be offered after class time to support low achievers.

Extract 4.9:

Interviewer: Do you think using Arabic should be banned?

*Student C: Yes .. I think it should be **ONLY** used during remedial classes. .. This is when the teacher can help weak students to catch up on what they missed during the class time.*

RQ 3: Are there any learning occasions where using Arabic during English classrooms may be beneficial?

All the interviewed students, with their different English proficiency levels, believe that using Arabic may be beneficial in introducing new vocabulary as well as difficult grammar rules. In Extract 4.10, Student D, who is an advanced student, mentions that Arabic is essential to teach vocabulary and grammar.

Extract 4.10:

Interviewer: But you said Arabic is not preferred to be used?

*Student D: It's **ESSENTIAL** with vocabulary .. I mean we need to know its equivalent in Arabic to be able to use it appropriately. [...] I think it should be limited to vocabulary and sometimes grammar.*

Also, Student C highlights other learning occasions in Extract 4.11 below where Arabic may be beneficial.

Extract 4.11:

Interviewer: What are the learning situations when teachers may use Arabic?

Student C: When giving advice to students .. when there's a problem in class .. when comparing between Arabic and English .. like grammar .. to show the differences.

As has been seen earlier, and in light of the research questions mentioned in [1.3], the previous section highlights the findings of both students' questionnaire and semi-structured interviews regarding students' attitude toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms. The following section reports the findings of the teachers' survey and semi-structured interviews in regard to their attitude toward the use of Arabic during English classes.

4.2: Teachers' attitude

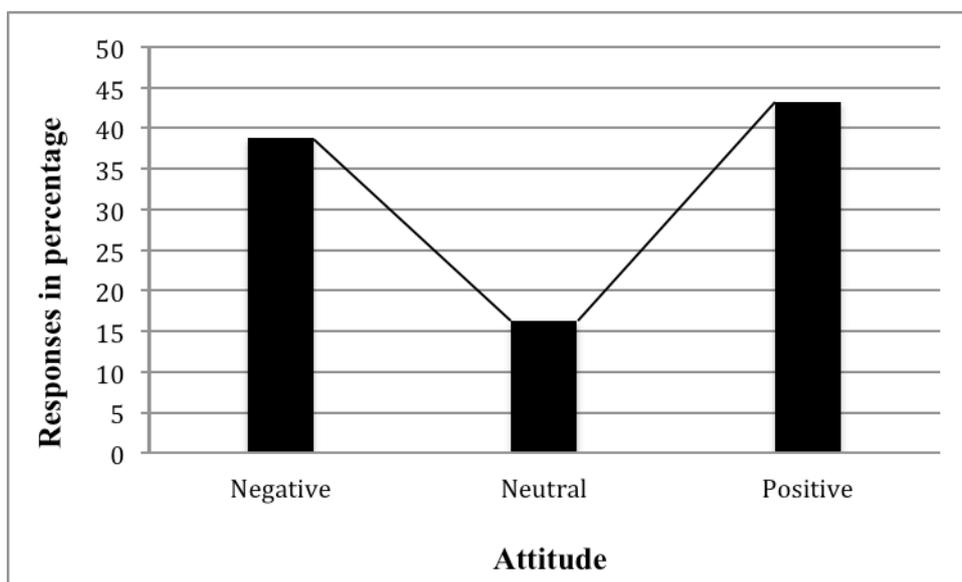
4.2.1: Teachers' questionnaire

The aim of this section is to analyse teachers' responses on the questionnaire in light of the research questions stated earlier in [1.3]. Items from one to nine focus on the teachers' perception toward using Arabic in EFL classrooms, whereas items ten to twenty explore the potential learning occasions where using Arabic during English classrooms may be beneficial.

RQ 1: Do EFL teachers hold a positive or negative attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms?

Figure 11 illustrates the teachers' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms. As can be seen from this figure, the surveyed teachers have a slightly overall positive attitude in regard to the use of their students' L1 in English classrooms. The data is split down the middle. Forty three percent of the teachers are in favour of using Arabic when learning English, whereas the negative and neutral attitudes score thirty-nine and sixteen percent of the subjects' responses respectively.

Figure 11: Teachers' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms in percentages (N=20)



When comparing students' and teachers' attitudes toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms (see Figure 4 and 11), it can be noted that both students and teachers have overall positive attitudes scoring almost the same percentage (44% and 43% respectively). However, teachers tend to have a more negative attitude toward Arabic than students, as they score thirty-nine percent against twenty eight percent for the students. This discrepancy might be due to teachers' concern of excessive use of Arabic, and how this might negatively affect students' learning.

Table 12 shows the teachers' overall attitude toward using Arabic per item on the questionnaire (items 1-8). As can be seen from this table, the teachers respond positively on items one, two, five, and seven. Fifty five percent of the surveyed teachers believe that Arabic should be used in English classes. Half of the teachers (50%) agree that their teacher should know the students' MT. Also, fifty percent do not agree that Arabic prevents students from learning English, in comparison to forty percent who

believe so. In addition, the majority of the teachers (80%) indicate that bilingual dictionaries help students understand the new vocabulary.

Table 12: Teachers' overall attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms per item (N=20)

#	Items	Overall attitude		
		Negative	Neutral	Positive
1	L1 should be used in English classes.	20%	25%	55%
2	Teachers should know their students' first language.	20%	30%	50%
3	Teachers should use their students' first language.	70%	15%	15%
4	Students' first language should be allowed during English lessons.	45%	20%	35%
5	Using L1 prevents students from learning English.	40%	10%	50%
6	Teachers should follow an English-only policy in the classroom.	70%	0%	30%
7	Bilingual dictionaries help students understand the new vocabulary.	15%	5%	80%
8	I do not feel comfortable when my students use their first language.	55%	25%	20%

On the other hand, items three, four, six, and eight show a negative attitude toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms. The majority of the teachers (70%) think that teachers should not use their students' mother tongue. Similarly, seventy percent indicate that teachers should follow an English-only policy in the classroom. About forty five percent of the teachers respond negatively when asked whether the students should be allowed to use their L1 during the English class. Moreover, fifty five percent do not feel comfortable when their students use Arabic.

Table 13: Teachers' view regarding the frequency of using Arabic in English classrooms (N=20)

#	Item	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
9	I think L1 should _____ be used in the English classroom.	0%	45%	45%	5%	5%

Table 13 shows the teachers' overall view regarding the frequency of using Arabic in English classrooms. As is evident from the table, forty five percent of the teachers indicate that Arabic should '*sometimes*' be used in English classrooms. The same percentage (45%) thinks that it should '*rarely*' be used.

RQ 3: Are there any learning occasions where using Arabic during English classrooms may be beneficial?

Table 14: Teachers' overall view regarding the learning occasions where using Arabic during English classes may be appropriate (N=20)

#	Items	Overall attitude		
		Negative	Neutral	Positive
	It's appropriate to use Arabic to ...			
10	explain difficult concepts.	20%	10%	70%
11	facilitate complicated English classroom tasks.	20%	20%	60%
12	introduce new grammatical rules.	60%	20%	20%
13	raise students' awareness of the differences and similarities between Arabic and English.	25%	15%	60%
14	explain new vocabulary especially abstract items.	15%	10%	75%
15	help students feel more comfortable/confident.	30%	25%	45%
16	give instructions.	75%	5%	20%
17	build up a good rapport with students.	40%	20%	40%
18	express students' feelings and ideas when they fail to do that in English.	20%	20%	60%
19	explain the English idioms and expressions.	25%	25%	50%
20	complete pair/ small-group work activities.	65%	10%	25%

Table 14 presents the teachers' overall view regarding the possible learning occasions where it is appropriate to use Arabic in English classrooms. The teachers show a positive attitude on all the listed items, except for three: twelve, sixteen, and twenty. As indicated in the table above, the teachers' positiveness ranges from forty five to seventy five percent. The majority of the teachers believe that it is appropriate to use Arabic to explain difficult concepts (70%). Also, sixty percent think that using Arabic might facilitate complicated English classroom tasks. The same percentage (60%) agrees that it helps to raise students' awareness of the differences and similarities

between Arabic and English. The majority of the teachers (75%) believe that it is suitable to explain new vocabulary especially abstract items. They also indicate that students might use Arabic to express their feelings and ideas when they fail to do that in English (60%). Finally, half of the teachers indicate that Arabic is convenient to explain English idioms and expressions.

On the other hand, items twelve, sixteen, and twenty show teachers' concerns regarding using Arabic in particular learning situations. As can be seen in Table 14, sixty percent do not agree that Arabic is useful when introducing new grammatical rules. The majority of the teachers do not see the value of using students' L1 to give instructions (75%). About sixty five percent do not agree that using Arabic is convenient to complete pair and small-group work activities.

As mentioned in [3.5], teachers' qualitative comments on the questionnaire items are combined and summarized in order to obtain a more in-depth understanding, and enrich the study (see Appendix K). These comments confirm the quantitative findings of the teachers' questionnaire. As can be noted, these comments indicate that the teachers have a slightly positive attitude toward the use of Arabic during English classes. A lot of comments indicate that Arabic is beneficial and should be used in English classrooms, especially with lower-level students. Its use can reduce anxiety and create less intimidating learning environment for beginners. If full immersion occurs before basic skills are gained, students will lose desire to learn the target language. However, there are other comments that stress the importance of maintaining an English-only environment, as the students have a limited opportunity to use the target language outside the classroom. L1 should be used as rarely as possible and kept to the minimum, as it should be used in a scaffolded way where the L1 is phased out as the students' level increases.

As has been seen, the previous section reports the findings of the collected data from the teachers' questionnaire in light of the research questions listed in the introduction. The following section reports the findings of the data collected from the semi-structured interviews conducted with four of the teachers, who showed interest in being interviewed.

4.2.2: Teachers' interviews

In light of the research questions stated earlier in [1.3], this section aims to report the findings of the qualitative data collected from the interviews conducted with four teachers regarding their perception toward using students' L1, Arabic, in English classrooms. As indicated in [3.4.2.2], each of the four teachers selected for interviews had teaching experience of at least 3 years; they also learnt another language at a certain stage in their lives. To secure the necessary data, a list of twelve pre-formulated, open-ended questions (see Appendix D) was used to carry out the interviews and probe for more in-depth data.

Part of the interview questions drew on teachers' previous learning experience as ESL/EFL learners and whether their MT was involved. Three of the interviewed teachers mentioned that their L1 was used a lot in their EFL classrooms, especially at their beginner stage. The fourth teacher did not study a foreign language, Italian in his case, in a normal classroom setting; he learnt it by being exposed to it. However, his L1 was also involved as he used a bilingual dictionary as well as seeking support from other bilingual speakers. The interviewed teachers reported that their experience as EFL learners affected them as teachers. They started to realize how difficult, and sometimes frustrating, it was to learn another language. They also developed a level of understanding toward the value of L1 in EFL classrooms.

RQ 1: Do EFL teachers hold a positive or a negative attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms?

The data collected from the four interviews indicate that the teachers show a slightly positive attitude toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms. They believe it has been a neglected area, and should be given more thought in the future. In Extract 4.12 below, Teacher A says L1 should not be banned in English classes, as this negatively affects learning, besides the fact that it is always in the students' minds.

Extract 4.12:

Interviewer: Is there anything else you like to add?

Teacher A: Well .. I do honestly believe that using L1 is .. is NOT something that should be banned or prevented in English classrooms because as I said .. even when it's not happening externally .. it .. that's how students are processing information in their own mind.

Also, allowing L1 in EFL classes is crucial for low-level students. Teacher C says in Extract 4.13 that it is an overwhelming challenge for them to be forced to solely use the target language when they are not ready yet.

Extract 4.13:

Interviewer: Do you think that such teacher-training programs should include something about the use of L1 in English classrooms?

Teacher C: YES .. definitely yes. I think there's definitely a place of the L1 in the ESL and EFL classrooms .. especially at lower levels. ... I think it's a little overwhelming for students who don't speak the language to be forced to completely use it.

Moreover, Teacher B, as mentioned in Extract 4.14, believes that effective L2 learning requires an interaction between L1 and L2 in the students' minds. He comments:

Extract 4.14:

Interviewer: There's a common criticism that allowing students to use their native language reduces their exposure to the target language. What's your opinion regarding this issue?

Teacher B: Personally .. I think it is a misconceived notion. When learning a second language .. you can't do this in isolation from the way of thinking you already know in your L1. .. There has to be a bridge. .. And allowing the use of L1 in L2 classrooms actually forms and allows this bridge to exist.

All the interviewed teachers believe that following an English-only policy in English classrooms has problems, as it is not suitable for all students' proficiency levels. Banishing L1 from EFL classrooms, as mentioned by Teacher B in Extract 4.15, negatively affects students' motivation, especially low-level students. It hinders their learning and causes frustration, as they cannot cope up with the language density they are exposed to. There should be a blend of both L1 and L2.

Extract 4.15:

Interviewer: Do you think that the English-only policy has problems?

*Teacher B: **YES** it does have problems .. for one affective problem with the students .. their motivation can be severely hindered if they're put into an English-only environment and they don't have the proficiency .. to survive in that environment 100%.*

The teachers agree that Arabic should not be forbidden. However, students should be encouraged to use English as much as possible, as their proficiency level increases. In Extract 4.16 below, Teacher A says that Arabic should gradually be phased out, and English-only environment should be the target whenever students' level allows.

Extract 4.16:

Interviewer: Do you think that the English-only policy has problems?

*Teacher A: I think students should be encouraged to speak English as much as possible and .. minimize the use of L1. .. But I don't think it should be **FORBIDDEN**. .. Certainly not. .. But we should push for English-only where possible.*

On the other hand, the interviewed teachers seem to be aware of the drawbacks of introducing L1 to EFL classrooms. Three of them agree that using Arabic in English classes reduces learners' exposure to English. Although the teachers recognize the value of L1, they believe that students rely on the Arabic support when it is constantly used. Consequently, this leads to minimizing any opportunities to practice the TL, English. Therefore, L1 use should be limited to the minimum, and as necessity dictates. As can be seen in Extract 4.17, Teacher D warns against excessive use of Arabic, as this limits students' abilities to communicate in the L2.

Extract 4.17:

Interviewer: There s' a common criticism that allowing students to use their mother tongue during English classes reduces their exposure to the target language. What's your opinion?

*Teacher D: Yes I agree if the use of Arabic is **CONSTANT** and if it is regularly used. .. Students will start relying on Arabic to ask questions, which will limit their chances to use English, as this will negatively affect their communicative skills.*

Teacher C comments on the dangers of using Arabic in Extract 4.18. He says that relying widely on Arabic drives the students to exert no effort to use the L2. Consequently, the students will not be motivated to learn, as they tend to take the easy path.

Extract 4.18:

Interviewer: In your opinion what are the drawbacks of allowing students' L1 to be used in English classrooms?

Teacher C: Using L1 in English classrooms doesn't motivate students to learn the target language. .. For most people .. it's a natural human tendency to take the path of least resistance.

In addition, using Arabic may make classroom management more challenging, as the students will not be on task. It also could be an excuse for the teachers not to explore new ways and techniques to help their students learn the TL better.

RQ 3: Are there any learning occasions where using Arabic during English classrooms may be beneficial?

In regard to whether students' L1 has the potential as a classroom-teaching tool, all the interviewed teachers believe that it may facilitate learning if it is used effectively and employed at a certain level. They highlight different learning occasions where Arabic has a role to play. In Extract 4.19, Teacher B says that in order to save time, it may be used to introduce abstract vocabulary, complex concepts, difficult grammar rules, and to highlight the differences between L1 and L2.

Extract 4.19:

*Interviewer: You indicated in the questionnaire that L1 might **SOMETIMES** be used in L2 classroom. So when do you think students' L1 may be used in terms of learning situations?*

Teacher B: It can be used to explain particular complex vocabulary or ideas .. where grammar concepts are more easily explained in L1. .. I don't see any problem with that.

Also, as mentioned in Extract 4.20 by Teacher A, it may be used for affective purposes, e.g. when students lack confidence, to provide emotional support, or establish a good rapport with students.

Extract 4.20:

*Interviewer: In the questionnaire you've completed, you indicated that L1 may be **RARELY** used in English classroom. What are the learning situations you think L1 may be used?*

*Teacher A: **POSSIBLY** if there's a very very **difficult** concept and you've exhausted all other means trying to explain it **IN ENGLISH**. .. possibly to save time and ... also when having students lacking confidence. They need that kind of .. assurance.*

In addition, pair/group work may be resorted to so that low-level students can get support from other students. Teacher B mentions in Extract 4.21 that it is also a tool to brainstorm ideas and prepare for cognitive tasks.

Extract 4.21:

*Interviewer: You indicated in the questionnaire that L1 might **SOMETIMES** be used in L2 classroom. So when do you think students' L1 may be used in terms of learning situations?*

*Teacher B: I don't mind using L1 for **THINKING** .. group work .. **BRAINSTORMING** .. students asking each other to explain a word or a concept. .. Why not to allow stronger students to help them using their L1?*

As has been seen, in order to investigate students' and teachers' attitudes toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms, this chapter highlights the findings of the data collected from both students' and teachers' questionnaires and interviews. The following chapter examines the findings of this study in an attempt to answer the research questions stated in [1.3]. It also links these findings to similar studies mentioned in the literature review. In addition, it discusses the pedagogical implications and limitation of this study. Furthermore, it gives suggestions on how this research may be taken forward.

Chapter Five Discussion

This chapter discusses the findings of the current study and answers the research questions specified in the introduction: whether students and teachers have positive or negative attitudes toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms, whether students' attitude toward the target language varies according to their English proficiency level, and whether there are any potential learning opportunities where the use of Arabic may be beneficial. It also links the findings of this research to other similar studies highlighted in the literature review. It discusses the pedagogical implications of the obtained results, as well as the limitations of the study. In addition, it gives an account of some possible future research possibilities that may move this research forward. Finally, it describes how the current investigation has impacted the researcher.

5.1: Students' and teachers' attitudes

RQ1: Do Emirati public high school students and EFL teachers hold positive or negative attitudes toward using Arabic in English classrooms?

The findings of the current study reveal that both students and teachers have slightly overall positive attitudes toward the use of learners' L1, Arabic, in English language classrooms. This is in line with Burden's (2001) finding regarding teachers' and students' perception toward the use of L1. Similar to Schweers' (1999) finding, teachers and students believe that Arabic plays an important role as a facilitating and supportive tool that helps students learn English as a foreign language. In addition, it motivates students to participate more in the classroom activities. It is also beneficial especially for low-level students, as it helps them to stay focused and be involved in the lesson (Macaro 2001; Willis & Willis 2007). Both teachers and students agree that it is an overwhelming challenge, especially for low-level students, to exclusively use a language they struggle with. Sharma's (2006) findings show that banishing L1 from English classroom negatively affects students' progress. In this research context, it seems that Arabic should not be banned, as this negatively affects students' motivation, hinders their learning, and causes frustration.

Although they recognize the value of using Arabic as a classroom resource, both teachers and students are aware of the challenges that such a decision may bring about. The present study provides additional support to Al-Nofaie's (2010) finding in that constant use of Arabic reduces learners' exposure to English and decreases their opportunities to practice the TL and hinders their learning. Moreover, excessive use of Arabic demotivates students to learn the L2 and, consequently, drives them to be lazier. This is consistent with Tang's (2002) finding of limited and judicious use of L1. In this research, teachers and students believe that Arabic should not be banned. Nevertheless, it should be limited and kept to the minimum, as English-only environment should be encouraged. Even with low-level students, Arabic should be gradually phased out as their proficiency level increases, which can be easily noted through their active participation in classroom activities.

5.2: Attitude and proficiency level

RQ2: Does students' attitude toward using Arabic in English classrooms vary according to their English proficiency level?

The current research findings indicate that students' attitude toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms varies according to their proficiency level in English. Consistent with Prodromou's (2002) and Mouhanna's (2009) results, the current study findings show that low-level students have a more positive attitude toward using Arabic than the intermediate and advanced students. Due to their limited English background, the low-level students are more linguistically challenged in comparison to the other students, as they cannot cope up with the density of the language they are exposed to. Therefore, allowing Arabic during English classes helps in lowering their 'affective filter', which leads to a more comfortable and a less intimidating learning environment. They benefit from an occasional use of Arabic, which helps them to keep up with the lesson progression.

On the other hand, the study results show that advanced and intermediate students have a negative attitude toward the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. These students see the use of Arabic as a hindrance, as it prevents them from learning the TL. Hence, they feel it should be banished from EFL classes.

Moreover, allowing students and/or teachers to use Arabic minimizes learners' exposure to English and maximize their reliance on their MT. Swain and Lapkin (2000) warn against the use of L1. They argue that it should not "be actively encouraged as it may substitute for, rather than support, second language learning" (p. 268). In this study context, therefore, maintaining an English-only environment seems to be more beneficial for all students, including the low-level learners. It might be a bit challenging at the beginning. However, students will get used to it.

5.3: Learning opportunities

RQ3: Are there any learning occasions where using Arabic during English classrooms may be beneficial?

The current research findings reveal that there is a high level of agreement between students' and teachers' views regarding the potential learning occasions where using Arabic may be beneficial during English language classes. This is generally consistent with the majority of the literature (Schweers1999; Swain & Lapkin 2000; Burden 2001; Prodromou 2002; Tang 2002; Sharma 2006; Storch & Aldosari 2010). In this current study context, using Arabic seems to be appropriate to facilitate complicated classroom tasks and explain difficult concepts. It may be used to explain new vocabulary, especially abstract items, as well as English idioms and expressions. Arabic may also be used to raise students' awareness of the similarities and differences between their mother tongue, Arabic, and English. In addition, students may resort to Arabic to express their feelings and ideas when they fail to do so in English.

As mentioned above, there is a high level of consistency between students' and teachers' opinions regarding the learning opportunities where Arabic may be useful. However, the research results also indicate that there are a few discrepancies in this regard. While students see the value of using Arabic to explain grammatical rules and complete pair/group work activities, teachers surprisingly do not share them this view. This could be attributed to teachers' belief that teaching grammar and pair/group work activities are possible learning situations where the use of the L2, English, can be maximized.

5.4: Linking research to previous studies in literature

The findings of the current research on the attitudes of students and teachers toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms bear a lot of similarities to other studies in literature (Schweers 1999; Burden 2001; Tang 2002; Sharma 2006; Al-Nofaie 2010). The results of these studies indicate that there is a general agreement between teachers and students regarding the importance of L1 use in the TL classes. Despite the different contexts where these studies were carried out, their findings show that learners' and teachers have positive attitudes toward using learners' MT when learning a foreign language. The participating subjects believe that both learners and teachers should be allowed to use learners' L1 in FL classrooms, as using L1 helps students learn English.

In this regard, Schweers (1999) stresses the importance of bringing learners' L1 back to EFL classes as this would lead to positive attitudes toward learning the target language. Limited and judicious use of L1 may be tolerated because of its pedagogical and affective benefits. Burden (2001) emphasizes the value of occasional inclusion of the L1 in L2 classes to meet learners' psychological needs of not portraying their MT as an inferior to the TL. Tang (2002) claims that "limited and judicious use of the mother tongue in the English classroom does not reduce students' exposure to English, but rather can assist in the teaching and learning processes" (p. 41). Sharma (2006) argues that banishing L1 from English classroom would negatively affect students' progress. Similarly, Al-Nofaie (2010) indicates that both teachers and students are convinced of limited and judicious use of Arabic. However, excessive use of Arabic would negatively affect and hinder learning English.

This research also examines whether students' proficiency level in English affects their attitude toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms. Prodromou's (2002) and Mouhanna's (2009) studies bear similarities to the current investigation. The results of these studies indicate that students' perceptions of L1 use vary according to their level of English proficiency. In this study context, it is noted that the low-level students show a more positive attitude toward the use of L1 in English classes than the intermediate and advanced students. The beginner students support the use of the mother tongue in the English classrooms. They also believe that using their L1 helps them to learn English. On the other hand, the intermediate and advanced students hold a negative attitude toward the use of L1. They believe that L1 hinders their L2 learning

and minimizes their exposure to the TL. Prodromou (2002) concludes that the students become less reliant on their L1 when their level of proficiency improves. Mouhanna (2009) points out that, due to lower level students' high demand for L1 use, there is a need to incorporate Arabic as a pedagogical tool for learning English.

The above-highlighted studies also indicate that the L1 may be appropriate to be used in different learning situations. L1 may be acceptable in explaining new vocabulary items, teaching difficult grammatical rules, raising awareness of the similarities and differences between the L1 and L2, clarifying difficult concepts, checking students' comprehension, giving instructions, and teaching new phrases and expressions.

5.5: Pedagogical implications

The results of the current study have a lot of implications on teaching English as a foreign language. As has been discussed earlier in this chapter, both teachers and students tend to have positive attitudes toward the use of Arabic. They both acknowledge the value of using Arabic as a facilitating tool in learning English. However, they also are concerned about the dangers of its excessive use.

Similar to the findings of other studies (Schweers 1999; Burden 2001; Tang 2002; Sharma 2006; Al-Nofaie 2010), the results of this research support the limited and judicious utilization of Arabic as a classroom resource that may facilitate learning. Tang (2002) claims that such "limited and judicious use of the mother tongue in the English classroom does not reduce students' exposure to English, but rather can assist in the teaching and learning processes" (p. 41). The concern here is when to make the decision to resort to Arabic. Due to their limited linguistic background in L2, low-level students are more challenged and, consequently, need more support through using L1. Therefore, tolerating Arabic with such students helps reduce anxiety and lower their affective filter. It also contributes to creating a more supportive learning environment that encourages students to be active learners, and ensures their active participation. In addition, Arabic may be permitted during pair/group work for better scaffolding. Also, allowing Arabic in pair and group work is beneficial for students especially for low-level students, as it helps them brainstorm ideas and prepare for challenging tasks. It

also enables low achievers to clarify their understanding and better communicate their thoughts.

However, L1 inclusion does not necessitate translating all classroom activities into learners' MT. It should be viewed as a tool that can be utilized only when there is a need. When L1 is excessively used, students tend to believe that they cannot understand new L2 language items without knowing their equivalent in their L1 (Atkinson 1987). In addition, teachers should not abuse the use of their learners' L1 to compensate for their lack of proficiency in the TL. Instead, they should explore new pedagogical techniques to address and accommodate their learners' linguistic and cognitive needs.

On the other hand, students' exposure to the target language is crucially important in EFL classrooms. Excessive use of Arabic may deny students valuable opportunities to practice English. Due to students' limited access to the target language outside the classroom, teachers have a significant role in maximizing students' use of English by creating more learning opportunities and allowing them to develop as autonomous learners. Arabic should not be totally prohibited in EFL classrooms. Nevertheless, it should be gradually phased out and less encouraged once the learners become more competent in English.

Another important implication that should be considered is the impact of allowing Arabic to EFL classrooms on English-native speaking teachers. These teachers need to be equipped with necessary tools to help them survive in a bilingual classroom environment. One way to empower English-native speaking teachers to utilize their students' L1 is using bilingual dictionaries, e.g. English-English-Arabic dictionaries. They may resort to this as a technique to introduce new vocabulary, especially the abstract ones. They may also rely on the more advanced student(s) in heterogeneous classes to help explain difficult concepts and clarify complex tasks to the other students in class.

To maximize the use of the TL and benefit from students' L1, a balance between both Arabic and English in EFL classrooms should be maintained. This requires a certain level of awareness among teachers and learners regarding the benefits and dangers of using one particular language. An agreement should be reached regarding what students may do using Arabic, and what they should do in English. Hence, there is no real conflict between maximizing L2 use and capitalizing on learners' L1. In order to ensure the maximum use of the TL, teachers need to understand that both L1 and L2 can simultaneously co-exist (Turnbull 2001).

Teacher-training programs and professional development opportunities represent a determining factor in shaping teachers' attitude toward the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. As discussed previously, English teachers, especially non-native, always feel guilty, and sometimes unprofessional, when resorting to learners' L1, as they believe they do something against the principles that govern good teaching practices (Auerbach 1993; Ferrer n.d.; Atkinson 1987). Here comes the crucial role of pre- and in-service ELT training programs such as Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) and In-service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT). Such training programs need to include something in their curriculum about the value of students' mother tongue as a classroom resource. In Extract 5.1 below, Teacher B says that teacher-training programs should address the value of using L1 as it has been used by a lot of teachers around the world, and it is a mistake to ignore this fact.

Extract 5.1:

Interviewer: Do you think that such training programs should include something regarding the use of L1 and its potentiality as a classroom resource?

*Teacher B: **SURE** ..yes .. I think it's in practices. .. It has been used by teachers all over the world who share their students' L1 .. and I think it is **FOOLISH** to ignore that .. and not deal with it **AT ALL**.*

Ignoring the value of L1 in such programs contributes negatively to teachers' attitude toward its use. Teachers need to be aware of the benefits and dangers of introducing their learners' L1 to FL classrooms before making the decision to utilize it.

5.6: Limitations of the study

The current research has its own limitations. Among these limitations is that it was conducted on a small scale: only one hundred and twenty Grade 10 students and twenty teachers participated in the questionnaires, while only four teachers and four students were interviewed. In addition, the results of the present study were limited only to the quantitative and qualitative data collected through questionnaires and interviews with both teachers and students regarding their attitudes toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms. Moreover, due to lack of access to female participants, the study

sample was limited to male students and teachers only. Furthermore, the context of the study did not represent all government public high schools, as this investigation was carried out in a technical high school where English was as the medium of instruction, which is not the case in the other public high schools. In addition, Grade 11 and 12 students were not represented in the sample, as it only included Grade 10.

Such limitations are important to consider before replicating the current study in other contexts, as this may affect the obtained data and also make it difficult to generalize its findings. Future research design may attempt to find out to what extent these factors may impact the results.

5.7: Future Research possibilities

The findings of the current research show that both teachers and students have slightly positive attitudes toward the use of Arabic in English classrooms. Based on the results and limitations of this investigation, there seem to be a lot of possibilities for this study to be taken further for future research.

Firstly, the obtained findings were limited to the data collected from questionnaires and interviews. Hence, it would be beneficial to triangulate these findings through adopting a third tool for data collection, e.g. classroom observations with pre- and post-observation conferences, as this will give more validity to the findings. Another study may also be conducted to find out whether students' and teachers' attitudes are confirmed by their classroom practices and to what extent the use of L1 may facilitate learning a foreign language.

Secondly, as mentioned earlier, all the participant students and teachers in this study are male. Although gender is beyond the scope of the current study, another investigation may be implemented to find out whether students' and teachers' attitudes vary according to their gender. In this regard, a similar study could be carried out where the sample includes a mixture of both male and female participants.

Lastly, future research may also expand on whether limited and judicious use of Arabic, or any other L1 in the appropriated context, helps improve students' performance in L2. A quasi-experimental study may be implemented to secure the necessary data. It is an experimental study that determines the impact of a particular factor or intervention on the subjects of the study (Heffner 2004). This also requires

dividing the student participants into two groups: a control group and an experimental group. Limited and judicious use of Arabic is only allowed with the experimental group, whereas the control group is exposed to English-only environment. A pre- and post-test can be used to determine how much progress students will have achieved due to the type of intervention used.

5.8: Professional impact

The current study has impacted the researcher in different ways. It has helped to develop as a professional, obtain valuable insights into the process of learning a foreign language. The researcher has become more aware of the value of learners' L1, the role it may play in facilitating learning another language, and the pedagogical implications it might have on learning an FL. On the other hand, the researcher also has realized the significant importance of L2 input in learning a foreign language, which requires maximizing students' exposure to the target language. In addition, the researcher has become better informed on how learning theories and approaches may affect and guide teaching practices.

The researcher has benefited from the present investigation in terms of research skills, as well. The experience gained through this process has enriched and contributed to previous knowledge of how to implement research. The ability to better identify language-learning problems, collect and analyze the necessary data, and find appropriate solutions has increased. Moreover, a high level of confidence has developed to conduct similar studies in the future, and explore potential problems that may face both teachers and students.

The following chapter will outline the purpose of the study and the way it was implemented. It will also shed the light on the most relevant findings of the current research.

Chapter Six Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the aim of the current study and how it was implemented. It also highlights its most relevant findings and consequent implications

The current research investigated the attitudes of both students and teachers toward using Arabic during English lessons. It also examined the relationship between students' proficiency level in English and their attitude toward the use of their MT, Arabic. In addition, the study explored the possible occasions where Arabic might play a role as a facilitating tool.

A mixed-methods approach was adopted to collect the necessary data for the present study. Twenty teachers and one hundred and twenty students were surveyed to obtain quantitative data. Also, four teachers and four students were interviewed to secure qualitative data and explore the research area in more depth. In light of the research questions specified in [1.3], the obtained data from questionnaires were tabulated and interpreted in percentage for easy analysis, whereas the conducted interviews were transcribed, and appropriate sections were discussed.

The results of the present study showed that both students and teachers had slightly positive attitudes toward the use of Arabic in EFL classrooms. The surveyed and interviewed teachers and students indicated that judicious and limited use of Arabic was beneficial and could play a significant role in facilitating learning English as a foreign language. However, excessive use of Arabic might minimize students' exposure to the target language, English, and limit their opportunities to practice it.

The study findings also indicated that students' attitude toward Arabic varied according to their English proficiency level. Low-level students showed more preference toward the inclusion of Arabic than intermediate and advanced students. They believed that it might help them learn English better and be more active participants, as it decreased their anxiety and lowered their affective filter. On the other hand, intermediate and advanced students were against the use of Arabic and preferred to banish it from English classrooms. They thought it did not seem appropriate to use it as it might demotivate and prevent them from learning English.

In addition, student and teacher participants highlighted some learning occasions where the use of Arabic might be beneficial. Arabic seemed acceptable to introduce new vocabulary, complex concepts, idioms and expressions. It might also be used to

raise students' awareness of the similarities and differences between the target language and their mother tongue. However, the study findings indicated discrepancies between students' and teacher' views in regard to using Arabic in particular learning situations. Students, especially the low-level students, believed that Arabic was important in pair/group work activities and teaching grammatical rules, as this would help them clarify their understanding. On the other hand, teachers did not share them this views. They considered pair/ group work activities and teaching grammatical rules as potential opportunities for their students to maximize their use of English.

Due to the small scale of this study, its findings cannot be generalized. However, these findings still may inform the process of teaching and learning EFL. The study findings support limited and judicious inclusion of learners' MT in EFL classrooms. There is a need, it seems, to adopt a more balanced approach toward learners' L1: an approach that maximizes learners' exposure to the target language and recognizes L1 as a beneficial classroom tool as well. Besides, learner's L1 may be more tolerated with low-level students because of their L2 limited linguistic proficiency. This could be during L2 classes or after-classroom remedial sessions. However, it should be gradually withdrawn, as learners become more comfortable and confident using the target language.

To conclude, the present research has been an attempt to contribute to the long debate between the monolingual and bilingual approaches through examining students' and teachers' attitudes toward the use of learners' L1 in EFL classrooms. It is hoped that the findings of this research will motivate educational policy makers, especially in the Arab world, to reconsider the role of learners' mother tongue in learning a foreign language and take teachers' and learners' input into consideration when making such decisions as well.

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Appendix A

The Use of L1 in L2 Classrooms

Student's Questionnaire

Dear Student,

The aim of this survey is to investigate your attitudes and beliefs towards using your first language, Arabic, in English classes. Please, be informed that all the collected data is confidential and will only be used for research purposes. So, we will be grateful if you respond to the following sentences honestly as your answers will help teachers and educators to better understand your needs. Your input is very important to understand the value of using Arabic in English classes.

Thank you.

عزيزي الطالب:

إن الهدف الرئيس من هذا الاستبيان هو معرفة رأيك وما تعتقده فيما يخص استخدام اللغة العربية أثناء حصص اللغة الإنجليزية، وليكن معلوماً لديك أنه سيتم التعامل مع جميع البيانات بسرية كاملة، وسيتم استخدامها لأغراض البحث فقط، ولذا نرجو منك الإجابة على جميع الأسئلة بأمانة تامة، إذ إن إجاباتك ستكون عوناً لكثير من المعلمين والتربويين على فهم احتياجاتك التعليمية بصورة أفضل، وشكراً.

Optional

Name: _____

Gender: Male Female Grade: 10 11 12

(Please, tick one of the responses below.)

Learning Cycle Three English mark:

100 - 85 84 - 70 69 - 60 59 - 50 Less than 50

* اختياري

..... الاسم:

12 11 10 : الصف أنثى ذكر : الجنس

(من فضلك، ضع دائرة حول إجابة واحدة فقط.)

- الدرجة التي حصلت عليها في اختبار اللغة الإنجليزية للحلقة الدراسية الثالثة:

100 - 85 84 - 70 69 - 60 59 - 50 أقل من 50

* Please circle ONE answer, which best reflects your opinion on the given statements.

* من فضلك، ضع دائرة على العبارة التي تبين وجهة نظرك.

A. Strongly disagree	B. Disagree	C. Neutral	D. Agree	E. Strongly agree
لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة

1. Arabic should be used in all English classes.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

1. يجب استخدام اللغة العربية في حصص اللغة الانجليزية.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

2. I would like my English teacher to use Arabic in class.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

2. أأرغب في أن يستخدم أستاذي اللغة العربية في حصة اللغة الإنجليزية.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

3. I feel more comfortable when my teacher uses Arabic in class.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

3. أشعر بارتياح أكثر عندما يستخدم أستاذي اللغة العربية بالصف.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

4. Using Arabic in class helps me learn English.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

4. استخدام اللغة العربية يساعدي في تعلم اللغة الانجليزية.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

5. Students should be allowed to use Arabic in class.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

5. يجب أن يُسمح للطلاب باستخدام اللغة العربية في الصف.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

6. I understand the lesson much better when the teacher uses Arabic.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

6. أفهم الدرس بصورة أفضل عندما يستخدم الأستاذ اللغة العربية.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

7. I prefer not to use Arabic in English classes.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

7. أفضل عدم استخدام اللغة العربية أثناء حصص اللغة الإنجليزية.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

8. Using Arabic motivates me to participate more in English classroom activities.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

8. استخدام اللغة العربية يحفزني للمشاركة بصورة أكبر في الأنشطة الصفية للغة الإنجليزية.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

9. Using Arabic in class helps me learn English better.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

9. استخدام اللغة العربية يساعدي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية بشكل أفضل.

A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

10. Using an English-Arabic dictionary helps me understand the new vocabulary.

A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

10. استخدام قاموس (إنجليزي/عربي) يساعدني في فهم المفردات اللغوية الجديدة.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

11. Using Arabic prevents me from learning English.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

11. استخدام اللغة العربية يعيقني عن تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

12. How often do you think Arabic should be used?

- A. Never B. rarely C. Sometimes D. often E. Always

20. كم مرة ترى أنه يمكن استخدام اللغة العربية أثناء حصص اللغة الانجليزية؟

- A. أبدا B. نادرا C. أحيانا D. غالبا E. دائما

13. I understand English grammar better when it is explained in Arabic.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

13. أفهم قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية بصورة أفضل عند شرحها باللغة العربية.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

14. Arabic should be used to explain new vocabulary items.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

14. يجب استخدام العربية لشرح المفردات اللغوية الجديدة.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

15. Using Arabic helps understand the English idioms and expressions.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

15. إن استخدام اللغة العربية يساعد في فهم التعابير والمصطلحات الإنجليزية.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

16. It's better to use Arabic to explain the differences and similarities between Arabic and English.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

16. من الأفضل استخدام اللغة العربية في شرح أوجه الشبه والاختلاف بين اللغة العربية والإنجليزية.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

17. Using Arabic helps me express my feelings and ideas when I fail to do that in English.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

17. يساعدي استخدام العربية في التعبير عن المشاعر والأفكار عندما أعجز عن فعل ذلك باللغة الإنجليزية.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

18. Students should be allowed to use Arabic in pair/ small-group work.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

18. يجب أن يسمح للطلاب باستخدام اللغة العربية أثناء العمل في أزواج أو مجموعات صغيرة.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

19. Teachers should use Arabic to explain difficult concepts.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

19. يجب أن يستخدم المعلمون اللغة العربية لشرح المفاهيم الصعبة.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

20. Arabic should be used to facilitate complicated English classroom tasks.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

20. يجب استخدام اللغة العربية في توضيح الأنشطة والتدريبات الصفية المعقدة أثناء حصص اللغة الانجليزية.

- A. لا أوافق بشدة B. لا أوافق C. محايد D. أوافق E. أوافق بشدة

* Additional Comments:

* تعليقات أخرى:

☺ Thank You ☺

Appendix B

The Use of L1 in L2 Classrooms Teacher's Questionnaire

Dear Colleague,

The aim of this survey is to investigate your attitudes and beliefs towards using students' first language (L1), in this case Arabic, in your English classes. Please, be informed that all the collected data is confidential and will only be used for research purposes. So, I will be grateful if you respond to the following sentences honestly as your answers will help me and other educators to better understand your needs. Your input is very important for researchers (including myself) and teachers to better understand the practice and value of using L1 in English classes.

Thank you.

- **Name (optional):** _____ - **Gender:** Male Female
- **Native Language:** _____ - **Other language(s):** _____

- **How many years have you been teaching English?**

0 – 4 years 5 – 10 years 11 – 20 years 21 years or above

- **Have you received any education overseas (e.g. primary education, secondary education) before?**

No Yes

- Please, specify the country: _____

- How long? _____

- **Have you ever studied a second language?**

No Yes

- Please, specify the language: _____

- How long? _____

- **If you would be willing to be interviewed at a later date, please let me know by ticking the box below and providing your email address in the space below.**

Yes: Email address: _____

Please circle **ONE** response, which best reflects your opinion on the given sentences.

PART ONE (Items 1 – 9)

1. L1 should be used in English classes.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

2. Teachers should know their students' first language.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

3. Teachers should use their students' first language.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

4. Students' first language should be allowed during English lessons.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

5. Using L1 prevents students from learning English.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

6. Teachers should follow an English-only policy in the classroom.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

7. Bilingual dictionaries help students understand the new vocabulary.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

8. I do not feel comfortable when my students use their first language.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

9. I think L1 should _____ be used in the English classroom.

- A. Never B. Rarely C. Sometimes D. Often E. Always

Comments: _____

PART TWO (Items 10 – 20)

*** It is appropriate to use Arabic to -----**

10. explain difficult concepts.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

11. facilitate complicated English classroom tasks.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

12. introduce new grammatical rules.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

13. raise students' awareness of the differences and similarities between Arabic and English.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

14. explain new vocabulary especially abstract items.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

15. help students feel more comfortable/confident.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

16. give instructions.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

17. build up a good rapport with students.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

18. express students' feelings and ideas when they fail to do that in English.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

19. explain the English idioms and expressions.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

20. complete pair/ small-group work activities.

- A. Strongly disagree B. Disagree C. Neutral D. Agree E. Strongly agree

Comments: _____

Additional Comments:

😊 Thank You 😊

Appendix C

Students' semi-structured interview questions

1. In your previous school, did your English teacher use Arabic in English classes?
If yes, what did he use Arabic for?
2. How did you feel when he used Arabic?
3. In your current school, do you think English teachers should use Arabic? Why/
why not?
4. When do you think Arabic may be used in English classrooms?
5. How do you feel when your teacher uses English only?
6. What do you do when you do not understand what your teacher says in English?
7. Do you use Arabic during your English class? If yes, what for?
8. In a 45-minute English class, what percentage in terms of time do you think
your teacher should use Arabic?
9. What are the potential problems of using Arabic during the English class?
10. How can native-speaking English teachers make use of Arabic to help their
students?
11. Do you think using Arabic should be banned? Why? /Why not?
12. In general, what do you think of the use of Arabic in English classrooms?

Appendix D

Teachers' semi-structured interview questions

1. In the survey you completed, you indicated that you learned a second language. Did your study involve using L1? If yes, How?
2. Has your experience as a second language learner affected you as an ESL/EFL teacher? If yes, How?
3. What kind of teacher-training have you received as an ESL/EFL teacher, if any? Did you receive any training on the value of students' L1 and its use? Do you think it is important that such teacher-training programs include something about L1 in their courses?
4. Have you ever tried to make use of your students' first language? If yes, How?
5. In the survey, you indicated that L1 may '*sometimes*' be used in the English classroom. When do you think students' L1 may be used in terms of learning situations?
6. Do you think that students' L1 has the potential as a teaching tool? Why? Why not?
7. There is a common criticism that allowing students' L1 to be used in English classes reduces their exposure to English. What's your opinion regarding this issue?
8. In your opinion, what are the drawbacks of using L1 in the English classroom?
9. Do you believe that the use of students' first language in the L2 classroom is often a recognition of teachers' weakness to teach properly?
10. Do you think that the English-only policy has problems? If yes, what are they?
11. How can an English native-speaking teacher be empowered to make use of his/her students' L1?

12. In a 45-minute English class, what percentage in terms of time do you think English teachers may use students' L1?

Appendix E

The format of the transcript

- In order to maintain anonymity, 'S' stands for 'Student'; 'T' stands for 'Teacher'; and 'I' stands for 'Interviewer'.
- The transcripts do not follow the standard punctuation in general, except for question marks and periods. They express the flow of the conversation.
- Short pauses are represented by two dots (..), and long pauses by three dots (...).
- When it is difficult to hear a word, the best guess is indicated with a question mark enclosed in parentheses (?).
- Words that are said in a loud voice are in **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS**.

Appendix F

Students' interviews transcript sample

Student: A

Turn #	Who	Transcript
01	I	In your previous school, did your English teachers use Arabic in English classes?
02	S	Yes .. A LOT .
03	I	What did they use Arabic for?
04	S	It was mainly in Arabic. It was used of EVERYTHING .. to explain new vocabulary .. grammatical rules .. and .. giving instructions.
05	I	How did you feel when Arabic was used?
06	S	I've always had difficulties in English. .. So when Arabic was used I always felt comfortable.
07	I	Why?
08	S	I was able to understand what was going on in class and .. and I did not feel embarrassed.
09	I	Do you think that Arabic should be used in English classrooms?
10	S	Yes, ... SOMETIMES .
11	I	Why?
12	S	Because not every student can understand 100% of what is said in English. ... Using Arabic helps me stay focused.
13	I	When do you think Arabic may be used in English classes?
14	S	Mainly to explain new vocabulary and sometimes grammar. For other classroom activities the teacher should use English.
15	I	Could you clarify this a bit?
16	S	I want to say that English should be used in class .. when doing exercises. .. The teacher should shift to Arabic only to introduce new vocabulary and sometimes grammar when it is difficult for the students to understand.
17	I	How do you feel when your teacher uses English only?

18	S	I feel it is difficult to follow what is going on in class.
19	I	What do you do then?
20	S	I ask my classmates for help .. like to translate the new vocabulary for me.
21	I	What do you do when your friends are not available to help you?
22	S	I sit doing NOTHING . I stop following the teacher .. and start daydreaming.
23	I	Do YOU use Arabic in class?
24	S	Yes
25	I	What for?
26	S	When there's something I don't understand. .. And we work in groups I ask my friends for help in Arabic .. most of the time if there's new vocabulary.
27	I	In a 45-minute class, what percentage in terms of time do you think Arabic may be used?
28	S	I'd say LESS than 5% from the class time.
29	I	What are the problems of using Arabic in English classrooms?
30	S	If the whole class was carried out in Arabic .. we will learn nothing.
31	I	But you said Arabic makes it easier for you to understand?
32	S	Yes, this is true when it is SOMETIMES used .. but not the whole time. This is an English class and we still need to study and learn English. ... Otherwise we won't be able to do well on the EXAMS .
33	I	How can native-speaking English teachers make use of Arabic to help their students?
34	S	I think it will .. will help a lot if the teacher groups a good student with other students who need help in English.
35	I	Do you think using Arabic should be banned?
36	S	NO .. definitely not.
37	I	Why not?
38	S	If COMPLETELY banned, some students won't be able to cope up with what is going on in class.
39	I	In general, do you think that Arabic is beneficial?
40	S	SOMETIMES it is. But it is not if it is overused.

Appendix G

Teachers' interviews transcript sample

Teacher: B

Turn #	Who	Transcript
01	I	In the survey you have completed, you indicated that learnt two languages besides English: French and Japanese.
02	T	Yes, that's right.
03	I	You studied French for 8 years, right?
04	T	Yes, but I'll be honest. .. My French study was when I was YOUNGER . .. So I have less direct memory that I can remember exactly. .. But Japanese was later when I was older.
05	I	All right. Did your study involve using your mother tongue?
06	T	Yes in both French and Japanese.
07	I	How?
08	T	Well .. when I learnt French I started in elementary school and my French teacher .. some of my earliest memory .. was just learning direct just word to word relationship .. like yellow in English is this word in French. So L1 was .. probably the primary use in class.
09	I	What was the percentage of using L1?
10	T	For French .. as far as I remember .. it was 80% English. Later on .. in middle school and the start of high school .. it was maybe 50-50 or even 60%.
11	I	So there was a lot of L1 used in class?
12	T	Yes .. yes.
13	I	Has your experience as a second language learner affected your beliefs as an ESL/EFL teacher?
14	T	I suppose .. yeah .. it must have. .. Maybe I'm not always aware of the influence .. but I'm sure it did influence me in the way I teach.
15	I	How?
16	T	When I teach I always think of the way I learnt. ... I'm not aware of exactly how it affected me. But if I was to take a guess .. I do believe

		that the use of L1 in the classroom is affective and .. should not be BANNED or prevented .. because in my experience as a language learner especially from the BEGINNING levels it was essential for me to feel comfortable in the classroom until .. I get started with the language.
17	I	What kind of teacher-training programs have you received?
18	T	Ok. I have CELTA certificate .. and I'm currently .. just more than half-way through a masters of education in TESOL.
19	I	Did you receive any kind of training on the value of L1 use?
20	T	For .. my CELTAL course .. which was my initial training .. NO . It .. it was designed to .. to focus on using English-only because .. I assume .. it was designed for teachers in multilingual classroom where students come from different L1s .. and it also .. built on the communicative approach. .. Not necessarily you have to use L2 only but it encouraged that. ... In my academic studies .. then I have seen .. I have learnt how L1 can be effective in sort of bridging the divide between L1 and L2 in students' cognition.
21	I	Do you think that such training programs should include something regarding the use of L1 and its potentiality as a classroom resource?
22	T	SURE ..yes .. I think it's in practices. .. It has been used by teachers all over the world who share their students' L1 .. and I think it is FOOLISH to ignore that .. and not deal with it AT ALL .
23	I	Have you ever tried to make use of your students' first language?
24	T	Unfortunately as a monolingual native speaker English teacher .. it's .. it's a handicap for me .. I feel that I don't have access to it.
25	I	But, do you allow your students to use it?
26	T	Yes .. I .. depending on the context .. I have no problems with the students using their L1 in class.
27	I	Give me a couple of examples when and where you tolerate it.
28	T	Well .. for me .. it depends on the outcome of the lesson .. the target language of the lesson. So let's say if it's a reading skills lesson .. I have no problem with the students discussing the ideas contained in the text amongst themselves .. in their L1 as long as they're ..

		receiving the language in L2 .. reading the text in English .. and if there's comprehension questions or some kind of outcome at the end that they are then producing that in L2 as well. .. Now .. if on the other hand a speaking lesson .. the target language is speaking or .. a grammar lesson .. as long as the students are producing the language in L2.
29	I	Would you mind having students prepare for the speaking in L1?
30	T	No .. as long as the productive outcome is in L2.
31	I	You indicated in the questionnaire that L1 might SOMETIMES be used in L2 classroom. So when do you think students' L1 may be used in terms of learning situations?
32	T	Ok if the teacher shares the L1 with the students .. then it can be used to explain particular complex vocabulary or ideas .. where grammar concepts are more easily explained in L1 .. I don't see any problem with that.
33	I	In your situation as a native speaker?
34	T	In group work .. students working together .. depending on the context .. as long as they are achieving the objectives of the lesson in L2. Then I don't mind using L1 for THINKING .. group work .. BRAINSTORMING .. students asking each other to explain a word or a concept. .. I don't expect the students to use L2 to explain something especially if students' asking for help are at a lower level .. then they may not understand the explanation in L2. .. Why not to allow stronger students to help them using their L1?
35	I	Do you think students' L1 has the potential as a classroom tool?
36	T	YES .. yeah .. the teacher can use it for many purposes .. explanation .. classroom management .. also building rapport with the students.
37	I	Even with native speakers English teachers?
38	T	Well .. it's possible that a native speaker could have learnt students' L1 as an L2 .. so the teacher might have .. a BIT of proficiency in a language .. I know a few words in Arabic.
39	I	Do you think it helps?
40	T	Sure for example .. if I really want students to be quiet .. if I say

		LISTEN in Arabic .. it will get their attention because I don't use Arabic very often.
41	I	There's a common criticism that allowing students to use their native language reduces their exposure to the target language. What's your opinion regarding this issue?
42	T	Personally .. I think it is a misconceived notion because .. well .. maybe if you count the number of words .. it may reduce their contact to the L2. Then you have to ask this question .. what are the actual goals of the course? And .. if the goals are communicative competency then I think using L1 is a more efficient way to get there if it's used effectively and appropriately. .. I think of language cognitively. .. It's a thought process and a tool for communication and when you're learning a new way to think which is what you're doing .. when learning a second language .. you can't ... do this in isolation from the way of thinking you already know in your L1. .. There has to be a bridge .. and allowing the use of L1 in L2 classrooms actually forms and allows this bridge to exist and I think we'll get the goals of any language program more efficiently .. I believe.
43	I	In your opinion what are the drawbacks of using L1 in English classrooms?
44	T	Well .. if it's permitted widely .. the students may not make the effort to use the target language when they should. ... Say they are doing an information-gap ACTIVITY .. and .. and accustomed to using Arabic in the classroom .. they may tell their friend the information in .. in .. L1 rather than using L2 as the activity suggests. If students aren't understanding the differentiation between when it's appropriate and when it's INAPPROPRIATE .. for a particular class or lesson .. then it can be actually a deterrent because they don't use L2 when they should.
45	I	There's another criticism that using L1 is often recognition of teacher's weakness and inability to teach properly. Do you agree?
46	T	I DISAGREE. .. I don't agree.

47	I	Why?
48	T	Well .. using L1 is a tool .. a method .. just because you use it doesn't mean that you are a bad teacher .. and just because you don't use L1 doesn't mean that you are a good teacher. ... A good teacher knows when to use which tools appropriately .. and as long as L1 being employed effectively to achieve the goals of the lesson .. then there's no problem.
49	I	Do you think that the English-only policy has problems?
50	T	YES .. it does have problems .. for one affective problem with the students .. their motivation can be severely hindered if they're .. put into an English-only environment .. and they don't have the proficiency .. to survive in that environment 100%.
51	I	So, this again depends on the students' proficiency level in the target language?
52	T	Sure .. that's right. .. if you're dealing with L2 learners who have near fluent .. then I think it'll have less effect on them. ... In our context here in school .. I mean a lot of students who first come in .. I mean 10 th graders .. they .. they don't have the proficiency to handle an English-only environment. So .. I see no problem in allowing SOME use of L1 when you have in mind that the goal is getting towards English-only environment. .. You know you have to go on in stages and there' .. there's an (ingredient?) between where you start and where you end up.
53	I	What are they ways you may think of to empower the native-speaking English teacher when teaching bilingual students?
54	T	Well .. to have basic level of proficiency in the students' L1 is really beneficial. .. I'm still some what new in this country and this language .. but in my previous experience in Korea at the end I knew a few stock phrases that I could use effectively .. in the classroom .. and it was .. good. Also using bilingual dictionaries could be a good idea as long as the students have to be aware that there might be certain register differences or connotations. .. But for getting the basic meaning across .. no problem with that. BRAINSTORMING

		in Arabic and you know .. expressing those ideas in L2 .. allowing students to think through things in their L1 even if they're not .. and ... and I think this something some people don't realize in English classrooms .. even if they're NEVER USING L1 by speaking or writing .. they are using it inside their heads.
55	I	The mental processes .. you mean?
56	T	Yes .. the metal processes are always gonna be in L1 until they can begin to think in that language which will never be 100% the same as in L1. So even if they are not using it for real like EXTERNALLY .. their mental self talk will be always in their first language.
57	I	So, if you're talking about a 45-minute class, what percentage do you think may be allocated for L1 use?
58	T	I'd say it varies depending on the lesson. ... On average I think it should not exceed 20 %. .. But again it depends on the lesson and the context.
59	I	Is there anything else you like to add?
60	T	Well .. I do honestly believe that using L1 is .. is not something that should be banned or prevented in English classrooms because as I said .. even when it's not happening externally .. it .. that's how students are processing information in their own mind. ... So L1 is never gonna go away. It's gonna always be influencing the students' learning .. and not only in a language class .. but also in other subject classes if taught in a second language. .. The fist language will be always there.
61	I	Thank you very much. I did enjoy this conversation. I appreciate that.
62	T	No problem.

Appendix H

Students' overall responses in percentage (N=120)

#	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Arabic should be used in all English classes.	19	15	26	28	12
2	I would like my English teacher to use Arabic in class.	19	24	27	19	11
3	I feel more comfortable when my teacher uses Arabic in class.	12	23	29	23	13
4	Using Arabic in class helps me learn English.	10	13	33	26	18
5	Students should be allowed to use Arabic in class.	10	22	40	15	13
6	I understand the lesson much better when the teacher uses Arabic.	22	17	21	27	13
7	I prefer not to use Arabic in English classes.	21	18	33	21	7
8	Using Arabic motivates me to participate more in English classroom activities.	19	12	27	29	13
9	Using Arabic in class helps me learn English better.	11	14	13	34	28
10	Using an English-Arabic dictionary helps me understand the new vocabulary.	13	22	25	22	18
11	Using Arabic prevents me from learning English.	10	23	43	16	8
12	How often do you think Arabic should be used?	8	29	44	16	3
13	I understand English grammar better when it is explained in Arabic.	8	18	18	25	31
14	Arabic should be used to explain new vocabulary items.	3	16	21	40	20
15	Using Arabic helps understand the English idioms and expressions.	7	15	34	31	13
16	It's better to use Arabic to explain the differences and similarities between Arabic and English.	8	14	27	29	22
17	Using Arabic helps me express my feelings and ideas when I fail to do that in English.	8	14	33	21	24
18	Students should be allowed to use Arabic in pair/small-group work.	8	10	27	28	27
19	Teachers should use Arabic to explain difficult concepts.	4	8	18	33	37
20	Arabic should be used to facilitate complicated English classroom tasks.	8	14	25	38	15

Appendix I

Teachers' overall responses in percentage (N=20)

#	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	L1 should be used in English classes.	0	4	5	9	2
2	Teachers should know their students' first language.	3	1	6	7	3
3	Teachers should use their students' first language.	2	12	3	3	0
4	Students' first language should be allowed during English lessons.	2	7	4	6	1
5	Using L1 prevents students from learning English.	3	7	2	7	1
6	Teachers should follow an English-only policy in the classroom.	1	5	0	10	4
7	Bilingual dictionaries help students understand the new vocabulary.	1	2	1	12	4
8	I do not feel comfortable when my students use their first language.	1	3	5	9	2
9	I think L1 should _____ be used in the English classroom.	1	1	9	9	0
10	explain difficult concepts.	3	1	2	13	1
11	facilitate complicated English classroom tasks.	1	3	4	11	1
12	introduce new grammatical rules.	1	11	4	4	0
13	raise students' awareness of the differences and similarities between Arabic and English.	1	4	3	11	1
14	explain new vocabulary especially abstract items.	1	2	2	13	2
15	help students feel more comfortable/confident.	2	4	5	8	1
16	give instructions.	5	10	1	3	1
17	build up a good rapport with students.	1	7	4	8	0
18	express students' feelings and ideas when they fail to do that in English.	0	4	4	12	0
19	explain the English idioms and expressions.	0	5	5	10	0
20	complete pair/ small-group work activities.	3	10	2	5	0

Appendix J

Students' general comments on the questionnaire regarding the use of Arabic in English classrooms by level

Level	Positive attitude	Negative attitude
Beginners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I want Arabic to be used to introduce the new vocabulary and difficult tasks. - Using Arabic 'sometimes' helps students to understand the new lesson, which facilitates learning. So, using it is very beneficial during English classes. - I think Arabic may be used to explain the new vocabulary, terminologies, grammar rules and difficult tasks. 	
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I want Arabic to be used to understand the difficult new vocabulary. - Arabic is beneficial to understand the meaning of newly introduced words and concepts. - I prefer to use Arabic if I can't explain what I want to say in English. Arabic may be used to communicate ideas. - Arabic should be limited to introducing new vocabulary and showing the differences between Arabic and English. - I understand English grammar better when it is taught in Arabic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I prefer teachers not to use Arabic at all. Arabic may only be used to the minimum to explain new vocabulary. - It is better not to use Arabic in English classes. It may be only used to facilitate new vocabulary. - We are in an English classroom, which means that we should learn English. What's the point of using Arabic? - I don't think we need to use Arabic to learn English. It is better to use English only, as using Arabic is not a good way to study English.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using Arabic saves time when introducing new vocabulary and difficult concepts. - Arabic should be allowed during English classes for grammar better understanding and collaborative work with other students. - Some students do not understand some English words, so teachers should explain them in Arabic. - English should be translated before being practiced. 	
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think that Arabic should be used in class, but not always. It should be allowed during pair/group work. In addition, it should be used to translate the new vocabulary. - Teachers may use Arabic if the content is too difficult for the students. Using Arabic helps students to learn better especially the new grammar rules. - Only lower-level students benefit from using Arabic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using Arabic in class does not help the students learn better as it negatively affects students' ability to learn English better. - I prefer not to use Arabic during the English class because it prevents me from learning English. However, I still believe that it may be used to introduce new vocabulary especially the abstract ones. In this case, Arabic empowers students to speak more English. - I believe that teachers should not use Arabic at all, as this will drive the students to be lazier. Moreover, they will push to talk more Arabic which will result in increasing the percentage of Arabic on the expense of using English.

Appendix K

Teachers' comments on questionnaire items

#	Items	Positive attitude	Negative attitude
1	L1 should be used in English classes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It can be used to attend to low-level students and also as a means of class control and management. - Its use can reduce anxiety and enhance the affective environment for learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This will lead to minimizing students' opportunity to practice the target language.
2	The teacher should know the students' mother tongue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher's knowledge of students' L1 is vital in understanding his students' culture and communicating abstract meanings and effective classroom management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowing would help but the temptation to use it would be strong. - Knowledge of the students' L1 can be an advantage but it is not essential.
3	The teacher should use the students' mother tongue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depending on the context using students' L1 can be useful for classroom management and creating rapport with beginners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students' L1 should be kept to the minimum, as excessive use of L1 in FL classrooms endangers the language teaching process and leads to too few actions carried out in the TL.
4	The students should be allowed to use their mother tongue during the English class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students' level is a factor; the lower their L2 level the more L1 should be used and vice versa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It depends on the activity and the learning situation: group/pair work.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At low levels this is ok but it should slowly be phased out. - L1 may be used occasionally to facilitate learning and create less intimidating learning environment for beginners. - Only to check understanding of some concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EFL students' limited use of L1 helps in increasing efficiency, focusing attention and facilitating interpersonal interactions.
5	Using L1 prevents students from learning English.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective L2 learning requires an interaction between L1 and L2 in the students' minds. - Only at higher levels. - L2 learners rely on their L1 to learn the language; interference instances reflect this event. - Not in learning vocabulary or grammar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximum target language use is vital in EFL due to the limited time students receive to use the language. - Speaking L1 all the time doesn't provide the confidence to learn English.
6	Teachers should follow an English-only policy in the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There will be occasions where it's indispensable to use L1. - That will inhibit students, as it will deprive them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English-only policy will help maximizing second language use in the EFL classroom and minimize the use of L1.

		from skills they already have.	
7	Bilingual dictionaries help students understand the new vocabulary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It saves time especially with low-level students. - Bilingual dictionaries would provide a great help to students by translating words/phrases to facilitate their learning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - However, they should switch to monolingual dictionaries as soon as possible.
8	I do not feel comfortable when my students use their first language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no harm if they do that for understanding purposes. - It can't be avoided in group-work activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a monolingual English speaker, I am often uncomfortable when students use their L1, as I would like to understand every subject the students are talking about. - Unless they are asking for help or explanation.
9	I think L1 should _____ be used in the English classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only as necessary and when the need exists. - To be used as a prop to learn the L2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To maximize the use of the target language, it should be used as rarely as possible and according to the level you are teaching.
10	explain difficult concepts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To clarify the meaning - Sometimes it's difficult for teachers to present concepts and abstract vocabulary in English. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers should not use students' L1 in a direct way.

		- To save time and effort.	
11	facilitate complicated English classroom tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why spending much time on comprehending instructions. - Teachers can sometimes depend on some good students to do that for those who have difficulties in understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ss should get used to responding to English instructions - Using the language to explain the task is one way to expose Ss to the target language.
12	introduce new grammatical rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve student's awareness of sentence structure. - It can be useful to highlight the differences in sentence structure and tense usage etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ss should learn grammar through practice. - Grammar should only be taught in the target language because it has a system that is generally independent from L1. - Only English should be used to do so because it has its own forms and formulas. - A teacher still can use simple language in grammar lesson.
13	raise students' awareness of the differences and similarities between Arabic and English.	- Being aware of these differences facilitate learning, as this helps the students not to generalize the grammar rules they have in L1 and transfer	- Every language has its own usages and mechanisms that have to be taught independently.

		them to L2.	
14	explain new vocabulary especially abstract items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It should be limited to abstract words only. - This is useful to save time. There's no reason to waste precious classroom time trying to do this in the target language. - This is very crucial for lower-level students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers do not have to do so as students can look them up in a dictionary.
15	help students feel more comfortable/confident.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only appropriate for beginners and shy students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think this related to classroom management policy. - Using English would reinforce students' confidence. - Students will get used to doing this in their first language, which will minimize the use of L2.
16	give instructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is only acceptable with lower-level students and when there is a need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is important to expose students to the target language. Understanding classroom instructions is part of the learning process. - Instructions should be addressed in English only to

			expose the students and familiarize them with the target language.
17	build up a good rapport with students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A few words can be useful for classroom management with beginners and for creating rapport with the students. - Whatever the purpose is, very limited use of L1 should be considered. - It is always better for emotional support. 	- English-only environment should be enforced inside the class.
18	express students' feelings and ideas when they fail to do that in English.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is very common with lower-level students, as their language competency does not allow them to do so in the L2. - If unavoidable e.g. when dictionaries are not available or time not permitting. 	- It should be kept as limited as possible because there is a need to create opportunities for learners to use L2; and this is one good opportunity to consider.
19	explain the English idioms and expressions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students think of similar expressions in the mother tongue, as such idioms and expressions usually have their equivalents in the mother tongue. - Low-level students have difficulty understanding this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It depends on the difficulty of the idiom or expression. - Using examples and contexts in English to facilitate the idioms is better.

		in L2.	
20	complete pair/ small-group work activities.	- This is one way of providing support to low-level students.	- If widely allowed, students tend to get off task and not focus on the lesson outcome in L2.
General Comments		<p>- The use of L1 in L2 classes is important, especially with low-level students who are not able to understand teacher's instruction.</p> <p>- According to some recent studies, using an English-only policy in the English class is not an advisable, as it is sometimes impossible to get the ideas through in a language students are struggling to understand in the first place.</p> <p>- To me Arabic should rarely be used in English classes to have the students get used to communicating in English.</p> <p>- Personally, when learning French I found myself uncomfortable and lost when there was not English to assist me. Immersing yourself as much as</p>	<p>- I think English teachers should focus more on using English in their classes. Students have to be introduced to and used to live in an English-only class.</p> <p>- I believe complete immersion is best for L2 learners especially if they do not have an opportunity to use the language outside the classroom. Moreover, the use of the L1 should be used in a scaffolded way where the L1 is used less and less as the students level increases.</p>

	<p>possible is important, but I feel better when the basic skills are gained. I often felt stupid and lost desire to learn the language when the immersion occurred before I was ready. Grades were also reflective of this and not understanding instructions completely.</p> <p>- Though using the target language is the norm, limited use of L1 should be tolerated. When and how to use it depends on the sound judgment of the teacher, student's level and the course material being taught.</p> <p>- The inclusion of the L1 in teacher/student practice is particularly relevant to any EFL context, where all classrooms are composed of students who share the same mother tongue.</p>	
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Appendix L

Informed Consent

Name: _____

As part of this research project, you have participated by taking part in interviews related to the value of using students' first language in foreign language classrooms. Please indicate below which uses of these records you are prepared to consent to – they will only be used in these ways and your identity will remain anonymous at all times.

- The records can be studied and used in research
- The records can be used in publications and conferences
- The written transcripts can be used by other researchers

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research – your contribution is extremely valuable.

Elmetwally Elmenshawy
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