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Translanguaging in TEFL: Bridging Linguistic Boundaries for Effective Language Learning

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of translanguaging strategies on bilingual and multilingual learners, specifically examining whether these strategies support the development of English language skills. The researcher focused on how bilingual and multilingual students use translanguaging to enhance their communication in the target language, with particular attention to how Moroccan learners utilize their native dialect, Darija, to construct meaning. The participants in this study were Moroccan high school students studying English as a foreign language. The research explored the role of translanguaging in improving the four core English language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Data were collected through classroom observations, written tests for both controlled and experimental groups, and feedback from questionnaires. The findings indicated that translanguaging played a crucial role in enhancing students' English language proficiency and facilitating their communication in the target language. Based on these results, the researcher argued that embracing translanguaging in the classroom is not only beneficial but also a highly effective educational practice. By adopting a bilingual perspective, this study underscored the importance of recognizing and utilizing students' full linguistic repertoire to support language learning.

Key words: Translanguaging, TEFL, Multilingual context, Teaching and Learning

Introduction

English has become a dominant global language, evolving from its origins as the native language of a small island group to a crucial medium for international communication. This transformation can be attributed to historical, cultural, and political factors, which have solidified English as essential for economic, scientific, and technological progress. Today, it is the primary language in sectors such as science, technology, business, and the arts, facilitating global collaboration and knowledge exchange. Its widespread use has made English a vital tool for academic, professional, and global engagement.

Moreover, English plays a significant role in global media and entertainment, with a large proportion of literature, films, music, and news content produced in the language. Major international events, including United Nations meetings and the Olympic Games, rely on English for communication. As a result, English proficiency is increasingly prioritized in schools worldwide, seen as essential for academic success, career advancement, and participation in the global economy.

In recent decades, language teaching has shifted from traditional, grammar-focused methods to more communicative approaches, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This shift emphasizes language as a tool for communication, moving away from detailed grammatical analysis (Celce-Murcia, 2001). CLT has been accompanied by a monoglossic ideology, which promotes bilingualism based on monolingual norms, often prioritizing immersion in the target language and discouraging the use of students' native languages (Garcia, 2009). In many foreign language classrooms, including those in Morocco, this results in a preference for monolingualism, despite the multilingual realities of students.

The dominance of CLT and monolingualism in language education has led to policies that often discourage the use of students' native languages, such as Darija in Morocco, to prevent what is perceived as "contamination" of the target language (García & Li, 2014). While immersion programs in English are increasingly popular in Morocco, they often fail to acknowledge the linguistic realities of bilingual students. In practice, many Moroccan teachers and students revert to Darija for practical reasons, a natural form of translanguaging that allows learners to use their full linguistic resources to enhance understanding (Cummins, 2005). Despite the English-only policies, translanguaging offers a more inclusive and effective approach to language learning, supporting students' ability to make meaning and deepen their comprehension of the target language.

Background

Translanguaging, first introduced by Williams (1994) in the Welsh context, refers to the pedagogical practice of alternating between input and output languages in the classroom (García, 2013). Colin Baker later defined it as "the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages" (Baker, 2011, p. 288). Since its introduction, translanguaging has become a key topic in educational research, particularly in North America and the UK (Wong, 2018). Three major trends have emerged in translanguaging studies:

Many studies emphasize the benefits of incorporating heritage languages into classrooms, showing that such an approach improves teaching strategies, boosts academic performance, and enhances language awareness (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Cummins, 2007; García & Li, 2014; Lin & He, 2017; Palmer et al., 2014). A bilingual approach facilitates deeper connections between concepts, improving understanding and retention.

Another body of research focuses on bilinguals' language experiences across different contexts, exploring their bi-literacy practices, identity formation, and social justice issues within a sociolinguistic framework (Li, 2011; Song, 2016). These studies highlight how bilinguals use their languages to construct meaning and express their identities, often diverging from monolingual norms.

Several studies investigate both teachers' and students' attitudes toward English immersion and translanguaging. Qualitative methods such as interviews and classroom observations have revealed that students often do not support the total exclusion of their first language from the classroom. Instead, they favor a balanced approach where translanguaging serves as a supplementary tool for learning (Macaro & Lee, 2013).

These studies demonstrate that translanguaging enhances language development by enabling bilingual learners to use their full linguistic repertoire, fostering comprehension and active engagement in learning. However, the practice remains contentious, particularly in contexts with strict language separation policies or English immersion programs. Despite this, growing research suggests that incorporating translanguaging can create more inclusive classrooms and support bilingual students' academic and personal growth.

Translanguaging, in its broader sense, is a practice that allows bilingual individuals to use their combined linguistic resources to create meaning and express their identities, challenging the traditional view of languages as discrete systems with fixed norms. Canagarajah (2012) argues that all speakers, whether monolingual or multilingual, engage in forms of translanguaging, mixing various languages and semiotic resources to construct meaning, thus highlighting the fluid and dynamic nature of language use.

For García and Wei (2014), translanguaging involves how bilingual students perform bilingually in classroom contexts, transcending the boundaries of individual languages. This approach represents a shift in language education, moving away from structuralist models that treat languages as separate systems toward integrational approaches that view languages as interconnected and dynamic.

Research on translanguaging has also challenged the notion that languages like Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and English are distinct cognitive entities. Thierry (2016) argues that the brain does not compartmentalize languages, and early studies suggesting distinct neural networks for processing languages reflect the learning process rather than how languages are represented in the brain (Li & Ho, 2018). This insight has significant implications for language teaching, particularly in academic contexts where meaning negotiation is essential for effective communication.

Translanguaging has been shown to benefit the development of all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Chen, Chiao, & Tsou, 2019). With the advent of globalization and technological advancements, language learning has increasingly moved beyond traditional classroom settings, with learners using online platforms and mobile devices. This shift has transformed language learning, reducing reliance on traditional teacher-led instruction and allowing for more personalized engagement.

Translanguaging has gained attention in bilingual education, especially in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) settings, where traditional monolingual approaches have been critiqued (Lin & Lo, 2017; Carroll & Mazak, 2016). García and Wei (2014) describe it as a process of meaning-making that integrates a learner's full linguistic repertoire, moving beyond rigid language separation.

Translanguaging challenges the dichotomy between first and second languages, as well as between native and non-native speakers. It bridges the gap between second language acquisition and bilingualism, emphasizing that the goal of learning an additional language is not to replace one language but to achieve bilingualism or multilingualism. Unfortunately, the idealized model of a monolingual native speaker in L2 instruction often misrepresents how multilingual individuals use languages in diverse social contexts.

In summary, translanguaging represents a shift from viewing languages as separate systems toward recognizing them as interconnected resources. As García (2009) defines it, translanguaging refers to "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds" (p. 45). It is both a language ideology and a pedagogical stance that embraces bilingualism as the norm, supports full use of linguistic resources, and offers valuable practices for enhancing language learning (Mazak, 2017). Despite resistance to using first languages in classrooms, research increasingly supports the integration of translanguaging to enrich the learning experience and better support bilingual students.

Tanslanguaging practice in the classroom

The classroom is a space where language practices, particularly those involving local/national languages and foreign/second languages, are often observed (Cenoz & Gorte, 2015; Levine, 2011). However, in many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, strict language separation is commonly enforced, with local languages being discouraged or even "othered" (Wei & García, 2014, p. 54). This practice is

rooted in the belief that the use of students' home languages may impede the acquisition of the target language (Levine, 2011). Yet, emerging research suggests that incorporating translanguaging—the strategic use of multiple languages—can enhance learning by utilizing students' full linguistic potential.

For example, Li and Luo (2017) demonstrate the benefits of translanguaging in urban high schools in the United States, particularly during small group reading activities. They found that bilingual students who engaged in translanguaging showed improved reading comprehension, as they were able to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire to analyze and understand texts. Similarly, McMillan and Rivers (2011) report that lecturers in Japan incorporated translanguaging practices, fostering greater interaction and understanding among students. Kim and Petraki (2009) also found that translanguaging in EFL classrooms in Vietnam improved students' comprehension and retention by helping them navigate both the target and native languages.

Beyond comprehension, translanguaging also facilitates deeper understanding of academic content. Cartens (2016) observed that African students used translanguaging to better understand complex academic concepts, especially in writing, by connecting target language concepts to their native language frameworks. Cummins (2008) also argues that translanguaging enables students to use their native language as a tool to support the development of the target language.

Translanguaging is particularly effective in EFL classrooms where students share a common native language. White et al. (2013) found that when students were allowed to choose which language to use, it helped integrate their native language knowledge with the new language, fostering both comprehension and bilingual or plurilingual competence. EFL classrooms thus offer an opportunity for students to bridge their native language and English, facilitating the learning process (Iwai, 2011).

Despite these benefits, not all educators embrace translanguaging. Nambisan (2014) found that in Turkey, teachers were often reluctant to incorporate translanguaging, viewing it as unnecessary or detrimental to students' language acquisition. This resistance stems from the belief that reliance on the native language may hinder full immersion in the target language. However, many educators argue that restricting native language use may actually impede students' understanding of the target language and overlook the potential of bilingual learners.

In conclusion, translanguaging offers a valuable pedagogical tool in EFL classrooms by allowing students to use their native language as a resource, enhancing both language acquisition and academic success. Integrating translanguaging into the curriculum can create a more inclusive and effective learning environment that recognizes and utilizes the diverse linguistic resources of students.

Benefits of Translanguaging Practice in the Classroom

Using translanguaging as a pedagogical tool in the classroom offers significant advantages for both teachers and students. It enables educators to strategically integrate multiple languages into their teaching, enhancing the learning environment by tapping into students' linguistic and cultural resources (Lubriner & Grisham, 2017). This approach values students' home languages, creating a more inclusive and effective learning experience. For instance, Lubriner and Grisham (2017) demonstrate how strategies like Cognate Strategy Instructions (CSI) capitalize on language similarities to improve comprehension and learning outcomes. By engaging in translanguaging, teachers foster an environment that celebrates linguistic diversity and encourages deeper engagement with the content.

Baker (2011) identifies four primary benefits of translanguaging in the classroom. First, it enables students to form a deeper understanding of the material by connecting new information to their existing knowledge in both languages. Second, it provides an opportunity for students to strengthen proficiency in their weaker language, promoting balanced bilingualism. Third, translanguaging enhances home-school cooperation, allowing parents and students to discuss academic matters in the same linguistic resources. Finally, it supports students' second language development while simultaneously enhancing their academic learning, creating a more integrated approach to language acquisition. According to Baker (2011), the use of multiple languages in the classroom helps overcome pedagogical challenges by making it easier for teachers to clarify complex concepts and ensure students grasp difficult material.

Translanguaging also plays a crucial role in self-regulation, particularly in the writing process. Velasco and García (2014) found that young students employed translanguaging as a self-regulatory tool during planning, drafting, and writing. By switching between languages, students were able to clarify thoughts, express ideas more clearly, and refine their writing. This practice not only supports the development of writing skills but also enhances cognitive strategies, contributing to a more holistic learning experience.

Holdway and Hitchcock (2018) stress the importance of teachers recognizing and promoting translanguaging in the classroom. Educators who adopt translanguaging practices create a supportive environment where multilingual learners feel validated, enabling them to participate more fully in class activities and better understand complex concepts. Schissel et al. (2018) argue that viewing multilingualism through the lens of translanguaging provides valuable insights into teaching practices and assessments, highlighting how translanguaging can enhance the academic success of linguistic minority students.

At the university level, translanguaging also supports students in deepening their understanding of coursework and exploring new perspectives. Rivera and Mazak (2017) found that university students who engaged in translanguaging—particularly in Spanish and English—gained a more profound understanding of their academic work. This approach helped students connect ideas, analyze content critically, and express their thoughts with greater nuance.

In conclusion, translanguaging offers numerous benefits in the classroom, from enhancing content understanding to improving bilingual proficiency. By embracing multilingualism, teachers can create more inclusive and effective learning environments that support students' linguistic and academic development.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study aim to explore the multifaceted role of translanguaging in the development of English language proficiency among students, focusing on both the strategies employed and the factors influencing their use. The first question investigates how translanguaging strategies contribute to the development of students' English language proficiency. Specifically, it assesses whether integrating students' first language (Arabic) with English in classroom settings enhances their overall language skills—speaking, writing, listening, and reading. The second question examines whether students' proficiency levels in a foreign language (FL) impact the extent to which they engage in translanguaging. This inquiry explores whether students with higher English proficiency are more likely to use translanguaging as a learning tool, or if lower proficiency levels lead to greater reliance on their first language. The third question explores the contextual factors that influence when and why students prefer to use Arabic (L1) during their English language learning. By examining specific situations, such as difficulty understanding complex concepts or expressing themselves in English, this question aims to provide a deeper understanding of the conditions under which translanguaging is most beneficial for learners. Collectively, these research questions offer valuable insights into how translanguaging functions as a dynamic and effective pedagogical tool, as well as how individual learner characteristics and contextual factors shape its use in language acquisition.

> ➢ *How does the use of translanguaging strategies develop a student's English language proficiency?*

> ➢ *How does students' proficiency level in a foreign language influence their use of translanguaging?*

> ➢ *In what situations do students prefer to use Arabic (L1) over English (L2)?*

Methodology

To address these research questions, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The quantitative aspect involved administering survey questionnaires to gather numerical data on students' and teachers' perceptions and experiences with translanguaging strategies. The participants included 15 EFL teachers from Badr High School and El Manssour High School. The student participants, all from Badr High School, consisted of 70 students who completed the survey. The survey questions were adapted from Champlin's (2016) study, ensuring that the measures were grounded in prior research and relevant to the study's context.

For the qualitative aspect, data were collected through direct classroom observations and written tests for two groups: a controlled group and an experimental group. The experimental group, consisting of 29 students, was exposed to translanguaging, with both Moroccan Darija and English used in the instructional process. In contrast, the controlled group of 30 students was taught using only English as the language of instruction. Over a period of five weeks, both groups were exposed to their respective teaching methods. At the end of this period, the performance of both groups was evaluated to assess the impact of translanguaging on language acquisition and proficiency. This comparison allowed the researcher to analyze the effectiveness of translanguaging in enhancing students' English language skills relative to the more traditional, monolingual English instruction.

Together, these methods provided a comprehensive view of the impact of translanguaging on language learning at Badr High School, allowing for triangulation of the findings and ensuring a robust and well-rounded analysis.

Participants

The participants in this study were 70 Moroccan students, aged between 16 and 19 years, from Badr High School, who completed the survey. These students were classified into two language proficiency levels—intermediate and upper-intermediate—based on their results from a Language Placement Test. Of the 70 students, 59 were divided into two separate classrooms according to the school administration's division. Both groups exhibited nearly identical language proficiency levels based on the placement test. Both groups were studying physics as their major.

Over a period of five weeks, with three hours of instruction each week, one group was taught using a translanguaging approach, which incorporated both Moroccan Darija and English, while the other group received instruction solely in English. This design enabled the researcher to compare the effects of translanguaging with the traditional monolingual approach on students' language development and academic progress.

In addition, a second questionnaire was administered to 15 EFL teachers from El Manssour and Badr High Schools. These participants shared their perspectives on the use of translanguaging in classroom practices, providing valuable insights into the teachers' attitudes and experiences regarding the integration of multiple languages in instruction.

Data Collection

This study employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to gather comprehensive insights into the impact of translanguaging on language development. Initially, the researcher assumed the role of an active participant in the classroom, both collecting data and delivering lessons. This involved taking detailed notes and maintaining field logs to document key observations related to classroom dynamics and language practices.

Classroom observations were conducted for both the experimental and controlled groups to better understand the interactions and language use in each setting. Additionally, two online surveys were administered via Google Forms. The first survey, consisting of 15 items, was distributed to students to gather feedback and insights directly from the participants. The second survey was delivered to the 15 EFL teachers from Badr and El Manssour high schools, aiming to capture their perspectives on the use of translanguaging in classroom practices.

To assess the impact of translanguaging on language development, the researcher also administered tests to both groups. These tests were used to compare academic performance and determine whether the use of translanguaging contributed to better language acquisition and proficiency compared to traditional, monolingual instruction.

By combining these methods, the study was able to triangulate data from different sources, providing a robust and well-rounded analysis of how translanguaging affects language learning and academic progress.

Results

Questionnaire 1: *Teachers' Perceptions of the Role of Translanguaging in TEFL within the Moroccan Context*

The researcher contacted 15 EFL teachers from the directorate in which he was employed to gain insights into their perceptions of translanguaging in TEFL. A comprehensive questionnaire was administered to gather their views on the role and effectiveness of translanguaging within the context of English language teaching. The questionnaire included a range of questions designed to explore their attitudes towards the integration of students' native language in the classroom, its impact on language acquisition, and how it might influence classroom dynamics and overall student learning. The teachers' responses provided valuable qualitative data, shedding light on their individual perspectives, experiences, and any challenges or benefits they associate with using translanguaging as a pedagogical tool. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of how translanguaging is perceived by educators and its potential role in enhancing EFL instruction in the Moroccan context.

➤ **Participants background information**

EFL Teachers	Male	Female
No.	8	7

The participants in this study, consisting of 15 EFL teachers in Morocco, possess a diverse range of teaching experience. Among them, 5 teachers have been teaching for less than 5 years, 5 others have between 5 and 10 years of experience, and the remaining 5 teachers have more than 10 years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language. This range of expertise allowed for a comprehensive understanding of how different levels of teaching experience might influence the perceptions and use of translanguaging in the classroom.

How long have you been teaching English as a foreign language?

■ From 1 to 5　■ From 5 to 10　■ More than 10

34% / 33% / 33%
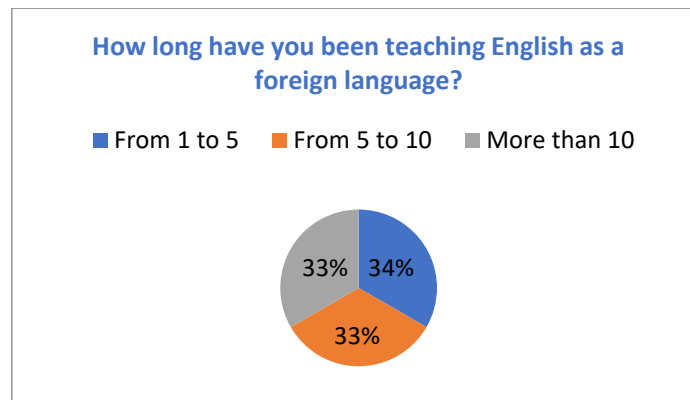
The participating teachers work with a diverse group of students, each displaying varying levels of language proficiency. The following graph illustrates the distribution of students' language proficiency levels across the participants' classrooms. This variation in proficiency allows for an exploration of how translanguaging may be perceived and utilized differently depending on the students' language abilities.
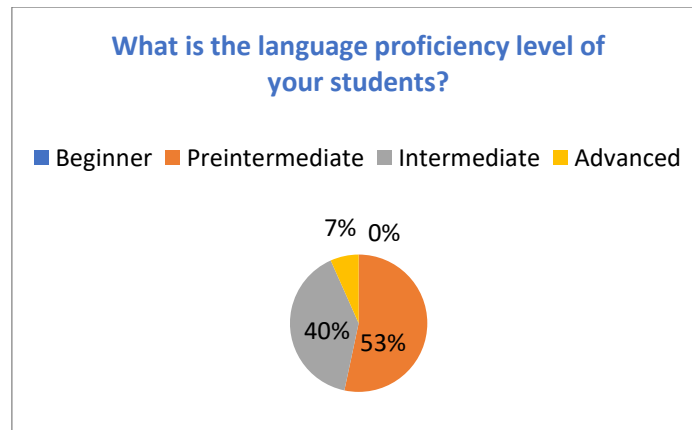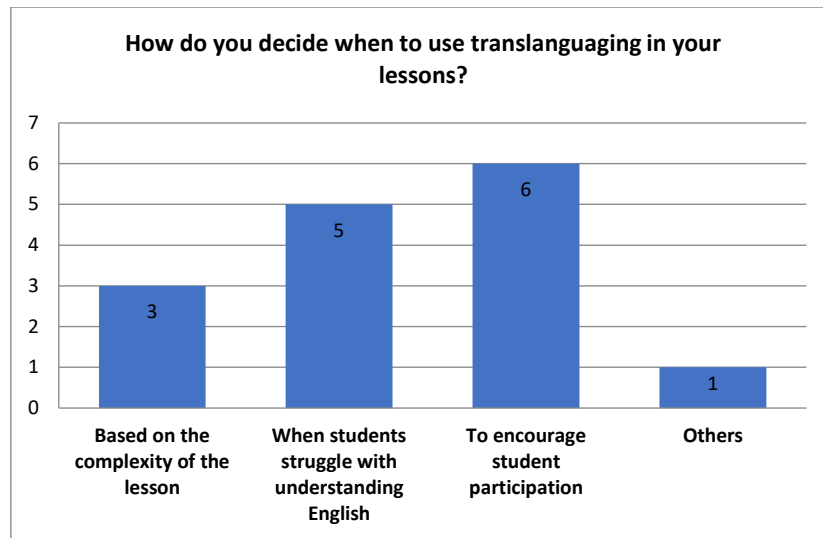
The first question regarding translanguaging asked the teachers whether they use more than one language in the classroom during their lessons. The majority of the participants (93.3%) confirmed that they do use translanguaging in their teaching practices. This indicates that the use of multiple languages is a common strategy among teachers in the Moroccan context, highlighting its potential role in facilitating language learning and communication in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom.
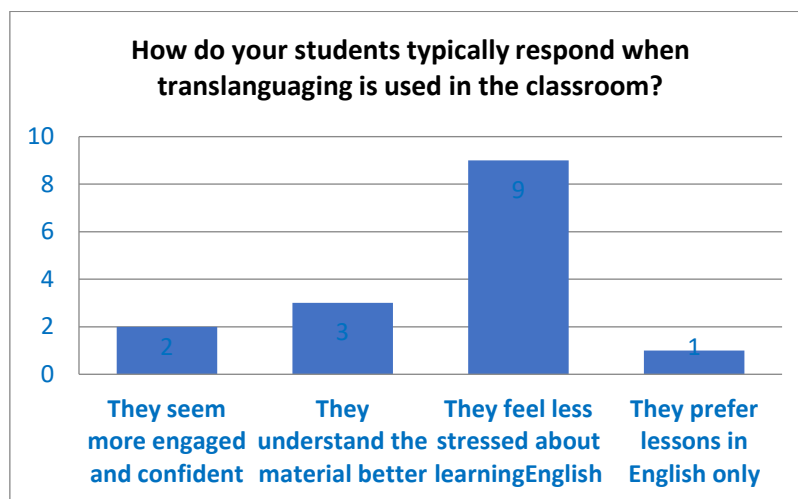
The question regarding the contexts in which teachers use translanguaging in their classrooms revealed a variety of responses. A total of 20% of teachers reported using translanguaging to explain complex academic concepts that students might find difficult to grasp in English, helping to bridge gaps in understanding and promote engagement with the content. Another 20% used translanguaging while giving instructions, ensuring that all students, regardless of their proficiency in English, clearly understood the tasks and expectations. Additionally, 20% of teachers employed translanguaging to encourage student interaction, creating a more comfortable environment for communication and collaboration during group or pair activities. The majority of teachers, 33.3%, used translanguaging to clarify misunderstandings, switching to the native language to provide clearer explanations when students struggled to comprehend a point. Finally, a small percentage of teachers (6.7%) indicated they used translanguaging in other contexts, such as reinforcing cultural references or for personal communication with students. These findings highlight the versatile role of translanguaging in supporting various aspects of classroom instruction.
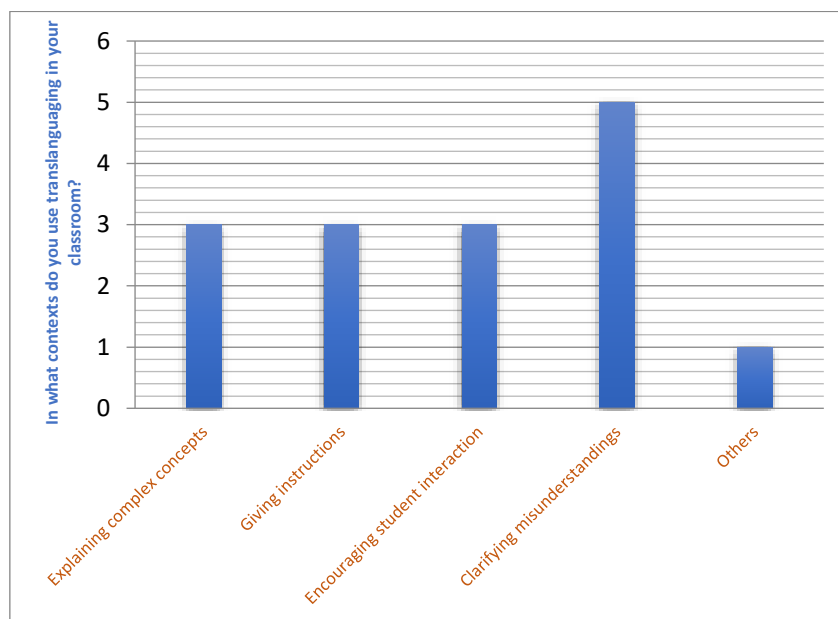
When asked about the languages they use for translanguaging with their students, the responses indicated a preference for specific language combinations. A significant majority, 86.7%, reported using Moroccan Darija and English in their classroom interactions. Additionally, 20% of teachers mentioned using a combination of English and French, while 6.7% indicated that they use English only when implementing translanguaging.

How do you decide when to use translanguaging in your lessons?

Category	Count
Based on the complexity of the lesson	3
When students struggle with understanding English	5
To encourage student participation	6
Others	1

As far as the question related to how they decide when to use translanguaging in their lessons, the responses varied according to the specific needs of the classroom. The majority of teachers, 40%, indicated that they use translanguaging to encourage student participation, creating a more inclusive and interactive environment. Another 33.3% of teachers mentioned they resort to translanguaging when students struggle with understanding English, using it as a tool to provide clarity and support comprehension. Additionally, 20% of teachers stated that they base their decision to use translanguaging on the complexity of the lesson, opting to switch languages when the content becomes more challenging. A small percentage, 1.7%, provided other reasons for incorporating translanguaging, though these were not further specified in the survey.

How do your students typically respond when translanguaging is used in the classroom?

| Category	Count
They seem more engaged and confident	2
They understand the material better	3
They feel less stressed about learning English	9
They prefer lessons in English only	1

The participants responded differently when asked about how their students typically respond to translanguaging in the classroom. The majority of them observed positive reactions. A significant 60% of teachers reported that their students feel less stressed about learning English when translanguaging is used. This approach appears to reduce anxiety and make students more comfortable in the learning environment. Additionally, 20% of teachers noted that students understand the material better when translanguaging is employed, as it helps clarify concepts in a more accessible way. Furthermore, 13.3% of teachers mentioned that students seem more engaged and confident during lessons when multiple languages are used. However, a small percentage, 6.7%, indicated that their students preferred lessons conducted solely in English, suggesting that some learners may still prefer a more monolingual approach.
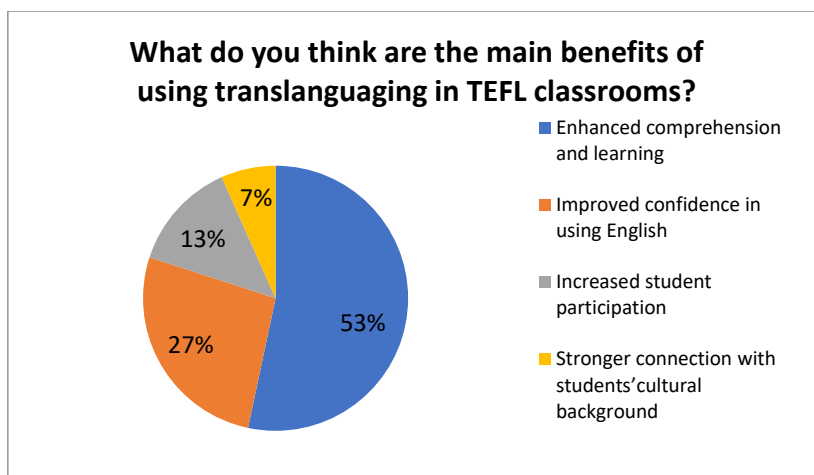
Regarding the main benefits of using translanguaging in TEFL classrooms, the majority of teachers identified several key advantages. A significant 53.3% of teachers believed that translanguaging enhances comprehension and learning, as it allows students to better understand the material by drawing on their linguistic resources. Additionally, 26.7% of teachers noted that it improves students' confidence in using English, as translanguaging provides a supportive environment where learners can express themselves more freely. Another 13.3% of teachers highlighted that translanguaging increases student participation, encouraging more active involvement in class activities. Finally, 7% of teachers emphasized that using translanguaging fosters a stronger connection with students' cultural background, helping students feel more seen and valued in the classroom.

Concerning the observation of improvements in students' English proficiency due to the use of translanguaging, the majority of teachers (80%) reported positive results, noting an improvement in their students' language skills. However, 13% of teachers were unsure about the impact, while 7% did not observe any noticeable improvement in students' English proficiency as a result of using translanguaging.
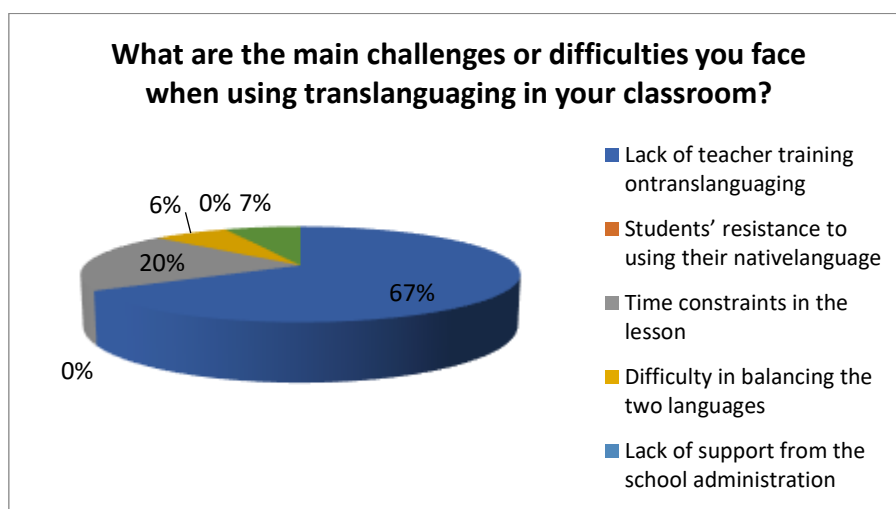
The main challenges teachers face when using translanguaging in the classroom were highlighted in the responses. A significant 66.7% of teachers pointed out the lack of teacher training on translanguaging as a major obstacle. Additionally, 20% of teachers mentioned time constraints during lessons, which made it difficult to effectively integrate translanguaging into their teaching. A smaller percentage, 6.7%, indicated that balancing the two languages posed a challenge, while another 6.7% identified other unspecified difficulties.

The majority of teachers (86.7%) believe that translanguaging can help students better understand academic content in English. However, 6.7% of teachers disagreed, feeling that translanguaging might not be beneficial, and another 6.7% were uncertain about its effectiveness in aiding comprehension.
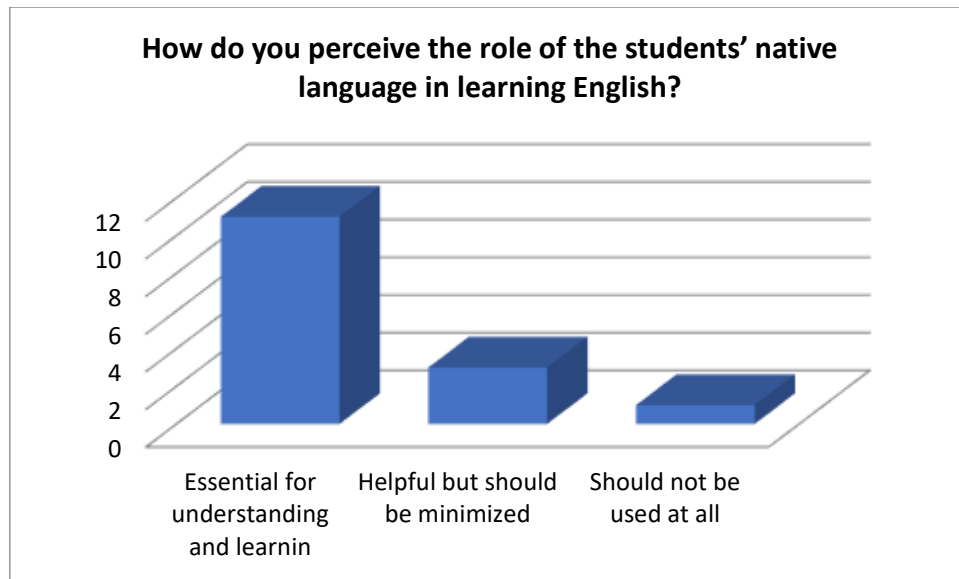
According to the survey, the majority of teachers (73.3%) perceive the students' native language as essential for understanding and learning English. A smaller group (20%) views the native language as helpful but believes it should be minimized in the classroom. Only 6.7% of teachers believe that the native language should not be used at all in the learning process.

Questionnaire 2: *Students use of Moroccan Darija /Arabic in English classes*

This section presents the results of the survey responses from the participants, as shown in Table 1. The table provides a summary of the key responses from the students, offering insights into their perspectives on translanguaging in the TEFL classroom.

No.	Survey items	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	I prepare my ideas in Arabic first before writing	1	6	29	18	15
		1.4 %	8.7 %	42 %	28.1 %	21.7 %
2	To understand the sentence structure, I recall similar or same Arabic structures	5	17	21	15	8
		7.6	25.8%	31.8%	22.7%	12.1%
3	To understand the grammatical rules, I compare them with Arabic rules	29	4	19	11	6
		42%	5.8%	27.5%	15.9%	8.7%
4	To confirm my comprehension of new words or phrases, I translate them to Arabic.	3	8	11	23	24
		4.3%	11.6%	15.9%	33.3%	34.8%
5	I prepare my sentences in Arabic before saying them in English	8	7	23	17	14
		11.6%	10.1%	33.3%	24.6%	20.3%
6	I think in Arabic while reading	10	7	17	19	15
		14.7%	10.3%	25%	27.9%	22.1%
7	To process a reading text I use Arabic language	9	13	24	8	15
		13%	18.8%	34.8%	11.6%	21.7%
8	I use Arabic to understand the meaning of new vocabulary	4	4	15	17	29
		5.8%	5.8%	21.7%	24.6%	42%
9	I use Arabic to understand a concept	3	8	17	16	25
		4.3%	11.6%	24.6%	23.2%	36.2%

No.	Survey items	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
10	**I use Arabic to ask for permission**	13	11	13	19	12
		19.1%	16.2%	19.1%	27.9%	17.7%
11	**I use Arabic to respond to teacher's questions**	11	14	21	9	13
		16.2%	20.6%	30.9%	13.2%	19.1%
12	**I use Arabic to explain problems not related to content**	4	9	26	12	17
		5.9%	13.2%	38.2%	17.6%	25%
13	**I use Arabic to brainstorm during class activities**	1	11	15	10	29
		1.5%	16.7%	22.7%	15.2%	43.9%
14	**I use Arabic to provide assistance to peers during activities**	2	3	23	16	24
		2.9%	4.4%	33.8%	23.5%	35.3%
15	**I use Arabic to discuss content or activities in small groups.**	2	4	9	23	30
		2.9%	5.9%	13.2%	33.8%	44.1%

Table (1): Results of the survey statements

The learners' responses to the survey provide valuable insights into their language usage patterns and how they integrate Arabic into their English learning process. One of the most striking findings is that a significant portion of learners, approximately 70%, prefer to prepare their ideas in Arabic before writing in English. This suggests that Arabic serves as a cognitive tool for organizing and structuring thoughts prior to expression in the target language, indicating a reliance on the native language as a bridge to facilitate understanding and production in English.

Moreover, around 74% of learners recognize the role of Arabic in aiding their understanding of English sentence structure. They tend to recall similar sentence structures from Arabic when faced with English sentences, highlighting how learners draw parallels between their native and target languages to better comprehend and organize English grammar. This reliance on cross-linguistic comparison is further underscored by the fact that approximately 70% of learners compare English grammatical rules with those of Arabic to gain a deeper understanding. This demonstrates that learners use their first language as a crucial cognitive resource to master complex grammatical concepts in English.

In terms of vocabulary acquisition, a significant number of learners, approximately 68%, report using Arabic to confirm their comprehension of new words or phrases through translation. This reflects the learners' use of Arabic as a direct tool for vocabulary acquisition, ensuring accurate comprehension of new linguistic elements. Additionally, about 43% of learners admit to thinking in Arabic while reading in English. This suggests that Arabic serves as an intermediary language during the reading process, helping learners to understand and process English texts, especially when they encounter unfamiliar vocabulary or complex sentence structures.

Furthermore, approximately 56% of learners actively use Arabic to process reading texts. This indicates that Arabic plays a key role in decoding and making sense of English content, further supporting the idea that learners rely on their native language to scaffold their understanding of new material in English. Similarly, about 66% of learners use Arabic to understand the meaning of new vocabulary, a common language-learning strategy where translation into a familiar language helps solidify the meaning of new words and phrases in the target language.

Arabic also plays a vital role in helping students grasp academic concepts in English, with around 59% of learners using it to better understand complex ideas. This highlights the crucial function of Arabic in bridging the gap between learners' native language and the foreign language they are learning, facilitating comprehension of academic content in English.

More importantly, around 47% of learners use Arabic to ask for permission or clarification in the classroom. This suggests that students feel more comfortable using their native language for social or administrative functions, rather than when engaging directly with academic content. In addition, many learners, about 59%, report using Arabic to assist their peers during activities. This shows that Arabic serves as a collaborative tool in the classroom, enabling learners to support one another during language tasks and promoting peer interaction.

The majority of learners, approximately 78%, use Arabic to discuss content or activities in small groups, illustrating the importance of Arabic in fostering group dynamics and promoting a deeper understanding of the material among peers. Lastly, around 66% of learners use Arabic for brainstorming during class activities. This indicates that Arabic is an essential tool for ideation and problem-solving, allowing students to freely express and organize their thoughts before articulating theim in English.

The present findings demonstrate that Arabic plays an indispensable role in the English learning process for many students, serving as a cognitive resource for comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and academic understanding. It also facilitates communication and collaboration in the classroom,

contributing to a more supportive and effective learning environment. However, these patterns also suggest that while Arabic is a valuable aid in learning English, learners' continued reliance on it may indicate areas where further development in English proficiency is needed.

Classroom practices and the students' achievements

The researcher designed and administered an experimental study involving two distinct groups: a controlled group and an experimental group. The primary aim of this study was to investigate the effects of translanguaging in the teaching and learning process. The controlled group was taught exclusively in English for a period of five weeks, while the experimental group was taught using a translanguaging approach that incorporated both Moroccan dialect (Darija) and English.

The researcher, who also served as the teacher, implemented the translanguaging strategy by encouraging the students in the experimental group to actively use both languages during their classroom interactions. Instructions were delivered in both Moroccan dialect and English, with the goal of ensuring that students could understand the content regardless of their proficiency in either language. When students encountered challenges or misunderstandings, the teacher provided clarification and assistance in both languages, thereby fostering a more accessible and supportive learning environment.

The teacher, in this case the researcher, established clear teaching and learning objectives and outcomes for both groups. Both the controlled and experimental groups were taught identical lessons from the same units, using the same textbooks and instructional materials. The only distinction between the two groups was the language of instruction. The controlled group received instruction exclusively in English, while the experimental group engaged in translanguaging, which involved a dynamic use of both Moroccan dialect and English.

Both groups consisted of second-year Baccalaureate students majoring in Physics. The researcher carefully adhered to the planned teaching structure, ensuring that both groups received the same content and instructional quality. The main variable, however, was the language(s) used during the instructional process: English only for the controlled group and a bilingual approach (English and Moroccan dialect) for the experimental group.

This experimental design allowed the researcher to examine the potential advantages and challenges associated with using translanguaging in the classroom, particularly in a context where students were learning complex scientific content. By encouraging the use of both languages, the study sought to explore how translanguaging could impact students' comprehension, engagement, and overall academic performance in English as a foreign language.

During the five-week period, the controlled group faced significant challenges in effectively interacting and communicating within the classroom. A limited number of students in this group were able to participate actively, engage in role-play, or fully comprehend the tasks at hand. As a result, the teacher faced considerable difficulty in maintaining a smooth learning process. Despite employing audiovisual aids to assist with communication and understanding, the process proved to be quite demanding and less efficient. The reliance on English alone for instruction left many students struggling to grasp the material, and they were unable to engage fully with the content.

In contrast, the experimental group, which was taught using a translanguaging approach, demonstrated a markedly different experience. The students in this group were able to interact and communicate effectively throughout the lessons. The use of Moroccan Arabic (Darija) alongside English significantly enhanced their ability to understand the content and instructions. By integrating both languages, students found it easier to follow the teacher's explanations and engage with the material. This bilingual approach enabled students to quickly clarify any misunderstandings and facilitated more active participation in class discussions.

The use of Arabic (Darija) helped bridge the gap in understanding, allowing students to produce excellent examples and responses without expending unnecessary effort. While audiovisual aids were helpful, the combination of English and Arabic for instruction proved to be far more effective in ensuring that students comprehended the lesson requirements. The translanguaging strategy allowed the experimental group to focus their energy on learning rather than on overcoming language barriers, making the overall learning process smoother and more productive. This contrasted sharply with the experiences of the controlled group, where communication challenges hindered their engagement and understanding.

Learner Performance in a Written Test: Controlled vs. Experimental Groups

The experimental group comprised 27 students, whereas the controlled group consisted of 30 students. These two groups were selected from the same cohort of second-year Baccalaureate students, majoring in Physics, ensuring a relatively homogeneous sample in terms of academic background and proficiency. The students in both groups were taught using the same curriculum, textbooks, and materials, with the primary distinction being the language of instruction. The controlled group was taught exclusively in English for the duration of the five-week period, while the experimental group received instruction through translanguaging, where both English and Moroccan Darija were employed to facilitate learning. This structure allowed for a direct comparison of student performance across both teaching methods.

The test administered to both groups was designed to assess the material covered during the five-week instructional period. It included a range of components aimed at evaluating students' proficiency in key areas such as vocabulary usage, collocations, grammar, and functional language. These areas were chosen to reflect the core learning objectives of the lessons, ensuring that the test comprehensively evaluated students' grasp of both the language content and the specific linguistic skills taught during the course. By incorporating a variety of language elements, the test aimed to provide a holistic measure of each group's performance and language development over the five weeks.

The following table presents the marks obtained by students in both the experimental and controlled groups. For confidentiality purposes, the names of the students have been anonymized and replaced with learner numbers. This ensures that individual identities are protected while still providing a detailed overview of the students' performance in the test. The table displays the scores for each student, offering insight into how each group performed across the different areas assessed, including vocabulary usage, collocations, grammar, and functional language.

Controlled group		Experiemental Group	
Students number	**Marks …. /20**	**Students number**	**Marks …. /20**
1	20	1	13
2	17	2	11
3	18	3	16
4	18	4	12
5	08	5	14
6	07	6	15
7	08	7	16
8	00	8	18
9	16	9	12
10	14	10	15
11	12	11	12
12	14	12	18
13	04	13	14
14	09	14	16
15	06	15	11
16	10	16	16
17	10	17	12
18	00	18	14
19	07	19	18
20	08	20	14
21	17	21	13
22	10	22	18
23	18	23	18
24	10	24	12
25	16	25	19
26	13	26	14
27	06	27	13
28	08	28	15
29	05		

The analysis of the marks for both the controlled and experimental groups provides valuable insights into student performance and the impact of different instructional methods. Both groups received marks out of 20, and comparing their results reveals important trends in their academic outcomes over the five-week instructional period.

In the controlled group, which consisted of 29 students, the marks ranged from 0 to 20, indicating considerable variability in performance. Notably, the top performers, such as students 1, 3, 4, 9, 12, 23, and 25, scored between 18 and 20, demonstrating a strong grasp of the material. However, several

students, including students 8, 18, 27, and 29, scored between 0 and 8, suggesting significant challenges in understanding or engaging with the content. The majority of students, such as students 2, 6, 13, and 14, achieved marks between 10 and 16, indicating average performance. These results suggest that while some students performed well, a significant number struggled, which could be attributed to the exclusive use of English in instruction. The lack of native language support, such as Arabic or Darija, likely contributed to communication difficulties and comprehension issues for many students.

In contrast, the experimental group, consisting of 27 students, demonstrated more consistency in performance, with marks ranging from 11 to 19. The top performers, including students 25, 23, 12, and 9, achieved high marks between 18 and 19, indicating a solid understanding of the material, particularly in areas such as vocabulary, grammar, and functions. While the lowest scorers, students 1, 2, and 5, received marks between 11 and 13, they still performed more consistently compared to the controlled group. Furthermore, a significant portion of the experimental group, including students 4, 7, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 21, scored between 12 and 16, suggesting that the use of translanguaging, which combined both Arabic (Darija) and English, helped bridge language barriers and facilitated better understanding of complex concepts.

Comparing the overall performance of the two groups, it is clear that the experimental group showed more consistent results, likely due to the use of translanguaging. By leveraging both Arabic and English, students were able to reduce cognitive load and better comprehend the material. This approach seems to have allowed them to engage more effectively in the learning process. In contrast, the controlled group exhibited greater variability, with some students excelling while others struggled considerably. The controlled group's wider variation in marks, including extreme scores of 0 and 20, indicates that some learners were either highly engaged or faced significant difficulties. On the other hand, the experimental group displayed less extreme variation, suggesting that the dual-language approach created a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

The findings suggest that translanguaging played a significant role in the experimental group's performance. By using both Arabic and English, students were able to better understand the content, engage in classroom activities, and perform more consistently. This practice appears to have facilitated easier integration of concepts and vocabulary, making comprehension and participation more manageable. Consequently, the experimental group achieved fewer low scores compared to the controlled group, which primarily used English as the medium of instruction.

In a nutshell, the comparison of the two groups highlights the positive impact of translanguaging on student performance. The experimental group, using both Arabic and English, demonstrated better understanding, more consistent engagement, and improved academic outcomes. In contrast, the controlled group, taught exclusively in English, displayed greater performance variability, with many students struggling to grasp the material. These results emphasize the potential benefits of incorporating translanguaging into the classroom, as it appears to provide students with the necessary linguistic resources to facilitate understanding and enhance overall learning outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the positive outcomes observed in the experimental group, it is highly recommended that educators incorporate translanguaging strategies into their teaching practices, especially in multilingual and multicultural classrooms. Encouraging the use of students' native languages alongside English can help clarify complex concepts, instructions, and vocabulary, ultimately bridging the gap between the first and target languages. This approach not only makes learning more accessible and effective but also increases student engagement and comprehension, leading to improved academic performance. Integrating translanguaging into the classroom can provide students with the cognitive support needed to better understand challenging content, fostering a deeper connection to the material.

To ensure the successful implementation of translanguaging, professional development programs for teachers are essential. Educators should receive targeted training that equips them with the necessary skills to use students' native languages strategically while teaching English. It is crucial for teachers to understand when and how to switch between languages to maximize learning outcomes. Workshops focusing on the pedagogical benefits of translanguaging, as well as practical strategies for its classroom application, would empower teachers to better support their students. Such training would ultimately enhance both teacher effectiveness and the overall language learning experience.

In light of the findings, it is also advisable for curriculum developers to consider integrating translanguaging practices into official language teaching frameworks. Incorporating translanguaging into the curriculum would allow teachers to utilize both the target language (English) and students' native languages, such as Arabic in the Moroccan context, in a balanced manner. A curriculum that supports translanguaging would promote flexibility in teaching and ensure that students can access content more effectively. The official recognition of translanguaging as a valid pedagogical approach could significantly improve overall language acquisition and foster greater student engagement in the learning process.

Given the promising results of this study, further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of translanguaging on language proficiency and academic performance. Future studies could adopt longitudinal research designs to examine whether the benefits observed during the five-week instructional period continue to impact students' learning over time. Additionally, research could extend to explore translanguaging's impact on various academic subjects, not just language learning, to assess its broader applicability and effectiveness across different disciplines.

It is recommended that teachers encourage students to use translanguaging to assist their peers during collaborative activities. Peer support and collaboration are enhanced when students can communicate effectively in both their native language and English. Teachers should design group activities where students can brainstorm, discuss content, and solve problems using both languages. This peer interaction not only fosters a sense of community within the classroom but also promotes mutual assistance, helping students better understand complex concepts and build confidence in their language abilities.

Implications

The findings of this study highlight the significant implications of translanguaging in enhancing language proficiency, fostering inclusive education, and supporting diverse learners. Firstly, the study suggests that translanguaging plays a crucial role in improving students' language proficiency. By allowing students to use their native language alongside English, it reduces cognitive load, making it easier for learners to understand complex academic content. This dual-language approach effectively bridges the gap between students' first language and the target language, facilitating better comprehension and retention of material. Consequently, translanguaging can be viewed as a valuable tool for enhancing language development, especially in multilingual classrooms where students may have varying levels of language proficiency.

In addition, translanguaging promotes a more inclusive educational environment. By permitting students to use their native language, teachers make learning more accessible and less intimidating, especially for those who may struggle with English-only instruction. This approach helps reduce anxiety, providing a supportive space where students feel validated and capable of engaging with the material. When teachers incorporate students' native languages, they foster a sense of inclusion, leading to increased student participation, engagement, and confidence in learning. Ultimately, this inclusivity enhances the overall academic experience and ensures that students, regardless of their language background, have the opportunity to succeed.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the value of translanguaging in supporting a diverse range of learners. Since students come from various linguistic backgrounds, translanguaging enables them to better access and understand content, regardless of their proficiency level in English. This practice ensures that no student is left behind due to language barriers, fostering greater equity in the classroom. By meeting the needs of all students, translanguaging helps to create an environment where everyone has the opportunity to excel, promoting fairness and equal access to academic resources.

The research also underscores the importance of teacher autonomy in adapting instructional practices to suit the diverse needs of students. Translanguaging provides teachers with the flexibility to adjust their teaching strategies based on the specific linguistic abilities and learning requirements of their students. This autonomy is essential in classrooms with students of varying levels of proficiency, allowing educators to tailor their lessons to optimize student comprehension and participation. By empowering teachers to make informed decisions about when and how to use translanguaging, they can enhance learning outcomes and ensure that all students are effectively supported.

Crucially, translanguaging fosters cultural and linguistic awareness within the classroom. By integrating students' native languages into the learning process, teachers acknowledge and celebrate the cultural and linguistic diversity that exists among their students. This practice strengthens the relationship between teachers and students, creating a respectful and supportive learning environment. When students see that their cultural identities are valued, they are more likely to feel motivated to engage with the material and participate actively in class. Therefore, translanguaging not only enhances language proficiency but also contributes to creating a positive, culturally responsive classroom where students feel respected and empowered to learn.

Conclusion

The findings from both the students' test marks and the teacher's perceptions provide compelling evidence of the effectiveness of translanguaging in enhancing English language learning. The comparative analysis between the controlled and experimental groups reveals that the use of translanguaging, which allowed students to use both English and Arabic, led to more consistent and improved performance. The experimental group demonstrated fewer extreme variations in scores and generally higher levels of engagement and comprehension. This suggests that translanguaging not only supported students in overcoming language barriers but also facilitated their understanding of complex concepts, vocabulary, and grammar.

The teacher's perceptions further corroborate these findings, as the use of both languages in instruction was seen to reduce cognitive load, increase participation, and enhance confidence among students. The translanguaging approach created a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, where students felt more comfortable engaging with the material and communicating their ideas. On the other hand, the controlled group, taught exclusively in English, exhibited greater variability in performance, with some students excelling while others struggled significantly. This highlights the challenges that arise when students are limited to a single language of instruction, particularly when their proficiency in that language is not sufficient to fully comprehend the material.

Overall, the results suggest that integrating translanguaging into the classroom can play a crucial role in improving students' academic performance, fostering a more inclusive learning environment, and addressing the diverse linguistic needs of learners. The findings underscore the importance of considering students' native languages as valuable cognitive resources in language learning, particularly in contexts where learners are not yet fully proficient in the target language. Consequently, this study advocates for the incorporation of translanguaging strategies in English language teaching, as it has the potential to support students' language development and overall academic success.

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