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**The Impact of Using Parallel Texts (English/Arabic) on Reading
Comprehension in EFL context**

A Case Study of Second-Year University EFL Students in the Department of Foreign
Languages at Abdelhafid Boussouf University, Mila

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Dedication

In the name of **ALLAH**, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

I dedicate this work to:

Myself, thank you for not giving up, for showing resilience in the face of doubt, and for continuing to move forward even when the path was unclear.

My beloved father and mother, your love, guidance, and prayers have been the foundation of my strength. Without your endless support, this journey would not have been possible.

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My sweet family, your presence fills my life with pride, warmth, and belonging.

My soulmate Sawsan, you are my true companion, my source of light, and the one who shares my dreams and struggles.

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With deepest love and gratitude, this thesis is dedicated to all of you.

Khawla

Dedication

In the name of **ALLAH**, the Most Merciful and Compassionate

I dedicate this work to:

To myself,

for persisting through moments that felt heavier than words can describe, and for continuing forward with quiet strength and determination. This achievement is not a coincidence, but the result of patience, resilience, and a long journey that shaped a stronger version of me.

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and to my little ones, Iline and Baha Eddine,

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for your sincere presence and support throughout this journey.

Finally, to everyone who believed in me and kept me in their prayers...

this achievement carries a part of all of you.

Hiba

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. However, many learners face difficulties understanding English texts due to limited vocabulary, complex grammatical structures, and unfamiliar expressions. To overcome these challenges, learners often use English–Arabic parallel texts, which present the original text alongside its Arabic translation. This study investigates the impact of using English–Arabic parallel texts on reading comprehension among second-year Licence students at Mila University. A mixed-methods research design was adopted. Data were collected through a questionnaire submitted to 80 students and semi-structured interviews with 10 teachers. Quantitative data were analyzed using percentages, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings indicate that most learners perceive parallel texts as helpful for improving reading comprehension. They support vocabulary understanding, facilitate the interpretation of difficult ideas, and reduce reading difficulties. Teachers also expressed generally positive attitudes toward their use, while emphasizing the importance of avoiding excessive reliance on translation. The study concludes that English–Arabic parallel texts can be an effective tool for supporting reading comprehension in EFL contexts when used appropriately and in moderation.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, English–Arabic Parallel Texts, EFL Learners, Bilingual Texts, Reading Difficulties.

List of Symbols and Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

i + 1: Input slightly above the learner's current level

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

Q: Question

%: Percentage

p: page

pp: pages

&: and

PDP: Pre, During, Post-reading (model)

SVO: Subject-Verb-Object

VSO: Verb-Subject-Object

DIER: Direct and Indirect Effects Model

DRIVE: Distributed Reading Integration and Verification Engine

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General introduction

1. Background of the Study

Reading comprehension is widely recognized as one of the most challenging skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. It plays a crucial role in language development, academic achievement, and access to knowledge. In university settings, students are frequently required to read academic texts containing complex grammatical structures, specialized vocabulary, and culturally unfamiliar concepts. Consequently, successful reading comprehension requires not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to process, interpret, and connect information effectively.

According to Schema Theory, reading comprehension largely depends on learners' ability to relate their prior knowledge to new textual information. When learners lack sufficient background knowledge, vocabulary, or cultural familiarity, understanding a text becomes more difficult. As a result, many EFL learners struggle to identify main ideas, infer meaning, and engage confidently with English texts. Similarly, Cognitive Load Theory explains that learners may experience cognitive overload when they are required to process excessive amounts of unfamiliar linguistic information simultaneously. In many EFL contexts, students tend to focus on translating individual words and sentences rather than constructing the overall meaning of a text. Consequently, reading may become a slow and demanding process, particularly for learners with limited exposure to English outside the classroom.

The importance of reading comprehension has increased in today's globalized world, where English proficiency is essential for academic success, professional development, and access to international sources of information. However, many Algerian EFL learners continue to face significant challenges when reading English texts, especially those containing unfamiliar vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and culturally specific references. Since English is primarily practiced within educational settings, learners often have limited opportunities to develop reading fluency through authentic language exposure.

To overcome these challenges, teachers and learners frequently employ various reading strategies. One commonly used strategy is the use of English–Arabic parallel texts, in which English texts are presented alongside their Arabic translations. This bilingual format may facilitate comprehension by helping learners understand difficult vocabulary, clarify grammatical structures, and follow the meaning of the text more easily. It may also reduce dependence on dictionaries and enable learners to compare linguistic features across both languages.

The potential benefits of first-language (L1) support in reading comprehension have been widely discussed in the literature. Cummins (1979), through the Interdependence Hypothesis, argues that cognitive and literacy skills developed in the first language can transfer positively to the second language, thereby supporting comprehension and language learning. This perspective suggests that L1 can serve as a valuable scaffold for understanding texts written in a foreign language. Likewise, Krashen's (1985) Comprehensible Input Hypothesis emphasizes that language acquisition occurs more effectively when learners are

exposed to input that is understandable and slightly beyond their current level of competence. From this viewpoint, bilingual support and translation can facilitate comprehension by making linguistic input more accessible and reducing cognitive demands during reading.

Despite these potential advantages, the use of L1 in foreign language learning remains a controversial issue within the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Some researchers argue that bilingual support enhances comprehension, lowers reading anxiety, and promotes vocabulary acquisition. Others contend that excessive reliance on translation may hinder the development of independent reading skills and limit learners' ability to engage directly with the target language. In such cases, learners may become dependent on translated texts rather than developing strategies for interpreting meaning through context.

Although English language instruction in Algeria generally promotes English-only immersion approaches, many university students continue to rely on Arabic-supported reading practices to understand complex academic texts. This situation creates a pedagogical tension between immersion-based teaching methodologies and the actual learning strategies employed by students. Although previous studies have examined reading comprehension, bilingual support, and the role of the first language in EFL learning, most research has focused on general translation practices or classroom L1 use. Comparatively little attention has been given to English–Arabic parallel texts as a structured reading tool. Furthermore, empirical research investigating their effectiveness within Algerian university contexts remains limited, particularly studies that explore both students' and teachers' perspectives. This lack of research represents a significant gap in the literature, as little is known about how English–Arabic parallel texts influence reading comprehension among Algerian EFL learners and how they are perceived by both students and teachers.

Therefore, there is a clear need for further investigation into this area. Addressing this gap, the present study seeks to examine the effectiveness of English–Arabic parallel texts in facilitating reading comprehension among Algerian EFL university students and to explore both students' and teachers' perceptions regarding their use in EFL reading activities.

2. Statement of the Problem

Reading comprehension remains a major challenge for many second-year EFL students at Mila University. Despite having studied English for several years, many students still experience difficulties when reading academic texts in English. These difficulties are often related to limited vocabulary knowledge, complex grammatical structures, and unfamiliar cultural references, which can negatively affect their understanding of written texts and their overall academic performance.

To overcome these difficulties, many students resort to using English–Arabic parallel texts as a reading support tool. By comparing the English text with its Arabic translation, students may better understand vocabulary, sentence meanings, and the general content of the text. However, the effectiveness of this practice remains unclear. While some teachers and researchers argue that parallel texts facilitate comprehension and increase learners'

confidence, others believe that excessive reliance on translation may hinder the development of independent reading skills.

In the Algerian EFL context, particularly at Mila University, little research has investigated the impact of English–Arabic parallel texts on students’ reading comprehension. Furthermore, there is limited information about how frequently students use these texts, the benefits and challenges they experience, and teachers’ perceptions of their pedagogical value. This lack of evidence creates uncertainty regarding the role that parallel texts should play in EFL reading instruction.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the impact of using English–Arabic parallel texts on the reading comprehension of second-year EFL students at Mila University and to explore both students’ and teachers’ attitudes toward their use in reading classes.

3. Aims of the Study

The present study aims to investigate the role of English–Arabic parallel texts in improving reading comprehension among EFL learners. It mainly examines how parallel texts can help learners understand English texts more easily and support them while reading.

In addition, the study seeks to identify some benefits and challenges related to the use of parallel texts in EFL reading. It also explores students’ and teachers’ views about using English–Arabic parallel texts in reading activities.

Furthermore, this study attempts to highlight how parallel texts can be used in an effective way to improve comprehension without making learners overly dependent on translation.

4. Research Questions

The present study addresses the following research questions :

- 1.To what extent do second-year EFL learners perceive English–Arabic parallel texts as a tool for supporting reading comprehension ?
- 2.How do EFL learners use English–Arabic parallel texts while reading academic texts ?
- 3.What are teachers’ attitudes toward the use of English–Arabic parallel texts in EFL reading classes ?
- 4.What are the perceived advantages and limitations of using English–Arabic parallel texts in reading comprehension activities ?

5. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its focus on English–Arabic parallel texts as a helpful tool to improve reading comprehension among EFL learners. It is expected to raise awareness among teachers and students about how bilingual texts can support understanding and reduce difficulties such as limited vocabulary, complex sentences, and misunderstanding of meaning.

This study may assist teachers in making informed decisions when using parallel texts in reading classes. It can guide them in presenting bilingual materials in a way that supports learners' comprehension and builds their confidence in reading English texts. It may also encourage a balanced use of the first language in EFL learning.

In addition, this research may contribute to applied linguistics by showing how the first language can support reading comprehension. It may also encourage further research on bilingual texts and their role in improving other skills such as vocabulary and writing, especially in the Algerian EFL context.

6. Research Methodology

The research investigates the impact of English–Arabic parallel texts on reading comprehension among second-year Licence students at Mila University Centre. A mixed-methods design was adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The participants completed a structured questionnaire including both closed and open-ended questions. It aimed to explore their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes towards the use of parallel texts in reading comprehension.

Teachers were also involved through semi-structured interviews, allowing them to share their perspectives on the pedagogical value of parallel texts and their impact on learners' comprehension, motivation, and confidence in reading English texts.

For data analysis, a descriptive analytical method was used. Quantitative data were presented in percentages and tables, while qualitative responses were analysed thematically. This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of learners' and teachers' views regarding English–Arabic parallel texts in EFL reading.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

This research is divided into two main chapters: a theoretical part and a practical part. The first chapter presents the theoretical framework and is organized into two sections. The first section focuses on English–Arabic parallel texts. It includes their definition, types, pedagogical value, and main advantages and limitations in EFL learning. The second section deals with reading comprehension. It presents its definition, main models, key components, difficulties faced by EFL learners, and reading strategies that support comprehension.

The second chapter presents the practical part of the study. It includes the research methodology, the participants, and the data collection tools, which are the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. It also covers the analysis of the collected data and the discussion of the main results.

Chapter One: Theoretical Part

Section One : Understanding Parallel Texts in EFL Reading

Introduction

Parallel texts are a helpful tool for learning English. They show two languages side by side, for example your own language and English. In this way, you can compare the two and understand the meaning more easily. That is why today many teachers realize that using the native language can actually help students learn a new one.

Parallel texts make learning less stressful because students can find the meaning of words quickly, and the skills they have in their first language help them learn the second language. Using these texts is a big help for learners, as it makes reading easier and also supports vocabulary and cultural understanding.

This section explains what parallel texts are and how they work. It begins with a definition and the different types, then moves to the theories behind them, as well as the advantages and challenges of using them in EFL teaching. By looking at both ideas and real classroom results, we will show how these texts help students learn and where they may not be as effective.

1.1 Definition of Parallel Texts

Parallel texts are materials that show the same passage in two languages, usually the learner's first language (L1) and the target language (L2). They are placed side by side so

students can compare them easily. This format helps learners understand meaning and notice similarities and differences between the two languages.

The idea of bilingual or parallel texts first started in translation studies. Translators used to place the original text next to its translation so it was easier to compare both versions. Later, language teachers saw that this method could also help students in classrooms. By showing two languages side by side, teachers realized learners could understand meaning more clearly and notice how the languages connect. This made parallel texts not only a tool for translation but also a way to support language learning.

From a learning point of view, parallel texts act as support tools. Reading both the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) together makes it easier when students face new or hard words (Grabe & Stoller, 2002), this helps learners pay more attention to bigger skills like making guesses and building meaning. Cummins (1979, p. 222) stated that “the developmental interdependence hypothesis proposes that the development of competence in a second language (L2) is partially a function of the type of competence already developed in L1 at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins”. Parallel texts show this clearly because knowledge from L1 can move to L2. Ellis (2003) also explains that comparing the two versions helps students notice grammar and vocabulary, which makes them read in a more effective way.

Parallel texts are helpful not, for learning a language but also for understanding a culture. Nation (2001) says that language and culture are closely connected, translations help learners get idioms and cultural references. This way parallel texts help learners understand and learn about a culture.

Learners can use texts in many ways, they can try to guess the meanings of words, check translations and see if they understand the text. Switching between the two languages helps them practice vocabulary and grammar while keeping them interested.

According to Duke and Pearson in 2002 this method works well. However, teachers warn that students should not rely much on their native language or L1, if they always translate, they may find it hard to read on their own in the language or L2, this is what Shei and Pain said in 2010.

So parallel texts should be used slowly with a plan They should help learners move towards reading away in the second language.

1.2 Types of Parallel Texts

Parallel texts can be shown in different ways. This depends on what the students are trying to learn and how good they are at English. Researchers usually describe three main types:

- The sentence-by-sentence format
- The side-by-side format
- The interlinear format

Each of these formats has good points and weak points when students are learning English as a foreign language. The sentence-by-sentence and interlinear formats are very helpful for beginners because they give support with each sentence. The side-by-side format works better for students who already know some English, as it helps them improve reading fluency and understand meaning in context.

Parallel texts can help students understand what they read and become more independent in learning a language, they support reading comprehension and make learning English easier. Over time, they also help students build vocabulary and cultural knowledge while slowly learning to read on their own.

1.2.1 Sentence-by-Sentence Format

The sentence-by-sentence format matches each sentence in the second language (L2) with its direct version in the first language (L1), this style is very helpful for beginners because it gives quick access to meaning. It lets them compare vocabulary and grammar directly.

Nation (2001) says this kind of alignment helps students study language. It also helps them notice how words and phrases are organized differently in each language.

Dolgunsöz and Kimsesiz (2021, p. 7) found that “the results showed that the learners who took instruction with parallel texts performed better in both types of tests”. They say it reduces effort by making meanings clear at the small level of each sentence, Students do not need to use dictionaries so they can focus more on understanding. However, Cook (2010, p. 83) warned that “word-for-word translation may encourage dependence on the first language and prevent learners from developing fluency in the second, these habits can slow fluency and stop learners from developing natural reading skills”.

The sentence-by-sentence format is effective for beginners, but it should be used carefully and should not make learners too dependent on the first language.

1.2.2 Side-by-Side Format

The side-by-side format shows the text in L2 next to L1 usually in parallel columns, this design helps learners read longer parts before checking the translation and supports fluency and understanding in context. Cook (2010) says that side-by-side texts are best for intermediate and advanced students because they allow learners to work with longer passages while still giving support in their first language. Abdallah (2021) found that this format helps learners use context before looking at translations, which improves guessing skills and confidence. Jalilova (2022) adds that side-by-side texts build cultural knowledge by letting learners compare idioms and cultural references. For Arabic–English texts, however, opposite writing directions (Arabic right-to-left, English left-to-right) can make reading more difficult. Learners must adjust their eye movement between the two directions, which increases effort and slows processing. Careful design and layout are needed to reduce this challenge. Wälchli (2007) also warns that students may rely too much on the L1 version, which reduces exposure to L2.

1.2.3 Interlinear Format

The interlinear style shows the L2 text with explanations for each word in L1 placed directly under the matching word. This often changes the sentence structure to match the word order in L1.

This style helps Arabic-speaking beginners learning English, they can quickly see the vocabulary and understand basic sentence differences between Arabic and English. Arabic sentences usually follow a Verb-Subject-Object (VSO) pattern, while English sentences follow a Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) pattern, The interlinear style helps with this.

Zarei and Hasani (2011) say that this style helps learners remember vocabulary and reduces the effort needed to learn new words. Learners do not have to look up for words in a dictionary. Elekaei et al. (2015) found that interlinear glossing improved word memory in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. This method worked better than notes in the margins.

However, Wälchli (2007) warns that relying too much on word-for-word translation can be harmful. It can slow down reading and make it hard to understand texts as a whole. So, the

interlinear format is good for beginners, but teachers should use it carefully. They should guide learners to use it as a step toward reading L2 texts. Learners should not depend too much on L1 explanations.

1.3 Theoretical foundation

Parallel texts are explained by different theories that show why they are useful in learning a foreign language. These theories talk about bilingualism, language transfer, and the use of the first language (L1) to help students understand and learn the second language (L2).

1.3.1 Bilingualism and Language Transfer

Understanding language transfer is important to know how parallel texts work well. Cummins (1979) says that reading and writing skills learned in the first language (L1) can help with the second language (L2). This gives students a base for understanding and analysis.

When learners use what they already know about language, they can make sense of new information. Odlin (1989) explains that language transfer is helpful when languages are similar, but it can cause problems when languages are different and confusing.

Parallel texts support transfer by letting students compare language structures and vocabulary directly. Students can see similarities and differences between languages, which helps them learn better. Language transfer is a key tool for learning because it shows how knowledge of L1 can support learning L2.

Research on education shows that people who speak two languages often use their first language (L1) as a tool when working with materials in their second language (L2). Cook (2001) says that speaking two languages gives learners flexibility, allowing them to switch between languages and use what they know from one to help with the other.

Parallel texts work in this way by helping bilingual learners use both languages together. They make it clear and easy to use L1 to understand L2. This helps learners use their first language to understand new ideas in their second language.

1.3.2 Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis

Cummins' (1979) interdependence hypothesis, also called the "common underlying proficiency" idea, says that skills in the second language (L2) depend partly on skills already learned in the first language (L1). This theory explains that abilities such as reading, making

guesses, and understanding developed in L1 can be used when learning L2. Parallel texts show this idea in practice by letting learners use their L1 literacy to help them understand L2.

Studies show that this idea works in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). For example, Dolgunsöz and Kimsesiz (2021) found that students who used parallel texts could take the reading strategies they learned in their first language (L1) and use them when reading English (L2). This helped them understand better and remember words more easily.

This means parallel texts are not only useful for translation. They are real learning tools based on ideas from bilingual education that have been used for a long time.

1.3.2.1 Common Underlying Proficiency

Cummins explained that both languages share one basic system in the mind. Skills such as guessing meaning, predicting ideas, and understanding texts are not limited to a single language. They can move from one language to another because they come from the same source. When reading and writing in the first language (L1) becomes stronger, it also helps the second language (L2). This happens because both languages use the same mental base. In this way, progress in L1 supports learning in L2.

1.3.2.2 Application in the Classroom

Teachers can guide students to use reading strategies from their first language (L1) when working with texts in the second language (L2). Strategies such as skimming, scanning, and predicting meaning can be transferred across languages. Parallel texts make this process easier because they show both versions side by side. Students can compare structures, vocabulary, and meaning, then apply familiar skills to new material. For example, an Arabic-speaking student who knows how to find topic sentences in Arabic can use the same skill when reading English, with the support of parallel texts. This method helps learners build confidence and strengthens comprehension in L2.

1.3.2.3 Criticism of the Theory

Some researchers believe that skills from the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) do not always transfer equally, especially when the two languages are very different, such as Arabic and English. Others point out that depending too much on L1 may slow down learning in L2, because students may rely on translation instead of building their own strategies in the new language. Even with these concerns, Cummins' idea remains

important in bilingual education and is often used in research on English as a foreign language (EFL).

1.3.3 The Role of L1 in Language Learning

The use of the first language (L1) in learning a new language is often discussed. Old teaching methods usually said that using L1 would stop students from learning the second language (L2). Now, many teachers and researchers believe L1 can actually help.

Cook (2001) explains that using L1 in a smart way can make learning less stressful, give students more confidence, and help them understand the culture behind the new language. Some teaching methods even use L1 together with L2 to help students switch between them more easily. In this way, L1 becomes a tool for learning, not a barrier.

Krashen (1985) says that learners need clear input in the second language (L2), but he also notes that the first language (L1) can be a helpful support when students face difficulties. Jalilova (2022) adds that parallel texts improve cultural understanding by helping learners figure out idioms and cultural meanings through their L1.

This shows that the role of L1 in parallel texts is not to replace practice in L2, but to give support for comprehension and to build a stronger connection with foreign language materials.

1.3.3.1 Historical Perspective

Early teaching methods, such as the Grammar Translation Method, relied a lot on the first language (L1). Teachers used translation to explain grammar and vocabulary, making L1 the main tool for learning. Later, new approaches like the Communicative Approach discouraged the use of L1. These methods focused on immersion, asking students to work only in the second language (L2) to build fluency.

Today, more balanced approaches are common. Teachers recognize that L1 can be helpful when used carefully. It can support learners by reducing confusion and showing connections between languages. At the same time, too much reliance on L1 is avoided, so students still practice independent skills in L2.

1.3.3.2 Teacher Attitudes Toward L1

Some teachers see the first language (L1) as a quick aid that makes learning easier and reduces stress. Others worry that using L1 too much may slow down progress in the second

language (L2). Modern teaching often suggests using L1 only when it is useful for example, to explain meaning, give cultural context, or provide support instead of banning it completely.

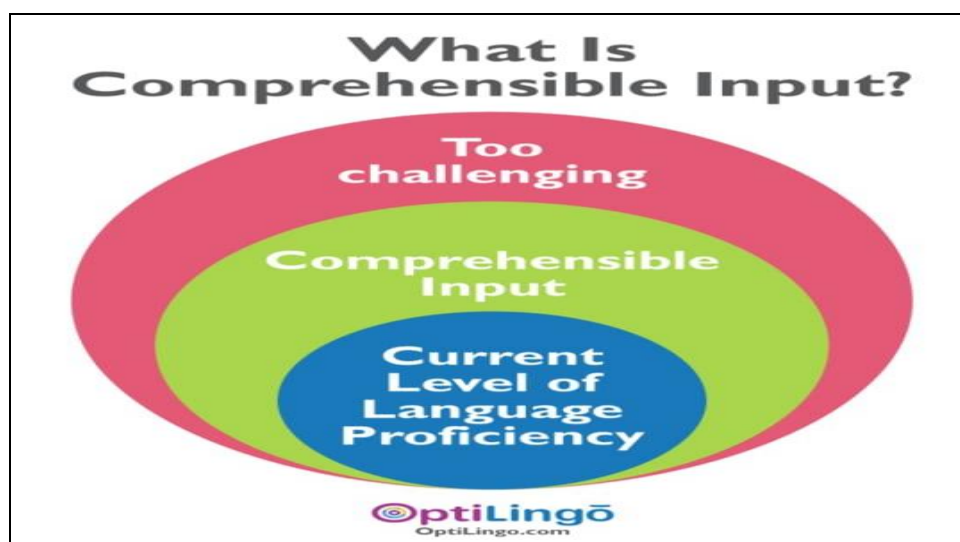
Table 1: Positive Roles of L1 vs. Challenges of L1 Use

Positive Roles of L1	Challenges of L1 Use
✓ Clarifying the meaning	✓ Too much translation
✓ Lowering anxiety	✓ Less exposure to real L2 input
✓ Building cultural Understanding	✓ Slower growth of independent comprehension skills
✓ Supporting reading strategies	

1.3.4 Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis

Krashen (1985, p. 2) explained that “language acquisition occurs when language is understood; that is, when we receive ‘comprehensible input’.” meaning L2 messages that learners can understand even if they do not know every word. Parallel texts can support this by making input clearer through L1, helping learners grasp meaning more easily. However, Krashen stresses that parallel texts should not replace authentic exposure to L2. They should be used as scaffolding, while learners still need real practice with L2 materials in natural contexts.

Figure 1: Comprehensible Input



1.3.4.1 Comprehensible Input Beyond Current Level ($i + 1$)

Krashen (1985, p. 3) stated that “learners progress when they understand input that contains structures a little beyond their current level of competence ($i + 1$).” This means students understand most of the language but also meet some new parts that help them grow. Parallel texts support this process by showing the meaning in the first language (L1) for the hard parts, while still giving practice with new material in the second language (L2).

1.3.4.2 From Input to Intake

Corder (1967, p. 9) explained that “input is what is available to the learner, intake is what is actually internalized.” This means students see or hear a lot of language, but only part of it is truly learned. Parallel texts make it easier for input to turn into intake, because learners can check meaning in their first language (L1) and avoid confusion.

1.3.4.3 Parallel Texts as Scaffolding

Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976, p. 90) defined scaffolding as “the process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts.” This means scaffolding is support that helps learners do something they could not do alone. Parallel texts work in this way by giving temporary help. They allow students to understand meaning with the aid of their first language (L1) until they are ready to read on their own in the second language (L2).

1.3.4.4 Limitations of Krashen’s Theory

Swain (1985, p. 249) argued that “comprehensible input alone is not sufficient for language acquisition; learners also need opportunities for comprehensible output.” This means

that understanding language is not enough by itself. Students also need chances to speak, write, and use the language in real situations. Parallel texts help by making meaning clear, but learners must still practice producing language and interacting in authentic contexts.

1.4 Pedagogical Value of Parallel Texts

Parallel texts are not only translation tools but also important educational resources that improve foreign language learning. They help students understand reading better, grow their vocabulary, and learn about culture. Research and theories show that bilingual materials play a key role in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching.

1.4.1 Enhancing Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is one of the main skills that parallel texts support. Abdallah (2021) showed that students who used parallel texts understood reading better than those who used only one language. The bilingual format gave quick clarification, reduced confusion, and encouraged students to read with more confidence.

Nation (2001) adds that parallel texts lower the mental effort needed when reading in a foreign language by giving direct access to meaning.

This allows students to use more mental energy for higher-level tasks like making guesses, analyzing, and combining ideas. Dolgunsöz and Kimsesiz (2021) also showed that parallel texts help students practice reading strategies that can move between languages. This improves their overall reading and writing skills.

1.4.2 Vocabulary Development

The acquisition of vocabulary is another domain where parallel texts excel. Dolgunsöz and Kimsesiz (2021) found that students who used parallel texts were better at keeping new words in memory. They could guess meaning from the context and then check it with translation. This double exposure makes memory stronger and helps students grow their vocabulary over time.

Nation (2001) says that the best way to learn new words is when students see them in meaningful contexts. Parallel texts create these contexts by showing words in both the first language (L1) and the second language (L2). This lets students connect new vocabulary with ideas they already know.

Cook (2010) adds that parallel texts help students notice differences in word choices between languages. This builds metalinguistic awareness and improves critical thinking skills.

1.4.3 Cultural Awareness

Parallel texts do more than help with comprehension and vocabulary. They also build cultural understanding. Jalilova (2022) explains that bilingual texts help students understand idioms and cultural references that might be confusing otherwise. By looking at culture in different languages, students gain better insight into cultural differences and improve their ability to communicate across cultures.

Cook (2001) highlights that cultural awareness is very important for learning a new language, because understanding often depends on using background knowledge. Parallel texts give students access to cultural details hidden in the language, helping them build intercultural skills.

Abdallah (2021) found that learners who used parallel texts showed more interest in materials with cultural references, since the L1 version acted as a bridge to understanding.

1.4.4 Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis shows how comparing two languages helps learners notice similarities and differences in grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Parallel texts naturally support this process by aligning Arabic and English versions of the same text. For example, learners can see how Arabic often uses Verb-Subject-Object order, while English uses Subject-Verb-Object order. They can also compare Arabic's root-and-pattern word system with English's simpler word building. This comparison improves awareness of language differences and helps learners avoid mistakes caused by structural contrasts.

1.5 Limitations of Parallel Texts

While parallel texts offer important teaching advantages, researchers have pointed out various drawbacks that should be taken into account when using them in EFL environments. One problem is that students may depend too much on their first language (L1), which can reduce their practice in the second language (L2). If teachers do not manage this well, these issues can weaken the benefits of parallel texts and slow down language learning.

1.5.1 Overdependence on L1

One of the main problems with parallel texts is that students may rely too much on their native language (L1). Krashen (1985) says that learning a language needs clear input in the second language (L2), and using translations too often can stop students from building independent reading skills. When students keep looking at the L1 version, they may avoid working with the L2 text directly, which reduces chances for immersion and natural learning.

Cook (2001) explains that while L1 can be helpful, depending on it too much may make students focus on translation instead of real understanding. This can lead them to think that language learning is only about word-for-word translation, which limits fluency and communication.

Dolgunsöz and Kimsesiz (2021) also warn that parallel texts should be used carefully. Strong reliance on L1 can block the growth of guessing skills and lower students' confidence when working with L2 texts on their own.

1.5.1.1 Dependency Syndrome

Cook (2001) observed that “students may fall into the trap of believing that translation is the only path to understanding.” This means some learners start to think they cannot understand the second language (L2) without always using the first language (L1). This problem, called dependency syndrome, reduces independence and makes students less willing to read L2 texts on their own. In classroom practice, teachers should guide students to slowly use L1 less, so they can build confidence and stronger skills in L2.

1.5.1.2 Loss of Inferencing Skills

Krashen (1985) emphasized that guessing meaning from context is essential for fluent reading. This means students need to practice using clues in the text to understand new words. If parallel texts are used too much, students may stop practicing these skills. Instead of trying to predict or figure out meaning from the sentences around a new word, they may quickly check the first language (L1) version. This habit can slow down the growth of independent reading skills in the second language (L2).

1.5.2 Reduced Exposure to L2

A big problem with using parallel texts is that students may not interact enough with the new language (L2). Wälchli (2007) notes that even though parallel texts help with

understanding, they can also make students rely too much on their native language (L1). This slows down the process of learning to read and understand the new language naturally.

As a result, students may struggle to read quickly and easily in L2, which is important for becoming fluent. To improve, students need to practice reading directly in the new language, not just translate from L1.

Krashen (1985) said that it is very important for learners to see and hear the second language (L2) in real situations. This helps them learn the L2 better. He also explained that parallel texts, which show the same thing in two languages, are not enough on their own. Students should also experience L2 in real life, not just in these texts.

Jalilova (2022) added that if the translation is poor or if there are cultural differences, students may not understand the real meaning of the L2 text. This can cause confusion. Even though parallel texts can be useful, they should be used together with materials written only in L2. This way, students get more exposure to L2, which is what they need to learn it well.

1.5.2.1 Classroom Management Issues

Abdallah (2021) explained that teachers sometimes find it hard to keep a balance between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2). If students keep using L1 too much, the amount of talk in L2 becomes less. This makes it difficult to build a strong learning setting, especially in methods that focus on communication. Good classroom management needs clear rules about when L1 can be used as support.

1.5.2.2 Translation Errors

Jalilova (2022) said that weak translations or cultural mismatches can confuse learners. For example, idioms translated word for word may make students misunderstand instead of helping them. Teachers need to check translations carefully and explain cultural differences so students can understand the real meaning.

1.5.3 Cognitive Load Theory and Parallel Texts

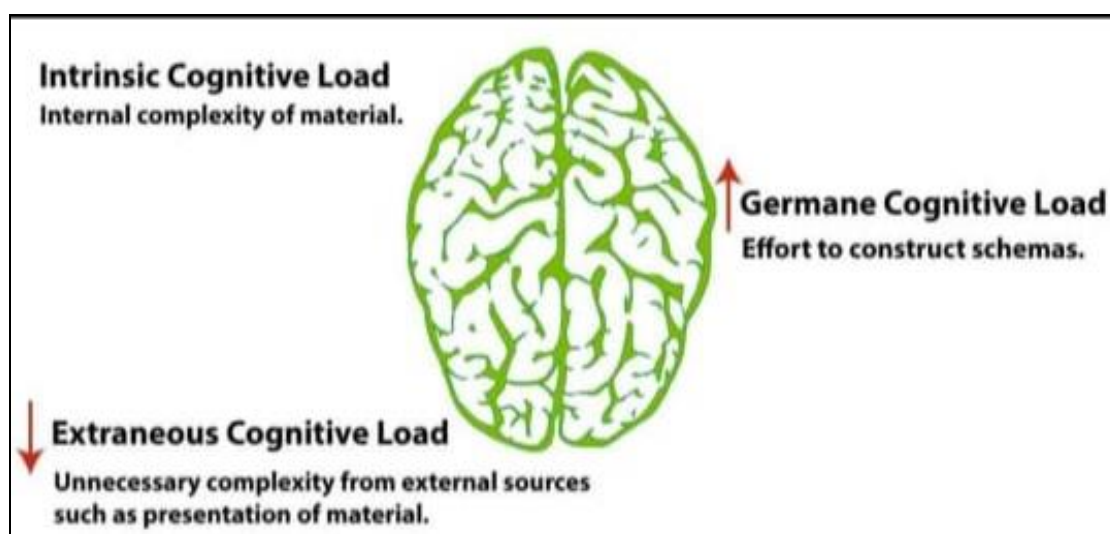
Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988) says that human memory has limited space when learning new things. Teaching materials should reduce extra effort so learners can focus on understanding. In bilingual reading, parallel texts can either make learning easier or add extra difficulty.

On one side, research shows that reading in two languages may cause interference, because words from both languages are activated at the same time (Dijkstra & van Heuven, 2002). Eye-tracking studies also confirm that reading in a second language takes more effort and attention than reading in the first language (Grotek & Ślęzak-Świat, 2024). On the other side, when translations are clear, they remove the extra load of guessing meaning and allow learners to use their memory for comprehension (Sweller et al., 2007).

For Arabic–English texts, the challenge is stronger because the two languages are very different. Arabic is written right-to-left in a cursive script, while English is written left-to-right in an alphabetic script (Saiegh-Haddad & Henkin-Roitfarb, 2014). Arabic also has complex word forms based on roots and patterns, while English uses simpler word building (Boudelaa & Marslen-Wilson, 2010). These differences can increase the load on memory.

However, if parallel texts are designed carefully, such as sentence-by-sentence or interlinear formats, they can act as “worked examples”

Figure 2: Intrinsic Cognitive Load



Conclusion

This section has explained what parallel texts are, the different types available, and the ways they help people learning English. Simple formats like sentence-by-sentence or interlinear styles are a great help to new learners, while putting the two languages side-by-side helps skilled students improve their fluency and understand cultural details. In texts using Arabic and English, the fact that the two languages are read in opposite directions creates a unique challenge, showing that the design must be planned very carefully.

The theoretical foundations, such as bilingualism, Cummins' interdependence hypothesis, the role of L1, and Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis, show how parallel texts connect first-language skills with second-language learning. Their pedagogical value is clear: they help students understand more, learn new words, grasp cultural differences, and compare how Arabic and English work differently. However, there are disadvantages, such as relying too much on the first language or feeling overwhelmed, which means teachers should use them alongside normal English materials.

In conclusion, parallel texts are helpful but also quite complicated. They can lead students toward learning on their own if they are designed well and use accurate translations. To gain a better picture of how they work, the following section will discuss theories and models of reading, specifically looking at the abilities students need and the challenges that EFL students often face. This will provide the necessary background to judge how English–Arabic texts can most effectively help students improve their reading levels.

Section Two: Reading Comprehension in EFL Context

Introduction

Reading comprehension is an essential component of language learning and one of the core areas studied in the discipline of applied linguistics. It is a complex and multi-faceted process that not only involves decoding written symbols but also requires the interaction of various cognitive processes. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), reading comprehension becomes more difficult because learners often have limited knowledge of the target language. As a result, many EFL learners face difficulties in understanding texts and interpreting meanings effectively. This section discusses reading comprehension within EFL contexts in detail. First, the definition and concept of reading comprehension are examined through the views of some prominent scholars whose ideas are based on the mental process of comprehension. Then, theoretical models of reading comprehension, such as the bottom-up, top-down, and interactive models, are presented to explain different views on how readers process texts. In addition, important elements in reading comprehension, including vocabulary knowledge, grammatical and syntactic competence, and background knowledge, are addressed in relation to comprehension. Finally, common reading difficulties and some strategies that may help students improve their reading skills are also discussed. These strategies include skimming, scanning, context guessing, schema activation, and metacognitive control.

2.1. Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension has long been a central concern in the field of applied linguistics and language education, and it has been widely discussed due to its complex and multidimensional nature. Numerous scholars have attempted to define and conceptualize this process from different perspectives.

To begin with, Snow (2002, p. 11) defines reading comprehension as “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language”. This definition emphasizes that comprehension is not limited to decoding written symbols, but also involves constructing meaning through the interaction between the text and the reader’s prior knowledge.

In a similar vein, Grabe (2009) defines reading comprehension as an intricate mental activity that involves the integration of multiple subskills, including word identification, syntax processing, and discourse analysis. According to this definition, reading

comprehension is the outcome of a dynamic relationship between low-level cognitive skills, such as vocabulary acquisition and grammar parsing, and high-level cognitive skills, such as reasoning, hypothesis formulation, and judgment.

Also, according to Kintsch's (1998) Construction Integration model, reading comprehension is understood as the creation of meaningful representations of the text by integrating information with the reader's existing knowledge structure. Thus, comprehension involves more than surface-level understanding and entails deeper-level representations incorporating both implicit and explicit meaning. This theory emphasizes the significance of cognitive processes and the activation of knowledge in comprehending texts.

Moreover, Anderson (2003, p. 68) describes reading comprehension as "an active, fluent process that involves both the reader and the written material in building meaning". This definition highlights the interactive nature of the reading process, because meaning, according to this view, is co-produced through the interaction between the reader and the text he/she is reading. In addition, the importance of fluency becomes clear, as efficient processing of written information allows meaning to be constructed more successfully.

According to Duke and Pearson (2002), comprehension is viewed as a process in which the learner uses cognitive and metacognitive strategies in comprehending the text. Such strategies include predicting, posing questions, clarifying, and summarizing. These strategies play a significant role in understanding and comprehending the text. Thus, comprehension cannot be attained by just having linguistic competence but rather through strategic management of the process of reading.

As a result, for students learning English as a foreign language, the task of reading comprehension is more complex because of their lack of experience in dealing with the target language. According to Grabe (2009), EFL students frequently face problems such as a lack of lexical skills, unfamiliar grammatical structures, as well as cultural contexts embedded in texts.

Based on the above definitions, the concept of reading comprehension may be viewed as an interactive and multidimensional process that requires the interplay between language knowledge, cognition, and background knowledge. Reading comprehension entails more than just the translation of text symbols into meaningful information. It encompasses the processes of constructing, interpreting, and evaluating the meanings of texts. Thus, reading comprehension is not a fixed ability, but rather a process that evolves with time and

experience. The concept of reading comprehension is highly significant for the current research endeavor that examines the ways to improve reading comprehension among EFL learners by means of bilingual texts in English and Arabic languages.

2.2. Models of Reading Comprehension

Reading has been explained in terms of a number of theoretical models, which try to account for the ways in which readers process written texts and make sense of them. These models represent different perspectives on the nature of reading, which range from text-based decoding to knowledge-based interpretation, and finally to integrating both. The understanding of these models is important in EFL contexts because learners in these contexts often struggle with linguistic and cognitive problems, which influence their reading comprehension. All these models offer important insights into specific aspects of the reading process, but none of them can account for the complex nature of reading.

2.2.1 The Bottom-up Model

The bottom-up model describes a hierarchical and sequential process in reading. It starts with recognizing the smallest linguistic units and then progresses towards higher-level meaning. Reading is viewed as a decoding process (Gough, 1972) in which written symbols are converted into linguistic representations through the processing of letters, words, and sentence structure. Here, comprehension is the product of successful decoding.

Furthermore, LaBerge and Samuels (1974) emphasize the role of automaticity in reading by stating that when lower-level processing is automatic, more cognitive resources can be used for comprehending the text. This implies that automaticity in word recognition is crucial in facilitating reading comprehension, particularly in the early stages of reading development.

In addition, this approach posits that meaning is located primarily within the text, and the reader's task is to recover this meaning through close analysis of linguistic forms. This means that the process of reading is text-driven, with the reader's understanding depending largely on his/her knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax.

While the bottom-up approach is important, the model has been criticized for having a narrow view of the reading process, as it tends to ignore the reader's prior knowledge and expectations (Stanovich, 1980). However, it remains highly relevant in EFL contexts, especially for lower proficiency learners who rely heavily on decoding due to limited

linguistic resources. It therefore highlights the importance of vocabulary and grammar knowledge as a foundation for reading comprehension.

In EFL contexts, learners often depend heavily on bottom-up processing because of limited lexical and grammatical resources, which increases cognitive effort during reading tasks. In this regard, English–Arabic parallel texts support bottom-up processing by providing immediate clarification of vocabulary and sentence structure, reducing the need for dictionary consultation and lowering cognitive load during decoding.

2.2.2 The Top-down Model

On the contrary, in the top-down approach, reading is a meaning-oriented process in which the reader is actively involved. According to Goodman (1967), “reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game in which readers make hypotheses about what a text means and verify or modify these hypotheses on the basis of limited clues.” Furthermore, Smith (1971) stated that “comprehension is more a function of what the reader knows than what the text says.” This means that readers use prior knowledge and expectations to predict meaning without processing every word in the text.

This model is closely related to schema theory, which emphasizes the role of background knowledge in reading comprehension (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). Schema theory suggests that comprehension depends on the activation of stored knowledge structures, which help readers interpret and organize new information.

Furthermore, the top-down model emphasizes higher-order cognitive processes such as inference, prediction, and interpretation. Reading is therefore not only word recognition, but also meaning construction based on what the reader already knows.

However, this model has also been criticized in EFL contexts because it may underestimate the importance of accurate linguistic processing. Over-reliance on prediction can lead to misunderstanding, especially for learners with limited vocabulary and grammatical competence.

Even with these limitations, the top-down model provides important insight into reading as an interpretative process based on meaning construction.

In this perspective, English–Arabic parallel texts facilitate top-down processing by activating learners’ L1 schemata, enabling them to grasp the global meaning of the text more efficiently and reducing cultural and linguistic misunderstandings.

2.2.3 The Interactive Model

As an alternative to the limitations of both the bottom-up and top-down models, the interactive model offers a more balanced and comprehensive explanation of reading. Rumelhart (1977) proposes that reading involves the simultaneous processing of multiple sources of information such as orthographic, lexical, syntactic, and semantic cues.

This balanced interaction is particularly relevant in EFL contexts, where learners rely on both decoding skills and prior knowledge to construct meaning.

The interactive model suggests that comprehension is a continuous interaction between the text and the reader's prior knowledge, meaning that readers combine both bottom-up and top-down processes rather than relying on one alone. In this context, Stanovich (1980) introduced the interactive-compensatory model, which explains that readers compensate for weaknesses in one area by relying on strengths in another.

From this perspective, English–Arabic parallel texts function as a dual scaffold that supports both decoding and meaning construction, making reading more accessible for EFL learners. They therefore bridge lower-level linguistic processing and higher-level interpretative understanding.

This model is particularly relevant in EFL settings because reading is not static, but dynamic and adaptive. It also supports instructional approaches that integrate both linguistic training and comprehension strategies.

2.2.4 Cognitive Models of Reading

To better explain reading, cognitive models provide deeper insight into the mental processes involved in understanding and word recognition. These models highlight the role of memory, attention, inference, and executive control in reading comprehension.

The Dual Route Model explains word recognition through two pathways: a phonological route used for decoding unfamiliar words, and an orthographic route used for recognizing familiar words (Coltheart et al., 2001).

The Construction-Integration Model (Kintsch, 1998) describes reading comprehension as a process in which readers construct a mental representation of a text by integrating textual information with prior knowledge and making inferences to build coherence.

Other models such as the Direct and Indirect Effects Model (DIER) and DRIVE further emphasize the role of cognitive skills such as working memory and attention in reading comprehension (Kim, 2017).

Although these models provide valuable insights into specific cognitive processes, they remain limited in scope because they focus on isolated components of reading. Therefore, the Interactive Model remains the most comprehensive and widely accepted framework, particularly in EFL contexts (Stanovich, 1980).

Overall, these models reinforce the idea that reading is a complex cognitive activity that involves the interaction of multiple processes and benefits from structured scaffolding. In EFL contexts, especially for Arabic-speaking learners, bilingual and parallel texts serve as an effective support mechanism that facilitates both linguistic processing and meaning construction.

2.2.5 Cognitive Models of Reading

To better explain reading, cognitive models give more information about the mental processes involved in understanding and word recognition. These models show how readers use mental processes such as memory, attention, and inference when they read.

Apart from the previous models, there are other theoretical frameworks which have greatly contributed to a further understanding of the process of reading. For example, the Dual Route Model explains word recognition in two ways: through a phonological route, which is used in decoding unfamiliar words, and through an orthographic route, which enables a person to recognize familiar words (Coltheart et al., 2001).

The Construction-Integration Model, as presented by Kintsch (1998), focuses on cognitive processing in reading comprehension. This model explains how a person constructs a mental representation of a text through the integration of textual information with their existing knowledge and through making inferences to build a coherent mental representation of a text. Other models, such as the Direct and Indirect Effects Model (DIER) and DRIVE, further elaborate on cognitive skills, which include working memory, attention, and executive control, in the process of reading (Kim, 2017). Though these models are significant in providing further understanding of particular processes in reading, they are limited in nature, as they are focused on particular processes in a general sense. Therefore, the Interactive Model is widely considered an empirically supported and comprehensive framework for explaining reading, particularly in EFL contexts (Stanovich, 1980).

2.3. Components of Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is a complex and multidimensional skill and involves the interaction of a number of cognitive and linguistic skills. There is a consensus among applied linguists that comprehension is not the result of a single skill, but the outcome of several skills working together to achieve meaning. Vocabulary, grammatical and syntactic knowledge, and background knowledge are some of the basic skills that are considered to be of great importance, particularly in EFL settings, where learners experience limitations in terms of linguistic and cultural knowledge.

2.3.1. Vocabulary Knowledge

Vocabulary knowledge has been consistently viewed as a key and foundational aspect of reading comprehension (Nation, 2001). Without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, the reader is not in a position to access the basic meaning of the text, thus making reading comprehension very difficult.

In the same context, Laufer (1997) argues that there is a need for a certain level of vocabulary to facilitate reading comprehension. It is argued that learners need to have the knowledge of 95% to 98% of the total vocabulary in the text in order to comprehend it. If the learners fall short of this level, they will not be able to read the text.

Furthermore, Qian (2002) differentiates two main dimensions of vocabulary knowledge: breadth and depth. Breadth refers to the quantity of words a learner is familiar with, while depth is associated with how well a learner understands these words in terms of their meaning and usage. These two concepts are equally important because knowing a word is not enough; one should be able to understand the meaning of a word in context. Additionally, vocabulary knowledge is an important factor in facilitating fluency in reading. This is because when a reader is exposed to a number of words, he/she does not know, he/she will be forced to read at a slow pace, thus affecting comprehension. However, when a reader has a large vocabulary, he/she will be able to read fluently. Vocabulary limitations have been identified as one of the most common problems in EFL contexts. This can make students struggle with unfamiliar words, which in turn hinders the reading process and can lead to frustration and lack of motivation. Therefore, it is important to foster both the breadth and depth of students' vocabulary knowledge to help them improve their reading comprehension and become more autonomous readers.

2.3.2. Grammatical and Syntactic Knowledge

Apart from vocabulary, grammatical and syntactic knowledge is also important for reading comprehension. It helps readers understand how words are arranged in sentences and how ideas are connected.

According to Grabe (2009), syntactic knowledge plays an important role in reading. It helps readers identify sentence structure, grammatical relations, and complex sentences. Without this knowledge, it becomes difficult to understand a text.

Similarly, Urquhart and Weir (1998) state that grammatical competence is essential for comprehension because it helps in parsing sentences correctly. Parsing means understanding how a sentence is structured. This is especially important in academic texts, where complex sentences are common.

Grammatical knowledge also helps readers understand meaning in context, such as tense, aspect, modality, and logical relations like cause, contrast, and condition. A lack of understanding of these elements can affect comprehension.

In EFL contexts, learners may face difficulties with grammar because of differences between their first language and English. This can lead to confusion, especially with long or complex sentences. For this reason, developing grammatical and syntactic knowledge is necessary for accurate and effective reading comprehension.

2.3.3. Background Knowledge

Another important aspect of reading comprehension is the role of the background knowledge, which is termed as the schema. According to Anderson and Pearson (1984), the definition of the term "schema" is "organized knowledge structures in memory which serve to interpret and understand new information."

Schema theory states that the process of comprehension is possible if the reader is able to link the new information being read with the existing one. Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) state that the activation of the schemata enables the reader to make inferences, predict the consequences, and fill in the gaps. The background knowledge varies in level, such as cultural knowledge, familiarity with topics, and general world knowledge. All these aspects are very significant in understanding implicit meaning, idiomatic phrases, and cultural references. If such background information is not present in the mind of the reader, then the understanding of the text can remain on a very superficial level. Moreover, the activation of schemas helps in

reducing the cognitive load of reading, as it is easier to process information related to familiar concepts rather than unfamiliar ones.

In EFL settings, the role of knowledge is particularly important because learners are often exposed to different cultural and social contexts in the texts. A lack of relevant schemata may act as a barrier to comprehension even if knowledge is adequate. Hence, the facilitation of schema activation is crucial for enhancing comprehension, especially in learners facing cross-cultural texts.

2.4. Reading Difficulties in EFL Contexts

The process of reading comprehension in EFL contexts can be considered a highly complex and multidimensional process. All researchers in the field of applied linguistics have stressed the fact that the process of reading should not be considered merely the interpretation of written symbols, but rather a cognitive, linguistic, and cultural process that requires the coordination of multiple skills. Therefore, EFL learners face many problems related to linguistic, cognitive, and cultural issues, which can be considered complex and intertwined.

2.4.1. Linguistic Difficulties

Linguistic competence is an important factor in the comprehension process. Paul Nation, in his article “Learning Vocabulary” published in 2001, points out the importance of “vocabulary knowledge as a key to reading comprehension; without knowing the meaning of words, readers cannot understand texts.” In the case of EFL learners, limited vocabulary is an important difficulty. For example, while reading the following sentence: “The committee deliberated on the ramifications of the proposal,” if the learner is not familiar with the words “deliberated” or “ramifications,” he/she can only understand parts of the sentence, which may lead to misinterpretation of the whole meaning.

Grammatical and syntactical knowledge is equally important. William Grabe (2009) affirms that “syntactic processing enables readers to recognize boundaries of sentences, understand grammatical relationships, and interpret complex sentences.” For example: “The policy, which had been debated by the government for months, was finally implemented.” A reader who has difficulty understanding subordinating clauses might not understand the timing or the causality of the statement, and thus may miss the intended meaning. According to Urquhart and Weir (1998), grammatical knowledge enables readers to parse sentences correctly, especially since complex sentences are often used in academic texts.

Moreover, knowledge of word formation, such as prefixes and suffixes, is also important. For instance, if a learner is aware that the word “unbelievable” is derived from the word “believe,” he/she may be able to infer its meaning without referring to a dictionary.

Therefore, the difficulties faced by EFL learners in reading include vocabulary, grammatical, and morphological difficulties.

2.4.2. Cognitive Challenges

Reading is a cognitive activity that demands the coordination of several skills such as attention, working memory, inference, and metacognitive skills. Perfetti and Stafura (2014) observe that “reading comprehension depends on the quality of lexical representations and the efficiency of linguistic processing.” In cases where texts are complex, abstract, or technical, learners’ working memory capacity can easily be strained, leading to partial comprehension of the text.

For example, in the following paragraph: “Although the experiment yielded inconclusive results, the researchers hypothesized that the underlying mechanisms could be traced to environmental variables.”

In this case, students are required to process subordinate clauses, understand abstract words like “hypothesized” and “underlying mechanisms,” and make connections across ideas in order to construct meaning.

Other cognitive difficulties include inferential processing, which requires readers to go beyond the literal meaning and make logical connections between ideas. Without proper cognitive strategies, learners may focus only on decoding words and miss the deeper meaning, which reduces comprehension.

Metacognitive strategies such as predicting, summarizing, and questioning also play an important role. For example, an EFL reader reading a news article might ask: “What is the main point? What is implied but not stated?”

2.4.3. Cultural Barriers

Another important factor in reading comprehension is cultural knowledge, also known as schemata. According to Anderson & Pearson (1984), schemata are “organized structures of knowledge that guide the interpretation of new information.” Carrell & Eisterhold (1983)

explain that activated schemata help readers make inferences about implicit meaning, understand idiomatic expressions, and connect the text to their own experiences.

EFL learners often encounter texts that include cultural references which may not be familiar to them. For example, American cultural practices such as “turkey pardon” or “Black Friday shopping” require background knowledge to be understood. Idiomatic expressions such as “hit the sack” or “under the weather” also cannot be understood literally; learners need cultural knowledge to interpret their meaning.

In addition, discourse patterns such as essay structures or rhetorical styles in speeches may also create difficulties. If learners are not familiar with these variations, they may fail to understand the writer’s emphasis, tone, or intention.

2.5. Reading Strategies in EFL Contexts

Reading comprehension in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings is a complex and purposeful process that goes beyond recognizing letters and words. It involves interaction with the text through linguistic, cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective skills.

In applied linguistics, reading strategies are defined as goal-oriented and intentional processes that learners use to improve comprehension, overcome language difficulties, and support independent learning (Oxford, 1990; Chamot, 2004). In EFL contexts, learners often face challenges such as limited vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and cultural background, which makes the use of strategies especially important.

Therefore, reading strategies not only help learners understand texts more effectively, but also support the development of learner autonomy, critical thinking, and lifelong learning skills.

2.5.1. Skimming and Scanning

The two basic strategies that help learners deal with a text are skimming and scanning. Skimming is a quick way of reading a text to get a general idea, while scanning is a quick reading technique used to locate specific information in a text. According to Grellet (1981), these two strategies are defined as follows: “Skimming is reading for gist, while scanning is reading for specific information” (p. 19).

EFL learners can use skimming to read an academic text in order to grasp the main ideas, structure, and overall argumentative flow of an article. The same learner can use scanning to search for specific information such as dates, figures, terms, or examples.

In a pedagogical context, teachers can guide EFL learners to use both skimming and scanning effectively to improve reading comprehension. Learners can first skim a text to understand the general idea, then scan it to find specific details, especially when they have limited time, such as during exams.

2.5.2. Guessing Meaning from Context

Guessing meaning from context is an important inferencing skill that helps learners understand unknown words by using the surrounding text. It is linked to interactive theories of reading, especially top-down approaches, where readers actively build meaning instead of only decoding words (Stanovich, 1980). According to Nation, “successful readers use context to infer the meanings of unknown words instead of interrupting the reading process” (2001, p. 256).

Context clues are different types of hints found in a text that help learners understand the meaning of unknown words. They include the words around the new word, the structure of the sentence, and the general meaning of the text. They can also include relationships between ideas such as cause and effect, or similarities and differences. In some cases, background knowledge or real-life experience can also help in understanding the meaning

For example, in the sentence “The committee deliberated on the ramifications of the new policy,” a learner can infer that *deliberated* means *discussed* and *ramifications* means *consequences*. Also, when reading a text about technology, learners may understand the meaning of *artificial intelligence* from the way it is explained in context.

Teachers should encourage learners to notice unfamiliar words and try to guess their meaning instead of stopping every time. This helps them think more critically, stay engaged with the text, and gradually improve their vocabulary, especially when dealing with academic materials.

2.5.3. Using Prior Knowledge (Schema Activation)

Prior knowledge means using what the reader already knows to help understand a new text. Schema theory says that understanding happens when new information connects with what we already know (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). They also say that “comprehension is a process of relating new information to prior knowledge” (p. 73). This helps learners predict ideas, understand meanings, and deal with unclear parts in a text.

In EFL learning, students can use prior knowledge in different ways. Before reading, they can guess what the text is about based on the topic. They can also use what they know to understand cultural ideas or expressions. In addition, they connect the text with their own experience or studies to understand it better.

For example, when reading about global warming, a student who already knows some basic ideas about the environment will understand the text more easily.

Teachers can help by activating students’ prior knowledge before reading. This can be done through simple discussions, brainstorming, or asking questions. This helps students understand the text instead of just reading it without thinking.

2.5.4. Monitoring Comprehension (Metacognitive Regulation)

Monitoring comprehension is the awareness and control of the reader. Learners check their understanding, notice when something is not clear, and try to fix it. It is an important strategy in metacognitive reading, which involves awareness and control of one’s own thinking processes. Metacognition refers to being aware of how we think and how we understand. Flavell (1979) states: “Metacognition is concerned with the processes by which people control their own cognition, including planning, monitoring, and evaluating one’s own performance, as well as knowledge of one’s cognitive processes or anything related to them” (p. 906).

In EFL contexts, learners usually start by previewing the text, looking at headings, subheadings, and key words to get an idea of the topic. They also ask themselves questions like “What is the main idea?” or “How does this part connect?” When they face confusion, they slow down, reread, or try to explain the idea in their own words. After reading, they check how well they understood and adjust their strategies for next time (Chamot, 2004; Oxford, 1990).

For example, a learner reading a scientific text may not fully understand a section about the method. In this case, they reread it, focus on key points, and connect it with what they already know to make the meaning clearer.

Monitoring comprehension helps learners become more independent. It supports autonomy, flexibility, and higher-level thinking. Learners can be encouraged to keep simple notes while reading, reflect on their understanding, and share difficulties to improve their reading skills.

2.5.5. Integration of Reading Strategies

The most effective reading instruction in EFL contexts combines cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies in a balanced way. According to Chamot (2004): “Successful strategy instruction should include explicit modeling, guided practice, and opportunities for independent application” (p. 22).

In practice, when learners face a difficult reading task such as an academic text, they can use different strategies together. They may start by previewing headings to activate prior knowledge (metacognitive strategy). They can then try to guess the meaning of unknown words from context (cognitive strategy). They may also discuss the text with classmates or the teacher to improve understanding (socio-affective strategy). During and after reading, they can check their understanding and reflect on the strategies they used (metacognitive strategy).

Using these strategies together helps learners build meaning more effectively instead of just reading word by word. It also helps them manage their thinking, understand the text better, and become more flexible readers who can deal with different types of texts in EFL learning.

2.6. The Role of Reading in Language Learning

Reading forms an important component of learning a language, especially for EFL settings in which reading may provide the primary source of exposure to language (Grabe, 2009). By engaging in reading activities, learners get access to different vocabularies, grammatical constructions, and discourse structures, which help in the acquisition of language skills (Nation, 2001). Reading is distinct from other language skills in that it enables learners to process language input at their own pace. Furthermore, besides being a tool that enhances language development, reading is a factor that develops the skills related to cognition and academics. Reading stimulates analytical and critical thinking, as well as the process of

evaluating information (Anderson, 2008). Reading is extremely important for academic settings where students need to gain knowledge from their reading activities. Reading is directly connected with other aspects of language learning. It facilitates vocabulary development, writing competence, and grammar (Grabe, 2009). Those learners who read more often become more fluent and accurate in language use. This way, reading should not be perceived as an independent language skill; rather, it should be regarded as part of the overall language learning experience. In an English as a Foreign Language environment, where learners are exposed less to the target language, reading takes on a more significant role because it gives learners a source of input that they cannot get from their daily interactions.

2.7. The Role of L1 in EFL Reading

The issue of the function of the mother tongue (L1) in EFL reading has attracted much attention within applied linguistics research. Even though early approaches to language teaching were quite negative towards the utilization of the L1 in education, the contemporary approach regards it as a valuable means for learning. In terms of cognition, students tend to employ their mother tongue in the interpretation of information. So, it can be said that L1 helps in activating prior knowledge and making connections between the information that students have already obtained and the new information.

It is also used in terms of vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension by means of comparisons and translations. Thus, L1 enables students to comprehend vocabulary and grammar better in the second language (Nation, 2001). Besides, it will be easier for them to compare languages and find out their similarities and dissimilarities. As mentioned in the article by Cook (2001), pedagogical use of L1 will positively influence comprehension, especially of those students who have low proficiency level. In this way, L1 acts as a kind of scaffolding which facilitates reading without hindering the studying process. It is also useful when working with bilingual resources such as English–Arabic texts.

The native language serves as an essential tool as a scaffolding strategy in current English language learning courses, becoming highly useful when applied together with parallel texts. In this way, learners will be able to compare vocabulary, grammar, and meanings of the texts to enhance comprehension and identify any differences in the linguistic structures. For example, should an Arab student experience difficulties comprehending certain terminologies in the English scientific article, it is quite likely that the student requires

reading the translation version in order to grasp the meanings of the terms. This scaffolding strategy aids learners in developing skills from their L1 to apply them to the target language.

In conclusion, one can state that L1 can be considered an efficient aid in reading comprehension. When paired with parallel texts, it not only supports understanding of vocabulary and grammar but also builds learners' confidence and independence in reading.

2.8. The Language Distance Factor between Arabic and English

One of the problems that arise for EFL learners when they encounter English texts is the linguistic gap between their native language and English. These two languages have different alphabets, grammatical structures, sentence patterns, and even syntaxes; this problem may complicate reading comprehension tasks for Arabic-speaking students (Koda, 2005). For instance, while Arabic is written from right to left, the English language is the other way around.

Moreover, Arabic has a root-based morphology and a flexible word order while English uses the strict subject-verb-object construction. This distinction frequently leads to misunderstanding and difficulties in comprehending syntactically complex English sentences (Grabe, 2009).

A helpful solution in overcoming such difficulties is provided by means of parallel texts the texts written in both languages at once. Being exposed to the texts in both English and Arabic simultaneously will allow the learner to build the relationship between vocabulary, grammar, and meaning, thus enhancing understanding. Using parallel texts facilitates noticing the similarities and differences between the languages and gradually enhances reading ability and English literacy (Nation, 2001; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983).

In conclusion, the distance in terms of language between Arabic and English is indeed a barrier to EFL reading comprehension. Yet, when properly developed, some techniques like the parallel text technique can be used as a scaffold for the learners to comprehend better while reading in English.

Conclusion

Understanding reading comprehension is more than just the ability to comprehend words in a text. Comprehending involves the interplay between various cognitive skills, linguistic abilities, metacognitive skills, and socio-cultural skills. Readers require vocabulary

skills, grammar and syntax skills, as well as background information on what is being read, in order to comprehend texts effectively.

The bottom-up model, the top-down model, and the interactive model underscore the importance of integrating different approaches in achieving good reading comprehension. The utilization of techniques like skimming, scanning, contextualizing unknown terms, drawing upon prior knowledge, and evaluating one's comprehension skills enhances the readers' engagement with texts.

For EFL students, especially those whose first language is Arabic, there will be other hurdles since Arabic has very little in common with English. The two languages have different alphabets, structures, syntax, and ways of writing. However, tools like parallel texts could help overcome this hurdle by having the same material written in two languages. This will enable learners to make comparisons, connect vocabulary and grammar to meanings and ultimately develop better skills at reading. Such an approach helps as scaffolding because it uses what the learners know about their L1 to comprehend the material.

Reading comprehension in an EFL environment thus requires multiple approaches and strategies alongside a theoretical background and the necessary tools. Using parallel texts in reading instruction helps learners to not only develop their linguistic skills but also acquire critical thinking skills and become independent learners who can develop language skills throughout their lives.

Chapter Two: Fieldwork

Introduction

After having dealt with the theoretical foundations of the present study in the first chapter, which explored reading comprehension, parallel texts, and their pedagogical implications in EFL contexts, it is now time to move from theory to practice in order to investigate the research problem empirically and answer the research questions. The present chapter is therefore designed to put the study into practical application and to analyze the collected data in relation to the use of English–Arabic parallel texts and their impact on EFL learners' reading comprehension.

For reminder purposes, the research questions guiding this study are as follows:

- To what extent do second-year EFL learners perceive English–Arabic parallel texts as a tool for supporting reading comprehension ?
- How do EFL learners use English–Arabic parallel texts while reading academic texts ?
- What are teachers' attitudes toward the use of English–Arabic parallel texts in EFL reading classes ?
- What are the perceived advantages and limitations of using English–Arabic parallel texts in reading comprehension activities ?

This chapter is divided into two main sections. Section one is devoted to the research methodology, including detailed information about the research design, the population and sample, and the data collection instruments used, namely the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. Section two presents the analysis and interpretation of the collected data in relation to the research questions, followed by a discussion of the main findings.

1. Research Methodology

This section presents the research design adopted in this study, the participants involved, as well as the data collection instruments used.

1.1. Research Design

The research seeks to examine the impact of English–Arabic parallel texts on EFL learners' reading comprehension. In order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research questions, a mixed-methods design has been adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

According to Creswell (2014), integrating different types of data allows for a deeper understanding of the research problem than using a single method alone. In this sense, a mixed-methods approach ensures more reliable and complete findings by bringing together the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods while reducing their individual limitations (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). For this reason, researchers often rely on this approach to improve the credibility and depth of their results.

The study adopts a convergent mixed-methods design in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected during the same phase of the research process.

1.2. Population and Sample

The present study involves two groups of participants. The first group includes 80 second-year undergraduate students of English at Mila University Centre, enrolled during the academic year 2025–2026. Second-year students were selected because they have already been exposed to English reading instruction, yet still face noticeable difficulties in comprehension, which makes them suitable for this investigation.

The second group consists of 10 English language teachers. These teachers were chosen due to their direct involvement in teaching reading comprehension and their awareness of learners' difficulties in EFL settings.

The participants were selected through convenience sampling due to their accessibility and availability during the data collection process.

1.3. Data Collection Methods

Data collection represents an essential phase in any research study. No single method is superior; rather, the choice depends on the nature and objectives of the study (O'Leary, 2004). Since this research adopts a mixed-methods design, two main instruments were used.

First, a questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms to second-year EFL students in order to explore their perceptions and experiences regarding the use of English–Arabic parallel texts and their influence on reading comprehension.

Second, a semi-structured interview was conducted with 10 English teachers to gather their views and attitudes toward the integration of parallel texts in EFL reading classes, as well as their evaluation of their effectiveness in facilitating learners' comprehension.

1.3.1. Description of the Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is widely recognized as an efficient data collection tool due to its practicality in terms of time, effort, and cost (Dörnyei, 2003). In this study, it aims to collect data related to the role of English–Arabic parallel texts in supporting EFL learners' reading comprehension.

It was administered to 80 second-year English students. The questionnaire includes both closed-ended questions, such as Likert scale items, and open-ended questions that allow participants to express their opinions more freely and provide justifications, which enriches the qualitative dimension of the data.

The questionnaire is structured into four sections. The first section gathers general information and explores learners' reading habits. The second section focuses on students' use of English–Arabic parallel texts and their reading strategies when interacting with bilingual materials. The third section addresses the main reading difficulties encountered by EFL learners, particularly those related to vocabulary, grammar, and cultural understanding. The fourth section investigates learners' perceptions of the impact of parallel texts on reading comprehension, motivation, and confidence in reading English.

1.3.2. Description of the Teachers' Interview

The interview is a qualitative research instrument that plays a key role in collecting in-depth information. As stated by Dörnyei (2007), interviews enable researchers to explore participants' opinions and experiences in greater detail through direct interaction.

In this study, a semi-structured interview was used to examine teachers' perceptions of English–Arabic parallel texts in EFL reading instruction. This format allows flexibility in the order of questions and permits the addition of new questions based on participants' responses.

The interview includes open-ended questions organized into four main sections. The first section explores teachers' general perceptions of reading difficulties faced by EFL learners. The second section focuses on their classroom experience with parallel texts. The third section discusses the advantages and possible drawbacks of using parallel texts. The final section investigates their pedagogical implications and recommendations, as well as their views on how parallel texts influence learners' reading independence and comprehension development.

2. Data Analysis and Discussion

As stated earlier, the present study relies on two main data collection instruments : a questionnaire administered to students and a semi-structured interview conducted with teachers. The data collected through these tools are systematically analyzed and carefully interpreted in light of the theoretical framework presented in Chapter One in order to provide clear answers to the research questions and to gain deeper insights into the role of English–Arabic parallel texts in EFL learners’ reading comprehension.

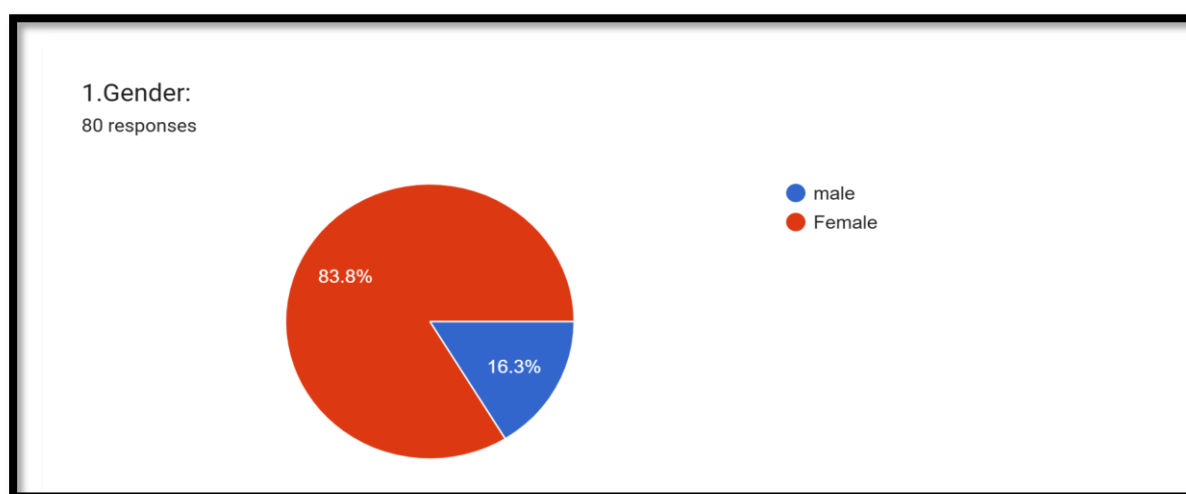
2.1. The Students’ Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered online on April 20th, 2026 to 80 students. The responses were automatically collected using Google Forms, which facilitated the organization and analysis of the data.

2.1.1. Analysis of the Students’ Questionnaire:

Q01:

Figure 3: Gender Distribution of Participants



The chart shows that females make up the majority of the participants. About 83.8% of the respondents are females, whereas only 16.3% are males. This means that the sample is mainly female. Such a difference may be related to the higher number of female students in the department. Although males represent a smaller percentage, their answers still add some diversity to the collected data and provide different opinions in the study.

Q02:

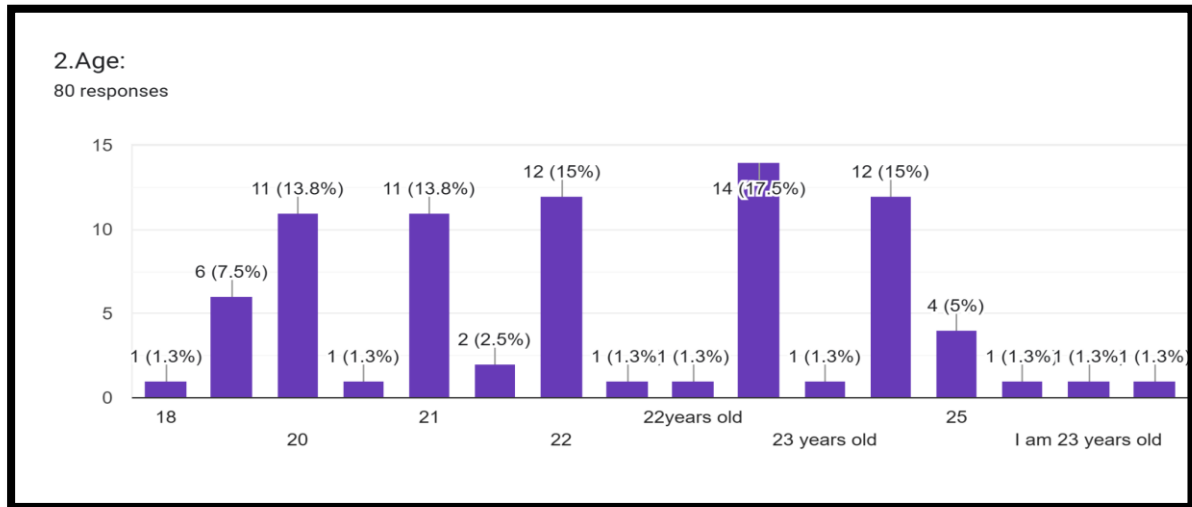
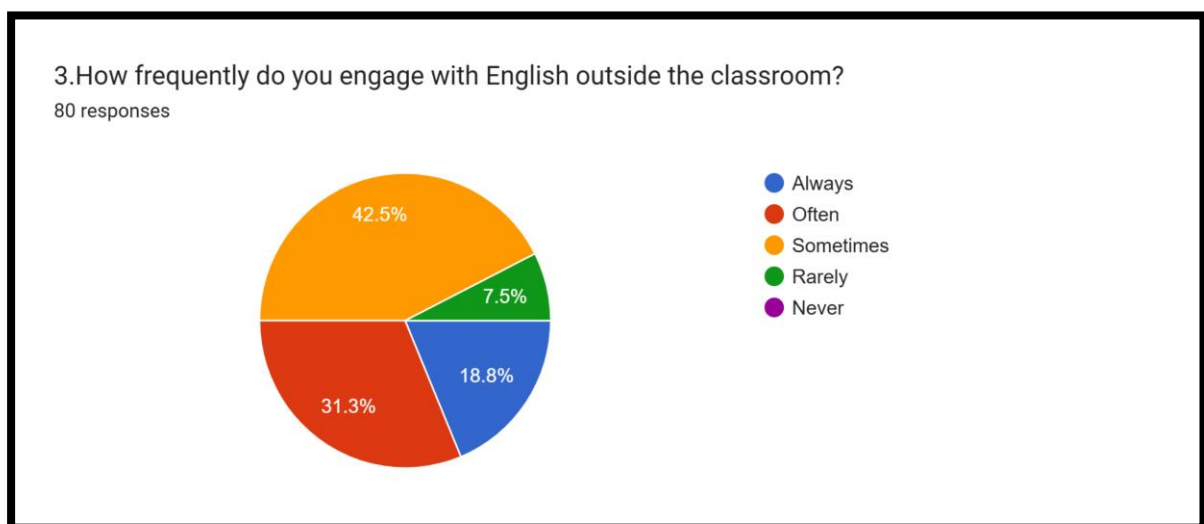
Figure 4: Age Range of Respondents

Figure below shows that the majority of respondents fall under the age range of 21 to 25 years. Respondents who are 23 years old make up the largest proportion with 17.5%. Some respondents' ages are 18, 20, and 22 years old respectively. These figures show that the respondents are predominantly comprised of university students since people of this age are active in academics and have gained some knowledge of the language before.

Q3:

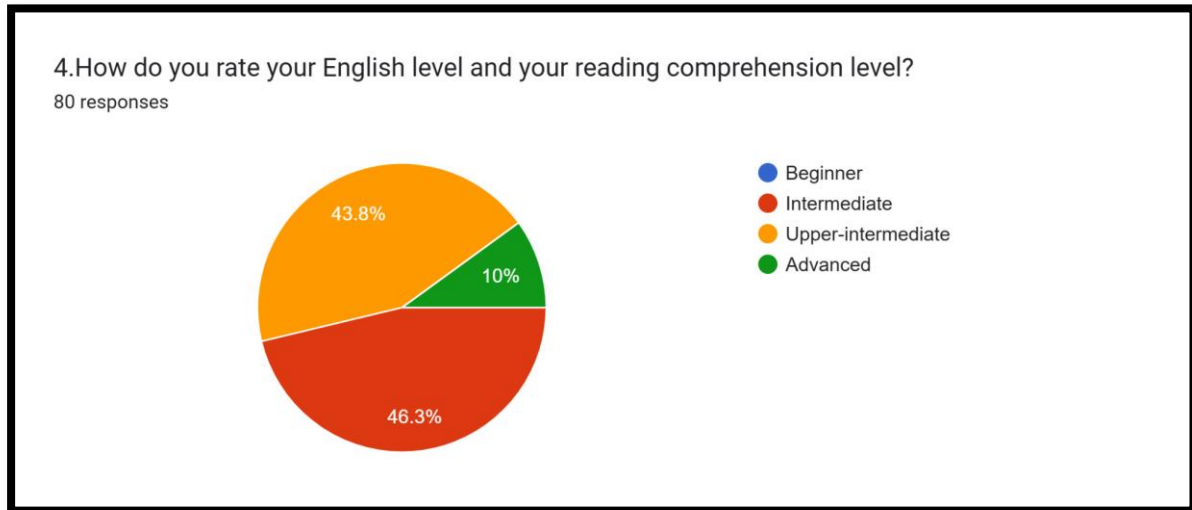
Figure 5: Frequency of English use outside the classroom

The results show that 42.5% of the respondents sometimes use English outside the classroom, 31.3% often use it, and 18.8% always use it. Only 7.5% rarely use English, while no student selected “Never.” This suggests that most students are exposed to English beyond classroom lessons. Such exposure may help them improve their reading comprehension and

become more familiar with English texts. Students who rarely use English may depend more on parallel texts to support understanding.

Q04:

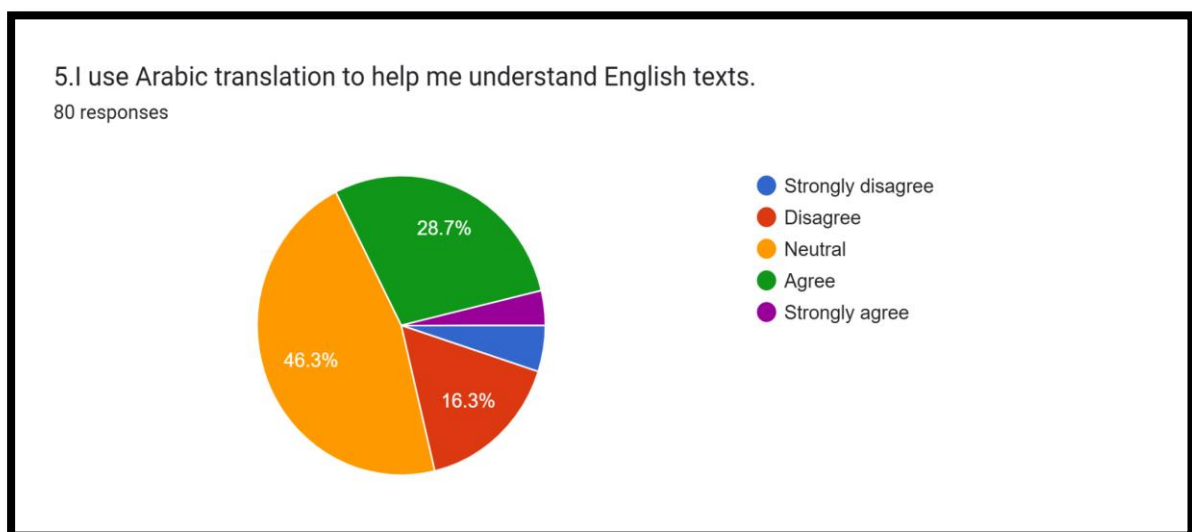
Figure 6: : Self Rated English and Reading Comprehension Levels



Regarding students' self-evaluation of their English level, 46.3% considered themselves intermediate learners, while 43.8% viewed themselves as upper-intermediate. In addition, 10% reported having an advanced level, whereas none of the participants identified as beginners. These results show that most students already have a good foundation in English. This is important because it means that the participants are able to deal with English texts and give reliable answers related to reading comprehension.

Q05:

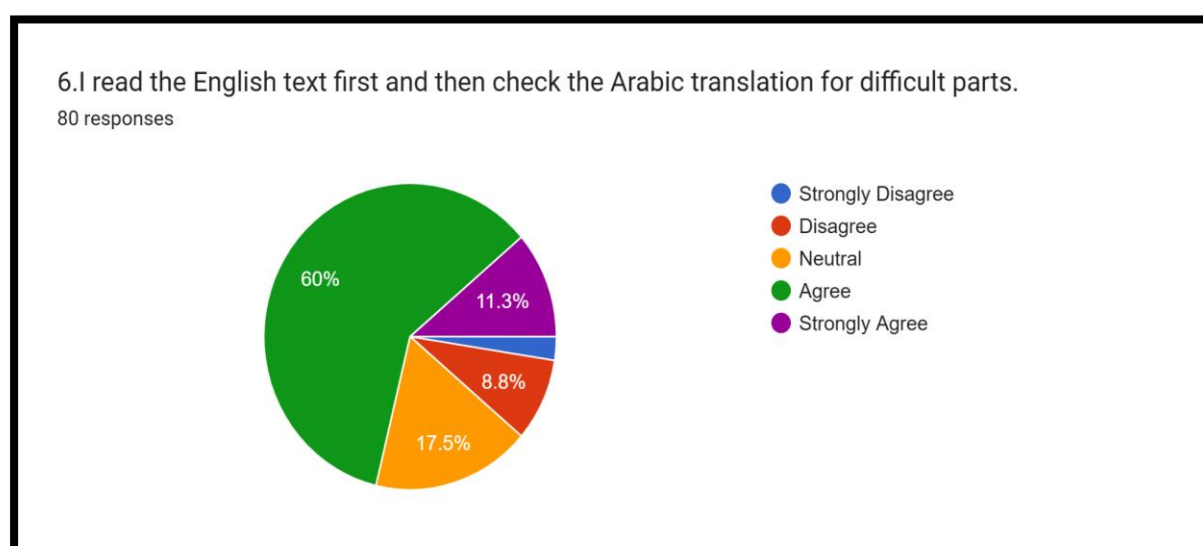
Figure 7: Use of Arabic Translation in Understanding English Texts



The chart depicts students' perceptions of the use of Arabic translation in reading English texts. A significant proportion of the respondents (46.3%) remained neutral, 28.7% agreed, and 8.7% strongly agreed. In contrast, 16.3% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed. This indicates that students do not rely on translation in the same way, as many learners use Arabic translation only when facing difficult words or unclear ideas. The large number of neutral responses may also suggest that the use of translation depends on the type of text and its level of difficulty. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights that translation can serve as scaffolding to make input more understandable and reduce anxiety. At the same time, it reflects Cook's (2001) Dependency Syndrome, which warns that excessive reliance on L1 translation may limit the development of independent reading skills in L2.

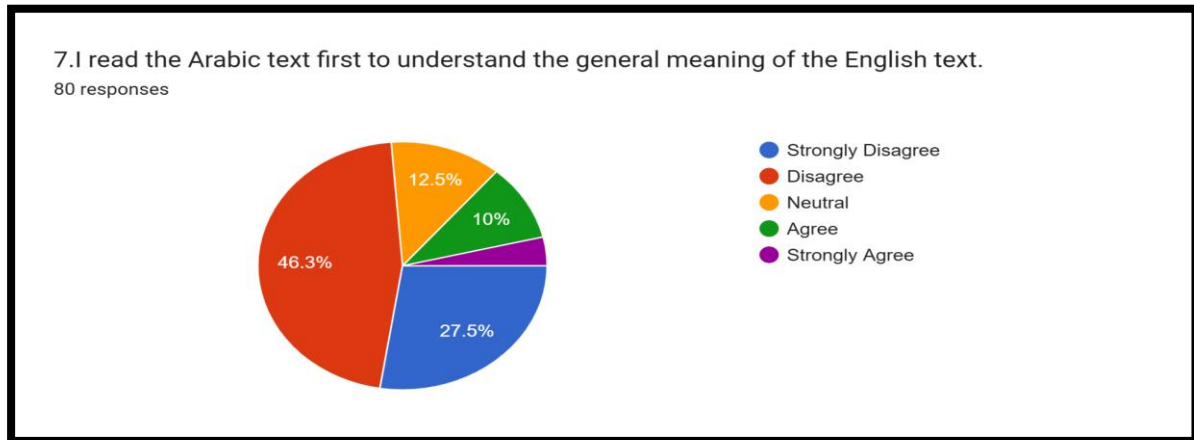
Q06:

Figure 8: Reading English First Before Consulting Arabic Translation.



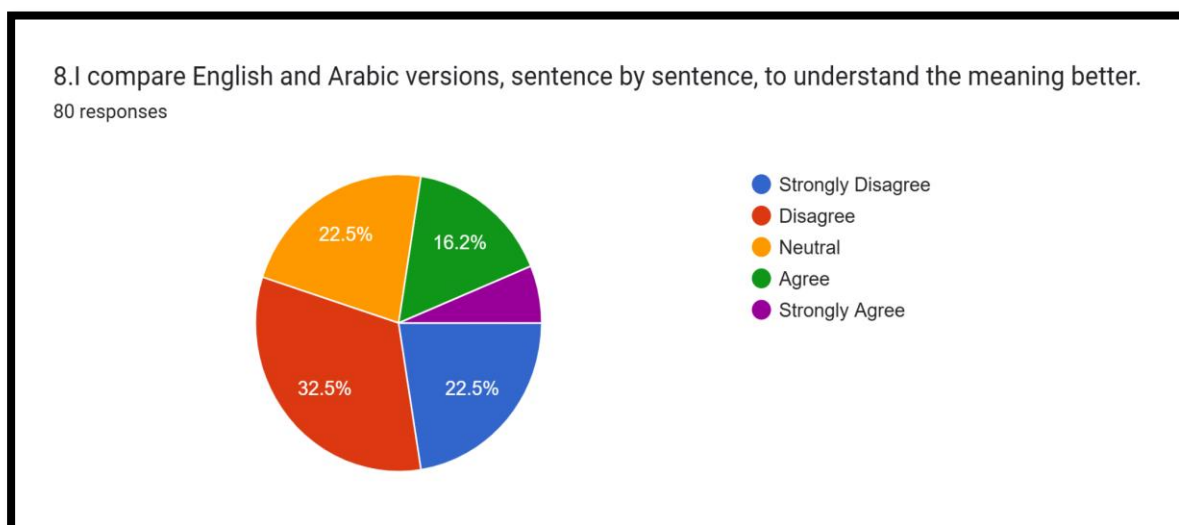
From the above graph, it is evident that most learners tend to read the English text first before verifying through the Arabic translation. Almost 60% of respondents were in agreement with the statement, while 11.3% strongly agreed. A very small number of learners were against this opinion, while 17.5% were neutral. The results indicate that most students attempt to comprehend the English text independently at first before resorting to the help of Arabic language translation. This is consistent with Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), which explains that skills developed in the first language can support the second language, but learners still prefer to rely on L2 input initially. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since students try to process English directly as comprehensible input, using Arabic only as scaffolding when necessary.

Q07:

Figure 9: Reading Arabic First to Understand English Texts

The responses reveal that 46.3% disagreed and 27.5% strongly disagreed with reading the Arabic text first. In contrast, only 10% agreed and 3.7% strongly agreed, while 12.5% remained neutral. These findings clearly show that most students prefer beginning with the English version. This may reflect learners' desire to practise understanding English directly and improve their reading skills over time. Arabic translation is mainly used later to confirm meaning or solve comprehension difficulties. This is consistent with Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), which explains that skills from the first language can support the second language, but learners still attempt to process L2 input independently. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since students try to make English input understandable first, using Arabic only as scaffolding when needed.

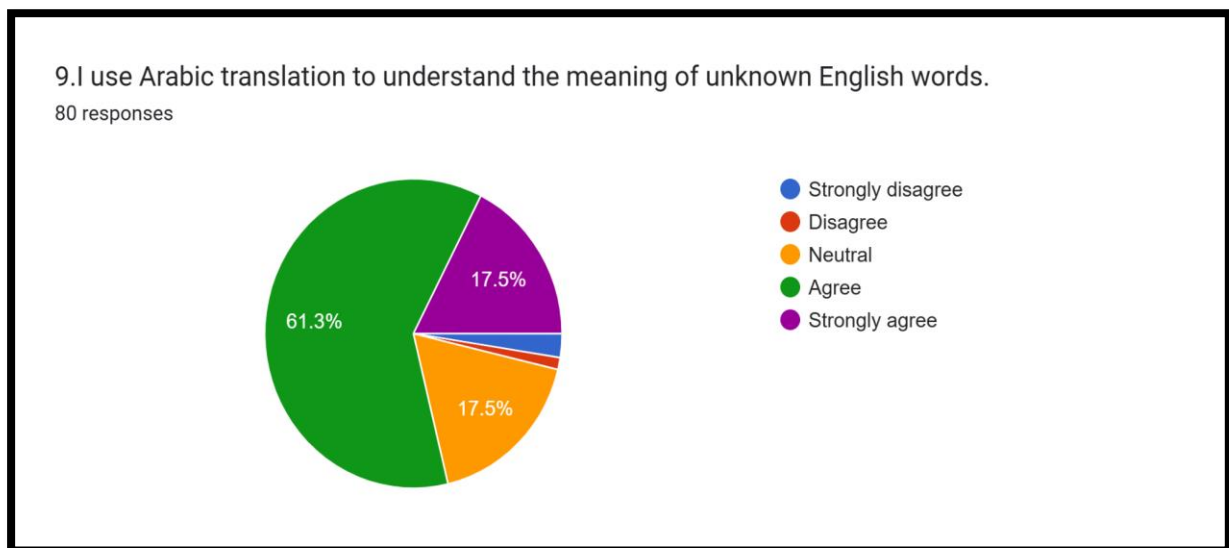
Q08:

Figure 10: Comparing English and Arabic Texts Sentence by Sentence.

According to these data, 32.5% of the respondents did not agree and 22.5% strongly disagreed with the statement that English and Arabic texts should be compared in sentences. At the same time, 16.2% of students agreed with this opinion, 6.3% strongly agreed, and 22.5% did not give any answer. It can be seen from this analysis that most learners do not make a comparison while reading. They tend to understand the general sense of the text, applying the translation method where it is necessary. This is consistent with Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), which shows that learners transfer skills from L1 to L2 without needing word-for-word comparison. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since students focus on the overall meaning of English input, using Arabic only when needed to make comprehension easier.

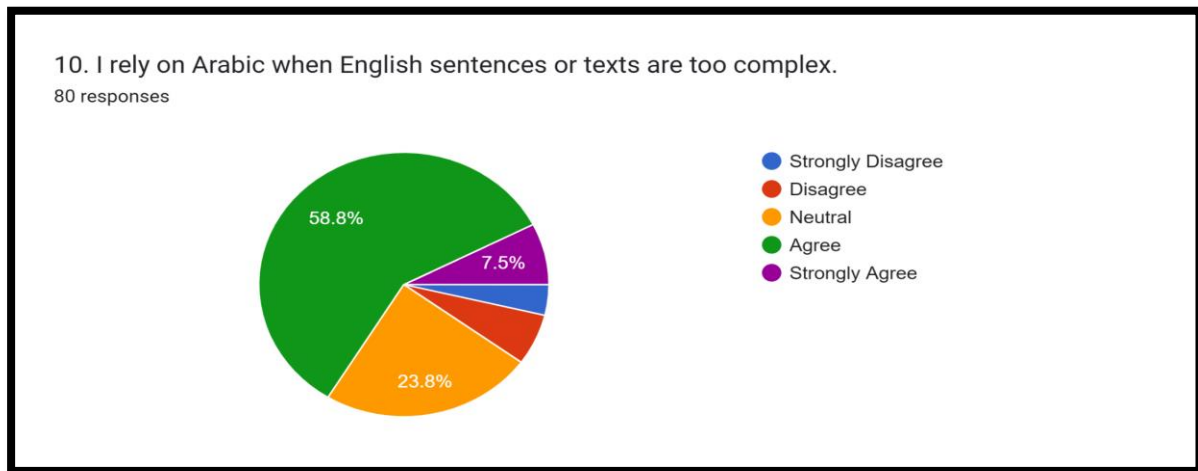
Q09:

Figure 11: Use of Arabic Translation for Unknown English Words



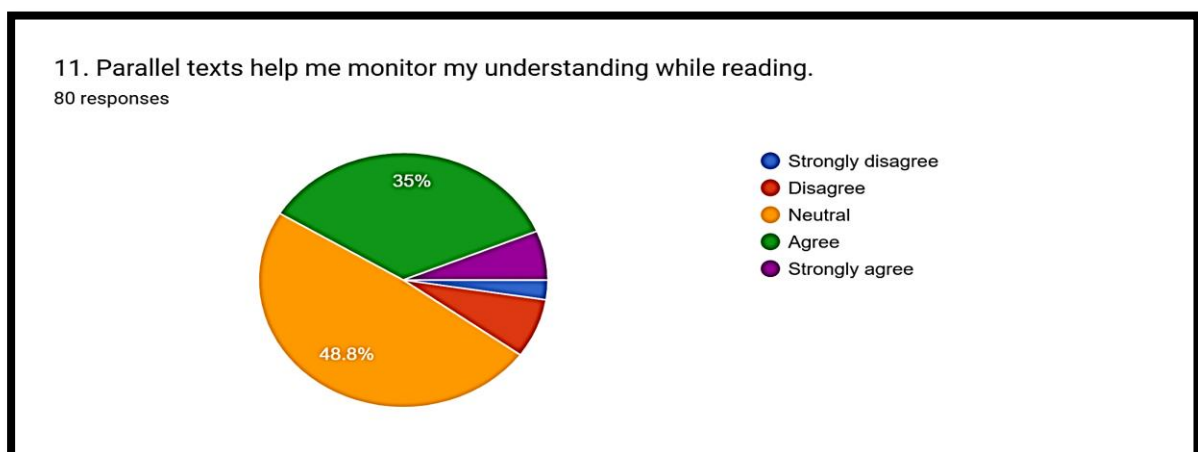
The chart indicates that 61.3% of the respondents agreed and 17.5% strongly agreed that they use Arabic translation when they face unfamiliar vocabulary. Another 17.5% remained neutral, while only small percentages disagreed. These findings show that parallel texts are especially useful for vocabulary learning. They help students connect new English words with familiar Arabic meanings, which makes reading easier and less stressful. As a result, learners may feel more confident while dealing with difficult vocabulary. This is consistent with Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), which explains that skills from the first language can support vocabulary growth in the second language. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since translation helps make input more understandable and reduces anxiety during reading.

Q10:

Figure 12: Reliance on Arabic When English Texts Are Complex.

The results reveal that 58.8% agreed and 7.5% strongly agreed that they rely on Arabic translation when English texts become complex. At the same time, 23.8% remained neutral, while only small percentages disagreed. These figures suggest that difficult sentence structures may create challenges for many learners. In such situations, parallel texts help students understand meaning more clearly and avoid confusion. They therefore act as a form of support when learners deal with advanced or complicated texts. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which shows that translation can make input more understandable and reduce anxiety. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since learners use skills from their first language to support comprehension when facing complex material in the second language.

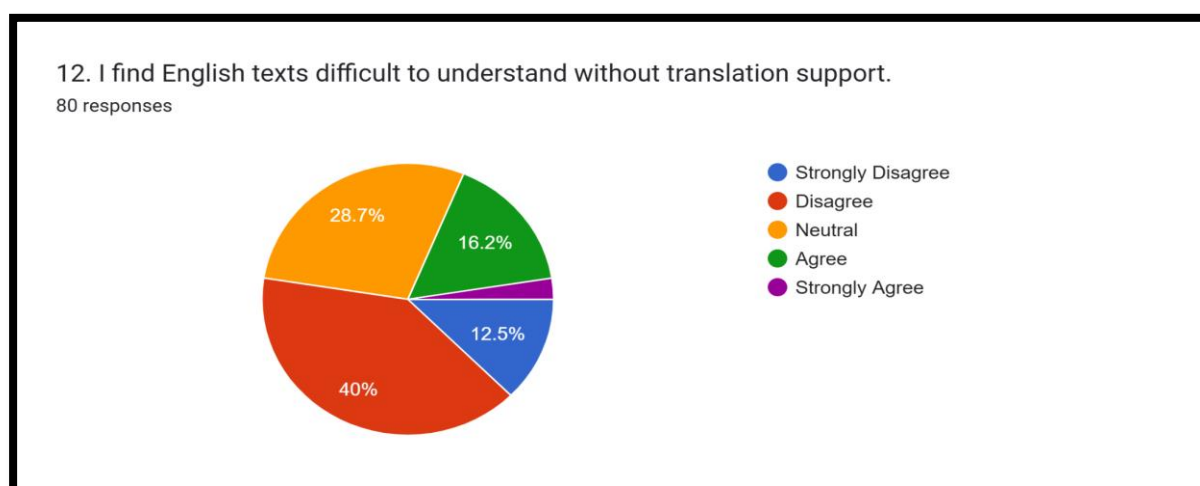
Q11:

Figure 13: : Role of Parallel Texts in Checking Reading Comprehension

It is clear from the figure above that the largest number of 48.8% of participants was neutral in regard to using parallel texts for monitoring their comprehension, 35% agreed and 6.3% strongly agreed. On the other hand, only 7.5% of the participants disagreed with the statement in question, and an extremely small percentage (2%) strongly disagreed. It can be stated that students find parallel texts helpful in terms of verifying their comprehension. This is consistent with Corder's Input vs. Intake distinction (1967), which explains that learners only internalize part of the input they receive, and parallel texts help them confirm meaning and avoid confusion. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since translation supports learners in making input clearer and more understandable during reading.

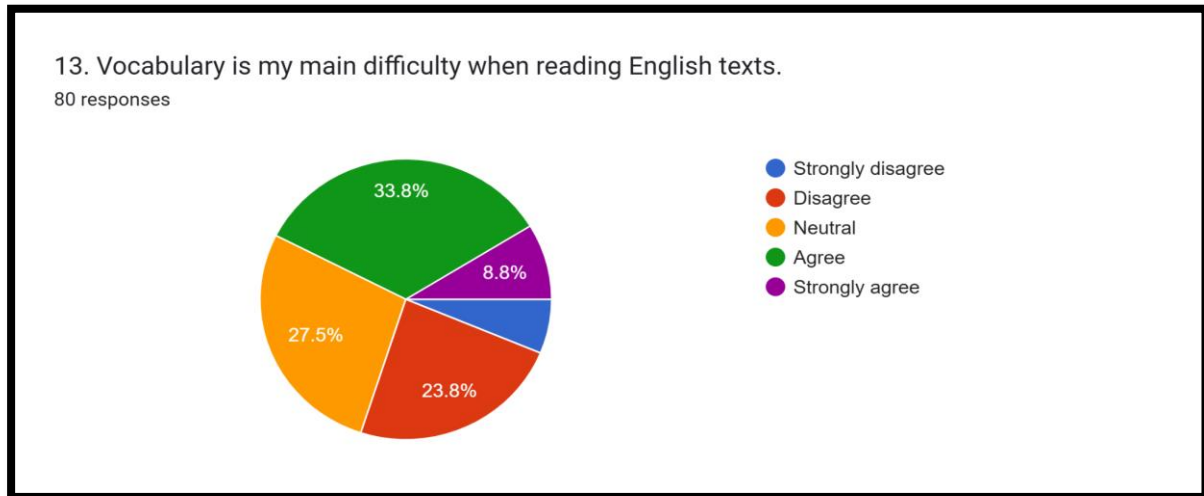
Q12:

Figure 14: Difficulty Understanding English Texts Without Translation.



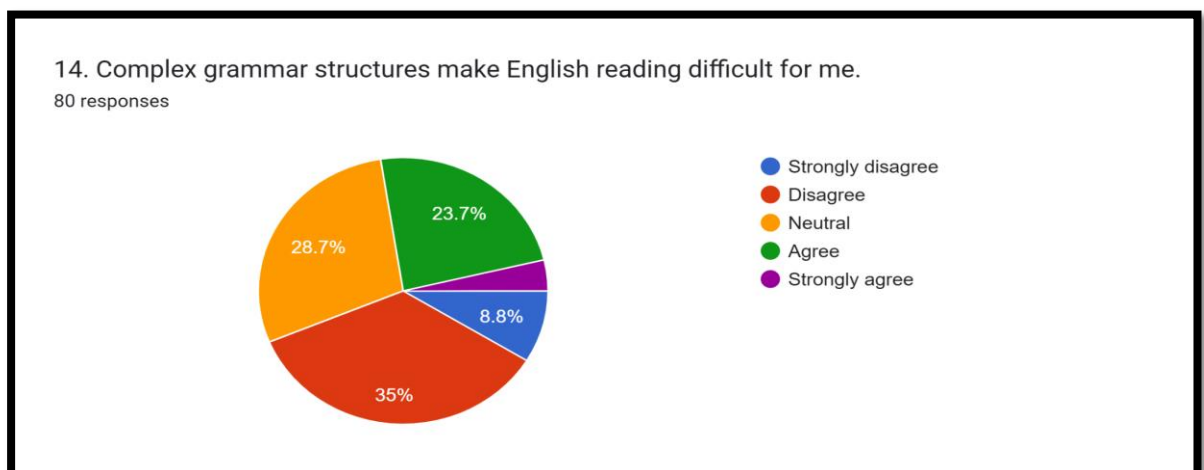
The responses indicate that 40% of the participants disagreed and 12.5% strongly disagreed that English texts are difficult without translation support. Meanwhile, 28.7% remained neutral, while 16.2% agreed and a very small percentage strongly agreed. These findings show that many students feel able to understand English texts independently. However, some learners still experience difficulties and need translation support, especially when texts become more challenging. Parallel texts therefore remain helpful for students who struggle with comprehension. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights that learners progress when input is understandable, and translation can serve as scaffolding when texts are complex. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since skills from L1 can support comprehension in L2, even though many learners prefer to rely on English directly. As a result, parallel texts may provide additional support for weaker learners while still encouraging more advanced students to develop independent reading skills.

Q13:

Figure 15: Vocabulary Difficulties in Reading English Texts.

From the statistics, it is apparent that 33.8% agree and 8.8% strongly agree that vocabulary is the greatest obstacle encountered when reading English texts. On the contrary, 27.5% were neutral, 23.8% disagreed, and 6.3% strongly disagreed. From these statistics, one can deduce that unknown vocabulary is indeed one of the most significant problems facing many individuals. Parallel texts would be instrumental in helping learners increase their vocabulary because they offer immediate meanings of words in Arabic. This is consistent with Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979) which shows that skills from the first language can support vocabulary growth in the second language. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since translation helps make input more understandable and reduces stress when learners face difficult words.

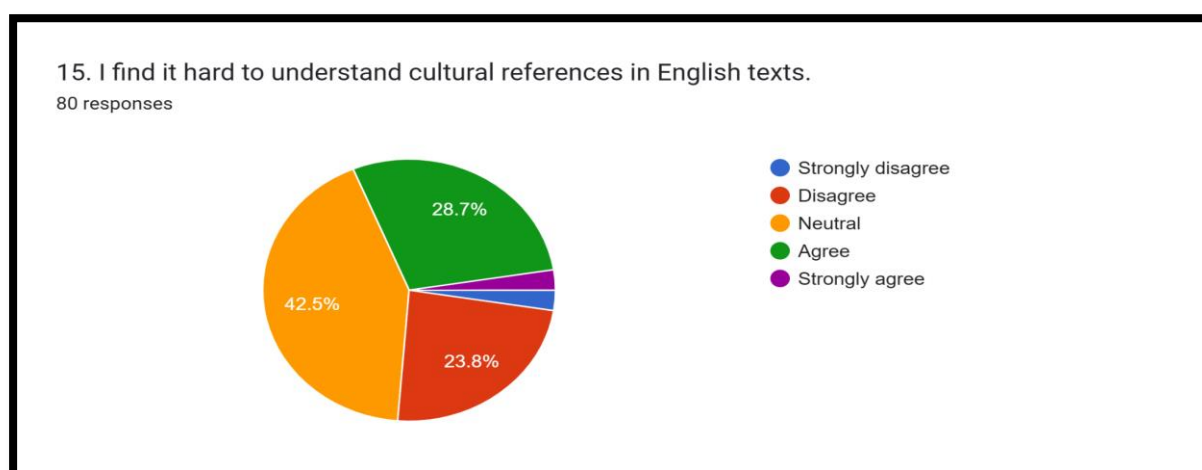
Q14:

Figure 16: Impact of Complex Grammar on English Reading Difficulty.

The chart shows that 35% disagreed and 8.8% strongly disagreed that grammar structures are their main difficulty. However, 23.7% agreed, while a smaller percentage strongly agreed, and 28.7% remained neutral. These findings indicate that grammar creates problems for some learners, but not for the majority of students. Even so, parallel texts may still help learners notice differences between English and Arabic sentence structures and improve their grammatical understanding. This is consistent with Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (Lado, 1957), which suggests that comparing L1 and L2 structures can highlight differences and reduce errors. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since parallel texts make complex grammar more understandable and support learners' comprehension.

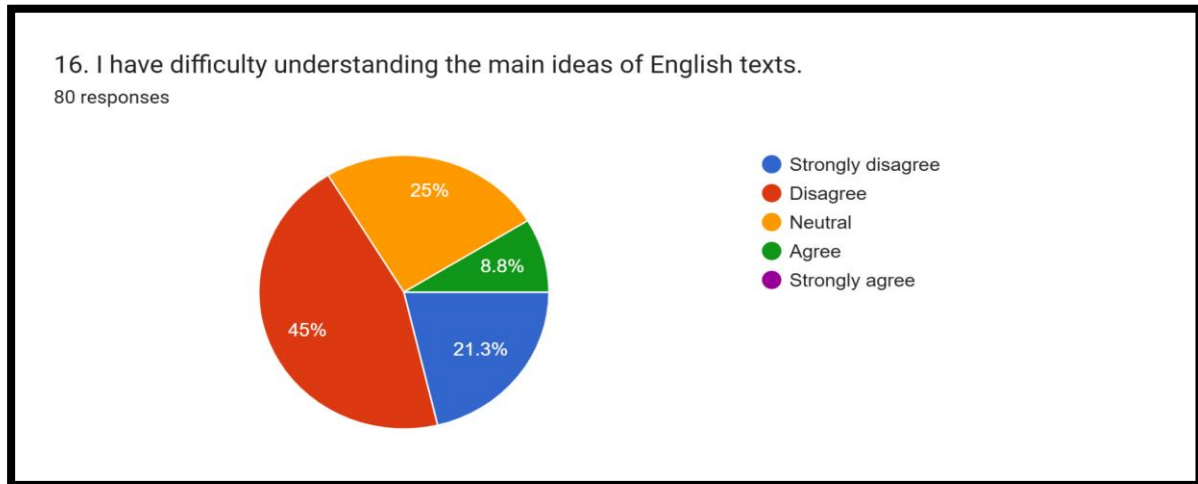
Q15:

Figure 17: Difficulty Understanding Cultural References in English Texts



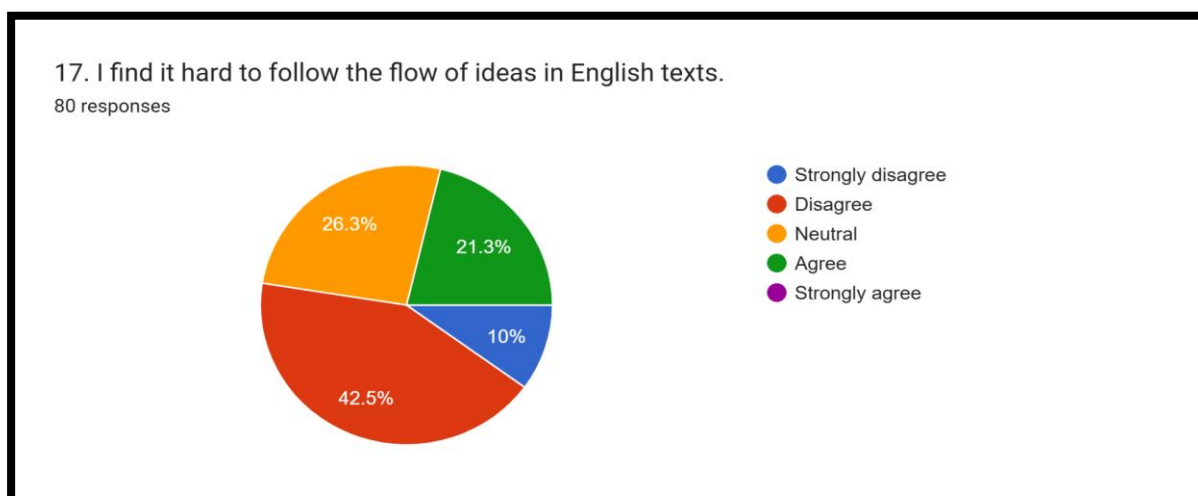
The results show that 42.5% of the respondents remained neutral regarding cultural references in English texts, while 28.7% agreed and a small percentage strongly agreed that they create difficulties. In contrast, 23.8% disagreed and only a few strongly disagreed. This suggests that some students find cultural references challenging, whereas others do not experience major problems. Parallel texts may help learners understand cultural meanings by giving additional context through translation. This is consistent with Nation (2001), who pointed out that language and culture are closely linked, and translations can clarify idioms and cultural references. It also reflects Jalilova (2022), who argued that side-by-side texts build cultural knowledge by allowing learners to access both languages simultaneously.

Q16:

Figure 18: Difficulty in Grasping Main Ideas of English Texts.

The figure reveals that 45% disagreed and 21.3% strongly disagreed that they have difficulty understanding the main ideas of English texts. Meanwhile, 25% remained neutral, and only 8.8% agreed. These results show that most students are generally able to understand the main ideas without major difficulties. This may be related to their intermediate and upper-intermediate levels in English. Parallel texts are therefore less necessary for general understanding but may still support weaker learners. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights that learners progress when input is understandable, and translation can serve as scaffolding for those who struggle. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since skills from L1 can still help weaker learners confirm meaning when English texts become more demanding.

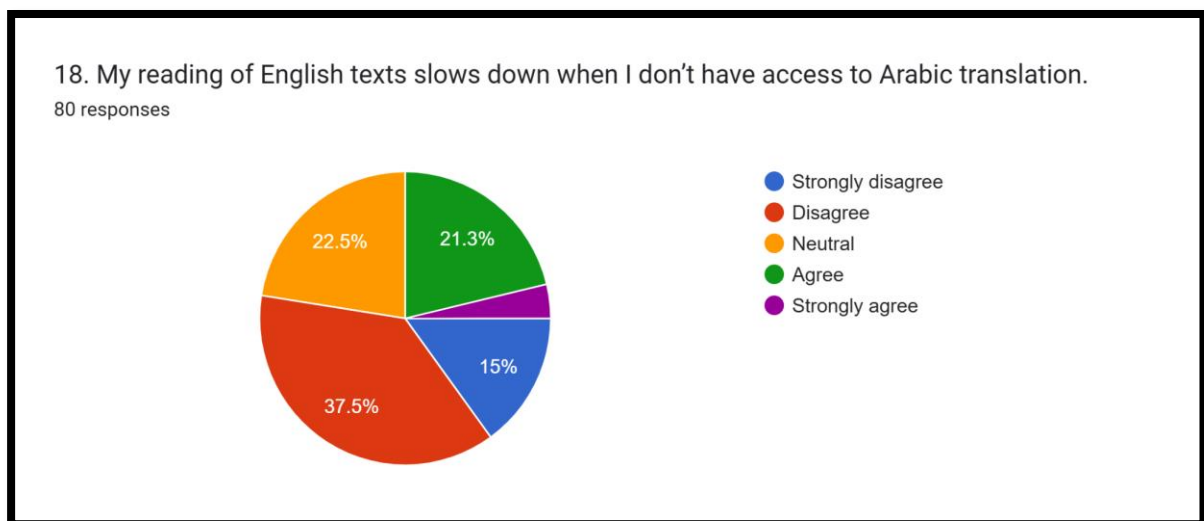
Q17:

Figure 19 : Difficulty Following the Flow of Ideas in English Texts.

The chart indicates that 42.5% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed that they struggle to follow the flow of ideas in English texts. In addition, 26.3% remained neutral, while 21.3% agreed. These findings suggest that most students can generally follow the progression of ideas while reading. However, some learners still face difficulties in connecting ideas between sentences. In such cases, parallel texts may help students maintain coherence and improve comprehension. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which shows that learners progress when input is clear and understandable. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since skills from L1 can support learners in linking ideas and confirming meaning when English texts become more complex.

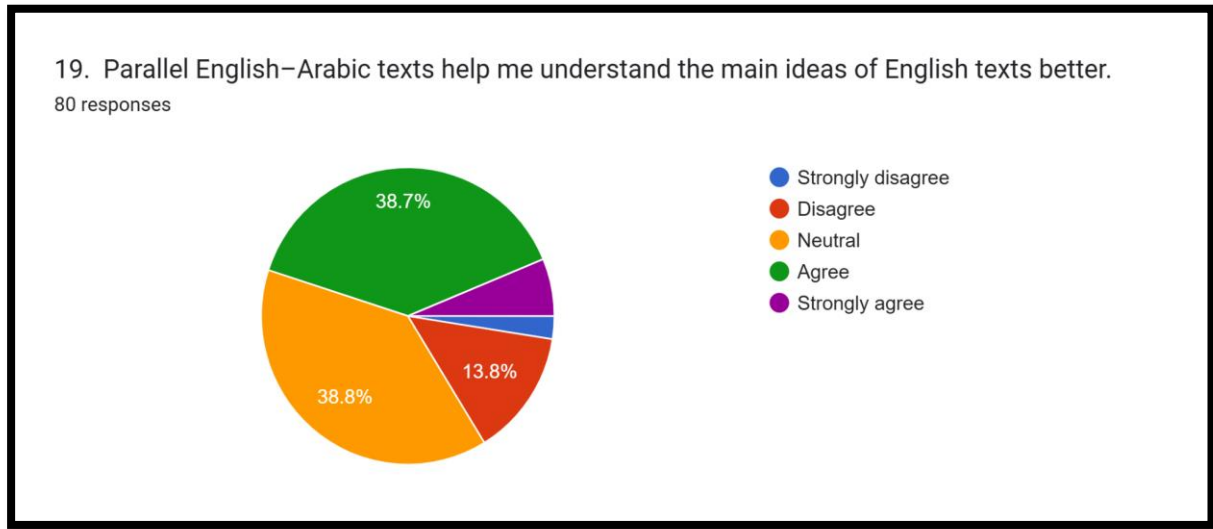
Q18:

Figure 20: : Effect of Translation Absence on Reading Speed.



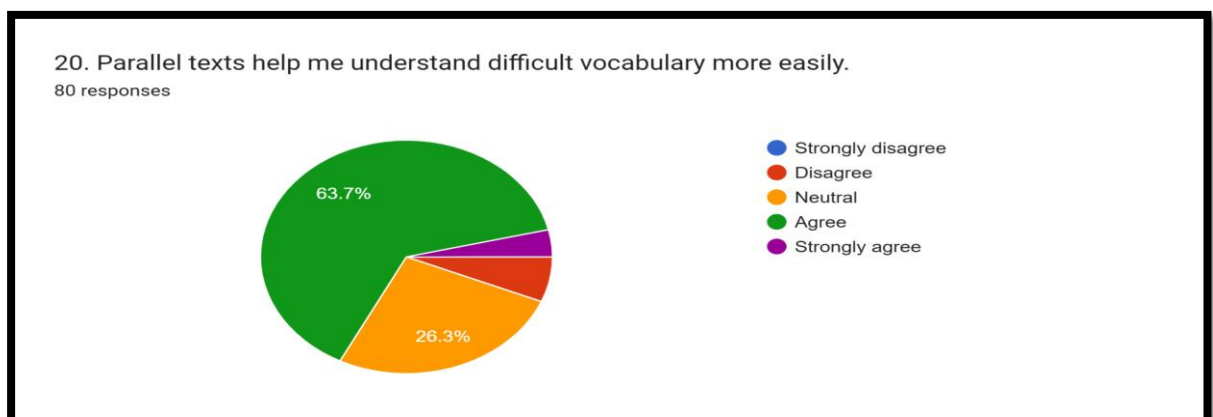
The data show that 37.5% disagreed and 15% strongly disagreed that they read more slowly without Arabic translation. Meanwhile, 22.5% remained neutral while 21.3% agreed and a small percentage strongly agreed. These results indicate that many students are able to read English texts at a normal pace without translation support. However, some learners still depend on Arabic to maintain reading speed and avoid losing meaning while reading. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights that learners progress when input is understandable, and translation can serve as scaffolding when texts become more demanding. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since skills from L1 can support reading fluency in L2 when learners face difficulties.

Q19:

Figure 21: Role of Parallel Texts in Understanding Main Ideas.

The figure indicates that 38.8% of the respondents remained neutral, while 38.7% agreed and 6.3% strongly agreed that parallel texts help them understand the main ideas of English texts. Only a small group disagreed. These findings suggest that many students believe parallel texts play a positive role in supporting general comprehension. However, the large percentage of neutral responses may indicate that some learners consider them useful only in certain situations. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights that translation can make input more understandable and reduce anxiety. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since learners may rely on L1 support when needed but still attempt to process English texts directly for overall comprehension.

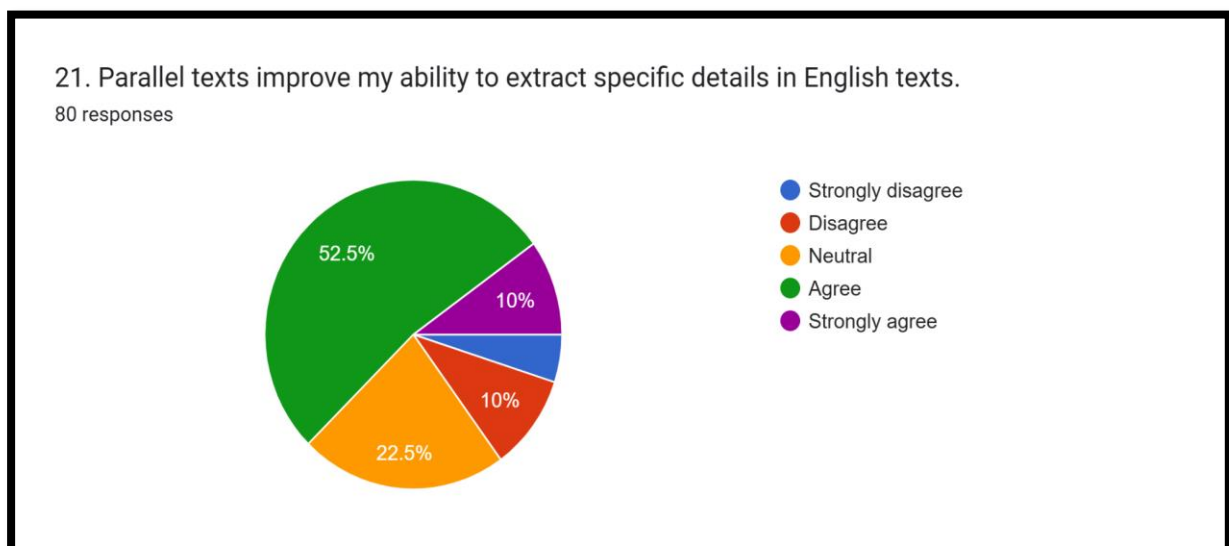
Q20:

Figure 22: Effectiveness of Parallel Texts in Understanding Difficult Vocabulary.

The results indicate that 63.7% agreed and a smaller percentage strongly agreed that parallel texts help them learn difficult vocabulary. Meanwhile, 26.3% remained neutral while only a few students disagreed. These figures clearly show that vocabulary support is one of the main advantages of parallel texts. By providing direct meanings in Arabic, they help learners understand unfamiliar words more easily and improve vocabulary knowledge during reading. This is consistent with Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), which explains that skills from the first language can support vocabulary growth in the second language. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since translation helps make input more understandable and reduces stress when learners face difficult words.

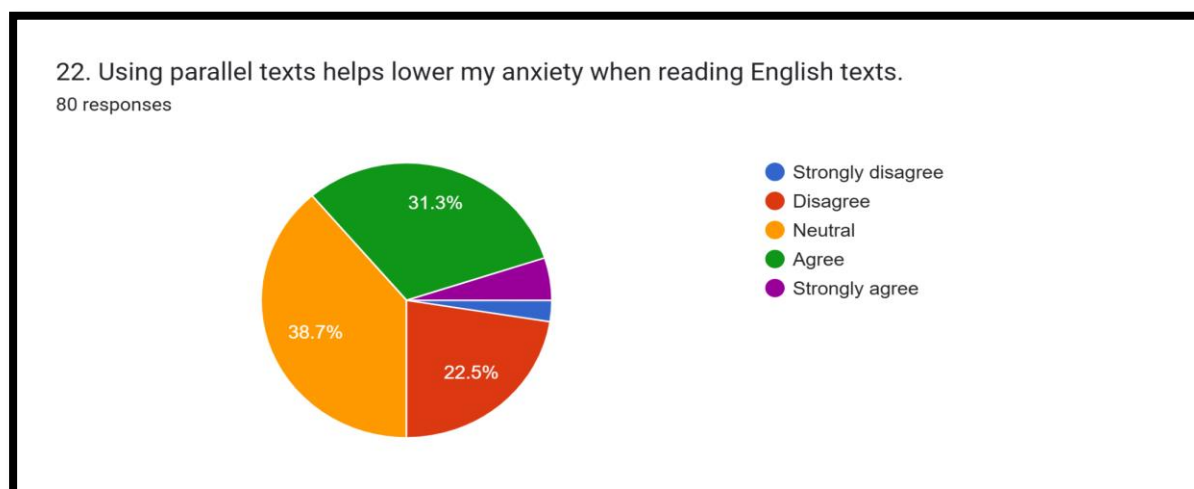
Q21:

Figure 23: Parallel Texts and Ability to Extract Specific Details



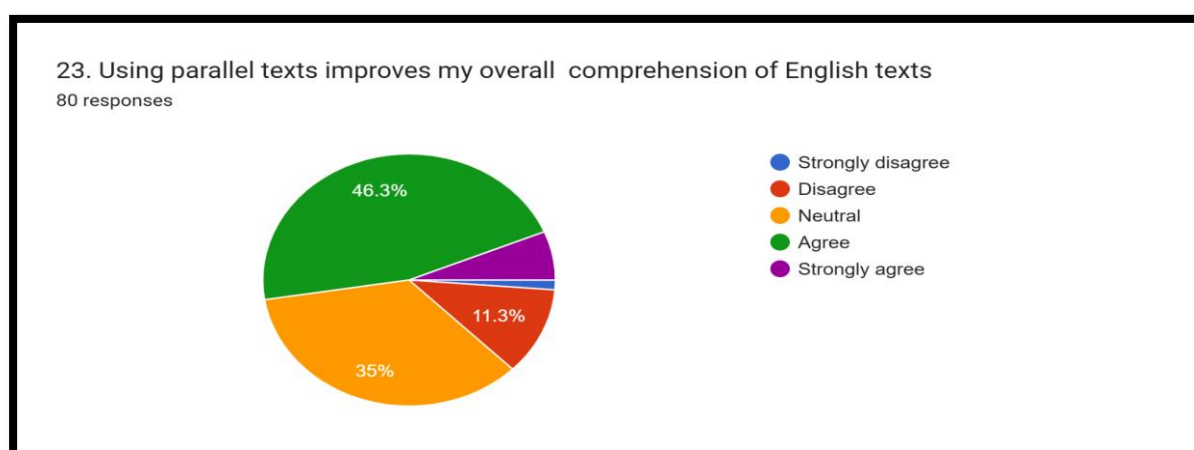
The figure shows that 52.5% agreed and 10% strongly agreed that parallel texts help them understand details in English texts. In contrast, 22.5% remained neutral while smaller percentages disagreed. These results indicate that most students believe parallel texts improve their ability to notice specific information while reading. They may therefore help learners focus on important details that could otherwise be misunderstood or ignored. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights that translation can make input clearer and reduce confusion. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since learners use their L1 knowledge to support comprehension and pay closer attention to details in L2 texts.

Q22:

Figure 24: Effect of Parallel Texts on Reducing Reading Anxiety.

The chart shows that 38.7% of the respondents are neutral, while 31.3% agreed and 5% strongly agreed that parallel texts help reduce anxiety during reading. By contrast, 22.5% disagreed and only a very small percentage strongly disagreed. These results suggest that many students feel more comfortable when using parallel texts. They may reduce stress by helping learners understand meaning quickly and avoid confusion while reading. As a result, parallel texts can increase learners' confidence, especially among students who feel anxious when reading English texts alone. This is consistent with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985), which explains that lower anxiety improves language acquisition. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since learners can rely on L1 support to confirm meaning and reduce stress when facing challenging texts in L2.

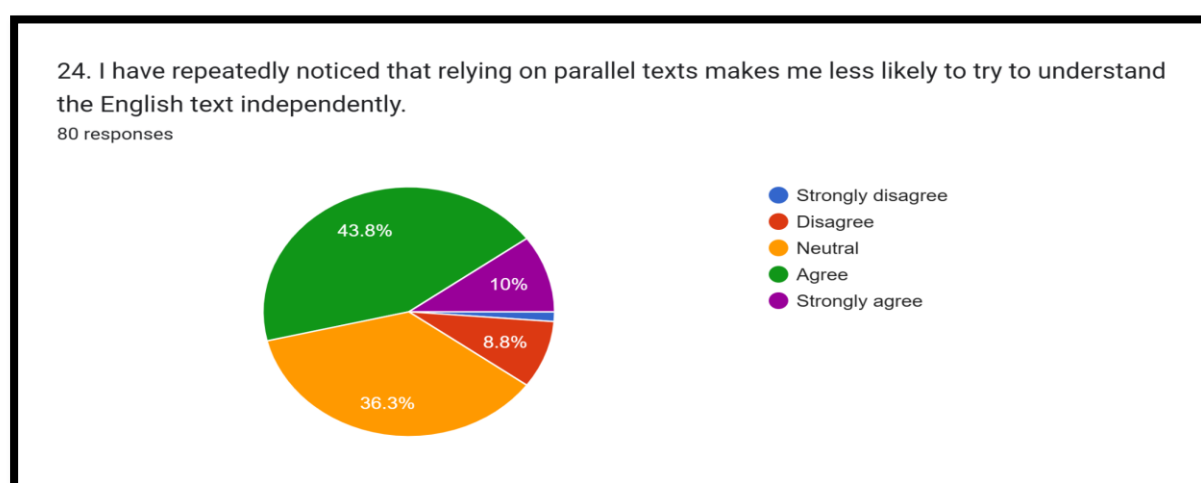
Q23:

Figure 25: Contribution of Parallel Texts to Overall English Comprehension

The figure shows that 46.3% of the participants agreed and 6.3% strongly agreed that parallel texts improve their overall comprehension of English texts. Meanwhile, 35% remained neutral while 11.3% disagreed and only a very small percentage strongly disagreed. These findings indicate that most students consider parallel texts helpful for understanding English more effectively. They provide support when learners face unclear vocabulary or difficult ideas, which helps reduce misunderstanding. However, neutral responses may suggest that some students only use translation support in certain situations. This is consistent with Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights that learners progress when input is understandable, and translation can serve as scaffolding when texts are complex. It also reflects Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1979), since learners can rely on L1 support to confirm meaning and strengthen comprehension when needed.

Q24:

Figure 26: Effect of Parallel Texts on Independent Reading.



The results show that 43.8% of the respondents agreed and 10% strongly agreed that parallel texts may reduce independent reading in English. Meanwhile, 36.3% remained neutral while only 8.8% disagreed and very few strongly disagreed. This suggests that many students feel that frequent use of translation can make learners depend less on reading English alone. Parallel texts are helpful for understanding difficult parts, but relying on them too much may reduce students' ability to practise direct reading in English. Therefore, they should be used as support rather than a complete replacement for independent reading. This is consistent with Cook's Dependency Syndrome (2001), which warns that learners may become overly reliant on translation and lose autonomy. It also reflects Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (1985), since balanced exposure to English-only texts is necessary for progress, while translation can serve as temporary scaffolding.

Q25: What are the biggest advantages of using English–Arabic parallel texts when reading in English?

When students were asked about the main advantage of using English–Arabic parallel texts, most of them agreed that these texts make understanding English faster and easier. Many respondents explained that parallel texts help them follow the meaning without difficulty, save time, and reduce the frustration they usually feel when dealing with complex texts.

A large number of students also mentioned vocabulary learning as an important benefit. They stated that parallel texts allow them to learn new words in context, which makes comprehension clearer and more effective. In addition, some participants pointed out that this strategy helps them feel more confident and makes reading longer or more difficult texts less challenging.

Other students added that parallel texts can help in comparing English and Arabic sentences, which sometimes makes difficult ideas easier to understand. However, a small number of participants expressed a different opinion. They preferred using other strategies such as paraphrasing or listening to English content, as they believe that relying too much on translation may reduce deeper understanding.

Overall, the findings show that the biggest advantage of parallel texts is quick comprehension with vocabulary growth, while also supporting confidence and reducing anxiety. This means that parallel texts are widely valued as a practical aid in EFL reading, though some learners prefer independent strategies.

Q26: What are the main disadvantages of using English–Arabic parallel texts when reading in English?

When the student sample was asked to explain the main disadvantages of using English–Arabic parallel texts, most of the respondents said that they can make learners rely too much on the Arabic translation. Students explained that this prevents them from thinking directly in English, slows down independent reading speed, and reduces practice in guessing meaning from context. Many also mentioned weak vocabulary retention, noting that constant translation may stop learners from remembering words and developing stronger English skills.

Other students pointed out that parallel texts may cause misunderstanding when the translation is not exact, especially with cultural references or complex ideas. Some added that over reliance on Arabic can limit creativity, reduce concentration, and make learners less motivated to engage deeply with English texts.

However, a few students reported that they did not see any disadvantages, or believed the benefits were stronger than the drawbacks.

Overall, the findings show that the main disadvantage of parallel texts is over-dependence on Arabic, which can slow down progress in English reading and reduce independent comprehension. This means that while parallel texts are helpful, they should be used carefully to avoid limiting learners' ability to think and read directly in English.

2.1.2. Discussion of the Results

The results of the questionnaire offer useful insights into the impact of using parallel texts on reading comprehension in EFL contexts.

In the first section, the findings provide a clear overview of the participants' general background. The sample is largely composed of female students, meaning that the results mainly reflect female learners' perspectives. Regarding age, most respondents fall within the typical university range, at a stage where academic reading skills are still developing. In addition, a considerable number of students reported using English outside the classroom at least occasionally, which indicates some exposure to the language beyond formal instruction. As for proficiency, the majority described themselves as intermediate or upper-intermediate, suggesting that they already have a solid foundation while still working on improving their reading abilities.

The second section reveals that students use English–Arabic parallel texts in a flexible and selective manner. Most participants tend to read the English version first and consult the Arabic one only when necessary, rather than depending on translation from the outset. Arabic is mainly used to clarify unfamiliar vocabulary and complex sentence structures. This suggests that translation serves as a supportive strategy rather than a primary reading approach. Furthermore, many students showed no preference for strict sentence-by-sentence comparison, indicating that they adapt their reading strategies according to their needs.

The third section highlights the main difficulties encountered by learners when reading in English. Vocabulary is the most frequently reported obstacle, as many students struggle

with unknown words. Grammar and cultural references are mentioned to a lesser extent and appear less problematic overall. Despite these challenges, most respondents stated that they are still able to understand the main ideas and follow the general meaning of texts without heavy reliance on translation. This points to a gradual development of reading autonomy.

In the final section, students' perceptions of parallel texts are generally positive. Most participants believe that these texts facilitate comprehension, particularly in relation to vocabulary and detailed understanding. Some also reported that this approach reduces anxiety and makes reading tasks more manageable. However, a few students expressed concern that frequent use of parallel texts may limit independent reading and encourage dependence on translation.

Taken together, the findings suggest that English–Arabic parallel texts are a useful support tool in EFL reading, especially for enhancing comprehension and vocabulary learning. Nevertheless, their effectiveness depends on balanced use, as excessive reliance may hinder the development of independent reading skills.

2.2. The Teachers' Interview

The interview involved ten university teachers from different specializations, including translation, reading comprehension, written expression, and other related fields. It is organised around ten questions that explore teachers' views on reading difficulties, the strategies they use in class, and their perceptions of the impact of using English–Arabic parallel texts in reading comprehension in EFL contexts. The questions move from general classroom practices to more specific issues such as the usefulness, limits, and long-term effects of relying on parallel texts in reading.

2.2.1. Analysis of the Teachers' Interview

Q01: What are the main difficulties your students face when reading English texts?

Vocabulary is the main difficulty mentioned. Unknown words often interrupt understanding and slow reading. This is usually linked with weak grammar and limited exposure to English outside the classroom. As a result, students struggle with both details and overall meaning. Some teachers also mention difficulty in identifying the main idea, as many students focus on translating instead of understanding. Pronunciation problems also appear when reading aloud.

Q02: Which reading comprehension strategies do you use most frequently?

Teachers report using a range of strategies rather than a single fixed method. Summarizing is commonly used to help students focus on key ideas and avoid unnecessary details. The PDP model (pre-, while-, and post-reading) is also frequently mentioned, as it provides a structured way to guide learners through the text. In addition, strategies such as skimming and scanning are used to develop faster reading and help students locate specific information. Prediction is also used to activate prior knowledge and prepare learners for the content. Overall, teachers tend to adapt their strategies depending on the level of students and the nature of the text, which shows a flexible rather than rigid approach.

Q03: Describe your experience using English–Arabic parallel texts. How often do you use them?

The use of parallel texts is not the same for all teachers. Some use them sometimes, especially with weak students or difficult texts. Others rarely use them at university level, where the focus is on English only. In some cases, teachers say these texts help students understand faster and reduce confusion, especially at the beginning.

Q04: What is your general opinion about the use of parallel texts in EFL classrooms?

Most teachers view parallel texts as a useful but limited pedagogical tool. They acknowledge their positive role in facilitating comprehension, especially in difficult texts, and in supporting vocabulary learning. They also highlight their affective role, as they can reduce anxiety and increase learners' confidence. However, this positive view is balanced by caution. Teachers repeatedly stress that excessive use may lead students to rely on Arabic instead of developing their ability to process English directly. For this reason, they consider that parallel texts should remain a support strategy rather than a permanent classroom practice.

Q05: How do parallel texts influence students' understanding of main ideas?

According to most teachers, parallel texts help students grasp the general meaning of a text more quickly. The Arabic version provides immediate clarification, which helps learners confirm their understanding and reduces uncertainty. However, some teachers note that this understanding is often surface-level, as students may rely on translation rather than engaging actively with the English text. This can limit the development of inferencing skills and reduce deeper interaction with meaning in the target language.

Q06: What are the potential disadvantages of relying on parallel texts?

The main concern highlighted by teachers is dependence. When students become accustomed to translation, they tend to avoid making effort to understand English independently. This over-reliance can slow down vocabulary development and reduce the use of contextual guessing strategies. It may also affect learners' ability to think directly in English and limit their reading autonomy. In the long term, this can hinder their progress towards fluent and independent reading.

Q07: What motivated you to use or avoid parallel texts?

Teachers who use parallel texts explain that their main motivation is to support comprehension when students face serious difficulties. They are often introduced to prevent misunderstanding and to keep students engaged with the lesson. On the other hand, teachers who avoid them refer mainly to long-term concerns, particularly the risk of dependency and the negative effect on reading fluency. In both cases, there is a shared understanding that the use of parallel texts should be purposeful and not systematic.

Q08: What types of parallel texts do you use most?

Teachers mention different types depending on teaching objectives. Literary texts are commonly used because they involve cultural elements and linguistic complexity that require clarification. Some teachers prefer short academic texts or news articles, as they are more manageable and closely related to students' academic needs. The choice of text generally depends on the level of students and the specific learning goals.

Q09: What advice would you give to a new EFL teacher?

Teachers generally recommend using parallel texts with caution. They advise new teachers not to rely on them systematically, but rather to use them strategically when necessary. It is also suggested to adapt their use according to learners' level and gradually reduce dependence on translation over time. The main objective, according to teachers, is to encourage students to engage directly with English as much as possible.

Q10: How do parallel texts affect students' independent reading over time?

The long-term impact depends on the way they are used. When overused, parallel texts can lead to dependence on Arabic and reduce students' ability to read independently. Learners may become passive readers who rely on translation instead of interpreting meaning in English. However, when used in a controlled and limited way, they can serve as a temporary

scaffold that supports comprehension at early stages without preventing the development of reading autonomy.

2.2.2. Discussion of the Results

The interview provides useful information about teachers' views on English–Arabic parallel texts in EFL reading comprehension. In general, teachers see them as a support tool that helps students understand texts, especially when they face difficulties.

The results show that reading problems are still common. Vocabulary, grammar, and limited exposure to English affect comprehension. Because of this, students often rely on translation. Teachers try to address these problems using strategies like summarizing, skimming, scanning, and guided reading activities.

Parallel texts are mainly used when texts are too difficult or when students cannot understand the meaning. In these cases, Arabic helps clarify ideas quickly and makes the lesson easier, especially for weaker students.

However, teachers are careful about overuse. They explain that too much translation can reduce students' effort to understand English and slow their progress in reading.

Still, most teachers do not reject parallel texts. They use them when needed and try to reduce them gradually as students improve.

Overall, parallel texts can be helpful, but only when used in a limited and balanced way. Their effect depends on how they are used in the classroom.

2.3. The discussion of the main findings

The analysis of both the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview reveals several important findings that help answer the research questions of this study. In general, the results show that English–Arabic parallel texts can have a positive effect on reading comprehension in EFL contexts when they are used in a balanced way. The findings also support the ideas discussed in Chapter One, especially the idea that parallel texts can help learners understand difficult texts more easily.

Regarding the first research question, the findings show that parallel texts help learners understand English texts better, especially when they face difficult vocabulary or complex sentences. Most students explained that they use the Arabic translation mainly when they do not understand certain words or ideas. They believe that translation helps them follow the

meaning faster and avoid confusion while reading. Teachers also confirmed that parallel texts can support comprehension by clarifying meaning and helping learners understand the general ideas of the text. Both teachers and students therefore agree that parallel texts are useful in supporting reading comprehension, particularly for learners who still face difficulties while reading English texts. This suggests that many EFL learners still need support during reading, even at university level.

The findings also show that parallel texts can help learners improve their vocabulary. Many students stated that they learn new words more easily when they see the English word together with its Arabic meaning in context. Teachers also considered vocabulary one of the main difficulties faced by EFL learners during reading. This finding is similar to many previous studies which consider vocabulary knowledge an important part of reading comprehension. As a result, parallel texts seem to help learners expand their vocabulary and read with more confidence.

Another important finding is related to learners' attitudes toward parallel texts. Most students had positive opinions about using bilingual texts in reading activities. They described them as helpful and reassuring, especially when reading difficult or long texts. Several participants also explained that parallel texts reduce anxiety and make reading less stressful. In addition, many students reported that they usually try to read the English version first before checking the Arabic translation when necessary. This shows that learners do not completely depend on translation, but rather use it as support when they need help.

Teachers also expressed positive views about parallel texts. They considered them a useful classroom aid, especially for weaker learners who struggle with comprehension. However, most teachers insisted that translation should not become the main reading strategy in EFL classes. While students focused more on the immediate help provided by parallel texts, teachers were more concerned about their long-term effects on learners' independence. This shows that students mainly care about understanding the text, whereas teachers focus more on helping learners become independent readers over time.

Concerning reading difficulties, the findings reveal that vocabulary is the most common problem faced by learners when reading English texts. Many students admitted that unknown words interrupt comprehension and slow down reading. Some participants also mentioned grammar and cultural references as additional difficulties, although these problems appeared less important than vocabulary. Teachers also confirmed that limited vocabulary knowledge

and lack of exposure to English make reading comprehension more difficult for students. In this situation, parallel texts seem to help learners understand meaning more clearly and reduce misunderstanding. However, the findings also show that not all learners use translation in the same way. Some students rely on it more than others depending on their level and reading habits.

The findings further show that parallel texts can influence learners' motivation and confidence in reading English. Many students explained that they feel more comfortable and less anxious when they use bilingual texts because translation helps them confirm meaning and avoid misunderstanding. Teachers also recognised that parallel texts may encourage weaker learners and make them more willing to read English texts. These findings suggest that parallel texts can create a more comfortable reading atmosphere and help learners feel more confident during reading activities.

Despite these advantages, the findings also reveal some disadvantages related to the use of parallel texts. Both students and teachers warned against becoming too dependent on Arabic translation. Some students admitted that frequent use of translation may reduce independent reading practice and make learners less able to think directly in English. Teachers also explained that using parallel texts too much may slow the development of reading autonomy and reduce learners' ability to guess meaning from context. In addition, a few participants mentioned that inaccurate translations may sometimes create misunderstanding, especially in texts that contain cultural or difficult ideas. This means that parallel texts are helpful, but they should be used carefully and not too frequently.

Finally, the findings of this study show that English–Arabic parallel texts can be an effective support tool in EFL reading comprehension. They help learners understand texts more easily, improve vocabulary learning, reduce anxiety, and increase confidence while reading. However, their effectiveness depends on the way they are used in the classroom. When used carefully and in moderation, parallel texts can support comprehension without preventing learners from developing independent reading skills. Therefore, they should be used as a supportive strategy that helps learners understand texts while gradually encouraging them to rely more on English itself.

2.4. Limitations and Recommendations

2.4.1. Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the data were collected only through questionnaires and interviews, which means the findings are based on perceptions rather than direct classroom observation or experimental testing. Second, the sample was limited to second-year Licence students at Mila University Centre, which reduces the generalizability of the results. Third, the study focused exclusively on English–Arabic parallel texts, without considering other bilingual or multilingual contexts. Finally, the use of convenience sampling may have introduced bias, as participants were selected based on accessibility rather than random selection.

2.4.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings and limitations, several recommendations can be made. Course designers at Abd Elhafid Boussouf University should integrate parallel texts into intensive reading modules, but in a structured and gradual way. Bilingual glossaries and side-by-side texts can be introduced at lower levels, while scaffolding should be reduced progressively as students advance to higher levels.

Teachers should encourage learners to read the English version first and consult the Arabic text only when necessary. This selective use promotes independent reading skills while still providing support when comprehension difficulties arise. Parallel texts should be used as scaffolding rather than permanent reliance, with gradual fading of the Arabic column to ensure that learners develop confidence in reading directly in English.

Future research should employ experimental designs, such as pre-test/post-test measures, to assess the actual impact of parallel texts on reading comprehension performance. Including classroom observation would also provide richer insights into how learners interact with bilingual materials in real time. Expanding the sample to include students from different universities and levels would enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Researchers and educators may also explore digital platforms that provide interactive parallel texts. These tools could allow learners to toggle between L1 and L2, highlight vocabulary, and access cultural notes, thereby combining the benefits of bilingual support with modern learning technologies.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the practical part of the study. The data from the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview were carefully described, analysed, and interpreted. The findings show that English–Arabic parallel texts can help EFL learners improve their reading comprehension, especially by supporting vocabulary learning, understanding difficult sentences, and building confidence while reading.

Students generally see parallel texts as helpful, while teachers view them as a useful support if used carefully. The research questions were answered: learners explained how parallel texts help them understand English, highlighted their benefits and drawbacks, and described their effect on motivation and reading independence.

The chapter also pointed out the study's limitations and offered recommendations. These suggestions aim to guide teachers and learners to use parallel texts in a balanced way, helping students rely more on English while still benefiting from translation when needed.

General Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the impact of English–Arabic parallel texts on reading comprehension among EFL learners. It also sought to explore learners' and teachers' perceptions toward the use of bilingual texts in reading activities. This study was motivated by the difficulties many EFL learners face while reading English texts, especially difficulties related to vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural understanding. Since many learners rely on parallel texts to support comprehension, this research attempted to examine the effectiveness of this strategy in helping learners improve their reading abilities.

The study began with a theoretical part that discussed reading comprehension in EFL contexts, the main models of reading, the components of comprehension, reading difficulties, and reading strategies. It also focused on the role of the first language in foreign language learning and explained how English–Arabic parallel texts may support learners while reading.

To answer the research questions, a practical investigation was conducted using a mixed-methods research design. Data were collected through a questionnaire administered to 80 second-year Licence students at Mila University Centre. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with 10 teachers of English to gather their views about the use of bilingual texts in reading classes. The collected data were analyzed using a descriptive and interpretive approach.

The findings of the study revealed that most learners consider English–Arabic parallel texts useful in improving reading comprehension. Students reported that bilingual texts facilitated understanding of difficult vocabulary, helped them follow complex ideas, and reduced confusion while reading. The results also showed that parallel texts positively affected learners' motivation and confidence, as many students felt more comfortable and less anxious when reading English texts with Arabic support.

Teachers also expressed generally positive attitudes toward the use of parallel texts in EFL classrooms. They considered bilingual texts helpful, especially for learners with limited language proficiency. However, some teachers emphasized that excessive dependence on translation may reduce learners' ability to read independently in English. For this reason, they recommended using parallel texts in a balanced and purposeful way as a support tool rather than a permanent solution.

In light of these findings, the study concludes that English–Arabic parallel texts can be an effective strategy for supporting reading comprehension in EFL contexts. When used

appropriately, they may help learners overcome reading difficulties, increase confidence, and develop a better understanding of English texts. Nevertheless, further research is still needed to explore the long-term effects of parallel texts on learners' reading development and their influence on other language skills.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

You are kindly invited to participate in this questionnaire, which is part of a research study for a Master's degree in Didactics. It aims to investigate students' perceptions of the use of English–Arabic parallel texts and their impact on reading comprehension in English as a foreign language contexts. Please note that your responses will remain anonymous and will be used for academic purposes only. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Section One: General Information

1. Gender:
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
2. Age:
3. How frequently do you engage with English outside the classroom?
 - a) Always
 - b) Often
 - c) Sometimes
 - d) Rarely
 - e) Never
4. How do you rate your English level and your reading comprehension level?
 - a) Beginner
 - b) Intermediate
 - c) Upper-intermediate
 - d) Advanced

Section Two: Use of English–Arabic Parallel Texts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

5. I use Arabic translation to help me understand English texts.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Agree

- e) Strongly Agree
- 6. I read the English text first and then check the Arabic translation for difficult parts.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 7. I read the Arabic text first to understand the general meaning of the English text.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 8. I compare English and Arabic versions, sentence by sentence, to understand the meaning better.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 9. I use Arabic translation to understand the meaning of unknown English words.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 10. I rely on Arabic when English sentences or texts are too complex.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly Agree
- 11. Parallel texts help me monitor my understanding while reading.
 - a) Strongly Disagree

- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

Section Three: Reading Challenges in English as a Foreign Language Contexts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

12. I find English texts difficult to understand without translation support.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

13. Vocabulary is my main difficulty when reading English texts.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

14. Complex grammar structures make English reading difficult for me.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

15. I find it hard to understand cultural references in English texts.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

16. I have difficulty understanding the main ideas of English texts.

- a) Strongly Disagree

- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

17. I find it hard to follow the flow of ideas in English texts.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

18. My reading of English texts slows down when I don't have access to Arabic translation.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

Section Four: Impact of Parallel English–Arabic Texts on Reading Comprehension in English as a Foreign Language Contexts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

19. Parallel English–Arabic texts help me understand the main ideas of English texts better.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly Agree

20. Parallel texts help me understand difficult vocabulary more easily.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree

e) Strongly Agree

21. Parallel texts improve my ability to extract specific details in English texts.

a) Strongly Disagree

b) Disagree

c) Neutral

d) Agree

e) Strongly Agree

22. Using parallel texts helps lower my anxiety when reading English texts.

a) Strongly Disagree

b) Disagree

c) Neutral

d) Agree

e) Strongly Agree

23. Parallel texts improve my overall reading comprehension in English.

a) Strongly Disagree

b) Disagree

c) Neutral

d) Agree

e) Strongly Agree

24. I have repeatedly noticed that relying on parallel texts makes me less likely to try to understand the English text independently.

a) Strongly Disagree

b) Disagree

c) Neutral

d) Agree

e) Strongly Agree

25. What is the biggest advantage of using English–Arabic parallel texts when reading in English?

26. What is the biggest disadvantage of using English–Arabic parallel texts when reading in English?

Appendix 2: Teacher's Interview

Dear Teacher,

You are kindly invited to participate in this interview, which is part of a Master's research study in Didactics. It aims to explore teachers' perspectives on the use of English–Arabic parallel texts and their impact on students' reading comprehension in EFL contexts.

Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. Your time and contribution are greatly appreciated.

Questions

1. What are the main difficulties your students face when reading English texts?
2. Which reading comprehension strategies do you use most frequently? Please explain your choice.
3. Describe your experience using English–Arabic parallel texts in your EFL reading classes. How often do you use them?
4. What is your general opinion about the use of English–Arabic parallel texts in EFL classrooms?
5. In your experience, how do parallel texts influence students' understanding of main ideas?
6. What are the potential disadvantages of relying on English–Arabic parallel texts?
7. What motivated you to start using (or avoid using) parallel texts in your reading comprehension lessons?
8. What types of parallel texts do you most commonly use (e.g., literary texts, academic articles, news, religious texts)? Please explain your preference.
9. What advice would you give to a new EFL teacher considering the use of parallel texts in reading comprehension classes?
10. How do parallel texts affect students' ability to read independently without Arabic support over time?

Résumé

La compréhension écrite est une compétence fondamentale dans l'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère (EFL). Cependant, de nombreux apprenants rencontrent des difficultés pour comprendre les textes anglais en raison d'un vocabulaire limité, de structures grammaticales complexes et d'expressions inhabituelles. Pour surmonter ces défis, les apprenants utilisent souvent des textes parallèles anglais-arabe, qui présentent le texte original accompagné de sa traduction arabe. Cette étude examine l'impact de l'utilisation de textes parallèles anglais-arabe sur la compréhension écrite chez les étudiants de deuxième année de Licence à l'université de Mila. Une conception de recherche mixte a été adoptée. Les données ont été collectées par le biais d'un questionnaire soumis à 80 étudiants et d'entretiens semi-directifs avec 10 enseignants. Les données quantitatives ont été analysées à l'aide de pourcentages, tandis que les données qualitatives ont été analysées de manière thématique. Les résultats indiquent que la plupart des apprenants perçoivent les textes parallèles comme utiles pour améliorer la compréhension écrite. Ils favorisent la compréhension du vocabulaire, facilitent l'interprétation des idées difficiles et réduisent les difficultés de lecture. Les enseignants ont également exprimé des attitudes généralement positives quant à leur utilisation, tout en soulignant l'importance d'éviter un recours excessif à la traduction. L'étude conclut que les textes parallèles anglais-arabe peuvent constituer un outil efficace pour soutenir la compréhension écrite dans les contextes d'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère, lorsqu'ils sont utilisés de manière appropriée et modérée.

Mots-clés : Compréhension écrite, Textes parallèles anglais-arabe, Apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère, Textes bilingues, Difficultés de lecture.

ملخص

تُعدّ القراءة الفهمية مهارة أساسية في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. ومع ذلك، يواجه العديد من المتعلمين صعوبات في فهم النصوص الإنجليزية بسبب محدودية المفردات، والتراكيب النحوية المعقدة، والتعابير غير المألوفة. وللتغلب على هذه التحديات، غالبًا ما يلجأ المتعلمون إلى النصوص المتوازية الإنجليزية-العربية، التي تعرض النص الأصلي إلى جانب ترجمته العربية. تتناول هذه الدراسة أثر استخدام النصوص المتوازية الإنجليزية-العربية على الفهم القرائي لدى طلاب السنة الثانية بجامعة ميلة. تمّ اعتماد تصميم بحثي مختلط. جُمعت البيانات عبر استبانة قَدّمتها 80 طالبًا ومقابلات شبه موجهة مع 10 أساتذة. حُلّلت البيانات الكمية باستخدام النسب المئوية، بينما حُلّلت البيانات النوعية موضوعيًا. تُشير النتائج إلى أنّ غالبية المتعلمين ينظرون إلى النصوص المتوازية على أنها مفيدة لتحسين الفهم القرائي. فهي تدعم فهم المفردات، وتُسهّل تفسير الأفكار الصعبة، وتُقلّل من صعوبات القراءة. أعرب الأساتذة بدورهم عن مواقف إيجابية بشكل عام تجاه استخدامها، مع التأكيد على أهمية تجنّب الاعتماد المفرط على الترجمة. تخلص الدراسة إلى أن النصوص المتوازية الإنجليزية-العربية يمكن أن تكون أداة فعّالة لدعم الفهم القرائي في سياقات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، شريطة استخدامها بشكل ملائم ومعتدل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفهم القرائي، النصوص المتوازية الإنجليزية-العربية، متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، النصوص ثنائية اللغة، صعوبات القراءة.