TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE USE OF
ARABIC IN SECONDARY LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

A THESIS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE USE OF
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ABSTRACT

The debate over whether or not students' first language should be used in English language classrooms has been controversial for a long time. Findings in the literature reveal two opposing views: On one end of the continuum are those who believe that L1 should not be used in L2 classrooms and call for its prohibition, and on the other end there are those who believe that L1 is useful for L2 learning and it should be employed in the English language classroom. However, a unified approach regarding the use of L1 is still absent thereby confusing teachers about the contexts in which L1 should and should not be used. It is this debate that aroused my interest in conducting this research. The purpose of the study was to find out teachers' and students' perceptions towards the use of Arabic (L1) in secondary level English language teaching and learning classrooms in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In addition, this study set out to discover the similarities and differences in the ways teachers and students perceive the use of Arabic (L1) in English language teaching classrooms, and what are the purposes, if any, in which teachers use Arabic in English language classroom activities. Data were collected from teachers and students' using classroom observations, surveys, and teacher interviews. Findings revealed that the use of Arabic was not encouraged in the private schools in the United Arab Emirates. In addition, students and teachers revealed generally negative attitudes towards its use. However, they employed its use and recognized its usefulness at times and in certain contexts such as explaining difficult grammatical points or new vocabulary. They also employed its use for joking and discussions outside the classroom. Generally, the teachers used Arabic in English language classrooms in order to facilitate students' comprehension and clarify meaning that was difficult to convey using English.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the most valuable people in my life: my family. To my mother and father, who taught me to love and appreciate the value of life, education, and learning and provided me with unlimited love, support, and encouragement. To my sister who continuously surrounded me with her love, care, and advice. I also dedicate this thesis to the memory of my brother, Rabiee Hamze, who used to advise, support me, and surround me with his love and warmth to progress and succeed in my life and education. To all of my precious family, I say thank you for your encouragement, patience, support, love, and warmth.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

"Don't ban mother-tongue use but encourage attempts to use the target language" (Willis, 1996, p. 30).

This is one of the voices that call for reconsidering the role of L1 in L2 classrooms. This call supports many other researchers' voices who urge re-establishing L1 in L2 classrooms after its use has been banned for many years. The exclusive use of English in English language classrooms has been the subject of significant debate. Many teachers and students are calling for re-examining the role of students' first language (L1), in English language classrooms (L2) where teachers and students share the same L1. The use of students' L1 is an arguable issue in English language education. Whether or not to use L1 has been argued since the implementation of the Direct Method of teaching English in the 20th century. This approach has had an effect on the way English is taught until today.

Yet, the avoidance and prohibition of L1 started to be questioned by many researchers and teachers and requires actual pedagogical rationalization. On one end of the continuum are those who recognize the importance of L1 use in the L2 classroom, and on the other end are those who support its prohibition. Despite L1 being prohibited in L2 classrooms, teachers might sometimes use it which leads to discrepancies in their teaching approach. The lack of an approach that unifies and deals with the use of L1 is leaving teachers confused about the contexts in which L1 may be useful for teaching and learning. Consequently, it is crucial to address the issue of using L1 in L2 classrooms in order to avoid confusion in teaching approaches, and to make sure L1 is not used excessively. In the UAE, English language teachers are confused of when to use students' first language, Arabic, in the classroom. They lack a unified approach that provides them with how, when, and why to use Arabic in the English language classrooms.

Within this context, this research commences with an attempt to find out teachers' and students' perceptions towards the use of Arabic (L1) in English language classrooms, and the practices teachers follow when employing the use of L1. In addition, this research aims at finding out to what extent teachers' attitudes match their current teaching practices, and whether teachers and students perceive the use of

L1 in L2 classrooms in a similar way. In the following sections, the controversy of L1 use in L2 classrooms and its use in the UAE is discussed.

<div align="center">Controversy of L1 Use</div>

While it has been argued that the success of L2 acquisition relies on keeping it separate from the first language (Elridge, 1996; Cook, 2008), others (Brown, 2000; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003) have argued that students' first language plays a fundamental role in second language learning as well as in its use. Turnbull (2001) argues that the "use of L1 and TL should be seen as complementary, depending on the characteristics and stages of the language learning process" (p. 535). The usefulness of students' first language has been suggested in the literature as a tool to facilitate early stages of L2 learning and knowledge. For example, Nation (2003) argues that using L1 in L2 classrooms "can have very positive effects on learning" (p. 3), yet Cook (2001b) argues that "the L1 is not something to be utilized in teaching but to be set aside" (p. 404). That is, Cook believes that L1 shouldn't be used at anytime in L2 classrooms; instead, what matters is maximizing the use of L2 in L2 classrooms. Although Turnbull (2001) encourages the use of L1, but he argues that its excessive use have negative impacts on students' L2 learning and fears that allowing teachers to use L1 in l2 classrooms "will lead to an overuse of the L1 by many teachers" (p. 536). The fact that some literature encourages the use of L1 in L2 classrooms while some discourages its use is confusing to teachers. As a result, teachers are not completely aware of whether they should use their students' L1 or not.

<div align="center">The Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose of this research is to find out teachers' and students' perceptions towards the use of Arabic in English language secondary level classrooms. In addition, it is also intended to find out whether they are similarities or differences in the way teachers and students perceive the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. I also aimed through this research to find out the purposes and reasons, if any, for which the teachers use Arabic in their English language classroom activities, and the activities in which they opt for not using Arabic. It is hoped that the outcomes of this research will help teachers create a favorable and a comfortable teaching and learning environment. In addition, I would like to point out, in light of the existing literature in this area and the results of this study, the importance of teachers being

aware of when, why, and how students' L1 should be used in English language teaching and learning classrooms.

Teachers tend to maximize the use of L2, but what matters is quality and not quantity. Therefore it is also hoped to find out through this study whether the careful use of students' L1 along with the L2 in classroom activities would facilitate students' L2 learning. According to Storch and Wigglesworth (2003), the use of students' L1 can "serve a number of functions, including enlisting and maintaining interest in the task as well as developing strategies and approaches to make a difficult task more manageable" (p. 760). Hence, this study will be of interest and significance for both teachers and students. It will provide several pedagogical implications and applications to teaching and teacher training practices in the UAE. This research findings might help teachers become better informed of their teaching practices in employing the use of Arabic in English language classrooms, which may, in turn, help students become more successful learners of English.

<div align="center">Research Questions</div>

My research sets out to explore the use of Arabic (L1) in English language (L2) classrooms. In particular, it intends to address the following questions:

1. How do non-native English language teachers who teach secondary level students in private schools in the United Arab Emirates perceive the use of Arabic in English language classrooms?

2. How do secondary level students in private schools in the UAE feel towards English language teachers' use of Arabic in English language classrooms? Do they support this practice and see it as helpful or not?

3. Are there any similarities or differences in the way teachers and students perceive the use of Arabic in English language classrooms?

4. Finally, what are the purposes, if any, for which teachers use Arabic in English language classroom activities? And what are the activities in which teachers opt for not using Arabic? Why?

<div align="center">The Context of the Study</div>

In UAE's private schools, English is a compulsory subject taught from grades 1 to 12. English is taught daily for periods of 45 minutes, in which students get the chance to learn, practice, and use the language. Generally, almost every English language teacher in UAE's secondary private schools teaches three classes one from

each level of the secondary stage: grades 7, 8, and 9. The book used in grade 7 is Better English Language Now-Grade 7, the book used in grade 8 is Better English Language-Grade 8, and the book used in grade 9 is Better English Language-Grade 9. The Better English Language textbook has the pupils' book which has the main units, and the activity book which has the exercises. The average number of students in each class ranges from 25 to 30. In secondary-level English language classrooms in UAE's private schools, teachers and students are not allowed to use L1 thus implementing the Direct Method of teaching. Despite this restriction of L1 use in English classrooms, many teachers and students sometimes employ its use.

<center>Overview of the Chapters and Appendices</center>

The first chapter has presented the purpose and the research questions of the study. In addition, it described the controversy of L1 use in L2 classrooms and talked about the educational context in the UAE's private secondary schools. The second chapter consists of a literature review that talks about the background of the controversy of L1 use in L2 classrooms, the use of L1 in teaching methodology, the arguments about L1 use, the use of L1 by teachers and students, and the overuse of L1 in L2 classrooms by teachers.

The third chapter offers a detailed description of the methodology, materials, and procedures used for collecting the data in this study. It includes information about the schools, participants, and the research instruments employed for data collection. The fourth chapter presents the analysis and findings obtained from the data collection. The findings are presented using figures and tables. The presentation of the findings is divided into four sections: classroom observations, teachers' interviews, students' attitudes towards the use of L1 in L2 classrooms, and teachers' attitudes towards the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. The fifth chapter presents the conclusion and implications. It consists of a summary of the findings, pedagogical implications for teachers and administrators, limitations of the study, and recommendations for further research. Five main appendices are also included. Appendix A is the informed consent form, Appendix B is the teachers' survey, Appendix C is the students' survey, Appendix D is the classroom observation sheet, and Appendix E is the teachers' interview questions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background

The controversial issue of whether or not students' first language (L1) should be used in English language classrooms (L2) can be traceable to the beginning of the 20th century during the "Great Reform", the period in which the Direct Method was established and employed. This method dominated in the 20th century leading teachers to use only English in the classroom, and they considered it as the ultimate method of teaching (Cook, 2001a). Teachers favored to use less of L1 in L2 classrooms, since it was considered to better serve teaching and learning. However, this exclusive use of only English in the classroom was referred to by Phillipson (1997) as a form of linguistic imperialism in which the L2 was enforced in the classrooms not only locally, but globally as well.

Recently, there has been an ongoing questioning of using only English in the classroom. Auerbach (1993) argues that "the rationale used to justify English only in the classroom is neither conclusive nor pedagogically sound" (p. 9). Auerbach further argues that there is no justification for its use except for ideological or political reasons. Many educational policies around the world are being set by policy makers in order to use only English in the classroom since they believe that using English for communication and learning is a sign of modern language teaching. But, these policy makers may not be considering the best learning environment for students since they are supporting the use of only English for economic and political reasons without taking into account "the [basic] linguistic environment of…learners" (Brock-Utne, 2001, p. 120). These factors have promoted the avoidance of L1 use in L2 classrooms, which in turn has led to its ban in many classrooms around the world.

L1 Use in Teaching Methodology

A number of teaching methods support the use of L1 as a useful tool in L2 classrooms. According to Baumgardner (2006), such methods include the "Grammar Translation Method as well as newer…methods like Suggestopedia and Community Language Learning" (p. 669). The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) which is used "not only for teaching Latin but, by extension, modern languages as well" is based on comparative teaching of two different languages, in which translation is regarded as the best system for teaching it (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 4). This means that

translation from the mother tongue into the target language is adopted, and vice versa. Apart from translating words and sentences, students learn several grammatical rules and massive vocabulary lists. Throughout this process, "the first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 5). However, in the mid 19th century, the Grammar Translation Method was heavily criticized because there was a greater call for methods that would help students achieve better opportunities of communication. Students needed to successfully use the foreign language they were learning for communication.

Opposition to the Grammar Translation Method led to the emergence of the Direct Method in the beginning of the 20th century. In the Direct Method, "no use of the mother tongue is permitted" (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 6). Instead, direct and natural use of only the target language is employed. The direct and natural use is achieved using "demonstrations, actions, and pictures" without any use of the students' first language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 11). The Direct Method was successfully employed in private schools where the use of only English was encouraged, but failed to be considered practical in public schools since it didn't "consider the practical realities of the classroom" (p. 12). Consequently, it was criticized for extensively relying on the teachers' skill and for completely avoiding the use of L1.

The Grammar Translation and Direct Method represent two extreme opposites with regard to L1 use in L2 classrooms. While the Grammar Translation Method encourages the use of L1, the Direct Method restricts its use. Other methods that restrict the use of L1 are "Audiolingualism….communicative language teaching and task-based learning methods" (Cook, 2001b, p. 404). The emergence of the Audiolingual Method resulted in the 1950s due to the lack of emphasis on oral-aural skills. The Audiolingual Method has strong ties to structural linguistics (Bloomfield, 1933) and behavioral psychology (Skinner, 1957), in which the teacher plays the main role and presents the L2 using several structures and situations without the use of L1. Students learn through repetition and practice until they produce no errors, "based on the assumption that language is habit formation" (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 7). In the Audio-lingual Method, "dialogues are used repetition and memorization….After a dialogue has been presented and memorized, specific grammatical patterns in the dialogue are selected and become the focus of various kinds of drill and pattern-

practice exercises" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 59). However, the Audio-lingual Method was criticized in the 1960s because students "were often found to be unable to transfer skills acquired through Audiolingualism to real communication outside the classroom" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 65). Thus, there was a need for methods or approaches that focus on communication rather than structure proficiency.

In the light of this need, the Communicative Approach emerged in the 1970s. In Communicative Language Teaching, students are the center of the approach and "the goal of language teaching is learners' ability to communicate in the target language….[in which] the content of a language course…include semantic notions and social functions, not just linguistic structures" (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 8). This use involves several trials and errors until students successfully communicate using L2. L1 is rarely used in Communicative Language Teaching, yet it can be used when using L2 seems to be difficult (Cook, 2001b). Richards and Rodgers (2001) add that in Communicative Language Teaching, "judicious use of [students'] native language is accepted where feasible, and translation may be used where students need or benefit from it" (p. 156). However, in the 1980s, the Task-Based Language Teaching approach emerged as a development of Communicative Language Teaching. The Task-Based Language Teaching approach is based on the use of tasks as the central element of teaching and learning the target language. These tasks require students to discuss meaning and connect in naturalistic and significant communication. The tasks and activities can be either "those that learners might need to achieve in real life or those that have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 224). These tasks and activities are carried out in the classroom using the target language.

The Silent Way is another language teaching method that avoids the use of students' L1. The Silent Way is based on encouraging students to independently produce and use L2 as much as possible and develop "their own inner criteria for correctness" (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, p. 64). In the Silent Way, learning is facilitated by using physical objects and problem solving (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Lessons are mainly planned around grammatical items and vocabulary, and the teacher uses charts, rods, and gestures to elicit students' responses. But, as Richards and Rodgers (2001) state, the use of these physical objects is to "directly link words and structures with their meanings in the target language, thereby avoiding translation into the native

language" (p. 86). As a result, students are expected to have practical knowledge of grammar and vocabulary but with greater emphasis being placed on achieving native-like fluency and successful communication in L2. Another approach that discourages the use of L1 is The Natural Approach, which is based on achieving communication in L2 without the use of students' L1. The Natural Approach, which focuses on producing grammatical perfect sentence and achieving communication in L2 without the use of students' L1. (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In contrast, other approaches consider the L1 to have a role in L2 classrooms. Such approaches include Total Physical Response and Community Language Learning. Total Physical Response is an approach in which the "focus is on comprehension, and the input is supposed to be comprehensible" (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 145). In Total Physical Response, the teacher gives instructions, and clarifies these instructions through gestures or modeling them. Students carefully listen to and watch their teacher's instructions and gestures, and then physically respond by performing the action. Larsen-Freeman (2001) states that "Total Physical Response was usually introduced in the students' native language; after that, the native language was rarely used, and the meaning was made clear through body movements" (p. 115). Another approach that supports the use of L1 is Community Language Learning, which is based on the Counseling-Learning theory to teach a language. The classroom is considered as a community, in which teachers and students are members of this community and learn through interacting with it. Students primarily learn through their native language and then through the target language. As Richards and Rodgers (2001) note, "Students know the meaning and flow of an L2 message from their recall of the parallel meaning and flow of an L1 message" (p. 91). The group work, classroom discussions, activities, and translations are first conducted using the students' first language and then the target language. Thus, Community Language Learning resembles the Grammar Translation Method in the sense that it relies on translation, but differs on the emphasis. While Community Language Learning emphasizes learning the language through the social process of involving learners in a classroom community, the Grammar Translation Method emphasizes explaining grammar.

To sum up, the role and significance of L1 in L2 classrooms varied depending on the existing methods and approaches of different periods. For example, while the

Grammar Translation Method and Community Language Learning considered L1 as a significant aspect of teaching and learning, the Audio-Lingual Method and Direct Method considered L1 as a trivial feature that causes interference in the L2 learning process.

<div align="center">Arguments about L1 use</div>

There are several arguments about the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. Many researchers and practitioners would want "L1 not to occur at all in the foreign language classrooms" (Chavez, 2003, p. 166). Belz (2003) states that "L1 use represents a taboo because it is thought to impede the learner's linear incremental progress toward the rule-governed attainment of the idealized L2 norm" (p. 214). Elridge (1996) furthermore asserts that the use of L1 in L2 classrooms "yields short-term benefits to the foreign language learner, but with a risk of hampering long-term acquisition" (p. 310). Duff and Polio (1990) state that maximizing the use of the target language and minimizing first language use is necessary and "provides necessary exposure for second language acquisition" (p. 155). On the other hand, Cook (2008) asserts that L1 is avoided in L2 classrooms because "it doesn't happen in first language acquisition….[and] the two languages should be kept separate in the mind" (p. 181). She argues that when children acquire the first language, they do not have another language to rely on. Thus, L2 learners should acquire and learn the second language in the same way they acquired their L1; without referring to another language. Cook's second argument urges keeping the two languages separate. That is, to learn L2 efficiently students should use it separately from the first language. Yet, Spada and Lighbrown (1999) argue that L2 learning is not considered separable from L1 and it has interactions with it.

Students and teachers are frequently prohibited from using their L1 in L2 classroom activities. One reason given for this is that teachers need to recognize "that the second language (L2) user is a particular kind of person in their own right with their own knowledge of the first language (L1) and the L2, rather than a monolingual with an added L2" (Cook 2005, p. 47). If language teachers consider this as a starting-point and base their teaching on it, then they had better understand the mind and needs of the L2 learner. But what about the use of L1 in L2 classrooms? Qi (1998) states that "the use of L1 seems to be a natural and frequent cognitive behavior in a bilingual mind engaging in an L2 task" (p. 415). In addition, Brown (2000) states that L1 "may

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be more readily used to bridge the gaps that the learner cannot fill by generalization within the second language" (p. 68). Kouritzin (2000) argues that the effect of L2 on L1 extends to outside the classroom. She argues for the importance of using the mother tongue by referring to her own experience in raising her children in a bilingual environment. She explains that her children were raised in an environment in which the dominant language was English and not Japanese. She and other Japanese families struggled to maintain their L1 after their children became dominant in English rather than Japanese. Children and students were using English even when they wanted to communicate with their parents. As Kouritzin argues, students and children are using their L2 more than their L1, and this is making a distance between the students and their parents. Therefore, excessive use of L2 may sometimes lead to the loss of L1.

Baumgardner (2006) also considers "the use of the mother tongue in the classroom [to be] one dimension of linguistic human rights" (p. 670), which can be used in L2 classrooms in order to facilitate learning. Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) argue that "L1 may be a useful tool for learning the L2" (p. 760). They report that based on several empirical investigations examining L2 learning practices within an sociocultural structure, in which L1 was used in cognitively challenging L2 activities, L1 provided students with supplementary cognitive support that allowed them to explore and learn the L2 more effectively. Nation (2003) also believes that "L1 provides a familiar and effective way of quickly getting to grips with the meaning and content of what needs to be used in the L2" (p. 5). Therefore, Nation believes that using the L1 provides students with the best means to transfer the intended L2 meaning. In addition, it facilitates their comprehension as well as their learning.

Carless (2008) believes that using students' L1 "may serve social and cognitive functions, including the construction of scaffolded assistance and create through collaborative dialogue the opportunity for language acquisition to take place" (p. 331). Wells (1998) also believes that "L1 can play [a valuable role] in the collaborative performance of tasks in L2, and hence, in the creation of opportunities for learning L2" (p. 352). For example, if students are working in groups they do not have to continually speak English; they can use their L1. Through this, they can overcome L2 difficulties and achieve effective communication with each other. In such an environment, Anton and DiCamilla (1999) believe that the use of L1 "emerges not merely as a device to generate content…but, more importantly, as a

means to create a social and cognitive space in which learners are able to provide each other and themselves with help throughout the task" (p. 338). With regards to collaborative performance, Turnbull and Arnett (2002) state that in a study that focused on the use of L1 made by 22 pairs of grade 8 French immersion students completing either a dictogloss or a jigsaw, the "use of…L1 during collaborative tasks occurred for three primary reasons—increasing efficiency, focusing attention, and facilitating interpersonal interactions" (p. 206). As a result of using L1, students were able to achieve success in their tasks more easily and productively. Turnbull and Arnett further argue and stress that teachers can facilitate students' learning process by having L1 as a resource in the classroom.

<div align="center">The Use of L1 by Teachers and Students</div>

Teachers need to maximize the use of L2, but this doesn't necessarily mean that L1 should be totally avoided. Instead, Turnbull (2001) suggests that the "use of L1 and TL should be seen as complementary" (p.535). Kouritzin (2000) advocates that teachers concern themselves "not only with the teaching of ESL but also with ensuring the existing of a healthy climate for fostering L1 development" (p. 314). Along with Kouritzin, Levine (2003) also supports "maximizing TL use while at the same time granting to L1 pedagogically sound functions" (p. 343). Thus many researchers seem to agree that dealing with L1 as a resource for L2 classrooms may open up many ways for using it effectively. For example, a teacher may spend lots of time trying to explain the meaning of an item in L2; whereas, simply translating the item using L1 may save time and suffering (Cole, 1998). In support of this, Nation (2003) advocates the use of L1 whenever the meaning to be conveyed in L2 is beyond learners' capabilities, and believes that "a small amount of L1 discussion can help overcome some of the obstacles" (p. 3). Teachers who use L1 in their L2 classrooms may have preferences for when to use students' L1 in the classroom. Carless (2008) argues that teachers generally prefer to use L1 when they want to "maintain students' attention, interest or involvement" (p. 333). Macaro (2001) states that teachers use students' L1 "for providing meaning of lexical items,…[and] to help reinforce understanding of the L2" (p. 541). Besides teachers' preferences for using L1, there are many classroom activities in which L1 can be efficiently introduced. For example, Edstrom (2006) suggests that students' L1 can be used for "grammar instruction, for classroom management, and to compensate for a lack of comprehension" (p. 283).

Nation (2003) suggests that L1 can be used in conversation tasks, discussion of intensive reading, and preparation for writing. Moreover, Turnbull (2001) conducted a study in which four core French teachers' use of English (L1) and French (TL) were tape-recorded for eight weeks. The teachers' discourse was then coded by dividing the teachers' talk into different categories. Turnbull argues that "giving classroom organizational instructions, teaching grammar, teaching background to new activities, and disciplining were best done in L1" (p. 537). In addition, Cook (2005) suggests that L1 can be used "as a way of conveying L2 meaning…as a short-cut for explaining tasks, tests, etc…,as a way of explaining grammar…[and] for practicing L2 uses such as code-switching" (p. 59). Cook suggests that using L1 in these situations saves time for teachers and students. Furthermore, it facilitates students' comprehension of the materials presented in the L2. Using L1 in these situations also provides teachers and students with effective ways in which L1 can be employed in L2 teaching and learning contexts. However, Duff and Polio (1990) discourage the use of L1 by teachers to clarify explanations or unclear points but instead encourage the "use of visuals…and gestures to help reduce the amount of L2-L1 translation" and maximize the use of L2 (p. 163).

On the other hand, students also tend to use their L1 in the classroom even when their teachers do not. Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) conducted a study carried out mainly in foreign language and immersion classroom, in which students share the same L1. 24 ESL university level students participated in the study. The students shared similar educational backgrounds and were all at intermediate ESL proficiency level. The purpose of the study was to investigate whether ESL learners would use their L1 to perform complex tasks, and if they did what cognitive functions the L1 use would serve. They argue that students used their L1s "mainly for task management and task clarification" (p. 763). Storch and Wigglesworth states that most of the time students find it more beneficial and easier to use their L1 since it helps them discuss and justify difficult topics or tasks in the classrooms. In addition, Turnbull and Arnett (2002) mention that students may sometimes require their teachers to use L1 because "they could not learn if they could not understand their teacher" (p. 211). As a result, teachers use their L1 "to provide a short-cut for giving instructions and explanations….,to build up interlinked L1 and L2 knowledge in the students' minds…,.to carry out learning tasks through collaborative dialogue with

fellow students….[and] to develop L2 activities such as code-switching for later real-life use" (Cook 2001b, p. 418).

<center>Overuse of L1 by Teachers</center>

Swain and Lapkin (2000) argue that "L1 should not be prohibited,…but neither should it be actively encouraged as it may substitute for, rather than support, second language learning" (p. 268). Turnbull (2001) suggests that "learners who are used to hearing their teachers use the L1 tend to ignore the TL and therefore do not benefit fully from valuable TL input" (p. 533). In the same vein, Turnbull and Arnett (2002) argue that "if the teacher overuses the L1 to convey meaningful information, the students have no immediate need to further their understanding in the TL" (p. 206). This means that students may become de-motivated towards L2 and rely too much on L1. But how can teachers decide how much L1 should be used? Carless (2008) states that "appraising what is a reasonable amount rather than too much [L1] use represents a difficult teacher judgment" (p. 334). Edstrom (2006) also believes that the "appropriate quantity of L1 use by teachers cannot be defined universally, as a fixed percentage, because it is inseparably linked to the underlying function or purpose" (p. 289). But teachers have the choice of gaining their students' interest toward maximizing the use of L2 and minimizing L1 use. Edstrom suggests that this can be achieved through presenting materials to students in an interesting way or carrying out various activities in the classroom that would enhance students' tendency to use more L2. Moreover Turnbull and Arnett (2002) suggest that teacher must resort to the L1 "if it is apparent that using the TL would be inefficient and/or problematic for the teacher" (p. 207). According to Turnbull and Arnett, eachers should not rely too much on using L1, but they should try as much as possible to explain matters to their students using the L2, and when it becomes ineffective and complicated then the use of L1 is necessary. For this, Cook (2001b) believes that teachers should rely on using L1 when "the cost of TL is too great" (p. 418). That is, when the use of L2 complex or time consuming for the students to progress and comprehend in L2.

<center>Conclusion</center>

The above literature provides explanations about the use of L1 in L2 teaching methodologies. Particularly, it shows how these methods deal differently with the use of L1. For example, the Grammar-Translation Method and Suggestopedia advocate the use of L1; whereas, Audiolingualism and Task-based Learning methods do not

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encourage the use of L1. The above literature also presents arguments that are for and against the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. It provides reasons why the use of L1 should be banned in L2 classrooms. On the other hand, it also provides justifications for the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. The literature also advocates the fact that teachers should use the L1 in L2 classroom in order to facilitate the L2 learning process of their students and help them master it. However, the literature also emphasizes that teachers should not overuse L1 in the classroom because this will distract students of valuable L2 input. Finally, the literature discusses the disadvantages of the excessive use of L1 in L2 classrooms, and when it should and should not be used.

Part of the above literature focuses on the activities in which L1 can be effectively employed in L2 classrooms, and what the contexts are in which these applications occur. The other part of the literature provides justifications and alternatives for not using L1 in L2 classrooms. However, it did not examine teachers' and students' perceptions towards this application, neither did it help teachers identify when, why, and how to use or not to use L1 in L2 classrooms. This study will examine teachers' and students' perceptions in English language secondary level classrooms in private school in the United Arab Emirates towards the use of L1 (Arabic) in English language classrooms.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. How do non-native English language teachers who teach secondary level students in private schools in the United Arab Emirates perceive the use of Arabic in English language classrooms?

2. How do secondary level students in private schools in the UAE feel towards English language teachers' use of Arabic in English language classrooms? Do they support this practice and see it as helpful or not?

3. Are there any similarities or differences in the way teachers and students perceive the use of Arabic in English language classrooms?

4. Finally, what are the purposes, if any, for which teachers use Arabic in English language classroom activities? And what are the activities in which teachers opt for not using Arabic? Why?

To answer these questions, data were collected by means of the following methods:

1. Classroom observations

2. Surveys for teachers and students

3. Teachers' interviews

The collected data from the surveys (see Appendices B and C) and classroom observations were descriptively analyzed and graphed in order to find out frequencies and percentages for each response of the structured statements, and whether there were similarities or differences in the way the teachers and students in this study perceived the use of L1 in their L2 classrooms. Data collected from classroom observations (see Appendix D) were also descriptively analyzed in order to find out whether or not L1 is used in L2 classrooms, and if it was then how and when. The results of the frequencies and percentages are presented in quantitative tables and charts in order to clearly present a comparison between the responses of the two groups: teachers and students. In addition, the tables and charts are supported with quotes from the interviews. The attitudes of teachers, obtained from the interviews, toward the use of Arabic (L1) in their English language classrooms (L2) were also considered as qualitative data and were used as a comparison tool in order to check the differences and similarities between the way teachers and students perceive the use of L1. The following sections provide a thorough description of the schools where

the study was conducted, background of the participants, and procedures used to collect the data.

<div align="center">Schools' Information</div>

The data were collected from two private schools in Sharjah, Al Shola Private School and Rosary School.

Al Shola Private School, Sharjah

Al Shola Private School is a gender-segregated school with grades from 1 to 12. I decided to conduct part of the surveys, classroom observations, and interviews at this particular school based on its good reputation. The school has more than 1000 students and around 200 teachers and administrative staff. Teachers are from several Arab nationalities and most of them hold BA degrees in English language or teaching. As for students, they are from different Arab nationalities such as Palestinians, Syrians, Jordanians, Lebanese, Egyptians, Sudanese, Iraqis, and Emiratis. The official language of instruction is Arabic, which is also the first language of the students and teachers. English is taught at the school starting from grade 1, and only English is allowed in the English language classroom. Nine English language classrooms taught by three different teachers, one from Syria and two from Palestine, were observed at Al Shola Private School, and each teacher's classroom was observed three times. Those teachers whose classrooms were observed also participated later on in the interviews.

Rosary School, Sharjah

Rosary School is a private school with grades from 1 to 12. Starting from grade 6, only females are accepted in the school. This is the school where I was educated from grade 1 till grade 8. As a result, and based on my personal experience at Rosary School, I am aware of and familiar with the school's environment and was able to obtain easy access to conduct my study there. The school has more than 1000 students and 300 teachers and administration staff. Teachers are of mixed nationalities, such as Lebanese, Syrians, Palestinians, Jordanians, Iraqis, Indians, Pakistanians, British, and Americans, and most of them hold BA degrees in English language or teaching. The students are from mixed nationalities as well, such as Syrians, Lebanese, Palestinians, Egyptians, Jordanians, Iraqis, Emiratis, Indians, Pakistanians, Sudanese, and Russians. All the teachers and students who took part in this study were Arabs, and Arabic was their first language. The official language of

instruction in the school is English and it is taught starting from grade one. Only English is allowed to be used in the English language classrooms.

<center>Participants</center>

Teachers

Twenty-six female and male teachers in total from Al Shola Private School and Rosary School took part in this study. Since the research investigated the use of L1 in L2 secondary level classrooms, the selection of teachers was based on the classroom levels they taught. In addition, the administration of each school provided me with access to certain sections of each grade for the purpose of the survey and classroom observations. The three teachers that were observed and interviewed from Al Shola Private School had more than 10 years of experience in teaching English at the secondary level. One of them had experience outside the UAE, in Jordan. All teachers were native speakers of Arabic. In addition to those three teachers, 23 other teachers in total from both schools took part in the survey. The teachers were native speakers of Arabic, and their experience in teaching English to secondary level students ranged from 5 to 20 years.

Students

All together, 170 students from Al Shola Private School and Rosary School participated in this study, and the administration gave me access to certain sections from each grade for the purpose of distributing the survey. At Al Shola Private School, three classes of 90 students in total from grades 7 to 9 were observed and completed the students' survey. Students included were all females who spoke Arabic as their mother tongue. From the Rosary School, three classes of 80 students in total from grades 7 to 9 participated in the students' survey. All students were females and had Arabic as their mother tongue. Students were from different Arab nationalities.

<center>Materials and Procedures for Data Collection</center>

Classroom Observations

I observed three teachers at Al Shola Private School. Each teacher was observed three times; total of nine classrooms. Although I was supposed to observe at both schools, based on a decision taken by the administration of the Rosary School, the classroom observations were cancelled. This decision was taken because they wanted to keep their teaching practices private and perceived my presence in their English language classrooms to e threatening. Thus, only classrooms at Al Shola

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Private School were observed. In the classroom observations, the teachers' use of Arabic was observed. Using a classroom observation sheet (see Appendix D), I observed the activities in which Arabic was used and recorded the frequency of its use. Each teacher's classroom was observed three times and each observation lasted for 45 minutes. Classroom observations were chosen as a mean for examining teaching practices because "the resulting record is factual rather than judgmental" (Hopkins, 2002, p. 89). Through classroom observations, I was able to obtain information about the reality of the teaching practices in terms of using Arabic. In addition, I was able to collect more data about when teachers apply and avoid this use in real classrooms.

Teachers' and Students' Surveys

The surveys, as shown in Appendices B and C, were designed in two versions: one for teachers and one for students. Prior to the distribution of the surveys, the teachers and students were given a consent form in order to get their permission for participating in this study (see Appendix A). The students were asked to give the consent form to their parents in order to get permission for being participants in this survey. The first section of the teachers' survey elicited background information. I asked them their age, gender, nationality, years of teaching experience, and level of students they are currently teaching. In addition, in the same section, short answer questions were also included in order to obtain information about whether the teachers were currently using Arabic in their English language classrooms, and for what activities they were using it. As for the first section of the students' survey, I asked them their age, gender, nationality, number of years they had been studying English in the school, and their school level. In addition, short answer questions were also included in order to obtain information about their perceptions of L1 use in L2 classrooms, and the activities in which they encouraged the use of the first language in English language classrooms.

The second section of each survey consisted of 16 statements aimed at finding out teachers' and students' perceptions of using Arabic in English language classrooms, and whether they find it practical for teaching and learning or not. These structured statements had four types of responses: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The second section of the students' survey was bilingual; the 16 statements were provided to the students in English and Arabic. This

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was done to help the students understand the structured statements more easily and thus elicit more accurate responses. Some statements in the teachers' survey included the following: I think that using students' L1 will facilitate their L2 learning. I think that using students' L1 makes me more confident in teaching. I think that students' L1 is necessary to explain difficult concepts and define new vocabulary.

Surveys were used as a method of data collection since they are considered a "quick and simple way of obtaining broad and rich information" (Hopkins, 2002, p. 117). Hopkins also states that collecting data through surveys provides quantitative data, "direct comparison of groups and individuals, and feedback on attitudes" (p. 118). However, Hopkins further adds that surveys lack essential depth. For this, teachers' interviews were conducted to verify in depth their beliefs and practices.

Teachers' Interviews

I conducted interviews with the three teachers whose classrooms I observed in order to clarify findings obtained from the classroom observations (see Appendix E). In addition, I wanted to identify their perceptions towards using students' L1 in L2 classrooms and whether they encouraged this use or not. Furthermore, I aimed at finding out more clearly the problematic areas that teachers face when employing the use of students' L1. Through the interviews, I also found out the sort of activities in which teachers integrate their students' L1, and what they believe the pros and cons are of such integration. The qualitative data obtained from the results of the interviews and teachers' survey was used as a comparison tool in order to check the differences and similarities between the way teachers and students perceive the use of first language in English language classrooms.

The teachers' interviews were considered essential instruments because they supported the classroom observations and helped in clarifying and justifying many issues that arose from the classroom observations. Interviews, as explained by Hopkins (2002), "are often very productive sources of information for a particular observer who wants to verify observations he or she has previously made" (p. 109).

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Classroom Observations

Through classroom observations, the research question that aimed at finding out the purposes, if any, in which teachers use Arabic in English language classroom activities was answered. Three English language classrooms were observed at Al Shola Private School for two weeks. Each classroom was observed three times. I decided to start with the classroom observations because the teachers were not informed about the purpose of my observation. The classroom observations revealed that there was minor use of Arabic in English language classrooms. However, when not using Arabic, the teachers relied on the use of explanations, objects, charts, role plays, gestures, actions, demonstrations, and pictures for teaching English. The teachers used the Direct Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, Total Physical Response, and the Grammar-Translation Method for teaching English without any use of Arabic. Below is a detailed description of the each of the methods, approaches, and techniques teachers used to teach English at the secondary-level at Al Shola Private School.

Methods of Teaching English in the Classroom

Teaching English through the Direct Method

In one of the content classes not focused on teaching language skills, Teacher 1 explained the meaning of elements, compounds, and mixtures through the use of objects and demonstrations. She demonstrated real objects on the classroom's table and used them to teach the lesson. The objects included test tubes, a bunsen burner, and chemical substances. For example, she displayed a sample of copper sulphate and explained to the students that it was an example of a compound. She also used the objects to conduct an experiment that the students needed to understand in order to answer questions in their exercise books.

In a lesson in which the focus was on the use of adjectives to describe things, Teacher 2 used drawings and posters to teach the students the difference between long, high, and tall. She had three posters with two drawings on each. In the first poster, there was a drawing of two trees; one was short and one was tall. In the second poster, there was a drawing of two buildings; one was short and one was high. In the

third poster, there was a drawing of two pencils; one was short and one was long. Through the use of the three posters, the teacher explained to the students when to use each of the adjectives "long", "high", and "tall". She also explained when to use each of the adjectives from a grammatical perspective. That is, she explained by pointing at the poster that had the tree drawing that generally the adjective "tall" is not used for objects and is generally used when talking about living things. She further clarified the principle of personification to make it comprehensible for students why the adjective "tall" was used for the tree.

The comprehension of the differences between elements, compounds, and mixtures and the adjectives "tall", "high", and "long" was achieved through the principles of the Direct Method in which learning and using the target language is achieved through using "demonstrations, actions, and pictures" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 11). Thus, through the use of objects and demonstrations, the teachers employed the Direct Method in order to convey meaning in English without using Arabic.

Teaching English through the Audio-Lingual Method

In a lesson about reporting speech, Teacher 2 used the principle of repetition until the students produced no errors. The teacher wrote the sentence "Rola said, 'I won't be able to come to the party tonight' and students were asked to change this sentence from direct to indirect speech. As they were doing so, the students were producing the incorrect form of the tense and sentence. Thus, the teacher provided them with the correct form of the sentence in the form of a dialogue and asked them to repeat it until they produced no errors. Based on this repetition, the teacher focused on the use of past tense in order for the students to master reporting speech, which was the aim of the lesson. She also focused on the students' pronunciation. In doing so, students were learning based on the principles of the Audio-lingual Method in which learning is achieved through repetition and practice until no errors are produced, "based on the assumption that language is habit formation" (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 7). They were also learning through the use of dialogues and memorization. As Richards and Rodgers (2001) propose, dialogue and drills are the basis of the Audio-lingual Method: "Dialogues are used for repetition and memorization….After a dialogue has been presented and memorized, specific grammatical patterns in the

dialogue are selected and become the focus of various kinds of drill and pattern-practice exercises" (p. 59).

Teacher 3 relied on the use of definitions and synonyms to deliver the meaning of words using only English. For example, she explained the meaning of "a couple of months" through defining the meaning of "couple". She asked the students to give her the meaning of "couple", and then asked them to form a sentence using "a couple of months". The teacher also clarified the meaning of the word "sign" by giving synonyms such as mark or signal. She also asked the students to use the word "sign" in a meaningful sentence. Through this process, students were able to comprehend the meaning more easily and practiced its use, which also represented fundamental characteristics of the Audio-Lingual Method.

Teaching English through Total Physical Response

In a lesson in which the focus was on the use of adjectives to describe things, teacher 2 used body movements, gestures, and pointing at objects in order to convey meaning. For example, in order to make it easier for students to understand how to use the adjective "high" to describe things, she said the phrase "high building" in Arabic along with body movements. Then she asked them to look through the window and pointed at a high building across the street. After this process, she repeated the phrase "high building", but in English, and pointed to a picture in their book. Students responded by performing the action denoting a high building. Teacher 3 also used gestures to explain the meaning of "grey-haired" and "blond". To explain the meaning of "grey-haired", she showed the students her hair and explained that a grey-haired person is someone who would have the same hair color as hers and then said the meaning of "grey-haired" in Arabic. In order to clarify the meaning of "blond", she pointed to one of the students who was a blond and compared her to another student who was a brunette. She then asked the students to point at another student in the class who was a blond. Thus, great emphasis was on comprehension, which is one of the principles of Total Physical Response.

As Celce-Murcia (2001) explains, Total Physical Response is an approach in which the "focus is on comprehension, and the input is supposed to be comprehensible" (p. 145). In Total Physical Response, the teacher gives instructions, and clarifies these instructions through gestures or modeling them. Larsen-Freeman (2000) also explains that "Total Physical Response was usually introduced in the

students' native language; after that, the native language was rarely used, and the meaning was made clear through body movements" (p. 115).

Teaching English through the Grammar-Translation Method

All three teachers employed a minor use of Arabic in the classroom. This use was employed when the meaning of words was hard for students to comprehend. For example, Teacher 1 translated the meaning of "chemically dried" into Arabic because students were not able to understand it, although the teacher tried several times to explain it. Thus it was time consuming for the teacher. In doing so, the teacher followed the principles of the Grammar-Translation Method and maintained Arabic as a reference during the process of learning English (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Through using Arabic to explain the meaning of "chemically dried", Teacher 1 did not only help the students understand more easily, but she also saved time and effort. According to Nation (2003), it is effective to use L1 in order to convey meaning, and "a small amount of L1 discussion can help overcome some of the obstacles" (p. 3). In addition, Cole (1998) proposed that simply translating the meaning of a word using L1 would save time and suffering.

The Use of Arabic in the English Language Classroom

There was a minor use of Arabic by all three teachers in the English language classrooms for different purposes and in different activities. Teacher 1 used Arabic for disciplining and classroom management. For example, at the beginning of one of the classes, the students were making a lot of noise to an extent that the teacher was not able to start the lesson. So, after saying a couple of times in English, "Girls please calm down", she had to raise her voice and say in Arabic, "Stop talking and open your books". Another example regarding disciplining and classroom management, the teacher told one of the students in Arabic, "Please stop talking and listen to the lesson", since the two students were talking while the teacher was explaining. Teacher 2 used Arabic during classroom discussion and participation. For example, in one of the exercise's discussion, one of the students wanted to always participate so the teacher told her in Arabic, "Your classmates should take their turns as well". Another example with regards to classroom discussion and participation, the teacher wanted one of the shy students to participate in the discussion, so she told her in Arabic, "You didn't participate today, can you answer the next question?" Also, in one of the

classroom's discussion, the teacher said in Arabic "The girls at the back are not participating; I want to see you more active. Come on girls, answer the next exercise".

Teacher 3 used Arabic for joking and socializing. For example, one of the students was always fixing her hair during the classroom. So the teacher told her in Arabic, "The lesson is more important and don't worry, you are beautiful". The girl and her classmates laughed and she stopped fixing her hair for the rest of the lesson. In another classroom, the teacher asked the students at the beginning of the class about their weekend and how did they spend it. So, she asked them in Arabic, "Girls, how was your weekend? Did you enjoy it? Tell me what did you do?" The students replied using Arabic as well as English, but more of Arabic was used.

Discussion of Classroom Observations' Findings

The classroom observations at Al Shola Private School revealed that Arabic was rarely used in the English language classroom. Instead, teachers mostly used explanations, objects, charts, dialogues, gestures, actions, demonstrations, and pictures for teaching English without the use of Arabic. That is, during their classrooms, teachers mainly relied on the Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method. The teachers unconsciously employed the use of these methods and did not aim to do. However, when conveying meaning that students had difficulty understanding, teachers employed a minimal use of Arabic in order to facilitate comprehension and learning. The teachers also used Arabic for disciplining, classroom management, joking, socializing, and during classroom discussion and participation.

Teachers' Interviews

In order to clarify findings from the classroom observations, the teachers who were observed were also interviewed. I decided to conduct the interviews directly after the classroom observations in order to clarify findings obtained from the observations. The interview questions, as illustrated in Appendix E, mainly dealt with whether or not the teachers thought that it is appropriate to use Arabic in the English language classroom. The questions also dealt with at what point the teachers thought it is suitable or necessary to use Arabic. Other questions dealt with finding out the problematic areas that teachers face when using Arabic in the English language classroom. Moreover, the interviews were aimed at finding out during what sort of in-class activities teachers employ the use of Arabic, and if they opt for not using it, then

what techniques and teaching practices they follow in order to compensate for not using Arabic. Teachers were also asked whether they thought that using Arabic facilitates students' English language learning.

Interview with Teacher 1

Teacher 1 taught grade 9, and she believed that it is not appropriate to use Arabic in the English language classroom. She thought that using Arabic will not facilitate students' learning of the English language. However, she thought that the use of Arabic is only suitable for conveying meaning or clarifying difficult grammatical points, and believed that through this use students would be able to develop better comprehension and she would save time and effort. This is in line with Cook's (2005) proposition that L1 can be used "as a way of conveying L2 meaning…as a short-cut for explaining tasks, tests, etc." (p. 59).

Yet, the teacher preferred not to use a lot of translation unless it was needed. She favored the use of real objects and demonstrations in order to teach without the use of Arabic, so that students do not become de-motivated towards learning English. Her preferences are in line with Duff and Polio (1990) who discourage using L1 to clarify explanations or unclear points but encourage the "use of visuals…and demonstrations to help reduce the amount of L2-L1 translation" (p. 163). In addition, her preferences are in line with Turnbull and Arnett (2002) who argue that "if the teacher overuses the L1 to convey meaningful information, the students have no immediate need to further their understanding in the TL" (p. 206). She also said, "If Arabic is frequently used in the classroom, then this might lead to overusing it which may lead students to depend on using Arabic more than English". What she thought is also in line with Turnbull (2001) who suggests that "learners who are used to hearing their teachers use the L1 tend to ignore the TL and therefore do not benefit fully from valuable TL input" (p. 533).

Interview with Teachers 2 and 3

Teachers 2 and 3 taught grade 8 and 7 respectively, and shared similar attitudes towards the use of Arabic in the English language classroom. They considered it essential to use Arabic only when obliged to do so. Teacher 2 said, "The use of Arabic, especially with weak students, is very useful". She also believed that the use of Arabic is useful when attempting to explain difficult meanings, grammar, and clarifying any difficult point that may hinder students' comprehension. This is in

line with Edstrom (2006) who suggests that students' L1 can be used for "grammar instruction,…and to compensate for a lack of comprehension" (p. 283). Teacher 3 believed that Arabic was only useful outside the classroom context, such as for joking and socializing. She stressed that "Arabic is best used to build relationships with the students and motivate them to learn the English language".

However, Teacher 3 said, "Due to the lack of a systemic approach for employing the use of Arabic in the English language classroom, I get confused and cannot take an appropriate decision on when to use Arabic and when not to". Thus, she considers this to be a problematic area for her as well as for the students. She called for a unified approach through which employing the use of Arabic in the English language classroom would be easier and reasonable. She said,

> Sometimes we are obliged to use Arabic when students are not able to understand. Although I employ a minor use of Arabic in my English language classrooms, I always ask myself whether I properly employed its use or whether I should have used an alternative method in order to avoid the use of Arabic. But, if we are provided with a systematic unified approach for employing Arabic, then we would be able to overcome this confusion.

Thus, she thinks that taking the decision when to use Arabic and when not to seem to be confusing and difficult. This difficulty in judging when to employ the use of Arabic in the English language classroom is in line with Carless (2008) who states that "appraising what is a reasonable amount rather than too much [L1] use represents a difficult teacher judgment" (p. 334).

Discussion of the Teachers' Interviews

The interviews revealed that the teachers preferred a minimal use of Arabic during certain activities only. They all preferred its use to overcome obstacles and save time. Moreover, the teachers believed that the use of Arabic is sometimes useful to facilitate comprehension and convey meaning that is hard to convey using English. However, one of the teachers considered the lack of a unified approach for employing the use of Arabic in the English language classroom to be problematic. Generally, all three teachers agreed that employing Arabic in the English language classroom should be limited and should not be used excessively.

The Surveys

There were two versions of the surveys: one for the teachers and another one for the students. The purpose of the surveys was to obtain information from teachers and students about their perceptions of L1 use in L2 classrooms, and the activities in which they encourage this use. They were also aimed at finding out whether teachers and students considered the use of L1 in L2 classrooms practical for teaching and learning or not.

Students' Responses

The students' survey was distributed to a total of 170 students from the two schools, out of which 150 students agreed to complete the survey. All students had experience in learning English as a second language (ESL) for more than seven years. All students spoke Arabic as their first language. The survey was divided into two parts: The first part aimed at eliciting information about their age, gender, nationality, number of years they had been studying English in the school, and their school level. In addition, short answer questions were also included in order to obtain information about their perceptions of L1 use in L2 classrooms, and the activities in which the students encouraged the use of the first language in English language classrooms. The second part consisted of 16 structured statements that aimed at finding out students' perceptions of using Arabic in English language classrooms, and whether they found it practical for learning or not.

In their responses to the first statement, illustrated in Figure 1, which meant to find out whether the students believed that the use of Arabic in L2 classrooms is important or not, 26% of the students disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed that the use of Arabic in L2 classrooms is not important, while 14% strongly agreed and 17% agreed and gave its use importance in the classroom. 18% of the students had a neutral opinion.

I think that the use of Arabic is important in English language classrooms
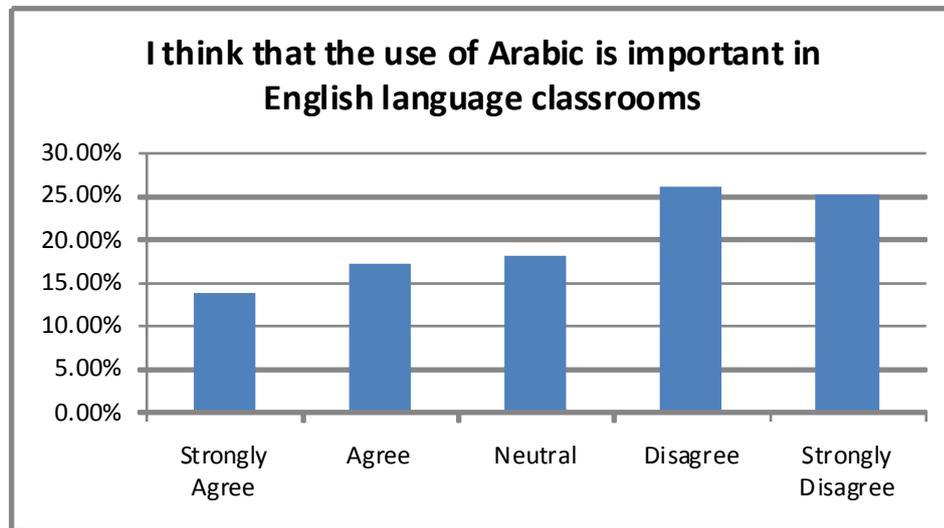
Figure 1: Students' attitudes towards the importance of the use of Arabic in L2 classrooms

As for the second statement, which sought to find out whether the students thought that the use of Arabic in L2 classrooms is essential during the early stages of learning the language, as illustrated in Figure 2, 18% of the students agreed and 31% strongly agreed that it is important, whereas 22% of them disagreed and 16% strongly disagreed, and 13% of the students had a neutral opinion towards its use.

It's better to use more of Arabic in L2 classrooms during the early stages of learning
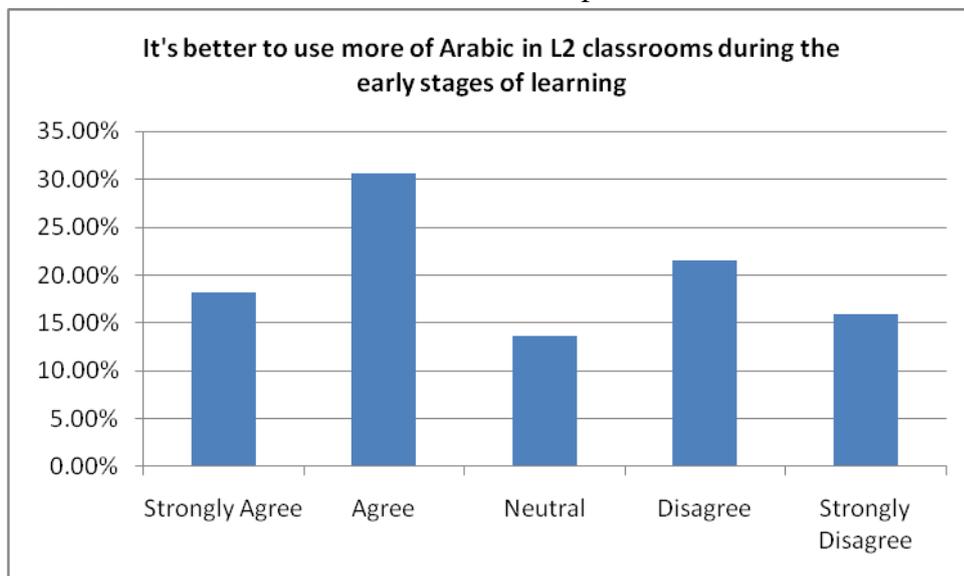
Figure 2: Students' attitudes towards L1 use during the early stages of learning English

The third statement dealt with finding out whether students get motivated when the teacher uses Arabic in L2 classrooms. As illustrated in Figure 3, 33% of the students strongly agreed and 31% agreed that they get motivated when the teacher

uses Arabic in L2 classrooms, whereas 18% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed and thought that the use of Arabic causes no motivation, and 12% had a neutral opinion.
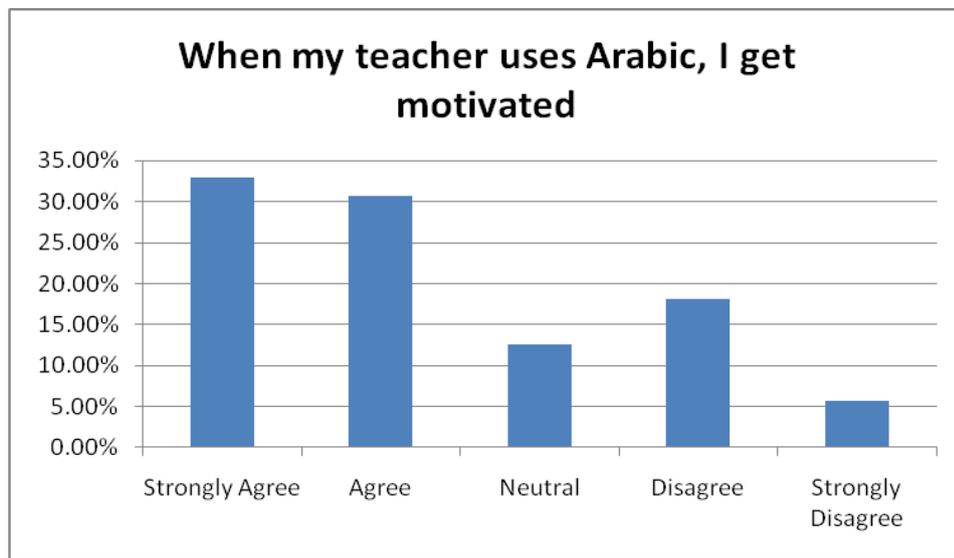
Figure 3: Students' attitudes towards the effect of the use of Arabic on motivation

In their responses to the fourth statement that dealt with finding out whether they tend to participate more in English language classrooms when their teacher uses Arabic, 22% of the students strongly agreed and 24% agreed that they tend to participate more when Arabic is used. But, 30% of them disagreed and 13% strongly disagreed, and 11% of them had a neutral opinion, as illustrated in Figure 4.
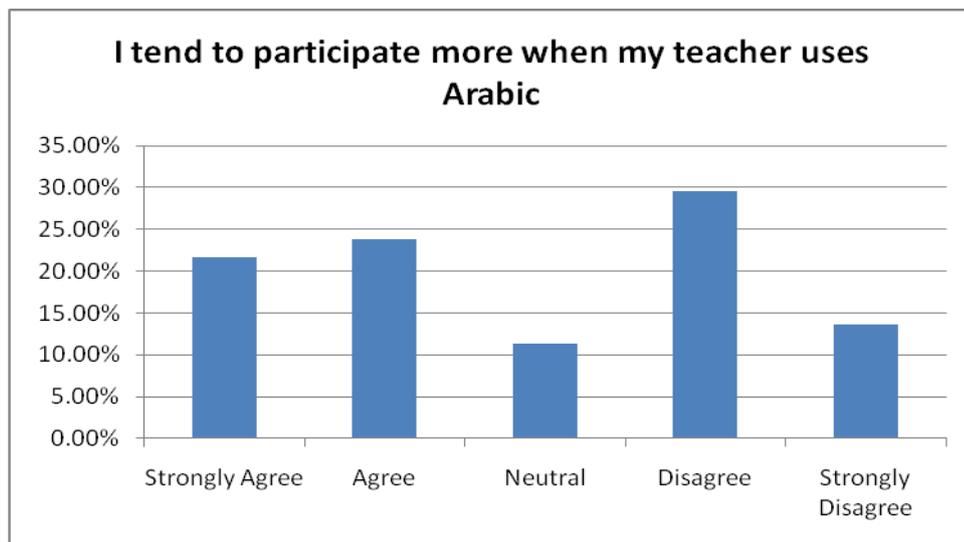
Figure 4: Students' attitudes towards the effect of the use of Arabic on participation

As illustrated in Figure 5, the fifth statement sought to find out whether students preferred their teachers to speak only English in L2 classrooms. 58% of the

students strongly agreed and 22% agreed that they prefer their teacher to speak only English in the L2 classroom. Only 7% of the students disagreed or and 1% strongly disagreed, and 12% of them had a neutral opinion.
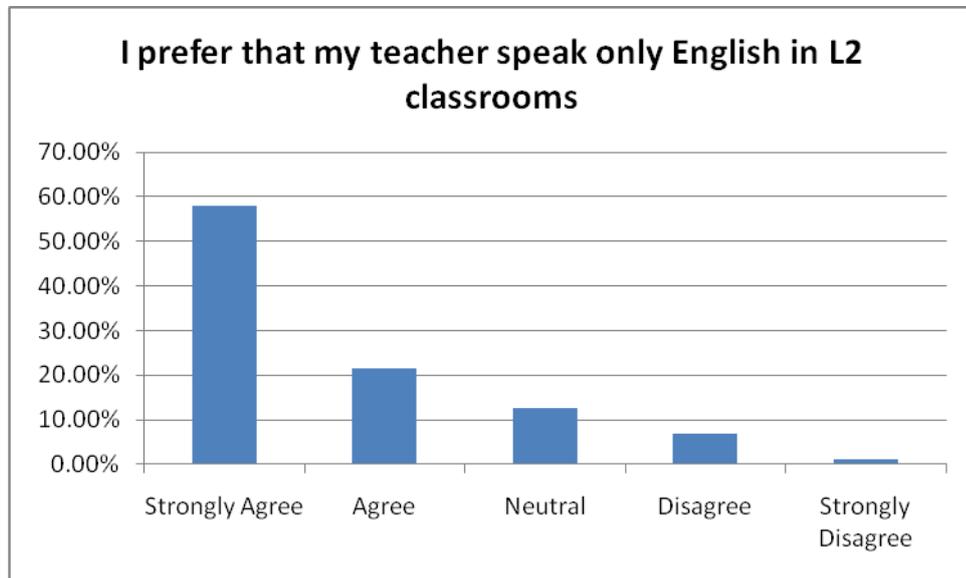
Figure 5: Students' attitudes towards their teachers speaking only English in L2 classrooms

In their responses to the sixth statement, as illustrated in Figure 6, 22% of the students strongly agreed and 35% agreed that they preferred their teacher to use Arabic for socializing in L2 classrooms. 8% of them had a neutral opinion, 24% disagreed, and 11% strongly disagreed.
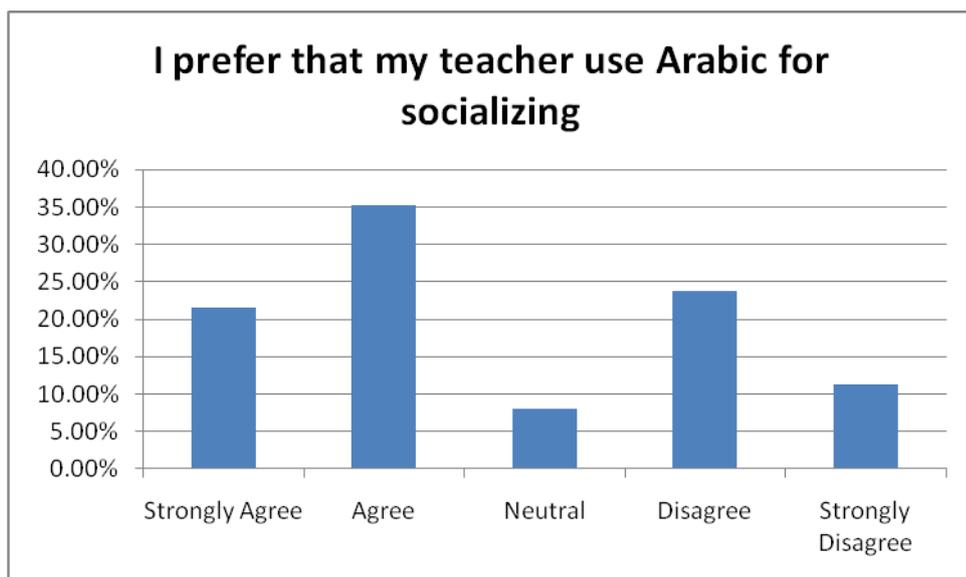
Figure 6: Students' attitudes towards the use of Arabic for socializing

The seventh statement sought to find out whether students tend to understand the lesson more easily when the teacher uses Arabic in L2 classrooms, 28% of the students disagreed and 24% strongly disagreed and thought that Arabic is not important for them to understand the lesson easily, 16% strongly agreed and 14% agreed that Arabic is essential to understand the lesson more easily, and 18% had a neutral opinion, as illustrated in Figure 7.
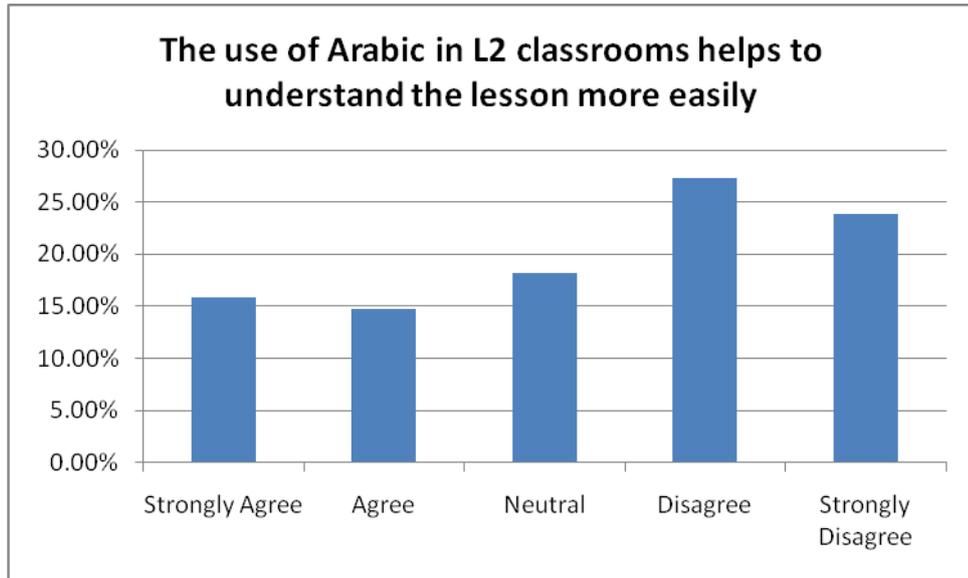
Figure 7: Students' attitudes towards the use of Arabic in L2 classrooms to understand the lesson more easily

The students were split in their opinion for the eighth statement which sought to find out whether students preferred the use of Arabic when summarizing material already covered. As illustrated in Figure 8, 16% of the students strongly agreed and 25% of them agreed that they preferred this use, while 38% of them disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed and did not prefer it, and 10% of them had a neutral opinion.
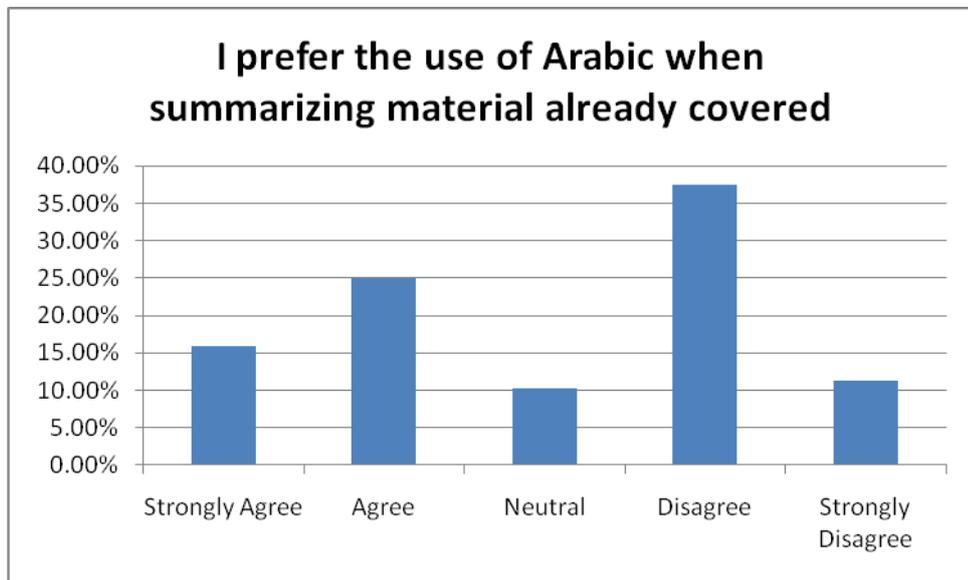
Figure 8: Students' attitudes toward the use of Arabic when summarizing material already covered

In their responses to the ninth statement, which sought to find out students' attitudes towards the use of Arabic for disciplining or relationship building, 24% of the students strongly agreed and 30% agreed that the use of Arabic in L2 classroom is effective for disciplining or relationship building, whereas, 25% of them disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, and 19% of the students had a neutral opinion, as illustrated in Figure 9.
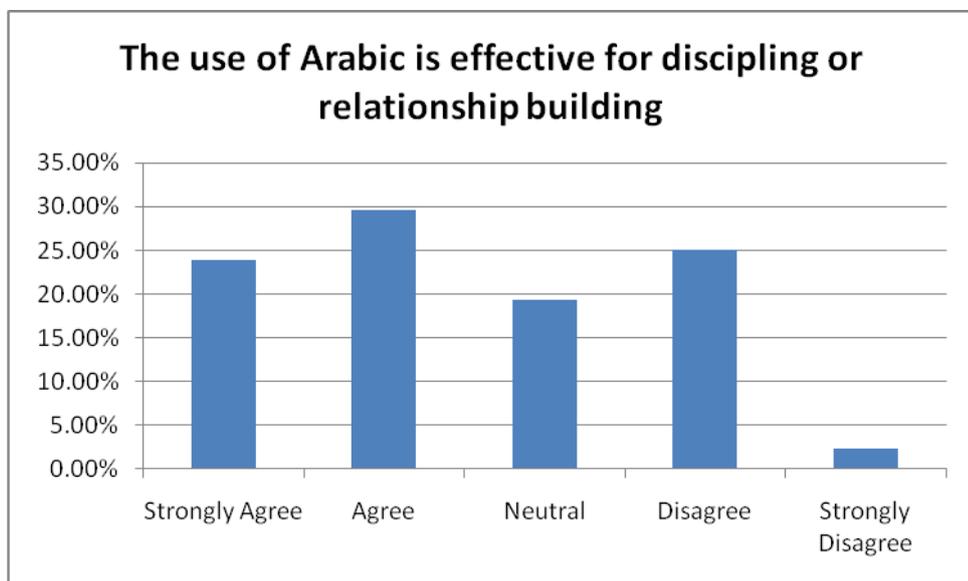
Figure 9: Students' attitudes towards the use of Arabic for disciplining or relationship building

22% of the students strongly agreed and 43% agreed that it is effective to use Arabic for clarifying difficult grammatical points, as illustrated in Figure 10. But, 14% of them disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed and 11% had a neutral opinion.
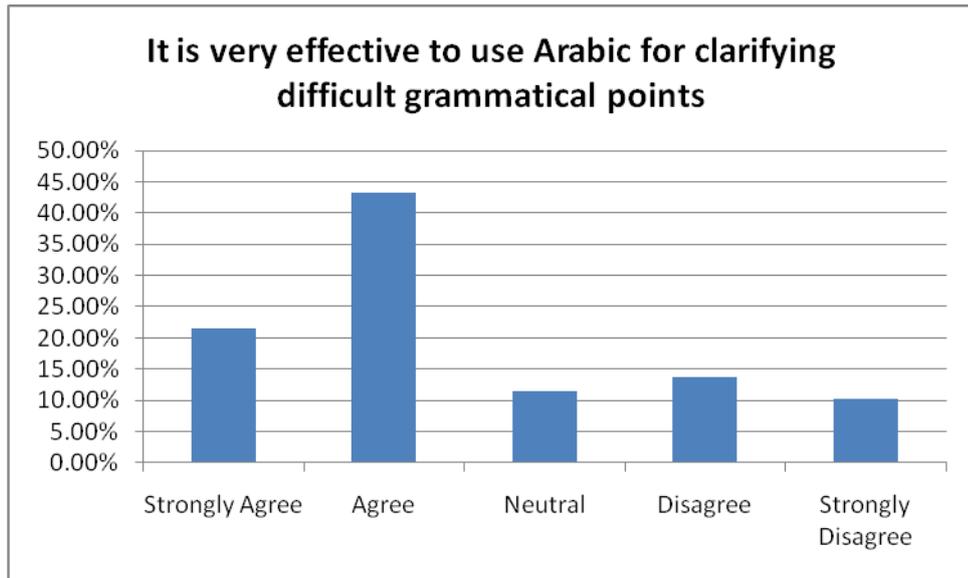
Figure 10: Students' attitudes towards the use of Arabic for clarifying difficult grammatical points

With relation to giving basic instructions, 34% of the students disagreed and 19% strongly disagreed that their teacher gives basic instruction using Arabic. However, 16% of them strongly agreed and 18% agreed that they prefer to be given basic instruction using Arabic, and 13% of them felt neutral as illustrated in Figure 11.
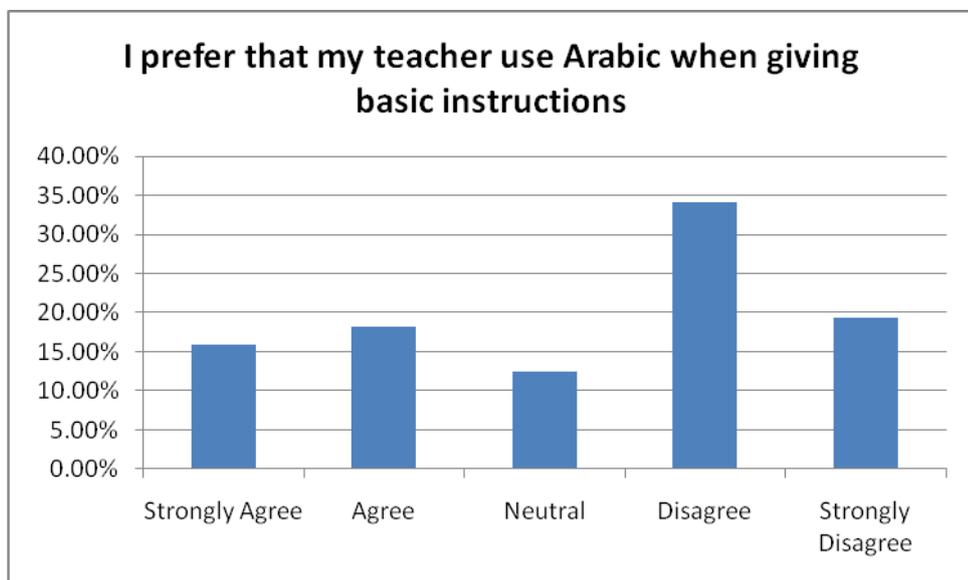
Figure 11: Students' attitudes towards the use of Arabic for giving basic instruction

In the responses for their preference about whether their teacher should use Arabic to check their comprehension, 45% of the students disagreed and 28% strongly disagreed towards this use, whereas only 5% of them strongly agreed and 10% agreed

and preferred the use of Arabic by their teacher to check their comprehension and 12% had neutral opinion, as illustrated in Figure 12.
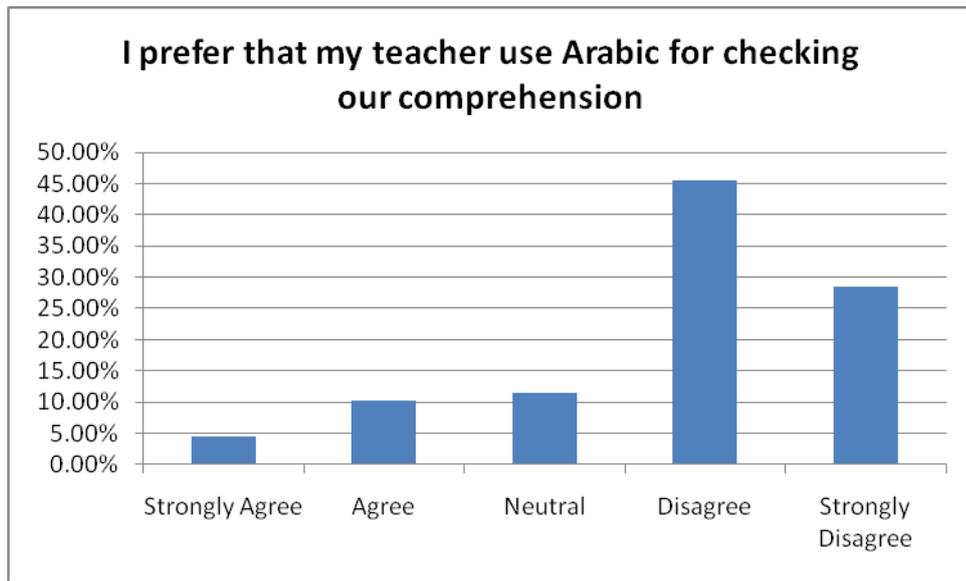
Figure 12: Students' attitudes towards the use of Arabic for checking comprehension

65% of the students strongly agreed and 16% agreed that successful English language learning is based on using only English in the classroom, whereas 5% strongly disagreed, 6% disagreed, and only 8% had a neutral opinion, as illustrated in Figure 13.
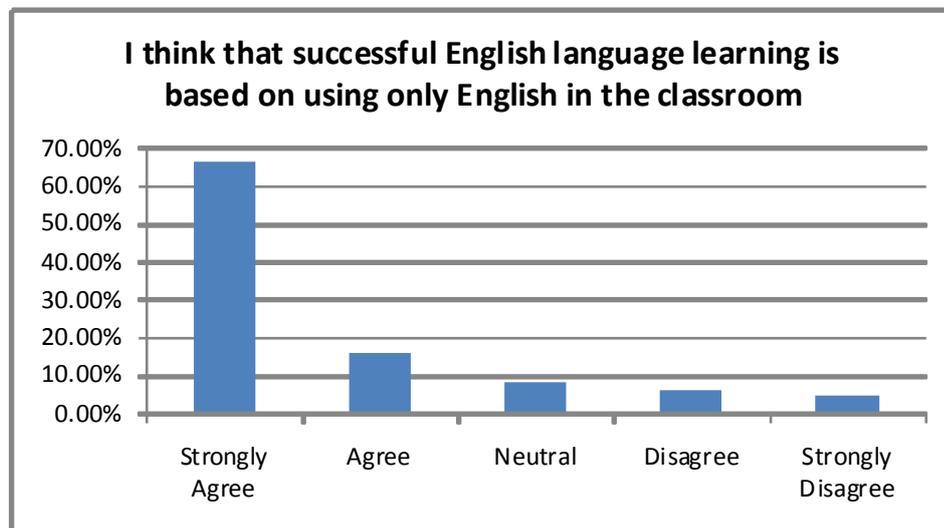
Figure 13: Students' attitudes on whether successful English language learning is based on using only English in the classroom

With regards to the students' responses to the fourteenth statement, as illustrated in Figure 14, which sought to find out whether they believed that they learn English better if teachers use only English in the classroom, 66% of the students

strongly agreed and 14% agreed that they learn English better when only English is used by their teachers, while only 9% of them disagreed and 11% had a neutral opinion.
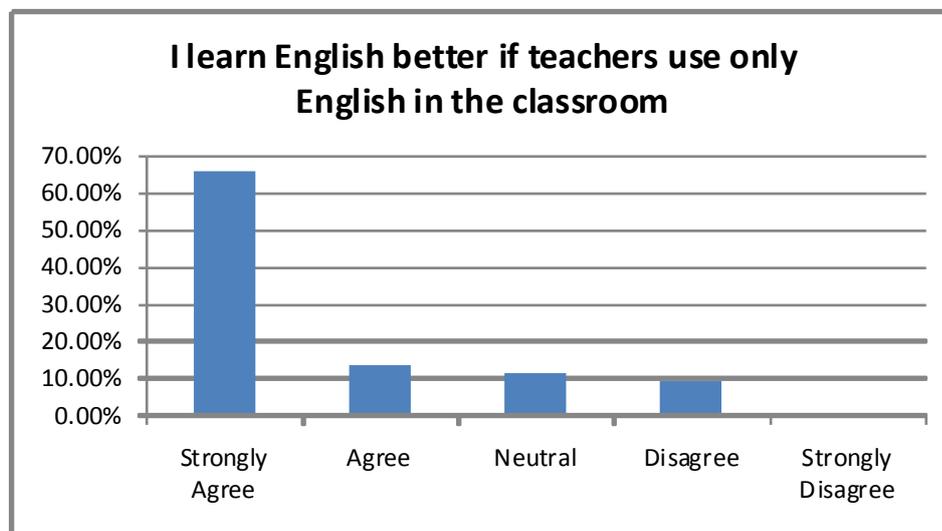
Figure 14: Students' attitudes on whether they learn English better if teachers use only English in the classroom

In their responses to the fifteenth statement, as illustrated in Figure 15, which sought to find out whether they feel comfortable when their teacher uses Arabic during talks or discussions outside the classroom, 19% of the students strongly agreed and 34% agreed, whereas 22% disagreed and 9% strongly disagreed, and 16% of the students had a neutral attitude.
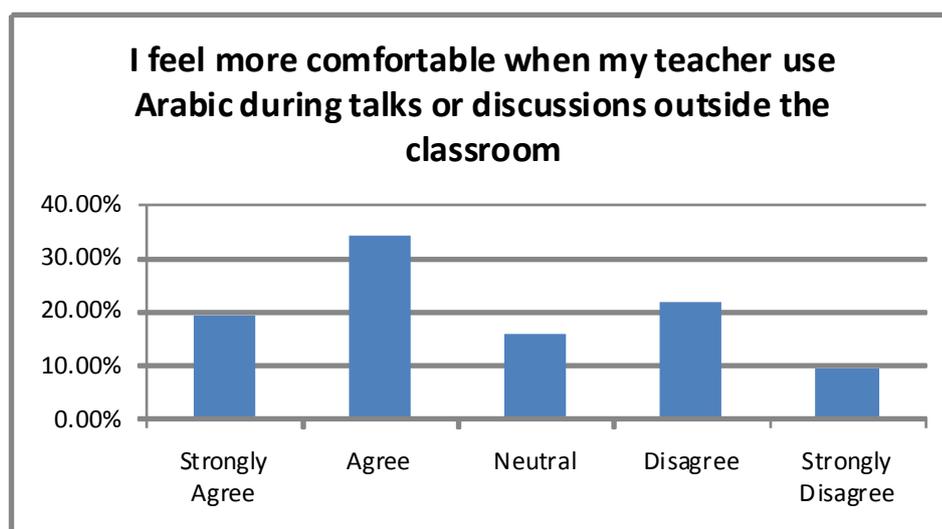
Figure 15: Students' attitudes on whether they feel comfortable when their teacher use Arabic during talks or discussion outside the classroom

Finally, in their responses to the last statement, as illustrated in Figure 16, 37% of the students strongly agreed and 30% agreed that their teacher should discuss with them the decision of using their L1 (Arabic) in English language classrooms, whereas, 12% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed, and 13% had a neutral opinion.
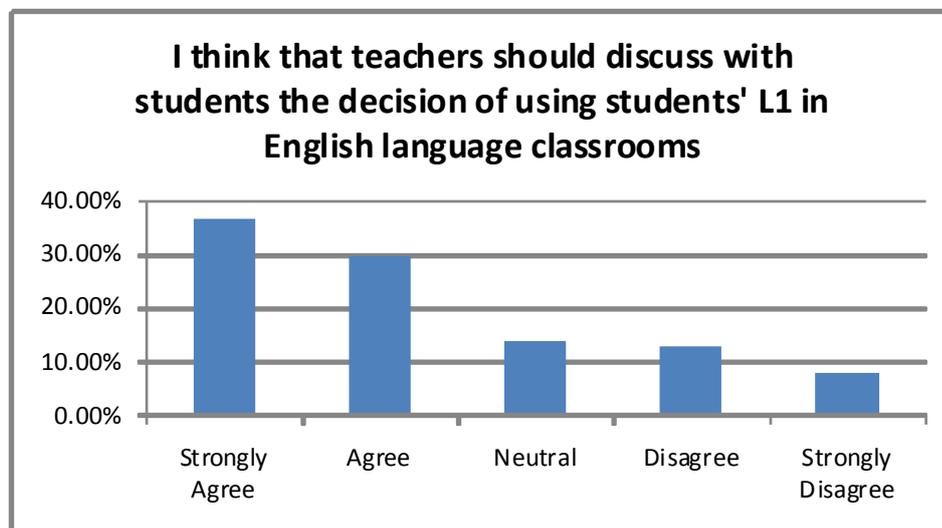
Figure 16: Students' attitudes on whether their teachers should discuss with them the decision of using their L1 in English language classrooms

Discussion of the Student' Responses

The descriptive analysis of the students' responses to the survey revealed that the students generally had negative attitudes towards L1 use in English language classrooms. They generally preferred the use of only English by their teachers in the English language classroom, and believed that this would help in successful learning of the language. On the other hand, the students' responses revealed that most of them held a positive attitude towards L1 use in English language classrooms during certain activities. For example, they preferred that their teachers use Arabic in socializing, disciplining and relationship building, and clarifying difficult grammatical points. Some of the students' opinions, taken from the open-ended questions in the first section of the survey, that were in favor of L1 use are quoted below:

I don't encourage the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. But, if the teacher faced difficulty explaining a certain point to students, especially vocabulary, then I find the use of Arabic beneficial.

It would be nice if the teacher uses Arabic when talking to us or when saying something funny.

The use of the Arabic language in summarizing and on worksheets would lift
up our spirits.

Some of the students' opinions that were against L1 use are quoted below:

I don't prefer the use of L1 in English language classrooms because we won't
benefit from learning English.

I don't encourage the use of Arabic in English language classrooms because it
doesn't encourage you to learn language better.

Finally, one of the students preferred the use of Arabic in English language
classrooms but said, "It depends on the teacher, if she agrees, then I encourage its
use".

The negative attitudes that most students had towards the use of L1 in English
language was quite surprising. They strongly discouraged L1 use in English language
classrooms, although they encouraged its use only in certain activities. This may be
due to the fact that policy makers and teachers discourage or ban students from L1 use
in English language classrooms, since they believe that its use hinders the L2 learning
progress. This may be in line with what Belz (2003) stated: "L1 use represents a taboo
because it is thought to impede the learner's linear incremental progress toward the
rule-governed attainment of the idealized L2 norm" (p. 214).

Teachers' Responses

The teachers' survey was distributed to 26 teachers, out of which 13 were
from the Rosary School and the other 13 were from Al Shola Private School.
Although I distributed the survey to all teachers, only 15 of them responded and
returned the survey; 7 from the Rosary School and 8 from Al Shola Private School.
The teachers' experience in teaching English as a second language ranged from 5 to
20 years. The teachers also had experience in teaching in countries outside the UAE
such as Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

The teachers' survey was divided into two parts: The first part aimed at
finding out their age, gender, nationality, years of teaching experience, and level of
students they were currently teaching. In addition, in the same section, short answer
questions were also included in order to obtain information about whether or not the
teachers were currently using Arabic in their English language classrooms, and if yes,
then in what activities they are using it. The second section of the survey consisted of
16 statements aimed at finding out teachers' perceptions of using Arabic in English

language classrooms, and whether they found it practical for teaching and learning or not.

In Table 1, which illustrates the teachers' responses for statements 1 to 5, 60% of the teachers strongly agreed and 14% strongly agreed to the first statement which aimed at finding out whether the teachers thought that students' first language should be used in the classroom. 14% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed and 6% had a neutral opinion. With regards to whether the teachers think that using Arabic facilitates students' English language learning, 14% of them strongly agreed and 52% agreed that the use of Arabic facilitates students' English language learning. However, 20% of them disagreed and 14% had a neutral opinion. The third statement, which sought to discover whether teachers thought using Arabic is better than using English in order to know about students' background and interests, 27% of them strongly agreed and 33% agreed. However, 20% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed and 14% of the teachers had a neutral opinion. With regards to whether teachers thought that students will become proficient in English when Arabic is used in the classroom, none of the teachers agreed, while 66% of them disagreed and 20% strongly disagreed and 14% of them had a neutral opinion. Surprisingly, all teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed with the fifth statement which sought to find out whether the use of Arabic in the English language classroom makes them more confident in teaching.

Table 1: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Use of Arabic in English Language Classrooms

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I think that students' first language should be used in the classroom.	9 (60%)	2 (14%)	1 (6%)	2 (14%)	1 (6%)
2. I think that using Arabic facilitates students' English language learning.	2 (14%)	8 (52%)	2 (14%)	3 (20%)	
3. I think that using Arabic is better than using English in order to know about students' background and interests.	4 (27%)	5 (33%)	2 (14%)	3 (20%)	1 (6%)
4. Students will become proficient in English when Arabic is used in the classroom.			2 (14%)	10 (66%)	3 (20%)
5. Using Arabic in the classroom makes me more confident in teaching.				3 (20%)	12 (80%)

In Table 2, which illustrates the teachers' responses for statements 6 to 10, 14% of the teachers disagreed and 66% strongly disagreed to the sixth statement and only 14% agreed that Arabic is better than English to test students' comprehension. Only 6% had a neutral opinion. With regards to explaining difficult concepts and new vocabulary, 27% of the teachers strongly agreed and 40% agreed that using Arabic is better than using English. However, only 20% disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed and 6% had a neutral opinion. In terms of giving feedback using Arabic, 40% of the teachers disagreed and 20% strongly disagreed that students will benefit from feedback given in Arabic. Yet, 27% of them agreed and 13% had a neutral opinion. In their responses to the ninth statement, which sought to find out whether they thought that using Arabic is better than using English to give directions about tests and exams, 20% of the teachers disagreed and 74% strongly disagreed and believed that using English is better. Only 6% agreed. With regards to whether the use of Arabic in the classroom motivates students, the teachers were split in their opinions. 13% of the teachers strongly agreed and 34% agreed that the use of Arabic in the classroom motivates students, and 20% disagreed and 20% strongly disagreed. Only 13% had a neutral opinion.

Table 2: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Use of Arabic in English Language Classrooms

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. I think that using Arabic is better than using their English to test students' comprehension.		2 (14%)	1 (6%)	2 (14%)	10 (66%)
7. I think that Arabic is necessary to explain difficult concepts and define new vocabulary.	4 (27%)	6 (40%)	1 (6%)	3 (20%)	1 (7%)
8. I think that students benefit from feedback when it's given in Arabic.		4 (27%)	2 (13%)	6 (40%)	3 (20%)
9. I think that using Arabic is better than using English to give directions about tests and exams.		1 (6%)		3 (20%)	11 (74%)
10. I think that English language learners are more motivated if Arabic is used in the classroom.	2 (13%)	5 (34%)	2 (13%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)

In Table 3, which illustrates the teachers' responses for statements 11 to 15, 34% of the teachers strongly agreed and 40% agreed to the eleventh statement, which sought to find out whether students would feel comfortable when using Arabic for talks or discussions outside the classroom, while 20% of them disagreed and only 6% had a neutral opinion. In their responses to whether the use of Arabic saves time and makes the English language learning process easier, 40% of the teachers strongly agreed and 34% agreed, whereas 13% disagreed and 13% strongly disagreed. In their responses to the thirteenth statement, which sought to find out whether using Arabic in English language classrooms helps students develop as bilingual learners, 40% of the teachers disagreed and 20% strongly disagreed while only 13% agreed. 27% of them had a neutral opinion. In terms of using Arabic to help students become autonomous English language learners, 47% disagreed and 33% strongly disagreed. None of the teachers agreed and only 20% had a neutral opinion. In their responses to the statement which sought to find out whether the teachers thought that using Arabic in the classroom helps students cultivate a positive attitude towards learning, 60% of the teachers disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed while only 20% agreed. 13% of them had a neutral opinion. In their responses to the last statement, which sought to find out whether the teachers were aware of the controversy surrounding the use of

the students' first language in English language classrooms, 100% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware of the controversy.

Table 3: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Use of Arabic in English Language Classrooms

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Students are more comfortable when I use Arabic for talks or discussion outside the classroom.	5 (34%)	6 (40%)	1 (6%)	3 (20%)	
2. Using Arabic saves time and makes the English language learning process easier.	6 (40%)	5 (34%)		2 (13%)	2 (13%)
3. I think that using Arabic in English language classrooms helps students develop as bilingual learners		2 (13%)	4 (27%)	6 (40%)	3 (20%)
4. I think using Arabic helps students become autonomous English language learners.			3 (20%)	7 (47%)	5 (33%)
5. I think using Arabic in the classrooms helps students cultivate a positive attitude towards learning.		3 (20%)	2 (13%)	9 (60%)	1 (7%)
6. I am aware of the controversy surrounding the use of L1 in English language classrooms.	3 (20%)	12 (80%)			

Discussion of Teachers' Responses

In general, the teachers were hesitant about the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. They seemed to believe that it should be used sometimes in the English language classroom, and that it would facilitate students' English language learning in some limited ways. Most of them considered its use to be important in socializing with the students, explaining difficult concepts and new vocabulary, and saving time. However, most teachers agreed that using Arabic in the English language classroom will neither help students become proficient English language learners nor will it help them develop as bilingual learners. This is in line with Elridge's (1996) assertion, that the use of L1 in L2 classrooms "yields short-term benefits to the foreign language learner, but with a risk of hampering long-term acquisition" (p. 310). The teachers also all agreed that using Arabic does not make them confident in teaching in the English language classroom. Some of the teachers' opinions, taken from the open-ended questions in the survey, that were in favor of L1 use are quoted below:

The use of Arabic is useful in the classroom especially when I have weak students.

I use Arabic in the classroom according to the different situations. For example, I use Arabic to explain the meaning of a difficult word that the students cannot understand.

Some of the teachers' opinions that were against L1 use are quoted below:

I use only English in the classroom because it is better for the students. When I use only English, the students are, in turn, obliged to speak using only English.

If I use Arabic in the classroom, the students will rely on this use.

One of the teachers was against the use of Arabic in the English language classroom, but he said:

I don't prefer to use Arabic in the classroom, but I find that sometimes it is useful to do so. It is useful when I want to explain difficult vocabulary or contexts in order to save time.

Apart from generally considering the use of Arabic not helpful for the students, the teachers were also hesitant about its use due to constraints by the Ministry of Education and institutional policies. Both schools did not allow the teachers to use Arabic in the English language classroom based on the rules and policies set by the Ministry of Education. Another reason is the notion that when teachers use Arabic they were considered as incompetent to use English skillfully in the classroom. That is, teachers' were considered to the lack enough experience and skills to teach using only English in the classrooms. Teacher 3 said in the interview, "If I frequently use Arabic in the classroom, my students will think that I am not good enough to be an English teacher". She further added that it's not only the students whom she worries about, but it's also the school's administration. She stated, "If the supervisor was observing one of my classrooms and she noticed that I use Arabic in the classroom, my evaluation at the end of the year will be negatively affected". Thus, the teachers were obliged to use only English in the classroom in order to protect their image and prove that they are capable to teach proficiently using only English. For this, teachers resorted to alternative techniques in order to teach without any resource to Arabic. For example, they relied on the use of examples, objects, demonstrations, and pictures in order to compensate for not using Arabic. Yet, when it was difficult to convey meaning using these techniques, all the teachers resorted to Arabic.

Generally, the teachers did not encourage the use of Arabic in English language classrooms; neither did they encourage its prohibition. This is in line with Swain and Lapkin (2000) who argue, "L1 should not be prohibited,…but neither should it be actively encouraged as it may substitute for, rather than support, second language learning" (p. 268). The teachers believed that the use of Arabic is helpful when conveying meaning is difficult. They also acknowledged its usefulness when using only English, or alternative techniques seemed to be ineffective in conveying the meaning or facilitating the learning process.

Comparison between Teachers' and Students' Perceptions towards the use of Arabic

The surveys revealed that teachers and students shared similar perceptions toward the use of Arabic in English language classroom. With relation to the use of Arabic for socializing, 58% of the students and 61% of the teachers preferred to use Arabic rather than English. In terms of checking comprehension, 75% of the students and 80% of the teachers agreed on the use of English instead of Arabic. 53% of the students and 74% of the teachers agreed that the use of Arabic for talks or discussions outside the classroom is more encouraging than the use of English. However, there was a discrepancy in the perceptions of teachers and students toward whether or not the use of Arabic is generally important in English language classroom. While 74% of the teachers agreed that the use of Arabic is important, only 30% of the students agreed. With regards to whether the use of Arabic is motivating, 64% of the students agreed whereas less than half of the teachers, representing 47% of the teachers, thought that the use of Arabic is motivating in the English language classroom.

Generally, although the students and teachers seemed to share positive perceptions towards employing the use of Arabic in the English language classroom, there was a discrepancy in their perceptions. While students thought that the use of Arabic in English language classrooms is motivating, the teachers had opposing attitudes. On the contrary, while teachers thought that the use of Arabic is important in English language classrooms, the students had opposing attitudes. Due to this discrepancy between teachers' and students' perceptions, I support Nation (2003) who argues that "a balanced approach is needed which sees a role for L1 but also recognizes the importance of maximizing L2 use in the classroom" (p. 7).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

The findings obtained from classroom observations, surveys, and interviews revealed that although the use of Arabic is forbidden in English language classrooms, the teachers employed its minor use in certain activities. The schools' administrations prohibit the use of L1 and this prohibition was observed and supported through the findings obtained from the teachers' interviews and surveys. Although generally the use of L1 was absent in the English language classrooms, teachers found ways in order to compensate for its absence. Teachers used other methods and techniques, such as giving examples, the use of visual aids and pictures, and the use of objects and realia. Sometimes, teachers also relied on acting out the meaning for clarifying difficult vocabulary items in English. Basically, the teachers relied on the Audio-Lingual Method, the Direct Method and Total Physical Response when teaching English without the use of Arabic in the classroom. However, when it was difficult for students to understand using only English, or when it was complex for teachers to convey or clarify a certain meaning in English, the teachers resorted to the minor use of Arabic. Basically, the minor use of Arabic was employed for explaining difficult vocabulary or grammatical points, for disciplining and classroom management, and for socializing and joking.

Moreover, the students and teachers shared similar perceptions towards the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. They did not encourage its frequent use and believed that it would not help in successful learning of English language. However, the students and teachers acknowledged its usefulness in certain contexts such as explaining difficult concepts, vocabulary, grammatical points, socializing, and talks outside the classroom. Although the teachers acknowledged its usefulness in these contexts, and employed its use, they were uncertain whether they were properly employing it. This may be due to several explanations such as the arguments against the use of L1 in L2 classrooms, the policies set by the Ministry of Education and the schools' administrations against the use of Arabic in English language classrooms, and more importantly the lack of a unified approach defining when, how, and how teacher may employ the of Arabic in English language classrooms.

Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study suggest implications in two areas: pedagogical implications for administrators and pedagogical implications for teachers.

Pedagogical Implications for Administrators

The benefits of using L1 in L2 classrooms argued for in the literature, and the findings obtained and revealed from this study, encourage the judicious use of Arabic in English language classrooms. Part of this is considering the judicious use of Arabic in the English language classroom an advantage to teachers, since they will not only be able to teach students the language, but they will also be able to understand and meet students' intellectual needs as well. Policy makers, administrators, and authorities in charge of curriculum design have to recognize the usefulness of using Arabic in English language classrooms in order to employ its use. In addition, teacher training programs play a crucial role in alerting teachers when to properly employ the use of Arabic in their English language classrooms. Through integrating and permitting the use of Arabic in English language classrooms, policy makers and administrators will help in achieving a balanced approach that will in turn make the use of Arabic in English language classrooms more clear and systematic for teachers. Moreover, through teacher training programs, teachers may change their perceptions and hesitation towards the use of Arabic in English language classrooms, and confidently employ it.

Furthermore, through this study, a gap was found between the teachers' teaching practices and their perceptions towards employing the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. The classroom observations, teachers' interviews, and surveys revealed that although the use of Arabic is prohibited in English language classrooms, the teachers employed a minor use of it. However, although teachers hold a positive attitude towards the judicious limited use of Arabic in English language classrooms, they are uncertain and hesitant as to when they should employ its use and when not to. For this, they resort to using alternative methods, approaches, and techniques in order to teach English without the use of Arabic, despite the fact that the use of Arabic may sometimes better serve students' understanding more than the alternatives used. Thus, it's the responsibility of policy makers and administrators to develop a unified approach that justifies the limited use of Arabic in certain activities in English language classrooms. This unified approach should define to teachers

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when, how, and why to beneficially employ the use of Arabic in English language classrooms in order to serve their students' needs and facilitate their language learning process, and when to reside to using alternative methods, approached and techniques. Through this approach, teachers may no longer be confused or hesitant as to when, how, and why they need to use Arabic in their English language.

Pedagogical Implications for Teachers

The usefulness of L1 in L2 classrooms was acknowledged in the literature and in the findings revealed from this study. Therefore, it is important for secondary-level English language teachers in private schools to become aware of the usefulness of L1 in their English language classrooms. More importantly, they need to become aware of when, how, and why they use L1 in English language classrooms. Teachers should not use L1 unless they are obliged to, that is, when using English to convey a certain meaning or explain something seems to be difficult or ineffective.

The benefits of using L1 discussed in the literature justify its limited and judicious use. Teachers should employ the use of L1 effectively and beneficially in English language classrooms in order to facilitate teaching as well as English language learning. In addition, teachers need to base their teaching on their students' needs in order to create a favorable student-centered environment in which students would benefit from L1 use. The teachers may decide to employ the use of Arabic when he/she feels that this use would better serve students' understanding and facilitate their English language learning process. For example, if a teacher notices that students cannot understand a certain word or point, despite the alternatives used to clarify the meaning, he/she may decide to use Arabic in order to help understand and progress in their learning. In addition, teachers may decide to use Arabic when he/she feels that this use may lead to creating a favorable classroom environment. For example, the teacher may use Arabic for building a better relationship with the students. The teacher may also use Arabic for joking, socializing, or having personal talks or discussions with the students. In doing so, students would feel closer to their teacher and thus a favorable classroom environment may be created.

Limitations of the Study

Classroom observations were fundamental to this study. The first limitation was the decision made by the Rosary School's administration to cancel the observations in their classrooms. Thus, I was not able to observe in enough contexts. In addition, the teachers were not informed about the purpose of my study during the classroom observations, and they were not comfortable about my presence. The teachers didn't know the purpose until they started filling the surveys and participating in the interviews. After the interviews, they acknowledged that they perceived my presence as threatening, since they didn't know what aspect of their teaching I was observing. Eventually, this may have affected their teaching practices.

Furthermore, because the use of video recording was discouraged by the teachers, I took notes throughout the classroom observations. This was because the teachers were very concerned about the confidentiality of their teaching practices and classrooms. However, I think that if video or tape recordings were used, the loss of data or forgetting things would have been avoided.

Additionally, this study took into consideration the perceptions of teachers and students in private schools. It would be interesting if public schools could be considered as well. This would lead to a comparison between the perceptions of teachers and students in private and public schools towards the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. Along with considering private and public schools, it would also be remarkable to examine the consequences of other variables on teachers and students perceptions such as background, gender, age, level of proficiency, experience, and motivations. It would be also be effective to conduct an experiment comparing two groups of students in different classrooms. For example, in the experiment all variables may be kept constant, except that in one of the classrooms the use of Arabic is employed while in the other it is not. Then, the students' perceptions towards the use of Arabic in English language classrooms would be examined along with their learning development. It is hoped that future research will address these variables and aspects.

Moreover, data obtained in this study didn't provide answers to the contradictions between the perceptions of the teachers and students. Therefore, further studies in this area need to utilize interviews with students in order to find out more about their perceptions, and make sure that they properly understood the statements.

Final Thought

Although the teachers and students in this study held positive attitudes about using Arabic for certain activities in their English language classrooms, this use is not often practiced. These English language teachers and students in UAE's private secondary schools acknowledged the usefulness of using Arabic in English language classrooms, but they felt hesitant about when, why, and how to employ its use in the classrooms. Accordingly, what is needed is a balanced approach through which teachers will no longer be confused or hesitant to use Arabic in English language classrooms for appropriate purposes. Moreover, instead of considering the use of Arabic a factor that hinders successful English language learning, findings from this study strongly suggest that its limited and judicious use needs to be considered facilitating and beneficial when the use of English seems to be ineffective or difficult for both teachers and students.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' and students' perceptions towards the use of Arabic in English language classrooms. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at anytime without adversely affecting your relationship with the researcher or your school. If you choose to participate, all information gathered will be held in strict confidence and will be used solely for the purpose of this research. I hope you will agree to take part in this research. I think it will prove to be both exciting and informative experience for all of us. If you agree to participate, please sign the consent form below and return it back to me.

_____

I have read and understand the information on this consent form. I consent to participate in this study. I understand that any information I give is completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at anytime.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B

Teachers' Perceptions towards the Use of Arabic in English Language Classrooms: A
Survey

Dear Teacher,

This survey aims at finding out your perceptions about the use of Arabic (L1) in your
English language classrooms (L2).

The purpose of this survey is to collect data for a research in my MA TESOL. You
don't need to write your names and your answers will be used for research purposes
only. Please reflect on your own experience and beliefs by completing this survey.

Thank you for your utmost cooperation.

Roussol Hamze
MA TESOL Program
American University of Sharjah
Spring, 2010

The survey is divided into two sections. Please tick the appropriate boxes for you.

<u>Section One:</u>

1. Gender:

   ☐ Male   ☐ Female   Nationality (Optional): _____

2. Teaching Experience: _____

   Number of years teaching in UAE: _____

3. Students' levels or grades you teach:

   School level (please mention which grade):_____

4. Are you currently employing the usage of students' first language in your English language teaching classrooms? Why or why not?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. Please specify, if any, the teaching contexts in which you opt for using Arabic in your English language teaching classrooms.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Please complete the information below. Tick (√) the appropriate response for
statements 1-16.
SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; N=Neutral; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. I think that students' first language should be used in the classroom.					
2. I think that using Arabic facilitates students' English language learning.					
3. I think that using Arabic is better than using English in order to know about students' background and interests.					
4. Students will become proficient in English when Arabic is used in the classroom.					
5. Using Arabic in the classroom makes me more confident in teaching.					
6. I think that using Arabic is better than using their English to test students' comprehension.					
7. I think that Arabic is necessary to explain difficult concepts and define new vocabulary.					
8. I think that students benefit from feedback when it's given in Arabic.					
9. I think that using Arabic is better than using their English to give directions about tests and exams.					
10. I think that English language learners are more motivated if Arabic is used in the classroom.					
11. Students are more comfortable when I use Arabic for talks or discussion outside the classroom.					
12. Using Arabic saves time and makes the English language learning process easier.					
13. I think that using Arabic in English language classrooms helps students develop as bilingual learners					
14. I think using Arabic helps students become autonomous English language learners.					
15. I think using Arabic in the classrooms helps students cultivate a positive attitude towards learning.					
16. I am aware of the controversy surrounding the use of L1 in English language classrooms.					

Appendix C

Students' Perceptions towards the Use of Arabic in English Language Classrooms: A

Survey

Dear student,

This survey aims at finding out your perceptions about the use of Arabic (L1) in your

English language classrooms (L2).

You don't need to write your names and your answers will be used for research

purposes only. Please complete this survey according to your perceptions and beliefs.

Thank you for your utmost cooperation.

Roussol Hamze
MA TESOL Program
American University of Sharjah
Spring, 2010

The survey is divided into two sections. Please tick the appropriate boxes for you.

<u>Section One:</u>

1. Gender:

   ☐ Male   ☐ Female   Nationality (Optional): _____

2. Age: _____

3. Number of years you have been studying English in school: _____

4. Your grade: _____

5. Do you encourage the use of Arabic by your teachers in English language classrooms? Do you see this use as useful or not? If yes, Why?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. Please briefly describe the activities in which you encourage the use of your first language in English language learning classrooms.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Please complete the information below. Tick (√) the appropriate response for statements 1-16.

SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; N=Neutral; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. I think that the use of Arabic is important in English language classroom. أعتقد بأن استعمال اللغة العربية في صف اللغة الانجليزية أمر مهم					
2. I think that it's better to use more of Arabic in English language classrooms, especially during the early stages of learning the language. أعتقد أنه من الأفضل الاكثار من استخدام اللغة العربية في صفوف دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية ، وخاصة خلال المراحل المبكرة من تعلم اللغة.					
3. When my teacher uses my Arabic, I get motivated. عندما يستخدم اسلذي اللغة العربية ، أشعر بدافع أكبر					
4. I tend to participate more in English language classroom when my teacher uses Arabic. أميل إلى مزيد من المشاركة في الفصل الدراسي في اللغة الإنجليزية عندما يستخدم أستاذي اللغة العربية.					
5. I prefer that my teacher speak only English in my English class. أنا أفضل أن يتكلم استاذي اللغة الانكليزية فقط في حصة اللغة الإنجليزية.					
6. I prefer that teachers use Arabic in socializing. أنا أفضل أن يستخدم المعلمون اللغة العربية في التنشئة الاجتماعية.					
7. I understand the lesson more easily when my teacher uses Arabic in English language classrooms. أنا أفهم الدرس بسهولة أكبر عندما يستخدم معلمي اللغة العربية في فصول اللغة الانجليزية.					
8. I prefer teachers to use Arabic when summarizing material already covered. أنا أفضل ان يستخدم المعلمين اللغة العربية عند تلخيص المواد التي تمت تغطيتها.					

9. It is very effective when my teacher uses Arabic for disciplining or relationship building. أنها فعالة جدا عندما يستخدم معلمي اللغة العربية لتأديب أو بناء العلاقة.					
10. It is very effective when my teacher uses Arabic for clarifying difficult grammatical points. أنها فعالة جدا عندما يستخدم معلمي اللغة العربية لتوضيح النقاط النحوية الصعبة.					
11. I prefer that my teacher use Arabic when giving basic instructions. أنا أفضل أن يستخدم أستاذي اللغة العربية عند اعطاء التعليمات الأساسية.					
12. I prefer that my teacher use Arabic when checking our comprehension. أنا أفضل أن يستخدم أستاذي اللغة العربية عند التحقق من قدرتنا على الفهم.					
13. I think that successful English language learning is based on using only English in the classroom. أعتقد أن النجاح في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية يعتمد على استخدام اللغة الانكليزية فقط في الفصول الدراسية.					
14. I learn English language better if teachers use only English in the classroom. أتعلم اللغة الإنكليزية على نحو أفضل إذا كان المعلمون يستخدمون اللغة الانكليزية فقط في الفصول الدراسية					
15. I feel more comfortable when my teacher uses Arabic during talks or discussions outside the classroom. أشعر براحة أكبر عندما يستخدم معلمي اللغة العربية خلال محادثات أو مناقشات خارج الفصول الدراسية.					
16. I think that teachers should discuss with students the decision of using students' L1 in English language classrooms. أعتقد أنه ينبغي على المعلمين مناقشة مع الطلاب قرار استخدام اللغة العربية في فصول اللغة الانجليزية					

Appendix D
Classroom Observation Sheet

<u>Section One:</u>

1. Teacher's Name: _____

2. Name of School: _____

3. Class level (grade): _____

4. Date: _____

5. Gender:
    ☐ Male   ☐ Female

<u>Section two:</u>
Observation Sheet:

Activities	L1 is used																
1. Classroom management																	
2. Giving basic instructions																	
3. Summarizing materials already covered																	
4. During classroom participation																	
5. Checking students' comprehension																	
6. Disciplining or relationship building																	
7. Clarifying difficult grammatical points.																	
8. Socializing and joking																	

Other activities

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix E
Teachers' Interviews Questions

No.	Question
1	Do you think that it's appropriate to use Arabic in English language classroom?
2	When do you think it's suitable or necessary to use Arabic in teaching English?
3	Why do you think it's important to use Arabic in English language teaching?
4	What are the problematic areas you face when using Arabic in English language classrooms?
5	In what sort of in-class activities do use Arabic?
6	If you opt for not using Arabic in English language teaching, what are the teaching techniques or practices you follow in order to compensate for this?
7	Do you think that using Arabic facilitates students' English language learning?
8	Do you encourage and support the use of Arabic in your English language teaching practices?

VITA

Roussol Kassem Hamze was on April, 29, 1988, in Dubai. She was educated in private schools and graduated from the Westminster High School as class valedictorian in 2005. She was then educated in Ajman University of Science and Technology, from which she graduated excellent with honor, in 2008. Her degree was a Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Translation.

Ms. Hamze has worked in the fields of public relations and translation. In 2008, she decided to pursue her MA in TESOL at the American University of Sharjah to prepare herself for the teaching career. Ms. Hamze attended the 13th CTELT conference at Dubai Me's College, an International Conference on Bilingualism and Bilingual Education at the American University of Sharjah, in addition to various workshops. Her fields of interest include bilingualism, language acquisition, pragmatics, and language assessment.