

Motivational Benefits of Translanguaging for EFL Learners

Hatim Masoudi

Department of Languages and Translation, Taibah University, Madinah, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—Translanguaging is emerging as an alternative medium of instruction to the traditional monolingual approach adopted in many countries teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Researchers have evaluated its applicability in monolingual and multilingual environments, concentrating on learners' perceptions of its use in classrooms but giving relatively little attention to its motivational benefits at Saudi universities. Addressing that gap, this study investigated the motivational benefits of translanguaging among EFL learners at Taibah University, Saudi Arabia, with self-determination theory as the theoretical framework. Online questionnaires in Arabic were collected from 159 EFL students, and written interviews in English were collected from 10 of the same students. Their responses indicated they understood what translanguaging was, expressed a positive attitude toward its use in the classroom, and appeared to show motivational benefits from it in terms of proficiency level, clarifying complex concepts, bridging linguistic and cultural gaps, and addressing difficulties with learning English.

Index Terms—English as a foreign language, motivation, translanguaging, Saudi, self-determination theory

I. INTRODUCTION

Students learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia face numerous obstacles, including the influence of their mother tongue, insufficient exposure to English in day-to-day life, inadequate teaching methods (Fareh, 2010), and poor assessment techniques, leading to insufficient language skills (Al-Khasawneh, 2010). Another issue is the medium of instruction. Some applied linguists (e.g., Hall & Cook, 2012; Krashen, 1982) have advocated target-language-only instruction in EFL classrooms because it offers more exposure to the target language, while others (e.g., Collier & Thomas, 2017) have recommended alternating between the native and target languages (a practice called translanguaging) because students tend to be more attentive and less confused when they are allowed to use their full language repertoire in class. Alsaawi (2019) and Al-Ahdal (2020) found EFL students held a positive attitude toward translanguaging in which Arabic was used for practical reasons, such as making them more involved in the class and increasing their motivation to learn. As Mazak (2017) noted, “translanguaging is a language ideology that takes bilingualism as the norm,” where “bilinguals do not separate their ‘languages’ into discrete systems, but rather possess one integrated repertoire of languaging practices from which they draw as they navigate their everyday bilingual worlds” (p. 5). This phenomenon goes beyond code-switching, encompassing “any practices that draw on an individual’s linguistic and semiotic repertoires,” such as “reading in one language and discussing the reading in another” (p. 5).

Translanguaging benefits EFL students by letting them draw on their diverse language resources to develop a deeper understanding of the target language, engage more fully with content, and bring their linguistic and cultural identities into their learning (Baker, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; García, 2009; García et al., 2017; Paulsrud et al., 2021; Tian & Shepard-Carey, 2020). Furthermore, “it creates a social space for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance” (Li, 2011, p. 1223). It also helps build cross-linguistic awareness, reading comprehension, conceptual knowledge, and sense of belonging (Daniel et al., 2019; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Leonet et al., 2019; Rajendram, 2021; Sayer, 2013). For these reasons, and because translanguaging presents greater learner involvement and allows for transferring Arabic skills into English, it has been embraced in Saudi higher education, and there is a high level of awareness about it among students and instructors (Al-Ahdal, 2020; Alasmari et al., 2022; Alharbi & Alqefari, 2021; Alhazmi, 2024; Almayez, 2022; Alqahtani, 2022; Alsaawi, 2019; Alzabidi & Alahdal, 2022; Bin Ghali, 2023).

Another core challenge in Saudi EFL classes is a lack of motivation to learn the target language (Al Hosni, 2014; Alrahaili, 2014). Motivation is a critical factor in language learning (Crisfield & White, 2012; Dörnyei, 1998; Honggang, 2008) and has been characterized as a learner’s “willingness or desire to be engaged in or commit effort to completing a task” (Zhou, 2012, p. 1318), but who makes the learner willing to learn? Dörnyei (2001) suggested it is primarily the teacher, while Alshenqeeti (2018) noted that some motivation must come from the learner and the learning environment. In the context of second language (L2) learning, Kissau (2006) regarded motivation “as the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so” (p. 76). Ortega (2009) defined motivation as “the desire to initiate L2 learning and the effort employed to sustain it,” with the common understanding “that some learners are highly motivated and others have little or no motivation” (p. 168).

A growing body of research has examined the motivations of Saudi EFL learners. For example, Al-Otaibi (2004) found they experienced a high level of instrumental motivation, followed by integrative motivation, and a lower level of effort and desire to use the language. In a study on intrinsic motivation by Moskovsky and Alrabai (2009), students showed significant reserves of motivation—which might be used to reach higher learning outcomes given more favorable circumstances—and a positive attitude toward learning English. Alshahrani (2016) investigated whether motivational self-system could explain the L2 motivational behaviors of a group of EFL university students in southern Saudi Arabia. That study confirmed the validity and relevance of the L2 self-system model’s basic components of ideal L2, ought-to L2, and English learning experience. However, there is a need for further research on the relationship between translanguaging and motivation among Saudi EFL students.

Although studies have confirmed translanguaging as an effective instructional approach in monolingual and multilingual environments (e.g., Alrayes et al., 2022; Alsaawi, 2019; Alzabidi & Al-Ahdal, 2022; Bin Ghali, 2023), the focus of such work has been more on learner attitudes and acceptability and less on the strategies used by instructors to motivate learners. The present study sought to address this gap by answering the following research questions:

1. How do Saudi EFL learners perceive the use of translanguaging in their classrooms?
2. Are Saudi EFL learners motivated by translanguaging to achieve their desired proficiency levels?
3. What motivational benefits do Saudi EFL learners derive from translanguaging in their classrooms?

This research thus contributes to the debate on the role of translanguaging in improving academic success (Beres, 2015), increasing student autonomy (White et al., 2013), and showing the value of linguistic diversity (MacSwan & Rolstad, 2010). This is in line with the observations by Dörnyei (1990) and Oxford (1996) that when learners can measure the practical outcomes of the learning process, they are much more motivated to engage in that process.

II. METHODS

A. Research Design and Theoretical Framework

This study adopted a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design (see Creswell & Clark, 2017). The first phase involved a quantitative questionnaire administered to EFL students at Taibah University, Saudi Arabia, and the second involved a written qualitative interview administered to selected EFL students at the same university.

The theoretical framework was self-determination theory (SDT) (see Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000), due to its versatility, which has resulted in researchers from different domains employing it to test people’s motivation in different contexts (Deci & Ryan, 2008), including language learning (Noels et al., 2003). In SDT, motivation resides along a continuum, with intrinsic motivation at one end, extrinsic motivation in the middle, and amotivation at the other end, as shown in Figure 1, taken from Ryan and Deci (2000).

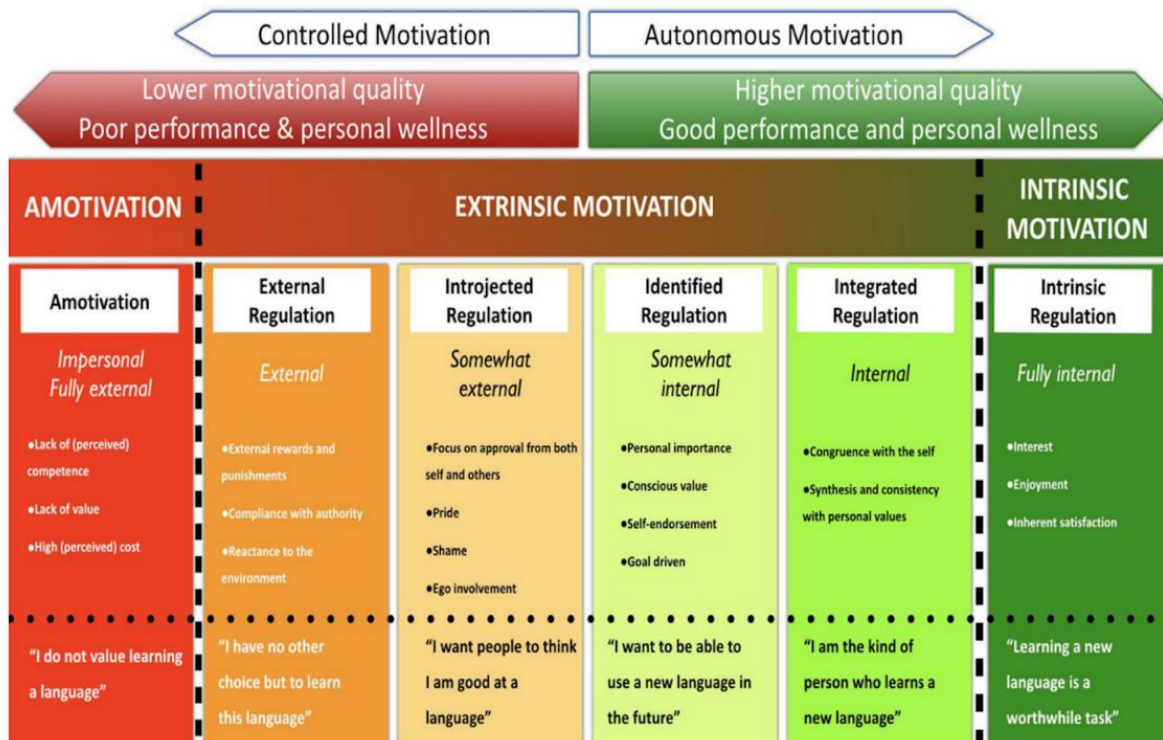


Figure 1. SDT Continuum

Intrinsic motivation refers to the motivation to engage in something because the action itself is enjoyable and satisfying, while extrinsic motivation is a drive to do something for an independent outcome. Amotivation refers to a lack of motivation. The present study investigated the motivational benefits of using translanguaging along this continuum. The SDT constructs shown in Table 1, adapted from Agawa and Takeuchi (2016), were used to answer the research questions.

TABLE 1
SDT CONSTRUCTS

Construct	Definition	Level of motivation
Need for autonomy	When translanguaging in EFL instruction encourages learners to want to engage in learning inside and outside of class.	High
Need for competence	When translanguaging encourages EFL learners to want to understand the content of English classes and become good at English.	High
Need for relatedness	When translanguaging encourages EFL learners to build and maintain a good relationship with their teacher and classmates.	High
Intrinsic motivation	When translanguaging encourages EFL learners to learn English because of a genuine interest in engaging in the subject for the pleasure and satisfaction of doing so.	High
Identified regulation	When translanguaging encourages EFL learners to learn English because they acknowledge and understand its value and importance.	High
Introjected regulation	When translanguaging encourages EFL learners to learn English due to a feeling of guilt or pride or to avoid anxiety or shame.	Low
External regulation	When translanguaging encourages EFL learners to learn English due to external pressure when they do not value its importance.	Low
Amotivation	When translanguaging encourages EFL learners to feel learning English has no value or refuse to pay attention during lessons.	None

B. Sample

Table 2 presents the demographics of the questionnaire sample.

TABLE 2
QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Variable	Sub-variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	79	61
	Female	62	39
Age	18–22	142	89.3
	22–25	12	7.5
	25–30	3	1.9
	Over 30	2	1.3
Native Language	Arabic	155	97.5
	English	4	2.5
English Proficiency Level	Advanced	12	7.5
	Intermediate	97	61
	Beginner	48	30.2
	Other	2	1.3
University Year	First	127	79.9
	Second	3	2
	Third	13	8.2
	Fourth	10	6.3
	Other	6	3.8
Course of Study	English	132	83
	Arabic	22	13.8
	Other (e.g., both, business)	5	3.2

Using purposive sampling, the researcher sent a questionnaire link to 100 male and 100 female EFL university students. This sampling technique was used to select participants who would possess the qualities needed to provide an in-depth understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2007). Out of the 200 target participants, 159 responded to the questionnaire, including 79 (79%) of target men and 62 (62%) of target women. All returned questionnaires were completed, resulting in a completion rate of 79.5%. Written interviews were sent to 10 of the participants (five male, five female) who completed the questionnaire. All 10 written interviews were returned. As shown in Table 2, most participants were between the ages of 18 and 22, spoke Arabic as their native language, and were English majors. Their English proficiency was mostly intermediate (61%) or beginner (30.2%).

C. Data Collection and Analysis

Participants agreed to an informed consent form before the study commenced, and all reasonable efforts were made to ensure their privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. Two instruments were used to collect the data. The first was a 30-item questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, strongly disagree, disagree) that was uploaded to Google Forms and distributed through email. The questionnaire clearly explained the study's purpose and instructions for filling it out. It was divided into three sections: seven items on perceptions of translanguaging, eight on attitudes

toward translanguaging in the EFL classroom, and 15 on motivational benefits of translanguaging. The questionnaire was based on Deci and Ryan (2002), Dörnyei (2010), Bolkvadze (2023), and the Saudi Ministry of Education's (2002) policy on learning English. It was translated from English into Arabic by a competent academic and checked by the researcher to ensure accuracy, validity, clarity, and readability and to avoid redundancy. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the questionnaire data via SPSS (Version 26). The second instrument was a written qualitative interview consisting of three questions on translanguaging perceptions, attitudes, and benefits. The responses were coded and grouped according to their similarities and then categorized to tally with the questionnaire themes. To illustrate the use of translanguaging, participants were asked to answer the questionnaire in Arabic and the written interview in English.

III. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

A. Awareness and Perception of Translanguaging

The majority of participants were aware of the meaning of the term translanguaging and its practical use in their classrooms, as shown in Table 3. This agreed with the literature (e.g., Al-Ahdal, 2020; Alasmari et al., 2022; Alharbi & Alqefari, 2021; Almayez, 2022; Alqahtani, 2022; Alsaawi, 2019; Alzabidi & Al-Ahdal, 2022; Bin Ghali, 2023).

TABLE 3
AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF TRANSLANGUAGING

Translanguaging instruction involves my instructor's use of Arabic in teaching me English.			
S/N	Option	Frequency	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	76	47.8
2	Agree	42	26.4
3	Neutral	24	15.1
4	Disagree	13	8.2
5	Strongly Disagree	4	2.5
Answering this questionnaire in Arabic on my English lessons means I am translanguaging.			
S/N	Option	Frequency	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	76	47.8
2	Agree	47	29.6
3	Neutral	30	18.9
4	Disagree	6	3.8
5	Strongly Disagree	0	0
When my instructor uses Arabic sometimes or allows me to speak Arabic in our English class, he/she is actually translanguaging.			
S/N	Option	Frequency	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	85	53.5
2	Agree	53	33.3
3	Neutral	15	9.4
4	Disagree	6	3.8
5	Strongly Disagree	0	0

They also gave their perceptions of translanguaging as a medium of instruction in EFL classes. The majority reported Arabic as very important to teaching English, as illustrated in Table 4. Machaal (2012a, 2012b) similarly found that Arabic was perceived as useful, and sometimes necessary, in EFL classes to mediate a learning activity and as an educational scaffold.

TABLE 4
PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF USING ARABIC IN EFL CLASSES

It is important to use Arabic in teaching English in the classroom.			
S/N	Option	Frequency	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	81	50.9
2	Agree	37	23.3
3	Neutral	25	15.7
4	Disagree	11	6.9
5	Strongly Disagree	5	3.1

Participants attributed their rising English proficiency to the use of Arabic in their classrooms (see Table 5). This was in line with Cenoz and Etxague's (2013) assertion that low language proficiency students might need first language support to cope with the challenges of an English medium of instruction.

TABLE 5
PROFICIENCY LEVEL AND TRANSLANGUAGING

My high level of English proficiency and competence in English is a result of my instructor's use of Arabic in my English lessons.			
S/N	Option	Frequency	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	77	48.4
2	Agree	31	19.5
3	Neutral	27	17
4	Disagree	15	9.4
5	Strongly Disagree	9	5.7

B. Attitudes Toward Translanguaging in EFL Classes

Participating students reportedly appreciated the way their instructor allowed them to have class discussions in Arabic and write EFL activities in English (see Table 6, Item 1). This was in line with using translanguaging as a pedagogical practice that switches the input and output language to “increase understanding” and “augment the pupil’s ability in both languages” (Williams, 2002, p. 37).

TABLE 6
ATTITUDES ABOUT TRANSLANGUAGING

	Items	Responses (%)				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	My instructor always allows us to discuss activities in Arabic and write the answers in English.	38.4	25.2	25.7	8.8	1.9
2	My instructor is a native speaker of English but understands Arabic.	36.5	18.2	20.2	13.2	11.9
3	My instructor is a native speaker of Arabic but speaks English fluently.	66.7	20.8	11.9	0.6	0
4	My instructor uses Arabic only when explaining difficult English concepts or for instructions.	47.8	28.3	17.6	5	1.3
5	My instructor uses Arabic only when making comparisons between languages.	42.1	23.3	27.6	5.7	1.3
6	I am just learning English to pass my exams.	27	10.1	13.2	25.2	24.5
7	Using Arabic to teach English is wasting a lot of lecture time.	31.4	9.4	22	22	15.2
8	I am always lost when my instructor speaks English so fast during lessons.	40.3	17	23.3	12.6	6.9

Participants indicated that instructors could use translanguaging regardless of whether they were native English speakers as long as they used translanguaging effectively (see Table 6, Items 2 and 3). This supported Yeşilçınar and Çakır’s (2020) teacher assessment and evaluation model that requires EFL instructors to have knowledge-related competencies (knowledge of the subject matter), skill-related competencies (ability to understand English and Arabic conversations), and attitude-related competencies (e.g., a warm attitude toward students and consideration of their needs).

According to the findings for Items 4 and 5 (see Table 6), participants asserted that their EFL instructors used Arabic only when explaining difficult English concepts, giving instructions, or making comparisons between languages. This was in line with Bolkvadze’s (2023) recommendations for when to use translanguaging.

Regarding participants’ overall attitude toward learning English, nearly half (49.7%) claimed they were not learning English only to pass exams, while 37.1% agreed they were. Hussain (2024) similarly found generally positive attitudes about learning English. Furthermore, participants in the present study tended to report negative attitudes toward the way instructors conducted EFL lessons. About 57.3% agreed that they were lost in class when the instructor used English quickly, likewise agreeing with Hussain (2024).

C. Motivational Benefits of Translanguaging

The SDT continuum was used to determine whether students were motivated to achieve their desired proficiency level through translanguaging and the types and levels of motivation they derived from translanguaging (see Table 7).

TABLE 7
ITEMS 1–3 ON MOTIVATIONAL BENEFITS OF TRANSLANGUAGING

Item		Responses (%)					Motivation	
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Type	Level
1	I feel relaxed and enjoy my English lessons when my instructor uses Arabic.	43.4	29.6	20.1	5	1.9	Intrinsic motivation (intrinsic regulation)	High
2	My instructor’s use of translanguaging supports me and encourages me to learn English.	61	26.4	10.1	1.3	1.3	Extrinsic motivation (integrated regulation)	High
3	My instructor lectures entirely in English but allows us to collaborate and construct meanings in Arabic.	49.7	29.6	17	3.8	0	Extrinsic motivation (integrated regulation)	High

In their responses to Item 1, the majority of EFL students reported enjoying their lesson when their instructor used translanguaging. In SDT terms (see Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2017), the students experienced intrinsic regulation because translanguaging motivated them to learn English out of a genuine interest in engaging in the subject for the pleasure and satisfaction it gave them. This would be measured as “high motivation” in the SDT motivation continuum. High motivation was also recorded in responses to Item 2, with students reportedly feeling supported and encouraged by their instructor’s use of translanguaging. By implication, this created the desire to build and maintain a good relationship with the teacher and other classmates. This type of motivation is referred to as integrated extrinsic motivation. The responses to Item 3 could be interpreted in the same vein, with the use of translanguaging encouraging students to collaborate and construct meanings in Arabic. Bin Ghali (2023) similarly reported benefits of collaborative activities using translanguaging, including students feeling empowered to make choices in their language in the pursuit of learning, which was associated with feeling encouraged to participate more and be more creative.

According to the responses to Item 4 (see Table 8), the use of translanguaging in an EFL classroom reportedly helped students appreciate the languages involved, i.e., Arabic and English, indicating that they regarded them as personally important, consciously valuing and self-endorsing them. This type of motivation is defined in the SDT as identified regulation and is marked as high on the motivation continuum. This was in line with Schuman’s (1978) observation that when people possess favorable attitudes toward the target language community, they will have a stronger desire to learn the language. Tai and Wong (2022) argued that translanguaging encouraged students to view diverse languages as resources and appreciate linguistic and cultural diversity. Based on the responses to Item 5, translanguaging motivated participants to improve their English to communicate with English speakers. In terms of the SDT, they were motivated because they had a goal to achieve. When learners become interested in the people and culture speaking another language, they are expected to have a higher motivational quality that will result in better performance (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In response to Item 6, students placed a utilitarian value on language learning, such as to improve one’s career potential or gain social recognition or economic advantages.

TABLE 8
ITEMS 4–6 ON MOTIVATIONAL BENEFITS OF TRANSLANGUAGING

Item		Responses (%)					Motivation	
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Type	Level
4	My instructor’s use of translanguaging helps me appreciate Arabic and English.	56	24.5	17	1.9	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (identified regulation)	High
5	My instructor’s use of translanguaging helps me acquire basic language skills to communicate with English speakers.	56	28.3	13.8	1.3	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (integrative regulation)	High
6	My instructor’s use of translanguaging helps me acquire the linguistic competence necessary in various life situations.	56	27	13.8	2.5	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (identified regulation)	High

According to the responses to Item 7 (see Table 9), participants viewed translanguaging as instrumental to motivating them to acquire the linguistic competence required in different professions. This type of motivation was the same as the one they experienced in response to Item 6 in Table 8. In response to Item 6 (Table 8), EFL students reported being motivated to adapt to different life and environmental conditions, while in response to Item 7 (Table 9), they were motivated to learn English and prepare for professional opportunities. According to the responses to Item 8, translanguaging motivated participants to be aware of the importance of English as a means of international communication. This could be interpreted as extrinsic motivation (identified regulation) because translanguaging caused students to personally view learning English as important, resulting in high motivation. It could also be considered extrinsic motivation (external regulation) because students were compelled to learn English for external rewards or punishment, compliance with authority, or as a reaction to the environment (for a similar view, see Ryan & Deci, 2000, pp. 70–73). This would imply students achieved low motivation. However, it should be noted that students may derive more than one type of motivation based on their reasons for learning English (Brown, 2000), and “one type can drive or develop another type, such as the pressure to get a good job, which may, in time, drive a more intrinsic motivation when one becomes pleased and confident as their abilities and competencies develop” (Alshenqeeti, 2018, p. 3). The strong responses to Item 9 indicated that participants perceived translanguaging in EFL classes as motivating them to have a positive attitude toward English, agreeing with Baker (1992) that a positive attitude toward a language is an essential factor in language learning.

TABLE 9
ITEMS 7–9 ON MOTIVATIONAL BENEFITS OF TRANSLANGUAGING

Item		Responses (%)					Motivation	
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Type	Level
7	My instructor's use of translanguaging helps me acquire the linguistic competence required in different professions.	56	27	14.5	1.9	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (identified regulation)	High
8	My instructor's use of translanguaging helps me develop an awareness of the importance of English as a means of international communication.	57.2	27	13.8	1.3	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (identified regulation),	High
							Extrinsic motivation (external regulation)	Low
9	My instructor's use of translanguaging helps me develop a positive attitude toward learning English.	59.1	25.2	13.2	1.9	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (identified regulation)	High

In their responses to Items 10–12 (see Table 10), participants reported that translanguaging motivated them to be aware of the cultural, economic, and social issues of their society, enabling them to contribute to solutions. Ismael (2024) suggested that translanguaging could create an environment where every student's home language and culture are embraced and celebrated. It could also promote an inclusive atmosphere and raise awareness among students about the various languages spoken in their communities. García et al. (2017) similarly claimed that translanguaging allowed for an expansion beyond monocultural and monolingual understandings in the classroom and promoted student connection with home languages and cultures. The responses to Item 10 indicated that participants were either motivated intrinsically, in the sense that they were studying English with personal interest and inherent satisfaction, or extrinsically, because they were learning English out of pride, seeking approval or recognition from society.

TABLE 10
ITEMS 10–12 ON MOTIVATIONAL BENEFITS OF TRANSLANGUAGING

Item		Responses (%)					Motivation	
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Type	Level
10	My instructor's use of translanguaging helps me be aware of the cultural, economic, and social issues of my society in order to contribute to solutions.	52.8	21.4	22.6	1.9	1.3	Intrinsic motivation (intrinsic regulation)	High
11	My instructor's use of translanguaging helps me develop the linguistic competence that enables me to present my country's culture.	59.1	25.8	13.2	1.3	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (identified regulation)	High
12	My instructor's use of translanguaging helps me understand the concepts of international cooperation and understand and respect the cultural differences between countries.	57.9	22	17	2.5	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (identified regulation)	High

Responses to Item 13 (see Table 11) suggested that students benefited from translanguaging because it created a desire to participate in transferring the scientific and technological advances of other nations to their country. In this sense, translanguaging helped them appreciate the value of English. This type of motivation would be graded "high" on the motivation continuum (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In responses to Item 14, participants reported experiencing extrinsic motivation because they were willing to integrate their proficiency into native speaker proficiency. Translanguaging in their classroom created a desire to open up and embrace English-speaker culture, in line with the observation by Brown (1989) that when someone is learning a foreign language, it will always entail learning a foreign culture to some degree (as cited in Dörnyei, 2001).

TABLE 11
ITEMS 13–15 ON MOTIVATIONAL BENEFITS OF TRANSLANGUAGING

Item	Responses (%)					Motivation	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Type	Level
13	54.7	23.9	19.5	1.3	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (integrated regulation)	High
14	58.5	25.8	13.2	1.9	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (integrated regulation)	High
15	57.9	24.5	16.4	0.6	0.6	Extrinsic motivation (introjected regulation)	Low

Responses to Item 15 showed that an instructor's use of translanguaging in EFL classes reportedly motivated participants to be able to communicate in English to non-native speakers of the language. This agreed with Ou and Gu's (2020) observation that translanguaging helped students develop communicative repertoires for interpersonal interaction with peers of diverse language backgrounds, which is what they can expect in the contact settings they are likely to experience after graduation (e.g., global teams in multinational companies, international social networks, and translocal communities).

IV. QUALITATIVE RESULTS

A. How Instructors Use Translanguaging to Teach English

Students' responses to Item 1 (see Table 12) in the interview indicated that their instructors strategically employed translanguaging, incorporating Arabic alongside English to enhance comprehension, cultural relevance, and student engagement. They explained that this approach supported their EFL learning by clarifying complex concepts, bridging linguistic and cultural gaps, and addressing confusion. These observations complemented responses to the questionnaire (see Table 6, Items 4 and 5).

TABLE 12
USE OF TRANSLANGUAGING TO TEACH ENGLISH

Participant	Briefly describe the way your instructor uses translanguaging in teaching English in your class.
Male 1	My instructor uses Arabic to explain abstract concepts like idioms or phrases that are hard to translate directly. They also use it to give instructions or examples when students seem confused.
Male 2	My instructor explains challenging English terms by giving Arabic synonyms and compares sentence structures between both languages.
Male 3	They use Arabic to explain homework instructions or assignments and check our understanding of difficult reading passages.
Male 4	My instructor switches to Arabic to explain technical terms in writing and grammar exercises.
Male 5	They use Arabic to clarify differences between English and Arabic pronunciation and to correct common mistakes we make.
Female 1	They use Arabic for cultural comparisons, like explaining the meaning of proverbs in both languages.
Female 2	My teacher uses Arabic to summarize long English texts when we struggle to understand them.
Female 3	They sometimes use Arabic to provide feedback on our writing assignments and explain how to improve.
Female 4	My instructor often uses Arabic to explain difficult grammar rules that are unclear to students in the class. They also compare Arabic and English grammar, which makes the rules easier to understand and apply.
Female 5	My instructor uses Arabic to clarify the meanings of new or difficult vocabulary. They also give examples related to our culture, which helps us remember the new words and place them directly in our minds.

B. Student Opinions About How Instructors Use Translanguaging to Teach English

EFL students generally viewed the use of Arabic by their instructor as a supportive and beneficial tool for learning English, especially in the early stages of language acquisition (see Table 13). They described it as a method that bridged comprehension gaps, reduced anxiety, and fostered a more approachable and relatable learning environment. Students highlighted the strategic and limited use of Arabic as effective in clarifying difficult concepts, addressing common challenges specific to Arabic speakers, and promoting confidence. Some also acknowledged the importance of balancing this approach to encourage greater immersion in English.

TABLE 13
OPINIONS ABOUT INSTRUCTORS' USE OF ARABIC TO TEACH ENGLISH

Participant	Briefly give your opinion on the use of Arabic by your instructor to teach English in your class.
Male 1	I find it helpful because it bridges the gap between what I know and what I'm learning, but I think using less Arabic would push us to practice English more.
Male 2	Using Arabic makes the lessons feel more approachable and helpful.
Male 3	I think it's a good strategy for beginners but might not be as necessary as we advance in learning.
Male 4	I like how Arabic is used only when absolutely needed. It ensures I stay focused on learning English.
Male 5	I think it's helpful because it highlights where we as Arabic speakers often struggle with English.
Female 1	I appreciate it because it makes learning English more relatable and less foreign.
Female 2	I find it beneficial, but I think we should try harder to understand English without translations.
Female 3	I think it's very useful because it reduces misunderstandings and helps us focus on improving our skills.
Female 4	I think using Arabic is helpful for me and my classmates, especially when learning new and challenging topics.
Female 5	I think using Arabic is important because it makes the lessons less intimidating and helps me feel more confident about asking questions.

C. Goals for Learning English

Table 14 presents students' stated goals for learning English. Many aimed to achieve fluency and confidence in English for various purposes, such as international travel, academic success, and career advancement. While translanguaging (the strategic use of Arabic alongside English) was valued for facilitating foundational understanding, students also highlighted the need for greater immersion in English to achieve their long-term objectives.

TABLE 14
GOALS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

Participant	Briefly explain your objectives for learning English as a foreign language (EFL) and whether the use of translanguaging by your EFL instructor is helping you (or not helping you) to achieve such objectives.
Male 1	My goal is to improve my speaking and listening skills to communicate confidently in professional settings. Translanguaging helps me grasp the basics.
Male 2	My main objective is to achieve fluency and comprehension for international travel and studies. The use of Arabic assists me to understand the lesson.
Male 3	I want to read English papers and research and write research papers in the future. Translanguaging is beneficial for understanding grammar rules and giving some instructions and information regarding the research paper formats and rules.
Male 4	My goal is to develop fluency to secure a job in a multinational company. Translanguaging helps me feel confident.
Male 5	I aim to improve my English for better career opportunities. Translanguaging helps me avoid confusion and understand faster.
Female 1	My goal is to pass international English exams like IELTS or TOEFL. Translanguaging is helpful, but I need more practice without Arabic to achieve this.
Female 2	I want to improve my English for academic success. Translanguaging supports my understanding of complex ideas, but more exposure to English would be better.
Female 3	My goal is to communicate confidently in English for both personal and professional use. Translanguaging is helping me gain a solid foundation.
Female 4	My main goal is to improve my ability to speak and write English fluently for academic purposes. Translanguaging is helping me achieve my goal because I can understand the lessons better and participate in class confidently.
Female 5	My goal is to develop my ability to speak and write English for academic and professional purposes. Translanguaging helps me fully understand the lessons and reduces confusion. However, I sometimes feel that relying too much on Arabic slows down my progress in thinking directly in English.

V. DISCUSSION

A. Research Question 1

Participating EFL students appeared aware of the meaning and application of translanguaging as a form of instruction different from a monolingual approach (see Figure 2). They also reported that this approach supported their EFL learning by clarifying complex concepts, bridging linguistic and cultural gaps, and addressing confusion, in line with the literature (e.g., Cenoz & Gorter, 2021; Lewis et al., 2012). This result differed from Alqahtani (2022), in which 51.3% of EFL learners were largely unaware of what translanguaging was.

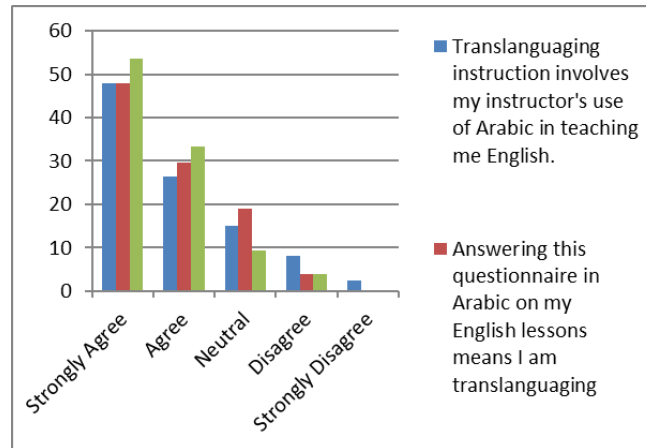


Figure 2. Awareness of Translanguaging

B. Research Question 2

Participants reported feeling motivated by translanguaging to achieve their desired level of English proficiency. Two-thirds (67.9%) attributed their high level of proficiency to the use of Arabic in class (see Figure 3). This supported the observation by Cenoz and Etxague (2013) that students with low language proficiency might need first language support to cope with the challenges of English.

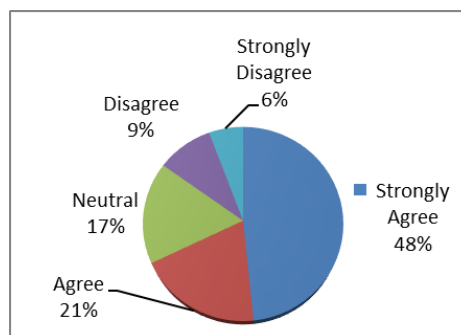


Figure 3. English Proficiency Is Result of Instructor's Use of Arabic in English Lessons

The overall responses indicated that translanguaging motivated participants to enjoy EFL lessons, persevere, collaborate with instructors and classmates, appreciate bilingualism, be competent in various life situations and professions, and see the importance of English in international communication. These motivational benefits were in line with the objectives of EFL education in Saudi Arabia (Elyas & Badawood, 2017).

C. Research Question 3

The dominant type of motivation experienced by EFL learners from translanguaging was extrinsic, as they reported feeling motivated to learn English to be competent in various life situations and professions; see the importance of English in international communication; participate in class; and contribute to the scientific, cultural, and economic development of their country. Furthermore, most participants showed a high level of motivation from translanguaging.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the motivational benefits of translanguaging in EFL classes in the monolingual Arabic environment of Saudi Arabia through the lens of self-determination theory. Based on an online questionnaire and written interview, students showed an understanding of what translanguaging is and a positive perception of its use in the classroom by native and non-native speakers alike. Most students were extrinsically motivated, as their goals for learning English were influenced by external factors. Future research could look for any significant differences in the motivational benefits of translanguaging in terms of age or gender. Similar research could also employ alternative theories of motivation.

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Hatim A. Masoudi earned his PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Memphis, Tennessee, in 2020. Prior to this, he completed a master's degree in teaching English as a Second Language at Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Canada, in 2014, and a bachelor's degree in English Language from Taibah University, Saudi Arabia, in 2009.

He is an associate professor of Applied Linguistics and the current Coordinator of the English Language and Translation Department at Taibah University, Medina, Saudi Arabia. Previously, he was Head of the English and Literature Department and a representative to the Caretaker Committee at Taibah University. His recent publications include works on the motivational benefit of translanguaging, the effectiveness of AI in language learning, and the impact of digital communication on language use in Saudi Arabia. His research interests center on language acquisition, digital linguistics, and language education.

Dr. Masoudi is a member of the International Association for Teaching English as a Second Language and the American Linguistics Association. ORCID ID: 0000-0003-3662-8222.