

[Page de garde]

HEC MONTRÉAL

**Impact de l'utilisation de l'intelligence artificielle dans la simplification de textes sur
l'expérience de lecture d'apprenants du français langue seconde**

par

Mila Maria Poisson Recasens

Sciences de la gestion

(Option Expérience Utilisateur dans un Contexte d'Affaires)

Sous la direction de

Sylvain Sénécal, PhD. et Consantinos Coursaris, PhD.

Mémoire présenté en vue de l'obtention

du grade de maîtrise ès sciences en gestion

(M. Sc.)

Avril 2025

© Mila Maria Poisson Recasens, 2025

Résumé

Cette étude porte sur l'utilisation d'outils d'intelligence artificielle (IA) pour faciliter la lecture d'articles de presse chez les apprenants du français langue seconde. Les avancées majeures de l'intelligence artificielle au cours des dernières années ont suscité l'émergence d'idées novatrices visant à améliorer l'expérience de lecture, notamment par le développement d'outils numériques adaptés. Nous examinons dans quelle mesure l'IA peut soutenir la lecture d'articles de presse en français chez des individus ayant un niveau intermédiaire de maîtrise de cette langue. Une expérimentation intra-sujets menée auprès de 19 participants a permis d'étudier l'influence de la complexité textuelle des articles sur la lisibilité objective, la fluidité du traitement cognitif et la compréhension de lecture, à l'aide de l'oculométrie, de questionnaires auto-administrés et de tests de compréhension. L'étude utilise une version originale comme base de référence, ainsi que deux versions simplifiées de chaque article. Les résultats indiquent que la complexité textuelle a un effet significatif sur le taux de saut de mots ainsi que sur la lisibilité perçue. Par ailleurs, le temps total de lecture exerce un effet négatif sur la lisibilité perçue et un effet négatif marginal sur la compréhension perçue. De plus, dans leur ensemble, les connaissances préalables des participants se révèlent être un modérateur significatif, modérant positivement les relations entre la facilité de traitement de la lecture et la lisibilité perçue et modérant marginalement les relations entre la facilité de traitement de la lecture et la compréhension perçue. Les résultats suggèrent que l'intelligence artificielle peut être utilisée pour simplifier le contenu d'articles de presse, contribuant à l'amélioration de la lisibilité et de la compréhension chez des apprenants d'une langue seconde.

Mots-clés : compréhension de lecture, lisibilité, lisibilité perçue, lecture en langue seconde, oculométrie, mouvements oculaires en lecture continue, analyse de trajectoires

Abstract

This study focuses on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to facilitate news article reading for learners of French as a second language *langue seconde*. The massive progress made in AI in recent years has stimulated innovative ideas to improve the reading experience, leading to the development of digital tools to improve reading. We examine how AI can facilitate reading newspaper articles in French for individuals who possess an intermediate level of linguistic proficiency in French. A within-subjects experiment involving 19 participants investigated how the objectively measured text readability of news articles influences perceived readability, reading processing ease, and reading comprehension using mixed-methods including eye-tracking, self-reported measures, and comprehension tests. The study employed a baseline (original version) and two simplified versions of each article, manipulating two levels of simplification. Text complexity was found to significantly influence both skipping rate and perceived readability. Additionally, total reading time exhibited a negative effect on perceived readability and a negative effect approaching significance on perceived comprehension. Furthermore, background knowledge, as a whole, emerged as a significant moderator, positively moderating the relationships between reading processing ease and perceived readability and marginally moderating the relationships between reading processing ease and perceived comprehension. The results suggest that artificial intelligence could be used to simplify news articles, thereby improving readability and comprehension for second-language learners.

Keywords: reading comprehension, readability, perceived text readability, second language reading, eye-tracking, eye movements during continuous reading, path analysis.

Table des matières

Table des matières

Résumé.....	3
Table des matières	5
Liste des abréviations	1
Avant-propos.....	2
Remerciements.....	3
Introduction	5
Mise en contexte.....	5
Objectifs de l'étude et questions de recherche	8
Tableau des contributions.....	10
Références.....	13
Chapitre 2: Article scientifique	15
Abstract.....	15
Introduction	16
Literature Review & Hypotheses	18
Readability and Reading Comprehension.....	19
Text simplification in language learning	21
Eye movements' role in reading cognitive processes	23
Methodology.....	33
Experimental design & stimuli	33
Participants	36
Procedure.....	37
Measures	37
<i>Self-assessed measures</i>	37
<i>Eye-tracking measures</i>	41

Apparatus.....	43
Data pre-processing.....	43
Data analysis.....	43
Results	45
Descriptive statistics	45
Correlations.....	47
Hypothesis testing.....	49
<i>H1 : Impact of text complexity on comprehension</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>H2 : Impact of text complexity on perceived readability.....</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>H3 : Impact of text complexity on eye movements in continuous reading.....</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>H4 & H5 : Prediction of perceived comprehension, objective comprehension and perceived readability through Reading Processing Ease</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>H6 : Impact of background knowledge on perceived readability and comprehension</i>	<i>58</i>
Discussion.....	62
Summary of results	62
Theoretical contributions.....	63
<i>Understanding variables at play in readers' perception of a text.....</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Addition of a variable of interest: perceived readability.....</i>	<i>64</i>
Managerial Implications	65
Limitations and research avenues.....	66
Conclusion	67
References.....	69
Chapitre 3 : Article managérial	80
La simplification de textes : un outil clé pour l'apprentissage	81
Étude sur l'impact de l'IA dans la simplification de textes	81
Garantir une simplification efficace	82
Conclusion	84
Chapitre 4 : Conclusion	84

Résultats	85
Contributions théoriques.....	86
Implications pratiques	87
Recherches futures.....	87
Remarques finales	88
Bibliographie	89
Annexes	90
Annexe 1 : Approbation éthique	90
Annexe 2 : Données démographiques	91
Annexe 3 : Éléments d'évaluation des compétences en français avec leurs traductions en anglais (LexTALE)	91
Annexe 4 : Échelles d'évaluations de lisibilité perçue, compréhension perçue et compréhension objective	91
Annexe 5 : Articles journalistiques complets dans les trois niveaux de complexité	93
Annexe 6 Présentation du stimuli	110
Annexe 7 : Questions des évaluations de compréhension objective	112
Annexe 8 : Évaluation du bagage linguistique	114

Liste des tableaux et des figures

Liste des figures

Chapitre 2

Figure 1 Integrative Research Model of Complexity, Processing, Readability, and Comprehension

Chapitre 3

Figure 2 Extraits d'un article dans ses trois niveaux de complexité

Annexes

Figure 3 Certificat d'attestation d'approbation éthique

Figure 4 Présentation de l'article 1 dans sa version originale

Figure 5 Présentation de l'article 2 dans sa version légèrement simplifiée

Figure 6 Présentation de l'article 3 dans sa version la plus simplifiée

Liste des tableaux

Chapitre 1

Tableau 1 Tableau des contributions

Chapitre 2

Table 2 Most Common Eye-Tracking Measures in Eye Movement Research in Continuous Reading

Table 3 Kandel-Moles Score Thresholds According to the Authors (Kandel & Moles, 1958)

Table 4 *Text Characteristics and Complexity between different Versions*

Table 5 Self-Assessed measures

Table 6 Background Knowledge Amongst Participants

Table 7 Means and Standard Deviations for Perceived Readability, Perceived Comprehension and Objective Comprehension scores at different Text Complexity Levels

Table 8 Means and Standard Deviations for Eye Movements at different Text Complexity Levels

Table 9 Correlations Between Eye-Tracking Measures

Table 10 Results of Global Tests for Impact of Complexity on Perceived and objective Comprehension and Perceived Readability

Table 11 Logistic Regression Estimates with Random Intercepts by Text Complexity

Table 12 Linear Regression Estimates with Random Intercepts by Text Complexity

Table 13 Means, Standard Deviations, and Three-Way Analyses of Variance in Eye-Movement measurements

Table 14 Pairwise Comparisons of Reading Time Measures Across Text Complexity Levels

Table 15 Linear Regression with Random Intercept Models for Perceived and Objective Comprehension without interaction with background knowledge

Table 16 Linear Regression with Random Intercept Model for perceived readability without interaction with background knowledge

Table 17 Linear Regression with Random Intercept Models for Perceived and Objective Comprehension with interaction with background knowledge

Table 18 Linear Regression with Random Intercept Model for perceived readability with interaction with background knowledge

Table 19 Summary Table of Hypotheses and Results

Annexes

Tableau 20 Questions démographiques

Tableau 20 Éléments de l'échelle des connaissances subjectives (background knowledge)

Tableau 21 Éléments de l'échelle d'évaluation de la lisibilité perçue (perceived readability)

Tableau 22 Éléments de l'échelle d'évaluation de la compréhension perçue (perceived comprehension)

Liste des abréviations

Utilisés en français dans le texte

L1 : langue première

L2 : langue seconde

IA : intelligence artificielle

Utilisés en anglais dans le texte, avec adaptation francophone

AI : artificial intelligence

AOI : Areas of Interest (aires visuelles d'intérêt)

BK : background knowledge (connaissances antérieures)

MCQ : multiple-choice questions (questions à choix multiples)

ML : machine learning (apprentissage machine)

L1 : native-language

L2 : second-language

SLA : second language acquisition (acquisition d'une langue seconde)

Avant-propos

Ce mémoire par article a été rédigé avec l'autorisation de la direction du programme de M. Sc. en gestion de HEC Montréal. Il comprend article scientifique ainsi qu'un article managérial basé sur les résultats de l'article scientifique. Tous les co-auteurs ont donné leur consentement pour que l'article soit inclus dans le mémoire. Le projet de recherche a été approuvé par le Comité d'éthique de la recherche (CER) de HEC Montréal : un certificat d'approbation a été délivré le 17 janvier 2022, puis un second certificat a été émis le 09 avril 2025 sous le numéro de projet 2022-4859.

Remerciements

Un vieil adage dit qu'il faut tout un village pour élever un enfant. Il en va de même pour la rédaction d'un mémoire. La réalisation de ce mémoire n'aurait pas été possible sans le soutien indéfectible de mon entourage.

Je tiens d'abord à remercier mes directeurs de mémoire, Sylvain Sénécal et Constantinos Coursaris, pour leur écoute, leur générosité dans le partage de leurs connaissances, leurs nombreux conseils et leur accompagnement tout au long de ce projet. Un immense merci à vous ainsi qu'à Pierre-Majorique Léger, pour m'avoir offert l'opportunité de réaliser ce projet au Tech3Lab.

Ce projet n'aurait pas été ce qu'il est sans l'appui de toute l'équipe du Tech3Lab. À Shang-Lin, un merci tout particulier pour ton soutien constant et ta patience remarquable lors de l'analyse des données – un défi de taille pour moi. À Élise, Salima, David et Frédérique, merci pour vos dépannages et vos conseils précieux lors de l'utilisation de l'écosystème de collecte. À Juan et Yara, merci d'avoir égayé mes longues journées de collecte et d'analyse au lab, à coups de blagues et de partages de collations.

Compléter un mémoire commence bien avant même l'idée de faire une maîtrise. Je remercie du fond du cœur toutes les personnes qui m'ont permis d'arriver jusqu'ici. Aller à l'université est un privilège immense, et j'en serai à jamais reconnaissante.

Un merci du cœur à ma mère, qui tout au long de mon parcours m'a accompagnée dans mes révisions jusqu'aux petites heures du matin pour que je ne sois pas seule, et qui m'a donné tout ce qu'elle a pu. À mon père, qui m'a appris que les montagnes se gravissent un pas à la fois, et qu'il ne faut jamais baisser les bras. À ma sœur, qui a toujours vu mon potentiel et m'a encouragée à le réaliser. À Suzanne, pour son soutien inestimable, dont je suis profondément reconnaissante.

Enfin, à mes amis et à mon copain : merci d'avoir su remonter mon moral quand il était au plus bas, pour vos encouragements dans les moments de découragement, et pour votre patience et compréhension face à mon indisponibilité durant cette dernière année. À The Row, merci d'avoir rendu mon expérience de maîtrise infiniment plus divertissante et même inoubliable.

Ce projet est pour moi une grande fierté dont je ne me serais pas crue capable, ayant su ce qui m'attendait. Je le dois à moi-même, ainsi qu'à celles et ceux qui m'ont soutenue à chaque étape.

Introduction

Mise en contexte

Quiconque suit l'actualité canadienne a certainement entendu parler de l'augmentation massive de l'immigration au Canada et au Québec, ainsi que des défis que cela pose pour les gouvernements (Carabin, 2025). Assurer l'intégration des nouveaux arrivants et maintenir la cohésion sociale figurent parmi les principales préoccupations des sociétés d'accueil.

Selon le recensement de 2021, environ 23% (Immigration, 2023) des Canadiens sont ou ont été des immigrants récents, avec des projections atteignant 30% d'ici 2036 (Immigration, 2023). En 2023, la croissance démographique a été largement alimentée par l'immigration internationale, représentant 98% de l'accroissement au Canada (Government of Canada, 2024) et 100% au Québec (Québec, 2024).

L'intégration des immigrants est un enjeu majeur, à la fois pour les sociétés d'accueil et pour les nouveaux arrivants eux-mêmes. Cette responsabilité partagée repose sur la mise en place de conditions favorables des deux côtés. Pour les immigrants, les principaux défis concernent l'apprentissage de la langue, l'intégration au marché du travail et l'adaptation culturelle (Myconsultant, s. d.). Au Québec, ces difficultés se manifestent principalement par la barrière linguistique, la non-reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences, les pratiques discriminatoires et le manque de réseaux sociaux (Béji & Pellerin, 2011).

Des études démontrent que l'accès à une information fiable, transparente et accessible constitue un facteur clé de l'intégration (Adamuti-Trache, 2013). Une maîtrise insuffisante de la langue d'accueil complique non seulement l'accès à l'information, mais nuit également à l'intégration économique, sociale et civique. Par exemple, parmi les nouveaux arrivants avec des compétences linguistiques limitées et peu d'expérience professionnelle, le taux de non-emploi quatre ans après l'immigration atteint 67% (Adamuti-Trache, 2013.) En revanche, ce taux tombe à 37 % chez ceux ayant amélioré leurs compétences linguistiques (Adamuti-Trache, 2013).

Sur le plan social, la maîtrise de la langue a un impact direct sur la création de liens interpersonnels. Parmi les immigrants ayant de faibles compétences linguistiques, 85 % n'ont noué aucune amitié en dehors de leur groupe ethnique après deux à quatre ans. Ce pourcentage chute à 33 % chez ceux ayant un bon niveau de langue (Adamuti-Trache, 2013). Une meilleure

compréhension linguistique favorise également l'autonomie, en facilitant l'accès à l'information pratique par les médias locaux (Alencar & Deuze, 2017).

Les médias jouent ainsi un rôle crucial en offrant non seulement des informations essentielles, mais aussi un moyen informel d'apprentissage linguistique et culturel (Adamuti-Trache, 2013; Alencar & Deuze, 2017). Cependant, cette opportunité reste limitée pour les nouveaux arrivants dont les compétences linguistiques sont insuffisantes, les empêchant de consommer efficacement les contenus médiatiques.

La responsabilité de l'intégration ne repose pas uniquement sur les nouveaux arrivants. Les autorités nationales jouent un rôle essentiel dans la création et la bonne gestion de ressources et initiatives favorisant l'intégration (CEFAN, 2025). Bien que diverses ressources existent pour faciliter ce processus, une piste prometteuse réside dans l'amélioration de l'accessibilité des contenus médiatiques.

Les journaux et autres supports d'information pourraient agir comme leviers d'intégration si leur contenu était adapté aux besoins des apprenants en langue seconde. Toutefois, les niveaux de complexité textuelle des articles de presse sont souvent trop élevés pour ces lecteurs (Adamuti-Trache, 2013), avec un style de niveau standard, soit entre quelque peu facile et quelque peu difficile à lire pour une personne dans sa langue d'origine (Flesch, 1948).

En novembre 2022, OpenAI a transformé le paysage numérique en lançant ChatGPT (OpenAI, San Francisco, USA), un agent conversationnel reposant sur des modèles conversationnels de pointe aux usages polyvalents. Cet outil est rapidement devenu populaire grâce à son accessibilité et la qualité de ses interactions (Québec, 2023) et offrant des avantages comme la réduction des coûts et du temps d'exécution (Deloitte Canada, 2024). Selon Gartner, les attentes envers l'intelligence artificielle atteignent un sommet (Jaffri & Khandabattu, 2024). Cet engouement suscite l'intérêt des chercheurs pour son potentiel à améliorer la lisibilité des textes, bien que les études se concentrent davantage sur le développement et l'évaluation d'outils de simplification (Odo, 2023).

La lisibilité, définie comme un construit multifacette, intégrant la facilité de compréhension et de traitement (Zhang & Gong, 2022), est étroitement liée à la compréhension de lecture. Ces thèmes ont été exhaustivement étudiés et ont mené à la création de plus de 200 formules de calcul de complexité textuelle (Dubay, 2004) ainsi que plusieurs modèles d'apprentissage machine et de

mouvements oculaires (EZ Reader; Reichle et al., 2003; SWIFT; Engbert et al., 2005). Les formules de complexité textuelle ont leurs limites, pour lesquelles elles ont été largement critiquées. Elles offrent des estimations basées sur des paramètres objectifs (ex. : longueur des mots, fréquence lexicale) mais ne reflètent pas toujours l'expérience réelle du lecteur (Bruce et al., 1981). Si les modèles de mouvements oculaires, conçus sur les conclusions d'études oculométriques, prédisent bien plus efficacement les comportements de lecture, ils ne sont pas accessibles au grand public.

Malgré l'intérêt porté à la lisibilité des textes et à la compréhension de lecture, la perception humaine de la lisibilité a reçu peu d'attention. Les rares études sur le sujet révèlent des divergences notables entre les scores calculés et les jugements subjectifs, apportant des nuances importantes (Liu et al., 2021; Heydari, 2012; François, 2014).

Bien que l'oculométrie ait été largement étudiée dans le cadre de la compréhension de lecture, sa contribution à l'analyse des perceptions demeure méconnue. Si les connaissances préalables, la reconnaissance des mots et l'extraction du sens sont reconnues comme des facteurs clés de la compréhension, leur rôle dans la perception de la lisibilité et de la compréhension reste à être identifié. De fait, les mécanismes sous-jacents, incluant les facteurs influençant ces perceptions et les mouvements oculaires associés, restent peu explorés. La principale ressource disponible, une liste compilant des règles d'or de la rédaction lisible rédigée par Dubay (2004), offre des recommandations imprécises.

Alors que la majorité des études oculométriques se concentre sur la lecture en langue maternelle, la recherche soulève des doutes quant à l'applicabilité des résultats à des lecteurs en langue seconde (Stajner, 2018).

Il est donc essentiel d'explorer la compréhension perçue et ses mécanismes sous-jacents dans ce contexte particulier. Il en demeure que comprendre comment les lecteurs perçoivent la facilité ou la difficulté d'un texte est essentiel pour évaluer son impact sur la lecture et la compréhension.

Dans un contexte d'immigration, où l'accès à l'information est un facteur clé d'intégration, l'intelligence artificielle (IA) pourrait jouer un rôle stratégique. En simplifiant les articles journalistiques, ces outils pourraient améliorer la compréhension et encourager les apprenants

en langue seconde à poursuivre leur apprentissage. Cependant, l'intelligence artificielle générative étant encore nouvelle, il est difficile de prédire comment les textes simplifiés par ces outils seront perçus et compris par des lecteurs en apprentissage du français. L'efficacité des intelligences artificielles à libre-accès dans ce domaine reste à démontrer. Peu d'études ont examiné leur capacité à simplifier des textes pour les lecteurs en langue seconde. Par ailleurs, bien que les mouvements oculaires soient étroitement liés à la compréhension objective, leur lien avec la perception de la lisibilité et de la compréhension perçue demeure peu connu.

Objectifs de l'étude et questions de recherche

Ce mémoire vise à évaluer dans quelle mesure l'intelligence artificielle en libre accès peut améliorer la lisibilité perçue, la compréhension perçue et la compréhension objective de textes journalistiques pour des apprenants du français comme langue seconde, sans chercher à identifier précisément les éléments textuels influençant ces perceptions. En complément, afin de comprendre les mécanismes sous-jacents à ces perceptions, ce mémoire vise à l'identification des relations entre la complexité textuelle, les perceptions de lisibilité et de compréhension, et les comportements de lecture.

Cet objectif a mené à l'élaboration de la question de recherche générale: *Dans le contexte des lecteurs en apprentissage d'une langue seconde, dans quelle mesure l'intelligence artificielle facilite-t-elle la lecture d'articles de presse ?*

Cette question globale se décline en quatre questions de recherche spécifiques, chacune explorant un aspect distinct de l'expérience de lecture et l'impact de la simplification de texte par l'IA.

Question de recherche 1 : *Quel est l'impact des versions simplifiées d'articles de presse générées par l'intelligence artificielle sur la compréhension perçue et la compréhension objective des lecteurs par rapport à la version originale?*

Question de recherche 2 : *Quel est l'impact des versions simplifiées d'articles de presse générées par l'intelligence artificielle sur la lisibilité perçue des lecteurs par rapport à la version originale?*

Question de recherche 3 : *Quel est l'impact des versions simplifiées d'articles de presse générées par l'intelligence artificielle sur l'effort de lecture des lecteurs par rapport à la version originale?*

Question de recherche 4 : *Quel est le mécanisme liant l'effort de lecture (manifesté par le comportement de lecture) à la lisibilité perçue, ainsi qu'à la compréhension perçue et objective?*

Pour ce faire, une expérience de lecture d'articles de presse a été menée en laboratoire à l'aide d'un modèle intra-sujets. Les participants ont lu trois articles de complexité variable, et leur comportement oculaire a été analysé à travers cinq mesures spécifiques. La lisibilité et la compréhension perçue ont été évaluées par autoévaluation, tandis que la compréhension objective a été mesurée par des questions à choix multiples. Des analyses statistiques ont ensuite permis d'examiner ces relations.

Cette étude s'appuie sur la *Eye-Mind Hypothesis* et l'*Immediacy Assumption* de Just et Carpenter (1980), selon lesquelles les fixations oculaires reflètent le traitement de l'information en temps réel. Le comportement oculaire indique ainsi les difficultés lors de la lecture. Ces théories, validées par la recherche (Rayner 1998, 2009 ; Rayner, Chace et al., 2006), font des mouvements oculaires un indicateur fiable de la facilité ou de la difficulté de compréhension.

Les résultats de cette étude contribuent à une meilleure compréhension de l'impact de l'intelligence artificielle sur la simplification de textes pour les apprenants en langue seconde. Ils permettent également d'explorer les mécanismes sous-jacents aux perceptions de lisibilité et de compréhension. Cette recherche offre des perspectives pratiques pour les éditeurs, en facilitant l'adaptation du contenu aux compétences linguistiques de leur audience. Pour les personnes immigrantes, cela favorise l'intégration sociale et culturelle. De plus, les professionnels bénéficient d'une meilleure compréhension et d'une productivité accrue dans leurs travaux de recherche.

À la suite de cette introduction suivront un article scientifique que mes codirecteurs et moi souhaitons soumettre à une revue scientifique ainsi qu'un court article managérial qui sera ultérieurement soumis à une revue professionnelle. Ce dernier met de l'avant les contributions pratiques et concrètes tirées des résultats de ma recherche. Une conclusion de la thèse complète le tout, suivie des annexes, où se trouvent les échelles de mesure utilisées ainsi que les stimuli et les articles dans leur intégralité.

Tableau des contributions

Cette thèse ayant été menée en collaboration avec mes codirecteurs et l'équipe de recherche du Tech3Lab, le tableau ci-dessous présente mes contributions à ce mémoire.

Tableau 1 Tableau des contributions

Étape du processus	Contribution
Définition des questions de recherche	Développement des questions de recherche – 60% Les questions de recherche ont été formulées avec l'aide de mes co-directeurs : Sylvain-Sénécal et Constantinos Coursaris.
Revue de littérature	Recherche et lecture d'articles scientifiques liés à la recherche – 95 % Rédaction de la revue de littérature – 90%
Développement du stimuli	Conception du stimuli N/A - Le stimuli utilisé a été tiré d'une étude antérieure réalisée par le Tech3Lab. Sa simplification a été faite par une ingénieure en apprentissage machine. Conception de la présentation visuelle du stimuli – 85% - L'équipe du Tech3Lab m'a aidée à identifier la présentation optimale pour cette recherche
Conception du design expérimental	Conception du protocole de l'expérience – 50% Le protocole a été révisé par l'équipe du Tech3Lab avant le début de la collecte de données.
Développement du questionnaire	Identification des éléments à évaluer – 70% J'ai identifié les questionnaires et sources d'information pour le développement avec du support de mes superviseurs de recherche

	Développement des questionnaires – 85% - Les items des questionnaires développés ont été améliorés à l'aide des commentaires de mes directeurs de recherche Traduction et évaluation des questionnaires développés – 80% - J'ai traduit les questionnaires en trois langues, qui ont ensuite subi une double-traduction par des collègues du Tech3Lab
Complétion du formulaire d'éthique	Rédaction de la demande au CER – 70% L'équipe du Tech3Lab a révisé le document pour s'assurer que la demande soit complétée adéquatement.
Exécution des prétests	Exécution de prétests – 90 % J'ai recruté et exécuté les prétests par moi-même, sous la supervision des assistant(e)s de recherche, qui m'ont fourni des pistes d'amélioration.
Recrutement des participants	Détermination des conditions de recrutement des participants – 100% Recrutement de participants – 90% - Les participants ont majoritairement été recrutés par prise de contact avec des centres de francisation et des publications dans des groupes. Gérer et donner les compensations aux participants – 30% - La gestion des compensations a été faite principalement par les assistant(e)s de recherche
Collecte de données	Exécution de la collecte de données – 100% J'ai exécuté la totalité des collectes de données de manière complètement autonome

Extraction et transformation des données	Extraire les données oculométriques – 75% - Des collègues du Tech3Lab m'ont aidée à comprendre le système informatique sur lequel étaient enregistrées les données Extraire et mettre en forme les données des questionnaires – 90% Mise en forme des données oculométriques – 65% - Le nettoyage des données a été réalisé de concert avec le statisticien du Tech3Lab
Analyse des données	Analyse des données oculométriques – 50% - Les analyses ont été vérifiées par le statisticien du Tech3Lab Interprétation des résultats – 75% - La réflexion menant à l'interprétation statistique des résultats a été alimentée par des conversations avec le statisticien du Tech3Lab ainsi que mes directeurs de recherche
Rédaction	Rédaction de l'article scientifique – 75% Rédaction de l'article managérial – 80% La rédaction des articles a été améliorée grâce à plusieurs commentaires de mes co-directeurs.

Références

Adamuti-Trache, M. (2013). Language Acquisition Among Adult Immigrants in Canada : The Effect of Premigration Language Capital. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(2), 103-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713612442804>

Alencar, A., & Deuze, M. (2017). News for assimilation or integration? Examining the functions of news in shaping acculturation experiences of immigrants in the Netherlands and Spain. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(2), 151-166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323117689993>

Béji, K., & Pellerin, A. (2011). Intégration socioprofessionnelle des immigrants récents au Québec : Le rôle de l'information et des réseaux sociaux. *Relations industrielles*, 65(4), 562-583. <https://doi.org/10.7202/045586ar>

Carabin, A. F., François. (2025, janvier 28). *Le gouvernement Legault va présenter un nouveau «modèle d'intégration» des immigrants.* Le Devoir. <https://www.ledevoir.com/politique/quebec/836695/gouvernement-legault-va-presenter-nouveau-modele-integration-immigrants>

CEFAN. (2025). *L'enjeu de l'immigration au Québec.* L'enjeu de l'immigration au Québec. https://www.axl.cefan.ulaval.ca/amnord/Quebec-4immigration.htm#6._La_difficile_gestion_de_lenjeu_migratoire

Deloitte Canada. (2024). *L'état de l'IA générative dans les entreprises - perspectives du troisième trimestre : Une perspective canadienne pour des solutions d'IA génératives plus exhaustives* (No. 24–9715586). Deloitte S.E.N.C.R.L. <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/ca/Documents/deloitte-analytics/ca-the-state-of-generative-ai-in-the-enterprise-a-canadian-perspective-aoda-fr.pdf>

Government of Canada, S. C. (2024, mars 27). *Le Quotidien — Estimation de la population du Canada : Forte croissance démographique en 2023.* <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240327/dq240327c-fra.htm>

Immigration, R. et C. C. (2023, décembre 20). *Contexte.* <https://www.canada.ca/fr/immigration-refugies-citoyennete/campagnes/avenir-systeme-immigration-canada/contexte.html>

Myconsultant. (s. d.). *My Consultant.* My Consultant: Canada Immigration, Express Entry, Permanent Residence. Consulté 29 mars 2025, à l'adresse <https://www.myconsultant.ca/>

Québec. (2023, septembre 18). *Le potentiel économique de l'IA générative : La prochaine frontière de la productivité*. Vecteurs économie et innovation. <https://www.economie.gouv.qc.ca/objectifs/informer/vecteurs/vecteurs-economie-et-innovation-detail/le-potentiel-economique-de-lia-generative-la-prochaine-frontiere-de-la-productivite>

Québec, I. de la statistique du. (2024, mars 27). *Croissance migratoire record de 217 600 personnes au Québec en 2023*. Institut de la statistique du Québec. <https://statistique.quebec.ca/fr/communiqu%C3%A9/croissance-migratoire-record-217-600-personnes-au-quebec-en-2023>

Stajner, S. (2018). How to Make Troubleshooting Simpler ? Assessing Differences in Perceived Sentence Simplicity by Native and Non-native Speakers. *LREC 2018 Workshop « Improving Social Inclusion Using NLP: Tools, Methods and Resources »*.

Chapitre 2: Article scientifique

Impact of AI summarized news articles on readability for learners of French as a second language

Abstract

This study focuses on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to facilitate news article reading for learners of French as a second language *langue seconde*. The massive progress made in AI in recent years has stimulated innovative ideas to improve the reading experience, leading to the development of digital tools to improve reading. We examine how AI can facilitate reading newspaper articles in French for individuals who possess an intermediate level of linguistic proficiency in French. A within-subjects experiment involving 19 participants investigated how the objectively measured text readability of news articles influences perceived readability, reading processing ease, and reading comprehension using mixed-methods including eye-tracking, self-reported measures, and comprehension tests. The study employed a baseline (original version) and two simplified versions of each article, manipulating two levels of simplification. Text complexity was found to significantly influence both skipping rate and perceived readability. Additionally, total reading time exhibited a negative effect on perceived readability and a negative effect approaching significance on perceived comprehension. Furthermore, background knowledge, as a whole, emerged as a significant moderator, positively moderating the relationships between reading processing ease and perceived readability and marginally moderating the relationships between reading processing ease and perceived comprehension. The results suggest that artificial intelligence could be used to simplify news articles, thereby improving readability and comprehension for second-language learners.

Keywords: reading comprehension, readability, perceived text readability, second language reading, eye-tracking, eye movements during continuous reading, path analysis.

Introduction

The use of news stories in the context of second language acquisition is a well-established practice, as evidenced by Allen's (2009) findings.

The recent emergence of sophisticated artificial intelligence-driven technologies has the potential to simplify textual content efficiently and effectively. At the time this article is being written, expectations towards AI tools are at their peak (Jaffri & Khandabattu, 2024). Regarded as a disruptive innovation, this advance generates considerable interest among researchers due to its potential for enhancing text readability (Murphy Odo, 2023).

However, text simplification through AI could be an interesting avenue to increase the use of media by language-learners. For newcomers, an increase in the consumption of media from their host country could be beneficial to their integration and well-being, as long as newspapers' articles are accessible to them.

There is evidence that while not an immediate strategy, consuming newspapers and media becomes critical for immigrants' long-term integration once the urgent aspects of resettlement are addressed (Alencar & Deuze, 2017). Media consumption serves as informal language training (Adamuti-Trache, 2013) and exposes individuals to cultural and social norms of their host country (Alencar & Deuze, 2017). Language proficiency is pivotal: Adamuti-Trache (2013) found that after 2–4 years, 85% of individuals with poor language skills reported no or few non-ethnic friendships, compared to 33% of those with strong skills. Language barriers, including reading difficulties, can lead to persistent challenges in education and employment (Okraïnec et al., 2017).

Limited exposure to host-country media may drive individuals to rely on media from their country of origin, reinforcing cultural distance (Danzer & Yaman, 2013). Yet, comprehension is essential for any reading task and serves as a means of social integration. Accessible reading materials are therefore crucial for newcomers with limited language proficiency to engage with host-country media effectively.

Despite an abundance of research on text readability using formulas and eye-tracking algorithms (see Nahatame, 2021; Rayner, 1998, 2009 for reviews), there is only limited work specifically dedicated on readability as perceived by humans. This is problematic, as the few studies conducted on this subject reach a consensus: perceived readability differs from that calculated

by machine and introduces greater nuance. Furthermore, while eye-tracking has been widely studied in discourse comprehension over decades (see Rayner, 1998, 2009 for a review), findings remain inconsistent. Consensus on interpreting eye movements in relation to readability and comprehension is still lacking, and studies addressing readers' perceived readability and comprehension are particularly rare.

This research gap is even more pronounced for second-language. Most studies focus on native-language readers, but evidence suggests that native-language and second-language do not evaluate or perceive in the same manner (Stajner, 2018). As a result, existing interpretations of eye movement patterns in native-language contexts may not transfer to language learners.

Understanding how language learners perceive and comprehend AI-simplified texts is essential to leveraging these tools for media accessibility. The aim of this investigation is to contribute to the existing body of eye-tracking research by establishing the impact of AI-driven text simplification on reading behaviors, comprehension, and readability of texts among second-language French learners. To this end, it examines a concept that has received minimal attention in the research community: experience during reading. By investigating perceived readability and comprehension, we explored the relationships among text complexity, readability, and comprehension while analyzing the role of eye movements. Additionally, we aimed to enhance understanding of the interplay between eye movement behavior and readability and reading comprehension, contributing to the existing literature.

The questions we aimed to answer were

RQ 1: *What is the impact of AI-generated simplified versions of news articles on readers' perceived comprehension and objective understanding compared to the original version?*

RQ 2: *What is the impact of AI-generated simplified versions of news articles on readers' perceived readability compared with the original version?*

RQ 3: *What is the impact of AI-generated simplified versions of news articles on readers' reading processing ease compared with the original version?*

RQ 4: *What is the mechanism linking reading ease - manifested by reading behavior - to perceived readability, as well as to perceived and objective comprehension?*

By answering these questions our study directly responds to Heydari and Riazi's (2012) call for further examination of the impact of human judgment in the evaluation of readability. It demonstrates that eye movements, as manifestations of reading difficulties, can serve as predictors of perceived readability.

A within-subjects experiment with 19 participants exposed to three conditions was conducted to investigate how the textual complexity of news articles influences perceived readability and reading comprehension, using eye-tracking data and self-reported measures.

Our findings make two theoretical contributions. First, the results suggest that background knowledge moderates the relationship between eye movements and perceived readability, with low background knowledge readers often relying on superficial understanding, while high background knowledge readers maintain stable perceptions despite variations in reading behavior. This contributes to Tighe & Schatschneider's (2016) research stream on individual differences in reading comprehension and supports prior work emphasizing the role of BK in text processing (e.g., Kintsch, 1988; McNamara et al., 1996). Second, our findings challenge the reliance on traditional readability formulas—which often use surface-level textual features such as sentence and word length (e.g., Gunning, 1952; Kandel, L. & Moles A., 1958), spelling properties (as in FABRA model by Wilkens et al., 2022), or word predictability (as in EZ Reader model by Reichle et al., 2003) by demonstrating the importance of accounting for reader-specific cognitive variables. This contributes to the growing body of research advocating for more dynamic and reader-centered approaches to assessing textual readability (e.g., Crossley et al., 2019; Graesser et al., 2014).

These findings offer practical implications for publishers and researchers seeking to enhance text accessibility in journalistic and business contexts. Furthermore, the study underscores the potential of AI-driven text simplification to improve readability and enhance media accessibility, especially for language learners. Results indicate that open-access AI summarizers can significantly boost perceived readability for these readers, offering a valuable tool for publishers looking to make their content more accessible.

Literature Review & Hypotheses

Readability and Reading Comprehension

Zhang & Gong (2023) describe readability as a multifaceted construct that includes ease of comprehension and ease of processing, showcasing the inextricable relation between readability and comprehension.

Comprehension is not a passive outcome of readable text but rather the result of an intricate sequence of active cognitive processes. K. D. Allen & Hancock (2009) provide a comprehensive and accurate definition of comprehension stating it as "the active engagement of meaning creation through a process of mediation between reader, text, and context factor" (p. 125.). This definition encompasses three main elements of comprehension: the reader, the text and the context in which the text is situated, with the reader being responsible to connect the different elements in order to make sense of what they read. This mediating task of connecting different elements is what we refer to as processing. It involves cognitive processes ranging from accessing one's lexicon to constructing situation models.

Reading comprehension has a long history of research into the factors involved in the comprehension process, with over 200 formulas aiming to estimate reading difficulty (DuBay, 2004). Most studies on this topic do not directly address readability. The studies sought to measure complexity, which indirectly improved readability. Nonetheless these formulas serve as a measure of it, as one of the key aspects of text readability is comprehension. Traditional readability formulas have evolved to machine learning models and computational eye movement models such as EZ Reader (Reichle et al., 2003) and SWIFT (Engbert et al., 2005), which predict eye movements to reflect reading ease of processing and support comprehension. These models, along with guidelines from Hackos & Stephens (1997), provide a more comprehensive framework for readability, suggesting strategies such as avoiding jargon, complex structures, and cultural references, while favoring the present tense and active voice. While readability formulas and machine learning models offer insights into how text features and reading ease of processing interact, they are ultimately tools aimed at facilitating comprehension.

The most modern tools such as machine learning models and eye-movement models offer more accurate and reliable results than traditional formulas. In example, in the case of the EZ-Reader (Reichle et al., 1998) it is possible to make modifications to adapt them to different use cases (i.e.,

biological or physiological constraints; Reichle, 2011) and make the results more accurate. In fact, readability formulas have faced decades of criticism for lacking validity. Being less complex than modern models, they cannot take in account as many factors involved in reading and therefore lack precision and overlook the reading ease. As stated by Britton et al. (1980) they "cannot correctly predict how a particular reader will interact with a particular book" (p. 1).

Despite the criticisms, these formulas are still used as they are more accessible and easier to learn to use and to apply. Incorporating human judgment to the evaluation of text complexity and readability is explored as a potential solution to this shortcoming. Heydari & Riazi (2012) suggest that relying solely on readability formulas may be inadequate, emphasizing the need to incorporate human judgments. Few studies, such as Nandhini & Balasundaram (2013) Liu et al. (2021), and Heydari & Riazi (2012), have compared human readability ratings with formula-based scores, highlighting discrepancies between the two. Schwartz et al. (1970) similarly found that readers often make more nuanced and reliable readability judgments than formulas. It is worth noting that these studies were conducted in the participants' native language, whereas Stajner (2018) demonstrated that second-language speakers do not always perceive simplified sentences as simpler.

As mentioned, comprehension is not a passive outcome and requires cognitive processes to make sense out of a text. Background knowledge plays a crucial role in processing and the ability to make inferences, as it provides additional information that helps the reader draw connections between the information presented in the text (Just & Carpenter, 1980). A reader's ability to infer meaning depends on whether he or she possesses the knowledge assumed in the text, which directly affects comprehension (Just & Carpenter, 1980; Nahatame, 2021; Rets & Rogaten, 2021). Background knowledge refers to all the information, concepts, experiences and mental patterns a person possesses. Langer (1984) categorized all types of background knowledge in three groups: Highly Organized Knowledge (i.e., concepts, definitions), Partially Organized Knowledge (i.e., examples, characteristics), and Diffusely Organized Knowledge (i.e., associations, past experiences). Bailin and Grafstein's (2016) widely accepted theory of readability further emphasizes syntax, vocabulary, text structure, visual presentation, and reader characteristics, with background knowledge playing an important role in comprehension. Background knowledge has been shown to impact comprehension (Rets & Rogaten, 2021). Langer (1984) found that passage-specific knowledge (the knowledge that a reader possesses on the specific subject of a given text) reliably predicts comprehension, as readers comprehend and learn more effectively when information matches their background knowledge (Anderson et al., 1978; Boscolo & and Mason, 2003).

By bridging theoretical concepts with empirical findings, our model aims to advance our understanding of how complexity, processing ease and reader-specific factors such as background knowledge interact to shape readability and comprehension in the reading experience.

Text simplification in language learning

Text simplification is a widely used method when aiming to improve students' reading comprehension. Initially, two main approaches to text simplification emerged: the intuitive and the structured methods. The intuitive method, which is widely used by language teachers (Allen, 2009; Young, 1999; Simensen, 1987; Bamford, 1984), relies on the teacher's judgment about factors that aid students' comprehension. In contrast, the structured method is more structured and mechanical, as it applies systematic simplification rules based on the reader's proficiency level, such as using only simple verb tenses. Recently, research has shown that AI-driven simplification has the potential to enhance readability (D. Allen, 2009; Murphy Odo, 2023; Stajner, 2018; Wilkens et al., 2022) and may prove more effective for learners who have already attained a certain level of second-language proficiency (Rets & Rogaten, 2021).

The use of simplified texts in learning is a controversial topic with mixed findings (see Crossley et al., 2012 for a review). Some argue that authentic texts are too complex for learners, while others believe that simplified texts undermine comprehension and do not reflect real-life language. Long & Ross (1993) and Yano et al. (1994), compared comprehension scores of three versions of a text: authentic, simplified, and elaborated. Results show that simplified texts yield higher comprehension scores than authentic versions, supporting that simplification facilitates comprehension and interaction (Goodman & Freeman, 1993; Murphy Odo, 2023), allowing learners to expand their knowledge. Conversely, some researchers support that simplification does not necessarily improve comprehension (Marzban & Davaji, 2015; Young, 1999) and may even decrease motivation for intermediate students (Marzban & Davaji, 2015). Critics further suggest that simplification may disrupt textual coherence (D. Allen, 2009; Siddharthan, 2006), hinder the acquisition of knowledge for reading authentic texts (Allen, 2009), or distort meaning by altering the authentic structure of the language and limiting complexity. While some see value in selective simplification, they argue that its effectiveness is likely to depend on factors such as the degree and type of simplification (D. Allen, 2009; Crossley et al., 2012; Tweiissi, 1998). Regarding second-language learners, Stajner (2018) observed that they may not always perceive

simplified sentences as easier to process. Building on Odo's (2023) work and recommendations to focus on higher-proficiency learners, the present study focuses on text simplification for intermediate proficiency (i.e., A2-basic and B1-intermediate French) learners as automatic text simplification might not be noticeable or effective for lower proficiency second-language learners due to insufficient reductions in complexity (Odo, 2023). According to the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM, 2024), A2-level French is intended for individuals who understand simple sentences, frequently used expressions, and can communicate in basic, everyday contexts. In contrast, B1-level French is suitable for those who can comprehend a broader range of topics in clear, standard language. Consequently, A2 texts featured shorter sentences, simpler vocabulary, and more explicit explanations, while B1 texts included more complex content and less simplified language.

From the aforementioned findings, we propose the following hypothesis.

H1. Compared to a more complex text, a text simplified to the current level of linguistic proficiency of the reader will be associated with higher perceived and objective comprehension.

In a study comparing the assessment of difficulty level by readability formulas and human judgment, Heydari and Riazi (2012) found significantly different results between the assessments. They concluded that human judgment contributes to a more complete and accurate assessment of text difficulty. In the present study, we sought to further investigate the relationships between text complexity and perceived readability and text complexity and perceived and objective comprehension. Our objective was twofold: first, to expand upon the findings of Heydari and Riazi (2012) by measuring perceived readability and comprehension; and second, to assess the well-established relationship between text complexity and objective comprehension. Building on Stajner's (2018) idea that readability and comprehension improve when text simplification matches a learner's proficiency and linking it to Heydari and Riazi's (2012) call for human assessment of text complexity. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H2: Compared to a more complex text, a text simplified to the current level of linguistic proficiency of the reader will be perceived as more readable.

As mentioned, a factor playing an important role in text comprehension is the capacity to draw upon one's background knowledge to contextualize new information. This is evidenced by the findings of Rets and Rogaten (2021), who highlight the influence of background knowledge on reading comprehension. Their research suggests that individuals with pertinent background

knowledge are better equipped to process and comprehend new content. It is therefore crucial to gain an understanding of the interaction between background knowledge and eye movements in order to gain a full understanding of reading comprehension.

Eye movements' role in reading cognitive processes

Eye-tracking allows the assessment of moment-by-moment information processing and comprehension in a more ecologically valid environment (Conklin et al., 2018) than previous methods. Prior to the introduction of this technology, the assessment of cognitive processes in discourse processing relied on techniques such as reading aloud, *think aloud* methods, or questioning observed passages and behaviours (Chall, 1996; Dale & Chall, 1949; Dubay, 2004). Although accurate, these methods did not produce as much rich and detailed data as eye-tracking, where data capture is continuous.

Eye-tracking is a widely employed research method for investigating cognitive processes during continuous text reading and their relationship with reading comprehension. Its popularity stems from its non-invasive nature and closely replicating natural reading conditions (Godfroid, 2019; Roberts & Siyanova-Chanturia, 2013). Just and Carpenter's (1980) widely accepted Eye-Mind Hypothesis and immediacy assumption, suggest that fixations reflect real-time information processing and information processing occurs as reading proceeds, rather than being accumulated and deferred. This theory also posits that fixation duration reflects the ease or difficulty of processing the word being read. The concepts developed are fundamental to eye-tracking research. The eye-mind theory and immediacy assumption laid the foundations for establishing the relationships between eye movements and the underlying cognitive processes. Rayner's extensive research has made a significant contribution to this field by associating specific eye movement behaviors with word and discourse processing (Rayner, 1998; Rayner et al., 2006). Numerous studies support the relationships established in this theory, as reviewed by Rayner in 2009. More recently, Southwell et al. (2020) reinforced the robustness of the connection between eye movements and reading comprehension.

Eye movements serve as an indicator of the ease with which a text is read, as they reflect the difficulties readers experience in understanding the text (Rayner et al., 2006). Eye movement behaviour can be divided into two distinct components: fixations and saccades. Fixations are defined as periods during which the eye remains stationary in order to facilitate the acquisition of new information. It is during these periods that new information is acquired (Rayner, 1998). Saccades are defined as periods during which the eyes are in motion, guiding the eye from one

fixation point to another. Progressive saccades move forward in the text, while regressive saccades are referred to as regressions, going back to a prior section of the text. This allows for the continuous processing of information and reading.

Metrics diversity

The relationship between eye movements and text readability is well-established, with substantial evidence supporting the existence of this connection. Nevertheless, identifying the precise mechanisms underlying these processes remains a significant challenge, given the inherent complexity of text comprehension and reading processes.

Intrinsically linked to comprehension and readability, Reading Processing Ease is a higher-order construct that reflects the overall ease with which a reader processes written text. It is assessed using global eye-tracking measures, which provide a holistic view of reading behavior. However, to better understand the underlying mechanisms contributing to processing ease, it is useful to distinguish between two more specific sub-constructs that are encompassed in Reading Processing Ease: Word Recognition Ease and Sense-Making Ease, which capture different stages of cognitive processing. To gain deeper insight into how these processes unfold, eye-tracking metrics are typically divided into global and local measures, each reflecting distinct aspects of cognitive processing. While global measures reflect overall processing ease, local measures shed light on specific word-level processes. Together, they help clarify what underlies the global reading experience. The application of global measures, such as mean fixation duration and mean saccade length, provides an overview of the ease or difficulty of processing across the entire text. However, these measures do not allow for the identification of specific sources of difficulty. In contrast, local measures concentrate on smaller units of text, such as individual words or phrases, thereby providing detailed insights that are valuable for the analysis of discourse processing. Nevertheless, these measures are less reliable for measuring overall comprehension (Southwell, 2020). To achieve a more comprehensive understanding of discourse processing, it is recommended to combine both types of measures (Mézière et al., 2023).

Table 1 outlines common oculometric movement-based measures in reading research (see Godfroid, 2019; Rayner, 1998 for reviews and comments), indicating the level of information processing and whether they reflect early-stage (word recognition) or late-stage processing (sense-making). It is to be noted the operationalization of the measures is inconsistent and has varied by study (Godfroid, 2019). Measures in bold are used in this study.

Table 2 Common Eye-Tracking Measures in Eye Movement Research in Continuous Reading

Information Processing level	Information Processing stage	Measure	Ocular behavior components	Used in
Global	-	Reading rate	Words read per unit of time	Inhoff, 2018 ; Zhang & Gong, 2022
Global	-	Regression-rate	Saccades (% backward saccades among all saccades)	Inhoff, 2018 ; Nahatame, 2021; Zhang & Gong, 2022
Global	-	Average saccade length	Saccades	Nahatame, 2021 ; Southwell et al. 2020; Tywoniw, 2023
Hybrid : Global or Local	Early	Skipping rate	Fixations (% of unfixated words)	Inhoff, 2018; Nahatame, 2021; Strukelj & Niehorster, 2018; Zhang & Gong, 2022
Hybrid : Global or Local	Late	Total reading time	Fixations + saccades	Strukelj & Niehorster, 2018
Hybrid : Local	Early or Late	Regression-path duration (also called Go-past time)	Fixations + saccades	Inhoff et al., 2018; Mézière et al., 2023
Local	Early	First fixation duration	Fixations	Strukelj & Niehorster, 2018; Rets & Rogaten, 2021
Local	Early	Average fixation duration	Fixations	Inhoff, 2018
Local	Early	First-pass reading time	Fixations	Strukelj & Niehorster, 2018
Local	Late	Re-reading time	Fixations + saccades	Inhoff, 2018

These measures are resilient to minor eye-tracking errors, making them well-suited for realistic reading contexts (Rayner et al., 2006; Southwell et al., 2020). Among these, total reading time is a preferred metric for capturing global effects, as it provides insights into the overall cognitive effort exerted during reading. Furthermore, it is one of the most reported measures in the field of second language acquisition and bilingualism research, facilitating direct comparisons with existing studies (Godfroid, 2019). However, while total reading time provides a general overview, it is correlated with more precise local measures that analyze specific aspects of reading behaviour. The skipping rate is a hybrid measure that offers both global and local perspectives,

particularly in the context of early-stage processing. On a global scale, it reflects broader factors such as text difficulty and reading strategies. For instance, more difficult texts typically reduce skipping rates, as readers allocate more time to processing. At the local level, the skipping rate captures early processing decisions, such as the recognition of a word in parafoveal vision prior to the eyes landing on it (Godfroid, 2019). In the present study, which focuses on reading behaviours in continuous texts, the skipping rate is primarily interpreted as a global measure. In this context, it represents the mean proportion of words skipped across the entire text, thereby providing an aggregate view of reading behaviour (Cop et al., 2015; Rayner et al., 2006).

Local measures provide detailed insights into cognitive activities occurring at the word level and are used to assess Word Recognition Ease as part of the Processing Ease. These include lexical access (Rayner, 1998) and the comprehension challenges associated with integrating words within a contextual framework (Mézière et al., 2023). These measures are typically classified into two categories: early measures and late measures. Early-stage measures reflect rapid, often unconscious processes involved in the initial acquisition of information such as word recognition and lexical access (Clifton et al., 2007; Rayner, 1998). Examples of such measures include first fixation duration, single fixation duration, refixation duration, gaze duration, first-pass reading time, and first subgaze (Strukelj & Niehorster, 2018). In contrast, local late measures are used to assess Sense-Making Ease as part of the Processing Ease, as they reflect disruptions in the typical reading process and signal the need for reassessment due to processing difficulties. Examples include the duration of the regression path, regression rate, and second-pass reading time (Godfroid, 2019). These measures provide insights into the cognitive processes that are involved in the comprehension of written material.

The duration of fixations is directly linked to the complexity of information processing as it reflects ease or difficulty of processing (Rayner & Duffy, 1986). It has been shown that text complexity (Nahatame, 2021; Rayner et al., 2006), recognition difficulty (Cop et al., 2015; Inhoff & Rayner, 1986) due to length (Reichle et al., 1998) or frequency (Rayner, 1998; Zhang & Gong, 2023), word predictability (Fernández et al., 2014) and word complexity (Zhang & Gong, 2023) have an impact on fixation duration due to variations of processing difficulty. Zhang and Gong (2023) reviewed that readers tend to devote more time to processing challenging linguistic patterns, characterised by longer fixation durations, increased number of regressions and lower skipping rates. These patterns include sophisticated vocabulary, complex structures, and texts with fewer connectives and reduced semantic overlap between sentences. It is noteworthy that fixations shorter than 100 ms are unlikely to reflect meaningful word processing (Sereno & Rayner, 2003).

The first-pass reading time, defined as the sum of all fixation durations during the initial pass, is a key metric for assessing language processing (Godfroid, 2019). This measure is a reflection of unconscious text processing (Catrysse et al., 2018). Rets and Rogaten (2021) observed that the first-pass reading time of second-language learners increased when they were presented with simplified texts. The present study chose first-pass reading time over average fixation duration, as this allows for a more comprehensive analysis of continuous reading and written discourse processing.

To the best of our knowledge, no prior study has directly examined the relationship between first-pass reading time and comprehension. However, the Eye-Mind Hypothesis (Just & Carpenter, 1980) suggests that fixations correspond to cognitive processing tied to ongoing comprehension. Rayner's research (1998) further highlights that prolonged fixation times often indicate increased processing effort, particularly in word acquisition and recognition. It seems reasonable to posit that this relationship is amplified in second-language learners, who face additional linguistic challenges. In such cases, longer durations for word recognition may be a crucial factor in facilitating text comprehension.

Forward saccades are executed to acquire new information, while regressive saccades reflect a need for further processing (Godfroid, 2019). These behaviors are subject to the influence of text complexity. The extant literature indicates that longer, less frequent words and challenging text structures result in shorter saccades and more frequent regressions (Castelhano & Rayner, 2009; Conklin et al., 2018; Cop et al., 2015). Furthermore, Rayner (2009) posits that text complexity is linked to higher regression frequency.

Regressive saccades occur in a variety of contexts. Regressions can occur inside a given word or from a word to another. Intra-word regressions refer to eye movements that occur within the same word, whereas inter-word regressions occur when a reader shifts their gaze backward from one word to a previous one. Intra-word regressions may indicate processing difficulty or an initial landing on the word that is less precise (Inhoff et al., 2018; Rayner, 1998). Inter-word regressions often correct eye movements but also signal difficulty integrating the current word with prior context. This suggests a misunderstanding of the discourse (Rayner, 1998; Roberts & Siyanova-Chanturia, 2013). Therefore, regressions to preceding sections of the text suggest processing challenges, whereas bypassing the most recently fixated word indicates successful resolution. The duration of a regression-path can be employed as a metric to quantify the time required to

overcome these difficulties (Radach & Kennedy, 2004; Rayner & Pollatsek, 2006; Reilly & Radach, 2006).

Rets and Rogaten (2021) observed that simplified texts resulted in longer initial reading times for second-language readers but shorter subsequent reading times, indicating that processing challenges were effectively addressed during the initial reading. Among the reassessment measures are the re-reading time and regression-path duration, which are measured in this study. Furthermore, the initial reading time was longer for the simplified texts than for the original versions.

The role of regressions in readability and comprehension appears nuanced and context-dependent. Although some studies (Inhoff et al., 2019; Parshina et al., 2022) suggest that effective comprehension is associated with fewer regressions, most of the research indicates an opposite relationship. Specifically, re-reading behaviours, such as making regressions to reprocess challenging words, can enhance comprehension (Schotter et al., 2014; Wonnacott et al., 2016). Rayner et al. (2006) found that long regressions occur only when necessary for comprehension, thus providing further support for the idea that the relationship between regressions and comprehension is positively correlated. Mézière et al. (2023) identified regression-path duration as a highly effective predictor of comprehension, showing the strongest positive correlation among the reading measures studied. They argue that corrective behaviors, such as regressions, allow readers to engage more deeply with challenging content, thereby enhancing comprehension. Similarly, Hyönä et al. (2002) and Schotter et al. (2014) found that rereading prior text segments is associated with improved comprehension, demonstrating its value as a strategy for overcoming difficulty. However, they note that this approach is more common and effective among skilled readers. Inhoff et al. (2018) expanded on these findings by examining the relationship between corrective eye movements and reassessment measures, reporting a strong link between comprehension and processing efforts to resolve misunderstandings.

Global measures analysis in eye-tracking encompasses both fixations and saccades, highlighting how readers allocate visual attention during text processing. Parafoveal processing plays a crucial role in this dynamic by enabling shorter fixation times or word skipping entirely. The perceptual span extends asymmetrically around the fixation point, spanning 3 - 4 characters to the left and 14 -15 characters to the right in alphabetically spelled languages such as French (Den Buurman

et al., 1981; McConkie & Rayner, 1975; Rayner et al., 1980; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1981; Rayner & McConkie, 1976). Function words are more frequently skipped due to their shorter length, higher frequency, and greater predictability compared to content words (Brysbaert, 2013; Luke & Christianson, 2016; Vitu, 2012). Moreover, studies have consistently demonstrated that text complexity negatively correlates with skipping rates (Cop et al., 2015; Inhoff & Rayner, 1986; Reichle et al., 1998), illustrating how global eye movement patterns adjust to the cognitive demands of reading. The act of skipping indicates an efficient and fluid reading pattern, and thus, it can be posited that more readable texts facilitate smoother reading patterns.

Mézière et al. (2023) identified the skipping rate as the most accurate predictor of performance on comprehension tests, demonstrating a negative correlation between skipping rate and comprehension scores. This is consistent with the findings of other studies which indicate that tasks requiring deep comprehension are associated with a reduction in the incidence of skipping behaviour (Strukelj & Niehorster, 2018). In these tasks, readers direct their attention to words with a view to ensuring the thorough integration of information (Southwell et al., 2020; Strukelj & Niehorster, 2018).

As mentioned, total reading time is a global measure that aggregates several dimensions of reading behaviour. It encompasses the duration of all fixations and saccades, including both the initial observation and any subsequent repeats. In essence, it reflects both the initial comprehension of the text and subsequent processes of reanalysis.

Given that fixation times tend to increase with more complex texts and that textual complexity heightens the need for reanalysis, it is reasonable to expect that these combined effects will lead to an increase in total reading time. A potential counterargument to this logic is presented by Rets and Rogaten (2021), which demonstrated that extended reading during the first pass may diminish the necessity for subsequent readings. Nevertheless, when total reading times are compared, it seems implausible that these counterbalances would fully negate the observed differences. In conclusion, irrespective of the specific characteristics (early or late) that increase cognitive processing time, this overall increase is inevitable.

The literature lends support to this proposition. Total reading time has been demonstrated to increase in conjunction with greater reanalysis (Magliano et al., 1993), more intensive cognitive processing (Hyönä, 2010), sustained attention, and higher levels of engagement with the text (Strukelj et al., 2016).

Although some may contend that total reading time is somewhat superfluous due to its correlations with other measures, it remains a fundamental metric in studies on the readability of continuous texts and discourse processing, precisely because of its global scope. Mézière et al., (2023) and Vorstius et al., (2014) demonstrated that total reading time is one of the most effective predictors of comprehension, exhibiting a robust negative correlation. Moreover, given that longer reading times are typically linked to processing difficulties, it is reasonable to hypothesize that participants will consider facing difficulties to low readability. In this sense, it can be posited that longer reading times may indeed reflect a greater perceived difficulty.

Based on the above-mentioned evidence and the connections established between them, we propose hypotheses aimed at identifying the difficulties that readers encounter when reading and how they affect their perception of a text's readability and comprehension, as well as their actual comprehension.

It has been demonstrated that simplified texts facilitate reading ease and reduce cognitive load (Zhang & Gong, 2023) by reducing lexical and syntactic complexity. In line with this, Rets and Rogaten (2021) found that simplified texts led to shorter re-reading durations and increased skipping behaviours in second-language readers, reflecting more efficient processing during the initial reading. These findings reflect the impact of text complexity on reading ease and eye movements. The increase in reading ease due to text simplicity results in fewer regressions, as readers encounter fewer comprehension obstacles requiring reanalysis (Godfroid, 2019; Rayner et al., 2006), and in increased skipping rates, since simple and predictable words are more likely to be bypassed during reading (Brysbaert et al., 1996; Cop et al., 2015). Moreover, the overall ease of processing reflected in total and first-pass reading times is generally lower for simplified texts, which require less intensive processing (Hyönä, 2010; Rayner, 1998). Similarly, regression-path durations are reduced, as readers need less time to resolve difficulties and integrate meaning (Mézière et al., 2014). We formulate the following hypothesis in light of this information:

H3: Compared to a complex text, a simplified text leads to less re-reading and an increased skipping rate while lowering total reading times, first-pass reading times and regression-path duration.

As mentioned, the Processing Ease is measured through eye movement patterns, which have been shown to predict how well readers understand a text (Mézière et al., 2023). Studies suggest that deeper objective comprehension is associated with specific reading behaviours such as longer first-pass durations and more frequent regressions, which reflect ease of processing to

resolve difficulty and integrate meaning (Mézière et al., 2023; Rayner, 1998; Schotter et al., 2014). While most studies focus on objective comprehension, few explicitly distinguish it from perceived comprehension. In this study, we are interested in both aspects. We expect the relationships with eye movement patterns to follow a similar direction for both perceived and objective comprehension. Increased first-pass reading times and re-reading efforts are often associated with a more thorough initial processing and corrective strategies, which enhance objective comprehension (Godfroid, 2019; Mézière et al., 2023; Schotter et al., 2014). Similarly, longer regression-path durations suggest both higher difficulties and deeper engagement with challenging segment, allowing readers to resolve misunderstandings and construct meaning (Rayner & Pollatsek, 2006). On the other hand, excessive total reading times may indicate persistent processing difficulties, and high skipping rates may reflect superficial reading, both of which are generally linked to poorer comprehension outcomes (Mézière et al., 2023; Strukelj et al., 2016; Vorstius et al., 2014). For these reasons, we postulate H4 :

H4: Reading Processing Ease has a direct positive effect on Text Comprehension

H4a: Reading Processing Ease has a direct positive effect on Objective Text Comprehension

H4b: Reading Processing Ease has a direct positive effect on Perceived Text Comprehension

Readability is closely tied to how effortlessly readers process a text; a dynamic captured through various eye movement metrics. It has been shown that higher skipping rates tend to reflect smoother and more efficient reading, often associated with simpler and more predictable content (Cop et al., 2015; Luke & Christianson, 2016). In contrast, longer total and first-pass reading times typically indicate greater processing difficulty, which can negatively affect the perception of readability (Hyönä, 2010; Rayner, 1998). Re-reading behaviours, including regressions and regression-path duration, may also signal deeper engagement with challenging content and thus contribute positively to perceived readability when they reflect effective resolution of difficulties (Mézière et al., 2023; Schotter et al., 2014). Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

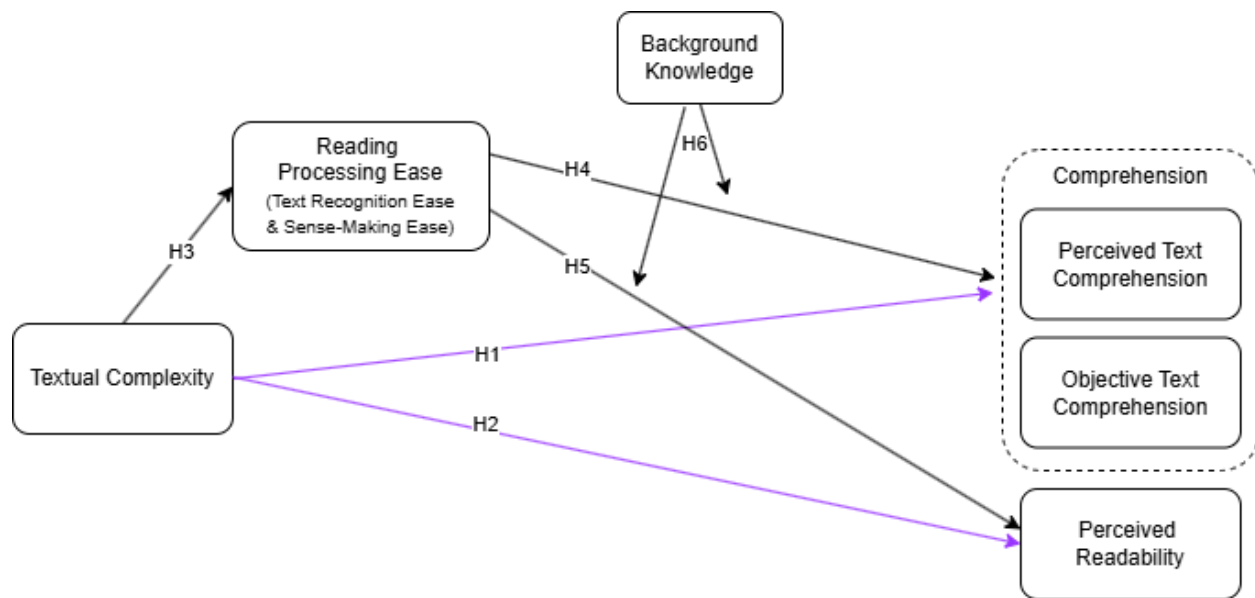
H5: Reading Processing Ease has a direct positive effect on Perceived Readability

Given the well-established impact of background knowledge on comprehension and its close link to eye movements (Tywoniw, 2023), we explore background knowledge's role in processing and comprehension. Since background knowledge influences comprehension and eye movements reveal and predict comprehension processes (Inhoff et al., 2018; Mézière et al., 2023; Southwell et al., 2020), background knowledge may also impact the relationship between eye movements, comprehension, and perceived readability. We therefore propose that background knowledge strengthens the associations between eye movement patterns and both perceived readability and comprehension, whether perceived or objective. When readers possess more background knowledge, reading and comprehension are expected to become easier. Therefore, we propose

H6: Background knowledge will positively moderate the relationships between Reading Processing Ease and Objective Text Comprehension (H6a), Perceived Text Comprehension (H6b), and Perceived Readability (H6c)

To enhance clarity and facilitate the consolidation of information, Table 19, a comprehensive table enumerating all hypotheses, is provided at the end of the results section. Figure 1 presents the research model used in this study, along with the relationships hypothesized between constructs.

Figure 1 Integrative Research Model of Reading Processing, Readability and Text Comprehension



Methodology

Experimental design & stimuli

This study was approved by the student's institutional Ethics Review Board before testing began, in accordance with current ethical standards for research involving human participants. This experimental study used a within-subjects design, assigning participants to three different conditions. The stimuli consisted of three journalistic articles, simplified to three levels of textual complexity using ChatGPT 4.0 (OpenAI, San Francisco, USA). The tool was trained to ensure uniform text length and comparable complexity scores across versions, as measured by the Kandel-Moles formula (Kandel & Moles 1958). The three conditions were distinguished by their level of textual complexity: original text, less simplified (B1 French level), and most simplified (A2 French level), further described below.

Each condition included three reading tasks, during which participants read three distinct articles, each corresponding to a different complexity level. Participants were exposed to only one version of each text to prevent bias in comprehension, processing ease, and perceived readability. The Tobii Pro Lab software (Tobii AB, Danderyd, Sweden) randomized the order of text presentation within each condition to mitigate order effects. Thus, each participant encountered three unique articles representing all three complexity levels.

The articles used in this study were adapted from journalistic texts from a local online newspaper with a solutions-oriented tone, previously developed for research on writing tone and its impact on readers. This tone was chosen for its relevance to the study's target demographic. The articles discussed the climate crisis, the presence of weapons in society and the local real estate situation. Each original text was simplified into two additional versions, resulting in three versions per article. The study was conducted in a Quebec context with the articles being created for a Quebec-based newspaper. Simplifications were guided by prompts emphasizing structural adjustments, such as prioritizing active over passive voice, simplifying verb tenses, limiting sentence complexity, and reducing word difficulty. The resulting versions corresponded to B1 and A2 levels of French, based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2025).

One pre-test was performed with eight French learners to ensure correct execution of questionnaires, test flow, level of difficulty of multiple-choice questions and the level of differentiation between texts.

Text complexity was manipulated through three levels of simplification, for which complexity was assessed using the Kandel–Moles formula (Kandel & Moles 1958), a well-established method for measuring text complexity in French texts (Klare, 1974; Luther et al., 2014), and successfully employed in previous studies (Hernandez et al., 2022; Wilkens et al., 2022). The index was calculated to guide the modifications and the degree of simplification applied by the artificial intelligence. It was reported for descriptive purposes only. This formula is an adaptation of the Flesh reading ease formula specially intended for French texts (Bamberger & Rabin, 1984; Kandel & Moles, 1958). The Kandel-Moles score is obtained through this equation:

$$KM_{score} = 207 - 1.015 \times MLS - 0.736 \times MNS.$$

where

MLS = Mean Length of Sentences;

MNS = Mean Number of Syllables.

A higher score signals a higher level of readability, with a score of 100 meaning “easy for any literate person” (Benoît, 1986, p.50), and a lower score signals a low level of readability. Scores may exceed 100, in which case the result must be counted as 100.

As the Kandel-Moles formula is a derivative of the Flesch formula adapted to French language the thresholds are the same. Flesch defines the thresholds as:

Table 3 Reading Ease Thresholds According to Flesch (1948)

Score	Ease of reading
90-100	Very easy
80 - 90	Easy
70 - 80	Fairly easy
60 - 70	Standard
50 – 60	Fairly difficult
30 – 50	Difficult
0 - 30	Very difficult

The Kandel-Moles scores have been computed using the SpaCy algorithm, a free open-source library for Natural Language Processing in Python. When used for French language, this tool tends to under-estimate the number of syllables, causing an increase in the KM score. Therefore, while the computed scores are higher than expected, the increase and variation are compliant with the programmed text complexity.

Table 4 Text Characteristics and Complexity between different Versions

Article	Text complexity	Complexity level	Word count	Kandel-Moles (KM) Score	Average KM score per version
1	Original version	Original text	555	98.12	95.14
2		Original text	607	95.16	
3		Original text	588	92.13	
1	Less simplified	B1	487	98.64	97.64
2		B1	493	97.09	
3		B1	509	97.19	
1	Most simplified	A2	420	104.36	106.58
2		A2	393	111.36	
3		A2	435	104.03	

Participants

Data for this study were collected from 21 French learners at the B1 or B2 proficiency level, levels equivalent to intermediate and advanced intermediate respectively. The initial sample size of 21 was reduced to 19 during analysis due to poor-quality eye-tracking data (11 male, Mage = 27.05, SD = 5.68, max = 38, min=20). B1-level participants can understand the main points of a text when clear, standard language is used, and the content is familiar (UQAM, 2024). B2-level participants can grasp the essential meaning of both concrete and abstract topics in complex texts (UQAM, 2024).

Participants were recruited through French learning programs, the laboratory's participant panel, and public flyer postings to represent diverse French-learning profiles. On average, participants had studied French for 7.0 years (SD = 6.6) and spoke 2.7 languages (SD = 0.7). A total of 15 languages were represented across the sample, with the most commonly spoken languages being English (100%), Spanish (42%), and Arabic (26%). The most frequent native-language were English (37%), Chinese (21%), and Persian (21%).

To ensure high-quality eye-tracking data, participants with uncorrected astigmatism, diagnosed dyslexia, or a history of laser eye surgery were excluded. While undiagnosed dyslexia could not be entirely ruled out, these measures were taken to minimize the risk of data inaccuracies. Participants received \$20 as a compensation.

Procedure

Before testing started, all participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions. These conditions corresponded to different variations of the stimuli. All participants were exposed to all three levels of complexity, but were presented different articles in a manner that each article was read once. The order of presentation of the stimuli was randomized. Upon arrival participants read and accepted a consent form before proceeding to orally answer demographic questions and completing eye-tracking calibration. Language proficiency (Brysbaert, 2013; Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012) and subjective topic knowledge (Flynn & Goldsmith, 1999) scales were completed on the computer. The entirety of the experiment was conducted using the online survey platform Qualtrics to administer questionnaires using the Google Chrome browser. Participants were instructed to read silently at their own pace and to notify when done reading. Participants informed they would answer questions assessing their comprehension. Three reading tasks were completed, each followed by a short questionnaire measuring perceived comprehension, perceived readability (adapted from Chebat et al., 2003 and DuBay, 2004) and objective comprehension, respectively. Adhering to this order prevented the introduction of bias in assessing perceived comprehension and readability after evaluating objective comprehension. The session concluded with an assessment of participants' linguistic baggage through the short Language History Questionnaire (LHQ) (Li et al., 2006, 2020), a tool for assessing the language background of multilingual or second-language learners. Once this questionnaire was completed, the oculometer was turned off and the data were saved. Participants were compensated. The entire experimental procedure lasted a maximum of 60 minutes.

Measures

Self-assessed measures

Demographic questions were asked to determine participant's profile and verify inclusion and exclusion criteria. French proficiency was assessed using the French adaptation of the LexTALE test, a tool designed to measure proficiency in a second-language (Brysbaert, 2013; Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012). In this evaluation, participants are presented with a list of 84 French-like words and non-words and asked to identify the French words correctly. The list of words can be found in Appendix 2. This measure was included as a control variable to account for potential effects of language proficiency.

A five-item questionnaire was used to evaluate subjective background knowledge (M_{BK} score = 18.6, SD = 3.8, max = 29.0, min=12.3) of the main themes of the three texts: the climate crisis, the presence of weapons in society and the local real estate situation. Responses were recorded on a seven-point self-assessed Likert scale adapted from Flynn and Goldsmith (1999). The highest possible score was 35 and the lowest possible score was 5. Results are presented in table 6. Chronbach's Alpha was computed for each of the three themes and can are presented in Table 6. Results demonstrate good to excellent internal consistency for the scale among the subjects.

To measure **Perceived Readability**, we operationalized a five-item construct as described by Dubay (2004) adding the two more general items "this text is clear" and "I text is easy to read", adapted from Chebat et al. (2003). Chronbach's Alpha was computed per complexity level and are presented in Table 7. Results indicate good internal consistency across the versions.

Perceived comprehension was measured using a single-item psychometric scale on a seven-point Likert scale that we developed. Participants responded to the statement: "I clearly understand this text," with options ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).

Objective comprehension was assessed after measuring perceived comprehension and readability to minimize bias in self-assessments. Three multiple-choice questions were developed for each text. Each question presented four answer options: one correct answer and three distractors, which included plausible but incorrect interpretations of the text. The same multiple-choice questions were used for all versions of each text. These questions were created with assistance from ChatGPT (OpenAI, San Francisco, USA) and were pretested with seven participants of varying levels of French proficiency to ensure appropriate difficulty and clarity. Following the procedure guide, participants completed the experiment, with iterations being done between tests.

Perceived readability and perceived and objective comprehension were assessed after each reading to obtain more reliable results compared to assessment after performing all tasks.

Lastly, linguistic background and multi-language proficiency were assessed through the short version of the Language History Questionnaire (LHQ) (Li et al., 2006, 2020).

Table 5 Self-assessed Measures

Measured construct	Scale name	Items	Reference
--------------------	------------	-------	-----------

Demographics		Age, sex, gender, preferred language	
French Proficiency	LexTALE	Indicate the words you know, or of which you are convinced they are French words (even though you would not be able to give their precise meaning).	(Brysbaert, 2013; Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012)
BK (subjective)		7-point Likert scale 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree “I know pretty much about the <i>subject</i>.” “I do not feel very knowledgeable about the <i>subject</i>.” “Among my circle of friends, I’m one of the “experts” on the <i>subject</i>.” “Compared to most people, I know less about the <i>subject</i>.” “When it comes to the <i>subject</i>, I really don’t know a lot.”	(Flynn and Goldsmith, 1999)
Perceived readability		7-point Likert scale 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree “This text is clear” “This text is easy to read”	Adapted from Chebat et al. (2003)
Perceived readability		7-point Likert scale 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree “This text uses simple words that I know.” “This text uses technical words that are difficult to understand.” “This text contains elements of Quebec culture, making it difficult to read.” “The text uses simple sentences that are easy to understand.” “The visual presentation of the text makes it easier to read.”	Adapted from Dubay’s (2004)

Perceived comprehension		7-point Likert scale 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree "I clearly understand this text"	
Objective comprehension		Answer the next questions according to the information found in the text you have just read. Followed by 3 multiple-choice questions with 4 answer choices.	Seen in (Crossley et al., 2019; Nandhini & Balasundaram, 2013)
Linguistic background	Language History Questionnaire (LHQ) (short version)	• Indicate your native language(s) and any other languages you have studied or learned. • Indicate the total number of years you have spent using each language. • Indicate the age at which you started using each language in terms of listening. • Indicate the age at which you started using each language in terms of speaking. • Indicate the age at which you started using each language in terms of reading. • Indicate the age at which you started using each language in terms of writing.	(Li et al., 2006, 2020)
		7-point Likert scale 1 = Very poor to 7 = Excellent • Rate your current ability in terms of listening in each of the languages you have studied or learned (including the native language). • Rate your current ability in terms of speaking in each of the languages you have studied or learned (including the native language). • Rate your current ability in terms of reading in each of the languages you have studied or learned (including the native language).	

-
- Rate your current ability in terms of writing in each of the languages you have studied or learned (including the native language).
-

Eye-tracking measures

Five eye-tracking measures were selected to provide a comprehensive perspective on written discourse processing, with three measures capturing specifically early-stage and late-stage cognitive processes. The early-stage and late-stage processes represent different stages of cognitive processing, with early-stage processes linked to Text Recognition and late processes involving deeper, conscious analysis of larger text units in order to create sense out of the material. This approach enables the identification of a full range of difficulties encountered and to gain insights into their cause, as proposed by Rayner (1998). Furthermore, using two late-stage processing measure and two global indicators affords greater confidence in the ability of observing hypothesized effects.

The following measures were selected to evaluate the readability and comprehension of simplified texts, based on their demonstrated relevance in prior research.

Regression-path duration and total reading time, as highlighted by Godfroid (2019), are standard metrics in text-based eye-tracking studies. These measures, alongside gaze duration and first fixation duration, were used in 49 of 52 reviewed studies on second language acquisition, with total reading time being the most common. Regression-path duration reflects the time required to resolve processing difficulties (Radach & Kennedy, 2004; Rayner & Pollatsek, 2006; Reilly & Radach, 2006). Regressions out of an area of interest indicate difficulty, while subsequent eye movements beyond the areas of interest suggest successful resolution. Consequently, this measure can be used to model the reader's problem-solving process. Regression-path duration was used as a measure of late-stage processing involved in sense-making. In line with our hypotheses, it served as an indicator of Reading Processing Ease, positively predicting perceived and objective comprehension as well as perceived readability.

Total reading time refers to the cumulative duration of all fixations within a given interest area (Rayner, Chace et al. 2006; Godfroid, 2019). In our study, this measure was aggregated at the text level. As it encompasses multiple underlying eye-tracking metrics, it is often correlated with those individual measures. As a global processing measure, total reading time reflects both early-stage processing and the additional time required to resolve processing difficulties (Godfroid,

2019). It was used as an indicator of Reading Processing Ease, negatively predicting perceived and objective comprehension as well as perceived readability.

First-pass reading time and re-reading time were selected as complementary measures to capture distinct processing stages. First-pass reading time, the time spent initially reading an area of interest, was chosen over first fixation duration, as the latter is more suited to isolated word studies, while this study focuses on the effects of simplification on multi-word areas of interest. First-pass reading time was used as a Text Recognition measure, reflecting early-stage processes such as initial word processing and lexical access. In line with our hypotheses, it served as an indicator of Reading Processing Ease, positively predicting perceived and objective comprehension and negatively predicting perceived readability. Re-reading time, calculated by the Tobii pro lab (Tobii AB, Danderyd, Sweden), includes all refixations, second-pass fixations, and further reanalysis, reflecting the reader's need for additional cognitive processing. It served as a Sense-Making measure of Reading Processing Ease, positively predicting perceived and objective comprehension as well as perceived readability.

Rets and Rogaten's (2021) findings underscore the influence of textual simplification on both first-pass and re-reading times and reveal a connection between re-reading time and comprehension. Shorter re-reading times, as observed in simplified texts, may indicate efficient processing during the initial reading and reduced comprehension difficulties.

The skipping rate, defined as the proportion of unfixed words (where a value of 0 indicates unfixed words and a value of 1 indicates fixed words), complements these measures. Although less commonly used, skipping rate offers insights into attention allocation and cognitive load during reading (Strukelj, 2018). A high skipping rate may suggest fluent reading or insufficient attention, depending on the context. Skipping rate was used as a behavioral indicator of fluent reading, reflecting instances where the reader bypasses words entirely. It was considered an indicator of Reading Processing Ease, negatively predicting perceived and objective comprehension and positively predicting perceived readability.

Prior studies have established correlations between fixation duration, fixation count, and regression rate with text difficulty (Cop et al., 2015; Nahatame, 2021; Rayner et al., 2006; Sui et al., 2023). Mézière et al. (2023) further identify skipping, regression-path duration, and total reading time as reliable predictors of comprehension accuracy.

For analysis, areas of interest were defined at the word level, results were aggregated per text to produce an average per text.

Apparatus

Eye movements were recorded with Tobii Spectrum Pro TX300 Tobii AB (Danderyd, Sweden) mounted to the bottom of the monitor. Eye movements were recorded at a rate of 1200 Hz. A 9-point calibration was done prior to the tasks to ensure highest level of detail in eye-movement captation. The data collected by the eye-tracker was processed through Tobii Prolab Tobii AB (Danderyd, Sweden) running on a Windows system. Stimuli were presented on a 23.8 inches (60.4-cm) EIZO FlexScan EV2451 LED backlight monitor (1920 x 1080 pixels resolution; EIZO Corporation Hakusan, Japan).

Data pre-processing

For better data quality and greater confidence for the conclusions, we considered fixations that lasted longer than 100ms (Manor & Gordon, 2003). As previously done by Strukelj & Niehorster (2018), return sweeps (eye movement from the end of one line of text to the beginning of the next line) were removed from the results. This has been done by excluding saccades with a y-coordinate change (Display area Coordinate System, expressed in millimeters) greater than or equal to 0.01. This value has been set after empirically deducing from the data that a difference of 0.01 in the coordinates represents the space between two adjacent lines. All other downward eye movements were also excluded from the data, since this ocular movement pattern is associated with skimming.

Data analysis

To test the effects of text simplification, data measured at the word level were aggregated by level of textual complexity for comparison across conditions. The analyzed variables included perceived and objective comprehension (H1), perceived readability (H2), as well as total reading time, first-pass reading time, regression-path duration, re-reading time, and skipping rate (H3).

Data processing and statistical analyses were performed using SAS Studio on SAS On Demand. The distributions of all dependent variables were examined prior to analysis, with each eye movement metric analyzed independently. To account for individual differences among participants, random intercept models were employed. Additionally, French proficiency scores from the LexTALE (Brysbaert, 2013; Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012) test were included as a control variable in all analyses to account for variability in language skills.

The distributions of skipping rate and perceived readability scores were normally distributed, while first-pass duration showed a linear distribution. Regression-path duration and re-reading duration displayed right-skewed asymmetrical distributions and therefore underwent logarithmic transformation. First-pass duration, characterized by a highly skewed distribution, was subjected to a median split for further analysis, a transformation previously applied by Rets and Rogaten (2021) for this same measure.

Both perceived and objective comprehension had right skewed distributions and were therefore subjected to a median split. The median score for perceived comprehension being 5, scores above 5 were assigned a value of 1 and scores of 5 and less were assigned a value of 0. Participants who answered all three comprehension questions correctly for a given text were assigned a value of 1, while those with two or fewer correct answers were assigned a value of 0. In essence, treating this as a binary variable allowed us to test the effect of the antecedents on the likelihood of completely correct set of responses sent by the participant, i.e. complete objective comprehension.

The impact of textual complexity on perceived comprehension, objective comprehension (**H1**) and perceived readability (**H2**) were tested through a Type III ANOVA for repeated measures for readability measures, while perceived and objective comprehension measures were tested through a Wald test with a random-intercept logistic regression model. Pairwise comparisons were then conducted to explore differences between conditions. Additionally, a linear regression with a random intercept was performed to examine the relationship between text complexity and readability, while logistic regression models with random intercepts were employed for perceived and objective comprehension.

To test the impact of textual complexity on Reading Processing Ease (**H3**) three series of tests were conducted. A Wald test with a random-intercept logistic regression model was applied to binary variables and a Type III ANOVA for repeated measures was applied to continuous variables. These tests examined the effect of text complexity (original text, less simplified, most simplified) on eye movement metrics (total reading time, regression-path duration, re-reading time, skipping rate, first-pass reading time), with French proficiency (LexTALE score) (Brysbaert, 2013; Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012) included as a control variable. Pairwise comparisons were performed to identify specific differences between groups. The impact of an additional control variable, word count, on the total reading time was examined for the relationship between text

complexity and eye movements, as slight variations in word counts across texts could potentially influence the overall duration of reading.

To test the impact of Reading Processing Ease on Objective Text Comprehension (**H4a**), Perceived Text Comprehension (**H4b**), and Perceived Readability (**H5**), we conducted statistical analyses using selected eye-tracking measures representing Reading Processing Ease. Their predictive power on comprehension and readability scores was assessed through linear regression models with random intercepts. To examine the impact of background knowledge as a moderator of these relationships (**H6**), the same analyses were run including background knowledge as a moderator.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 6 shows the mean background knowledge scores reported by participants for the three texts' topics: climate change, the presence of firearms in society, and real estate. On average, participants scored highest on climate change ($M = 22.2$, $SD = 4.9$) and lowest on firearms ($M = 16.6$, $SD = 6.0$). The overall mean background knowledge score per participant was 18.6 out of 30 ($SD = 3.8$), or 53.2% ($SD = 10.8$), indicating moderate familiarity with the topics.

Table 6 Background Knowledge Amongst Participants

	Climate change	Presence of firearms in society	Real estate	Mean background knowledge score per participant	Mean background knowledge score per participant (%)
Mean	22.2	16.6	17.0	18.6	53.2
Std.					
Deviation	4.9	6.0	7.3	3.8	10.8
Cronbach's					
Alpha	0.823	0.878	0.935	-	-
Max.	30	30	30	29.0	82.9
Min.	12	5	8	12.3	35.2

Highest possible score = 35

Lowest possible score = 5

As presented in Table 7, perceived readability and comprehension increased with simplification. Readability scores were lowest for the original text ($M = 4.52$, $SD = 0.91$), followed by the less simplified ($M = 5.16$, $SD = 0.87$) and most simplified versions ($M = 5.50$, $SD = 0.73$). Perceived comprehension also increased across conditions: original ($M = 5.32$, $SD = 1.16$), less simplified ($M = 5.84$, $SD = 0.96$), and most simplified ($M = 6.00$, $SD = 0.94$).

Table 7 Means and Standard Deviations for Perceived Readability, Perceived Comprehension and Objective Comprehension scores at different Text Complexity Levels

	Perceived Readability	Perceived Comprehension	Objective Comprehension	Perceived Readability
Complexity level	Mean (Std. deviation)	Mean (Std. deviation)	Mean (Std. deviation)	Chronbach's Alphas
Original	4.516 (.910) **	5.316 (1.157) *	2.500 (.707)	0.839
Less simplified	5.158 (.868) **	5.842 (.958)	2.722 (.461)	0.823
Most simplified	5.495 (.734) **	6.000 (.943) *	2.500 (.514)	0.796

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .001$.

Table 8 presents the mean results for the studied variables for each level of text complexity. Eye movement measures varied across conditions: first-pass reading time was highest for the original texts ($M = 83.93$ ms, $SD = 56.22$), compared to less simplified ($M = 66.59$ ms, $SD = 57.48$) and most simplified texts ($M = 64.44$ ms, $SD = 34.48$). Skipping rate increased with simplification: original ($M = 0.59$, $SD = 0.07$), less simplified ($M = 0.60$, $SD = 0.07$), and most simplified ($M = 0.63$, $SD = 0.08$). Total reading time (controlling for word count) also declined slightly with simplification. No significant differences were observed for re-reading time or regression-path duration.

Table 8 Means and Standard Deviations for Eye Movements at different Text Complexity Levels

	First-Pass Reading Time	Re-Reading Time	Skipping Rate	Regression-path duration	Total reading time (controlling word count)
Complexity level	Mean (Std. deviation)	Mean (Std. deviation)	Mean (Std. deviation)	Mean (Std. deviation)	Mean (Std. deviation)
Original	83.929 (56.223)	5.399 (0.497)	0.594 (0.069) *	5.706 (0.467)	5.657 (0.306)
Less simplified	66.590 (57.477)	5.424 (0.472)	0.600 (0.069) *	5.650 (0.484)	5.451 (0.347)
Most simplified	64.443 (34.479)	5.407 (0.453)	0.628 (0.078) *	5.667 (0.4)	5.350 (0.306)

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .001$.

We observe differences in the expected direction for all results, but the skipping rate is the measure that seems to be most affected, being the only one that shows significant differences for variations at all levels of text complexity.

Correlations

We calculated correlations between the different eye-tracking data to assess their level of association as indicated in prior research (Inhoff et al., 2018; Mézière et al., 2023; Rayner, 1998; Reichle, Rayner & Pollatsek, 2003; Rets & Rogaten, 2021; Southwell et al., 2020; Tywoniw, 2023).

Table 9 Correlations Between Eye-Tracking Measures

	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5
1. Total reading time	19	5.486	0.340	—				
2. Regression-path duration	19	5.674	0.444	0.7993**	—			
3. Re-reading time	19	5.410	0.466	0.6580**	0.7812**	—		
4. Skipping rate	19	0.607	0.072	-0.5335**	-0.5812**	-0.5692**	—	
5. First-pass reading time	19	0.509	0.504	0.05042	0.05238	-0.1991*	-0.2115	—

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

The test reveals strong correlations between regression-path duration and total reading time, as well as with rereading time. Re-reading time is also highly correlated with total reading time, supporting the notion that these measures reflect late-stage reading processes.

As expected, skipping rate shows negative correlations with total reading time, regression-path duration, and re-reading time. This is consistent with the observation that reduced reading intensity leads to shorter reading times, fewer re-readings (lower regression-path duration and rereading time), and an increased skipping rate.

Similarly, negative correlations are observed between first-pass reading time and re-reading time, consistent with the findings of Rets and Rogaten (2021), who reported an inverse relationship between these measures. This relationship is further supported by the regression rate, which is highly correlated with re-reading time.

Since total reading time is a global measure that encompasses both initial reading and re-reading, it is unsurprising that it shows correlations with several other measures.

Hypothesis testing

H1 : Impact of text complexity on comprehension

The first hypothesis examined the impact of text complexity on perceived and objective comprehension. It was hypothesized that text simplification would increase both perceived and objective comprehension.

The global test showed that there were approaching significance differences between the different levels of complexity for perceived comprehension.

The effect of text complexity on **perceived comprehension** was marginally significant, $F(2, 34) = [2.64]$, $p = .0857$, $\eta^2 = [0.1344]$. Pairwise comparisons showed a marginally significant difference between original text ($M = [5.316]$, $SD = [1.157]$) and most simplified ($M = [6.000]$, $SD = [0.943]$), $p = .0851$, with comprehension scores slightly lower for original text. The relationship between text complexity and perceived comprehension was found to be negative, indicating that as text complexity decreases perceived comprehension scores increase.

Objective comprehension has not been found to be significantly affected by text complexity. Thus, H1 is partially supported, as only perceived comprehension resulted to show marginally significant variations between complexity levels.

Table 10 shows there is a significant variation in perceived readability scores between different textual complexity levels.

Table 10 Results of Global Tests for Impact of Complexity on Perceived and Objective Comprehension and Perceived Readability

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI		Prob F	Test
			LL	UL		
Perceived comprehension	-0.9065	0.7903	-2.4555	0.6425	0.0857	Wald test with random intercept logistic regression
Objective comprehension	-2.1136	0.9231	-3.9229	-0.3043	0.4	Wald test with random intercept logistic regression
Perceived readability	-1.2071	0.9319	-3.0336	0.6194	0.0001***	Type 3 ANOVA for repeated measures

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

The pairwise comparisons indicate a marginally significant change in perceived comprehension when switching from the original to the most simplified version ($B = -2.11$, $SE B = 0.92$, $OR = 0.12$, $95\% CI [-3.92, -0.30]$, $p = .028$) (Table 11). This demonstrates the small impact of simplification on perceived comprehension, given that texts must undergo major changes in order for the readers to feel that they better understand the text.

Table 11 Logistic Regression Estimates with Random Intercepts by Text Complexity

Effect		Perceived comprehension					Objective comprehension				
Comparison		Estimate	SE	p	95% CI		Estimate	SE	p	95% CI	
					LL	UL				LL	UL
original	less	-0.9065	0.7903	0.4079	-2.4555	0.6425	-0.5169	0.724	0.9603	-1.9359	0.9021
original	most	-2.1136	0.9231	0.0851	-3.9229	-0.3043	0.4656	0.6854	0.9603	-0.8778	1.809
less	most	-1.2071	0.9319	0.4079	-3.0336	0.6194	0.9825	0.7164	0.5376	-0.4216	2.3866

H2 : Impact of text complexity on perceived readability

The second hypothesis examined the impact of text complexity on perceived readability. It was hypothesized that compared to a more complex text, a text simplified to the current level of the learner would be perceived as more readable.

The results confirmed this prediction, showing that lower text complexity significantly improves perceived readability. The relationship was found to be negative, indicating that as text complexity decreases, scores for readability increase.

The global test analyses presented in Table 10 indicate that there were significant differences between the different levels of complexity for readability

As shown in Table 10, text complexity had a highly significant effect on **perceived readability**, $F(2, 34) = [11.75]$, $p = .0001$, $\eta^2 = [0.4087]$. An in-depth logistic regression analysis, the results of which are presented in Table 12, led to the conclusion that perceived readability scores were significantly higher for both the least and most simplified versions compared to the original version. Pairwise comparisons revealed that **perceived readability** scores were significantly lower for original text ($M = [4.516]$, $SD = [0.910]$) than for less simplified ($M = [5.158]$, $SD = [0.868]$), $p = .0076$, and significantly lower for original text than for most simplified ($M = [5.495]$, $SD = [0.734]$), $p = .0001$. Thus, H2 is supported as text simplification significantly enhances perceived readability.

Table 12 Linear Regression Estimates with Random Intercepts by Text Complexity

Perceived readability						
Effect		Estimate	SE	p	95% CI	
Comparison					LL	UL
original	less	-0.6222	0.2001	0.0076**	-1.0143	-0.2301
original	most	-0.9556	0.2001	0.0001***	-1.3477	-0.5635
less	most	-0.3333	0.2001	0.1049	-0.7254	0.0588

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

The perception of readability differs significantly only when compared to the original version of the text, demonstrating that even a mild simplification improves the perception of readability.

H3 : Impact of text complexity on eye movements in continuous reading

H3 explored the effect of text complexity on reading metrics. Specifically, it was hypothesized that simplified texts would lead to lower first-pass reading times, regression-path durations, total reading times, and re-reading times, while increasing skipping rates.

Preliminary analysis using global tests revealed significant differences between text complexity levels for both total reading time and skip rate, as shown in Table 13. Noticeably, differences of total reading time between complexity levels are shown to be highly significant when word count is not controlled [$F(2, 34) = 13.24, p = <.0001, \eta^2 = 0.437$], while these results are not significant when word count is controlled [$F(2, 35) = 0.67, p = 0.2590, \eta^2 = 0.037$]. In addition, the effect size decreases dramatically. Skipping rate shows significant differences between versions [$F(2, 34) = 4.64, p = 0.00825, \eta^2 = 0.214$]. More detailed results from pairwise comparison analyses are specified in Table 14.

Table 13 Means, Standard Deviations, and Three-Way Analyses of Variance in Eye-Movement measurements

Eye Movement Measure	Complexity level			F(2,34)	p-value	η^2
	Original version	Less simplified	Most simplified			
	Mean (Std. deviation)	Mean (Std. deviation)	Mean (Std. deviation)			
Total Reading Time	5.657 (0.306)	5.451 (0.347)	5.35 (0.306)	13.24***	<.0001	0.437
Total Reading Time (controlled by word count)	5.657 (0.306)	5.451 (0.347)	5.35 (0.306)	0.67 (df=35)	0.2590	0.037
Regression-Path Duration	5.706 (0.467)	5.65 (0.484)	5.667 (0.4)	0.29	0.3747	0.017
Re-Reading Time	5.399 (0.497)	5.424 (0.472)	5.407 (0.453)	0.12	0.4455	0.007
Skipping Rate	0.594 (0.069)	0.6 (0.069)	0.628 (0.078)	4.64**	0.0083	0.214

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

A Wald test revealed no significant effect of text complexity on first-pass reading time, $F(2, 34) = 0.71$, $p = .250$ (one-tailed).

Skipping Rate. Text complexity significantly affected skipping rate, accounting for 21.4% of its variance $F(2, 34) = [4.64]$, $p = .0083$, $\eta^2 = [0.2144]$. Pairwise comparisons indicated that skipping rate was significantly lower for original text ($M = [0.594]$, $SD = [0.069]$) than for most simplified ($M = [0.628]$, $SD = [0.078]$), $p = .0221$, and significantly lower for less simplified ($M = [0.600]$, $SD = [0.069]$) than for most simplified, $p = .0487$. Thus, H3 is supported for skipping rate, as simplified texts resulted in increased skipping rates compared to more complex texts.

Total Reading Time. When the total reading time is controlled by the word count, non-significant results are obtained $F(2, 35) = [0.67]$, $p = .2590$, $\eta^2 = [0.0369]$. However, when the word count is not taken into account, the effect of text complexity on total reading time was highly significant, $F(2, 34) = [13.24]$, $p = .0001$, $\eta^2 = [0.4378]$. Pairwise comparisons revealed that total reading time, when not controlled by word count, was significantly higher for original text ($M = [5.657]$, $SD = [0.306]$) than for less simplified ($M = [5.451]$, $SD = [0.347]$), $p = .0032$, and significantly higher for original text than for most simplified ($M = [5.350]$, $SD = [0.306]$), $p < .0001$. Thus, H3 is unsupported as total reading time decreased with simplified texts only when word count was not controlled.

Table 14 Pairwise Comparisons of Reading Behavior Measures Across Text Complexity Levels

	Complexity level		Mean difference (I) - (J) (Std. error)	Sig.	95% CL	
	(I)	(J)			LL	UL
Eye movement	original	less	0.2074 (0.0606)	0.8792	0.0886	0.3262
First-pass reading time	original	most	0.3051 (0.0606)	0.8792	0.1863	0.4239
	less	most	0.0977 (0.0606)	0.7536	-0.0211	0.2165
Total reading time (non-controlled by word count)	original	less	-0.0003 (0.0166)	0.0032**	-0.0328	0.0322
	original	most	0.0288 (0.0166)	<0.0001***	-0.0037	0.0613
	less	most	0.0291 (0.0166)	0.1158	-0.0031	0.0613
Regression-path duration	original	less	0.0483 (0.0711)	1	-0.0911	0.1877
	original	most	0.0455 (0.0711)	1	-0.0939	0.1849
	less	most	-0.0028 (0.0711)	1	-0.1422	0.1366
Re-reading time	original	less	-0.0068 (0.0136)	1	-0.0335	0.0199
	original	most	-0.0389 (0.0136)	1	-0.0655	-0.0123
	less	most	-0.0322 (0.0136)	1	-0.0589	-0.0055
Skipping rate	original	less	-0.0068 (0.0136)	0.6242	-0.0335	0.0199
	original	most	-0.0389 (0.0136)	0.0221*	-0.0655	-0.0123
	less	most	-0.0322 (0.0136)	0.0487*	-0.0589	-0.0055

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

These results demonstrate that total reading time is significantly reduced when texts are simplified, although no significant difference was observed between the two simplified versions. However, as previously mentioned, when total reading time is adjusted for word count, the effect is no longer significant. This suggests that total reading time is influenced more by text length than by complexity. Additionally, while minor simplifications do not appear to impact skipping rate, more extensive simplifications, where both sentence structure and word choice are simplified, lead to a significant increase in word skipping. Therefore, H3 is partially supported. The results support the hypotheses only for text complexity, which leads to reduced skip rates.

H4 & H5 : Prediction of perceived comprehension, objective comprehension and perceived readability through Reading Processing Ease

H4 posited that Reading Processing Ease, as measured by eye-tracking metrics, would predict both objective (H4a) and perceived comprehension (H4b). It was expected that Reading Processing Ease would have a direct positive effect on Perceived Text Comprehension and Objective Text Comprehension.

Longer first-pass reading times, increased regression-path durations, and more re-reading were hypothesized to improve comprehension. In contrast, higher skipping rates and longer total reading times were expected to hinder comprehension.

H5 proposed that Reading Processing Ease, measured through eye-tracking measures (first-pass reading time, regression-path duration, re-reading time, total reading time, and skipping rate) would predict perceived readability. It was expected that Reading Processing Ease would have a direct positive effect on Perceived Readability. Specifically, it was anticipated that higher skipping rates, increased rereading, and longer regression-path durations would enhance perceived readability. Conversely, longer first-pass and total reading times were expected to negatively impact readability. Linear regression analyses are presented in Tables 15 and 16, showcasing the high significance of the total reading time as a predictor of perceived readability.

Objective Comprehension. Contrary to expectations, total reading time approached significance as a positive predictor of objective comprehension, $\beta = 15.13$, $p = .070$, 95% CI $[-4.48, 34.73]$. Thus, H4 is not supported as the observed positive effect of total reading time on objective comprehension contradicted the hypothesized negative effect.

Perceived Comprehension. Total reading time approached significance as a negative predictor of perceived comprehension, $\beta = -21.50$, $p = .054$, 95% CI [-47.03, 4.03]. Similarly, skipping rate was marginally significant, $\beta = 90.49$, $p = .091$, 95% CI [-39.70, 220.67]. Thus, H4 is partially supported as the results suggest that longer reading times negatively influence perceived comprehension, while skipping rates had a marginally positive effect.

Perceived Readability. Total reading time was a significant negative predictor of perceived readability, $\beta = -0.99$, $p = .009$, 95% CI [-1.77, -0.22]. Longer reading times predicted lower readability scores. Thus, H5 is partially supported as the negative effect of longer reading times on perceived readability was consistent with expectations.

Table 15 Linear Regression with Random Intercept Models for Perceived and Objective Comprehension without interaction with background knowledge

Effect	Perceived Comprehension					Objective Comprehension				
	Estimate	SE	<i>p</i> (one-tailed)	95% CI		Estimate	SE	<i>p</i> (one-tailed)	95% CI	
				LL	UL				LL	UL
Total Reading time	-									
	2.1496	1.3026	0.0539	-47.0265	4.0345	1.5125	1.0002	0.0698	-4.4786	34.7286
Regression-Path										
Duration	-0.7245	1.0529	0.2480	-21.3610	19.9120	0.9487	0.8329	0.1312	-0.6838	2.5812
Re-reading time	-0.4990	0.8950	0.2904	-2.2532	1.2552	0.9529	0.7305	0.1003	-0.4789	2.3847
Skipping rate	9.0486	6.6423	0.0909	-39.7007	220.6727	1.3099	4.8548	0.3944	-82.0533	108.2513
First-pass reading time	-0.0089	0.0084	0.1476	-0.0254	0.0076	0.0054	0.0071	0.2229	-0.0085	0.0193

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

Table 16 Linear Regression with Random Intercept Model for perceived readability without interaction with background knowledge

Effect	Estimate	SE	<i>p</i> (one-tailed)	95% CI	
				LL	UL
Fixed effects					
Total Reading Time	-0.9911	0.3955	0.0085**	-1.7663	-0.2159
Regression-Path Duration	-0.1611	0.3827	0.3382	-0.9112	0.589
Re-reading Time	-0.0748	0.3228	0.4091	-0.7074	0.5579
Skipping Rate	2.6507	2.1133	0.1090	-1.4913	6.7927
First Pass Reading Time	-0.0036	0.0029	0.1081	-0.0092	0.002

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

Supporting hypotheses only for ocular measures associated with global cognitive processes, results suggest that perception is influenced by global aspects of the reading experience rather than specific aspects such as Sense-Making Ease or Text Recognition Ease. Specifically, perceived readability was associated with total reading time, while perceived comprehension was linked to both total reading time and skipping rate. These metrics are considered global eye-tracking measures, as they reflect how readers engage with larger units of text, such as sentences, paragraphs, or entire passages. Unlike local measures that focus on individual words or short phrases, global measures are aggregated and offer insights into overall reading ease and strategic processing. As such, the findings indicate that perceptions of readability and comprehension are shaped by the cumulative cognitive load imposed by the text.

To summarize the results of testing hypotheses 4 and 5, we observe that total reading time had a significant and inverse effect on perceived readability, supporting H5. No significant results in support of the hypotheses were obtained from analyses of other oculometric measures. Hence, hypotheses 4 and 5 are partially supported.

H6 : Impact of background knowledge on perceived readability and comprehension

H6 examined the role of background knowledge in moderating the relationships between eye movements and objective comprehension (H6a), perceived comprehension (H6b), and perceived readability (H6c). The hypothesis suggested that background knowledge would positively moderate these relationships, amplifying both positive and negative associations.

Specifically, subject familiarity significantly strengthened the predictability of perceived readability based on total reading time, regression-path duration, and re-reading time. A marginal effect was also observed for first-pass reading time. Results for H6 derive from the information found in Tables 17 and 18, which report Linear Regression with Random Intercept Models for Perceived Comprehension, Objective Comprehension, and Perceived Readability.

Table 17 Linear Regression with Random Intercept Models for Perceived and Objective Comprehension with interaction with background knowledge

Effect	Perceived Comprehension					Objective Comprehension				
	Estimate	SE	<i>p</i> (one-tailed)	95% CI		Estimate	SE	<i>p</i> (one-tailed)	95% CI	
				LL	UL				LL	UL
Total Reading time	1.7400	1.3055	0.0959	-0.8187	4.2987	-0.7849	0.9500	0.2074	-2.6469	1.0771
Regression-Path Duration	1.0119	0.8975	0.1339	-0.7472	2.7710	-1.2191	0.7518	0.0572	-2.6926	0.2544
Re-reading time	0.9374	0.8832	0.1481	-0.7936	2.6684	-0.5901	0.6983	0.2021	-1.9587	0.7785
Skipping rate	-6.3879	6.7983	0.1771	-19.7123	6.9365	11.5762	5.4568	0.0208*	0.8811	22.2713
First-pass reading time	0.0041	0.0070	0.2799	-0.0096	0.0178	-0.0141	0.0081	0.0460*	-0.0300	0.0018

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

Table 18 Linear Regression with Random Intercept Model for Perceived Readability with Interaction with background knowledge

Effect	Estimate	SE	<i>p</i> (one-tailed)	95% CI	
				LL	UL
Fixed effects					
Intercept	0.119	0.04	0.003**	0.041	0.198
Total Reading Time	0.4759	0.2354	0.0257*	0.0145	0.9373
Regression-Path Duration	0.4495	0.1849	0.0103*	0.0871	0.8119
Re-reading Time	0.3735	0.1922	0.0303*	-0.0032	0.7502
Skipping Rate	-29.488	12.424	0.0118*	-53.8386	-5.1374
First Pass Reading Time	0.0025	0.0015	0.0531	-0.0004	0.0054
French Proficiency	-0.039	0.018	0.03*	-0.074	-0.004

* Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .05$.

** Indicates significantly different scores between versions at $p < .01$.

*** Indicates significantly different scores between version at $p < .001$.

Objective Comprehension

Regression-path duration approached significance, $\beta = -1.22$, $p = .057$, 95% CI $[-2.69, 0.25]$, showing a reduced effect of re-reading duration on comprehension. Skipping rate significantly enhanced comprehension, $\beta = 11.58$, $p = .021$, 95% CI $[0.88, 22.27]$, while first-pass reading time had a contrary significant effect, $\beta = -0.01$, $p = .046$, 95% CI $[-0.03, 0.00]$. Therefore, H6a is not supported, as background knowledge moderated some relationships, but in directions that contradict the hypothesized effects.

Perceived Comprehension

Background knowledge approached significance in the improvement the relationship between total reading time and perceived comprehension, $\beta = 1.74$, $p = .096$, 95% CI $[-0.82, 4.30]$. While not statistically significant, the direction of the interaction effects for perceived comprehension were all consistent with the hypotheses, supporting H6b in trend.

Perceived Readability

Background knowledge significantly moderated and enhanced the relationship between **total reading time** and perceived readability, $\beta = 0.48$, $p = .026$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.94]. Background knowledge amplified the effect of **regression-path duration**, $\beta = 0.45$, $p = .010$, 95% CI [0.09, 0.81], and **re-reading time**, $\beta = 0.37$, $p = .030$, 95% CI [-0.00, 0.75], on readability. Contrary to the hypothesis, background knowledge significantly reduced the negative effect of **skipping rate** on perceived readability $\beta = -29.49$, $p = .012$, 95% CI [-53.84, -5.14]. An interaction approaching significance was observed between subject knowledge and **first-pass reading time** $\beta = 0.00$, $p = .053$, 95% CI [-0.00, 0.01].

H6c is partially supported by the results regarding the relationships between eye movements and perceived readability. Results show that background knowledge has important interactions with all the measured eye movements, relationships involving total reading time, regression-path duration, and re-reading time align with the hypotheses, showing stronger positive associations when background knowledge is higher. The relationship involving skipping rate also reached significance and showed a negative interaction effect, which aligns with the hypothesis given its expected negative direction. First-pass reading time showed a positive interaction effect approaching significance, offering limited support for the hypothesis.

The observed moderating effects demonstrate the impact background knowledge has on eye movements in reading and therefore readers' Processing Ease. Background knowledge may enhance perceived comprehension's predictability, as suggested by an effect approaching significance, observed for total reading time, while objective comprehension's predictability is significantly enhanced by the skipping rate—contrary to the expected negative association. Significant and marginal moderating effects of background knowledge were also found on the relationships between skipping rate and perceived readability, as well as between first-pass reading time and regression-path duration and objective comprehension. These results suggest a decrease in the predictive power of these eye-tracking measures when readers are more familiar with the subject. Overall, they underscore the crucial role of background knowledge in shaping the Reading Processing Ease, reflected through complex reading behaviors, and in influencing how readers understand and perceive written content.

Table 19 Summary Table of Hypotheses and Results

	Hypothesis	Support
H1	Impact of text complexity on comprehension	Partially supported
	Perceived comprehension	Partially supported
	Objective comprehension	Not supported
H2	Impact of text complexity on perceived readability	Supported
H3	Impact of text complexity on eye movements in continuous reading	Partially supported
	Total reading time	Not supported
	Regression-path duration	Not supported
	Re-reading time	Not supported
	Skipping rate	Supported
	First-pass reading time	Not supported
H4	Predictability of perceived and objective comprehension according to eye movements in continuous reading	Partially supported
a	Objective comprehension : Total reading time	Not supported
	Objective comprehension : Regression-path duration	Not supported
	Objective comprehension : Re-reading time	Not supported
	Objective comprehension : Skipping rate	Not supported
	Objective comprehension : First-pass reading time	Not supported
b	Perceived comprehension : Total reading time	Marginally Supported
	Perceived comprehension : Regression-path duration	Not supported
	Perceived comprehension : Re-reading time	Not supported
	Perceived comprehension : Skipping rate	Supported
	Perceived comprehension : First-pass reading time	Not supported
H5	Predictability of perceived readability according to eye movements in continuous reading	Partially supported
	Total reading time	Supported
	Regression-path duration	Not supported
	Re-reading time	Not supported
	Skipping rate	Not supported
	First-pass reading time	Not supported
H6	Moderating effect of background knowledge on the relationship between eye movements and perceived readability and objective and perceived comprehension	Partially supported
a	Objective comprehension : Total reading time	Not supported
	Objective comprehension : Regression-path duration	Marginally Supported
	Objective comprehension : Re-reading time	Not supported

	Objective comprehension : Skipping rate	Not supported
	Objective comprehension : First-pass reading time	Not supported
b	Perceived comprehension : Total reading time	Marginally Supported
	Perceived comprehension : Regression-path duration	Marginally Supported
	Perceived comprehension : Re-reading time	Marginally Supported
	Perceived comprehension : Skipping rate	Not supported
	Perceived comprehension : First-pass reading time	Not supported
c	Perceived readability : Total reading time	Supported
	Perceived readability : Regression-path duration	Supported
	Perceived readability : Re-reading time	Supported
	Perceived readability : Skipping rate	Supported
	Perceived readability : First-pass reading time	Marginally Supported

Discussion

Summary of results

Our study explored the overarching question: *To what extent does AI simplify news article reading for second-language readers?* This was addressed through four research questions, each supported by specific hypotheses.

RQ1 and **RQ2** examined the impact of AI-generated simplification on perceived readability, perceived comprehension, and objective comprehension. Findings from H1 and H2 show that even minimal simplification improves perceived readability, though it does not significantly affect comprehension. Simplified texts are easier to read but not necessarily easier to understand.

RQ3 assessed how simplification affects reading processing ease, using eye-tracking data (H3). Total reading time decreased for simplified texts, but this effect disappeared when controlling for word count, suggesting that text length, not complexity, was the main driver. Only extensive simplification led to significantly increased skipping, reflecting shifts in reading behavior.

RQ4 investigated how processing ease relates to objective comprehension (H4a), perceived comprehension (H4b) and perceived readability (H5) and the role of background knowledge (H6) in the reading experience.

Contrary to expectations, total reading time emerged as a marginally significant positive predictor of objective comprehension, indicating that longer reading durations enhanced objective

comprehension. However, the same measure negatively predicted both perceived comprehension and perceived readability. Additionally, skipping rate was a significant predictor of perceived comprehension.

H6 examined background knowledge as a moderator of the relationship between reading processing ease and (a) objective comprehension (H6a), (b) perceived comprehension (H6b), and (c) perceived readability (H6c). For objective comprehension, most moderation effects contradicted predictions: background knowledge weakened the predictive power of several key eye-tracking measures. In contrast, results related to perceived comprehension followed the expected pattern based on the reading processing ease framework, though they did not reach statistical significance. Background knowledge positively moderated the relationship between processing ease and all three outcomes: objective comprehension (H6a), perceived comprehension (H6b), and perceived readability (H6c). When taking background knowledge in account, all eye movements show to be predictors of perceived readability. As predicted, perceived readability was positively associated with processing ease, with key eye-tracking measures (total reading time, regression-path duration, and re-reading time) aligning with hypothesized directions. Skipping rate also emerged as a significant predictor, showing the expected negative association, while first-pass reading time is a predictor approaching significance.

Overall, these findings suggest that background knowledge reshapes the role of reading behavior: it promotes deeper engagement when judging readability while enabling more efficient processing strategies that may weaken the link between ease of processing and actual comprehension in second-language contexts.

Theoretical contributions

The results make two key contributions to the field. First, this study enhances our understanding of the factors that influence readability perception and demonstrates how reading challenges, reflected in eye movements, can predict perceived readability. Second, our study responds to the call for further research issued by Heydari & Riazi (2012) which suggested that human evaluation is a reliable approach to assess a text's readability.

Understanding variables at play in readers' perception of a text

Supporting the hypotheses only for eye-tracking measures reflecting global processes, the results seem to indicate that the perception of readability, and even comprehension, is affected by all elements of the text and the resulting cognitive load. It seems that it is the overall reading experience that drives perception, rather than isolated textual components. Noticeably, while the total reading time marginally enhances objective comprehension, it reduces the perception of one's comprehension and a text's readability. Nonetheless, this perception is further modulated by the reader's background knowledge.

For readers with low background knowledge, fast reading times and high skipping rates often reflect superficial reading, where ease of processing is maximized, and comprehension is only partial. This aligns with (Ferreira et al., 2002) concept of "good enough" understanding, where readers rely on initial or partial interpretations to continue reading without deeper comprehension. Conversely, longer reading times and lower skipping rates correlate with a more negative perception of readability, likely due to increased cognitive load from lexical access or inference challenges. High background knowledge readers, however, maintain a stable perception of readability regardless of reading time or skip rates, suggesting their background knowledge confer superior processing abilities allowing them to understand nuances with higher ease of processing.

These findings suggest that perceived readability is closely tied to the ability to make inferences, which depends on both topic-specific knowledge and lexical familiarity, rather than raw processing effort. Moreover, while skipping increased with simplification, our data did not show that this effect varied by background knowledge. By linking eye movement metrics to perceived readability, the study underscores how ease of processing and knowledge interplay to shape the reading experience, highlighting the central role of inference in readability perception.

Addition of a variable of interest: perceived readability

Our study directly responds to Heydari and Riazi's call for further research to validate the role of human judgment in readability assessment, suggesting that human evaluation is a reliable approach to assess a text's readability. This is supported by studies showing significant differences between computed readability scores and human ratings (Heydari & Riazi, 2012; Liu et al., 2021; Nandhini & Balasundaram, 2013), as well as by research highlighting the nuances in readability assessment (Schwartz et al., 1970).

While readability formulas are based on numerous calculable factors, including sentence and word length (gunning formula by Gunning, 1952 and kandel-moles formula by Kandel and Moles, 1958), spelling properties (FABRA by Wilkens et al., 2022), and word predictability (EZ Reader model by Reichle et al., 2003), they fail to consider readers' unique backgrounds, particularly their personal knowledge. Our study highlights that background knowledge influences perceived readability, supporting the idea that human factors complement formulaic approaches, as noted by Heydari & Riazi (2012).

By demonstrating a strong impact of textual complexity on perceived readability, this study contributes to confirming that human evaluations, beyond formulaic measures, are crucial in understanding text accessibility. This understanding of perceived readability is essential, as it can act as a demotivating factor for some learners (Marzban & Davaji, 2015).

The findings indicate that complex text versions were perceived as more difficult to read, despite objective comprehension scores remaining comparable across versions. This observation suggests that participants were able to overcome the encountered challenges allowing for discourse comprehension, yet these challenges were perceived as increasing reading difficulty. Furthermore, only selected eye-tracking metrics, such as skipping rate, showed significant variation, suggesting that while overall comprehension was not grueling, certain text features posed notable challenges. This interpretation is corroborated by the observation that the participants expressed a marginally significant impression of having understood the most simplified version better than the original version.

Managerial Implications

Participants in this study were volunteers who could withdraw at any time. Prior to each reading task, they were informed their comprehension would be assessed via a quiz. As a result, the dropout rate in our controlled laboratory setting was very low; in fact, no participants withdrew from the study. However, some readers exhibited partial comprehension or sustained processing effort, suggesting that in real-world context, such as reading newspapers to stay informed rather than to practice language skills, they may abandon texts that are overly demanding. Simplifying traditional media content could therefore broaden audience reach and boost readership, particularly among second-language learners such as newcomers. Often facing the dual challenge of acquiring a new language while adapting to sociocultural norms, this population may

benefit greatly from more accessible informational content designed to support both language development and civic integration.

In professional contexts, simplified texts could enhance efficiency by reducing ease of processing while maintaining comprehension, resulting in saved time. For readers using a non-primary language, perceived readability improves with simplification, even when comprehension scores show minimal variation. Rapid reading may reflect efficient processing, possibly facilitated by background knowledge, vocabulary, and inferencing skills, though this interpretation should be considered with caution. In contrast, longer reading times often reflect detailed engagement.

Readers with moderate proficiency in a non-primary language may benefit from simplified texts, showing slight trends toward improved comprehension and reduced ease of processing. Professionals with subject expertise particularly benefit, showing improved processing ease and perceived readability. These results highlight the potential of simplification to lower cognitive load and enhance efficiency, especially in contexts requiring sustained ease of processing.

Limitations and research avenues

The sample size in this study was relatively small. However, the collection of repeated measures increased the number of data points. In eye-tracking research, this number of participants is not a major concern given the high sampling rate and the fact that the analysis was performed at the word level, resulting in a robust dataset per participant. This methodology is well-established for mitigating the challenges typically associated with small sample sizes.

For readability and comprehension data, while a larger sample size could enhance statistical power, the collected data remains sufficient for valid analysis. The assumptions for the selected statistical methods were satisfied, and relatively simple models were used to minimize strain on the data. Similar approaches have been employed in prior studies, including those by Rets & Rogaten (2021) and Nahatame (2021), demonstrating the reliability of findings from smaller samples in this field. A larger sample size would have increased statistical power and reduced the risk of Type II errors, improving the reliability and generalizability of the findings. Future research could build on these results with larger samples to further reinforce the generalizability of the conclusions.

Although participants completed the Language History Questionnaire (LHQ) (Li et al., 2006, 2020), we did not include its data in the analyses because the LexTALE (Brysbaert, 2013; Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012) scores already served as sufficient control variables. The LHQ data were used only to characterize the participant sample.

We believe that incorporating a debriefing discussion at the end of a test measuring perceived readability or exploring comprehension challenges could be highly beneficial. Such discussions could involve in-depth questions aimed at uncovering difficulties encountered by readers and addressing aspects of the text that may have been misunderstood or only partially comprehended.

By interviewing participants directly, we might gain valuable insights into their experiences, potentially revealing answers aligned with eye-tracking research findings. For instance, questions such as “At this point, you revisited an earlier part of the text, do you recall why?” or “What aspects of the text did you find particularly challenging?” could help identify specific difficulties. This approach would also allow for verification of participants’ responses against established findings in the eye-tracking literature.

Conclusion

This study highlights how textual complexity shapes the reading experience among second-language readers, primarily through its effects on Reading Processing Ease. AI-generated text simplification was found to enhance perceived readability and, in some cases, influence reading behaviour, notably through increased skipping rates. Perceptions of comprehension and readability shaped more by the overall Reading Processing Ease than by specific components such as Sense-Making or Text Recognition Ease, showing a stronger association with global processing measures (i.e. total reading time, skipping rate) than with specific ones. Background knowledge played a key moderating role, facilitating more efficient and easy to process, and influencing how readers evaluate both comprehension and readability. These findings contribute to a broader understanding of second-language reading and underscore the importance of considering readers’ perceptions as part of the reading experience.

Simplified texts can improve processing efficiency and reduce cognitive load without compromising comprehension, particularly for moderately proficient second-language readers and domain experts in professional settings. In informational contexts, simplification may further

promote media accessibility and support the linguistic and civic integration of newcomers adapting to a new language and culture.

References

- Adamuti-Trache, M. (2013). Language Acquisition Among Adult Immigrants in Canada : The Effect of Premigration Language Capital. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(2), 103-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713612442804>
- Alencar, A., & Deuze, M. (2017). News for assimilation or integration? Examining the functions of news in shaping acculturation experiences of immigrants in the Netherlands and Spain. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(2), 151-166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323117689993>
- Allen, D. (2009). A study of the role of relative clauses in the simplification of news texts for learners of English. *System*, 37(4), 585-599. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.09.004>
- Allen, K. D., & Hancock, T. E. (2009). Reading Comprehension Improvement with Individualized Cognitive Profiles and Metacognition. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 47(2), 124-139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388070801938320>
- Anderson, R. C., Spiro, R. J., & Anderson, M. C. (1978). Schemata as Scaffolding for the Representation of Information in Connected Discourse. *American Educational Research Journal*, 15(3), 433-440. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312015003433>
- Bailin, A., & Grafstein, A. (2016). Towards a Theory of Readability. In A. Bailin & A. Grafstein (Éds.), *Readability : Text and Context* (p. 177-204). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137388773_6
- Bamberger, R., & Rabin, A. T. (1984). New Approaches to Readability : Austrian Research. *The Reading Teacher*, 37(6), 512-519.
- Benoît, J.-P. (1986). Revue critique des formules de lisibilité (60 ans de formules de lisibilité : Qu'en reste-t-il ?). *Pratiques*, 45-63.
- Boscolo, P., & and Mason, L. (2003). Topic Knowledge, Text Coherence, and Interest : How They Interact in Learning From Instructional Texts. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 71(2), 126-148. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220970309602060>

- Britton, B. K., Ziegler, R., & Westbrook, R. (1980). Use of Cognitive Capacity in Reading Easy and Difficult Text : Two Tests of an Allocation of Attention Hypothesis1. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 12(1), 23-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10862968009547348>
- Brysbaert, M. (2013). Lextale_FR A Fast, Free, and Efficient Test to Measure Language Proficiency in French. *Psychologica Belgica*, 53, 23. <https://doi.org/10.5334/pb-53-1-23>
- Brysbaert, M., Vitu, F., & Schroyens, W. (1996). The right visual field advantage and the optimal viewing position effect : On the relation between foveal and parafoveal word recognition. *Neuropsychology*, 10(3), 385-395. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0894-4105.10.3.385>
- Castelhano, M. S., & Rayner, K. (2009). Eye movements during reading, visual search, and scene perception : An overview. In *Cognitive and Cultural Influences on Eye Movements*. Routledge.
- Catrysse, L., Gijbels, D., & Donche, V. (2018). It is not only about the depth of processing : What if eye am not interested in the text? *Learning and Instruction*, 58, 284-294. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2018.07.009>
- Chall, J. (1996). Varying Approaches to Readability Measurement. *Revue Québécoise de Linguistique*, 25(1), 23-40. <https://doi.org/10.7202/603125ar>
- Chebat, J.-C., Gelinas-Chebat, C., Hombourger, S., & Woodside, A. G. (2003). Testing consumers' motivation and linguistic ability as moderators of advertising readability. *Psychology & Marketing*, 20(7), 599-624. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.10088>
- Clifton, C., Staub, A., & Rayner, K. (2007). Chapter 15—Eye movements in reading words and sentences. In R. P. G. Van Gompel, M. H. Fischer, W. S. Murray, & R. L. Hill (Éds.), *Eye Movements* (p. 341-371). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-008044980-7/50017-3>
- Conklin, K., Pellicer-Sánchez, A., & Carrol, G. (2018). *Eye-Tracking : A Guide for Applied Linguistics Research*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108233279>
- Cop, U., Keuleers, E., Drieghe, D., & Duyck, W. (2015). Frequency effects in monolingual and bilingual natural reading. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 22(5), 1216-1234. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13423-015-0819-2>

Council of Europe. (2025). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) : Global scale—Table 1 (CEFR 3.3) : Common Reference levels*. Council of Europe. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>

Crossley, S. A., Allen, D., & McNamara, D. S. (2012). Text simplification and comprehensible input : A case for an intuitive approach. *Language Teaching Research*, 16(1), 89-108. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168811423456>

Crossley, S. A., Skalicky, S., & Dascalu, M. (2019). Moving beyond classic readability formulas : New methods and new models. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 42(3-4), 541-561. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12283>

Dale, E., & Chall, J. S. (1949). The Concept of Readability. *Elementary English*, 26(1), 19-26.

Danzer, A. M., & Yaman, F. (2013). Do Ethnic Enclaves Impede Immigrants' Integration? Evidence from a Quasi-experimental Social-interaction Approach. *Review of International Economics*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/roie.12038>

Den Buurman, R., Roersema, T., & Gerrissen, J. F. (1981). Eye Movements and the Perceptual Span in Reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 16(2), 227-235. <https://doi.org/10.2307/747557>

DuBay, W. H. (2004). The Principles of Readability. *Online Submission*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ed490073>

EIZO Corporation. (s. d.). EIZO FlexScan EV2451. Consulté 30 juin 2024, à l'adresse <https://www.eizo.com/products/flexscan/ev2451/>

Engbert, R., Nuthmann, A., Richter, E. M., & Kliegl, R. (2005). SWIFT : A Dynamical Model of Saccade Generation During Reading. *Psychological Review*, 112(4), 777-813. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.112.4.777>

Fernández, G., Shalom ,Diego E., Kliegl ,Reinhold, & and Sigman, M. (2014). Eye movements during reading proverbs and regular sentences : The incoming word predictability effect. *Language, Cognition and Neuroscience*, 29(3), 260-273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01690965.2012.760745>

- Ferreira, F., Bailey, K. G. D., & Ferraro, V. (2002). Good-Enough Representations in Language Comprehension. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 11(1), 11-15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.00158>
- Flesch, R. (1948). A new readability yardstick. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 32(3), 221-233. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0057532>
- Flynn, L. R., & Goldsmith, R. E. (1999). A Short, Reliable Measure of Subjective Knowledge. *Journal of Business Research*, 46(1), 57-66. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963\(98\)00057-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963(98)00057-5)
- Godfroid, A. (2019). *Eye Tracking in Second Language Acquisition and Bilingualism : A Research Synthesis and Methodological Guide*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315775616>
- Goodman, K. S., & Freeman, D. (1993). *What's Simple in Simplified Language?* <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED371578>
- Graesser, A. C., McNamara, D. S., Cai, Z., Conley, M., Li, H., & Pennebaker, J. (2014). Coh-Matrix Measures Text Characteristics at Multiple Levels of Language and Discourse. *The Elementary School Journal*, 115(2), 210-229. <https://doi.org/10.1086/678293>
- Gunning, R. (avec Internet Archive). (1952). *The technique of clear writing*. New York, McGraw-Hill. http://archive.org/details/techniqueofclear0000gunn_y0m0
- Hackos, J., & Stephens, D. (1997). Standards for online communication. *Wiley*.
- Hernandez, N., Oulbaz, N., & Faine, T. (2022). Open corpora and toolkit for assessing text readability in French. In R. Wilkens, D. Alfter, R. Cardon, & N. Gala (Éds.), *Proceedings of the 2nd Workshop on Tools and Resources to Empower People with READING Difficulties (READI) within the 13th Language Resources and Evaluation Conference* (p. 54-61). European Language Resources Association. <https://aclanthology.org/2022.readi-1.8>
- Heydari, P., & Riazi, A. M. (2012). Readability of Texts : Human Evaluation Versus Computer Index. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3.
- Hyönä, J. (2010). The use of eye movements in the study of multimedia learning. *Learning and Instruction*, 20(2), 172-176. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2009.02.013>

- Hyönä, J., Lorch Jr., R. F., & Kaakinen, J. K. (2002). Individual differences in reading to summarize expository text : Evidence from eye fixation patterns. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 94(1), 44-55. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.94.1.44>
- Inhoff, A. W., Gregg, J., & Radach, R. (2018). Eye movement programming and reading accuracy. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 71(1), 3-10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17470218.2016.1226907>
- Inhoff, A. W., Kim, A., & Radach, R. (2019). Regressions during Reading. *Vision*, 3(3), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.3390/vision3030035>
- Inhoff, A. W., & Rayner, K. (1986). Parafoveal word processing during eye fixations in reading : Effects of word frequency. *Perception & Psychophysics*, 40(6), 431-439. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03208203>
- Jaffri, A., & Khandabattu, H. (2024, juin). *Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence, 2024*. Gartner. <https://www.gartner.com/interactive/hc/5505695?ref=hp-wylo>
- Just, M. A., & Carpenter, P. A. (1980). A theory of reading : From eye fixations to comprehension. *Psychological Review*, 87(4), 329-354. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.87.4.329>
- Kandel, L. & Moles A. (1958). Application de l'indice de Flesch à la langue française. *Cahiers Etudes de Radio-Télévision*, 19, 253-274.
- Kintsch, W. (1988). The role of knowledge in discourse comprehension : A construction-integration model. *Psychological Review*, 95(2), 163-182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.95.2.163>
- Klare, G. R. (1974). Assessing readability. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 10(1), 62-102. <https://doi.org/10.2307/747086>
- Langer, J. A. (1984). Examining background knowledge and text comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 19(4), 468-481. <https://doi.org/10.2307/747918>

- Lemhöfer, K., & Broersma, M. (2012). Introducing LexTALE : A quick and valid Lexical Test for Advanced Learners of English. *Behavior Research Methods*, 44(2), 325-343. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-011-0146-0>
- Li, P., Zhang, F., Yu, A., & Zhao, X. (2020). Language History Questionnaire (LHQ3) : An enhanced tool for assessing multilingual experience. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 23(5), 938-944. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728918001153>
- Liu, Y., Ji, M., Lin, S. S., Zhao, M., & Lyv, Z. (2021). Combining Readability Formulas and Machine Learning for Reader-oriented Evaluation of Online Health Resources. *IEEE Access*, 9, 67610-67619. IEEE Access. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2021.3077073>
- Long, M. H., & Ross, S. (1993). *Modifications That Preserve Language and Content*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED371576>
- Luke, S. G., & Christianson, K. (2016). Limits on lexical prediction during reading. *Cognitive Psychology*, 88, 22-60. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cogpsych.2016.06.002>
- Luther, K., Snook, B., & Luther, E. (2014). Mesure de la complexité de lecture des formulaires de déclaration et de renonciation aux droits pour adolescents québécois. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 56(5), 623-636. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cjccj.2013.F03>
- Manor, B. R., & Gordon, E. (2003). Defining the temporal threshold for ocular fixation in free-viewing visuocognitive tasks. *Journal of Neuroscience Methods*, 128(1), 85-93. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0165-0270\(03\)00151-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0165-0270(03)00151-1)
- Marzban, A., & Davaji, S. (2015). The Effect of Authentic Texts on Motivation and Reading Comprehension of EFL Students at Intermediate Level of Proficiency. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpis.0501.11>
- McConkie, G. W., & Rayner, K. (1975). The span of the effective stimulus during a fixation in reading. *Perception & Psychophysics*, 17(6), 578-586. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03203972>
- McNamara, D. S., Kintsch ,Eileen, Songer ,Nancy Butler, & and Kintsch, W. (1996). Are Good Texts Always Better? Interactions of Text Coherence, Background Knowledge, and Levels of

Understanding in Learning From Text. *Cognition and Instruction*, 14(1), 1-43. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532690xcil401_1

Mézière, D. C., Yu, L., Reichle, E. D., von der Malsburg, T., & McArthur, G. (2023). Using Eye-Tracking Measures to Predict Reading Comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 58(3), 425-449. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.498>

Murphy Odo, D. (2023). The Effect of Automatic Text Simplification on L2 Readers' Text Comprehension. *Applied Linguistics*, 44(6), 1030-1046. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amac057>

Nahatame, S. (2021). Text Readability and Processing Effort in Second Language Reading : A Computational and Eye-Tracking Investigation. *Language Learning*, 71(4), 1004-1043. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12455>

Nandhini, K., & Balasundaram, S. R. (2013). Improving readability through extractive summarization for learners with reading difficulties. *Egyptian Informatics Journal*, 14(3), 195-204. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eij.2013.09.001>

Noldus Information Technology. (2024). Viso (Version 3.0). Noldus Information Technology, Wageningen, The Netherlands.

Okraïneç, K., Booth, G. L., Hollands, S., & Bell, C. M. (2017). Language Barriers Among the Foreign-Born in Canada : Agreement of Self-Reported Measures and Persistence Over Time. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 19(1), 50-56. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-015-0279-9>

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT-4 (Large language model). OpenAI, San Francisco, CA, USA.

Parshina, O., Sekerina, I. A., Lopukhina, A., & von der Malsburg, T. (2022). Monolingual and Bilingual Reading Processes in Russian : An Exploratory Scanpath Analysis. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 57(2), 469-492. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.414>

Radach, R., & Kennedy, A. (2004). Theoretical perspectives on eye movements in reading : Past controversies, current issues, and an agenda for future research. *European Journal of Cognitive Psychology*, 16(1-2), 3-26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09541440340000295>

- Rayner, K. (1998). Eye movements in reading and information processing : 20 years of research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 124(3), 372-422. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.124.3.372>
- Rayner, K. (2009). Eye Movements in Reading : Models and Data. *Journal of Eye Movement Research*, 2, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.16910/jemr.2.5.2>
- Rayner, K., & Pollatsek, A. (1981). Eye movement control during reading : Evidence for direct control. *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology Section A*, 33(4), 351-373. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14640748108400798>
- Rayner, K., Chace, K., Slattery, T., & Ashby, J. (2006). Eye Movements as Reflections of Comprehension Processes in Reading. *Scientific Studies of Reading - SCI STUD READ*, 10. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532799xssr1003_3
- Rayner, K., & Duffy, S. A. (1986). Lexical complexity and fixation times in reading : Effects of word frequency, verb complexity, and lexical ambiguity. *Memory & Cognition*, 14(3), 191-201. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03197692>
- Rayner, K., & McConkie, G. W. (1976). What guides a reader's eye movements? *Vision Research*, 16(8), 829-837. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0042-6989\(76\)90143-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0042-6989(76)90143-7)
- Rayner, K., & Pollatsek, A. (2006). Chapter 16—Eye-Movement Control in Reading. In M. J. Traxler & M. A. Gernsbacher (Éds.), *Handbook of Psycholinguistics (Second Edition)* (p. 613-657). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012369374-7/50017-1>
- Rayner, K., Well, A. D., & Pollatsek, A. (1980). Asymmetry of the effective visual field in reading. *Perception & Psychophysics*, 27(6), 537-544. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03198682>
- Reichle, E. D. (2011). Serial-attention models of reading. In *The Oxford handbook of eye movements* (p. 767-786). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199539789.001.0001>
- Reichle, E. D., Pollatsek, A., Fisher, D. L., & Rayner, K. (1998). Toward a model of eye movement control in reading. *Psychological Review*, 105(1), 125-157. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.105.1.125>

Reichle, E. D., Rayner, K., & Pollatsek, A. (2003). The E-Z Reader model of eye-movement control in reading : Comparisons to other models. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 26(4), 445-476. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X03000104>

Reilly, R. G., & Radach, R. (2006). Some empirical tests of an interactive activation model of eye movement control in reading. *Cognitive Systems Research*, 7(1), 34-55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cogsys.2005.07.006>

Rets, I., & Rogaten, J. (2021). To simplify or not? Facilitating English L2 users' comprehension and processing of open educational resources in English using text simplification. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 37(3), 705-717. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12517>

Roberts, L., & Siyanova-Chanturia, A. (2013). USING EYE-TRACKING TO INVESTIGATE TOPICS IN L2 ACQUISITION AND L2 PROCESSING. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 35(2), 213-235. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263112000861>

Schotter, E. R., Tran, R., & Rayner, K. (2014). Don't Believe What You Read (Only Once) : Comprehension Is Supported by Regressions During Reading. *Psychological Science*, 25(6), 1218-1226. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797614531148>

Schwartz, D., Sparkman, J. P., & Deese, J. (1970). The process of understanding and judgments of comprehensibility. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 9(1), 87-93. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-5371\(70\)80013-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-5371(70)80013-5)

Sereno, S. C., & Rayner, K. (2003). Measuring word recognition in reading : Eye movements and event-related potentials. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 7(11), 489-493. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2003.09.010>

Siddharthan, A. (2006). Syntactic Simplification and Text Cohesion. *Research on Language and Computation*, 4(1), 77-109. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11168-006-9011-1>

Southwell, R., Gregg, J., Bixler, R., & D'Mello, S. K. (2020). What Eye Movements Reveal About Later Comprehension of Long Connected Texts. *Cognitive Science*, 44(10), e12905. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cogs.12905>

Stajner, S. (2018). How to Make Troubleshooting Simpler ? Assessing Differences in Perceived Sentence Simplicity by Native and Non-native Speakers. *LREC 2018 Workshop « Improving Social Inclusion Using NLP: Tools, Methods and Resources »*.

Strukelj, A., & Niehorster, D. C. (2018). One page of text : Eye movements during regular and thorough reading, skimming, and spell checking. *Journal of Eye Movement Research*, 11(1), 10.16910/jemr.11.1.1. <https://doi.org/10.16910/jemr.11.1.1>

Strukelj, A., Scheiter, K., Nyström, M., & Holmqvist, K. (2016). Exploring the lack of a disfluency effect : Evidence from eye movements. *Metacognition and Learning*, 11(1), 71-88. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-015-9146-2>

Sui, L., Dirix, N., Woumans, E., & Duyck, W. (2023). GECO-CN : Ghent Eye-tracking CORpus of sentence reading for Chinese-English bilinguals. *Behavior Research Methods*, 55(6), 2743-2763. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-022-01931-3>

Tighe, E. L., & Schatschneider, C. (2016). Examining the Relationships of Component Reading Skills to Reading Comprehension in Struggling Adult Readers : A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 49(4), 395-409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022219414555415>

Tobii AB. (s. d.). Tobii Pro Spectrum (TX300). Consulté 30 juin 2024, à l'adresse <https://www.tobii.com/products/eye-trackers/screen-based/tobii-pro-spectrum>

Tweissi, A. I. (1998). The Effects of the Amount and Type of Simplification on Foreign Language Reading Comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 11(2), 191-204.

Tywoniw, R. (2023). Compensatory effects of individual differences, language proficiency, and reading behavior : An eye-tracking study of second language reading assessment. *Frontiers in Communication*, 8. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2023.1176986>

UQAM. (2024). *Compétences linguistiques*. UQAM : Formations linguistiques non créditées. <https://langues-en-continu.uqam.ca/competences-linguistiques/>

Viso. (2023). <https://www.noldus.com/viso>

Vitu, F. (2012). Chapter 40—On the role of visual and oculomotor processes in reading. In *The Oxford Handbook of Eye Movements* (p. 732-749). <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199539789.013.0040>

Vorstius, C., Radach, Ralph, & Lonigan, C. J. (2014). Eye movements in developing readers : A comparison of silent and oral sentence reading. *Visual Cognition*, 22(3-4), 458-485. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13506285.2014.881445>

Wilkens, R., Alfter, D., Wang, X., Pintard, A., Tack, A., Yancey, K. P., & François, T. (2022). FABRA : French Aggregator-Based Readability Assessment toolkit. In N. Calzolari, F. Béchet, P. Blache, K. Choukri, C. Cieri, T. Declerck, S. Goggi, H. Isahara, B. Maegaard, J. Mariani, H. Mazo, J. Odijk, & S. Piperidis (Éds.), *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Language Resources and Evaluation Conference* (p. 1217-1233). European Language Resources Association. <https://aclanthology.org/2022.lrec-1.130>

Wonnacott, E., Joseph, H. S. S. L., Adelman, J. S., & Nation, K. (2016). Is children's reading "good enough"? Links between online processing and comprehension as children read syntactically ambiguous sentences. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 69(5), 855-879. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17470218.2015.1011176>

Yano, Y., Long, M. H., & Ross, S. (1994). The Effects of Simplified and Elaborated Texts on Foreign Language Reading Comprehension. *Language Learning*, 44(2), 189-219. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1994.tb01100.x>

Young, D. N. (1999). Linguistic Simplification of SL Reading Material : Effective Instructional Practice? *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(3), 350-366. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00027>

Zhang, X., & Gong, N. (2023). Modeling effects of linguistic complexity on L2 processing effort : The case of eye movement in text reading. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 46(1), 141-168. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263123000438>

Chapitre 3 : Article managérial

L'intelligence artificielle et la simplification de textes : un levier pour l'apprentissage linguistique et l'intégration

Chaque année, des milliers de nouveaux arrivants s'installent au Québec. En 2023, ce nombre s'élevait à 227 000¹, représentant 100% de l'accroissement démographique québécois. Assurer leur intégration sociale constitue un défi pour le Québec, qui cherche un modèle optimal garantissant la cohésion sociale².

Cette intégration passe en partie par l'exposition aux médias locaux, qui jouent un rôle clé dans l'adoption de la langue³ et leur consommation peut servir de formation linguistique informelle⁴ s'inscrivant ainsi une stratégie d'intégration à long terme⁵. Cependant, lorsque la langue constitue un défi, la complexité des articles de presse peut rendre la lecture d'un article de journal un particulièrement ardue. Face à l'essor des capacités de l'IA, notre équipe de recherche s'est interrogée : l'IA pourrait-elle aider ces apprenants à surmonter cette difficulté ?

¹ Québec, I. de la statistique du. (2024, mars 27). *Croissance migratoire record de 217 600 personnes au Québec en 2023*. Institut de la statistique du Québec. <https://statistique.quebec.ca/fr/communiqu%C3%A9/croissance-migratoire-record-217-600-personnes-au-quebec-en-2023>

² Carabin, A. F., François. (2025, janvier 28). *Le gouvernement Legault va présenter un nouveau «modèle d'intégration» des immigrants*. Le Devoir. <https://www.ledevoir.com/politique/quebec/836695/gouvernement-legault-va-presenter-nouveau-modele-integration-immigrants>

³ Chiswick, B. R., & Miller, P. W. (1995). The Endogeneity between Language and Earnings : International Analyses. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 13(2), 246-288. <https://doi.org/10.1086/298374>

⁴ Adamuti-Trache, M. (2013). Language Acquisition Among Adult Immigrants in Canada : The Effect of Premigration Language Capital. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(2), 103-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713612442804>

⁵ Alencar, A., & Deuze, M. (2017). News for assimilation or integration? Examining the functions of news in shaping acculturation experiences of immigrants in the Netherlands and Spain. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(2), 151-166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323117689993>

Nous avons exploré son potentiel pour améliorer la compréhension et la lisibilité - soit l'aisance pendant la lecture - d'articles de journal chez les apprenants du français langue seconde.

La simplification de textes : un outil clé pour l'apprentissage

La simplification de textes est une méthode couramment employée dans l'enseignement des langues. Habituellement réalisée manuellement, elle repose sur le choix et l'adaptation de textes par les enseignants selon leur expertise et leur jugement⁶. Cette approche progressive facilite l'apprentissage en proposant du matériel adapté au niveau des apprenants⁷, renforçant ainsi leur motivation en évitant la frustration face à des textes trop complexes⁸.

Dans un contexte d'intégration des immigrants, l'impact de la simplification de textes est encore plus significatif. En effet, la maîtrise de la langue du pays d'accueil joue un rôle clé dans l'intégration sociale et professionnelle⁹. De plus, une exposition accrue aux médias locaux favorise cette intégration, alors qu'une exposition limitée peut au contraire accentuer la distance culturelle en poussant les individus à s'appuyer sur les médias de leur pays d'origine¹⁰¹¹.

Étude sur l'impact de l'intelligence artificielle dans la simplification de textes

Nous avons mené une étude visant à évaluer la lisibilité et la compréhension d'articles de presse simplifiés par l'intelligence artificielle auprès d'apprenants du français. Nos résultats suggèrent que l'utilisation d'outils de simplification basés sur l'intelligence artificielle constitue une avenue

^{6,7} Allen, D. (2009). A study of the role of relative clauses in the simplification of news texts for learners of English. *System*, 37(4), 585-599. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.09.004>

⁸ BROOKS 1996

⁹ Adamuti-Trache, M. (2013). Language Acquisition Among Adult Immigrants in Canada : The Effect of Premigration Language Capital. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(2), 103-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713612442804>

¹⁰ Alencar, A., & Deuze, M. (2017). News for assimilation or integration? Examining the functions of news in shaping acculturation experiences of immigrants in the Netherlands and Spain. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(2), 151-166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323117689993>

¹¹ Danzer, A. M., & Yaman, F. (2013). Do Ethnic Enclaves Impede Immigrants' Integration? Evidence from a Quasi-experimental Social-interaction Approach. *Review of International Economics*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/roie.12038>

prometteuse pour les médias traditionnels. Ceci pourrait éventuellement leur permettre d'élargir leur audience tout en facilitant l'intégration des immigrants.

Dans le cadre de cette recherche, nous avons comparé des articles de presse en version originale et en versions simplifiées à différents niveaux de complexité, grâce à l'intelligence artificielle. Nous avons mesuré la lisibilité perçue, c'est-à-dire la facilité de lecture ressentie, ainsi que la compréhension perçue et réelle des textes. Les résultats montrent que la simplification par intelligence artificielle améliore la lisibilité et la compréhension perçue, sans compromettre la compréhension réelle. Concrètement, les lecteurs se sentent plus à l'aise et estiment mieux comprendre les textes simplifiés par intelligence artificielle que les versions originales. Comme leur compréhension réelle reste stable, ces outils permettent de réduire la charge cognitive liée au décodage, favorisant ainsi la motivation et la persévérance dans l'apprentissage.

Garantir une simplification efficace

Si les outils de simplification par intelligence artificielle sont accessibles et faciles d'utilisation, leur efficacité dépend d'un usage maîtrisé et d'une validation rigoureuse. Pour évaluer la qualité des textes simplifiés, nous avons mesuré la corrélation entre la lisibilité perçue et un indice objectif de complexité textuelle basé sur la formule de Kandel-Moles¹². Ce modèle, qui prend en compte le nombre de syllabes, de mots et de phrases, a permis de confirmer une forte correspondance entre la difficulté perçue par les lecteurs et la complexité calculée. Ainsi, un texte journalistique pourrait rapidement être évalué et, si trop complexe, une version simplifiée avec l'aide d'une intelligence artificielle générative pourrait être proposée. À long terme, cette approche pourrait contribuer à une meilleure intégration en augmentant l'exposition aux normes culturelles et sociales du pays d'accueil.

La version très simplifiée du texte présente des phrases actives, peu de noms propres et des adjectifs, pronoms, prépositions et conjonctions simples. Le nombre de mot est écourté et les mots utilisés sont communs. Les termes considérés comme complexes sont définis. Ces modifications entraîne une augmentation du score de Kandel-Moles, signifiant que le texte sera plus facile à lire.

¹² Kandel, L. & Moles A. (1958). Application de l'indice de Flesch à la langue française. *Cahiers Etudes de Radio-Télévision*, 19, 253-274.

Figure 2 Extraits d'un article dans ses trois niveaux de complexité

V0 Version Originale (555 mots) Score K-M : 98,12 <u>Urgence climatique : il est encore temps d'agir</u> Dans son plus récent rapport sur les changements climatiques, le Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat (GIEC) sonne l'alarme. Il faut changer radicalement notre mode de vie pour atténuer les conséquences dramatiques du réchauffement climatique. Des solutions existent, mais elles doivent être adoptées dès maintenant par les grands décideurs politiques mondiaux. L'objectif est de freiner l'augmentation des températures mondiales avant qu'il ne soit trop tard. Le monde s'est déjà réchauffé de presque 1,1 degré Celsius depuis 150 ans. Le GIEC affirme qu'un réchauffement de plus de 1,5 degré Celsius aurait des conséquences irréversibles et dévastatrices pour les humains et les animaux qui vivent sur Terre. Ces conséquences toucheraient davantage les communautés les plus pauvres et les plus vulnérables de la planète, qui ne sont pourtant pas celles qui la polluent le plus. Chaque fraction de degré compte et il n'y a pas de temps à perdre ni d'excuses à trouver, insiste Antonio Guterres, secrétaire général de l'ONU. « Les solutions sont claires. Des économies vertes et inclusives, la prospérité, un air plus pur et une meilleure santé sont possibles pour tous si nous répondons à cette crise avec solidarité et courage. » – Antonio Guterres, secrétaire général de l'ONU	V1 Version simplifiée (487 mots) Score K-M : 98,64 <u>Changement climatique : il est encore temps d'agir</u> Le dernier rapport sur les changements climatiques du Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat (GIEC) nous alerte. Nous devons changer complètement notre manière de vivre pour réduire les effets graves du réchauffement climatique. Des solutions sont disponibles, mais les grands leaders politiques du monde doivent les appliquer tout de suite. Le but est de limiter l'augmentation des températures mondiales avant qu'il ne soit trop tard. La température mondiale a déjà augmenté de presque 1,1 degré Celsius en 150 ans. Selon le GIEC, un réchauffement de plus de 1,5 degré Celsius aurait des effets très mauvais et permanents pour les hommes et les animaux sur la Terre. Les plus touchés seraient les groupes de personnes les plus pauvres et vulnérables, qui ne sont pourtant pas les plus grands pollueurs. Antonio Guterres, le secrétaire général de l'ONU, dit qu'il est urgent d'agir et qu'il ne faut pas chercher d'excuses. Il affirme que si nous agissons ensemble et avec courage, nous pouvons créer des économies respectueuses de l'environnement, améliorer notre santé et respirer un air plus propre.	V2 Version très simplifiée (420 mots) Score K-M : 104,36 <u>Urgence climatique : on peut encore agir</u> Des experts ont écrit un rapport sur les changements climatiques. Ils disent qu'il est urgent de changer notre façon de vivre pour réduire les effets négatifs du réchauffement climatique. Il existe des solutions, mais les leaders politiques du monde doivent les utiliser tout de suite. L'objectif est d'empêcher que la température mondiale augmente trop. Depuis 150 ans, la température de la Terre a augmenté de presque 1,1 degré Celsius. Les experts disent que si elle augmente de plus de 1,5 degré, les conséquences seront très graves et définitives pour les gens et les animaux. Les communautés pauvres et vulnérables, qui polluent le moins, seront les plus touchées. Antonio Guterres, le chef de l'ONU, dit qu'il est important d'agir rapidement et sans excuses. Il explique que si nous agissons ensemble et avec courage, nous pouvons avoir une économie respectueuse de l'environnement, une meilleure santé et un air plus propre pour tous.
---	--	--

Conclusion

L'intelligence artificielle offre un potentiel considérable pour l'amélioration de la lisibilité des

Méthodologie

L'étude a été menée en laboratoire auprès d'apprenants du français de niveau intermédiaire. Des articles de journal simplifiés par IA et correspondant à trois différents niveaux de complexité ont été lus par les participants. Pendant la lecture, les mouvements des yeux des participants ont été captés afin de mesurer les processus de traitement de l'information se produisant. Suite à la lecture, la lisibilité et la compréhension perçues ont été évaluées par questionnaire.

textes, notamment en contexte d'apprentissage linguistique et d'intégration. Nos résultats montrent que les outils de simplification par intelligence artificielle permettent de rendre les textes plus accessibles sans compromettre la compréhension réelle. Toutefois, une utilisation optimale nécessite une validation méthodique afin de garantir la qualité des textes produits. En intégrant ces technologies aux pratiques éducatives et médiatiques, il serait possible d'élargir l'accès à l'information et de soutenir l'apprentissage des langues de manière innovante et efficace.

Chapitre 4 : Conclusion

L'objectif de ce mémoire était d'évaluer dans quelle mesure l'intelligence artificielle en libre accès peut améliorer la compréhension objective, la compréhension perçue et la lisibilité perçue de textes journalistiques chez des personnes en apprentissage d'une langue seconde. Ce faisant, nous cherchions à étudier les mécanismes sous-jacents à ces perceptions en examinant les relations entre la complexité textuelle, les perceptions de lisibilité et de compréhension, et les comportements de lecture.

Nous avons mené une recherche intra-sujet en laboratoire afin de répondre à la question *Dans le contexte des lecteurs en apprentissage d'une langue, dans quelle mesure l'intelligence artificielle facilite-t-elle la lecture d'articles de presse?* 19 participants, tous exposés à trois conditions, ont participé à cette étude. La recherche a été développée autour de quatre axes de recherche, soient la compréhension objective et perçue, la lisibilité perçue, l'effort de lecture et le mécanisme expliquant l'expérience de lecture.

Résultats

Notre première question de recherche visait à comprendre l'impact des versions simplifiées d'articles de presse générées par l'intelligence artificielle sur la compréhension objective et la compréhension perçue des utilisateurs par rapport à la version originale. Les résultats indiquent que la simplification de texte par l'intelligence artificielle entraîne une amélioration de la lisibilité perçue, les versions simplifiées recevant un score plus élevé que les versions plus complexes. Toutefois, bien que la compréhension perçue soit améliorée par la simplification de texte, les changements apportés doivent être notables pour améliorer le sentiment de compréhension. L'absence de différences significatives sur la compréhension objective indique que bien que les textes paraissent plus faciles à lire, il n'est pas nécessairement plus facile de les comprendre.

Nous nous sommes ensuite intéressés à l'impact des versions simplifiées d'articles de presse générées par l'intelligence artificielle sur la lisibilité perçue (Q2) et l'effort de lecture (Q3) des utilisateurs par rapport à la version originale. L'analyse des comportements oculaires démontre que ces derniers sont peu affectés par la complexité textuelle; seul le taux de saut est affecté en présence de simplification accrue, où la structure des phrases et le choix des mots sont simplifiés. L'analyse des mouvements oculométriques a associé la lisibilité perçue au temps de lecture total et la compréhension perçue au temps de lecture total ainsi qu'au taux de saut. Ces deux mesures reflètent d'efforts cognitifs globaux dans la manière dont les lecteurs s'engagent dans la lecture

de textes, suggérant que la perception de la compréhension et de la lisibilité sont davantage influencés par la facilité globale de traitement que par des composantes spécifiques.

Enfin, nous avons étudié la nature du mécanisme liant l'effort de lecture (manifesté par le comportement de lecture) à la compréhension objective, la compréhension perçue et la lisibilité perçue. Les résultats obtenus indiquent que les connaissances préalables influencent les perceptions de compréhension et de lisibilité.

Ces résultats contribuent à une compréhension plus large de la lecture en langue seconde et soulignent l'importance de considérer les perceptions des lecteurs comme faisant partie de l'expérience de lecture.

Contributions théoriques

Ces derniers résultats apportent de l'information nouvelle au corpus de connaissances en comportements de lecture et perception de la lisibilité. D'une part, les résultats analysant les comportements de lecture suggèrent que les perceptions de la lisibilité et de la compréhension sont influencées par la charge cognitive globale imposée par le texte. D'autre part, les résultats mettent en lumière comment les comportements de lecture sont affectés par des facteurs propres au lecteur, tel que les connaissances préalables. Enfin, en démontrant l'impact de la complexité textuelle sur la lisibilité perçue, cette étude contribue à confirmer que les évaluations humaines, au-delà des mesures formulées, sont cruciales pour comprendre l'accessibilité des textes, répondant à l'appel de validation lancé par Heydari et Riazi (2012).

Les versions complexes ont été perçues comme étant plus difficiles à lire bien que les scores de compréhension objective soient restés comparables d'une version à l'autre. Cette observation suggère que les participants ont été capables de surmonter les difficultés rencontrées pour comprendre le discours, mais que ces difficultés ont été perçues comme augmentant la difficulté de la lecture. Cette interprétation est corroborée par l'observation que les participants ont exprimé une impression marginalement significative d'avoir mieux compris la version la plus simplifiée que la version originale.

Les lecteurs avec des connaissances préalables moindres adoptant une lecture plus superficielle étant moins exigeante mais entraînant une compréhension partielle ont une perception plus positive de la lisibilité alors que ceux adoptant une lecture plus minutieuse ont une perception

plus négative de la lisibilité, probablement due à la difficulté de traitement. Les lecteurs possédant de hauts niveaux de connaissances préalables ont une perception de la lisibilité qui demeure stable, indépendamment de leur temps de lecture ou taux de saut, indiquant que leurs connaissances préalables élevées permettent une compréhension facilitée. Ainsi, les résultats suggèrent que la lisibilité perçue est étroitement liée à la capacité à faire des inférences plutôt que l'effort cognitif brut. En reliant les mesures des mouvements oculaires à la lisibilité perçue, l'étude souligne comment la facilité de traitement, l'attention et la connaissance interagissent pour façonner l'expérience de la lecture, mettant en évidence le rôle central de l'inférence dans la perception de la lisibilité.

Implications pratiques

Notre étude démontre que la simplification des textes présente un fort potentiel pour faciliter le traitement tout en maintenant la compréhension.

Les résultats suggèrent que, bien que les participants n'aient pas abandonné l'étude en contexte contrôlé, des textes trop complexes pourraient décourager certains lecteurs en situation réelle, notamment dans un but informationnel. Ainsi, rendre disponible du contenu journalistique simplifié serait une possibilité à considérer pour les éditeurs, permettant d'élargir l'audience. Pour les immigrants et les immigrants récents, la disponibilité de versions simplifiées d'articles de presse offrant une expérience de lecture améliorée pourrait agir comme un levier d'intégration. Elle permettrait un meilleur accès au contenu médiatique, faciliterait l'accès à l'information, l'exposition aux normes socioculturelles, et encouragerait l'apprentissage de la langue par des moyens informels, contribuant ainsi à leur intégration.

En contexte professionnel, la simplification de texte par intelligence artificielle permettrait de gagner du temps en facilitant le traitement de l'information, tandis qu'en contexte d'apprentissage, elle pourrait prévenir le décrochage face à des textes trop exigeants à lire et comprendre. Ces résultats soulignent l'importance d'adapter le niveau de complexité des contenus aux besoins et au profil des lecteurs.

Recherches futures

Bien que les résultats de cette recherche permettent de mieux comprendre les mécanismes affectant la lisibilité ainsi que les compréhensions objective et perçue, il ne s'agit que d'un premier pas. Afin d'approfondir notre compréhension de ces mécanismes et d'identifier plus finement les obstacles rencontrés par les lecteurs, il pourrait être bénéfique d'ajouter une courte discussion

de débriefing à la fin d'un test sur la lisibilité perçue ou la compréhension. Ces débriefings pourraient explorer les passages difficiles ou mal compris, identifiés par des comportements de lecture reflétant ces difficultés.

Interroger directement les participants permettrait de mieux comprendre leur expérience de lecture et de faire des liens concrets avec les données oculométriques, par exemple en leur demandant pourquoi ils sont revenus à une section précise du texte ou ce qui leur a semblé particulièrement difficile. Ce type d'approche contribuerait à enrichir l'analyse des résultats en les ancrant dans le vécu des lecteurs, complétant les résultats d'études oculométriques.

Remarques finales

Dans un contexte où l'accès à l'information est un vecteur clé d'inclusion, cette recherche montre que l'intelligence artificielle peut jouer un rôle concret pour faciliter la lecture. Au-delà de la simplification, elle met en lumière les dynamiques qui influencent la lisibilité et la compréhension d'un texte chez les lecteurs en apprentissage d'une langue seconde.

Ces résultats rappellent l'importance d'adapter les contenus aux profils des lecteurs et ouvrent la voie à des pratiques plus accessibles, plus sensibles et mieux ancrées dans la réalité des usages.

Bibliographie

Heydari, P., & Riazi, A. M. (2012). Readability of Texts : Human Evaluation Versus Computer Index. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3.

Annexes

Annexe 1 : Approbation éthique

Figure 3 Certificat d'attestation d'approbation éthique



Comité d'éthique de la recherche

ATTESTATION D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE COMPLÉTÉE

La présente atteste que le projet de recherche décrit ci-dessous a fait l'objet des approbations en matière d'éthique de la recherche avec des êtres humains nécessaires selon les exigences de HEC Montréal.

La période de validité du certificat d'approbation éthique émis pour ce projet est maintenant terminée. Si vous devez reprendre contact avec les participants ou reprendre une collecte de données pour ce projet, la certification éthique doit être réactivée préalablement. Vous devez alors prendre contact avec le secrétariat du CER de HEC Montréal.

Nom de l'étudiant(e) : Mla Maria Poisson Recasens

Titre du projet supervisé/mémoire/thèse : Impact de l'utilisation de l'intelligence artificielle dans la simplification de textes sur l'expérience de lecture d'apprenants du français langue seconde

Titre du projet sur le certificat : Impact de l'utilisation de l'intelligence artificielle dans la simplification de textes sur l'expérience de lecture d'apprenants du français langue seconde

Projet # : 2022-4859

Chercheur principal / directeur de recherche : Sylvain Sénécal

Cochercheurs : Sylvain Sénécal; Frédérique Bouvier; Saljma Tazi; Constantinos K. Coursaris; David Briegne; Mila Maria Poisson Recasens; Shang Lin Chen; Elise Imbeault; Juan Fernandez Shaw; Luis Carlos Castiblanco; Marc Fredette

Date d'approbation initiale du projet : 17 janvier 2022

Date de fermeture de l'approbation éthique pour l'étudiant(e) : 09 avril 2025

Mr. B

Maurice Lemelin
Président
CER de HEC Montréal

Signé le 2025-04-09 à 15:56

Annexe 2 : Données démographiques

Tableau 20 Questions démographiques

1.	Quel est votre âge?
2.	Quel est votre sexe?
3.	À quel genre vous identifiez-vous?
4.	Quelle langue préférez-vous utiliser pour effectuer l'expérience d'aujourd'hui?

Annexe 3 : Éléments d'évaluation des compétences en français avec leurs traductions en anglais (LexTALE)

cheveux (hair); soumon (NW); cloche (bell); fascine (faggot, fascinate); huif (NW); semonce (lecture); canoter (boating); infâme (infamous); fourmi (ant); cadenas (padlock); racaille (riffraff); porcine (NW); oeillet (carnation); raplaner (NW); plaiser (NW); cerveler (NW); endifier (NW); jamais (NW); ennemi (enemy); pouce (thumb); mettre (NW); fosse (pit); inciter (encourage); salière (salt shaker); fouet (whip); censure (NW); clouer (nail); mappemonde (globe); gloque (NW); lézard (lizard); sacher (NW); nouer (establish); occire (slay); écrouce (NW); osseaux (NW); rejoute (NW); escroc (crook); hache (ax); parchance (NW); pinceau (brush); poisson (fish); robinet (tap); amadouer (coax); peigne (comb); retenir (NW); crayon (pencil); sentuelle (NW); alourdir (to make heavy); marteau (hammer); esquif (skiff); treillage (trellis); dauphin (dolphin); orgueil (pride); amorce (prime); cintre (hanger); chameau (camel); bouton (button); capeline (wide-brimmed hat); lanière (strap); honteux (NW); abêtir (stultify); fenêtre (window); écureuil (squirrel); caddie (caddy); détume (NW); oeuviller (NW); balai (broom); piroche (NW); vicelard (pervert); joueux (NW); agire (NW); ventail (range); boutard (NW); panier (basket); citrouille (pumpkin); bouilloire (kettle); parir (NW); remporter (win); procoreux (NW); tanin (tannin); église (church); indicible (unspeakable); réporce (NW); mignon (cute).

* NW indique *non-word*, soient des mots inexsistants

Annexe 4 : Échelles d'évaluations de lisibilité perçue, compréhension perçue et compréhension objective

Tableau 21 Éléments de l'échelle des connaissances subjectives (background knowledge)

1.	I know pretty much about <i>the climate crisis</i> .
2.	I do not feel very knowledgeable about <i>the climate crisis</i> . (reverse scored)

3. Among my circle of friends, I'm one of the "experts" on *the climate crisis*.
4. Compared to most people, I know less about *the climate crisis*. (reverse scored)
5. When it comes to *the climate crisis*, I really don't know a lot. (reverse scored)

Response format: 1 = strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree

Tableau 22 Éléments de l'échelle d'évaluation de la lisibilité perçue (perceived readability)

Perceived readability evaluation

-
1. This text is clear.
 2. This text is easy to read.
 3. This text uses simple words that I know.
 4. This text uses technical words that are difficult to understand.
 5. This text contains elements of Quebec culture, making it difficult to read.
 6. The text uses simple sentences that are easy to understand.
 7. The visual presentation of the text makes it easier to read.
-

Response format: 1 = strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree

Tableau 23 Éléments de l'échelle d'évaluation de la compréhension perçue (perceived comprehension)

-
1. I clearly understand this text.
-

Response format: 1 = strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree

Annexe 5 : Articles journalistiques complets dans les trois niveaux de complexité

Article 1 : Urgence climatique

Texte original

Urgence climatique : il est encore temps d'agir

Dans son plus récent rapport sur les changements climatiques, le Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat (GIEC) sonne l'alarme. Il faut changer radicalement notre mode de vie pour atténuer les conséquences dramatiques du réchauffement climatique. Des solutions existent, mais elles doivent être adoptées dès maintenant par les grands décideurs politiques mondiaux.

L'objectif est de freiner l'augmentation des températures mondiales avant qu'il ne soit trop tard. Le monde s'est déjà réchauffé de presque 1,1 degré Celsius depuis 150 ans. Le GIEC affirme qu'un réchauffement de plus de 1,5 degré Celsius aurait des conséquences irréversibles et dévastatrices pour les humains et les animaux qui vivent sur Terre. Ces conséquences toucheraient davantage les communautés les plus pauvres et les plus vulnérables de la planète, qui ne sont pourtant pas celles qui la polluent le plus.

Chaque fraction de degré compte et il n'y a pas de temps à perdre ni d'excuses à trouver, insiste Antonio Guterres, secrétaire général de l'ONU.

« Les solutions sont claires. Des économies vertes et inclusives, la prospérité, un air plus pur et une meilleure santé sont possibles pour tous si nous répondons à cette crise avec solidarité et courage. » – Antonio Guterres, secrétaire général de l'ONU

Un appel à l'action

L'ONU appelle à des actions précises de la part des États les plus pollueurs, principalement les pays du G20. Voici ce qu'elle demande :

- 1- Viser des émissions nettes nulles, donc compenser tous les gaz à effet de serre (GES) produits.
- 2- Renforcer les engagements politiques lors des grandes conférences internationales.
- 3- Mettre fin aux subventions pour les combustibles fossiles.
- 4- Fixer un prix sur le carbone, et donc taxer les émanations.
- 5- Protéger les communautés les plus vulnérables.
- 6- Financer la lutte contre les changements climatiques.

La question climatique n'a plus à être débattue, insiste Antonio Guterres. Il est inutile de réitérer que l'activité humaine est la cause de ces dérèglements. Il faut plutôt travailler à documenter les

conséquences des changements climatiques et à cibler les divers effets néfastes, ajoute-t-il. C'est cette collecte de données qui permet de sensibiliser et d'agir concrètement pour freiner les effets du réchauffement planétaire.

Les principaux pollueurs s'engagent à faire mieux

Les dirigeants mondiaux ont pris des engagements concrets lors de la dernière conférence mondiale sur le climat, la COP26, qui a eu lieu à Glasgow. Mais l'ONU craint qu'ils ne soient pas suffisants.

« Nous n'avons pas atteint ces objectifs lors de cette conférence. Mais nous avons des éléments de base pour progresser. » - Antonio Guterres, secrétaire général de l'ONU

Quelques engagements à souligner :

- 120 pays représentant 90 % des forêts du monde se sont engagés à arrêter la déforestation d'ici 2030.
- 100 pays ont accepté de réduire leurs émissions de méthane d'ici 2030, entraînant par le fait même une diminution des GES.
- 40 pays ont accepté d'abandonner le charbon. C'est le cas de la Pologne, du Chili et du Vietnam, qui en sont les plus grands utilisateurs.
- Un regroupement de 100 villes, États et entreprises se sont engagés à mettre fin à la vente de voitures à combustion interne d'ici 2040.
- Une alliance formée de 11 pays a été créée pour fixer une date butoir au-delà de laquelle l'exploration et l'extraction nationale de pétrole et de gaz seront interdites.

Changement climatique : il est encore temps d'agir

Le dernier rapport sur les changements climatiques du Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat (GIEC) nous alerte. Nous devons changer complètement notre manière de vivre pour réduire les effets graves du réchauffement climatique. Des solutions sont disponibles, mais les grands leaders politiques du monde doivent les appliquer tout de suite.

Le but est de limiter l'augmentation des températures mondiales avant qu'il ne soit trop tard. La température mondiale a déjà augmenté de presque 1,1 degré Celsius en 150 ans. Selon le GIEC, un réchauffement de plus de 1,5 degré Celsius aurait des effets très mauvais et permanents pour les hommes et les animaux sur la Terre. Les plus touchés seraient les groupes de personnes les plus pauvres et vulnérables, qui ne sont pourtant pas les plus grands pollueurs.

Antonio Guterres, le secrétaire général de l'ONU, dit qu'il est urgent d'agir et qu'il ne faut pas chercher d'excuses. Il affirme que si nous agissons ensemble et avec courage, nous pouvons créer des économies respectueuses de l'environnement, améliorer notre santé et respirer un air plus propre.

Un appel à l'action

L'ONU demande à certains pays, surtout ceux du G20 qui polluent beaucoup, de prendre des mesures précises :

1. Viser à ne plus émettre de gaz à effet de serre que l'on ne peut pas éliminer.
2. Prendre des engagements plus forts lors des grandes réunions internationales.
3. Arrêter de soutenir financièrement les énergies fossiles.
4. Mettre un prix sur le carbone pour faire payer les pollutions.
5. Protéger les groupes de personnes les plus vulnérables.
6. Donner de l'argent pour lutter contre les changements climatiques.

Antonio Guterres insiste pour dire que nous ne devons plus discuter si les changements climatiques existent ou non. Nous savons déjà que les activités humaines en sont la cause. Nous devons maintenant nous concentrer sur l'étude des effets du réchauffement et sur les façons de les réduire.

Les pays qui polluent le plus s'engagent à faire des efforts.

Lors de la dernière grande réunion sur le climat, la COP26 à Glasgow, les leaders mondiaux ont promis de faire mieux. Antonio Guterres dit que les objectifs n'ont pas été complètement atteints, mais qu'il y a des bases pour améliorer la situation. Voici quelques promesses importantes :

- 120 pays, qui possèdent 90 % des forêts du monde, ont promis d'arrêter la déforestation d'ici 2030.
- 100 pays vont réduire leurs émissions de méthane d'ici 2030, ce qui diminuera les gaz à effet de serre.
- 40 pays ont décidé de stopper l'utilisation du charbon. Parmi eux, la Pologne, le Chili et le Vietnam sont les principaux utilisateurs.
- Un groupe de 100 villes, États et entreprises s'est engagé à ne plus vendre de voitures qui utilisent des combustibles fossiles d'ici 2040.
- Un groupe de 11 pays a fixé une date limite pour arrêter l'exploration et l'extraction de pétrole et de gaz sur leur territoire.

Urgence climatique : on peut encore agir

Des experts ont écrit un rapport sur les changements climatiques. Ils disent qu'il est urgent de changer notre façon de vivre pour réduire les effets négatifs du réchauffement climatique. Il existe des solutions, mais les leaders politiques du monde doivent les utiliser tout de suite.

L'objectif est d'empêcher que la température mondiale augmente trop. Depuis 150 ans, la température de la Terre a augmenté de presque 1,1 degré Celsius. Les experts disent que si elle augmente de plus de 1,5 degré, les conséquences seront très graves et définitives pour les gens et les animaux. Les communautés pauvres et vulnérables, qui polluent le moins, seront les plus touchées.

Antonio Guterres, le chef de l'ONU, dit qu'il est important d'agir rapidement et sans excuses. Il explique que si nous agissons ensemble et avec courage, nous pouvons avoir une économie respectueuse de l'environnement, une meilleure santé et un air plus propre pour tous.

Un appel à l'action

L'ONU demande aux pays qui polluent le plus, surtout ceux du G20, de faire des choses importantes :

1. Atteindre des émissions de gaz à effet de serre nulles, c'est-à-dire balancer ce qu'ils émettent.
2. Prendre des engagements plus forts lors des grandes réunions internationales.
3. Arrêter de donner de l'argent aux industries des énergies fossiles.
4. Mettre un prix sur le carbone pour faire payer les pollutions.
5. Protéger les communautés vulnérables.
6. Donner de l'argent pour lutter contre les changements climatiques.

Antonio Guterres insiste sur le fait qu'il n'est plus temps de discuter si les humains sont responsables ou non des changements climatiques. Il faut plutôt se concentrer sur l'étude des conséquences et agir.

Les grands pollueurs promettent de faire mieux

Lors de la dernière grande réunion sur le climat, appelée COP26, à Glasgow, les leaders du monde ont pris des engagements.

Mais Antonio Guterres craint que cela ne soit pas suffisant. Il dit que nous n'avons pas encore atteint nos buts, mais nous avons des bases pour améliorer la situation.

Voici quelques engagements pris lors de cette réunion :

- 120 pays vont arrêter la déforestation d'ici 2030.
- 100 pays vont réduire leurs émissions de méthane d'ici 2030.
- 40 pays vont arrêter d'utiliser le charbon. Des pays comme la Pologne, le Chili et le Vietnam sont concernés.
- 100 villes, États et entreprises vont arrêter de vendre des voitures à essence d'ici 2040.
- 11 pays ont formé une alliance pour décider d'une date après laquelle ils n'extraieront plus de pétrole et de gaz.

Article 2 : Armes à feu

Texte original

Armes à feu : le combat de Montréal

Le Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) remarque que de plus en plus de jeunes portent sur eux des armes à feu. Ils sont, selon le SPVM, poussés par un sentiment d'impunité qui les encourage à glorifier les armes de poing. Ce serait même, assure la police, du jamais-vu, qu'elle associe d'ailleurs à une hausse des événements violents enregistrés sur le territoire de la métropole. Comment combattre ce phénomène?

Des intervenants dans la rue pour rencontrer les jeunes

« On fait de la prévention et de la répression. Mais pour combattre cette glorification des armes à feu, il nous faut des partenaires dans la communauté. Parce qu'une chose est certaine : une culture de violence, la police n'est pas capable de mettre ça en prison », explique d'entrée de jeu Sébastien de Montigny, inspecteur-chef au Service de gendarmerie Nord-Est et responsable de la stratégie de lutte contre la violence armée au SPVM.

Ces partenaires peuvent varier, et vont du travailleur social à l'entraîneur sportif. Mais une chose est sûre, leur succès à convaincre les jeunes de faire une croix sur la criminalité dépend de leur capacité à gagner leur confiance.

« Si un gang de rue peut recruter, c'est parce qu'ils font sentir aux jeunes qu'ils les respectent et les prennent en considération, le travailleur de rue peut aussi avoir cet effet quand il y a un lien de confiance », explique Mathieu L., qui a baigné dans la criminalité toute sa jeunesse. Le trentenaire propose une piste de solution : se servir de l'expertise d'anciens criminels repentis, comme lui. « Je pense aussi que des vétérans repentis, qui ont connu la criminalité, devraient faire partie du dialogue. »

Les armes à feu : le nerf de la guerre

Pour les jeunes qu'on n'arrive pas à convaincre, il faut alors agir sur la façon dont ils sont mis en contact avec le milieu criminel et les armes à feu. Plusieurs solutions sont envisageables :

- Investir dans les ressources communautaires pour sensibiliser les jeunes dans les écoles secondaires, les parcs et autres milieux qu'ils fréquentent.
- Surveiller l'entrée d'armes illégales à la frontière avec les États-Unis.
- Prévenir les vols d'armes légales aux domiciles de leurs propriétaires.

- Surveiller l'achat de pièces et d'outils pouvant servir à assembler des armes illégales, reçues en pièces détachées.
- Surveiller les médias sociaux, nouveau lieu populaire pour le recrutement du crime organisé et espace de publication de méfaits de toutes sortes.

Selon le SPVM, une arme de poing coûte entre 5000 \$ et 6000 \$. C'est un montant très élevé, surtout pour des jeunes encore à l'école secondaire. Ces sommes proviendraient de la vente de drogues, du proxénétisme et, surtout, de la fraude, croit la police. Ces secteurs d'activités doivent donc aussi être surveillés de près par les agents en service.

La clé : être sur le terrain

Enfin, le SPVM a aussi noté un changement au sein même du milieu criminel. Les groupes criminels évoluent très rapidement : les alliances se créent et se défont, ce qui rend la surveillance très difficile. Encore là, des pistes de solution existent.

Notamment, pour avoir des renseignements sur un milieu en constant changement, il est nécessaire que les patrouilleurs soient proches du terrain, croit le SPVM. En général, les gens qui possèdent des informations ne vont pas appeler le 911. Ils vont se confier au policier sur le terrain, croit l'ancien directeur du SPVM Jacques Duchesneau, qui a fait la guerre aux motards criminels dans les années 1990. La criminalité a pris une toute nouvelle forme, conclut-il.

Armes à feu : le combat de Montréal

Le Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) a remarqué que de nombreux jeunes portent des armes à feu. Selon le SPVM, ces jeunes se sentent impunis, ce qui les pousse à valoriser les armes de poing. La police dit que c'est une situation inédite et que cela correspond à une augmentation des actes violents dans la métropole. Comment peut-on lutter contre ce phénomène ?

Des personnes vont dans la rue pour rencontrer les jeunes et parler avec eux.

Sébastien de Montigny, un haut responsable de la police, explique : « Nous essayons de prévenir et de punir. Mais pour lutter contre cette valorisation des armes à feu, nous avons besoin de collaborer avec la communauté. La police ne peut pas enfermer une culture de violence ».

Les collaborateurs peuvent être différents, comme des travailleurs sociaux ou des entraîneurs sportifs. Leur succès à convaincre les jeunes de renoncer à la criminalité dépend de leur capacité à établir une relation de confiance avec eux.

Mathieu L., qui a été impliqué dans la criminalité pendant sa jeunesse, explique : « Si un gang de rue recrute des jeunes, c'est parce qu'il leur montre du respect et de la considération. Un travailleur de rue peut aussi avoir cet effet s'il établit un lien de confiance ». Il suggère d'utiliser l'expérience des anciens criminels repentis pour aider. « Je pense que les anciens criminels, qui ont changé de vie, devraient participer aux discussions ».

Les armes à feu : un problème majeur

Pour les jeunes qui ne sont pas convaincus, il faut agir sur leur contact avec le milieu criminel et les armes à feu. Voici quelques solutions possibles :

- Financer des programmes communautaires pour sensibiliser les jeunes dans les écoles, les parcs et autres lieux qu'ils fréquentent.
- Contrôler l'entrée d'armes illégales venant des États-Unis.
- Empêcher le vol d'armes légales chez les propriétaires.

- Surveiller l'achat de pièces et d'outils qui peuvent être utilisés pour assembler des armes illégales.
- Surveiller les réseaux sociaux, devenus populaires pour le recrutement criminel et la publication de méfaits.

Le SPVM indique qu'une arme de poing coûte entre 5000 \$ et 6000 \$. C'est très cher, surtout pour des jeunes encore à l'école. Selon la police, cet argent vient souvent de la vente de drogues, du proxénétisme et de la fraude. Il faut donc aussi surveiller ces activités.

La solution : être présent sur le terrain

Le SPVM a aussi noté que les groupes criminels changent rapidement. Les alliances se forment et se défont, ce qui complique la surveillance. Pour obtenir des informations sur un milieu qui évolue constamment, il est essentiel que les policiers soient actifs sur le terrain. Jacques Duchesneau, ancien directeur du SPVM, a dit que les personnes qui ont des informations ne vont généralement pas appeler le 911. Elles préfèrent parler directement aux policiers présents dans leur quartier. La criminalité a beaucoup changé, conclut-il.

Armes à feu : le combat de Montréal

Les jeunes et les armes à feu

La police de Montréal voit que plus de jeunes ont des armes à feu. La police pense que ces jeunes se sentent libres de montrer qu'ils aiment les armes de poing. La police dit aussi que c'est la première fois qu'ils voient cela. Ils pensent que cela cause plus de violence à Montréal. Comment arrêter cela?

Rencontrer les jeunes dans la rue

"Nous essayons de prévenir et de stopper cela. Mais nous avons besoin d'aide de personnes dans la communauté pour lutter contre l'amour des armes à feu. La police ne peut pas arrêter une culture de violence," dit Sébastien de Montigny. Il travaille pour la police et s'occupe de réduire la violence avec les armes.

Les aides peuvent être différents, comme les travailleurs sociaux ou les entraîneurs sportifs. Leur réussite dépend de la confiance des jeunes en eux. "Si un gang recrute, c'est parce qu'il montre du respect aux jeunes. Un travailleur social peut faire la même chose s'il est de confiance," dit Mathieu L., qui était dans la criminalité avant. Il pense que des anciens criminels qui ont changé peuvent aider.

Les armes à feu : un problème majeur

Pour les jeunes qu'on ne peut pas convaincre, il faut changer comment ils rencontrent le crime et les armes à feu. On peut :

- Sensibiliser les jeunes dans les écoles et les parcs avec des programmes spéciaux.
- Contrôler les armes illégales qui viennent des États-Unis.
- Prévenir le vol d'armes légales chez les gens.
- Contrôler l'achat de pièces pour faire des armes illégales.
- Surveiller les réseaux sociaux où le crime recrute des jeunes.

La police dit qu'une arme de poing coûte entre 5000 \$ et 6000 \$. C'est beaucoup d'argent, surtout

pour des jeunes à l'école. Cet argent vient de la vente de drogues, de la prostitution et de la fraude. Il faut donc surveiller ces activités.

Être sur le terrain

La police a aussi vu des changements dans le crime. Les groupes criminels changent vite. Il est difficile de les suivre. Les patrouilleurs doivent être près des gens pour avoir des informations. Les gens ne vont pas appeler le 911, mais ils vont parler aux policiers dans la rue. "La criminalité a changé," dit Jacques Duchesneau, un ancien directeur de la police.

Marché immobilier : que faire quand acheter ne semble plus être possible?

Les prix de l'immobilier rendent l'accès à la propriété encore plus difficile pour les jeunes et les moins nantis, de quoi accentuer les inégalités sociales et précariser une génération. À Montréal, la situation est plus difficile qu'ailleurs au Québec. Le prix des maisons a bondi de 28 % en un an et le coût médian s'approche dangereusement du demi-million. Et si des solutions existent, ce sont les gouvernements qui doivent les mettre en place.

L'augmentation du prix des maisons dans la métropole accentue le fossé entre locataires et propriétaires. En plus, le prix des loyers augmente aussi de 4,2 % par an, en moyenne, ce qui est supérieur à l'inflation. C'est un cercle vicieux : ceux qui n'ont pas les moyens d'acheter s'appauvrissent en payant un loyer qui gruge de plus en plus leur pouvoir d'achat.

Résultats : les nouveaux acheteurs doivent mettre beaucoup d'argent de côté pour acquérir une propriété. Et lorsqu'ils y arrivent, ils s'endettent plus que leurs parents. La Banque du Canada observe d'ailleurs des signes de plus en plus inquiétants de surendettement.

Des solutions existent toutefois pour calmer le marché de l'immobilier, mais elles demandent une intervention politique ciblée. Voici quelques exemples :

1. Considérer les profits réalisés par la vente d'une résidence principale comme un revenu imposable qui s'ajoute à vos autres revenus sur votre déclaration d'impôts.

L'objectif : décourager les gens d'acheter seulement pour revendre avec une marge importante de profit. En ce moment, quand vous vendez une maison, vous n'êtes pas imposé sur les revenus réalisés entre l'achat et la vente de cette propriété, c'est ce qu'on appelle l'exemption fiscale du gain en capital. Par exemple, si la valeur de votre maison passe de 200 000 \$ à 400 000 \$, vous empochez 200 000 \$ lors de la vente, une coquette somme libre d'impôts.

2. Taxer les profits réalisés à la vente de votre propriété principale. Tout comme la précédente mesure, il est question d'une taxe gouvernementale sur le profit réalisé lors de la vente de sa maison. Cette taxe serait alors fixe, elle pourrait par exemple équivaloir à 10 % des profits réalisés et ne dépendrait pas de vos autres revenus.

3. Bonifier les programmes d'aide pour le premier acheteur. Crédit d'impôt pour l'achat d'une première habitation, régime d'accession à la propriété, mesures incitatives à l'achat : il existe plusieurs options pour appuyer les acheteurs, mais elles sont insuffisantes. La surchauffe du marché rend les propriétés très chères et les conditions d'admissibilité empêchent souvent les aspirants acheteurs de remplir les conditions nécessaires pour obtenir de l'aide.

4. Resserrer les règles pour éviter la spéculation sur le prix des propriétés. Acheter et revendre à de multiples reprises sans payer d'impôt sur le gain en capital empoché lors des transactions est actuellement illégal au Québec, mais plusieurs personnes trouvent le moyen de contourner cette interdiction. Il faudrait donc que le gouvernement impose des règles plus sévères et les surveille de plus près.

5. La fin de la pandémie pourrait avoir un impact positif. Des vendeurs retarderaient la vente de leur propriété en raison de la pandémie de COVID-19, selon certains analystes. S'ils reviennent sur le marché avec l'intention de vendre leur maison, l'offre augmentera et, par le fait même, les prix baisseront un peu.

6. Briser l'idée selon laquelle les prix augmenteront toujours. Robert Kavcic, économiste à la Banque de Montréal, suggère de briser la psychologie du marché et cette croyance que les prix peuvent seulement continuer à augmenter encore.

Marché immobilier : que faire quand il n'est plus possible d'acheter?

Les prix des maisons rendent l'achat d'un logement très difficile pour les jeunes et les personnes moins riches. Ces prix élevés augmentent les inégalités sociales et rendent une génération plus vulnérable. À Montréal, cette situation est particulièrement grave comparée au reste du Québec. En effet, en un an, le prix des maisons a augmenté de 28 % et le prix moyen est maintenant près de 500 000 dollars. Seuls les gouvernements peuvent trouver des solutions à ce problème.

L'augmentation des prix des maisons à Montréal crée un grand écart entre ceux qui louent leur logement et ceux qui en possèdent un. De plus, le prix des loyers augmente aussi rapidement, à environ 4,2 % par an, ce qui est plus rapide que l'augmentation générale des prix à la consommation. Cela crée un problème où les personnes qui ne peuvent pas acheter de maison deviennent plus pauvres car elles dépensent beaucoup pour leur loyer.

En conséquence, les personnes qui veulent acheter une maison doivent économiser beaucoup d'argent. Quand elles réussissent à acheter, elles s'endettent souvent plus que leurs parents. La Banque du Canada note que l'endettement devient un problème sérieux.

Il existe cependant des manières de réduire les problèmes sur le marché immobilier. Ces solutions nécessitent des actions politiques spécifiques. Voici quelques idées :

1. **Traiter l'argent gagné en vendant votre maison principale comme un revenu supplémentaire imposable.** Cela découragerait les gens d'acheter des maisons uniquement pour les revendre et gagner beaucoup d'argent. Actuellement, cet argent n'est pas imposé grâce à ce que l'on appelle l'exemption fiscale sur le gain en capital. Par exemple, si vous achetez une maison à 200 000 dollars et la vendez à 400 000 dollars, vous gagnez 200 000 dollars sans payer d'impôt.
2. **Imposer une taxe sur l'argent gagné en vendant votre maison principale.** Cette taxe serait un pourcentage fixe des profits, par exemple 10 %, et ne dépendrait pas de vos autres revenus.
3. **Améliorer les programmes de soutien pour ceux qui achètent leur première maison.** Il existe déjà des crédits d'impôt et des programmes d'aide à l'achat, mais ils ne sont pas suffisants. Le marché très actif rend les maisons très chères et il est souvent difficile de remplir les conditions nécessaires pour obtenir de l'aide.

4. Renforcer les règles pour éviter la spéculation sur les prix des maisons. Actuellement, il est illégal de faire plusieurs achats et ventes de maisons sans payer d'impôt sur les profits. Mais beaucoup de personnes contournent cette loi. Le gouvernement devrait donc imposer des règles plus strictes et mieux les contrôler.

5. La fin de la pandémie de COVID-19 pourrait aider à réduire les prix. Certains experts pensent que des vendeurs attendent la fin de la pandémie pour vendre leurs maisons. Quand ils décideront de vendre, l'offre de maisons augmentera et les prix pourraient baisser.

6. Changer l'idée que les prix des maisons vont toujours augmenter. Robert Kavcic, un économiste, pense qu'il faut changer cette mentalité et l'idée que les prix ne peuvent que monter.

Prix de l'immobilier en hausse : bon courage, les jeunes !

Les prix des maisons sont très élevés. Cela rend difficile pour les jeunes et les moins riches d'acheter une maison. Ces prix élevés créent plus d'inégalités et rendent une génération plus vulnérable. À Montréal, acheter une maison est encore plus difficile qu'ailleurs au Québec. Le prix des maisons a beaucoup augmenté, de 28 % en un an. Le prix moyen d'une maison est maintenant presque de 500 000 dollars. Les gouvernements doivent trouver des solutions pour aider.

Le prix des maisons augmente beaucoup à Montréal. Cela crée une grande différence entre les personnes qui louent leur logement et celles qui en possèdent un. De plus, le prix des loyers augmente aussi. Il augmente de 4,2 % chaque année, ce qui est plus que l'inflation. Les personnes qui ne peuvent pas acheter une maison dépensent beaucoup d'argent en loyer. Ce problème les rend plus pauvres.

Les nouveaux acheteurs doivent économiser beaucoup d'argent pour acheter une maison. Quand ils réussissent à acheter, ils ont plus de dettes que leurs parents. La Banque du Canada dit que beaucoup de personnes ont trop de dettes.

Il y a des solutions pour contrôler les prix des maisons, mais elles nécessitent l'action des gouvernements. Voici quelques idées :

1. Considérer l'argent gagné en vendant sa maison principale comme un revenu. Cela découragerait les gens d'acheter et de revendre pour faire un grand profit. Actuellement, quand vous vendez votre maison, vous ne payez pas d'impôts sur l'argent gagné entre l'achat et la vente.

2. Mettre une taxe sur l'argent gagné en vendant sa maison principale. Cette taxe serait de 10 % du profit et ne dépendrait pas de vos autres revenus.

3. Améliorer les programmes d'aide pour les personnes qui achètent une maison pour la première fois. Il y a des crédits d'impôt et d'autres mesures pour aider, mais ce n'est pas suffisant. Les maisons sont très chères et il est souvent difficile de répondre aux critères pour obtenir de l'aide.

4. Mettre des règles plus strictes pour empêcher de spéculer sur les prix des maisons. Il est illégal d'acheter et de revendre plusieurs fois une maison sans payer d'impôt sur le profit en Québec, mais certaines personnes trouvent des moyens de contourner cette loi.

5. La fin de la pandémie de COVID-19 pourrait aider. Des vendeurs attendent pour vendre leurs maisons. Quand ils décideront de vendre, il y aura plus de maisons disponibles et les prix pourraient baisser.

6. Changer l'idée que les prix des maisons vont toujours augmenter. Un économiste suggère de changer cette croyance pour influencer le marché.

Annexe 6 Présentation du stimuli

Figure 4 Présentation de l'article 1 dans sa version originale

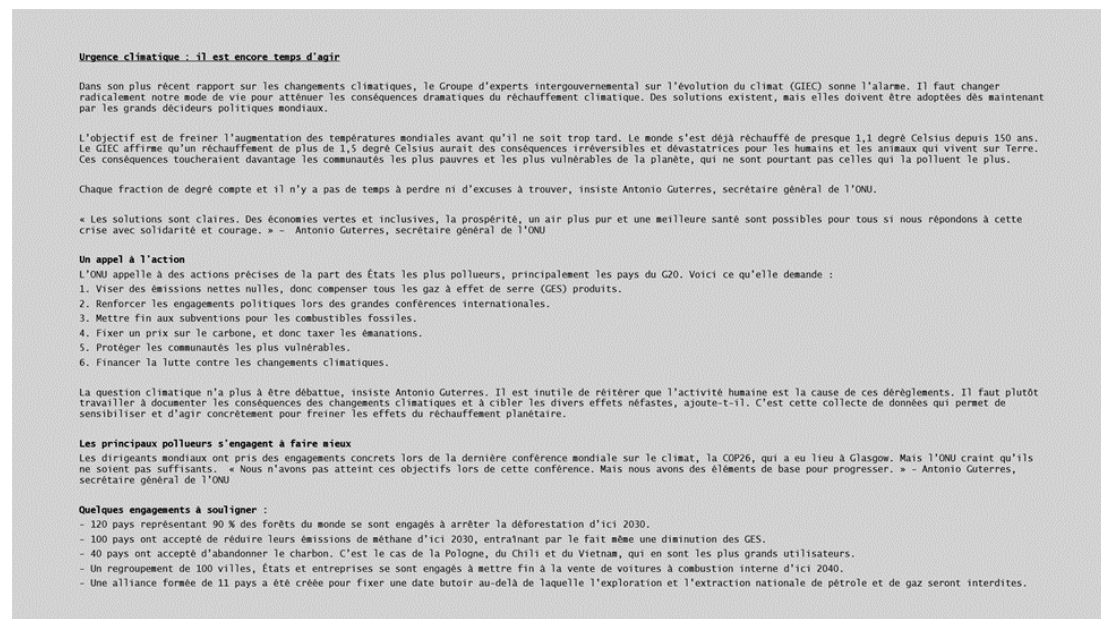


Figure 5 Présentation de l'article 2 dans sa version légèrement simplifiée

Armes à feu : le combat de Montréal

Le Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) a remarqué que de nombreux jeunes portent des armes à feu. Selon le SPVM, ces jeunes se sentent impunis, ce qui les pousse à valoriser les armes de poing. La police dit que c'est une situation inédite et que cela correspond à une augmentation des actes violents dans la métropole. Comment peut-on lutter contre ce phénomène ?

Des personnes vont dans la rue pour rencontrer les jeunes et parler avec eux.

Sébastien de Montigny, un haut responsable de la police, explique : « Nous essayons de prévenir et de punir. Mais pour lutter contre cette valorisation des armes à feu, nous avons besoin de collaborer avec la communauté. La police ne peut pas enfermer une culture de violence ».

Les collaborateurs peuvent être différents, comme des travailleurs sociaux ou des entraîneurs sportifs. Leur succès à convaincre les jeunes de renoncer à la criminalité dépend de leur capacité à établir une relation de confiance avec eux.

Mathieu L., qui a été impliqué dans la criminalité pendant sa jeunesse, explique : « Si un gang de rue recrute des jeunes, c'est parce qu'il leur montre du respect et de la considération. Un travailleur de rue peut aussi avoir cet effet s'il établit un lien de confiance ». Il suggère d'utiliser l'expérience des anciens criminels repentis pour aider. « Je pense que les anciens criminels, qui ont changé de vie, devraient participer aux discussions ».

Les armes à feu : un problème majeur

Pour les jeunes qui ne sont pas convaincus, il faut agir sur leur contact avec le milieu criminel et les armes à feu. Voici quelques solutions possibles :

- Financer des programmes communautaires pour sensibiliser les jeunes dans les écoles, les parcs et autres lieux qu'ils fréquentent.
- Contrôler l'entrée d'armes illégales venant des États-Unis.
- Étapecher le vol d'armes légales chez les propriétaires.
- Surveiller l'achat de pièces et d'outils qui peuvent être utilisés pour assembler des armes illégales.
- Surveiller les réseaux sociaux, devenus populaires pour le recrutement criminel et la publication de méfaits.

Le SPVM indique qu'une arme de poing coûte entre 5000 \$ et 6000 \$. C'est très cher, surtout pour des jeunes encore à l'école. Selon la police, cet argent vient souvent de la vente de drogues, du proxénétisme et de la fraude. Il faut donc aussi surveiller ces activités.

La solution : être présent sur le terrain

Le SPVM a aussi noté que les groupes criminels changent rapidement. Les alliances se forment et se défont, ce qui complique la surveillance. Pour obtenir des informations sur un milieu qui évolue constamment, il est essentiel que les policiers soient actifs sur le terrain. Jacques Duchesneau, ancien directeur du SPVM, a dit que les personnes qui ont des informations ne vont généralement pas appeler le 911. Elles préfèrent parler directement aux policiers présents dans leur quartier. La criminalité a beaucoup changé, conclut-il.

Figure 6 Présentation de l'article 3 dans sa version la plus simplifiée

Prix de l'immobilier en hausse : bon courage, les jeunes !

Les prix des maisons sont très élevés. Cela rend difficile pour les jeunes et les moins riches d'acheter une maison. Ces prix élevés créent plus d'inégalités et rendent une génération plus vulnérable. À Montréal, acheter une maison est encore plus difficile qu'ailleurs au Québec. Le prix des maisons a beaucoup augmenté, de 28 % en un an. Le prix moyen d'une maison est maintenant presque de 500 000 dollars. Les gouvernements doivent trouver des solutions pour aider.

Le prix des maisons augmente beaucoup à Montréal. Cela crée une grande différence entre les personnes qui louent leur logement et celles qui en possèdent un. De plus, le prix des loyers augmente aussi. Il augmente de 4,2 % chaque année, ce qui est plus que l'inflation. Les personnes qui ne peuvent pas acheter une maison dépensent beaucoup d'argent en loyer. Ce problème les rend plus pauvres.

Les nouveaux acheteurs doivent économiser beaucoup d'argent pour acheter une maison. Quand ils réussissent à acheter, ils ont plus de dettes que leurs parents. La Banque du Canada dit que beaucoup de personnes ont trop de dettes.

Il y a des solutions pour contrôler les prix des maisons, mais elles nécessitent l'action des gouvernements. Voici quelques idées :

1. **Considérer l'argent gagné en vendant sa maison principale comme un revenu.** Cela découragerait les gens d'acheter et de revendre pour faire un grand profit. Actuellement, quand vous vendez votre maison, vous ne payez pas d'impôts sur l'argent gagné entre l'achat et la vente.
2. **Mettre une taxe sur l'argent gagné en vendant sa maison principale.** Cette taxe serait de 10 % du profit et ne dépendrait pas de vos autres revenus.
3. **Améliorer les programmes d'aide pour les personnes qui achètent une maison pour la première fois.** Il y a des crédits d'impôt et d'autres mesures pour aider, mais ce n'est pas suffisant. Les maisons sont très chères et il est souvent difficile de répondre aux critères pour obtenir de l'aide.
4. **Mettre des règles plus strictes pour empêcher de spéculer sur les prix des maisons.** Il est illégal d'acheter et de revendre plusieurs fois une maison sans payer d'impôt sur le profit en Québec, mais certaines personnes trouvent des moyens de contourner cette loi.
5. **La fin de la pandémie de COVID-19 pourrait aider.** Des vendeurs attendent pour vendre leurs maisons. Quand ils décideront de vendre, il y aura plus de maisons disponibles et les prix pourraient baisser.
6. **Changer l'idée que les prix des maisons vont toujours augmenter.** Un économiste suggère de changer cette croyance pour influencer le marché.

Annexe 7 : Questions des évaluations de compréhension objective (objective comprehension)

Article 1 : Urgence climatique

Q1. What is the main objective of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report?

- a. To raise awareness among major polluters of the impact that climate change will have on the most vulnerable communities.
- b. Make countries aware of their lack of action.
- c. Target actions to slow global warming.
- d. Discuss the causes of climate change.

Q2. What is UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' position on rising temperatures?

- a. He doesn't have any solutions yet, and thinks we have time to find them.
- b. He says that there are possible solutions and that we must lose no time in applying them.
- c. He is pessimistic about possible actions and sees no solutions.
- d. He has no solutions, but says we must hurry to find them before it's too late.

Q3. Who is most affected by climate change?

- a. G20 countries.
- b. The poorest communities.
- c. Corporate polluters.
- d. Rich countries.

Article 2: Armes à feu

Q1. Why is it important for the police to be out in the field ?

- a. To respond quickly to emergencies.
- b. To know the scene.
- c. Because people talk to police in the field.
- d. To control traffic.

Q2. Why can former criminals help solve this problem?

- a. They have experience as social workers.
- b. They know about crime and can build trust with young people.
- c. They can easily infiltrate and bring offenders to the police.
- d. They have access to firearms and can counterattack in the event of an argument.

Q3. Which statement is true about crime today?

- a. It is decreasing thanks to new technologies.
- b. It has taken on a new form.
- c. It hasn't changed since the 80s.
- d. It's easier to monitor now.

Article 3 : Marché immobilier

Q1. According to this text, what is the main difficulty encountered by the young and less wealthy in buying a house?

- a. Lack of assistance and subsidy programs.
- b. Rising house prices.
- c. Mortgage interest rates are very high.
- d. Lack of homes for sale.

Q2. What is the impact of rising rents on tenants?

- a. None. While renting they can still save to buy a house.
- b. Their purchasing power decreases, as saving becomes more difficult.

- c. The number of tenants increases, because rents are too expensive.
- d. Their quality of life is affected.

Q3. What impact do rising house prices have on first-time buyers?

- a. They have a greater capacity to save.
- b. They take on more debt than the previous generation.
- c. They benefit from lower interest rates on their mortgages.
- d. They find homes more easily.

Annexe 8 : Évaluation du bagage linguistique (Language History Questionnaire)

1. Indicate your native language(s) and any other languages you have studied or learned, the age at which you started using each language in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and the total number of years you have spent using each language.

**Notes For "Years of use", you may have learned a language, stopped using it, and then started using it again. Please give the total number of years.*

For each language indicate the number of years you have spent using it:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

For each language indicate the age at which you started it:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Years of use

2. Rate your current ability in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in each of the languages you have studied or learned (including the native language).

For each language rate your skills in:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Years of use

Response format: 1 = Very poor , 7= Excellent