

# “Parental Involvements in their Children’s Learning of English Language”

**Amita**

*Reseach Scholar, O.P.J.S University (Churu) Rajasthan.*

## **ABSTRACT**

Almost all institutions of education, as others elsewhere, of all levels from primary, secondary to higher, of all sectors, from private to public, of all shapes and sizes, from metropolitan universities to small institutions, are starting to teach English as a second language to students. These students’ learning is influenced by their parents’ involvement in and attitudes toward English language. Such influence is what the current study tires to investigate and evaluate in the Moroccan context. To this end, a quantitative approach was adopted, and 31 questionnaires were distributed on students at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University. The results showed that parents were strongly involved in their children’s learning of English though with varying degree. Parents with educational background and considerable income accompanied their children through all twists and turns of their learning journey. The less fortunate ones, however, were less engaged when it comes to orienting their children’s specialty choice. It was also found out that most parents recognized the crucial role of English language. The findings revealed also that parents’ support in and positive attitudes toward English language have significantly facilitated and contributed to the academic achievement of the students.

## **LINTRODUCTION**

The spread of English language was chiefly the result of tow impulses: the creation of British Empire and the spread of American technological and economic hegemony, which reached an apogee at the turn of the twentieth into the twenty-first century (Burchfield *et al.*, 2001). *According to Sadiqi (2003) English was introduced in Morocco during World War Two once American established military bases to link them to the battlegrounds in Europe. Additionally, the international status of English as the language of science and technology, business, cyberspace, research, and the list goes on, has contributed in the spread of English in Morocco (p. 50). Furthermore, Swan and Mercer (2009) reported that English becomes the fastest growing foreign language in Morocco. It has supplanted Spanish in economy and education, and is in competing with French in education.*

There is a plethora of research that has been carried out internationally to investigate the contribution of parents in boosting such spread through their attitudes about and involvement in their children learning of English language. The term “attitude” refers to “the sum total of a man's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias,

preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and convictions about any specified topic” (Mason, 2011). Oppenheim (1992) admits that “most researchers seem to agree that an attitude is a state of readiness, a tendency to respond in a certain manner confronted with certain stimuli”. The term “involvement” points out to one’s participation, engagement, and/or contribution to a child’s education (Armstrong-Piner, 2008).

The current paper is an attempt to outline Parental attitudes and involvement in the Moroccan context. The importance of the topic is not only of immediate and practical, but of permanent interest, for it will enlighten all stakeholders about the importance and effects of parents’ involvement in their children’s education in general and English language learning in particular which its instrumental importance is beyond doubt in today’s world. As such, they can encourage those who have contributed to their children’s education and bridge the gap which other parents did not fill. The present study outlines the methodology through which the study is conducted. It provides also a thorough discussion of the results obtained.

## **II.METHODOLOGY**

The investigative approach used in the study is quantitative. A questionnaire was distributed on 31 students studying at Sidi Mohamed Bin Abdellah University, Fez, Morocco. The questionnaire consists of four sections, A, B, C, and D. In section A, items were used to collect personal information of the respondents. In sections B and C, items were used to gather data about parents’ characteristics and attitudes and how such characteristics and attitudes affect their involvement in English learning. The final section mirrored the previous sections possible effects on the respondents learning journey.

## **III.DATA ANALYSIS**

The results were clustered into two basic themes through the following process. Fourteen questions of the questionnaire were categorized into four sections, then similar categories with common characteristics were classified into two basic themes, parents’ attitudes about and involvement in the students learning process and the effect of such involvements and attitudes on the students learning journey. The themes are presented and interpreted based on “the context of the content in order to expose the ideological, the latent meaning behind the surface of the texts”

## **IV.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Parents Involvement**

To identify the parents’ attitudes and the level of their involvements, students were requested to reveal the backgrounds of their parents- language(s) spoken, income, and level of education. They were also asked about their parents’ role in the learning process in terms of orientation toward learning English language, the way they perceive English language and American culture, and the level and the type of support they provided them with. Table 1 shows percentages representing the subjects’ responses to questions detailing the former points.

Table-1. shows parents' characteristics

| Questionnaire items           | Number | Percentage | Total N P |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------|-----------|
| Parents language(s) spoken    |        |            |           |
| Moroccan Arabic               | 19     | 61.3%      | 31 %      |
| Moroccan arabic and tamazight | 5      | 16.1%      |           |
| Moroccan Arabic and French    | 7      | 22.6%      |           |
| Income                        |        |            |           |
| Low                           | 3      | 9.7%       |           |
| Middle                        | 23     | 74.2%      |           |
| High                          | 5      | 16.1%      |           |
| Education                     |        |            |           |
| No informal                   | 22     | 70.9%      |           |
| Primary                       | 4      | 12.9%      |           |
| Secondary                     | 1      | 3.2%       |           |
| University                    | 4      | 12.9%      |           |

Table-2. Parents attitudes

| Questionnaire items                 | Number | Percentage | Total N P |
|-------------------------------------|--------|------------|-----------|
| <b>Orientation</b>                  |        |            |           |
| Myself                              | 29     | 93.5%      | 31 %      |
| Mutual agreement                    | 2      | 6.4%       |           |
| Parents                             | 0      | 0%         |           |
| <b>Encourage choice</b>             |        |            |           |
| Yes                                 | 31     | 100%       |           |
| No                                  | 0      | 0%         |           |
| <b>Reasons of support</b>           |        |            |           |
| Better Job opportunities            | 22     | 100%       | 22 70.9%  |
| <b>Views about american culture</b> |        |            |           |
| Like                                | 0      | 0%         | 31 100%   |
| Dislike                             | 28     | 90.3%      |           |
| Dont care                           | 3      | 9.6%       |           |

Table-3. shows parents' level of involvements

| Questionnaire items             | Number | Percentage | Total N | P    |
|---------------------------------|--------|------------|---------|------|
| <b>Housing</b>                  |        |            |         |      |
| Yes                             | 31     | 100%       | 31      | 100% |
| No                              | 0      | 0%         |         |      |
| <b>Providing learning needs</b> |        |            |         |      |
| Little                          | 31     | 100%       |         |      |
| Enough                          | 29     | 93.5%      |         |      |
| More than enough                | 0      | 6.4%       |         |      |
| <b>Ask about classes</b>        |        |            |         |      |
| Yes                             | 19     | 61.3%      |         |      |
| No                              | 12     | 38.7%      |         |      |
| <b>Ask about results</b>        |        |            |         |      |
| Yes                             | 31     | 100%       | 31      | 100% |
| No                              | 0      | 0%         |         |      |

#### B. The Effects of Parents' Attitudes and Involvements on the Students

The former respondents' self reports about their parents' attitudes and involvement in their learning journey of English will be analyzed in relation to the effects such attitudes and involvements might have on their learning process.

Table-4. Shows the effects of parental involvement on the learning process

| Questionnaire items           | Number | Percentage | Total N | P     |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------|---------|-------|
| <b>The learning process</b>   |        |            |         |       |
| Easy                          | 0      | 0%         | 31      | 100%  |
| In the middle                 | 27     | 87.1%      |         |       |
| Difficult                     | 4      | 12.9%      |         |       |
| <b>Professors' evaluation</b> |        |            |         |       |
| Excellent                     | 0      | 0%         | 31      | 100%  |
| Very good                     | 4      | 12.9%      |         |       |
| Good                          | 25     | 80.6%      |         |       |
| Not bad                       | 2      | 6.4%       |         |       |
| <b>Future study</b>           |        |            |         |       |
| Continue                      | 19     | 23.1%      | 13      | 41.9% |
| Drop                          | 12     | 46.2%      |         |       |
| Undecided                     |        | 30.7%      |         |       |

Concerning the effects of parents' attitudes and involvements on the students learning of English, interesting findings were obtained. Unsurprisingly, the findings reveal that the majority of the subjects, 87.1%, reported that the learning process was in between. The majority of the respondents, 80.6%, also have reported that their professors evaluated them as good students. This might be because, as mentioned before in Tables 2 and 3, almost all of the respondents reported that their parents were encouraging them to study and that they were providing them with the learning needs.

The final item of the questionnaire, future study, was the least answerable item, with 13 respondents as the total number. Thus, more than a half of the respondents (58.1%) did not answer. This might be because the whole respondents were master students, and the procedures of students' enrollment in doctorate are tightened. Therefore, they are left with uncertainty in the sense that even if they did want to pursue their education the final decision is up to the administration. However, among the respondents on the aforementioned item 46.2% reported that they are going to drop their study and 30.7% still undecided. These percentages might result from different factors like socioeconomic and demographic problems and/or the very limited access to doctoral studies.

## V.CONCLUSION

Initially the result of this questionnaire revealed that almost the majority of Moroccan parents see English language as an appropriate means that can secure future jobs to their children. Thus, all of them supported their children along the learning journey. They provide them with enough learning needs. Such supports were reflected on the students' academic achievement when they reported that they did not face difficulty during the learning process. What's more, the professors' evaluations to the majority of them were good enough.

The findings also showed that specific attitudes and involvements seemed to be affected by specific parents' characteristics. For example, parents who have considerable income and have an advanced level of education were the ones to orient or advice, or negotiate with their children the future field of study. However, students who are the descendents of families with middle or low incomes reported self-orientation.

Although this study provides interesting results, generalization must be made with caution. More research studies need to be conducted on this issue. Research studies with bigger sample and adoption of triangulation are likely to help in obtaining results that can be generalized on Moroccan parents' attitudes about and involvements in children learning of English language and how such attitudes and involvements affect the learning process.

## REFERENCES

- [1.] Armstrong-Piner, S. (2008). An Exploratory study of parent involvement as measured by Joyce Epstein's overlapping spheres of influence. Regent University: Virginia.
- [2.] Burchfield, R. W., Lass, R., Algeo, J., Blake, N. N. F. and Hogg, R. M. (2001). The Cambridge history of the English language. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- [3.] Fosados, R. (2007). Exploring the role of peer influence, linguistic acculturation, and social networks in substance use. PreQuest Information and Learning Company: Michigan.
- [4.] Lareau, A. (2000). Home advantage: Social class and parental intervention in elementary education. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.: Maryland.
- [5.] Mason, W. (2011). Implicit Social Influence. PreQuest Information and Learning Company: Michigan.
- [6.] Minsch, J., Goldblatt, D. L., Flüeler, T. and Spreng, D. (2012). Tackling long-term global energy problems: The contribution of social science. Springer Science & Business Media: New York.
- [7.] Oppenheim, A. N. (1992). Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement. Pinter Publishers: London.
- [8.] Sadiqi, F. (2003). Women, gender and language in Morocco. Koninklijke Brill NV: Leiden.
- [9.] Swan, J. and Mercer, N. (2009). Learning English: development and diversity. Routledge: New York.
- Zughoul, M. (2003). Globalization and EFL/ESL pedagogy in the Arab world.