BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY

Attitudes of Mothers and their 9th Grade EFL Learners towards

Learning the English Language and its Culture in Palestine

اتجاهات الأمهات وطلابهن في الصف التاسع نحو تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية

وثقافتها في فلسطين

By

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Abstract

The following study aimed at discovering parental attitudes towards learning English and its culture, and those of their adolescent children. Additionally, to investigate the reasons behind these attitudes in the Palestinian educational context. The study sample consisted of 24 parents and 24 (12 males and 12 females) 9th grade EFL learners in Palestine. The study followed the qualitative design. Semi-structured interviews were the primary research instrument used to gather data which was then analyzed thematically. Results showed that parental attitudes impacted on their children and their motivation to learn, primarily, represented with parents of high achievement learners that shared their experiences with their children. The social context a learner thrives in partially shapes his/her attitudes and motivation and even with ideal environments the learner's individual differences and personalities are what either keep learners motivated or have them withdraw from the learning process.

Keywords: EFL learning, Palestinian education, Parents attitudes, Student attitudes

مُلخص الدراسة

هدفت هذه الدراسة الحالية إلى التعرف على اتجاهات الأمهات نحو تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية وثقافتها كلغة اجنبية والتعرف على الأسباب الكامنة وراء هذه الاتجاهات في المجال التعليمي في المجتمع الفلسطيني. تكونت عينة الدراسة من 24 من امهات طلبة الصف التاسع والبالغ عددهم 24 (12 ذكر و 12 أنثى) متعلم للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من الصف التاسع في المدارس في فلسطين واعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج الكيفي من خلال استخدام أداة المقابلة شبه المنظمة كأداة للدراسة الأساسية التي من خلالها تم جمع البيانات وتحليلها فيما بعد باستخدام طريقة التحليل حسب الإجابات والأفكار. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن اتجاهات الأمهات أثرت على أطفالهم نحو دافعهم للتعلم. وأظهرت هذه النتائج بشكل رئيسي مع الأمهات المتعلمات ذوات الكفاءة العالية اللواتي شاركن تجاربهن مع أطفالهن. حيث بينت أن البيئة الاجتماعية التي يكبر وينمو فيها المتعلمين تؤثر على توجهاتهم ودوافعهم بشكل واضح وحتى في البيئات المثالية، لذلك فإن الفروقات الفردية لدى المتعلمين و شخصياتهم هي التي تساهم في جعل المتعلمين متحفزين أو تقلل تحفيزهم من عملية التعلم.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Introduction

English language learning in Palestine begins from the 1st grade, and in some localities as early as preschool or kindergarten. Yet, many complete high school incapable of utilizing language skills in the real world. The Palestinian Ministry of Education (2017) has sought to improve learning achievements of students but have had many hurdles to overcome in terms of funding as well as overcoming barriers to providing education due to the occupation. Despite Palestinian students beginning their language learning studies at a young age, students not being proficient in the English language is an ongoing issue. A recurring issue for language learners regardless of what country they reside in is feeling like or dislike for learning English. As such, this study focuses on attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. In Bartram's (2005) study students' perception of the usefulness of the target language shapes whether they deem it worthwhile of their efforts or not. In other words, learning a language students feel they won't really use is not a priority.

In the Palestinian context, lack of exposure to authentic language experiences is an issue. Add to that any language learning anxiety, and lack of parental encouragement be it vocalized or hinted at adds to the problem. An often overlooked aspect of this is society's impact on learners. Parental and societal influences can be classed under affective variables, which are important in the study of language learning (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). A topic not often discussed in the Palestinian context is the impact of society on learner attitudes towards learning English. Children (learners) could reflect on these observed parental/societal experiences or perceptions towards a subject matter, simply because children feel the experience through their parents (Bhattacharyya, Horner & O'Connor, 2008; Wainwright, 2011).

Attitudes and perspectives start taking shape from a young age. For instance, my son at one point refused to speak English due to being chided for speaking the language by family members by claiming that his delayed speech was a result of our bilingual household. He was discouraged for some time. This dislike for English was a learned and/or acquired behavior for

him due to his direct experience. If he was so influenced by extended family, what of learners where the reflected experiences are those of their own parents? Parental/societal experience or perceptions with a subject matter tend to be reflected back on their children simply because the children feel the experience through their parents (Wainwright, 2011). Parents don't have to explicitly state what they think, as the saying goes 'actions speak louder than words'.

What this study aims to do is understand just how far the parent child relationship goes in the context of English learning. Parents, in the case of this study mothers, could be a source of motivation and encouragement, or be the exact opposite for young learners. This thesis makes a connection between the two concepts of attitudes and motivation as being important elements in the acquisition of English, and details what these two concepts mean in regards to the research.

Research Problem

The question this study addressed was what on a personal level may be discouraging students and have them holding back. So this leaves us to question how experiences and attitudes of mothers influence their children's motivation towards language learning. Some experiences shape what views, or attitudes learners have towards learning which produce a level of anxiety with students. So the primary question to ask would be how experiences influence a student's desire to learn English and how mothers' attitudes impact and shape their children's attitudes towards English and in turn their motivation.

Research Purpose

This issue has many facets, but the aspect that this study investigated was how mothers' experiences and attitudes influence students' attitudes and motivation towards language learning. According to studies conducted within the subject area; (Musleh, 2010; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993) the general consensus seemed to be that students with high levels of motivation with favorable attitudes towards language learning achieved better language proficiency than those learners who did not. Also, those within a socio-cultural context that includes individuals (friends, family, and community in general; including teachers) with positive attitudes impact learners in a positive manner. Available studies on this subject matter usually

were based in Asian contexts, or in English speaking countries with learners primarily being bilingual or immigrants seeking to 'fit in'.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

1) What are 9th Grade Palestinian students' attitudes towards learning English language and culture?

2) What are the reasons behind student's attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language?

3) What are mothers' attitudes towards their children learning English Language and culture?

4) What kind of relationship exists between mothers' attitudes and their children's attitudes and motivation to learn English language and culture?

Limitations of the Study

Some villages and cities were omitted from this study due to accessibility concerns and limitations on mobility within certain areas. In addition, the time and cost needed to travel to certain locations limited the researcher to travel to remote villages and towns.

Not all of the participants fully answered the interview questions asking to skip questions or simply staying silent. For some of these participants they entered the room nervous. The researcher shared the cover letter that was prepared in advance explaining what the interview was about and that regardless of what was shared it would have no impact on them. After explaining the aim of the interview some visibly relaxed while others remained tense. The same situation arose with participating mothers. Some participants shared after the interview that they were told they were to have an interview with someone and not the reason or what impact this would have on them (or their children). Some schools did not inform mothers and students the nature of the interviews causing unnecessary stress and confusion. Of all participants three students were not fully cooperative with two of them being male. For others this did not work refusal to fully cooperate was unavoidable.

Ideally, teachers would have been interviewed to substantiate claims and also to get the whole picture so to speak. However, time constraints would not allow this with the number of interviews that were scheduled to take place. This issue could be alleviated if two researchers conducted interviews with one focusing on language teachers and possibly even the fathers of students. The learner home environment typically does not consist of the mother alone. This would have filled in gaps in terms of any questions on father involvement and their role as primary disciplinarian and heads of households. Mothers are more involved in their children's education within the Palestinian context and more emotionally invested. Involvement in regards to teacher parent meetings or going to schools to check progress typically fathers do not generally partake in this, mothers do.

Research Significance

An abundance of literature exists on the importance of motivation in the learning process, as well as how society could be a source of motivation or a lack of it (Fatiha, et al 2014). Learning starts at home, from the first words a child learns to the hesitation towards a subject or excitement. Children are very impressionable and can be influenced by their environment, not just by what they are told but what they observe and experience (Memon, et al., 2016). Naturally, the study of attitudes and motivation are often closely related.

These are the formative years of where to some extent parents help to shape and mold positive attitudes towards learning which is imperative. Yet limited research on whether mothers' attitudes influence their children's attitudes, particularly in the Palestinian context can be found. This study sought to fill a gap in the literature about the relation of mothers' attitudes and experience and those of their children. Research studies such as the present study bring together knowledge about the effects of attitudes and how they may be a source of anxiety or student motivation to learn (Lastra, 2009; Sinno 2008). Musleh (2010) showed the importance of such studies by stating the following:

> Having knowledge of student attitudes, orientations, concerns and interests will therefore increase our understanding as instructors and as a result increase student motivation. According to research and the findings in this study this increase in motivation will have a positive impact on achievement. (p. 208)

There aren't many studies that approach the topic of student learning from a humanistic perspective. Which this study will try to do, while seeking to deepen our understanding of learning from the aspect of the human experience.

Theoretical Framework

Learning theories have different perspectives in regards to how learning happens, however, behaviorism (social behaviorism), social constructivism, and humanistic theory all have the common ground that the environment around a learner has an impact on the learning process that takes place. The three main theories that were the foundation of this theoretical framework were: Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence, Self-Determination theory, and the L2 motivational self-system (L2MSS).

The L2MSS theory discussed by Dörnyei (2014) focuses on Individual differences and the interactions amongst them that impact the learner. Seeing that the first learning environment for a learner is the home it can be understood how the social environment exudes influence on the learner. Children model behaviors of those around them or of things they see, and based on observed behavior they can be discouraged or encouraged to take part in a particular behavior; as was represented with Bandura's Bobo Doll experiment (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008). Bhattacharyya et al. (2008) characterized an effective model as being relatable, reliable, and authoritative.

In the Palestinian context, with the culture emphasizing respecting one's parents and pleasing them. A child's learning is influenced by different aspects of their environment as explained by Macdonell Strom-Gottfried, Burton, and Yaffe (2006). The way children are parented and disciplined shapes how children will behave (Taylor, Clayton, & Rowley, 2004). Authoritative parenting is demanding and sets high standards and boundaries that are consistently enforced. This fits the Palestinian cultural context where parenting is relatively authoritative in nature. In a regional study concerning parenting styles of Arab societies, Palestinian parenting styles were mainly shown to be authoritative and/or authoritarian. Boys perceived their parents as being stricter and rigid with them than their female siblings (Dwairy, et al, 2006). Parents have set expectations of their children, and children seek to gain approval,

praise, for meeting these expectations. This type of parenting results with little conflict and minimal negative outcomes. Parents are responsive to the child's emotional needs while maintaining these high standards. Children with this type of parenting environment usually excel academically. It is important to not dismiss the importance of the learning environment which is not limited to the classroom or home environment. Musleh (2011) touched on the importance of the learner's environment in the discussion of motivation through the scope of Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

Self-determination Theory (SDT)

Self-determination Theory (SDT) unites motivation, personality, and individuals' inclinations. The learner is viewed through the lens of their experiences, through the affective side of learning. This theory also looks at how social factors can facilitate or undermine a learners learning initiative also influencing their performance (Musleh, 2011; Noel, 2001). Through the affective view of SDT motivation type is identifiable based on the degree of participation in an activity as a result of their inner interest. SDT identifies 3 types of motives: intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation.

Intrinsic motivation according to SDT is more emotionally driven in that learners make an effort due to feeling satisfied in doing so, or finding enjoyment in a task. Extrinsic motives are more calculated in nature, in that the learner participates for a purpose driven motive such as obtaining grades or avoiding punishment or disapproval. Amotivation is when participation in an activity has no purpose and the performance consequences seem irrelevant to the individual. SDT looks at the motivation that drives the choices individuals make. Each motivational orientation differs in the degree of self-determination (Musleh, 2011; Noel, 2001; Dörnyei, & Ushioda, 2009). For this to happen there are three innate needs that need to be met to allow for the learner for growth and improvement to occur: competence: seeks control of the outcome and mastery; relatedness: the desire to interact and be connected to others and be cared for and care for others; autonomy: desire to freely act in one's own life and be in sync with one's self… does not mean to be independent of others. The impact is positive if these needs are met and negative if neglected or not met. For a learner's inner potential to be drawn to the surface a nurturing social environment is needed. Part of this environment that

surrounds the learner is family. Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence clearly portrays the important role family plays alongside community and school.

The Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence

The Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence helps bring forth just how important community, family, and school together could provide a great support network (Epstein, 2010). In this theory, the spheres represent the school, family, and community. According to Cansler (2008) "Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence which in simplest terms views community family and school as overlapping systems that build up a student and their success." (p 13). This connection of society and culture in education also connects with Gardner's socio-cultural theory. It is beneficial that the learner is viewed from a humanistic perspective, as a child by the teacher so that all components could work together for the betterment of the learner (Epstein, 2006; 2010). If educators see the individual within the student, then it is more likely to view parents and the community as partners in the education process (Epstein, 2010). Family and community play an integral role in how students are influenced and perceive their studies (Epstein & Sanders, 2006; Epstein, 2010).

The main contributing factors to consider to the degree of overlap of the spheres: time (age of the child, advancement in academic career) and experiences (experiences from school and family) (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). For this reason, it is important for this study to investigate mothers involvement and attitudes towards their children's learning. Older learners were targeted precisely to look at the contributing factors of learner age and experiences, and the impact mothers have on the formation of attitudes towards learning. Learners are highly influenced by those around them. They are sensitive to the attitudes of society.

"Society is highly influential in the formation of learner attitudes towards language society can create or extinguish learners' desire to learn" (Fatiha et al., 2014, p. 123). Negative experiences shape negative attitudes which in turn are a source of foreign language anxiety for many learners. These factors make learners less responsive in the language classroom, less motivated, resulting in learners being less likely to participate in language learning activities.

Attitudes are a part of a learners' identity. It is how they feel about certain situations or topics. Positive or negative attitudes play a role in determining language-learning achievement (Fatiha et al., 2014). Parents could have had difficulty with learning English. These experiences and perspectives could be passed down to their own children. They in a way filter what experiences their children have which have a long lasting effect which shapes their children's experiences, beliefs and attitudes (Bhattacharyya et al. 2008). Impressionable children will absorb these cues and internalize them, then as they grow older some of these experiences become their own, influencing their motivation or lack thereof. Dollard and Miller expand on their concept of social conditions by saying that learning is influenced by drives, cues responses, and rewards (McDonell et al., 2006).

If parents view school in a positive way so will their child resulting in learners having more positive outlooks and outcomes (Taylor, Clayton, & Rowley, 2004). As a child grows up, they become more independent as such parental influence decreases, and that of their peers' increases. However, in Palestinian society where culturally parents, and specifically mothers, stay involved in their adult children lives, that is not the case. This connection of society and culture in education also connects with Gardner's socio-cultural theory. According to Masgoret and Gardner (2003) researchers found that among the variables of Gardner's socio-educational model, integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, motivation, integrative motivation and instrumental orientation; that motivation correlated with language achievement more than any other variable in the socio-educational model. In this way social factors can facilitate or undermine an individual's learning motivation also affect their performance.

L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS)

The way a learner is motivated starts with the learner's own view of their abilities. Dörnyei (2014) and Dörnyei & Ushioda (2009) present the concept of the self-system as the starting point of motivation. Learning motivation is an internalized affective process affecting how learners aim to achieve their language learning ambitions. Second language learning motivation and the self-system are seen as a symbiotic relationship where both feed off one another. If one side fails to support, the other shortly follows. The idea of "self" is the perception the learner has of who they are, and what variations, or possible forms of who they

currently are could become in the future; possible selves (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). These affective factors that influence motivation also play a role in influencing learner attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. These different facets of language learning are often explored individually with the focus primarily falling on the learner and not on those around them, which is something that my study seeks to remedy. In order to better understand how mothers' attitudes influence those of their children, it is vital to understand the internal interactions of these factors within the learner.

Individual Differences

Dörnyei (2018) in his speech at Waseda University in Tokyo made an important point regarding motivation. It is an ongoing process. Motivation is exhaustible and once the initial burst of motivation dwindles down, the learner needs to find a way to 're-fuel' their motivational reserves to persevere in their language learning process. The reasons or source of motivation differs amongst learners. Learners are unique individuals with their own differentiating and unique traits or features that set them apart from others. Individual Differences (ID) theory exemplifies this (Dörnyei, 2014). Individuals who are within the same environment will respond differently to different situations due to their individual differences. Herein lies the importance of context and environment. If two learners have the same IDs, their environment, and inherited traits is what would differentiate them from each other, which would result in different learning experiences and outcomes. These individual differences (ID), according to Dörnyei (2014), could be attributed to perceived language learning success and differing levels of achievement. The understanding of these ID variables goes beyond L2 learning. They help in better understanding of the individual and what makes them who they are (personality, motivation, abilities, etc).

Dörnyei (2014) agrees with Anastasi's (1994) conclusion "that the inherited genetic information sets broad limits to one's development and within these limits, what individuals actually become depends on their environment" (p. 4). Distinguishing characteristics (ID) vary from person to person; these individualizing traits are extensive due to a myriad of possible reasons such as heredity and environment. Environment is not limited to the classroom but also the home environment and the community in which they live. These characteristics are not

stand alone traits separate from the others. In fact, as can be seen these characteristics and learner variables overlap and interact with each other in a complex manner.

Personality and Motivation

The individuality of learners that differentiate them from each other, these individual differences, play a role in learner motivation. Attitudes are a differentiating trait that are an aspect of personality. From Dörnyei (2014) we understand that personality is the emotional makeup of an individual; it is the way they would behave in a given situation. Temperament is a hereditary behavior construct which shapes an individual's personality. Potential determinants of personality include both environmental factors related to the nature of the home in which the person was raised as a child, and biological factors related to hereditary factors (Dörnyei, 2014). An example of personality and temperament would be inhibition vs. risk taking. For language learners with a more outgoing personality they are likely to take adventurous risks, unafraid to make mistakes, and more likely to learn than students who have inhibited personalities. Inhibition centered personalities and temperaments are more withdrawn, shy, and anxious. Meaning they are less likely to experiment with language or participate in language learning activities. An aspect of confidence that was expanded on was self-confidence, which is the learner's own belief that they have the ability within them to accomplish goals and meet objectives; this too is a measure of motivation (Dörnyei, 2014; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). Musleh (2011) and Rahman (2015) also broached the topics of the learner's role in their own motivation through self-regulation and internal resistance. In that environmental factors could be driving the learner towards negative behaviors of holding themselves back, not reaching their full potential. As seen, personality shapes the way learners approach learning which leads to their drive to learn.

Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) link between affective variables such as attitudes and motivation affecting language learning. Motivation is what drives students forward; it is the fuel that pushes learners to keep going (Dörnyei, 2018). Motivation starts with an initial burst, the intention is to keep students motivated, parents could be one of the affective variables that either enhance motivation, or extinguish it. The extent of impact largely depends not only on external variables such as socio-cultural setting, community, teachers, parents (Epstein, 2006;

2010; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993) learner competence and degree of training in second language, etc. but also on individual variables that lie within the learner (Dörnyei, 2014). Foreign language learning is typically driven by several motives at times both internal and external influences. The main two types of motivation are instrumental and integrative (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Sinno, 2008). Instrumental motivation centers on learning the language for the purpose of practical reasons, to meet specific needs (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Whereas, integrative reasons to learn would be to feel included in the community, language is to be as a tool to become part of a society. The two primary sources for motivation are internally (intrinsic) and extrinsically (external) situated.

Extrinsically motivated behaviors are when actions are done for external rewards and are environmentally driven passing a class, good grades, etc.; or to avoid punishment; such as pleasing parents to avoid getting in trouble. Intrinsically motivated behaviors are done for a more personal reason and the rewards are within the learner; internally (for the joy of doing an activity, or to satisfy curiosity) (Dörnyei, 1994; Shakfa &Kaliban). Integrative motivation is mostly seen with learners where learning the target language is a must since it is part of their day to day lives. However, this is not the case for foreign language learners, where natural interactions and exposure to the target language is minimal, as is the case with Palestinian English learners. The target language is not associated with a specific community or setting. For this reason, the "integrative" notion of this perspective on motivation is irrelevant (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009).

Instrumental motivation is where learning is a result of wanting to fulfil or gain something. These two forms of orientations may seem like opposite ends of the spectrum, however, the best form of motivation is when both of these types are used (Dörnyei, 2014; Musleh, 2011; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). Neither of these orientations can consistently predict second language (L2) achievement but do jump start the learning process, but are not predictors (Noel, 2001). The type of orientation is important, but not as important as the source of a learner's motivation. Where learners draw their motivation from could be from within themselves or from outside influences. In short, the process starts with the learner. The way a

learner processes and deals with these various sources of influence comes down to their own individual characteristics.

Self-System

Dörnyei and Ushioda's (2009) L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS) as a component of this theoretical framework consists of three elements: ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and the L2 learning experience. The ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and the L2 learning experience. The ideal L2 self refers to the version of self, individuals would like to reach, what they hope or wish to become. While the ought-to L2 self refers to what those around a learner expect the individual to become, typically by those significant to the learner such as parents, family, etc. (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009).

This is where those within the environment of the learner would potentially exude influence as to what the learner would seek out to become. The L2 learning experience in essence is an expansion of the previous in that the circle of those concerned with the individual expands to include their experiences within the learning environment, which includes people such as peers and the teacher and the actual curriculum itself. In the scope of learning a foreign language, it is distinct from learning a second language in that the "new" language is not associated with a segment of the learner's community. Meaning that the aspect of integrative motivation where the learner wishes to become part of the target language community is not feasible, which is the case with Palestinian English learners (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011). The main principle of L2MSS is that when a learner perceives a difference between their current self and their future self-guide (i.e., ideal or ought), this would motivate the learner to try to persist to reach their desired ideal or ought-to self. The ideal and ought-to self fall under the umbrella of possible selves. A fundamental assumption in the L2MSS is that when the learner perceives a discrepancy between their current state and their future self-guide (ideal), this inconsistency can be a form of motivation for the learner to be driven to remedy this and reach the desired end-state.

Possible selves, also known as future self-guides are what drive an individual towards something. Possible selves are subfields that emerged from the study of individual differences

(Dörnyei, 2005). Dörnyei (2014) stated that possible selves represent "the individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" (p. 98). Possible selves are specific representations of one's self in future states that manifest to either meet one's goals and aspirations, or the becoming of a person they fear. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009), "the perception of one's self is not only formed by past experiences but also shaped by the here and now, by their present. It is an ever changing constant process of what the person envisions they would be drawing from hopes, ambitions, fears, wishes and fantasies (p. 11)". This affective side of the motivation and self-system deals with the negative manifestations of what one could become, which could be sourced from language anxiety as stated in the study by Papi (2010).

Lastra (2009) and Kitano's (2001) studies both support the theory of learner performance being negatively impacted by anxiety specific to language learning (language anxiety). Learners that lacked self-confidence and viewed their language skills as lacking felt judged and became anxious. Language anxiety specific to language learning situations has two main distinct forms: Beneficial/facilitating vs. inhibitory/debilitating anxiety. Anxiety can be either debilitative, where it can interfere with learning, or it can be facilitative where it can positively affect learning. Sometimes anxiety does not always inhibit performance but actually can promote it. A learners' willingness to learn or communicate in L2 is often related to anxiety. Learner attitudes, motivation, and anxiety levels could be affected by learners' prior language knowledge, how much they have used the language, confidence, and competence in the language (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). Another form of anxiety is trait vs. state anxiety. Trait anxiety refers to the tendency to become anxious in certain situations. Where state anxiety is the brief, moment-to-moment anxiousness related to a specific situation.

Tension (anxiety/stress) between the individual and those around them such as teachers, peers, parents, etc. impacts various aspects of the person. It is believed that fear and anxiety are a strong driving force that "are representative of societal reflection of pain" which can be expressed through anxiety (McDonell et al., 2006). These drives not only represent responses but also are capable of motivating new forms of behavior. Typically, the response to mild forms of anxiety can serve as a push to put forth more effort and could be viewed as

positive, as a form of motivation (facilitating anxiety). Anxiety becomes harmful and transforms into language anxiety when there are high levels of anxiousness. This becomes problematic when in a learning situation the learner becomes excessively stressed and tense unable to participate or perform language tasks due to debilitating anxiety. Language anxiety is an ID variable and is significant in its impact on language learning. Depending on learners' personality type, anxiety can shift from debilitating to facilitating anxiety depending on the way they internalize this tension in a given situation. This ID trait usually becomes more negative in nature when it is with learners that have highly introverted personalities. Since they are already less likely to take risks, this inhibition increases and can seriously impair L2 fluency.

The internalized motivational drive as seen in Dörnyei and Ushioda's (2009) motivational self-system is explained in the inward visualization of learners of their future L2 self of meeting their own and other's linguistic ambitions for L2 achievement does make a true impact on student achievement. These possible selves have the distinguishing feature in that they could all be a reality; all these variations have a real possibility of becoming the individual's new reality. The possible self may not be viable in the now, in the moment, does not make the possibility of that manifestation any less realistic. The importance of the L2 self-system motivation theory is that if researchers understand the internalized perceptions of the learner of themselves we are much closer to actually better understanding the emotions behind the motivated behavior. Possible selves are also known as 'future self-guides' in that they are what drive an individual towards action. However, simply envisioning a possible self will not yield results. Learners must have goals related to the future they hope to achieve. What these goals are move towards the social environment in which learners are.

Procedural Definitions

Depending on the scope of a study the way certain terms are used vary from context to context or from researcher to researcher. As such, the following terms are defined as they are used within the scope of this study:

Experience:

According to Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2020) the term experience was defined as: the conscious events that make up an individual life; the events that make up the conscious past of a community or nation or humankind generally and something personally encountered, undergone, or lived through. For the scope of this study the term will refer to an impressionable situations or an encounter that shapes individuals' perspectives and attitudes in regards to language learning.

Motivation:

"[T]he extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity (Gardner, 1985, p.10)".

Attitude:

A particular view or opinion towards a specific topic or object that could be in a positive light or a negative one. Attitudes have three major components: cognitive refers to a person's own beliefs about something; effective how one feels towards something; and behavioral that is a person's own behavior towards something which were discussed by Fatiha et al. (2014). For the purpose of this study attitudes will refer to the opinions or views that the Palestinian community holds, specifically mothers, towards the English language, and/or learning English.

Anxiety:

Anxiety is described as "a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome" (OxfordDictionarys.com, 2020). Stress and/or anxiousness that crops up when it comes to situations or things. It is a type of reaction to fear. However, language anxiety is more specific to the use of language; feeling of stress, or anxiousness when it comes to learning a second language or foreign language. (Musleh, 2010). There is a relationship between motivation and language anxiety; when language anxiety is high the degree of motivation decreases, when motivation is high language anxiety might decrease. For the purpose of this study, anxiety and language anxiety will be associated with the fear of performance or being judged in the classroom setting.

The aforementioned terms are used in the theoretical framework on which the current study was based. The theories also illuminate the way in which the interconnectivity of attitudes, motivation, and social context all fit in the understanding of the influences that foreign language learners interact. Palestinian students live in a social-cultural environment where the interplay of all these affective factors have not been investigated especially from the aspect of parental influence on learner outcomes. Working from the ground up this framework will help guide a better understanding of learners' attitudes towards language learning and the sources of such attitudes. Further, they help in understanding to what extent, parent experiences and attitudes influence those of their children towards language learning.

Conclusion

In Chapter One the rational for conducting this study, purpose, and significance were established. The theoretical framework and concepts on which this study was based were established focusing on motivation and attitude formation as they are related to learning English as a foreign language. A brief overview of the theories discussed in the Theoretical Framework are summarized in Figure. 1.1 below.

Figure. 1.1

Summary of Epstein Theory, Self Determination Theory and L2 Motivational Self-System

	Components
Epstein Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence	• Supportive society members working as a team • Nurturing environment (peers, community, parents) working for the benefit of the learner • Learner is influenced by those around them all must work for benefit of the learner.
Self-Determination Theory	• Competence, autonomy, and psychological relatedness • Looks as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation • Society has an impact on learner efforts • Nurturing environment that meets learner needs provides the backbone of learner motivation. • Degree of impact depends on learner specific variables (self-regulation and effort towards language learning tasks). • The more enjoyable language learning is perceived the more emotionally/personally invested they are in outcomes. • Power of personal goals.

L2 Motivational Self-System	- Perceptions of what learner views their self in terms of learning language: L2 self, Ideal self, Ought-to self - Discrepancy between who they are and who they wish to become is what motivates them. - Motivation can be impacted by society - Nurturing environment - Societal pressure by those significant to the learner impact motivation direction. - Environment helps shape/impact goals learner wants to achieve in unifying the vision they have of themselves with who they believe they and those around them expect them to be. - Ought-to self: who learners aspire to be.

The literature that helped formulate the researcher's understanding and strengthen the direction of this study will be discussed in the next chapter (Chapter Two). The factors that influence language learning, attitudes towards foreign language learning, impact of language anxiety, and studies that were conducted within the Palestinian context will be discussed at length. In this study, the researcher focused on attitudes and motivation and the impactful nature of mothers in Palestine on the formation of their 9th graders attitudes and motivation towards learning English as a foreign language.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

There is a vast amount of research on what environmental factors impact foreign language (English) learners. This literature review has been divided into sections due to the variety of topics that interconnect to paint the whole picture so to speak. The first portion will be about what influences language learning from a young age, and then moving on to other factors such as society, attitudes, and motivation. Several studies have been conducted on attitudes and motivation in relation to English language learning in various contexts including the Palestinian context. When it comes to language learning the most common variables considered are within the classroom itself; teacher accountability, student responsibility, and motivation top the list of things to consider.

What is not consistently covered within various contexts is parental impact on their learners. Before learners enter school they arrive with a set of notions, preconceptions, and attitudes towards learning acquired from the environment around them. These thoughts and feelings shape how learners will face academic challenges and the way they approach learning challenges. These experiences start at a young age, and the first teacher every child has is the first individual they model, and that is a parent figure. The first portion will be about factors that influence language learning such as society, attitudes, and motivation.

Factors that Influence Foreign Language Learning

Starting at the very beginning stages of a child's educational journey the study *Modeling: It's More Than Just Imitation* (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008) investigated the way preschool aged children imitated, or modeled behaviors of adults around them. Examples of modeling presented ranged from: learning an action is punishable when seeing another student punished for it (spilling sand), gender roles, and language acquisition: using a Spanish greeting learned from a children's show (Dora the Explorer), and another using Japanese learned from home. The last example shows how language learning at a young age starts not in the

classroom but from the child's environment which include parents, community, and the media (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008; Bartram, 2005; Sinno, 2008).

Cansler's (2008) study corroborated this with participants spanning from Kindergarten to fifth grade citing Vygotsky's theory of social development. In that learning occurs from those that surround the learner; their society, community; which shapes mental development. Learners can give value or meaning to something based on what parents do or say (Bhattacharyya et. al, 2008; Cansler, 2008). Cansler (2008) gave an example of this when what seems like a meaningless act of a child hitting a toy was compared by the mother to the actions of the father by stating, "hammering nails just like daddy" (p20). Social cognitive theory explains how behavior is learned through personal observations which has 3 functions (Bhattacharyya, 2008):

1) Observational learning: modeling what is seen; such as in Bandura's Bobo doll experiment.
2) Response facilitation: the observer acts in response to a modeled action; nothing was learned but were motivated to act based on what was seen.
3) Inhibition/disinhibition: can occur during observation; a model is punished for an action the observer refrains from copying the punished action.

Observational learning in the case of language learning is when learners emulate habits or attitudes of those around them, where response facilitation is the motivation or demotivation of replicating an action or partaking in a behavior (classroom participation, academic activities, etc). If parents are communicating or reward interactions in English, the child/student will continue to model this behavior since they are motivated to do so (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008). This could come in the form of showing interest in what learning activities their child was involved in at school (Cansler, 2008). Cansler (2008) further validates this by explaining that according to Bandura's social cognitive theory a learner's environment includes social interaction which molds attitudes, perceptions and beliefs. That this prompts individuals to reflect on what they think is expected of them as they try to meet those expectations to please others (Lastra, 2009). In the Palestinian context culture emphasizes

respecting parents and pleasing them, particularly mothers. A child's learning is influenced by different aspects of their environment as explained by Macdonell Strom-Gottfried, Burton, and Yaffe (2006). The way children are parented and disciplined shapes how children will behave (Taylor, Clayton, & Rowley, 2004).

Second language learning is a multifaceted learning process that not only includes a linguistic aspect, but also a psychological, personal, and educational aspects (Musleh, 2011, p3). Taylor et al. (2004) discuss different perspectives on parental influences on children. The two major perspectives of parenting discussed were: What Parents Do Perspective and Who Parents Are Perspective. The first is related to the way parents shape the development of their children's prosocial and antisocial behaviors by the parent's socialization. The authors elaborate further that different parenting types and discipline result in a variety of children behavior outcomes. An example would be if an authoritative parent communicated with their children with warmth, responsiveness, and demandingness with little conflict and negative outcomes the child would excel in academic and social activities.

People from varied cultural backgrounds differ in their parenting styles and cultures where authoritarian parenting is the norm according to Dwairy, et al (2006) does not yield any negative effects. Authoritative parenting is demanding and sets high standards and boundaries that are consistently enforced. This fits the Palestinian cultural context where parenting is relatively authoritative in nature. In Dwairy et al. (2006) cross-regional studies concerning parenting styles of Arab societies, Palestinian parenting styles were mainly shown to be authoritative and/or authoritarian. The home atmosphere where parents expect to be obeyed and respected is part of the cultural fabric of Arab societies. Boys in the study perceived their parents as being stricter and rigid with them than their female siblings. This leads to how Taylor et al. (2004) discuss the 'Home Learning Environment', where language stimulation is provided by parents for their children. The second perspective "Who Parents Are" focuses on parental behavior. The "Socioeconomic and Cultural Influences" studies the possibility of race and poverty status impacting the child's outcome. "Parental Cognition About School" recognizes the way the mothers perceive the school impacts the child's thought process about the school. If parents view the school positively, so will their child (Wainwright, 2011) leading to more

positive outcomes in financial and academic success (Taylor et al., 2004). A parent's behavior may be directly affected by individual experiences and negative parenting behaviors can have a devastating impact on the child's life. Parents through social and cultural, individual experiences, and behaviors create the path for their child's early academic experiences. Once a child matures their peers also start to have an influence on them. As seen people in the learner's life mold and impact how students behave and view learning. This is also substantiated by Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) in their research that studies various affective variables that impact learners' achievement that are derived from within the learner, and around them.

Attitudes towards Foreign Language Learning

The opinions, attitudes, and perceptions that were discussed by Bartram (2005) are what feed into learners' own formation of attitudes on language. This is also built upon further with the explanation of Bandura's social cognitive theory that environment which includes social interaction molds attitudes, perceptions and beliefs what have individuals reflect on what they think is expected of them as they try to meet those expectations to please others (Cansler, 2008). All this leads back to how parent attitudes, beliefs and perceptions can be influential on their children so their involvement is of importance. "The Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence clearly portrays the importance of family alongside the community and the schools (Cansler, 2008, p26). Sabah's (2013) strengthens the claim of the link, or connection between attitudes and behavior, "Experts discovered that attitude indicates in a certain degree the possibility of adopting certain behavior" (p2). Tanni (2015) also writes of attitudes being a component of affective variables in relation to language learning. It is important to understand how various researchers have defined attitudes. Tanni (2015) cites several researchers in the composition of the meaning of attitudes, but what it can be summed up as is the following way. Attitudes have three parts: cognitive component, evaluative component, and behavioral component.

Cognitive relates to how the learner thinks about a situation, their views or beliefs towards it. Which feeds into the evaluative component of liking or disliking said situation or topic? Then lastly, the behavioral component which could be related to Bhattacharyya's

research which discussed the imitation of a behavior, in that attitudes can prompt learners to adopt a behavior. These together could be seen as an explanation of a linguistic behavior that is sorted by the learner's experience as a response to a situation.

Fatiha, Sliman, Mustapha, and Yahia (2014) classify attitudes within 3 categories that are cognitive, affective, and behavioral; which is very similar to Tanni's (2015) and Alseweed's (2009) breakdown of attitudes. However, Fatiha et al. (2014) expand on the cognitive classification in that their ideas on a situation or topic is connected to their understanding in that how prior knowledge relates to what students are currently learning, and the application of this new knowledge in different contexts. The study summed up the definition of attitudes as an emotion towards individuals or things that can be negative or positive for the individual that have a hold or influence on how something is perceived. There are two main variables of attitudes that were specified that would determine language learning success or failure: attitudes towards learning language and towards target language community. Attitudes towards language learning are impactful in that if the learner views learning a foreign language positively then learning would take place. In terms of attitudes towards the target language community the study cited Karahan (2009) in saying, "learners who have favorable attitudes towards a language, its speakers and their culture tend to be more successful in their learning than those who have negative attitudes (Fatiha, et al., 2014, p118).

Cansler (2008) mirrored previous researchers in their connection of positive attitudes being linked to a desired action, in that attitudes have a social aspect to them. The social component is that attitudes are influenced by the social context that learners which shapes their views and how they feel about learning (Cansler, 2008; Alseweed, 2009). Context is important since behavior differs from culture to culture, context to context (Al-Saraj, 2011). Attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions fit together shaping experiences that are observable and can be experienced by the learner to alter their own views and feelings about things (Cansler, 2008). Alseweed (2009) brought forth the importance of studying attitudes which helps in showing the significance of such studies:

- Positive attitudes aide the learning process

- Students are unique individuals with different backgrounds, and beliefs; trying to change these aspects could be harmful.
- Learners have views on the learning process and can voice them
- Limited studies conducted on attitudes towards English learning.

The last point also holds true in the Palestinian context with studies being limited on the topic in particular impact of parental attitudes on student attitudes and motivations; leading to the significance of my own research. The researcher adds to our understanding of attitudes from literature on the topic which can be summed up as follows:

- Attitudes are favorable or unfavorable reactions or feelings towards a situation influenced by context continuously being formed and modified. Whereas language attitudes are more specific, they are learned feelings that the learner has towards the target language.
- Attitudes are important in relation to learner language achievement, the connection between motivation and attitude, attitude formation is impacted by experiences; good or bad; that hinder learning resulting in a fear of language learning; better known as language anxiety in other studies.
- Attitudes consist of three components: the cognitive; individual's belief structure; affective; emotional aspect; and conative components; tendency to behave in a certain way towards the attitude (Alseweed, 2009).

Hashwani's (2008) study was similar in investigating attitudes but expanded further to include the impact anxiety and motivation on language learning. The study findings show a higher degree of extrinsic motivational goals connected to student's language learning outcomes and future achievements comparable to intrinsic ones, regardless of gender. Overall, girls have a slightly higher degree of positive attitudes and motivation compared to boys. In terms of intrinsic motivation 93% of students were comfortable in meeting and conversing with English speakers and 88% appreciated English literature and liked to connect with people around the globe; results were almost similar between both genders. However, one aspect of attitudes not investigated in depth or frequently enough and that is what or who influences attitudes and what forms them in the learner's mind.

Factors that Influence Attitudes towards Foreign Language Learning

Learning attitudes may be positive or negative based on their personal experience with the language or the experience of those close to learners; be it their teachers, peers or parents. (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008; Fatiha et al., 2014; Lastra, 2009; Sinno, 2008). The environment around a learner at a young age influences what they will or will not do, there is a consideration of being judged by teachers; punished (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008) or evaluated poorly by the teacher and judged by their peers and parents for making mistakes or for their participation (Lastra, 2009; Juhana, 2012).

A nurturing environment encourages students to strive, as such then logic stands to reason that an overly judgmental one could be discouraging causing anxiousness or fear when it comes to language learning. Building on this with Piaget's social development theory that social interactions that are constructed by experiences between adults and children are what build up as a child goes through their developmental stages (Cansler, 2008). Part of this society is media; media such as television shows (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008); and social media easily consumed simplifies access to different views and makes it easier to share perspectives or attitudes about any given topic (Bartram, 2005).

The learner's social environment; the context, in which the learner is learning a language; includes the learner and their peers, teachers, and parents (Cansler, 2008; Fatiha, 2014; Bartram, 2005). The influence and importance on language learning attitudes of this social environment was stated by Bartram (2005), ""the overall cultural context within which we live can provide a set of assumptions and salient facts which determine the attitudes we will develop" (p1). Lastra (2009) dubbed these influences as social issues, since they can motivate learning or demotivate it. The following is a brief discussion of the various aspects of the learner's social environment with the focus falling on the parental role in learner's attitudes.

A) The learner and their peers:

Peers have an important impact on the learner since most EFL learners worry about being judged or mocked by their classmates which sparks anxiety (Juhana, 2012; Lastra, 2009). Learners tend to compare their skill level to that of their peers, learners are sensitive to this

inner comparison; evaluation (Kitano, 2001). On the other hand, they can be what encourage learners to be interested in language learning (Fatiha, et al. 2014). If a learner's peers show interest in language learning, this positive outlook will capture the attention of the learner and will be more likely to take part in learning activities (Bhattacharyya, 2008; Lastra, 2009; Bartram, 2005; Fatiha, et al. 2014). Another aspect to consider is the context that learners and their peers are learning the target language in. The perceived usefulness of the language; be it for advancement in academics or for use within their social context also would saw learner attitudes (Bartram, 2005; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Memon, et al., 2016).

In Bartram's (2005) study one student simply stated that the lack of usefulness for a language discourages any effort to learn it; an English student in regards to learning German. Basically, if a learner does not feel that learning a language will be useful in their daily life they would not be motivated to learn it or make any real effort. Cultural context is another consideration (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011; Tanni, 2015; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Memon et al., 2016), and portrayal of language in media (Bartram, 2005). Cultural context is another consideration for learners, according to Musleh's (2011) findings demographic location (context) and culture impact learner attitudes and reasons (motivations) for learning English. In contrast, if they are uninterested or display boredom towards language learner, then this to will affect the learner, but negatively. (Cansler, 2008; Fatiha, 2014; Lastra, 2009).

B) Teachers:

Learner attitudes are highly impacted by teachers' behavior within the classroom in terms of meeting teaching goals, good classroom management, and provide a safe learning environment (Fatiha, 2014). A safe learning environment is where learners freely share their opinions without feeling judged or made to feel anxious for their responses or questions (Fatiha, 2014; Kitano, 2001; Juhana, 2012). The teacher must also have positive perceptions to English and English instruction while showing enthusiasm and passion that reflect on to learners boosting motivation and improving learner attitudes (Memon et al., 2016; Juhana, 2012). Teacher roles and responsibilities in increasing learner confidence and improve language learning attitudes is well documented (Hashwani, 2008; Abu Jarad's; Tanni, 2015) in

understanding learner attitudes and steps to alter them to be positively inclined towards language learning (Tanni, 2015; Kitano, 2001).

Some studies attributed poor attitudes towards language learning to classroom environments that do little to dissuade negative learner attitudes, and that motivated learners with positive attitudes are the products of good teaching (Juhana, 2012; Sabah, 2013; Lastra, 2009). Several studies conducted focused on the role of the teacher in learner attitudes, including Palestinian studies (Tanni; 2015; Musleh; 2011; Abu-Jarad; Sabah; 2013; Shakfa & Kabilan, 2017).

C) Parental Role:

Parental involvement and interest in their child's learning processes is important and could be in its own way motivational (Lastra, 2009; Fatiha, 2014). Children model behaviors of their parents, if they see their parents excited about something children will reflect this by sharing the same excitement (Fatiha, 2014; Bhattacharyya, 2008). What parents do and say help shape and form their children's attitudes towards school and learning (Fatiha, 2014). Parental role in influencing and motivating their children is further substantiated by the statement that, "parents play the role of bridge between two cultures and language […] students are sensitive to the opinions of their parents and teachers" (Memon et al., 2016, p256). Several studies have shown that there is a fear of disappointing parents by not meeting their expectations as a result disappointing them by not being obedient (Jin et al., 2016; Memon et al., 2016; Lastra, 2009).

Parental influence reaches far beyond the walls of the home and is impactful on learners' motivation to learn within the classroom environment (Rahman, 2015). In Rahman's (2015) study results indicated that students in general were influenced by home environmental factors; parental involvement, economic investment, and parents' attitude towards the language. The data suggested parental investment was higher for male children's English learning. Also, that boys were more influenced by parental involvement and encouragement than girls. Parental involvement can either enhance learner progress or hinder it; internal resistance. Quality of the home environment is impacted by what the researcher dubs as family

capital which includes: financial capital (physical); material resources measured by family income; human capital; education attainment represented by a person's knowledge, skills and capabilities to interact in social structures; and lastly social capital; the connections or social standing that a learner can utilize for knowledge or support. It was noted that differences in physical capital is not a predictor of home environment quality.

The setting of high expectations and holding children accountable to meet them has been seen in the literature to result in better learning outcomes. Much like Palestine, Bangladesh's history is one riddled with times of war, and British intervention. Both countries had British as a source for introduction of the English language. The history of English in Bangladesh was prominent in the literature review of the study. Both my own and Rahman's study seek to fill a gap in the literature on the topic of environmental influences on language learners specific to parental roles. If parents are communicating or reward interactions in English, the child/student will continue to model this behavior since they are motivated to do so (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008).

They have a positive experience based on the positive perspectives reflected onto them by their parents. This ties into the consequences of modeling (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008). Some studies have concluded that parents play a significant role in their child's learning experience; reinforcing that society plays an influential role on learners (Jin et al., 2016; Memon et al., 2016; Lastra, 2009; Fatiha; Bhattacharyya, 2008). However, if a learner feels that their parents' would disapprove of learning English, or that they will be judged harshly by those around them this can be demotivating, and lead to anxiety, language anxiety to be specific (Lastra, 2009). Parent attitudes, beliefs and perceptions do have influence on their children, the same holds true with parental involvement as the literature has shown. Expanding on the previously mentioned Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence, the spheres are representative of schools, families, and communities, and the overlapping portions of the spheres represents the mutual interest and influence each have on a child's education (Epstein, 2010). It is beneficial that the learner is viewed from a humanistic perspective, as a child by the teacher so that all components could work together for the betterment of the learner (Epstein, 2010). If educators see the individual within the student, then it is more likely to view parents and the community

as partners in the education process. This means that parents will be encouraged more by the teacher to be active in their child's learning even if they have been passive; however, this also relies on other factors. The main two contributing factors to consider to the degree of overlap of the spheres: time and experiences. Time as in the age of the child, how far along they are in their academic career, and the experiences that the child has in the school and family (Epstein & Sanders, 2006).

Parents are more likely to be involved in their child's school and learning at younger ages, but that involvement tends to decrease as their child advances in grade levels. This moves back towards parental influence at younger ages having a lasting impact. Parents are the models that children seek to emulate, to model. According to Bhattacharyya (2008) an effective model must be: relatable, reliable, and authoritative; parents encompass these features for their children.

For the learner to model an action they must be: paying attention, remember long-term in detail what was observed, be able to re-enact what was observed, and be motivated to model the behavior (Bhattacharyya et al., 2008)**.** From this we see that parental influence does not halt at home, but carries on into the classroom and can serve to give learners that push to stay on task, or to veer away. Jin and associates (2016) studied children from a young age and showed how parents shaped their perspectives and experiences with English in the Chinese context. Memon et al.'s (2016) study yielded similar results that showed the influential role of parents in children's attitudes towards learning English; which in turn impacts learner achievement and motivation. Modeling consequences can occur before and after a behavior modeled in the form of form of punishment; time out or restrictions to show displeasure; or reinforcement; praise rewarding desired behavior (Bhattacharyya, 2008).

For an observer to model an action they must: be paying attention, remember long-term in detail what was observed, be able to re-enact what was observed, and be motivated to model the behavior. In turn an effective model must have three characteristics: reliability, relatability (competence), and authoritative status (Bhattacharyya, 2008). This is best illustrated when comprehending that studies have reflected that modeling and seeking to please a parent

is an attribute that learners still hold with them even beyond school. Studies conducted with kindergarteners in China (Jin et al., 2016), to university level students in Pakistan (Memon et al., 2016) have yielded typically consistent results in showing the importance of parental attitudes. That from the formative educational years, to adulthood in college parental attitudes shape those of their children. This is further cemented in the minds of Palestinian learners since culturally it is engrained to please ones' parents, to be obedient and follow their advice and simplistically put, do as they are told. The culture of China also has this similar expectation of its youth as was cited by Jin et al. (2016) that according to Phillipson and Phillipson (2007) "the influence of parents is a deciding force since children have been educated to listen to, obey and meet the expectations of parents, and to follow teachers' instructions" (p7).

In summation what is understood is that learners are a product of observed and modeled behaviors, which falls over into the modeling of attitudes, perspectives and experiences. If parents have a negative experience and either vocally or through actions reflect this to their children, this may very well alter the student's experiences and attitudes. The same holds true if it is positivity the students are exposed to. As can be seen a learner's social environment has influence on learners, and learner attitudes are drawn from the world around them. Like the pieces of a puzzle this all fits together to form a clear picture and that is the understanding parental influence does not cease at a young age, but transitions with children as they grow and enter the classroom setting. Learners are impacted not only by teachers as much of the literature states but also by their environment. The context they are in and their parents do play a pivotal role in the formation of their attitudes towards different aspects of life, which includes education as well. If not handled with care, these attitudes could make way for the learner to distance themselves or show little effort in EFL classroom activities. When not addressed this can transform into a form of anxiety, and avoidance of language learning.

Motivation and Foreign Language Learning

Many studies investigated the relationship between motivation and attitude and their influence on English language learning. Motivation is the driving force that pushes a person to take action and is one of the affective variables that impact language learning, it can be intrinsically or extrinsically situated (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011; Dörnyei, 1994; Shakfa & Kaliban,

2017). Shakfa and Kabilan (2017) state that, the integration between both types' leads to powerfully influence on the learners' behavior "(p2-3). Motivation in terms of language learning as previously discussed falls into two main categories: integrative or instrumental.

Shakfa and Kabilan (2017) state that, "[T]he integration between both types leads to powerfully influence on the learners' behavior (p2-3). Masgoret and Gardner (2003) viewed motivation in the terms of instrumental motives and integrative motivation being linked, "integration with a world community is matched with instrumental motives (i.e. access to employment opportunities and social goods). This may be due to the changing needs in a globalized world where English language proficiency has become a basic skill rather than an option (Sinno, 2008, p155). Their findings showed that students' integrative motivation is slightly higher than instrumental motivation in learning English. Juhana (2012) believes that a lack of motivation is one of the psychological challenges foreign language learners face.

Motivation can be drawn from the social context of a learner: family, peers, and society at large (Memon, R., Memon, S., & Wadho, 2016). Motivation is the desire to learn which is linked to the way learners view the target language or culture Gardner and (MacIntyre, 1993). The degree of impact relies on complex variables such as: socio-cultural setting the communities are made up of, as well as the different levels of training and competence in the second language. Studies conducted in various contexts about attitudes and motivation indicate that motivation or language attitudes significantly correlate with second language learning achievement. In terms of language learning Gardner (1985) is cited in Oroujlou and Vahedi (2011) study saying, "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (p 995). According to Gardner and MacIntyre's (1993) another variable that is influenced by attitudes and motivation is language classroom behavior; classroom participation. Studies show that more motivated students are more likely to participate. These results indicate an association between attitudes and classroom participation. Sinno (2008) summed up motivation as the desire to work and strive to achieve something, to learn due to the feeling of satisfaction of having accomplished the task; language learning. Motivation is considered to be an essential for

English language learning process that reinforces students' attitudes towards learning (Shakfa & Kabilan, 2017, p2).

Fatiha et al. (2014) discuss that these social pressures that come in the form of discouragement of family and friends in the pursuit of language learning can be overcome by sheer determination or motivation. The motivation to do so can be determined by:

1) Interest: if lessons are interesting this encourages and motivates learners to want to learn more. This leads back to the role of teachers in the formation of attitudes.

2) Classroom environment: This has been touched on in Lastra's (2009) study, in terms of the setting that students are learning in. If students feel at ease to freely practice their language skills without judgment, this encourages participation and learning.

3) Society: Society encompasses the learner, parents, and teachers. The role of mothers is underrepresented in the sense of its importance in the formation of attitudes. Learners are highly influenced by those around them; they are sensitive to the attitudes of society. Society or the community could either create desire within a learner to progress, or hinder it.

Hashwani (2008) also discusses how motivational factors and experiences can potentially influence students' attitudes and anxiety levels towards English learning.

Impact of Language Anxiety

Anxiety is a basic human emotion surfacing when one is under pressure, which is not uncommon in the learning environment. Negative attitudes may lead into language learning anxiety which can diminish or reduce the desire or motivation in partaking in English classroom activities (Lastra, 2009; Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011). Hashwani (2008) also discusses how motivational factors and experiences have the potential to influence students' attitudes and anxiety levels towards English learning. The social environment of learners that includes peers, teachers and parents can work together to encourage (motivate a learner) or demotivate them due to feeling judged or put on the spot as previously mentioned. This feeling can be overwhelming and cause the learner to become tense and nervous resulting in anxiousness being associated with the situation they are in (Juhana, 2012; Gardner and Macintyre, 1993).

When this situation is related to language learning, this anxiety is called language anxiety. Language learning anxiety is specific apprehension to performance in the target language and can also affect students' language learning performance (Gardner & Macintyre 1993).

Anxiety to a certain degree is not always harmful, as Lastra (2009) discussed it can at the right levels be motivating. In that a certain level of anxiousness could be good if it pushes the student to want to do better, to want to improve. However, if a learner's anxiety is exceeding what would be expected in certain learning situations; around exam time so a student studies to get good marks; then this could make way to language anxiety, or fear. Fear of disappointing parents, fear of being judged, or fear of punishment for not meeting expectations (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011; Lastra, 2009; Bartram, 2005; Fatiha, et al. 2014; Musleh, 2011). This fear can be debilitating since students will be hesitant to participate in learning activities (Lastra, 2009; Sabah, 2013; Oroujlou and Vahedi, 2011).

Fear

Fear is one of the components of anxiety, but it is specific. A person can be nervous or anxious about leaving children unattended, but be afraid or fearful of public speaking. Fear is a more intense manifestation of anxiousness; it is part of language anxiety. In education this fear is connected to being judged, making mistakes, or disappointing those in the learner's social environment (Cansler, 2008; Fatiha, 2014; Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011; Lastra, 2009). This fear could develop as a resentment or dislike towards English language learning due to experiences of being mocked or judged by those within their social environment (Fatiha, et al., 2014, Cansler,2008; Lastra, 2009). Juhana (2012) states that, "students' fear of being laughed at by other students or being criticized by the teacher […] As a result, students commonly stop participating" (p101).

An excerpt from Lastra's (2009) this study best exemplifies how the different layers of fear can impede participation in class:

> Student 4: "We are part of a society that depends on what others say. So many of us feel embarrassed even me, to say something or speaking English even in Spanish we are afraid of being criticized by other people".

> Student 1: "Not only criticism but mockery. When you mispronounced a word people go 'ha ha ha' because we don't respect each other, there is not that level of respect to the learning process of each person both in English and Spanish (p. 182).

Fear, here, is related to a feeling characterized by a sense of insecurity or a lack of self-confidence. According to the participants of Lastra's (2009) study learners do not use the language in class due to a fear of making mistakes and fear of losing the respect of their peers. This fear impedes learning, and lowers motivation which in turn becomes a form of anxiety that lowers students desire to speak English and or participate in the learning of the language. This fear gave birth to anxiety which lead to students being more hesitant to practice or perform in the target language. As we know fear or anxiety can be of use when it is at low levels, since this stress causing fear may push some learners; in essence motivate them; to try to do better. But after a certain level this fear can be debilitating resulting in hesitancy to partake in language learning activities to speaking English outside of the classroom.

Studies in the Palestinian Context

Studies in the Palestinian context on student attitudes either look towards the burden of accountability being on teachers in regards to their impact on learner attitudes, and what teachers could do to improve their attitudes towards language learning (Oroujlou & Vahedi 2011; Abu-Jarad). Shakfa and Kabilan's (2017) study looked at instructors and syllabus designers as holding responsibility with being considerate of the learners' reasons for learning English. The unique socio-political context of Palestine means that many study findings in other contexts cannot be easily generalized to the Palestinian context. Studies conducted in Palestine such as Musleh's (2011) study specifically consider how not only the country but also the community context impacts learners in particular their motivation for learning English as a foreign language. Study findings showed that demographic location (context) and culture impact learner attitudes and reasons (motivations) for learning English (Musleh, 2011). The researcher concluded that Palestinian students are strongly motivated to learn English which differs from Catalonia students due to the role language plays within each context (Musleh, 2011). This confirmed that context and culture have a great impact on language learning motivation and reasons for learning English language.

Tanni's (2015) study sought to identify Tulkarm, Palestine Al-Quds Open University students' attitudes towards English. Results showed that the majority of students have positive attitudes towards English because language learning was seen as a beneficial instrumental tool to use in the world they live in. Tanni states that, "English in Palestine is taught as a foreign language and students are instrumentally motivated" (Tanni, 2015, p139). The focus of the source of these attitudes like many studies is the teacher's role in understanding learner attitudes and remedying the problem by knowing what to do to change detrimental perceptions towards language learning. Both Tanni (2015) and Abu-Jarad concluded that the instrumental motivation for using English that students had led to the positive attitudes that learners held. Abu-Jarad's study investigated the attitudes of 1st year students in Al-Azhar University – Gaza towards English from varying fields of study. With participant ages ranging between 17 and 19. Results showed significant attitudinal differences among participants from different fields, yet overall participants had an overall positive attitude towards English. The conclusion reached was that these positive attitudes were due to the instrumental use of the language; being used in learners' studies, and seen as opening up job opportunities. The study veers towards what teachers impact is on attitudes of learners, and what teachers could do to improve learner attitudes towards language learning. As is seen the pattern of this study and those before them focus more on student and teacher responsibility towards the learning process and do not address parental roles. Abu-Jarad's study substantiated these results with a similar sample; however, his study was set in a different context within Palestine. As is seen the studies tend to focus more on student and teacher responsibility towards the learning process and do not address the importance of parental roles.

Conclusion

The literature has established that there is a large gap in research that investigates the topic of parental influence on their children's attitudes and motivation towards learning English. The primary focus has been on older students, or preschool learners. Musleh's (2011) study findings showed that demographic location (context) and culture impact learner attitudes and reasons (motivations) for learning English. Many studies focus on the role teachers play in the learning process, but neglect to really look into just how much mothers influence their English

learners. Previous studies have shown just how interconnected language learning is; or in fact shaped by varying degrees; by motivation, attitudes, and learner experience. In short, participants were influenced by those around them reinforcing that society plays an influential role on learners, not just young learners (Jin et al., 2016) but those further on in their educational career. Several studies have been conducted on attitudes and motivation in relation to English language learning in various contexts including the Palestinian context. Yet, when it comes to language learning the most common variables considered are within the classroom itself; teacher accountability, student responsibility, and motivation are prioritized on the list of things to consider. Very little research has been conducted on the impact mothers' attitudes or perspectives on their learners. Even fewer studies have been conducted in the Palestinian context on this topic.

Palestinian studies on the topic focused mainly on older students, university students, who are goal oriented and thinking about their future. There is a focus on either motivation or attitudes or parents, however, not all three are investigated within the same study. Culture and context are part of a combination of several factors that also includes educational system changes and the conservative culture. (Al-Saraj, 2011). This obedience could be in the form of avoiding what displeases them. It is of importance to keep in mind the Spheres of Influence in that teachers, parents and community must work together forming a partnership to best benefit learners. In other words, teachers are not being removed from the equation; however, they are part of the intricacy of what is needed for the best possible outcomes for the learner.

This study aimed to see to what extent mothers are involved in their children's language learning journey on an emotional level. Studies investigating parental influence on learner attitudes are not present especially studies focusing on younger participants are rare and few. This shows that there is a large gap in understanding learner attitudes of those that are still progressing through their academic career. As such, the researcher sought out the participation of 9th graders since they have progressed in their academic career and would be better able to vocalize the impact their environment has had on them.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

Introduction

This study investigated a hot topic in the field of teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). In its investigation, it used qualitative methods using a qualitative research design to collect and analyze data. Qualitative data was collected using interviews for both mothers and their upper basic learners. This qualitative data was thematically analyzed using the approach's six phases of analysis.

Research Design

This study implemented a qualitative research design using qualitative data collection methods. Qualitative research allows for exploring the data from different aspects. Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions. Using open-ended questions in the semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to gather more information and to explore issues and topics that participants share. This direct interaction with participants helped in viewing issues from different aspects allowing for interpretation of participants' shared experiences. The interviews of mothers and their participating children were conducted separately. The interviews assisted the researcher in finding out the learners' and mothers' attitudes towards learning English and culture and the reasons behind them.

Mothers' and Students' Interviews

Questions for each group of participants were sorted to ensure that they would contribute to answering the study's research questions that concerned them. The open-ended questions were used only as a guide allowing for further exploration and using exploratory questions when needed to inquire more about a particular issue or shared experience.

Study Sample

The population of the study was composed of 5,251 grade 9 students (2,673 females and 2,578 males) attending public schools in Ramallah School District. Since was challenging for the researcher to select students from all Public schools in metropolitan Ramallah Area due to checkpoints and hardship of travel, a convenience sample was drawn from 12 schools (*see*

Appendix A) consisting of 24 students (12 males and 12 females) and their mothers (total of 48 participants) were selected to participate. The reasons behind choosing grade 9 students were:

- They have progressed sufficiently in school, and as such, they have had more learning and life experiences that they could share.
- They are cognitively more aware and developed than younger students. This means that they will be more capable of articulating their opinions and answer questions.
- According to UNICEF 9th and 10th grades are critical points in the Palestinian education system. Since this is the time many students drop out of school (UNICEF State of Palestine, 2018).

Instruments of the Study

Interviews

The researcher conducted two semi-structured interviews. One interview with students and one with mothers. In both interviews, interview questions were checked to ensure that they:

- Did not give way to one-word responses, but rather guide subjects to share experiences.
- Assist in getting the participant to reflect and describe their experiences (Rudestam & Newton, 2007).
- Are not prying in nature; questions do not impede on participants' privacy.
- Reviewed to ensure they are in line with study objectives.

Interviews provided this study with more in-depth understanding of not only participant perceptions also the reasons behind them. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with a list of guiding questions prepared (Please see Appendices B and C) keeping the interview conversational in nature and relaxed to help participants feel more at ease (Hu et al., 2016). The semi-structured nature was to encourage the flow of conversation and allow for flexibility in adding follow-up questions as needed. The interview model and question sets were developed based on pilot interviews to help formulate appropriate questions that best guide the interviews in the right direction. Further, interview questions were adopted from studies relating to the subject matter and adapted to fit the research purpose and context. Participants were asked for elaboration on responses when needed. Interviews were conducted with

mothers and their children separately to allow each more freedom to speak as they see fit. These interviews were recorded with the participants' consent and were later transcribed ensuring that nothing participants conveyed was misconstrued. After completion of transcriptions, participants were contacted to confirm that what was understood aligned with what they intended. Contact with participants was made before hand by school administrators inquiring about their participation. The researcher was unable to obtain participants' contact information from schools to carry out this step due to privacy concerns. Follow-up phone calls were made to agree on a day, time, and place that would be most convenient for those participating to carry out the interviews. Relevant information about this study was shared prior to starting the interviews and shared in the form of a cover letter (*see Appendices B and C)*. This information was re-stated during interviews as well.

Instruments' Validity and Reliability

The interview questions were shared with specialists (faculty members at the Faculty of Education at Birzeit University and a professor of Linguistics at East-West University) who have rich experience in the field of education, research, and linguistics. This was to ensure that data collected was valid and to assist in answering the research questions. As well as ensuring questions were not judgmental in nature, leading, or overly repetitive without intention. Based on the comments of the reviewers, modifications to the interview questions were made in terms of wording or the adding or removal of questions. The semi-structured interview was cross-validated against the research study questions and the purpose of the study. To ensure interrater reliability of the results achieved through the interviews, in analyzing the data the researcher worked with a colleague to analyze the data thematically ensuring consistent results. This was done through comparing codes and themes drawn from randomly selected interviews leading to high reliability. Collected findings were re-visited with participants for verification (respondent validation) confirmed the validity of the data collected through the interview instrument.

Data Analysis

Data collected through the interview process was thematically analyzed. Thematic analysis includes looking through the data, which could be interviews, observations, or any

other texts, to find connections or repeated patterns that form meanings. These patterns describe and represent crucial meanings related to the study questions were classified as themes. The researcher analyzed the data using Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase model as a working outline for the thematic analysis process. In Phase one the researcher familiarized herself with the data by reading and rereading the data several times to become familiar with all aspects of the data. During this process, notes were taken and some ideas underlined throughout the reading and rereading process in the coding phase. In Phase two, the researcher organized the data and coded them using different highlighter colours. In Phase three, the researcher searched for themes by putting the gathered codes into themes. In Phase four, the researcher reviewed the themes and made some adjustments and edited them. In Phase five, the researcher defined and named the themes. Finally, in Phase six meaningful themes were presented and supported with evidence.

Conclusion

The main aim of the current research study was to investigate students and mothers' attitudes toward learning English as a foreign language and the relationship between the two attitudes. In this chapter, the researcher discussed the methodology of the research (research design, the population, and the sample). Further, the researcher discussed the validity and reliability of the research instruments. In addition, she explained how the data gathered would be analysed.

Chapter Four

Results

Introduction

This chapter aims to report the results gathered from the interviews conducted with 12 male and 12 female students (6 high achievement and 6 low achievement learners) and their respective mothers. The interview questions that were formulated to answer the research questions were created to allow mothers and learners to share their experiences and understandings within the scope of this study relating to attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language and its culture, specifically, American and British cultures. The data set that was analyzed by the researcher yielded codes that were then categorized into 5 main themes. In the following sections, the researcher presents the results of the study pertaining to each one of the research questions. It is worth noting that the names used in this chapter are pseudo names and not the real names of the participants. Further, the quotes that are being used are edited for language accuracy while preserving the meanings intended by the participants.

Palestinian Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Language and Culture

In student interviews, the majority of students stated that they liked or loved learning English with the exception of three students who stated that they 'hated' or 'disliked' English in regards to the subject. The following themes emerged as a result of the thematic analysis of the data: English is Essential to Learn in Spite of Challenges, Learner's Level Plays a Vital Role in Learning English, Conflict between Learners' native Culture and Target Language Culture, Lack of Exposure and Deep Accurate Understanding of the Target Culture and Learner's Inability Finding / Accessing their Own Information about the Target language and Culture.

English is Essential to Learn in Spite of Challenges

Overall students had positive attitudes towards English language learning regardless of challenges encountered. However, the motivation of students to learn is what ultimately guides learners either to push forward or to give up altogether. In the words of one of the students who struggled with English (Nora):

> I love English class because it is an important language and I like it. I love
> it because it started being used more than Arabic these days.

Most students shared several positive opinions on learning English in spite of the fact that they struggle in learning the language. When asked if when having difficulties with learning they received tutoring or other additional forms of help the response was no. They reported that there was difficulty in obtaining additional assistance in part due to financial reasons, or lack of access to resources such as those available on the internet.

Having positive experiences in learning English particularly at early grade levels (Kindergarten – grade 4) and supporting and caring teachers gave students a morale boost and made them feel excited to learn English. One of the students (Ahmad) who was a high achieving student reported that:

> The way the teacher treats you and his method attract a student and
> make learning enjoyable. The teacher was fun and in his way of teaching
> and dealing with us was good. If he were in a bad mood one would hate
> the class and does not want to participate.

Further, learners expressed admiration for the English culture and showed a positive attitude towards the language and target culture. They admired aspects of the English society such as status of modernity and social issues that could be classified as human rights such as gender equality. Nora stated:

> Their culture is lovely and beautiful. They are self-confident,
> understanding, and modern people with traditions that are more
> beautiful than the past […] they have that women in society are like
> males not like where the male is better than the girl. They have equality
> between males and females.

Another challenge learners had to overcome was the classroom environment in regards to the way their teacher handles certain situations. Teachers as will be seen in the following pages according to both mothers and students alike played a role in learners' inclination to learn the language or to withdraw from the process.

Learner's Level in English Plays a Vital Role in Learning the Language

Some students showed negative attitude towards learning English. As participants reported such a negative attitude is due to several factors. The primary issue being that

students (particularly low achievement students) were struggling with the class and did not enjoy it. Therefore, they avoided it. The most prevalent complaint was vocabulary as a source of weakness. This leads to the root of the issue for most participants. Those that had negative attitudes lacked the base knowledge to be able to comprehend the material and subject matter presented to them in class. Even high achievement learners shared this viewpoint, in that they like learning English because it is easy and they understand it. Ahmad illustrated this point rather clearly:

> Like other subjects, sometimes I am bored sometimes I enjoy it. It depends, if the lesson is difficult or not. It depends on the way the teacher explains.

The student here stated that lesson difficulty and the teacher as well play a role in how attentive he is to the lesson and whether he enjoys the class. This was similar for the most part for the majority of participants. The same student also brought up something that also could contribute to the lack of interest in learning English as a foreign language in Palestine and that is the disconnect between the subject that is studied in the classroom and the students' lives. He stated, "If the lesson is connected to real situations, it (the information) reaches us easily". Even students that had some negative perceptions towards language learning also liked learning English but faced some form of difficulty with the subject.

Conflict between Learners' Native Culture and Target Language Culture:

The majority of participants have some negative views towards the target culture such as individuals being dishonest, trouble makers, and most notably not being family-centered in regards to taking care of the elderly and the expectation that upon turning 18 teenagers are deemed adults and are to leave the family home. These perceptions towards the target culture are drawn from what limited exposure students have in the form of films, games, YouTube and other media. Those that were exposed to more forms of media had detailed ideas on culture and more rounded perceptions. However, the caveat remained that the target culture contrasted with their own views of right and wrong. Pertaining to this issue Sameera a high achiever, reported:

> Things (from the target culture) that would never be appropriate for our culture (Palestinian Arab culture) like being an open society. There are

things that are contradictory between us and them. They do not respect their family and once the person becomes 18 years old they don't acknowledge their parents.

Overall mothers and students shared the same views towards the importance of learning the English language regardless of educational background and employment of the mothers and learner achievement level. The prevalent common view of participants was that much of American/British culture contradicts religious and cultural beliefs/norms of Muslim Palestinians. Participants supported learning about the target culture if it did not conflict with their own.

Lack of Exposure and Deep Accurate Understanding of the Target Culture

For the majority of participants, there was confusion as to what was meant by the term 'culture' even with direct translation and definition. To ensure participants understood what the researcher intended by the term culture an example of a mainstream television series in Palestine to explain the difference in cultural norms of that time in Arab society compared to now. This seemingly helped participants better understand what 'culture' meant and helped them articulate better. For a few participants, further inquiry on what they liked or disliked of the target culture, after initially providing vague or unrelated responses, admitted to not knowing much about it. The primary source of exposure to the target language's culture, as reported by the participants was through representations in the media that students consume. In particular movies, YouTube, games, music, reading (ordered in terms of what the majority of students have access to).

Action movies were the popular genre of choice for learners. Participants reported that they watched comedies, cartoons alongside other sources such as music tended to have a broader and more in-depth view of the target culture. For example, Sameera shared that her exposure to the target culture was from movies, cartoons, music, YouTube, stories, and talking to native speaking family members in America. This was her insight as to why some Palestinians may view the target culture as better than their own culture. When asked if media and other sources influence her perceptions about the target culture she stated:

> Yes, it has an impact. Look at the impression that the foreign music gives. You find differences between them and Arabic music in the meanings they carry. Most of it is about hope and things like that.

When asked if they would feel differently about learning English if they lived in an English speaking country overall both high and low achievement learners agreed that they would be more motivated to learn. The motivation would stem from being immersed in the language of the society and would need to learn to integrate and communicate with those around them. In the words of one of the participants (Ahmad):

> If I were in an English speaking country, I would be forced to learn it. My direction would be to learn English the way I learn the Arabic language. If you go to a shop you don't speak another language, no you speak the language of the country.

Both mothers and students viewed American/British cultures far removed from their own. Participants saw no fault in learning about the culture as long as it was not imitated, applied in their own lives and clashed with their own cultural and religious traditions. In general, English native speakers' culture (American/British) was viewed negatively in terms of there being a strong contradiction with their own faith, cultural and societal values.

Learner's Inability Finding / Accessing their Own Information about the Target language and Culture:

The lack of reliable access to the internet for students to seek out their own information, and the inability of mothers to help their language learners dampens or reduces learner motivation. This deficit in access to help whether within the home environment or outside of it in turn impacts learner confidence in some cases breeding anxiety and in some cases a breakdown in communication. When comparing the number of students that do share or discuss with their mothers' things related to their language and culture learning it was with high achievement learners that numbers were higher, particularly female students. Having positive attitudes, higher confidence and rapport with mothers together have an impact on learners. Parents are the first resource of knowledge and assistance for their learners. One mother of a high achieving student (Nehal) stated that:

> She (her daughter) likes to come to me. I enjoy listening to her. She shares with me a situation or something happened in class. She comes

> to tell me or she asks me about things related to learning English. I am
> like a resource for her.

Learners with positive attitudes are more likely to be much more motivated to learn, take risks, and be much more confident in their ability to learn. This confidence boost can be drawn from their array of access to the target language from a variety of sources in particular books, individuals that they can converse in English with, and videos (movies or YouTube clips) alongside access to resources when needing assistance such as their parents for example. Overall mothers of both low and high achievement learners generally wanted their children to be better than them to achieve what they were unable to accomplish. Positive attitudes alongside supportive environmental factors boost learner confidence and motivation. Negative attitudes towards learning English could have the opposite effect on the desire to learn sapping the motivation to learn and leave students feeling discouraged resulting in learners withdrawing from the learning process in one way or another.

Reasons behind Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Language and Culture

The two most prevalent sources of contentment or discontentment according to participants were teachers and parents. Parent involvement is an important aspect with the ability to provide the support needed and the tools necessary to further themselves. Some participants attributed their motivation to their parents sharing experiences with them and the ability to access assistance when needed. Both mothers and students recalled memories relating to their relationship with their language teachers. The positive in terms of classroom environment such as feeling safe to make mistakes, feeling the teacher wanted them to succeed and teacher personality. With more negative recollections centering on discipline and personality. Data Analysis revealed a number of themes pertaining to the reasons behind students' attitudes toward learning English language and culture. These themes will be discussed below.

Mothers Support and Involvement

Mothers who have more education and higher household income have higher levels of involvement and support than parents in a lower income bracket and less education. The majority of high achievement students had at least one parent that was educated past the 11th

grade level. Some students spoke of the father being a teacher or some other profession that required a degree. As such, it could be argued that mothers' education alongside economic status (inability to send to a tutor or enroll in supplementary courses) do in some way impact student achievement and or motivation in that they have the knowledge to help their learners.

This is reflected by the fact that the majority of high achievement learners both male and female reported they get help at home, and do not receive help from tutors or otherwise receive alternative supplemental support. With the exception of two participants, one grew up in the USA and the other was enrolled in a private school. The majority of participating mothers stated their English language education started in the 5th grade. This means with the majority of mothers of low achievement learners not exceeding the 9th grade that they only received 4 years of English language education.

Finances and distance are another aspect that mothers of both high and low achievement learners discussed. Mothers regardless of their language learner's achievement level wished that courses and tutors were a lot more easily accessible and affordable. The majority of participating mothers feel that their adolescent children lack the proper core knowledge in the English language. Many low achievement participants shared that their primary weakness is inability to read and vocabulary. In order to fill this gap many parents try to send their struggling learners to enroll in supplementary courses. However, this proves to be problematic for some as the following mother (Fatema) best articulated her concerns as follows:

> The courses are in Ramallah and expensive. I sent my son for a month to British Counsel. I paid 600 Shekels (monthly) plus 50 Shekel for transportation. This is a big amount.

Socio-economic status and mothers' education level seemed to be a common shared attribute overall for lower achieving students. The lack of availability of classes within the visited areas further provided difficulty. Some areas (Biteen is an example) were what would be classed as predominantly native speaking. Much of the population in these areas were families that lived abroad in English speaking countries and moved back to Palestine. Mothers of some low achievement students voiced this as a possible reason that weaker students were ignored since

they were the minority. The one-dual edge constant that seemed to be a barrier was the economic state and educational level of learners' mother as it pertains to their home environment. In the words of one of the students that struggled with English (Khaled):

> I used to take courses a while ago. Mom can't help because she didn't learn English. She left school at the 9th grade. I go to my aunt she teaches me English and math.

Another participant who also struggled with the subject (Saif) reported:

> In the past I used to take lessons but I stopped because of the financial situation and my sister used to teach me but she has university studies and can't.

Some families have limited or no access to electronic devices or the internet. Resulting in independent student learning to be severely impaired if not impossible for some. In the absence of supplementary courses, internet access, and tutors… their family was a source many students sought out. At times, the ability to go and request help was not always an option from family members.

Mothers indicated they were more involved in the education of their children in earlier grades since their adolescent teens as a whole were not likely to openly share much unless prompted. Mothers reflected this quite often in stating at this age our sons/daughters do not share as much or want us as involved as when they were younger. When asked if learners share what they learned with their parents, one of the mothers whose son was a high achiever (Nouran) stated:

> Because he is a bit older, he relies on himself and because he has younger brothers who take my time in following-up with their studies. However, in exams, he studies and I ask him sometimes what he took and what he studied.

Another mother whose son was a low achiever (Lara) reported:

> No, he doesn't like [asking for help], he doesn't talk… this is his problem. I mean if he was to come to me or his sisters … I'm smart in English. I read and write normally.

Parent involvement in terms of students discussing what issues they have or what was covered in class was in part impacted by the age of the students. Older students tend to keep to themselves more and not share as much with their mothers as a whole. This is illustrated in the

observations in some of the mothers and confirmed by the majority of participating students that state they primarily inform mothers of their exam grades and not much else.

Parent Expectations

Parental expectations served as a source of positive reinforcement for students for the most part. Even those that were anxious associated the feeling of wanting to please their parents or felt support and encouragement in their desire to do better to meet these expectations. However, some low achievement learners were aware of low expectations despite some mothers voicing the opposite of what their language learner shared. In the words of Saif, who struggled with English, commented on his parents' expectations: "even if they nagged at me a lot it isn't stressful. They do not expect a lot of me. Little hope but not a lot".

Students mostly had a clear understanding of what their parents expected of them. The difference could be seen more along the lines of what students felt the benefits of learning English were and what they said their mothers thought. Parent expectations and thoughts on language reach their children but it was evident that for a few low achievement learners the influence of these expectations was not prevalent. In some cases, they were overpowered by experiences within the classroom.

Teacher Support and Personality

Both mothers and students made connections to their like or dislike of English to their teachers. Be it the way a teacher taught or the teacher's personality and treatment of students. Both students and mothers mostly made statements of how a teacher influenced their views on language learning. For some individuals, teachers sparked initial interest and for others teachers were associated with their dislike of the subject. Pertaining to this issue one of the participants (Sarah) stated that:

> I feel depressed (when having English class). I do not understand it because it is all English (teacher talks in English). I do not understand a thing and there are many words and I find it difficult. For me English class is one of the classes that I hate the most and don't like it at all. Honestly, I used to like it a little but now because of the teacher that gives it to us I do not like her. My not liking her reflected on the subject. There was a teacher that used to give it to us. I liked her a lot loved her and used to be excited for her class.

All participants shared memorable things in their learning experiences. Overwhelmingly it came down to two main experiences: memories of mothers' involvement (or lack) and largely teachers. The most positive memories were connected to a time where English learning was fun and when the teacher involved games or stories. When asked about their current English learning experience, low achievement learners shared negative perceptions of their teachers in terms of class management, personality (temperament), method of instruction, and classroom environment. If students do not feel safe or lack an environment conducive to learning this will negatively influence learners. Sarah shared one of her experiences in the class on how her English teacher reacted to her when she made a mistake while reading

> When I was reading, the other day there was a word I said it wrong. She started screaming at me and told me the correct word [...]. She started to scream at me and say repeat it. I am of the type that I do not like someone to be controlling or yelling at me. I mean I made a mistake and she is a teacher and it is her duty to be patient with us.

The student spoke of her frustration and anxiety about class in regards to her teacher's method of addressing classroom issues. The student continued in the interview about how these interactions resulted in her hating the subject and English class resulting in the student avoiding the subject when possible. Another participant (Raghad) responded as follows when asked about how she feels when she has an English class:

> I love it. Sometimes the behavior of the students might make the teacher easily angry. In our school now the students focus on the method of the teacher because the teacher is what makes students love the subject that she teaches. Because of this we love the English teacher. I love to take with her classes because most of the times she is cool tempered. But sometimes she has a bad mood and gets angry with the girls that agitate her. She gets angry a lot and I get scared when she does. But I focus on the book only and forget what happens in class.

Both girls come from different schools but show a different reaction to the stress caused by the classroom environment. Sarah who had low achievement levels in the subject and Raghad who had high achievement levels both experienced a similar situation. Both students became anxious, however, one of them has withdrawn completely from putting any effort while the other focuses on her book and tries to ignore what is going on and waits for the

situation to resolve itself. This comes down to individual differences amongst students in terms of how they perceive and deal with stressful situations.

The majority of students stated almost consistently that their teacher helped shape their feelings towards English learning. The method of instruction, classroom environment, teacher's personality, and teacher's temperament were the most recurring particulars identified. Even when asked about their earliest memories regarding learning English the overwhelming majority recalled situations connected to their teacher. Samer shared the following situation that made him like/dislike English:

> At first, I used to hate English because there was a teacher that would come and I used to personally hate her. Honestly, between her and I there were always problems. Teacher used to say shut up to me. I would talk back. There were problems between us. One year a teacher came. He until now is the teacher. The teacher made me like English in a big way. I mean he used to explain English in an excellent way. I mean he used to love me as a student. He would tell me come answer this and made me feel like I was smart.

This student was very vocal about his dislike of a previous teacher. This made him dislike the subject. The emotion of being belittled made him pull away, struggle and achieve low achievement results. However, when a new teacher came praising him, he boosted the student's confidence and that improved his English and became a high achiever. A female student who was a low achiever from another school when asked how she feels about English class reported that she feels depressed and hates English. In Sarah's own words:

> Honestly, there was some love [for English] but the teacher that teaches it to us, I don't like her. My lack of love for her reflected onto the subject"

Peer Pressure and Anxiety

Students that have low confidence in their language skills withdraw from participation due to the anxiety that comes with being judged by their peers for their difficulties. This added with stressors relating to the classroom environment further reduces motivation to participate. Some students felt support from their classmates rather than stress or judgment. While others felt judged for knowing English and disliked participating for that reason. The following three students had low achievement results. When students were asked about anxiety as pertains to

participating in class Farah answered, "yes, a lot when I mess up during reading [...] and when I read in a bad way the girls mock or make fun of me".

Anxiety was most prevalently discussed by participants in the context of speaking outside of the classroom with foreigners or family members in particular because they were afraid of making a mistake in front of them. Nadeem stated:

> Not always I feel anxious. I feel anxious when I will be speaking with someone foreign or a stranger but if I am speaking and it is with a friend no it is normal. I worry saying something wrong.

Further, Rami reported

> Sometimes I would be a bit (anxious) if speaking to someone strong with language or a native because I am afraid I will make mistakes and they will make fun of me.

Other participants primarily spoke of the more day to day aspect of anxiety relating to speaking in the classroom and participation. This could be attributed in part to a lack of confidence in their responses and ability, more so with an audience of those who are proficient in the target language. Reporting on her experience participating in class activities Sarah stated:

> When I raise my hand and the teacher picks me I get nervous. I start saying wrong things even when I know the right answer and everything is right. When I say wrong things and the teacher starts to yell at me get even more nervous.

English Language Status as a Lingua Franca

Both mothers and students overall viewed English as a widespread language used in many contexts with many uses from employment, travel, to more personal reasons such as helping the next generation learn the language. In short learning English as a foreign language was considered key. One of the mothers of a struggling student Asmahan stated commenting on the significance of learning English:

> We saw it (English) as a strange subject but now I see it as important and the language of this age. I regret that I did not complete my education and learn English.

Culture overall was considered as a separate entity to be studied at arm's length. Data analysis revealed that the majority of mothers agreed that 1) English language is important in everyday life and 2) learning English is a necessity for the lives of youth today since it was seen as a useful tool for the academic and vocational future of their children. In regards to English as lingua

franca, its value was placed on its everyday usage in life as a widespread means of communication bridging a linguistic gap among different language speaking nationalities. Despite all of this, mothers and their adolescent children mostly shared that they thought that English is part of life even outside of the classroom in that it opens up doors for them in the realm of higher education, employment, travel and much more. Sameera who had high achievement results stated, reporting on how English helped her as a student outside the classroom:

> Because English is more universal, right now I am trying to learn other languages but through English. Like there is an application (DuoLingo) to learn Japanese or Turkish but for Arabic speakers there is no way to learn these languages, only through English (menus). Because now my English is good I am learning using this application.

Motivation to Learn

There was a clear divide in learner motivation to learn based on their perceived importance or utility of the language. Lower achieving students tended to be focused on far off or rare instances of use such as travel and communicating with foreigners/tourists with few students mentioning English use for higher education or employment and a few made mention of teaching their future children. Whereas high achievement learners predominantly had a more targeted and feasible view of using English in their daily life and future within the scope of employment, university studies, daily life uses and even family-oriented (teaching their own children). For instance Mousa, one of the high achieving participants, is trying to learn English because in his own words:

> It (English) is a link to communicate and connect with others and it will be beneficial in university since I will study medicine. It is the language the field depends on.

Overall student motivation is more of an instrumental force rather than integrative due to the simple fact that in Palestine students do not feel the need to integrate into English speaking society since it is so far removed from their own. This was a recurring theme within the student participants regardless of gender or level of academic achievement. "It doesn't have a lot of importance outside of school. There is not anyone that speaks English" in Kamal's words emphasizing the point that students learning English her in Palestine for instrumental purposes.

Mothers' Attitudes towards Their Children Learning English Language and Culture

The consensus seemed to be that mothers viewed the English language as useful and important in this age but had negative views towards culture. They considered culture as a separate entity removed from language learning. Most speak with family through social media, siblings, or family visiting from overseas meaning the practice of language skills is limited and not continuous. Explaining why for some there is a form of language anxiety when it comes to communicating in the English language. Analysis of the data collected through parents' interviews yielded some themes. These will be presented below.

English is the Key to Children's Future:

English was perceived by parents as key opening doors to the future for their children. That English as a school subject has real-world applications that would benefit their language learners in the present and in the future. Broadening job prospects, ability to communicate and be self-reliant in future travels and day to day needs. In Amina's words (one of the mothers of a struggling student) commenting on why English is necessary and important for her daughter to learn:

> I wish for real that my daughter would be in English exactly as she is in Arabic because most of the things need English and most of the studies at university are in English. I mean we are now at the level of English in government schools which is not that strong. Many [students] finish tawjeehi (12th grade) and they don't know how to speak or read well in English.

Few mothers encouraged the learning of foreign cultures but all agreed that it was to be completed without compromising their own cultural and religious beliefs. One of the mothers (Nehal) commenting on her high achieving daughter learning culture stated:

> To learn about other cultures is not wrong but you know what you are.
> Anything that contradicts religion she moves away from it.

Learning the Language but not the Culture

Negative attitudes centered mainly around views on culture rather than language. Language was considered something good to learn as long as it was not associated with culture. When mothers were asked what they thought about their children being exposed to the target culture or learning about culture mothers generally did not want their children learning what

would be deemed contradictory to their own faith and culture. Also that as mothers they set boundaries for their children to know right from wrong as to avoid their children being impacted and imitating what was seen as inappropriate. One of the mothers (Israa) of a high achieving male stated:

> Honestly I don't like it. It has to be within the boundaries you know? That from the start I explained to them what is right and what is wrong. So they know what is halal (allowed) and what is haram (forbidden).

Amina, another mother reported:

> This [learning the target culture] I am against it. Their traditions and their culture are completely different from us. I support that she learns English. But, as traditions as cultures no because there is nothing of their culture or traditions that are appropriate in our society or environment that we live in or with our religion.

The general advice from mothers of both males and females regardless of their English learner's language achievement was work hard. Work hard to improve their language skills and much of this advice seems to stem from mothers' personal experiences with language learning or the feeling of wanting better for their children. As the new generation of students set out into the world and become heads of their households, their experiences and those of their mothers will shape how they approach language learning for their own children. The utility of English was not as established as it is in the modern technological age with accessibility to language booming through social media and alternative sources via applications and video hosting sites such as YouTube for English video clips and movies.

Mothers' Aspirations, Learners' Self-motivation and Individual Differences

Generally, mothers wanted to see their language learners improve regardless of the student's current achievement. While others wished not only to see their sons and daughters improve but also to see their children reach what they as students could not attain. When asked what their expectations were one of the mothers stated "sometimes I say that I want to achieve my aspirations through my son".

Some mothers of their own accord during interviews brought up the differences they see amongst their children in regards to English learning. That despite all children being provided the same opportunities and environment at home there is a noticeable difference in

terms of attitudes towards the subject and achievement. Israa' (a mother of two boys) reporting on her two boys experience in learning English:

> Well it depends on each one. My son moves along and loves (English) but I have my other son he doesn't love it. He does not love English at all or the subject and he doesn't like me to teach it to him but I insist to help him. I do not know seriously. It is strange! I do not know. Maybe the teacher plays a role. My son loved the teacher and he did activities and used teaching aids and stuff like that. The teacher does actions and is a fun teacher because of this he loves it. But, for my other son the teacher is not like that. He [The teacher] is serious and does not use teaching aids. He is not active like the other one. He just gives the subject and moves on.

Despite similar environments, shared experiences, involvement differences amongst learners' could be attributed to students' motivation and individual differences. Meaning parents peer, and teachers contribute to the formation of attitudes however, a part of it stems from within the learner.

Reasons behind Mothers' Attitudes towards Learning English Language and Culture

English Teacher's Support and Personality

Teachers are not only a resource of information but also part of another environment in which students are learning. In the home environment and the classroom environment students are exposed to different authority figures and at school, the authority figure is their teacher. Teachers were also viewed by mothers as a potential reason that their language learner is struggling with the subject in addition to other possible factors. Such as the students themselves being inattentive in class due to not understanding the subject matter. One of the mothers of a low achieving female (Maha) said:

> It is maybe the teacher that she did not know how to get the information to the student or the student is distracted in class.

Further, many mothers reported that if a student doesn't understand they lose confidence and if the teacher does not work on getting the idea to students and boost the student's confidence then the student will be inattentive. This brings to light another issue, inattentive students feeling lost in class could be part of a classroom management issue further preventing students from fully comprehending classroom instruction.

What is understood here is that the classroom environment has many intricacies among them the personalities or more specifically the individual differences of students and those of their teachers that interact with each other resulting in variances in the environment. One of the mothers of a high achieving male (Nuha) shared her experience in learning English on how the English teacher made her and her classmates love English. In her own words:

> When we went to high school, there was a teacher who was amazing. She stays till now in my mind. I swear she is who made us love English.

Mothers' experiences in regards to their own time the education system reflected some of the issues that students face today in the classroom environment. Some mothers recalled positive experiences that made them like the subject and try harder because they felt the teacher cared. Others had the opposite experience that made them dislike or hate the subject. One of the mothers (Niveen) shared the following incident while she was learning English:

> Once the teacher asked me to get up and write and I did not know… I used to mix up between the 6 and the 9. I would write them the opposite. So once she told me get up and write. I was may be in the 6th grade. I made a mistake mixing them up. So she grabbed my ear. So this grabbing or pinching of my ear till now I did not forget.

Mothers' Parents Support and Perception Pertaining to Learning English

At the time of the majority of participating mothers' youth education was not seen as a priority by their parents and held little importance. A large number of participating mothers left the education system early and married. Many mothers expressed that their parents regarded English as just another subject since it was so new to them. That education was not given special attention. They did not have the opportunities afforded to students today in terms of parents inquiring of progress or access to additional help outside the classroom. One of the participating mothers whose daughter is a high achiever (Rula) commented on this issue

> My parents were not educated. My [English] teacher was weak. She did not know how to manage the classroom. So I didn't learn English well as a student. Exemplary students in English their teacher would be strong in the subject and have strong personality.

Another mother whose daughter struggles with English class (Ismahan) stated:

> My mother was no attentive or interested when I was little. I do not remember much (of the language) only letters and a few lines and it was a weak subject for me.

Questions inquiring about parent involvement were for the most part neutral as to allow participants to talk about one or both parents without unintentional direction one way or the other. Participating mothers expanded that times have changed and education is more valued and they see the importance of English which they did not see as students. As for their children, the majority mirrored their parents' thoughts on learning what was beneficial about culture and the importance of English within and outside of Palestine. Mothers' experiences shaped their views and now attitudes towards the learning of the English language. As parents, they desired to give their children the opportunities they did not have.

Peer Pressure and Challenge

Peer pressure in terms of wanting to learn to fit in is a recurring theme with both mothers and their children. The feeling of wanting to belong and not be judged is a feeling that mothers did not wish on their own children when sharing their own experiences. One mother shared that the selection of high achieving learners to participate in English contests left her feeling excluded wishing to be able to participate. Her disappointment led her to want her children to not have the same experience. To be able to comprehend the language, participate and feel included in school activities and outside of school as well. In her own words the mother (Narmeen) of a high achieving son stated:

> I felt Excluded. Like how someone would be left like nothing. Yesterday my daughter went to a birthday party and she came and told me that there were two girls that came from America and they spoke English. They were talking badly about us. I got up and answered them in English.

The mother continued that she was happy her daughter was able to stand up for herself; and how she as a mother "always gives to her children what is better".

Relationship Between Mothers Attitudes and Those of Their Children

Overall mothers and students shared very similar insights on language learning and attitudes as relates to culture. The differences could be attributed to infrequent communication and to life experiences of the mothers giving them more insight that they did not share in full with their children. When looking at the results the researcher found that high achievement

learners, particularly female students, were far more likely to share about their learning experiences with their parents.

In addition, that the mothers of high achievement learners were by far the most frequently sharing with their children about their own learning experience according to the students themselves. There was a notable overlap in attitudes towards learning the target culture between mothers and their children. Students' own opinions and attitudes at times did differ but there was a general consensus of agreement in learning what did not contradict their native culture and traditions. Even if what mothers and students shared in terms of learning culture were not verbatim, they sent a similar message to learn what does not contradict with Palestinian culture and their Muslim faith. One of the mothers (Amina) stated:

> I am against it (learning culture) because in the end their customs and traditions are different from ours completely. But, I am with that they learn a second language but as for culture no because there are things that are not appropriate with our society or the environment that we live in and with our religion as well.

Her daughter (Sarah) emphasized this point when she said

> Their traditions and customs are not all for us because in our society they are haram (forbidden). But, they are normal things for people other than us.

Mothers' Concerns and Recommendations Regarding Teaching English Language and Culture

Data Analysis revealed mothers' dissatisfaction with English instruction and curriculum at Palestinian public schools. They were also well aware of education quality disparity in public schools in comparison to private schools**.** One of the mothers (Nouran) of a high achieving male commenting on the differences between teaching English at public schools and private schools:

> He [her son] studied until 4th grade (in a private school) and there is a big difference in the explanation (teacher instruction) and focus on language and the rest of the subjects. There is no comparison.

For this reason, the Palestinian education system should adopt a more balanced curriculum within the school system regardless of public or private school education participants recommended. Several mothers expressed in varying degrees their dissatisfaction with the EFL curriculum in Palestine, specifically, the difficulty of the material. A mother (Nehal) of a high achieving female that was schooled in America and currently lives in Palestine not only

addressed this but also proposed a way that would make material more accessible to students. In her own words:

> The way the curriculum presents the information is sterile. Look at the curriculum of 1st and 2nd grades you see pictures, you feel there isn't much to it. You feel it is empty. The method of explanation is not clear. I mean like the grammar… 4th grade…it isn't clear. It is hidden. Why don't they put it clearly and explain it clearly so that the students understand? There is a gap in knowledge the way it is. The explanation is not clear even in 10th and 11th grades. Not like the curriculum that we studied in America. The way to make it clear is that the explanation is written. The rule that students are to learn is written clearly with examples on it. I saw in 8th and 9th grades the student needs to infer what the rule that they must learn and that isn't right. It should be clear so that the student can go back to the book something that is clear.

Conclusion

Students are individuals with their own experiences and perceptions on matters that can be swayed by their surrounding environment. The schools being from different areas consisting of their own complexities and variables that shape the environment and context in which students learn presented the researcher with variations to consider. Some areas have predominantly native speaking students since their families (or family members) lived abroad and settled in Palestine or have a family member that travels abroad for work. Parent attitudes were drawn from their own experiences and perception of their time. Similarly, students were impacted as was seen by shared mothers' experiences serving as a motivating force alongside their mothers' ability to help and guide language learners when needed. The social network of parents, peers, and teachers that surround learners do in fact influence attitudes and their motivation to learn as was understood from the results. These results in relation to the available literature will be discussed in-depth in the next chapter.

Chapter 5
Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

This study sought to investigate the relationship between mothers' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language and its culture and those of their 9th grade language learners. As well as gaining an understanding of the impact this relationship has on learner attitudes and their motivation to learn. The results revealed that mothers' attitudes were positive towards learning the English language and viewed culture as a separate entity that they preferred their children to not be exposed to or only learn what did not conflict with Palestinian Muslim cultural norms and faith. Learner attitudes generally reflected the opinions of their mothers' in regards to the target culture and learning English as a foreign language. This chapter aims to discuss the results of the study in terms of the four research questions on which the study was based. Also how these results relate to literature in the field. Lastly, the researcher will advance the limitations of this study and practical recommendations for future studies based on the findings of the study.

Palestinian Upper Basic Students' Attitudes

Palestinian upper basic students' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language were overwhelmingly positive with the exception of a few learners. Those that had negative attitudes either deemed the language to not be useful to them in Palestine or had strong negative attitudes towards learning English due to their classroom environment. American or British culture was seen as contradictory with their own Muslim faith and Palestinian culture. Participants over all articulated that if they were to learn the target culture they would focus on what they considered to be positive characteristics of the culture and step away from what was deemed inappropriate by their own standards or those of their mothers.

Reasons behind Students' Attitudes

Insight about the importance of not only the home environment but also the educational environment on learners has been made evident in relation to learner motivation to learn. These results show the importance of not only the home environment but also the students' environment which encompasses their community, school, and home. As was seen in

the work of Bhattacharyya et. al (2008) and Cansler (2008) the society or more specifically the environment that a learner is a part of shapes their mental development.

The Spheres of Influence or Theory of Overlapping Spheres (Epstein, 2010) illustrate the importance of bringing these realms together in order to help learners reach their full potential as well as overcome any difficulties in a specific area. Low achievement learners either shared that they felt anxious participating in class afraid to be mocked, disliked their language teacher or how perceived issues were handled by the teacher, or a combination of the previous two. Another facet that emerged was that learners that perceived the subject as difficult usually struggled with an essential skill such as reading or vocabulary that impeded their ability to fully comprehend classroom tasks or exams. Learners associated positive attitudes with the difficulty or ease of the class. Essentially the reasons behind students' attitudes towards learning English came down to learner experiences, difficulties within the classroom, their mothers, and their teacher.

Mothers' Attitudes Towards Their Children Learning English Language and Culture

Mothers' attitudes were in part seen within the students' responses to the interview questions. Mothers were supportive of their adolescent children learning English with a few stating their support but not at the cost of their native language. However, there was general agreement that learning the target culture had to have some limitations as they did not want their children to imitate what they learned. The reason for this being that parents viewed the target culture as contradictory to their own and to their Muslim faith. When students were asked what their mothers felt about learning English and the target culture there was a clear distinction among some students about their own opinions and those of their mothers'. Overall, it seemed that students were well aware what their mothers' attitudes were towards learning the English language and its associated culture.

Relationship Between Mothers' Attitudes and Their Children's Attitudes

High achievement learners were more likely to share and discuss matters concerning language learning. Female students shared more in depth responses to what they discuss and share with their parents and what experiences their mothers shared with them. The

relationship between learner attitudes and those of their mothers towards learning the target culture and language had a degree of overlap that was more evident with participants that discuss with their language learners English class, progress, and difficulties. However, as expected there were some variances in opinion towards the importance of learning English and what potential benefits learning the language may have for them (students). The same held true with perceptions on culture and what was considered negative or positive. These variations could be attributed to individual differences of the individuals participating in the study.

This study helped deepen the understanding of the various interconnected variables that influence language learners in the Palestinian context. There is not one point of contrition that learning difficulties can be affixed to as the source of negative attitudes. All the different aspects of the learner's environment play varying degrees of influence on learners based on their individual differences that shape and form who they are and how they react to different situations.

Parents could gain the understanding that learning issues involve many factors beyond the home environment they provide. Teachers do play a role as they presumed however so does the curriculum and the learner him or herself. If the learner loses the motivation to learn then what needs to be worked on is understanding what it is that demotivates their learners. That it is a challenge that parents and educational practitioners can work together to resolve.

This study could provide teachers insight that even if the method of instruction is engaging and classroom management is not an issue there are other environmental factors at play within their classrooms. The way peers can either provide support or can create tension reducing how active learners are in the classroom. This alongside environmental factors at home. The understanding that classroom management is not just about controlling the classroom but about creating an environment conducive to learning. Majority of students stated that they received some form of encouragement. The difference between high and low achievement learners fell upon individual learner difficulties. Mothers who were unable to

resolve their language learner's difficulties or provide access to supplemental support meant that resolution for the core issue was not underway.

Parent expectations of their children were more specific and went beyond wanting their language learner to improve when looking at responses of high achievement learners and their mothers. High achievement learners and low achievement learners both sought to meet parent expectations; the variance was more prominent in what mothers were able to do for their learners to assist in the achievement of these goals. The importance of learners' environment, particularly their home environment, in helping students excel academically was established in Rahman's study (2015). The indication that home environment factors such as parental involvement, economic status, and mothers' attitude towards language all played a role. The socio-economic status of a family played a role alongside the educational attainment and language skills of mothers. High achievement learners shared that if they struggled or faced difficulty with something related to their language studies they sought help from the internet or a family member such as a parent (mother or father) or sibling. Musleh (2011) study results reflected this study's results in showing that the home environment that addresses learners' needs helps learners excel academically. The learner's environment and community play a role in learner attitudes but also in their motivation to learn.

The importance of those who surround the learner was not only seen in this study but also in Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres. This theory places value on not only the society the learner lives in, but also the benefit of how the learner is viewed and or treated by those that surround him or her. This is exemplified not only must the learner be treated like an individual, a human, at home but also within the classroom (Epstein, 2006; 2010). It is the most beneficial for learners if all facets of the society work with the aim of betterment for the learner. Two students from different schools with one being male and the other female shared experiences where they developed negative attitudes towards English learning and did not wish to apply any effort due to how they felt they were being demeaned. Creating a safe environment within the classroom where students do not feel judged or fear making mistakes or fear of an angry reaction from their language teacher does have an impact. As was shared in

the results when the student spoke of how his current teacher makes him feel smart motivating him and encouraging his participation in class.

In one of the interview questions that asked about movie subtitles learners found value in subtitles, and this value primarily rested in learning vocabulary. The number one complaint for language learners was vocabulary, and since being immersed in the language is not an option subtitles offer a sort of scaffold for students to reference when needed. What does this mean for the classroom? Japanese classrooms and Korean classrooms practice full immersion. This means that typically natives teach the language and the L1 is not used at all only when needed. Translators standby to assist students when needed. The issue is that with the few students that did speak of the teacher using English only in the classroom even highly achievement learners found it at times daunting. The variance in accent also off-putting and confusing. This would not be an issue if English exposure occurred in a more organic way so to speak. Students found the use of subtitles beneficial and dubbed movies detracting from the value of learning English yet disliked and were overwhelmed by English teachers that use only English in the classroom. Students' inability to reference something or to take a cue from somewhere about what was being said so that they do not feel lost is the difference. For high achievement learners they struggled but managed to overcome this difficulty, while for low achievement learners this formed negative attitudes for them towards learning English and towards English class leaving them unmotivated to learn.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) looks at the aspect of motivation relating to learner motivation to take on a task. SDT considers the social environment that a learner is in and if it facilitates learning (Musleh, 2011; Noel, 2001). Based on the results we can conclude that most students have a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Recent studies have found that personal motivation and instrumental motivation are the most prevalent forms of motivation for learners that think in terms of what benefits them in a context where for learners English is not a native language as is the case for countries in the Middle East (Fitriani, 2017).

This study looked at what attitudes learners had and what interest or motivations they had in regards to learning English and culture. What the results showed was that learners are well aware of their surroundings and the limitations that these surroundings put for them. Where some low achievement learners had positive attitudes towards the idea of learning English when it came to their own reality they faced hurdles that reduced confidence and limited opportunities to practice the target language. The basic needs that SDT looks at haven't been met for the lower achievement participants. The needs being competence, relatedness, autonomy. The degree of SDT depends on the individual and their specific needs.

The environment the learner lives in needs to be nurturing and allow them to thrive. So when looking back at Dörnyei and Ushioda's (2009) L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS) it becomes evident that learners vision of their ideal self and their current self-contrast strongly without a way to close the gap. This gap is what feeds into the negative attitudes not only towards language learning but their own abilities. As Dörnyei (2018) said in his speech at Waseda University in Tokyo, motivation is not something that is inexhaustible.

Learner motivation needs to be replenished time to time, and learner environments are the source that learners draw from. What seems to be happening in certain cases that learners shared during interviews is that learners do want to improve. They have the motivation, but it was not being replenished by their environment, but instead their motivation reserves were being depleted even faster by either circumstances or individuals around them.

They enjoy learning, recognize their areas of difficulty, and yet find that they are unable to receive assistance at home or outside of it or lack of encouragement within the classroom. There were a few high achievement learners that lacked internet access, had a parent unable to help them, were unable to go to private lessons or courses due to distance or financial reasons… still they were in the category of high achievement learners. They had positive attitudes towards learning English and from their perspective encouraging and highly involved parents. This is where the individuality of the learner plays a role in what is characterized as individual differences. An example from within this study is a low achievement learner who stated that his parents encourage him to study, and tell him to go to a relative to get help but

he doesn't listen. L2 Motivational Self-System, Self-determination Theory, and Individual Differences all are different parts of the puzzle that this study has sought to fit together in order to get a clearer image of learner attitudes their motivation and the role mothers play.

Many mothers stated that at their time education was not a priority and that they left school either as a result of family circumstances, to tend to their siblings, or for marriage. This was most prevalent with the mothers of low achievement learners. Incomplete education would put these mothers at a disadvantage when it came to assisting their children when their own language education started at the 5th grade. Mothers that were married at a young age or left their education (on average about 8th – 10th grade) due to family related issues faced difficulty in helping their English language learning adolescents.

With the exception of mothers that studied abroad, or were enrolled in private schools many started learning English at the 5th grade level. Early marriage was widespread and on the decline in Palestine according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2018):

> "The results of the Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017 indicated that the percentage of women (20-24 years) who were married before the age of 18 in Palestine reached 10.8% (8.5% in the West Bank and 13.8% in Gaza Strip)" (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018, p1).

Which is a decline from 2007 numbers standing at 18.1% and in 1997 reaching 30.5%. Youth in general have higher enrollment rates than those in 1997 according to Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2018) report. The decline in early marriage and increase in youth enrollment in educational institutions of recent years reflects assumptions made in the results in regards to participating mothers; early marriage being connected to reduced educational attainment in most cases (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Most of the mothers of high achievement learners continued on in their education journey to obtain a degree or a diploma which served in helping them have the knowledge background to assist their children when needed.

Parental and societal influences can be classed under affective variables, which are important in the study of language learning (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993). Also, those within a socio-cultural context that includes individuals (friends, family, and community in general

including teachers) with positive attitudes impact learners in a positive manner. Many students without prompting shared opinions on their teacher and how encouraging or discouraging classroom interactions were to them. (Dörnyei, 2014).

Research has shown the importance of parental involvement and this study has substantiated this alongside the importance of teachers. Regardless of achievement level learners as a whole need involvement from both their parents and teachers working as a team in order for learners to progress (Lastra, 2009; Fatiha, 2014). Access to educational support outside the classroom, exposure to the target language, meaningful involvement beyond 'what grades' learners gained all play a role in forming learner attitudes and shaping their motivation to learn. Considering the effect of resources on parental involvement, it was found that a family's socioeconomic resources (financial capital) and educational attainment have consistent positive effects on parental involvement at school, in the home, and in the community. These findings are consistent with previous research such as Rahman's (2015) which discusses these forms of family capital in detail.

Online informal interview of a parent living in the USA with elementary aged children was asked what help or programs did her son's government school provide ESL learners. In short a pre-test is given to gauge the student's level and based on this they receive individualized help and dedicated time that fluctuates based on the child's progress (Parent interview, 2019). The issue is that here in Palestine government schools are struggling with balancing tight budgets with the ever expanding needs of their students.

A teacher from a school here in Palestine shared that the school she was employed in was denied funds to increase internet speed. Slow internet speeds meant that some teachers were forced to use their phones as hot spots just to get through a lesson that needed internet access. Funding is a real issue that limits exactly what can be done to help struggling students. Comprehensive programs such as the one that is implemented in the United States is not feasible in the Palestinian context unless it is done as an after school program that parents would pay to enroll their children in to offset costs. Leading to a whole slew of other issues and difficulties.

Recommendations for Future Research

Some households the father was absent due to travel abroad for work effectively transforming the family home into a one parent household. It is worth noting that this information was voluntarily provided by either the participating mother or student without being directly asked in relation to mothers' involvement. Future research could investigate the role of both parents in influencing the attitudes of their children, their involvement, and what impact father figures play in learner motivation and attitudes. Particularly absent fathers since a few students shared that their fathers traveled often for work (abroad), mostly low achievement learners brought up this point when talking about parental involvement. However, since this was outside the scope of the study and the researcher was unable to gather sufficient information this was not included in the results.

Distance from school is something of notable importance. Due to issues relating to participating mothers being able to travel to the school it was necessary for the researcher to travel to the participants. Which sparked interest in inquiring about distance students need to travel after the interviews concluded? This is something worth considering in future studies since the emotional and physical state of a student may impact learner willingness to learn.

Further research into the effects of at-home involvement on children's academic achievement is thus warranted. Mother's ability to be of assistance was shaped by financial and educational restraints. Specifically, research into the degree of involvement of parents in following up at school with their learners alongside teacher interviews to compare responses to get a more complete understanding on what happens on both sides of the student. This research did not attempt to examine potential negative effects of mothers' involvement at school, although this does represent an under-researched area that may prove beneficial when examining mothers' involvement, especially school involvement.

Lastly, a study investigating the role of teachers particularly teachers' treatment of learners, error correction, and overall classroom environment is warranted in light of some of these results. Student and teacher interviews alongside classroom observation would be

beneficial in order to gain a solid grasp of what both students and teachers experience and the impact on learner motivation and attitudes towards learning English.

Conclusion

Due to Palestine's complex linguistic history, Palestinians have over time had to adopt the language of the occupier with British English and Hebrew being part of that linguistic narrative. Education practitioners and several studies have shed light on the educational challenges that hinder teaching English in Palestine (Bianchi and Razeq, 2017).

This study sought to address yet another challenge that learning English in Palestine has to overcome that is not often addressed or discussed, and that is the environment at home and by extension the school that learners are a part of. In understanding mothers' attitudes and those of their children we can formulate ideas how to handle learner attitudes and work on helping students form positive ones.

As more Palestinians complete their high school education the better chance their children have in their own education. When parents have language experience and knowledge to draw from they are better able to help their learners. Access to technology at home helps in assisting learners to independently learn when English language courses or tutors are not a financially viable option (Rahman, 2015). The context in which a learner lives in impacts them to an extent. However, beyond that it is the internal drive and the learner's personality that dictates the outlook that is taken in regards to language learning (Dörnyei, 2014).

Mothers play a role in not just influencing attitudes, but motivation itself. Motivation is the driving force deciding if someone does or doesn't do something. According to behaviorism, a child emulates behavior that they observe in terms of not actions alone, but reactions and expectations to a degree. Cognitive theory stipulates that learners reach their own conclusions about language from the environment around them (Brown, 2000). Understanding why something would be as it is we then can work on the how in terms of remedying the situation.

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Appendices

Appendix A

List of Participating Schools

Note: Some schools were categorized as mixed but were mixed at the primary level. Other schools only access to the male or female student population was available. Some schools are called elementary despite having high school grades. As such, the following schools are labeled male or female according to what student population was sampled.

Male		Female	
1	Khirbitha Bani Harith High School for Boys	7	Khirbitha Bani Harith High School for Girls
2	Amine Al-Husseini Elementary High School	8	Sameeha Khaleel Mixed Elementary School
3	Beit Oor Alfoqa Mixed High School	9	Alteera Mixed High School
4	Biteen High School for Boys	10	Biteen High School for Girls
5	Abu Qash Elementary for Boys	11	Abu Qash High School for Girls
6	Ayn Yabrood High School	12	Abu Shkheidem High School for Girls

Appendix B
Parent Interview, Cover Letter and Questions

Dear Mother,

A study is being conducted to investigate *Attitudes of Mothers and their 9th Grade EFL Learners towards Learning the English Language and its Culture in Palestine.* You are invited to participate in this study because as a parent, you are an expert in your son/daughter's educational needs and experiences and your perspective would be valuable.

عزيزتي الأم،

يتم إجراء هذه الدراسة للتعرف على اتجهات الامهات نحو أبناءهم وبناتهم في الصف التاسع الذين يتعلمون الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في فلسطين. ولذلك أنت مدعوة للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة بصفتك أحد الوالدين، فأنت خبيرة في الاحتياجات والخبرات التعليمية ابنك/ابنتك وستكون وجهة نظرك ذات قيمة.

We estimate it will take about 30 minutes to complete the interview. The first part of the interview asks for some demographic information and your opinions and experiences in regards to learning English. The second part will be about your observations on your child's foreign language learning experiences and your own involvement in their learning. Your participation in this study is voluntary. *If anything is unclear or if you have any questions or concerns feel free to ask at any point.*

سوف تستغرق مدة 30 دقيقة لاكمال هذه المقابلة، الجزء الأول من المقابلة يتضمن الاجابة عن بعض المعلومات الديموغرافية ورايك الشخصي وخبرتكِ فيما يتعلق بتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. أما الجزء الثاني يتضمن تجاربك حول تعلم طفلك اللغة الأجنبية ومشاركتك الخاصة له في تعلمه. مع العلم ان مشاركتك في اجراء هذه المقابلة سيكون اختياري . وفي حال كان لديك شيء غير واضح في المقابلة أو لديكِ أي أسئلة أو استفسارات لا تترددي في السؤال عنها .

The purpose of this interview will be for research purposes. Anything you share during the interview will be confidential; no identifying information will be shared. To protect your privacy, your name will not be used in any data, and your name or identifying information will not be used in any publication or presentation of this research. Please keep this letter for your records. The interview will be recorded for transcription and accuracy purposes only. If at any time you have any questions, or if you need any more information about this study, please contact Ms. Nedaa Zayed at ███████████ or ███████████

أن الهدف من اجراء هذه المقابلة هو تحقيق اهداف الدراسة مع العلم أنه ما ستشاركه من خلال المقابلة يبقى سريًا ولن يتم مشاركة أي معلومات بشكل صريح لحماية خصوصيتك . حيث لن يتم استخدام اسمك او أي معلومات تعريف عنك في أي منشور أو عرض تقديمي لهذا البحث. لذا يرجى الاحتفاظ بهذه الرسالة لسجلاتك. مع العلم انه سيتم تسجيل المقابلة لأغراض النسخ والدقة فقط. إذا كان لديك أي أسئلة أو إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مزيد من المعلومات حول هذه الدراسة ، يرجى الاتصال بالسيدة نداء زايد على ████████████ و████████████

If you would like a copy of the summary of the results once the study is completed, please let us know. This study has been approved by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and by Birzeit University.

يرجى اعلامنا في حال كانت لديك رغبة في الحصول على نسخة من ملخص النتائج بمجرد الانتهاء من الدراسة. تمت الموافقة على هذه الدراسة من قبل وزارة التربية والتعليم الفلسطيني وجامعة بيرزيت**.**

Parents Interview

Age:	Educational level:	Employment:	Number of children:
Who lives in your household:	Sons:	Daughters:	other:

Section One: Attitudes toward Learning English as a Foreign Language

1. Do you think English should be taught in school? Why?

2. Do you think it is beneficial for your children to learn English? Why? An example?

3. How do they feel about English? Do they resist learning it or not?

4. Do they have some difficulties at school due to English?

5. Do you want your child (children) to know both English and Arabic?

6. How involved are you in your child's English learning?

7. Does your child share what they learned in English classes with you? Do you ask them? or do they come to tell you on their own?

8. What motivations do your children seem to have regarding learning English? Do the motivations affect their language learning?

9. Does your child receive private English tutoring by non-family members in your house? Do they go to a private language institute?

Section Two: Experiences of Learning English as a Foreign Language

10. How did you feel about learning English when you were a student? Why?

11. What did you think of learning English as a student? What about now as an adult and as a parent?

12. Could you tell me a story of an experience that involved learning English happened to you or someone else?

13. What advice do you give your child about learning English?

Appendix C

Student Interview, Cover Letter and Questions

Dear Student,

A study is being conducted to investigate *Attitudes of Mothers and their 9th Grade EFL Learners towards Learning the English Language and its Culture in Palestine.* You are personally invited to participate in this study since you are an English learner and your perspective would be valuable.

عزيزي الطالب/ة:

يتم إجراء هذه الدراسة للتعرف على اتجهات الامهات نحو أبناءهم وبناتهم في الصف التاسع الذين يتعلمون الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في فلسطين. ولذلك أنت مدعوة شخصياً للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة *نظرًا لأنك تتعلّم اللغة الإنجليزية وستكون وجهة نظرك ذات قيمة.*

We estimate it will take about 30 minutes to complete the interview. The interview will start with demographic information, and then about your personal experience in learning English. Then, you will be asked about various aspects of your English language learning at home and what role that plays in your English learning experience. The purpose of this interview will be for research purposes. Anything you share during the interview will be confidential, no identifying information will be shared. To protect your privacy, your name or identifying information will not be used in any publication or presentation of this research. Please keep this letter for your records. The interview will be recorded for transcription and accuracy purposes only.

سوف تستغرق مدة 30 دقيقة لاكمال هذه المقابلة، تبدأ المقابلة بمعلومات ديموغرافية، ثم عن تجربتك الشخصية في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. بعد ذلك ، سوف تُسأل عن الجوانب المختلفة لتعلّم اللغة الإنجليزية والدور الذي يلعبه في المنزل خلال تجربتك في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. مع العلم أن الهدف من هذه اجراءا هذه المقابلة هو لتحقيق أغراض البحث، و سيكون أي شيء تشاركه خلال المقابلة سريًا ولن يتم مشاركة أي معلومات بشكل صريح لحماية خصوصيتك . حيث لن يتم استخدام اسمك او أي معلومات تعريف عنك في أي منشور أو عرض تقديمي لهذا البحث. لذا يرجى الاحتفاظ بهذه الرسالة لسجلاتك مع العلم أنه سيتم تسجيل المقابلة لأغراض النسخ والدقة فقط.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If anything is unclear or if you have any questions or concerns feel free to ask at any point. This study has been approved by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and by Birzeit University.

مشاركتك في هذا البحث أختيري، يرجى اعلامنا في حال كانت لديك رغبة في الحصول على نسخة من ملخص النتائج بمجرد الانتهاء من الدراسة. تمت الموافقة على هذه الدراسة من قبل وزارة التربية والتعليم الفلسطيني وجامعة بيرزيت.

Student Interview

Section One: Attitudes toward Learning English as a Foreign Language

1. Do you think it is beneficial to learn English? Why?

    a. Follow-up: can I have an example?

2. What are your reasons for wanting to learn English?

3. What do you feel when you have an English lesson at school? Why?

    a. Do you like or dislike English? Why?

4. Do you experience anxiety when learning English?

5. How do you think you are coping with learning English? What is difficult and which parts are less difficult?

6. Do you use English outside of school? In what situations? How do you use it?

7. Do you enjoy reading English books? If so, what do you think the elements that make English reading and studying happy are.

8. Are your parents involved in your English learning at home or school? How?

Section 2: Experiences of Learning English Learning as a Foreign Language

9. Can you share a story about something you remember as a child about an English class?

    → Interactions with teachers, parents, classmates (inside or outside of class)

10. What is your earliest memory in regards to learning English?

    →What aspects of the experience stand out for you?

11. Can you think of a situation or experience that made you like or dislike learning English?

    → How has this experience affected you?

12. Tell me about your English class… Do you look forward to it?

    →What situation /experience made you feel this way?

13. What activities do you like doing in English class? What do you dislike?

14. Tell me about your experiences regarding learning English?

15. Describe in your own words how your home environment contributes to learning English.

16. Describe your parents' involvement with your English studies at home.

17. Do you get any help regarding learning English at school? What help do you get outside of school?

    → At home? Outside tutoring from family, friends, paid tutor?

18. Did your parents help with your English? If so, do you think your family influence helps you learn English.

19. What do your parents do if you are finding difficulty with something relating to your English learning?