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*Parents' Perceptions on Children's Language  
Learning: The Case Study of the English Language  
in Algerian Primary Schools.*

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for a **Master's degree in Didactics** at the University  
of Bejaia.

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## Dedications

*To my parents, whose unwavering support, guidance, and sacrifices have enabled me to pursue and reach my dreams. Your love and encouragement have been my anchor through the challenges and successes of this research journey.*

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## **Dedication**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the influence of parents' perceptions on children's English language learning in the primary school level. The research was conducted in three regions, namely Boudjellil, Ighzer Amokran, and Bejaia City, with a sample size of 49 respondents. In this descriptive study, data was collected using a questionnaire. The study also employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis to analyze the data. The study revealed that the majority of parents have positive perceptions towards their children's language learning, while few of them view English as a threat to their mother languages. In other words, some parents prefer their children to focus on mastering their mother language instead of learning a foreign language.

**Keywords:** English, Parents' Perceptions, Influence, Language Learning, primary school.

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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

- **MT: Mother Tongue.**
- **TL: Target Language.**
- **EFL: English as a Foreign Language.**
- **ELT: English Language Teaching.**
- **FL: Foreign Language.**
- **FLL: Foreign Language Learning.**
- **SL: Second Language.**

## Definition of KeyWords

- **Target Language (TL):** according to the definition found in the Oxford Dictionary, it is the foreign language that someone is learning. For example, in the case of primary school pupils, the target language is English. It is the language they are aiming at learning.

- **Mother Tongue (MT):** from its name, we can conclude that it is the first language that a person ever acquires; language learned from birth (Nordquist,2019). For the case of Algerians, it is either Arabic or Kabyle/Berber. It is often the language that is used at home. Often, people feel more comfortable when speaking their mother tongues, and in some cases, it is the most dominant one in their speech.

- **EFL:** EFL stands for the use of English as a foreign language as a common language between two different people with two different mother tongues. In the case of Algeria, it refers to the fact of studying English, which is not a primary language, to obtain the necessary language skills to communicate effectively with native English speakers.

- **Second language (SL):** A second language simply refers to the second language that is learned after the first language. It can be learned for personal or professional reasons. For instance, based on observations, the majority of Algerians' second language is the French language because it is the most used in society; it is used for public communication (Hasa, 2018)

- **Foreign Language (FL):** a foreign language is a language that is not used by the people of that given country (Hasa, 2018). For example, in Algeria, French is considered a foreign language and widely used in society.

- **Bilingualism:** The most common definition given to bilingualism is the ability to alternate and use two languages, easily and rapidly, according to one's needs.

- **Multilingualism:** Multilingualism refers to the fact of speaking fluently more than two languages and alternating between them with ease. For instance, in Algeria, people talk several languages including dialects and varieties.

# General Introduction

Several populations succeeded in the occupation of Algeria, including the French occupation. The consequence of these conquests and colonizations gave birth to a coexistence of several languages in the Algerian society: French, Berber, and Arabic. This linguistic situation explains why most Algerians can alternate between two or more languages easily; bilingualism and multilingualism.

In Algeria, the French language has long been the dominant language used. In fact, French is widely used in Algeria as a second language in many fields, especially in education. Due to the Algerians' desire to promote their national identity and use of Arabic and Amazigh languages, the use of French has declined somewhat (Ghanmi, 2019), but it remains an important part of the country's linguistic heritage. In this vein, Lacoste (2007) stated that "the French language is considered to be the most used language despite the painful history between the two countries; Algeria and France" (17). With the decrease of the French language, English has been increasingly studied as a foreign language. In this context, the Algerian government attempts to replace French with English as the dominant language (Ghanmi, 2019), since English has become the lingua franca and global language of more than 350 million people around the world (Crystal, 2023). This development and power of English have led every country all over the world to teach it, whether as a second language (ESL) or a foreign language also referred to as EFL, which is the case of Algeria.

The English language has become increasingly popular as a foreign language in Algeria, as observed in the daily life usage of this last one. In fact, instead of teaching English only in middle and high schools, it has also begun to be taught in primary schools. The teaching of English in primary schools in Algeria is still in its early stages. The main goal of this inclusion is to ensure that students in Algeria are equipped with the necessary language skills to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

However, the introduction of the English language at the primary school level is a matter of many controversies in Algerian society, especially among parents. The opinions of Algerians about teaching English in primary schools are diverse and vary depending on individual experiences and perspectives. Some parents consider teaching English in primary schools as a positive development that will provide children with a competitive advantage. Furthermore, some of them view the ability to communicate in English as essential for success in a variety of fields. However, some parents argue that the focus on English could undermine the importance of the Arabic language, which is seen as a critical part of the country's cultural heritage. Ultimately, the opinions of Algerians about the teaching of English in primary schools are likely to be shaped by a variety of factors, including personal experiences and cultural values. People have different perceptions about the introduction and teaching of the English language. Put it differently, some of them view it as a step towards a more developed country, while others view it as a threat to their mother languages.

## **1. Statement of the Problem**

Parents are considered to have an important role in the way children perceive a language. They may adopt their parents' perceptions of a language, either positive or negative. Moreover, children can develop their own perceptions and attitudes towards a given language based on their own experiences and interactions with the given language.

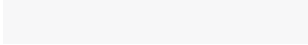
Teaching the English language as a second foreign language instead of a foreign language has launched many debates. As previously mentioned, many people in Algeria reject all aspects related to France, whether it is its culture, beliefs, or even its language. Regarding the fact that English is now the second foreign language in addition to French, this research will try to explore parents' perceptions towards the introduction of English at the primary school level.



## 2. **Research aims**

Taking into consideration all that has been mentioned above, this research aims at:

- Exploring parents' perceptions towards the introduction of English in primary schools.
- Exploring the influence of parents' perceptions towards English on their children.



According to Djeghar (2009), the family framework as well as the environment in which we live play a very important role in the linguistic representations that one can have about languages; it can either lead to success or failure. This is more present in children who are in their early stages of discovering and learning other languages than their mother one. Hence, this environment, whether it is societal or family, plays an important role in the level of acquiring and learning languages for children. Therefore, the choice of a second/foreign language to be learned is often influenced by the family or environment of the child. This influence can be beneficial, or detrimental if the parents have negative perceptions about languages, except their mother language in the case of Algeria: Arabic and Kabyle.

## **5. Research Methodology and Design**

In the following exploratory research, a descriptive approach is adopted. The researchers relied on a questionnaire as a research tool to collect the necessary data. The population of the present study is composed of participants from Boudjellil, Ighzer Amokran, and Bejaia City. The choice of these populations is justified by the fact that in these regions, people speak Tamazight, Arabic, and French.

## **6. Structure of the Dissertation**

The present thesis is composed of two chapters. The first chapter represents the theoretical background, in which more insights were given regarding all aspects related to our field of study. It includes three main sections. The first section is about the sociolinguistic landscape in Algeria. The second section deals with language acquisition theories. Lastly, the third section concerns the Algerian academic reforms. The second chapter, which is the practical chapter, is devoted to the research methods, design, analysis, discussion, and interpretation of the findings. It is separated into three main sections. The first section deals with the used methods and design, in which can be found a description of the sample and population, the

instruments of the study, and the data collection process. The second section is designed for the analysis and interpretation of the results. Whereas the third section is devoted to the discussion and interpretation of the main findings, the limitations of the study, recommendations and implications, as well as suggestions for further study.

# **Chapter One**

## **Theoretical Background**

## **Introduction**

The following chapter provides a theoretical background to the topic under discussion. It is divided into three sections. The first one concerns the sociolinguistic landscape in Algeria, which includes an overview of the Arabic, Tamazight, French, and the English languages. The second section is about language acquisition theories that deal with four main theories, which are the behaviorist, cognitive, nativist, and social interactionist theories. The third one sheds light on the different Algerian academic reforms. It also deals with the learning of English as an EFL in the Algerian context, with reference to previous studies related to the research study.

### **Section 01: The sociolinguistic landscape in Algeria**

Sociolinguistics deals with the study of language and how it relates to society. It looks at how people use language in different social contexts. In simpler terms, it examines how language works in the real world. The Algerian sociolinguistic landscape is characterized by several languages spoken across the country due to the different colonizers, which lead to the coexistence of several languages and cultures. Arabic and Tamazight are the official languages of Algeria and are the most widely spoken languages.

According to Bouhadiba (2019), the linguistic situation in Algeria focuses on three main languages spoken across the country, which are Arabic, Berber, and French. The use and status of these languages can be influenced by some factors such as political and historical factors, for instance, colonization, national identity, and social class. Additionally, linguistic policies can have a major influence on people's perceptions toward a particular language.

Furthermore, sociocultural factors such as cultural beliefs, traditions, and values can influence parents' perceptions towards a language, shaping their expectations and priorities for

their children's language development. For example, in some cultures, certain languages may be considered prestigious or more important than others such as French, which is considered the language spoken by the “high” social class. Therefore, parents may prioritize their children learning some languages over others. Biases against specific languages can influence parents’ perceptions, thus, shaping their children’s language learning experience. Parents’ perceptions hold high significance in determining children’s proficiency in the target language to be learned.

### **1.1. The Arabic Language**

Arabic is the official language of Algeria and is spoken by the majority of the population. There exist two types of Arabic language in Algeria. The first one is colloquial Arabic also known as “Daridja”, which is the dialect that is most commonly spoken and is used in daily life communication but differs from one region to another. Besides, there is also standard/ official Arabic, which is used in formal settings, taught in schools, and used in the government (Ouari, 2015). The Arabic language in Algeria is a rich and complex language, with a diverse vocabulary and unique grammar. It is an integral part of the Algerian culture, identity, and history.

After Algeria got its independence from the French colonizers, the Algerian government took a decision, which consisted in promoting the Arabic language; the process is known as “Arabization”. The main reason behind Arabization was, first, to get rid of the French language. Through the promotion of the Arabic language use in all domains and sectors including the educational system, the use of French was bound to decrease, therefore getting rid of the colonizers’ linguistic and cultural attributes (Mihoubi, 2017). The decision to re-Arabize Algeria created a debate between those who supported this decision and those who wanted to maintain the usage of the French language. “The end of colonialism led to a

complete reversal in the status of the two competing languages: Algeria's legislation allowed the inferiorization of French and the recognition of Literary Arabic (considered a foreign language during colonization) as the national and official language of the country" (Benrabah, 2007, p.206).

## **1.2. The Berber Language**

The Berber language, also known as Tamazight or Berber, is a language spoken in Algeria. It is considered a member of the Afro-Asiatic language family and has a complex and rich history, with its roots dating back to ancient times. Its usage and existence do not only restrict to Algeria but can also be found in North Africa, from Morocco to Egypt. In Algeria, the largest population of Berbers is located in the north of Algeria.

Historically, Algeria has been regarded as a Berber country. Consequently, the Tamazight language is considered its native tongue. However, the language faced rejection by the French colonizers and even by some Algerians during the Arabization era. This led to its confinement in specific regions of the north as a means of preservation. Each region is composed of different dialects where Kabyle, Chaoui, Mزاب/ Mozabite, Tergui, and Tamacheck. The Tamazight language faced several obstacles. Many of its speakers fought and died for its recognition. The Berber language ended up being recognized as an official language in 2016 alongside the Arabic language (Berdous, 2022)

This language has faced various challenges, in this respect, Belaidi (2016), stated that the Berber language faced many challenges in terms of recognition, promotion, and preservation. However, there have been increased efforts to give the language much recognition, through education and daily usage. Therefore, the Berber language is nowadays, an important symbol of cultural identity for many Algerians.

### 1.3. The French Language

As mentioned previously, French is one of the three main languages spoken in Algeria, alongside Arabic and Berber. Its presence in Algeria is rooted in the country's colonial history. During this period, French was the language of administration, education, and culture.

The status of the French language in Algeria has always been subject of debate, particularly in relation to its perceived association with colonialism. Thus, French was viewed as a symbol of oppression and was therefore rejected. However, for some people in Algeria, it as a valuable tool for international communication.

Despite the introduction and teaching of the French language in primary school, its daily usage in everyday life, its importance, and its application to all states and regions of Algeria, there are still some Algerians who are reluctant to this language. Nowadays, with the introduction of the English language into Algerian primary schools, the majority of Algerians argue that the French language should be removed since it is the language of the colonizer. Moreover, they argue that French should be replaced by the English language, which is considered the language of the future generation and the new world.

“In recent times, the Algerian people have become more demanding to remove the French language from the educational program, as many think that it is a dead language for them, and they describe it as the old style, where the younger generation is using the English language in the use of everyday terms, and the reasons differ about the reason for the people’s desire to remove the French language is to erase the language of colonialism that accompanied them since independence” (Ben Sada, 2022,



#### **1.4. The English Language**

The constant change in today's world has led to the demand and use of many languages, especially the English language. As mentioned by Crystal, (2023), English has become the lingua franca and global language of more than 350 million people around the world. Therefore, many people all around the world are interested in learning English as a foreign language. In schools, colleges, and universities, the main goal of learning a foreign language is to learn how to use it effectively, as well as to communicate with others. For this reason, in Algeria, teaching the English language since the early stages of childhood, in primary schools, has gained much importance. However, not many share the same perception regarding English language introduction in primary schools. Some parents consider this introduction as an opportunity for their children to develop their language skills in that language, while others perceive it as a way to move away from the French language. Some Algerians consider the French language as the language of colonialism, this is why they want to replace it with the English language. However, some parents reject this decision concerning the introduction of English at an early age because of two major reasons: The first one is that Algerian primary schools lack appropriate means to teach the English language effectively such as audiovisual tools and other teaching materials. The second reason is that many Algerian parents consider the introduction of another foreign language as a threat to their own language.

## Section 02: Language Acquisition Theories

“Language is a cognition that truly makes us human” (Lemetyinen, 2023, p.01). Language acquisition refers to the process of how humans acquire, learn, comprehend, and produce language. This process can be qualified as a complex and fascinating one, which is why it has always ignited the interest of several researchers and psychologists. There exist several theories concerning language acquisition. This section will deal with the main ones, which are the Behaviorist, Nativist, Cognitive, and Social Interactionist theories.

### 2.1. The Behaviorist Theory

This theory puts much emphasis on the role of environmental factors in language acquisition. It claims that any language is acquired through imitating, as well as reinforcement and conditioning “habits”. In other words, when a child acquires any given language, he/she does so by imitating their parents, and when they produce correct coherent utterances, they are rewarded through positive reinforcement. Like so, the child goes from muttering utterances to forming implicit speech (Demirezen, 1988). However, through his/her process of acquiring a language, the child will make some errors, known as the trial and error process, which will be constrained by the lack of positive reinforcement.

“Through a trial and error process, in which acceptable utterances are reinforced by comprehension and approval, and unacceptable utterances are inhibited by the lack of reward, he gradually learns to make finer and finer discriminations until his utterances approximate more and more closely the speech of the community in which he is growing up”

(Rivers, 1968).

The Behaviorist theory gave birth to what is known as stimulus-response since behaviorists believe that learning an L2, occurs through constant change and that the learners “have no free will and are shaped entirely by the external environment” (Norbahira and Radzuwan, 2018, p.164 as cited in Ludescher, 2010). They are mainly influenced by their family, parents, and even friends. The behaviorists highlighted two types of conditioning: classical and operant conditioning. The former happens when the learning of the L2 occurs involuntarily in response to a neutral stimulus that was paired frequently with an unconditioned stimulus. For instance, parents can habituate their children to say "thank you" or "please" each time they give them something. Like so, over time, the children learn to use those phrases naturally, without being reminded each time, it becomes a habit/natural behavior (Norbahira and Radzuwan, 2018, p. 164).

On the other hand, operant conditioning can be explained in terms of positive and negative reinforcement. For instance, in a classroom, a teacher can decide to apply the operant conditioning of behaviorism theory, in which he/she will praise a learner each time he/she gives a correct answer. This way, it will motivate the learners. However, it is important to note that the use of negative reinforcement should be balanced with positive reinforcement to create an effective and successful learning environment.

## **2.2. The Nativist Theory**

The Nativist theory, founded by Noam Chomsky, argues that language is an innate ability that is present in every human being. According to the nativists, humans are biologically wired to learn and use language. Noam Chomsky referred to this as the term “LAD”, which refers to a language acquisition device that enables every human to acquire language easily without any effort. Even with minimal to no exposure to the outer world, children are able to develop their language skills quickly (Litchfield, Lambert, 2011).

Chomsky believes that all people have an underlying, biological aptitude to learn languages, this aptitude is known as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), which allows a kid to listen to a language, acquire its rules, and begin using it at a young age, as well as generate or interpret utterances that they have not heard before (Escamilla, 2000, p.01). He believes that with the right input, the LAD predisposes people to learn a second language in the same way as they learn their first language. Additionally, he stated that the nativist theory has ignored the importance of the environment and has only focused on one's internal capacity to learn a second language. "We have argued that nativist theory provides an answer to the question of how people acquire a second language, but that it falls short in addressing the importance of the environmental factors encountered by the second language learner" (p. 13).

### **2.3. The Cognitive Theory**

The cognitive theory, founded by Jean Piaget, is a well known theory in the field of linguistics, which suggests that human beings are born with a limited innate capacity that needs to be further developed through interaction between the internal capacity and the external environment. This can be done through various stages, mainly the sensory-motor period, pre-operational period, concrete operational stage, and formal operational stage. After each stage, the child is said to be able to grasp more complex vocabulary and grammar. Piaget believes that children have a different way of thinking compared to adults. They need to, first, grasp and understand what surrounds them before developing language because they are unable to express concepts that they do not yet comprehend. Hence, a child must initially learn about their environment, and then they can connect language to their prior experiences and knowledge (LaMarr, 2022).

Jean Piaget is said to be the first to develop a language acquisition model that takes into consideration the cognitive side of the language acquisition process. Despite the fact that Jean Piaget's theory was and is still used in teaching, it is the subject to criticism. This theory is considered to be too rigid. Indeed, each child has his/her own way, style, and level of assimilation in learning. Therefore, the stages, mentioned earlier, cannot be applied. In addition, Piaget's theory cannot also be applied to children with special needs. "Piaget's developmental stages have been seen as too rigid and not able to account for differences in learning speed in different individuals. Piaget's theory has also been criticized for not being applicable to children with physical disabilities, autism or other cognitive impairments" (Kirkwood, 2021, p. 05 cited in Demetriou, 2013).

#### **2.4. The Social Interactionist Theory**

This theory suggests that language development occurs through social interaction and communication between a child and their parents or other members of their social environment. According to this theory, language is not simply acquired through exposure to language, but rather through meaningful interactions with others. This is because language is inherently social, and children learn language best when they are engaged in interactive communication with others. One of the key components of this theory is the concept of scaffolding. Scaffolding refers to the process of providing support and guidance to a child as they learn a new skill or concept. In the context of language acquisition, scaffolding may involve a caregiver providing feedback and correction, modeling language use, and adjusting their language to match the child's current level of understanding (LaMarr, 2022).

This theory argues that the surrounding of children plays a role in the way the child acquires his/her MT. Social Interactionists also claim that both biological and social factors have an impact on the way a baby learns and communicates in a particular language. In this

context, Vygotsky puts much emphasis on the importance of social interaction for learning a language. This can be seen through his sociocultural model, in which he states that children go through two main stages. In the first stage, the child observes his surrounding and the way people interact with each other. In the second stage, the child tries to mutter some utterances and develops his/her own ability to communicate. Vygotsky also argues that a child learns best when interacting with people around him/her. In other terms, when facing any kind of problem, the child will receive some help from the parents at first and then will solve it alone. This can also be applied to the way a child learns a particular language.

### **Section 03: The Algerian Reforms of the Educational System**

Algeria is a country where several languages coexist such as Kabyle, Arabic, and French. For more than 100 years, French was the most widely used language throughout the country as it was colonized by France. In the 1970s and 1980s, under the aegis of President Houari Boumediene, the educational system shifted to Arabization on all educational and even administrative levels. French was used for scientific subjects and for higher education. This resulted in a very high failure rate among students. In order to remedy this problem, the authorities launched a vast program to rehabilitate the teaching of French and other foreign languages as part of the reform of the Algerian school initiated in the early 2000s (Ibrahimi 2004). Consequently, this led to the teaching of French in primary schools.

Concerning Tamazight, it was proclaimed as the second official language alongside Arabic, and is also taught in schools. As for other foreign languages such as German, Italian, Spanish, and English, they are all considered foreign languages. Recently, in 2023, English became the second foreign language to be taught in primary schools, alongside French, which is maintained as a second language.

The Algerian educational system has undergone several reforms, ranging from primary, middle, and secondary schools and even higher levels. In 2003-2004, the educational system underwent another reform, which consists in the number of years of primary school, which shifted from six to five years. As far as the middle school is concerned, the shift is from three to four years. Additionally, preschool was generalized to become mandatory in 2008/2009. For higher education, the LMD system will be applied from 2004/2005 (Benharkat, 2008). Recently, Algeria has witnessed another reform, directed to the primary level. Thus, the decision to introduce the English language into primary schools starting from 2023 was undertaken.

As stated previously, because the English language has become the most prominent language to ever exist, and also due to all the economic and social changes Algeria witnessed, it was interesting to teach it to pupils at an early stage. However, its introduction should be well-planned and prepared.

Parents play an important role in the process of learning English; their perceptions towards the TL (Target Language) can affect either negatively or positively the motivation of their children. Zhou, (2019), stated in his research that parents hold an important role in the way a second language is learned and in the child's motivation. By the "role", he meant the parents' attitudes and views about that language. Concerning parents' role, we can distinguish three (03) main types of parents: active role parents, passive role parents, and rural parents. Active role parents encourage fully their children to learn the second/target language and give them enough support and motivation to do so. The second type of parents does not fully encourage them due to their lack of skills and competencies in that language. The third and last type of parents is not supportive of their children learning any new language except their native language (Forey, 2016, Walczak, 2016, Zhou, 2019). For these researchers, "the attitudes of parents will become a factor influencing children's learning of a language other

than their mother tongue". It is worth mentioning that some parents are conservative regarding the mother tongue and this state of fact can influence the way a child perceives and learns foreign languages.

Razi and Alawawda, (2000, p.27) claim that parents and the environment in general play a role in motivating the child to acquire any given language. They also state that a child learns more when his/her environment values that learning, as cited in (Hayes, O'Toole, and Halpenny, 2017). This view was supported by Vygotsky's ideas that a good social and cultural environment for a child can lead him/her to learn, reflect, and use his/her cognition in a more effective way. There are some elements, which allow parents to provide a positive learning environment for their children, such as age, perceptions, level of instruction, and racial and ethnic origins (Tamis and Rodriguez, 2009).

Thus, parents play an important role in second or foreign language learning. As a matter of fact, it is important to further explore how can parents' perceptions and views about a particular language affect their children's learning of a language.



**Chapter Two**  
**Practical Part**

## **Introduction**

The current chapter represents the scope of our study, which is based on the grounds of sociolinguistics and language acquisition theories and is designed to answer the study questions regarding the influence of parents' perceptions on how a child learns the English language and parents' perceptions regarding the introduction of the English language in the primary level. It is composed of three sections; the first one comprises details about study methods and design, population and sample, and the research instruments used to answer the research questions, as well as the procedure followed to analyze the obtained data. The second section deals with the analysis and interpretation of the findings gathered. The third section presents a discussion of the study's major results, which provides answers to the research questions set at the beginning. Furthermore, this section includes, recommendations, limitations of the research, suggestions for further research, and a general conclusion.

### **2.1. Section 01: Methods and Study Design**

#### **2.1.1. Methods and Study Design**

The present research attempts to explore parents' perceptions about the introduction of the English language in Algerian primary schools and their influence on how a child learns a foreign language. Therefore, in our attempt to investigate the research problem, an exploratory/ descriptive design was adopted in order to gather the required information, as well as a mixed methodology, in which both qualitative and quantitative methods are used. Accordingly, analyzing research data using both methods provides a deeper and broader understanding of the research results (Jogulu and Pansiri, 2011).

Questionnaires are an effective way in order to gather data from a large number of participants. They are used to gather both qualitative and quantitative data, depending on the type of questions asked; whether they are open-ended or close-ended questions.

“Questionnaires are popular research methods because they offer a fast, efficient, and inexpensive means of gathering large amounts of information from sizeable sample volumes. These tools are particularly effective for measuring subject behavior, preferences, intentions, attitudes, and opinions. Their use of open and closed research questions enables researchers to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data, resulting in more comprehensive results” (Cint, 2022, p.05).

### **2.1.2. Population and Sample of the Study**

The target population of the research study constitutes of 3rd-year primary school children's parents in 03 different regions, which are Boudjellil, Ighzer Amokrane, and Bejaia City. The population was chosen for two major reasons. First, we chose parents of 3rd-year primary school children because it is the year in which children start to learn English. The second reason is that the three regions have a diversity of families who speak Arabic, Tamazight, French, and even other languages such as Spanish and German. This will allow us to reach the research aims, that is to say, show the different perceptions that parents can share about the introduction of the English language according to their origins and mother tongues. As far as the sample is concerned, it contains a total of 49 parents, including 29 females (59,18%) and 20 males (40,81%), whose ages range from 30 to 50 years old. A questionnaire was distributed for the sake of collecting as much data as possible in order to support the investigation with valid evidence.

### **2.1.3. Parents' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire deals with parents' different perceptions about the introduction of the English language in primary schools and their influence on children's language learning. The questionnaire starts with an introductory paragraph, which states the topic of the research study and its aims. Additionally, it informs the participants that their participation will remain anonymous.

The questionnaire is made up of two different types of questions; closed and open-ended questions. Through the closed questions, parents are requested to tick/pick their answers from the given options. They can choose one or multiple answers. In the open-ended questions, parents are given the possibility to express their opinions freely and provide explanations. These two types of questions will allow us to gather both qualitative and quantitative data.

The questionnaire is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the participants' general information. It includes questions about their gender, age, level of education, mother tongues, and the languages they use/speak at home. The second section is composed of four questions regarding parents' perceptions and their willingness to help their children in their learning process. The third and last section gathers parents' further suggestions, opinions, and remarks that parents can have regarding the research study.

### **2.1.4 Data Analysis Procedure**

For the analysis of the questionnaire, two distinct methods were employed; the qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. The gathered answers were represented in numbers, which were converted into percentages and frequencies (tables) and then into graphic forms. This allows for a better understanding of the research results. On the other

hand, the qualitative analysis method allowed for the identification of the main ideas and notions, which were derived from parents' answers to the open-ended questions.

## **2.2. Section Two: Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Results.**

This section is considered the focal part of the research study. It aims at finding answers to the research questions, set at the beginning, by reporting parents' different perceptions gathered through the questionnaire and the way they influence children language learning. The analyzed data provided both qualitative and quantitative results, in other words, statistical and descriptive results, which were further analyzed and discussed.

### **2.2.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results**

The following part includes quantitative and qualitative analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. The analysis and interpretation of the findings are divided into three parts since the questionnaire includes three sections, each section dealing with a different aspect.

#### **2.2.1.1. Part One: Participants' Background Information**

##### **Item 01: Participants' Gender**

**Table 01: Participants' Gender.**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	20	40,81%
Female	29	59,18%
Total	49	100%

The table above shows the gender of the participants. The majority of the participants are females, who constitute 58,18%, whereas males constitute the minority with only 40,81% of the whole population.

**Item 02: Participants' Age**

**Table 02: Participants' Age**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
30-40	28	57,14%
41-50	14	28,57%
+50	07	14,28%
Total	49	100%

The second table above shows that the participant's age range is between 30 to 40 years old, which constitutes the majority of the population at 57,14%. Participants aged from 41 to 50 years old constitute 28,57% of the population, whereas only 14,28% of the participants are aged older than 50 years old.

**Item 03: Participants' Academic Degree**

**Table 03: Participants' Academic Degree**

Academic Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	01	02,04%
Primary School	02	04,08%
Middle school	04	08,16%
High School	17	34,69%
University	25	51,02%

Total	49	100%
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Table above demonstrates the participants' academic level. As it shows, the majority, which constitutes 51,02% of the population, have a high academic level. 04,08% of the participants stopped in primary school, 08,16% in middle school, and 34,69% in high school. Only 02,04% of the population do not have any academic degree since they are illiterate.

**Item 04:** Participants' Mother Languages

**Table 04:** Participants' Mother Languages

Mother Tongues	Frequency	Percentage
Arabic Language	6	12,24%
Kabyle Language	41	83,67%
Others	2	04,08%
Total	49	100%

As it is shown above, the mother language of the majority, which constituted 83,67% of the population, is the Kabyle language. Meanwhile, the mother tongue of 12,24% of the population is the Arabic language. Whereas only 04,08% have stated to have other mother tongues such as French or even spanish.

**Item 05: Languages Used at Home****Table 05: Languages Used at Home**

Languages Used	Frequency	Percentage
Arabic Language	03	06,12%
Kabyle Language	14	28,57%
Arabic and Kabyle	09	18,36%
Kabyle, Arabic, and French	09	18,36%
Kabyle and French	14	28,57%
Total	49	100%

Table 05 above demonstrates the languages that the participants use at home. The most used language is the Kabyle language, which constitutes 28,57% of the population. In addition, participants use Kabyle and French together at the same rate as the Kabyle language (28,57%). Some participants (18,36%) tend to use Kabyle and Arabic together. While some other participants (18,36%) alternate between the three languages at the same rate as Kabyle and Arabic.

**2.2.1.2. Part 02: Parents' Attitudes towards the English Language**

**Item 06:** Do you consider learning new languages as beneficial for your child? Please Justify.

**Table 06: Parents' Perceptions Regarding Learning New Languages**

Parents' Perceptions	Frequency	Percentage
Positive Perception	39	79,59%
Negative Perception	10	20,40%
Total	49	100%



Table 06 above reports the results of the participants' perceptions regarding the learning of new languages. As it is shown, almost the majority of the parents consider learning new languages as beneficial for their children, which constitutes 79,59% of the participants. However, the minority, which equals 20,40%, view learning new languages as not beneficial.

**Item 07:** Do you think that teaching English at a young age has any advantages? Please Justify.

**Table 07:** Parents' Perceptions Towards Teaching English at a Young Age

Parents' Perceptions	Frequency	Percentage
Positive Perception	38	77,55%
Negative Perception	11	22,44%
Total	49	100%

Table 07 shows parents' perceptions towards the teaching of English at a young age. The majority of the participants consider teaching English in primary schools as advantageous, which constitutes 77,55% of the population. Only 22,44% of the participants think that teaching English at such young age has no advantages.

**Item 08:** Does your child speak or attempt to speak English at home? Please Explain.

**Table 08:** Children's attempt to speak English

Children's Attempts	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	32	65,30%
No	17	34,69%
Total	49	100%

Table 08 above demonstrates the findings about children's attempts to use and speak English at home. It shows that 65,30%, that is the majority, attempt to speak English even outside of the academic setting. However, according to parents' answers, it is reported that 34,69% of children do not try to speak English.

**Item 09:** Do you help your child with the English language learning? If yes, how. If no, why

**Table 09:** Parents' Willingness to Help Their Children

Parents' willingness to Help their Children	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	32	65,30%
No	17	34,69%
Total	49	100%

Table 09 above shows parents' willingness to help their children in their English language learning process. It indicates that 65.30% of parents are willing to assist their children in learning English, while 34.69% choose not to help. The unwillingness of the latter group can be attributed to two main factors. The first factor is that the majority of these

parents (82.35%) do not know the English language and, therefore, feel incapable of helping. However, a small category of these parents (5.88%) expressed their willingness to assist their children even though they lack knowledge of the language. The second factor is that some parents (11.76%) believe it is better to let their children learn independently.

### **2.2.1.3 Part 03: Further Suggestions**

**Item 10:** If you have any comments, opinions, or further suggestions, please share them with us, we would highly appreciate it.

The last part of the questionnaire concerns the additional comments, opinions, or further suggestions given by the participants regarding the research study, which deals with parents' perceptions of the introduction of the English language in primary schools, as well as their influence on children's language learning processes, we have recorded the following points of view:

- "Every language learned at a young age opens doors in the future, that is why, every parent should consider letting their child discover and learn new languages to develop their intellectual knowledge and have a better future since English is an international language".
- "Even if it might seem overwhelming, parents should motivate their children instead of obliging them to follow the path they once followed".
- "Parents are the key to children's motivation".

The participants also mentioned that this research is an efficient way to raise awareness and shed light on the importance of languages in one's life, especially nowadays, which will help to change some parents' negative perceptions and attitudes.

## **2.3. Section Three: Discussion of the Main Results, Recommendations and Implications, General Conclusion, Limitations of the Study, Suggestions for Further Study.**

### **2.3.1. Discussion of the Main Results.**

The current sub-section summarizes the main results and findings gathered throughout our investigation. The research study aimed at exploring parents' perceptions regarding the English language introduction in primary schools. The research also aimed at exploring the influence of parents' perceptions towards English on their children.

With regard to the first research question, which seeks to figure out how parents view the English language introduction in primary schools, the research results gathered from the qualitative and quantitative data demonstrated that the majority of the participants have positive perceptions and attitudes towards the teaching and learning of the English language at the primary levels. The majority of the participants, which constitutes 77,55% of the whole population, stated that teaching English at early stages allows children to develop their cognitive, intellectual, and linguistic competencies. Furthermore, they stated that children are more receptive when they are young, thus, they will learn the FL the same way they acquired their mother tongue. The major motive that parents kept highlighting in their answers is the fact that English is an international language. Therefore, it will open more opportunities for their children in the future. However, there is still a category of parents, which constitutes 22,44% of the whole population, who are against the introduction of English. They argued that teaching a foreign language in addition to the French, Kabyle, and Arabic languages is overwhelming for the child. Furthermore, they stated that "the teaching of the English language has no advantages; it will only result in the child forgetting their roots and mother tongues". Additionally, one parent stated that Algerian society is not ready for such sudden change, taking into consideration that some children do not even master the French language.

Concerning the second question, which is concerned with the extent to which the environment, mainly parents, influence children learning, the answer can be extracted from the gathered responses collected from the distributed questionnaire. As mentioned previously, some parents do not view English introduction as something beneficial. Instead, they consider it as a threat to their mother tongues, whether it is Kabyle or Arabic. They stated that they prefer their children to focus on learning and mastering their mother tongue instead of wasting time learning a foreign language that has nothing to do with their culture, religion, or beliefs. In addition, they also stated that they will try to impose their children to learn their MT before any FL. Thus the results of our study are in line with results obtained in previous studies as Djeghar's research, which indicate that the family framework as well as the environment in which we live play an important role in the linguistic representations that one can have about languages; it can either lead to success or failure (Djeghar, 2009, pp.191-198).

In summary, the research objectives have been effectively accomplished and the study outcomes have provided answers to the research questions. It can be deduced that the majority of parents have positive perceptions regarding English introduction in primary schools. In addition, parents play a vital role in the way children view and learn languages.

### **2.3.2. Recommendations and Implications**

Parents play a vital role in the learning process of their children, their perceptions and attitudes contribute heavily to the way a child views and learns a certain language; as mentioned in the social interactionist theory, a child needs guidance and support when learning a new concept or skill, which is known as scaffolding (LaMarr,2022). Parents are kindly requested to consider the following:

- Parents need to be more supportive of their children's English language learning.

- Encourage parents to participate actively in their children's language learning process, such as encouraging their children to read short stories or movies in English.
- Address parents' concerns regarding the impact of English on the mother tongues through discussions, which will demonstrate how English can complement the mother tongues instead of being a threat.
- Encourage teachers to foster positive attitudes towards the English language learning, particularly in cases where parents have negative perception.
- Investigate effective pedagogical approaches that promote engagement and motivation among students and foster positive relationships between teachers, students, and parents.

### **2.3.3. General Conclusion**

The main goal of this research was to give some insights into parents' perceptions on the teaching of English at the primary level, as well as their influence on children's language learning. Parents play a vital role in the way a child views and learns a FL, as well as in determining the failure or success of EFL. On this basis, the main goal of the present study was to explore parents' perceptions regarding the English Introduction. As it also aims at exploring the influence of parents' perceptions towards English on their children.

The findings of this research study allowed us to reach the objectives and answer the research questions. They showed that the majority of the parents share positive perceptions towards the introduction of the English language and recognize its benefits. Additionally, it is shown that parents play a crucial role in shaping how children view and learn languages. It was found that a considerable number of parents show concern and view English as a threat to their MT, hence, obliging their children to learn and favorite their MT over an FL.

#### **2.3.4. Limitations of the Study**

Like any other research, during the investigation process, different obstacles were encountered. The primary challenge faced was the lack of resources available in the university's library. In order to have valid and pertinent research results, it necessitates the use of various references ranging from books to Ph.D. dissertations, which were challenging to find. Additionally, a significant number of parents failed to properly cooperate in the questionnaire. They failed to provide explanations for their choice of answers, ignored some items and sections, and some parents did not even give the questionnaires back. In addition, since the majority of the participants do not know English, we had to translate the questionnaire into French and Arabic to make the collection of data easier. Furthermore, since the research study was conducted in Bejaia City, Boudjellil, and Ighzer Amokran, it is not possible to generalize the research results to other regions of Algeria.

#### **2.3.5. Suggestions for Further Study**

According to the research results achieved, we can assume that the majority of the parents have positive perceptions and that they do influence their children's language learning process. To expand upon the current study, we suggest that future research could explore the influence of parents' educational level on their perceptions, which was not deeply investigated during the research. Furthermore, future researchers could put more emphasis on the role of cultural and societal factors in shaping parents' perceptions. These suggestions could shed more light on the research topic in order to expand the current understanding, as well as provide more insights into how parents' perceptions influence children's English language learning.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 01

### Parents' Questionnaire in French

**Dans le cadre de la préparation de notre mémoire de master qui traite des perceptions des parents à l'égard de l'introduction de l'anglais dans les écoles primaires et de leur influence sur la façon dont l'enfant apprend l'anglais, nous vous prions de bien vouloir répondre aux questions suivantes. Votre contribution reste anonyme.**

**Merci à l'avance.**

## Questionnaire

### Section 01 : Informations sur les participants

- |  |                 |                          |
|--|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 1- Sexe :  | Homme           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Femme           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2- Quel est votre tranche d'âge ?                        | 30-40           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | 41-50           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | + 50            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3- Quel est votre niveau d'étude?                        |                 |                          |
| 4- Quelle est votre langue maternelle ?                  | Arabe           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Kabyle          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Autres          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5- Quelle langue parlez-vous/utilisez-vous à la maison ? | Arabe           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Kabyle          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Arabe et Kabyle | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Français        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Autres          | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Section 02: Perceptions des parents envers la langue anglaise

6- Considérez-vous que l'apprentissage de nouvelles langues est bénéfique pour votre enfant ?

Oui

Non

Veillez justifier

7- Pensez-vous que l'enseignement de l'anglais à un si jeune âge présente des avantages ?

Veillez justifier

8. Votre enfant parle-t-il ou essaie-t-il de parler l'anglais à la maison?

Oui

Non

Veillez expliquer

9. Aidez-vous votre enfant à apprendre l'anglais?

Oui

Non

Si non, pourquoi?

Si oui, comment?

## Section 03: Autres Suggestions

**Si vous avez des commentaires, des opinions ou des suggestions supplémentaires, n'hésitez pas à les partager avec nous.**



## Appendix 02

### Parents' Questionnaire in English

**In the context of preparing a research thesis, which falls within the field of sociolinguistics and language learning and which deals with parents' perceptions towards English introduction in primary schools and their influence on how a child learns English, we kindly ask you to answer the following questions. Your contribution will remain anonymous**

**Thank you in advance.**

### Questionnaire

#### Section 01: Participants' Background Information

1. What is your gender?
  - Male
  - Female
  
2. What is your age?
  - 30-40
  - 41-50
  - 50 +
  
3. What is your academic degree?
  
4. What is your mother tongue?
  - Arabic
  - Kabyle
  - Others
  
5. What language do you speak/use at home?
  - Arabic
  - Kabyle
  - Arabic and Kabyle
  - French
  - Others

## Section 02: Parents' Perceptions towards the English Language

6. Do you consider learning new languages as beneficial for your child?

Yes

No

Please Justify

7. Do you think that teaching English at a such young age has any advantages?

Please Justify

8. Does your child speak or attempt to speak English at home?

Yes

No

Please Explain

9. Do you help your child with English language learning?

Yes

No

If not, why?

If yes, how?

## Section 03: Further Suggestions

**If you have any comments, opinions, or further suggestions, please share them with us, we would highly appreciate it.**

## Appendix 03

### Parents' Questionnaire in Arabic

في سياق إعداد أطروحة بحث، التي تقع في مجال اللغويات الاجتماعية وتعلم اللغة والتي تتعامل مع تصورات الآباء نحو إدخال اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية وتأثيرها على كيفية تعلم الطفل للغة الإنجليزية، نرجو منك الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية. سنظل مساهمتك مجهولة

شكرا لك مقدما

#### استبيان

##### الجزء 01: معلومات أساسية عن المشاركين

1. ما هو جنسك؟ ذكر  
أنثى
2. ما هو عمرك؟  
40-30  
41-50  
50
3. ما هي درجتك الأكاديمية؟
4. ما هي لغتك الأم  
اللغة العربية  
القبائلية  
آخر
5. ما هي اللغة التي تتحدثها / تستخدمها في المنزل؟  
اللغة العربية  
القبائلية  
اللغة العربية والقبائلية  
اللغة الفرنسية  
آخر

##### الجزء 02: تصورات الآباء تجاه اللغة الإنجليزية

6. هل تعتبر تعلم لغات جديدة مفيدًا لطفلك؟

نعم

لا

يرجى تبرير

7. هل تفكر أن تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في مثل هذه السن المبكرة له أي مزايا؟

يرجى تبرير

8. هل يتحدث طفلك أو يحاول التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية في المنزل

نعم

لا

يرجى توضيح

9. هل تساعد طفلك في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟

نعم

لا

إذا لم يكن كذلك ، فلماذا؟

إذا كانت الإجابة نعم ، فكيف؟

الجزء 03: اقتراحات أخرى

إذا كان لديك أي تعليقات أو آراء أو اقتراحات أخرى، يرجى مشاركتها معنا، فإننا نقدر ذلك كثيرًا.

## **Résumé**

Cette étude examine l'influence des avis des parents envers l'apprentissage de la langue Anglaise sur les enfants au primaire. La recherche a été menée dans trois régions, à savoir Boudjellil, Ighzer Amokran et la ville de Bejaia ,avec un échantillon de 49 répondants. Dans cette étude descriptive, les données ont été collectées à l'aide d'un questionnaire. L'étude a également utilisé des méthodes d'analyse qualitatives et quantitatives pour analyser les données. L'étude a révélé que la majorité des parents ont une perception positive envers l'apprentissage de la langue Anglaise de leurs enfants, tandis que quelques parents considèrent l'anglais comme une menace pour leur langue maternelle. En d'autres termes, certains parents préfèrent que leurs enfants se concentrent sur la maîtrise de leur langue maternelle plutôt que sur l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère.

**Mots Clés : Anglais, perceptions des parents, influence, acquisition, apprentissage des langues, école primaire.**

## ملخص

تختبر هذه الدراسة تأثير تعلم الأولياء للغة الإنجليزية. أجري البحث في ثلاث مناطق التي هي بوجليل، إغزر أمقران ومدينة بجاية بعينة تتكون من 49 مستجيباً. تم جمع البيانات في هذه الدراسة الوصفية باستخدام استبيان، كما استخدمت الدراسة طرق التحليل الكمية والنوعية لتحليل البيانات. ووجدت الدراسة أن أغلبية الأولياء لديهم إيجابية تجاه تعلم أطفالهم للغة الإنجليزية ، بينما ينظر البعض إلى اللغة الإنجليزية على أنها تهديد للغة الأم. بمعنى آخر ، يفضل بعض الأولياء أن يركز أطفالهم على إتقان لغتهم الأم بدلاً من تعلم لغة أجنبية

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** اللغة الإنجليزية ، تصورات أولياء الأمور ، التأثير ، الاكتساب ، تعلم اللغة ، ، المدرسة الابتدائية.