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An Investigation of the Factors Contributing to EFL High School Students' Reticence in the Classroom: A Socio-cognitive Approach

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Dedication

To my unschooled mother

To my father

To my brothers and sisters

To the soul of my late teacher Mr. El Hossain El Idrissi, whose death has left a deep wound in my heart

To my former teacher of English, Mr. Nassir Eddine Daoudi, who inspired me to learn the language

To my friends

To all Moroccan EFL teachers over Morocco

I dedicate this humble work.

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Abstract

Students' reticence has been a main source of frustration for EFL teachers. Although it has been a thorny issue that teachers encounter in the classroom, little is known about learners' reticence in the Moroccan context. Therefore, this dissertation has the intention of investigating some of the factors that contribute to this phenomenon, directly or indirectly, from the point of view of cognitive and cultural capital theory. By adopting a mixed-methods approach, this dissertation explores the interplay between Moroccan EFL learners' reticence and cognition, on the one hand, and their social class dimensions, on the other, by analyzing a corpus of data gathered by means of a language achievement test, a focus group, and semi-structured interviews. Thus, based on the data gathered via the mixed-methods approach, students' reticence was found to be the result of the interaction between the micro and macro factors shaping the material world of EFL learners' lives. Specifically, EFL learners' reticence was found to interact with a lack of vocabulary, high foreign language speaking anxiety, shyness, fear of peer evaluation, a lack of exposure to English input, and a lack of investment in the target language, on the one hand, and a lack of cultural capital and learner agency, on the other. To help overcome this problem that teachers and learners alike face, some implications for EFL teaching and learning are discussed.

Keywords: Reticence; factors; English as a foreign language; cognitive; socio-economic; cultural capital.

مقتضب

لطالما شكل إحجام متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية باعتبارها لغة أجنبية عن التحدث بها مصدرا جوهريا للإلحباط في صفوف مدرسي هذه اللغة. وعلى الرغم من كونه قضية شائكة تعترض المدرسين، فإن هذا السلوك يفتقر إلى الدراسة في السياق التربوي المغربي. وفي هذا الصدد، تسعى هذه الأطروحة إلى البحث في بعض العوامل التي تسهم في بروز هذه الظاهرة، بطريقة مباشرة أو غير مباشرة، وذلك في إطار النظرية المعرفية ونظرية الرأسمال الثقافي. وبناء على البيانات التي جمعت، يستكشف هذا البحث التفاعل بين الإحجام عن التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية باعتبارها لغة أجنبية والمعرفة، من جهة، وأبعاد الطبقة الاجتماعية، من جهة أخرى، وذلك من خلال تحليل مجموعة من البيانات التي ُجمعت بواسطة استمارة واختبار تحصيل المفردات ومجموعة نقاش ومقابلات. وهكذا، وانطلاقا من البيانات المجمعة بواسطة مقاربة كمية، تبرز هذه الأطروحة أن الإحجام عن التحدث باللغة الهدف هو نتيجة للتفاعل الحاصل بين العوامل الجزئية والكلية التي تشكل العالم المادي لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية باعتبارها لغة أجنبية.خلصت هذه الأطروحة بالخصوص إلى أن الإحجام عن التحدث باللغة الهدف يتفاعل مع نقص المفردات والقلق الشديد من التحدث والخجل والخوف من تقييم الأقران وكذا غياب التعرض لهذه اللغة فضلا عن عدم استثمار المتعلمين في اللغة الهدف، من جهة، ومن جهة أخرى، خلص هذا البحث أيضا إلى أن الإحجام عن التحدث باللغة الهدف يتقاطع مع شح كل من الرأسمال الثقافي وفاعلية المتعلم. ومن أجل تخطي هذا المشكل الذي يعترض المتعلمين والمدرسين على حد سواء، تقترح هذه الأطروحة مجموعة من الإستراتيجيات لتدريس وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية باعتبارها لغة أجنبية في السياق التربوي المغربي

الكلمات المفتاحية: الإحجام، عوامل، الإنجليزية باعتبارها لغة أجنبية، معرفية، اجتماعية واقتصادية، الرأسمال الثقافي .

General introduction

Explaining how language learning happens has always been subject to heated debate. Since the publication of Krashen's (1982) *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, educators, teachers, and researchers alike have claimed that the teaching of English has to help language learners develop their fluency. In this connection, all it took for language learners to develop their proficiency in the target language (TL) was sufficient comprehensible language input in an anxiety-free atmosphere (Krashen, 1982; Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Additionally, many scholars (Kang, 2015; Krashen, 2004a, 2004b; 2009, 2011, 2018; Krashen, Lee & Lao, 2017) argue that reading is central to language development. Thus, explaining how successful language learning happens does not, according to these lines of reasoning, seem to involve any sort of language production on the part of the learners.

In spite of the influence of Krashen's (1982) model on research and classroom practice, Swain (1985, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2005) pointed out that the production of language (speaking and writing), not language comprehension per se, enhances language learning significantly. Thus, although exposure to the target language is of great importance, what learners say of the target language (hence the comprehensible output hypothesis) is of vital importance as well. Krashen's (1982) Comprehensible Input and Swain's (1985, 1995, 2000, 2005) Comprehensible Output were synthesized by Long (1996) in a set of specific claims known in the field of second language learning and acquisition studies as the Interaction Hypothesis. Participating in conversational interaction thus *facilitates* L2 learning.

Yet, if successful language learning is a matter of receiving language input, producing the output, and interacting with other more proficient speakers of the target language, why are some learners, in spite of years of exposure to the target language, unable to use English orally, a phenomenon that has been referred to in research as *reticence*? Previous research argues that this reticence could be the result of multiple factors (Bao, 2014; Izadi & Zare, 2016; Keaten & Kelly, 2009; King, 2011; Murad & Jalambo, 2019; Phillips, 1997; Phillips & Metzger, 1973; 2012; Wang, 2019).

On this view, these factors that interact with students' reticence can be grouped into five major categories: linguistic, affective, cultural, institutional, and cognitive factors. Broadly, these factors can be internal or external to the language learner. In fact, in spite of the growing body of research, students' reticence remains largely an unexplored area of knowledge in educational settings (Bao, 2014, 2020; King, 2011; Nakane, 2008). While students' reticence

has been neglected by mainstream second language scholars (Bao, 2014, 2020; Izade & Zari, 2016; Julé, 2011; King, 2011; Nakane, 2008), there is a growing body of knowledge about this issue.

In a similar vein, previous attempts at explaining this phenomenon mostly conceptualized reticence as a "speech pathology", "speech disorder", and a "communication problem" that has to be eradicated via training individuals to improve their behavior (Kelly, Phillips, & Keaten, 1995; Phillips & Metzger, 1973; Phillips, 1997). However, until recently, EFL learners' classroom reticence received little attention (Bao, 2014, 2020; Izade & Zari, 2016; King, 2011). Therefore, given the lack of research on reticence in educational settings, the aim of this dissertation is to investigate students' and parents' perceptions of the factors contributing to the emergence of reticence in the Moroccan EFL classroom from micro and macro perspectives.

Moreover, what is at issue is that current scholarship on second or foreign language teaching and learning overemphasizes the cognitive aspects of language development at the expense of social approaches (Atkinson, 2002, 2011; Block, 2003, 2012, 2014; Gao, 2014; Lulstijn, Young, & Ortega, 2014; Shin, 2014; Vandrick, 2014). Meanwhile, little attention has been given to the impact of students' socio-economic background on English language learning (Atkinson, 2002, 2011; Block, 2003, 2012, 2014; Lulstijn et al. 2014). For this reason, this dissertation aims to shift away from cognitive to more socio-economic realms.

Thus, to avoid the pitfalls of the cognitive and linguistic approaches, the present investigation tends to go beyond the classroom context to wider society in order to explore the issue from a social class perspective, namely by drawing on the lenses of the cultural capital theory developed by Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1986, 1990a, 1990b, 1993, 1996). Far from reducing students' behaviour to the social class dimensions, this dissertation, however, seeks a balance between the cognitivist and the social constructivist approaches in that it examines students' reticence from micro/internal and macro/external points of view.

In this connection, Block (2014) notes that the impact of social class differences on language learning has historically been marginalized in favor of cognitive and linguistic approaches. In a similar vein, Block (2003, 2012, 2014) argues that language learning happens both at the level of learners' cognition and society. Thus, Block (2014) offers an alternative to the cogntitivist perspective by integrating learners, teachers, learning contexts, social practices, products, tools, and worlds. On this basis, Atkinson (2002) is perhaps the first to propose the socio-cognitive

approach, which implies "a view of language and language acquisition as simultaneously occurring and interactively constructed both 'in the head' and 'in the world" (p. 525).

Atkinson's (2002, 2011) approach sees language as a social phenomenon in the first place. As Atkinson (2002) summarizes, "language never occurs apart from a rich set of situational / existential correlates, and to separate it out artificially is to denature it" (p. 527). On this basis, it is evident that the *socio-cognitive* approach applies, judging by the passage above, more to L1 environments where children pick up their target language unconsciously. Yet, the *socio-cognitive* approach can be applied to L2 environments as well, on the grounds that the richer the social context, linguistically, economically, and culturally speaking, the more likely that learners are to develop their proficiency in the target language.

Thus, the nature of the input stimulus provided by one's environment and family is undeniably significant in impacting the learning outcomes of language learners. What this means is that external factors play a significant role in language learning apart from the internal factors to the language learners. Learning additional languages, in this sense, profoundly depends on the integration of both perspectives to explain the process of language learning.

Therefore, learners' achievement in the target language should not be limited to classroom hindrances alone; rather, one must take into account the other indicators of the broader class structures shaping students' experiences and schooling at large (Atkinson, 2002, 2011; Block, 2003, 2012, 2014; Gao, 2014; Kanno, 2014; Shin, 2014; Lulstijn et al. 2014; Vandrick, 2014). This shift in research on language development has been referred to in the literature as the *social turn* (Block, 2014). Therefore, seeing students' reticence through the lens of cultural capital theory is likely to provide language learning scholars with insights into the possible interaction between social class and language achievement.

This *social turn* represents a promising direction for research in second language acquisition, learning studies, and applied linguistics (Block, 2014). This in fact begs the question: can the social context that EFL learners inhabit explain why some language learners learn faster than others and get further ahead in the learning process? This perspective on second language teaching and learning appears to be missing from research on English language teaching and learning in the Moroccan context (Azhar, 2020). Strikingly, even the literature on second language learning hardly mentions the impact of social class on learning (Block, 2003, 2012, 2014).

Given the interaction between internal and external factors in learning additional languages, this dissertation partly endorses a social turn to researching students' behavior in the EFL classroom. Specifically, this dissertation investigates students' and parents' perceptions of the factors contributing to their reticent behavior in the EFL classroom by relying on data gathered by means of a language achievement test, a questionnaire, a focus group, and semi-structured interviews. Since a mixed-methods approach is likely to avoid the biases and weaknesses of only one method (Hulstijn et al. 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Duff, 2008), the validity and reliability of the information gathered from diverse perspectives are likely to be enhanced.

1. Motives

This dissertation has its roots in the conversations that I have been engaged in with my colleagues both at the Regional Centre for Careers, Education, and Training in Oujda (CRMEF) and at Al Amal High School. I admit I tend to get angry with the teachers, especially EFL teachers, who use terms with negative connotations to describe what they think are "low-achievers". Although they depict them as "low achievers", these teachers have not defined what that means to them. What is low about low-achievers? Is being "a low-achiever" the result of their choice? Could it be that other broader socio-economic factors have a bearing on this issue? Simply put, could being "a low-achiever be the result of some possible factors beyond the control of the learners themselves? Thus, in order to solve practical problems encountered in the EFL classroom, one has to look beyond school factors that interplay with students' learning. While such problems may be beyond one's own control, understating them better presupposes that one conducts research in and outside the EFL classroom.

Moreover, I have been repetitively irritated by some of my colleagues who keep telling me that their students are "good for nothing", "stupid", and "low achievers". Frustrated and demoralized by the "level" of their students as such, I can understand why these colleagues of mine say so about their students. However, this was not, for me, a scientific answer as to why these students were depicted in such a way. How do these colleagues of mine know that their students are good for nothing? Did they carry out some research? It seems to me that their answer is based on common sense rather than solid knowledge and scientific inquiry. Apart from these sweeping over-generalizations, which I find odd since they are dominant among teachers, little is known, as far as my knowledge is concerned, about students' reticence in the Moroccan context.

On this basis, it has been noted that investigating students' reticence in the EFL classroom presented itself to me upon reflection on the wide gap between what I had learned in the CRMEF as a trainee and what I encountered in practice in the EFL classroom as a practicing teacher later on. On reflection, I think a lot was said by our teacher trainers about how to teach English (teaching methodologies), but nothing was said about the learners that we, the trainees, were going to help learn English.

To illustrate, part of the trainees' curriculum was action research, but our trainers said absolutely nothing about the sociology of education. Both the trainers and trainees spent a bulk of their time on courses like planning, didactics, language awareness, classroom management, language assessment, and action research. This action research was supposed, I think, to help trainees think of their practice beyond the narrow context of the classroom since language classrooms are not isolated islands but reflect, more or less, social life beyond the EFL classroom in wider society.

One day, while the trainees were engaged in a discussion on how to conduct action research, I recall saying, "We, the trainees, have been talking about researching one's practice for coming up with practical solutions to help solve problems encountered in the classroom. I believe something is missing here. We have been talking about the classroom context per se! I think we need to examine the broader context of the classroom. By extending our approach to the broader social context, one will be able to understand the teaching and learning processes better". "I think", our trainer replied, "You are right!" This dissertation has its roots somewhere there. While the inquirer does not deny the role of cognitive and affective factors in language learning, he argues that the material world in which learners live has a significant impact on their learning.

2. The Significance of this research

This dissertation has the intention of adding to existing knowledge in two ways. First, it critically questions current scholarship on second language learning and argues that teachers, EFL teachers in particular, and researchers alike are required to shift their attention away from cognitive approaches. In so doing, this dissertation highlights that seeking a balance between the cognitive and social approaches to second language learning could help practicing EFL teachers, within the Moroccan context, for example, to problimatise their teaching practice in such a way as to look at students' behavior from micro and macro perspectives, thereby finding solutions to

classroom dilemmas. Second, since reflection on classroom practice is essential to effective teaching and learning, this dissertation intends to help teachers reflect deeply on their practice. This will not only help EFL teachers to look positively and critically at students' behavior in the EFL classroom, but it will also assist them in improving their teaching practice. On this basis, to find tentative answers to why reticent EFL learners demonstrate such behavior in the classroom, four research hypotheses have been advanced.

3. Research hypotheses

As it has been mentioned earlier, the main purpose of this dissertation, in the first place, is to carry out an investigation into students' perceptions of the factors contributing to the emergence of reticence in the EFL classroom by analyzing a corpus of data gathered by means of a mixed-methods approach. Thus, this dissertation seeks to find tentative answers to four main hypotheses:

- H1: The poorer the students' exposure to the language input, the less likely they are to participate in the classroom.
- H2: There is a relationship between poor attitudes, high foreign language speaking anxiety, and EFL learners' reticence.
- H3: The more vocabulary the EFL learners know, the more likely they are to speak in the classroom.
- H4: There is a correlation between students' reticence and a lack of cultural capital.

4. Research objectives

This dissertation aims at investigating the factors that contribute to students' reticence in the EFL classroom from micro-individual and macro-societal perspectives. To achieve this purpose, the dissertation seeks to measure the extent to which learners' exposure to the target language is related to their reticence. Moreover, it aims at exploring the possible interaction between some of the affective factors, on the one hand, and students' reticence, on the other hand. Furthermore, the dissertation seeks to examine the interaction between students' socio-economic background and reticence from the point of view of cultural capital theory.

Therefore, this dissertation consists of three main chapters. The first chapter focuses on laying the theoretical foundations on which this dissertation is built. More specifically, it discusses some of the most influential models in second language acquisition and learning studies. Next, the chapter traces the introduction and evolution of reticence in communication studies. On this basis, it discusses, at some length, the factors contributing to students' reticence in the EFL classroom. This chapter suggests that language research should go beyond the narrow context of the EFL classroom to examine the possible influence of the broader context on language development by thinking sociologically.

The second chapter highlights the research design and methodology used for carrying out this research. Besides, this chapter discusses the research approach opted for, the data collection instruments selected, and describes them at some length. Moreover, it sheds some light on the background information of the participants and the sort of sampling used, together with the local context in which the research was conducted. By investigating students' reticence from micro and macro perspectives, this dissertation seeks a balance between the cognitivist and social constructivist approaches to the production and interpretation of knowledge. Therefore, this chapter argues for the adoption of a socio-cognitive approach to researching students' reticence. In so doing, a more complete picture of students' reticence is expected to emerge.

Finally, the third chapter reports and analyzes the main findings obtained and discusses how these results relate to the research questions and hypotheses advanced earlier. Thus, by drawing on the quantitative and qualitative data gathered by the mixed-methods approach, emphasis will be put on whether these findings seem to support or refute the hypothesis put forward earlier. Last but not least, based on the discussion of the findings, some possible implications for English language teaching and learning are discussed.

I. Literature Review

Second language acquisition studies (SLA) has always been subject to heated debates among researchers because a plethora of issues pertinent to language teaching and learning, have been hotly debated. One of the areas that has received serious attention is language learning theory. Within this framework, “the communicative approach” has become a buzzword among teachers, researchers, and theorists alike. Communicative language teaching advocates all agree that, for the sake of helping learners develop their communicative competence, teaching should be done communicatively. This chapter, therefore, consists of three major sections. The first section throws some light on some of the most influential models accounting for successful language learning. Upon such an impression, emphasis will be put mainly on the Monitor Model, the Output Model, and the Interaction Model. Besides, it discusses at some length some of the factors predicting success in language development. That being the case, emphasis will be put on the profile of successful language learners-that is, who these learners are and what they do (learning strategies) to develop their proficiency in the target language.

Importantly, this section sheds light on different ways that language learners can employ to participate in the classroom, including overt and covert classroom participation. Despite the role of active oral participation in language learning, many language learners seem to avoid speaking, resulting in their withdrawal from classroom participation and thereby the concept of *reticence*. Afterwards, the section traces the evolution of the concept of reticence in literature, defines it, and identifies the characteristics of reticent individuals within and outside the classroom. Because learners’ reticence in the context of the language classroom has been an under-researched territory of knowledge, a discussion of the factors that contributed to this marginalization is essential. In the second section, the main focus will be on the functions of silence and reticence from cultural and educational perspectives. Besides, the section discusses the possible factors that have been reported to contribute to learners’ reticence in the classroom. The third section will draw on the insights of the sociology of education, namely the theories of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, to examine the possible interaction between learners’ backgrounds and their educational achievements.

Explaining successful language learning

The word "successful" here could be problematic if taken from a critical perspective. However, the idea is that this notion is not used in reference to learners’ loss of their native language and culture whatsoever; rather, "successful" simply implies the mastery of the four core skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. One of the critical questions that have occupied

"pedagogical thinking" has been, of course, how do ‘people’ go about learning languages successfully? This may seem like a simple question, but once one leafs through what has been written about the issue, one feels at sea in that "at least", to borrow the words of Larsen-Freeman (as cited in Menezes, 2013), “forty theories of SLA have been proposed”. Ellis (2008), in this regard, explains that successful language learning implies that scholars take into account *internal* and *external* factors. Meanwhile, he stresses that Social factors, settings, and input/interaction cannot be considered in total isolation from individual learner factors like motivation, age, and attitudes since they do interact with one another (Ellis, 2008). Significantly, some of the psychological factors predicting success in language learning are, however, socially determined (Ellis, 2008).

Generally speaking, in the field of SLA, three major influential models have been frequently quoted in previous research as accounting for the ‘secret’ behind learning, say, English. In this regard, the ideas and theories of Stephan Krashen (1982, 1983, Krashen, 2004a, 2004b; 2009, 2011, 2018), a pioneer in the field of second language acquisition, have had such a deep impact on the way we understand the processes of teaching and learning that his presence is widely felt in the area of English language teaching and learning in particular and applied linguistics in general. Although numerous applied linguists have offered serious critiques of most of the theories he introduced to the area of language pedagogy, Krashen’s (1982, 1983, 2004a, 2004b; 2009, 2011, 2018) model has been so influential in English language teaching and learning that one can hardly talk about this field without mentioning his name.

The monitor model

The moment one hears Krashen’s name, one goes straight to his Monitor Model, a theory of language acquisition consisting of five hypotheses that he developed in *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition,* published in 1982. Backed up by evidence from previous second language acquisition studies, Krashen (1982) introduced a controversial five-hypothesis model in which he explained his views about how languages are acquired. The model under discussion consists of five hypotheses: the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis.

Krashen (1982) claims that learning and acquisition are at odds with one another in the sense that acquisition, by definition, is the unconscious process by which one acquires a language, whereas learning is a conscious process. In doing so, he seems to draw a line between learning

and acquisition. It follows from this premise that infants, for example, acquire their L1 simply because they do not have to think about the grammar rules when they use the language for communication. This means, according to Krashen (1982), that this "acquired system" applies more to natural environments where learners "pick up" languages unconsciously through meaningful interaction. Seen in this light, learners do not have to think about the rules when they acquire the target language, thereby engaging in communicative acts. Is this the case? In the literature, there is much disagreement as to whether this is the case or not.

As stated previously, Krashen (1982) discusses acquisition in relation to learning and argues that learning, contrary to acquisition, is the product of the formal instruction that is taking place in the language classroom. Therefore, once one is exposed to the target language in the formal classroom, one is thought to learn that very specific language. This is so because s/he is consciously learning the grammar rules and their multiple uses. What is controversial about this distinction is that Krashen (1982) claims that these are two independent systems by which both children and adults acquire their target languages. Consequently, one does not have to think about the rules of their native language. The rules are firm in their brains. If one violates these rules of the language as dictated by “the acquired system”, one’s intuitions will interfere. Although acquirers are not aware of the rules governing the system they are using, their grammatical judgments are valuable.

Contrary to acquisition, learning is conscious knowledge. Learners know the rules and are able to talk about them. In doing so, it seems that Krashen (1982) suggests that there is no such thing as a Critical Period hypothesis, introduced and popularized by Lenneberg (1967) and reinforced later on by Chomsky (1968) with his idea of Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Within the brain of an adult, both learning and acquisition can perfectly coexist, according to these lines of thought. How do these distinct systems function? The answer to this question lies in the Monitor Hypothesis. Krashen (1982) assumes that both systems are used to perform specific activities allocated to each one of them. As he states,

> Normally, acquisition "initiates" our utterances in a second language and is responsible for our fluency. Learning has only one function, and that is as a monitor or editor. Learning comes into play only to make changes in the form of our utterance, after it has been "produced" by the acquired system (Krashen, 1982, p. 15).

As clearly illustrated, the acquired system, because it was picked up unconsciously, is at the top of the pyramid, controlling the learned system. Put simply, acquisition is so powerful when

compared to learning, whose function is merely the editing of the message before one utters it. Metaphorically speaking, learning is similar to a spider's web that catches other insects. The insects here imply learners' errors and mistakes. Then, the acquired system initiates speech, whereas the learned system monitors and checks it for mistakes and inaccuracies.

Following these lines of reasoning, Krashen (1982) assumes that although learning has a limited role to play in editing one's own output, it can be used by the performers only when three conditions are met: time, form, and knowledge of the rule. To put it succinctly, for one to use the learned system effectively, one needs to think about the rules effectively, so learners need to have sufficient time to think about those rules. Nevertheless, what is at issue is that

> For most people, a normal conversation does not allow enough time to think about and use rules. The overuse of rules in conversation can lead to trouble, i.e., a hesitant style of talking and inattention to what the conversation partner is saying (Krashen, 1982, p. 16).

Clearly, focusing on the rules of the target language diffuses learners' attention; hence, learners could ignore the message that is being transmitted to them by the other speakers. What is intentionally at stake here is that the performers may resort to hesitations or even silence if they are not following what the other speakers are saying to them. To use the monitor effectively, performers are expected to focus their attention more on the rules and the correctness of their utterances. The third condition presupposes that learners should have full control over the system of the target language. Still, the issue that arises here, according to Krashen (1982), is that the structure of language is very complex and that we know only a fragment of it. What makes the problem even more problematic is that some rules are learned incidentally, whereas other learners do not learn "every rule they are exposed to" (Krashen, 1982, p. 16).

Additionally, Krashen (1982) postulates that the input hypothesis is all it takes to acquire a certain language. These linguistic data to which the learners are exposed should be comprehensible to them, provided that the input is a bit beyond the learners' current competence (i+1). It follows from this premise that as learners invest more effort in decoding the linguistic information to which they are exposed, learning happens automatically. Gass and Selinker (2008), however, seem skeptical about whether input alone is sufficient for language learning or acquisition to take place.

Krashen (1982) assumes that language fluency, although he does not state what he means by fluency, particularly that some of the features of speech such as hesitations, the use of gap

fillers, and silences are typical of native speaker performance, emerges over time. In other words, while fluency cannot be taught directly, it emerges gradually as acquirers receive more comprehensible input. This fluency differs from one person to another, depending on many internal and external factors contributing to the emergence and non-emergence of fluency on the part of language learners. While these ideas have clear pedagogical implications, Krashen (1982) highlights that this information is taken from naturalistic environments where individuals "pick up" languages. Nevertheless, one thing he is certain of is that "early speech, moreover, is typically not grammatically accurate but develops overtime" (Krashen, 1982, p. 22).

What can be deduced from this discussion is that Krashen asserts that adults, too, can acquire their target languages, not just "learn" them. Seen in this light, one can see that Krashen is of the opinion that the natural environment can be "copied" and "imported" into the context of the classroom, thereby "teaching" languages in a way that could help learners acquire their target languages implicitly.

To help adults or children acquire the target language, one is required to simplify the input, which is of three sorts: foreigner-talk, teacher-talk, and inter-language (Krashen, 1982). The common feature among these "input types" is simplification. Therefore, teachers, in a formal setting, are invited to simplify their classroom input in order to help learners acquire their target language. However, Krashen (1982) stresses that a variety of variables can hinder or enhance the learning of the target language. In this respect, he classifies these variables into three main categories: 1) motivation, 2) self-confidence, and, 3) anxiety.

These three variables have a determining role in hindering or promoting the language learning process. Krashen (1982) argues that it is vital to keep students relaxed in the classroom. For him, language learners and acquirers will not be receptive to the linguistic data provided by the teacher in an anxiety-provoking environment, even when there is sufficient comprehensible input. For this reason, Krashen (1982) confirms that language learning and acquisition are mainly the result of two main conditions: comprehensible input and a weak affective filter to allow the input in. He explains,

> The affective filter hypothesis claims that affective variables don’t impact language acquisition directly but prevent input from reaching what Chomsky has called the language acquisition device, the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition. If the acquirer is anxious, has low self-esteem, or does not consider himself or herself to be a potential member of the group that speaks

> the language […] he or she may not understand the input, but it will not reach the language acquisition device block- the affective filter, will keep it out (Krashen, 1982, p. 4).

As illustrated above, it is of paramount importance that language teachers supply incomprehensible input to all learners, but even if there is enough comprehensible input in an unhappy classroom environment, learning cannot occur. Then, it is the job of the teacher to supply comprehensible input and create a situation that encourages a low filter. As to what variables cause a high affective filter in addition to the ones discussed earlier, Krashen (1982) illustrates,

> My personal view is that early production, before the student has built up enough competence through comprehensible input, is perhaps the single most anxiety provoking thing about classes! While some students may want to talk as soon as possible, others may feel less secure till they have built up more competence (p.73).

This means that insisting on early language production with insufficient competence, puts learners in a stressful context. Nevertheless, what makes the classroom more stressful is the teacher's explicit corrective feedback. In his discussion of the effects of error correction, Krashen (1982) declares that, "error correction has the immediate effect of putting the students on the defensive" (p. 75). To put this point in simple words, putting the students on the defensive implies that they adopt a learning strategy through which they will do their best to avoid mistakes, avoid difficult constructions, and focus less on meaningful interaction. This idea is supported by Selinker's and Gass's (2008) statement that "anxiety directs one's attention to physical features of words, and that occurs at the relative neglect of semantic meaning" (p. 402).

Anxiety and foreign language learning

Many language learners claim to have a mental block against learning additional languages. Therefore, it is not unusual to find learners anxious when about to use the target language in a language classroom. From the perspective of humanistic language teaching, for both learning and teaching processes to be effective, the learner's personality has to be put at the heart of instruction.

In this regard, Laird (1985) claims that the learner's personality "consists of many elements, specifically […] the intellect, emotions, body impulses, and imagination" (p. 12). What does this mean for teachers and educationalists alike? It simply means that without addressing all these

elements, one's teaching will not be as effective as it is supposed to be. It also means that it is only by establishing a positive atmosphere in the classroom, in which learners feel comfortable and are not threatened by any external factors whatsoever, that language learners can benefit from classroom input. From this, it follows that creating a supportive classroom environment is essential for language learning to take place. Nevertheless, two questions that may come to one's mind are, of course: what is anxiety? And to what extent does anxiety hinder students' learning?

In their seminal paper, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) argue that the extent to which anxiety hinders students' routes to learning is undeniable. Horwitz and his colleagues advanced a hypothesis, which they referred to as "foreign language anxiety". Drawing on this point, Horwitz et al. (1986) define foreign language anxiety as, "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system" (p. 128). Likewise, Lightbown and Spada (2006) define anxiety as the feeling of "worry, nervousness, and stress that many students/learners experience when learning a second language" (p. 61).

Stated simply, foreign language anxiety is a feeling of being nervous, anxious, and worried when about to speak in the target language. According to Hortwitz et al. (1986), the dangers of foreign language anxiety lie in the fact that it affects students' performance. Researchers have identified many variables behind this feeling. In this regard, Dörnyei (2005) assumes that "anxiety is multifaceted", meaning that research has identified many factors that contribute to the emergence of this sort of behavior among language learners (p. 198).

However, second language scholars (Horwitz et al., 1986; Dörnyei, 2005) highlight that anxiety is of two types: general anxiety and specific anxiety. For Horwitz et al. (1986), the term "specific anxiety" is used to differentiate between people who are generally anxious in a variety of situations and those who are anxious only in specific situations. Foreign language anxiety falls into the last category as long as students feel anxious only in the context of the foreign language classroom. In the same way, Dörnyei (2005) makes a distinction between "trait" and "state" anxiety. On the one hand, trait anxiety is a feeling of worry and nervousness that people have, "in a cross-section of situations," whereas state anxiety, on the other hand, "is the transient, movement-to-movement experience of anxiety as an emotional reaction to the current situation" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 198).

The point is that specific anxiety depends on the environment, whereas general anxiety is part of the learner's personality. This sort of anxiety stems from many sources. Dörnyei (2005), for instance, assumes that one of the main reasons for anxiety is the learners' lack of competence in the target language. In the same way, Horwitz et al. (1986) note that "immature command of the second language" is a major cause of anxiety (p. 128). Thus, if learners have insufficient knowledge of the target language, they are more likely to feel anxious in the classroom.

Similarly, Gass and Selinker (2008) suggest that anxiety, like many factors affecting language learning, "has a curvilinear effect on performance" (p. 400). Indeed, most researchers would agree with Arnold and Brown's (1999; cited in Dörnyei, 2005) conclusion that "anxiety is quite possibly the affective factor that most pervasively obstructs the learning process" (p. 198). In other words, anxiety has damaging effects on the language learners' self-esteem, particularly when the learners feel embarrassed or humiliated or when they think other students speak the target language better than them.

Having briefly dealt with some of the reasons behind foreign language anxiety, a question that is usually asked is: how does anxiety affect students' performance? Horwitz et al., (1986) proposed that anxious students tend to be "less interpretative" (p. 125). That is to say, anxious learners will not participate in classroom discussions in comparison with other "talkative" students who take leading roles in classroom talk. As a result, these anxious learners will restrict themselves to the production of short sentences and fewer grammatical structures. These anxious students, to borrow the words of Horwitz et al. (1986), "May avoid studying and, in some cases, skip class entirely in an effort to alleviate their anxiety" (p. 127).

Within this context, Lightbown and Spada (2006) argue that "speaking anxiety" affects second or foreign language performance in that it "discourages risk-taking, which is necessary for success in language learning" (p. 61). Accordingly, anxious learners may not be able to take risks and get the message across. Is it just this anxiety that is more likely to lead students to be less interpretive? There is, in fact, more to it than just anxiety, one of which, as argued by the Monitor Model, is the importance of building up one's own competence, which apparently implies vocabulary and grammar.

The significance of lexis in speaking

It has been argued before that once learners have built up their linguistic competence, it becomes easier for them to speak. In this vein, Krashen (1982) Krashen and Terell (1983) highlight that language production depends more on comprehending the input. As Krashen (1982) explains, “language comprehension and production begin to emerge early in childhood during the mastery of our mother tongue and then affect performance in reading and writing as children progress through school” (p. 43).

Although the acquisition of vocabulary has been found to affect one’s performance, Selinker and Gass (2008) note that second language acquisition scholars pay little attention to the lexicon in comparison to other aspects of language, though this aspect has been considered, “as the most important language component for learners” (p. 449). In the same way, Krashen (1982), drawing on the Monitor Model, argues that the classroom is of benefit only when

> It is the major source of comprehensible input. When acquirers have rich sources of input outside the class, and when they are proficient enough to take advantage of it (i.e., understand at least some of it), the classroom does not make an important contribution (p.58).

Additionally, Krashen (1982) claims that the informal context is usually superior in terms of the naturalistic input it provides compared to formal classroom contexts. As he explains, "the informal real-world environment is always superior to the classroom or formal environment" because the informal environment is rich in what we hear and read (Krashen, 1982, p. 58). However, when one considers the implications of this major distinction between formal and informal environments, one asks: what if one’s exposure is very limited to the formal classroom, where one learns English for a few hours a week, for instance?

Krashen (1982) highlights that extensive and intensive reading are of great importance to language acquisition/learning because, "students profit more from reading for meaning and reading great quantities of material" (p. 73). When one considers English language learning in Kashru’s (1985) Expanding Circle, where the language serves very few functional purposes, it becomes clear why EFL learners find it difficult to develop proficiency in the target language since their exposure is very limited to the classroom and for a few hours each week. Is this the reason why some learners never develop their language proficiency? Suggesting so would mean that one adopts a reductionist method for very complex questions.

In this connection, Krashen (1982) claims that "output is possible as a result of acquired competence" and that it "has a contribution to make to language acquisition, but it’s an indirect one" (p. 60). Again, what implications does this have for English language teaching and learning

in the Expanding Circle? Krashen (1982) suggests that teachers should fill the classroom with as much comprehensible input as possible. However, even if one tries as hard as possible to fill the classroom with comprehensible input, not all students develop proficiency in the target language. While some learners benefit from classroom linguistic data and hence start to use the language orally, though their output contains errors, many more learners may not say even one word. Are there any other factors that can influence learners or acquirers to develop their speaking abilities other than Krashen's (1982) view of comprehensible input? The answer is definitely in the positive.

In this way, Levelt (cited in Selinker & Gass, 2008) suggests that the lexicon is the backbone of speaking since it is "the driving force in sentence production" (p. 450). In a similar vein, Nation (2000, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2009) highlights that vocabulary knowledge is central to language fluency. Lexical information is not only necessary for language production, but it is also a prerequisite for language comprehension. Therefore, poor lexical skills are likely to lead to poor or no language production on the part of language learners or acquirers.

In a similar vein, Selinker and Gass (2008) highlight that learners' output depends to a large extent on lexical skills. As they state, "learners need good lexical skills to produce sentences and to understand them" (Selinker & Gass, 2008, p. 457). In the same way, Kormos (2006) claims that the reason why learners of languages find it difficult to express themselves is because they possess incomplete knowledge of the target language. Given this reason, "learning vocabulary is essential for being able to communicate in L2" (Kormos, 2006, p. 86).

Additionally, Kormos (2006) emphasizes that insufficient L2 lexical knowledge is an obstacle to effective communication. Drawing on Levelt (1989), Kormos (2006) postulates that speech formulation processes "are lexically driven" (p. 140). From this premise, it follows that language learners, due to their linguistic deficiencies, are more likely to experience difficulties in producing output and comprehending input, leading to a possible breakdown of communication between proficient and less proficient speakers. Therefore, due to their lexical gaps, learners resort to transferring L1 knowledge and applying it to L2 situations, resulting in Lado's (1957) concept of negative transfer.

Seen in this light, Ellis (2015) argues that one way to communicate effectively is through building one's own linguistic competence. As he states, "massive exposure to comprehensible input through reading is beneficial for acquisition, especially when vocabulary is concerned" (Ellis, 2015, p.170). Instead of backing up scholars' (Krashen, 1982; Krashen & Terrell, 1995)

view that acquisition will always occur naturally and automatically simply by exposing learners to comprehensible input, Ellis (2015) highlights that it is not sufficient for language learning to happen and that learners' attention should be, when reading, focused on specific forms and their meaning.

Krashen and Terrell (1995), within this framework, propose their Natural Approach, which was primarily built on the premise that the ability to produce the target language "emerges", to borrow the words of Ellis (2015), "only after learners have acquired some language through comprehending the input" (p. 273). Knowledge of vocabulary, according to Krashen and Terrell (1995), is very critical to language acquisition and learning. In so doing, the aforementioned scholars seem to criticize the advocates of the grammar-translation method for not giving sufficient attention to vocabulary teaching. As they state,

> Grammar-based approaches to language teaching deliberately limit vocabulary in order to concentrate on syntax. We are suggesting that vocabulary should not be avoided: with more vocabulary, there will be more comprehension and with more comprehension, there will be more acquisition! (Krashen & Terrell, 1995, p.55).

According to Krashen (1982), comprehension precedes production, and speaking is the result of building up one's own linguistic competence. In this context, Krashen and Terrell (1995) highlight that

> Speaking is not absolutely essential for language acquisition. We acquire from what we hear (or read) and understand, not from what we say. The input hypothesis claims that the best way to teach speaking is to focus on listening (or reading) and spoken fluency will emerge on its own (p.56)

Although both of these scholars postulate that "speaking is the primary cause of most language students", they both warn against insisting on early language production on the part of learners (Krashen & Terrell, 1995, p. 57). This is based on the assumption that language learners/acquirers will shift gradually from answers with gestures, single words, and yes/no answers, to the production of longer utterances, depending on the richness of the input provided by their environments. In addition to this, the length of time that precedes language production (the silent period) varies from one person to another since there will always be differences in terms of the quality and quantity of the input. In a similar vein, Krashen and Terrell (1995) argue that

> Adults make the transition from listening to production quite rapidly. Some adults begin producing single words or short phrases after one or two hours of input before they feel comfortable enough

> to produce. Adolescents often need considerable exposure to the new language before they attempt to produce utterances (p.78)

Following these lines of thought, Krashen and Terrell (1995) suggest that production is probably impeded by, "more affective factors than any intrinsic difficulties with language acquisition" (p. 78). Is language acquisition the result of comprehensible input alone? Is language learning impeded by affective factors *per se*? What about other external factors, such as the socio-economic status of the learner? What is the role of family background in language learning? Do learners who come from disadvantaged families learn the target language the same way as learners who come from high status families? Do language learners who come from high- and low-income families achieve the same level of proficiency in the target language, regardless of class differences?

According to these lines of reasoning, all it takes to learn a certain language is comprehensible input in an anxiety-free classroom atmosphere. Fluency will definitely emerge over a period of time. Krashen (1982) warns that one should not encourage learners to talk before they have acquired competence. As he writes, "output is possible as a result of acquired competence" (Krashen, 1982, p. 60). On the indirect contribution of output to language development, Krashen (1982) seems to endorse the view that "we acquire spoken fluency not by practicing talking but by understanding input, by listening and reading," and that "it is possible to acquire language without ever talking" (p. 60).

Central to this model is Krashen's (1982) idea that children experience a silent period in their attempt to produce the target language. Krashen (1982) highlights that language learners are expected to go through this silent period before they can productively use the target language for communication, though he does not illustrate how much time it would take before they could speak. Drawing on Asher's (1972) Total Physical Response, Krashen (1982) highlights that the silent period, may last as long as six months. During this silent period, the child may produce very little or nothing at all in the target language, "other than routines, and a few patterns" (Krashen, 1982, p. 72). He continues to explain that teachers should not insist on early language production and states that

> Forcing early production before the student has built up enough competence through comprehensible input is perhaps the single most anxiety-provoking thing about language classes. While some students may want to talk as soon as possible, others may feel less secure until they have built up more competence" (Krashen, 1982, p. 74).

Having touched upon some of the aspects of Krashen's (1982) theory, one can conclude, with a sort of assertiveness, that Krashen stresses the role of receptive skills (listening and reading) over productive skills because fluency is expected to emerge gradually but surely over a period of time. In his comment on Krashen's theory of language acquisition, Wheeler (2003) notes that the theory in question "has been closely analyzed and heavily criticized" (p. 93).

For example, Moreen and Soneni (2015) note that there is a clash between Lenneberg and Krashen in that Krashen postulates that the ability to learn an additional language does not decline with age, whereas Lenneberg (1967) goes as far as to admit that the language acquisition device (LAD) declines dramatically as one ages. That being the case, one asks a legitimate question: if non-children cannot learn additional languages, why do adults invest their time in running after illusions? The process of learning an additional language is more complex than Lenneberg (1969) might have thought.

Thus, learning additional languages is possible even after one passes puberty provided that one creates the necessary conditions for learning to happen; otherwise, how can one, as Zafar (2011) explains, go as far as to say that adults cannot learn additional languages at a time when Joseph Conrad (1857–1924), the Polish-born writer, started learning English at the age of twenty-two? What is more is that Conrad achieved full proficiency in English. The evidence for this is that his works are included in the English canon. While Conrad retained his strong Polish accent, as Yule (2010) in *The Study of Language* argues, the example of Conrad suggests that some of the arguments of anti-Krashenites might be flawed.

Within the same framework, Liu (2015) raises his skepticism about whether input alone is enough for language acquisition to take place. Reinforcing this idea, Gregg (1984) postulates that little is known about whether more comprehension on the part of language learners leads to successful acquisition. It follows from this discussion that while all the aforementioned critics recognize the role of exposure to comprehensible input, they (Liu, 2015; Gregg, 1984; Lenneberg, 1967; McLaughlin ,1978) all point to the conclusion, to use the words of Liu (2015), that "the exposure to comprehensible input is indeed essential but not sufficient to explain overall SLA" (p. 145).

Liu (2015), drawing on the serious criticisms directed at Krashen's theory, groups these criticisms into three major categories: excessive claims, an absence of evidence, and invalid theory. Seen in this light, one can ask: what is left of Krashen's Legacy? Has the pyramid

become so fragile that it collapses with this ease? Has he, seeing the severe criticism levelled against his theory, contributed anything at all to the already existing knowledge on how learners acquire/learn languages? The answer o this last question, according to Brown (2000), is in the positive. Although he has been heavily criticized for the controversial theory he introduced, Krashen's theory has been considered an original contribution to the field of second language learning/acquisition.

Similarly, Liu (2015), and McLaughlin (1978) stress that it is thanks to Krashen that we are able to talk about the role of exposure to input in language learning, without forgetting that credits go to the same scholar in calling for introducing meaningful-based instruction into the classroom, which, according to Liu (2015), has contributed enormously to the shift away from the "traditional" accuracy-based teaching methods dominant in the seventies to more meaningful-based interaction exemplified in the classroom by the use of communicative learning activities such as role-play dialogues and so on and so forth. Besides, creating a happy classroom atmosphere where learners feel comfortable is largely based on Krashen's (1982) idea of the affective filter hypothesis (Liu, 2015).

Despite describing Krashen's theory as "passé", "unverifiable", "hostile" (Wheeler, 2003.p.92–93), and "harsh" (Liu, 2015.p.140), The Monitor Model has had such a deep impact on how teachers, EFL teachers in particular, conceptualize the language they are teaching and has also influenced what teachers do in their actual classroom practice. In spite of this, Liu (2015) notes that Krashen's theory does not say much about the value of language production in learning the target language. Owing to this criticism leveled against the model under discussion, Swain (1985, 1998, 2005) introduced the Output Hypothesis.

The comprehensible output hypothesis

Despite the influence of Krashen's model on research and classroom practice, Swain (1985, 1998, 2005) argues that the production of language (speaking and writing), under certain circumstances, is a very significant part of the SLA process. As a result, the comprehensible output hypothesis came as a reaction to the inadequacies of the input hypothesis. In this regard, Ramat (2012), Mackey (2007) stresses that the value of the receptive skills (listening and reading) in language learning was raised after researchers analyzed the outcomes of various immersion programs which were based mainly in Canada.

Ramat (2012) highlights that many researchers who gathered considerable amounts of data in French immersion programs about the performance of learners, who were exposed to large language quantities of comprehensible input, "displayed", to borrow the words of Ramat (2012), "considerable difficulties in the area of language production concerning accuracy and appropriacy" (p.54). Taking these disappointing results of these programs into account, Swain (1995), following informal and formal observations conducted in the classrooms, proposes that learners of French in these immersion programs, did not speak as much French as English and that their teachers did not "push" them to use the target language for communication meaning. Against the input hypothesis, Swain (1985, 1998, 2000, 2005) claims that the output has the potential to provide learners with effective feedback.

In this vein, Bygate, Skehan and Swain (2001) illustrates that the importance of the output hypothesis lies in the fact that it enables learners "to negotiate better input" (p.79). For learners to negotiate for meaning, they are supposed to use clarification requests, confirmation checks, and comprehension checks, resulting in the development of Selinker's (1972) interlanguage productively. Bygate (2005) and Bygate et al., (2001) argue that it is only via participating in classroom discourse that EFL learners can develop their speaking skills. As Bygate (2001) puts it,

> If meaning-making is jointly collaborative activity, then we cannot read about these skills, or even acquire them passively, but instead have to take part in discourse and realize how our resources are put to work to build conversations and negotiate meaning. Extensive speaking practice is therefore unavoidable (, p.81).

Seen in this light, learners cannot simply develop their speaking skills by reading and listening. Rather, one has to take an active role in the construction of classroom talk. This dissatisfaction with Krashen's input hypothesis, as pointed out earlier, resulted in the developing of Swain's (1985) output hypothesis which asserts that language production (speaking and writing) is the backbone of language development. According to Swain (1985, 1998, 2005), the output hypothesis benefits, enormously, language development in diverse ways: Noticing/triggering function, hypothesis testing function, and metalinguistic/reflection function. In a similar vein, Selinker and Gass (2008) highlight that language production can benefit learners in four different ways,

> (a) receiving crucial feedback for the verification of these hypotheses; (b) testing hypotheses about the structures and meanings of the target language; (c) developing automaticity in TL production,

> and (d) forcing a shift from more meaning-based processing of the second language to a more syntactic mode" (p.328).

a. The noticing/triggering function

According to Ramat (2012), this function manifests itself if learners, when expressing themselves, "discover that they don't know how to express the intended message" (p.54). In other words, the noticing/triggering function helps language learners to consciously recognize the areas where they have problems. Accordingly, Swain (1985) and Nunan (2004) emphasize that as soon as language learners *notice* the gap between the intended message and the tools they have available at their hands, multiple cognitive processes responsible for activating and consolidating linguistic data get triggered by learners' themselves. This results in deep learning. Commenting on the noticing/triggering function, Ramat (2012) argues that when learners say something of the target language, they not only notice that they are not able to express what they want, but they may also notice key differences between one's output and the correct target language form(s).

b. The hypothesis testing function

Following her argumentation, Swain (1995) assumes that language production on the part of the learners has the potential to assist them, to use the words of Aluslami (2016), "to test hypothesis about the target language" (p.138). Contrary to the previous claims established by Krashen (1982), Swain (1985, 1998, 2005) suggests that by having students verbalize, language learners engage in testing the hypotheses they have formed about how the target language works. She states

> Students formed hypotheses and tested them against available resources, vocabulary, morphology, and complex syntactic structures each became the focus of their attention, and in turn, their attention become focused by talking about the problem. Verbalization of the problem allowed them the opportunity to reflect on it, and apparently, served as one source of their linguistic knowledge (p.79).

Within this framework, King (2011) further confirms that learners' output functions as a test to their utterances, meaning that it indicates to the learners' whether their utterances are

communicated successfully or whether they result in negative feedback and hence require further modified output.

c. The metalinguistic function

Following her discussion of the positive role of output in language learning, Swain (1985, 1995, 2000) argues that oral production has the ability to help learners solve linguistic problems they encounter by reflecting on them or via talking about the internal logic of their target language. Therefore, talking about language implies that one explains how that language works, explicitly speaking. By having learners reflect consciously on the language they are targeting, deep learning occurs. In this context, Izumi (2002) claims that the importance of the output hypothesis lies not only in its role in L2 development, but it presents learners with unique opportunities to process language more deeply at the cognitive level in a way that may not be decisively necessary for the comprehension models. In spite of the importance of Swain's (1985, 1995, 2000) theory of language learning and teaching, the Model is not without shortcomings. Given this reason, Long (1986, 1993) proposes his Interaction Model.

The interaction hypothesis

Krashen's (1982) comprehensible input and Swain's (1985, 1995, 2000) comprehensible output together with the vital role of conversation in language learning were synthesized by Long (1996) in a set of specific claims known in the field of SLA studies as the Interaction Hypothesis. In his review of the research findings about the contributions of both input and output to language development, Long (1983) suggests that participating in conversational interaction *facilitates* L2 learning, thereby the introduction of Interaction Hypothesis. In this sense, Mackey (2007) claims that language learners' contributions to conversations with interlocutors benefit them in many different ways.

Within this framework, Lightbown and Spada (2006) highlight that interaction helps learners to negotiate for meaning, which, "occurs when a speaker's message is not clear or comprehensible to a listener" (p.158-159). Likewise, Mackey (2007) postulates that interaction benefits learners through allowing them the opportunity to negotiate for meaning, feedback, recasts, and output. Therefore, if combined together, all these interactional processes have the ability to facilitate the learning process.

Following an early investigation, Long (cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2006) compares the features of L2 learners' speech both in teacher-fronted classrooms and group work. The results of the investigation reveal that "the learners not only produced a greater quantity of speech when interacting in group work, they also used a much greater variety of language functions" (p. 159). According to Lightbown and Spada (2006), the role of interaction in language learning was consistent with the developments occurring in second language pedagogy, particularly after the Communicative Language Teaching Movement had begun to shift attention away from structure-based types of instruction to more communicative-oriented syllabi.

Mackey (2007) assumes that interaction provides learners with ample opportunities "to make connections between L2 form and meaning" (p. 86). Not only this, but, to borrow the words of Long (1996), the sort of feedback obtained during conversational interaction "connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways" (p. 452). In the same way, Pica (as cited in Mackey, 2007) highlights that language development cannot, in any way, be limited to one factor but rather is a multifaceted product that arises from "interaction among the cognitive, psycholinguistic, and social processes of language learning as well as the interaction of various processes within them" (p. 86).

While SLA/L pioneers have shown the significance of interaction in language development, Vygotsky (1978) sees learning as a product of social and cultural factors. Vygotsky (1978) argues that language learning cannot be separated from social activity, meaning that learning happens when members of society who have already acquired the knowledge guide those who are in the process of discovering such knowledge (*scaffolding*). Such a socio-cultural perspective on interaction views speech modifications during communication between less and more proficient learners or learners with their teachers as central to the acquisition or learning process.

In a similar vein, Hatch (as cited in Breen, 2001) is perhaps the first scholar to try to bring this perspective to SLA research, as he argues that learners, under such conditions, are more likely to extend their grammatical repertoire on the basis of "scaffolding" provided for them by more proficient speakers during conversations. Mackey (2007), in this context, illustrates that learning the target language is not the product of interaction alone but is the result of many internal and external factors impacting learning outcomes, more or less. As Mackey (2007) writes,

> To date, there is no claim that one or more of the interactional process, including comprehensible input, feedback, and modified output, work better than any of the others, although it is possible that these process may be differently effective for various aspects of language, learner characteristic, contexts, and task demands. Indeed, interactional processes may work in concert or in unique ways (p.87).

These attempts at explaining what promotes SLA and SLL should not be disregarded (Menezes, 2013). According to Menezes (2013), when the aforementioned models are put together, "they provide a broader and deeper view of the acquisition process" (p. 407). In lieu of accounting for language development by referring back to previous learning theories such as behaviorism, acculturation, universal grammar hypothesis, comprehension hypothesis, output hypothesis, interaction hypotheses, connectionism, and socio-cultural theory, Menezes (2013) argues that "we still do not know how languages are learned" (p. 407). The reason for this, according to Menezes (2013), is that all the aforementioned models seem incomplete, "as they don't describe the whole SLA phenomenon, but just parts of it," although he admits that it is difficult to reject any of these models (p. 407).

Drawing on previous research (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Lier, 1996), Menezes (2013) stresses that there is a need for conceptualizing language learning from the perspective of "chaos theory", meaning that language development does not occur in a linear manner. Rather, language learning is "a complex non-linear dynamic phenomenon" (p. 407). As such, Lier (as cited in Menezes, 2013) states, "Learning is the result of complex (and contingent) interactions between individual and environment" (p. 407).

The essential point is that language development is the result of a plethora of internal and external factors and that each of the models discussed previously is thought to promote certain aspects of the target language. For example, the input hypothesis is thought to promote learners' receptive skills (listening and reading), whereas output and interaction can help promote learners' fluency. Irrespective of how languages are learned, second language acquisition and learning studies suggest that learning additional languages is more about the effective learning strategies learners make use of in their attempt to achieve proficiency in the target language.

Effective language learning strategies

According to Ellis (2002), what counts more in language learning is neither interaction nor input, but the learners themselves and their role in actively constructing their knowledge. As he

states, "in the final analysis of successful language acquisition and processing, it is the language learner who counts" (Ellis, 2002, p. 88). Dornyei (2005), in this way, explains that success in language learning varies among individuals due to many internal and external factors. On this basis, "there seems to be an agreement that there is some sort of trait-like strategy potential that enables certain learners to become effective strategy users" (Dornyei, 2005, p. 163).

Dornyei (2005) highlights that research into language learning strategies was centered on what could be learned from "the good language learner", implying the characteristics that made some learners more successful than others "when it came to attaining an L2" (p. 166). Oxford (2001) and Dornyei (2005) discuss the effective role of language learning strategies in enhancing learners' output and classify these into six main categories: cognitive, mnemonic, meta-cognitive, compensatory, affective, and social strategies.

Dornyei (2005) explains that social strategies involve interpersonal behaviors that aim at increasing the amount of L2 communication and practice that the learners undertake, such as initiating interaction with native and non-native speakers, cooperating with other peers, and so on. In this context, Oxford (2001) claims that social strategies are "crucial for communicative language learning", although she notes that O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) cognitive model downplayed social strategies in favor of more cognitive and meta-cognitive ones.

As far as the models of language learning strategies discussed previously are concerned, Bao (2020) notes that there is in Oxford's (2001) model a connection between learning and social skills in the sense that learners who are good at social communication strategies tend to be good at using effective language learning strategies. More importantly, interacting with other language users has the potential to enhance learners' social skills, which include "managing, social introduction, turn-taking, initiation of talk, closing conversation, changing topics, interrupting, and recognizing the difference between L1 and L2 social norms" (Bao 2020, p. 3).

What is at issue here is that language learning strategies do not happen in a vacuum. Rather, they are influenced, more or less, by other individual factors such as one's own culture, gender, motivation, learning style, learner personality, and learner beliefs, to mention but a few (Dornyei, 2005). Within this framework, Lightbown and Spada (2001) highlight that factors like intelligence, aptitude, personality, motivation, attitudes, learner beliefs, learner preferences, and the age of acquisition may predict success in language development. However, they warn against adopting linear approaches to the role that these factors could play in learning, meaning

that individual factors may influence language learning in a nonlinear way (Lightbown & Spada, 2001).

Meanwhile, they warn researchers against interpreting success in language learning to mean a correlation between two or more factors definitely exists due to a causal relationship between variables (Lightbown & Spada, 2001). For example, if motivation influences and hence predicts success, it does not mean that it will *definitely* and *automatically* lead to success. Following these lines of reasoning, Lightbown and Spada (2006) suggest that

> The most serious error in interpreting correlations is the conclusion that one of the variables causes the other. The fact that two things tend to occur together or increase and decrease in a similar pattern does not necessarily mean that one caused the other. While it may be that one variable influences the other, it may be that one variable influences the other, it may be that both are influenced by something else entirely (p.56).

Seen in this light, one can ask: is it motivation that influences success, or is success in language learning more likely to influence motivation? Which leads to which? The aforementioned scholars would definitely answer by raising one's own awareness of other variables that interplay with individual characteristics. As Lightbown and Spada (2006) put it, "research on individual differences must also take into account the social and educational settings in which learners find themselves" (p. 97). Reviewing the previous studies, Lightbown and Spada (2006) argue that some empirical investigations have reported that some successful language learners with a higher IQ (intelligence quotient) are more likely to predict success in learning the target language than those with a lower IQ, whereas other studies reported no correlation. These conflicting results imply that the language tests used do not measure the same kind of knowledge.

Irrespective of the critical issues raised so far, the existing literature (Oxford, 2001; Lightbown & Spada, 2001, 2006; Dornyei, 2005) shows that some individual characteristics may either impede or enhance learning the target language. On the whole, the aforementioned scholars discuss what they term "good language learners" to describe individuals who are good at learning languages. It would be better if one substituted "good" for "effective" or "successful" to avoid falling into the trap of value judgments. Following her discussion of the profile of effective language learners, Oxford (2001) claims that a successful language learner is someone who,

a. is a willing and accurate guesser;

b. has a strong drive to communicate;
c. is uninhibited and willing to make mistakes;
d. focuses on form by looking at patterns and using analysis;
e. takes advantage of all practice opportunities;
f. monitors his or her own speech and that of others;
g. pays attention to meaning (p.161)

Lightbrown and Spada (2006) elaborate more on the characteristics of successful learners. For them, "a good language learner" is someone who,

a. is a willing and accurate guesser;
b. tries to get a message across even if specific language knowledge is lacking
c. is willing to make mistakes
d. constantly looks for patterns in the language
e. practices as often as possible
f. analyses his or her own speech and the speech of others
g. attends to whether his or her performance meets the standards he or she has learned
h. enjoys grammar exercises
i. begins learning in childhood
j. has an above-average IQ
k. has good academic skills
l. has a good self-image and lots of confidence (Lightbrown & Spada, 2006, p.55).

Current scholarship on second language teaching stresses that language teaching and learning are informed by a set of principles backed up by previous research findings (Brown, 2002). These principles include automaticity, meaningful learning, the anticipation of reward, intrinsic motivation, strategic investment, language ego, self-confidence, risk taking, the language-culture connection, the native language effect, and communicative competence. In this context, Brown (2002) suggests that basing one's own teaching on these assumptions could help tremendously in meeting one's own objectives. In spite of the contributions of the aforementioned models accounting for effective language learning, they say little about the possible contributions of one's socio-economic background to effective language learning.

Of particular importance is the principle of "risk-taking". It follows from this premise that language teachers should encourage learners to "attempt to produce and interpret language that is a bit beyond their absolute certainty", which means that successful English language learners must be willing to become "gamblers" when they are not sure of the answers they are about to

utter (Brown, 2002, p. 13). It is an adventure. In spite of privileging active oral participation in classroom discourse, several scholars (Bao, 2020; Cohen, Oxford & Chi, 2002; Dornyei, 2005; Saville-Troike, 1988; Yoshida, 2009) argue that language learners, especially introverted learners, can resort to a form of "private speech" in their attempt to effectively learn the target language.

The role of private speech in language learning

Drawing on Oxford's (2001) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, Dornyei (2005) explains that social strategies manifest themselves in the behaviors of learners when they "work with other language learners' to practice, review, or share information" (p. 182). Likewise, Cohen et al. (2002) claim that central to social strategies is the view that learners practice their speaking skills either in the form of "private talk" (practice saying new expressions to myself), strategies to engage in conversations (regularly seek out opportunities to talk with more proficient speakers), or compensation strategies as when they ask for help from conversational partners (circumlocution). In the same way, drawing on the taxonomy of language learning strategies proposed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Dornyei (2005) argues that while social strategies may include overt behaviors such as cooperation, questioning, and clarification, they can also include covert behaviors exemplified by self-talk.

In a similar vein, Yoshida (2009) maintains that teachers find it difficult to know what introverted learners are doing or thinking except when interacting with other learners and stresses that second and foreign language learners participate in classroom discussions in direct and indirect ways. Participating directly, on the one hand, implies asking questions and answering those of the teachers and peers. Learners may interact indirectly, on the other hand, with other interlocutors via private talk, "which is usually produced in a soft voice and directed towards the self and not others, in the classroom" (Yoshida, 2009, p. 2). Following her discussion of the distinction between various forms of classroom participation, Yoshida (2009) postulates that learners respond to teachers' questions or classmates' feedback overtly or covertly, depending on their personality types, to a greater degree.

Within this framework, Ohta (as cited in Yoshida, 2009) points out that second and foreign language learners use both, "private speech as well as overt speech in classes" (p. 3). In the same way, Ohta (cited in Yoshida, 2009) assumes that learners in the classroom are not only addresses, "but also auditors and overhearers" and that learners tend to express their answers in

private speech, especially "when teachers [ask] questions to either the class or other learners" (p. 3). On the close relationship between the employment of private speech in the process of second language learning and personality types, Saville-Troike (1988) notes that the idea that children choose to practice speaking to themselves in private before they attempt social performance reflects a sort of social and cognitive orientation. Following his discussion of the functions that private speech can have in the language learning process, Yoshida (2009) states,

> Learners use private speech not only to answer teachers' questions to the class or other learners, but also to repeat what teachers or other learners have said, to manipulate the sounds or forms of teachers' utterances or to covertly respond to teachers or other learners […] learners' use of private speech in the classroom may trigger their leaning even in the absence of responses to it (p.5).

Obviously, private speech can help tremendously in the language learning process, just like covert participation. In this way, Burdelski (as cited in Yoshida, 2009) explores the functions of private speech by primary school students in Japanese immersion programs in the USA and identifies four major functions. These are, of course:

> (1) wordplay (to control form or the sound of language used by the teacher or themselves, or to express fun verbally or non-verbally through smile or laugh); (2) rehearsal (to rehearse before performance and repeat a part of the teacher's utterance); (3) response to a teacher or other learners; and (4) problem solving in the immediate circumstance (Yoshida, 2009, p. 136)

Discussing effective language learning strategies implies that one should not overlook the role of private speech as an effective way of learning at least some aspects of the target language, so as not to exaggerate. In this context, Saville-Troike (1988) focuses on children who go through a "silent" period early in the course of second language learning, using video recordings with radio microphones under natural conditions; five out of nine children were observed to engage in extensive private speech. This private speech, as Saville-Troike (1988) suggests, is employed to perform a variety of intrapersonal learning strategies, including (1) repetition of others' utterances, (2) recall and practice, (3) creation of new linguistic forms, (4) paradigmatic substitution and sytagmatic expansion, and (5) a rehearsal for overt social performance.

Observing nine Chinese children aged between three and eight years old whose target language was English, Saville-Troike (1988) shows that five of these students employed private speech mainly due to linguistic limitations. That being said, the private speech of these Chinese students was found to perform a rehearsal function, among many other functions. Saville-Troike

(1988) adds, "When reflective children begin initiating speech in English, they commonly first practice what they want to say to themselves before saying it aloud" (p. 575).

Besides, Saville-Troike (1988) postulates that private speech contributes enormously to cognitive functions especially in childhood as when children use it for problem-solving activities. According to this understanding, private speech can be employed by both adults and children who learn additional languages. In this context, Saville-Troike (1988) claims that private speech can perform many functions including, in the area of second language learning, pronunciation practice, recitations of sentences that children had heard from others in their environment, and grammatical drills.

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In an attempt to discuss the basic differences in social and cognitive orientation of language learners, Saville-Troike (1988) makes a distinction between two fundamentally different types of learners: (1) inner-directed versus other-directed learners. To illustrate, inner-directed learners, on the one hand, "have been found to approach language learning as an intrapersonal task, with a predominant focus on the language code. They appear to be reflective children who are ultimately likely to be among the most successful second language achievers" (Saville-Troike, 1988, p. 568).

Other-directed learners, on the other hand, have been found to approach language as a social task, with a predominant focus on the message they wish to convey. These learners seem to be assertive in their attempts to communicate with other speakers of the new language, using all possible means, including a combination of gestures, facial expressions, memorized social routines, and so on and so forth.

On the basis of his observations, Saville-Troike (1988) explains that inner-directed learners appeared to talk to themselves during the ongoing interactions and hypothesizes that inner-directed learners are not, as the advocates of the communicative language teaching approach maintain, "merely passively assimilating second language input, but were using private speech

in an active process of engagement with the input data", though these types of learners are not verbally active in social communication and tend to produce little, if any, overt social verbalization in the second language classroom (p. 568).

Bao (2020) highlights that private speech can happen in silence, "through whispering to oneself or others, or in spoken and written form" (p.3).While a thorough analysis of the purposes of covert and overt classroom participation is beyond the scope of the current investigation, it is of vital importance to note that both forms of classroom participation, as has been clearly shown, contribute, directly or indirectly, to the learning of the target language. Closely related to the view of the private speech hypothesis, as pointed out earlier, is Krashen's (1982) view of the silent period to account for the silence episodes that learners undergo in their attempt to achieve proficiency in the target language.

Although children have been reported to use a wide range of language learning strategies, Saville-Troike (1988) notes that socialization shapes the manner in which individuals and groups prefer one style of learning over another. What this means is that one's own leaning styles and strategies (cautious or inner-oriented versus socially-oriented or risk-taking) are shaped, to a large degree, by the process of socialization. Regardless of the different ways in which language learners learn the target language, motivation has been found to enhance the learning process.

The role of motivation in language learning

One of the most persistent issues in second or foreign language learning has been the relationship between, motivation and successful language learning. In fact, there is a general agreement among researchers that motivation enhances one's own learning (Dornyei, 2001, 2005; Lightbown & Spada, 2006, 2008; Gardner, 1972, 1985). According to MacIntyre and Serroul (2015), motivation is "the force that gives behavior its energy and direction" (p. 109). In *The Psychology of Language Learner: Individual Differences in Language Learning*, Dornyei (2005) tries to answer why some language learners are more successful than others regarding learning additional languages, and his conclusion is that many factors can predict successful learning, one of which is motivation.

The question of individual differences (ID) in language learning may seem like a simple one, but such differences are in fact so complicated. Basically, researching individual differences in

language learning, including age, gender, anxiety, intelligence, motivation, learning styles, and strategies, implies bringing to light both internal and external factors contributing, directly and indirectly, to successful learning and attainment. Is enhanced language learning the result of the aforementioned variables? According to Dornyei (2005), individual differences are further influenced by their constant interaction "with instructional and situational variables" (p. 63).

Following the possible contribution of individual differences to successful language learning, Dornyei (2005) argues that these differences interact, more or less, with situation-specific variables and that they do in fact interact with learners' personality types to a great extent. Previous investigations into individual differences

> Indicated in a fairly consistent manner that besides a high degree of language aptitude and motivation, there are other learner factors that could help students in their active and creative participation in the process through the application of individualized learning techniques (Dornyei, 2005, p.6).

In his systematic review of the previous research, Dornyei (2005) assumes that personality types are among the factors that usually predict success in the target language. In this vein, scholars, as discussed before, distinguish between two personality types: introverted and extroverted learners. Extroverted learners, on the one hand, are thought to be "gregarious, active, assertive, passionate, and talkative", whereas introverted learners seem to be "passive, quiet, reserved, sober, aloof, and restrained" (Dornyei, 2005, p. 15).

Dornyei (2005) suggests that introverts, on the one hand, tend to "suffer from increased pressure because the arousal level exceeds their optimal, which in turn inhibits the automaticity of speech production" (p. 20). Extroverts, on the other hand, "are found to be more fluent than introverts both in L1 and L2 and partially in formal situations or environments characterized by interpersonal stress" (Dornyei, 2005, p. 20). As such,

> Introverts side back to controlled serial processing, rather than automatic parallel processing which overloads their working memory. As a consequence, their speech slows down, they hesitate more often, they tend to make more errors, and they are unable to produce utterances of great length (Dornyei, 2005, pp. 26-27)

In their seminal paper, Horwitz et al. (1986) documented similar results, though they did not consider foreign language speaking anxiety in relation to learner personality types. The implications of these dichotomies are obvious in that introverts will say very little or nothing at

all in the target language, whereas extroverted ones will dominate classroom discussions and talk. Dornyei (2005) states, "Being disadvantaged at L2 communication would, of course, mean that introverts can benefit less from learning opportunities and speaking practice that require participation in communicative tasks and situations" (p. 27).

Motivation, according to Sterberg (as cited in Dornyei, 2005), is the product of "the perceived need for additional languages", meaning that motivated learners believe that there is "a need for additional languages, and the languages are taught with this practical use in mind" (p. 63). Central to this understanding of the role of motivation in enhancing language learning is Gardner's (1985) view that "motivation involves four aspects: a goal, effortful behavior, a desire to attain the goal, and favorable attitudes toward the activity in question" (p. 50). Irrespective of the learner personality types and their possible impact on language learning, Gardner and his colleagues (2003) further confirm the relationship between learners' attitudes towards the target language community, on the one hand, and successful language learning, on the other hand.

Commenting on Gardner et al.'s (2003) model, Lightbown and Spada (2006) assert that "there is ample evidence that positive motivation is associated with a willingness to keep learning" (p. 63). Put simply, having favorable attitudes towards the target language community will encourage learners to keep learning. Thus, if learners perceive the need to use the target language for functional purposes, they will exert their efforts to keep learning. As Lightbown and Spada (2006) point out, "if learners have favorable attitudes towards the speakers of the language, they will desire more contact with them" (p. 63).

In his review of Gardner's (2003) model of motivation, Dornyei (200l) argues that this model can be divided into three dimensions, including integration, positive attitudes towards the learning situation, positive attitudes towards both the teacher and the language course, and favorable or unfavorable attitudes towards learning the target language. In social psychology, motivation can be integrative, instrumental, or intrinsic (Gardner, 1985). This means that positive attitudes can be initiated and promoted by the instrumental dimension, that is, by the concrete benefits that language proficiency may bring, including career opportunities and an increased salary, for example. In this context, Dornyei (2005) assumes that being instrumentally motivated is "primarily associated with the potential pragmatic gains of L2 proficiency, such as getting a better job or a higher salary" (p. 16).

From this discussion, one can see that motivation is "a complex, multi-dimensional construct" (Dornyei, 2001, p. 19). Williams and Burden (1997), in the same way, assert that

motivation can be derived from internal or external factors. Internal motivation can include a wide range of variables such as interest in the activity, perceived value of the activity, sense of agency, self-concept, attitudes, and offensive states, whereas external factors can include the role of parents, teachers, and peers, the nature of interaction that takes place in the classroom, and the learning environment (Williams & Burden, 1997).

Poor language attitudes can be traced back to the influence of the teacher on the learners (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Summarizing the previous research findings, Dornyei (2005) states that the overall thesis has been that there are affective differences between students with lower and higher levels of L2 skills and that "students with high levels of anxiety poor language attitudes, and low motivation in the L2 classroom are likely to be those who have a history and a current difficulty with some aspect of their native language skills" (p. 55). Therefore, motivating learners to actively express their opinions and ideas in the target language does not come out of the blue. These behaviors may be traced back to the teachers and what they do inside the classrooms (Dornyei, 2005; Lightbown & Spada, 2006). On this point, Lightbown and Spada (2006) clearly state,

> Teachers also have more influence on these behaviors and the motivation they represent than on students' reasons for studying the second language or their attitudes towards the language and its speakers. Teachers can make a positive contribution to students motivation to learn if classrooms are places that students enjoy coming to because the content is interesting and relevant to their age and level of ability, the learning goals are challenging yet manageable and clear, and the atmosphere is supportive (p. 64).

In this vein, Lightbown and Spada (2006) argue that some studies have found that success in language learning is correlated with learners' scores on questionnaires measuring characteristics associated with extroversions such as assertiveness and adventurousness; others have found that many successful language learners do not get high scores on measures of extroversions. In this way, Selinker and Gass (2008) highlight that extrovert learners tend to "engage in more talking and social activity in a second language and would thus learn the language better" (p. 433). However, both types of learners tend to succeed in language learning, "although in a different way" (Selinker & Gass, 2008, p. 433). Put simply, "extraversion is beneficial for certain tasks and certain methods of language teaching, whereas introversion is beneficial for others" (Selinker & Gass, 2008, p. 433). Given the idea that learners are in need of developing their speaking and interactional skills, being an introvert may be a disadvantage.

Dornyei (2005), in this context, argues that motivation can be enhanced by contextual factors such as "the classroom learning situation, the teacher, the curriculum, and the learner group" (p. 74). Therefore, what happens inside and outside the classroom can either hinder or enhance students' motivation towards the target language. In this context, following an early investigation on the link between motivation and contextual factors, Nikolov (2001) reveals that although learners may have a favorable attitude towards the target language, the main reasons for their lack of success in the L2 are related to their perceptions of the classroom practices to which they had been exposed, including classroom methodology in general, assessment, focus on forms, and rote learning.

Motivation can also be enhanced or lowered as a result of the learners' own choice of the language courses or the policy of the school they attend. In this vein, Dornyei (2005) illustrates that choice vs. assigned conditions may not influence motivation, but rather one's own motivation is affected by the amount of time learners invest in actively learning the target language in a school, which could enhance language attitudes and motivation.

In spite of the usefulness of cause-effect correlations in explaining the process of language learning development, Gregersen and MacIntyre (2015) highlight that much of the literature on individual differences in language learning is dominated by cause-effect research and "has isolated variables, such as anxiety, beliefs, cognitive abilities, learning strategies and styles, willingness to communicate, and motivation" (p. 262-263). Criticizing the cause-effect correlations, Dornyei, MacIntyre, and Henry (2015) note that these models, based on cause-effect relationships, fail to offer realistic explanations for the complex nature of motivation observed in real-life situations.

For this reason, scholars feel a need to conceptualize motivation in more *dynamic* terms. As such, Larsen-Freeman (2015) highlights that motivation is so complex that approaching it requires the adoption of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST), which centers on the *dynamism*, *emergence*, and *change* of human behavior over time. CDTS looks at how a small influence, in a non-linear manner, can have far-reaching consequences for the subject. Therefore, for some new behavior to occur, it arises from the interaction of a wide range of components of the system. Dornyei et al. (2015) state,

> Manifold issues and factors affecting second language acquisition are interrelated, and the new paradigm represented a holistic approach that took into account the combined and interactive operation of a number of different element conditions relevant to specific situations, rather than

> following the more traditional practice of examining the correlation between well-defined variables in relative isolation (p.1)

Put simply, language learning in general and learning motivation in particular could happen in a nonlinear way, meaning they are chaotic and dynamic. Seen from the perspective of CDTS, Larsen-Freeman (2015) argues that motivation is a very complex *process* that one has to consider in relation to other internal and external variables. Thus, one cannot get a true measure of the influence of one factor if one isolates it from the other factors and examines it in isolation (Larsen-Freeman, 2015). In this vein, Gregersen and MacIntyre (2015) state that

> From a dynamic perspective the term 'variables' takes on an expanded meaning, reflecting any influence on the ongoing processes of a system. References to variables in the system include familiar, traditional individual differences in motivation, anxiety or aptitude, but also changeable features of the context, such as the behavior of the teacher or classmates, progress made during the lesson plan or changing demographics in the community. The many influences on the thought, feelings and behavior of an individual, whether teacher or learner, are in perpetual flux and often result in emergent, nonlinear, unpredictable outcomes. If the complexity found within each individual is impressive, the dynamism between individuals pared in a communicative process is even more so (p.263).

Seen in this light, Ushioda (2015) assumes that the context or the environment may influence learners to a large extent; "these might be features of the linguistic and social environment, such as L2 input, classroom instruction, or peer group relations. Such features will be in dynamic interaction with various components within the learner's cognitive and language development" (p. 51).These factors can either be internal or external to the learner, but their interconnectedness and interdependence give rise to the desired behavior: enhanced motivation.

To better understand the dynamic nature of language learning, Ushioda (2015) postulates that contextual factors that can shape learners willingness to communicate in the L2 may, for example, "refer to various background systemic elements within the language learners", including motivation, cognitive, affective, and linguistic characteristics, anxiety, self-confidence, linguistic competence, and agency, to mention but a few variables (p. 51).

Seen from a sociological perspective, Norton (1997) conceptualized motivation as a form of *investment*. Darvin and Norton (2021) illustrate, "while motivation is a psychological construct that focuses on conscious and unconscious factors, investment is primarily sociological and focuses on how histories, lived experiences, and social practices shape language learning". Investment, therefore, "involves how learners invest in their learning at particular times and in

particular settings, as they engage in a range of social interactions and seek a wider range of material and symbolic resources" (Darvin, 2019, p. 247).

Motivation, thus, is viewed as such a complex construct that it constantly interacts with power, identity, agency, and language learning. Language learners can be highly motivated if their lived experiences, histories, social practices, and identities are recognized in the classroom (Darvin, 2019; Darvin & Norton, 2021; Norton, 1997). Under these conditions, language learning is conceptualized as a social practice shaped by power relations and is dynamically changing, given the changing realities of language learners. Learners' motivation can also be enhanced by the effective use of technology (Lee & Lee, 2020).

To sum up, this section has provided an overview of second language learning and acquisition theories. It has discussed the Monitor Model, the Output model, and the Interaction Model. Afterwards, it has been highlighted that language learning strategies are crucial when it comes to explaining language learning in that the more active the learners are in building up their knowledge, the more likely they are to promote their learning. Significantly, the section has argued that linguistic and motivational constructs are so important in helping learners use the target language orally. Additionally, this section has argued that motivation and vocabulary knowledge are central to enhanced language learning and speaking. In spite of the crucial role of speaking in promoting the target language, some learners may not engage in any sort of conversation when in the language classroom, a phenomenon that has been referred to in the existing literature as *reticence*. The next section will draw more on this concept.

Reticence: Defining the term

According to Izadi and Zare (2016), “the concept of reticence was first introduced to language studies in 1965 by Gerald Phillips” (p. 74). Surveying the previous literature (Phillips & Metzger, 1973; Kelly, Keaten, Haze, & Williams, 2010; 1982, 2000; Phillips, 1997), there is a tendency to discuss the characteristics of the reticent individual rather than define the concept in question in clear-cut terms. For this reason, consulting English dictionaries with the intention of defining the term is important. The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2020), for instance, has it that reticence is synonymous with “reluctance”, “unwillingness”, “silence”, and “hesitance”.

Clearly, these synonyms are partly helpful in getting the meaning of the word under discussion. Surprisingly, this online dictionary tends to define reticence in terms of the characteristics of reticent individuals, citing adjectives like “closemouthed”, “tight-mouthed” and “uncommunicative” as synonyms of the reticent individual. According to the same dictionary, a reticent person is someone who is (i) “inclined to be silent or uncommunicative in speech” and (ii) “reticent to speak out or at length, especially about one’s affairs”. The essential point is that the meaning of reticence overlaps with silence, reluctance, unwillingness to speak, and the like. On the etymology of the term, the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2020) suggests that

> Reticent first appeared about 170 years ago, but the “reluctant” sense of “reticent” is a mid-20th century introduction. Though it is now well-established, this newer sense bothers some people, particularly because it has veered away from the word’s Latin origins-“reticent” is from the verb “reticēre,”, meaning “to keep silent”. But there is some sense in the way the newer meaning developed. We first tended to use the “reluctant” sense of “ reticent” when the context was speech (as in “reticent to talk about her past”), thus keeping the word close to its “silent” sense. Eventually, however, exclusive association with speech was abandoned (Merriam-Webster online dictionary, 2020).

In a similar vein, *The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1987) too gives no straightforward definition of reticence but instead focuses on the behavior of the reticent individual and suggests that the word "reticent" implies "unwilling to speak; not expressing as much as is known or felt" (p. 892). Evidently, being reticent seems to be synonymous with being silent, reluctant, and unwilling to speak. In a similar vein, Shea (2017) argues that reticence is often taken to mean "the unwavering resistance of students to express ideas actively and engage

in whole class discussion" (p. 173). Although Shea (2017) proposes the aforementioned definition, she tends to use silence and reticence interchangeably throughout her paper. Rather than defining reticence in clear terms, other authors (Chalak & Backtash, 2015) use lack of "verbal contributions" to depict "quiet" students who are thought to be reticent. In this way, Phillips and Metzger (1973) assume that in order to be classified as reticent," "a person would not speak very much and would be concerned about it" (p. 220).

Shao and Gao (2016) and Cai (2021) use "unwillingness to communicate" and "reticence" interchangeably. In their overview of east Asian learners' profiles, Shao and Gao (2016) reveal that researchers and practitioners alike have long noticed that students who come from the so-called Confucian heritage cultural contexts tend to display particular characteristics and behaviors in the learning and teaching processes, such as obedience to authority, rote learning, fear of negative evaluation and losing face, reticence, and passivity. This claim has been contested and severely criticized by many scholars (Cheng, 2000; Shao & Gao, 2016). Within this framework, Shao and Gao (2016) define reticence as "lack of participation in classroom activities" (p. 116). In a similar vein, reticence refers, according to Bao (2014), to "undesirable silent moments" (p. 40).

Surveying the previous literature, it must be noted that there is a lack of theorizing on reticence, particularly in relation to EFL educational settings. Previous attempts at explaining students' reticence in the classroom are mostly empirically oriented, meaning little attention has been paid at the level of theory with the exception of the Reticence Program at Pennsylvania State University in the 1970s, which has, in turn, generated a plethora of studies on the issue under discussion. Nevertheless, the pioneers of such programs (Phillips & Metzger, 1973; Phillips, 1997) conceptualize reticence as a "speech pathology", "speech disorder," "communication problem," and so on. Simply put, reticence is regarded as a personality or psychological disorder that ought to be eradicated via training to improve one's own behavior.

In their seminal work, Kelly and Keaten (2000) assume that reticence presents multiple difficulties to people who wish to communicate their ideas and feelings across a range of situations, not only in the classroom context. Meanwhile, they suggest that reticence requires further examination by scholars of communication problems. From this premise, it follows that reticence, psychologically speaking, is a personality-based anxiety disorder and, above all, indicates "inadequate communication skills" (Keaten & Kelly, 2000, p. 166).Rather than giving a straightforward definition of reticence, King (2012) discusses some of the characteristics of

reticent learners who are characterized by "reluctance, inability, or lack of opportunity to speak" (p. 226).

Because the aforementioned terms overlap with one another, not just in dictionaries but even in literature addressing this learner's behavior in the ESL/EFL classroom, reluctance, silence, reticence, unwillingness to speak, and the like can be used interchangeably. In the same way, Phillips and Metzger (1973) highlight that reticence refers to "avoidance of social, verbal interaction; unwillingness to communicate unless prodded; disposed to be silent; not inclined to speak freely; reserved" (p. 220).

Seen in this light, Phillips (1991) acknowledges the difficulty in defining the term. Given this reason, Phillips (1991) uses the phrase "communication incompetence" to describe the difficulties that students encounter when in the process of communication. In order to address this issue from the point of view of communication studies, Keaten and Kelly (2000) propose a very useful definition of reticence. As they explain,

> When people avoid communication because they believe it is better to remain silent than to risk appearing foolish, we refer to this *behavior* as reticence. Individuals who are referred to as reticent are people who tend to avoid communication because they believe it is better to remain silent than to risk appearing foolish. In short, reticence refers to behavior; individuals we refer to as reticent are people who have a tendency to avoid communication, that is, to engage in chronic silence out of fear of foolishness (Keaten & Kelly , 2000, p.168).

The essential point is that reticence is a sort of strategy that people use to avoid appearing foolish in various situations, not only in the classroom. The question that is overlooked here is, of course,: is reticence the result of "shyness" alone, or are there other variables that interact with "shyness"? Phillips (1991) claims that shyness is the major cause of students reticence.

Within this framework, previous literature describes this behavior as "silence" (Jule, 2011; King, 2012), "reticence" (Bao, 2013; Keaten & Kelly, 2000; Phillips, 1968; Phillips & Metzger, 1973; Walsh, 2011), "non-responsiveness", "oral passivity" reluctance," "non-verbalization" , "lack of participation" , "non-participation", "avoidance of talk" (Phillips & Metzger, 1973), "lack of oral participation" , and "communication apprehension"(Shao & Gao, 2016). What these "descriptions" have in common is that the language learner may say little or nothing at all of the target language, thereby stripping themselves of opportunities to practice the language, which is a prerequisite for the development of speaking skills, as it has been repeatedly argued before.

As such, if language learners tend to be *reticent* in the classroom, they may run the risk of not developing their interactional competence; thereby, they may be more likely to encounter difficulties in communication when expressing themselves across various social contexts. Under these conditions, reticent language learners are likely to do harm to their speaking and interactional skills in that they may not develop them effectively, particularly in the age of the Communicative Approach.

In this context, Izadi and Zare (2016) and Walsh (2011) confirm that there is nothing as frustrating as a silent or reticent classroom. Izadi and Zare (2016) continue to illustrate that since reticence is a serious problem, it prevents "learners from speaking a foreign language" (p. 83). This reticence is one of the challenges that teachers encounter in practice because it results in (a) low classroom participation and (b) frustration for teachers (Izade & Zare, 2016; Shao & Gao, 2016). In this way, Walsh (2011) states, "For many language teachers around the world, dealing with reticent students is a very common problem and a dominant feature of classroom life" (p. 42). Although silence and reticence differ from one another, they perform different functions, particularly in the language classroom.

Silence and reticence: Major functions

Silence and reticence overlap with one another to a great degree (Bao, 2014). However, there have been some major distinctions between the two terms. In *Understanding Silence and Reticence: Ways of Participating in Second Language Acquisition*, Bao (2014) highlights that silence is a normal aspect of conversations that, among other functions, meaningfully completes speech. Silence is thought to express a variety of meanings and "performs a range of language functions-including to comfort, to support, to accept, to attract attention, to negotiate power, to scold, to interrupt, to challenge, and so on" (Bao, 2014, p. 14). Many scholars (Bao, 2014; Jaworski & Sachdev, 1998; Zembylas & Michaelides, 2004) argue that silence benefits language learners pedagogically and cognitively. Thus, a major difference between silence and reticence is that silence positively contributes to the promotion of teaching and learning processes, whereas reticence usually hinders the development of learners' speaking skills.

In spite of the aforementioned findings regarding the place of reticence in research, there is a lack of research into the functions of silence with respect to educational settings (Jaworski & Sachdev, 1998; Zembylas & Michaelides, 2004). For example, Zembylas and Michaelides (2004) state, "Silence has never really found its place in educational philosophy" (p. 208). To

fill in this gap, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) focus on secondary school students' beliefs about the multiple uses of silence in the classroom. In their analysis of the functions that silence performs, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) explain that both talk and silence are determined contextually, ritually, and professionally. For instance, priests, members of the congregation, libraries, borrowers, judges, plaintiffs, teachers, pupils, actors, audiences, and so on, resort to silence and talk depending on the context in which they find themselves.

In so doing, it appears that silence and talk are determined by institutional settings like funerals, public performances, temples, mosques, libraries, schools, and so on and so forth. Thus, silence appears to be the norm rather than an exception, meaning that it is highly valuable. Silence can mean, in addition to what has been discussed so far, different things to different people cross-culturally. To illustrate this idea, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) obtained information on the beliefs of several groups of Chinese and Caucasian Americans. Discussing the findings of such an investigation, they highlight that Chinese participants' appear "to perceive silence as more important, more enjoyable, and being used to a greater degree for social control than Caucasian Americans" (Jaworski & Sachdev, 1998, p. 276).

As stated previously, few studies have focused on the functions of silence as it occurs inside the classroom. Seen from the perspective of power differences existing between teachers and students in the classroom, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) claim that teachers' use of silence, coupled with specific body movements and facial expressions, could (i) show disapproval of their students, (ii) scold them, or (iii) try to restore order in class. The clear, silent messages sent by teachers to their students are often taken to mean "pay attention", or "what you're doing is unacceptable to me". Put simply, teachers' silence reveals, among other things, their dominant status over their students. That being said, teachers' use of silence in the classroom is thought to control students' behaviors in such a way as to get and focus their attention, interrupt them, or reduce the tension between them and their students.

Therefore, silence and talk are closely related to power relations in educational contexts. In this vein, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) go as far as to suggest that power relations are constructed and reproduced through the use of silence in the classroom. Put differently, teachers' silence is used as a means of exerting power over pupils. Leaving the controlling functions of silence on students' and teachers' behaviors aside, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) claim that silence can perform a facilitative function in the classroom. This is, for example, exemplified by the increased "wait time", and slowing down the tempo of speech in student-led discussions. Following the results obtained, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) highlight that by training teachers

to increase wait time from 1 to 3 seconds, significant changes in several measures of students' performance were reported. To further examine the effects of wait-time on enhanced students' output, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) illustrate,

The length of student response increased from mean of seven words to a mean of 27 words; the mean number of appropriate unsolicited responses increased from five to 17; the mean failure to respond dropped from seven to one; the mean incidence of soliciting, structuring, and reacting moves increased from five to 32;number of speculative responses increased from a mean of two to a mean of seven; the incidence of student-student comparisons of data increases; the frequency of student-initiated questions increases from a mean of one to a mean of four (p.278).

Given the facilitative role of silence in the promotion of teaching and learning processes, it is quite important that teachers work towards increasing the wait-time so as to improve the quality and quantity of classroom interaction, which, in turn, is going to influence language learning in particular. Other authors (Lightbrowm & Spada, 2006) have reported similar results with respect to the facilitative role of "wait time" in teaching and learning English.

In their seminal work, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) selected three different schools in Wales to take part in their exploratory study. The schools selected can be described as rural (1.733 participants) vs. urban (schools 2 and 3) (school 2 included 114) and sub-urban (3.132 participants). Describing the socio-economic background of the participants, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) describe the students as mainly "working class" for the rural and inner city schools, and "middle class" for the sub-urban school. Equipped with this knowledge, the findings of such an investigation reveal that silence, as seen from the perspective of the students, is a positive item in the sense that they highly appreciate it as a "facilitative device" to enable them "to gain access, organize, and absorb new material" (Sachdev, 1998, p. 286).

Yet, differences in terms of the value that the aforementioned schools attached to silence were clearly reported. In this vein, students in rural and inner-city schools were found to value the use of silence in the classroom more than students in suburban schools. In their explanation, Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) claim that valuing silence in rural areas is perhaps influenced by the sort of silent nature of that environment, unlike inner-city students, who seemed to attach less value to silence in the classroom. These students' negative attitude towards silence might be influenced by their noisy environments. While this may contain some truth, Jaworski and

Sachdev (1998) argue that more extensive research to closely examine the validity of such explanations is required.

In a similar vein, Ollin (2007) continues to stress that silence in the classroom is mostly perceived negatively by teachers. This tendency reflects a sort of bias toward talk at the expense of silence. Additionally, current educational policies place "a high value on overt student participation and on practice and observable interventions by the teacher" (Ollin, 2007, p. 265). Ollin (2007), in this context, claims that given the emphasis put on the development of functional skills typical of the modern world, silence is "a neglected aspect of teaching", and that "a silent pedagogy" should be developed (p. 265). Following his discussion of the value that western cultures place on talk, Ollin (2007) stresses that "the value and underlying purposes of the dominance of talk within western formal learning settings represent a particular cultural construct, which gives primacy to the role of vocal communication in the teaching and learning process" (p. 266).

Ollin (2007) points out that silence, unlike speech, is often problematic in classroom situations, with the underlying implication that classrooms are meant for talking. He goes on to explain that previous scholars (Fassinger, 1995) equated participation with talking, no matter whether learners were engaged in active listening or not. As a result, active listening implies, somehow or another, non-participation on the part of the learners.

Based on his investigation into pupils' perceptions of classroom silence, Deans (2013) reports that silence helped pupils to "think", "focus", "work hard", and "concentrate". In this context, Ollin's (2007) investigation reveals that silence was seen as a professional tool to be used for the benefit of the learners to promote their learning process and provide them with "slow time" to think and to concentrate. As seen from the point of view of twenty-five teachers whose perceptions were explored, classroom silence was perceived to be an effective tool to be used in teaching in that it was "used as a relaxation, slowing down time whether at the beginning, to settle down the group, or at the end, to enable them to absorb what had gone before" (Ollin, 2007, p. 270).On the basis of this knowledge, Ollin (2007) argues that teachers view classroom silence as a means to "focus, discipline, and control" (p. 270). Cognitively speaking, "silence" is important for the cognitive processing of complex ideas" (Ollin, 2007, p. 275). Likewise, Vassilopoulos and Konstabtinidis (2012) illustrate how primary school teachers use silence "to bring students to reason or calm them down, to facilitate deflection, encourage the expression of feelings, and communicate a subtle message" (p. 91).

Besides, Vassilopoulos and Konstantinidis (2012) point out that teachers use silence for a variety of purposes, such as enhancing the student-teacher relationship, allowing time for students to think, assimilating information, and solving tasks. In spite of this, both authors seem to highlight that teachers find it extremely difficult to understand the functions that silence could perform in the teaching and learning process and could even start, given this reason, to develop a negative attitude towards silent or reticent pupils. In a similar vein, Gilmore (as cited in Vassilopoulos & Konstantinidis, 2012) claims that silence is an effective strategy to help attract students' attention, especially at the very beginning of a new lesson or learning activity.

In their discussion of the educators' position on the students' silence in the classroom, Zembylas and Michaelides (2004) argue that "we seldom grant, either to ourselves or our students, the opportunity to be silent. When we observe our students' silence, we do not always acknowledge its value, nor do we typically appreciate the possibility of using this silence in a creative manner" (p. 195). Evidently, silence seems to significantly contribute to enhanced learning and teaching.

Reticence, in sharp contrast, tends to reveal a sort of handicap in activating communication skills and is closely related to communication apprehension and shyness (Bao, 2014). Bao (2014) continues to explain that "silence may characterize a mentally active period during which learners go through the process of building up language proficiency", whereas reticence seems to be "a source of disadvantage in second language improvement" (p. 14). In spite of their different functions, Bao (2014) highlights that both forms of silence and reticence "might overlap to a considerable extent" (p. 14).

Therefore, silence does not seem to indicate low competence, and the silent learner may have good proficiency in the target language but choose to keep quiet "for reasons other than the lack of verbal ability" (Bao, 2014, p. 15). As it has been suggested before, learners in EFL/ESL settings are required to develop their interactional competence, "such as social introduction, turn-taking, initiation of talk, closing conversation, changing topics, interrupting, and recognizing the difference between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) social norms" (Bao, 2014, p. 17). Therefore, it is a prerequisite for learners to engage in conversation so as to develop their interactional competence. Imbedded in Bao's (2014) view is the idea that a learner who does not interact with other speakers is expected to experience difficulties in communication.

Building on the previous discussion, Bao (2014) defines reticence as undesirable silent moments when students believe that talk is required. Thus, reticence is taken to mean longer pauses, silent episodes, or hesitations. Nevertheless, these silences are not contributing anything of significance to the process of teaching and learning. Rather, they stand as obstacles in the way of learners attempts to sharpen their speaking skills in general and interactional competence in particular. Imbedded in this assumption is the idea that reticence is an obstacle to the professional growth of individuals.

By and large, the same applies to language learning situations in that learners' reticence is a real obstacle to language development, particularly when it comes to developing a fair amount of proficiency in the target language in contexts where learners' exposure to the target language input is limited to the context of the classroom. Therefore, when silence no longer serves as an effective learning tool, according to Bao (2014), it results in reticence. In spite of the distinctions that Bao (2013, 2014, 2020) makes between silence and reticence, they both use "reluctance", "silence", and "reticence" interchangeably. This amounts to saying that "natural silence" is a form of silence that can be beneficial for learning and teaching processes cognitively, psychologically, and linguistically. Reticence, on the other hand, is a manifestation of psychological, cultural, and linguistic deficiencies.

This is why it has been regarded as an obstacle to the effective process of teaching and learning since it prevents learners from expressing themselves freely in social situations. In doing so, language learners are more likely not to expand their knowledge and, hence, may not develop their fluency in the target language as much as their highly articulate counterparts. For these reasons, reticence can be problematic. Irrespective of the different functions of both silence and reticence, the advocates of the Reticence Program at Pennsylvania University put forward a set of useful characteristics to identify reticent individuals.

The profile of the reticent

As it has been pointed out earlier, there has been a tendency among the Reticence Program pioneers to focus more on the identification of the characteristics of reticent people. To expand more on this point, Phillips (cited in Keaten & Kelly, 2000) assigns four features to reticent communicators. First, "they refrain from participating at all; [second] "they create a self-

fulfilling prophecy of ineptitude", meaning that even when they perform well enough, they doubt their competence and stop participating (p. 166).

Simply put, reticent communicators are not as reticent as they might think they are, but the perceptions they have of themselves and their competence are what really drive their reticent behavior. Third, reticent communicators are thought to engage, more or less, in a sort of "programmatic activity, relying on clichés or head nodding," and finally, "some reticent communicators have nervous mannerisms such as hesitant speech and vocalized pauses" (cited in Keaten & Kelly, 2000, p. 166). Following their discussion on reticence, Keaten and Kelly (2000) explain that the phenomenon under investigation is directly or indirectly related to other possible factors such as anxiety and rhetorical deficiency.

In a similar vein, Phillips (1991) asserts that this communication incompetence has two dimensions: cognitive and behavioral. At the level of behaviors, reticent individuals may have, implicitly speaking, deficiencies in one or more of the classical canons of rhetoric, including "invention, disposition, style, delivery, and memory" (Phillips, 1991, p. 71). The cognitive element of the problem is largely the result of "the faulty belief system which justifies the reticent person's avoidance of communication" (Keaten & Kelly, 2000, p. 168).

Nevertheless, the picture of the reticent gets more complicated when one considers educational settings. In an effort to examine the faulty beliefs that reticent speakers hold, Keaten and Kelly (2000) assume that a reticent person, first, is someone who has "an exaggerated sense of self-importance" (p. 167). Phillips (1991) continues to illustrate that, "reticent people tend to see themselves as potentially more important to others than others see them" (p. 167). Reticent individuals think that effective speakers are born, not made, and believe that effective speakers are born with a gift which they do not have (Phillips, 1991). Reticent individuals envy those they perceive to be effective speakers, accept their own failure as unavoidable, and believe that speaking is not that important (Phillips, 1991).

In addition, Reticent people assume that most people talk too much and that small talk is a superficial waste of time and see themselves as effective listeners. More importantly, they claim they can speak when they want to, but they often choose not to (Phillips, 1991). Reticent individuals believe that this is the most common reason for non-participation and overemphasize the role of effective listening because of the assumption that most people talk too much anyway (Phillips, 1991). However, they are not usually good listeners, as most are locked in their speculative fantasies while other people are talking (Phillips, 1991).

That is why reticent individuals choose not to talk because they assume they will be evaluated negatively by other people present in the environment. It follows from this set of features that it is better to be quiet and let people think you are a fool than prove it by talking. Last but not least, reticents need a cure because they regard their own disability as a disease and seek some form of applied treatment to obtain relief.

In an insightful comment on the aforementioned characteristics of "the reticent," Keaten and Kelly (2000) explain that "these beliefs devalue communication, view effective speaking as a gift but at the same time as manipulative, and provide reticents with justification for not speaking" (p. 168). Drawing on Phillips (1991, 1997), Keaten and Kelly (2000) propose a more detailed model of reticence that includes "need, perceived incompetence, helplessness, anxiety, devaluation, and withdrawal" (p. 169).

Meanwhile, the aforementioned scholars warn that "no assumption is made that this is a sequential, linear model" (Keaten & Kelly, 2000, p. 169). To expand on this model, reticent individuals, though they resort to silence, are fully aware of the vital role of communication for survival in a social world, particularly in societies that value verbal communication. In sharp contrast to Phillips (1991, 1997), Keaten and Kelly (2000) argue that it is not that reticent people do not understand the vital role of communication. Rather, "the problem rests with their perceived inability to satisfy personal and professional needs" (Keaten & Kelly, 2000, p. 170). That is to say, if the individuals who "avoid communication" tend to view themselves as incompetent or lacking in key communication skills, reticents "often report problems regarding knowledge of what to say, timing, organization, delivery, and memory" (Keaten & Kelly, 2000, p. 170).

As far as the component of helplessness is concerned, Keaten and Kelly (2000) postulate that in the context of reticence, helplessness refers to a perceived lack of control over communication outcomes. As such, reticents feel that their attempts at speaking are doomed to failure no matter how hard they try, as they believe that "good" communicators speak without rehearsal and without planning and, more importantly, that effective communicators communicate spontaneously. Consequently, the more individuals perceive their expectation of failure, the more likely they are to feel anxious about communication. Although they believe speaking is a necessity for functioning in society, reticent individuals, according to Keaten and Kelly (2000), experience a sort of cognitive dissonance. In this way, they explain that

> Because they understand the critical need for communication but perceive themselves as helplessly unable to be good communicators, reticent individuals experience cognitive dissonance, which they alleviate in part by devaluing communication. They are trapped in the reticence paradox: understanding the importance of communication on a societal level but devaluating its importance on a personal level. They believe that "speaking is not that important to me" while agreeing simultaneously that communication is important for building relationships, forming identity, and achieving goals (Keaten and Kelly, 2000, p.172).

Given their perceived communication incompetence, the faulty belief system that the reticent individuals have adopted, together with their anxiety, leads them to avoid communication by putting themselves in situations not requiring talk and/or by saying little or nothing when in communication contexts, leading to their withdrawal from discussions and conversations. In this way, Phillips and Metzger (1973) highlight that the problem of reticence is grounded in nosology and is closely related to neurosis as a behavioral pattern. The behavior of most reticent people seems to have an analogy with the symptoms of four major neuroses. As Phillips and Metzger (1973) illustrate,

> The reticent person may appear depressed. His tonicity is down his speech monotonous, low keyed and characterized by little emotion. He may disparage himself and his competencies, Reticents frequently report physical symptoms associated with their efforts to communicate in various situations […] in some cases of reticence, particularly in males; there is considerable hostility and aggressive feeling displayed in written documents about their feelings towards others (Phillips & Metzger, 1973, p. 222).

Nevertheless, Phillips (1984) highlights that "mere quietness" is not the issue when it comes to reticence. On the contrary, many eloquent people choose not to participate in discussions and conversations. What makes reticence problematic is that reticents cannot participate even when they are in dire need of it (Keaten & Kelly, 2009). A reticent individual "has become a prisoner of his technique of avoidance, and he can neither fulfil himself nor the demands of society" (Phillips, 1968, p. 45).

Reticence is a socio-pathological disorder and even a schizophrenic behavior (Phillips & Metzger, 1973). Therefore, the desire of reticent individuals to withdraw from discussions and conversations "may be their defense against unsettling paradoxical situations in their homes or among their peers" (Phillips & Metzger, 1973, p. 223). As such, reticent individuals may avoid making eye contact with other speakers to whom they are speaking as if the other persons are

not there, and they tend to show numerous hesitations in their speech, resulting in their stuttering (Phillips & Metzger, 1973).

Moreover, reticent individuals, to borrow the words of Phillips and Metzger (1973), “don’t talk much to their peers. They tend to be silent in the classroom, even when permission is given not to be silent" (p. 226). On many occasions, reticent individuals tend to wait around for someone else before they make the first move. Given the difficulties that hinder their speaking, Phillips (1968) highlights that reticent individuals prefer to communicate in writing, and most have achieved a fairly high level of skill at it.

Equipped with this knowledge, Phillips and Metzger (1973) argue that reticence is not context-specific but rather a personality trait, noting, meanwhile, that it may present a lot of difficulties to learners at school. Following these lines of thought, Phillips and Metzger (1973) show that reticence could be "the result of inadequate communication training in the home and in early school experience" and that reticence could be a sign "of social marginality" in the sense that students who come from rural areas, for example, may encounter difficulties in behaving according to the norms and expectations of their schools. In this context, Phillips (1968) assumes that reticent individuals may not show any signs of stuttering or distortions in articulation. To illustrate this idea, he points out that a reticent individual is someone who is

> Usually quiet and tends to avoid interaction. He is reluctant to discuss ideas and problems with others and seems inordinately intimidated by super-ordinates. He rarely asks questions, does not socialize well, and physical upsets are often associated with his attempts to communicate. Though he may be able to handle minimal communicative requirements, face to face contact with others normally threatens him. He does not anticipate success in communicative transactions involving speech. He may be defined as *a person for whom anxiety about participation in oral communication outweighs his projection of gain from the situation*. He may or may not be consciously aware of what he has at stake when he communicates with others. He is quite aware, however, of his inability and consequently seeks to avoid interactions rather than to participate. He knows that he does not react as others do in personalized communicative situations. This awareness often pushes him to seek occupations and activities that will spare him from communicating, where his peers choose such activities on a basis of interest or commitment without much concern for the communicative requirements. People around him may describe his as “tight-lipped”, “curt”, “pauciloquent” , “uncommunicative” , “shifty” , “recondite” , “withdrawn” , “close-mouthed” , “shy”, “deficient”, “fearful” , “apprehensive” , “antisocial” , “schizophrenic” and apply many other adjectives which imply denigration (Phillips ,1968, p.40).

Seen in this light, Phillips (1968), based on diary reports from 198 college-age students who were identified as severely inadequate oral communicators, compared this group to similar data from 1100 college-age students who seemed to have no problem with communication. This comparison resulted in the identification of ten features of the population designated "reticent". Among the symptoms reported were a loud or rapid heartbeat, headache, throbbing temples, nausea, excessive perspiration, and an inability to see the audience.

In addition to this, reticent individuals expressed their inability to communicate with "important" people like teachers or counselors. Most indicated that they tried to avoid private conferences and expressed a fear of being asked questions in the classroom. Consequently, they tended to rely on monosyllables and neutral responses, and finally, most of them showed "hesitancy, vocalized pauses, diffidence in voice, or syntactic awkwardness in speech" (Phillips, 1968, p. 41).

As far as educational settings are concerned, Izadi and Zare (2016), in their useful paper, propose that reticent learners, generally speaking, “are unwilling to engage in classroom discussion, ask questions, or give responses. They are passive and over-dependent on the teacher” (p. 74). They went on to explain that the phenomenon under investigation

> Could be indicative of students’ avoidance of communication; it may force them to adopt a silent mask, though they develop the knowledge domain. Reticence can also be detected from the negative approach learners adopt towards communication. To these learners, communication is an inefficient activity that only wastes their time (Izadi & Zare, 2016, p. 74).

What is at issue here is not that reticent learners avoid communication or have negative self-esteem. Rather, the reticent behavior has damaging effects on the language learning process, particularly when it comes to developing proficiency in EFL settings where learners’ exposure to the target language is restricted to the context of the classroom, as is the case with Moroccan EFL learners. In so doing, Phillips (1968) argues that if reticence is "a speech disorder", some sort of treatment must be given to these individuals, suggesting that a program of speech instruction with the aim of training reticents must be developed.

In fact, the Pennsylvania State University Reticence Program was designed to help reticent communicators in the first place by training them in particular areas. In an effort to reduce reticence, Keaten, Kelly, and Finch (2000) highlight that participants in the reticence program are "given instruction and practice for context-specific communication skills including social

conversation, talking to authority figures, class participation, group discussion, job interviewing, oral interpretation of literature, and public speaking" (p. 152).

Because reticent individuals subscribe to a set of faulty beliefs that contribute, more or less, to their communication difficulties, Keaten et al. (2000) examined the effectiveness of the Pennsylvania State University Reticence Program in changing the beliefs associated with reticence and found that the Program was effective in helping to reduce the anxiety about communicating and improving social communication behavior. In this regard, Phillips (cited in Keaten et al., 2000) uses the term "rhetoritherapy" to describe the type of treatment approach used in the Pennsylvania State University Reticence Program.

Moreover, this program helps individuals "set specific goals for their behavior, prepare, plan, and perform the behaviors to achieve those goals, and then evaluate their performance" (Keaten, et al., 2000, p. 136–137). The end result of the reticence program, according to Keaten et al., (2000), "is continually on changing behavior" via producing changes in the belief systems to which the reticent individuals subscribe (p. 137).

In this way, Keaten et al. (2000) assess the extent to which the reticence program has been successful in changing the belief systems to which reticent individuals subscribe. Significantly, the results indicate that the effects of the program were fruitful. In spite of the considerable body of knowledge generated by the Reticence Program in helping one understand the psychology of reticent individuals, it says little with regard to educational settings. For this reason, it is essential that one shed some light on the place of reticence in educational contexts.

Reticence in educational settings: An under-researched issue

Reviewing the existing knowledge on the place of reticence/silence in the EFL/ESL classroom, many scholars (Bao, 2014, 2020; Izade & Zari, 2016; King, 2011; Julé, 2011; Nakane, 2008) claim that the issue of students' reticence is an under-researched area of knowledge, though it has been considered to be a serious phenomenon encountered by both teachers and students on a daily basis (Walsh, 2011). Bao (2020), for example, argues that students' silence/reticence is "an under-explored theme in the mainstream literature on second language acquisition and on the methodology of teaching a second language" (p. 2).

Following his discussion of the reasons that contributed to the marginalization of students' silence/reticence in the field of second language learning studies, Bao (2020) states, "Silence is a

hard topic to deal with when it comes to empirical research, simply because when learners talk, the researcher can record data for analysis, yet when learners are speechless, data hardly exist for one to collect and read" (p. 2). Based on these legitimate reasons that researchers encounter in exploring the issue, which are predominantly related to the research methods by which scholars collect and transcribe silence, the issue has been largely neglected in the field of second language acquisition studies (Bao, 2020).

In this vein, many scholars (Izadi & Zare, 2016; King, 2011) argue that, under the influence of the communicative language teaching movement (CLT), very little attention has been paid to reticent or silent learners in the language classroom. Seen in this light, it appears that Hymes's (1972) notion of "communicative competence" has had a profound impact on educationalists, teachers, and stakeholders all over the world. This is evident in the obsession of teachers with productive skills, namely speaking, with which communication has become synonymous. This obsession with speaking skills has led educationalists to put a lot of emphasis on speaking in particular, resulting in doing everything it takes to discourage what they called "learners' passivity".

In the same way, Vassilopoulos and Konstantinidis (2012) point out that the theoretical and empirical literature on silence/reticence in the classroom is scarce. Based on this view, for learners to shape their speaking skills, they are, theoretically, required to do as much speaking as possible. Seen in this light, learners who do so tend to gain the label of active ESL/EFL learners, whereas quiet/reticent ones will gain the label of passive learners. Are EFL learners "passive" merely because they do not speak in the classroom? Are there no significant cognitive processes occurring in the brain of a reticent learner when listening to others?

The growing body of research evidence on reticence in educational settings (Abedi & Aghazadeh, 2014; Bao, 2013, 2020; Bista, 2012; Carter & Henrichnsen, 2015; Chang, 2011; Chalak & Baktash, 2015; Harmouda, 2013; Izade & Zare, 2016; Julé, 2011, 2012; Jackson, 2002; Liu, 2002,2005a, 2005b, 2017; Li & Jia, 2006; Nakane, 2008; Riasati, 2012; Soo & Goh, 2013; Shea, 2017; Zare-ee & Shirvanizadeh, 2014) indicates that researchers' interest in this partly neglected area of knowledge is renewed and that focusing one's own attention on the unobservable behaviors is no less important that the observable ones occurring in the EFL educational settings .

In other words, teachers, and EFL/ESL teachers in particular, need to decode the multiple meanings of reticence, not turn a blind eye to it. Influenced by the concept of "communicative competence", Shumnin (2002) asserts that speaking is central to effective communication in today's world. On this basis, in order to engage in conversations in the classroom, EFL/ESL learners have to take the initiative, ask questions, or express disagreement in the conversation, all of which require a command of particular language features.

As far as the observable and unobservable behaviors of classroom interaction are concerned, Tsui (2001) argues that most of the previous empirical research on classroom interaction is primarily centered on "what is observable in the class", noting, however, that such an approach does not closely examine classroom discourse in its entirety (p. 123). Moreover, Tsui (2001) shares the view that previous classroom interaction studies focused remarkably more on observable turns taken by teachers and language learners as the sole indicator of classroom participation, ignoring, at the same time, that "learners could participate by taking private turns or even mental turns that are unobservable"(p.123). In an insightful comment on the dominance of the observable trend in classroom interaction research, Tsui (2003) explains,

> For more than two decades, the focus of classroom interaction research- be it teacher or student talk- had been on what is observable; more recently researchers have begun to question analyses of classroom process based only on the observable. It was felt that the unobservables in the classroom-such as teachers' and learners' psychological states, including beliefs, attitudes, motivations, self-perception and anxiety, learning styles and cultural norms-play an important part in shaping classroom interaction (p. 121)

Seen in this light, the researcher is of the opinion that claiming that EFL/ESL learners may resort to silence/reticence merely because they are unmotivated enough to express themselves is both simplistic and reductionist in nature. In this way, Tsui (2001), for instance, stresses that researching only the observable aspects of classroom behaviors has led researchers to focus their energy on three main aspects: input, interaction, and output. This means that the unobservable aspects of classroom interaction, such as students' reticence, have gone unnoticed. However, Tsui (2001), though he does not say much about such a change in the attitudes of researchers, assumes that current research approaches to classroom interaction do in fact emphasize the vitality of examining the unobservable aspects of classroom interaction.

In 1997, Sifianou claims that though silence/reticence is a meaningful component of human interaction, it is only recently that it has attracted the attention of linguistics, whereas it had been

the focus of anthropologists, psychologists, and philosophers for much longer. The reason for this, according to Sifianou (1997), is that linguists viewed silence "merely as the absence of talk". Put simply, the absence of talk implies the absence of meaning. For this reason, linguists felt that silence was less worthy of thorough investigation. Drawing on Granger (2004), and Saville-Troike (1988), Bao (2020) emphasizes that second language acquisition researchers have shown less interest in private speech production and seem, to use the words of Granger (2004), "insufficiently curious about silence as part of the second language learning process" (p. 30).

Apart from the reasons that have contributed, directly or indirectly, to the marginalization of silence/reticence in classroom research, Bygate (2001) highlights that teaching speaking has received momentous attention starting from the 1970s onwards in the sense that language teaching and learning became increasingly influenced by cognitive and sociolinguistic theories of language and learning. Therefore, drawing on the serious shortcomings of "traditional methods", a more communicative approach started to emerge, with the effect of exercising so much influence on what teachers and learners do in the context of the language classroom.

Because Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasizes the vital role of speaking in learning the target language, King (2011) argues that this is a major reason why reticence has been neglected by researchers, especially by EFL/ESL teachers and applied linguists; otherwise, what is the use of applied linguists if they do not come up with suggestions or implications to help solve language-related problems? Following his discussion about the reasons that have contributed to the marginalization of reticence or silence in research, King (2011) strangely notes that

> Hardly any empirical research has targeted the issue of silence, particularly when it happens in language classes. Indeed, as a subject for study, the often-ignored phenomenon of silence is both potentially fascinating and problematic in equal measure. Investigating something as intangible as silence, something that can be neither seen nor heard, poses real challenges for researchers (p.325).

Although King (2011) claims that reticence has been neglected as a research territory, the growing body of research (Granger, 2004; King, 2011; Nakane, 2007) indicates that interest in students' reticence has been renewed. Despite the attempts at exploring the intricacies of silence in educational settings, King (2011), for example, highlights that "silence is such an ambiguous, multi-faced, and dynamic phenomenon that only a cross-disciplinary approach can do justice to its sophisticated and complicated nature" (p. 48).

In his attempt to trace the evolution of silence/reticence research in second language acquisition studies, Bao (2020) maintains that "silence is a hard topic to deal with when it comes to empirical research, simply because when learners talk, the researcher can record data for analysis, yet when learners are speechless, data hardly exist for one to collect and read" (p. 2). Meanwhile, Bao (2020) points out that most of the studies on silence have been carried out by psychologists and sociologists. What makes the issue more difficult to research, according to Bao (2020), is that "there is no scientific method to transcribe silence", noting, however, that research on silence/reticence has been informed by Krashen's silent period (1982), the inner speech stage (Vygotsky, 1978), internalization (Winegar, 1997), and private speech (Saville-Troike, 1988).

In this context, Jaworski (1997) strongly argues that silence/reticence is such a diverse concept that only a multidisciplinary approach can do its merits justice. This amounts to saying that researching students' reluctance to speak in the language classroom is not an easy task, not because of the intangibility of the issue under investigation but because of the multidisciplinary nature of this area of knowledge, which may mean no more than an absence of sounds, especially to laymen. In so doing, King (2011) seems to endorse the use of an interdisciplinary approach to research students' reticence to avoid falling into the trap of reductionism.

Meanwhile, King (2011) argues that data on students' reticence in educational settings is notably lacking. As he puts it, "empirical quantitative studies using a more systematic observational method to measure the existence of silence within specific contexts, especially educational contexts, are notably lacking" (King, 2011, p. 325–326). In his seminal work on the silence of Japanese students, King (2011) finds it strange that no major empirical research has been conducted on silence in Japanese tertiary education. Following his discussion of the possible factors behind this strange negligence of students' silence/reticence, King (2011) explains,

> Perhaps it is because silence is somewhat esoteric phenomenon that tends to exist on the edge of our consciousness. This lack of awareness, coupled to a relative scarcity of relevant literature dealing with the subject (when compared to spoken aspects of L2 learner discourse), means that silence simply does not seem to be on most educational researchers' radar. This in itself is odd because it is an issue that affects everybody who teaches; whether silencing the boisterous or encouraging the silent to contribute, both are part of educators' daily classroom realities. A further difficulty which might help explain the lack of empirical studies in this area is that investigating silence presents a number of methodological challenges and interpretive conundrums that are not

> easily resolved. How can silence be effectively identified and measured within classrooms? How can accurate meanings be gleaned from something so multifaceted, ambiguous and highly dependent upon context for its significance? (pp.1-2).

Given the complexities involved in discussing the multiple meanings of students' silence or reticence, it is quite evident that King (2011) and Jaworski (1997) call for the necessity of adopting a highly multidisciplinary perspective on the issue under discussion. Irrespective of whether researchers, in the past, used to focus more on (a) the observable behaviors of students and teachers, (b) the intangibility and complexity of reticence, or (c) the influence of communicative language teaching on classroom discourse and research, reticence is no longer a forgotten research territory, as this is manifested in the growing body of research findings, including education in general and EFL/ESL contexts in particular. Leaving aside the factors that contributed to giving less attention to students' reticence in the EFL classroom, it has been suggested in the literature that reticent students are usually looked upon by both their peers and teachers alike.

Attitudes towards reticent students

As it has been repeatedly suggested by the Reticence Program pioneers, reticent individuals tend to have a negative image of themselves (Phillips, 1984, 1991; Phillips & Metzger, 1973). In EFL educational settings, it has been widely accepted that learners are expected to develop their interactional competence, particularly in the age of the Communicative Language Teaching Movement. In this context, Marlina (2009) assumes that students who are proactively communicating their opinions orally in the classroom are often perceived as active, whereas those who interact less or prefer listening are correspondingly categorized as passive.

Seen in this light, Mclean and Ronson (as cited in Marlina, 2009) offer a critique of the deficient view of the reticent learner by claiming that "silence can mean engagement in thought, not lack of ideas" (p.2).On top of that, Mclean and Ronson (2005) further explain that the assumption that "talking is connected to thinking" is a western participatory style of learning and that "it is not shared in the East" (p. 2). Within this framework, Shi (as cited in Marlina, 2006) highlights that the deficiency view that eastern students tend to be passive in the classroom implies that there is a superior Western culture that has a radically different discourse pattern.

Drawing on previous research findings, Weaver and Qi (2005), Kuh and Umbach (2004), and Rocca (2010) seem to associate active learners with being motivated, and critical. Weaver and Qi (2005) clearly state, "Students who actively participate in the learning process learn more than those who do not" (p. 570). Upon such an impression, students who participate in class discussions, in sharp contrast to their silent or reticent counterparts, show improvement in their communication skills, tend to memorize less, and engage in higher levels of thinking, including "interpretation, analysis, and synthesis" (Rocca, p. 188). That being said, one asks a question: is criticality limited to vocal students? Are silent students not thinking critically just because they do not voice out their thoughts?

According to several scholars (Marlina, 2009; King, 2011, Bao, 2014), reticence has been regarded as a defining feature of Asian students, and this reluctance to speak has been deeply influenced by Confucian teachings, which place a high value on collectivistic values within society. That is to say, avoiding classroom communication by Asian students, for instance, has been shaped by their culture to a great extent. However, Marlina (2009) suggests that attributing students' reticence to culture "is only a partial understanding of the issue" (p. 3). Since Moroccan society emphasizes familial ties, interdependence, and taking care of one another, Moroccan EFL learners' reticence may be the result of their culture.

Based on the results he obtained, Marlina (2009) reveals that Chinese learners, for example, did in fact appreciate classroom participation, thus refuting the old-established deficiency view that reticent learners are not into oral participation in the language classroom. However, similar to the advocates of private speech, the participants in this study showed that listening; reading, and researching are forms of active participation in the classroom (Marlina, 2009). In doing so, Marlina (2009) seems to call on teachers and researchers to re-examine the wrong assumption that Chinese students, in multicultural classrooms, for instance, tend to be passive. These students do not just "sit there", but rather "actively think, listen, process, and link with their prior knowledge before they seek an opportunity to express their carefully processed opinions" (Marlina, 2009, p. 7).

Seeing their active counterparts monopolizing class discussions, Weaver and Qi (2005) argue that less active students would start to develop a negative attitude towards their active classmates. As such, students' fear of disapproval may force them to adhere to a more passive mode of learning. For this reason, a silent majority is likely to feel indignant at students who are mostly perceived as "monopolizing class discussions", or "linguistic rate busters" in the

classroom (Weaver & Qi, 2005, p. 576). In her comment on the attitudes that "passive" students develop towards their "active" counterparts, Marie (2000) explains that passive students feel so irritated at their "talkative" peers. As he states, "in those classes, students become irritated with peers who were especially talkative" (Marie, 2000, p. 342).

Bao (2020), in a similar vein, argues that students who tend to remain silent in the classroom are usually perceived as "negatively, socially, and intellectually incompetent" (p. 2). However, he highlights that being orally active may not lead automatically and definitely to better academic achievement, just like being less articulate may not lead to poor academic achievement (Bao, 2020). While this idea may contain some truth, speaking is central to developing one's own interactional competence in language classrooms. Thus, not engaging in speaking activities could negatively influence learners' interactional competence.

Bao (2020) further goes on to suggest that individuals who remain silent or silenced are framed within the needy and at risk, lacking in critical thinking skills; silence goes against one's empowerment; lacking competence or commitment; having low literacy skills. Furthermore, being quiet might result in the teacher's low opinion of reticent students (Bao, 2014, p. 40). For these reasons, teachers, and language teachers in particular, seem to prefer students who speak out to demonstrate evidence of learning engagement (Bao, 2020). This is quite understandable because, in the age of communicative language teaching, learners need to orally use the target language in order to develop their communicative competence. Research has, in this context, revealed that there are multiple reasons why learners "fail" to take part in in-class discussions.

Factors contributing to classroom reticence

From the preceding discussion, it is evident that reticence is a multifaceted phenomenon (Abedi & Aghazadeh, 2014; Bao, 2013, 2014, 2020; Chalak & Baktash, 2015; Cheng, 2000; Izadi & Zare, 2016; Murad & Jalambo, 2019; Jaworski, 1997; Jaworski & Sachdev, 1998; Keaten & Kelly, 2000; Phillips, 1991; Phillips & Metzger, 1973; Weaver & Qi, 2005). That is to say, reticence is the result of a plethora of interrelated factors.

As far as research is concerned, learners reticence can be the result of a plethora of factors, including teaching methods, modes of classroom interaction, syllabi, language proficiency, personality traits, self-confidence, cultures of learning, language anxiety, rapport, classroom climate, lack of motivation, lack of knowledge, and classroom logistics. These factors can be

grouped into five major categories: linguistic factors, affective factors, cultural factors, institutional factors, and cognitive factors. Broadly, these factors can be internal (micro) or external (macro) to the learners. With regard to cultural factors, there has been a lot of discussion in scholarly literature with regard to Asian contexts that view reticence as an "Asian thing" (Bao, 2014; Wang, 2019).

In this vein, Bao (2014) highlights that learners reticence is the product of “low L2 proficiency, lack of confidence, fear of judgment, fear of mistakes, and group pressure” (p. 41). Bao (2014) further claims that teachers can be the reason for students’ reticence. As he states,

> What the teacher does in the classroom represents a significant influence over students’ inclination to speak or their withdrawal into silence. Many students feel that one should not underestimate how influential the teacher is, simply because every teacher can make students talk or stay quiet through his or her individual style. A number of teachers who use their life experiences to connect and illustrate lesson content could make the lesson so interesting that reticent students would open up and interact with them. Other teachers who only focus on the textbook make the lesson tiresome as students can always read the book at home (Bao, 2014, p.58).

Based on an extensive multisite investigation exploring the classroom behavior of 924 Japanese learners of English, King (2011) reports that students initiated less than one percent of classroom talk within their classes, "which over a fifth of all class time observed was characterized by no oral participation by many participants" (p. 325). King (2011), in the same context, highlights that it is only after a thorough understanding of the dynamics of learners reticence that one can be able to discover the most effective ways to encourage active oral participation in the English language classroom. In his useful review of the causes of students’ reticence in higher education institutions in China, Wang (2019) claims that classroom reticence can be caused by the classroom atmosphere, the teachers themselves, and the culture that students bring with them to the classroom. Like King (2011), Wang (2019) claims that Asian EFL learners’ reticence in the English language classroom is a burning issue for both teachers and researchers who struggle to help develop learners’ speaking skills.

Psychologically, Wang (2019) highlights that it is well-documented that Chinese EFL learners’ are not confident enough to use English in the classroom, which suggests, in turn, that learners’ reluctance to speak is closely related to their individual traits (extroversion vs. introversion). As Wang (2019) explains, "extroverted students who are eloquent, have a keen

intellect, and are motivated tend to take an active part in class and express themselves, whereas introverted students opt to be passive and are less willing to speak in class" (p. 56).

Seen from the perspective of linguistic competence, Wang (2019) argues that learners' reticence can also be traced to their lack of competence in the target language, which usually manifests itself in the sort of difficulties students experience in understating teachers' output. In a similar vein, Hu (as cited in Wang, 2019) assumes that the lack of oral participation in the English language classroom is mainly caused by the dominance of traditional teaching and learning methods, which hinder students' thinking and prevent them from expressing themselves in English.

Accordingly, Wang (2019) highlights that, pedagogically speaking, the use of traditional methods in teaching English contributes enormously to the rise of reticence on the part of language learners, thereby leaving little room for students to express themselves. Using "boring" teaching materials and devoting less time to lesson planning are cited as leading reasons for the phenomenon under investigation (Wang, 2019). Consequently, students feel unmotivated and thus lose interest in the learning activities, resulting in reticence.

Additionally, the questioning strategies used by teachers are thought to influence students' oral participation (Rocca, 2010; Wang, 2019). To illustrate, Wang (2019) claims that "open-ended" and "easy" questions are more likely to stimulate more classroom talk in comparison with "close-ended" questions. Put differently, the more the questions are open and easy, the more likely students are to contribute to classroom discussions. In the same way, Rocca (2010) points out that the sort of questions that allow for interpretation and elaboration rather than fact or evaluation are reported to lead to fruitful discussions. While this may contain some truth, it overlooks the fact that some learners, especially in contexts where English is a foreign language, have language deficiencies, not because they lack critical thinking skills to express themselves orally but simply because these students are lacking in linguistic skills.

Although the pioneers of the Reticence Program claim that reticence is "a disease" that requires "a cure", Keaten and Kelly (2000) strongly argue that

> Reticence as a behavior response to a social situation is not necessarily problematic. In fact, reticence can be an appropriate and rational response. For example, if a teacher were to ask a group of elementary students "who can tell us about the major implications of quantum physics? Many, if not

> all, of the students would experience reticence because of their lack of knowledge of the topic. In this example, reticence would be considered an appropriate and understandable response (pp.168-169).

This amounts to saying that while shyness may be a major reason for the emergence of reticence, it is not beyond any reasonable guess that having little or no knowledge about the topic of the conversation could also be a leading factor. What can be deduced from this discussion is that reticence is the product of a plethora of factors interplaying with one another, directly or indirectly. In spite of this, reticence can be problematic when it prevents an individual from reaching their personal or professional goals (Keaten & Kelly, 2000).

In this way, Lightbown and Spada (2006) assume that the sort of oral corrective feedback that learners receive after their contributions could either encourage or discourage them from actively participating in constructing classroom talk. On this basis, one can assume that if teachers' corrective feedback is positive, learners may feel encouraged to speak actively. However, if teachers keep correcting students for "silly" mistakes, this may have the tendency to "upset and even frighten students" (Wang, 2019, p. 58).

Rocca (2010) argues that classroom participation can be influenced by the teaching styles of the instructors themselves. Thus, students are more likely to share their thoughts and comments if their teachers do not pay attention to their mistakes, make fun of them, put them down, or are not overtly critical of them. Put differently, if teachers provide negative feedback that disparages the self-esteem of the learners, resorting to silence could be an escape. Addressing the impact of teachers on class participation, Fassinger (1995) points out that teachers' teaching styles in higher education institutions, for example, do not seem to have a direct relation to class participation. Rather, faculty's greatest impact on class participation stems from course designs; for example, when professors create class activities that foster positive emotional climates, they are likely to help cultivate interaction (Fassinger, 1995, p. 93).

In the same way, Bao (2014) highlights that teachers' poor questioning styles can be the reason for students' reticence. He writes, "Teachers' poor questioning techniques constitute an important cause of silence" and that students may "resist answering questions that seem to be either too simple or too challenging" (Bao, 2014, p. 58). "A second factor," Bao (2014) writes, "has to do with insufficient space for students to process their thinking" (p. 58). Bao (2014) continues to state that a third factor behind students' reticence is closely related to teachers' failure to utilize learners' background knowledge as a resource in the process of teaching. In this

sense, “without personal knowledge and experience, students do not know how to contribute to class discussion and easily become reticent” (Bao, 2014, p. 59).

Significantly, what happens in the classroom can either encourage or discourage students’ speaking. In this context, Bao (2014) says, "When classroom processes are uninspiring, students lose the talking mood and become socially introverted" (p. 59). In a similar vein, Cheng (2000) states, "In a teacher-centered environment, learners are doomed to reticence and passivity. If such experience is constantly repeated, learners are likely to develop permanently reticent behavior" (p. 442). Another factor for learners’ reticence

> Has to do with the teacher’s unapproachable personality and poor classroom management. Some teachers fail to build trust among shy students, induce a stressful classroom climate, lack a good sense of humour, receive student contribution with criticism, and let strong students dominate discussions (Bao, 2014, p. 59).

Within this framework, Bao (2014) claims that it is not an easy task for teachers to motivate students to speak in the classroom when the education system tends to prepare them for examinations rather than for life-long learning. In this way, Delios and Makino (as cited in Bao, 2014) highlight that

> Many students tend to focus on formulas, correctness and grades rather than the dynamic of verbal communication and life skills. Arguably, for students to interact more, the educational system should be able to convince students that they will be assessed on practical, real-world communication abilities (p.60).

Although these findings may apply to Asian contexts, it seems that the same difficulties in engaging students to verbally contribute to classroom discussion are typical of the Moroccan context to a great extent because students are not assessed, for instance, in speaking skills. This is not typical of Moroccan and Asian contexts alone, but it seems that the same applies to Kachru’s (1985) *Expanding Circle,* where English has a foreign status and serves few functional purposes. At the institutional level, Wang (2019) explains that the Chinese education system is examination-oriented in that teachers highlight the importance of scoring high on tests and examinations at the expense of promoting Chinese learners’ speaking skills. Consequently, students may make very modest contributions to classroom talk or even none of it at all.

This seems to be the same case in the Moroccan context, with students doing very little speaking, though oral speaking skills have, in the Ministry *Guidelines* designed for secondary

school teachers of English (2007), received considerable attention. Seen from the point of view of Chinese culture, Wang (2019) argues that Chinese culture, unlike Western culture, relies on meaning construction "through gestures, the use of space, and even silence", meaning that Chinese culture tends to be aware of its environment and relies less on verbal communication as its main information channel (p. 59).What implications does this have for students' reticence?

Wang (2019) answers by stating that, "Chinese students are less willing to interact with teachers in class because they believe that silence often sends a better message than words, as a proverb states, 'empty cans clatter the loudest." (p.59). Similarly, Liu (2017) highlights that Chinese university students are often silent in English classrooms, and they rarely express themselves or answer teacher's questions, citing low English proficiency, traditional learning styles, emphasis on written exams, and teachers' dominance on classroom discourse, negative feedback, and inappropriate use of questioning strategies as major reasons for students' reticence in the university classroom.

This indicates that reticence is the result of a plethora of interrelated factors. Is reticence, then, a product of the culture that learners bring with them to the EFL classroom? Wang (2019) stresses that in collectivistic cultures, people often care for the harmony of the group and the maintenance of face. Caring for the group implies that learners' mindsets and behaviors will be profoundly influenced. The Chinese culture is based on Confucian principles, which emphasize that "no one can exist alone without the other" (Wang, 2019, p. 59). Discussing the possible influence of Japanese culture on students' reticence, King (2011, 2012) too believes that the impact of Confucianism on everyday life cannot be denied.

In their examination of the effects of cultural value orientations on adolescents' psychosocial development, Lee, Beckert, and Goodrich (2010) claim that "the most apparent difference between western and Eastern cultures is the influence of social expectation on individual development" (p. 883). Western cultures, on the one hand, are thought to be individualistic in essence; thereby, such cultures tend "to emphasize independent relationships, personal goals, autonomy, and individual competence" (p. 883). Eastern cultures, on the other hand, "tend to emphasize interdependent relationships, group goals, group cohesion, and community cooperation" (Lee et al., 2010, p. 883).

Given these essential differences between Western and Eastern cultures, "individualistic values are more prevalent in Western societies while collectivistic ideas are more common in

Eastern societies" (Lee et al. 2010, p. 883). In spite of the fact that cultures can exert a lot of influence on one's own behavior, it must be noted that explaining all of one's own behavior with reference to these binary oppositions is deterministic, simplistic, and reductionist in nature. In a similar vein, Lee et al. (2010) warn against these interpretations. As they explain, "although individualism embraces the attitude of autonomy while collectivism highlights the idea of conformity, most cultures and societies still value some balance between autonomy and conformity" (p. 883).

Within this framework, Devos and Yokoyama (2014) note that "in academic settings, Asian students are often described as less talkative, quieter, and more reserved than White students", citing many more studies confirming the same findings. Additionally, Devos and Yokoyama (2014) claim that the difference between Chinese learners and their Western counterparts in communication styles and interaction patterns is commonly attributed to cultural differences because in Eastern cultures, which care more about "group harmony and cooperation in collectivist cultures, people of Asian descent tend to prefer indirect and non confrontational interpersonal communication styles, whereas individualist-oriented westerners use more direct and assertive methods".

The aforementioned researchers claim that cultures influence "behaviors and practices," which are linked to ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving in social situations. Having touched upon the cultural differences existing between eastern and western cultures, the two authors claim that "North American children tend to be more verbal and to communicate more frequently than East Asian children" (Devos & Yokoyama, 2014, p. 386). Because of this distinction, European Americans are more likely to endorse the idea of talking at the expense of the "quietness" endorsed in Eastern cultures.

Devos and Yokoyama (2014) continue to explain that one's own culture has a deep impact on students' and teachers' behaviors in the classroom. As they write, "these contrasting cultural perspectives on the role and value of speech have tangible psychological effects on cognitive functioning" (Devos & Yokoyama, 2014, p. 387). In other words, cultures shape one's own perceptions that learners bring with them to the context of the classroom in such a way as to manifest themselves in concrete behaviors in EFL/ESL educational settings.

Although they emphasize the psychological effects of culture on behavior, Devos and Yokoyama (2014) highlight that these differences between Asian and White students in

academic settings "may stem from a process of implicit self-stereotyping" (p. 387). Defining self-stereotyping, Devos and Yokoyama (2014) explain that "self-stereotyping refers to a shift in self-conceptualization that brings the self-concept in line with the defining characteristics of the in-group and distinct from the relevant out-group" (p. 387). This means that individuals see themselves as members of groups rather than as unique individuals, and that their sense of "togetherness" seems to exert a deep impact on their individuality.

Following their arguments, Devos and Yokoyama (2014) assume that describing Asians as “quiet”, “shy” and “unsociable” is a form of ethnic stereotypes. Differences between people of Asian and European descent cannot easily be reduced to behavioral variations on an introverted-extraverted continuum (Devos & Yokoyama, 2014). Reviewing research findings from the past fifty years across disciplines and with multiple methodologies, Rocca (2010) synthesizes that a wide range of variables have been found to impact students’ in-class participation, including "logistics", "personality traits", "confidence and classroom apprehension", "the impact of the instructor on the climate" and "sex differences".

As far as sex differences are concerned, Rocca (2010) discusses that the sex of the instructors is a means of predicting the existence or absence of class participation. In this sense, male college students tend to participate more than female students. Her explanation is that males may have been doing more speaking throughout their education, compared to their female counterparts (Rocca, 2010).

Closely related to the frequency of classroom participation among both males and females is the variable of self-esteem. That is to say, if learners think highly of themselves, no matter whether they are males or females, they will contribute their comments to classroom discussion, regardless of the sex of the instructors. Howard and Henney (as cited in Rocca, 2010), however, found that being a mere male or female is not useful in explaining the differences in the amount of speaking done by both "sexes". Rather, when "sex" is combined with the student’s age, for example, a more detailed picture arises. The same conclusion is supported by scholarly research (Crombie, Pyke, Silvesthorn, Jones, & Piccinin, 2003). Meanwhile, Rocca (2010) reminds us to interpret the results of such studies with caution since sex is taken, in these investigations, to mean biological sex rather than psychological sex; that is, gender.

In the same context, Crombie et al. (2003) claim that students' participation in university classrooms, for example, is influenced by a number of individual as well as contextual variables. As far as these contextual factors are concerned, Crombie et al. (2003) point out that the

discipline of the course does, with varying degrees, influence students' perceptions and participation. What this means is that the natural science classes tend to stimulate fewer discussions in comparison with the humanities and social sciences (Crombie et al. 2003). Is it "scientifically proven" that science courses "silence" students and arts courses stimulate more discussion? King (2011), for instance, answers this question by explaining that non-participation is a defining characteristic of EFL classrooms in Japanese universities as well.

While they note the limits of lecture-text based teaching on students' opportunities to participate in classroom discussions, Weaver and Qi (2005) assume that class size poses real challenges for teachers to motivate all students to talk on the grounds that it becomes "impractical for all or even most students in a large section of an introductory course to participate and still cover even a portion of the material" (p. 572). It follows from this premise that only a handful of students will assume more responsibilities to speak, whereas a vast majority are likely to engage in "civil attention"- paying sufficient attention to know when to nod, to laugh, where appropriate , or otherwise to appear attentive without risking too much involvement" (Weaver & Qi, 2005, p. 571).

Seen from the perspective of the passive/active dichotomies, active students tend to monopolize the classroom discourse. Passive students are often depicted as being so quiet that they "set themselves at the periphery of the classroom and thereby facilitate the strategic withdrawal of the majority" (Weaver & Qi, 2005, p. 573).

This amounts to saying that in large classes, there is a tendency among passive students to withdraw from classroom talk. In this vein, Weaver and Qi (2005) suggest that large classes should be divided in such a way as to get a few students into smaller groups, and this will help, in turn, "to render passive withdrawal less tenable" (p.573). That is to say, the larger the class size, the less likely the students' participation is. In an insightful comment on the passive/active dichotomies, Weaver and Qi (2005) explain that there is a sort of "division of labor" among students regarding class participation. As Weaver and Qi (2005) write,

> Although hierarchy and division of labor among students can emerge-"the good ones" who participate; "the quite ones" who appear attentive, say little and are barely noticed and the "poor performers" who irregularly attend and who sleep, read the news, chitchat, or otherwise remain inattentive (p. 573).

Nevertheless, Weaver and Qi (2005) view that, besides students' age, it is the formal structures of the classroom that directly or indirectly affect class participation. Following their analysis of

the hierarchical nature of power structures typical of university classrooms, Weaver and Qi (2005) claim that these structures are responsible, more or less, for how much participation takes place in the classroom. For example, "the professor typically ‘leads’ the class, defines what is to be learned, identifies the activities and readings students are to undertake, and determines how student performance will be evaluated" (Weaver & Qi, 2005, p. 573).

Upon such an impression, the result would be that only a handful of students would participate, while the majority would listen passively, to classroom talk. It seems that the seeds of little in-class participation are planted by the sort of culture deeply rooted in formal academic circles that encourages and perpetuates the view of "faculty" as "expert" authorities (Weaver & Qi, 2005). This dominant view leads students to perceive faculty as having "expert" authority and mastery over knowledge, which is likely, in turn, to lead learners to contribute little to classroom discussion or simply "withdraw into silence" (Weaver & Qi, 2005, p. 573-574). The essential point is that this perception of faculty authority might well diminish students’ confidence and indirectly encourage passive withdrawal.

Added to this is the faculty-student interaction factor. In order to reduce the psychological and intellectual distance existing between both "species", which has a bearing on classroom participation, Weaver and Qi (2005) suggest that out-of-class interaction between faculty and students is likely to affect students’ perceptions of power differences, leading, in turn, to more students’ involvement, development, and effective learning. According to Weaver and Qi (2005), students’ fear of the instructor’s criticism is a determining variable in speaking in the classroom in the sense that undermining students’ confidence affects their ability to verbally and meaningfully contribute to class discussion. As they illustrate,

> Confidence offers the “social energy” needed to animate the classroom, and confidence deficient depresses the climate of interaction. Therefore many students may consider it safer to and better to retreat from the ongoing discussion into passivity than to risk outright rejection from the person in power (Weaver & Qi, 2005, p.575).

Similarly, Weaver and Qi (2005) explain that the act of participation indicates students’ attachment to the class and to others within it because such participation promotes group solidarity and demands gracious acceptance. Meanwhile, students’ participation involves the risk of being rejected by the group, which, in turn, "generates certain fears" within them (Weaver & Qi, 2005, p. 575). Once the contributors are met with the instructor’s criticism, students experience a sort of "loss or even humiliation" (Weaver & Qi, 2005, p. 575). Leaving

aside the power structures existing between teachers and their students, the formal structure of classroom participation does in fact impact the classroom's emotional climate (Weaver & Qi, 2005).

Surveying the perceptions of 1.805 students at Midwest University, Weaver and Qi (2005) reveal that classroom participation is the result of a plethora of variables interacting with one another directly or indirectly. The results indicate that professors' authority of knowledge, age, preparation, confidence, para-participation, and fear of professors' criticism were found to be major variables contributing to participation or non-participation among students. In this connection, relying on data gathered by means of non-participation, observation, and interviews, Marie's (2000) investigation shows that in various disciplines, including natural sciences (biology and physics), social sciences (anthropology, political sciences, psychology, sociology, and women's studies), and humanities (history and literature), differences in levels of participation were clearly reported.

In his attempt to measure students' participation through the use of multiple questionnaire items, Fassinger (1995) groups the independent variables into three categories: "class traits", "students' traits", and "professors' traits". Under this classification, class traits include "size, gender, distribution, emotional climate, interaction norms, participation grade, and interaction type" (Fassinger, 1995, p. 86). Students' traits include "confidence, preparation, comprehension, and interest", whereas professors' traits were approached by exploring students' perceptions of "professors' inclusiveness, approachability, feedback style, supportiveness, discussion style, and expertness" (Fassinger, 1995, p. 88). Julé (2011), however, highlights that gender is central to classroom participation in second language educational settings.

In his analysis of the findings, Fassinger (1995) finds that male and female students reported contrasting self-perceptions, with males feeling more confident and more involved in classroom interaction than did females. The results, thus, point to the conclusion that females were found to be more "prepared for class, more interested in the subject matter, and more interested in peers' comments and questions than did the males" (Fassinger , 1995, p. 88). Following his discussion of the findings, Fassinger (1995) indicates that professors' gender "had a minimal impact on males' self-perceptions" and that female students were significantly more confident, comprehended more, were more interested in the subject matter, and participated more in classes where the professors were female (p. 89).

Despite the usefulness of the factors explaining students' reticence discussed so far, it has been argued that going beyond the classroom context to examine the possible socio-economic factors that may interact with students' reticence is central to understating learners' reticence. Block (2003, 2012, 2014) has long argued that most of the existing models of language learning and acquisition (Ellis, 2008; Dornyei, 2001; Gardner, 1985; Krashen, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006) Long, 1986; Oxford, 2001; Swain, 1985, 1998, 2005; 2005; focus more on the internal cognitive aspects than external factors; that is, beyond-school factors. For this reason, one has to adopt critical perspectives so as to examine a certain behavior in the classroom, and this will result in a holistic picture of the behavior under discussion.

In other words, while factors such as learners' motivation, learning strategies, language proficiency, input, and the like may partly explain students' behaviors in the classroom, addressing critical aspects of language teaching and learning may give rise to a more complete picture of learners' reticence in the EFL classroom. Critical English language teaching and learning tends to examine the relationship between language achievement and gender, ethnicity, race, class, sexual orientation, literacy, and so on (Julé, 2011, Ellis, 2015; Block, 2003, 2012, 2014; Benesch, 2012). That is to say, one has to go beyond the school context in an attempt to examine the impact of home and family factors, for example, on the emergence of reticence in the Moroccan EFL classroom.

On this basis, language learning can be influenced by factors beyond school, including wider family networks, the local education system, conflicting interests, cultural norms, and societal expectations and attitudes. For these reasons, It is essential that one consider the critical side of English language learning by drawing on the sociology of education in an effort to examine the possible interaction between reticence, on the one hand, and learners' socio-economic backgrounds, on the other hand.

To conclude, this section has defined the term of reticence and traced its evolution in the literature starting from the Reticence Program at Pennsylvania State University in the 1970s, which has, in turn, generated a plethora of studies on the issue under discussion. The section has discussed attitudes towards reticent EFL learners in the classroom. Afterwards, it has shed some light on some of the major distinctions between silence and reticence. Then, it has explored some of the internal and external factors that could interact with learners' reticence and has grouped them into five major categories, including linguistic, affective, cultural, institutional, and cognitive factors. The next section will draw on the sociology of education in order to examine the possible interaction between language learning achievement and the beyond-school

factors that have a bearing on teaching and learning, with a special focus on the thinking tools developed by French sociologist and social theorist Pierre Bourdieu.

As stated previously, this section will look at the *sociology of education*. Given several criticisms leveled against the cognitive approaches to English language teaching and learning, this section will draw on the critical aspects of this field by relating this field to the *social context* where both processes of teaching and learning happen. Specifically, it will shift attention away from cognitive approaches to language learning by discussing *the social turn* in language learning/acquisition studies. Thus, it will be argued that the impact of socio-economic differences on learning outcomes cannot be denied. In order to examine the interaction between family backgrounds and the school achievement of children, some of the main "thinking tools" advanced by Pierre Bourdieu, such as *social class*, *cultural capital*, and *habitus*, will be discussed.

The sociology of education

How do we understand the differences in children's learning outcomes in general and English language learning in particular? Though learners are exposed to the same classroom input as well as the same techniques, notwithstanding the same teachers, their school achievements differ. If this is so, under what circumstances do such differences emerge? One of the possible answers to this question is provided by the sociology of education. To further understand the relationship between education and the social context (family and home factors) in which both teaching and learning take place, it is important that one touches upon this link.

Generally speaking, sociologists of education look at a wide range of questions, such as: How do we increase the school achievements of all students regardless of their gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and the like? Do schools simply perpetuate inequality? What impacts should schools have on students? Does the cultural capital of students affect their school or academic achievement? Why do some students achieve greater educational success than others?

The sociology of education focuses on analyzing different structures of society such as family, religion, education, politics, economics, and health (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017). Thus, sociology cannot be discussed within the narrow fields of education but rather is related to numerous fields such as "economics and school financing; political science; politics, and educational policy issues; the family and the school child […] psychology and children's educational motivation and aspirations" (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017, p. 41-42). Thus, learning does not take place only in school settings; it can also take place in informal settings. On this point, Ballantine and Hammack (2017) state,

> Learning takes place both formally in school settings and informally by our family, peers, media, and other influences in our lives […] the institution of education interacts and is interdependent with each of the other institutions. For instance, the family involvement in education will affect the child's achievement in school (p.18)

In other words, school success can be influenced by a plethora of internal and external factors. One's own socio-economic background shapes the learning experience of children (Bourdieu, 1986). In a similar vein, Ballantine and Hammack (2017) continue to illustrate

> Learning as a process is influenced not only by the teacher, the techniques, the classroom setting, and the formal or informal material being, but also by the child's ability, motivation, interest in the subject matter, readiness to learn, retentiveness, values and attitudes, relationship with the teacher, feeling about self and ability, relationships with peers, background experiences, home life, encouragement from home and literacy. Also of importance are the environmental pressures for learning, the time allocated for learning, family support for learning, and the atmosphere of the school and classroom. Children's experiences differ as a result of such variables as race, gender and class. Thus, it is superficial to explain learning differences among children by one primary factor, such as intelligence (p.62).

This means that success at school, not just in learning additional languages, can be heavily influenced by the socio-economic backgrounds of one's own family, albeit mainstream second language scholars have relatively neglected this perspective in favor of cognitive approaches (Block, 2014). Although educational inequalities exist with regard to race, gender, and ethnicity, Ballantine and Hammack (2017) conclude that the variables that are related to social classes "are the deepest and most enduring" (p. 93). Relevant to the impact of the socio-economic background on students' route to learning is the concept of *social stratification*, which is taken to mean "the organization of people in society into socio-economic strata; that is, different and unequal positions based on the traits associated with social class, namely income, wealth, education, prestige, and power" (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017, p. 91).

In the same way, Glasgow, Dornbush, Troyer, Steinberg, and Ritter (2006) argue that reproducing social stratification through education is a defining feature of the United States of America, for example. Likewise, in a report entitled "The School of Social Justice: A Contribution to Thinking about the Development Model", The Higher Council for Education, Training, and Scientific Research (2018) confirms that the Moroccan education system reproduces and reinforces the same social class inequalities typical of Moroccan society.

Significantly, sociologists (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bourdieu, 1996, 1986; Lareau, 2003, 2011; Lareau & Weininger, 2003) suggest that social class has a deep impact on learning outcomes. Thus, "children from different social classes are socialized differently, and these different styles are associated with different results with the educational system" (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017, p. 93). Thus, while countless children can succeed or fail on the basis of their own efforts or family background, Ballantine and Hammack (2017) highlight that educational systems can perpetuate and reinforce social class inequalities and thus, “reproduce the existing system of social stratification, rather than altering it” (p. 91). What this means is that there will always be interaction between micro (individual) and macro (societal) levels. Individuals, after all, are not isolated islands but parts of their communities and societies.

The impact of socio-economic status on school achievement

As mentioned before, the impact of family and home backgrounds on the learning outcomes of children is well documented in scholarly works (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bourdieu, 1996; 1986; Gintis & Bowles; 2011; Hartas, 2011; Lareau, 2003; Obaidul, 2009; Reay, 2005) Thus, the impact of family backgrounds on rearing patterns is undeniable.

For example, in her insightful book *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, And Family Life*, Lareau (2003, 2011) suggests that high- and low-income families raise their children differently. Based on her concept of *concerted cultivation*, Lareau (2011) discusses how middle-class parents in America involve themselves wholeheartedly in the learning of their children. Parents, in concerted cultivation, cultivate, in the minds of their children, "a robust sense of entitlement" (Lareau, 2003, p. 2).

Reay (2005), however, argues that parental involvement in schooling differs with respect to gender too. Yet, she highlights that this involvement is strongly influenced by the socio-economic status of families, with middle-class mothers compensating for what they perceive to be gaps in school curriculum "through the employment of tutors along with attempting to modify the provision the school makes for their child, all the while continuing to complement what the school site offers through mothering work in the home" (Reay, 2005, p. 66).

Working-class mothers, in sharp contrast to middle-class mothers, seem to "support" or "back up" the school along with its policies (Reay, 2005). Additionally, middle- and working-class families are reported, as mentioned before, to raise their children differently. As a way of illustrating, middle-class families are reported to encourage their children to ask questions and express their opinions, whereas working-class families are reported to rely more on directives, that is, directing their children rather than negotiating with them or eliciting their opinions (Lareau, 2011). Thus, children from middle-class families are raised in such a way as to cultivate their talents "in a concerted fashion" (Lareau, 2011, p. 1).

This has a so profound impact on children's sense of entitlement. This sense of entitlement, "plays an especially an important role in institutional settings, where middle class children learn to question adults and address them as relative equals" (Lareau, 2003, p. 2). In differentiating between middle and working class parents' patterns of rearing their children, Lareau (2003) writes,

> Formidable economic constraints make it a major life task for these parents to put food on the table, arrange for housing, negotiate unsafe neighborhoods, take children to the doctor (often wait for city buses that do not come), clean children's clothes, and get children to bed and have them ready for school the next morning. But unlike middleclass parents, these adults do not consider the concerted development of children, particularly through organized leisure activities, an essential aspect of good parenting […] parents tend to use directives: they tell their children what to do rather than persuading them with reasoning. Unlike their middleclass counterparts, who have a steady diet of adult organized activities, the working class and poor children have more control over the character of their leisure activities (pp.2-3).

In a similar vein, Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson (2007) emphasize that parental involvement in children's schooling differs with respect to social class dimensions. Middle and upper classes are more engaged in the schooling of their kids because they understand better how schools work (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2007). In addition to this, socio-economically speaking, it has been suggested that "children from low-income families are more likely to be at risk of academic failure because they enter school at a significant disadvantage" (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017, p. 59).

Risks can include low income, minority group status, non-English-speaking homes, single parents, large households, and a disabling condition (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017). According to these lines of reasoning, the aforementioned factors can affect a child's mental, emotional, and physical growth. Children who come from such a milieu are more likely to be at risk in terms of their educational achievements at school since "they begin their education with lower cognitive skills than children from higher socioeconomic levels and often end up in poor schools" (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017, p. 59). Although middle- and upper-class families have been reported to be more involved in their children's schooling, Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson (2007) emphasize that motivated parents, though they might be poor economically, can effectively support their children's schooling.

For example, linguistically speaking, the British sociologist Basil Bernstein (1964) highlights that in a diverse linguistic community, two dialects or codes of the same language can be used: *restricted* and *elaborated* codes. These codes are the result of the social class to which the speaker belongs. Bernstein (1966) summarizes the relationship between the social class and the codes they use: "different social structures may generate different speech systems or linguistic codes" (p. 56). Each child, according to this understanding, is expected to learn the linguistic code of which he is a part. Yet, the implication of restricted vs. elaborated codes is obvious: children with an elaborated code are expected to encounter fewer difficulties at school when compared to children with restricted codes.

While much work has been written on the impact of gender on the classroom experience, Julé (2011) notes that little research has been carried out to examine the impact of ethnicity on language learning and classroom participation. Like Lareau (2003, 2015), Banks (1968), following the *elaborated* vs. *restricted* speech dichotomies, illustrates that middle- and working-class families tend to use different rearing techniques. The reason for these differences is that working-class parents tend to exercise their authority over *people* rather than *reasons*.

Banks (1968) further argues that the home environment in which the child is raised impacts children's verbosity to a great extent. Middle-class mothers seem to be more likely "to take up the child's attempts at conversation, less likely to avoid or evade difficult questions, less likely to use coercive, threatening, or imperative forms of control, and more likely to value the educational use of toys" (p. 95). Working-class children have been found to talk less than their middle-class counterparts, assuming in the meantime that these deprived children seem to "express themselves quite well in spontaneous and unstructured situations" (Banks, 1968, p. 97). Thus, the effects of social class on sharpening the speaking skills of children cannot be denied. Commenting on these differences, Banks (1968) writes,

> Within the middle –class family, communication between mother and child will be primary verbal. The child must, early on, learn to recognize that quite small changes in word position and sentence structures signal important changes in feeling. The necessity to verbalize, which is then forced upon the child, exposes him to a whole range of potential learning which is denied to the lower-working-class child precisely because of the linguistic mode in use within the working-class family (p.93).

Apart from the features of elaborated and restricted codes, elaborated codes are used and thus *validated* by state institutions or formal situations, including schools, whereas restricted codes, as the concept implies, are limited to informal situations. Consequently, students with restricted codes are thought to have linguistic deficiencies in the sense that the code they bring with them cannot stand on its own. Banks (1968), in this way, highlights that these differences in speech reflect different child-rearing patterns, which are strategic for educational and occupational success in society. According to this understanding, these forms of language are socio-economically, not individually, determined. Banks (1968) illustrates that "the middle-class child, on the other hand, is brought up in an environment that places great value on verbalization and conceptualization" (p. 93).

The distinction between elaboration and restriction gets more complex once one considers learning or restricting access to additional languages such as English in Kashru's (1985) "Expanding Circle," where English is restricted to formal educational settings in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Students from different ethnic origins encounter countless difficulties when they are exposed to the target language (Julé, 201).

In *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*, Bowles and Gintis (2011) note that social scientists in America in the 1960s and early 1970s tended to associate the inequalities plaguing society with the role of children's cognitive capabilities found in the immutability of genetic structure. Thus, the poor seemed to be poor because they were intellectually incompetent, and "their incompetence is particularly intractable because it is inherited from their poor and also intellectually deficient parents" (Bowles & Gintis, 2011, p. 5–6). They further argue that scholastic achievement depends more on the family background into which the child was born,

> The results of schooling differ greatly for children of different social backgrounds. Most easily measured, but of limited importance, are differences in scholastic achievement. If we measure the output of schooling by scores on nationally standardized achievement tests, children whose parents were themselves highly educated outperform the children of parents with less education by a wide margin. Data collected for the U.S. Office of Education Survey of Educational Opportunity reveal, for example, that among white high school seniors, those whose parents were in the top education decile were, on the average, well over three grade levels in measured scholastic achievement ahead of those whose parents were in the bottom decile (Bowles & Gintis, 2011, p. 34).

Relevant to these dichotomies is the notion of *social mobility*. What is at issue is that students from high socio-economic backgrounds "are nearly twice as likely to attend college as students of low socio-economic backgrounds" (Bowles & Gintis, 2011, p. 32). Not less important is the impact of ethnicity on schooling in general (Bowles & Gintis, 2011) and ethnicity and gender on English language learning in particular (Julé, 2004). Bowles and Gintis (2011) conclude that the American education system is "highly unequal, with the chances of attaining much or little schooling being substantially dependent on one's race and parents' economic level" (p. 35).

Within this framework, Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson (2007) note that in the USA, "schooling is often seen as the chief remedy for inequalities in social and economic opportunity, but schools do not compensate fully for inequalities in other spheres of life" (p. 68). Similarly, Crawford, Dearden, and Micklewright (2016) highlight that not only does the socio-economic background affect the school achievement of children, but it also restricts their access to higher education institutions in England. Crawford et al. (2017) further note that "children from different socio-economic backgrounds tend to go to different schools" (p. 96). According to Bourdieu (1996), different social classes send their children to different *grand écoles* in France, for example.

Following these lines of argumentation, it has been suggested that parent involvement in children's education is very critical in the sense that, "parents help boost their children's schooling by being encouraging and supportive" (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2007, p. 83). Schools, too, can help make up for the deficits in socially or educationally disadvantaged families by developing educational programs. Despite the impact of social stratification on learning outcomes, schools, being social institutions, can be a greater equalizer when they reward talent and hard work. In so doing, even learners who come from low-income families can excel. These findings have been gathered from American, Canadian, and French contexts. Therefore, projecting them on the Moroccan context uncritically would be both naive and reductionist. Still, irrespective of the context from which these findings were gathered, home and family factors do, more or less, influence the school achievement of the children significantly (Bourdieu, 1986).

English language teaching and learning in its social context

In the preceding discussion, much has been said about the impact of one's own class on school achievement. Yet, one has to be cautious to address reticence in the Moroccan EFL classroom along the lines of this research since the specifics of the contexts of these studies (Bowles & Gintis, 2011; Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1986, 1990a, 1990b, 1993, 1996; Julé, 2011; Lareau, 2003;) could be at odds with that of Morocco, given the wide range of differences between western and eastern countries.

In relation to the impact of social class on learning additional languages, for example, little has been said so far. In this vein, Block (2003), Pierce (1995), Vandrick (2014), and Atkinson (2002, 2011) note that the field of second language teaching and learning has been mainly dominated by cognitive approaches, noting, meanwhile, that it is only recently that researchers have started to consider issues of power, class, and dominance together with their impact on success in learning English.

Second language teaching and learning scholars highlight that English language teaching is influenced by the social context in which it takes place (Candlin & Mercer, 2001; Chick, 2001; Ellis, 2008, 2015; Julé, 2011, 2012; Lin, 2001; Mitchell & Myles, 2001; van Lier, 2001; Vandrick, 2014). Therefore, examining the socio-economic impact on language development could provide researchers with insights into how languages are enhanced by one's background.

In a similar vein, Block (2003, 2012, 2014) argues that in spite of the insights of the sociolinguistic perspective on language teaching and learning, no effort has been made, up to now, to relate English language teaching and social class. As he states, "there is not at present, nor does it appear to have been in the past, anything resembling a line of research exploring the possible links between social class and the processes and outcomes of second language learning in both formal and informal settings" (Block, 2014, p. 148). Commenting on Ellis' (2008) statement that "the class is less important for success in language learning than it has been in the past", Block (2014) summarizes,

> This conclusion obeys certain logic, according to which one can judge the importance of a factor mediating SLA/L by how much this factor comes up in published research. Here the argument seems to be that the lack of research on social class in SLA/L shows that it is not

> relevant or useful. I have no doubt that for researchers who subscribe to the view that SLA/L is only about cognition and linguistic development, the only element of interest in the world outside the individual mind is the kind of linguistic input with which learners are provided (pp.148-149).

In spite of this, Block (2014) asserts that it is in fact hard to accept that the class is irrelevant to the field of English language learning, though little has been explored from this perspective. The fundamental claim of this *social turn* is that learning or acquiring the target language can either be promoted or impeded by the social world that learners inhabit (Block, 2003, 2012, 2014).

This suggests that learning additional languages is influenced by micro (individual/internal) and macro (societal/external) factors and that it is only after approaching the learners within their specific social contexts that one can construct a more complete image of the learners' behaviors in the EFL classroom. Ellis (2015) argues that social-turn researchers see language learning in particular "as a social activity that learners actively shape through their own agency" (p. 328). Thus, there is a relationship between social class and L2 achievement (Ellis, 2008).

On this basis, considering the social contexts of learning the target language is no less important than considering the cognitive factors that have a bearing on the rate and route of learning. Van Lier (2001), for instance, highlights that the social context is central to language learning. By looking at the initiation-response-feedback exchange (IRF) dominant in the English language classroom, van Lier (2001) claims that learners often respond in mechanical ways to the teacher's stimulus, making the teacher the only active agent in the classroom. As van Lier (2001) writes,

> The teacher does all the initiating and closing (in other words, takes all the first and third turns), and students' work is done exclusively in the response slot. The IRF format therefore discourages student initiation and student repair work […] it is extremely hard, if not impossible, in the IRF format, for the student to ask questions, to disagree, to self-correct and so on… The IRF format discourages interruption (or disruption) and can therefore be called a closed rather than open discourse format, in that it structurally and functionally controls what takes place (p. 95-96).

What is at issue is that the prolonged use of the IRF format may have a negative effect on learners' intrinsic motivation and "cause a decrease in levels of attention and involvement" (van Lier, 2001, p. 97). In the same context, Chick (2001) claims that under the former apartheid system in South Africa, teachers, for instance, were found to adopt authoritarian roles and were doing most of the talking, "with few pupil initiations and with most of the pupil responses taking the form of group chorusing" (p. 227). Black students were, therefore, discouraged from asking questions or actively participating in learning. Chick (2001) maintains that the consequences of such interaction patterns on students are significant since they oppress creativity, initiative, and assertiveness.

Learning additional languages can also be influenced by one's own culture, as has been discussed before. In this context, Cortazzi and Jin (2013) highlight that members of different cultural communities have different perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and preferences when it comes to teaching and learning, resulting in the introduction of the concept of *cultures of learning to the* TESOL community. Cortazzi and Jin (as cited in Yuan & Xie, 2013) define cultures of learning as

> Socially transmitted expectations, beliefs, and values about what good learning is, what constitutes a good teacher and a good student and what their roles are and relationships should be; about learning and teaching styles, approaches and methods; about classroom interaction and activities; about the use of textbooks; about what constitutes good work (p.24).

On this basis, Cortazzi and Jin (2013) argue that most of these ideas are absorbed in early learning and continue to shape the way one perceives both processes of teaching and learning to a large extent. As they explain,

> Cultural ideas of learning, often subconscious and taken for granted, are absorbed in early learning in the presence of contrasting ideas and are not normally articulated; they are built up in interaction in families and through early and later schooling as cultures transmit ways of learning and children are socialized into education and then, through education, into so much else in the wider world (Cortazzi & Jin, 2013, p.1).

In spite of the influence of schools on children's perceptions and behaviors, parental socialization remains very critical for the simple reason that young children spend much more time, as a matter of daily routine, with their parents or caregivers than with other people (Li,

2013). "Middle-class parents", writes Lareau (2015), "also stress language use and the development of reasoning and employ talking as their preferred form of discipline" (p. 17). As far as language use is concerned, Lareau (2015) points out that while middle-class families encourage their children to use reasoning and thus contest adult statements and negotiate between parents, working and poor families rarely encourage their children to challenge or question adults, notwithstanding their acceptance of parental directives (Lareau, 2015).

In a similar vein, Julé (2011) asserts that interaction in the classroom is privileged, but the teaching methods "are not only distancing those who may be less competitive or aggressive but also giving those who already excel in claiming the floor (usually boys) further opportunities to do so" (pp. 26–27). Based on extensive classroom observation, Julé (2011) further notes that "the teacher's lack of certain teaching methods further limited more verbal participation" (p.147).Thus, it becomes important for language teachers to break the IRF lockstep and use more inclusive participation patterns if they wish their students to develop their communicative competence.

Julé (2011, 2018), borrowing the concept of *linguistic space* from Mahony, highlights that classroom talk is distributed unequally among boys and girls and claims that one's own gender is constructed and reinforced by these turns that ESL teachers allocate to their students in the language classroom. By problimatizing classroom talk, Julé (2011) seems to suggest that allocating more turns to boys implies that girls are likely to be stripped of opportunities to develop their speaking skills. This inequality of talk time in the classroom implies that it is not a minor feature of female tendencies in speech,

> But a result of complex social processes of belonging in certain ways. Relationships may propel a consistent imbalance. The implications of such conditions point to the possibility of girls having less opportunity to speak and engage with ideas, perhaps having more confidence as a result, and having less recognition of their presence or involvement in general (Julé, 2011, p. 27).

Likewise, Bourdieu, as suggested earlier, has contributed countless insights to the sociology of education. His theories have deeply influenced social theory and education. In this way, Bourdieu (1986) suggests that what makes a difference in the learning outcomes of learners is the sort of cultural resources available to them. Though some of these resources can be cultural as well as linguistic, their origins lie deep in the economic basis of society, which is

usually characterized by struggle and conflict. Bourdieu's concepts of *social class, cultural capital,* and *habitus* are central to the sociology of education. Once one analyzes these "thinking tools", one senses the heavy presence of Marx's (2012) class analysis.

In this way, Marx (2012) argues that capital forms the foundation of social life and determines one's position within the social order. For Bourdieu (1977) and Marx (2012) alike, the more capital one has, the more powerful a position one occupies in social life. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) and Bourdieu (1986), however, extend Marx's idea of capital beyond the realm of the economic and into the more symbolic realm of culture. Relevant to this discussion is the relationship between the notions of *cultural capital* and *habitus*.

Bourdieu and the sociology of education

a. Cultural capital

As it has been suggested before, traditionally, English language teaching and learning and applied linguistics research have been dominated by cognitive approaches (Atkinson, 2002, 2011; Benesch, 2012; Block, 2003, 2012, 2014; Hulstijn et al. 2014). This is the reason why current scholarship on social class, English language learning and applied linguistics is fairly meager (Block, 2012, 2014; Gao, 2014; Kanno, 2014; Lopez-Gopar & Sughrua, 2014; Shin, 2014; Vandrick, 2014). Generally, numerous scholars (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977; Bourdieu 1996, 1986; Hartas, 2011; Lareau, 2003; Liu & Chiang, 2019; Reay, 2005) note that the socio-economic backgrounds of families affect children's learning outcomes with varying degrees.

Although the social class dimension of motivation has been played down by second language acquisition/learning, Azhar (2020) Benesch (2012) Gao (2014) Vandrick (2014) Shin (2014) Lopez-Gopar and Saghruna (2014) Darvin and Norton (2014) and Kanno (2014) argue that the social class impacts language learning significantly. In this way, Liu and Chiang (2019) state, "student motivation reflects differences in class background interactions" (p.5). Research suggests that, "advantaged families are able to instill high levels of learning motivation in their children by providing high levels of social-emotional support as well as class-based opportunities and resources at home" (Liu & Chiang, 2019, p.3).

Moreover, "highly educated parents provide their children with the ability, motivation and disposition to be successful in higher education" (Kraaykamp & van Eijck, 2010, p. 220). Gardner (1985), in the same way, asserts that the role of one's own home environment is crucial in enhancing learners' motivation to learn the target language. On this basis, the role of parents, together with the provision of a warm and supportive environment have a clear effect on foreign language learning (Gardner, 1985).

As mentioned earlier, relevant to this discussion on motivation and English language proficiency, on the one hand, and social class, on the other hand, are the key concepts of Bourdieu. Extending Marx's (2012) concept of *capital* to cultural fields, Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1986, 1990a, 1990b, 1993, 1996) argues that class is central to children's educational outcomes. In order to look at the correlation between EFL learners' reticence, on the one hand, and their socio-economic backgrounds, on the other, this dissertation will partly apply the theoretical lenses of cultural capital theory.

Although Bourdieu did not address the field of English language teaching and learning in particular, his key concepts are useful paradigms for explaining EFL learners' reticence. Motivation, as it was established before, is strongly associated with learners' language achievement and retention. In spite of the usefulness of these lines of thought in examining the social and psychological dimensions of motivation, they say nothing about the material world in which students live. Borrowing the concepts of *cultural capital*, *social class* and *habitus* from Bourdieu (1996), this research endorses a *social turn* to English language teaching and learning in that it calls for adopting a holistic approach (micro and macro level analysis) to language achievement beyond the narrow context of the classroom or school culture.

Cultural capital, according to Bourdieu (1986), can take three forms: in the *embodied* state (in the form of long-standing dispositions of the mind and body); in the *objectified* state (in the form of concrete or material cultural goods like pictures, books, dictionaries, devices, instruments and the like) and last in the *institutionalized* state such as one's academic qualifications, degrees and titles. Appreciating objectified cultural capital requires embodied cultural capital. Cultural capital, therefore, is the accumulated "experience and knowledge" (Bourdieu 1984, p. 23). Bourdieu (1986) goes as far as to argue that, "ability or talent is itself the product of an investment of time and cultural capital" (p.243). According to Bourdieu and

Passeron (1977) school success is shaped by the embodied cultural capital that students bring with them from social origins to the context of the classroom.

Most significantly, cultural capital is acquired passively and unconsciously at an early age depending on the period, society and the social class. On this basis, children from lower classes may lack this cultural capital when compared to upper classes and might, because of their dispositions and experiences, score poorer on standardized language tests at school for example. Hence, children from lower classes might be at risk when it comes to their school achievement. Bourdieu (1996) argues that, "those who possess diversified and largely cultural capital have everything to gain by maintaining the family ties that enable them to benefit from the capital held by each member of the group" (p. 292).

Drawing on all forms of capital is significant on the grounds that, "it is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the form recognized by economic theory" (Bourdieu, 1986,p. 241). In all his works, Bourdieu seems to offer a critique of the narrowly economic standpoint as well as extend it to the field of culture, noting, meanwhile, that capital can present itself in the immaterial form of cultural capital or social world. Nevertheless, Bourdieu (1986) argues that cultural capital is closely connected to the economic capital. As he states, "in the economic field itself, the concentration in the means of economic capital was accompanied by a concentration in the means of cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1996, p.336). What is at issue, according to these lines of thought, is that schools are sites where social structures are reinforced and reproduced (Bourdieu, 1996; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

Following his argument, Bourdieu (1986), points out that cultural capital, which is, more or less, a manifestation of power and class differences,

> Can exist in three forms; in the embodied state, e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematic, etc.; and in institutionalized state, a form of objectification which must set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural which is presumed to guarantee (p.17).

Recalling how the notion of cultural capital initially presented itself to him, Bourdieu (1986) writes,

> The notion of cultural capital initially presented itself to me, in the course of research, as a theoretical hypothesis which made it possible to explain the unequal scholastic achievement of children originating from the different social classes by relating academic success, i.e., the specific profits which children from the different classes and class fractions can obtain in the academic market, to the distribution of cultural capital between the classes and class fractions. The starting point implies a break with the presuppositions inherent both in the commonsense view, which sees academic success or failure as an effect of natural aptitudes, and in human capital theories. Economists might seem to deserve credit for explicitly raising the question of relationship between the rates of profit on educational investment and on economic investment (and its evolution). But their measurement of the yield from scholastic investment takes account only of *monetary* investments and profits, or those directly convertible into money, such as the costs of schooling and the cash equivalent of time devoted to study; they are unable to explain the different proportions of their resources which different agents or different social classes allocate to economic investment and cultural investment because they fail to take systematic account of the structure of the differential chances of profit which the various markets offer agents and classes as a function of the volume and the composition of their assets (p.17).

Therefore, what can be deduced from this discussion is that cultural capital is acquired passively and unconsciously at an early age depending on the period, society and the social class. Based on this knowledge, lower classes may lack this cultural capital when compared to upper classes, thereby putting their children at risk when it comes to their school achievement. In this sense, Bourdieu (1996) argues that those who possess diversified and largely cultural capital can have cultural advantages that enable them to benefit from cultural capital over those who do not possess a large cultural capital. "More precisely", writes Bourdieu (1986)

> it is because the cultural capital that is effectively transmitted within the family itself depends not only on the quantity of cultural capital, itself accumulated by spending time, that the domestic group posses, but also on the usable time (particularly in the form of the mother's free time) available to it (by virtue of its economic capital, which enables it to purchase the time of others) to ensure the transmission of this capital and to delay entry into the labor market (through prolonged schooling), a credit which pays off; if at all, only in the very long term (p.25).

Seen in this light, cultural capital refers to the knowledge and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups in relation to specific sets of social forms. Some forms of cultural capital may have a higher exchange value than others in a given social context due to many reasons (Pierce, 1995). With respect to English language teaching and learning, Pierce (1995) and Norton (2021) argue that language educators and theorists need to reconceptualize the way they approach the role of motivation in English language learning. Instead of motivation, Pierce (1995) endorses the view of *investment* in that

> The conception of instrumental motivation generally presupposes a unitary, fixed, and ahistorical language learner who desires access to material resources that are the privilege of target language speakers. In this view, motivation is a property of the language learner-a fixed personality trait. The notion of investment, on the other hand, attempts to capture the relationship of the language learner to the changing social world (p.17).

According to Bourdieu (1986), capital is accumulated labor that manifests itself in several forms, one of which is the cultural capital. Thus, this capital can either be presented in its *objectified* or *embodied* states. The objectified state of the capital presents itself in material objects and media "such as writings, paintings, monuments, instruments" and that it can be transmitted into its materiality (Bourdieu, 1986, p.19). The embodied state is what inhabits theindividual; that is, one's own culture.

Similarly, Bourdieu (1996) highlights that the transmission of the cultural capital secures countless advantages for their holders in the competitive struggles which set them against each other. Although it is fundamental to social life, Bourdieu (1996), as mentioned previously, nominates several forms of capital: economic (money and assets); cultural (forms of knowledge; taste, aesthetic and cultural preferences, language, narrative and voice); social (affiliations and networks; family, religious and cultural heritage) and symbolic (credentials).

Based on the previous discussion, the notion of objectified cultural capital, in the field of language teaching and learning, can mean anything that can be of help to language learning processes including access to books, stories, dictionaries, newspaper articles, desks, mobile phones, computers, radios, TVs, other more proficient family members, private tutors, a literary tradition among family members and the like. This *objectified* capital may help, more or less, in facilitating the process of learning an additional language provided that

learners are motivated enough. Obaidul (2009), for example, highlights that the role of cultural capital and habitus, in the field of TESOL,for example, cannot be denied in that it helps tremendously in learning additional languages.If learners grow up in an environment riddled with cultural capital, language learners are expected to be better at learning the target language.

What this means is that the social space that the language learners occupy can significantly impact the learning and teaching processes.Therefore, cultural capital is about the social assets of a person including their education, style of speech, style of dress; intellect; and knowledge that they have internalized within a given social group. While these assets shape individuals, children's *habitus*, another key concept in Bourdieu's model of reproduction, can either promote or impede social mobility in a stratified society.

b. Habitus

As discussed previously, habitus is central to Bourdieu's sociological approach to education. Conceptualizing it as "a system of lasting and transposable dispositions that, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 18), Bourdieu (1990) further confirms that habitus is "the product of social conditionings and thus of a history" (p. 116). On this basis, habitus indicates a set of *internalized* habits, skills, styles, attitudes, tastes, and dispositions (systems of propensity, tendency, and inclination) that incline agents to act and react in certain ways. A person's habitus is thus a mechanism that guides their behavior (perceptions, appreciations, and actions), which, in turn, is "the product of all biographical information" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 46).

Being a system of dispositions, habitus can be "acquired by implicit or explicit learning that functions as a system of generative schemes and generative strategies that can be objectively consistent with the objective interests of their authors without having been expressively designed to that end" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 76). In spite of the limitations it sets on one's thinking, expectations, and aspirations, habitus is subject to change, making it dynamic (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Significantly, habitus is meant to depict the deep-seated dichotomies that structure ways of thinking about the social world and shape, in turn, the perceptions of individuals. For

example, Maton (2008) highlights that "habitus is the link not only between past, present, and future but also between the social and the individual, the objective and subjective, and structure and agency" (p. 53). If EFL learners' reticence is likely to have socio-economic roots, then their English language achievement is likely to be enhanced or impeded by their social origins. The material basis of social life is relevant to language learners' achievement in general and motivation in particular. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), for example, highlight that academic institutions are never *neutral* but rather tend to reproduce the same class inequalities existing in society.

In a similar vein, as far as the Moroccan context is concerned, a recent report from the *Higher Council for Education, Training, and Scientific Research* (2018) concludes that the Moroccan education system reproduces and reinforces the same social class inequalities starting from primary school to higher education. That is to say, instead of equalizing between students regardless of their social and economic origins, the Moroccan education system tends to reinforce the class inequalities typical of society at large. Thus, the roots of poor educational achievements need to be established here.

In the same way, Bourdieu (1993) argues that the concept of *habitus* is similar to *habit*. He illustrates,

> The *habitus*, as the word implies, is that which one has acquired, but which has bacame durably incorporated in the body in the form of permanent dispositions. So the term constantly reminds us that it refers to something historical, linked to individual history, and that it belongs to a generative mode of thought (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 86).

In this context, Reay (2005) highlights that the amount of cultural capital that mothers, for example, are able to use in the present for the benefit of their children is a consequence of their current situation, meaning that their personal history and educational experiences and qualifications "have an effect on their propensity for some types of action over others" (p. 61). On the basis of this knowledge, habitus

> Focuses on our ways of acting, feeling, thinking, and being. It captures how we carry within us our history, how we bring this history into our present circumstances, and how we then make choices to act in certain ways and not others (Maton, 2005, p.52).

Therefore, the concept of habitus denotes the mental representations of the social world; it shapes both the inner as well as the outer world of individuals. Thus, it shapes the

perceptions of individuals and determines their future to a large extent. Maton (2008) illustrates that "habitus is the link not only between past, present, and future but also between the social and the individual, the objective and subjective, and structure and agency" (p. 53). In simple words, habitus denotes the position of individuals or groups within the social world, which is shaped by one's own experiences and the structures of which one is part. Accordingly, each social class shapes its members' perceptions and behaviors. Maton (2008) writes,

> Habitus links the social and the individual because the experiences of one's life course may be unique in their particular *contents*, but are shared in terms of their *structure* with others of the same social class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, occupation, nationality, region and so forth. For example, members of the same social class by definition share structurally similar positions within society that engender structurally similar experiences of social relations, processes and structures. We are a unique configuration of social forces, but these forces *are* social, so that even when we are being individual and "different" we do so in socially regular ways (p.53).

Being internalized symbolic schemes, habitus is used to refer to socially acquired ways of feeling, judging, thinking, acting, perceiving, interpreting, classifying, and evaluating. On this basis, habitus refers to the skills, habits, and dispositions that one has accumulated as a result of their experiences within a particular social class. It is, therefore, a sort of personal history of individuals in relation to the power structures shaping the realities of individuals in society at large. In *distinction* (1986), Bourdieu goes as far as to argue that French citizens' tastes in art, for example, are shaped by their social class positions. Because individuals from the upper classes have been exposed to and trained to appreciate art at an early age, they are more likely to have a taste for the fine arts. Working-class individuals may not have the tendency to appreciate fine arts simply because they had no access to them at an early age.

Conclusion

By drawing on sociological theory, this chapter has stressed the role of social context and social class factors in shaping children's learning outcomes. It has been highlighted throughout this section that social context and social class have been mainly neglected in favor of more cognitive approaches to English language teaching and learning. This is one of the major reasons why scholars have, relatively speaking, paid less attention to the context in which both teaching and learning occur. This emerging research trend has emphasized the

role of the social turn in researching the impact of the social context and social class dimensions on education in general and on English language teaching and learning in particular. As such, this section has highlighted that the sociology of education could provide insights into English language teaching and learning. That is why emphasis has been put on the macro factors shaping the process of teaching and learning.

On the basis of this knowledge, one asks: Are reticent learners culturally deprived of opportunities to learn the language, given their lack or absence of cultural capital? Are they simply lacking in motivation? Or is their reticence influenced by their lack of vocabulary, among other factors? Is their reticence a manifestation of their social class? To consider both the internal and external factors interplaying with EFL learners' reticence, a micro and macro approach will be adopted. The next chapter will focus more on the research methodology that will be used.

II. Methodology

The primary purpose of this research is to explore the factors that interact with learners' reticence in the EFL classroom from a socio-cognitive perspective. On this basis, this chapter provides an overview of the research design and methodology that will be used. Selecting an appropriate methodology will ensure the validity and reliability of the information elicited to a greater degree. This chapter, therefore, discusses the research design, research approach, research questions, research hypotheses, and research variables. Besides, the chapter throws some light on the profile of the participants, the setting (national and local), the data collection instruments, and the description of these instruments. Finally, the section discusses how the researcher went about gathering and analyzing the data.

Research approach

As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, most of the existing mainstream models of language learning and acquisition tend to overemphasize the role of internal cognitive and psychological aspects in language teaching and learning (Atkinson, 2002; Ellis, 2008; 2015) and applied linguistics (Block, 2014; Hulstijn et al., 2014). Atkinson (2002), one of the pioneers of this trend, argues that the cognitivist perspective on SLA is biased and that the socio-cognitive approach is specifically meant to overcome these biases. Owing to these shortcomings, scholars developed the *socio-cognitive* approach to language teaching and learning in response to "SLA orthodoxy" (Atkinson, 2002, p. 536).

This research, thus, combines the positivist and social constructivist paradigms to investigate students' reticence in the EFL classroom. Apart from the philosophical debates regarding these two concepts, the positivist approach, according to Obaidul (2009), is characterized by realism, independence, objectivity, casual correlations, and universal truth, whereas the constructivist approach stresses "the interpretative, value-laden, contextual, and contingent nature of social knowledge" (p. 89). In the same way, Creswell and Creswell (2018) highlight that the positivist stance on knowledge and knowledge production "has the elements of being reductionistic, logical, with an emphasis on empirical data collection, cause-and-effect oriented, and deterministic based on prior theories" (p. 20).

Looking at it from a positivist perspective, students' reticence can be empirically tested and objectively measured. For social constructivists, however, data are socially constructed; hence, all that one can benefit from the data gathered is to make sense of them to understand the experiences of learners' subjective worlds. For this reason, in order to understand the

world in which these reticent EFL learners live, a constructivist approach will be adopted. Positioning this research in this way is likely to help the researcher avoid the shortcomings of the positivist stance on knowledge.

On this basis, students' reticence could interact with one's personal history, experience, social class dimensions, and context. Herein lies the significance of seeing EFL learners' reticence through Bourdieu's thinking tools since they draw one's own attention to class dimensions and their possible impact on children's school achievement and success. This research, nevertheless, seeks a balance between positivist and social constructivist perspectives on learners' reticence.

In this way, Atkinson (2002) is perhaps the first to propose the socio-cognitive approach, which implies "a view of language and language acquisition as simultaneously occurring and interactively constructed both 'in the head' and 'in the world" (p. 525). In a similar vein, Block (2003, 2012, 2014) seems to offer a critique of the dominant cognitive approaches to language learning as something that purely takes place in the heads of the learners and thus offers an alternative to this perspective by integrating learners, teachers, learning contexts, social practices, products, tools, and worlds.

Atkinson (2002) asserts that the dominant view of language acquisition and teaching has regarded learners in de-contextualized contexts. Nevertheless, in spite of the usefulness of the socio-cognitive perspective on English language learning, it says little about the material world that EFL learners inhabit. For this reason, focusing more on the social class dimensions of language learners is quite essential (Block, 2003, 2012, 2014).

In this way, Block (2014) notes that although second language learning is a very complex phenomenon, the impact of class differences on language learning has historically been marginalized in favor of cognitive and linguistic approaches. Atkinson's (2002, 2011) approach sees language as a social phenomenon in the first place. As he summarizes, "language never occurs apart from a rich set of situational and existential correlates, and to separate it out artificially is to denature it" (Atkinson, 2002, p. 527).

While he does not define what he means by language acquisition, it is quite clear that Atkinson (2002) uses the term of acquisition in the same way that Krashen (1982) uses the concept, that is, L1 as it occurs in naturalistic environments. Although he uses the term

acquisition to refer to first language acquisition, the same term can be used to refer to learning additional languages as a conscious process. Therefore, the learning-acquisition dichotomies are used interchangeably in this research. Atkinson (2002) states,

> Cognitive potentials are realized in (and such dynamic actors supported by) extremely rich, nurturing social activities and contexts. Quite opposed to the Chomskyan "poverty of the stimulus" argument, a first principle of L1 acquisition should therefore be the richness of the context, that is, the deep, multiplex embedding of language activities in the lush social world that surrounds most children" (p. 528).

On this basis, it is evident that the *socio-cognitive* approach applies, judging by the passage above, more to L1 environments where children pick up their target language unconsciously. Yet, the *socio-cognitive* approach can be, as suggested earlier, applied to L2 environments as well, on the grounds that the richer the social context, linguistically and culturally speaking, the more likely that learners are to develop their proficiency in the target language. Thus, the nature of the input stimulus provided by one's environment and family is undeniably significant in impacting the learning outcomes of language learners. What this means is that external factors play a significant role in language learning apart from the internal factors for the language learners. Atkinson (2002) illustrates,

> A socio-cognitive approach to SLA would take the social dimensions of language and its acquisition seriously. Interaction in socio-cognitive SLA would have its full socio-cognitive significance and constitute a foundational concept. Language is learned in interaction. Classroom teachers are part of this group where second languages are concerned, but only a part-peers, mentors, role models, friends, family members, and significant others can also fall into this category (p.536).

In other words, language learning is not all about the social context in which learners live but is "fundamentally cognitive and fundamentally social"(p. 537). Learning, in this sense, profoundly depends on the integration of both perspectives to explain the process of language learning. In a similar vein, Hulstijn et al. (2014) highlight that language learning and teaching are influenced by different social circumstances. Language learning, thus, varies according to the context in which it takes place since "learning a new language in educational settings would be a different cognitive process from learning the same language in immersion settings" (Hulstijn et al. 2014, p. 374).

In this context, Hulstijn et al., (2014) argue that there is, in fact, no gap between cognitive and social approaches to learning and teaching. The issue, however, has been more about the "weight to be attributed to the social aspect of language learning" (Lulstijn et al. 2014, p. 375). In an environment with large quantities of language input, learners might develop their language quickly (Krashen, 1982).

The preceding discussion has confirmed that many individual differences (ID) can predict success in language learning. What about the social classes to which learners belong? Is it not part of this ID paradigm existing among learners? Can the social context that learners inhabit explain why some language learners learn faster than others and get further ahead in the learning and acquisition processes? This *social turn* represents a promising direction for research in second language acquisition, learning studies, and applied linguistics (Block, 2014). Given the interaction between internal and external factors in learning additional languages, it is suggested that there is an interaction between micro (individual) and macro (societal) structures shaping learners' reticence.

In addition to the differences that will be documented in both environments, it can be added that learning additional languages can also be promoted or impeded by the social class to which learners belong (Block, 2003, 2012, 2014). While this has to be tested, this research employs Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of *social class*, *cultural capital,* and *habitus* as a basis to explain the differences in learning outcomes among second/foreign language learners.

Simply put, learning additional languages can be enhanced by internal and external factors such as the home environment as well as the position that learners occupy in social space. Therefore, this research will draw heavily on Bourdieu's work, as his lenses are useful to explain EFL learners' reticence and other phenomena occurring in the language classroom as being the product of their *habitus*. Because data do not speak for themselves, this research, therefore, partly adopts an interpretative approach, which is usually concerned with developing analyses of subjective meanings and interactions.

This is the rationale for looking at EFL learners' reticence from three perspectives: linguistic, psychological, and socio-economic. By drawing on the EFL learners' backgrounds, schemes of thinking, linguistic knowledge, learning motivation, and dispositions, this research aims to establish how their reticence interacts with their experiences as social beings positioned in certain social spaces. Apart from naturalistic environments where acquirers have

the chance to expose themselves to a lot of input, Moroccan EFL learners are impeded by a plethora of constraints given the place of English in the school curriculum as well as the few functional purposes for which they can use the language outside of the EFL classroom.

Teaching and learning English in the Moroccan context

Moroccan EFL learners are introduced to English at a relatively late age in public schools. On the whole, in the absence of technological devices, most of the Moroccan learners are exposed to English, formally speaking, in the third grade of lower secondary school for two hours a week per se. Moroccan EFL learners may find it somehow difficult to develop their full proficiency in English given the foreign status of the language in the Moroccan context, in spite of the recent attempt to promote English learning in the Moroccan education system.

In this way, Kashru (1985) examines the status, spread, and function of English in three main contexts around the world. In Kashru's (1985) three-circle Model, the *Inner Circle* refers to the traditional bases of English, dominated by mother tongues, where English acts as a first language for a vast majority of people. The United States of America, England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are involved in the Inner Circle.

The *Outer Circle* consists of the countries where English functions as a second language. Most of these countries are former colonies of the UK or the USA, such as India, Malaysia, and Kenya. The *Expanding Circle* consists of the countries where English is learned as a foreign language, meaning that it is not part of a country's chief institutions. English in the Expanding Circle is used as a vehicle for international communication. China, Japan, Greece, Poland, and Morocco fall within the Expanding Circle.

As far as the presence of this language in the Moroccan language market is concerned, the English language has received momentous attention from the Moroccan governments. Several official documents (The National Charter for Training and Development, 1999; The New Frame Law, 2020) stress the importance of learning English for Moroccan students. According to Hyde (1994), the teaching of English in Morocco is mainly driven by its extrinsic value. Hyde (1994) stated that English "can be used as a purely functional instrumental tool, nothing more than a linguistic means to certain ends, such as fuller employment and a stronger economy, as in tourism, international banking, and higher education, and for access to texts" (p. 296).

Nevertheless, Ben Haman (2020) highlights that with the 51-17 Frame Law (2020) Moroccan EFL learners are going to be stripped of important opportunities to learn English in comparison with the French language, for instance. This is the reason why Moroccan English proficiency is considerably low given the fact that French is still dominant in all walks of life, including education, industry, and banking (Ben Haman, 2020). In fact, the EF English Proficiency Index (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021) classifies Morocco as a poor country in terms of English proficiency skills.

In spite of the financial and human resources allocated for French teaching, English, according to Hyde (1994) and Azhar (2021), is gaining ground in all domains in Morocco, including banking, international communication, tourism, higher education, job markets, and the like. Yet, the language policies implemented in Morocco at the national level are, according to Ben Haman (2020), negatively affecting the learning of the English language.

Thus, what makes the learning of English even more difficult for Moroccan students, in addition to the little amount of time allocated for the teaching of this language in public schools, is the limited functional purposes for which the language could be used. On this basis, the implication of Kashru's (1985) Model is obvious with respect to English language teaching and learning: learners in The Expanding Circle countries are expected to use the target language on a few occasions given the fact that its use is mostly restricted to the context of the EFL classroom. English, as such, is mainly taught as a subject and is used for international communication. Thus, the status that learners' target language has will exert an influence on how much of the target language is learned. For example, if the target language performs a wide range of functions at national and international levels, learners are likely to use it outside the language classroom.

Yet, if the target language is restricted to the classroom and is not used for communication with other members of society at large, it is likely that learners' attitudes towards the target language may be affected. Although this could be partly the case, it overlooks the fact that in an increasingly globalized world, technology remains a defining feature of modern life. On this basis, EFL learners can compensate for their limited exposure to the target language by immersing themselves in digital technology. This means that the use of technology provides an escape into richer linguistic environments, irrespective of institutional and socio-economic constraints (Diouani, 2021).

Seen in this light, one has to note that not all Moroccan EFL learners have access to the target language input (in all its forms) due to a lack or perhaps absence of Bourdieu's (1986) *objectified cultural capital*, which is further influenced by one's *habitus* and *social class* constraints. To put the point in simple words, while the status of English in the Expanding Circle may influence, with varying degrees, learners' exposure to the target language, it must be emphasized that learners' proficiency could also be limited by the positions they occupy in a stratified society.

It has been suggested before that learners reticence is a very complex phenomenon. The paradox, however, is that most of the relevant literature on reticence, along with the dominance of cognitive and psychological approaches in research on English language learning issues, focuses on isolated aspects of reticence. Now that the place of English in the national context has been discussed, it is important that one provide some background information on the local context where the study took place.

The local/social context of the investigation

This research took place at 'Anwal High School' (pseudonym) in a semi-urban town located in northern Morocco, Midar. Only 27 second-year baccalaureate students out of 163 were selected for this investigation. These participants made up 14.21 percent of the total number of second-year baccalaureate students. According to the Haut-Commissariat au Plan (2014), Midar had a population of 15021. Out of 15021, 10492 of the population are unemployed (Haut-Commissariat au Plan, 2014). Linguistically, this town is mainly inhabited by Amazigh speakers since a majority of the population (91.8 percent) use Tarifit variety for everyday communication (Haut-Commissariat au Plan, 2014). However, this does not mean that Amazigh-speakers are monolinguals, but rather a vast majority of them are bilinguals, particularly those who live in bilingual and multilingual situations (Boukous, 2011). Educationally, the rate of illiteracy among the population is 34 percent (Haut-Commissariat au Plan, 2014). However, these official data show that illiteracy is higher among women (45.6 percent) when compared to men (22.4 percent). Economically, while they can be described as an agrarian community, the town dwellers depend mainly on (a) farming, (b) trade, and (c) migrant workers' remittances. Investigating learners' reticence, thus, can be challenging because it is the product of complex factors that only a mixed-methods approach can do some justice to.

Additionally, Midar had six primary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and one vocational training school. In addition to these public schools, the town in question had only one primary private school. All of the aforementioned schools are formal educational institutions. With this in mind, the town and the school where this investigation took place had no public or school libraries. Being culturally poor has implications for the school achievement of language learners (Tan, 2019).

In fact, conducting research at work raises many issues. Creswell and Creswell (2018), for instance, highlight that "to study one's own workplace, for example, raises questions about whether good data can be collected when the act of data collection may introduce a power imbalance between the researcher and the individuals being studied" (p. 122). Nevertheless, being an insider investigator to the participants has been compensated for by using triangulation.

On this basis, while the researcher was quite aware of the problems of conducting research at his place of work, he opted for triangulation. Choosing this homogenous group of participants could provide the inquirer with insights into students' reticent behavior in the EFL classroom. Opting for this choice was in fact the result of a good teacher-student relationship that the inquirer and the participants developed over more than two years of "friendship". Likewise, Creswell and Creswell (2018) recommend that researchers establish rapport with their participants "so that they will disclose detailed perspectives about responding to an action or process" (p. 125). Since being an insider to the participants could affect the quality of the data gathered, a mixed-methods approach, as stated earlier, was used.

Mixed methods

Given the fact that reticence is a multidimensional phenomenon in the EFL classroom, adopting an interdisciplinary approach will help in generating a wealth of quantitative and qualitative data with respect to the factors that contribute to it, directly or indirectly. On this basis, combining educational and social theories in research on learners' reticence is more likely to generate quantitative and qualitative data. To achieve this purpose, a qualitative approach was selected. Specifically, this research makes use of a mixed-methods approach, which, by definition, involves "the combining or integration of qualitative and quantitative research data in a research study" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 51).

As it has been suggested before, the nature of reticence is very *complex,* and only a mixed-methods approach can penetrate some of its intricacies. This complexity is not limited to learners' reticence but goes beyond it to include the whole field of second or foreign language learning. Thus, the integration of both quantitative and qualitative data is more likely to provide one with insights into the dynamics of learners' reticence.

Moreover, adopting a mixed methods approach is likely to help in avoiding the methodological deficiencies of previous research (Bao, 2014; Izadi & Zare, 2016; King, 2011; Keaten & Kelly, 2000; Liu, 2017; Shea, 2017; Wang, 2011, 2019;), on the one hand, and shift the attention away from the cognitive approaches in research on English language teaching and learning, on the other hand, to more social ones. Significantly, a mixed-methods approach is likely to avoid the biases and weaknesses of only one method (Hulstijn et al. 2014; Dornyei, 2007). Therefore, to better understand the social habitat of the reticent learners, a vocabulary achievement test, a focus group, a questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews will be used.

Since reticence tends to affect many language learners, opting for focus group interviews could help one better understand the phenomenon under investigation from multiple perspectives. Choosing to draw upon some of the experiences of the individuals is important because such a method "recognizes that each human case is complex" (Duff, 2008), particularly that the learners operate within a wide range of linguistic, sociolinguistic, sociological, and cultural systems (Duff, 2008). On the role of looking at certain individuals' experiences in enhancing research insights, Duff (2008) writes,

> Sometimes the analysis of an individual's knowledge system and performance within a classroom context or within a particular activity setting provides sufficient background information to interpret influences on L2 comprehension, production, or task accomplishment, for example. Other times, the analysis is enhanced by looking at the home, school, community, or workplace environment and by looking at the individual within a social network of family members, peers, teachers, and others (p.38).

It goes without saying that catching all the complexities of students' reticent behavior is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, since triangulation is used, our knowledge of EFL learners' reticence is expected to increase.

Research questions

This research seeks to find tentative answers to the following questions:

1. How often do reticent students *invest* in their learning of English?
2. Is there a *correlation* between *poor vocabulary* and learners' reticence?
3. What are the attitudes of students' parents toward learning English?
4. Is there a correlation between students' *affective* factors and a lack of in-class participation?
5. To what extent do students value active *oral participation* in the EFL classroom?
6. In what ways does students' reticence interact with their *socio-economic* backgrounds?

Research hypotheses

This research seeks to explore the relationship between Moroccan EFL learners' reticence, on the one hand, and their lack of vocabulary, unfavourable language attitudes, and social class dimensions, on the other hand. To this end, the researcher puts forward four main hypotheses:

- H1: The poorer the students' exposure to the *language input*, the less likely they are to participate in the classroom.
- H2: There is a relationship between *poor attitudes, high foreign language speaking anxiety,* and EFL learners' reticence.
- H3: The more *vocabulary* the EFL learners know, the more likely they are to speak in the classroom.
- H4: There is a *correlation* between students' reticence and a lack of cultural capital.

Far from being deterministic, these hypotheses are built on the assumption that there could be an *interaction* between EFL learners' reticence (the dependent variable) and their lack of vocabulary, poor language attitudes, and their social class (the independent variables). As such, no assumption is made to suggest that learners' reticence is solely the result of these variables. In *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Popper (2013), for example, presents a critique of the sociology of knowledge as being something entirely the product of one's own class. Thus, explaining all one's behavior with reference to their *social habitat* is both wrong and reductionist (Popper, 2013). Therefore, the point that "our opinions, including our moral and scientific opinions, are determined by class interest and more generally by the social

historical situation of our time" is both simplistic and reductionist in nature (Popper, 2013, p. 420).

Meanwhile, Popper (2013) endorses the idea of *interaction* between research variables, not *determinism*. Critiquing this dependency of the economic base on the cultural and intellectual lives of individuals, Popper (2013) writes, "There is an interaction between economic conditions and ideas, and not simply a unilateral dependence of the latter on the former" (p. 318). Based on this understanding, the investigator assumes that there is an interaction among learners' reticence, on the one hand, poor vocabulary, poor language attitudes, and learners' social class, on the other hand.

Research variables

Students' reticence is the dependent variable. Besides, the independent variables include positive attitudes towards English language learning, notwithstanding the economic capital (income, educational qualifications, and job), cultural capital (parental education, private tutoring, study desk at home, English books and materials, TVs at home, mobile phones, computers, Wi-Fi internet), social capital (parents involvement in and support for children's English language learning, including parental expectations, parental encouragement in English learning, parental responsive to students' needs and finally learner habitus (exposure to input, investment in learning English, attitudes towards in-class participation, motivation for learning English, English and career expectations).

Research participants and sampling

As mentioned previously, this investigation took place in a semi-urban town called Midar, which is located in the Province of Driouch in northern Morocco. Only 27 students out of 497 were selected for the investigation. Specifically, these participants made up 5.76% of the total number of students. Because of their "severe" reticence in the EFL classroom, the investigator, who is an EFL teacher, took interest in these 27 (arts and science students) participants throughout almost three years of instruction. Given the fact that EFL learners demonstrated different levels of classroom participation, this thesis focuses more on the EFL learners who never said anything in the EFL classroom. For this reason, the researcher opted for focus group interviews, as these tools are essential to increasing one's own knowledge of

the social *habitat* of EFL learners (Dorneiy, 2007). Furthermore, both the researcher and the participants shared the same L1 and culture.

Moreover, these individuals were selected inductively, in that only the learners who never participated or volunteered answers were chosen. Additionally, selecting this limited number of participants was, as suggested previously, the result of a good rapport that the researcher and the participants developed throughout two years of "friendship". More information about the backgrounds of the participants will be provided.

Although the researcher tried to use all possible resources (humor, implicit correct feedback, motivating learning activities, calling students by names and praising them, and so on) to motivate students to speak in the classroom, many of them still avoided in-class participation altogether. Moreover, the present research deliberately selected 27 focal participants (n = 27). Since reticence seemed to affect both genders, these participants included, as stated previously, both female (n = 10) and male (n = 17) students. The participants consisted of second-year baccalaureate students at Anwal High School (pseudonym), where the researcher has been working as an EFL teacher.

While selecting this small number of participants could be a major limitation of the present investigation, it must be noted that this number was selected based on issues of accessibility, particularly in this small town where women's private spheres were extremely difficult for the researcher to penetrate. For this reason, the inquirer had to employ "a female friend" to interview female participants since being a male researcher made it difficult for him to collect data from such private spaces. Since not all EFL learners were reticent in the EFL classroom, non-probable sampling.

Students' reticence has been a major obstacle hindering the inquirer's classroom practice. In conversation, other EFL colleagues from the same school confirmed the same observation that few learners participated in classroom talk. Throughout the 2020–2021 school years, the author observed that a vast majority of the students (common core, first and second year baccalaureate) never said anything at all in the classroom. Since not all EFL learners avoided in-class participation, non-random sampling, as stated earlier, was chosen.

The inquirer, therefore, engaged in discussions with other colleagues to let him observe their classes to find out more about in-class participation. The conclusion confirmed the same

findings: that few students participated in the classroom and volunteered their answers. He learned, via observing different classes, that what happened inside the Moroccan EFL classrooms, at least those he observed, was far from helping learners develop their grammatical competence, let alone their communicative competence.

In fact, based on the *Ministry Guidelines for Secondary School Teachers* (2007), speaking, as mentioned in the previous chapter, received momentous attention from the Ministry of Education. Yet these EFL learners' were less engaged in speaking. The investigator then started to question his teaching practice: Was the problem with the teachers and their teaching strategies? Was it with the learning activities they used in the classroom? When he approached some of the reticent students, all that the researcher could hear was the Amazigh expression: "*wantcharik cha minzi wansin cha!"* (That can be translated as "we do not participate because we lack knowledge.

On many occasions, the researcher encouraged these reticent learners to share their opinions about issues pertinent to their lives, but they could not use English as they would mostly resort to their L1 and say, in turn, "*ustad ma'lish ansiwer thmazikhth*" (is it ok, teacher, to use the Amazigh language?) Was their reticence an indicator of a lack of knowledge? What did this lack of knowledge mean anyway? Was there "something" associated with their social realities that made it difficult for them to learn or acquire such knowledge?

Being an *insider* to the participants is a two-edged sword in that one may not see participants' lives and experiences in social and educational life objectively. However, this, in fact, was a strong enough reason that all the families welcomed the researcher as one of "theirs". Thus, insiders may be superior to their outsider counterparts when it comes to conducting research since "insiders have special advantages when it comes to doing research in their own sites and to investigating practices that hold their work and lives together in those sites—the practices that are *enmeshed* with those sites" (Kemmis Mctaggart, Nixon, 2014, p. 5).

The participants in this investigation were selected on the basis of their "severe" reticence, meaning that they never participated or volunteered any answers whatsoever. They would just sit at the back of the classroom and avoid making eye contact with the teacher, particularly when he asked questions and expected students to give their answers. After Allen and Wiles

(2015), participants' names (both students and their parents) have been replaced with pseudonyms to preserve their anonymity. The background information of the participants is summarized in the following table:

Table 1: The socio-economic background information of the participants (children and their parents)

Participants No.	Age	Gender	Pseudonyms	Parents' occupations	Age	Educational Qualifications	Yearly Income	Pseudonyms
Participant 1	18	Male	Yahya	Father: unemployed	54	Illiterate	----------	Jeddi
				Mother: a housewife	49	Illiterate	----------	Tamimount
Participant 2	19	Male	Rachid	Father: a cow keeper	50	Illiterate	80000-90000 dirhams	Afellay
				Mother: a house wife	58	Illiterate	----------	Khadouj
Participant 3	22	Male	Abdenour	Father: a tradesman	44	Illiterate	200000-300000 dirhams	Botkmanti
				Mother: a housewife	42	Illiterate	----------	Ikram
Participant 4	18	Male	Mohamed	Father: a farmer	50	Illiterate	30000-40000 dirhams	Bodounti
				Mother: a housewife	45	Illiterate		Yamina
Participant 5	18	Male	Ahmed	Father: construction worker	40	Primary school	50000-60000 dirhams	El Batioui
				Mother: a housewife	42	Primary school	----------	Yamna
Participant 6	19	Male	Yassir	Father: a mechanic	60	Primary school	60000-70000 dirhams	Azouti
				Mother: a housewife	56	Primary school	----------	Fatima
Participant 7	18	Male	Abdelhaq	Father: unemployed	65	Primary school	----------	Ousrouti
				Mother: a housewife	56	Illiterate	----------	Safae
Participant 8	18	Female	Oumayma	Father: deceased	--	--	----------	Kaddouri
				Mother: a housewife	64	Middle school	----------	Manal
Participant 9	18	Male	Anir	Father: a shopkeeper	62	Primary school	90000-100000 dirhams	Talhi
				Mother: a housewife	60	Primary school	----------	Zoulikha
Participant 10	19	Female	Tasnim	Father: a sheep keeper	46	Illiterate	20000- 30000 dirhams	Chicki
				Mother: a housewife	44	Secondary school	----------	Mimount
Participant 11	22	Female	Israe	Father: a shop assistant	71	Illiterate	18000-20000 dirhams	Azhar
				Mother: a housewife	42	High school	----------	Aicha
Participant 12	20	Female	Mimount	Father: a beekeeper	55	Illiterate	30000-35000 dirhams	Soulimani
				Mother: a housewife	50	Illiterate	----------	Chaymae

Participant 13	18	female	Khadija	Father: cow keeper Mother: a housewife	60 54	illiterate Illiterate	---------- ----------	Chamlali Ikram
Participant 14	18	female	Salwa	Father: a construction worker Mother: a housewife	48 48	Primary school Illiterate	40000-50000 dirhams ----------	Ben Ahmed Salima
Participant 15	19	female	Sabah	Father: a construction worker Mother: a housewife	53 50	Primary school Illiterate	30000-35000 dirhams ----------	Sotou Soukaina
Participant 16	19	female	Mina	Father: a construction worker Mother: a housewife	70 48	Illiterate Illiterate	20000-30000 dirhams ----------	Ammari Sanae
Participant 17	19	male	Hassan	Father: shopkeeper Mother: a housewife	51 50	Illiterate primary school	150000-200000 dirhams ----------	Aissati Hajar
Participant 18	20	male	Karim	Father: unemployed Mother: a housewife	63 60	Illiterate Illiterate	---------- ----------	Saaliti Hajar
Participant 19	20	Female	Meryem	Father: an *imam* (Islamic clergy) Mother: a housewife	68 64	Primary school Illiterate	50000-60000 dirhams ----------	Razouki Nada
Participant 20	20	Male	Youba	Father: a beekeeper Mother: a housewife	64 49	Illiterate Illiterate	20000-30000 dirhams ----------	Akachar Dounia
Participant 21	20	Female	Zakaria	Father: unemployed Mother: a housewife	65 49	illiterate Illiterate	---------- ----------	Choho Fadoua
Participant 22	21	Male	Boubker	Father: a shop assistant Mother: a housewife	50 50	Middle school Illiterate	20000-24000 dirhams ----------	Belhaj Meryam
Participant 23	21	Male	Ayour	Father unemployed Mother: a housewife	63 60	illiterate Illiterate	---------- ----------	Hamrouni Salma
Participant 24	20	Male	Massin	Father: a mechanic Mother: a housewife	58 47	Primary school Illiterate	60000-70000 dirhams ----------	Youssfi Insaf
Participant 25	20	Male	Khalid	Father: a beekeeper Mother: a housewife	59 57	Primary school Primary school	20000-30000 dirhams ----------	Benmousa Loubna
Participant 26	19	Male	Omar	Father: unemployed Mother: a housewife	64 50	illiterate Illiterate	----------	Masoudi Zakia
Participant 27	23	Male	Hafid	Father: a farm worker Mother: a housewife	66 46	illiterate Illiterate	---------- ----------	Boujdaini Halima

In addition to the 27 students that were non-randomly selected for this research, the parents of these reticent EFL learners, as can be noticed in the table above, were also interviewed (27=mothers; 26=fathers). The rationale for including parents in this research was that the inquirer sought to closely examine the extent to which reticence interacts with students' socio-economic background. Therefore, looking at students' reticence from a sociological perspective and within the framework of cultural capital theory implies a close examination of the social class to which these reticent English language learners belong.

Data collection instruments

To avoid the biases and weaknesses of one single method, this thesis used a mixed-methods approach to data collection. Therefore, in order to measure students' motivational and linguistic dimensions behind their reticence, both a Likert-Scale questionnaire and a vocabulary achievement test were used. The questionnaire was meant to measure students' attitudes towards learning English as well as their investment in learning the target language. The 40-item vocabulary achievement test was based on the *Oxford Vocabulary Level Test,* in which students were asked to choose only one correct word to complete simple sentences with multiple English *distractors*.

By shifting the attention away from the cognitive approaches to EFL learners' motivation, the inquirer resorted to conducting semi-structured interviews with the students' parents to look critically at the possible *interaction* between families' socio-economic backgrounds and learners' reticence. As such, this research reports on psychological, linguistic, and cultural capital paradigms to explain EFL learners' reticence. Next, a detailed description of the data collection methods used will be provided.

Description of data collection instruments

a. Vocabulary achievement test

It has been suggested before that learners' reticence can be the result of linguistic factors per se. As such, the researcher opted to measure the linguistic dimensions of learners' knowledge of the target language by administering a 40-item vocabulary achievement test to the target population (n = 27). The 40-item vocabulary achievement test was based on the online *Oxford*

Vocabulary Level Test, in which students were asked to choose only one correct vocabulary item out of five vocabularies.

To ensure the accuracy of participants' answers, students were asked to complete "simple" sentences with several English *distractors* (see appendices). However, the test designed was based on the vocabulary items that the EFL learners had been exposed to starting from their first exposure, formally speaking, to English in the lower secondary school grade (the ninth grade). This paper-and-pencil test was designed to test learners' separate components of English, that is, their knowledge of English vocabulary *per se*.

Besides, the test created was based on the students' English textbooks supplied by the Ministry of Education, including *Focus* (ninth grade), *Almassar: Window on the World* (common core), *Ticket to English 1* (first year baccalaureate), and *Ticket to English 2* (second year baccalaureate). The rationale for this choice was further inspired by Schimtt's (2008) view that "the words tested should obviously be drawn from the ones covered in the course" (p. 164).

Therefore, to measure learners' vocabulary knowledge consistently and accurately (hence the test's reliability), the test required students to select only one word out of five. "Validity", writes Milton (2009), "addresses the question of whether a test measures what it is supposed to measure and not something else" (p. 18). To achieve this purpose, the test was, as has been repeatedly pointed out earlier, adapted to the sort of linguistic data that the participants had been exposed to throughout their three years of learning English in the Moroccan EFL classroom.

Based on the word-frequency parameter (see appendices), Milton (2009) illustrates that "it is important because frequency determines which words a learner is likely to encounter and how often they are encountered" (p. 22). This research intentionally included lexical words, which carry a greater burden of meaning, in the sentences inserted on the test. As such, it included "lexical words, nouns, main verbs, and adjectives that, it might be thought, appear to carry a greater burden of meaning in any sentence" (Milton, 2009, p. 23). These lexical words were included since they frequently occurred in the Morocco EFL classroom and had been covered in the aforementioned syllabi. By testing these reticent learners' vocabularies, the results of such a test would either refute or confirm, though partly, the link between reticence and a lack of vocabularies.

In fact, the test targeted learners' "basic" English language proficiency. It tested students' knowledge of numbers (cardinal and ordinal), body parts, family members, jobs, colours, fruit, drinks, vegetables, clothes, seize, meats, house parts, meals, and so on. Including these vocabulary items was meant to determine whether or not the reticent learners had attained the basics of English to which they had been exposed. On these grounds, if learners do not attain these vocabulary items, there is a possibility that they may not understand the teacher's output, resulting in their reticence in the classroom.

Moreover, as stated previously, this vocabulary achievement test was mainly based on the *word-frequency* model (Nation, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2009; Milton, 2009; Schmitt, 2000). On word frequency, Milton (2009), for example, explains that "there is a strong relationship between a word's frequency and the likelihood that a learner will encounter it and learn it" (p. 25). Opting for this choice was further inspired by Milton (2009), who illustrated that "learners will tend to know more of the high-frequency words than the lower-frequency words" (p. 25). Consequently, students' knowledge of vocabulary is central to language production on the grounds that "while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (Wilkins, 1972).

Schmitt (2000) further explains that the more "items (questions) a test contains (which means a higher sampling rate), the more reliable the test is" (p. 167). However, though longer tests are better in terms of validity and reliability,

> But unreasonably extensive tests often fail in terms of practicality; for example, tests with hundreds of words are unlikely to be of much use in the classroom. Thus, there is always tension between having a test long enough to be valid and reliable, yet short enough to be administered" (Schmitt, 2000, p.167).

This test was designed to find out about learners' mastery of the vocabulary items and the link that this could have with learners' *habitus*. After this test, students were asked, on the same day, to take part in completing a questionnaire to gain more insights into their reticence.

b. Learner's questionnaire

The questionnaire was highly structured in that it required participants (n = 27) to respond to a series of stimuli on a five-point Likert scale that contained statements targeting students' *habitus* together with the possible interaction that this could have with reticent students' social

class dimensions. On this basis, to gather quantitative data, an 80-point Likert-scale questionnaire was designed and subsequently administered to the target population (see appendices). Items 1-11, for example, targeted students' exposure to English input and whether they invested their time in learning English or not, whereas items 12-22 gathered data about students' perceptions of in-class participation.

Meanwhile, this questionnaire focused on exploring students' intrinsic, extrinsic, and instrumental aspects of learning motivation (23-35). Items 36-50 investigated the possible interaction of students' reticence with their social realities, given the social class dimensions of the issue under discussion. Besides, items 51-60 concentrated on the investment that these reticent students put in learning the target language, whereas items 61-76 investigated learners' *habitus* as related to parental expectations of learning English in particular and how much they were responsive to their children's needs. Finally, the questionnaire targeted the learner's education and career expectations (items 77-80). To elicit more qualitative data, focus group interviews were used.

c. Students' focus group interviews

Due to the shortcomings of questionnaires for gathering in-depth data, the researcher opted for focus group interviews. Some of the focus group questions (see appendices) were adopted from Obaidul (2009). However, the researcher adapted these questions to fit the purpose of the present research given the specificities of the Moroccan context as well as the different objectives of the present investigation.

Therefore, the participants were asked questions about their attitudes towards English language learning at school, the efforts they put into learning it, their degrees of satisfaction with in-class participation, their aspirations for learning the language for their future, and their parents' possible contribution to their learning of English. This was meant to draw a holistic picture of the learner's *habitus* by including questions about their attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, motivations, preferences, and expectations.

The questions included but were not limited to: Are you satisfied with school teaching in English? What are the things you like the most about your English class? Do you like speaking English in the classroom? How frequently do you participate in the classroom? What is your favorite subject at school? Do you like English? How important is English for your

future studies and career? What are the advantages that you think you can obtain by learning English? Would you learn English if it were not a compulsory school subject? Is English easy or difficult? How satisfied are you with your grades in English? What grade do you expect to get in the national baccalaureate exam?

How would you describe your efforts to learn English at home and school? How would you describe someone who usually participates in English? How would you describe someone who is always silent in the classroom? Do you study English every day at home? What do you usually do if you have problems with English? Are you taking any private lessons in English? What level of education do you aspire to have in the future? What do you think are the reasons that will hinder your path to higher education? How do you spend your leisure time? Do you read any books outside your English syllabus? How do you describe the contribution of your parents to your English language learning? To gain some knowledge of parents' perspectives on the education of their children, semi-structured interviews were used. It is worth noting that other prompt questions were also asked during the interviews.

d. Parents' semi-structured interviews

One shortcoming of the previous reticence research is that it limits learners' reticence to the learner's perspective per se, neglecting, meanwhile, the material world they inhabit. Exploring learners' reticence should not be limited to learners' or teachers' perspectives; one has to see this phenomenon through the lenses of sociologists. While this research does not claim to find answers to all educational problems, it suggests that drawing on the socio-economic factors that interact with EFL learners' reticence could be a good enough start to find more pertinent answers to burning educational issues in the Moroccan context.

As it has been pointed out earlier, the social class dimensions have been overlooked by mainstream models of second language acquisition and learning (Block, 2003; 2014). Nevertheless, the inquirer is of the view that researching EFL learners' reticence should be considered within a socio-cognitive approach so as to keep a balance between both perspectives.

For this reason, the explorer resorted to interviewing these reticent EFL learners' parents (n = 53). Since social classes could be conceptualized, according to Bourdieu (1990) and Block (2003), within three main dimensions (income, occupation, and educational qualifications),

the interview questions (see appendix) focused on questions that targeted both parents' *habitus, economic* and *cultural capital*, and the impact that this could have on learners' English language proficiency.

To illustrate, parents are generally asked to talk about their "reticent children". The questions included: What is your occupation? How much money do you earn a year? Do you have Wi-Fi? Do you have a TV set? Do you read books? How many languages do you speak? How do you spend your free time? Which school grade is your child in? Does s/he usually keep silent at home? Do you have electricity? How many members are there in your family? Does your child have a study desk? How frequently are you helping your children with learning? How frequently were you assisting your child with English language learning? Do you motivate him to study hard? Do you think English will be important in the future for your child? What do you wish for him or her to be? How happy are you with his school grades in general and in English in particular? What do you think about him as a student? Do you assist them directly in his studies regularly? Does he or she talk to you about his or her studies and career plans? What grades do you expect him to get in English? What level of education would you like them to achieve? Do you think he or she tries his or her best to learn English? Do you urge them to be serious? How important do you think English is for your son's future education and career? Do you think it is important for you to keep in touch with your son's school and teachers? How do you maintain such contact? Other prompt questions were also asked during the interviews. The scores obtained were calculated based on a coding system.

Items coding

Items with the highest value (strongly agree) were assigned number 5 on the scale (1–5), whereas items with the lowest value (strongly disagree) were assigned number 1. This applies to the multiple-response test items as well (the *vocabulary achievement test)*. The examinees were informed to select only one correct answer out of five alternatives. Given that this research adopts a multi-perspective paradigm, the data gathered by the mixed-methods approach will be supported by interpretative stances on knowledge. Moreover, the qualitative data gathered by the focus group and semi-structured interviews were analyzed *inductively* and *thematically*.

Data collection procedures

To analyze the data inductively, the author made use of the *thematic analysis* framework developed by Clarke and Braun (2006). By taking the research questions and the focus of the dissertation into consideration, the investigator generated a plethora of salient themes. However, he looked for common themes, patterns, and associations among the entire data set in order to analyze such data in multiple-case analysis. To ensure the readability and clarity of excerpts, redundancy, false starts, and repetitions were taken out. On this basis, it is worth noting that the interviews were conducted in Tarifit-Berber and were, subsequently, translated into English.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the research design and methodology used in this research. First, it has discussed the shortcomings of the cognitive approaches and stressed the importance of adopting a more "critical approach" to English language teaching and learning. Second, the chapter has explained the rationale for adopting a socio-cognitive approach to researching students' reticence. Third, to ensure the validity and reliability of the information elicited, the chapter has suggested that reticence should be approached from a positivist as well as a social constructivist perspective. Fourth, this chapter has shed some light on the profile of the participants, the local and national settings, and the data collection instruments used. The chapter has also described these instruments at some length. Finally, the chapter has highlighted how the researcher went about gathering and analyzing data thematically. The data gathered will be presented and analyzed in the next chapter.

III. Data Analysis

This dissertation, as it has been stated, explores the links between students' *reticence*, on the one hand, and *poor vocabularies, unfavorable attitudes, a lack of investment* in English language learning, and *social class* dimensions, on the other hand (social factors). Divided into four sections as such, this chapter aims at offering and analyzing the data collected through the mixed-methods approach. First, the chapter presents the data gathered by the vocabulary language achievement test, analyzes this from a *positivist* perspective, and links this to *second language acquisition and* learning studies and *applied linguistics*. Second, it analyzes the data gathered by the focus group interviews with the students (micro-level analysis) and their parents (macro-level analysis). This will be analyzed from a *social constructivist* perspective. However, it is crucial to mention that the quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed *thematically*. Apart from the *thematic analysis* of the data elicited, the main purpose of this chapter is to give tentative answers to the *research questions* and *hypotheses* advanced earlier. While these tentative answers are not final as to what makes reticent EFL learners reticent, the chapter sheds light on the possible interaction between students' habitats and their cognition. First, this chapter will start by offering the data gathered through the Likert-scale questionnaire. Second, the chapter will analyze the data gathered by the vocabulary achievement test. Then, it will present the data gathered by the focus group and the semi-structured interviews in an effort to find tentative answers to the previous research questions. These findings will be discussed in light of the cultural capital theory developed by Bourdieu.

Students' questionnaire

This research closely examines the possible interplay between the micro-internal and macro-external factors that contribute to the emergence of EFL learners' reticence. However, taking into consideration the fact that this research is illuminated by positivist and constructivist approaches, the dissertation combines micro- and macro-level explanations. On this basis, measuring students' exposure to English, learning motivation, parental involvement, and responsiveness were quite essential for the examination of these assumptions. This section offers and analyzes the data gathered through the Likert-scale questionnaire used.

In fact, this questionnaire was highly explicit in that it required participants to respond to the stimuli by ticking an option of their choice with respect to their frequency of *exposure to English input* (items 1–11), *attitudes towards in-class participation* (12–22), *motivation for*

learning English (items 22–35), *parental involvement in English learning* (36–50), *efforts at learning English* (51–60), *expectations of learning English* (61-64), *parental expectations* (64–71), *parental responsiveness* (73–76), *and education and career expectations* (77–80). Including these constructs on the questionnaire was essential to finding out more about the profile of the reticent EFL learners.

By combining the perspectives of English language learning theories and the sociology of education, a more complex picture of students' reticence is expected to emerge. At the *macro* level, it has been argued previously that the social habitat of language learners has been neglected in favor of more cognitive approaches (Azhar, 2020; Benesch, 2012; Block, 2003, 2012, 2014; Davin & Norton, 2014; Gao, 2014; Kanno, 2014; Lopez-Gopar & Saghruna, 2014; Shin, 2014; Vandrick, 2014). This means that addressing learners' material conditions and their achievement is likely to lead one to gain more insights into the profile of successful language learners, particularly in the Expanding Circle, where EFL learners have little exposure to English given its foreign status. The following table summarizes the frequency of students' exposure to English input. These numerical data are manifestations of students' *habitus.* This means that by drawing on the data at hand, one can somehow get a clear picture of students' perceptions and behaviours, which are, more or less, manifestations of their class differences.

Table 1: The erequency of students' exposure to English input

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	I like to read English books and shorts stories in my free time				
	22	3	0	2	0
	81.48%	11.11%	0%	7.40%	0%
2.	Reading is one of my favorite hobbies				
	13	12	0	1	1
	48.14%	44.44%	0%	3.70%	3.70%
3.	I like talking about the books I have read with other people				
	16	11	0	0	0
	59.25%	40.74%	0%	0%	0%
4.	I regularly watch news in English				
	14	8	3	2	0
	51.85%	29.62%	11.11%	7.40%	0%
5.	I chat with English speakers from all around the world				
	12	11	2	1	1
	44.44%	40.74%	7.40%	3.70%	3.70%
6.	I really enjoy watching English movies				
	13	4	3	5	2
	48.14%	14.81%	11.11%	18.51%	7.40%
7.	I have never read an English book				

	0	0	0	2	25
	0%	0%	0%	7.40%	92.59%
8. I usually practice English at home					
	15	4	3	5	0
	55.55%	14.81%	11.11%	18.51%	0%
9. I listen attentively to the teacher when in the classroom					
	0	2	3	4	18
	0%	7.40%	11.11	16.66	66.66%
10. I enjoy listening to English music					
	14	3	3	5	2
	51.85%	11.11%	11.11%	18.51%	7.40%
11. I usually talk to myself					
	17	9	1	0	0
	62.96%	33.33%	3.70%	0%	0%

SD: strongly disagree; D: disagree; N: neutral; A: agree: SA: strongly agree

Based on the dataset above, it is quite clear that students' exposure to English is in its infancy. While this research does not suggest that participants' lack of exposure to the target language is the sole reason for students' reticence, it is, in fact, one of the major reasons why students do not participate in the EFL classroom. Significantly, 82.42% of the participants, for example, did not seem to "like to read English books and short stories" (SD = 22) and, thus, reading did not seem to be one of their favourite hobbies (SD = 13; D = 12). For these reasons, 92.59% of the participants have never read an English book.

This little exposure that these EFL learners have had to English input is also manifested in the students' frequency of watching English movies (SA = 16; A = 8) and their absence of contact with English speakers from all around the world (SA = 12; A = 11), though this contact with more proficient speakers of English has been found to positively impact learning outcomes. Although it has been highlighted that introverted learners of English may resort to private talk when learning English, these reticent learners did not seem, based on the data at hand, to "usually talk to themselves" (SA = 17; A = 9).

These findings confirm that reticent students did neither seem to practice English at home (SA = 16; A = 8) nor seem to enjoy listening to English music (SA = 15; A = 4). Yet, 66.6% of the participants, based on the frequency with which they exposed themselves to English input, indicated that they "listened attentively to the teacher when in the EFL classroom". In spite of listening to the teacher attentively in the EFL classroom, most of the participants did not seem to enjoy listening to English music (SD = 14; D = 3).

In addition, when the participants were asked about how regularly they watched news in English, 16 participants ticked “strongly disagree”. Watching TV, however, is helpful for English language learning. Krashen and Terell (1983), in this way, highlight that a little TV watching enhances language development. As he puts it, “it seems that those who do better on tests of language and literacy read more but watch TV only a little less” (Krashen & Terell, 1983, p. 146). On the critical role of reading in language learning, Krashen and Terell (1983) conclude,

> When children read for pleasure, they “get hooked on books”, they acquire, involuntarily and without conscious effort, nearly all of the so called language skills many people are concerned about: they will become adequate readers, acquire a large vocabulary, develop the ability to understand and use complex grammatical structures, develop a good writing style, and become good [...] spellers (p.149)

Reading English resources, however, is not the product of students’ strong learning motivation per se. Rather, one’s own reading habits are, more or less, shaped by one’s habitus and social class differences. Farkas (2018), in this context, rightly puts it: “Differences in family social class status lead to differences in parenting, which lead to differences in school-related habitus, which lead to differences in cultural capital skills and behaviours” (p. 6).

While he noted that there is a lack of research into the effects of socio-economic status on school achievement among Moroccan students, Nadori (2019) reported a significant influence of home-based factors on students’ exposure to language input. Research on the effects of early exposure to print-language environments shows that language input is, thus, associated with enhanced language input (Nadori, 2019). Following their examination of the effect of parental reading behavior on students’ school achievement, De Graaf, De Graaf, and Kraaykamp (2000) summarized their findings: “Parental reading is effective in predicting success in school, especially for children whose parents have low levels of education” (p. 92).

While these findings do not suggest that students’ reading habits are the result of one’s own habitus per se, they indicate that there is an interaction between home, family factors and children’s reading habits. Thus, family reading behaviour is predictive of student educational success (Farkas, 2018). Bourdieu (1984) highlighted that the probability of reading newspapers, for instance, is linked to social class, and this rate of readership is linked, in turn, to the possession of educational capital. Therefore, while these reticent students’ exposure to

English input is in its infancy, their home environments provided them with no support to learn English. This implies that reticence is a manifestation of habitus and the absence of educational qualifications among children's parents.

As long as language learning occurs in a social setting, Ellis (2008) highlights that successful language learning is also enhanced by social factors. As Ellis (2008) illustrates,

> Social factors/settings serve as the major determinant of the input that learners receive. For example, they influence what variety of the target language the learners will be exposed to and also the amount of exposure. Input provides the data for the language processing mechanisms (p.204).

Thus, one's social background is thought to impact the language learning process in the sense that learners from high socio-economic backgrounds are provided with rich linguistic environments since their parents tend to have acquired crucial institutionalized capital.

Equipped with this knowledge, 13 students assumed that they "strongly disagreed" with the statement, "I really enjoy watching English movies". Since students' lack of exposure to English input is evident, they neither seemed to "enjoy listening to English music" (N = 14, SA) nor read an English book (N = 23). In spite of this little exposure the students have had to English, these participants, as discussed so far, "listen attentively to the teacher when in the EFL classroom" (SA = 22). Part of the answer lies in the *affective* side of speaking in front of one's peers in the classroom.

Against the assumption popularized by the Pennsylvania Reticence Program pioneers that reticent individuals do not like to engage in speaking (Phillips, 1968), reticent learners in the EFL context, judging by the results obtained, viewed speaking as one of the most important skills to practice towards improving one's own output (SA = 24). In spite of the important role of speaking in the learning of the target language, a majority of the participants did not "like to participate and volunteer answers in the classroom" (SD = 24). Some possible factors, therefore, are responsible for this lack of classroom participation. In simple words, there are multiple factors that hold EFL learners back from taking an active role in the classroom.

Table 2: Students' attitudes towards in-class participation

	SD	D	N	A	SA
12. I like to participate and volunteer answers in the classroom					
	12	8	5	2	0
	44.44%	29.62%	18.51%	7.40%	0%
13. Speaking is important for me to improve my English					
	0	2	3	0	22
	0%	7.40 %	11.11%	0%	81.48
14. Speaking is not important to learn English					
	16	5	4	2	0
	59.25%	18.51%	14.81%	7.40%	0
15. I am often scared to talk in the classroom					
	0	1	2	4	20
	0%	3.70%	7.40%	16.66%	74.07%
16. I think participating in class is a waste of time					
	12	11	2	1	1
	44.44%	40.74%	7.40%	3.70%	3.70%
17. I do not participate because I do not know many English words					
	3	4	0	3	17
	11.11%	14.81%	0%	11.11%	62.96%
18. I do not participate because I usually lack knowledge about the topic of discussion					
	5	5	0	2	15
	18.51%	18.51%	0%	7.40%	55.55%
19. I do not like to talk in English because my pronunciation is bad					
	4	1	0	7	15
	14.81%	3.70%	0%	25.92%	55.55%
20. I participate more in the Arabic class than in the English class					
	4	3	0	2	18
	14.81%	11.11%	0%	7.40%	66.66%
21. I feel nervous when I participate in class					
	0	3	2	0	22
	0%	11.11%	7.40%	0%	81.48%
22. I feel embarrassed when I speak English in front of the class					
	0	0	1	7	19
	0%	0%	3.70%	25.92%	70.37%

Although students' attitudes towards speaking English in the EFL classroom were predominantly positive (81.48%), there is strong evidence, from the table above, suggesting that these participants' reticence is the result of *affective* (statements 4, 8, 10, 11) and *linguistic* (statements 17 and 19) factors in the first place. This indicates that in-class participation is not a waste of time (44.44% = SD; 40.74% = D). Therefore, classroom participation can enhance learners' learning outcomes.

It has been suggested earlier that students' reticence is influenced by affective, linguistic, and cognitive factors (Bao, 2014, 2020). The findings of the present research seem to point to

the same conclusion. To illustrate, psychologically speaking, most of the students (n = 24) suggested that they were “often scared to talk in the classroom” (SA = 20). In the same way, "I feel nervous when I participate in class" received 22 responses (SA = 22). Moreover, 70.37% of the participants revealed that they felt embarrassed when they spoke English in front of the class (SA = 19; A = 7).

However, these findings indicate that reticence is the product of the interaction between affective and linguistic factors. In this way, Eddraoui and Wirza (2019) pointed out that the lack of class participation depends on other variables. As they explained,

> One of the sources of language speaking anxiety is lack of vocabulary. Language learners feel nervous and worried because of the amount of the vocabulary they possess in the target language, especially when they are involved in an academic conversation or a formal setting (Eddraoui & Wirza, 2019, p.351)

This implies that foreign language speaking anxiety is the result of a lack of insufficient English vocabulary, which, in turn, leads to students’ passivity in the EFL classroom. Linguistically speaking, 55.55% of the students (n = 22) in the present investigation revealed that they did not like to talk in English since their pronunciation was poor (SA = 15; A = 7). Additionally, 62.96% of the participants strongly agreed that they did not take part in the classroom because they did not know enough English words (SA = 17; A = 3). Cognitively speaking, 55.55% (n = 17) of the participants, however, strongly agreed (SA = 15; A = 2) with the statement that their lack of knowledge about the topic of discussion was likely to force them to resort to silence in the classroom, whereas 5 participants strongly agreed with this statement.

Following her investigation at Ibn Abbad Secondary High School in the city of Kenitra, Guebba (2020) found out that although her respondents expressed favorable attitudes towards speaking in the EFL classroom, such participants (n = 80) did not actually participate actively in the classroom. This means that there is no correlation between students’ attitudes towards in-class participation and their behaviors in the classroom.

In a similar vein, Baissane (2022, 2023) argued that most of the Moroccan EFL learners, whose perceptions he surveyed via means of a questionnaire, seemed to be reluctant to speak and interact orally in English due to a feeling of foreign language speaking anxiety and apprehension. This foreign language speaking anxiety, according to Hortwitz et al. (1986),

has a negative impact on the speaking abilities of language learners since it prevents them from developing their speaking skills.

This suggests that classroom participation is the result of rich linguistic repertoires and high self-esteem. Therefore, having low self-esteem and poor linguistic repertoires are some of the major factors why a vast majority of these reticent students (n = 20) did not seem to participate and volunteer their answers in the EFL classroom (SA = 12; A = 8). These findings are in line with those revealed by Baissane (2022), Guebba (2020), and Eddraoui and Wirza (2019). Put differently, reticence reveals a lack of learners' investment in the target language and high foreign language speaking anxiety.

In this way, Ouakrime (2016), for instance, argued that even the first year Moroccan university student in the English Department does less speaking, let alone secondary school students. Ouakrime (2016) regretfully notes that "unfortunately, this potential is rarely put to adequate use since opportunities to participate in class are very limited because of the size of groups and the predominance of the lecture as a teaching practice" (p. 102). Ouakrime (2016) says this of Moroccan universities, where teachers usually resort to lectures.

In a similar vein, Bouddage and Elfatihi (2018) revealed that Moroccan second-year baccalaureate students in Agadir, for instance, demonstrated high levels of speaking anxiety. Significantly, in relation to students' reticence, Bouddage's and Elfatihi's (2018) study showed that this high level of anxiety hindered students' speaking abilities tremendously. Moreover, speaking anxiety was found to be the result of explicit error correction, intolerance of students' errors, a tense classroom atmosphere, a lack of teacher-student rapport, and the learning and teaching activities used (Bouddage & Elfatihi, 2018). In relation to how error correction influences learners' performance at an early stage of language development, Krashen (1982) rightly put it,

> Error correction has the immediate effect of putting the student on the defensive. It encourages a strategy in which the student will try to avoid mistakes, avoid difficult constructions, focus less on meaning and more on form. It may disrupt the entire communicative focus on an exchange (p.75)

Similarly, Soo and Goh (2013) showed that a vast majority of their respondents avoided talking since they felt "tense" and "nervous". In the same way, Krashen (1982) Krashen and Terell (1983) argued that students could have a sort of mental block against classroom input,

given the fact that an inappropriate atmosphere (anxiety and peer pressure, for example) hinders students' language development. This is one of the chief reasons why students tend to avoid talking in the EFL classroom.

In light of *foreign language speaking anxiety*, Horwitz et al. (1986) documented similar results. That is to say, the feeling of nervousness that EFL learners have in the language classroom tends to hinder their speaking and puts them on what Stevick (as cited in Krashen, 1982) calls "the defensive". In simple words, foreign language speaking anxiety raises reticent learners' affective filter, not lowers it. Thus, high foreign language speaking anxiety is one of the major factors for students' reticence.

In spite of the affective factors that hinder students' route to sharpening their speaking skills, these reticent EFL learners hold positive attitudes towards in-class participation, and this, as suggested earlier, indicates that reticent EFL learners value classroom participation, just like their active counterparts. Although these students in question never contributed any answers to the classroom discussions and conversations, based on the data gathered, they all seemed to appreciate classroom participation. This means that a reticent EFL learner may, theoretically speaking, appreciate in-class participation, but they may not engage in it in practice due to multiple *linguistic*, *affective,* and *cognitive* factors.

These affective factors impeding EFL learners' speaking in the classroom can be traced back to notions of cultural capital and habitus. In this context, Bourdieu (1984, 1993) highlighted that, in the case of the French middle class, for instance, individuals' confidence comes with cultural capital and middle-class habitus. Seen in this light, students' reticence indicates fragile cultural capital, and this, in turn, leads, with varying degrees, to foreign language speaking anxiety in the EFL classroom.

In *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1984) highlights that one's perceptions, behaviors, and appreciations can be explained by reference to "class variations" (p. 212). The differences in these perceptions towards sporting activities, for example, are, according to Bourdieu (1984), driven by the profits they are supposed to bring. He illustrated,

> In any case, one only needs to be aware that the class variations in sporting activities are due as much to variations in perception and appreciation of the immediate or deferred profits they are

> supposed to bring, as to variations in the costs, both economic and cultural (Bourdieu , 1984, p.212).

Thus, being introverted may imply a lack of cultural capital. In this context, although Bourdieu (1986) did not introduce the notion of *emotional capital*, which is usually used to refer to "a special form of social and cultural capital that is generated through affective mechanisms, especially in the family" (Piri, Pishghadam, Dixon, & Rasekh, 2018), such capital is critical to the promotion of children's learning. Since family's emotional contribution to children's education is thought to significantly contribute to enhanced learning (Piri et al., 2018), learners' reticence is thought to be the result, though partly, of a lack of parental support and motivation to help their children learn English due to structural factors in the first place.

Likewise, Piri et al. (2018) explained that learning outcomes could be enhanced by investing in emotional capital. This means that lower classes, judging by the results obtained, did not seem to utilize effective socializing techniques to help socialize their children into educational success since the emotional resources that are passed on from parents, especially mothers, to their children are impeded, in our case, by illiteracy and poverty. In other words, fear of making mistakes, nervousness, embarrassment, poor pronunciation, a lack of vocabulary, and a lack of knowledge about the topic of the discussion are just some of the factors that influence EFL learners' behaviour in the classroom. Under these conditions, one can say that what seems to make a reticent EFL learner reticent, at the micro level, is their lack of knowledge of English, lack of knowledge about the topic of the conversation, and high foreign language speaking anxiety.

While these micro factors are important to catch the intricacies of students' reticence, considering the external factors (the macro level), namely the social factors, is essential to having a more complete image of students' reticence in the EFL classroom. Nevertheless, in spite of their "severe" reticence, these participants revealed a strong learning motivation.

Table 3: Students' motivation for learning English

	SD	D	N	A	SA
23. I always look forward to English classes.					
	0	1	0	12	14
	0 %	3.70 %	0 %	44.44 %	51.85%
24. learning English is important because it will help me find a good job in the future (improve career prospects)					
	0	8	2	3	14
	0 %	29.62 %	7.40 %	11.11 %	51.85
25. Learning English is important because it will enable me to go overseas in the future for higher education					
	3	7	1	1	15
	11.11 %	25.92 %	3.70 %	3.70 %	55.55
26. I do not like to learn English because it is not my favorite subject.					
	24	0	0	0	3
	88.88 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	11.11
27. I wish that no English was taught at school					
	22	1	2	1	1
	74.07 %	3.70 %	2.40 %	3.70 %	3.70
28. Learning English is important because it will help me to read books, magazines, and newspapers written in English					
	0	3	3	8	13
	0 %	11.11 %	11.11 %	29.62 %	48.14
29. Learning English is important because it will allow me to meet and talk with many people in the world					
	0	0	0	13	15
	0 %	0 %	0 %	48.14 %	55.55
30. I would learn English simply because it is compulsory					
	15	2	2	4	4
	55.55 %	7.40%	7.40%	14.81%	15.81
31. I concentrate on English more than French and Arabic					
	12	5	3	6	1
	44.44 %	18.51 %	11.11 %	22.22 %	3.70
32. I am working hard at learning English					
	14	9	1	3	3
	51.85 %	33.33 %	3.70 %	11.11 %	11.11
33. Studying English will help me get a high paying job					
	7	3	16	0	2
	25.92	11.11 %	59.25 %	0 %	7.40
34. Studying English will be useful if I travel abroad					
	0	0	0	5	22
	0 %	0 %	0 %	18.51 %	81.48
35. English is the most important school subject					
	4	3	11	1	8
	14.81 %	11.11 %	40.74 %	3.70 %	29.62 %

A close analysis of the findings above reveals that reticent students are strongly motivated to learn English, just like their orally active peers in the EFL classroom. For example, 96.29% of the participants agreed that they "always look[ed] forward to English classes" (SA = 14; A = 12). In a similar vein, these participants confirmed their disagreement with the statement that read: "I wish that no English was taught at school", with 74.07% of the participants

suggesting that they strongly disagreed with the statement in question. When they were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with item 30, 55.55% of the respondents strongly agreed (n = 15) and 7.40% agreed (n = 2) with this statement.

Although these participants seem to be strongly motivated to learn English, the results of item 35 revealed that 40.74 % of the respondents in this investigation expressed their neutrality when they were asked about whether or not English was the most important school subject. In this way, 88% of the students showed their strong disagreement with the statement that read: "I do not like to learn English because it is not my favourite subject". What this means is that although these participants were neutral with regard to how important English was for them, they seemed to have a favourable attitude towards English learning, not merely because it was one of the school subjects they had on their timetables.

This interest in learning English is confirmed by the responses of the participants to item 26. To illustrate, when they were asked to "tick" whether or not they would learn English simply because it was part of the school curriculum, 55.5% of the participants (n = 15) strongly disagreed with the statement. Besides, 62.96% of these students, though reticent in the EFL classroom, assumed that the English language would be useful for them to "get a high-paying job in the future".

In other words, reticent EFL learners are extrinsically motivated to learn the English language. However, when they were asked to indicate the extent to which studying English will help them get a high-paying job, 59.55% of these participants were neutral, and 24.92% strongly disagreed with the statement under discussion.

This lack of investment in learning English is further confirmed by students' attitudes towards the ability of their target language to help them pursue higher education overseas. In this sense, students' indifferent views are clearly illustrated by the frequency with which they indicated their choices (N = 13, D = 10, and SA = 2). This implies that reticent students, judging by the results obtained, assumed that English would not be necessary even if they chose to continue their higher education abroad.

However, 77.76% of the participants indicated that "learning English is important because it will help me read books, magazines, and newspapers written in English". Moreover, 55.55% of the students strongly agreed that "learning English is important because it will

allow me to meet and talk with many people in the world", whereas 48.14% agreed with the statement.

What this means is that these reticent EFL learners are intrinsically and instrumentally motivated to learn the target language. In other words, the participants are basically learning English to read English resources and communicate with other English speakers from around the world. These findings were further reinforced by the fact that a vast majority of the participants (81.48%) strongly agreed that studying English would be useful for them if they travelled aboard (SA = 22). Despite these positive attitudes towards English learning, these participants revealed that they were in fact investing more in Arabic and French than in English (item 31). In other words, these reticent students, though they viewed English positively, were not working hard at learning it (85%).

On this basis, following his survey of 1,477 respondents belonging to different school levels and disciplines about their frequency of use and mastery of languages, Bouziane (2020) revealed that Moroccan students had positive attitudes towards all languages and would like, in the first place, to use foreign languages for instrumental purposes. Apart from the impact of language policy, Bouziane's (2020) explanation was that such positive attitudes did not depend on the level of mastery of these languages nor on their use as mediums of instruction or communication. Rather, these findings imply that attitudes towards languages in Morocco are rooted in factors beyond the official policy orientations (Bouziane, 2020).

In the same way, Bouziane (2020) argued that Moroccan students' preferences for language learning, present in the Moroccan education system, are determined by "factors such as social class, the type of school, family, context, interlocutor, the topic of discussion, etc." (p. 302). Thus, the findings of the present investigation are consistent with Bouziane (2020) and Buckner (2011).

This, among other things, indicates that reticent EFL learners are quite aware of the power of English in today's world, though they do not tend to invest in their learning of the target language. Therefore, students' low motivation may not be the sole reason for their reticence. Looking at this issue from the point of view of cultural capital, one can say that students' reticence is largely the result of their lack of cultural capital, meaning that their poor speaking performance at school was influenced by their socio-economic backgrounds.

In this way, Gayton (2010), Akram and Ghani (2013) pointed out that learners' socio-economic status is positively correlated with learning motivation. According to Gayton (2010) and Block (2014), having good economic capital gives language learners access to a plethora of authentic situations, such as when they travel to other countries and experience the target language and culture.

Similarly, Akram and Ghani (2013) highlighted that learners' socio-economic status (SES) is an important predictor of English language achievement in the sense that students with high socio-economic status tend to demonstrate a more positive attitude and strong motivation towards learning a language in comparison with students who come from low socio-economic backgrounds. Therefore, EFL learners who bring with them enriched cultural capital are expected to excel in the classroom, and thus their performance will be good enough, provided that their parents supply all the necessary means.

In the same way, Oskamp and Schultz (as cited in Bartman, 2006) claimed that "A child's attitudes are largely shaped by its own experience with the world, but this is usually accomplished by explicit teaching and implicit modelling of parental attitudes" (p. 126). This means that parents' sociocultural backgrounds have a significant impact on their children's learning. Therefore, the cultural assets that the EFL learners bring with them from their families could either enhance or impede their rate and route of EFL learning. This, in turn, impacts students' oral performance at school to varying degrees.

Research suggests that previously learned dispositions affect the learning outcomes of children (Bourdieu, 1984). In a similar vein, Bourdieu (1986) highlighted that school and academic achievement are not merely the result of talent and intelligence but rather that the monetary, cultural, and social capital that students bring with them to the context of the classroom tremendously influences their school achievement.

Of all forms of capital, cultural capital, according to Bourdieu (1973), is the cornerstone of school achievement. While economic capital may not account for the differences in the educational achievement of learners who come from different social classes (Piri et al., 2018), one's cultural dispositions are significant for school success (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979).

Therefore, when considering factors beyond school, one is likely to find out more about the issue of students' reticence. This implies that such behaviour is not simply the result of poor

motivation. In a similar vein, Arratibel and Bueno-Alastuey (2015) highlighted that enhanced English language achievement implies the interaction of three variables: family socio-economic background, individual efforts, and motivation.

In other words, the macro-level explanation of EFL learners' reticence implies that one touches upon one's social origins, together with their impact on language achievement. In this connection, Arratibel and Bueno-Alastuey (2015) indicated that "motivation influenced students' proficiency the most and that motivation correlated with the mother's occupation and higher amounts of input outside classes" (p. 43). Therefore, reticence could indicate less parental involvement in their children's learning.

Table 4: Parental involvement in English learning

	SD	D	N	A	SA
36. My parents encourage me to learn English.					
	18	1	0	5	3
	66.66 %	3.70 %	0 %	18.51 %	11.11 %
37. My parents encourage me to attend extra English classes after class					
	13	2	9	1	2
	48 %	7.40 %	33.33 %	3.70 %	7.40 %
38. My family put a lot of pressure on me to study English.					
	16	11	0	0	0
	59.25 %	40.74	0 %	0 %	0%
39. My parents think English is important to learn					
	5	3	18	1	0
	18.51 %	11.11 %	66.66 %	3.70 %	0 %
40. My parents try to help with my English lessons					
	20	6	0	0	1
	74.07 %	22.22 %	0 %	0 %	3.70 %
41. My parents cannot help me with my English language					
	0	0	0	15	12
	0 %	0 %	0 %	55.55 %	44.44 %
42. My parents ask me about my school regularly					
	17	8	1	1	0
	62.96	29.62 %	3.70 %	3.70 %	0 %
43. My parents encourage me to study English					
	0	16	10	0	1
	0 %	59.25	37.03 %	0 %	3.70 %
44. My parents know my teacher of English					
	12	11	0	4	0
	44.44 %	40.74 %	0 %	14.81 %	0 %
45. My parents always ask me what I do or learn at school					
	14	12	1	0	0
	51.85 %	44.44 %	3.70 %	0 %	0 %
46. When I have homework in English, my parents make sure that I do it					
	7	15	2	0	2
	25.92 %	55.55 %	7.40 %	0%	7.40 %
47. My parents think I should give more time to English language learning					
	1	2	18	6	0
	3.70 %	7.40 %	66.66 %	22.22 %	0 %
48. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am having problems with my English					
	16	4	5	2	0
	59.25 %	14.81 %	18.51 %	7.40 %	0 %
49. I usually seek help from my family with English					
	22	5	0	0	0
	81 %	18.51 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
50. My parents think English is not important to learn					
	3	2	17	4	1
	11.11 %	7.40 %	62.96%	14.81 %	3.70 %

Previously, it was revealed that the participants in this research were highly motivated to learn English, though they did not seem to effectively and deliberately invest in their learning, practically speaking. The table above, however, highlights that children's parents, according to students' responses, seemed to be less involved with their children's learning. In a similar vein, 66% of the participants indicated that their parents were not encouraging them to learn English (SD = 18; D = 1).

In the same way, 48% of the participants strongly disagreed with the statement that read: "My parents encourage me to attend extra English classes after class". This means that the families of these reticent EFL learners did not put a lot of pressure on them to study English (SA = 16; A = 11). In other words, a vast majority of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed with item 3 on the questionnaire. Part of the answer lies in the fact that 66.66% of the participants revealed that their parents thought that English was not important to learn. These findings, however, should be viewed in light of the socio-economic background of these EFL learners.

Moreover, although the assistance that the children's parents provide is crucial towards helping one's own children acquire English language competences, the data gathered seemed to suggest that these parents were not involved in the learning of these children altogether, with 55.5% of the students agreeing and 44.4% of the participants strongly agreeing with item 41. However, moving beyond numerical information is important to explore learners' habitats and the impact that this has had on their lives.

That is to say, there is an obvious interaction between micro and macro factors in relation to EFL learners' reticence. Therefore, without taking into consideration the material world that shapes the lives and identities of language learners, it could be reductionist to conclude why a vast majority of the parents did not seem to help their children with English lessons (SA = 74.07%; A = 22.22%). These findings should be viewed in light of the cultural capital theory (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1986, 1990a, 1977, 1990b, 1993, 1996a). In other words, parents' educational level, occupations, and yearly income have an effect on children's learning motivation (Block, 2003, 2014).

In addition to this, according to the information gathered via these questionnaires, 62.86% of the participants strongly disagreed with the item (41) that read: "My parents ask me about my school regularly". This lack of interest in supervising children's learning should be seen in light of the cultural assets of one's own family. In this way, Nadori (2018) highlighted that parents' educational level as well as their father's occupation are important predictors of reading comprehension achievement.

Following his investigation, Nadori (2018) pointed out that parents who were highly educated influenced the reading habits of their children the most. What this means is that one's economic capital may not have a significant impact on children's learning. The same

findings have been confirmed by Bourdieu (1990). Given the illiteracy of the parents, it is evident why the parents of these reticent EFL learners were not provided with assistance with respect to the acquisition of English capital. Thus, parents' poor motivation towards the learning of their children is further manifested in the fact that such parents did not seem, based on the data at hand, to encourage their children to study English (A = 16).

Lack of encouragement for the children has implications for learning in the sense that the more the parents encourage their children to learn the target language, the more likely the children are to enhance their learning (Gardner, 1985). This little encouragement is clearly manifested in parents' lack of familiarity with the school system (SD = 12; D = 11). Doubtless, having a good understanding of the education system on the part of the parents, according to Lareau (2003) and Lareau and Weininger (2003), *does* have an impact on the learning of one's own children. Following their lines of reasoning, Lareau (2003) and Lareau and Weininger (2003) illustrate that parents who come from middle- and upper-class families, for example, do help their children make their own choices, whereas parents who come from lower classes do follow the school regulations to the fullest.

Thus, given the fact that these parents did not seem to support the schooling of their children, it must be noted that these parents have been shaped by the socio-economic forces of their habitat. Because of a lack of educational, monetary, and emotional capital, these parents' contribution to the promotion of the English capital of their children was in its infancy. On the link between the critical role of habitus in setting limits to one's own thought and practice, Bourdieu (1984) states,

> The habitus generates representations and practices which are always more adjusted than they seem to be to the objective conditions of which they are the product. To say with Marx that 'the petit bourgeois cannot transcend the limits of his mind' (others would have said the limits of his understanding) is to say that his thought has the same limits as his condition, that his condition in a sense doubly limits him, by the material limits which it sets to his practice and the limits it sets to his thought and therefore his practice, and which make him accept, and even love, these limits (p.244).

According to Gardner (1985), parents can influence their children positively or negatively. For parents to positively influence their children's learning of English, they are, for instance, expected to encourage, reward, monitor, and scaffold their children's learning in diverse ways. This, however, appears to be missing from the lives of these reticent EFL learners.

Parents' indifferent attitudes towards the learning of English have the potential to negatively impact the learning of their children. Thus, such parents' passive behaviors towards the learning of their children are likely to discourage EFL learners from learning the target language when they undervalue the target language or regard languages as not essential for their children to learn (Gardner, 1985).

In this context, Kurlaender and Hibel (2018) highlight that families, based on their class differences, tend to invest in the education of their children at an early age, with the purpose of making a significant difference in their educational pathways. As they write, "families invest time and resources in children's educational development early in childhood" (Kurlaender & Hibel, 2018, p. 361). Although he did not conceptualize learning and mental development along class lines, Vygotsky (1978) highlights that "children's learning begins long before they attend school" (p. 84). What is at issue, however, is that this investment of time, resources, and efforts is constrained by multiple structural, cultural, and institutional forces (Kurlaender & Hibel, 2018).

Drawing on Bourdieu's (1977) notion of cultural capital, Farkas (2018), in this context, argues that school success and achievement "are strongly and positively correlated with parental social class" (p. 3). Under these conditions, it has to be stressed that, seeing that these reticent students are highly motivated to learn English, one's own *habitus* may, thus, not be influenced by their social class backgrounds, by and large.

As such, children may not blindly and mechanically replicate the social class status of their families, though economically speaking, several of these reticent EFL learners (participants 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 17, 24) were, relatively speaking, not at a disadvantage. On this basis, children's lack of English resources to expose themselves to the target language as well as the absence of parents' knowledge of the English language interacted (*embodied capital*) to a large extent with how far the children could go with the learning of English.

Clearly, students' lack of English resources and lesser parental involvement with the children's learning *do* influence the rate of EFL learners' learning. In other words, though several of these students' parents were providing their children with advantages (monetary and objectified cultural capital in the first place), their lack of knowledge of English as well as their little institutionalized cultural capital seem to have had a negative impact on the schooling of their children.

In relation to English language learning, following the cultural capital theory paradigm, Tan (2019) highlights that parents with a high socio-economic status may have a better understanding of what their children are expected to learn in school and may, therefore, invest effectively in their children by providing the latter with educational resources to support their learning at home. According to Bourdieu (2000), parental involvement in the children's learning is concretely illustrated by their "investment in the domestic space" (p. 166). This investment, nevertheless, appears to be missing from the home environments of the reticent EFL learners.

This means that there is an interaction between the socio-economic backgrounds of the families and the support they provide for their children at home. Following his investigation into the role of cultural capital in enhancing Moroccan EFL learners' proficiency, Diouani (2021) pointed out that while children's socio-economic backgrounds significantly enhanced students' learning, the very positive attitudes that the children's parents had towards English learning were positively correlated with enhanced EFL learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, having a good enough monetary capital may not have an impact on the schooling of their children if the parents themselves are illiterate. In this context, illiteracy is thought to limit one's own linguistic repertoires, orientations, dispositions, skills, and opportunities. That is to say, learning English cannot be reduced to cognitive processes per se, but it is enhanced by socio-economic dimensions in the first place since it is influenced by home, family, and school factors. In a similar vein, research has revealed that students who have access to home educational resources tend to have higher levels of school achievement (Tan, 2019).

Additionally, a majority of the participants' answers showed that their parents rarely investigated what they did or learned at school (SD = 14; A = 12). When these EFL learners were asked about whether or not their parents were concerned with their learning, a majority of the participants indicated their disagreement with item 47. This implies that students' parents seemed to be "careless" about whether or not their children did their homework in English. Under these conditions, 66.66% of the participants indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 45. Part of the answer lies in the fact that these participants, whose perceptions were surveyed, were confused about how to answer given their class dispositions.

Nevertheless, when these participants were asked about whether or not their parents urged them to allocate more time to English language learning, a bulk of the students answered in the negative (SD = 14; A = 12). Moreover, a bulk of the participants indicated that their parents did not advise them to seek help from their EFL teachers in case they were having problems learning English. Thus, parents' indifferent attitudes towards their children's learning cannot be fully understood without taking into account the socio-economic background and the environment in which these reticent EFL learners grew up.

Due to the constraints of their structure, these participants (n = 27) did not, based on the information obtained, tend to seek any help from their families with English (SD = 22; A = 5). These parents' indifferent attitudes towards English language learning were strongly reinforced by the fact that 62.96% of the participants (n = 17) indicated that they were neutral regarding their opinions about statement 50, which read: "My parents think English is not important to learn".

These findings should be viewed in light of parents' cultural capital and students' home environments. For example, when the participants were asked to state the extent to which they agreed with whether their parents were encouraging them to attend extra English classes after class or not, a majority of the students' responses were negative (SD = 17; D = 8). These findings concretely indicate a lack of social reinforcement for children's English language learning at home, which is a prerequisite, according to Centola (2018), for behaviors to occur and spread.

Although English has impacted all countries globally, these participants' parents did not see the need for their children to learn the language. This parent's "passivity" towards the learning of English is translated by their children into reticence in the EFL classroom. By referring back to parents' profiles, part of the answer as to why parents' are passive when it comes to the educational needs of their children lies in the fact that such parents were either illiterate or they lacked English competencies and skills in particular.

As far as the Moroccan context is concerned, Azhar (2020), in this way, pointed out that knowledge of English could act as a powerful form of cultural capital. Thus, accumulating knowledge of English is perhaps the first step for Moroccan EFL earners, who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, to go up the social ladder (Azhar, 2020). While the learning of English is important to climbing the social ladder, it must be stressed that one's socio-

economic background could either foster or impede the learning process to a large extent. Hence, considering the macro factors that interplay with students' reticence is essential to examining one's achievement in the target language.

On this basis, one concludes that reticent EFL learners are not helped by their parents with the learning of the English language. Why is this so? The possible reasons behind this issue will be further discussed once the researcher presents and analyzes the data elicited from the reticent students' parents. However, it is important to note that common among the parents of these EFL learners is their illiteracy, lack of formal education experiences, and lack of knowledge of English. Thus, a lack of what Bourdieu (1984) terms "educational capital", which is measured by qualifications and competences, seems to have deprived these reticent learners of cultural socialization into English capital.

That is to say, reticence, once addressed from the perspective of *habitus*, is likely to provide one with more insights into the lives of reticent students. Parental involvement with the English learning of their children is an essential aspect of one's own *habitus*. Therefore, by measuring *habitus* through parental involvement, one is likely to draw a picture of the class position of reticent learners and their parents.

The frequency of students' responses is significant too because it helps one get an idea about the sort of support that parents provide for their children as informed by their socio-economic backgrounds. Although habitus can manifest itself in diverse ways, it can impact the language learning process negatively or positively. EFL learners, according to Darvin and Norton (2021), can escape the constraints of their habitus provided that they exert their efforts to learn the target language via learning autonomy.

Table 5: Students' efforts at learning English

	SD	D	N	A	SA
51. I always study English even when on a holiday					
	20	5	2	0	0
	74.07 %	18.51 %	7.40 %	0 %	0 %
52. I always review my English lessons before coming to school					
	13	7	0	7	0
	48.14 %	25.92 %	0 %	25.92 %	0 %
53. I usually practice my English with foreigners on the internet					
	18	4	1	1	3
	66.66 %	14.81 %	3.70 %	3.70 %	11.11 %
54. I keep up to date with English lessons by working on them almost every day.					
	14	3	4	2	4
	51.85 %	11.11 %	14.81 %	7.40 %	14.81 %
55. When I have a problem in learning English, I ask my teacher or some other proficient person for help					
	12	7	2	5	1
	44.44 %	25.92 %	7.40 %	18.51 %	3.70 %
56. When I have a problem in learning English, I use my mobile phone to look for the information.					
	13	4	3	4	3
	48.14 %	14.81 %	11.11 %	14.81 %	11.11 %
57. I do not have a special plan for my homework					
	2	3	1	6	15
	7.40 %	11.11 %	3.70 %	22.22 %	55.55 %
58. I keep working on my English lessons even if they are difficult					
	15	9	0	3	0
	55.55 %	33.33 %	0 %	11.11 %	0 %
59. I do my best to learn English					
	12	5	3	7	0
	44.44 %	18.51 %	11.11 %	25.92 %	0 %
60. I spend a lot of time learning English at home					
	14	10	0	2	1
	51.85 %	37.03 %	0 %	7.40 %	3.70 %

Exploring reticent students' perceptions regarding the efforts they put into learning the target language is significant to catch the possible interaction between the efforts that these EFL learners put into learning English, on the one hand, and reticence, on the other hand. As it was revealed previously, these reticent EFL learners were strongly motivated to learn English. However, judging by the data gathered and analyzed, these reticent students did not seem to invest effectively and deliberately in their learning. As a way of illustration, 92.58% of the participants expressed their disagreement with item 51, which targeted students' efforts to study English on holidays (SD = 20; A = 5).

Besides, 69.06% of the participants indicated that they were not reviewing their English lessons before coming to school (item 52). In the same way, as can be seen in the table above, 81% of the participants disagreed, with varying degrees, with item 53. This means that reticent EFL learners, though they stated that they were highly motivated to learn the target language, did not seem to practice their target language with foreigners on the internet.

Practicing the target language with more proficient language learners is thought to promote one's own learning (Swain, 2000). This lack of exposure to English input (aural or written) implies that learners' reticence interacts with the little effort they put into learning the target language. Additionally, 61.96% of the participants indicated that they were not keeping up with English lessons (SD = 15; A = 3).

As suggested earlier, seeking help from more proficient English language speakers positively impacts one's own learning. Yet, these reticent students, as far as the data gathered is concerned, seemed to be less involved with their learning. To illustrate, when they were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with item 56, 13 participants (48.14%) strongly disagreed, and only 4 (14.81%) disagreed with this statement.

Although all of the participants (n = 27) possessed a mobile phone, students' responses revealed that they did not use such devices to look for information when they encountered problems in learning English (SD = 48.14%; D = 4). Significantly, mobile assisted language learning (MALL) has been found to enormously enhance English language learning among Moroccan EFL learners (Diouani, 2022).

Thus, the impact of the mobile phone on English language learning has been well documented. Since young learners engage with English on the internet, MALL has been found to promote language learning (Rosell-Aguilar 2018; Lee & Lee 2020; Hanson and Brown 2019). Thus, given the dominance of English in online interaction, learners resort to using multiple online platforms to enhance their learning in diverse ways.

While MALL has been used to learn vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, it can also be used to reinforce and extend learners' learning beyond the 'traditional' classroom in interactive ways (Wrigglesworth and Harvor 2018). MALL offers considerable potential for vocabulary learning (Sweeney and Moore, 2012), increases long-term retention of vocabulary (Hanson and Brown, 2019), fosters autonomy (Chen and Kessler, 2013), and facilitates interaction, conversation, and collaboration among learners (Wrigglesworth and Harvor, 2018).

What this means is that students' reticence is the result of a lack of active learning behaviors. This was further confirmed by the fact that 77% of the respondents agreed, with varying degrees, that they did not have a special plan for their homework (item 58). Not only

this, but these participants also revealed that they were not working on their English lessons (77.7%). In a similar vein, 62% of the participants disagreed, though to varying degrees, with item 59.

Put simply, reticence indicates that EFL learners are not doing their best to learn English. Since they did not seem to make any effort to learn English, these reticent participants indicated that they did not spend their time learning English at home (SD = 14; A = 10). How could EFL learners sharpen their speaking skills if they did not put any effort into learning English? The roots of students' reticence have to be established here in the very little effort that reticent students put into learning English. Yet, the macro factors, as stated earlier, have a bearing on this issue as well.

As Gardner (1985) observed, "many of us want to be millionaires, but if this desire is not associated with a concomitant effort to achieve the goal, we are not really motivated to become millionaires" (p. 11). Therefore, the efforts that English language learners put into learning the target language are thought to be the most valid assessment of motivation (Gardner, 1985). In other words, these reticent students are reticent because of their lack of efforts at learning the target language, though they seemed, judging by the numerical data obtained, to be motivated.

In spite of these reasons, motivation may not be the result of learners' efforts per se. Rather, motivation could have socio-economic roots (Bourdieu, 1990). In a similar vein, research highlighted that motivation could be influenced by internal and external factors outside the learner, such as teachers, parents, and society's expectations. (Williams & Burden, 1997).

Another possible explanation is that offered by Darvin and Norton (2021), who explained that holding favorable attitudes and investing in the target language are two different things. That is to say, what makes a significant difference in the lives of EFL learners is not how positively they view the target language, culture, and community but rather the efforts they deliberately and effectively put into learning English (Norton, 2021). Seen from a sociological perspective, Norton (1997) highlighted that motivation is a form of *investment* in learning. In the same way, Darvin and Norton (2021) illustrated that "while motivation is a psychological construct that focuses on conscious and unconscious factors, investment is primarily

sociological and focuses on how histories, lived experiences, and social practices shape language learning" (p. 247).

Investment, therefore, "involves how learners invest in their learning at particular times and in particular settings, as they engage in a range of social interactions and seek a wide range of material and symbolic resources" (Darvin, 2019, p. 247).Since these reticent learners did not seem to invest in their learning, though their home environments had some objectified cultural capital (namely TVs and mobile phones), it becomes clear why their output is very poor in the EFL classroom.

Being a complex, multidimensional construct, motivation can, thus, be influenced by *internal* and *external* variables, including the interest and perceived value of activities, attitudes, affect, the learning environment, and societal expectations (Williams & Burden, 1997). Gardner (1985), however, argues that parental encouragement enormously enhances learning outcomes. As he rightly states, "the provision of a warm and supportive environment that encourages within the child the development of an integrative motive toward language study will have a clear effect on second language acquisition" (Gardner, 1985, p. 123).

Thus, by examining the objectified cultural capital the students had at home, one is left with the assumption that one's monetary capital may not, contrary to Bourdieu (1986), have a significant impact on the learning of English. The picture gets clearer once one compares the efforts that the students put into learning the target language with their poor vocabularies. Seen in this light, one asks a question: can one's own learning and behavior not be influenced by one's own economic resources? The data elicited in this context seems to support this hypothesis. Simply put, reticence, on the one hand, is positively correlated with poor English vocabulary, which, in turn, is further reinforced by the little effort the students put into learning English.

Nevertheless, the cultural capital of the parents revealed how powerful such dimensions could be when it comes to transmitting one's own view of the world around them to their children. In this way, these results significantly indicated that reticent learners are shaped by their environments to a great extent. The evidence for this is the very limited vision that these students have for themselves (career expectations).

On top of that, the lack of effective EFL learning strategies seemed to interact with the students' milieu in that their environments have, as far as the dataset at hand is concerned, influenced their learning outcomes. These findings suggest that making sense of the data at hand presupposes that one pays close attention to the poor linguistic and cultural stimulus provided by the home environment. As such, enriched home environments are likely to lead students to perform well at school (Bourdieu, 1986).

Therefore, previously, it was suggested that reticent learners' attitudes towards English were predominantly favourable, but their lack of Norton's (2021) sociological concept of *investment* in their learning makes it impossible for them to learn the target language; hence, their inability to orally communicate using English.

Table 6: Expectations of learning English

	SD	D	N	A	SA
61. I believe I can get a very good grade in the national exam					
	5	5	17	0	0
	18.51 %	18.51 %	62.96 %	0 %	0 %
62. Simply passing the English exams is good enough for me					
	4	7	2	8	6
	14.81 %	25.92	7.40 %	29.62 %	22.22 %
63. I do not have a special interest in English studies					
	5	4	1	1	16
	18.51 %	14.81 %	3.70 %	3.70 %	59.25 %
64. I expect that one day I will be able to read, write and speak English fluently					
	6	3	18	1	0
	22.22 %	11.11 %	66.66 %	3.70 %	0 %

Based on the table above, one important idea to be noted in this respect is that a vast majority of the students indicated that they were mostly "neutral" regarding the stimulus on the questionnaire. To give an example, 62% of the participants indicated that they were neutral regarding their perceptions of getting a very good grade in the national exam. The same thing applies to item 64 in that 66.66% of the participants were neutral with respect to whether or not they would be able to read, write, and speak English fluently one day.

This means that these reticent learners did not seem to have a special interest in English Studies after getting their baccalaureate degree. In this connection, these reticent students seem to be interested in passing the English exams per se. Thus, the results indicated that students were motivated to pass the national exam per se. This means that these EFL learners

were "interested" in learning English, but they desired to pass the baccalaureate exam per se. In other words, reticent students are learning the L2 for utilitarian and pragmatic goals.

One possible explanation is that parents may have influenced their children's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards English language learning. Based on the information elicited, while they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements, it seemed, from the data below, that students' vision of the future is blurry.

Table 7: Parental expectations of learning English

	SD	D	N	A	SA
65. My parents say that education is the most important thing in life					
	12	5	5	2	3
	44.44 %	18.51 %	18.51 %	7.40	11.11
66. My parents say that I should have the best education at all costs					
	13	8	2	0	4
	48.14 %	29.62 %	7.40 %	0 %	14.81
67. My parents do not consider education to be very important in life					
	16	7	1	3	0
	59.25 %	25.92 %	3.70 %	11.11 %	
68. My parents emphasize that if I don't know English, I cannot succeed in school					
	4	3	15	2	3
	14.81 %	11.11 %	55.55 %	7.40 %	11.11
69. My parents think that success in school is possible without good English					
	4	1	18	3	1
	14.81 %	3.70 %	66.66 %	11.11 %	3.70
70. My parents want me to have university education in English					
	6	4	14	1	2
	22.22 %	14.81 %	51.85 %	3.70 %	7.40
71. My parents are not interested in what level of education I attain					
	2	5	16	4	0
	7.70 %	18.51 %	59.25 %	14.81 %	0 %
72. My parents want me to have a high-status job in the future					
	5	2	15	1	4
	18.51 %	27 %	55.55 %	3.70 %	14.81 %

Clearly, parents seemed to be uninterested in the education of their children, with 62% of the participants saying that their parents viewed education as perhaps the least important thing in life (SD = 12; D = 5). In the same way, a vast majority of the students agreed with item 66 in the sense that their parents did not seem to provide the best education for their children at all costs (SD = 13; D = 8). What this means is that the parents of these reticent learners did not seem to consider education to be very important in life (SD = 16; D = 7). Regarding parents' attitudes towards English language learning, the participants' views seemed to back up the idea that their parents' perceptions towards the education of their children were noticeably indifferent.

Thus, when asked about whether or not their parents regarded knowledge of English as a prerequisite for school success, half of the participants (55%) indicated being neutral. This applies to items 69 and 70, respectively. To illustrate, 66.66% of the participants assumed that they were neutral with respect to the possible link between school success and knowledge of the English language. In the same way, 59.55% of the students indicated that their parents were not interested in the level of education their children attained.

Although the children's parents seemed to show indifferent views regarding the weight to be granted to education and English learning in particular, they did in fact buy their children school supplies and other learning materials they needed for school (SA = 55.55%). Additionally, item 75 revealed that children's parents provided Wi-Fi internet to help them do their homework (SA = 10; A = 16). In spite of this, parents, according to the data gathered, did not employ private tutors in English when their children needed to (SD = 14; D = 2), nor did they consider the educational needs of their children as priorities (D = 12; SD = 8).

When asked about whether students' parents emphasized that children's lack of English knowledge was an obstacle to school success, they all (n = 27) strongly disagreed with the statement in question. Apart from their lack of awareness of the place of English in today's world in all walks of life, the idea that knowledge of English is, according to these participants, not necessary to school success and achievement suggests that the individual level is influenced by societal and institutional levels to a great extent.

This tendency was further confirmed by participants' agreement with the statement that "success in school was possible even without good English". However, when asked about whether or not participants' parents wanted their children to get a high-status job in the future, students predominantly agreed (SA = 22). The picture now gets clearer once one compares these responses to those received previously with regard to the link between students' knowledge of English and school achievement. Parents' attitudes toward the schooling of their children are strongly linked to their lack of responsiveness to the educational needs of their kids.

Table 8: Parental responsiveness

	SD	D	N	A	SA
73. My parents buy me books and other leaning materials I need for school					
	2	8	0	2	15
	7.40 %	29.62 %	0 %	7.50%	55.55%
74. My parents employ private tutors in English when I need that					
	14	2	4	4	3
	51.85 %	7.40%	14.81 %	14.81 %	11.11%
75. My parents provide the Wi-Fi internet to help me do my homework					
	0	0	1	16	10
	0 %	0 %	3.70 %	59.25 %	37.03 %
76. My parents consider my education needs or problems as priorities					
	8	12	8	5	2
	29.62 %	44.44%	0 %	18.51 %	7.40%

As clearly shown in the table above, students' parents seemed to moderately respond to their children's educational needs. This is explicitly manifested in the number of "ticks" each statement receives. To illustrate, when the participants were asked about whether their parents bought them books and other learning materials the children needed for school, they mostly responded in the affirmative (SA = 13; A = 11). Besides, when they were asked about whether or not their homes were equipped with Wi-Fi internet, almost all students agreed with the statement (n = 26). Nevertheless, according to the data gathered, students parents did not consider the education needs or problems of their children as priorities (n = 23; SA = 11; A = 12), nor did they employ private tutors to help their children learn English when they needed to (n = 22; SA = 10; A = 12).

What this means is that children's parents limit their responsiveness to what their children *really* need at school, such as their English textbooks. Meanwhile, this should not be taken for granted as individuals are, more or less, social agents; that is, individuals with ideas, perceptions, and mental structures are the product of their social origins. In this way, Bourdieu (1986) argues that in order for one's children to acquire the cultural capital accumulated by the family, one has to work hard at investing their time and energy. He states,

> The accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of what is called culture, cultivation, Bildung, presupposes a process of embodiment, incorporation, which, insofar as it implies a labor of inculcation and assimilation, costs time, time which must be invested personally by the investor (Bourdieu, 1986, p.17)

Thus, it is not the mere possession of economic capital that guarantees the children's enhanced school achievement. Rather, what seems to significantly contribute to the support of one's children at school is the involvement of parents in the whole process of teaching and

learning. This, judging by the table above, appears to be missing from the reticent EFL learners' lives. Therefore, to help children acquire the target language and invest effectively in their learning, parents are supposed to immerse themselves in their children's learning. That is to say, one's own parents should have positive attitudes towards the learning of their offspring, with the aim of providing assistance whenever needed. According to Bourdieu (1986), investing in the learning of children has its own cost for the parents. As he explains,

> The work of acquisition is work one oneself (self-improvement), an effort that presupposes a personal cost […], an investment, above all of time, [..] and sacrifice that it may entail. It follows that the least inexact of all the measurement of cultural capital are those which take their standard the length of acquisition-so long of course, as this is not reduced to length of schooling and allowance is made for early domestic education by giving it a positive value (a gain in time, a head start) or a negative value (wasted time, and doubly so because more time , a head start) or a negative value (wasted time, and doubly so because more time must be spent correcting its effects), according to its distance from the demands of the scholastic market (Bourdieu, 1986, p.18).

Seeing students' reticence in light of the absence of cultural capital (in its embodied, objectified, and institutionalized forms), one can say that reticence is a manifestation of one's socio-economic background in the sense that these participants have not been assisted by their parents to acquire English competences since they, themselves, were predominantly illiterate or lacking in English competences and skills.

According to Bourdieu (1986), "cultural capital can be acquired, to a varying degree, depending on the period, the society, and the social class, in the absence of any deliberate inculcation and therefore quite unconsciously" (p. 18). Thus, the cultural capital embodied in each individual is thought to illustrate economic capital dimensions in the first place. One way that class differences appear to have a bearing on the school achievement of the children is by examining the career and school expectations that students envisage for themselves.

Table 9: Students' education and career expectations

	SD	D	N	A	SA
77. I do not have any wish to study after I get my baccalaureate degree					
	3	2	0	7	15
	11.11 %	7.40 %	0 %	25.92 %	55.55
78. I will have to get a job after I finish my university studies					
	7	3	2	2	13
	25.92 %	11.11 %	7.40 %	7.40 %	48.14
79. I want to have a high-status job in the future					
	16	0	0	10	1
	59.25 %	0 %	0 %	37.03 %	3.70
80. Any kind of job is ok for me					
	6	3	0	5	16
	22.22 %	11.11 %	0 %	19.51 %	59.25 %

The table above shows that the participants have low career expectations. For example, 15 students "strongly agreed" that "they did not have any wish to study after obtaining their baccalaureate degrees", whereas 7 participants "agreed" with the statement. Moreover, 26 EFL learners in this investigation disagreed with the statement that read: "I want to have a high-status job in the future" (SD = 16; A = 10). Under these conditions, "any kind of job" for these participants seemed to be "ok" (SA = 15; A = 5).

This lack of motivation to further one's own studies has to be explained in light of the absence of institutionalized capital, which is clearly evidenced by the total lack of higher education degrees, combined with little formal education, among the parents of these reticent students (see the socio-economic background information of the participants). The absence of this dimension in the families of these EFL learners did, directly or indirectly, influence students' attitudes towards career expectations, given the fact that most of the parents had manual occupations.

Thus, students' career expectations are likely to be restricted by their material realities (lack of cultural and monetary capital). As such, not desiring to further one's studies could be a strong indication of group membership since children's parents' *embodied* and *institutionalized* capital illustrated a weak educational background as well as a lack of English language skills and competences. Therefore, in spite of the fact that one cannot observe one's embodied cultural capitals, one's own *habitus* urges people to do certain things and act in certain ways, and these are unconsciously practiced by individuals (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986; Farkas, 2018).

To sum up, this section focused on the analysis and interpretation of numerical data elicited through a Likert-scale questionnaire. This questionnaire targeted students' perceptions of affective, linguistic, and cognitive factors. These data collected through this questionnaire were meant to test whether reticence could interact with students' psychology, namely the link between students' foreign-speaking anxiety and reticence. The data elicited and analyzed seemed to back up this hypothesis.

It has been argued that students' reticence can be interpreted on positivist as well as constructivist grounds. From a positive perspective, it has been explained that students' reticence was the product of affective and linguistic factors. The social constructivist perspective, however, has highlighted that students' reticence could be interpreted by examining the macro-level of the phenomenon under investigation. Thus, emphasis has been put on the socio-economic status of reticent students' families.

On this basis, some socio-economic factors have been found to influence the learning outcomes of English language learners. That is to say, students' reticence is the result of the interplay between both micro and macro factors. On the whole, students' reticence has been found, at the micro level, to interact with students' lack of exposure to English input, lack of English vocabulary, poor pronunciation, negative peer evaluation, high speaking anxiety, and lack of investment in learning the target language.

At the macro level, lack of parental support to learn English, lack of knowledge of the English language among reticent students' parents, illiteracy, and unfamiliarity with the target language have been found to influence children's behaviours at school. Though these numerical data were useful to understand some of the intricacies of the psychology of the reticent, the next section will examine the link between a lack of English vocabulary and EFL learners' reticence in the classroom.

The vocabulary achievement test results: The poverty of students' vocabulary

The purpose of this section is to present and analyze the data gathered by the vocabulary achievement test administered to the reticent EFL learners. At the micro/individual level and as far as the results of the students' knowledge of English vocabulary are concerned, the results obtained evidently and noticeably demonstrated that the students' vocabulary was extremely poor. This is evidenced by the results that the participants (n = 27) obtained with regard to the mean scores on the vocabulary achievement test, though the test in question targeted the basic knowledge of the target language to which the participants had been exposed. Of the twenty-seven participants, none of the EFL learners obtained an average score on the test, as they all scored poorer on it than had been expected. This test was administered to students to gather data as to whether to refute or support the links between poor vocabulary and reticence. The data gathered seemed to suggest that there is a strong link between vocabulary knowledge, on the one hand, and reticence, on the other. Accordingly, the *micro*/individual level is illuminated by the influence of the *macro*-level analysis of the research (family, school, and home environments). In so doing, by combining the micro and macro levels, one is likely to examine other unexplored territories of knowledge in relation to English language learning and the social context. The following table summarizes the data obtained:

Table 1: Participants' scores on the vocabulary achievement test

Participants' names	Mean range	The mean score
Yahya	0000	2.375
Rachid	0.075	2.3
Abdenour	0.175	2.2
Mohamed	0.05	2.325
Ahmed	0.475	1.9
Yassir	0.175	2.2
Abdelhaq	0000	2.375
Oumayma	0.3	2.075
Anir	0.35	2.025
Tasnim	0.075	2.3
Israe	0.575	1.8
Mimount	0.14	2.235
Khadija	0.075	2.3

Salwa	0.575	1.8
Sabah	0.475	1.9
Mina	0.175	2.2
Hassan	0.3	2.075
Karim	0.775	1.8
Meryem	0.175	2.2
Youba	0.35	2.025
Zakaria	0.475	1.9
Boubker	0.075	2.3
Ayour	0.3	2.075
Massin	0.14	2.235
Khalid	0.075	2.3
Omar	0.075	2.3
Hafid	0.575	1.8

After Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995), low scores are between ranges 1.0–2.4; medium scores are between ranges 2.5–3.4; and high scores are between ranges 3.5–5.0. The highest scores, as can be seen in the table above, are those of Yahya and Abdelhaq, with a mean score of 2.375. Yet it is not even close to the minimum. The mean score in the table above is very significant because it calculates the average of students' answers regarding the vocabulary achievement test. Moreover, it establishes a strong link between reticence, on the one hand, and participants' lack of vocabulary, on the other.

As it has been pointed out earlier, the table above is very significant because it calculates the mean score of students' responses with respect to their knowledge of English vocabularies. The examinee received 5 points for each correct answer. That is to say, the highest value was assigned to the correct answer. For example, from 1 to 1.8, it means very low (VL). From 1.90 to 2.60, it means low (L); from 2.7 to 3.4, it means average (A). From 3.50 to 4.20, it means high (H), and from 4.30 to 5.00, it means very high (VH). Analyzing the data gathered, one concludes that these participants (n = 27) are not at an appropriate level for interaction since they seemed to have retained very little knowledge of the vocabularies to which they had been exposed. Yet, this lack of interactive competence is influenced by both internal and external factors.

In a similar vein, Nation (2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2009) explains the importance of vocabulary knowledge in language production, though it is not an end in itself. According to Nation (2009), "a rich vocabulary makes the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing

easier to perform" (p. 14). Similarly, Wu (2019) highlights that although the causes of English deficiency are manifold and interrelated, low English language proficiency is a major reason behind EFL learners' reticence.

Thus, learners' reticence has a significant relationship with their vocabulary knowledge (Nagari & Nabavizadeh, 2011). In fact, these results are in line with previous research findings (Wu, 2019). Based on data gathered from Saudi EFL classrooms, Khan, Radzuan, Shahbaz, Ibrahim, and Mustafa (2018), for example, stress that vocabulary knowledge is essential for Saudi EFL learners to develop their speaking skills. Commenting on the results they obtained, Negari and Nabavizadeh (2011) argue that

> There is a reverse relationship between learners' vocabulary knowledge and their level of unwillingness to participate in oral performance; that is, the higher the vocabulary scores of the students, the lower their reticence to participate in oral performance (Nagari & Nabavizadeh, 2011).

Although Nagari and Nabavizadeh (2011) got these results from an Iranian context, these findings, generally speaking, fit the Moroccan EFL learners to a large extent. Simply put, if EFL learners' linguistic proficiency is high, students, generally speaking, are likely to orally participate in classroom activities, irrespective of learners' contexts. However, if learners' linguistic proficiency is poor, they will tend to remain silent, saying perhaps nothing of the target language, which is, according to Swain (2000), a prerequisite for language learning to occur. Thus, it can be suggested that large vocabulary repertoires are positively correlated with enhanced speaking abilities and interactive competence.

In a formal language setting, learners, according to Lightbown and Spada (2006), "do not only spend less time in contact with the new language, [but] they also tend to be exposed to a far smaller range of discourse types" (p. 39). Thus, in addition to home and family influences, the Moroccan EFL classroom, given the little exposure that the learners have to English, deprives them of opportunities to learn the target language. The limited vocabulary of these reticent students reflects, more or less, little exposure to English language input.

In this connection, Gradman and Hanania (1991) stressed that the variables that proved to contribute most to English learning were all related to a higher amount of rich language input: exposure to the language through extensive reading outside class, exposure to native teachers, the use of English as the language of instruction, and participation in intensive English

programs. Therefore, by having students immerse themselves in the target language, their supposed rich linguistic repertoires are likely to lead them to participate in communicative activities without any difficulties. Adopting less effective language learning strategies is likely to lead EFL learners to a poor lexicon, thereby increasing their reticence in the EFL classroom.

Enhanced speaking abilities are nevertheless connected to boosting learners' self-confidence when it comes to in-class participation (Doqaruni, 2015). As Negari and Nabavizadeh (2011) rightly note, "a rich lexicon helps learners take the risk and engage themselves in interaction" (p. 99). Vocabulary knowledge is, thus, essential for language comprehension (Nation, 2009). Therefore, EFL learners who do not seem to know enough vocabulary can neither engage in conversations nor understand spoken or written inputs.

Likewise, scholars (e.g., Krashen, 1982; Krashen & Terell, 1983) in language acquisition studies and in vocabulary language studies (Nation, 2000, 2001a, 2009b, 20009), in particular, confirmed that there is an interaction between building up one's own vocabulary and speaking. In line with this finding, Krashen (1982), for example, highlights that language production occurs as one has built up enough competence through comprehensible, though moderately challenging, input (*i*+1).

Therefore, reticence is significant because it, though partly, indicates poor language proficiency among EFL learners. According to Krashen (1982), he never conceptualized language learning or acquisition within the framework of a structural approach. That is to say, Krashen (1982), like other mainstream second and foreign language scholars, did not take into consideration the *structural constraints* that could impede the language learning process.

Although this is the case, one should avoid falling into reductionism in that reducing students' reticence to one sole factor (low language proficiency), in total isolation from other external or macro factors that could have a bearing on the issue, is a partial understatement of the issue under discussion. That is to say, other factors are likely to come into play when discussing the roots of reticence. To illustrate, some of the affective factors such as shyness, anxiety, and low self-esteem are, as has been discussed earlier, related to students' reticence, either directly or indirectly (Bao, 2014, 2020).

In light of the results of the vocabulary achievement test, one has to note that although the aforementioned test targeted the basic knowledge of English to which the learners had been exposed, most of the participants selected incorrect answers. To illustrate, out of 40 answers, Karim (participant 18), for example, got only 2 answers right. Even when the author submitted the test, the participants could not stop complaining about the perceived difficulty of understanding the items on the test. Accordingly, the participants started "bombarding" the researcher with complaints and questions. "We are going to gamble on the answers," participant 2 said as he started writing. Imbedded in this point is the fact that reticent students, given their lack of vocabulary, depend more on luck than on their linguistic repertoires when it comes to answering questions on tests assessing vocabulary.

In the same way, Ahmed (participant 5) revealed that “the problem is that we do not understand the sentences”. “What is the difference between closed and open, teacher?” Another participant asked before adding, “I am confused because I do not understand the words on the test”. Having gaps in one’s own vocabulary knowledge implies that one is likely not to understand the input, be it oral or written. For this reason, reticent students tend to complete the sentences on the Vocabulary Achievement Test with inappropriate words that cross their minds, no matter how easy the test is. As a way of illustration, when the participants were asked, on the test (see appendices), to select whether a "person who cuts up and sells meat" is a "lawyer", "president", "teacher", "butcher", or a "mechanic", all the participants selected "a lawyer"!

On the basis of this knowledge, these findings give one a clear idea about how poor reticent EFL learners’ linguistic repertoires are. Nation (2009), in this regard, clearly illustrates, "There are two reasons why learners may not be able to say what they want to say. First, they may not know enough vocabulary; second, they may know enough vocabulary, but they are unable to put this vocabulary to productive use" (p. 94). Since the participants in this research scored low on the Vocabulary Achievement Test, it is likely that their unwillingness to speak in the EFL classroom is determined by their limited vocabulary.

Therefore, what seems to hold reticent students back from more active oral classroom participation is their linguistic deficiencies. These results are in line with Yates’s and Trang’s (2012) study. However, since most scholars in second language learning do not acknowledge the relevance of class dimensions to learning additional languages (Shin, 2014; Sughrua & López-Gopar, 2014; Vandrick, 2014), Nation (2001a, 2000b), like other mainstream second

or foreign language scholars, fails to see individual differences in language learning from a socio-economic angle. Despite this, there is evidence suggesting that there is a relationship between social class and L2 achievement (Block, 2014; Shin, 2014). One way to examine how students' reticence is positively correlated with social origins is to look at the contributions of the environment to the language learning process.

a. The effects of the poverty of environment on the poverty of students' vocabulary

Previously, the data gathered confirmed the link between a lack of English vocabulary and students' reticence. Seen from a structural perspective, the home environment has a deep impact on the school achievement of one's own children (Block, 2003, 2012, 2014; Bourdieu, 1977, 1986, 1984, 1996, 1990, 1993, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Teng, 2017). Cognitively speaking, the little knowledge of the English vocabulary that the participants had could be explained by the fact that students, at the micro level, had had little exposure to English. However, when examining the macro level (home, school, and family factors), students' tendencies, perceptions, skills, and behaviours may not be fully comprehended in isolation from the overall social structure; that is, their class differences.

In this connection, students' reticence seems to be largely the result of the poverty of the home and school environments, given the total absence of English resources and the illiteracy of the parents, not to mention a lack of learners' agency. These poor vocabulary achievement test results, therefore, interact with students' lack of English language learning resources and the poverty of their home environments. In this context, Bourdieu (1986) argues that individuals' cultural capitals are shaped to a large extent by their social class backgrounds.

In a similar vein, given the rural nature of the town where this research was conducted, EFL learners were deprived of having access to cultural sites such as public libraries, for example. Roy (2017), in this way, highlighted that EFL learners have very little access to English resources, and this impedes their learning directly or indirectly. Research in this context pointed out that EFL learners' cultural capital positively correlated with enhanced language teaching and learning (Pishghadam, Noghani, & Zabihi, 2011; Teng, 2017).

In the absence of cultural capital, EFL learners have been found to depend more on their teachers for language input (Mali, 2021). Under these conditions, what seems to be the issue is that some EFL learners may never develop a fair amount of proficiency in the target

language, given both (a) the little time allocated for its teaching and learning in the Moroccan classroom and (b) its foreign status in society at large.

In this way, Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) highlighted that the students who have richer and more extensive knowledge tend to originate from middle and upper social origins. On this point, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) explain,

> While wide variation in the ability to play a musical instrument and in knowledge of plays and concert-going is in no way surprising since class cultural habits and economic factors here combine their effects, it is remarkable that students diverge even more clearly by social origin in the frequency of their visits to museums and galleries and even in their knowledge of the history of jazz or cinema, which are often said to be "popular arts". When one discovers that in the case of painting, which is not directly taught, differences appear even in the knowledge of the most classical artists and steadily increase for more modern painters, and that erudition about the cinema or jazz [...] is also very unequally distributed depending on social class (p. 17),

Clearly, students from different social backgrounds bring with them, to the context of the EFL classroom, different cultural assets, attitudes, and interests. The point is that what is linguistic, cognitive, or affective should not, if one is going to look at students' reticence from a sociological perspective, be dealt with in isolation from one's cultural capital since these variables could interact with each other directly or indirectly. This indicates that high language proficiency is beyond the control of reticent learners. In a similar vein, Liouaeddine Bijou, and Naji (2017) revealed that Moroccan students' poor learning outcomes are impacted by individual as well as contextual characteristics.

In the same way, Block (2003, 2014) confirms that language development cannot be isolated from the socio-economic environment of the learners, in that learning is enhanced by the social position one occupies in society. Therefore, it is the interaction between internal processing mechanisms and IDs, on the one hand, and external factors, such as quality and quantity of input, on the other, that could explain why some language learners learn faster than others and get further ahead in the acquisition process.

Culturally, while several participants (2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 17, and 24) revealed that their families had crucial monetary capital, their home environments offered very little socialization into English language learning in general and speaking in particular. As such, one can say that

students' reticence may not be influenced by one's own monetary capital, but being successful at school may not be limited to being conversant in English.

What this means is that middle-class families may not be familiar with the importance of sharpening their cultural capital since their visions are shaped by the position they occupy in society as a whole. In simple words, at the micro level, students' reticence seems to be the result of their limited vocabulary, but as one examines the macro level (the societal level), one concludes that the issue under discussion is in fact the result of both the micro and macro levels that shape the material world of reticent EFL learners.

For example, there are multiple micro and macro factors that affect how much reading the students do. To illustrate, at the macro level, the town where these data were gathered had no public libraries; thereby, students were deprived of access to English books and learning materials. This, more or less, has an impact on the amount of reading that these reticent students could have done in and outside of the classroom. Given this poverty of the environment, Krashen and Terell (1983) highlight that children from low-income families must seek out reading materials, whereas high-income families are deluged with books.

These differences, according to Krashen and Terell (1983), have a lasting impact on language development. In addition to learners' poverty, which Krashen and Terell (1983) depict as "devastating" when examining its effects on language development, even the high school where the study took place had no books to offer students, given that the school had no library. The availability of public and school libraries instills in children a culture of reading through frequent visits to such cultural sites (Krashen and Terell, 1983). The lack of such cultural sites interacts with EFL learners' rates and routes of learning.

Krashen and Terell (1983) highlight that children's access to books is further reinforced by the motivating content of the reading materials. As he points out, "children from higher-income families have access to the reading material they like, but children from lower-income families do not" (Krashen & Terell, 1983). Since reading leads to better vocabulary gains (Krashen & Terell, 1983), one can establish a strong link between one's own vocabulary and speaking abilities. Significantly, these reticent students had no English books or materials whatsoever in their homes. Both students and their parents seemed to have no "taste for reading", given that these parents, for instance, were predominantly illiterate and lacking in English and educational capital (structural factors).

In contrast to these findings, Diouani (2021) revealed that orally active EFL learners effectively used multiple technological devices available within their home environments to enhance their learning outcomes, though they were lacking in English books and materials. Following his investigation, Diouani (2021) showed that students' parents were completely unaware of what these forms of objectified cultural capital could offer their offspring, given their educational disadvantages. In a similar vein, research suggests that "middle-class children achieve higher levels of L2 proficiency and more positive attitudes than working-class children when the program emphasizes formal language learning" (Ellis, 2008, p. 217).

Thus, "When books are readily available and the print environment is rich, more reading is done" (Krashen & Terell, 1983, p. 47). Therefore, children in print-rich environments are expected to develop a culture of reading, and this impacts their learning in general and their speaking skills in particular. This means that children who grow up in print-poor environments read fewer books. Research shows that parents with lower socio-economic status negatively influence students' performance at school (Li & Qiu, 2018).

Examining the social class dimensions of language learners, Ellis (2008) highlighted that "children from middle-class homes regularly outperformed those from lower- and working-class homes. There were also class-related differences in the learners' attitudes" (p. 216). Seen in this light, learners' reticence reflects poor cultural environments and indifferent parents' attitudes towards English learning.

That is to say, learners' socio-economic backgrounds not only impact their learning outcomes but also influence their attitudes towards the target language. In a similar vein, Ellis (2008) also found moderate correlations between the family background of 23 secondary school children in Bristol and both language learning aptitude and foreign language achievement in French and German, with middle-class children again outperforming lower-class children. Commenting on the results of such studies, Ellis (2008) pointed out that these "results mirror the general finding that children from lower socioeconomic groups are less successful educationally than those from higher groups" (p. 217).

However, as far as the research findings of this investigation are concerned, it is not the absence of financial resources that made a significant difference in the lives of these reticent learners but the total absence of embodied cultural capital and the children's parents' indifferent attitudes towards the school achievement of their offspring. These findings suggest

that one may be an advantage (technology devices, cars, houses, factories, and the like), but their possessions may not be transmitted to the cultural arenas, given the fact that such behaviour is limited by one's own class consciousness.

That is to say, language learners who come from lower-class backgrounds are, cognitively speaking, poor. This "cognitive poverty" can impact learners' school achievement tremendously. This also means that in order to find out about the rate and route of one's own learning, one must closely examine the cultural and linguistic environments in which children grow up.

In light of the total absence of embodied as well as English objectified capital, it must be asked: what kind of assistance are the parents expected to offer their children to acquire English capital if they are lacking in such competences? Students' reticence is, therefore, related, directly or indirectly, to parental lack of educational and linguistic capital.

Thus, these data support the premise that students' reticence is partly linked to their lack of vocabulary. On this basis, the second research question raised earlier seems to be supported. As such, the hypothesis that there seems to be a correlation between poor vocabulary and students' reticence in the EFL classroom seems to be supported as well. Therefore, the more *vocabulary* the EFL learners know, the more likely they are to speak in the EFL classroom. In spite of this link between vocabulary and reticence, no assumption is made to conclude that students' reticence is solely the product of a lack of English vocabulary. Given their impoverished cultural environment, students' reticence does, thus, interact with their cultural capital and the learning opportunities available for them to input exposure.

b. The interaction between reticence and English language learning opportunities

It has been pointed out earlier that students' reticence is more likely to interact with internal (lack of vocabulary, for example) and external factors (absence of cultural capital, for example). Significantly, the macro-level explanation implies that one touches upon the place of the English language at the official level as well (education and state-owned media). For example, Arabic and French are dominant in all walks of life, including the Moroccan education system and official media. Not knowing French has implications for the social mobility of Moroccan students (Azhar, 2020). On this basis, "Individuals with no or low French," writes Azhar (2020), "are inevitably at a great disadvantage when competing for

academic and professional opportunities with their peers who inherited and were enabled to own a French cultural capital' (p. 70).

In spite of this, Azhar (2020) highlights that for Moroccan EFL learners, since their proficiency in French is weak, learning English represents an alternative cultural capital "that would allow them social recognition and some form of rewarding social mobility" (p. 70). However, according to Ben Haman (2020), English language teaching and learning in the Moroccan context is impeded by a plethora of institutional factors. Given these constraints, Moroccan EFL learners seem to be deprived of sufficient amounts of English language input. This, in turn, affects the extent to which students achieve proficiency in the target language.

Meanwhile, no English is used in the official media, for example. This has an impact on the amount of linguistic data to which Moroccan EFL learners are exposed (Ben Haman, 2020). For example, in spite of the supposed reform to introduce English starting in the fifth grade of primary school, such as The National Charter for Training and Development (1999) and the Frame Law 51.17 (2020), students in the Moroccan public schools are introduced to English in the ninth grade of lower secondary school.

This is significant because exposing Moroccan students to English at such a late age strips EFL learners of crucial opportunities to learn the target language. Hence, while this research does not suggest that these reticent students will neither learn English nor develop their speaking skills, encountering English, formally speaking, at such a relatively late age implies that reticence interacts with the value or weight assigned to English in the Moroccan linguistic market, irrespective of public statements made by the Ministry of Education to promote English language teaching. In this connection, following several surveys, the *EF English Proficiency Index* suggests that Moroccan EFL learners' proficiency is *low* (2016, 2020, 2022, 2021) and *very low* (2017, 2018, 2019), respectively.

According to Ellis (2008), learners' opportunities to learn the target language are "constrained by the contexts they find themselves in" (p. 225). In a similar vein, Lightbown and Spada (2006) highlight that motivation, attitudes, and language learning success are influenced by the macrostructures that exist in wider society. This means that language achievement is shaped by social, economic, and political forces. Thus, students' reticence should be considered in light of structural factors that impede the enhancement of their learning outcomes.

In a similar vein, Bachore (2022) claims that the acquisition of English language literacy skills differs with respect to urban and rural schools, with students in urban schools outperforming their counterparts in rural schools. Since Midar has no direct access to English input, except in the EFL classroom, this strips reticent EFL learners of opportunities to expose themselves to authentic linguistic data. Therefore, reticence is not merely the product of poor vocabulary. Rather, students' reticence interacts with both micro and macro factors, including home, family, educational, and policy factors.

Supporting formal learning, according to Ellis (2008), could be done by providing "foreign language learners with opportunities for informal learning so that they can reach higher levels of oral proficiency" (p. 225). Having illiterate parents who are lacking in English competence, combined with the use of little English at the institutional level, puts these reticent EFL learners at a disadvantage.

Likewise, Johnson (2009) pointed out that the development of learners' communicative competence is impeded by a number of institutional constraints. Language teachers, too, are impeded by institutional constraints in developing language learners' communicative competence (Johnson, 2009). To give a concrete example, in the age of the communicative approach, language learners are, theoretically speaking, expected to develop their L2 communicative proficiency.

The problem, however, is that the forms of assessment used push teachers, directly or indirectly, to emphasize the learning of reading skills, vocabulary, and grammar at the expense of advancing learners' overall L2 communicative proficiency (Johnson, 2009). Given these institutional constraints, teachers may give little or no importance to the introduction of communicative tasks. Students, implicitly or explicitly, are encouraged to remain silent since their speaking skills will not be assessed by the end of the school year (the national baccalaureate exam).

In addition to this, Ouakrime (2016) explains that the forms of assessment at the university level require students to demonstrate their abilities in writing, whereas assessing one's own speaking skills is neglected (for practical reasons). The same applies to secondary schools in that students' speaking skills, in the national baccalaureate exam, for instance, are not assessed at all. Due to these institutional constraints, Moroccan EFL learners usually demonstrate their linguistic abilities in writing, though this speaking (classroom participation)

accounts for 40 percent of the overall grade of the EFL leaners in the Mroccan secondary school. In spite of the reforms introduced regarding English language teaching methodology, it seems that secondary school students rarely develop their speaking skills. In fact, giving less attention to speaking skills in the Moroccan context is impeded by a plethora of difficulties including unsuitable textbooks, lack of teaching and learning materials, and large classes (Ait Hattani, 2018; Diouani, 2020; El Karfa, 2019).

Thus, the value that people attach to language learning is symbolically interacting with the weight of that language in the language market. Given the little exposure that Moroccan EFL learners have to the English language, learning may not occur. Since students' exposure to English in the Expanding Circle is restricted to a few hours a week, learning the language, formally speaking, could be promoted by parents' knowledge and guidance in the event they knew English and possessed high educational and linguistic capital.

Besides, since exposure to the English language in informal contexts is significant, Moroccan EFL learners do not seem to be assisted by the amount of English diffused through state-owned media. This implies that reticence interacts with a lack of opportunities to learn English, and this, in turn, has been further reinforced by a lack of interest in the teaching of English compared to French at the official level.

Even when Moroccan students are introduced to English in the ninth grade, the amount of time (two hours a week per se) devoted to the teaching and learning of English cannot, in any way, be sufficient to help Moroccan EFL learners develop their full linguistic proficiency. What this means is that one has to consider the educational and social context in which the target language learning takes place in isolation from the cognitive approaches, which, according to Block (2003, 2014), have been overemphasized in the community of English language teaching and learning.

Moreover, parents play a decisive role in the academic achievement of their children. In this respect, Bourdieu (1986), and Passeron (1979) highlight that scoring high or low on school achievement tests can be traced back to the impact of one's cultural milieu, namely the role of the family in the training of children to succeed at school at an early age, even before school starts.

However, the absence of such training indicates that the use of less effective socializing techniques to acquire English capital is typical of lower-class families. Additionally, the total absence of external stimulation resulted in the cultural deprivation of these reticent EFL learners. Simply put, social factors have a significant influence on the linguistic and intellectual development of children.

Poor children are thought to have poor linguistic repertoires and, thus, understand fewer words in comparison with children who come from middle or upper socio-economic backgrounds. What can be deduced from this discussion is that the more linguistically and culturally restricted the children's environments are, the more restricted their linguistic repertoires will be. Therefore, students' reticence interacts, more or less, with a lack of parental educational and linguistic capital and a lack of sufficient exposure to English at school and outside, notwithstanding the few functional purposes for which these EFL learners can use the target language. Thus, one possible explanation as to why these reticent EFL learners were lower scorers, in addition to what has been discussed hitherto, is because of their lower socio-economic status.

In fact, Moroccan students' educational achievements are lagging behind those of their North African counterparts (Liouaeddine, Bijou, & Naji, 2017; Mullis, von Davier, Foy, Fishbein, Reynolds, & Wry, 2023; Mullis, Martin, Foy, Kelly, & Fishbein, 2020). In the same way, based on a series of international surveys such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, The Higher Council for Education, Training, and Scientific Research (2015, 2018) confirms the poverty of Moroccan students' science and literacy skills. As a result, parental education and the availability of enriched, objectified cultural capital within home environments have been found to significantly impact the learning outcomes of Moroccan students (The Higher Council for Education, Training, & Scientific Research, 2015).

Thus, when measuring reading literacy as well as science skills, Moroccan students were found, according to The Higher Council for Education, Training, and Scientific Research (2015), to be very low in the acquisition of basic literacy skills (Arabic and French), notwithstanding science and math. These reports contne to explain that students' school achievement is strongly correlated with their socioeconomic backgrounds (Liouaeddine, Bijou, & Naji, 2017). Although the aforementioned reports did not examine the proficiency of

Moroccan EFL learners in English, the database provided by the *EF English Proficiency Index* (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022) emphasized that the proficiency of Moroccan EFL learners is below average.

Judging by the results at hand, there seems to be a link between reticence and limited linguistic knowledge of the target language. Hence, there is ample empirical evidence to suggest that the hypothesis that "the more *vocabularies* the EFL learners know, the more likely they are to speak in the classroom" is supported. What is at issue is that not knowing a considerable number of words has implications for understanding the input and generating the output. In other words, having little knowledge of the target language is likely to interfere with the student's understanding as well as the production of output. However, by going beyond the narrow microlevel explanation, one is met with a barrage of structural factors that contribute, more or less, to the emergence of reticence among EFL learners (institutional factors, for example).

This is why reticent EFL learners do not tend to interact with one another, even when their output is highly welcomed by the teacher. Reticent students' little knowledge of English vocabularies seems to be related to the very little exposure that these EFL learners have had to the target language, which seems, in turn, to have been influenced by the amount of reading that these EFL learners do. Additionally, learners' reticence is also influenced by the poverty of students' home environments, culturally speaking, and the lack of motivating or encouraging words from their families, given the fact that students' parents themselves lack such knowledge of English, given, in turn, their obvious illiteracy and unfamiliarity with the school system.

On this view, this section has focused on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge, on the one hand, and reticence, on the other hand (internal factors for the learner). The findings have pointed to the conclusion that there is a correlation between EFL learners' lack of vocabulary and reticence. Thus, vocabulary has been found to be the backbone of speaking. This unwillingness to speak, however, has been found to interact with broader macro factors. In this way, emphasis in this section has been put on the poverty of the students' environment.

This means that reticence is partly the result of poor cultural capital. This is evidently manifested in the lack of educational and linguistic capital among the parents of the reticent EFL learners, not to mention that both the town and the school where the investigation was

carried out offered little socialization into English capital. At the macro level, the place of English in the Moroccan education system as well as the total absence of this language from state-owned media have contributed, somehow or another, to the impoverished exposure that reticent EFL learners have had to the English language. The following section will focus more on the link between micro and macro factors that interact with students' reticence in the EFL classroom as viewed from the perspective of reticent EFL learners.

Focus group results

This section continues to qualitatively explain why the students in this research tend to remain silent in the EFL classroom by drawing more on the themes that emerged as a result of the data analysis. To recapitulate, the data revealed in the previous section revealed that the reticent students pointed out that they resorted to silence due to *linguistic*, *cognitive,* and *affective* factors in the first place. Seen from micro- and macro-level paradigms, this section discusses the possible factors that hinder EFL learners' oral performance in the classroom. The findings, however, indicate that there is a link between reticence, on the one hand, and affective, linguistic, and socio-economic factors, on the other. On this basis, this section examines the interplay between micro and macro factors that are related to students' reticence.

a. The centrality of rich language lexicon to understating and speaking

This research has previously anticipated that EFL reticent learners' reticence is related to their lower language proficiency. Irrespective of the qualitative results elicited with respect to this link between language proficiency, on the one hand, and the emergence of students' reticence, on the other, which has been strongly supported when the vocabulary achievement test was analyzed, there remains the question of: in what ways does students' lack of vocabulary relate to reticence? Moving back and forth between the entire dataset elicited, multiple themes emerged in relation to the aforementioned question, one of which was the critical role of vocabulary knowledge in *understanding* classroom input. To give a concrete example, upon asking them why he did not volunteer his answers in the classroom, Yahya (interviewee 1), for instance, asserted that

> I lack knowledge [of English] language, and I do not understand [the teacher]. This is why I do not like to participate. I do not understand many English words, and I rarely understand what you [the teacher] say.

On the basis of this knowledge, one major reason why this participant is not taking part in classroom discussions is his poor language proficiency. Yet, his unwillingness to participate in the classroom is related to his lack of understanding of the teacher's input, which, in turn, is related to his lack of vocabulary (*I do not understand many English words*). When they were asked about their opinions about speaking, a vast majority of the students (n = 25) tended to positively value active classroom participation. Contrary to Pennsylvania Reticence program

advocates (Phillips, 1968; Phillips & Metzger, 1973), the findings of the present investigation suggest that passive English language learners, just like their active counterparts, view in-class oral participation positively. What seems to hold them back from classroom participation is their limited linguistic knowledge, among other cognitive and affective factors. Reinforcing the link between English language proficiency and reticence, Abdenour (interviewee 3) too revealed that,

> I do not understand English. I do not do any exercises when I go home. Also, I neither read books nor watch English news or movies because I have no English books. I use no language applications, on the phone, as well. I mostly use my phone to play video games!

Obviously, what this means is that a lack of understanding of classroom input is exemplified by the fact that this participant puts little effort into learning the target language, which, in turn, is exemplified by not exposing himself to English input (reading and listening). What is at issue here is that even if this student possessed a smart phone, they did not use it to create a rich linguistic environment, which could have enhanced their receptive and productive skills. Rather, they used such a powerful device to play video games per se. In this connection, another important idea to be discussed is that this participant's reticence seemed to be interacting with his lack of motivation as well (*I do not do any exercises when I go home*).

However, the idea that this participant has "no books" may not be understood without examining the *habitus* that guides students' behaviours. Being culturally disadvantaged is manifested in the lack of books and other English learning resources from which these EFL learners could have benefited. Yet, this lack of resources is nurtured by a lack of general knowledge among learners' parents as to how to help their children develop their language at a time when they themselves lack such knowledge. Within this framework, Meryem (interviewee 19) argued that

> I do not understand English *mlih* [very well]. On many occasions, I do my homework, but when it comes to classroom participation, I cannot volunteer my answers. I tried to start learning English from scratch [English Alphabet], but nobody is giving me a hand.

On this basis, understanding is central to taking part in conversations. Likewise, participants 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 22, and 26 expressed similar opinions. That is to say, they explained that the reason they did not participate in class was because they were unable to understand classroom input. However, lack of understanding, according to these lines of

reasoning, cannot be fully understood without taking into account participants' socio-economic background. In simple words, the idea that "nobody is giving me a hand" is very significant in that it says a lot about the macro level of reticence. Why is nobody giving this reticent student a hand? The reason why is because there are, as mentioned before, socio-economic factors that orient students towards this behaviour, as exemplified by the lack of what Bourdieu (1986) termed "the domestic transmission of cultural capital" (p. 17). Thus, parents' institutionalized capital can noticeably assist in shaping EFL learners' lives. When children's behaviour is not socially reinforced, there is a possibility that such behaviour will not be demonstrated on subsequent occasions. Yet, what if these parents themselves lack the same embodied cultural capital as the parents of these reticent students?

Closely associated with Bourdieu's (1986) notion of cultural capital and Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis is Vygotsky's (1978) notion of scaffolding. In the field of second or foreign language teaching and learning, scaffolding theory stresses that students comprehend and hence learn the target language with the help or guidance of a more proficient person. This proficient person, in this case, could be the teacher or one of the students' family members. In order to help EFL learners move out of their proximal development zone, it is essential that teachers and parents alike use scaffolding as individualized support. Language development, according to Vygotsky (1978), is the result of "interactions between the child and persons in her environment" (p. 90). This means that one's own home environment makes a critical contribution to children's language development. On the relationship between language development, language learning, and cooperation, Vygotsky (1978) states,

> The acquisition of language can provide a paradigm for the entire problem of the relationship between learning and development. Language arises initially as a means of communication between the child and the people in his environment. Only subsequently, upon conversion to internal speech, does it come to organize the child's thought, that is, become an internal mental function (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 89).

Although the scaffolding theory draws one's attention to the role of the environment and adults in supporting the development of the target language (since it limits learning to what happens inside the head of each individual child), it says little about the sociological aspects of language learning in general and foreign language learning, in particular. In sharp contrast, Block (2014, 2013) highlights that social class dimensions directly affect English language teaching and learning. Accordingly, when considering second or foreign language learning,

children's parents may have little or no knowledge of the target language, resulting in little support for the child to promote their target language.

Thus, because of children's parents' illiteracy and lack of knowledge of English (poor institutionalized cultural capital) and indifferent attitudes towards English language learning, there is no way that reticent learners' parents can use scaffolding as a tool for enhancing children's learning. Therefore, this reticent behaviour in the EFL classroom illustrates the poverty of children's home environments at the cultural level. This also suggests that learning English can be impeded by the structural and cultural forces shaping the material world of reticent EFL learners.

Obviously, this lack of cultural capital has an impact on how EFL learners go about learning the target language. Bourdieu (1986), in this way, highlights that economic capital can be directly and immediately converted into money and that the profits that the children who come from different social class backgrounds can be significant "to explain the unequal scholastic achievement" (p. 17).

Yet, judging by the data at hand, it is quite clear that while some students were not, relatively speaking, lacking in economic capital, the sort of objectified capital within the home environment did not seem to be influenced by one's own economic capital. Additionally, given the lack of knowledge among students' parents on how to use their objectified cultural capital to enhance the learning of their children, there are serious limitations as to how one's own objectified capital can be used to positively impact one's own children.

What this means is that though these reticent EFL learners scored poorly on the vocabulary achievement test, several of these families were not poor, economically speaking (see participants' background information in the methodology chapter). On the contrary, some of these children's parents appeared to enjoy good enough economic capital as they possessed houses, cars, bank accounts, and ran businesses. Apart from the interaction between language proficiency and reticence, one major theme that emerged out of the data analysis was the role of affective factors in the rise of students' reticence.

b. Shyness, poor pronunciation and reticence

As it has been established previously, reticent learners seem to withdraw from in-class participation because of affective factors (Bao, 2014, 2020; Izadi & Zare, 2016; King, 2011; Julé, 2011; Nakane, 2008). However, students in this research were, psychologically speaking, more concerned about the presence of their peers in the EFL classroom. In other words, although they viewed speaking positively, these reticent students were afraid that their classmates would laugh at them if they orally participated in classroom activities due to the perceived inaccuracies in pronunciation. This fear of negative evaluation seemed to have had a lasting impact on the psychology of these reticent EFL learners. Almost all participants (n = 24) highlighted that their pronunciation of English was poor, which is why they tended to avoid in-class participation. Hassan (interviewee 17), for instance, revealed

> I am too shy to participate, teacher. I am afraid that they [my classmates] will laugh at me. I do not like it because it has an impact on me. It is more about *nafsiyya inu* [my psychology] than anything else. I am quite sure that speaking English in the classroom is important. Sometimes I *do know* the answer, but I pretend I do not know it.

Obviously, reticent learners, because of shyness and other affective factors, tend to take over other identities (*I pretend I do not know the answer*) to avoid talking in front of other classmates. Embarrassed as such, reticent EFL learners, judging by other cases, did all it took to remain silent, no matter how important speaking was for them to sharpen their linguistic skills. In this way, Mina (participant 16) stressed that

> I can neither participate nor talk in front of my classmates. I have a sister who is also feeling the same way. She told me that she would rather skip classes than give oral presentations at the university in front of other students. She told me that she was so happy and breathed a sigh of relief when her teacher skipped her to give her presentation [due to time constraints].

This inability to orally participate in the language classroom could, thus, accompany the learner throughout their journey of language learning, even at the university level, where students' output is important in courses like Public Speaking, for instance. This speaking apprehension is, therefore, a serious problem standing in the way of EFL learners. While they are frustrated by classroom participation, these students' attitudes towards speaking are, as mentioned previously, predominantly positive.

For example, upon asking her whether speaking has any role in learning, Sabah (interviewee 15) emphasized that "speaking is important because it helps students become fluent". As suggested earlier, similar views were voiced out by participants 6, 8, 15, 18, 21, 22, and 27. This means that reticent EFL learners, contrary to how reticent learners would look in the Pennsylvania Reticence Program, admit the value of speaking in enhancing one's own learning in general and speaking skills in particular (interviewees 4, 7, 9, and 10 expressed similar opinions).

What seems to be the problem is that reticent EFL learners, judging by the few cases explored in this research, are afraid of the reactions and attitudes of their classmates if they talk in front of them (peer pressure). In this way, Tasnim (interviewee 10) stated, "Even if you dare to participate and say two or three words, they [classmates] would laugh at you". Thus, one's own silence seems to be like a strategy that EFL learners use to avoid embarrassing themselves, thereby saving their faces in the EFL classroom. To further confirm the link between poor pronunciation, on the one hand, and reticence, on the other hand, Hafid (interviewee 27) says, "Even if I want to participate, I feel that my pronunciation is bad". That is to say, these participants' self-image is negatively viewed when it comes to their pronunciation. In the same way, Ahmed (interviewee 5), for instance, pointed out that,

> My pronunciation is bad, and I am also shy. I do not know how to pronounce English words. Most of my classmates speak good English, and their pronunciation is good as well. So I am afraid that they [my classmates] may laugh at me if I say something. I do not participate because of my lack of English and shyness. I am not confident enough.

Based on these data, there is ample evidence suggesting that shyness and poor pronunciation do prevent students from expressing themselves in the EFL classroom, resulting in reticence. These findings are in line with previous investigations (Bao, 2014). Poor pronunciation, however, does not seem to influence reticent students' behaviour directly; rather, the reactions of their classmates to their poor pronunciation seem to be significantly impacting EFL learners' reticence. Besides, being confident is closely related to high self-esteem and rich cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 1990), as well as families' support and stimulus supplied to their children (Young, 1958). This is something that these students seemed to lack.

In a similar vein, one can suggest that self-confidence and high self-esteem are stimulated and supported by one's parents if they are educated. Therefore, one can establish a link

between students' reticence and lack of parental support from the very beginning with respect to learning English in particular and education in general.

Seen from the perspective of linguistic competence, Wang (2019) argued that learners' reticence can also be traced back to their lack of competence in the target language, which usually manifests itself in the sort of difficulties students experience in understating teachers' output. In a similar vein, Hu (as cited in Wang, 2019) assumed that the lack of oral participation in the English language classroom is mainly caused by the traditional methods, which hinder students' thinking and prevent them from expressing themselves in English. Within this framework, Bao (2014) claimed that it is not an easy task for teachers to motivate students to speak in the classroom when the education system tends to prepare them for examinations rather than for life-long learning. In this way, Delios and Makino (as cited in Bao, 2014) highlighted that

> Many students tend to focus on formulas, correctness, and grades rather than the dynamic of verbal communication and life skills. Arguably, for students to interact more, the educational system should be able to convince them that they will be assessed on practical, real-world communication abilities (p. 60).

These findings can be generalized to the Moroccan context since Moroccan EFL learners of English are not assessed in speaking skills altogether. In fact, this is not typical of Moroccan and Asian contexts alone, but it seems that the same institutional constraints apply to Kachru's (1985) *Expanding Circle,* where English has a foreign status and serves few functional purposes. In other words, school success can be influenced by a plethora of internal and external factors. In this respect, Ballantine and Hammack (2017) explained that school achievement can be influenced by micro (that is, factors internal to the learner) and macro (that is, factors external to the learner) factors, including the teacher, the classroom setting, motivation, attitudes, background experiences, home life, family support for learning, and encouragement from home environments.

In other words, "Children's experiences differ as a result of such variables as race, gender, and class. Thus, it is superficial to explain learning differences among children by one primary factor, such as intelligence" (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017, p. 62). Ballantine and Hammack (2017) continue to illustrate that learning does not take place only in school settings but rather can take place in informal settings as well. On this basis,

Learning takes place both formally in school settings and informally with our family, peers, media, and other influences in our lives. The institution of education interacts with and is interdependent on each of the other institutions. For instance, family involvement in education will affect the child's achievement in school (Ballantine & Hammack, 2017), p. 18.

Despite their passivity in the EFL classroom, students are able to act without being constrained by the governing socioeconomic structures, thereby establishing the concept of individual agency. This indicates that Moroccan EFL learners may be impeded by a plethora of obstacles on their way to learning English (such as a lack of objectified and embodied cultural capital). Yet, Diouani (2021) asserted that in the absence of English language learning resources, Moroccan EFL learners resort to the effective use of online learning environments to compensate for such a lack of tangible cultural capital (books and bilingual dictionaries in particular). Apart from the interaction between linguistic and affective factors, reticence, on the one hand, indicates a lack of agency among EFL learners.

c. The interaction between students' reticence and individual agency

According to Holec (1981), learning autonomy; that is, the "ability to take charge of one's own learning", is what predicts success in language learning (p.3). Holec (1981) further notes that this ability "is not inborn but must be acquired either by 'natural' means or (as most often happens) by formal learning, i.e. in a systematic, deliberate way" (p.3). Thus, to take charge of one's learning is to have the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this language learning.

While reticence, as has been shown by the qualitative and quantitative data discussed so far, interacts with EFL learners' lack of vocabulary, lack of exposure to the target language input, and lack of parental involvement in their children's learning, it also reflects the very little effort that these reticent students *invest* in the learning of the target language. One possible explanation is that these reticent EFL learners lacked individual agency. In this connection, Bourdieu (1984) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) highlight that individual agency interacts with students' family backgrounds. Thus, students' reticence enormously interacts with learners' lack of agency. In this way, Diouani (2021) highlighted that although his respondents were lacking in English and educational capital, taking charge of their learning seemed to be positively correlated with their active oral participation in the EFL classroom.

That is to say, the decisions that one makes at the micro level are, more or less, shaped by the macro level, including, in this case, families, state institutions, media, schools, and home environments. Yet, being fully "enslaved" by one's own social class indicates a lack of agency among these reticent EFL learners. Moreover, a lack of individual agency among these reticent students could interact with the state's educational and language policies. To illustrate, the French language, for example, has been dominant in the Moroccan education system. By allocating the bulk of the time to this language, learners are implicitly encouraged to value French in comparison to English since this language is the key to having access to higher education institutions. This, more or less, influences reticent students' attitudes towards English and the efforts they put into learning it.

Under these conditions, individual agency can be used to overcome the broader socio-economic constraints that impede enhanced English language learning. Additionally, judging by the fact that these reticent learners were not deliberately putting any effort into the learning of English, this indicates that individuals could find it extremely difficult to act in isolation from the socio-economic structures that shaped their habits. However, in spite of the limitations it sets for one's thinking, perceptions, expectations, preferences, and aspirations, habitus is subject to change, thereby being dynamic (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

In this way, Bourdieu (1984) explains that interest in cultural life, for example, is determined by students' family backgrounds. Seen in this light, learners' reticence seems to interact with their lack of agency. Therefore, one's own social class exerts a lot of influence on one's cultural choices, including how much effort one puts into learning the English language. In a similar vein, Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) highlight that, in spite of the influence of schooling, the most underprivileged students have the ability to escape the influence of their social origins "thanks to their greater adaptability or to a more favourable family environment" (p. 8). However, given the educational disadvantages of the parents of these reticent EFL learners, reticence seems to interact with a lack of parental encouragement and support for their children's learning.

On this basis, reticence is strongly linked to poor educational capital. Students' responses, more or less, correlated with the educational attainment of their parents. What this means is that reticence indicates a lack of investment in the learning of English capital, a lack of agency, and a lack, if not a total absence, of English resources from which reticent EFL learners could have benefited. Lack of learners' agency, thus, should be conceptualized within

their students' social structures; particularly, research has revealed that parental educational capital positively impacts self-efficacy (Bandoura, 1997). Commenting on Bandura (1997), Teng (2017) stated that "students may aspire to emulate educationally and professionally successful parents because these parents represent models with status, power, and prestige" (p. 44).

Following his investigation into the impact of instructional practices, school resources, and students' science attitudes, beliefs, and achievement, Teng (2017) highlighted that of all these recourses provided by schools, teachers, and the home environment, "home cultural resources had the largest direct effect among all SES variables on students' science achievement [...] home cultural resources contributed to students' science achievement directly by affecting their science self-efficacy and other attitudes and beliefs" (p. 51). This means that the educational attainment of the parents has a deep influence on the children's attitudes, beliefs, and motivation to enhance their learning of English. Therefore, the absence of such support interacts with the *laissez-faire* attitude adopted by the parents of these reticent EFL learners.

According to Abadi and Razmjoo (2022), successful English language learning can be explained by learners' "determination, hard work, and persistence" (p. 33). However, according to Abadi and Razmjoo (2022), there are many socio-economic factors that are beyond the learners control. What this means is that the more cultural capital one possesses, the more likely they are to successfully learn the target language. The social and cultural contexts seem to have an impact on students' learning motivation (Gholami & Tamimi, 2012).

This lack of individual agency is manifested in participants' vague images of their future careers. For example, Sanae stated, "I do not really know what to do after I get my baccalaureate degree". Having a confused grasp of the future, according to Bourdieu and Passeron (1979), is a manifestation of one's own social origins. However, students who come from upper classes, because of their proximity to literary and cultural capital, have a good grasp of their future careers since they have accumulated a wide pool of cultural capital, which is acquired by "frequenting seminars, lectures, debates, or assemblies [and] by reading fashionable journals" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979, p. 49).

In spite of the influence of structural constraints on individual agency, Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) highlighted that individuals are able to escape their socio-economic structures. In this sense, "the most advantaged classes are those most likely to be crushed by

the weight of their social destiny; they can also, exceptionally, turn their excessive handicap into the stimulus they need to overcome it" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979). This means that students, though disadvantaged, can accumulate cultural capital and, thus, go up the social ladder.

Yet, Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) assumed that the most culturally disadvantaged students, because they are restricted by the cultural dispositions gained from their family background, can transgress the limits of their habitus by resorting to "more scholastic activities, such as reading plays, as a way of compensating for their handicap" (p.21).The point, nevertheless, is that these reticent students, judging by the data at hand, did not seem to effectively invest in their English language learning. In other words, although individuals can act in isolation from their family backgrounds, these EFL learners seemed to be passive when it came to the adoption of effective English language learning strategies. Thus, learners' habits, in this case, seem to be static, not dynamic. As such, a lack of individual agency is thought to contribute to students' reticence in the EFL classroom.

Nevertheless, in this case, students' perceptions, when compared to parents' attitudes, are at odds with one another. Does this mean children may not inherit the same behaviours and skills as their families, into which they were socialized? The answer may be yes (Bandura, 1982). Simply put, Moroccan EFL learners' motivation to learn English is partly related to their efforts, agency, and learning autonomy, irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds (Diouani, 2021).

Thus, neither the cultural objects available within the children's home environments nor the monetary capital of their families seemed to assist these EFL learners in their attempt to learn English. Part of the answer lies in the fact that these reticent students did not try to compensate for this lack of English knowledge among their families by using their objectified cultural capital, as they all possessed smart phones. Thus, reticence strongly indicates students' lack of agency and learning autonomy.

In this way, reticent EFL learners, judging by the information at hand, did not show any indication of taking charge of their own learning. Based on the data at hand, they did not seem to set their own goals or seek opportunities to practice the target language outside the classroom. These students tended to depend more on the teacher for English language input. In a similar vein, although most of these EFL learners confirmed the possession of smart

phones (and TVs within their home environments), none of them seemed to understand the power of MALL in helping them enhance their learning of the English language. Judging by the data elicited, it was not the absence of cultural capital that made a difference in the lives of the reticent students (though this was significant), but their lack of awareness as to how to use such objectified cultural capital (TVs and mobile phones) to learn the target language.

In a similar vein, following their discussion, Assulaimani and Althubaiti (2021) explain that "in order to optimize the use of objects or artefacts, families must have the expertise required to employ them effectively for educational purposes" (p. 78). Indicative of reticent students' families is their inability to use the objectified cultural capital available within their home environments. Not being able to effectively use these cultural gadgets to enhance learning strongly indicates learners' lower socio-economic backgrounds. This is one of the major reasons why these reticent students did not feel the need for English knowledge in today's world.

Although they possessed multiple cultural objects, including TVs, mobile phones, English textbooks, and the like, these reticent EFL learners did not seem to know how to use such tools to enhance their learning; hence, their "passivity" is a marker of the social position they occupy in society at large. This is how the cognitive as well as the psychological aspects of English language learning seem to interact with the material worlds of EFL learners. On this basis, contrary to Diouani (2021), the availability of objectified cultural capital, based on the information gathered by the focus group interviews, does not automatically guarantee enhanced English language learning.

While the data gathered seems to imply a lack of agency among these reticent EFL learners, the persistence of passivity towards English language learning seems to have been influenced by a lack of parental support and encouragement. Diouani (2021), in this way, reported that the effective use of smart phones has been very significant for Moroccan EFL learners to compensate for their lack of objectified cultural capital. However, the point is that it is not the mere possession of this capital that made a significant difference in the learning of these EFL learners, but, on the contrary, how effectively they used such devices, combined with strong parental encouragement for their children to learn the target language. In other words, what enhances students EFL learning is not their possession of technological devices but rather how effectively and deliberately they use such devices to navigate, plan, and increase their learning.

d. The impact of cultural capital on English language learning opportunities

In addition to the influence of individual learners' agency on self-regulated learning, Diouani (2021) highlighted that objectified cultural capital has a very significant impact on the linguistic proficiency of Moroccan EFL learners. Specifically, the interplay between family background and enhanced English language learning is well documented (Yulia, 2017). That is to say, there is a correlation between parental socio-economic status and students' achievement in English. One striking finding of the present investigation is that students demonstrated a total absence of English resources (objectified cultural capital) within their home environments, notwithstanding parents' indifferent attitudes towards their children's learning of English.

In this way, one important idea to mention is that macro structures shape individuals' aspirations, perceptions, and behaviours. Arguing that the English language may not be necessary to succeed in the Moroccan context may be regarded as stating the obvious. Yet, considering the socio-economic circumstances under which Moroccan EFL learners act can be of paramount importance to making sense of their perceptions and behaviours.

For example, when discussing the language reform policies in Morocco, one arrives at the conclusion that the English language, though regarded as an international language in today's globalized world, is impeded not by assessment forms per se but by the place it occupies in the Moroccan education system as a whole. This is so because, in the Moroccan context, securing jobs and promotions combined with entrance into prestigious schools and universities has come to be based on French language proficiency (Azhar, 2020).

Since they were predominantly illiterate (parents' total lack of English embodied capital), these EFL learners were at a cultural disadvantage. Even if these parents had received some education, they did not have English language on their schedules as a school subject since they did not go beyond the primary school grades. Additionally, these parents' attitudes towards the school and their real involvement with their children were not supportive as well. In other words, parents' education, not their income, had a deep impact on how much English was being learned by their children, and this, in turn, had a negative impact on their English competences.

Apart from the English syllabus, which all the students possessed, no home English learning resources were used by these reticent EFL learners. Some participants, as was the

case with Israe (interviewee 11), suffered from poverty, though several interviewees demonstrated the possession of crucial monetary and economic capital. This could influence one's overall school achievement. As she said,

> I repeated it four times. I have a problem with the pronunciation of English, and I am also shy about speaking. I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me if I participate. Sometimes, I only understand a few words of what you [the teacher] say. I only borrow the English textbook from other students because of my financial situation. I could not buy it, as I am staying at the boarding school.

Upon asking her whether she possessed any bilingual English dictionary, she stated, "I do not have a dictionary, but I will look for a certain way to get one because I do not have the money [to buy one] at the moment". Lack of English words, therefore, interacts with external factors that have been shaping EFL learners' lives (home and family). What this means is that a lack of words, directly or indirectly, interacts with students' unwillingness to participate in the classroom. This, in turn, interacts with parents' lack of encouragement for their children, which, in turn, interacts with parents' poor educational, linguistic, and monetary capital.

On this basis, students' lack of English words must be viewed within the broader home and school environments. If families and homes are poor, culturally, educationally, linguistically, and economically speaking, students are more likely to be stripped of multiple opportunities to learn and practice the target language (Yulia, 2017; Lareau, 2003). This sheds more light on the critical role of cultural capital in enhancing EFL learners' proficiency. Students with highly educated parents have been found to have higher educational achievement (Teng, 2017).

This indicates that social factors have a major impact on L2 proficiency (Ellis, 2008), though they probably do not influence it directly. Ellis (2008), in his review of the related literature, argues that the effects of the social context on English language learning are mediated by a number of variables. As he puts it,

One set of variables that has been found to be of major importance is learner attitude. Social factors help to shape learners' attitudes, which, in turn, influence learning outcomes. Social factors also influence L2 learning indirectly in another way. They determine the learning opportunities that individual learners experience. For example, the learners' socio-

economic class and ethnic background may affect the nature and extent of the input to which they are exposed (Ellis, 2008, p. 208).

That is to say, regardless of the psychological factors that influence language proficiency, the learners' socio-economic backgrounds may affect the linguistic data to which they are exposed. Based on the data at hand, several of these parents had no financial problems whatsoever (especially the tradesmen). This monetary capital did not seem to impact children's learning effectively. Put simply, this monetary capital did not seem to have had a positive impact on children's learning of English on the grounds that the parents of these reticent learners were poor in terms of educational, linguistic, and cultural capital.

In this way, Bourdieu (1986) suggested that objectified cultural capital is relevant to embodied cultural capital. This relationship is very strong in terms of students' cultural capital and reticence, meaning that although they did not lack objectified cultural capital, they obviously lacked English resources, but their lack of knowledge as to how to use them is what made their reticence manifest itself in the classroom. In a similar vein, research suggests that "it is important to recognize, however, that it is not socio-economic class per se that produces these effects, but rather the experiences of the world that members of the different social classes are likely to have" (Ellis, 2008, p. 217).

In a similar vein, Teng (2017) highlights that educated parents positively correlated, if they were responsive to their children's needs, with their children's enhanced learning outcomes. As Teng (2017) explains, "highly educated parents' values, skills, and knowledge of the education system inform their educational expectations, home educational practices, skills for their children to emulate, and their ability to intervene in the school system" (p. 43).

Although the relationship between social class and language learning is extremely complex, Ellis (2008) summarizes that "it should be recognized that it is not age, sex, social class, or ethnic identity that determine L2 proficiency, but rather the social conditions and attitudes associated with these variables" (p. 222). Bourdieu and Passeron (1979), however, highlighted that psychological constructs, such as motivation and attitudes, cannot be dealt with in isolation from one's social origins. On this basis, there seems to be an interaction between internal and external factors that shape the oral performance of Moroccan EFL learners.

Research has, however, shown that there is a link between the educational capital of one's own parents and the linguistic competencies that one's own children will learn, meaning that parents tend to transmit linguistic proficiencies and skills via cultural activities such as reading and supervised access to television and the internet (Sullivan, 2001, 2007). Therefore, when parents motivate their children to read and debate, their linguistic competences are likely to develop as well. As Assulaimani and Althubaiti (2021) clearly illustrate, "when parents engage their children in creative pursuits, such as painting, gardening, and participating in poetry readings or debates, this actively supports their linguistic development" (p. 79). What is at issue nonetheless is that cultural capital, though distributed unequally among social classes, can have a powerful impact on the educational pathways of children.

Although he focused on higher education in the Saudi context, following his argument about the role of cultural capital in education, Alhawsawi (2013) highlighted that possessing cultural capital determined, to a large degree, the manner in which EFL students experienced their education and used the resources available to them. As he wrote,

> Those students who lacked cultural capital were at a disadvantage compared to their more fortunate peers. This was because an absence of cultural capital limits participation, inhibits confidence, and impedes effective interactions with both peers and teachers, thereby generating low self-esteem. It might be preferable, therefore, if students could receive tailored support from their university to remedy these shortcomings (Alhawsawi, 2013, p. 79).

Obviously, students' cultural capital and family background seem to have influenced these reticent students' attitudes, skills, perceptions, knowledge, and behaviors in the EFL classroom. Alhawsawi's (2013) study about the impact of cultural capital and family background amongst students participating in an EFL program

> Not only confirmed the importance of family background in the development of competencies but also revealed that family educational background, the provision of resources, and economic affluence all shape the accrual and transmission of cultural capital. Moreover, cultural capital can be enhanced through the provision of books and the inculcation of attitudes and behaviors (p. 79).

Therefore, students' reticence indicates a lack of investment in the learning of the English language. This investment, however, interacts with students' socio-economic backgrounds. As far as the respondents' views regarding their objectified cultural capital are concerned, one

participant said, "We have many non-English books at home, but I do not read them. I have only one English book. This bilingual book has many Arabic [words, phrases, and sentences] equivalents". In the same way, given the absence of tangible English language resources as well as the absence of parental encouragement to study English, participants 5 and 8, for instance, explained that while their English competences were poor, they assumed that they could only learn English after they obtained their baccalaureate degree. As Ahmed (interviewee 5) illustrated, “Nobody helps me with English learning. I want to learn English after I get my baccalaureate degree”.

While noting that she neither watched English movies nor news, Oumayma (participant 8) explained that she wanted to learn English after she obtained her baccalaureate degree. Although this participant confirmed her willingness to learn English after she gets her baccalaureate degree, she expressed a sense of loss after getting the degree and explicitly stated, “I really do not know what to do after I get my baccalaureate degree”. As such, this participant’s statement should be interpreted in light of the total absence of parental encouragement and guidance to study hard. Therefore, not envisaging one’s educational pathways in clear terms indicates poor educational and cultural capital. The point is that one’s educational pathways are, more or less, influenced by one’s own socio-economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Farkas, 2018).

These findings suggest that motivation to learn English could either be enhanced or impeded by one’s own socio-economic background as well. In this way, building on Bourdieu’s (1986) cultural capital theory, Butler (2012) and Teng (2017) highlighted that enhanced learning outcomes were strongly correlated with families’ socio-economic status. Butler (as cited in Gao, 2014) illustrated how parents’ socio-economic status related to English language teaching and learning influenced their children’s English-learning outcomes. While noting that their socio-economic status did not have a deep impact on English language learners’ reading, writing, and listening skills, the results of Butler’s (2012) investigation indicated that

The students’ English-speaking performance was substantially different according to their parents’ socioeconomic backgrounds, both during their primary and middle school years. Socioeconomic factors had an earlier impact on the students’ English-speaking performance than on their listening, reading, and writing performances.

Commenting on the results of such an investigation, Gao (2014) illustrated that

> This may be because acquiring good English-speaking skills requires the parents' capacity to provide more resources and opportunities, such as accessing high-quality schools, financing private lessons by trained teachers with high oral competency, and offering other English-learning chances and support during childhood (p. 95).

Seen in this light, students' reticence seems to interact with poor parental educational capital. The acquisition of this educational capital interacts, in turn, with class positions. Therefore, beliefs, perceptions, and behaviors about investment in English language learning vary across different social classes, with upper and middle-upper class families showing higher motivation to see their children learn English (Gao, 2014).

Despite the influence of social class on English achievement, social class is, according to Gao (2014), not a determining factor for English language learning motivation but rather a factor among a wide range of other factors contributing to English language achievement. Teng (2017), however, pointed out that equipping learners with positive attitudes and beliefs may not have any effects on students' school achievement. Thus, the point that these positive attitudes are likely to influence children's school achievement cannot compensate for their socio-economic status, which is critical to improving one's language achievement.

Additionally, "having no taste for English language learning" can be regarded as a signifier of the students' lower socio-economic status in society. This indicates that reticence is a manifestation of the social position that EFL learners occupy in society. Seen from the perspective of embodied cultural capital, the families of these reticent students did not know English, nor did they show positive attitudes towards English learning.

At the level of the objectified cultural capital, with the exception of TVs and smart phones, which all the students possessed (n = 26), these reticent learners demonstrated that no English language resources, materials, books, newspapers, and so on were available within their families' homes. Consequently, the absence of these cultural objects clearly illustrated these reticent students' social class status. Additionally, children's parents had very poor institutionalized cultural capital since the vast majority of them did not receive any formal education. As a result, families' cultural capital is thought to have a deep impact on students' performance in the EFL classroom. Lack of cultural capital as such interacts with the emergence of students' reticence.

According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1979), highly effective learners "derive from their background of origin habits, skills, and attitudes that serve them directly in their scholastic tasks; they also inherit knowledge and know-how, tastes, and a ‘good taste" (p. 17). While the inequality of income may be insufficient to explain the school performance of EFL students, it is the students’ "cultural privilege" that, according to Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, p. 14), contributes to the school success and achievement of the children. Given their "handicap", culturally disadvantaged students are more likely to resort to more scholastic activities such as reading as a possible way to compensate for their handicap (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979, p. 21). On this basis, reticence, as an obstacle to developing speaking skills, is a reflection of reticent students’ social origins.

In summary, this section has offered and analyzed the focus group data gathered from the perspective of reticent students (n = 27) in an effort to explore the correlation between reticence, on the one hand, and students’ psychology and agency, on the other hand. Under these conditions, the data elicited have clearly confirmed that there is an interaction between the psychology of reticent learners, namely shyness, poor pronunciation, and negative peer evaluation, and reticence. However, students’ reticence has been found to positively correlate with a lack of individual agency. That is to say, although these reticent students possessed mobile phones, they did not use such technological devices to promote their learning. This lack of agency seems to have been shaped by a lack of opportunities to expose oneself to the target language due to institutional constraints, given the insufficient time allocated for teaching and learning English in the Moroccan education system;

Nevertheless, it is not the absence of objectified cultural capital per se that has made it difficult for EFL learners to enhance their oral performance, though this was evident in all interviews. Rather, a lack of parental support and encouragement seems to have contributed to children’s reticence. Given their lack of objectified and institutionalized cultural capital, combined with a lack of financial recourses, reticent students were economically, culturally, and linguistically deprived of having access to sufficient English input. On this basis, one can say that reticence is the result of both internal and external factors to EFL learners. Next, more emphasis will be put on the extent to which reticent students’ socio-economic backgrounds have an impact on reticence by analyzing a corpus of data gathered by means of semi-structured interviews with the parents of the reticent students in question.

Parents' interviews

This section seeks to find a tentative explanation as to why reticent students demonstrate such behavior in the EFL classroom by focusing on parents' socio-economic backgrounds. Specifically, this section, as mentioned previously, provides a tentative explanation for students' reticence as derived from the insights of cultural capital theory. However, when Bourdieu's lenses are irrelevant, other useful insights will be borrowed from other scholars who based their analysis on cultural capital theory. This section, thus, examines the interaction between social class dimensions, including parents' educational capital, occupations, and yearly income, on the one hand, and students' reticence, on the other. The findings point to the conclusion that students' reticence is positively linked with their parents' socio-economic background.

a. Parents' attitudes towards English language learning

It has been established earlier that there is strong evidence suggesting that parents' attitudes towards English language learning are predominantly indifferent. Yet, these findings are difficult to make sense of if considered in isolation from the structural factors that have produced such realities. Thus, judging by the information obtained via the semi-structured interviews with the parents of the reticent EFL learners, there is, again, strong evidence suggesting that the children's parents had indifferent attitudes regarding English language learning. Additionally, mothers, since they were mostly illiterate and lacked familiarity with the Moroccan education system, had no idea about English capital whatsoever.

Seen from the perspective of educational capital, emphasis must be put on the fact that students' parents did not have the chance to learn English when they were themselves students since the Moroccan education system has introduced English to Moroccan students only recently compared to French and Arabic languages. Therefore, having little or no knowledge of the English language should be interpreted in light of the education system that shaped the experiences of these parents, notwithstanding their social origins and the powerful impact that this can have on one's social mobility. Thus, parents' lack of enthusiasm towards the English language learning of their children, combined with their lack of social reinforcement of their children's learning of the English language, is significant in the sense

that children, or reticent EFL learners in this case, did not feel the need to take responsibility for their learning, thereby limiting their emotional capital as well as their agency.

On this basis, the findings of the present investigation suggest that these parents were predominantly poor and lacking in educational and linguistic capital (see participants' background information). Interviewees 2, 3, 6, 9, 17, 19, and 24 demonstrated the possession of some wealth since they were shop-owners and described themselves as "*mlih*", that is, financially secure. Despite their relative wealth, these fathers (Affelay, Boutkmanti, Talhi, Azouti, Aissati, Razouki, and Youssfi) stressed that acquiring English capital is not a prerequisite to succeeding in society. As Boutkmanti illustrated, with a sort of pride, as the tone of his statement suggests, "Look at me, for instance, do I know English? Of course not! But I am a successful tradesman, although I do not know this language." Evidently, associating success, in this case, with being a tradesman is tied to being a tradesman, not with being rich, culturally speaking.

That is to say, what makes a successful person successful in traditional Riffian society, judging by this case, is not their educational or linguistic capital but how much monetary capital they own and how many businesses they run. Put simply, success is defined within this framework in materialistic terms per se. Acquiring English capital is, thus, beyond their horizons. However, when comparing these lines of reasoning to one's educational qualifications, the picture gets clearer in that such tradesmen, including Boutkmani, were poor in terms of educational and linguistic capital (they spoke Tarifit and Darija only). In this sense, family background and educational experiences frame what individuals can value or devalue (d'Almeida, 2016).

Accordingly, these indifferent attitudes towards English language learning indicate that these parents, given their structural handicaps, do not seem to value English capital. According to Bourdieu (1989) and Wacquant (1992), language is a form of capital that can be exchanged for other forms of economic, cultural, and social capital. Since these parents were mostly lacking in both economic and cultural capital, supporting the learning of English was not within the limits of their habitus.

What this means is that having a taste for English capital presupposes the possession of a good enough pool of other educational and linguistic capital. Is this not providing evidence for the static nature of habitus? In fact, judging by the results obtained, this assumption

contains a lot of truth, as most of the parents did not envisage any possible benefits from learning English in Morocco to go up the social ladder. Thus, appreciating the learning of English requires a fair amount of educational capital. Part of the answer lies in the power of habit to limit individuals' visions of the world. In this way, commenting on how habitus governs one's own practice, Bourdieu (1990) wrote,

> Habitus ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought, and action, tend to guarantee the 'correctness' of practices and their constancy over time more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms. This system of dispositions—a present past that tends to perpetuate itself onto the future by reactivation in similarly structured practices, an internal law through which the law of external necessities, irreducible to immediate constraints, is constantly exerted—is the principle of continuity and regularity (p. 54).

In other words, people's attitudes cannot, according to the passage above, be comprehended without taking into account the personal embodied histories of those who adopted such attitudes. Therefore, given parents' lack of literacy and little or no monetary capital, combined with manual occupations typical of lower classes in agrarian societies, it is quite understandable why parents' attitudes towards English language learning are predominantly indifferent. Simply put, parents' difficult circumstances played a key role in shaping their attitudes towards English language learning.

In the same way, Zoulikha (interviewee 18) insisted that knowledge of English cannot determine one's own educational pathways. On this point, she explained, "English is *just* a language. It cannot determine his [Karim's] educational success". Clearly, with the exception of interviewees 5, 7, 8, and 23, a majority of both mothers and fathers asserted that they had no idea whether or not the educational success of their children was related to acquiring English capital. Being educationally and culturally disadvantaged seems to have influenced parents attitudes towards English language learning in diverse ways.

These cultural and linguistic handicaps were not only reflected in the indifferent attitudes towards the acquisition of English, but they were also noticeably evident in the parents' lack of familiarity with the Moroccan education system. For example, Oumayma's mother (participant 8) highlighted that her lack of English capital prevented her from imagining any possible benefits of learning English. While she admitted that her lack of linguistic and cultural capital limited how far she could see, she later spontaneously explained that

> I do not know what Oumayma [participant 8] studies at school. I have no idea whether or not knowing English is important for her to pass. So I do not know whether it is possible or impossible for her to succeed at school without knowledge of English.

Therefore, combined with their illiteracy, parents' unfamiliarity with the Moroccan education system stands as an obstacle in their way of helping their children improve their English language learning. On the basis of this knowledge, students' motivation to learn English seems to be strongly linked with their socio-economic backgrounds. In addition to their unfamiliarity with the Moroccan education system, several parents pointed out that since the official language of Morocco is Arabic, educational success does not necessarily mean that one should know English. For example, when Hajar (participant 17) was asked whether the learning of the English language was a prerequisite in today's world, she said, "I do not know because *nesh waghrigh cha* [I am illiterate]. I have no idea about this". She further explained, "I think it is possible for my son [Hassan] to pass without knowledge of English since the official language of Morocco is Arabic".

These indifferent attitudes towards the learning of English, as suggested earlier, reflect individuals' agents' spontaneity and consciousness generated within the limits of their linguistic habitus. In the same way, Ben Ahmed (interviewee 14), upon asking him about whether or not English learning was an essential language to learn in today's' world, noted that "English is not widely used in Morocco". In other words, as long as English is not widely used to perform functional purposes in society, learning it may be unimportant. Hence, learning English could be influenced by macro factors as well.

According to Spratt and Wegner (1988), parents' attitudes towards the acquisition of literacy skills by their children are influenced by their educational background. Following their investigation into the impact of literacy acquisition and retention in Moroccan children in one urban and one rural field site in Morocco, Spratt and Wegner (1988) revealed that "parental literacy and clusters of parental attitudes were found to be related to reading achievement in Moroccan children. In addition, children's own beliefs about reading and learning were also significant predictors of their own reading performance" (p. 359). What this means is that parental attitudes do influence the literacy achievement of their children. Thus, these findings also reinforce the proposition that children's beliefs, especially in the context of family illiteracy, can play an important role in reading achievement and school success (Spratt & Wegner, 1988).

Under these conditions, there seems to be an interaction between internal and external factors for EFL learners. Reticence, thus, seems to be the result of the interaction between micro and macro factors. In other words, the decisions that individuals make may not be fully understood without considering the forces that have shaped such "choices". While reticent students did not, as far as the data gathered is concerned, show any sign of reticence at their homes as revealed by their parents during the interviews, this indicates that students' reticence is context-specific. That is to say, these EFL learners demonstrated reticent behaviors only in the classroom, whereas they were articulate when outside of the classroom. In spite of this fact, students' reticence is related, directly or indirectly, to parental attitudes towards English language learning.

Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) highlight that differences in attitudes towards education cannot, in any way, be explained by gifts or giftedness. Rather, attitudes are directly influenced by "the cultural habits and the dispositions inherited from the original milieu" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979, p. 14). These attitudes are, thus, "significantly related to social origin" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, p. 8). Given the "educational handicap" of their parents, lower-class children often make "ill-informed decisions, forced choices, or lose time" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979, p. 14). According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1979), students from middle- and upper-class families come to school with "scholastic advantages", in contrast to the sons of farm workers or farmers (p. 14).

Thus, what this means is that the assumption that certain students excel at school just because they are "gifted" is misleading since one's decisions at the micro-level are influenced by the macro-level, that is, by one's social origins. In this connection, d'Almeida (2016) highlights that learning additional languages is positively linked with parental support. As she explains, "home conditions and access to cultural capital enable [...] pupils to be more open to the foreign language" (p. 16).

This means that there is an obvious interaction between internal and external factors that shape the lives of individual actors. In other words, the decisions that individuals make may not be fully understood without considering the forces that shape their lives. Within this framework, upon asking him whether the English language was an important language or not, Israe's father (interviewee 11) answered by saying that "*nesh waghrigh cha* [I am illiterate], so I do not know what to say. Even if you ask me a question, I may not give you an answer". In a similar vein, Soulimani (interviewee 12) highlighted that he had no idea whether English

could help his child in the future. As he stated, “I do not know whether English could be of any benefit to her [Mimount] in the future”.

These indifferent attitudes towards the learning of the English language have their roots in the socio-economic background of the participants (n = 54). Given their monetary, educational, cultural, and linguistic handicaps, parents’ views, as interviewee 11 revealed, may be of little value. Therefore, appreciating the acquisition of cultural capital is largely determined by those with a high level of educational capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984). This implies that in the absence of cultural capital (embodied, institutionalized, and objectified), parents have no capital at their disposal to pass on to their children. Thus, parents’ indifferent attitudes towards English language learning should be explained within the framework of their cultural handicaps.

Simply put, students’ reticence could be explained by the social class position that EFL learners occupy in society at large. As a result, the absence of positive parental support and stimulus makes it difficult for children, who come from lower classes, to acquire English capital, given the lack of educational and cultural support.

Following his argument, Bourdieu (1990) explains that

> The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce *habitus*, a system of durable, transposable dispositions, and structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles that generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them (p. 53).

Put differently, parents’ linguistic *habitus* acts as a system of cognitive and (de)motivating structures. Being the basis of parents’ schemes of perception and appreciation, parents’ *habitus* is the only way through which they make sense of English language learning. Therefore, children who come from the upper and middle classes unconsciously acquire this cultural capital without intention or even effort. As such, differences in the school achievement of children are, in fact, manifestations of class dispositions (Bourdieu, 1990; Lareau, 2011). What this implies is that parents who possess high educational and linguistic capital are more likely to invest their time and energy in the education and motivation of their children (domestic investment). Therefore, a possible explanation as to why these parents

hold indifferent attitudes towards the education of their children is because they were noticeably lacking in basic literacy skills.

While parents' lower socio-economic status is evident in the parents' lower income, little literacy, and occupations (manual occupations typical of agrarian societies), the parents who come from high socio-economic status (SES) have effective educational and linguistic capitals as well as high-status occupations and, therefore, tend to be more effective in equipping their children with language skills and competencies. Not only this, but students who come from advantaged classes, contrary to those who come from disadvantaged classes, are more likely to use the objectified cultural capital available within their home environments since they are mostly assisted and effectively guided by their parents (Lareau, 2003, 2011, 2015; Yelkpieri, 2015).

The point, however, is that these parents (n = 54), based on the information at hand, did neither seem to encourage their children to study hard nor did they provide them with enough cultural capital from which they could benefit to enhance their learning of the English language. These parents were obeying a certain logic of practice; that is, they were mostly under the dictates of their habitus. In this context, Bourdieu (1990) highlights that "the practices of the members of the same group or, in a different society, the same class, are always more and better harmonized than the agents know or wish" (p. 59). Put simply, members of the same social class are thought to follow the norms of their class. As such, "class habitus and individual habitus are inseparable from one another" (Bourdieu, 1990).

On this basis, home and family factors are noticeably significant in the shaping of Moroccan EFL learners' experiences. Apparently, these findings seem to be consistent with Bourdieu's (1996) link between the concentration of the means of economic capital and the concentration of the means of cultural capital. As Bourdieu (1996) explains, "in the economic field itself, the concentration in the means of economic capital was accompanied by a concentration in the means of cultural capital" (p. 336).

Nevertheless, while this statement is valid for the parents who were poor in terms of yearly incomes (economic capital), for instance, the parents who demonstrated a good enough monetary capital did not seem to transmit the concentration of this economic capital to the cultural arena. That is to say, the availability of monetary capital does not guarantee enhanced

oral performance at school. As such, it seems that one's cultural capital may not be shaped wholeheartedly by the economic base.

Accordingly, in the case of the present research, parents' habitus was not limited by their economic capital per se, but it was also restricted by their lack of objectified and embodied capitals, and this, in turn, seems to have influenced their attitudes towards English learning. Seeing the persistence of parents' indifferent attitudes towards the schooling of their children, the findings gathered seem to confirm Bourdieu's (1990) view that habitus is embodied within the individual in that it is "a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking". On this basis, cultural and linguistic handicaps seem to have hindered parental involvement in their children's learning of English.

In so doing, the findings of the present investigation are partly at odds with Bourdieu's (1996) idea that the accumulation of economic capital means automatically and mechanically the concentration of cultural capital in the hands of the same social agents. In this sense, in spite of the limitations it sets on one's thinking, expectations, and aspirations, habitus is subject to change, thereby being dynamic (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Significantly, what seems to have influenced the parents' attitudes towards their children's learning of English is their lack of cultural capital, given their cultural, linguistic, and monetary handicaps.

b. Illiteracy: a structural barrier to parental involvement with English language learning

There is a long tradition among social theorists highlighting that material conditions and interests shape the consciousness of the people (Marx, 2012; Bourdieu, 1990; Block, 2014). Although this line of reasoning could be taken to mean that the workings of society are deterministic, it is still important to note that one's socio-economic background is likely to contribute to the school success and achievement of one's own children (Bourdieu, 1990; Lareau, 2011; Teng, 2017). Therefore, given the indifferent attitudes of parents towards English capital, it is highlighted that there is an interaction between students' reticence and their social class. Thus, the material and cultural basis for school achievement and success cannot be denied (Bourdieu, 1990; Lareau, 2011; Block, 2014, 2017).

Compared to middle-class parents, lower-class parents are, as is the case with this research, unable to effectively and deliberately help their children with English homework. To give

some concrete evidence, when I asked him whether his son was assisted with his learning by anybody, Masoudi (interviewee 26) in turn asked me,

> Who is going to help them? There is no one that could help him with his schooling; both of his parents are illiterate. Even if we take a look at his textbooks, we do not know how we can help him. I do not know how to encourage my children. It is not in my hands. We have no idea about these things. We have no idea how we can help them. We are like animals because we do not understand what is written there [in those books].

On this basis, literate parents seem to have advantages to offer their offspring in the sense that they, as parents, "help with schoolwork or extra teaching and provide information about education and employment" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979). In a similar vein, this cultural capital heritage "is passed on more discretely and indirectly, even in the absence of any methodical effort or overt action" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, p. 20). Put differently, "social origin exerts its influence throughout the whole duration of schooling" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979, p. 13).

Seen in this light, upon asking him how he compensated for his lack of English capital, Choho (interviewee 21) answered by saying, "I do not help my children with English, but schools teach them so". According to these lines of reasoning, sending children to school is all it takes for parents to have their children learn English. However, with reference to the social class dimensions of this participant, it is evident why this participant holds this attitude. In this connection, Lareau (2011) highlights that lower, middle, and upper social classes raise their children differently, with middle classes raising their kids in a way that provides them with the skills necessary to remain in the middle class.

What is at issue, according to Cooter (2006), is that when parents are illiterate, there is a great danger that illiteracy could be inherited by their children. In so doing, EFL learners are left with little room to develop their individual agency since their structure has had so much influence on their dispositions. The findings of this investigation are in line with the investigations carried out by Ann (1993), Kaur (2011), and Nadori (2019). Confirming these findings, Nadori (2019), After Bourdieu (1973), illustrates that

> Literate parents generally hold positive attitudes towards reading, spend more time reading, and may possess a large variety of books and other educational resources at home. In so doing,

> parents transmit their positive attitudes and their cultural capital to their children, which in turn may be conducive to better reading gains (p. 283).

On this basis, while parents' literacy enables parents to supervise their children's learning and help them enhance their school performance, its lack puts children at a cultural disadvantage. Therefore, the findings of the present investigation seem to suggest that what appears to stand as a genuine obstacle in the way of reticent EFL learners is not their economic disadvantages but their linguistic and cultural handicaps.

In a similar vein, in a recent report from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (2021), it was found that children who come from high socio-economic backgrounds (middle and upper classes) are more motivated to learn for learning's sake because they seem to have inherited their parents' positive attitudes towards school and learning. Therefore, a lack of literacy, directly or indirectly, influences students' school achievement. While students' reticence has been found to interact with affective and linguistic factors, in the first place, there is evidence based on the parents' semi-structured interviews indicating that such a behaviour interacts with a lack of parental support and educational capital.

Moreover, UNESCO, in the aforementioned report (2021), revealed that the involvement of parents in the education of their children was impeded by a plethora of obstacles, including lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Thus, the report in question continued to explain that the support that parents provide "affects children's development, learning, and subsequent educational outcomes" (UNESCO, 2021). Psychologically, parents of lower socioeconomic backgrounds were found to have little confidence and skills to guide their children to school success (UNESCO, 2021).

Apart from the general comments made by parents (both mothers and fathers), none of the interviewees were involved in helping their children's learning of English. This is quite understandable since such parents were lacking in linguistic capital as well as familiarity with the Moroccan education system, especially mothers who were mostly monolingual (they spoke Tarifit-Berber only). What can be deduced from the discussion above is that EFL learners' reticence does not happen in isolation but is influenced by families' lack of cultural capital. Thus, students' reticence appears to be the product of the interaction between macro

(home-based factors) and micro factors (lack of investment, high foreign language speaking anxiety, lack of English vocabularies, and so on).

In this connection, research suggests that "advantaged families are able to instil high levels of learning motivation in their children by providing high levels of social-emotional support as well as class-based opportunities and resources at home" (Liu & Chiang, 2019, p. 3). In the same way, Kraaykamp and van Eijck (2010) highlight that "highly educated parents provide their children with the ability, motivation, and disposition to be successful in higher education" (p. 220).

In a similar vein, Gardner (1985) asserts that the role of one's own environment is crucial in enhancing learners' motivation to learn the target language. On this basis, the role of parents, combined with the provision of a warm and supportive home environment, has a clear effect on foreign language learning. Given their literacy, "parents would readily encourage and support their children if they themselves had some background in language learning" (d'Almeida, 2016, p. 12).

On this basis, students' reticence seems to be interacting with their class dispositions. In this way, Bourdieu (1984) seems to define a social class on cultural grounds "such as family tradition and early training, or obligatory manners [...] and socializing techniques" (p. 271). Importantly, upper- and lower-class families are thought to socialize their children differently (Lareau & Weininger, 2003).

This means that the use of certain socialization techniques is determined by one's own habitus and has far-reaching consequences for the school achievement of the children, together with ample life chances and opportunities to climb the social ladder. What is significant is that several interviewees associated their lack of literacy with God's destiny. In this way, Massoudi (interviewee 26), for example, stated, "God did not create us all rich. He made us poor and rich. He made us literate and illiterate." Likewise, many of the interviewees (4, 10, 18, 22, 23, and 27) asserted that they were unschooled simply because of structural factors in the first place.

This total absence of parental support for their children, based on the parents' views, seems to acknowledge the influence of the habitus on the shaping of their behaviors and perceptions. In this way, Benmousa (interviewee 25) and Ousrouti (interviewee 7) seem to explicitly

acknowledge the constraints of their social class, which tend to prevent them from offering help to their offspring. Upon asking him whether he helped his child directly or indirectly with their schooling, Jeddi (interviewee 1), for instance, asked, "How can I help him [Yahya] at a time when I am illiterate?"

Likewise, Choho (the interviewee) further noted that "today it is important that one educates their children; otherwise, how are they going to pray? How are they going to talk? They [educated parents] can help their children read and write. But if they are illiterate, they know nothing. “Associating illiteracy with *nothing* implies that illiterate parents are aware of the power of literacy in today’s world, thereby acknowledging the limitations of their social origins.

As such, the absence of all forms of cultural capital (embodied, objectified, and institutionalized states) is concrete evidence of the position that these lower-class parents occupy in social space. In this way, Bourdieu (1986, 1990) made a clear distinction between the different states of cultural capital, all of which influence schooling in diverse ways and with varying degrees. Arguing that cultural capital can be subjective implies that it is embodied within individuals, with the result of pushing them to “have a feel for the game” required in social interaction. Therefore, objectified and embodied cultural capitals are intertwined (Bourdieu, 1986). In his comment on Bourdieu (1986), Block (2014) explains that having a taste for arts, languages, and other forms of cultural expression are manifestations of embodied cultural capital (in the form of dispositions). On this point, Block (2014) states,

> It is objective: first, as existent in material artifacts (cultural goods like books and gadgets), which come to index distinction and taste; and second, as the congealed social validation, legitimation, and recognition conferred onto those who have the right educational qualifications or taste in art or other forms of cultural expression (p. 53).

Seeing the structural constraints of these parents, one may wonder: How could these parents help their offspring develop their English capital at a time when they, themselves, are "handicapped" by their illiteracy and lack of economic resources? Diouani (2021) argued that despite their illiteracy, Moroccan parents could, thanks to their monetary capital and positive attitudes towards English learning, tremendously assist EFL learners to achieve better results in the target language. However, given their limited literacy, parents can have a negative

influence on their children's school achievement. In this way, Hooge and Menheere (2010) summarize:

> Parental involvement in children's learning does not only affect learning outcomes but also influences learning motivation, attention, task persistence, receptive vocabulary skills, and conduct problems in the classroom. Besides direct parent involvement in the home situation and at school, there is another factor that should be considered in this context: parents' strong belief in and high expectations of their children's success in school. Parents socialize children in a way that promotes the internalization of social and educational goals. By engaging in educational activities with their children at home (homework, reading, modeling), parents communicate their expectations for achievement. This 'efficacy' factor brings the school curriculum goals into the situation at home (p. 147).

These findings are consistent with previous research (Hooge & Menheere, 2010). As such, illiterate parents, in their attempt to be involved with the learning of their children, seem to encounter a plethora of difficulties, though their involvement is crucial for their achievement, motivation, and well-being. In this connection, the data elicited indicate that reticent EFL learners and their parents embody a particular class position characterized by no educational qualifications, low income, and occupations typical of lower classes.

While these findings may not be the final answer as to why these EFL learners were reticent in the EFL classroom, they do, in fact, confirm the link between reticence, on the one hand, and learners' socioeconomic backgrounds. Accordingly, the fact that an English language learner comes from a wealthy family means that, from an early age, such learners have access to the best language learning resources as well as the best education that money can purchase. Thus, while providing language learners with ample opportunities to learn the target language does not guarantee enhanced EFL learning outcomes, language learners are more likely to take advantage of these tangible and intangible resources to develop their proficiency in the target language, given the wealth of cultural capital at hand as well as parental support, scaffolding, and motivation.

Thus, while parents' indifferent attitudes towards the learning of English seem to have been influenced by their class dispositions, their poor attitudes towards English can be explained by the resistance of their habitus to the English capital. In the same way, Bourdieu (1990) highlights that habit does, in fact, resist change. As he explained,

> Early experiences have particular weight because the habitus tends to ensure its own constancy and its defence against change through the selection it makes within new information by rejecting information capable of calling into question its accumulated information capable of calling into question its accumulated information, if exposed to it accidently or by force, and especially by avoiding exposure to such information [...] the habitus tends to protect itself from crises and critical challenges by providing itself with a milieu to which it is as pre-adapted as possible, that is, a relatively constant universe of situations tending to reinforce its dispositions by offering the market most favourable to its products" (Bourdieu, 1990, p.60-61).

Thus, parents' passivity towards the school of their children indicates how powerful *habitus* can be in shaping parents' thinking, feelings, schemes of perception, appreciation, action, and trajectories.

c. Poverty, the division of labour, lack of infrastructure and dropping out of school

One of the themes that emerged out of the data analysis is the effect that poverty, the division of labor among family members, and a lack of infrastructure have had on limiting parents' chances to attend school and further their education. Understanding these macro-factors is indispensable to understanding why the reticent students were at a disadvantage, within the framework of the present investigation, when it comes to English and objectified cultural capitals.

Under these conditions, Choho (interviewee 21), for example, revealed that going to school was beyond his control when he was a child. This participant illustrated that one main reason he did not attend school was because of the logic of the division of labour in his community. As he explained,

> I did not go to school even for one day. Our parents did not let us attend school because they were poor and needed us to work and graze the sheep. There were plenty of schools, but we did not have the chance to attend them. Our parents were not aware of the importance of reading and writing one's own name.

Clearly, parents can have a deep impact on the pathways of their children. Given a lack of parental support and stimulus, parents could either foster or impede children's learning. However, given the fact that such children were needed to fulfil domestic and labour tasks, children of such families were deprived of their right to have access to education. Seeing

students' reticence within this framework, it is quite clear that reticence is the result of no training in the English capital as well as the total absence of effective socializing techniques that could have helped EFL learners, somehow or another, improve their oral proficiency.

In addition to receiving no parental educational support, there is some evidence from the data gathered indicating that some of the students were engaged in helping their families with housework, as expressed by their parents. In this way, Ikram (interviewee 13) confirmed that her daughter was not receiving any educational support from anyone. As a way of illustrating, she stated,

> Nobody helps her [Khadija] with her homework. She studies on her own. Our social circumstances do not permit us to pay for extra classes in English [to improve her learning] and get high grades. She [Khadija] is under terrible stress as she is squeezed by time and housework. She helps me with cleaning and caring for the sheep. She usually arrives home [from school] at a late time because the school is far away from our home

Seen in this light, research suggests that there is a link between child labor and poor school performance. That is to say, children's psychology, social development, and educational achievement are negatively affected when they are required to work and use their time to contribute to the needs of their families (Hallaq & Khalifah, 2022; Bezerra, Kassouf, & Arends-Kuenning, 2009). In line with these findings, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (2004) reported that child labor in Moroccan rural areas is determined by a plethora of structural factors, including gender, household income, parents' education, rural infrastructure, and school distance. Summarizing these findings, UNICEF (2004) puts it,

> In sum, children's work in rural areas is strongly affected both by income and especially by infrastructure availability. If most working children are indeed out of school, then policy changes need to be explored that allow more children to perform some work without giving up school (p. 35).

As pointed out earlier, several parents stressed that one of the major reasons their educational capital was weak was because of poverty and the numerous household tasks they had to fulfil for their families when they were children. For instance, upon investigating the factors that contributed to his dropping out of school when he was a student, Benmousa (interviewee 25) recalled,

> I was in the fifth grade in primary school when I dropped out. This was in 1974. I was ten years old when my father enrolled me in school. I was born in a village that had no schools at all. It was only after we had moved here [to Midar] that I went to school. The reason I dropped out of school is that after I had passed the fifth grade of primary school, I could not afford it. I did not even have a proper pair of shoes! If we [the family] had had enough money, I do not think I would have dropped out of school. Most of my former classmates are now engineers, professors, and lawyers. Because I could not afford it, I dropped out of school.

In the same way, Ousrouti (interviewee 7) asserted that furthering his education was beyond his control when he was a child. However, based on the interview data gathered, there were a number of structural factors that shaped his experience. As he illustrated, "owing to the death of my father, I dropped out of the fifth grade of primary school. I dropped because there was nobody to help me [financially speaking] to further my education".

Likewise, El Batioui (interviewee 5) confirmed that "when I asked my father to buy me *nashat l'ilmi*" he said, "You need *nashat lghanami*". That is to say, since El Batioui's father was a farmer, his views about education were greatly restricted by his habitus. In a similar vein, Belhaj (interviewee 22) too highlighted that "[he] did not go to secondary school because his father needed him to help him with his shop (shop assistant)". For this reason, he did not see the advantages of sending his children to school.

Under these conditions, it is evident that the division of labour among family members limited the children's chances to attend school. This is the reason why illiteracy seems to run in the parents' families. Within this framework, Azhar (interviewee 11) explained that

> When I was a child, my family was poor. So I had to graze sheep and help my father with farming. I did not have the time to attend school. I used to wake up very early in the morning and go to the market to help my father, [who was a vendor back then] earn a piece of bread.

Therefore, the absence of cultural capital (in its three states: objectified, embodied, and institutionalized) implies that the economic base does greatly contribute to the flourishing of cultural expression and the promotion of life opportunities. If these interviewees in question had had enough monetary capital to further their education, their families would have probably been rich culturally and economically. This, in turn, could have contributed to the parents' mobilization up the social ladder as well as enhanced the school achievement of their children. Thus, while the lack or even absence of cultural capital implies the poverty of the

economic base, which is the basis of social and cultural life, it is also true that the economic base does not mechanically lead to enhanced learning outcomes.

In the same way, Mimount (interviewee 10) argued that "because the school was situated far away from our home, I gave up the idea of education". Additionally, while explaining that he did not receive any formal education, Masoudi (interviewee 26) stated that "I did not attend school because the idea of schooling was insignificant for my family". For this reason, Masoudi, like other participants, especially mothers, did not receive any formal education. To illustrate, Fatima (interviewee 6) explained,

> I did not go to school when I was a child because I grew up in a rural area. My village did not have any schools. In order to attend school, one had to walk for 15 kilometers. My parents were illiterate as well. My father was herding sheep, and I had to help him.

Obviously, attending school is impeded by a plethora of structural factors, such as the division of labour in an agrarian society and the spatial inequalities typical of Morocco (lack of infrastructure). In a similar vein, Chaymae (participant 12) illustrated that the reason she did not receive any education was because of her family's (i) negative attitudes towards educating girls (ii) and lack of infrastructure. As she put it,

> Schools were situated far away from our home. I had to help my mother with housework. Also, my father was completely against the idea. My father was thinking that only boys should attend school. Also, my family had nothing beyond our tiny house.

Meanwhile, Aissati (interviewee 17) explained that "my father did not enrol me in school because of our [difficult] living conditions. He died when I was a child. So my brothers did not enrol me in school because they were illiterate too". In the same way, Halima (interviewee 27) emphasized that "I did not receive any formal education because I had to help my father with the housework".

Because social classes socialize their adherents differently along class lines (Bourdieu, 1990; Lareu, 2003), Youssfi (interviewee 24) explained that while he was highly motivated to study, his father was against the idea. As he said, "it was my father who did not wish for me to keep attending school. He wanted me to learn the craft [mechanic]". Within this framework, Chamlali (interviewee 13), too, stated, "I did not attend school because schools were far away from our house and even my family needed me to work in the fields [farming]".

Similar views were expressed by Halima, Salima, Soulimani, and Safae. This indicates that parents were in the process of preparing their children for some occupations typical of the lower working classes (mechanic and farmer are cases in point). Lareau (2003; 2011) highlights that, because of their habits, social classes socialize their children differently in an effort to prepare them for different jobs typical of their socio-economic backgrounds, depending on the availability and unavailability of cultural resources put at their disposal.

Similarly, Sanae (interviewee 16) explained that the reason she did not have access to education when she was a child was "because I was living in a small village that had no schools at all". Similar opinions were expressed by participants Nada (interviewee 19), Meryam (interviewee 22), Insaf (interviewee 24), and Loubna (interviewee 25). These findings suggest that the division of labor and the total absence of infrastructure, together with the dominant parental mentalities typical of rural Morocco, could limit the life chances of individuals.

In the same way, Afellay (interviewee 2) recalled that life was difficult for him when he was a child. Because he was an orphan, he said, "I suffered a lot when I was a child. My father died when I was eleven years old. So I had to work and feed my mother, brothers, and sisters. This is the reason I did not attend school. There was nobody to look after my family".

While several parent interviewees did not face economic problems (Talhi, Botkmanti, and Aissati), a majority of the parents did in fact suffer from poverty. Besides, one important fact to be mentioned in this regard is that all the parents included revealed that they had extended families (ranging from 6 to 8 family members), irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds. Due to their lack of monetary capital as well as the numerous children they have to feed, several interviewees found it difficult to pay for their children's school buses. In this context, Sotou (interviewee 15), for example, stated that

> I am the father of six children. Sometimes I do not have the money to pay for her [Sabah's] school bus. On many occasions, I borrow money so that I can buy them [family members] food and clothes. *Nekkan'twatta* [I do struggle to do so]. I cannot work because of a serious disease. I have sciatica. Nobody is helping me, including my brothers and sisters. I do struggle to satisfy my family's needs. It is hard!

Because of their lack of monetary capital, Chohou (interviewee 21) reported that his son resorted to working in order to pay for his school bus. As he illustrated, "he [Zakaria] resorts to working in construction from time to time. He also helps me with the bees sometimes. I am

poor, so when I do not pay for his school bus, he does so himself to help me with the expenses. Keeping bees is the only source of my income". Before keeping bees, Soulimani [interviewee 12] stated that he had worked in construction, but in vain. As he stated,

> I worked in construction and farming for ages, but I did not make any money. I make so little money that I hardly satisfy my family's basic needs, as I am the father of six children. I am working all days of the week except for Wednesday because I go to the weekly market to do shopping.

Similarly, Akachar (interviewee 20) confirmed that there were several reasons why he did not go to school, one of which was "my lack of knowledge about the value of education as well as my weak educational performance at school [primary school]". Saaliti (interviewee 18), in the same way, mentioned that while he wanted to continue his education, his father objected to the idea. He continued to explain that "my father needed me to help him with his trade" (interviewee 22). Within this framework, Saaliti (interviewee 18) continued to highlight that "I spent only one month in the first grade of primary school. After that, my father decided to take me out to help him farm. [In addition to this, the school was far away from our house".

Therefore, the lack of educational and cultural capital among the parents of these reticent students whose perceptions were investigated should be considered within the framework of the structural constraints that have shaped their experiences. Because they were needed to contribute to satisfying the needs of their families, these parents, once children, were deprived of their right to have access to formal education. This lack of educational capital seems to have influenced the way parents see the whole process of teaching and learning English. However, mothers, judging by the information gathered and closely analyzed, seemed to be more affected by illiteracy since their families, and fathers in particular, were predominantly against educating them, notwithstanding the lack of infrastructure that seemed to affect both genders.

Thus, based on the information gathered, there is strong evidence indicating that illiteracy seems to have affected women more than men. In this way, the interview data suggest that the reason why the mothers of these reticent students offered no assistance with English learning was mainly because of illiteracy (see the socio-economic background information of the participants in the methodology chapter). However, the little schooling that these mothers had can be explained by the traditional gender roles that women in rural Morocco perform.

In this regard, Tamimount (interviewee 1) regretfully stated, “I did not attend school because my father did not want me to do so. He [My father] was hard on me. He [my father] could not stand the idea of me going out of home. That is why he [my father] did not want to enrol me in school”. Ikram (interviewee 13), in a similar context, explained that one of the reasons why she did not receive further education was "because education had no value for my family. I had to help my family with the numerous tasks of housework. [Moreover], my father did not let me have access to education because he was thinking that girls’ appropriate place was the house".

In a similar vein, Salima (participant 14) pointed out that her lack of literacy is due to "lack of advice from my family members to attend school. When I was a child, I had to graze sheep and help my father with farming. I did not have time to attend school. I was unmotivated to go to school". Within this framework, the findings indicate that learning motivation reflects the influence of one’s socio-economic background. Moreover, upon asking her if she received any formal education, Manal (participant 8) explained, “My father died when I was six years old. Nobody was there to help me [financially speaking] continue my education”.

Thus, the availability of financial resources enhances life chances to a large extent. What this means is that the lack or even absence of cultural capital is very significant since these parents were deprived of their right to have access to education either because of social, cultural, spatial, or economic inequalities, on the one hand, or because of the dominant mental structures shaping the roles of men and women in rural Morocco. That is to say, without a thorough understanding of EFL learners’ socio-economic backgrounds, the dominant cognitive explanations for learners’ school achievement are based on a partial understanding of learners’ reticence in the EFL classroom. Thus, when examining learners’ reticence in the EFL classroom from micro and macro perspectives, a more complete picture of the phenomenon under investigation is likely to emerge.

Implications for English language teaching and learning

While eliminating students' reticence wholeheartedly is beyond the scope of this dissertation, this piece of research has the intention to help reticent learners take part in classroom talk by helping them, directly or indirectly, gain some self-confidence and, therefore, use the target language, orally speaking, in and out of the classroom. Broadly, these implications target both the micro and macro levels of this research. Specifically, these implications are meant to help solve, more or less, some of the cognitive, linguistic, pedagogical, affective, policy, institutional, and social issues related to students' reticence in the EFL classroom, directly or indirectly. On this basis,

1. EFL teachers are required to introduce reticent learners to extracurricular activities to help them reduce their anxiety and nervousness (public speaking and spelling bees, for example).

2. EFL teachers are expected to familiarize students with their roles in the classroom by including classroom participation as an essential component of learning assessment. In so doing, students would feel that classroom assessment is important for getting a good enough grade in English; thereby, they could assume more responsibility for their learning and, thus, exert their effort to usually contribute and volunteer their answers.

3. EFL teachers should encourage reticent students to prepare a two-minute presentation that should be given at the beginning of the English class. This will help EFL learners gain self-

4. Teachers should introduce learners to more simple communicative tasks in which these reticent learners will not be required to adopt assertive roles (miming or finding someone who, for example). The teacher should, in the first place, integrate reticent learners to assume the roles of, within the framework of the communicative approach, "passive learners" (in which they are required to say little of the target language). However, as students gain more confidence to speak in public, EFL teachers should assign them more active and assertive roles (like assigning them the role of a speaker for the whole group when having students work in groups, for example).

5. EFL teachers are also required to have these reticent students sit at the front of the classroom to prevent them from increasing their reticent behaviour. As such, EFL teachers should change the seating arrangement in such a way as to have students, especially if the classes are small, sit in such a way as to form a horseshoe shape that could allow for more student-student interaction. By doing so, students are expected to feel that their oral contributions are prerequisites for the whole class.

6. EFL teachers are required to prepare students for classroom discussions before they come to class. For example, he or she may assign students some reading assignments before the next lesson starts. In this way, students will compensate for their lack of vocabulary and knowledge about the topic of the conversation or discussion by doing the readings in advance.

7. EFL teachers should give more "wait time" for the reticent learners to process the information before sharing their opinions with the whole class. In this connection, learners could be asked by the teachers to write down their answers before they share them with the whole class.

8. To boost their self-confidence, teachers should call students by their first names.

9. As long as reading is one of the most effective ways to increase one's own vocabularies, introducing students to guided reading is likely to increase and reinforce EFL learners' knowledge of the vocabularies of the target language.

10. On their part, teachers are required to facilitate their teaching and reflect on their practice to meet their goals and those of their students more effectively and efficiently. One way to do this is by conducting action research and critical action research alike.

11. EFL teachers should understand the social contexts in which they are acting on the grounds that learning is not only influenced by what happens inside the classroom per se; rather, learning, according to this line of reasoning, is impacted by home and family factors to a great extent. By making this connection, teachers will gain a deep understanding of the teaching and learning processes.

12. On their part, policymakers should provide more opportunities for exposing EFL learners to receive and practice English in the state-owned media (informal learning). This will help Moroccan EFL learners have more exposure to the target language.

13. More exposure to English in the formal classroom is critical to improving students' output, particularly at the lower secondary school level, where learners' exposure to English is very limited to two hours a week. Thus, exposing EFL learners to insufficient quantities of language input is likely to deprive them of opportunities to both learn and practice their skills. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education should make decisions in such a way as to increase the amount of language input to which Moroccan EFL learners are exposed.

14. Re-considering the language policy implemented in Morocco is crucial to increasing students' exposure to more English input.

15. Taking into account the widespread use of technology among students, promoting online learning could be a step forward to help reticent learners expose themselves to more and more English in online learning environments. On this basis, students should be made aware of the many language applications that could help them practice the target language. Within this framework, training reticent EFL learners on how to use such applications could be effective in helping them engage in learning autonomy.

16. Teachers are expected, in the age of digital technology, to sensitize students to free language applications in order to help them grow independently.

17. Schools should hold monthly meetings to meet the parents of the students and (a) let them know about the progress of their offspring, as well as (b) boost family involvement in the teaching and learning process. This could also help in investigating and anticipating the reasons for students' behaviours in the classroom.

18. Schools must find a way to listen to students' learning problems and suggest practical solutions.

19. The Ministry of Education should equip schools with the necessary technological tools to help EFL learners practice their speaking and listening skills.

20. The forms of assessment used, particularly in the baccalaureate national exam, should be revised since they focus on written exams (reading and writing combined with language aspects: functions, grammar, and vocabulary) at the expense of students' speaking skills. Assessing students' speaking skills could be a step forward to have

students' work harder to speak and improve their skills, though this could be difficult given the practicality of the suggestion.

21. Substantial and extensive reading programs in the language courses should be developed by the teachers to help EFL learners immerse themselves in the target language (by creating reading clubs, for example). More extensive and guided reading will prove very useful for these kinds of learners. Reading, after all, has been regarded as a powerful tool for language development.

22. Given their lower proficiency and inability to understand teachers' output in the EFL classroom, reticent students should be provided with bilingual dictionaries.

23. Schools are expected to build their libraries to create cultural sites for EFL learners to enhance their English learning.

24. Policymakers should provide illiterate parents with non-formal education classes with the aim of providing them with basic literacy skills: reading and writing. This could help foster positive attitudes towards English language learning.

25. Special intervention programs should be implemented to help improve parents' literacy skills. This has the potential to help parents boost their involvement in the education of their children.

General conclusion

This dissertation has focused on EFL learners' reticence in the classroom. Specifically, it has sought to find tentative answers as to what factors contribute to the emergence of reticence among EFL learners by analyzing a corpus of data gathered by means of a language achievement test, a questionnaire, a focus group, and semi-structured interviews. It has been argued that since mainstream second language approaches have been cognitively oriented, this dissertation has argued that paying attention to the social context where English language teaching and learning take place is no less important than the cognitive approaches.

Students' reticence in the EFL classroom was neglected by mainstream second language learning studies for a variety of reasons. From a psychological perspective, reticence has been regarded as a disease that has to be eradicated by training reticent individuals in communication skills, especially by advocates of the Pennsylvania Reticence Program. However, until recently, very little attention has been paid to this behaviour in the context of the EFL classroom, albeit with reticence, which has been regarded as one of the main sources of teachers' frustration.

Historically, several factors have contributed to the marginalization of reticence in the EFL classroom, including, for example, (a) the influence of communicative language teaching on classroom discourse and research; (b) the negative attitudes of English language teachers towards reticent learners; and (c) the intangibility and complexity of reticence. All these factors have contributed to the marginalization of reticence in second language learning research. However, it has been highlighted throughout this dissertation that there has been a growing body of educational research on reticence in the EFL classroom.

In so doing, the dissertation has examined students' reticence from micro and macro perspectives. That is to say, by focusing on affective and linguistic factors and students' socio-economic background (social factors), this dissertation has addressed students' reticence from two perspectives: (i) second language acquisition and learning studies and (ii) the sociology of education, with a special focus on the input hypothesis and the cultural capital theory. Accordingly, it has been highlighted that by combining the cognitive and social aspects of English language learning, a more holistic picture of the learners' reticence is expected to emerge.

Thus, this dissertation has highlighted that the influential models in language learning, including the input model, the output model, and the interaction model, have paid less

attention to the learners' socio-economic background, particularly in the Expanding Circle, where EFL learners' exposure to English input is mostly restricted to the EFL classroom. Additionally, it has been asserted that what is likely to make a significant impact on the learning of EFL learners is not their degree of exposure to large quantities of linguistic input, though this is important, but how far they adopt effective language learning strategies. Thus, what counts more in the language learning process is not the linguistic input per se but the learners themselves and how effectively and deliberately they plan and organize their learning.

Moreover, it has been pointed out that reticence is a multifaceted phenomenon that only a multidisciplinary approach could do justice to. Moreover, learners' reticence has been found to interact with a plethora of other variables, including language teaching methods, modes of classroom interaction, poor language proficiency, personality traits, self-confidence, cultures of learning, language anxiety, classroom climate, lack of motivation, and classroom logistics. Generally speaking, these factors can be grouped into five major categories: linguistic factors, affective factors, cultural factors, institutional factors, and cognitive factors.

In spite of the insights of second language learning studies in explaining students' behaviour, these insights do not take into consideration the socio-economic background of the learners. In this sense, there is a growing body of research addressing English language learners' behaviours from the perspective of the sociology of education. In so doing, a more complete picture of students' learning is expected to emerge. On this basis, learners' reticence has been investigated in this dissertation from both internal (micro) and external (macro) perspectives.

Based on the insights of second language learning studies and cultural capital theory, this dissertation has illustrated that by combing both perspectives, a more complete picture of learners' reticence is likely to emerge. At the micro level, the findings of this research have revealed that learners' reticence is positively correlated with a lack of English vocabularies, poor motivation, shyness, high foreign language speaking anxiety, a lack of exposure to English input, and a lack of investment in the target language. At the macro level, reticence has been found to interact with the poverty of the environment in which the reticent learners have grown up. That is to say, reticence, from the perspective of cultural capital theory, seems to be a manifestation of one's own class dispositions.

While these reticent EFL learners were at a disadvantage culturally, educationally, linguistically, and economically, it becomes evident why the parents of the reticent students, whose perceptions were investigated, have revealed their weak economic, educational, and linguistic capitals. Given lack of parents' involvement in their children's learning of English, it is evident that EFL learners' reticence interacts with their socio-economic backgrounds significantly. Students' parents themselves, based on the interview data, seemed to be aware of their structural hindrances that prevented them from helping their children learn at least some aspects of the English language since they were predominantly illiterate and lacking in monetary capital. As such, parents were economically, educationally, culturally, and linguistically speaking, at a disadvantage. This, in turn, has manifested itself in the lack of support and encouragement offered to EFL learners.

What seems to have had a significant impact on parents' indifferent attitudes towards their children's learning of the English language is their lack of cultural capital (in its three forms: institutionalized, embodied, and objectified). On this basis, though the economic dimensions are of significance when it comes to learning motivation, they did not seem, based on the information reported, to have had a significant impact on students' learning. This means that students' reticence has been mostly the result of a lack of cultural capital in the first place. Yet, this dissertation has further argued that a lack of students' investment in the learning of English and a lack of agency among these reticent EFL learners have indirectly influenced students' reticence in the EFL classroom.

Moreover, this dissertation has shown that some of the institutional factors, including little English language exposure to the target language in formal and informal contexts, have tremendously influenced Moroccan EFL learners' learning opportunities to expose themselves to more language input. In this connection, it has been emphasized that the sort of assessment forms that have been used in the Moroccan EFL classroom as well as the lack of school and public libraries could have a negative impact on the development of learners' inter-language skills. Within this framework, combined with learners' socio-economic backgrounds, it has been stressed in this dissertation that the context in which this research was conducted offered no socialization into English language learning. This could have influenced students' opportunities to learn English, directly or indirectly.

Limitations and recommendations for further research

This research has a number of potential limitations. First, only a small sample of the reticent EFL learners (n = 27) was included. This was a major pitfall in this dissertation. Thus, the results obtained may not be over-generalized, as further research is needed. Second, the non-random sampling could be biased since only the participants who demonstrated their reticence were selected for the investigation. Therefore, the risk of sampling bias is high. Third, this dissertation investigated students' perceptions of the EFL classroom per se. Yet, exploring students' perceptions in other classes or school subjects could have provided more reliable data, thereby increasing the validity of the information gathered. Fourth, this research was conducted among a homogenous group.

Fifth, the relationship between the researcher (teacher) and the participants (students) might have influenced the students' decision to take part in this research. Sixth, the dissertation did not rely on any administrative data to draw a good enough picture of the socio-economic conditions of the population under discussion, including parents' education level, rate of poverty, rate of illiteracy, occupations, and the like. Thus, using these data could have illuminated this dissertation and opened new avenues for further research. However, the researcher was denied access to this official data in spite of several attempts. This is the reason why he relied on firsthand data, that is, information elicited from the perspective of the parents (n = 53).

Therefore, to avoid the shortcomings of this dissertation, future research should focus on including more participants. In so doing, this could help in generalizing the information gathered. Apart from including a large representative number, future research should investigate case studies since this method could provide a thick description of the profile of reticent EFL learners. This will also help teachers and researchers alike to have a good image of reticent EFL learners. However, generating such a detailed description of the recent individuals implies that researchers have unlimited access to participants' homes. Moreover, because having access to female private space is difficult for male researchers; it could be effective for female researchers to embark on exploring students' reticence in such contexts.

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Appendix I: Questionnaire sample

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Discourse, Creativity, Society and Religions: Perception and Implications

QUESTIONNAIRE

The aim behind this questionnaire is to collect data on the factors contributing to students' reticence in the EFL classroom. You are kindly requested to answer all the questions below, bearing in mind that the information you will provide will be used only for research purposes and that your identities will be kept anonymous.

Please tick (✓) the answer of your choice.

The statements	I strongly disagree	I disagree	neutral	I agree	I strongly agree
A. Exposure to English Input/investment (statements 1-11)					
1. I like to read English books and short stories in my free time					
2. Reading is one of my favorite hobbies					
3. I like talking about the books I have read with other people					
4. I regularly watch news in English					
5. I chat with English speakers from all around the world					
6. I really enjoy watching English movies					
7. I have never read an English book					
8. I usually practice English at home					
9. I listen attentively to the teacher when in the classroom					
10. I enjoy listening to English music 11. I usually talk to myself					
B. Attitudes towards in-class Participation (12-22)					
12. I like to participate and volunteer answers in the classroom					
13. Speaking is important for me to improve my English					
14. Speaking is not important to learn English					
15. I am often scared to talk in the classroom					
16. I think participating in class is a waste of time					

17. I do not participate because I do not know many English words					
18. I do not participate because I usually lack knowledge about the topic of discussion					
19. I do not like to talk in English because my pronunciation is bad					
20. I participate more in the Arabic class than in the English class					
21. I feel nervous when I participate in class					
22. I feel embarrassed when I speak English in front of the class					
C. Motivation for Learning English (22-35)					
23. I always look forward to English classes.					
24. learning English is important because it will help me find a good job in the future (improve career prospects)					
25. Learning English is important because it will enable me to go overseas in the future for higher education					
26. I do not like to learn English because it is not my favorite subject.					
27. I wish that no English was taught at school					
28. Learning English is important because it will help me to read books, magazines, and newspapers written in English					
29. Learning English is important because it will allow me to meet and talk with many people in the world					
30. I would learn English simply because it is compulsory					
31. I concentrate on English more than French and Arabic					
32. I am working hard at learning English					
33. Studying English will help me get a high paying job					
34. Studying English will be useful if I travel abroad					
35. English is the most important school subject					
D. Parental Involvement in English Learning (36-50)					
36. My parents encourage me to learn English.					
37. My parents encourage me to attend extra English classes after class					
38. My family put a lot of pressure on me to study English.					
39. My parents think English is important to learn					

40. My parents try to help with my English lessons					
41. My parents cannot help me with my English studies					
42. My parents ask me about my studies regularly					
43. My parents encourage me to study English					
44. My parents know my teacher of English					
45. My parents always ask me what I do or learn at school					
46. When I have homework in English, my parents make sure that I do it					
47. My parents think I should give more time to my English Studies					
48. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am having problems with my English					
49. I usually seek help from my family with English					
50. My parents think English is not important to learn					
E. Efforts at learning English (51-60)					
51. I always study English even when on a holiday					
52. I always review my English lessons before coming to school					
53. I usually practice my English with foreigners on the internet					
54. I keep up to date with English lessons by working on it almost every day.					
55. When I have a problem in learning English, I ask my teacher or some other person for help					
56. When I have a problem in learning English, I use my mobile phone to look for the information.					
57. I do not have a special plan for my homework					
58. I keep working on my English lessons even if they are difficult					
59. I do my best to learn English					
60. I spend a lot of time learning English at home					
F. Expectations of learning English (61-64)					
61. I believe I can get a very good grade in the national exam					
62. Simply passing the English exams is good enough for me					
63. I do not have a special interest in English studies					
64. I expect that one day I will be able to read, write and speak English fluently					
G. Parental expectations (64-71)					
65. My parents say that education is the most important thing in life					
66. My parents say that I should have the best education at all costs					
67. My parents do not consider education to be very important in life					

68. My parents emphasize that if I don't know English, I cannot succeed in school					
69. My parents think that success in school is possible without good English					
70. My parents want me to have university education					
71. My parents are not interested in what level of education I attain					
72. My parents want me to have a high-status job in the future					
H. Parental Responsiveness (73-76)					
73. My parents buy me books and other learning materials I need for school					
74. My parents employ private tutors in English for me when I need that					
75. My parents provide the Wi-Fi internet to help me do my homework					
76. My parents consider my education needs or problems as priorities					
I. Education and Career Expectations (77-80)					
77. I do not have any wish to study after I get my baccalaureate degree					
78. I will have to get a job after I finish my university studies					
79. I want to have a high-status job in the future					
80. Any kind of job is ok for me					

If you have any additional comments, feel free to write them:

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Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Appendix II: Test sample

The Vocabulary Achievement Test

1. <u>Choose the correct word to complete the sentences.</u>

1. Mohamed…..... is the king of Morocco

A) Six B) the sixth C) sixteen D) sixty E) sixteen

2. My father is forty-five years.....

A) Feet B) long C) tall D) old E) short

3. The sister of my mother is my……..

A) Cousina B) cousin C) aunt D) uncle E) brother

4. The daugher of my aunt is my……

A) Cousin B) nephew C) sister D) brother E) grandfather

5. A…..... is a person who cuts up and sells meat.

A) Lawyer B) president C) teacher D) butcher E) painter

6. A pilot..... planes

A) Flies B) drives C) rides D) fly E) drive

7. My sister and I always… .....karate

A) Do B) go C) play D) going E) take

8. Juice, coffee, soda, water are……

A) Vegetables B) fruit C) drinks D) bread E) foods

9. Who… ..... the money from my wallet?

A) Disturbed B) was C) stole D) broke E) is

10. Milk, butter, cheese, and yogurt are..... products

A) Diary B) water C) meat D) fruits E) vegetables

11. Morocco……a lot of canned fish and phosphates abroad.

A) Exports B) imports C) throws D) buys E) comsumes

12. The glass is ..... water

A) Empty B) full of C) full with D) closed with E) full

13. Sweaters, t-shirts, shirts, and trousers are…….

A) Papers B) books C) clothes D) computers E) people

14. I.....swimming every Saturday morning

A) Make B) go C) play D) do E) have

15. Black, blue, green, yellow, orange are……

A) Vegetables B) fruits C) pens D) colors E) fish

16. What size do you need: small, medium, or.....?

A) Big B) large C) huge D) giant E) overweight

17. Could you show me the.....to the bank, please?

A) Path B) way C) road D) traffic light E) route

18. Could you close the door, please? it is very .....in here.

A) Warm B) hot C) cold D) warm E) hot

19. The.....connects the head to the body.

A) Eyebrows B) neck C) leg D) eye E) eyebrows

20. Hard is the synonym of……

A) Happy B) sad C) wonderful D) difficult E) easy

21. Salmon, sardines, tuna are……..

A) Fish B) water C) bread D) eggs E) chicken

22. Refrigerators are usually placed in the……

A) Bedroom B) bathroom C) kitchen D) living room E) hall

23. I love.....such as potatoes and tomatoes

A) Fruits B) vegetables C) bananas D) oranges E) tomatoes

24. What time do you go to… .....every day?

A) Job B) office C) work D) workplace E) workforce

25. Happy is the .....of sad

A) Oppose B) opposite C) oppsitive D) opposed E) opossite

26. She is a police officer , so she has to wear a at work.

B) Dress B) police suit C) clothes D) uniform E) suit

27. I love all fruit, but… ..... strawnerries

C) Mostly B) specificially C) especially D) specially E) generally

28. "Fruit and vegetables are healthy"= fruit and vegetables are…….

D) Benefit for you B) good for you C) healthsome D) good for health E) bad for health

29. I am a bit lost. Can you tell me how to….....to the university?

E) reach B) get C) find D) go E) arrive

30. He studies Maths at university. He is a……

F) Pupil B) professor C) studier D) student E) teacher

31. Our teacher doesn't….....us use mobile phones in class

G) Forbid B) let C) allow D) make E) drink

32. Do you live in a house or a (an) ?

H) Home B) apartment C) builduing D) village E) city

33. This noise is giving me a……..

I) Headouch B) headpain C) headache D) headhurt E) heartattack

34. The weather was great-it was really……

J) Sun B) sunny C) strong sun D) sunshine E) strong sun

35. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are…….

K) water B) foodtimes C) meals D) eatings E) fish

36. He is so ……..! I am not .....in anything he says

A) bored, interested B) bored, interesting C) boring, interested D) boring, interesting E) bored, good

37. I don't like my job very much. I am going to… ..... and look for another one.

B) Finish B) retire C) fire D) resign E) leave

38. He is a waiter, she is a……

C) Waitress B) waiteress C) waitree D) waiter E) waitresses

39. Every time I wear something white, I .....coffee or orange juice or something on it.

D) Drop B) pour C) spill D) let E) spread

40. Excuse me, I think you have.....a mistake in our bill

E) done B) made C) given D) mad E) have

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix III: Interview sample

Students' interview schedule

1. Are you satisfied with your participation in class?
2. Is oral participation important to you to learn English?
3. Why is it that you are not participating in the class?
4. What are the things you like the most in your English class?
5. Do you like speaking English in the classroom?
6. How frequently do you participate in the classroom?
7. What is your most favorite subject at school?
8. Do you like English?
9. How important is English for your future studies and your career?
10. What are the advantages that you think you can obtain by learning English?
11. Would you learn English if it were not a compulsory school subject?
12. Is English easy or difficult? How satisfied are you with your grades in English?
13. What grade do you expect to get in the national baccalaureate exam?
14. How would you describe your efforts in learning English at home and school?
15. How would you describe someone who usually participates in English?
16. How would you describe someone who is always silent in the classroom?
17. Do you study English everyday at home?
18. What do you usually do if you have problems with English?
19. Are you taking any private lessons in English?
20. What level of education do you aspire to have in the future?
21. What do you think are the reasons that will hinder your way to higher education?
22. How do you spend your leisure time?
23. Do you read any books from outside your English syllabus? Do you have any English books?
24. Do you have a study desk?
25. How do you describe the contribution of your parents to your English language learning?

It is worth noting that other prompt questions were also asked during the interviews.

Appendix IV: Interview sample

Parents' interview schedule

1. What is your occupation?
2. What is your level of education that you have completed?
3. How much money do you earn a year?
4. Do you have Wi-Fi internet?
5. Do you have a TV set?
6. Do you read books?
7. How many languages do you speak?
8. How do you spend your free time?
9. Which school grade is your child in?
10. Does s/he usually keep silent at home?
11. Do you have electricity?
12. How many members are there in your family?
13. Does your child have a study desk?
14. How frequently are you helping your children with learning?
15. How frequently were you assisting your child with English language learning?
16. Do you motivate him to study hard?
17. Do you think English is important in the future for your child? What do you wish for him/her to be?
18. How happy are you with his school grades in general and English in particular?
19. What do you think about him as a student?
20. Do you assist them directly in his studies regularly?
21. Does s/he talk to you about his studies and career plans?
22. What grades do you expect him to get in English?
23. What level of education would you like them to achieve?
24. Do you think s/he tries his best to learn English?
25. How important do you think is English for your son's future education and career?
26. Do you think it is important for you to keep in touch with your son's school and teachers?
27. How do you maintain such contact?

It is worth noting that other prompt questions were also asked during the interviews.