Sociolinguistic Analysis of School Failure among High School Students: Marrakesh as a Case Study

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
	The purpose of this study is to record the beliefs/views of teachers and students on the sociolinguistic factors of school failure. The facts of this research are part of a wider research concerning student's social adequacy having used a questionnaire and the viability of the educational system. The sample used for this research was 30 pupils and 20 teachers from four public high schools in Marrakesh. The results show that both teachers and students attribute school failure to different sociological and psychological factors. Results and implications of this analysis will be presented at the end of this paper. Some recommendations are presented as well.

1. Introduction

As education is very important for the development of any country, school failure is considered a major problem. Research on this issue has brought about a number of analyses and different studies that have attempted to find out its causes. The issue of school failure has become a main concern of public debates. School failure among Moroccan pupils is attributable to a number of factors that are linked to pupils, teachers, parents, policy makers and curriculum designers. The present research paper aims to study the possible factors that lead pupils to failure at school. More specifically, this research paper is set out to examine the failure of a great number of Moroccan high school pupils to learn English

School performance is of complex and multi-dimensional signification (Walberg &Tsai, 1985). Tzani (1988) defines school performance as a cluster of maneuvers attempting to integrate the student to the schooling system and the student's efficiency towards lessons. School performance can also be defined as a continuation in a ladder, where success is on the one end and failure on the other, bilateral differences are obvious (Paraskevopoulos, 1985). However, few researchers have outlined the qualitative elements responsible for student differentiation.

The school success or failure refers to what degree the student has fulfilled (fully or partially) teaching goals (Kalogridi, 1995. Dimou, 1997). Success is believed to be the lack of problems and the student's achievement of high standards, while failure is characterized by difficulties and an inability to reach the desired goals. It is also accompanied by a variety of other problems (behavioral etc.) which often associated with school failure. (Kupersmidt & Coie,1990).

2. The questions, hypotheses and objectives of the study

In order to examine the sociolinguistic factors which contribute to school failure, the present study aims to find possible answers for the following questions:

What are the sociolinguistic factors of school failure?
What are the factors that contribute to pupils' failure in learning English inside Moroccan public school?
In addition, this research paper attempts to support or refute the following hypotheses: School failure is due to the pupil.

a. School failure is due to school environment.
b. School failure is due to family problems.
c. School failure is due to social class.

In the light of what has been stated earlier, there are two major objectives of this study:

    a.   To examine the sociolinguistic factors of school failure,
    b.   To identify the causes that contribute to pupils' failure in learning English in Moroccan public high schools

3. Review of literature

School failure is a psycho-social problem which affects all societies. Yet, its degree differs from one society to another. It occurs both in public and private schools but the highest rates are found in the former. It has always posed a real challenge for the ministry of education in Morocco. The term school failure is complex and there are different definitions of it. This is because sociologists and psychologists did not agree on a single definition of the term. The definition of school failure can be ambiguous because it does not only refer to pupils' failure but also to the failure of the educational system to meet pupils' needs (Papadopoulos, 1990).

The term is so broad that it may mean different things to different people. It may refer to a school system which fails to offer services conducing to learning, or that a pupil is failing to advance to the 11 next grade. It may also mean that some pupils leave school with no competencies and skills that are required in the labor market.

Enguita, Martinez and Gomez (2010) state that there are two different versions of school failure: restrictive and less restrictive. In the former, school failure refers to the state where pupils fail to meet the minimum academic standards of an educational institution. While in the latter, school failure refers to the situation of those who fail in any of their compulsory levels. In this sense, the main variable has to do with who takes the decision: is it the institution or the pupil who decides whether a particular pupil continues study or not. In the restrictive version it is the institution that decides while in the less restrictive version it is the pupil's choice.

3-1 Theoretical approaches to school failure

There are numerous theories that attempt to account for the issue of school failure. These theories include intelligence, cultural deprivation, material deprivation, culture and interaction theories

The Intelligence theory

This theory is based on IQ scores. The IQ refers to intelligence quotient which is a score that is derived from one of different tests. These tests aim at evaluating human intelligence. The main assumption of this theory is that intelligence is an element that can be inherited. Yet, the IQ is a complicated concept and there is no exact definition of what the IQ contains and how it is measured. Much has been written about this issue mainly by Howard Gardner (1983, 1993),

Howard Gardner has introduced a theory of multiple intelligences. He has differentiated between seven types of intelligence at first and later he has added another type. These types are as follows:

    a.   Bodily kinesthetic: involves the ability to learn through physical activities,
    b.   Interpersonal: includes understanding and being able to communicate with others,
    c.   Intrapersonal: involves knowing one's body and mind,
    d.   Linguistic: refers to the ability to express well in one's language or foreign languages, 13
    e.   Musical: comprises learning through music or rhythmic movements,
    f.   Naturalist: includes the ability to understand the natural world of plants and animals
    g.   Spatial: encompasses having a visual perception of the environment and the ability to create mental images,
    h.   Logical-mathematical: refers to the ability to learn higher- mathematic

The cultural deprivation theory

This theory associates school success with one's ability to communicate. As stated in this theory, it has been observed that middle class children in Britain differ from lower working class children in the way they make use of communicative skills. Middle class children are able to use communicative skills at an early stage more than working class children. Therefore, middle class children use an elaborated code and are more accustomed to the way of thought prevailing at school. This theory focuses on the relatedness between socio-economic factors and linguistic performance. This idea is given in Bernstein's Deficit Theory (Bernstein, 1973) where he referred to the linguistic weakness of the lower class as « a limited verbal code of communication ». Bernstein assumes that lower working class children make use of a restricted code and thus have weak language competences as a result of their economic and social background. On the other hand, middle class children have access to both elaborated and restricted code. Therefore, working class children are unable to communicate effectively and show low achievements in school.

The materialistic deprivation theory

This theory has been proposed by Wedge and Prosser (1973). It claims that school performance is linked to poverty and argues that children who come from poor environments confront difficulties in learning more than those who come from middle class environments. This is due to the fact that labour class children are more likely to suffer from illnesses which will affect their learning achievement. Hence, poverty is seen as the main factor that affects educational attainment and results in lack of learning opportunities.

The culture theory

The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1994) believes that labour class children's knowledge, culture, experience and skills are deprecated by the educational system. This is manifested in how the educational system is organized in a way to emphasize the culture of the leading class. Bourdieu also believes that when middle class children join school, they enter it with a background that is similar to that of the predominant class. In other words, they share the same mentality with their educators and this is what helps them to be successful in schools, while working class children are seen as unable to succeed because their knowledge and background do not fit school in general.

3.2 Causes of school failure

School failure is a social and educational problem that is linked to different and interrelated factors. The reasons for school failure are rarely one - dimensional or singular. Therefore, school failure can be attributed to different things such as family, parents' involvement, environment and school and so forth.

To start with, family is a fundamental factor in shaping one's educational achievement. It is actually the chief variable that determines the way a child develops (Jimerson et al., 1999). Family related factors are diverse. For example, family income has a great effect on pupils' performance. There is a relationship between low family income and failure at school. Many researchers have provided different explanations for why family income can influence the child's achievement. They say that poverty is associated with parental stress and depression which affect parents' ability to look after their children as they have to do (Mcloyd, 1990).

Packer et al. (1999) state that low income parents report a high level of frustration and aggravation in the way they treat their children and these children are more likely to have poor achievements at school. This view is also supported by both Duncan et al. (1998) who find that family income at early ages is very important in determining the educational attainments of the child.

Hickam et al. (1995) state that low-income families in Britain are less involved in their children's education compared with high income families who are engaged in the process of their children's education. That is to say low income families are usually occupied with how to get money and guarantee their daily basic needs instead of devoting time to catering for their children's needs. Kramer (2000) contends that poverty takes poor parents out of the homes for longer periods of time than parents who are more well- to- do. They usually do not show interest in being involved in their 17 children's education. This can be also related to the fact that most low-income parents are not educated or have a low level of education which does not help them to monitor their children's school endeavors. Scott-Jones (1984) says that poor families have an active role in their children's education. Others claim that it is not the family income that matters most in determining school performance but it is the parents' cultural values and the amount of importance they attribute to education. This is so because many families with low income are observed to give much importance to the education of their children. They are aware that education is the key element to develop their lives.

3.2.1 Family characteristics and school performance
Socioeconomic status and academic achievement

According to Ansalone (2004), the socioeconomic status (SES) of the family is usually associated with its children's success. It is found that in the USA children from high socioeconomic status are two and a half times more likely to continue their education beyond high school and six times more likely to enter college. In addition, research has shown that the higher the socioeconomic status of the family, the higher the school performance and attainment of the pupil. Children from low SES start school with lower cognitive achievement skills when compared to their middle class counterparts and this gap becomes bigger after each year of schooling.

Nevertheless, Ansalone (2004) argues that this relationship between the SES and academic achievement should not be taken to imply that children from high SES are born more intelligent that those children from low SES. Rather, it is likely that in more well-off families' children have more opportunities to be provided with more interesting and stimulating experiences which contribute in promoting their intellectual development. Additionally, the strategies used by families of high SES to

monitor their children's education are different from those used by low SES families. In a study conducted by Stevenson and Baker (1986) to examine the correlation between family SES and school achievement, it was found that mothers from high SES families were likely to use the strategies (visiting school, helping with homework, letter writing) which affect positively their children's academic achievement. The researchers conclude that high SES children perform better in school because their parents have advanced management skills and usually negotiate their children's success (Baker and Stevenson, 1986)

School environment
 School is the second most important socializing agent. It has a great impact on pupils' success and failure. Many researchers on the topic of school failure place the blame on the school itself. There is a link between school building and learning process. Earthman and Lemasters (1996) contend that students who are surrounded by a safe and modern environment experience a positive impact on their performance.

Ames (1992) points out that classroom environment encourages pupils either towards mastery or towards performance. Those who are directed towards mastery strive towards competence and failure provides them with valuable feedback and pushes them to try more to change their strategy. On the other hand, those who are oriented towards performance try to perform well. When pupils are directed towards mastery, they develop better learning strategies.

Research reveals that peer rejection has negative impacts on school attendance (De Rosier, Kupersmidth, and Patterson, 1994). Peer rejection can lead to anxiety which hinders students' retention of information and interferes with their concentration in the classroom. Harris (1998) claim that peer group have a more powerful effect than that of parents. Students who 25 have difficulties to establish themselves within a peer group are likely to have difficulties in school.

Dreyer and Dummy (1983) contend that if pupils confront learning problems and are excluded by the class group, their problems will be aggravated. In order to avoid rejection by others, these pupils may develop a negative attitude towards the teacher and the school subject. This may lead them to low achievement and possible failure.

Ryan (2000) finds that students' own satisfaction with school is increased when they are associated with friends who have a positive attitude towards school; whereas, it is decreased when associating with friends who have a negative attitude. The impact of peer relation on scholastic achievement is observed equally among both genders. There is no gender impact on the correlation between scholastic achievement and social functioning (Chen et al. 2003). Similarly, Fuligni et al. (2001) finds that there is no gender variation in the long-term impacts of peer orientation

3.2.2 Didactic causes of school failure

Inefficient teaching styles

Inadequate teaching styles are a major cause of learning problems and failure. Many teachers lack the necessary skills to teach basic school subjects. They use some methods and materials which do not suit pupils' learning difficulties. Bouwer and Van Neikerk (1991) contend that to understand pupils' poor scholastic attainment, it is important to address and establish the dynamics of the pupils' education situation as a whole. This can be done through analyzing the different components of education such as: the participation of the pupils in the lesson and the lesson content, which may cause the pupils learning difficulties. Bouwer and Van Neikerk (1991) also claim that a mere analysis of pupils' errors followed by an attempt to remedy the detected errors is not enough. A more dynamic approach is needed to analyze all potential deficiencies in the education situation

Deficiencies in the pupils' lesson participation
The degree of the pupils' involvement in the lesson is related to the level of their abilities, performance and interest in the content. Hallahan and Bryan (1981) contend that pupil's engagement in a lesson is a determinant factor in their mastery of some of the goal of that lesson. Hallahan and Bryan (1981) in their study found that inadequate pupil involvement in 33 a lesson may be detrimental to their mastery of some of the objectives of that particular lesson.

Inadequacies in lesson representation
 In their study, Bouwer and Niekerk (1991) point out that poor lesson presentation can lead to poor pupils' performance or even failure. The authors claim that if the teacher fails to transmit information effectively, this may disable some or all of the pupils. In addition, they say that poor performance is associated with some variables such as deficient concept formation, poorly developed schemata and a lack of problem solving skills. It is also found in this study that teachers may provoke feeling of reluctance, disapproval and disobedience in their pupils through particular actions in class which result in poor scholastic achievement by the pupils.

Classroom management and failure

Classroom management is of vital importance in teaching. It is the process by which teachers and schools create and maintain appropriate behavior of pupils inside the classroom. Pringle (1970) claims that poor discipline which leads to poor scholastic performance can be reduced if proper organizational skills are applied in classroom management. In his study, Montegomery (1990) finds out that fear of failure leads many pupils to behave in an inaccurate way and it is this fear which causes failure. The research has also shown that poor planning and ineffective instruction cause behavioral problems in the class, which in turn creates learning problems and failure. Weak classroom management is viewed as one of the principal causes of scholastic failure. The teacher's method of classroom management determines the classroom atmosphere. The teacher's ability to keep the class actively attentive to the lessons and engaged in classroom activities creates the suitable environment for effective learning.

4. Methodology
Measurement tools
The instrument used in this study consists of two questionnaires which are answered by pupils and teachers of English in Marrakech.

The questionnaire
Using a questionnaire may allow people to express views on issues about which they may not feel comfortable talking with an interviewer. In addition, the questionnaire's anonymity helps to get reliable large amounts of responses.

The questionnaire used in this paper aims at eliciting pupils' and teachers' perception of pupils' scholastic achievement. It also attempts to examine the difficulties which pupils encounter in learning English and the causes behind these difficulties.

Two questionnaires were designed, one for pupils and one for teachers. The teachers' questionnaire consists of 6 questions and that of the pupils consist of 7 questions. The questions range from yes/no questions to multiple choice questions. It also contains yes/ no, multiple choice and open-ended questions. The latter allow teachers to give more explanations

Procedure
The respondents were contacted in their respective classrooms and information about the purpose of the study was provided to them. After obtaining their consent, the questionnaire was handed out to them with request to complete it.

As for the teachers' questionnaire, it was distributed in four high schools in Marrakech: Ibn youssef, Az-zahra, Iben Abbad and Abi- Abas Sabti. The researcher met the teachers and explained the purpose of the study. In addition, it is worth- mentioning that a number of questionnaires were sent via Facebook to some teachers of English who work outside Marrakech. To examine

Participants
A total of 30 pupils and 20 teachers completed the questionnaires. The respondents were male and female. All the pupils who participated in the study are 2nd year baccalaureate pupils. They are studying English for the fourth year.

5. Presentation and analysis of the results
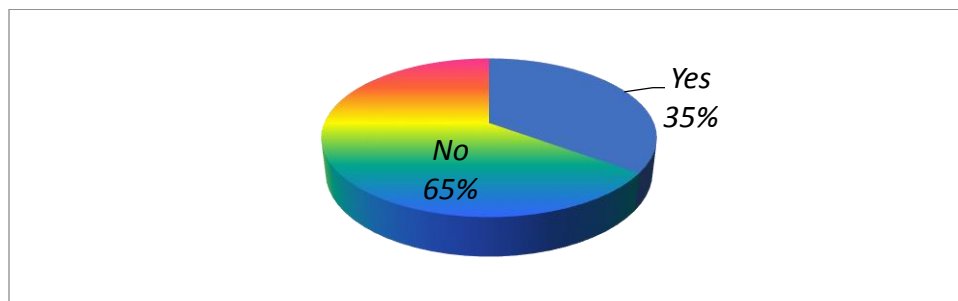*The teachers' questionnaire*

Question 1

Figure 1: students' motivation

The figure above shows that 35% of the respondents see that their pupils are motivated to learn English while 65% say that their pupils lack the motivation to learn the language. In addition, it is important to note that out of the 35% of the

respondents who say that their pupils are motivated, 25% say that most pupils who are motivated are beginners and that pupils who are in their last year in high school lose this motivation gradually.

Comment
It can be said that motivation is very important in the process of foreign language learning and in education in general. According to their teachers, Pupils' lack of motivation is likely to push them into failure. This result is similar to the one in the study of Dorney (2007) which was discussed in the theoretical part. Dorney (2007) claims that motivation is a leading factor in determining success or failure in many learning situations.

Question 2:
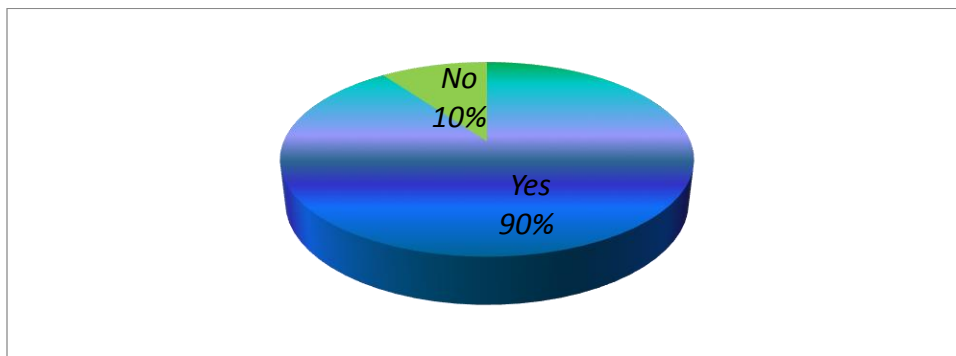
Figure 2: do students face difficulties in learning English?

Figure 2 shows that a high number of the respondents (90%) report that their pupils find difficulties in learning English. Yet, the kind of difficulties which pupils encounter differs from one pupil to another. This will be investigated in the third question.

Comment
As it was expected, most learners in Moroccan high schools, like the majority of Arabic speaking learners of English, find difficulties in learning English as it is claimed by Mukkatash (1983) in Section 2.6. These difficulties are due to a number of factors which were discussed in the same section. These factors include the lack of EFL learner's personal motivation, interference from Arabic, and teaching strategies
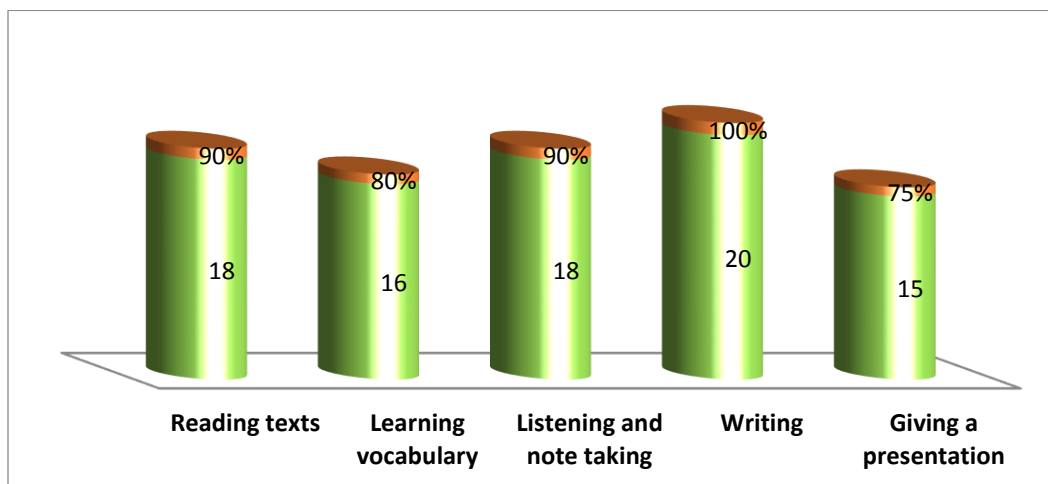
Question 3

Figure 3: types of difficulties which pupils encounter

The findings show that most of the teachers find that their pupils have difficulties in more than one skill because all the skills are interrelated.

Comment

What can be seen from this figure is that most pupils who fail in learning English have difficulties in most of the skills especially in writing as 100% of the respondents say that their pupils cannot write perfectly. As a teacher in a high school, I have noticed that many pupils in the baccalaureate examination leave the writing task unanswered. Yet, this does not mean that they do not have difficulties in other tasks such as reading comprehension and grammar. Indeed, Moroccan pupils find difficulties in reading, spelling, pronunciation, etc. This finding is supported by the studies mentioned earlier in this paper.
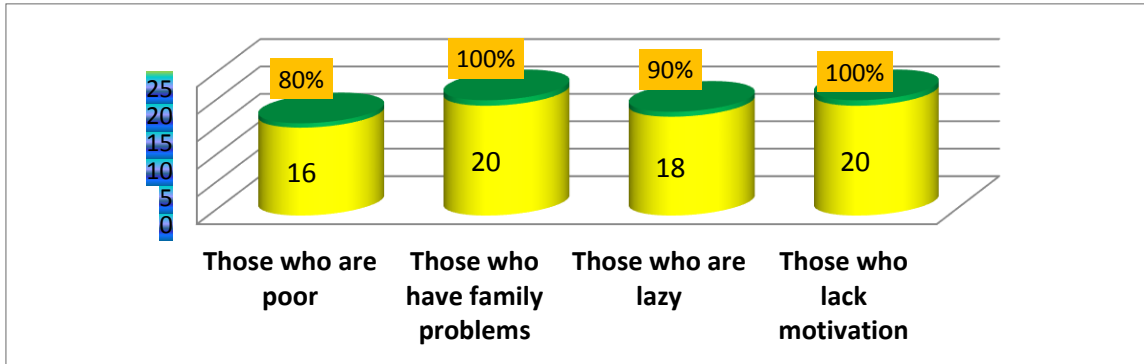
Question 4

Figure 4: which pupils are most likely to fail?

Again almost all the respondents tick more than one choice and this is manifested in the percentages I get. The results show that 80% of the respondents say that the pupils who come from poor social background are likely to fail their classes. This is in accordance with what was said in the second chapter where we explained the correlation between family background and pupils' achievement. In addition, all the respondents (100%) believe that pupils with family problems experience failure in their classes. The same percentage of respondents, 100%, reports that the pupils who fail in learning English lack the motivation inside the classroom. They are not interested in the language and show negative attitude towards it. Finally, some of the respondents 70% add other variables that characterize the pupils who are likely to fail their classes. These variables include those pupils who have problems with their peers, those who cannot attend classes regularly, those with discipline problems and those who live away from their parents

Comment

It can be concluded from the results above that all the factors which were discussed in the second chapter and which contribute to pupils' failure are found to have a great impact on pupils' definite achievement. These factors are related to the pupils themselves, to their families and to the school environment. This supports the hypotheses of this paper in which we assume that pupils' failure is due to the pupil, the family, the social status and the school.
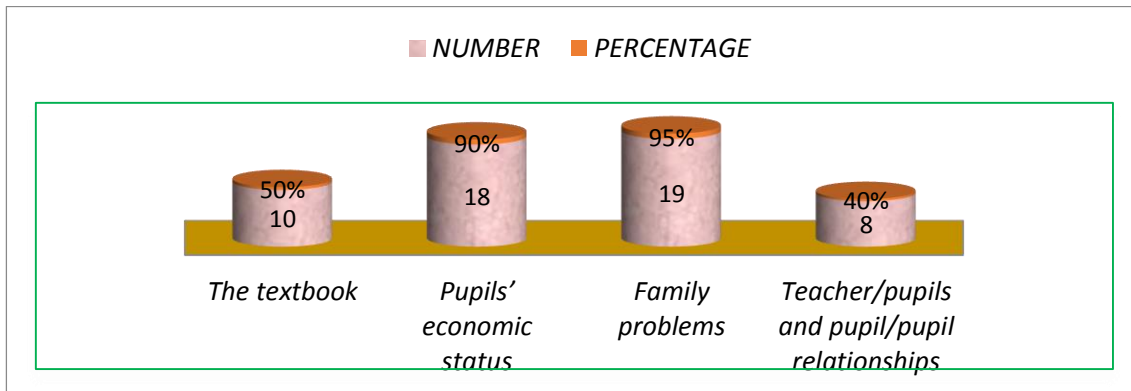
Question 5

Figure 5: causes of pupils' failure in learning English

It is also worth mentioning here that nearly all the respondents tick more than one cause. The table shows that 50% of the respondents attribute their pupils' failure to the textbook which does not cater for their needs. In addition, a great number of

respondents (95%) see that family problems are responsible for the failure of many pupils. Moreover, eighteen teachers see that pupils' economic status is also a determining factor of pupils' failure. Finally, eight teachers (40%) believe that the problems between teachers and pupils and between pupils' themselves affect pupils' achievement.

As for the space which is left for the respondents to add any other causes of pupils' failure, the findings show that 12 teachers say that the excessive interference of the mother tongue is also responsible for pupils' failure to learn the language. The use of Arabic in the classroom hinders pupils from learning the language.

Comment
As indicated by the data above, teachers believe that pupils' failure is due to a number of factors such as the textbook which does not cater for the different types of pupils' intelligence. They also state that family problems and family income play a vital role in the pupils' failure. This idea is in accordance with the studies which are discussed in the theoretical part. Finally, teachers also stress that the relationships between pupils and teachers can also affect pupils' performance inside the classroom

Question 6

The last question gives the respondents the chance to voice their views as to how to help pupils avoid failing at school.

Nearly all the teachers answered this question. The provided suggestions are presented in the below table

Pupils	Teachers	Parents
- Attend classes regularly. - Know the objectives of learning - Talk to their parents and teachers about the hindrances they face - Be motivated	- Communicate any change in school performance to parents. - Promote a tolerant and free anxiety school atmosphere - Vary their activities to accommodate varied learning styles, and intelligences. - Encourage pupils to participate in school activities. - Listening to pupils' concerns about family and school difficulties - Provide support for pupils who come from poor families. - Resort to extra curriculum activities.	- Take a genuine interest in their child's school life and attend school events. - Listen to their children's concerns about school. - Talk to children about the importance of education. - Work together with teachers to get their children's appropriate help.

Table 1: teachers' suggestions

The measures which to be taken in the hope of helping pupils avoid failing their classes are directly related to the actions of three key elements namely pupils, teachers and parents. Additionally, it must be stressed that that these three key elements have much bearing on the success or failure of pupils with varying degrees.

Comment
As indicated above, it seems that pupils' failure is much dependent upon a number of factors ranging from pupils to teachers to parents. Put differently, pupils are supposed to put objectives and work to achieve them. They have to be aware of the importance of education for their future life. In addition, pupils are required to communicate their problems to their teachers and parents so as to avoid the negative effects of these problems on their educational process.

Teachers are invited to offer psychological support for pupils and promote a tolerant and free anxiety atmosphere in the classroom. They are requested to encourage pupils to participate in the classroom by varying their activities to cater for all the needs. This will help pupils to be motivated. In addition, teachers are asked to inform the parents with any changes in the pupils' performance.

Similarly, parents are to be involved in their children's education. They should always be ready to listen to their children's concerns about school and offer them help. Moreover, parents should intervene when unsafe situations cause anxiety or school avoidance for their children.

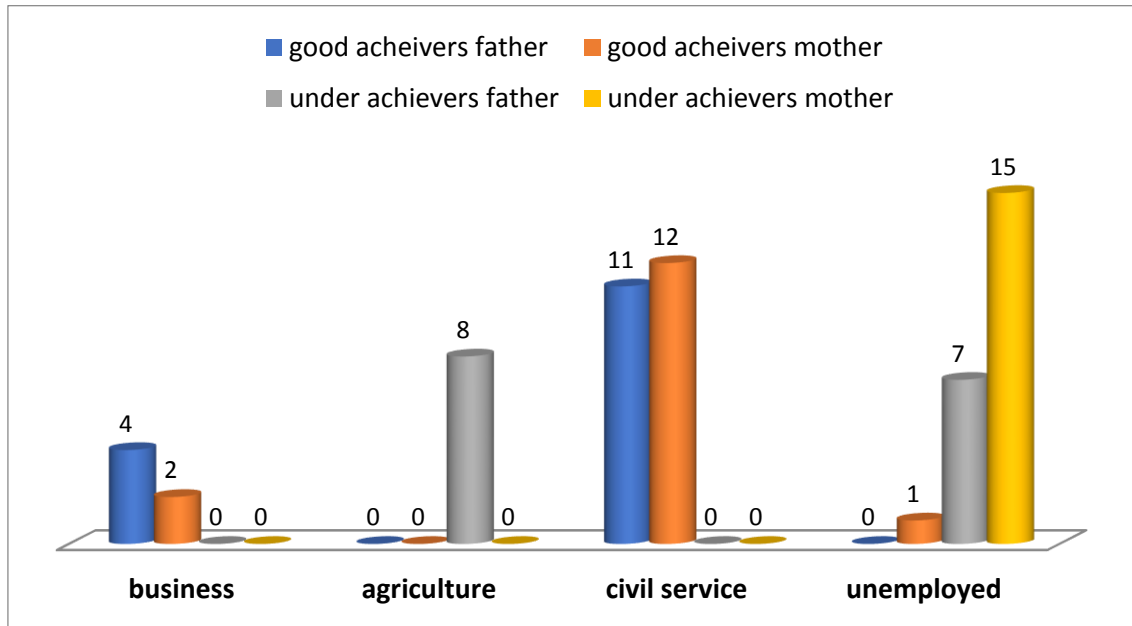### The pupils' questionnaire

Question 1

Figure 6: parental occupation

Good achievers
As the figure above indicates, 4 (26%) of the respondents say that their fathers work in business and 11 of them say their fathers are employees. With respect to mothers' occupation, 13% of the respondents report that their mothers work in business, 80% say they are employees and only 7% of them have mothers who are unemployed.

Underachievers
The data collected show that 8 of the respondents (54%) say that their fathers work in agriculture and the remaining ones (46%) have unemployed fathers. As for mothers' occupation, it is noticed that 100% of the respondents say that their mothers are unemployed.

Comment
As the statistics show, most of underachievers' parents have low income jobs, such as agriculture, as opposed to good achievers' parents. This shows that there is probably a relationship between family income and scholastic achievement. This is consonant with the idea discussed in the theoretical part (section 2.4.2) where it is stated by Analsone (2004) that the higher the socioeconomic status of the family, the higher the school attainment of the pupil.

Most of underachievers come from poor families who cannot afford the necessary learning materials which can enhance and facilitate their children's scholastic development. All in all, the results confirm the researchers' claims about the great impact of families' characteristics (father's occupation, mother's occupation and family income) on the attainment of children at school
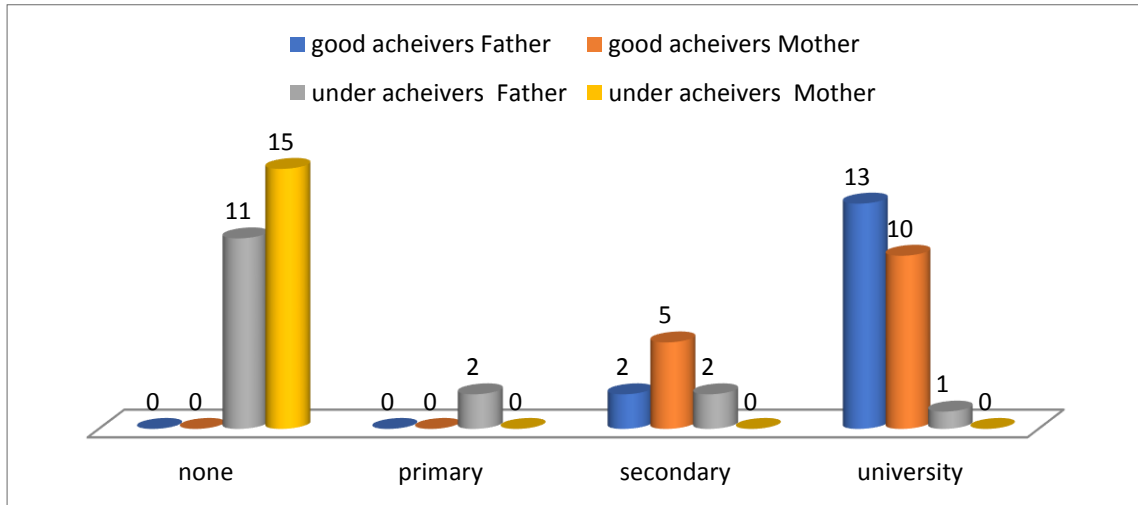
Question 2

Figure 7: parental level of education

Good achievers

The data above show that 13 of the respondents' fathers have a university level of education while 2 of them say that their fathers have a secondary level of education. As for mothers, 5 of the respondents report that their mothers' level of education is secondary while 10 of the respondents' mothers have a university level of education.

Underachievers

According to the data above, 11 of the respondents report that their fathers have no level of education while 4 of them say they have a primary level of education. Regarding mothers' education, all the respondents (100%) say that their mothers are uneducated.

Comment

It can be concluded that these pupils whose parents have a acceptable level of education are more likely to succeed in their education. Parents' education is among the factors leading to the success of children at school. This can be explained by the fact that educated parents can help their children with their homework. On the other hand, parents with low or no level of education may have fewer resources to help their child perform well at school. These parents do not have the ability to offer their children opportunities as tutors or computers.

From the data in Question 1 and Question 2, we can draw a relation between the educational level of parents and their economic status. Families of low SES have parents of lower education levels.
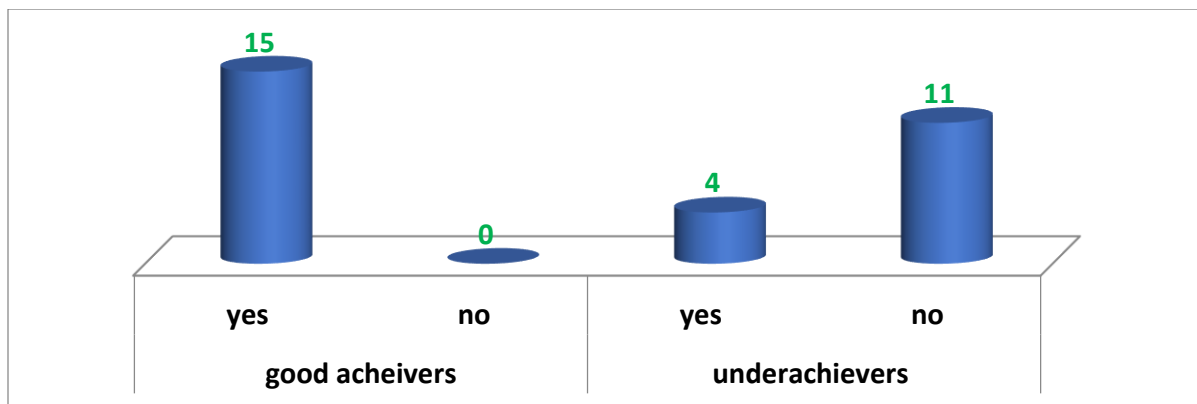
Question 3

Figure 8: Parental Involvement

Good achievers

As the figure indicates, all the respondents (100%) answer this question in the affirmative and report that their parents monitor and assist their education.

Underachievers

The figure above shows that only 4 of the respondents (26 %) say that their parents monitor their education while 10 of the respondents (74%) say that their parents are not involved in their studies. This low level of involvement can be explained by the fact that most of these respondents live far away from their parents.

Comment

It can be seen that parental involvement may have a positive impact on pupils' scholastic achievement. Most of good achievers have parents who care and show more interest in their children's education. Such a view is in conformity with the arguments discussed in the theoretical part (Section 2.4.1) where it is stated by Bakker et al. (2007) that the more involved parents are in their child's schooling the better pupils perform academically and reach a higher level of achievement in high schools.
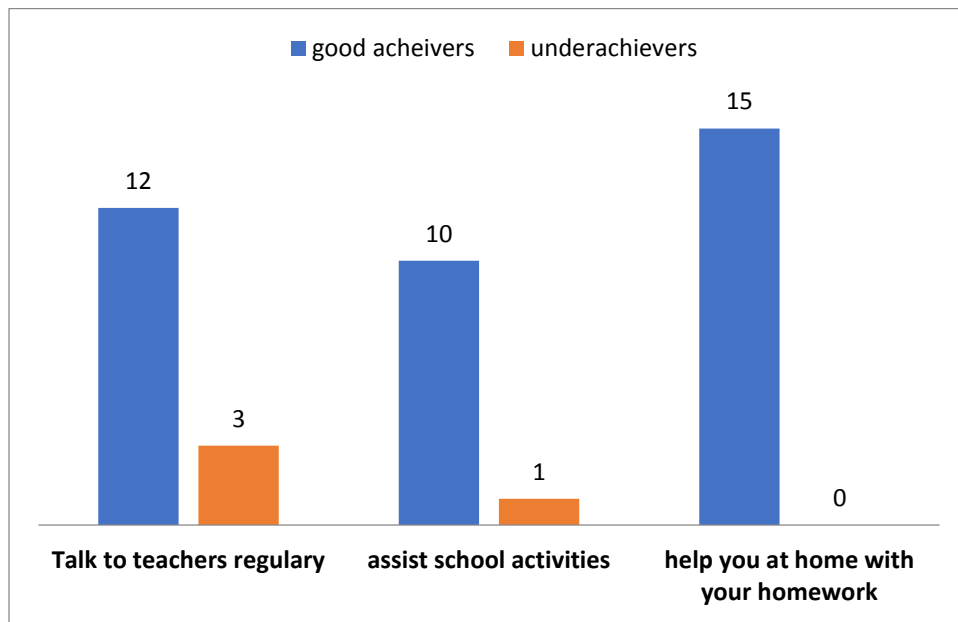
Question 4

Figure 9: forms of parental involvement

Good achievers

All the respondents choose more than one form. As indicated in the figure above, all the respondents (100%) choose the third choice; 12 of them (80%) choose the first and 10 (67%) choose the second one.

Underachievers

The figure shows that 3 of the respondents (20%) say that their parents talk to teachers regularly and no more than 6% of the respondents' parents assist school activities. This result is supported by the fact that only 4 of the respondents answer positively to the previous question: *do your parents monitor your education?*

Comment

As can be seen, most good achievers' parents show more interest in their children's educational life. This involvement ranges from assisting school activities, talking to teachers regularly and helping them at home. On the other hand, underachievers' parents are less involved in their children's education. These findings are in conformity with what is stated in Chapter 2. More involved parents build strong relationships with their children and show that they are interested in their children's academic success.
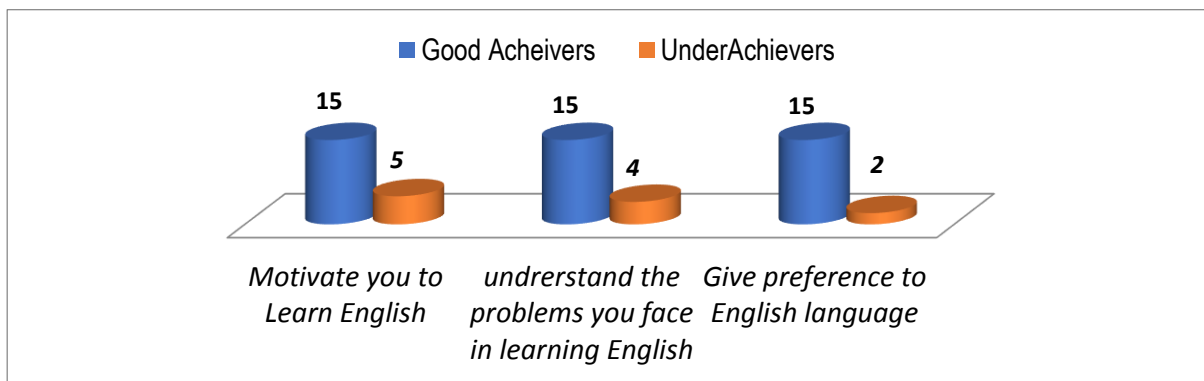
Question 5

Figure 10: parental attitudes towards the English language

Good achievers

The data collected show that all the respondents, without exception, report that their parents motivate them to learn English, understand the problems they encounter and give preference to the English language as well.

Underachievers

As indicated in the figure above, 5 of the respondents say that their parents motivate them to learn English, and 4 opt for the second choice, stating that their parents are aware of the difficulties they encounter in learning English. Only 2 of the respondents opt for the second choice saying that their parents give preference to English

Comment

Again the findings show that motivation is important for pupils' success in learning a foreign language. This view is supported by Gardner (1972), who claims that motivation can influence language learning outcomes independently from language aptitude. This view is supported with the idea discussed in Chapter 2 when Dornyei (2007) considers motivation as one of the main determinants of second/foreign language achievement.

Parents' motivation is also important in two respects. First it is comforting in the sense that learners feel that they are being taken care of by their parents. Second, the parents who reward their children they give value to their education. Briefly put, parents must understand and believe in the importance of English language learning.When children realize that their parents do not think learning English is important, they will be less likely to approach the subject with positive attitude. Phrased differently, when parents motivate their children either materialistically or verbally, they contribute to their success. The learners who are motivated or those who receive support from parents or teachers to enhance their motivation perceive themselves to be more competent and have more interest in learning.
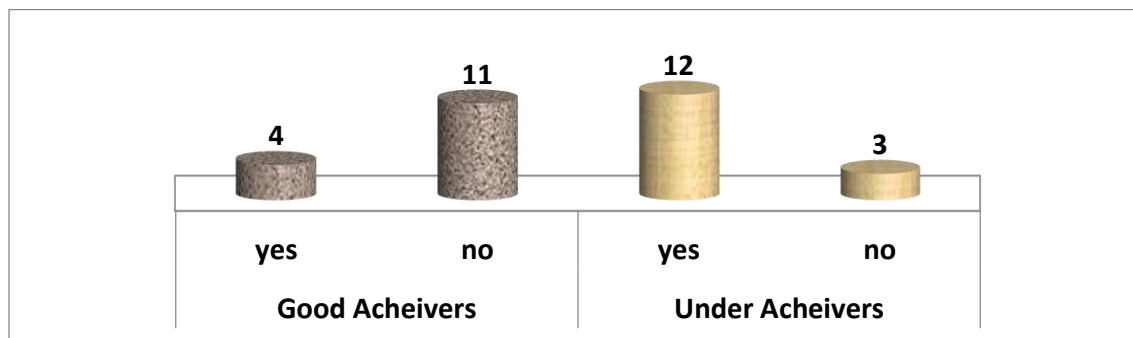
Question 6

Figure 11: teachers 'use of Arabic inside the classroom

Good achievers

As the figure above indicates, 11 of the respondents report that their teachers do not use Arabic to explain the lesson while No more than 4 respondents answer in the affirmative stating that their teachers use Arabic inside the classroom.

Underachievers

The data collected show that a high number of respondents answer in the affirmative as opposed to a small number of respondents who answer in the negative. In percentage terms, 80% say that their teachers use Arabic while teaching them English while 20% report that their teachers do not use Arabic inside the classroom.

Comment

Teachers' use of Arabic inside EFL classrooms is one of the important issues related to the problems Arab EFL learners face. As the results show, the majority of respondents agree that teachers have the tendency to use Arabic inside EFL classroom. Such a view is in accordance with what is said by Al.Nofaie (2010) in section 2.6.6 as he maintains that "the use of Arabic was an unavoidable phenomenon. The teachers were aware of the disadvantages of the excessive use of Arabic, as their use of Arabic depended on their students' specific needs most of the time. They preferred to use it with beginners and low achieving students to help them understand the new language" (Al.Nofaie, 2010: 77)
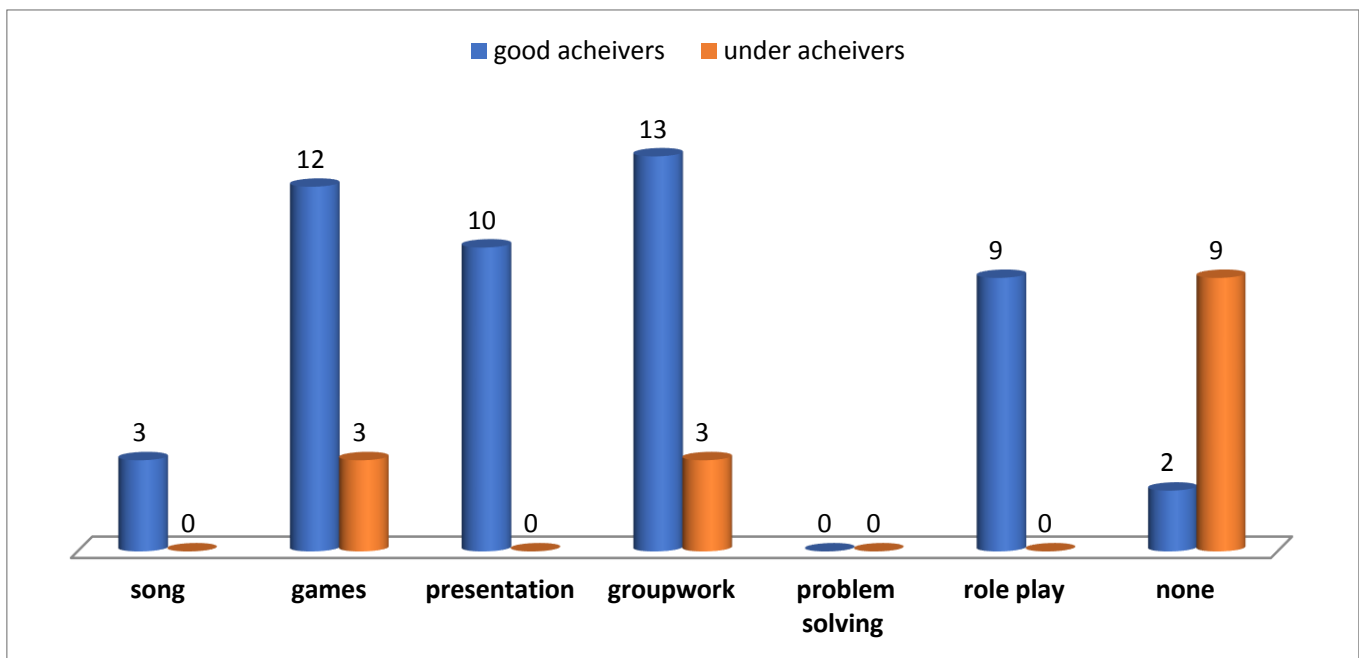
Question 7

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Figure 12: teachers' activities inside the classroom

Good achievers

As indicated in the above figure, most of respondents tick more than one choice. The responses vary from songs (3 respondents), games (12), presentations (10), group work (13 respondents) to role play (9 respondents). Whereas 2 of the respondents say that their teachers do not make use of any of the activities provided.

Underachievers

As for this group, the data show that the majority (60%) report that their teachers do not use any extra activities inside the classroom, 20% say their teachers use songs and the same percentage tick the fourth choice stating that their teachers use group work in teaching them English.

Comment

It is evident that pupils differ a lot in their motivation, learning styles, multiple intelligences, interests and background. Catering for learners' different needs is therefore an important factor in their success.

As indicated by the data above, teachers use a variety of activities believing that these are responsive while most of underachievers are not provided opportunities to engage actively in activities which require higher thinking or application of language skills. This can be accounted for by the fact that many teachers do not attempt to use extra activities with these pupils believing that they are unable to be engaged in such activities. This value judgment may sabotage the chance of these pupils to improve their achievement.

The teachers who make use of a variety of activities inside the classroom are aware of the importance of catering for the multiple intelligence of pupils in achieving well. This idea is in accordance with what is said in Section 2.3.2 in which several researches such as those of Dilek Sezer (2008) and Baluch (2002) emphasize the impact of catering for pupils' multiple Intelligence on pupils' success, knowledge and attitude. The pupils whose intelligence types are not catered for in the activities used at school cannot be able to improve their brilliant sides and are likely to fail.

Therefore, respecting and involving pupils' different needs is a key element in their success. Both school and teachers need to be committed to improving the talent of individual learners by providing them with challenging learning opportunities.

6. Conclusion
The aim of the present study was to record the views of teachers and pupils in relation to possible causes that lead learners to failure at school and to identify the difficulties EFL learners encounter in learning English. Our research findings indicated that several research studies have associated school performance with socioeconomic status. It was found that most low achievers come from poor background and lack the opportunities which are provided for pupils who come from advantaged families.

Regarding teachers' views on the responsibility of the family context for low school performance, there has been a dominant perception that home environment largely determines school performance by affecting pupils' motivation, values, and attitudes towards education and learning. Parents with a personal, educated background have a much easier time preparing their children for school compared to parents lacking this background Social status and educational background of parents serve as important factors, influencing the performance of children at school. It has also been identified that low-income families are not involved in their children's education, a fact which critically affects children's personality and skills. Findings in the present study are in line with previous research, pointing out that teachers allocate greater importance to family context and student personality, compared to the structure of the education system, in determining student failure or success.

This part also aims at   identifying the problems encountered by Moroccan EFL learners focusing on the many problems in English language learning and the reasons that lie behind these problems. The findings demonstrate that Moroccan EFL learners encounter many serious problems in the four language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. It also concludes that these problems can be attributed to a number of factors such as lack of parental involvement, the use of Arabic as their formal language of communication, the lack of the EFL learners' personal motivation, and the teachers' indifference to the different needs of the pupils.

6.1 Recommendation
Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations can be made in order to avoid such difficulties and improve pupils' performance.
1. Teachers and parents should motivate pupils to acquire a confidence whenever they make mistakes in language classrooms
2. Parents should try to encourage their children to actively be involved in learning the English language at home and schools.
3. Students should be encouraged to practice English language both inside and outside classrooms.
4. The curriculum designers should cater for the learners' multiple intelligence in language learning before designing the curriculum.
5. Special support should be provided for pupils who come from poor families, who have family problems, and are who rejected by their peers.

6.2 Limitations of the study
Like any other research, there are some unavoidable limitations. First, the research was conducted only on a small size of pupils and teachers. It is true that the number of participants is fairly representative, yet these results cannot be generalized beyond this sample. Second, since the pupils had to fill in the questionnaire in the presence of the teacher, this might be a factor that affected the results of the study because the respondents were usually under the pressure from the teacher's

presence. Third, the questionnaires were addressed only to the pupils and teachers. It would have been better if parents also took part in this research because their perception of school failure would be of great help. Last but not least, because the analysis of the data collected was conducted by the researcher, herself, certain degree of subjectivity can be found.

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