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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to address the critical role that parents play in helping their children expand their vocabulary and learn English. Language skills are essential for children’s interpersonal ability. This qualitative study examined how parents support vocabulary development through various home-based and external strategies. Semi-structured interviews and observation were employed with fourteen parent-child pairs from the Gasha Educational Community. They were selected for their active language learning engagement in formal and informal settings. The findings revealed that parents enhance vocabulary acquisition by providing access to English-language materials, modeling spoken language, and fostering visually stimulating environments. The study also emphasized recognizing a child’s developmental stage and creating a language-rich environment. While many parents were actively engaged, the findings also suggest a possible gap in awareness or use of effective strategies among some, which may contribute to varying levels of language growth. However, examining the causes or extent of this variability falls beyond the scope of the current study and could be a valuable direction for future research.

Keywords: Children; Language; Parental Influence; Vocabulary, Gasha Educational Community

Children possess an exceptional capacity for language acquisition throughout early childhood, making this the optimal period to introduce English. Children benefit from receiving education both from educators and their parents. The role of parents in facilitating children’s language development is essential. Parents significantly affect children’s English vocabulary development, and proficient speaking abilities in early infancy provide a robust basis for future linguistic capabilities. The degree to which parents are involved in their children’s various academic pursuits and the possible consequences of this involvement on the children’s educational development and achievement are of growing importance to researchers and educators.

Several research projects have supported the idea that parental participation in their children’s education has an impact on the student’s academic achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001). According to Boonk et al. (2018), there are two types of parental involvement: home-based and school-based. Parental home-based engagement primarily consists of

monitoring and helping with homework, overseeing children's learning activities, and having conversations with children about school-related issues at home. On the other hand, parental school-based participation refers to the parental behaviors at their children's schools, such as helping at school events or attending teacher-parent conferences. Such disparities in the definitions of the various forms of parental participation make it challenging to access the body of information in this area and may lead to inconsistencies in the study's conclusions (Boonk et al., 2018). The term 'parental involvement' refers to parental involvement in their children's education. From an educational standpoint, parents must actively and consistently participate in their children's education. It is conventional wisdom that the more parents are dedicated to their children's education, the more successful the children will be in the long run (Oranga et al., 2023). Additionally, motivating students to study is crucial. An individual experiences a phenomenon known as interest in learning when they interact with their environment (Sari, 2023).

Parents play a critical role in shaping their children's language development, particularly in expanding vocabulary. Vocabulary, consisting of words and expressions used in everyday communication, is foundational to effective speaking and comprehension. Although difficult to modify once developed, a strong command of vocabulary enables children to express themselves clearly in daily interactions. Through strategies such as reading aloud, engaging in conversations, and introducing new words in context, parents actively contribute to building their children's vocabulary and stimulating their curiosity about language.

Parents are the primary educators in the home and the primary collaborators in ensuring that children's education in early childhood institutions is successful. Several studies emphasize the varying forms and perceptions of parental involvement in children's education. For instance, Hussain et al. (2018) investigated secondary students' perceptions of home-based and school-based parental involvement in Pakistan. Their findings revealed that students perceived home-based involvement, such as helping with homework, discussing school matters, and encouraging learning at home, as significantly higher than school-based involvement, which included attending meetings or volunteering in school activities. Notably, the study found no significant gender differences in these perceptions, but a positive correlation existed between the two forms of involvement. These findings underscore the tendency of parents to be more active in informal, home-centered support rather than in formal school settings. This aligns with broader literature suggesting that while parental engagement at home plays a critical role in student success, greater effort is needed to strengthen school–parent partnerships (e.g., Boonk et al., 2018; Castro et al.,

2015). Given the integration and holistic nature of early childhood education programs, the shared objectives of the home and school can foster a consistent and healthy learning environment through parental engagement in schools.

This research aims to explore the role of parents in supporting their children's English language development, with a particular focus on vocabulary acquisition, learning strategies, and home-based engagement. However, many parents may not fully understand how to encourage their children to expand their vocabulary in English. This study may enhance the local school of Gasha, located in Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, by fostering a collective awareness of the significance of English education and the involvement of parents in this regard. The findings of this study may serve as a foundation for further research and the enhancement of educational programs aimed at improving children's English vocabulary across diverse situations.

In this study, the following are the research questions that are being attempted to be addressed.

1. What types of involvement do parents have in their children's English learning efforts inside and outside of school?
2. What specific activities do parents engage in to support their children's acquisition of new English vocabulary?
3. What patterns or regularities characterize parental support for English learning in this community?

Review of the Literature

This section focuses on previous studies demonstrating the significant influence of parents' active involvement in their children's academic pursuits on their academic success and cognitive development in learning English vocabulary. Many studies support the assumption that their children do better in school when parents are involved. Recent research underscores that fostering learner autonomy and encouraging self-directed learning are crucial for children's language development, complementing formal schooling and parental support. For instance, Teymouri (2024) highlights that mobile-assisted vocabulary learning, which promotes learner autonomy, significantly enhances vocabulary retention and motivation among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Learner autonomy is the ability of pupils to take charge of their learning. This is commonly encouraged by parents while children are young (Little, 2003).

This study specifically investigates the methods Kurdish parents use to foster vocabulary development and autonomy in their children within educational environments.

By focusing on this cultural context, it aims to provide insights into effective parenting strategies that enhance language acquisition.

The Significance of Engaging Parents

Parental involvement is widely acknowledged as a key factor in children's educational success. According to Reynolds (1992), when parents actively participate in their children's learning, academic achievement improves significantly: "The most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family can become involved in their children's education at school and in the home" (p. 441). Supporting this perspective, Hou (2014) also found that children whose parents took an active role in their language learning through reading, reviewing vocabulary, and engaging in educational activities demonstrated stronger language development and better school performance compared to peers with less parental involvement. The results unexpectedly cast doubt on the widely held idea that parental participation directly correlates with children's academic success. This study indicated that children's demographics and features mediate parental engagement indicators, influencing children's academic achievement (e.g., Cross et al., 2019; Wei et al., 2022)

Parental involvement plays a vital role in shaping children's academic outcomes, particularly in language learning. A study by Xiong et al. (2021) examined various forms of parental engagement, including regular communication between parents and teachers about children's academic development. The researchers found that such involvement had a positive impact on students' performance in Chinese, English, and mathematics. Similarly, Reynolds (1992) emphasized that the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement is not socioeconomic background, but the degree of family involvement both at school and at home. Hou (2014) supported these findings, showing that children whose parents actively engaged in their language learning through vocabulary review, reading, and educational games tended to outperform their peers academically.

While these studies affirm the positive role of parental engagement, some research highlights barriers that may limit parents' ability to support their children effectively, such as language proficiency, limited time, or lack of awareness of learning strategies. Nevertheless, the consistent pattern in the literature suggests that even modest, regular parental involvement can have meaningful benefits. The current study builds on this understanding by exploring how parents in a specific educational community contribute to their children's English vocabulary development both inside and outside the classroom.

Extensive educational research has highlighted the critical role that parents play in

their children's education, emphasizing the value of their active engagement in the learning process (Kimu, 2012; Musengamana, 2023). However, Musengamana (2023) pointed out that parental participation is a very basic and complicated topic that encompasses many distinct elements and indicators, all of which may have varying degrees of impact on adolescents' academic performance and cognitive development.

Methods for Engaging Parents

The Foundation: Relations Between the Participation of Parents and the Achievement of Students in School

One of the most basic truths that has emerged from decades of study on education is that parents are not just viewers of their children's academic journey; rather, they are active builders of their children's educational achievement. This is the beginning of the tale of parental participation in education. This story of impact is being played out in classrooms and communities all over the globe, where the presence or lack of parental participation produces unique routes for the accomplishment of students. To comprehend this narrative, it is necessary to investigate how parental involvement functions as both a stimulant and a supporter of academic advancement.

This version of events is supported by evidence that is both convincing and consistent. Castro et al. (2015), in their meta-analysis, identified a strong causal relationship that challenges the notion of parental engagement as merely supplemental. By synthesizing findings from multiple studies, they demonstrated that parental involvement is a significant predictor of academic performance. Their analysis suggests that engaged parents do not simply respond to their children's success, but actively help shape the conditions that make such success possible.

The importance of this fundamental knowledge increases when we take into account specific learning areas. The narrative continues with Melanium et al. (2023), whose research on English language acquisition in a primary school context demonstrates how parental participation influences topic mastery in ways that extend beyond conventional academic assistance. According to their research, there is a complex relationship between family support and specialized learning outcomes, and the positive correlation between parental engagement and English learning achievement reflects a deeper reality: parental involvement changes to meet the particular demands of various academic disciplines.

Kim (2002) explored the relationship between parental involvement and children's educational achievement within Korean American families. Using data from 209 children (ages 12–14) and their parents, the research examines the extent and nature of parental

involvement across different domains. The findings reveal that Korean American parents demonstrate a notably high level of home-based involvement but comparatively lower levels of school-based engagement. Moreover, parental education and English proficiency significantly influence both the degree of involvement and children's academic outcomes. The study concludes that Korean American parental involvement reflects both traditional cultural values and varying degrees of adaptation to the host society, resulting in a unique pattern of influence on children's academic achievement.

The Power of Parental Expectations and Academic Socialization

High parental expectations contribute not only motivational sparks but also academic momentum. Feng et al. (2019) examined whether students' autonomous motivation mediates the relationship between adult support (from parents and teachers) and homework effort. Using data from 666 Chinese middle school students, structural equation modeling showed that both parental and teacher support positively influenced math homework effort, with autonomous motivation acting as a mediator. The findings highlight the significant role of adult support and student motivation in promoting homework engagement. Complementing this, in their meta-analysis, Hill and Tyson (2009) identified "academic socialization" (e.g., communicating future goals, selecting rigorous coursework) as the most impactful form of involvement during middle school years, more so than attending school events (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Together, these studies reveal that when parents set aspirational goals and support self-directed learning, students thrive more than when support is merely task-focused.

Parental Educational Background and Home Learning Environment

Although higher parental education often correlates with richer home-learning environments and confidence in academic support, engagement strategies from all educational backgrounds matter. Tamis-LeMonda et al. (2017) demonstrated that when mothers of toddlers engaged in book-reading, conversation, and provided developmentally appropriate materials, their children's cognitive outcomes were notably stronger by fifth grade, even when parents faced stressors like single parenting or economic hardship. This illustrates that the *quality* of interaction, not simply parents' credentials, underpins long-term cognitive growth.

Homework and Emotional Dynamics: Unpacking the Challenges

While parental homework involvement can be beneficial, it's not without emotional complexities. Gao et al. (2025), in an in-situ study of Chinese families, documented frequent emotion-laden conflicts during homework sessions, particularly when parents lacked content knowledge or offered ambiguous praise. They concluded that it is critical to

support parents in managing stress and nurturing autonomy to avoid undermining learning environments (Gao et al., 2025). This research underscores that involvement quality must be guided to prevent unintended negative effects on student motivation and family well-being. Building on the idea that parental engagement shapes academic outcomes in multifaceted ways, Wei et al. (2022) examined how specific forms of parental support, particularly homework help and academic socialization, affect students' academic adjustment, highlighting that the impact varies depending on the child's developmental stage.

Methodology

Conceptual Framework

This research is based on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and ideas from constructivist theory. It has been influenced by thinkers such as Piaget and Bruner, and complements Vygotsky's ideas by suggesting that learners actively construct knowledge based on experiences, rather than passively receiving information. In this view, learning is most effective when it is meaningful, contextualized, and interactive, aligning well with home-based support where parents personalize learning to their child's needs and cultural background.

These theories were chosen because they offer a strong conceptual foundation for understanding how parent-child interactions can shape language development and academic achievement, particularly in the early years. They also highlight the importance of considering not just the cognitive skills of the child, but also the social, emotional, and cultural resources that families bring to the learning process. By framing the study within these perspectives, we can better interpret parental involvement not as a set of isolated behaviors but as part of a dynamic system of guided participation and co-construction of knowledge.

Purpose of the Study

This exploratory research project sought to gather information on Kurdish parents' supplementary outsourcing practices regarding their children's English language acquisition through one-on-one interviews. The main goal of exploratory research is to learn more about an issue or subject that is not precisely defined or understood. Its primary goal is to investigate a phenomenon to find trends, theories, or concepts that may be investigated in later, more methodical stages of the study.

Participants

The study involved 14 Kurdish parents whose children are currently enrolled in primary and secondary school at the Gasha Educational Community in Sulaimani, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. These participants were purposefully selected to provide rich insights into parental involvement within the specific cultural and linguistic context of the Kurdish community. Focusing on this group allowed the research to explore how cultural values, language, and community dynamics shape parents' roles in supporting their children's language proficiency and academic development.

Participants were recruited through community centers and local schools that are part of the Gasha Educational Community, which serves Kurdish families. The researchers collaborated with community leaders and educators to identify and invite parents who met the inclusion criteria, namely, being a parent or primary caregiver of a school-age child and being actively involved or interested in their child's education. This recruitment strategy ensured that participants were both accessible and representative of engaged parents within the community.

Data Collection

Initially, potential parent participants were identified and selected based on the following criteria: being Kurdish parents of children actively engaged in English language learning, residing within the Gasha Educational Community, and demonstrating willingness to participate in a one-on-one interview. Following the selection of participants, rapport was established to cultivate a trusting and open environment, promoting candid and comprehensive responses.

The 14 parents selected for the study participated in semi-structured one-on-one interviews. This interview format was employed to provide a balance between guided questioning and the flexibility to explore participants' perspectives in depth, thereby facilitating a comprehensive understanding of their supplementary outsourcing practices related to their children's English language acquisition. According to Khatun and Haque (2024), the researcher serves as the primary instrument in qualitative research, with their subjectivity and biases influencing data collection and analysis. A qualitative descriptive study generates descriptive data, including verbal expressions and observable behaviors of the subject. Qualitative research is a methodology that prioritizes an in-depth comprehension of a topic above the pursuit of generalizable findings.

The interviews were recorded with the participant's agreement to ensure accurate data collection. The researchers, who are also the authors of this study, conducted all

interviews to maintain consistency in data collection. The researchers had prior contact with some participants through community networks, which facilitated recruitment but was managed to minimize bias. The recorded content was transcribed from the Kurdish language into English for further study, and the transcriptions were subsequently analyzed to discern patterns, topics, and insights pertinent to the study subjects conducted by the researchers.

Data Analysis

The narratives collected via one-on-one interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, which allowed for the transformation of the stories into overarching themes. The process of theme analysis involves a variety of rigorous techniques that are executed to discover, investigate, and display patterns in qualitative data. The narrative data in this study were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. The researcher's active participation in the coding and theme development process is emphasized by reflexive thematic analysis, which also emphasizes that themes are developed based on the researcher's theoretical perspective, research questions, and interactions with the data rather than just "emerging" from it.

The transcripts were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase reflexive thematic analysis. This method emphasizes the researchers' active role in interpreting the data through the lens of the study's theoretical framework and research questions.

Using an inductive approach, codes were generated directly from participants' words rather than predefined categories. The researchers initially coded the data independently and then engaged in collaborative discussions to review, refine, and group codes into broader themes that captured key concepts and participant experiences. This iterative and reflective process ensured that final themes were comprehensive, grounded, and representative.

The analysis drew on five themes derived from the qualitative interviews using Braun and Clarke's (2006) Reflexive Thematic Analysis yielded the following themes:

Theme 1: Resource-Based Support for English Learning

Focuses on the availability and use of materials, tools, and parental support for English language acquisition.

Theme 2: Perceptions of Language Progress

Captures how learners and parents assess improvements and milestones in English proficiency.

Theme 3: Peer and Family Influence on Learning

Explores how interactions with siblings, classmates, and other family members shape learning experiences.

Theme 4: Community and Cooperation

Highlights the role of educational communities, support networks, and collective efforts in language learning.

Theme 5: Perceived Challenges and Limitations

Addresses the obstacles faced by learners and their families, including time, resources, and motivational barriers.

Findings

This section presents the findings of the five themes, including excerpts from the interview data. The raw interview data is available in the appendix.

Theme 1: Resource-Based Support for English Learning

Theme 1 explored parental perspectives on supplementing educational resources. Many parents emphasized providing their children with English books, enrolling them in private lessons, or supporting English media consumption. This resource-based approach reflects an investment in educational scaffolding beyond the classroom.

Almost all parents in the study emphasized the importance of supplementing their children's English learning with additional resources at home. Their responses revealed a shared belief that providing books, exposure to media, and even private tutoring could significantly support their children's language development.

Several parents specifically mentioned reading materials as central to their strategy. One parent explained, “We buy her English books to read because she enjoys reading and is interested in watching English movies with subtitles,” highlighting how they align resources with the child’s interests. Another noted, “We try to buy her suitable teen books she will benefit from with her reading and spelling of the words,” suggesting a thoughtful consideration of age-appropriate content and linguistic benefit.

In some households, older siblings played a role, especially when the younger child was not yet independently interested in reading. As one parent shared, “Because she is young, her sister tries to teach her. Maybe when she grows up, she will want to read more, but not now.”

A few parents linked the need for resources to educational transitions or disruptions. One remarked, “This is his first year in an English school so we get him books to read and enroll him in summer private lessons,” while another mentioned the impact of pandemic-

related school closures: “We have been trying to compensate for the lack of lessons in 2020 and have enrolled her in a private school.”

Interestingly, while most parents endorsed additional resources, a minority expressed that their child didn’t need them. One parent stated, “He doesn’t need any resources because he has studied in an all-English school before, and he also doesn’t want to read any books that are not school-assigned.” Another reflected a more relaxed stance: “Our daughter doesn’t need external resources. She is doing alright without anything outside of the school materials.”

Despite these few exceptions, the overall pattern points to a strong parental commitment to enriching their children’s English language environment through books, media, tutoring, and family support. These efforts reflect not only educational aspirations but also a willingness to adapt to each child’s needs, interests, and stage of development.

Many parents (12 out of 14 participants) believed that enrolling their children in an English-speaking private school was a sufficient means of supporting their mastery of the English language. As one parent noted, “We chose this school because we thought speaking English every day would naturally make them fluent.” However, a minority (three out of 14) assumed that watching English-language movies was the most suitable way to improve fluency. One parent explained, “My son learns a lot just by watching cartoons in English; it helps him pick up words and pronunciation.” The use of active listening during the interviews enabled richer, more detailed responses, uncovering how parents tailor their strategies to their children’s interests and needs.

Theme 2: Perceptions of Language Progress

Theme 2 explored parental perceptions of children’s English vocabulary development. Parents reported perceived improvements in their children’s vocabulary and fluency, often attributed to regular practice, private tutoring, or sibling interaction. They assessed progress through everyday conversations and academic performance.

Parents generally expressed a positive view of their children’s English vocabulary growth, attributing improvement to a mix of formal instruction, home support, and informal learning environments.

A recurring theme was the impact of private lessons and home tutoring. Several parents reported that structured learning had significantly boosted their children’s vocabulary. One parent shared, “She has been improving greatly because she gets constant private lessons and her sister helps her with challenging subjects,” while another observed, “She benefits from the private classes she gets in the summers, which makes learning and

improving her English a lot easier.” These comments reflect a strong belief in the value of external academic support, often reinforced by familial involvement.

In other households, home engagement and exposure to English media were seen as key contributors. One parent noted, “He has been doing great because he watches YouTube videos and speaks in English with his friends,” while another emphasized their child's self-motivation: “We don’t help him out—he learns more from movies, books, and online games.” These examples suggest that some children are acquiring vocabulary through informal, self-directed means, supported by digital and social environments.

A few parents highlighted peer or sibling interaction as particularly beneficial. As one parent put it, “She has improved a great deal because she uses English daily with her sister. Also, she can study with her and ask her questions.” Another mentioned, “She begins using [new words] with her friends when they are talking on the phone,” showing how children actively apply new vocabulary in their social lives.

While most comments were positive, a few parents acknowledged gradual or limited progress due to age or background. One noted, “Because of her young age, we try not to make it hard for her since she hasn’t been to kindergarten. However, she is improving slowly.” This response reflects an awareness of developmental stages and a more patient approach to vocabulary acquisition.

Overall, parents perceived noticeable and ongoing vocabulary growth in their children, often crediting this to a combination of structured learning, digital exposure, sibling support, and peer interaction. Their observations suggest that children are acquiring and using new words in both academic and informal contexts, which points to a dynamic and multi-faceted learning process.

Theme 3: Peer and Family Influence on Learning

Theme 3 explored children’s use of English at home and examined the balancing of language between family and peer support from siblings, especially those fluent in English, emerged as a key factor. Some children practiced English with older siblings or cousins, demonstrating the importance of immediate social networks in language acquisition. Most households maintain Kurdish as the dominant language, with English used selectively. A few families used English more frequently, often due to parents’ backgrounds or extended stays in English-speaking countries.

When asked whether their children speak English at home, most parents indicated that Kurdish remains the dominant language for family communication. However, many children do use English selectively, particularly with siblings or peers, reflecting a bilingual

environment shaped by both family and school contexts.

The most common pattern reported was the use of Kurdish with parents and English with siblings. One parent shared, “With her mother and me, she only speaks Kurdish, but she speaks English with her sisters. One of her sisters lives in the UK, and the other one is an English teacher.” Another explained, “He usually speaks Kurdish with his father and me, but sometimes uses English while talking with his siblings or his friends.” These examples suggest that children compartmentalize their language use depending on the conversational partner and context.

Several parents noted that their children use English strategically, sometimes even playfully. For instance, one parent commented, “She only uses English to talk to her sister, but when she is talking to us, she uses Kurdish. Sometimes she speaks in English so that we don’t understand what she is saying.” Another observed that English occasionally appears intermixed with Kurdish: “She speaks Kurdish with her family and uses English when speaking with her friends. Sometimes she uses some English words in between the Kurdish ones.”

A few children were described as more fluent in English than Kurdish, especially if they had studied in English-speaking environments. One parent noted, “Yes, he can only communicate in English properly and finds it difficult to use Kurdish. When he doesn’t know a word in Kurdish, he says it in English.”

In rare cases, English was the primary household language. One parent shared, “At home, we only communicate in English. We speak English as the main language in our house, either with the children or with each other.”

However, in many families, English is not used at all in everyday home life. One parent explained, “She only speaks Kurdish at home. She finds it difficult to use English in a normal environment, such as home.” Another noted a cultural consideration: “We only use Kurdish to talk. It is not like he can’t use English to communicate; it’s more like his father would not fully understand him.”

In summary, while Kurdish remains the main language of home communication, many children navigate bilingual spaces by using English with siblings, peers, or selectively in mixed-language conversations. These findings highlight how family structure, exposure, and comfort levels with English influence its use at home, reinforcing the importance of both familial and social environments in language development.

Theme 4: Community and Cooperation

Theme 4 explored community and cooperation in supporting English acquisition.

When asked whether there was any form of community or cooperation among parents to support their children's English language acquisition, nearly all participants responded negatively. Parents consistently stated that they were not part of any group, organization, or communication network with other caregivers in their child's school or classroom.

One parent stated simply, "We are not a part of any community. And we don't have direct contact with any of the parents who have children in her class," while another echoed, "We don't have any kind of communication with other parents, nor are we friends with any of the student's parents." This sense of isolation was a common thread across the responses.

Some parents mentioned alternative sources of support, primarily within the family. One parent shared, "She likes to help her friends and cousins if they have any questions," and another explained, "Her older sister helps her," showing that while there was no formal community involvement, some level of informal cooperation existed within extended families.

Interestingly, one parent expressed a desire for more structured interaction: "No, we are not a part of any community but expect the school to arrange some sort of group between the parents." This suggests an openness to collaboration, despite the current lack of such opportunities.

Overall, these responses indicate a notable absence of organized parental networks or peer support systems in the context of English language development. While children may receive help from siblings or cousins, there is little to no cooperation among parents themselves. This highlights a potential area for development, schools and educators might consider facilitating parent networks to enhance communal support and shared strategies for language learning. A great number of parents deem their various approaches highly effective. Starting with the private schools, to varied summer programs, and tutors have met the desired results. However, a minority of parents assume that their children do not require any external resources to improve their language fluency.

Theme 5: Perceived Challenges and Limitations

Parents cited various barriers such as lack of time, limited English proficiency, and lack of structured community support. Despite valuing English, they often relied on informal strategies due to logistical or educational constraints.

Parents' educational backgrounds and their resulting approaches to assisting children with English varied noticeably across the responses. While some parents actively engaged in homework and study routines, others relied more on their children's autonomy

or sibling support.

Some parents indicated that their children had become independent learners. One parent remarked, “Ever since she was young, we have been helping her with her homework, but nowadays she doesn’t want our help with English, because she knows how to study,” highlighting a gradual shift toward self-directed learning. Similarly, another parent noted, “We don’t have any strategies because he doesn’t need our help. He can study on his own and never misses homework.” These comments suggest that, over time, children develop personal study habits that reduce parental intervention.

In contrast, some parents described direct involvement in their children’s studies, especially when children faced difficulties. For example, one parent shared, “Our strategy is to make him sit and do the studying with him; if we don’t do the homework with him, he will either forget or ignore it,” emphasizing the importance of parental supervision. Another added, “She can’t study alone, so I help her sit and do her homework or teach her about difficult topics such as math, which she struggles with.”

Sibling support also played a significant role in some families, especially when parents themselves had limited English proficiency. One parent explained, “Her mother and I don’t speak English; she gets what she needs from her siblings. She constantly speaks English with them.” In these cases, older siblings act as informal tutors or language models, bridging gaps in parental assistance.

Parents with higher education levels in English noted an advantage in supporting their children’s learning. For instance, one family with parents as English teachers observed, “Our children are especially good at English because of that.” Conversely, some parents acknowledged their limitations, as one reflected, “Her father and I are not as proficient in English as he is. Usually, he points out our errors.”

Overall, parental strategies ranged from hands-on supervision to reliance on children’s independence or sibling help. These variations often reflected parental educational backgrounds and language proficiency, highlighting diverse family dynamics in supporting English acquisition.

Discussion

This section discusses and explores the perspectives and behaviors of Kurdish parents regarding their involvement in their children’s acquisition and learning of English proficiency. Based on the study’s research questions. Each subsequent paragraph offers a thematic analysis in response to one of the questions.

Parental Involvement in Children’s English Learning Inside and Outside School

The findings indicate that parents in this community engage in various forms of involvement to support their children’s English learning. Inside the school environment, parents often participate through attending parent-teacher meetings and maintaining communication with teachers to monitor their child’s progress. Outside of school, many parents actively assist with homework assignments and encourage the use of English in daily conversations at home. However, some parents face challenges such as limited English proficiency or time constraints, which can reduce their direct involvement.

Specific Activities Parents Use to Support Vocabulary Acquisition

Parents employ several practical strategies to help their children learn new English words. Reading English storybooks together is a common activity that not only introduces new vocabulary but also fosters an interest in the language. Additionally, parents use flashcards and vocabulary lists to reinforce word learning. Engaging children with English-language media, such as songs, cartoons, and educational apps, also contributes to vocabulary development. These activities provide enjoyable and meaningful contexts for children to acquire and practice new words regularly.

Patterns and Regularity of Parental Support for English Learning

Parental support for English learning in this community tends to occur regularly but varies in frequency depending on the family’s resources and parents’ language skills. Many parents establish daily or weekly routines, such as reading sessions or vocabulary practice, which help sustain consistent learning. Community-specific factors, such as cultural attitudes toward English education and availability of learning materials, also influence how regularly parents can assist their children. Overall, the data suggest that despite some limitations, parents show a strong commitment to supporting English learning in a manner that fits their circumstances.

These findings align with the concept of scaffolded learning and show a link between parental involvement and emerging learner autonomy.

Children who were supported with structured and consistent English exposure tended to show more fluency and initiative in using the language, especially when older siblings or private tutors were involved. However, the lack of structured community or school-parent collaboration limited the scale of these benefits.

The results align with what numerous scholars assert, that acquiring literacy and language skills involves more than just what is taught in schools; it also involves how

parents assist and encourage their children throughout this process of learning and growth (Sainain et al., 2020; Siregar, 2017; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2014). It is crucial to investigate and assess the factors that have led to English becoming the dominant language of children, to the extent that many parents ignore Kurdish and encourage their children to switch entirely to English. This includes the reasons why parents are so eager to encourage their children to learn and use English more frequently, as well as the impact this has on the children's identity in the future. On the other hand, Tok et al. (2023) mentioned that parents have challenges with their children's self-care abilities, physical growth, interaction with others, intellectual growth, and linguistic development in comparison to their preschool classmates. The parents observed their children's developmental requirements throughout the homework process.

Limitations

The study is limited by its small sample size and reliance on self-reported data, which may not fully reflect actual learning behaviors. Future research should include children's voices, explore longitudinal impacts of parental involvement, and investigate digital tools for self-access learning in multilingual contexts.

Conclusion

Parents have favorable opinions about learning English for the sake of their children's language level. This is shown by the parents' comments, which firmly concur that English is an essential topic that their children must study. Furthermore, the parents in this research used three types of participation to facilitate their children's English language acquisition. While the study initially aimed to explore community collaboration in supporting children's English learning, the data revealed a limited level of actual community involvement. Instead, support was primarily provided within family and peer networks, with only emerging signs of broader community cooperation. This finding highlights an important gap and suggests opportunities for fostering stronger community engagement in future initiatives. In conclusion, it was ascertained that parents' evaluations of their children's English language acquisition positively impacted the extent of parental participation. The findings highlight how parents play an active role in supporting their children's English learning, primarily through home-based strategies, resource use, and emotional encouragement, with varying levels of external support. Parents' English competence and giving their children a range of English learning tools, speaking models, and visual aids may considerably expand their vocabulary. This study also stressed the need

to identify a child's developmental stage, encourage positive boldness, and create a language-learning environment. These characteristics help youngsters learn new words by creating a language-friendly atmosphere. Caregivers may improve language acquisition by adapting techniques to each child's developmental requirements.

Proposed Future Research Areas

Future research could explore several important dimensions to deepen our understanding of parental involvement in children's English language learning. Longitudinal studies examining the sustained impact of various forms of parental engagement, such as home-based learning activities, decision-making participation, and community collaboration, would provide valuable insights into how these influences evolve over multiple academic years.

Additionally, investigating the role of parents' own English proficiency could shed light on how their language skills shape the methods and effectiveness of their support. Socioeconomic status, educational background, and cultural attitudes also warrant further examination, as these factors may affect the degree and nature of parental involvement and potentially mediate learning outcomes. Given the rise of educational technology, it would be timely to assess how digital tools and platforms used by parents contribute to their children's language acquisition. Research into structured collaboration models between teachers and parents could identify practical strategies for fostering more effective partnerships that enhance English proficiency.

Moreover, studies focusing on child-centered approaches tailored to different developmental stages across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts could provide nuanced guidance for educators and families alike. Finally, exploring the impact of multimodal learning aids, such as videos, flashcards, and storytelling, offered by parents may help clarify their role in vocabulary acquisition and retention. Together, these avenues offer promising directions for future inquiry to support and optimize parental contributions to children's language learning journeys.

Notes on the Contributors

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Appendix

Excerpts and Supporting Quotes From Participant Interviews

This appendix presents excerpts and supporting quotes from participant interviews aligned with the five main themes identified through Braun and Clarke’s (2006) reflexive thematic analysis:

Table 1

Resource-Based Support for English Learning

Q1. Is it necessary for parents to add to their children’s educational resources to help them learn English?	
Parent (1)	Yes, it is. We buy her English books to read because she enjoys reading and is interested in watching English movies with subtitles.
Parent (2)	Yes, it is very important. She reads the books we get her and enjoys spending time with her sisters since they speak English with her.
Parent (3)	Yes, it is very necessary. We try to buy her suitable teen books she will benefit from with her reading and spelling of the words.
Parent (4)	Yes, it is very essential. She enjoys reading as a hobby so we tend to buy her the books she wants to read.
Parent (5)	Yes, it’s important, because this is his first year in an English school so we get him books to read and enroll him in summer privet lessons.
Parent (6)	Yes, it is. We try to help him with his studies as much as he needs it. Or get him books to read or movies to watch.
Parent (7)	Yes, of course it is. We have been trying to compensate for the lack of lessons in 2020 and have enrolled her in a privet school. When she was in second grade, we got her a privet tutor to teach her the important expressions in English.
Parent (8)	Yes, we find it necessary. Because she is young her sister tries to teach her. Maybe when she grows up she will want to read more but not now.
Parent (9)	Yes, it is very important to have different resources. He enjoys reading more than watching cartoons so we buy him teen books.
Parent (10)	Yes, it is crucial to provide resources. She likes watching kids cartoons more than reading but she still tries to read more.
Parent (11)	He doesn’t need any resources because he has studied in an all-English school before, and he also doesn’t want to read any books that are not

	school-assigned.
Parent (12)	Yes, it is important. She has been in a private school since kindergarten. We try to read her kids' books to make her familiar with the sounds of the letters.
Parent (13)	Yes, I agree it is important. But our daughter doesn't need external resources. She is doing alright without anything outside of the school materials.
Parent (14)	Yes, it is. We have provided him with the materials he wants such as books. He insists on reading as much as he can without it affecting his studies.

Table 2

Perceptions of Language Progress

Q2. How do parents evaluate their child's vocabulary development in English?	
Parent (1)	She learns many new words every day. when she learns a new word, she begins using it with her friends when they are talking on the phone.
Parent (2)	We have been observing her improvements in her English speaking and have noticed a lot of changes in her level.
Parent (3)	She has been improving greatly because she gets constant privet lessons and her sister helps her with challenging subjects.
Parent (4)	She benefits from the privet classes she gets in the summers which makes learning and improving her English a lot easier.
Parent (5)	He has been getting better at English because we pay him extra attention to his homework and get him privet lessons in the summers.
Parent (6)	He does okay with English since his naturally very good at it and he has been getting even better. We believe if he continues at this rate he can improve on his own.
Parent (7)	She has gotten a lot better after she got that privet tutor, she hasn't needed any privet lessons since.
Parent (8)	Because of her young age, we try not to make it hard for her since she hasn't been to kindergarten. However, she is improving slowly.
Parent (9)	Because he reads a lot, he learns a lot of new words and since has gotten older he can find his resources if he needs any for a subject.
Parent	Comparing her progress to two years ago she has gotten a long way since

(10)	she likes the English language and is interested in learning more.
Parent (11)	He has been doing great because he watches YouTube videos and speaks in English with his friends.
Parent (12)	Yes of course she has improved greatly, she can even speak in English with her cousin because we live close.
Parent (13)	She has improved a great deal because she uses English daily with her sister. also, she can study with her and ask her questions.
Parent (14)	We don't help him out he learns more from movies, books, and online games. He benefits from online gaming when he speaks English while playing with friends.

Table 3

Community and Cooperation

Q3. Is there a function for community or cooperation among parents in facilitating children's English acquisition at this stage?	
Parent (1)	No, we are not a part of any community. And we don't have direct contact with any of the parents who have children in her class.
Parent (2)	No, we are not a part of anything. The only people she speaks English with or asks questions regarding her studies are her sisters.
Parent (3)	We are not in any sort of group or communicate with other parents, and we also don't have any relatives in our family that she can talk to.
Parent (4)	We are not a part of any groups or communities as we are not familiar with any other parents who have students in that class.
Parent (5)	No, we are not part of any groups with other parents. And don't have any friends who have children in the same class as ours.
Parent (6)	We don't have any kind of communication with other parents, nor we are friends with any of the student's parents.
Parent (7)	We are not a part of any community but she likes to help her friends and cousins if they have any questions.
Parent (8)	We are not in any sort of group with the other parents but her older sister helps her.
Parent (9)	No, we are not a part of any community but expect the school to arrange some sort of group between the parents.
Parent	We are not in any group of fellow parents and don't know anyone who has

(10)	children the same age as ours.
Parent (11)	No, we don't have any contact with any parent. And we are not close with any other classmate's caregivers.
Parent (12)	No, we are not in any group, but her cousin is in the same grade and class as her and they help each other out.
Parent (13)	No, we are not members of any community, nor do we have any contact with the other student's parents.
Parent (14)	No, we don't have any sort of contact with other parents and don't have any family friends who are in the same class as him.

Table 4

Perceptions of Language Progress

Q4. How do parents estimate the efficiency of their approaches for enhancing their children's English vocabulary?	
Parent (1)	Her father knows English and has helped her with her studies until two years ago, but now she doesn't need our help with English.
Parent (2)	Her mother and I don't help her with her studies; she studies on her own and gets help if needed from her older sister, because she is an English teacher.
Parent (3)	Because of her privet lessons, she has been improving daily. When she finds a subject difficult, her tutor can provide him with a simpler explanation and give more examples.
Parent (4)	She has always been great with languages so she enjoys learning English, which makes her improve much faster.
Parent (5)	We think that helping him study and complete his homework is doing a good job of raising his grades.
Parent (6)	He doesn't need anyone to remind him of homework since he does it on his own. He is a responsible student who does what is required of him.
Parent (7)	We think our ways have worked greatly because she has gotten better in her studies and can speak English better than she used to two years ago.
Parent (8)	We think she is doing all right considering she is only a first grader. If one day she needed an extra lesson or a tutor, we would enroll her in a summer course.
Parent (9)	We have enrolled him in English summer courses, and we think they have helped him quite a lot. His previous school changed their curriculum to

	English for a year, which he benefited a lot from, but he hasn't been to any privet schools before now.
Parent (10)	She has been in kindergarten, which has helped her speak greatly, but this is her first year in a privet school, so she needs time to get used to it.
Parent (11)	We don't help him with his studies or learning English. He is a good kid who completes his homework without us telling him.
Parent (12)	We think enrolling her in a privet school has benefited her greatly, especially when it comes to speaking English.
Parent (13)	I think our approaches are working because she is getting better every day. She used to struggle with some subjects but that's not a problem anymore.
Parent (14)	We think that they are working since he is getting more fluent in English with each passing day.

Table 5

Perceived Challenges and Limitations

Q5. Do parents with varying levels of education have various strategies for assisting their children in learning English?	
Parent (1)	Her father is an architect, and I'm a psychologist. Ever since she was young, we have been helping her with her homework, but nowadays she doesn't want our help with English, because she knows how to study.
Parent (2)	Her mother and I don't speak English, she gets what she needs from her siblings. She constantly speaks English with them.
Parent (3)	We don't help her with learning English because her older sister is good at English so she helps her with harder subjects if necessary.
Parent (4)	She doesn't need our help since English is quite an easy subject to handle. She needs to give more of her energy to harder subjects such as math or science.
Parent (5)	Our strategy is to make him sit and do the studying with him, if we don't do the homework with him, he with either forget or ignore it.
Parent (6)	He doesn't require his father's or my help because he can do it himself so we pay less attention to his studies.
Parent (7)	She doesn't need our help with her homework because she can do them alone but sometimes, I help her out with math.
Parent	I usually help her out with her homework more than her father since her

(8)	father is always tired after work and she understands more from me than him.
Parent (9)	Since he has gotten older, he doesn't need my help with his studies like before. However, I tell him when you're done studying his father will ask you questions about it.
Parent (10)	She can't study alone so I help her sit and do her homework or teach her about a difficult topic such as math which she struggles with.
Parent (11)	We don't have any strategies because he doesn't need our help. He can study on his own and never misses homework.
Parent (12)	Since she can study alone, and if she doesn't understand something she usually searches online. we don't have any particular strategies.
Parent (13)	Her mother and I are both English teachers because of that our children are especially good at English.
Parent (14)	Her father and I are not as proficient in English as he is. Usually, he points out our errors.

Table 6

Perceived Challenges and Limitations

Q6. What specific problems do parents have in assisting their children?	
Parent (1)	Her father does not face many problems as much as me since my English isn't that good. What I couldn't help with her father did it.
Parent (2)	Since we can't speak English, we can be of much help to her if she uses the internet or asks her sister if she can explain it to her.
Parent (3)	We don't face any problems. Since her lessons are quite easy one can understand them if she needs any help with them.
Parent (4)	Because she doesn't require any help from her mother and me, we don't have any problems. She does her needed studies and completes her homework on time.
Parent (5)	Our only problem is him saying I have done my homework but haven't. so we need to keep him under supervision until we are certain his homework is done.
Parent (6)	We don't have any problems with him. He gets his homework done on time then after all that goes and does something fun.

Parent (7)	We don't have any problems because when it comes to English, she is fine on her on but sometimes she requires my help with math or social values.
Parent (8)	We don't have any specific problems but I have to do the homework with her since she is young and just started to write and read.
Parent (9)	We don't have a problem regarding his studies since he doesn't require our help a lot, he completes his homework without us telling him.
Parent (10)	We don't face many problems when it comes to English but we struggle with the names in science.
Parent (11)	We face a problem because he doesn't know many words in Kurdish, but when it comes to English assignments it is simpler for him to do alone.
Parent (12)	We don't face any problems, because he doesn't do anything else until he has finished with his homework for the next day.
Parent (13)	We rarely face a problem regarding English since English is an easy subject for her, she can understand all the materials easily.
Parent (14)	He doesn't need our help with English so we don't face any problems. If has a question he usually searches for it on the internet or asks his teacher in school.

Table 7

Resource-Based Support for English Learning

Q7. How do parents get involved in their children's English learning efforts inside and outside of school?	
Parent (1)	When she was in first grade she was struggling with the letters and the pronunciation so we got her a privet tutor to teach her the English alphabet. She hasn't needed any privet lessons since.
Parent (2)	She has never needed any privet lessons; she is naturally very good with languages, especially English.
Parent (3)	She and her older sister have been getting privet lessons every summer to improve their languages and get extra lessons with subjects that they find more challenging.
Parent (4)	Both of my daughters get privet lessons in the summertime; we don't want them to sit in the house all day without anything to do.
Parent (5)	We get him many useful resources such as enrolling him in a summer privet lesson to improve his speaking.

Parent (6)	He gets to go to privet lessons in the summers. If he learns the materials beforehand it would be much easier for him at school.
Parent (7)	When she needed privet tutoring, we got her a teacher and we also enrolled her in an only course to learn English.
Parent (8)	She hasn't been to any English course but we intend to enroll her in a summer course to improve her English.
Parent (9)	We will enroll him in a course if there are any good ones around, and provide him with all the books he wants to read.
Parent (10)	We try to help her study and if she needs it will get her into a summer course. She hasn't needed any courses before.
Parent (11)	We don't do anything special, because he has studied in UAE and his school was all English.
Parent (12)	She didn't need any privet lessons but she was always in a privet school, so she always had good teachers to teach her everything she needed.
Parent (13)	We try to communicate as much as we can in English and sometimes, I try using a new word to see if she can understand its meaning.
Parent (14)	He rarely needs any outside help when it comes to English and he has never been on a summer course before.

Table 8

Resource-Based Support for English Learning

Q8. What specific things do parents do to help their children learn new words in English?	
Parent (1)	We buy her the English books that she wants and let her watch videos on YouTube which she learns a lot from.
Parent (2)	We don't do anything special to help her she studies all on her own. She is a responsible student.
Parent (3)	We try to enroll her in as many summer lessons as possible to improve her grades and language learning and we also buy her many books so she can read more.
Parent (4)	She doesn't like reading too much but we try to encourage her to read. she also has privet lessons every summer for the past four years.
Parent (5)	I try to make him watch English cartoons and sometimes I even sit with him, if I am not there sitting beside him, he gets bored and leaves.
Parent	He doesn't need our help to learn new words she learns all the things she

(6)	wants on her own.
Parent (7)	She loves reading and has many books at home, she used to watch cartoons but has stopped.
Parent (8)	She is too young to buy her any book but I try to watch cartoons with her so she learns new words.
Parent (9)	He mostly learns new words at school or while reading, we don't do anything special, if he sees a new word he repeats it until he has memorized it.
Parent (10)	We don't do anything special in that regard. She was always good with English she gets most of what she knows from movies she enjoys.
Parent (11)	He doesn't need us to do anything to help him learn new words. He watches cartoons and movies and learns a lot from them.
Parent (12)	We don't do anything specific to help her. She watches many videos on YouTube that help her with new words.
Parent (13)	When we are talking in English, I try slipping in new words in the conversation to see if she grasps its meaning and later on tell her where and how to use that word.
Parent (14)	Whatever he needs he can get it on his own, so we don't do anything specific, and he learns a lot from his online friends because they speak English.

Table 9

Perceptions of Language Progress

Q9. For how long has their child been speaking or trying to learn English?	
Parent (1)	She has been speaking English for two to three years now. However, she has been learning English ever since kindergarten.
Parent (2)	Ever since she started school, she has had a special interest in the English language because of her sisters she has been exposed to English from a young age and she has developed an interest in it.
Parent (3)	We started to pay more attention to her speaking English from kindergarten, but recently she has been more independent and trying to learn on her own.
Parent (4)	She has always been fond of languages especially English since a young age, so she didn't need our help a lot.
Parent	It has not been too long since he started to learn English since his not

(5)	especially interested in learning.
Parent (6)	He has been learning English through school and watching cartoons for three years now. He also learned a lot of what he knows from the YouTube channels he watches.
Parent (7)	She has been studying English since the first grade, and since then she has watched English videos which has helped with her pronunciation and vocabulary.
Parent (8)	Since this is her first year, she has just started to learn English, but we keep encouraging her to watch English cartoons which she enjoys.
Parent (9)	Since he was enrolled in school, because he studies English and the teachers use English with him.
Parent (10)	Since kindergarten, she has been exposed to the language and when she started school, she has been learning English continuously.
Parent (11)	Ever since he was enrolled in a privet school in UAE because we lived there for four years, his teachers and friends were only using English with him.
Parent (12)	Since kindergarten she has been learning English, then after that, she has been learning the English language because of the school lessons.
Parent (13)	Ever since kindergarten and even before that we tried teaching her simple words, and after kindergarten she learned directly through the school books which are in English.
Parent (14)	When he was in the first grade. He has always loved English and has been trying to learn it ever since.

Table 10

Peer and Family Influence on Learning

Q10. Does your child speak English at home?	
Parent (1)	No, she only speaks Kurdish. She usually uses English to talk with her school friends who also speak English.
Parent (2)	With her mother and me, she only speaks Kurdish, but she speaks English with her sisters. One of her sisters lives in the UK and the other one is an English teacher.
Parent (3)	When she is talking with me and her mother, she uses Kurdish but sometimes she uses English with her sister.
Parent	She only uses English to talk to her sister but when she is talking to us, she

(4)	uses Kurdish. Sometimes she speaks in English so that we don't understand what she is saying.
Parent (5)	He can't communicate in English a lot, but tries to change a word he knows to English while speaking Kurdish with his siblings or his father, and me.
Parent (6)	He usually speaks Kurdish with his father and me, but sometimes uses English while talking with his siblings or his friends.
Parent (7)	No, she speaks Kurdish with her family and uses English when speaking with her friends. Sometimes she uses some English words in between the Kurdish ones.
Parent (8)	She only speaks Kurdish at home. She finds it difficult to use English in a normal environment, such as home.
Parent (9)	He only speaks English with his siblings, but when he speaks to his father and his mother, he uses Kurdish.
Parent (10)	She tries to use English with her older brother and sister, but only uses Kurdish with her father and me.
Parent (11)	Yes, he can only communicate in English properly and finds it difficult to use Kurdish. When he doesn't know a word in Kurdish, he says it in English.
Parent (12)	She speaks both English and Kurdish. When she is speaking with her siblings or is talking with her school friends.
Parent (13)	At home, we only communicate in English. We speak English as the main language in our house, either with the children or with each other
Parent (14)	No, we only use Kurdish to talk. It is not like he can't use English to communicate; it is more like his father would not fully understand him.