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## **The Effects of EFL Teachers' Gender on the Secondary School Students' Learning**

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English Discourse Studies and Applied Linguistics

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to all whom I know with a special emphasis on:

First and foremost, I would like to dedicate this thesis to the ones whom I am eternally indebted to my parents for their wholehearted support and encouragement which were the wind beneath my wings and the important influence on the development of my career to date. Thank you for helping me to get my feet on the ground and taught me how to believe in myself. My journey to live my dream could never have been realized without your unwavering belief that I could fulfil a lifelong dream.

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## **Abstract**

In the field of education, gender gains a great attention at the worldwide level. The teacher student relationships are significant in the scope of language teaching since gender difference is an important theme in linguistic education. The present research study aims at investigating the influence of EFL teachers' gender on their learners' academic achievements at secondary schools. Gender differences were discerned through reporting the importance of students' attitudes and perspectives towards the gender of their teacher of English, as well as the impact of the differences and similarities between male and female teachers in terms of their attitudes, teaching methods and instructional strategies on the patterns of their EFL classroom interactions. So as to evaluate the effect of teachers' gender, the study applied a mixed-method approach. The quantitative data were obtained from the questionnaires which were developed for both the teachers and their pupils from six secondary schools where English was taught as a foreign language. They were randomly chosen to assure the reliability and validity issues. The qualitative results were in a form of both a classroom observation and an interview with each teacher separately. The overall findings of this study concluded that both parties held a strong conviction that gender played a major role in learning and teaching English. There was ample evidence that girls significantly achieved better results than boys due to their teachers' gender. Although male and female teachers shared some aspects, the patterns of teacher-pupil interactions were gender related as their learners revealed the superiority of female teachers. Moreover, the patterns of pupil-teacher talk were also affected by the gender of the pupils since female pupils had more interaction with their female teachers while male pupils were in more contact with their male teachers. The present study also provides empirical implications for educational policy makers and English language teachers to enhance the learning experience, influence student success, and guide the development and maintenance of teacher-pupil interactions which are affected by their both genders and considered essential for the pupils' learning environment.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

**AAUW:** American Association of University Women.

**ADHD:** Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

**cf.:** “compare” or “consult” used to provide contrasting or opposing information.

**D.O.E:** Department of Education.

**ECCRN:** Early Child Care Research Network.

**ECOSOC:** The United Nations ECONomic and SOcial Council.

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language.

**e.g., :** for example; abbreviation for *exempli gratia*.

**ESL:** English as a Second Language.

**etc.:** “and so on” or “and so forth” abbreviation for *et cetera*.

**FLLS:** Foreign Language Learning Strategies.

**FSSE:** Faculty Survey of Student Engagement.

**FTA:** Female Teacher A.

**FTAs:** Face Threatening Acts.

**FTB:** Female Teacher B.

**FTC:** Female Teacher C.

**GAD:** Gender and Development.

**GBV:** Gender-Based Violence.

**GPI:** Literacy Gender Parity Index.

**G8:** Group of Eight countries: Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States.

**ICTs:** Information and Communication Technologies.

**MMR:** Mixed Method Research.

**MTA:** Male Teacher A.

**MTB:** Male Teacher B.

**MTC:** Male Teacher C.

**NCES:** National Centre for Educational Statistics.

**NCLBA:** No Child Left Behind Act.

**NICHD:** National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

**NRC:** National Research Council.

**OECD:** Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development.

**Pre-K:** pre-kindergarten.

**PIRLS:** Progress in International Literacy Study.

**PISA:** Program for International Student Assessment.

**SLA:** Second Language Acquisition.

**TIMSS:** Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

**U. K:** United Kingdom.

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

**UNFPA:** United Nations Fund for Population Activities.

**U.S:** United States.

**WASL:** Washington Assessment of Student Learning.

**WID:** Women in Development.

**WHO:** World Health Organization.

**ZPD:** Zone of Proximal Development.

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## **General Introduction**

Learning is a process with cognitive and social psychological elements, and both should be taken into account if academic success is to be maximized. The relationships that teachers form with their pupils play a significant role in the latter academic development.

Well-built teacher-student relationships can be one of the most important environmental factors in changing a pupil's educational path. This study will explore the effect of secondary school teachers of English gender on their pupils' learning outcomes.

Nowadays, knowledge of English becomes an essential part of everyday life of the global world. Many people are using English in nearly every sector and for international relations. Gender is an issue with important theoretical and pedagogical assumption in learning English as a foreign language. Gender can have a significant effect on how pupils learn a language. The gender differences in EFL learning strategies can have an influence of second language learners' cultural background and of the educational settings in which they learn the target language on the choice of their learning strategies by gender.

An effective teacher would be intelligent in influencing his/her pupils through building an effective and positive relationship with them which may be the keystone that allows the other aspects to work well. However, the teacher characteristics such as gender influences the educational qualifications and teaching experience on pupils' academic achievement (Akiri and Ugborugbo, 2008, pp.185-191). Thus, the present study tries to contribute to the field of education by examining secondary school pupils' perspectives about the effects of their EFL teacher's gender on their learning process.

Teacher's gender is an issue that has theoretical and pedagogical implications for EFL education, as it is considered as a factor influencing the educational processes with regard to teacher and pupil interactions. Teacher gender receives attention in language learning strategy research which shows that it affects the quality and quantity of interactions in the classroom. Gender has substantial effect on the perspective of the pupils in relation to foreign language learning. In general, attitudes and beliefs are some features that have an effect on the choice of teaching techniques applied on the pupils, but more particularly gender.

The effect of teacher's gender in language classrooms is becoming more and more a crucial subject among researchers. There is a strong relationship between language pupils' success as well as their attitude and motivation toward language and the gender of their language teacher (eg: Dee, 2006). Apart from the dichotomy that characterizes 'gender' as a

concept, teachers' personality traits and teaching styles, that are usually determined and judged by the pupils, are strongly influenced and linked to their gender.

Gender is a teacher-related factor that is persistently researched because of its main impact on the aspects of teaching and learning the English language, for example teacher-pupil communication and miscommunication, teacher fairness towards their male and female pupils, participation and performance in the classroom. In fact, successful interaction between teacher and student very often provides the impetus behind effective language teaching and reinforces students' motivation for language learning.

The patterns of teacher-pupil talk are gender-related, and both male and female teachers and pupils have different behaviours in the classroom (Rashidi and Naderi, 2012, pp. 30-36). Various researches published from the 1980's to the 1990's like Kelly (1982) and Sadker and Sadker (1992) showed that the biased treatment was not only used in primary schools but also in secondary schools and colleges. These discriminations, which are stemmed from the genders of both pupils and teachers, determine the quality not only of teaching but also of learning either in a positive or a negative way. For instance EFL male teachers use direct questions and tend to be more interactive with boys than girls, whereas EFL female teachers ask referential questions and are more supportive, patient, gave more compliments as they are in more contact with their pupils either in single-gender or mixed-gender classes. Therefore, gender affects the teacher-pupil interaction.

Besides, the past twenty years witnessed a significant reversal of a remarkable gender gap in education. The international phenomenon of female dominance in academic achievements paves the way to new questions about the causes of this disparity. On academic performance, our estimates confirm a gender gap: girls surpass boys on English test scores. In order to dig deeper into this question, our thesis examines whether or not the EFL teacher gender impacts the learning of girls and boys at the secondary-school level. Increasing number of studies tried to document the effect of teacher gender at the secondary-school (e.g., Dee 2005, 2007; Ehrenberg, Goldhaber and Brewer 1995; Nixon and Robinson 1999; Winters, Haight, Swaim and Pickering 2013).

Secondary schools in all over the world record an overmatch in English learning among boys and girls when being taught by a female or a male teacher. This leads us to deeply inquire about the possible effects of teacher-pupil gender interaction which are also becoming an important topic in studies about pupils' school achievement in learning English.

Pupils' gender is also proved to be an important factor in explaining various educational outcomes. Differences are documented in school achievement among girls and

boys, and numerous authors offer theoretical explanations. Evidence shows that while both boys and girls improve their performances, girls achieve higher marks than boys in EFL learning. Gender is regarded as an important affective factor that still plays a specific role and influences foreign language learning.

A particularly interesting interpretation of gender differences in pupil's success is related to the dynamics of gender interaction between teachers and their pupils, or more precisely, to teachers' and pupils' gender combination. In addition, very lately, the influence of teacher-pupil gender interaction grows to be an interesting topic in the educational research.

Since there are some differences between the language of men and that of women, no education or social conditioning can entirely blot out these differences. Thus, assignment to a same-gender teacher can be educationally pertinent for many reasons; for instance, it can affect pupil's engagement or behaviour through role-model effects. Moreover, same-gender teachers may also communicate various expectations to the boys and girls in their classrooms.

Therefore, more details will reveal the mechanisms by which gender interactions between teacher and pupil result in differential outcomes for both girl and boy pupils. Since researchers find that teachers differently interact with pupils of similar gender than they do with those of the opposite gender, we will also try to investigate if teachers prefer their same-gender pupils or not which will lead to a different attention paid to the pupils' responses depending on gender, and if girls and boys respond and react to instruction in different ways when their teacher follows such a teaching behaviours. It includes evidence suggesting disciplinary procedures and proclivity to discipline vary by both pupil and teacher gender. Likewise, a teacher's perception of pupil characteristics and abilities appear to systematically differ according to gender.

It is very important to understand these mechanisms in order to design a policy which aims at mitigating and/or avoiding gender differences at school (Carrell, Page and West 2010). Our research provides insight into this question by observing how teachers' behaviours differ by pupil gender as well as to test the way pupils' beliefs and motivation for learning English are influenced by their teachers' gender. Some researchers prove that female pupils do better when they are taught by female teachers, while other studies find that male pupils benefit at the expense of female pupils in the amount and quality of interaction received from teachers of both genders. What has yet to be determined is how these differences in discipline, perceptions of student ability and interactions between pupils and their teachers have a great influence on pupil outcomes.

The importance of studying pupils' and teachers' behaviours inside the classroom constitutes learning motivation which in turn includes emotions as they are essential to learning and teaching. The quality of such interpersonal relationships within the instructional setting influences the pupils' learning atmosphere, as it can result in a greater degree of learning in the classroom.

Pupils spend at least quarter of their time at school, most of it in the classroom, in this sense; their relationships with their teachers reflect the ability to promote development. In this way, classroom interactions are the key to understand pupils' engagement. Lawrenz (1987) indicates that pupils are attracted by the opposite gender teacher (pp.689-697). That is to say that male pupils prefer to be taught by a female teacher of English and the vice versa. Whereas, Lavin et al. (2012) point out that pupils equate teaching effectiveness with gender-related features, in other words female learners pay more attention to the way the teachers deliver the lesson as well as to being well organized (pp.1-16). While, male learners focus on other evaluative features like; whether the teacher is fair, responsible and humorous (Ogden et al., 1994).

For this reason, the role of the teacher in the classroom is of great significance in promoting learning. Teachers have a very crucial role in the success or failure of their pupils since they are the point of contact and the bridge between the educational system and the pupil. All teachers make some differences in their pupils' academic journey. Some teachers consistently have a greater and more positive effect than others; they seem to relate to pupils better and to be more successful in helping them to meaningfully benefit from their instructions.

The topic of the influence of EFL teachers' gender on their secondary school pupils is very debatable; some studies centred on controversial claims state that teachers consistently privilege boys over girls or the contrary, for instance by giving more positive feedbacks and helpful questions. However, the raised inquiry should focus on whether these classroom dynamics differ when the pupil and his/her teacher share the same gender or not.

Our role in this study is shaped by our previous experience working in the field of secondary education. Our humble teaching years afford us the opportunity to be embedded in a variety of classrooms, different secondary schools, working alongside teachers of both genders and with different grades. We believe that these experiences provide us with unique insight, understanding, and knowledge of teaching and learning. Such experiences may shape certain biases, although every effort will be made on our part to remain neutral as a qualitative researcher and let the data shape our analysis and interpretation.

In the field of education, the relationships that teachers develop with their pupils are so important that they result in positive academic outcomes. Such relationships are, in a way or another, related to and influenced by the gender of both the pupils and their teachers of English. Our position in this study can be considered as an insider researcher as our own experiences provide us with an implicit understanding of the effects of teachers' gender on pupils. On the basis of our observation, we can say that there is an educational gap in the way male and female EFL teachers deal with their pupils. Our purpose is to conduct a study to determine to which extent both EFL teachers' and pupils' genders influence the academic performance of pupils at secondary schools.

The current research identifies the thought process of the teachers as they are developing pupil relationships and delivering instructions. Teachers need to understand how to incorporate interactions and instructional tactics into their daily classroom work in order to make a positive effect in the lives of pupils who are at risk of academic failure.

The present study seeks to reveal the answers to the following main research question:

- To what extent do secondary school EFL teachers' and pupils' genders affect learning English outcomes?

The research sub-questions are as follows:

- To what extent are secondary school EFL teachers similar to or different from each other as far as their performances are concerned?
- Due to the educational gender gap, to what extent is learning English a gender-related phenomenon?
- To what extent is EFL classroom interaction gendered?

The hypotheses are as follows:

- There may be a gender different effect in the academic performance in learning English as a foreign language between male and female secondary school pupils in classrooms taught by male teachers and/ or female teachers.
- Male and female EFL teachers may use different/similar strategies while teaching which may also be affected by their gender.
- Learning English may be influenced by the gender of both the teacher and the pupil.
- The difference in interaction between pupils in classrooms with male teachers and pupils in classrooms with female teachers may be affected by the gender of both of them.

The results of this study are practical in the educational field as they include a commonality of effective characteristics and strategies employed by teachers that influence the pupils' English learning process quality and interactions in the classroom by taking into consideration both teachers' and secondary school pupils' gender.

Positive student-teacher relationships are a valuable resource for students. Having a positive relationship with a teacher means to allow pupils to be able to comfortably work on their own because they are sure that they can rely on their teacher if any problem arises, as their teacher recognizes and responds to the problem. The pupils' relationships with teachers provide the foundation for successful adjustment to their social and academic environment. This kind of pupils feel safer and more confident in the classroom, feel more capable, make more positive connections with peers, and achieve greater academic success.

Moreover, teachers' gender influences their attitudes and beliefs about the pupils they teach which are, in turn, very important components to predict the quality of a students' education. A teacher's personal teaching styles and interactions with his or her male and female pupils can make a significant difference for them. Teachers are expected to discover how pupils learn and what they require in order to learn effectively, and to apply this knowledge into their teaching.

The present research base broadly focuses on EFL teachers' and secondary school pupils' relationships as far as their gender is concerned. This study describes and contributes to the field of education by providing teachers with guidance on relationship-building strategies that a highly effective teacher employs in a real world and an authentic setting, the classroom, so as to effectively deliver the needed instructions for achieving better results in learning English.

The fact of studying gender differences is so significant since it influences the design of the curriculum, the teaching methods and the learning process. Moreover, the present study investigates the effect of EFL teacher's gender on student's attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language, as it is widely recognized that language plays a significant role in learning it properly just in case the learner holds positive attitudes towards the language and learning which would enhance proficiency as well.

As EFL teachers differ in their gender, they also differ in the characteristics they hold when being in their classes and dealing with their secondary school pupils. These variations may include; teachers' control and dominance, politeness, way of teaching, treatment of the pupils, teaching methods, teaching styles...etc.

This dissertation tries to shed some light on the importance of pupils' attitudes and perspectives towards their teacher of English, more precisely towards the gender of their teacher of English and its influence on their academic performance, since it is very important to provide a relaxed atmosphere for the students to get better learning outcomes.

In chapter one, we review the literature relevant to gender in the educational setting. This chapter includes the gender concepts and terms, EFL learning and pupils' gender, as well as teachers and gender gap in students' different achievements in learning English are also included at this level.

In chapter two, we deal with EFL teachers' gender differences at the level of language use, teaching styles, teachers' classroom management and control and the importance of teacher-student relationships, as well as, a diverse range of perspectives on this topic organized by various categories of researchers.

Chapter three is an account of the research design used in this study, including the methods used for data collection, justification of methodology instruments, the methods to establish trustworthiness, data analysis, research ethical issues and the study limitations I have faced while conducting the present research study.

Chapter four contains the description of the objective of each mixed-method tool, the teachers' and the pupils' questionnaires, the class observation and the structured interviews with the teachers and reporting the obtained results.

Finally, in chapter five we discuss the findings, the research questions' and hypotheses' answers, the recommendations for EFL teachers and implementations for educationists and their relevance in the field of education.



# CHAPTER ONE

## GENDER IN EDUCATION

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## **1.1.Introduction**

Gender is actually about the characteristics that refer to the distinction between masculinity and femininity. Depending on the context, these characteristics can include biological sex, sex-based social structures or gender identity. Gender is defined socially as the social meaning designated for males and females. Every society focuses on certain roles that each gender should perform, though there is a wide range of acceptable behaviours for each gender.

Gender influences all aspects of human life. As people may follow a certain lifestyle, they may also use a certain language patterns at home, in the street or at schools, which are all affected by gender features. In the educational field gender represents male and female teachers and learners. Learners may share the same gender with their teachers as they can be taught by the opposite-gender teacher.

Gender in education is gaining an increasing attention as becoming a significant topic to be discussed among researchers and investigated by various studies. In the scope of language teaching and gender, the aim of this study is to determine whether teaching and learning English as a foreign language can be influenced by the gender of both the teacher and the student. While this chapter will generally deal with the gender in the educational frame including learner gender, the difference between the pupils' achievements as being influenced by the gender of their teachers, the next chapter will more precisely treat the nature of the relationship between teachers and learners as far as their gender effect is concerned.

A sundry review of literature investigated the effect of teachers' and students' gender on teacher-student interactions. Many researchers argued that teacher gender differentially impacted the teacher's relationship with male and female students, as well as teachers' treatments to their students systematically varied by gender. In other words, female and male students are differently treated by their male and female teachers.

Teachers in general and English language teachers in particular play a crucial role in their pupils' learning process and academic achievement. According to prior studies, teachers are highly responsible for their students' effective and efficient learning and what occurs in their classrooms. The way teachers behave and the techniques they use while teaching are based to a large extent on their beliefs about effective teaching, understanding and organizing instructions.

Thus, these perceptions can highly influence teachers' way of teaching and as a result their students' learning process. Students also hold their own beliefs about learning and their perceptions about effective teachers in the classroom which in turn appear to have an obvious relevance to their expectations of the course. Therefore, all these beliefs and perceptions are highly influenced by both teachers' and learners' gender.

Research on the relationship between foreign language learning and gender underwent a significant change in the last three decades and benefited from emerging gender perceptions in language studies. Early research concentrated on gender-based differences in the linguistic repertoire of males and females, where gender was a fixed and bipolar category that could be linked to language and language learning. By contrast, subsequent studies investigated the relationship between gender and speech patterns, and gender was defined as a dynamic feature based on social activities and contexts.

Gender, in fact, is a matter of theoretical and educational premise that is important in learning a foreign language. A large number of studies found that gender had a significant impact on the way students learnt a language. A great deal of research was conducted on gender issues, including the ability to learn language, motivation, teachers' perceptions, learning styles and strategies, classroom interaction, teaching materials and pedagogy.

Many studies which investigated gender as a variable in the use of foreign language learning strategies (FLLS) revealed that significant gender differences were almost equally as they showed greater use of FLLS by female learners more than males did. The relationship between gender and students' academic achievement was argued for decades. A gap between the achievement of boys and girls was found, with girls showing better performance than boys in certain school subjects.

With regard to the last studies, it was proved that while both boys and girls improved their performances, girls outperformed males by attaining the best marks in EFL learning. Gender was considered as a significant affective aspect that played, and still, a specific role that influenced foreign language learning. All the issues mentioned above will be discussed in a detailed way all throughout this chapter.

## **1.2.An Introduction to Gender**

Since ever, humanity was surrounded by gender experience. It was noticeable in discussions, agreements, and divergences. It is necessary to understand the differences among males and females in everything they do starting from their life styles to the way they treat people. Gender is present so thoroughly in everywhere in our society, institutions, actions, beliefs, needs and our desires, which we consider to be absolutely natural. The world swarms with ideas about gender which are so commonplace that we believe that they are right and correct, agreeing on the adage as a scientific fact.

All over the world, in each society there are obvious differences and disparities between women and men in decision making, personal preferences, assigned responsibilities, and personality aspects. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Gender indicates the social features which are linked to being either a male or a female, the relationships between women and men, girls and boys, and the relations among women and among men themselves. Through the socialization processes, these attributes and relationships are socially constructed and learned. As they can be related to a specific time or context they can also be changeable. The expectations estimated from a man or a woman in a given context is directly determined by their gender.

The concept of gender, that we use now, took part in the common language since the beginning of the 1970's. It was applied to refer to a feminist analytical category to draw a line of demarcation between biological sex differences and to distinguish between behaviours and capabilities, which they refer as to either 'masculine' or 'feminine'. The term gender was described as a social construction of different characteristics that men and women may share or differ in, which takes place throughout life, by frequently taking into account the relations between the sexes in several aspects.

The roles and responsibilities performed by men and women in our families, our societies and our cultures are determined by their gender. The concept of gender also refers to what society expects from women and men or femininity and masculinity features, characteristics, adequacy and their behaviours. Gender roles and expectations are learned inside the family and within society. They are related to a specific time context and a particular culture. The gender roles can be modified and determined according to specific society distinctions such as political status, class, ethnicity, physical and mental abilities, age and many others.

Almeida (1998) argued: “Sex is determined before birth by natural biological processes whereas gender is a cultural product acquired and transmitted in social structures” (p. 43).

In order not to be misled between the two terms of “sex” and “gender” several investigations were conducted to identify and differentiate between the meanings of each of them, as well as to understand how the human behaviour was influenced by his or her biology, the impact of biology and other aspects. The two following definitions will clarify the difference between the two terms: “The term Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women.” (WHO, 2009).

Desprez-Bouanchaud et al. (1987) claimed: “*The term gender refers to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities, associated with being male and female. In most societies, men and women differ in the activities they undertake, in access to and control of resources, and in participation in decision-making. And in most societies, women as a group have less access than men to resources, opportunities and decision-making*” (pp. 20-21).

According to gender studies, the social construction is based upon the differences between the sexes which create dissimilarities between them. This kind of research supports the analysis of these differences and rejects the studies based only on the biological aspects.

Amancio (1998) considered that discrimination had its origin in: “The form of social thought that establishes differentiation in terms of value of the models of male and female persons and the social functions of the two sexes in society” (p. 15).

It is so important to analyze the social thought or better saying the way society considers the differentiation between the masculine and the feminine and not the differences between men and women. Amancio emphasized on that gender discrimination was not credited only to women or only to men rather, on how both sexes behaved in the society and on what both of them shared and performed certain values.

Centuries ago, women fought to bring an end to their subalternization in society, while men always played the dominant role. So the desire to subvert and change those values, in order to reach gender equality, was the responsibility of both men and women. However, what both men and women thought that their models of behaviour were natural; in fact they

were only socially imposed on them, in that way they unconsciously took part in emphasizing the existence of gender differences.

It is easy to observe the construction of masculinity and femininity in the interaction between the sexes, each one of them tries to impose his/her power which can be the motive to formulate them. However, if both of the man and woman share the stereotypes and contribute to inequality, they will repress the building ways of being. Rather, if each sex contains the opposite sex, it is possible to question the rules which try to fix the masculine and the feminine from this construction of the being so that each sex can prove him/her self.

For this reason, it is very crucial to deal with gender studies in order to analyze the carriers performed by men which are originally socially considered to belong to feminine, because if men occupy such professions, they will come into conflictuality with their sex expectations in an attempt of reaffirmation of their masculinity.

For instance, Vianna (2001/2002) claimed that the fact that most teachers were women was a result of not only the feminine sense of the teaching profession, but also as a result of a social attribution. In other words, society imposed and pictured the teaching profession as a feminine profession connected with a meaning of gender despite the sex of the person who performed it, because feminization happened in spaces and practices which even males could carry out them (pp. 81-103).

Finally, gender studies might be of help to understand the differences between the two sexes at the level of brain, cognition, personality, language use, conflicts, resistances, agreements, treating people, satisfactions, failure and success.

### **1.3. Gender and Sex Concepts and Terms**

The purpose of introducing such gender concepts is first to clarify the difference between the two terms sex and gender, second to deal with all most all the differences and similarities between men and women as far their gender is concerned and to raise the awareness, that in the previous years, women didn't use to have their full rights in society and that they were under men's empowerment. While now women share the same rights as men do, for instance both of them can occupy the same jobs but their performances differ since they are based on their genders such as teaching, both men and women can work as teachers but they do not deal with their students in the same way and this is because of their gender differences which I will discuss later in the next chapter.

**1.3.1. Sex** is described as the biological differences between men and women, or the classification of people as male or female which are universal and determined at birth. Since their birth, children are assigned a sex based on a combination of bodily characteristics including: hormones, chromosomes, internal reproductive organs, and genitalia.

**1.3.2. Sex-Disaggregated Data** is the data collected and presented separately on men and women.

**1.3.3. Gender** refers to a culturally-defined set of economic, social, and political roles, responsibilities, rights, entitlements obligations, linked with being female or male, as well as the power relations between and among women and men, boys and girls. The definition and expectations of what it means to be a woman or girl and a man or boy, and sanctions for not adhering to those expectations, vary across cultures and over time, and often intersect with other factors such as race, class, age and sexual orientation.

**1.3.4. Gender Analysis** is the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Both men and women act different roles. This gives the chance to women and men to have different experiences, knowledge, aptitudes, desires and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so that policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men.

**1.3.5. Gender Equality** means that both women and men share their equal and full human rights as they benefit from the socially, economically, politically and culturally valued goods. Gender equality is therefore the equal values being either similarities or differences given to both men and women by society and the roles they play. It is based on women and men's partnership in their home, their community and their society. Genuine equality goes beyond parity in common values; it means expanded freedoms and improved overall quality of life for all people.

**1.3.6. Gender Equity** is the process of being fair to men and women, boys and girls. To guarantee justice, measures must often be taken into account to recompense for the historical, economical, political and social difficulties that hinder women and men from operating on a level playing field. Equity is a means while Equality is the result.



**1.3.7. Gender Integration** refers to the policies applied in programmatic design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation to take gender considerations into account and to compensate for gender-based dissimilarities.

**1.3.8. Gender Empowerment** is the fact that both women and men can control their own lives, such as the freedom in selecting their life styles, defining their own objectives, setting their targets acquiring talents, building self-confidence, solving problems and developing self-reliance. No one can control someone else's life: only the individual can empower herself or himself to make choices, to speak out or to take personal decisions. In other words, it means the expansion of people's free will to live the way they like, including their capacity to make and act upon their choices, since this ability was previously denied. Programmatic interventions often focus specifically on empowering women, because of the inequalities in their socioeconomic status.

**1.3.9. Gender Division of Labour** depends on how each society divides work among men and women according to what is considered suitable or appropriate to each gender.

**1.3.10. Gender and Development** or The GAD approach which focuses on intervening to deal with gender discrimination which prevent unequal development between the two sexes, and which often impedes women from their full participation in society. GAD seeks to make sure that both women and men have the same rights such as making decisions and sharing benefits. The objective of this approach is often to fulfil practical needs which both men and women require like immediate necessities such as water, shelter and food, as well as promoting strategic interests. So that the GAD approach can be successful, a sustained long-term commitment is necessitated.

**1.3.11. Women in Development** or The WID approach which aims at integrating women into the existing development process by targeting them, especially in women-specific and related activities. Women are usually passive recipients in WID projects, which often highlight making women more efficient producers and increasing their income. In other words the WID renders women more self reliant members in their society. The default of WID projects is that they do not take into consideration that women can perform multiple roles in the society they live in or that they underestimate that women cannot manage between time and labour.

The biggest difference between **WID** and **GAD** is that **WID** projects traditionally are not based on a comprehensive gender analysis, while the **GAD** approach is gender-analysis driven.

Most of the time, there is certainly a necessity for women-specific and men-specific interventions. These accomplish gender initiatives. Investigations show that the depth of the gender analysis is the bases for the success of both sex-specific and gender activities.

**1.3.12. Strategic Gender Interests** are about the interventions addressing strategic gender interests focus on fundamental issues related to women's subordination and gender inequities. Strategic gender interests are long-term and are often related to structural changes in society regarding women's status and equity. They contain legislation for equal rights and increased participation in decision-making. The notion of "strategic gender needs" was first used in 1985 by Molyneux, who helped develop gender planning and policy development tools which are now used by development institutions around the world.

**1.3.13. Gender-Mainstreaming** is a process rather than a goal. Gender concerns are mainstreamed to realize gender equality and ameliorate the significance of development agendas. Such an approach shows that the costs of women's marginalization and gender inequalities are born by all. This process ideally results in meaningful gender integration.

UNECOSOC describes gender mainstreaming as:

*"the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality". (ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions, 1997/2)*

**1.3.14. Gender-Responsive Objectives** are programme and project objectives that are non-discriminatory, equally benefit women and men and aim at correcting gender imbalances.

**1.3.15. Literacy Gender Parity Index (GPI)** is the ratio of the female to male adult literacy rates which assesses improvement towards gender equity in literacy and the level of

learning opportunities available for women in relation to those accessible to men. It also serves as a significant indicator of the empowerment of women's role in society.

**1.3.16. Men's Engagement** is a programmatic approach in which men and boys take part as being beneficiaries, partners and as actively agents of change in the society in order to promote gender equality, women's empowerment and the transformation of inequitable definitions of masculinity. Men's engagement also includes broader efforts to promote equality with respect to care giving, fatherhood, and distribution of labour.

#### **1.4. EFL Learning and Gender**

In the period of globalization and technological development, education is meant to be the stepping stone of every human activity. It plays a very important role in the improvement of human wealth, as it leads to the individual's well-being and opportunities to guarantee a better life (Battle & Lewis, 2002, pp. 21-35). That is to say education is the warrantee to acquire the needed knowledge and skills which, through time, will enhance individuals' productivity and evolve their quality of life. The main concern of educators is to improve the quality of students' performance. Their main purpose is to make a difference at the local, regional, national and global levels.

During the last thirty years, in the area of foreign language learning and teaching, many studies were conducted in order to investigate the individual characteristics of foreign language learners that could influence their success in language learning (Vibulphol, 2004). The beliefs about language learning were one of the focuses of the study which attracted many researchers in this success which was depended less on materials, techniques, language analyses and much more on what was going on inside the brains of the learners and among the pupils in the classroom atmosphere (Stevick, 1980).

As Horwitz (1987) said that foreign language learners had some assumptions regarding language and language learning and the behaviour of language learners was strongly influenced by those beliefs during their language learning process. Thus, it was necessary to discover the beliefs of students so as to facilitate the work for teachers in designing the lessons which fitted the individual learners' needs, expectations and interests (Brown, 2009, pp. 46-60).

The majority of researchers concurred that language learners possessed different beliefs about language learning, and that their approaches or behaviours towards language learning might consciously or unconsciously be influenced by those language learners' different beliefs about language learning. For example, if a student believed that learning a foreign language "English" essentially consisted of learning only pronunciation, s/he would devote most of her/his time on learning the segmental (e.g. vowel and consonant phonemes) and suprasegmental phonemes (e.g. stress, pitch, and intonation) of a language in formal language learning. In order to facilitate the language learning process and motivate language learners to reveal their hidden energy, positive beliefs are beneficial to language learners. Nevertheless, the language learning process can be detrimentally hindered by negative beliefs to language learners.

Bialystok (1979) believed that language learning strategies took a fundamental part in learning a second or foreign language as they might help learners master the forms and functions necessitated for reception (listening and reading) or production (speaking and writing) in the second or foreign language, hence influencing success (cited in Hashemi, 2012). The mental and communicative procedures were included in the use of learners for language learning and use (Nunan, 1999).

When considering the function of gender in language acquisition, we must take into consideration that there are many ways in which it can have an effect on the use and development of language. Gender is a variable that can influence the use and the acquisition of language as a consequence of biological and psychological impacts, or social-cultural effects distinctions between the two.

Gender differences were found in many fields of human social and cognitive development. Studies elucidated that females were more interested in social activities than males, and that females were less competitive and more cooperative than males (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). Research studies also stated that both in second/foreign and first language acquisition females did well in comparison to males (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). Ditto according to language learning strategy studies, a number of researches in different cultures demonstrated that females used more frequent strategy than males, particularly the social-based strategies like in Oxford (1995) and Mohamed Amin (2000).

The beliefs learners hold, concerning the language they learn, are regarded as a very considerable factor, like many others, which determines whether the language learning is successful or not. Schoenfeld (1983) in Bernat & Llyod (2007) declared that one's belief systems, social cognitions, and metacognitions were a driving force for intellectual performance. The latter encompassed both the acquisition and the learning of the second/foreign language. Maftoon and Shakouri (2012), through their study, demonstrated that there was definitely a relationship between the students' belief system and their gender to choose the strategies to improve their second/ foreign language learning (p. 1208-1215).

Many other researchers also showed their interests in studying the relationship between language learning belief and gender. The study conducted by Rieger (2008) investigated 61 students in secondary school in Budapest. The results proved that language learners' belief about language learning was significantly influenced by both gender and the target language. Concerning gender, the only important difference that was found was the perceived importance of practicing the target language with authentic written text (p. 37).

While studying the factors that can effect in language learning, gender differences as being one of the socio-cultural factors was remarkably used in the foreign language. Lakoff (1975) in Coates (2007) claimed that there was an extensive range of gender differences in the processes of using and learning a foreign language, as he added that those differences were directly associated with the relative social strength of male speakers and the relative powerlessness of female speakers. Those meant that males were and still hold the power to speak freely due to their power in society whereas females preferred to speak as less as possible due to their weak position in society. A research by Moriam (2005) among Japanese and Bangladeshi learners resulted in that either male or female learners used some different speaking strategies while talking.

Moreover, researches showed that the influence of gender had a significant impact on the students' perception when it came to learning a foreign language. In this field, the investigations about gender were conducted where females were on the spot-light since they carried out more interests, positive behaviours and performances compared to males like in Dornyei & Shoaib (2005) and Aacken (1999).

These gender differences are owing to students' distinct levels of motivation, attitudes and anxiety towards language learning, much more influenced by their learning

characteristics and styles, lesson content and teaching strategies, social surroundings and helpful mechanisms, family impact and peer pressures, cognition levels, and so on (Williams, Burden & Lanvers, 2002, pp. 503-528). So as to improve learners' interests, motivation and outcomes in second/foreign language learning, the investigation of influential aspects essentially becomes significant particularly within the framework of a gender perspective.

Studies on adult learners in English as a foreign language with the aim of investigating gender effects demonstrated that teachers had to deal with the disability of students through carefully attending and approaching the learning environment as well as the gender of learners. It becomes clear that the more we deeply dig to investigate the language learning strategy differences, the more complex this issue becomes. Consequently, the expansion of our knowledge on individual learning strategy differences is so significant that more research is required.

In particular, the study of gender differences about the strategies used in learning English as a foreign language will illustrate the impact of the cultural background of second / foreign learners and the learning environments in which they learn the target language in selecting their own learning strategies according to their gender (Tercanlioglu, 2004, pp. 181-193).

Furthermore, the findings derived from the research examining students' views on the impact of their gender on language learning indicated that males and females commonly neither had similar views on language learning and the issue under investigation, nor seemed to react in the same way to their beliefs about the ability of learning a foreign language, the difficulty they faced in language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies and their dissimilar motivations and expectations. Males and females appear to significantly differ in their belief that multilingual people are very intelligent, with females agreeing more with that statement (Bernat and Lloyd, 2007, pp. 79-91).

Throughout many decades, it was argued that there was a relationship between gender and students' academic achievement (Eitle, 2005). It was affirmed that there was an achievement gap between boys and girls, in certain subjects; girls surpassed boys in showing better performance (Chambers & Schreiber, 2004). So, gender was a significant contributor to student achievement (McCoy, 2005; Peng; Hall, 1995). On one hand, in order to make it

clearer, Mantle-Bromley (1995) asserted that the positive attitudes and realistic language-related beliefs held by language learners pushed them to become more disposed to behave in a more productive way in language learning than those with negative attitudes (pp.372-386). On the other hand, language learners with negative attitudes and unrealistic language-related beliefs became less motivated to take part in EFL classroom activities.

### **1.5.Learners' Gender**

In the modern educational system, there is no problem of gender stratification; girls and boys share the same and equal chances to be at school. The matter of gender equality in the educational system is mainly confirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stating that everyone has the right to education without distinction of any kind, such as race, social origin or sex. At least for the large part of the world's population, there is no longer a problem with women's access to education.

At the elementary and secondary educational levels, female pupils academically performed better than the male ones and that tendency also extended to the higher educational levels. In spite of these optimistic evidences, there are some stereotypes with gender content and expectations in the educational system that still affect the academic performance of pupils and students.

The distinct traditional masculine and feminine themes clearly disclose the fact that there is gender inequality in schools, and pupils' academic performance is mainly determined by their gender. It is widely known that the subjects as mathematics, physics, computer science and engineering are better performed by boys, while in literature, languages, history and art girls do better. With respect to superior studies, this reality obviously shows that boys are going to decide to carry on their education mainly in natural and technical sciences, while girls will select language, humanitarian, pedagogical and art fields (Marc, W. J. & Morraine-Webb, J. 2019).

The differences in the educational system are clarified through two reasons. Particularly, in order to analyze and to take into consideration every gender issue, there are two sorts of approaches used to explain the differences either by biology or by upbringing. The biological argument is based on a statement that the brains of men and women are differently specialized according to the genetic heritage from their ancestors. Bearing in mind that the main activity of men was hunting, consequently the phylogenetic development was the cause for the specialization in the right hemisphere which is responsible for visual space

and mathematics skills. Concerning women, the specialization takes place in the left hemisphere which is responsible for verbal and cognitive skills. The brain's specialty for a woman is a reporter's role as a mother. In order to explain why boys are academically better performing than girls in some subjects and the vice versa, the supporters of the biological approach used these arguments, for instance boys do better in mathematics, geometrics and technical subjects while girls in languages and other humanitarian subjects.

The second approach states that socialization and upbringing are the two external processes which lead to the creation of gender differences in education, and particularly the socialization which runs at schools. School and kindergartens are especially important places. In this surrounding the child meets and recognizes her and his peers for the first time, s/he considers the classroom as a laboratory while playing and associating them to learn and discover the gender roles; the masculinity and the femininity. In this new environment, they are willing to have relations only with children of the same gender. Furthermore, the home life of a child is affected by the school, in a way that, it is going to be changed from being a home-concentrated life to a school-concentrated one.

Pupils' academic achievement is influenced by the environment they live and study in as well as their individual characteristics. The quality of the students' academic performance should be supported by the school personnel, members of the families and communities. This social assistance plays a fundamental role for the achievement of performance objectives of students at school (Goddard, 2003). In addition to the social structure, the average of the learners' academic success is increased the more their parents get involved in their children learning process (Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995).

Educational services are often intangible and difficult to be measured due to their importance which will change learners' knowledge, life skills and behaviour alteration (Tsinidou, Gerogiannis, & Fitsilis, 2010). They asserted that learners should reach a qualified and a developed level all throughout their learning process. The quality in education is so vital that there is no fixed definition is agreed upon in this field. The definition of quality of education differs across cultures (Michael, 1998).

Inside the classroom, students are eager to study in a safe and an opportunistic atmosphere and most teachers are seeking to supply learners with this kind of environment. Not all teachers pursue the same approach in their classrooms while teaching which are in a way or another influenced by some variables. Throughout the years, many researchers, such



as Rowan et al. (2002), West and Zimmerman (1987) and Young (2001) developed ideas, trying to relate the relationship between gender identities and the teaching techniques.

In other words, research revealed that “gender is something we do” West and Zimmerman (1987). Young (2001) also emphasized on the idea that both boys and girls learnt to “do” gender from social interactions and contexts that affected the child’s daily experiences, such as home, school, sports, and society/media. Rowan et al.’ research (2002) in approved that “gendered identities are multiple and socially constructed” (p. 61).

In addition, the different social institutions a person belongs to during his/her lifetime always contribute in the construction and the reconstruction of gender identities. Teachers may base their treatments to their pupils on special approaches and gender identities, which may be biased towards a specific group or gender of students. When the teacher involves such a bias in the classroom, students in turn either accept or create bias among them.

Few centuries ago, the differences between girls and boys in the school were taken into consideration (Frank et al., 2003). Several debates were conducted on this concern by taking into consideration different perspectives depending on the social-political and economic context (Skelton, 2001). The importance dedicated to the topic also differed from one country to another. Compared to the USA, UK and Australia, the topic moved onto the agenda in the Netherlands rather late and the reactions were reserved, defensive, and indifferent or negative (Veendrick et al., 2004).

The tagging of the issue also differs with the situation which is assumed and can thus vary from “gender differences”, “gender gap” or “differential levels of success for girls versus boys” to “the girls’ problem”, on one hand, and more recently “the boys’ problem”, “failing boys” or “underachieving boys” on the other hand (Younger et al., 2002; Smith, 2003).

Several fundamental aspects are involved and taken into account by various researchers about the differences that exist between boys and girls in the school careers. The question that arises is that to what extent boys’ and girls’ achievements in fact vary from each other. Concerning the situation in England, Francis and Skelton (2005) claimed that gender differences of the learners were much more influenced by the social milieu they lived in and by their family characteristics.

Moreover, different educational areas had different claims to the gender issue. The second language acquisition (SLA) theorists assumed that female learners showed a potential superiority in the second language learning process. They showed a positive attitude toward linguistic arts, as it was seen in their academic success, which contrasted to less-scoring males who indicated a negative attitude towards the arts of language.

Male and female students were also different from each other in terms of their interactions with their teachers. For example, most studies, whether being conducted in the distant past such as Meece (1987) or recently conducted such as Francis (2004), showed that boys get involved in classroom interaction more than girls. In fact, it was said that even teachers may find themselves getting engaged in discussions with male students because the latter responded and initiated communication with their teachers more than female students did (Meece, 1987).

Even Rashidi and Rafiee Rad (2010) noticed in an Iranian context that boys were more willingly to interact with their teachers. Male students, however, preferred to volunteer to answer the questions, even if they did not know the exact answer. Similarly, they reported that they were more potentially taking longer turns (p. 93-120).

However, according to Chavez (2000) female students were less likely to be humorous than males. Female students were more interested in satisfying the teacher or meeting expectations. They preferred to take shorter and partial turns but were more likely to be addressed in full sentences by the teacher (pp. 1019-1058).

Another discussion also drew attention to another aspect in gender differences which was that whether the latter was increased or decreased throughout the recent years. According to Gillborn and Mirza (2000), the difference increased in favour of girls. Nevertheless, Gorard et al. (2001) wondered if boys ever over performed girls over the past 25 years. Smith (2003) tackled another feature which was quite curious the “moral panic” that arose when boys were most recently found to achieve high marks less than girls (pp. 95-98).

According to Driessen (2007), teachers react in a better way with girls for example they say “Well done, girls!” However, other methods were directly taken to restore the level of achievement to the “standard” for boys (p. 183-203). There seemed to be something to be done about the leadership girls were given and the current differences that must be eliminated according to “the male repair agenda” approach by Durdant-Hollamby (2002).

According to the above mentioned analysis, another question should be raised and largely spoken about which is the “problem of boys”. According to Smith (2003) and Van Langen and Dekkers (2005), the subject was not discussed in a sufficient detailed way but the conclusion should be instead that boys better performed than girls with respect to certain aspects of education such as mathematics and science, however, girls performed better than boys with regard to other aspects such as language and behaviour.

It also seems that the period students spend in their school should be taken into consideration, since the scientific subjects like mathematics, physics and science are selected by only few girls during the secondary school, for instance, these choices clearly limit the number of possibilities for subsequent follow-up open to them (cf. Bae, et al., 2001; Dekkers, Bosker & Driessen, 2000; OECD, 2004; Ofsted, 2003; Van de gaer, 2006; Van Langen, Bosker & Dekkers, 2006).

Latterly, Van Langen, Driessen & Dekkers (2008) published the results of an internationally comparative tendency study about boys’ and girls’ different achievement and attainment in school. Based on national databases, internationally comparative studies such as PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS2 and other research sources, they provided a detailed inventory of the situation in the Netherlands, Flanders, the United Kingdom, the United States, Sweden, Australia, Denmark, Germany and France during the last decade (pp. 3-15).

With regard to gender differences in achievement, the explanation is as the following: girls are better than boys in reading and language. The differences are from small to average and are relevant to all the surveyed countries and at all stages of primary and secondary educations. However, boys are usually better than girls in math and science tests, but again these differences are much smaller if we compare them to those of reading and language, this pilot also completely vanishes in the secondary school years in many countries. Concerning information processing, problem solving skills and general study skills, the representation is more widespread which means that sometimes boys have small lead, at other times the girls. It seems that the above claims were not changed much over the past 10 years.

Concerning education participation according to level, a fairly consistent statement took a place; practically, in all of the previously studied countries girls participated more than boys in the upper levels of secondary schooling. Nonetheless, the differences did not occupy much space for all countries. Besides, the countries, where the studies were undertaken,

witnessed the improvement of participation in higher education among the pupils, but such an enhancement was much more among girls rather than boys. Due to that increase, women became more eager to participate in higher education than men in virtually all countries.

Carrington et al. (2007) inspected if the gender of the teacher actually had relation to their pupils' success with more than 300 secondary school students in England. When the students were asked if their teachers treated them all in the same fairly way, 83% of the girls and 72% of the boys answered affirmatively. When asking the students about their teacher gender, 73% of the boys taught by female teachers replied positively compared with 71% of boys taught by male teachers. The corresponding figures for the girls were 83% and 78% respectively. The issue concerning the participation in the secondary and higher education that was described was quite different through the last ten years. Female pupils made clear invasions during that period (pp. 397-413).

With respect to student flows, repeating classes and returns on higher education, the following results were published. In Dutch, Flemish, Swedish and the United States secondary education boys' schooling was much more belated because they considerably repeated the class more than girls. Speaking about the return on higher education, again, in the Netherlands was higher for female students than for males: female graduates were almost a year younger than their male counterparts and their studies were less between three and six months. Furthermore, there were more females with diploma from high education than males. Over the last decade these phenomena became more remarkable.

In the United States, returns on higher education were also higher for women than for men, which were evaluated by the short period of time female students spent to graduate and the lower percentage of female drop-outs. According to international figures from the European Union, the number of men in the 18-24 ages was higher than women who left school early, although there were significant differences between countries in the total size of the group. Whereas the size of the group shrank in most countries over the last ten years, the difference by gender increased to some extent.

With regard to gender differences in education participation according to courses and sectors the next depiction comes out. Male students overwhelmingly learn better science, technology and economics subjects to study, though interest for those modules was also decreased throughout the last years. Female students were more willingly to study art and

languages but with only limited efforts spent on science and technology subjects, apart from American secondary school girls, although these interests do not extend into higher education. The above applies to all countries, but not exactly to the same extent.

Robinson (1992) reconsidered the fact that teachers' perceptions of discipline in gender-based classrooms were based on the stereotypical belief that male and female teachers held different disciplinary measures. The participants were 720 students and 110 teachers from secondary schools and colleges in Tasmania. The results showed that the techniques teachers followed about classroom discipline were mainly based on the students' gender. In general, girls were regarded by teachers to be inactive, submissive and controllable. The active, aggressive and domineering behaviour of boys was seen as an annoying problem for the most of teachers.

A lot of male teachers were worried about the right way to deal with the girls' misbehaviour, which they considered to be unsuitable for them. They said that they found it easier to deal with boys who were a concern, since boys reacted more to their aggressive and short-term threats. Though, male teachers also applied the same tactics on difficult girls as they did with male students.

According to the previously conducted studies' results, we can conclude that during the last years, in the countries where the studies took place, the educational level was improved. The population was divided into two parts; the biggest one participated in higher education and secondary school, whereas the small part left school without having a diploma. The results of those studies showed that that progress was mainly contributed to the female pupils more than the male ones. Girls can be said to have exceeded males to the extent that, at the international level, there was a certain degree of inequality in gender-based pedagogy that works against male students.

During the past ten years, boys' position in education was critical in comparison to girls because of their weak level, academic dropout and few returns on education. Generally noticed, education attainment points more or less in the same direction; girls have a slight to moderate advantage over boys in reading and language, while their academic decrease in math and science subjects varied from being non-existent to limited.

Burusic, Babarovic, and Seric (2012) examined whether students' academic achievement was influenced by their gender as well as that of their teachers in 844 Croatian

secondary schools. In Croatian secondary schools the percentage of students taught by male teachers varied from 4.5% to 6%. The scores and the standardised knowledge tests of almost all the studied subjects in the curriculum were used to determine school achievement. The obtained results indicated that the achievement of girls was more than that of boys, and the students who were taught by female teachers got better results than the ones taught by male teachers. On the whole, the results revealed that students' gender differences in school achievement were strongly affected by their teachers' gender.

Marsh, Martin, and Cheng (2008) also reviewed the effects of teachers' gender on students' motivation amongst 964 (48% females and 52% males) students from five Australian coeducational government secondary schools. In total, 101 classrooms, taught by a total of 69 teachers (58% female and 42% male), were studied. Depending on the matching hypothesis that male teachers could motivate boys and female teachers could motivate girls, the effect of student motivation varied according to the gender of the teacher. Working with the gender-stereotypic hypotheses girls were generally more positively motivated than boys, but all of the school subjects the female students studied were affected by gender differences. Both male and female students said that they had better relationships with female teachers than with male teachers; however there was little or no confirmation to back up the hypothesis that boys received a better academic education with male teachers (pp. 78-95).

Here again, throughout Kesler and Tatar's (2007), Schiff and Tatar's (2003) and Tatar's (1998) research, it was proved that female students received greater appreciation for their teachers and assigned them a more positive influence than their male peers, who had a negative impact on their teachers. Many studies reported that girls, as compared to boys of the same age, were more willing to develop interpersonal relationships (Gilligan, 1982) and that girls stated that they usually had a very important person in their lives except their parents (Greenberger et al., 1998) might assist those findings. According to the highly existence of female teachers in school staff may help us to understand why female students give more importance to the teachers than their male counterparts.

Motivating students is another aspect that should be tackled in further studies. Both teachers' enthusiasm for teaching their students and the knowledge they possess about the subject matter play a vital role in affecting their students desire to be in the class and in enhancing their achievement. However, some of the decisions taken by the teachers are based on their personal experiences and the objectives they want to achieve are all influenced by

their gender. Teachers are able to choose limitless activities and techniques to guarantee the success of all their pupils without any exception and to avoid the gender gap that will be discussed next.

### **1.6.Learners' Achievement Gender Gap**

Throughout the years, various researchers investigated a widespread significant issue which was the gender gap and students' achievement differences. Several aspects can contribute in the existence of gender students' achievement gaps. Lam et al. (2009), along with many other researchers, pointed out: "Although there are no genetic differences between the genders, girls' performance is usually superior to that of boys in terms of early reading attainment" (pp. 565-578).

The significant question is concerning the gender of the teacher and its importance to the way students view mutual trust, and how gender influences the reciprocal relationship between the teacher and the student so that their learning can be stimulated and motivated. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the teacher's gender along several dimensions in the communication and interactions between a student and his or her teacher. We are particularly interested in differential effects of male and female teachers on male and female learners and in investigating why such a gender gap exists among pupils. Along with many studies, it was found that the significance of teachers' gender (eg: Martin and Marsh, 2005), among many other differences, there were three important notions: the sex-stereotypic notion, the sex-opposite notion and the sex-invariant notion.

The sex-stereotypic notion means that female learners achieve better when being taught by female teachers, while male learners perform better when taught by male teachers. Noddings (1984) proposed that female teachers were more thoughtful and helpful than male teachers. That hypothesis was often mediated as anecdotes in the media (Carrington and Skelton, 2003) and along with teachers (Lahelma, 2000). The role models in socialization had their background in role theory (Merton, 1957), but the idea that teachers were considered to be the role models to their pupils, had meagre empirical support (Hutchings et al., 2008). However, Martin and Marsh (2005) found that female pupils actually developed better relationships with female teachers than with their male teachers.

The sex-opposite notion refers to the commonsense ideas about female students as seducers, as well as the concept of the stereotype involving female teachers and childish boys

(Francis and Skelton, 2001). At the basis of these perceptions are the emotional relationships between the teacher and students of the opposite gender, though it is hard to find obvious confirmation of this. Einarsson and Granström (2002) discovered that male teachers gave more attention to female students, compared to males, as they got older, whereas female teachers always paid more attention in classrooms to males than to females, regardless of their school level. Moreover, adolescent male students began conversation with female teachers more than with their male teachers, compared with female students. They proposed a rather speculative explanation: 'slight elements of sexual enticement could be at work' (p.125), but also other explanations are possible. Younger et al. (1999) found that female students at this age interacted in more curious and inquisitive ways.

The sex-invariant notion is the fact that the gender of the teachers does not influence students' volition, motivation, academic work, engagement, involvement and achievement. Instead, it is the pedagogy that affects but not the teacher's gender who is in the classroom with his/her learners. Teachers' professional role is not to prefer some students to others. The supporters of this hypothesis stated that there was little evidence to confirm that teachers' gender could influence students' educational attitudes and achievements. Lahelma (2000) discovered that both for the 13-14 year-olds and for the 17-18 year-olds, it was not gender that appeared to be essential in learners' perceptions about teachers (p.177). Martin and Marsh (2005) concluded that female and male students became no more involved in classes taught by males than they were in classes taught by females: "the data support the gender-invariant model" (p. 330). Finally, Ehrenberg et al. (1995) found that matching teachers and students by gender had little impact on their achievement.

While investigating the male and female students' achievements differences, the main objective of our study is again to know if the gender of the teacher contributes any effects on the students' learning process. Such as the research conducted by Lam (2009) and Arnold (1998) obtained the same results. In Arnold's (1998) study, a sample of 20 male and 20 female teachers from Minnesota were randomly chosen to determine whether the gender of the teacher affected the grades male and female students attained. While, Lam et al.'s (2009) study was conducted in Hong Kong and 34 other countries and regions, the findings of those studies remained the same and did not change over time and space.

Arnold (1998) stated that the most significant aspect in defining learners' grades was seen by teachers to be students' achievement. The results obtained from the study indicated



that there were differences between the scores assigned to male and female learners, which referred to females having better achievement than males did. Besides, the grades given to male and female students by male and female teachers were fairly the same, whereas, male teachers were inclined to assign higher grades to some extent.

With regard Lam et al.'s (2009) study, the results pointed out that both male and female pupils taught by female teachers considerably surpassed pupils taught by male teachers "in terms of overall reading comprehension performance on understanding the literary passage and the informational passage" (p. 756). Other findings from Lam et al.'s (2009) research indicated that female students had better reading performances more than males in spite of the gender of the teacher. Moreover, both of the students developed more positive attitudes towards reading and perceived that improving the reading abilities was very important to the future when taught by female teachers more than those taught by male ones (Lam et al., 2009). Thus, UNESCO (2009) stated: "The gender of teachers and educators influence the gender roles of their students thus impacting their educational outcomes".

In the same way, Krieg (2005) established that students of female teachers outperformed students of male teachers. Extra results from Preston's (1979) research showed that female teachers rated both male and female reading abilities more generously than male teachers did. Lastly, both male and female students inconsiderably scored the tests higher than those of male teachers (p. 524). According to those studies, it was supposed that male teachers were essential to have; yet they did not have the influence to motivate students and to make school and learning more attractive to males or ameliorate reading performance. Simply, both female and male students had higher educational attainments when being taught by women.

The question that arises is whether these classroom dynamics differ when the pupil and the teacher share the same gender. Assignment to a same-gender teacher could be educationally significant for many reasons. For instance, it can affect students' engagement or behaviour through role-model impacts and stereotype threat. In addition, same-gender teachers may also convey different expectations to both male and female learners in their classrooms. Previous researches investigated the empirical importance of these dynamics by evaluating the reduced-form influence of assignment to a same-gender teacher on educational achievements (e.g., Bettinger and Long, 2005; Canes and Rosen, 1995; Rothstein, 1995).

The gender dynamics in classrooms are also often described as a significant “environmental” source of the gender differences in educational outcomes (e.g., AAUW, 1992; Sommers, 2000). There are various structural interpretations for why assignment to a same gender teacher, mainly, can impact both males’ and females’ students learning process. And understanding the distinct features between these theoretical explanations is an important antecedent to designing well-targeted policy involvements.

There is a general hypothesis which suggests that male and female teachers hold exclusive biases about the way they involve their male and female learners in the classroom. For instance, there is controversial proof based on classroom observations that teachers tend to offer more praise, feedback and remediation in response to male students’ comments while less gratitude in response to females’ comments (e.g., Klein, 2004; Sadker and Sadker, 1994). Likewise, cognitive process theories (e.g., Jones and Dindia, 2004) proposed that teachers might delicately demonstrate that they had different academic expectations of males and females. Those biased expectations became self-fulfilling when students responded to them. In other words, teacher expectations influenced student performance; positive expectations influenced performance positively, and negative expectations influenced performance negatively.

The available proof on the extent to which male and female teachers share any particular bias in how they deal with their male and female teachers is more limited and contradictory. For instance, in a new review of some works, Jones and Dindia (2004) mentioned various small-scale studies to back up that pretension and concluded that a teacher’s gender was “the most obvious factor that seemed to shape gender equity in the classroom” (pp. 443-471). Though, those researches mainly focused on post-secondary settings, in a previous review of research covering different grade levels, Brophy (1985) concluded: “teachers do not systematically discriminate against students of the opposite sex” (p. 137).

A second category of explanations of the educational importance of the teacher’s gender includes the way students perceive their teacher’s gender and not how that teacher really behaves. For instance, the possible presence of a “role model” impact means that students will increase their intellectual involvement, behaviour and academic performance when they are assigned to a same-gender teacher. A modern variation on this argument is the

phenomenon known as “stereotype threat” which refers to a situation in which students’ performance suffers when they are afraid to be seen through a negative stereotype threat lens.

During the last decade, the gender gap concerning educational achievement in public education became an international issue, with male students lagging behind their female classmates on several significant indicators of school achievement (Burns & Bracey, 2001; Clark, Oakley & Adams, 2006; Kafer, 2004). The topic of male students’ underachievement in recent years attracted the attention of the national media in the United States as it was also extensively investigated in other countries around the world.

### **1.7.Examining International Gender Gap Data**

The previous generation noticed that there was a focus to provide girls with more support, encouragement and equal opportunities in the area of education and career development. While, at the international level, boys faced more academic difficulties as they attained lower levels in the most of the studied subjects according to their test score, grades and dropout frequencies (Australian Council for Educational Research, 1997; Gray, Peng, Steward, and Thomas, 2004; U. S. Department of Education [D.O.E.], 2004). Moreover, male learners had a considerably higher incidence of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), special education recommendations and placements, behavioural issues and school discipline referrals (Kafer, 2004; National Centre for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2006). Females outperformed males not only in secondary school graduation rates, but in university enrolment and degree completion (NCES, 2006; U.S. D.O.E., 2004).

In the worldwide, fourth grade female pupils considerably surpassed males in each G8 country (Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States) that contributed in the 2001 Progress in International Literacy Study (PIRLS) (NCES, 2004). Fifteen year old females did better than males among the 25 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries participating in both the 2000 and 2003 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (NCES, 2006). In twenty-one of these countries, the number of female graduating from university exceeded the number of males (Whitmire, 2006).

Undergraduate enrolment in the United States of females to males is at present about 134:100 (NCES, 2005) with many major universities enrolling 60% of more female students. The college enrolment gender gap is projected to augment through 2015 and beyond. More

females than males join up in graduate schools, and the percentage in many professional schools such as medicine and law greatly increased during the latest years (NCES, 2006).

The United Kingdom and Australia shared the same achievement statistics. In Australia, research indicated that male students did not perform as their female counterparts in each aspect of literacy; reading, writing listening, and speaking, although there did not seem to be important differences in mathematics achievement by gender in Australia (Parliament of Australia, 2002a). Approximately 80% of suspensions and expulsions from school were males, and they comprised about 2/3 of the “school leavers,” students who did not fulfil secondary education (Parliament of Australia, 2002b). Over 56% of students enrolled in higher education were females (Parliament of Australia, 2002c).

Longitudinal studies in the United Kingdom pointed out that females made better improvement than males in reading, mathematics, verbal and non-verbal reasoning (UNESCO, 2004). Data collected from national assessments at the age of seven revealed that females had a lead early in reading and this gain was sustained at ages 11 and 14. In addition, about 15% more girls than boys achieved high grades in English examinations at age 16 during their secondary education (U. K. Government, 2006).

Besides achievement data, there are data related to students’ attitudes and motivation which demonstrate that males as a group do not appear to take school into consideration in their lives as females do (Clark et al., 2006). In a recent national study of U.S. 12<sup>th</sup>-graders over the course of a decade, male students constantly reported, at a much higher rate than female students, that they ‘fooled around’ in class, failed to complete assignments and rarely tried to do their best work (NCES, 2005). The same study also reported that females defined homework as being more meaningful and interesting than the males did, and more often considered the importance of their schoolwork as related to their futures (NCES, 2005).

In the United States, girls attain better than boys in measures of reading achievement whereas generally underperform in science and mathematics. The most significant interpretation for these gaps includes the gender-based interactions between students and their teachers. Such interactions can influence teacher perceptions, students’ achievement and involvement and this, what will be empirically discussed all throughout the present study.

At the academic level, female students constantly surpassed males, and the males’ behaviours influenced their academic success. We can ask some questions like how students

considered their learning, and what role their learning played in their future objectives and plans. The students regarded their education as being a significant part of their future plans, and also perceived their education as a positive experience.

According to the latest population survey released by the U.S. Bureau of Labour, the teaching gender gap still exists. Male teachers represented just 2.3% of pre-K and kindergarten teachers, 18.3% of the elementary and middle school teacher population, and 42% of the high school level teaching staff. These numbers were down from 2007, but proposed a clear female majority in the teaching profession.

In the last years, females were increasingly supported to get involved in typically male-dominated domains, like math and science, but males were not encouraged to be engaged in female-dominated professions, like teaching. As indicated by Robert Cappuzzo (2011), an early childhood education professor at the University of Alaska-Anchorage, “We don’t give boys the same opportunities that we give girls.” Due to this discrepancy, males might be reluctant to choose teaching as their future profession.

There is also a disappointing stigma related to male teachers who teach the earlier grades. According to Jeffrey Daitsman, a researcher at the Centre for Practitioner Researcher at National-Louis University, “male teachers responsible for younger students are accused of being “not masculine”. The stereotype supports the thinking that, since male teachers are expected to be disciplinarians, they are “not masculine” if they want to teach children who are not well disciplined in most of the time.

Female students attain better results when being taught by female teachers, if females with an unnoticed tendency for achievement are more likely to be matched with female teachers. Equally, if males with a lower propensity for success are more likely to be assigned to male teachers, the estimated benefits of a male teacher will be downward biased. This study addresses these concerns by examining the impacts of a teacher’s gender on students’ learning achievement.

In addition to gender biases, males are often deterred from teaching because of the salary associated with being a teacher. Several males are influenced by the traditional pressure of being the “breadwinner,” and teaching is not seen to be a lucrative job. Bryan G. Nelson, the head of the Minneapolis-based non-profit, MenTeach said: “If we started paying elementary teachers [a year](#), \$150,000 we’d see a massive influx of male teachers.”

All in all, as education reforms are increasingly advocated, teaching is proving to be a very difficult, challenging and demanding profession. Starting from the stress of executing new policies, to the constant pressure of competition and accountability, teaching needs a brave heart and a strong personality since it is not a job for the faint of heart.

### **1.8. Teachers' Gender in the Educational Frame**

Teachers cannot be dissociated from the schools they teach at and from the academic results of schools. It would thus be logical to evaluate teachers' performance depending on the results obtained from the students' assessments results. In case schools and teaching subjects get highly classified, teachers are pleased and rewarded. As teachers feel happy when being rewarded because they make more efforts, they should also be blamed when there is little performance among students. According to the studies done in this field, there is evidence that students' academic achievement is highly effected due to their teachers. They play a vital role in the educational accomplishment because the teacher is eventually responsible for translating policy into action and principles based on practice while interacting with students (Afe, 2001).

The studies of Wright, Horn and Sanders (1997) stated that the most important factor which affects student success is their teacher. Teachers, in a way or another, are responsible for imparting knowledge, values and skills during the learning process. If the teacher is not effective, students will reach insufficient academic progress. This is without forgetting the similar or different individual abilities students have in academic achievement.

Effective language teaching is usually based on a successful interaction between teacher and student which will also enhance student motivation to learn a language. Since the teacher's role is so important to achieve a successful fulfilment of language teaching curriculum program, this role, if not done in the right way, will fall short for example teachers behaving in an authoritative way towards languages and especially toward the English language be it either an ESL or an EFL.

Teachers of English usually evaluate their success and failure against the rules created by others within their own job. Most of teachers have personal teaching styles which are determined by how to provide instruction, assess students, choose the appropriate content according to the student's level of competency, and meet the needs of their students.

Secondary schools comprise many different English language teachers. Sometimes, there are novice teachers of English and others more experienced ones whose English language proficiency varies from one teacher to another. Both of the two types of teachers may hold differences at the level of their teaching experience, professional qualifications, personality traits, and other individual variances. Another inevitable factor teachers share or differ in, which also influences the classroom behaviour, teaching styles or daily interactions between the teachers and their students, is the teachers' gender.

Teachers' classroom management, teachers' content knowledge, teachers' instructional styles are all influenced by teachers' gender. Throughout the last decades, the awareness about the way pupils learnt, the appreciation of selecting the best effective teaching and classroom management techniques were extremely augmented.

It is well known that teachers share their experiences with their colleagues, but learning is very individual and only effective teachers can be able to discover the differences among students and work hard to provide the optimal learning experience for each one of them. Besides, both teaching and learning can only be effective if the classroom is well managed and the teacher is sure about the knowledge s/he is going to transmit to her/his students, in this way teachers can make a significant contribution to the quality of education (Cohen, Raudenbush, & Ball, 2003, pp. 119-142).

In general, there is a considerable deal of researches that were conducted to focus on the gender differences between male and female secondary school teachers. Demetriou, Wilson, and Winterbottom (2009) noticed that male and female teachers used different strategies to deal with challenges such as disruptive and disengaged students. Female teachers tended to go to greater lengths to reengage learning while male teachers were more inclined just to deal with the subject they were teaching, and hoped that would attract their students' attention enough to get them engaged in their learning (pp. 449-473).

Green, Shriberg, and Farber (2008) indicated that when female teachers faced similar behavioural challenges, their behaviour was more severe than that of male teachers. According to them since male teachers tended to be more controlling, they succeeded to manage disruptive behaviour more effectively than their female colleagues. Robinson (1992) also pointed out that a classroom discipline practice was an area where gender-based strategies was used to deal with disruptive behaviours; which means that the punishment

depends on who behaves in a disruptive way; either girls or boys. Girls who did not emphasize the appropriate stereotypical behaviours had the worst consequences.

Nevertheless, the functions which are likely to be performed in the learning environment are another difference between male and female secondary school teachers. Rice and Goessling (2005) pointed out that society had stereotypical roles that males were expected to fill in the education sector (e.g. managers, supervisors, or physical education teachers). Skelton (2009) backed up this idea through claiming that secondary teaching was seen as a women's profession based on the stereotypical expectation that education was a women's job because it involved childcare.

Smith (2004) supposed that male students needed male role models in the secondary schools. For this reason there is a need for a call for more male teachers and that men and women differ in their ways of teaching, and set unrealistic and confusing expectations on men to model masculinity while doing a job that is usually regarded as the work of women. Skelton (2003) argued that the male role model as a simplistic and naive concept had its roots in theories of socialization in the role of gender, it separately considered masculinity and femininity in men and women respectively.

According to Rivkin, Hanusheck and Kain (2005), there was never a general agreement on the specific teacher's factors that affect students' academic achievement. Researchers investigated the effects of teachers' characteristics like gender, educational efficiency and teaching experience on students' academic achievement with different results. Akiri and Ugborugbo (2008) found that there was a significant relationship between teachers' gender and students' academic achievement. This is contrary to what Dee cited in Akiri and Ugborugbo (2008).

Adeyemi (2010) and Yala and Wanjohi (2011) discovered that students' academic achievement could be mainly foretold according to the teachers' experience and educational qualifications. On the contrary, Ravkin et al. (2005) found that there was no significant relationship between teachers' teaching experience and educational qualifications and students' achievement. Etsy (2005) study in Ghana revealed that students' low academic achievement was due to teachers' incidences of lateness to school, absenteeism, and failure to complete the syllabi. Scholars stated that the academic performance of students during their learning process in the subjects they studied was influenced by a range of teachers'



characteristics such as their qualification, age, experience, and gender.

Teacher's gender is a concern that has theoretical and pedagogical implications for EFL education, and receives a big attention in language learning strategy research (Young and Oxford, 1997). Broadly, according to some researches the selection of the teaching strategies is affected by certain attitudes and beliefs (Oxford, 1990) and cultural background (Oxford, 1996) which in turn is going to have an impact on students too, but the most influencing factors are motivation and gender (Kaylani, 1996). Teachers' gender, in a way or another, affects the educational processes, the teaching and the learning ones which are based on teacher-student communications.

Over the last years, various researchers became more interested in investigating the crucial influence of teachers' gender in language classrooms. Many studies resulted in suggesting that the fact that language students' achievement as well as their attitudes and motivation toward learning foreign languages was significantly related to the gender of their teacher (Dee, 2006; Lavin et al., 2012).

Apart from the dichotomy that characterizes 'gender' as a concept (as in biological male/female), the teacher's gender is coupled with a host of other most stereotypical male/female personality traits and teaching styles that are usually determined and evaluated by the students who are the receivers in the teaching process, such as Rahimi et al. (2013) and Antecol et al. (2012). Indeed, no teacher can teach a subject without making some contributions to a gender bias or an attitude toward the subject to his/ her students (Brosh, 1996).

Both Curtain and Pesola (1994) propose that foreign language teachers today need a mixture of teaching methods, competencies and basic qualities that may be unprecedented in preparing language teachers, and that strong professional development is critical. However, many educators will not consider gender training to be an important aspect of a teacher's professional development (Dee, 2006). Though, what appears to attract many students' attention more than teachers' teaching skills or physical appearance is their gender. In secondary education, students incline to prefer having teachers of the reverse gender because it makes the psychological environment of classes more positive and comfortable (Lawrenz, 1987).

Based on a bit different remark, Raacke and Raacke (2007) investigated a sample of 5070 professors from 117 colleges and universities in the U.S. The information gathered were based on the following categories: the overall figure of ratings, all professors' qualifications, professors' average easiness, helpfulness and clarity, and the professors' physical attractiveness. The results obtained from their research showed that there was an important relationship between professors' qualities and their physical attractiveness.

Furthermore, Raacke and Raacke (2007) discovered that students from different grade levels took into account the category of physical attractiveness to be a favourite characteristic. Actually, university professors' physical attractiveness category included not only the appearance but many other characteristics like the professors' reputation, student-teacher interaction, grading distribution, and fairness in the classroom. Eventually, female teachers were estimated to be more attractive than male teachers; as well as, the ones who used a simplified way to explain the lessons.

Gender is a teacher-related factor that is frequently studied because of its significant impact on teaching and learning, such as interaction between teacher and student, including miscommunication, teacher fairness towards male and female students, student participation in class and the whole student performance at school.

Appleby (2014) pointed out that gender patterns were evidently an effective element in the educational structure, since gender was constantly allied with language teaching and learning. She also stated that the significance of gender depended in the knowledge that gender was directly linked to different opportunities and barriers that constituted the composition of language teachers.

According to Dee (2006), the gender of the teacher did not only form the interaction between teachers and students, but was also a vital factor in depicting the teacher as a 'gender-specific role model'. He claimed that when the gender of the teacher matched that of the students, they were more likely to actively participate in the class, be on their best behaviour and perform well; and the high test marks could prove this theory. On the contrary, Francis et al. (2008) proposed that it was not important for students to be taught by their matching teachers, claiming that gender matching did not result in effective teaching and better academic performance but rather giving more priority to the individual abilities the teacher possessed.

To put teaching skills and student academic performance aside for an instance, let us raise the following question: how do students generally perceive the idea of a teacher's gender? Lawrenz (1987) noted that the students' perceptions of their preference for their teachers demonstrated attraction to the opposite gender. In other words, female students preferred being taught by male teachers, and the vice versa. Lavin et al. (2012) indicated that students linked effective teaching with gender characteristics or stereotypes of their teachers with an emphasis on that; actually, the specific attributes of the relevant teacher had a gender-based priority on the students' gender.

This means that for male students some features in the teacher appear to be more significant than other ones, and the other way around. On one hand, female students often give more attention to the creativity of teachers in presenting their lesson and their passionate and enthusiastic attitude towards the subject, as well as being well organized. On the other hand, it seems that male learners concentrate on other judgment areas, such as whether teachers are fair, responsible and humorous (Ogden et al., 1994). According to some studies, teachers of both genders incline to interact with male students more than with female ones in the classroom. The researches which were published in the 80's and the 90's confirmed that bias treatment which extended from primary schools till secondary schools and universities.

However, another study was conducted about the effect of gender on the models of classroom interaction. It resulted in that the communication which happened in the classroom was strongly linked to the gender of either the teacher or of the students, and that males did not behave in the same way their like female peers did (Rashidi and Naderi, 2012). For instance, male teachers used more clear questions while, female teachers asked many questions that were in relation to the previous lesson. Another example showed that female teachers were more in contact with their students; be it either in single-gender or mixed-gender classes.

The researchers investigated other different situations by implementing various examples like the following two ones; male teachers communicated more with male pupils than females in mixed gender classes, however female teachers were more helpful, patient and supportive, they encouraged more interaction by giving their students more compliments and using less ruling methods. Hence, it was significantly proved that teacher-student communication was and still influenced by gender.

Sprague and Massoni (2005) argued that when students' gender-role expectations were not fulfilled by a female teacher the latter was criticized in a hostile way in comparison to male teachers. Yet, Tieman and Rankin-Ullock (1985) proposed that teachers in non-traditional professional fields for example: men in liberal arts and women in business were expected to perform better because they succeeded in unexpected domains, based on their gender.

Whereas, Abrami and d'Appollonia (1999) and d'Appollonia and Abrami (1997) found that teachers' gender differences might not affect students' learning process. This remark was supported by Centra and Caubatz (2000) and Kite (2001). Those results were also consistent with Kong (2008), who announced that there was no evidence in studies relating test results to teachers' gender.

Nonetheless, the research done by Arbuckle and Williams (2003) showed that male teachers performed better than female teachers when it came to classroom management and imposing authority on students by using the right voice tones while teaching. This view was the same as that of Martin and Smith (1990) who argued that male teachers' performance was highly classified than that of their female colleagues.

Teacher gender is also systematically related to class environment. Many studies like the ones of McCandless, Bush & Carden (1976) and Etaugh & Hughes (1975) indicated that male teachers provided a more positive atmosphere only for male students in the classroom, whereas for Stake and Katz (1982) female teachers were inclined to provide a positive atmosphere for all students in the class. After observing 40 class sessions, Einarsson and Granström (2002) opined that male teachers gave more attention to female students while female teachers constantly did it for male students.

There are also reports indicating that even teachers hold gender biased perceptions about their students' abilities and characteristics. Parker-Price and Claxton (1996) investigated the way teachers perceived views about the skills of their students. They found that male teachers believed that male students were visually superior whereas female ones were present to offer help in the classroom. Mullola et al. (2012) also argued that male teachers considered male students as being more active, competent and held a big teach ability than females. They were so rigorous in their perceptions of the characteristics of girls.

Hopf & Hatzichristou (1999) claimed that female teachers assessed more positive interpersonal behaviour among boys and assessed their adjustment as less problematic with regard to different aspects of their academic and psychosocial performance than their male counterparts. While other female teachers did not openly reveal what they were thinking about the differences among the pupils but still believing that male students held better quantitative skills.

Although it is clear that teachers do not perceive and treat all their students in the same way, it is not enough evident how this discriminatory treatment affects the performance of students in examinations. There was a great literature which dealt with the different results of exams by gender of student, but there was no study linking those results to teachers' gender and its interaction with students' gender. If male teachers, as mentioned above, treat students differently from female teachers, so we can expect that the students' exam results to be influenced by the gender of their teachers.

Even though, teachers may clearly treat students differently by gender, over treatment should not be the only way to create differences in test marks on the basis of gender. If, as it was suggested by Parker-Price and Claxton, male students performed better through visual experiences, so it would be natural for male teachers, who also learned through those visual aids, to return to visual instructions, which would lead to a better performance by male students in their classrooms.

Students perceive their relationship with their teachers as a very significant one; on this basis they measure their teachers. If learners build strong, warm, honest and close connections with their teachers, they will do their best to achieve greatest results. In other words, if they feel that their teacher is fair, patient, caring and willing to satisfy their needs, pupils will foster their motivation for learning and subsequent gains in academic achievement in order to please their teacher and to prove that they are competent and trustworthy. Conversely, if there is a conflict between students and their teacher, the formers will discord and mistrust the latter which will eventually hinder and may demolish their success during their learning process.

This is why teachers are asked to be able to motivate and positively engage their students and more precisely to know them on a personal level because they are supposed to be positive role models for their students. All in all, teachers, who are better at establishing good

relationships with their students, will find it easy to monitor their behaviour in the classroom, consequently their learners will achieve greater learning outcomes.

According to many different studies, there are incisive evidences about the relationship between teachers' gender and students' achievement. Whereas, at the international level, a great focus was significantly on recruiting more female teachers. In other words, this means that being in a female teacher's classroom is advantageous for language learning. In this context, this study examines the effects of teachers' gender on their students' learning outcomes. Our investigation will inspect the gender differences between male and female secondary school teachers of English, in Tiarat, in terms of classroom management practices and their belief in students' ability to learn and other many characteristics which will be discussed in a very detailed way in the next chapter.

### **1.15. Teaching as a Feminized Profession**

In various countries, the female employees take over the teaching domain mainly at early childhood and primary levels (Drudy, 2008). Whereas, years ago, the feminization of the teaching sector was the long-range phenomenon in developed areas like the United Kingdom, Australia, Brazil and Canada, now it also becomes widespread in some of the developing countries like in North Africa (Kelleher, 2011).

At the world wide level, the teaching profession becomes more feminized because of tow significant causes; first, thanks to the social and economic advance, new job opportunities are created to hire more male workers, as a result males prefer to pursue new careers for the good payment or simply they are interested in exploring new profession, leaving more opportunities for women in the teaching domain (Kelleher, 2011). In addition, traditional views considering men as the first and the main responsible and the economic provider of the family drove some of them not to choose to work as a teacher because of the low salary (Kelleher, 2011).

The second reason, why teaching becomes more and more feminized, is due to the socially perceived gender roles which link teaching to the mother's roles like nurturing and caring (Drudy, 2008). On the stereotypical basis, the teaching profession is said to be a woman's "mission", in her "God-given nature" and her "proper place in society" (Kelleher, 2011).

Many researchers conducted many studies to investigate the influence linked to the feminization of the teaching profession. Some of them stated that the fact of hiring more female teachers drove to a decreased educational quality (Songtao, 2000), students' discipline problems (Haywood et al., 2005), and the decline situation of teaching as a profession [Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2004]. For instance, it was confirmed that due to the feminization of teaching, male students in schools needed more social role models, so they felt demotivated, less engaged and did not achieve better outcomes (Driessen, 2007).

However, Griffiths (2006) indicated that it was not really proved that boys lacked male teachers to perform well or they lacked role models to be motivated. The teaching profession status argument was controversial. Whereas, some researchers stated that the feminization of the teaching profession was associated with the status of the teaching as a profession. The counter-arguments confirmed that in the countries like Finland, Korea, Ireland and Cyprus, where more female teachers were found in schools they enjoyed high professional status, with strong competition for entry into teacher education. Also, in developing countries where the teaching profession has not been more feminized yet, there was a low status of the profession (Kelleher, 2011).

A study on commitment to teaching indicated indecisive results concerning gender features. In an international review study by Guarino et al. (2006) commitment, in comparison to males, more female teachers held positive attitudes to the teaching profession and had high intentions to choose teaching as a career. Fresko et al. (1997) in his study in Israel about pre-service and in-service teachers found higher levels of job satisfaction and positive attitudes towards the profession among females more than males.

Furthermore, in Nigeria, Maliki (2013) found that both female students and teachers showed more positive attitudes towards the teaching profession than males. In Belgium, more female than male students and teachers demonstrated higher desire to work as a teacher after graduation (Rots et al., 2014). However, Guarino et al., (2006) identified higher exhaustion rates among female student and teachers and in-service teachers compared to male ones; Ingersoll (2001) found that male teachers were less likely to quit than were female teachers in the USA.

### 1.16. Teachers' versus Pupils' Gender

Gender stereotypes are a set of definite principles about the characteristics that women and men usually own. The characteristics that women possess are being caring, sensitive, nurturing, team-oriented, collaborative, friendly and kind. While males' features are to be controlling, individualistic, self-confident, practical and powerful. The occupations that male and females are expected to fulfil, which are attributed to gender, are not stated but instead are determined by society and are changeable. In other words, people believe that the fact of prospering in specific professions needs stereotyped characteristics of a certain gender. Gender stereotypes can make people think that some jobs are definitely for women such as being a nurse, secretary or a teacher, while other occupations are for men like being an engineer, builder or a mechanic.

Researchers such as Rowan et al. (2002) conducted certain studies which resulted in that students' desire to study certain subjects was influenced by the mindset of gender identities and differences. When mentalities no longer follow the prevailing views, teachers are helpful and inconspicuous with the formation of certain forms of masculinity and femininity. So as to be in contact with all students both Young (2001) and Blackburn (2003) carried out researches to back up the study that supported facilitated learning to be integrated in the classrooms. Facilitated learning gives students the opportunity to be free of gender stereotypes or power conflicts that may be created between the genders of students and teachers. Gender bias may exist and influence the classroom atmosphere, curriculum and interactions if gender differences are not discovered in the classroom. The raised issues are going to be addressed in this research to determine if the teachers' gender differences can influence students of different gender during their learning process or not.

In fact, all teachers develop differences between oral and non-oral communication with their male and female students. Teachers can greatly influence students' lives and communicate assessments, expectations, and performance through verbal and nonverbal behaviours that leave lifelong effects. As there are students being influenced by their teachers' treatment to them, there are others who face discrimination inside their classrooms either at the student level or with their teachers and the latter will badly influence their engagement in learning.



More specifically, Good et al. (1973) identified in a study that most of teachers treated male and female students with higher achievement more positively and preferably than male and female students with low achievement. Though, this favourable treatment was much more apparent with males than females, putting the high-performing males as the most preferable and low-achieving students were less in contact with teachers. Females also faced the same communication pattern of high performing females receiving more positive connection than low-achieving students, but still receiving less attention than males. They also continued to say in an interpretation for females who received less interest from their teachers than their male classmates as having low confrontational behaviour, distinct from males who had more aggressive behaviour, may make it easy not to be observed by teachers.

Good et al.'s (1973) study also led to the idea that female teachers' classes were characterised with being more active, having a strong will to initiate engagement and class communications through supplying students with safer opportunities to guess the right answers. Eventually, they indicated that male teachers gave less feedback to correct answers despite constructive work with the student to produce an exact reply in a "failure status" (p. 85). Whereas female teachers did not strongly comment false responses, they showed more positive behaviour towards students in "success status" by supporting students' answers with praise, complements and constructive feedback.

Moreover, another research about the same topic which was conducted in Iran pointed out that when teachers began communication within the classroom, three out of four categories of evaluative interactions were significantly oriented more towards male than female students (Hassaskhah and Zamir, 2013). Similarly, it was also found that the communications between teachers and students were influenced by gender in secondary school classrooms because of gender differences. The pace of the communications made it hard for the teachers to be wholly conscious of what was precisely going on (Sadker and Sadker, 1986). Consequently, problems may occur as experimental studies suggested, despite teachers' good intentions they may differ their behaviour with their students because of the impact of both teachers' and students' genders (Hassaskhah and Zamir, 2012).

Likewise, the comparison of teachers to male and female learners and the use of corrective feedback supposed that the results appeared to be more consistent with the findings of Mackey (1999) who notified the common trend of teachers to use recasts for adult learners. Along with the study conducted in Zaire in 2010, which was based on a questionnaire

discovered that further feedback occurred in female teachers' classes rather than male ones. Another investigation done by Iraj, Zoghi and Tabrizi (2014) emphasized that the occurrence of corrective feedback by female learners' teachers was higher than that of male learners' teachers. Thus, it was agreed upon that the categories of corrective feedback differed depending on the gender of the learners.

On one hand, in the last years, studies demonstrated that female learners showed more positive attitudes and preferred to have higher performance in learning English than male ones. Research also indicated that privileged treatment existed in both male and female classrooms, and that male students mainly received positive and negative, nonverbal and verbal contact with teachers more than females. The studies in this domain claimed that such treatment was based on the gender of the teacher.

On the other hand, it was found that preferential dealing and biases existed for both genders of the opposite gender of the teacher. As well, although females were usually seen in research as they were likely to hold positive attitudes towards learning foreign languages, we are going to investigate if males are going to possess positive attitudes more than females.

Researchers such as Etagh and Hughes (1975) and McCandless, Bush and Carden (1976) discovered that teachers interacted differently with their same-gender students than they did with students of the opposite gender. This comprises confirmation which refers to disciplinary methods and tends to differ by the gender of both students and teachers. Other studies found that male students availed on the account of female students concerning the quantity and quality of interaction they received from their teachers of both genders. What has not yet been agreed upon on is how these differences in discipline, perceptions of student skills, and communication between students and teachers affect students' achievements in learning English.

For many years, researchers were interested in analyzing the amount and kind of attention teachers provided their students with. Several studies inspected gender differences and the way those communications happened in the classroom with great attention was directed towards male students than female ones by their teacher (Lockheed & Harris, 1984; Sadker, Sadker & Bauchner, 1984).

Various studies concentrated on the gender of both students and teachers, but mainly on the effect of teachers' gender on their students (Hopf & Hatzichristou, 1999). Meece (1987) stated that female teachers were more helpful, kind, polite and more caring to their students than male teachers who were inclined to be more dominating and controlling. A study of 20 teachers showed that male teachers were more likely to be authoritative and tended to choose a more harsh and aggressive disciplinary approach to deal with their male learners, whereas teachers of both genders preferred to pay no attention to males' disruptive behaviour than that of females when the behaviour was not offensive (Rodriguez, 2002).

In the United States of America, the states evaluate school performance in order to reward schools that attain better results while setting corrective actions for schools that did not meet benchmarks set by law. These assessment techniques test all public school students' performance within the state in at least two basic areas: reading/language arts and mathematics. The results obtained from these tests should be determined in terms of proficiency levels of students instead of the centigrade method.

For more details, as cited in Dr. John M. Krieg's journal, The WASL is the state of Washington's diagnostic tool aimed to determine faltering schools under 'No Child Left Behind Act' (NCLBA) which is a test used to better understand the influence of student-teacher interactions on students' test performance scores, It was signed into law by President Bush on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and its provisions would be phased in over a period of several years. . The WASL is a mixed open-ended, short answer, and multiple choice exam including four eminent areas of learning: reading, writing, listening and mathematics. The objective of the WASL is to measure the application of basic skills to real-world situations with a large number of comprehension, application, and analysis questions as categorized by Bloom's Taxonomy.

The WASL is administered in grades 4, 7, and 10 and, under current state legislation; students need to pass the WASL so as to get a high school diploma. For each section of the WASL the state selects a minimum score needed for passing that section. In the 2002-2003 academic year 34.4% of 4<sup>th</sup> graders, 27.2% of all 7<sup>th</sup> graders, and 33.5% of all 10<sup>th</sup> graders met all four WASL standards.

According to Dr. John M. Krieg, the results indicated that in comparison to male students, females significantly achieved better than boys on the reading and writing

components of the WASL and to some extent worse on the listening component. Female students were also more likely to use a computer for school work, were more likely to read frequently for fun, and were more likely to come from a home in which English was never spoken, while boys were more likely to be returned at least one grade in the past.

The results also came up with a set of comparisons between the same-gender students with their teachers and those who did not. Interestingly, students who shared the same gender as their teachers attained better marks on reading and writing and were more probably to win the WASL exam than students of the opposite gender with their teachers. Whilst this could point out that the students benefited from being taught by the same-gender teacher. Dr. John M. Krieg declared that it was important to remember that those descriptive statistics did not control for other factors that might impact students' learning process.

So many literatures provide significant substantiation that strong and positive relationships between teachers and students are essential constituents to the healthy academic improvement for all the students in schools. This collection of literature covers various genres of studies that were conducted over the past three decades examining the communications between teachers and their students and which influence such interactions had on learning. There is a trustworthy proof that the nature and quality of teachers' interactions with students have a significant impact on their learning process.

Actually, the role of the teacher is so complex in nature. It consists of holding the duty to facilitate learning in parallel with preserving order in the classroom, to improve learners' subject skills and to deal with the entire programme at a specific point of time (Cooper and McIntyre, 1993). Hare (1993) highlighted that one of the most important dilemmas of the teaching profession was how to equalize the teachers' need to be "genuinely interested in and concerned about the well-being of their students and at the same time to be "passionately committed to the subjects they teach."

It can be supposed that the nature and strength of teachers' effect on their learners, perhaps of their own thinking about this prospect impact, is probably linked to the extent to which they develop interpersonal and pedagogical abilities (Cohn and Kottkamp, 1993), the point to which their behaviour inverts mentor characteristics (Cullingford, 1987), the degree of their knowledge about the contexts, surrounding and lives of their students (Pianta and Walsh, 1996), and their sense of teaching efficacy, teachers' situation-specific expectations

that they can help their pupils learn (Ashton and Webb, 1986).

It is well known that gender has a significant affect among many factors that influence both the teaching and learning processes. Investigations in the area indicated that for instance the teacher's gender impacts his/her attitude towards their job; for example, (Alghzo et al., 2003; Askar and Erden, 1986; Cakir, 2005) discovered that female teachers held more positive attitudes towards their teaching career than male teachers. Furthermore, it was showed in various studies that teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession were a significant indicator of pupils' success as well as their attitudes. (Chacko, 1981; Chidolue, 1986).

Though, a great deal of literature of many studies revealed that researchers investigated students' perspectives towards the gender of their teachers of English. Yet, it was claimed that those beliefs differed according to some factors such as the gender of the teacher. A great attention was paid to the attitudes towards learning because they were regarded as a fundamental element in learning and should therefore be indicated as a significant factor in second/foreign language learning pedagogy (Ababneh, 2012, p. 46). Other numerous studies also investigated the attitudes of teachers' towards their profession. Bradley (1995) cited many factors, such as the limited support, insufficient salaries, and lack of community support. It was also found that gender played a crucial role in drawing attitudes of teachers.

Learner's gender is evidenced to be a vital factor in elucidating diverse educational outcomes. Several studies found differences in school achievement between male and female students, and various authors documented theoretical clarifications. Observed gender differences were credited to biological and genetic determinants (Spinath et al., 2008), differences in the abilities, skills and competencies (Buzhigeeva, 2004; Deary et al., 2007), disparities in personality characteristics (Steinmayr and Spinath, 2008), variations in the type and level of motivation (Meece et al., 2006; Preckel et al., 2006), diverse attitudes toward school (Buzhigeeva, 2004), different social experiences (Abraham, 1989; Lahelma, 2005) and social expectations (Meelissen and Luyten, 2008), disparities in self-discipline and self-regulation (Duckworth and Seligman, 2006), and differences in preferred learning styles (Carrier, 2009).

So as to intriguingly explain the gender disparities in learners, academic achievement was significantly linked to the dynamics of teacher-students gender communication or more

particularly the gender combination between teachers and their students. Furthermore, during the last years, researchers in the field made teacher-students gender interaction an interesting topic in educational research and policy.

The studies were greatly interested in this subject for two facts which are: first, female teachers overwhelmingly predominate on secondary schools in the most of educational systems at the level of the whole world. Additionally, most of the studies conducted on the effect of teachers' gender on their career performance emphasized that female teachers were more successful in teaching in comparison with their male colleagues, mainly when the results obtained by students of both teachers were measured by standardized tests. Studies conducted by UNESCO pointed out that pupils taught by female teachers achieved better results than those taught by male teachers (UNESCO 2000, 2005). Female teachers were regarded to be more concerned, compassionate, patient, kind and open for communication with their students. Simpson and Erickson (1983) and Stake and Katz (1982) also supported those findings, and proposed that female teachers tended to give more verbal and nonverbal approvals to pupils than male teachers.

The second fact is that at the present time, female students tend to be more interested in their studies as a result they achieve success more than male students in secondary education, and even in traditionally regarded masculine subjects like math and science they outperform male ones (Holmlund and Sund, 2008; Mills et al., 2004). Several studies supported the findings that showed females achieving better results than males (Ciarrochi et al., 2007; Demie, 2001; Duckworth and Seligman, 2006; Leeson et al., 2008).

Taking into consideration the two educational realities, many researchers stated that these tendencies were due to the lack of male teachers as being role models for male students (Skelton, 2003). Their lack, mainly in the secondary schools, was noticed, and the shortage of their existence was an arguable factor in the domain of education. Martin (2005) noted that statistics for male teachers in secondary schools in the United States declined between 1981 and 2005 from 18 percent to 14 percent. Those statistics raised distress that male students, precisely, did not face enough male teachers as their models in the classroom (Carrington & Skelton, 2003; Lam et al., 2009). Moreover, theories of gender development showed that the evolution of gender identity took place in schools where learners observed their same-gender role models (Golombok & Fivush, 1994).

The researchers also proposed that male teachers would encourage and support male students to perform better during their learning. In fact, some studies confirmed that learners' achievement was influenced by the student-teacher gender combination. Dee (2006) proved that female pupils performed better when being taught by female teachers and the same thing with male pupils when being taught by male teachers. Ammermüller and Dolton (2006) came with the same findings according to data from British and American secondary schools. The authors concluded that teachers' gender played a significant role in the success of pupils in higher grades, when male teachers tended to improve the achievement of boys in science and mathematics.

There was a study conducted on Croatian secondary school pupils. The main objective was to comprehensively investigate the educational achievement differences that can be attributed to learners' and teachers' gender. The fundamental emphasis was on the possible interaction effect of teacher-pupil gender combination on pupils' school achievement. Typically, female students outperformed males in the most of the subjects as they were amongst the higher achieving students. Males tended to hold more negative perceptions about school, consider homework as being useless and a waste of time, they did not like to be helped, and were more unwilling to do extra work. In addition, teachers believed that male students were less able to focus, less determined to solve difficult problems, and less creative. For learners, gender was related to personal and emotional issues; male students preferred the involvement of male teachers and female students liked the involvement of female teachers.

For this reason, one of the secondary focuses of teachers' classroom responsibilities is to create the best learning environment for students. A great commitment, no doubt, this is really a difficult, but not impossible, purpose to achieve. Besides organizing and developing the curriculum, the teacher is asked to perform a myriad of assignments including, but not limited to, efficient management of the whole classroom.

The success to manage the classroom is taken into consideration as being one of the most principal areas of interest by both male and female teachers. The methods used to manage the classroom may also differ according to the gender of the teacher (Martin & Yin, 1997; Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998). Yet, according to the previously mentioned researchers, male teachers tended to be more dominant than their female colleagues. Moreover, similar studies manifested that male teachers were more inclined to take control of

discussions by selecting the topic, interrupting more, and speaking for a long time (Zaremba & Fluck, 1995). Whereas, female teachers tended to help their pupils while communication as a way of influencing them (Johnson & Ahlgren, 1976). Female students were more polite and less competitive while males tended to be more assertive, aggressive, and dominant than their female classmates (Grossman, 1990).

According to the findings of the previous studies, we can say that gender identities are developed at an early age. Whereas, most of the researchers stated that the existence of male teachers as role models in the classroom does not greatly influence or improve male students' performance. Though, the aim is not to intentionally portray male teachers in a reduced manner, because they also play a significant role in the classroom and make important contributions to the field of education. The disparity in data, of male and female teachers affecting male and female pupils, makes it uncertain if they are a factor in students' school achievement, and this will be addressed in the next chapter.

### **1.17. Conclusion**

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of teachers of different genders on instructing students of different genders. In this section, we have gathered several forms of data, from previous studies which included interviews, observational notes, concept maps, and surveys to determine the main aspects of how teachers of different genders teach students of different genders.

This chapter sought to provide an overview of the key issues in gender study as they were relevant to education, and the ideas and initiatives to make a change. We also tried to demonstrate what was special about working with gender issues in education and how they were related with other aspects in society.

After reviewing former studies, the significance of studying teachers' and learners' gender and its effects seems as an issue that does not only influence teaching styles and the learning process, but also affects students' attitudes and learning assumptions. Learning is better achieved when the learner develops a positive belief towards the language and the learning process as they enhance proficiency. Thus, the importance of this study lies in showing the effect of gender on the students' desire to study, and their expectation linked to their teacher's gender.



The first chapter contributed to the emerging literature that examined the impacts of both learners' and teachers' gender by exploring how they may work together in classrooms. From here stems the significance of the present study which tries to spot some light on the influence of teachers' gender on student's perceptions towards learning English, as it also shed the light on the effect of students' gender on their attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language.

We can see from the analysed literature that there was a discussion about the gender gaps in terms of performance examination of boys outperforming girls or girls outperforming boys in certain subjects and boys' educational underachievement. Moreover, explanations or potential factors affecting the gender gap were discussed in greater details. Studies of gender difference research continues to be the most popular study of gender issues in education, for this reason it is imperative for EFL teachers to get well informed about the gender effects, as they have to be more familiar with the existing educational differences among their male and female pupils.

According to the results of previous studies discussed all along this chapter, the gender gap was reiterated with regard to educational achievement and development to higher education. The data at the international, national and local levels indicated that female students tended to have more positive attitudes and favoured to achieve higher performance in learning English than males as proved by indicators such as grades, enrolment in rigorous academic coursework at the secondary school level, graduation, enrolment and completion of college and even graduate school.

However, male pupils receive more disciplinary referrals, disproportionately represented in special education settings, higher drop-out rates in secondary schools, and lower enrolment and enrolment rates than girls. In Australia and the United Kingdom, there were a number of interventions by concerned governments to assist male students in their learning process. In spite these attempts, the gap remained the same. In the United States, there was greater media attention over the past two years on the disparity between male and female achievements.

Nevertheless, there is an important conclusion focusing on the significance of a meaningful mutual trust, and that students can benefit from having a teacher with whom they feel high levels of confidence. When female teachers seem to succeed at building reciprocal

trust with female students, and male teachers succeed in a great deal of reciprocal trust with their male learners, the relationship between teacher awareness and the potential importance of mutual trust can contribute to improving practice. Although teachers, in large part, realize that females and males differently perceive reciprocal trust, this aspect varies also according to the gender of the teacher.

To conclude, there seems to be interesting differences between female and male secondary school pupils in learning English as a foreign language which are due to their engagement, their communication with their teachers, as well as due to their teachers' different teaching styles, classroom management and control, and many others which will be dealt with in the next chapter. However, this research does not conclusively indicate one group of teachers, male or female, to be worse or better than the other in teaching male and female pupils the English language.

# CHAPTER TWO

## **TEACHER GENDER DIFFERENCES**

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## **2.1. Introduction**

A gender difference is a disparity between male and female humans. From the biological perspective, females and males basically differ in their cognitive ability and their learning styles. These differences derive from basic physiological differences like in the development of brain. Women and men differ not only in terms of their physical traits but also in terms of their speech in communication. Differences in the way men and women use a certain language is observed to differ in their form, topic, content, and use. These gender differences are represented by some behaviours and attitudes which are also shaped by society and overall culture.

Previous studies on this issue claimed that men might be more directive as they used more nonstandard forms, usually talk about sports, money, and business. However, women were often more polite, expressive, discussed topics about home and family, and used more words involving feelings, interpretation, and psychological state.

No matter what gender differences are mainly linguistically, culturally or biologically determined, educational research in the last several years demonstrated that the gender differences noticeably influenced students' academic interests, needs, and achievements. We can say that gender is a factor in the process of teacher/student relationship in the classroom which is constantly something of a widely acknowledged assumption, that, in other words, teachers' gender influences not only the quality and quantity of interactions in the classroom but also students' motivation towards studying at whole.

According to our humble years of experience and observation in teaching English at the secondary school, we can say that there is a gap in the way male and female teachers use a certain teaching methodology. They do not share the same teaching characteristics which differ according to their gender. For instance, according to the pupils, male teachers tend to give more attention to classroom management as they prefer features like fairness and good communication. While, female teachers focus on student-centeredness, as they tend to be more polite, supportive and well-organized.

From here stems the significance of the gender differences study, since it has a direct impact on the design of the curriculum, the teaching methods and the teaching/learning processes. Furthermore, throughout this chapter the effect of EFL teacher's gender on student's attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language will be discussed, as it is widely recognized that language plays a significant role in learning it properly.

As EFL teachers differ in their gender, they also differ in the characteristics they have when being in their classes dealing with their secondary school pupils. These variations may include; teachers' control and dominance, politeness, way of teaching, treatment of the pupils, teaching methods, teaching styles...etc.

Low willingness or commitment to teaching amongst teachers is a problem facing the teaching profession in many schools. Gender could convey a good explanation of how it might play an important aspect in showing which features teachers are attracted to teaching. The relationship between teachers' gender and their pupils' gender impact and commitment to teaching within the context of the secondary school will be all examined throughout the current study.

Indeed, in chapter two, a deep understanding will be afforded about the effects of gender and the strategies used by teachers on the patterns of classroom interaction between teachers and students as far as their learning process is concerned. The classroom is the perfect basis for the research about language and gender, mainly when taking into account the ways in which male teachers and female teachers might differ in terms of the language they use.

The light will be also shed on the importance of pupils' attitudes and perspectives towards their teacher of English, or more precisely the gender of their teacher of English and how their interaction and relationship are effected by gender, as it is very essential to provide a relaxed atmosphere for the students to get better learning outcomes.

## **2.8. Teacher Beliefs and Perceptions about Gender**

The development of gender beliefs and the gender-role stereotypes are acquired very early in life. Parents, teachers, and the whole society continuously elucidate to children and adolescents that there are expectations about what shapes and frames each a suitable gender-specific behaviour (Ruble & Martin, 1998). Every day, children are encouraged to express their proper beliefs, ambitions, and objectives depending on their predominant gender categorizations (Barone, 2011).

Gender beliefs are socially constructed according to each local specific context, particularly; sex differences in social behaviour take place from the division of men and women's social roles in a specific society (Wood & Eagly, 2002). For instance, women as householders, more than men, tend to perform and occupy more domestic roles which involve domestic activities like cooking, emotional support, being a homemaker and as being the first

one who takes care of her children, whereas men are considered to act the role of primary family provider and to occupy roles that involve economically productive activities.

The gender roles, in society, are formed according to the different position of men and women in the social structures. The psychological characteristics of each gender are going to determine which specific tasks are expected from them to perform according, of course, to their gender. To this extent, the already mentioned associated skills, values, and motives become stereotypic to each gender and are incorporated to be special to each gender roles. In other words, the specific roles executed by men and women are guided by the expectations of their social behaviour which is already based on their gender.

Various circumstances, time periods, age, race, ethnic background, religion, class, education, and the geographical, economic and political environment can also affect and change the gender stereotypes. Therefore we can expect that gender stereotypes also influence the career choices people make.

The beliefs hold by the teachers about their work, their students, their planning, their subject matter, and their roles and responsibilities are also determined by their gender. Pajares (1992) proposed that teachers' gender educational beliefs were strongly and directly related to their preparation, instructional decisions, selection of activities and classroom practices.

Teacher student relationship, interaction and communication are influenced by the teachers' gender (Gray & Leith, 2004), as it affects students' motivation and achievement towards their learning process (Martin, Yin, & Mayall, 2006). Teachers may share the same knowledge base and training programmes, however their personal beliefs and perceptions, which have a powerful impact on the decisions they make, will certainly influence their teaching styles and methods in different ways. For instance, a listening script may be taught by some teachers through an auditory recording of a native speaker while others may prefer to simply read it for their pupils. A teacher may know classroom management procedures, but be uncertain when or under what conditions a specific procedure is effective and how to execute them. All these beliefs and perceptions depend on teachers' gender.

## **2.9. Teachers' Gender Differences**

The duality between man and woman is the essential actuality of our existence, and the attitudes towards this fact vary from one culture to another one. The distinction of the human race between males and females depends not only on biology and genetics but also on the socially learned roles, tasks, gauges, behavioural manners and expectations coupled with



the maleness and femaleness of the socially concrete society. This is why in several scientific literatures a clear differentiation is mentioned between the biological sex and the gender which is the socio-cultural meaning of the sex.

Only by mastering their gender identity people can, who are determined by birth with biological gender, gain the feeling of being a man or a woman. The process of forming a child to a girl or a boy goes into socialization, that is to say it is a process of learning the ideal lifestyles of her/his groups. Gender restricts some expectations and estimations of the newly born child. The feeling of being a girl or a boy is conferred by the adults in order to strengthen and reinforce their gender matching actions and behaviours. Family and parents are not the only factors who contribute in children's socialization but also other important agents which are school and peers. The gender construction is often and unconsciously supported by the teachers and generally the surroundings at schools.

Being in peers is not the only factor in the process of gender identity formation, the other one is teachers who have diverse attitudes and expectations and differently behave with female and male children. In this case as well, the borders of gender division of the previously mentioned subjects are also coincided by teachers' expectations. For instance, if a girl gets a good mark in one of the masculine subjects, her success will not be considered as being a talented pupil which is completely normal to be, but to her hard work and diligence; while, the failure of a boy in the same masculine subject will be justified in this stereotypical way: "He is talented but lazy". As a result, even boys and girls are differently being encouraged and punished by their teachers at school.

Many teachers still think that the main role of any woman is making a family, having and upbringing children, as a result their expectations and demands are affected by this opinion. Consequently, the pupils take these attitudes as norms and try to adapt to them. This can be better sensed among the male teachers while they are somehow united with their male students by uniform masculine "public culture".

Hence, since centuries ago, the field of education received an increased attention. In order to develop such a field the focus was on teacher effectiveness. Teaching is not only limited to presenting lessons, instead it is more based on some expectations such as to motivate, inspire, analyze, explain, involve, synthesize, engage, understand and guide the students throughout their learning process to guarantee better development and results.

What is expected from teachers is to pre-determine the goals they want to achieve by the end of the lesson; such objectives include the attraction of students' attention towards the lesson content, concepts, attitudes, values, the acquisition of several knowledge, abilities and skills. They are also expected to hold some qualities like professional proficiency, educational efficiency and social sufficiency.

Teacher effectiveness can be considered to be the power to fulfil the socially valued objectives agreed for teachers' work, especially, but not only, the work on enabling students to learn. It becomes an adage that the effectiveness of education is strongly related to the effectiveness of the teachers.

In order to develop and reach standards of effectiveness, teachers are called to create competitive teaching environment. Recently, various studies focused on several features of the teaching profession through identifying the functions of a teacher or emphasized on the effective and successful ways of teaching by taking into consideration the changing nature of teacher's professionalism. Effectiveness of secondary school teachers may be determined by several factors that affect their job performance. Among these factors, gender which is of interest to the general populace especially now that female teachers are gradually taking over and dominating the teaching profession at secondary levels of education.

Therefore, teachers are expected to possess a complex set of skills, abilities, insight, intelligence, knowledge, management, patience, competence, dynamism, and attentiveness, to be ready enough to face the challenges that may appear inside the classroom. Although both male and female teachers can have such qualities, yet they may not meet the challenges the same way. In the recent previous years, there was a focus on the most interesting aspects, by some researchers, on the relationship between teachers' gender and the teaching profession.

Consequently, there are some differences between male and female teachers and pupils, and no education or social environment can entirely ignore or erase these differences, one of them is language. According to the gender role theory, gender stereotypes are culturally common expectations for appropriate gender behaviour. The family atmosphere and the overall culture females and males grow up with, help them better learn the behaviours and attitudes, and therefore the non-physical gender differences are the product of socialization (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Eagly, 1987). Irrespective of gender differences in the first place culturally or biologically, educational research over the past few decades showed that gender differences clearly affected students' academic interests, needs and achievements.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt about the importance of the teacher in the educational process. No educational system can rise above the level of teachers who are the ones who either make or ruin the society. According to Golla and de Guzman (1998), “the teachers form the single strong causal factor in defining the quality of education in schools.” (pp. 41-77)

Teachers are responsible for their degree of effectiveness which determines the quality of education they deliver to their learners. Hanushek (2010) showed that if the student was taught by an effective teacher, instead of the average teacher, for only five years, the enhanced learning would be enough to completely close the average gap between low- and middle-outcome students during that comparatively short period of time. It is a consistent fact that students’ achievements are influenced by both effective teachers who are going to increase their learning, as well as the most relevant school factors.

In addition to teacher attitudes and evaluations, there is an extra point in interaction between teachers and pupils that plays an important role in the process of gendered relations. While explaining the lessons, the teachers differently pay attention to their male and female students where they spend their time disproportionately while interacting with them. Again, in this case male pupils are in a more advantageous position. For this reason, gender studies is turning into a focal attention in different colleges and research establishments in everywhere throughout the world as it importantly affects the procedures of learning and educating.

However, this pattern can’t be solely explained through teachers’ attitudes. It is well known that boys are much more disruptive and aggressive than the girls are; therefore teachers spend more time and energy to control over them so that they keep silent. At the same time the girls are sitting quietly and work on their tasks. It is essential to mention one more detail which is the method of how pupils are sitting in the classroom is also gender dependent. The girls prefer to sit more in the front or the centre of the classroom to be next to the teacher, whereas the boys mostly like to occupy margins and periphery of the classroom. This way of sitting necessitates even more effort of teachers to control male pupils.

From the 1960’s till the 1990’s there was a published research which showed that teachers did not treat their male and female students in the same way in pre-college and college levels (Sadker & Sadker, 1992; Tannen, 1991). In fact, college teachers were asking male students higher-order questions demanding critical thought (Sadker & Sadker, 1992), making eye connections more frequently with males rather than females (Thorn, 1979), letting the dominance to male students in the classroom by extra regularly calling on them (Thorne,

1979), allowing males to interrupt females, and responding to males with attention while females with diffidence (Hall, 1982).

Teachers of both genders spend more time in interacting with male students than female ones (Sadker & Sacker, 1992). They start and specialise the great portion of communication with males students compared to their female counterparts. As Sadker (1999) stated that classroom interactions among teachers and students put males one inside the spot-light, while females were marginalized, invisible and relegated to the sidelines. In addition, Kelly (1988) conducted a meta-analysis synthesis of 81 studies on gender differences in the interaction between the teacher and his/her learners. She came up with a result that teachers tended to engage male students more than female ones in teacher and students initiated interplay. Males were asked more questions and supplied them with extra response opportunities. In other words, Kelly (1988) said that the fact that boys were receiving more attention by their teachers in comparison to girls existed in a huge variety of classroom contexts including EFL and ESL.

Putting it another way, teachers interact more with male students because they participate in topics more than their female classmates (Duffy et al., 2001). In line with the most of the obtained results, Dale (1982) also discovered that her interactions in the classroom were gender-based because she spent at least 58% of her time in classrooms interacting with males up to a maximum of 42%, an average of 38% of her time with females.

In general, for Chavez (2000) in comparison with male students, females appeared to work in a strong and cooperative way. Teachers were reported to more likely deal with female students since they liked to interact with their teacher and pay attention to their presentations by taking notes more than their male peers did.

The classroom atmosphere is not only influenced by the gender of the students but also by that of the teachers (Canada and Pringle, 1995; Hopf and Hatzichristoo, 1999; Duffy, et.al. 2001). According to studies carried out in this field, teachers of different genders had classes with different characteristics. For instance, the class taught by a male teacher was characterized to be more teacher-centred classroom, as much excessive time was devoted to only the teacher, the subject was abruptly shifted and students acted and shortly took turns but for more frequent time. Likewise, female teachers were reported to make the communications smoother and easier and even the first language use was allowed. Besides, female teachers were seen to be very powerful in selecting themes and asking a lot of questions mainly in order to facilitate and sustain the conversational flow (Chavez, 2000).

Despite of all these differences between female and male teachers' behaviours in the classroom, in the studies of Doray (2005) and Rashidi and Rafiee Rad (2010) about classroom interaction in Australia and Iran, they respectively disclosed that male and female teachers shared a lot of common characteristics in their classroom communication styles backing up the concept that the choice of discourse feature depended first on the context and second on the purpose of interaction vis-à-vis each other in the community of practice. But this does not mean that all teachers share the same way of teaching and dealing with their students.

Putting all these studies together, some of them declared that it was not very clear to what extent classroom interaction was influenced by gender as there were some controversies along with the results of the studies. Whereas other studies explained that male and female teachers performed in the same way in their classes, and even their methods of teaching and their behaviour were not affected by the gender of their students. While, there were many others that emphasized that the gender of both students and teachers caused the appearance of various discrimination in the classroom. These discriminations and biases, in fact, can impress the quality of teaching and learning either in a positive or a negative way.

In other words, the issue of gender was differently tackled in various countries. People from diverse countries or cultures had different visions about this subject. Consequently, the results of earlier studies or the perceptions of people coming from different countries cannot be generalized to another context. This is why more studies are needed from different countries and cultures in this field so as to clarify the situation (Dordinejad and Porghoveh, 2014).

Educational researchers were interested in the study of the learning environment which they considered it as an important research field. While students' perceptions were often taken as measurements to classroom learning environments, teachers' perceptions were usually used to assess school-level environments. The domain of school environment is usually wide. It includes the teachers' relationship with students, with their colleagues, the principal, pupils' parents, and the community.

The degree and the quality of the learning process delivered to all students are significantly influenced by the schools and teachers. In order to provide pupils with a successful learning atmosphere, they should feel that their needs are met, safe, understood, relaxed, unstressed and motivated so that they can attain good learning outcomes. The learning environment is also the place where students recognize their own gender roles as a

result, learners can have more freedom to shape their own identities and determine how they want to play out.

Teachers' gender plays a crucial role inside the classroom. Teachers' gender affects teachers' classroom control, teachers' subject knowledge and teaching styles. Male and female teachers don't similarly perceive how pupils learn, or understand what constitutes effective teaching. The effective teachers need to be sensitive to these differences and take action so as to provide the most favourable learning environment for every learner.

According to Teven and Hanson (2004), teachers' effectiveness in the classroom is shown in teachers' best interests to be perceived as both competent and trustworthy. In turn, teachers who are better able to manage their behaviour in the classroom may subsequently be able to achieve greater learning outcomes in their students. Teachers' effectiveness is also influenced by teachers' gender. For instance, male and female teachers differently behave in the classroom, and students may differently react to their behaviour which is already based on their gender and this latter will certainly have an impact on teacher student relationship. So, in order to deepen in this relationship, we are going to highlight the differences between male and female teachers.

### **2.9.1. Teachers' Language Use**

In fact, within both our society and our culture there are deep beliefs about the way men and women behave or are supposed to behave. A major part of this is based upon the way we speak, which is developed into the field of 'folk-linguistics'. Differences in the way male and female teachers use a certain language inside the classroom with their pupils are of interest in the study of sociolinguistics in relation with discourse analysis. The type of the language used reflects, shows, and transmits social differences of teachers, since gender differences are evidently reflected in language. Apparently, male and female teachers of English differ in the language they use with their students. At this level we will examine these differences from the following aspects:

#### **2.9.1.1. Differences in Pronunciation**

Phonological differences between the speech of men and women are noted in a variety of languages. Usually women's pronunciation is better than men's. This is shown in the teaching of English as a foreign language. For instance Shuy (1969) conducted several researches in this field such as the examination of the pronunciation of "-ing". He discovered that 62.2% of male teachers pronounced "-ing" in a wrong way, while only 28.9% of female

teachers didn't pronounce it right. This will also be reflected in the student's pronunciation; female students usually have better pronunciation than male students, and that can explain the reason why more girls choose to learn foreign languages as their major than boys. Generally speaking, girls display a better ability in learning foreign languages because they are influenced by their female teachers of English.

According to Coates (2004), female teacher's language is used in a supportive way or a polite way, while male teacher's language is used in a competitive way. We consider nouns and noun phrases are part of language. Based on Coates' opinion, female teachers use more polite nouns and noun phrases than male ones and the vice versa. For example, in respect to men's compulsiveness and competitiveness, we may say that men use more compulsive and competitive nouns and noun phrases than women do. According to Köhler (2008), male teachers and female teachers differed in the way that the former managed pupils and gave sentences in a form of orders while the latter often softened their demands and statements.

### **2.9.1.2. Differences in Intonation**

Female teachers often favour to speak in a high-pitch voice because of their physiological reason, but scientists indicated that that was related to women's "timidity" and "emotional instability". In addition to the high-pitched voice, female teachers prefer to use reverse accent as well.

Example: Pupil: When are we going to correct our first test?

Female teacher: it will be on next Monday.

In this case, the female teacher is the only one who knows the answer, but she answers her pupil with a high rise tone, which has the meaning that "will that do". This kind of intonation shows women's gentility and docility. The pupil will surely feel his female teacher certitude and honesty. Lakoff (1975) claimed that female teachers usually answered a question with rising intonation pattern rather than falling intonation. In this way, they can show their gentleness, and sometimes this intonation shows a lack of confidence, in the sense that if female teachers speak in a falling intonation, they will miss classroom management.

As a contrary, male teachers tend to use falling intonation to show that they are quite sure of their teaching and control. Falling intonation also shows men's confidence and sometimes power.

### **2.9.1.3. Differences in Vocabulary**

We can notice that male and female teachers tend to select different words to show their feelings. For example, if a female teacher faces a disruptive behaviour in the classroom, she will usually soften the atmosphere and say “can you pay attention to the lesson, please?” and if there is no response she will call for help from the administration. While, if pupils hear their male teacher speaking in that way or calling for help in such a situation, they will think of him as being a coward teacher. The differences in vocabulary can be shown in the following aspects:

### **2.9.1.4. Differences in Adjectives**

Pupils can every day notice that their female teachers prefer to use many adjectives when dealing with them or praising them, such as adorable, fantastic, great job, but male teachers seldom use them. When a female teacher of English likes any pupil’s copybook, she says “It is a gorgeous, a well organized and written copybook”, personally speaking we did it several times. Whereas, if a male teacher wants to express the same idea, he may only say, “It is a nice copybook.” The fact that female teachers of English use more adjectives to describe things and their feelings can show that they are more sensitive, careful and accurate to the learning environment and more likely to express their attentiveness with words, which sometimes makes female teachers’ language more interesting.

### **2.9.1.5. Differences in Adverbs**

There are also differences in the use of adverbs between male and female teachers of English. Female teachers when dealing with their pupils tend to use such adverbs like awfully, pretty, terribly, vastly, quite, so, but male ones like to use very, utterly, really. In 1992, Jespersen found that female teachers used more ‘so’ than males did, such as, “It was so interesting” was often uttered by a female teacher and in that way a good and a solid relationship was going to be built with the students.

### **2.9.1.6. Differences in Diminutives**

Sometimes, when the female teachers are mothers they tend to use words which have the meaning of small, such as “my little boy, or my little girl” since they consider their pupils as their children. Female teachers also prefer to use words that show affections, such as my dear, sweetie pupil. If a male teacher often uses these words, pupils will be surprised. Besides, female teachers like to use words that show politeness, such as please, thank you my dear, and



they use more euphemism, but a direct and an unemotional language far is considered to be male teachers' preference.

#### **2.9.1.7. Differences in Pronouns**

During the lesson presentation, female teachers of English prefer to use first person plural pronouns when they deal with their pupils, even when they suggest to the other person, for the sake of making all pupils involved, while the male teacher tends to use the first person singular pronoun to speak about himself, and when he is suggesting to the other person, he will directly use the second person pronoun.

Example: Female teacher: "Today, we are going to study if conditional. We are going to read this text all together."

Male teacher: "You are going to study if conditional."

Male teacher: "I am going to teach you if conditional. I will read this text for you."

From these differences we can see that male and female teachers of English don't share the same vocabulary words for the sake of achieving emphatic effects. So, in the area of vocabulary, it is very obvious that teachers' gender influences the choice of their words, so gender should not be denied.

#### **2.9.1.8. Differences in Syntax**

However there are no particular rules that decide upon which specific grammar to be used by which specific gender, but these differences are present in almost every language. At the syntax level, there are also some differences between male and female teachers of English to consider, such as:

#### **2.9.1.9. Modulation**

When a female teacher of English communicates with her pupils, she often takes their opinions into consideration. She usually leaves a decision open rather than imposing her own ideas or claims on the pupils. She generally says "well, you know..., I think..., I suppose....kind of, maybe I am wrong but..., etc."

When they want to decide on something concerning what happens inside the classroom, male and female teachers express it differently, let's consider the following example:

Female teacher: "I suppose we can do this activity in less than ten minutes."

Male teacher: “you have less than ten minutes, do the activity.”

From the above example we can see men tend to directly ask something, while women tend to include her pupils in the decision making process.

#### **2.9.1.10. Interrogative Sentences**

Women use more interrogative sentences than men do. Female teachers consider interrogative sentences as a strategy of enduring a good conversation so that all the pupils get involved in the communication. Lakoff (1975) pointed out that compared with male teachers, female ones were more likely to use an interrogative sentence to express their ideas, and they tended to use tag questions, because they can make the tone less tense, for instance: they would say: “what do you think of today’s lesson? Isn’t easy?” So, in this way the female teacher expressed her idea about the easiness of the lesson, at the same time she wanted to know her pupils’ opinions to make them engaged in oral discussion therefore to enhance their speaking skills.

As a proof, Fishman (1980) collected many couples’ conversation tapes, and found that women used three times tag questions than men did. In these conversations, there were 370 interrogative sentences, among which women used 263, almost two and a half of times of men did.

This point is similar to the difference in intonation between male and female teachers, as it was mentioned above. Just as Lakoff (1975) said that female teachers of English might answer a question with a rising tone, while male ones might tend to use a falling tone to make a firm statement. According to Lakoff (1975), female teachers tended to do this because they were uncertain about themselves and their opinions than males. The different uses of language also demonstrated that female teachers had less confidence.

#### **2.9.1.11. Imperative Sentences**

In the learning/teaching processes, teachers are supposed to ask pupils to do something and the latter to respond. Every day at school, pupils receive imperative sentences to perform some skills. At this level, male teachers of English use a lot of imperative sentences, while female teachers use more “let’s patterns”.

Example: “Male teacher: give me that book!”

Female teacher: “Would you give me that book, please?”

Male teacher: “It’s time to do the activities.”

Female teacher: "Let's do the activities together."

On the light of this example, we can notice that female teachers of English prefer to use sentences with modal verbs, such as can, could, and may, but they seldom use imperative sentences to give orders. To lower the imperative tone, they use more adverbs like maybe, perhaps, probably.

#### **2.9.1.12. Grammar**

Female teachers are attentive to the correctness of syntax. While explaining the lesson content, they would speak clearer by using precise and correct grammar. However, this doesn't mean that all male teachers do not pay attention to the grammar they use. An example of tenses:

Female teacher: "We have just finished the first unit."

Male teacher: "We finished the first unit."

Female teacher: "What have understood from today's lesson?"

Male teacher: "What did you understand from today's lesson?"

#### **2.9.2. Differences in Teachers' Attitudes toward Language**

Female teachers of English tend to pay attention to using the Standard English Language or the Received Pronunciation language than male ones do, especially some of the young male teachers of English who lean to use the American English. So, female teachers are stricter with the rules of language use.

Example: Female teacher: "We are going to deal with the lesson of suffixes today."

Male teacher: "We gonna study suffixes."

The use of the standard form of language by female teachers of English is emphasized in the difference of pronunciation.

#### **2.9.3. Non-Verbal Differences: Differences in Manners**

In the classroom, pupils are urged to participate and express all their interests, ideas and concerns, but most of the time male teachers of English may interrupt the pupils' talk and stop them simply because they are not patient enough to listen to everything said by each

pupil. While female teachers are more patient and tolerant, they can wait for the student to finish his/her speech.

Generally speaking in conversations, we can say that male teachers usually interrupt other's talk since they are eager to be heard as they do not like to be silent, whereas female teachers will wait until others to stop their talking. They do not interrupt others often, but encourage other pupils to talk, so they often play the role of patient and good listeners, which is a good feature because in this way they can pay more attention to their pupils' mistakes and errors, understand their needs and make them attain a successful and good level of learning and acquisition. Besides these differences, other sex-linked differences exist, such as female and male teachers of English may have different paralinguistic system as they differently move and gesture.

#### **2.9.4. Differences in Choosing Topics**

In social interaction, men and women have different interests in choosing their topics. This issue will influence the selection of the topics to be studied in the classroom. Female teachers of English may deal with subject matters which are related to fashion, modern inventions, natural and man-made disasters, clothes, cooking, the protection of the environment, family affairs...etc. While male teachers are more likely to choose the topics of politics, sports, news, football teams, economics and the outside world. The overall goal of female teachers of English, when going through conversations with their pupils, is to express and discuss ideas so that both of them can speak, while male teachers may speak in order to impose their opinions and not to give the opportunity for other students to express theirs.

#### **2.9.5. Teachers' Subject knowledge**

Being an effective teacher means holding strong subject matter knowledge coined with a deep students' understanding, effective representations and instructional strategies. Teacher knowledge cannot be established at the individual level, but rather it should be acquired and developed through professional socialisation (Barnett & Hodson, 2001). Barnett and Hodson (2001) featured teacher knowledge as being derived from both internal and external sources: internal sources comprise reflections upon experiences with students, parents, and colleagues; external sources consist of knowing the content to teach and the context to teach in like the knowledge of the district, school, as well as state and national standards.

Teachers can also develop their knowledge through exchanging discussions of experiences, problems and sharing solutions which take place during professional development opportunities, at teacher meetings, in the plan room, and in the hallway (Barnett & Hodson, 2001). New knowledge is built by teachers through their understanding of how should teaching be done, the experiences they live with their students inside the classroom and the recognition of what does and does not work in favour of students.

The investigations conducted in this field also indicated that the content knowledge of the subject to be taught held by teachers was significantly influenced by their gender. According to Norlander-Case, Regan and Case (1999) female teachers delivered more information than their male colleagues in teaching. This argument was also propped by Mwamwenda and Mwamwenda (2002) since they declared that pupils of female teachers obtained much better results than pupils taught by male teachers in English Language, Mathematics, Science and Social studies in Botswana. Through the study of Zuzovsky (2008) in Israel, she confirmed that female teachers' students performed better than those of male teachers.

Other theorists processed the issue of teacher gender but not from the matching side with their students, instead as a factor that influenced the teaching skills which in turn affected the learners' performance. Bernat and Lloyd (2007) argued that women were more interested in multilingualism than men. William (1975) stated that a well-balanced classroom environment and a good management depended on two facets: the subject knowledge and teaching skills, which played a crucial role in the success of foreign language classroom. Besides, when related with the aspect of teacher and student gender, knowledge and teaching skills appear to have many different outcomes, which in some instances show that female teachers have inspiring effects on female students (Krupnick, 1985). For example, female language teachers encourage students to speak longer than when students are in classes taught by male teachers. Moreover, in a study on teacher gender and student performance in mathematics in Spain, Escardibul and Mora (2013) concluded that students who were taught by female teachers had better test marks. Thus, many aspects of teaching and learning seem to be influenced by gender.

Teachers should know what they are teaching. Teacher knowledge and curriculum are major educational resources that significantly contribute to the quality of both instructional and pedagogical content knowledge (Cohen et al., 2003). Any wrong and

insufficient knowledge of the content may convey misconceptions of the teachers to their students (Ozden, 2008). Teachers who do not themselves know what they are teaching, are not able to exactly recognize which knowledge content students need during their learning process. Though, the fact to well know just the subject matter is not sufficient to teach. Instead effective teachers are the ones who are sure about the content knowledge used to support, expand and strengthen students' learning.

#### **2.9.6. Teachers' Collegiality**

Teacher collegiality basically refers to the work of teachers professionally in a form of one team and to support their colleagues at both the social and emotional levels. A collegial relationship between teachers includes respect for one another and a commitment to work towards a specific objective. A collegial approach rather than an individual approach improves both the school's atmosphere and the learning environment for pupils, so as to create a sense of community and empowerment (Stronge et al., 2004).

Some teachers often think that teacher-collegial practices are directly and only related to pupils' achievements, whereas they neglect the other side which is the social benefits of collegiality to teachers themselves. Collegiality enhances the quality of education, the emotional health of the school surroundings and diminishes the emotional stress and exhaustion among teachers (Jarzabkowski, 2002).

Teachers' attitudes towards their teaching profession can significantly be influenced by the supportive working atmosphere that collegiality offers (Harris & Anthony, 2001). Attitudes can be seen as natural or instinctive, and gradually grow over a long period of time through socialization and expressing people's feeling about something. The attitudes towards the teaching profession are of a fundamental quality that defines the teacher's desire to improve and increase as a skilled one who directly influences the school environment (Tok, 2012).

Bektas and Nalcaci (2012) assessed the predictability of the personal values of student teachers about their attitudes towards teaching. There were 350 student teachers participants from the University of Ankara in the United States. The results showed that the personal values of teachers were very important in predicting their attitude towards the teaching profession. Both discipline and responsibility along with participation and respect were found to be essential in interpreting the attitudes of teachers towards the teaching profession. According to Bektas and Nalcaci (2012), each person was in a direct or indirect

way formed of values because they constituted behaviours, judgments, social relations and social development.

Huang (2001) evaluated the perceptions of secondary school teachers to see if they perceived the school environment alike or differently. The study involved 275 teachers (127 males and 148 females) from eight secondary schools in the southern United States. The results pointed out that most secondary school teachers viewed the school environment as a favourable place to be at. Most of the assessed teachers positively thought of their principals and felt that most of their colleagues had a professional commitment and worked well with each other. With regard to gender, female teachers realized that their own school atmosphere was more appropriate and convenient than male teachers. They also built good and solid relationships with their colleagues and pupils. Female teachers said that they had a good discipline control and work satisfaction. Huang (2001) presented one reasonable clarification about the differences and said that men and women had different ways of communicating and that might affect the way they worked.

People in general, whether in social situations or at work, are affected by the relationships they build with the others. Teachers take important professional decisions based on their collegiality if there is a positive social contact at their schools. Some teachers either take part in collegiality or provide barriers to the teamwork. In the best case scenario, collegiality is high and teachers are honest in their professional work. It is not easy to be satisfied and happy in the teaching profession when people do not agree with each other, so the successful school is built on successful teachers both inside and outside the classroom.

### **2.9.7. Teaching Styles**

Teaching styles depend on how each teacher is going to deal with his profession at school, this includes many ways such as solving problems, carrying out tasks, selecting the lesson contents, choosing the suitable authentic material and making decisions in the process of teaching, and of course this differs from one individual to another and sometimes it varies among different groups (Fan & Ye, 2007). The teachers' selection of the teaching styles can be a result of the impact of many factors, such as their educational experience, their professional level, their gender, and their commitment to teaching.

It is quite possible what appear to be different teaching styles might, instead, be gender differences. Teachers' gender has a significant impact on the choice of the diverse teaching styles during the teaching/learning process. According to some studies, female

teachers of English were reported to be more caring, supportive, helpful, expressive, sympathetic, nurturing, cheering, informal and open with their students, to spend significantly greater proportion of time encouraging and allowing student participation, to raise students' partnership, to engage them into objective communication, to follow more flexible teaching methods, to avoid direct orders, to give more compliments and to use less directive forms, to share authority and to maintain control in the classroom in a way that kept their relationships with students intact. In other words, all these characteristics and advantages would motivate students to be full of enthusiasm during their learning process in order to guarantee better outcomes.

However, male teachers were observed to be dominating, masterful, exacting, demanding and exercised greater control, to stress more on the group work and structured activities, to ask more display and direct questions that made the interactions between male teachers and students shorter and more limited, to use their authority at the cost of participation of students with an authoritarian and task oriented teaching style.

Two hundred and three secondary school teachers (64 male, 139 female) from China participated in a survey to evaluate the relationship between teaching styles and teachers' characteristics (Fan & Ye, 2007). Considerable correspondences were related with gender, age, and educational level. Compared with their male colleagues, the female teachers favoured to use a conservative way in teaching. While, male teachers did not prefer to compare or analyse in their classrooms like their female colleagues, they took the challenge to try new teaching techniques.

Age was another important factor which had its impact on teaching styles. Younger teachers tended to be more creative and open, and less obedient or traditional in their teaching practices than their older counterparts. According to Fan and Ye (2007) the major cause for this might be that the older teachers experienced many teaching styles that were confident of what to do and the way to do it.

Another study was conducted in London in 2009 to investigate whether there were any differences between the approaches male and female teachers used while teaching and if students' motivation could be influenced by their teachers' emotional responses. There was a group of 305 teachers from different secondary schools; 63% were females and 37% were males. Even though most teachers seemed to effectively communicate with their learners, more specifically male teachers felt trapped by communication barriers. The role of emotion



in the teaching process was not visualized by male and female teachers in the same way; as a result teachers used different strategies to face some situations that might occur in the classroom. For instance, female teachers tolerated the use of the mother tongue as they did not embarrass students when they made mistakes, whereas some male teachers immediately corrected the mistakes made because they were more authoritarian and less patient than female teachers.

Researchers also found that male teachers typically focused on delivering lectures for the majority of the class, while female teachers were more likely to condense their attention on each student so as to involve all of them in active and cooperative learning approaches, which are considered to be learner-centred instructional practices. This might be due to the fact that there were fundamental differences which were somehow innate between men's and women's ways of communicating, where a man's world focused on competition, status, and independence, however a woman's world focused on intimacy, consensus, harmony and interdependence.

Kite (2001) went further to prove that gender roles were either consciously or subconsciously strongly influenced by the cultural and the societal conditioning. Female teachers were obviously expected to show more warmth and nurturing qualities, yet at the same time such behaviour might be interpreted and considered by some secondary school teachers as weakness and feminine. However, there were some special cases where a strong female teacher might be seen as rigid and controlling rather than intellectually rigorous and challenging.

Kelly (1982) also raised another issue; she observed that male teachers demonstrated, to a large extent, in the classroom less interaction with girls than female teachers did. This was true mainly for feedback, praise and criticism where male teachers nearly ignored their female pupils. As regards teacher's gender, whether male and female teachers differently behaved and treated their male and female pupils, the meta-analysis could not arrive at a definite conclusion.

Results from the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) also suggested ways in which male and female teachers taught differently. Female teachers affirmed higher order thinking skills, active and collaborative learning, and variety experiences more than male teachers (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2005). Also, even concerning controlling for disciplinary and other differences, "women are more likely than their counterparts to value

and use effective educational practices” (Kuh, Nelson Laird, & Umbach, 2004, p. 29), such as paying more attention to academic challenge and improving enriching educational experiences.

Teaching styles differ from one teacher to another since they are also influenced by the gender of the teacher, for this reason, according to many studies female teachers were more helpful, caring, understanding, spending much more time encouraging and allowing student participation, engaging students in teamwork, asking more reference questions, more praising and less using forms of guidance, sharing authority with pupils but being all under their control in the classroom in a way to keep their relationships perfect and respectful. However, male teachers were found to take the whole control over the students even if they got afraid of being engaged in long conversations, to oblige the learners to work in groups, to deal with some questions that students answered with short answers.

The results of other studies also indicated that male teachers taught the whole class while female teachers paid more attention to the learners whose understanding was limited and was more likely to involve all the students in conversations following and believing in the learners-centred approach. This happens maybe because of the fundamental differences that the society compels on both males and females, for instance: males’ conversation is characterised by leadership and competition, while that of females concentrates on agreement, intimacy and cordiality.

Students recognize that the same teaching style or behaviour is going to be differently presented by their female and male teachers. This may be because they may have biased perceptions of differences between men and women in a means that are proportionate with gendered expectations when going through conversations and interactions with their teachers. Studies also indicated that students expected female teachers to perform better in traditionally female disciplines like teaching languages in comparison to females in traditionally male disciplines like teaching physics, mathematics and sciences.

Marchbanks (2000) stated that females generally held the personality traits needed to become an effective teacher to a higher degree than males. However, Smith (2010) said that gender had little effect on how often technical college faculty used the various educational practices. When controlling the academic school, Starbuck (2003) found that gender differences were no longer important. Even though male and female teachers differed in their teaching styles, they possessed many similarities. Brophy (1985) and Meece (1987), in a large

and significant review of literature, noted that there were only slight differences in male and female teachers' behaviour in the classroom that the authors considered as a result of the gender-typed differences in the behaviour of their students themselves.

To this extent in a way or another, it becomes apparent that gender influences in several complicated and interconnected ways the perceptions and behaviour of teachers and students in the learning environment. General research on pedagogy elucidated that a variety of teaching models could be effective, and that some styles were more effective for certain types of material and for particular kinds of learners therefore, and that the selection of the teaching styles, types and models all depended on the teachers' gender. Going beyond proving that both male and female teachers differently teach, it is very important to inspect whether and how gender differences may change and be affected by time, culture, society and different demographic factors. To conclude, it is so important and essential to understand and analyze the effects of gender on teachers' teaching process effectiveness in a very detailed way for further research.

### **2.9.8. Teachers' Classroom Management and Control**

Classroom management is considered by teachers to be one of the most crucial and continuing aspects in the educational field. Gender is seen as a complex social phenomenon that changes over time and varies across cultures and societies. The presence of gender can be constructed and performed in interaction among people, not only to be conceptualized as a social construct because it is not rigid and static. Gender issues are rooted in every part of a learning environment for instance, curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, lesson plans and other instructional materials describe the different roles performed by male and female teachers and the various ways of interaction they go through. Gender bias can affect how male and female teachers manage their classrooms; the way they deal with their pupils and the perceived gender-based differences they have about their colleagues.

The Classroom is the place where students and teachers can be face to face for all day long. Behaviours of the students depend on the classroom environment, where all the primary sources of the education exist such as student, teacher, programmes and materials. Therefore, as much as the teacher is well trained is largely reflected on the quality of the classroom management, since it is not a simple challenge that every day teachers face. For this reason, teachers are expected to be ready to perfectly deal with any situation that may happen in the classroom.

Classroom management was the main interest of researchers over the past decades. Teachers' classroom management is a broad umbrella term describing teachers' efforts to supervise a multitude of activities in the classroom including learning, social interaction and students' behaviours (Ritter & Hancock, 2007). Classroom management further decides upon which kind of instruction will be applied in a specific classroom. The teachers' beliefs on content and process are reflected in their classroom management style which is going also to create an individualised style of classroom management (Martin et al., 2006). Students' achievement is influenced by many significant factors such as school policies regarding curriculum, assessment and for sure the classroom management as being the first among the list.

With regard to gender stereotypical beliefs, there is a supposition that female teachers are compliant and prefer to manage their classrooms through cooperation. However, male teachers tend to be more dominating and controlling in managing their classes. Francis (2008) wondered whether teachers' gender identity influenced their way of teaching or not. Brinia's (2012) review of educational leadership and gender stated that a good teacher remained a good teacher whatever his/her gender was. However, we should admit that male and female teachers do not hold the same characteristics, for instance males are impartial, confident, objective and have analytical thoughts, whereas, female teachers tend to be more emotional, intuitive, sensitive, tactful, and cooperative (Brinia, 2012).

Canada and Pringle (1995) sustained that both male and female teachers imposed their authority in various ways in a gender-mixed classrooms, but behaved similarly in one-gendered classroom. They noted that in gender-mixed classes, where female students were more than male ones they were more teacher-driven and were less student-driven in comparison with male-led and gender-mixed classes. And in all female classes, female teachers acted more male-like to impose their authority over their pupils.

Organization is one of the most crucial parts of classroom management. Classroom organization focuses on the materials and activities for an effective teaching. Effective teachers must be able to organize a safe classroom environment for their students. They strategically provide directions for clear strategies, clear assignments, clearly posted assignments, indicated homework assignments written on the board, pre-prepared materials, efficiently distributed materials, plan for interruptions and unexpected events, and well planned time.

Behavioural issues are the other most important phase of teaching. In the classroom teachers are facing various types of students such as disruptive students, troublemaker students, students without books or homework, without pencil, without notebook, students who need to make up work or even students with special needs ...etc. Monitoring all these behavioural issues is related to the degree of classroom management. For this reason, teachers must think about the convenient ways to deal with routines, procedures, interactions and discipline in the classroom. According to Kyle and Rogien (2004) “the more teachers share with students the discipline strategies and their purpose and rationale, the more effectively the students will learn responsible behaviours”. That is why, all the behaviours are related to classroom management.

Male teachers tend to give more attention to classroom management as they prefer to practise severe control over the pupils, while, female teachers focus more on student-centeredness, as they tend to be supportive and well-organized (Ogden et al., 1994). Both male and female teachers, who were exposed to the pre-service training, were more likely to be in controlling, reactive modes than those who received some or no training in classroom management scored less on controlling. Teachers with more than eight years of experience had more realistic ideas concerning how to effectively manage their classroom; however inexperienced teachers were overly dependent on control and survival skills to manage their students, naively believing that students and teachers were always working towards the same goals.

In the light of gender stereotypical beliefs one would assume that female teachers are submissive, tolerant, and tend to manage their classrooms through cooperation and collaboration. In contrast, male teachers would be expected to be more controlling, dominant in the management of their classes.

Although the characteristics such as neutrality, confidence, objectivity and analytical thoughts are considered as common for male teachers, characteristics such as emotionalism, sensitivity, cooperation, intuition and tactfulness are considered common for female teachers, but in general most of these characteristics remain for both genders (Brinia, 2012).

### **2.9.9. Teachers’ Politeness**

For more than two decades, many studies were conducted and different theories emerged about politeness. Politeness is a predominant concept and an important factor in

human interaction. According to its definition, it is often believed to be a socio-cultural appropriate behaviour as it is characterized by the observation of the expectations of society.

In the dictionary of applied linguistics politeness is defined as “how languages express social distance between speakers and their different role relationships” (Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics 3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Another definition of politeness in the same dictionary is referred to as “the attempt to establish, maintain, and save face during conversation”.

According to Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics, politeness is a term for a combination of interpersonal considerations and linguistic choices affecting the form and function of linguistic interactions. In different cultures and different contexts, politeness refers to quite different things.

Various studies were conducted on politeness throughout the recent decades. One of the fascinating ones done by Rosenthal, et al. (1996) was about politeness strategies expressed through various channels of communication such as, silent video, speech, full channel video and audio, and transcriptions of speech. In that study, he found that politeness strategies could be communicated non-linguistically as well as linguistically and that non-linguistic strategy usage was related to social and contextual factors.

Holmes (2008) claimed that interrogative and declarative sentences, generally speaking, were more polite than imperative ones; however a great deal of politeness was shown at the level of intonation, the tone of the voice and context. According to her, an imperative sentence which was uttered in a polite way may be far more polite than a thundered declarative sentence. So, it all depends on our way of speaking and asking for something.

Politeness is a universal concern across cultures and professions. Gender and politeness challenges the notion that women are always considered to be more polite than men. Politeness is the use of the right word or phrase in the proper context, which is determined by the rules that are prevalent in society.

Since Politeness is one of the main fundamentals of people interaction, it is always a fascinating topic to be discussed among them; the topic of most of these discussions is about what is polite and what is not. Politeness is differently defined because people differently believe and perceive the norms of politeness which is also related to each society and culture.

According to Yule (2002), “Politeness in an interaction can be defined as the means employed to show awareness for another person’s face.” (p.40). What is face and why is it important in interaction? Yule (2002) writes: “Face refers to our emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize” (p.42).

Politeness is characterized to be a tool to reinforce effective interaction between people. In the context of English language teaching, it is ratified to improve learning by promoting an energetic environment in the classroom (Jiang, 2010). It is believed that a successful human relationship is based on politeness. For this reason, many researchers such as Leech, Brown and Levinson, and Austin and Searle emphasized on politeness in their studies and proposed different theories about politeness. It is also supposed that just like any other relationship, teacher-student relationships are also positively affected by politeness. In order to investigate teachers’ politeness influence in an EFL classroom, Jiang (2010) carried out a study and found that “Politeness enhances teaching, benefits the students, contributes to the effective interaction and friendly, lively atmosphere in an EFL classroom.” (p.655)

So, in order to improve both the teaching and learning processes and to have an effective teacher-students relationship politeness is strongly required. If the classroom interaction runs well, the delivered knowledge by the teacher will be in turn received by students well. In addition, the teacher is the model in the class and the students will imitate the way s/he treats them, for this reason creating a good interaction process which happens between a teacher and students in the classroom must be effective and polite.

At this section, Leech’s politeness principle, Brown and Levinson’s face theory and politeness strategy, Austin and Searle’s speech act theory are mainly used so as to analyze the teacher’s politeness in an English class.

### **2.9.9.1.Politeness Principle**

In “Principle of Pragmatics” (1983), the British linguist Leech explained the important impact of politeness on linguistic communication and regarded politeness principal and cooperative principal proposed by Grice (1989) as the two basic principles on which communication should be based. Leech first introduced the Politeness Principle as an essential complement for Grice’s Cooperative Principle. He considered what he called the “politeness principle” as one of the fundamental pragmatic principles that we usually noticed when others communicated in language. He suggested six maxims of the politeness principle:

1-The tact maxim is when the speaker minimizes the cost and correspondingly maximizes the benefit to the listener.

2-The generosity maxim is when the speaker minimizes the benefit and correspondingly maximizes the cost to self;

3- The approbation maxim which means that the speaker minimizes dispraise and correspondingly maximizes praise of the listener.

4- The modesty maxim where the speaker minimizes praise and correspondingly maximizes dispraise of self.

5-The agreement maxim is when the speaker minimizes disagreement and correspondingly maximizes agreement between himself and the listener.

6-The sympathy maxim is where the speaker minimizes antipathy and correspondingly maximizes sympathy between himself and the listener.

### **2.9.9.2.Brown and Levinson's Face Theory and Politeness Strategies**

Brown and Levinson's work "Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena" (1987) gave a very detailed analysis of politeness phenomena and proposed a universal theory of cross-cultural politeness phenomena in which the core concept was "face". According to Brown and Levinson, politeness strategies were developed so as to save the hearers' "face". The concept "face" was described as the public self-image and the respect that an individual had to claim for him or herself, and was for preserving that "self-esteem" in public or in private situations.

Brown and Levinson (1987) went further and claimed that an individual's face consisted of two desires: the desire to be approved by others (termed "positive face") and the desire to be unimpeded by others in one's actions (termed "negative face"). They more simplified the distinction between the two types of face positive and negative and said: "positive face refers to the need for approval, desire and appreciation by other society members, while the negative face is the want of every competent adult member that his/her actions be unimpeded by others and to seek for autonomy and freedom from imposition."

Politeness is defined as regressive action taken to counterbalance the disruptive effect of face-threatening acts (FTAs) (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Brown and Levinson also stated that in human communication, either oral or written, people tended to continuously maintain one another's face, and that tendency added up to politeness. If the hearers' need to



maintain his /her self-esteem and to be respected is violated by an act during discussions, the acts are called “Face Threatening Acts” (FTAs).

Either or both of the positive and negative faces can be threatened by certain FTAs such as ordering, advising, or offering. Politeness strategies are developed for the fundamental objective of dealing with these FTAs. Brown and Levinson (1987, p.60) described four types of politeness strategies in order to deal with the FTAs, which described human “politeness” behaviour: Bald on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off-Record Indirect.

**2.9.9.2.1. Bald on-Record Strategies** focus on clarity and efficiency, and do nothing to minimize threats to the hearer’s “face” (e.g. I need an example about the lesson). These strategies are similar to Grice’s conversational maxims, which are maxim of quality (be sincere), maxim of quantity (don’t say less/more than required), maxim of relevance (be relevant), and maxim of manner (avoid ambiguity) (Grice, 1989).

**2.9.9.2.2. Positive Politeness Strategies** give importance to the hearers’ face, minimize the potential threat of an FTA and the relationship is friendly (e.g. can you give me an example concerning the lesson?). In positive politeness the speaker’s aim is to communicate the same impact on the listener, putting much emphasis on their commonalities. Positive politeness could be defined as an involvement-based approach made by the speaker for understanding, approving of, and admiring the positive image of the hearer (Wagner, 2004).

**2.9.9.2.3. Negative Politeness Strategies** recognize the hearer’s face, as well, but it also admits that you are in some way imposing on the hearer (e.g. I know you have understood the lesson but can you give me an example?). In negative politeness, the intention is to show the respect to the differences between the speaker and the listener and let them preserve their autonomy and freedom in being obliged to each other.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), negative politeness strategies were universally more preferred since it was safer to assure the addressee’s peace and determination rather than the speaker’s expressions of regard, whereas; some scholars such as Ho (1994), Lavandera (1988), Nwoye (1992) and Wagner (2004) did not support the statement. According to these scholars, positive politeness was more valued than negative politeness. Reversely, positive politeness can be more preferred because of its avoidance-based, off-record verbal behaviour or other means of addressing face.

**2.9.9.2.4. Off-Record Indirect Strategies** are done in such a way that it is impossible to ascribe only one clear communicative intention to the act. The speaker leaves

himself/herself 'out' by trying to avoid the direct FTA (e.g. Today's lesson is done; I want you to show me what you have understood). They are essentially indirect uses of language.

### **2.9.9.3.Speech Act Theory**

Speech act theory is built on the foundation laid by Wittgenstein and Austin. John Searle was most often associated with the theory. Wittgenstein, L. argued that the meaning of language depended on its actual use. According to Austin (1962) to say something is to do something. In other words, saying is an act of utterance; language is not only words but actions too. In his lecture series entitled "How to Do Things with Words", he stated that we did things, not only said things, with words. Austin pointed out that there were at least three components in a speech act: Locutionary act, Illocutionary act, and Perlocutionary act. According to Searle, the ability of understanding language is related to the ability of understanding the speaker's intention. Since language is an intentional behaviour, it should be treated like a form of action. Thus Searle referred to statements as speech acts. The speech act is the basic unit of language used to express meaning, an utterance that expresses an intention, in short, speaking means performing actions.

The differences in the ways that men and women use certain politeness language strategies was one of the most important research topics in sociolinguistic. However, this was reflected in the educational field. Consequently, many studies showed that the widespread use of politeness strategies in the classroom within teacher students' interactions revealed the power and the effect of politeness on such relationships in the learning environment. Lakoff (1975) was one of the most significant scholars of gender-difference research for the past forty years. Her study into language and woman's place played a key role in launching the issue of gender-related differences in politeness. In her study she argued that females' speech sounds were more polite than males' sound in terms of linguistic forms like tag-questions and requests, and this was previously mentioned in the current chapter.

In the educational field female teachers are more likely to employ politeness strategies with their students than male teachers. Even though teaching inevitably includes some potentially face-threatening acts, teachers use a multitude of politeness strategies in the classroom to manage the class, motivate students to learn and reduce face threat. Female teachers are more likely to use positive politeness strategies through which they do not impose their arguments and opinions on their pupils. For instance, female teachers prefer to use tag questions as a kind of a polite statement in order not to force their personal agreement or belief on their students. Using tag-questions is a special linguistic feature of gender

differences in politeness. Holmes (2008) agreed that in general women used more tags than the men, as Lakoff (1975) predicted.

The way teachers respond to their pupils is also influenced by their gender. The gender of the teacher is the most obvious influential variable. Female teachers are expected to provide more praise, encouraging feedback and agreeing responses, to be more supportive, motivating and kind than male teachers. To sum up, female teachers use their emotions and feelings as a mediator with the pupils.

The reader of this thesis is now wondering why the researcher included all these elements about politeness. It is done for one reason is that when the EFL teachers possess a great knowledge about the politeness strategies and apply it in the classroom; they will certainly succeed to have a good teacher-student interaction and relationship based on trust and a good behaviour.

### **2.9.10. Teacher Pupils Classroom Interaction**

In the scope of teaching English as a foreign language, various researches show that the gender of the teachers strongly influences the interaction with their pupils. Duffy, Warren and Welsh (2001) argued that teachers differently interacted with male students than with female students in school, for one reason that the former were more likely to initiate interaction with their teachers than the latter. (p.582)

Moreover, other studies revealed that male students obtained more attention in the classroom from their teachers than female students did (Bailey, 1993). Besides, it is widely known that the interaction between teachers and students is based on the gender of their teacher (Omvig, 1989; Worrall & Tsarna, 1987). For example, results of an American study on the differences between male and female teachers of English and the way they interacted with their students, found that male teachers were more authoritative and instrumental while female teachers were more supportive, helpful and expressive (Meece, 1987).

Surprisingly, impressive results derived from a Vietnamese study which investigated who received more attention in the classroom either boys or girls, discovered that male students often obtained complements from their teachers for speaking out, participating, acting confidently and expressing their ideas, while female students were often praised for being quiet, studious, and polite (Van, 2010). However, this teachers' behaviour towards their female students will hinder and prevent them from acquiring the knowledge they need because if they do not participate, engage in the learning process and express their opinions,

teachers cannot know if the female students grasp the lesson content or not, and this will lead to female students' failure. In other words, silence does not reveal the hidden.

Female teachers were more likely to follow facilitator or delegator strategies which focus on establishing a good relation between them and their students to be their guide, advisor and their resource, instead of just being the knowledge transmitter, setting objectives, and providing feedback. Female teachers of English were more likely to use motivational methods and learner-centred approaches, while they were less likely to rely on a content-oriented paradigm. Furthermore, female teachers, more than male ones, invested their time in planning their courses, setting objectives, designing learning activities, and evaluating assessing students' learning.

In the field of teaching English as a foreign language, students need to get benefit from the instructional and social opportunities in the classroom in order to improve their language skills (Catts, Fey, Zhang, & Tomblin, 1999;) at the same time, teachers should engage students in conversations that promote the development of specific language skills such as social language and pragmatics (Ninio & Snow, 1999; Whitehurst et al., 1988), vocabulary (Penno, 2002) and narrative skills (Zevenbergen, Whitehurst, & Zevenbergen, 2003). Teachers are required to offer high levels of language modelling, such as going through objective conversation with students, asking different open-ended questions, and using a variety of words, including more advanced language which is explicitly linked to the words the students already know and encouraging them to use the new learnt words in peer conversations. Unfortunately in other situations, the classrooms dominated by teacher talk, the students' utterances are rarely attended or responded to in any meaningful way.

Pupils who are exposed to a high-quality language modelling, both at home and school, demonstrate more positive language development which, in turn, is associated with more positive social adjustment and greater reading abilities. The research findings suggest that if students are explicitly introduced to new words through providing a definition and using the new word in several examples, they display greater vocabulary development (Justice et al., 2005). In contrast, simple exposure to new words through book reading is not associated with significant vocabulary gains.

At secondary schools, language-related interactions between teachers and students can be characterized in terms of instructional discourse in the classroom. Students can only foster their linguistic skills through exchanging ideas, concepts, perspectives and control over their discourse when the teacher promotes rich instructional discourse. Since the English

language is the lingua franca and the first universal language, it is used both as a social medium and a medium for conveying information, for this reason teachers' language and their interactions around it with and among students are fundamental to the ways in which teacher-student interactions are a medium for student engagement.

On the light of what was previously discussed, it appears the significance of the study of the influence of teachers' gender on the design of the curriculum and the syllabus, the teaching methods and the learning process. Furthermore, the present study will reveal the effects of teachers' gender on students' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. Chamber (1999) argued that learning took place more easily, only if the learner had positive attitudes towards the language, the teacher and the learning. In addition, Gardner and Lambert (1972) in their inclusive researches gave proof that positive attitudes toward a language improved proficiency as well, for this reason the teacher student relationship should be tackled in details in the next point.

#### **2.9.11. Teacher Pupils Relationship**

Teachers are expected to fulfil various missions during their teaching process; one of the responsibilities is to provide the learners with a relaxed atmosphere which encourages cooperation and interaction, so that the students feel more likely to get involved in the learning process. Since pupils are taught by both female and male teachers, it is a widely acknowledged assumption that teachers' gender is a factor in the process of teacher-student relationship which is going too to influence the quality and quantity of interactions in the classroom.

Classrooms are complex social systems, and student-teacher relationships are also complex which in turn they all belong to multi-component systems. So that teachers can understand and guarantee students' engagement in their learning process, it is very necessary to establish a good and a qualified relationship with them. Such a relationship can be evaluated through standardized observation methods, formative assessment as it can be improved by looking for the relevant developmental processes of the classroom providing students with complements and support about their interactive behaviours and cues so as to enhance the teacher students relationship. When these supports are provided to teachers' interactions, student engagement increases. In other words, relationships between teachers and students reflect a classroom's capacity to promote development, and it is precise that, in this way, relationships and interactions are the key to understanding pupils' engagement.

Classrooms are, by their very nature, social places. Teachers and pupils discuss various topics, share some experiences, and work together to create an environment in which learning occurs. The classroom climate can be described along positive and negative scopes. Positive climate refers to the degree of the warmth, attention and care students receive and experience from their relationships with their teachers and peers, in this way they are going to enjoy the time they spend in the classroom. Negative climates encompass the situations in which students do not feel comfortable such as frequent yelling, humiliation, or irritation in relationships with teachers and peers.

Over the last past ten years, many studies were conducted to prove that the aspect of climate was shown in the nature and quality of teachers' relationships with students. It was confirmed that certain teachers had tendencies to develop more positive relationships, across multiple students in their classroom, than did others. Students in classrooms with higher levels of teacher support had higher levels of peer acceptance and classroom engagement than did their peers in less supportive classrooms.

Teachers are expected to provide more than a warm and caring social environment, and this is by nature a female characteristic, for this reason we can say that female teachers are more warmth and attentive to their students than male ones . Female teachers are more attuned, responsive and willing to meet students' cues and needs in their classrooms, a dimension of teaching referred to here as teacher sensitivity. Highly sensitive teachers, through their consistent, timely, and responsive relationships, help students create environments in which they feel safe and free to explore and learn. Highly sensitive teaching requires teachers to simultaneously attend to process, and respond to a lot of information.

Throughout Pianta's (2001) researches, she witnessed an example of highly sensitive teacher and said that during a whole group instruction, a female teacher, within a quick succession, noticed some pupils not paying attention, she saw that one child was frustrated because he did not understand her questions, she observed a sad look on a pupil, she knew, was generally very happy and engaged. This sensitive teacher did not only notice those subtle cues from students, but knew her students well enough to respond in ways that helped alleviate their problems. She changed the tone of her voice to reengage the students who were not participating, taken a quick moment to restate her question in simpler language, and made a mental note to check in with the sad student at recess.

In contrast, Pianta noticed a male teacher who was a somehow insensitive one, who didn't pay attention to his pupils' facial expressions so he completely missed those subtle cues

or responded in ways that worsened, rather than alleviated, students' problems. Sensitive teaching is so important not only to social outcomes, but also to academic outcomes.

On one hand, according to many scholars, in such classrooms, female teachers are more likely to build a good relationship with their students for the sake of involving them in their learning process. They frequently ask for students' ideas and thoughts, follow students' lead, and provide opportunities for students to have a formative role in the classroom. In such classrooms, students are not just motivated to participate but are actively encouraged to exchange their ideas all together, in this way female teachers are not only raising the spirit of peers cooperation and collaboration but also reinforcing students' self-esteem.

On the other hand, male teachers tend to more control the classroom, they follow much scripted plans for how the day should run, show little flexibility or response to students' interests and motivations, and provide few opportunities for students to express their thoughts or to assume responsibility for activities in the classroom. Male teachers in these classrooms are also very controlling of student movement. As regards to some findings, students who report more positive feelings about school, are more motivated and more engaged when they face a more learner-centred and autonomy-supportive methods; whereas, students in more teacher-directed classrooms have higher levels of internalizing problems (NICHD ECCRN, 2003).

There are some findings, however, suggesting that the optimal level of teacher control may vary depending on factors such as learning objectives (Brophy & Good, 1986; Soar & Soar, 1979), grade and gender. Interestingly, there is ample support that adolescents also thrive when given some degree of control and choice over their learning, in other words they feel at ease when they know that they are responsible for their learning outcomes (NRC, 2004).

Moreover, the teachers who follow more effective behaviour management methods (Emmer & Strough, 2001; Evertson, Emmer, Sanford, & Clements, 1983; Evertson & Harris, 1999), having more organized and routine management structures (Bohn, Roehrig, & Pressley, 2004; Cameron, Connor, & Morrison, 2005), and using strategies that actively involve students in classroom participating activities (Bowman & Stott, 1994; Bruner, 1996) have less oppositional and disruptive behaviour, higher levels of engagement in learning, and ultimately, students who are willing to learn more.

Thus, the dimensions of teacher-student relationship that are reflected in the classroom organization domain include effective behaviour management, productivity, and learning formats, because classrooms with positive behaviour management tend to have students who make greater academic progress. Consequently, teachers who successfully manage their time contribute in establishing a highly productive classroom which may resemble a “well-oiled machine” in which every student in the classroom seems to know what is expected from him/her and how to go about doing it (Pianta et al., 2004). However, when teachers do not efficiently manage time, students may spend extraordinary amounts of time looking for materials, waiting for the next activity, or simply sitting around.

The effectiveness of teaching directly depends on the extent to which teachers provide interesting activities, instruction, and materials and facilitate those activities so that students are actively engaged through various modalities. According to constructivism, the constructivist theories as well as information processing views of learning and cognition (Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978 ), the teacher should not only focus on the type of instruction or number of materials used but rather on how effectively s/he interacts to use instruction and materials to engage students and to promote active participation in a specific learning opportunity, such that the students are not only behaviourally participating but they are cognitively engaged as well. Simply, students are not going to learn facts but to gain useful knowledge, which is built upon learning how facts are interconnected, organized, and conditioned upon one another.

The teacher is responsible for the development of students’ cognition and language by offering them the opportunities to express existing skills and scaffold more complex ones. So as the students get benefit from the instructional opportunities described above, they like to hear feedback about their learning from their teachers. Feedback refers to the information provided from to the teachers about students’ performance, effort and results which are already based on teacher students’ relationship. Research on feedback typically focused on praise (Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Stallings, 1980), behavioural feedback, or attributional feedback, in which teachers make statements to students attributing their performance to either ability (e.g., “you did this well because you are a good reader”) or effort (e.g. “you did this well because you worked hard”), in this way pupils will be more encouraged to enhance their learning results.

In order to improve and reinforce teacher student’s relationship, feedback is expected from him/her. When teachers provide students with specific information about the content or



their process of learning, pupils will feel that their teacher cares about them so they establish a good relationship with each other. High-quality feedback refers to the communication between teachers and students for the sake of supplying them with precise and detailed information about not only if they are correct or not (Brophy, 1986), but about how they achieve the correct answer, how they can perform at a higher level, or how their performance meshes with larger objectives. The fact of providing high-quality feedback leads to students' engagement in active participation and communication in the classroom where students exchange and comment on their ideas in a sustained effort to reach deeper understanding (Pianta et al., 2004).

According to Whitaker (2004), the main variable in the classroom is not the student, but the teacher. Great teachers have high expectations for their students, but even higher expectations for themselves. This kind of teachers acknowledges the significance of connecting with their students, that if they are emotionally unable to connect with them, then influencing their minds may be impossible.

Whitaker (2004) suggested that teachers were the first and maybe the most important point of contact in a student's life. In spite of the countless reforms, educational movements, and programmes implemented to improve education, no other element can be as profound as the human element. He further urged: "It's the people, not the programmes". More profoundly he stated: "There are really two ways to improve a school significantly: Get better teachers and improve the teachers in the school." (p.9)

"A fundamental question for a student is 'Does my teacher like me?' Given a rigorous, aligned curriculum, the answer to that simple question is our best predictor of student achievement." (Terry, 2008, p. 1) Teachers should cognize the efficacy of student motivation and achievement since they are crucial components to creating relationships that motivate them. Both teachers and students have to value their contribution. A student has to feel worthwhile and esteemed. A teacher has to make sure that he or she can have a positive effect on their students. Wiseman and Hunt (2001) referred to this as "teacher efficacy" and note that the more the teacher believes in it the more s/he will cause it to happen (p.11).

A student wants to feel connected to people and to feel as though he or she deserves to be loved and respected (Stipek, 2002). According to Stipek many pupils who face academically failure, are the same ones who have a poor and a weak relationship with their teachers. If these pupils are humiliated or badly treated by their teachers in the classroom, their teacher-student relationship begins to hold negative associations.

In her research, Stipek (2002) found that students who received more attention from their teachers tended to have better attitudes towards their learning process and often performed better than their peers who lacked the same support and affection. A good teacher-student relationship positively influences learning. The more students feel linked, the more they are willing to do tasks, to revise the lessons and to ask for help if they need it. Such students will try to maintain this relationship and to satisfy the teacher by doing well in class.

According to Tyler and Boelter (2008), positive teacher-students relationship is directly related to the high academic performance or academic gains; whereas a negative one is resulted in a decrease in academic performance. So, according to Whitaker (2004), it is better to create the relationship that will motivate the student to positively behave towards his/her learning process.

Student success in the classroom occurs due to the factor of a good student-teacher relationship. Pianta (1994) attested that teacher student relationships were reflected on students' success in school; and Lee (2007) found that a relationship based on trust between the student and the teacher could contribute to students' academic performance. Noddings (1988 & 1992) shared that students wanted to perform well and thus worked harder only for teachers whom they cared about and perceived as also valuing their learning. When the students love the teacher, they like the subject.

The student-teacher relationship can influence students' future paths toward academic success. Lastly, Miller (2000) found that the student-teacher relationship played an important role in helping reduce the chances of future bad outcomes, or in other words reducing dropping out of school.

#### **2.9.11.1. Teacher Pupils Relationship Characteristics**

Since decades ago, many studies directly spotted the light on some of the characteristics of the teacher-students relationship in order to investigate how such an important relationship was. Barr (1958) and later Good and Brophy (1995) identified teacher characteristics that students most like to be in their teachers, including caring, consideration, buoyancy, understanding and patience. Jacobson (2000) claimed that in order to develop such a relation and create this type of environment, the first step was that the teacher should know each student, thus allowing him/her to have a better chance of developing positive rapport that could in turn facilitate and support the student's learning. Though such studies provided

important insight, but they didn't go further to explain how these characteristics then affected students and ultimately the student-teacher relationship.

### **2.9.11.2.Negative Teacher Pupils Relationships Characteristics**

Teachers who experience negative relationships with a student demonstrate frustration, annoyance, irritability and anger toward that student. Teachers might show their negativity through unpleasant, ironic, humiliating and sarcastic comments toward the student or to be always struggling or in conflict with him/her. Often, teachers will describe a specific student as “one who exhausts them” or “a student who leaves them feeling drained and burned out.”

In classrooms where teachers show irritability and anger toward one or many students, there will be no positive teacher-student relationships. In such classrooms, teachers may face situations where they need to yell and practise harsh punitive control. Teacher-student communications may be based on sarcastic and disrespectful language, or pupils simply don't pay attention to the teacher. In classrooms of this kind bullying behaviours may commonly occur (Pianta et al., 2006).

Negative teacher-student relationships cause stress for both teachers and students (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Lisonbee, Mize, Payne, & Granger, 2008) as they can hurt and impede students' academic and social-emotional development (McCormick & O'Connor, 2014; O'Connor, Collins, & Supplee, 2012).

When students feel their teachers' caring and love, they further increase the level of their learning process (Stronge, Tucker, & Hindman, 2004). Caring can take many forms such as including demonstrating patience, fairness, positive engagement, being a positive role model, being sensitive to students' needs, being nurturing, and knowing students on a personal level. Teven (2001) found that secondary students' perceptions of their teachers' levels of caring were positively related to their perceptions of their teachers' immediacy, responsiveness, and assertiveness.

### **2.9.11.3.Positive Teacher Students Relationships Characteristics**

Effective teachers do their best to develop positive relationships with their students through trying to meet pupils' developmental, emotional and academic needs which is going

to create a more motivated classroom environments and conducive to learning. Here are some concrete examples of closeness between a teacher and a student:

- A high school student writes a story to perform it as a play with his classmates and chooses to share it with his teacher because he knows that he will show genuine interest in his success.
- Another student struggling in English shows comfort in admitting to his teacher that he needs help with understanding the difference between countable and uncountable nouns even if most of his classmates in the class move beyond this work.
- A girl having some problems with her friends and her family and approaches her female teacher to discuss them because she trusts that the teacher will listen and help her.

Teacher-student relationships are often measured according to the dimensions of closeness and conflict. Close relationships are characterized by warmth, trust, and open communication. These kinds of open relationships help to promote students' motivation for learning and subsequent gains in academic achievement (Hughes, Luo, Kwok, & Loyd, 2008). Contrariwise, conflict relationships are characterized by discord and mistrust which can undermine students' careers (Hamre, Pianta, Downer, & Mashburn, 2008).

Positive teacher-student relationships help in adjusting school and both academic and social performance. According to many studies teachers of low conflict report a high degree of closeness and support, and little dependency lead to sustain students' adjustment to school, contribute to their social skills, promote academic performance and reinforce students' resiliency and flexibility in academic performance.

Teachers, who establish close relationships with their students stated that their pupils were less likely to avoid school, appeared more self-directed, more cooperative and more engaged in learning (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Decker, Dona, & Christenson, 2007; Klem & Connell, 2004). Teachers who utilize more learner-centred approaches, which include practices that show sensitivity to individual differences among students, giving the students the opportunity to be decision-makers, acknowledge students' development, and be interested to their personal and relational needs, produced greater motivation in their students than those who used fewer of such practices (Daniels & Perry, 2003).

According to the attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1982; Bowlby, 1969), positive teacher-student relationships allow students to feel safe and secure in their learning

environments and provide scaffolding for important social and academic skills. Teachers who support students in the learning environment can go further and positively impact their social and academic outcomes, which are important for the long-term path of school and eventually employment (Baker et al., 2008; Silver et al., 2005). In other words, when teachers form positive bonds with students, classrooms become supportive spaces in which students can engage in academically and socially productive ways (Hamre & Pianta, 2001).

According to Hamre and Pianta, (2001) closeness, warmth, and positivity are the characteristics of positive teacher-student relationships. In this way, students will foster their relationships with peers, and developing self-esteem and self-concept. Through this secure relationship, students will learn how to appropriately behave socially as well as to build academic expectations and how to achieve these expectations. These studies show that such relationships based on security, safety and mutual respect with teachers will significantly influence students' later years of schooling (Midgley et al., 1989).

Besides positive teacher-student relationships, students' motivation to learn is another aspect that affects social and academic outcomes. The link behind associating the academic improvement and positive teacher-student relationships is students' motivation and desire to learn (Wentzel, 1998). Motivational theorists suggested that if students built a good relationship with their teachers, they would be highly motivated to perform well (Bandura, 1997; Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). Developing such warm and positive relationships, students are more engaged in school and willing to improve their academic achievement (Hughes, Cavell, & Jackson, 1999).

Motivation is greatly linked to student's perceptions of teacher expectations. Studies of middle and high school students demonstrated that students formed their own educational expectations from their perceptions of their teachers' expectations. Students who notice that their teachers have high expectations of their academic achievement are more motivated to try to meet those expectations and perform better academically in order to please their teachers, than their peers who perceive low expectations from their teachers. Expectations can play a significant role on a students' academic achievement due to the influence of expectations on motivation (Muller et al., 1999, pp. 292-337).

Moreover, teacher-student relationships influence the academic self-esteem of students (Ryan et al., 1994), for instance high-poverty students often feel undermined as a result they have low academic self-esteem and low confidence in their academic and vocational futures (Wentzel, 2003). Therefore, establishing positive relationships with their

teachers is very important in developing higher levels of self-esteem, higher academic self-efficacy, and more confidence in future employment outcomes (Ryan et al., 1994; Wentzel, 2003). So if pupils develop their self-confidence and future aspirations, they will be more interested in school, their academic self-efficacy and in turn, their academic achievement and thus reduce drop-out rates. (Wentzel, 2003).

As it was already mentioned, students having high self-esteem are more likely to be self-efficacious and set higher goals including relationship and job satisfaction, occupational status, emotional regulation, and physical health. Students' socially status is also influenced by the degree of their self-esteem. Students with high self-esteem usually develop positive relationships with their mates and teachers. Self-esteem also influences students' mental health outcomes including reducing anxiety and symptoms of depression. Self-esteem is especially essential during adolescence to help students develop a positive sense of self (Orth, Robins, & Widaman, 2012, pp. 1271-1288).

Strong teacher-student relationships may be one of the most important environmental factors in changing a pupil's educational path and future life (Baker, 2006). The recommendations from Downey's analysis were that "students need teachers to build strong interpersonal relationships with them, focusing on strengths of the students while maintaining high and realistic expectations for success" (p. 57). These relationships should be based on respect, trust, caring, and cohesiveness. Hamre and Pianta (2006) also investigated the importance of teacher-student relationships. They admitted that positive relationships between teacher and student were considered as a resource to students, which were going to sustain their engagement in academic pursuits. This extended engagement leads to success and to better grades.

Hamre & Pianta (2006) suggested that schools should actively support staff members to engage with the students and learn about their outside interests so that teachers would be more connected with them on a more personal level. Both Hamre & Pianta (2006) agreed on that a strong teacher-student relationship was necessary for success in school: "ways to build good solid teacher- student relationships should be explicitly targeted in school intervention plans" (p. 56). These strong and supportive relationships foster students' competency to make greater academic gains.

Hamre & Pianta (2006) acknowledged that many researches supported the efficacy of building teacher-student relationships and recommended the need for more empirical evidence to increase how to go to scale with efforts targeting student-teacher relationships,

and how to maintain these efforts over time. Their position means that this will eventually help make schools more responsive to the various learning needs in classrooms.

Baker (1999) conducted a study of “at risk students” who were defined as students nominated as having a high possibility of poor developmental or school outcomes. Baker reported that at risk students often reported feeling alienated and disenfranchised from the environment, culture and atmosphere of school. When asked, students reported that they would be satisfied with school if they experienced and lived a caring and a supportive relationship with their teacher.

The focus on using certain instructional methodologies and a stripped curriculum that does not take into account students’ characteristics takes over the importance of the relationship teachers share with their students. For instance, Baker (1999) said that because elementary students were luckier to build an enhanced relationship with their teachers since they spent such significant amount of time with only one teacher, contrary to middle and secondary school pupils who were taught by several teachers.

Baker (1999) supposed that students who dropped out of school “seem not to have the social connectedness with adults at school that could function as a protective factor in the face of academic or life stressors” (p. 59). She concluded that students’ school performance was strongly and directly influenced by the relationships with their teachers and the quality of the interactions they daily experienced. The more teachers have intimate knowledge of how their students learn, the more they build strong relationships with them which lead to providing opportunistic guidance to their students.

Brekelmans & Wubbels, (2005) also conducted a study which showed that students’ cognitive outcomes were influenced by the perceptions of their teacher. The higher a teacher was perceived on the influence dimension, (an interpersonal perception profile), the more students had higher outcomes and results in their tests. In their study, teacher influence was the most important variable at the class level. They reported that the more teachers were perceived by their students as supportive, the higher the students’ scores were on cognitive tests.

Another instructional technique that focused on fostering teacher-student relationships was discussed by Flood et al. (2003). It is the strategy of ‘reciprocal teaching’ which is a method of teaching comprehension through structured dialogue between teachers and students. Polincsar and Brown (1984) formulated this technique based on Vygotsky’s

(1978) concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Reciprocal teaching refers to the extremely dependency on interaction between teachers and students as readers learn new information (p. 935). Downey (2008), too, recommended the use of reciprocal teaching as an effective instructional strategy; one that required the construction of strong interaction between teacher and students as they “develop an inquiry-oriented approach to learning” (p. 60).

The fact of building strong effective relationships with students, teachers would benefit from another additional instructional capacity that could enhance learning from a range of students’ interests and strengths. According to Hallinan (2008), learning is a cognitive as well as social psychological process. He reported: “research has shown that students who like school have higher academic achievement” (p. 271).

Since a long time ago, it was pointed that the student-teacher relationships were always an important factor in student’s success and achievement. Improving students’ relationships with teachers had important, positive and long-lasting consequences for both students’ academic and social development. The fact of improving students’ relationships with their teachers will not only produce gains in achievement, but it will prepare them to be active agents in their social life and raise the awareness of humanity. However, these students who have close, positive and supportive relationships with their teachers will realize higher levels of achievement than those with more conflict in their relationships.

In order to provide a better atmosphere for a classroom environment, there is a need of communication between the student and the teacher which serves as a connection between the two. Definitely, a teacher cannot understand and deal with every problem of every pupil in his or her classroom, but s/he should obtain enough information for those students who are struggling with specific tasks. A significant body of research indicates that “academic achievement and student behaviour are influenced by the quality of the teacher and student relationship” (Jones, 2015). The more the teachers connect or communicate with their students, the more likely they will be able to help students learn at a high level and accomplish quickly.

From time to time, teachers experience some students who are disruptive and/or find learning boring. Teachers should put in mind that if this behaviour continues and nothing is done to prevent it in the classroom, the outcome proves to be disastrous for both types of participants. The student will understand that his or her behaviour is permissible, and will no more focus on learning; therefore it is essentially important for the teacher to explain to the



pupil right from the beginning the importance of studying. Though it is acknowledged that learning cannot be forced, the pupil will only show the desire to learn if he or she feels comfortable with learning whether it is in a classroom or at home.

Hence, the teachers who display respect towards their students will obviously win favour by having active learners in their classroom. The arrogant or offensive teacher will lack these positive qualities due to his or her lack of control over the pupils. Teachers should affirm that they should also be treated with respect and their responsibilities to ensure that students treat each other with kindness which means to spread the spirit of mutual respect. According to the Jones (2015), “Teachers are encouraged to blend their warmth and firmness towards the students in their classroom, but with realistic limits.”

For teachers conducting a classroom and shaping the minds of the young students, effective teachers’ communication should be associated with appropriate and helpful feedback to their students. Interaction between the student and his/her teacher is extremely important for a successful relationship throughout all the whole time of a school year. A close, but limited relationship between the student and teacher can be helpful for those students who are shy, having difficulties in speaking in front of the classroom or pupils who have low self-esteem. The tension these students hold in a classroom will obtain the confidence they have always wanted, but never achieved if no good relationship was shared with the teacher. So teachers are the only ones who have the unique opportunity to support students’ academic and social development at all levels of schooling.

To sum up, the following example will accurately summarize and describe teacher-students’ relationship. Imagine a student who shares a strong personal connection with her teacher, frequently talks to her, and receives more constructive guidance and praise rather than just negative and subversive criticism from her teacher. The student is likely to build a relationship based on trust with her teacher, show more desire to engage in the learning, behave better in class and achieve at higher levels academically, and this is mostly shared between female teachers and their pupils. Effective teacher-students relationships succeed to engage students into the process of learning and enhance their desire to study.

## **2.10. Conclusion**

There are two different genders male and female, basing on the differences between the physiological characteristics and the superiority and inferiority in social activities. Men

and women are differentiated from each other in individuality, value, image and status which lead to variations in their commitment to their professions.

Gender as an analytical category continues to motivate researchers in many areas. Importantly, the gap between men and women is apparently present across all contexts. As research on gender continues, it will be fundamental to determine how and why the gaps are different. In this chapter, the differences between male and female teachers of English were tackled from various aspects. We can notice that there are many differences between the two genders, as well as the fact that they contribute to be some changes through time.

The purpose of the current study was to inspect the impact of teachers' gender on secondary school pupils' learning process. The second chapter revealed that there were differences between male and female teachers and this was confirmed by the claims made by the previous studies which were conducted on the same scope. This chapter was a springboard for understanding how teaching was influenced by teachers' gender and the best way to meet the needs of students in different environments.

The relationship between teachers' gender and teaching style which includes all the differences such as teachers' talk, control, interaction, politeness and other characteristics, as it is already mentioned above, has implications for practice in the classroom. For this reason school development programs should be aware of the results of this study which indicate that gender differences do exist.

Teachers may set different objectives to be achieved in their teaching, which are influenced by their gender; one of them is to reinforce students' enthusiasm to learn, progress, and to perform better. As it was mentioned earlier many studies provided underlined evidence that teachers' gender played a crucial role in convincing and drawing students' perceptions of the learning environment.

Moreover, as regards to some researches male and female teachers create differences in the learning environment through pursuing different teaching strategies. As a result, findings show that female teachers are more likely to be more student-centred and supportive of students than male teachers. Hence, positive relationships are also mostly established between female teachers and their students. For the male teachers the relationships between the teacher constructs and student are clearly different. Teacher-students relationships should not be left to chance, but rather teachers can influence the dynamics of their classrooms and

build strong teacher-student relationships that will support student learning through using some strategies.

The essence of a strong teacher and student relationship revolves around how it affects the classroom learning environment in a meaningful way. The everyday conversations and interactions in the classroom do matter when teachers follow valuable and effective strategies that will positively contribute to the advance of the acquisition of knowledge. In developing such relationships teachers will have a great opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge about the minds and hearts, both the academically and socially needs, of their learners so as to positively influence the pupils' learning process.

Students' relationships with teachers are fundamental to their success in school. These relationships are reinforced in classrooms throughout the whole school year through a significant intersection of student and teacher beliefs, views, attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and interactions with one another. When students experience strong and supportive relationships with their teachers, they feel safer and more secure in the school setting, feel more comfortable, competent, make more positive connections with their classmates, and make greater academic gains. However, disagreements and conflicts with teachers may pull students towards a trajectory of school failure; as a result pupils will be unable to connect to academic and social resources offered within classrooms and schools.

To conclude, teachers are different from each other as regard their gender which also imposes other differences; this will definitely influence the teacher-students relationships. The theoretical and empirical study of such interactions should lead to the development of programmes designed to promote students' school success by improving student-teacher relationships. This may further positively influence the social development and the academic growth and, ultimately, help make schools and classrooms more aware and responsive to the diverse needs of today's students. In The next chapter, the studied literature on the influence of the EFL teachers' gender on the pupils' learning process will be evaluated in a practical method.

# CHAPTER THREE

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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### **3.29. Introduction**

In this research study, we seek to explore the influence of EFL teachers' gender on secondary school pupils in learning English. In this chapter, first we will deal with our role as the researcher of the current study. Then, light will be shed on describing the research design including the identification of the independent and dependent variables and an explanation is provided for choosing the mixed-method approach throughout this study. Next, the research methodology will be discussed in details including the used research methods to collect data. A justification of methodology instruments will be also dealt with. The selection of the participants used throughout the study is then discussed. Then, this chapter also provides an overview of the validity and reliability of the measurement and of the research itself. The third chapter also includes a description of hypothesis testing, data analysis, and study limitations. Finally, we will deal with the methods used to ensure research ethical issues as well as the resources required to accomplish this research study.

### **3.30. Researcher Stance**

In order to meet the criteria of transparency, we played the role of passive observer at the secondary schools where we conducted this research, in which we strictly watched, took notes, and had little interaction with the pupils in the classroom. Since, we have been teaching English at the secondary school for seven years, we were able to gather and analyse and yield meaningful data throughout the research.

In any research, the researcher uses several tools, and as such, leads bias into the process. Patton (2002) posited: "The human factor is the great strength and the fundamental weakness of qualitative and quantitative inquiry and analysis, a scientific double edged sword" (p. 433). Patton's advice was to "do the very best with your full intellect to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveals given the purpose of the study" (p. 433).

While, Stake (1995) described the qualitative research as a highly personal research, as it increased the ability to use good sources of data and led to important understanding and trustful interpretations. He declared that researchers were induced to include their own personal perspectives in the interpretation. Since most of the research depends on interpretation, experience is one of the main qualifications of a qualitative researcher. He insisted on that we needed to use this experience to "know what leads us to significant

understanding, recognizing good sources of data, and testing the robustness of our interpretations” (p. 50). Yin (2009) also wrote that qualitative researchers should use their own prior experience and expert knowledge to demonstrate their awareness of current thinking and discourse about the case study topic.

Our role in this research will be shaped by our previous experience years working in the field of secondary education which in turn strengthened our abilities as the researcher conducting this study. Our teaching experience afforded us the opportunity to be embedded in a variety of classrooms, working alongside teachers. We believe these experiences provide us with unique insight, understanding, and knowledge of teaching and learning. We also know that these experiences shaped certain biases “the scientific double-edged sword”, even though every effort will be made on our part to remain neutral and let the data shape our analysis and interpretation.

As a teacher in this domain, our challenge was to remember to define our roles in this study as that of researcher and not of a study participant. We needed to be mindful that our role was that of impartial observer and to remind the participants in the study of our objective for being in the classroom. This would be a paradigm shift that we needed to stay mindful of. This process strengthened our investigation practices through analytical confirmation and analysis through previous theory and application in the data acquired through questionnaires, interviews and observations.

Although we had some research experience, we faced some challenges in this study. The greatest challenge was acknowledging that all findings and interpretations would not be influenced and shaped by our identity and viewpoint. Our opportunities at the secondary schools setting would consist of passive observation of all six classrooms since we were not involved in leading or instructing the class in any way. As an individual with our own beliefs and perspective of gender, we needed to constantly reflect back on the issues being analyzed and this leads to a more insightful and perceptive analysis. Prior to this study, we have never had any involvement at these schools; therefore there was little to no interference with our role as an observer to both the group of students and teachers. This position allowed us to strictly focus on the collection of data, rather than a more actively involved role.

Even though we conducted this study from the position of a teacher researcher, our purpose was to collect information that would improve the field of education, and not to



evaluate the teacher or the pupil. This purpose was made clear to the study participants before the investigation began.

### **3.31. Research Design**

In the research field, there are mainly two general approaches to both collect and report information which are quantitative and qualitative approaches. Mixed-methods methodology was used along this study in order to investigate our hypotheses. The quantitative approach was inclined to examine the studied issue from a larger number of informants using survey methods. The qualitative approach concentrated on understanding the phenomenon from a closer angle.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2006) defined the mixed methods design which served as a guide for this study as the following:

*“Mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of the qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone”* (p. 5).

This kind of design which includes both quantitative and qualitative approaches is used for the reason that each individual research approach has its weaknesses and strengths. The quantitative part of this study was a questionnaire, whereas the qualitative part was about an observation and an interview. When utilized together, they represented the full range of educational research methods (Gay & Airasian, 2000).

So, the quantitative and qualitative research design was used to investigate the hypotheses. In this research study, we sought to explore the influence of EFL teachers' gender on secondary school pupils using a design approach in which we examined a real-life, over a period of time, through a detailed and in-depth data collection (Creswell, 2013). The independent variables for this research were secondary school teachers' gender with the dependent variables included pupils' academic achievement and their performance in learning English as a foreign language.

Creswell (2009) declared: “often the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is framed in terms of using words (qualitative) rather than numbers (quantitative)” (p. 98). In this case, our use of both of the methods seems to be to identify the teacher’s gender influence and to evaluate it through the achievements of students in learning English as the best fit.

### **3.31.1. The Quantitative Approach**

The quantitative approach focuses on describing a phenomenon among a big number of individuals, thereby concluding in the possibility of summarizing characteristics across groups or relationships. This approach surveys a large number of participants and uses statistical methods to identify total patterns in operational relationships. Significantly, applying surveys can be done on several groups to compare between them so as to determine that certain features which influence specific outcomes.

The researcher, using the quantitative research, can measure and analyze data. The researcher objectively deals with results of the research. This kind of research can be used to test hypotheses in experiments because of its ability to measure data using statistics. Quantitative research usually includes comparison studied, cause and effect relationship, etc.

Using survey methods among a large group of individuals facilitates generalization. For instance, if the researcher wants to study the influence of teachers’ gender on pupils, s/he will likely need some evidence for her/his hypotheses. Interviewing a small number of participants might be reflective for specific cases; however, it would not be enough to strongly assert the results. Stronger support for trustful findings would be evident when using quantitative methods too.

Applying the quantitative approach along a study will enable the researcher to gather information from a relatively large number of participants, to conduct among a number of groups, allowing for comparison, to allow generalizing to broader population, to provide numerical or rating information and to lend to statistical techniques that allow determining relations between variables.

#### **3.31.1.1. Questionnaire**

Questionnaires can also be classified as both a quantitative and a qualitative method according to the type of the questions. More precisely, the answers obtained from the closed-

ended questions and/or the multi-choice answers are analyzed through using the quantitative methods which may be presented in a form of percentages, bar-charts and pie-charts. However, the answers obtained from the open-ended questions are analyzed in a different way which is through using the qualitative methods which are in a form of critical analyses and discussions but without using calculations or numbers.

The questionnaire is a scientific double edged sword; its advantageous side comprises of the rapidity in gathering data, lower requirements and the high level of objectivity in contrast to other alternative methods of primary data collection. However, the disadvantageous part is represented in the informants' random choosing of answers without correctly reading the question. Furthermore, the participants are sometimes asked to give extra ideas on the issue which they may fully answer or to leave it as an empty space.

### **3.31.1.1.1. The Types of Questions**

The questionnaires can include two types of questions: the first type is used to get quantitative data where closed-ended questions are used, while the second type is used to get qualitative information through using open-ended questions and each type has its way of analyzing and interpreting the results.

#### **3.31.1.1.1.1. Closed-Ended Questions**

Closed-Ended Questions limit the answers of the participants to response options provided on the questionnaire in which all possible answers are identified and the informant is asked to choose one of them. This kind of questions save time in a way that the respondents take minimal effort and less time to fill in the questions which in turn allows for more questions to be answered. They are ideal for quantitative type of research since the responses are easy to code and interpret and more time-efficient. Here are some examples of close ended questions we have included in the questionnaires:

##### **3.31.1.1.1.1.1. Dichotomous Questions**

This type of questions provides the respondents with two options to choose between them: yes or no. It is the easiest form of questionnaire for the participants in terms of responding it.

### **3.31.1.1.1.2. Multiple Choice Questions**

Respondents are given a group of answers from which they are going to choose: A, B, or C.

### **3.31.1.1.1.3. Scaled Questions**

Also known as ranking questions, in which the rating scales is used to present an option for informants to rank their answers to the questions on the scale of a given range of values for instance from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This type of questions was presented in the teachers' questionnaire.

### **3.31.1.1.1.2. Open-Ended Questions**

Open-ended questions are different from the other types of questions used in the questionnaires in the way that there are no predefined options or categories included, as they may produce unexpected findings because the participants are asked to write their answers using their own words, and they can respond to the questions exactly the way they like to do so. This can make the study more original and valuable because the researcher can investigate the meaning of answers in an ideal way to gain qualitative results. However, this kind of questions requires a long time, the responses are difficult to code and interpret and the results of the findings are hard to be analyzed since the collected information is in a form of open questions, but of course not impossible to do it.

### **3.31.2. Qualitative Approach**

The qualitative approach aims at describing a phenomenon in an in-depth comprehensive way of human behaviour and the reasons that direct such behaviour. This is generally done in interviews, open-ended questions, or observations. Through the qualitative method, we explored the why and how of decision making, not just what, where, when. In most cases, only a small number of individuals participate in this type of research who can provide data in their own words and in their own way, because to carry out such a research necessitates many resources and much time.

Yin (2009) said that the strength of any study was represented in its ability to deal with a whole mixture of proof sources like interview, notes taking and observation as opposed to what might be available in other kinds of qualitative methods. He added that using this type of research method had a clear benefit asking the "how" and "why" questions that were

examined about an incident over which the researcher had little or no control (p.9). The qualitative method allows researchers to maintain the holistic and purposeful characteristics of real- life situations (Yin, 2009).

Stake (1995) argued that qualitative investigators tried to understand a case to assess the singularity and intricacy, its solidarity and interaction with its contexts (p. 16). Stake asserted that the real scope of study was the generalization, which means that we take a special case we know it well and we try to apply the obtained results on the same other fields of study. He said that qualitative study benefited from “ordinary ways of making sense” (p. 72).

The majority of contemporary qualitative researchers consolidated the idea that knowledge was constructed rather than discovered (Stake, 1995). For this reason Blumer (1978) believed that one had to immerse him/herself in a situation and to be an integral part of it so as to know what was going on. Our objective in conducting this study is to provide more specificity and greater empirical groundings for how secondary pupils’ learning process is influenced by their teachers’ gender. Reliable information will be provided by determining specific aspects linked to teacher-students interactions to an educational learning community. O’Connor et al. (2011) agreed that, with regard to teacher education, their study revealed the significance of “fostering school teachers’ awareness of the role of their relationship with students and provided teachers with information as to how to support high quality relationships with their students” (p. 152).

At present, some studies on the quality features of teaching inside the classrooms suggested that teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about their pupils represented the main factors to foresee the excellence of education (Pianta et al., 2002). The way teachers interact with their pupils strongly influences them especially those who are at risk of academic failure. The significance of teacher relationships with his/her students cannot be overestimated (Downey, 2008).

#### **3.31.2.1. Interview**

Interviews can vary from being highly structured and guided by open-ended questions or being less structured and taking the form of a conversational interview. Because of the investment in this kind of research and the relatively few number of participants, fewer restrictions or assumptions are placed on the data to be collected, not everything can be

quantified or easily quantified but still some findings from qualitative research can be generalized to some populations. However, such a research is beneficial for larger studies and deeper insights that can enrich theory, practice, and specific situations.

The fact of using open-ended questions and interviews means to provide the researcher with a clear understanding of the characteristics of the interviewees, what their experiences are, and to identify important precedents and results that may not appear when studied with predefined questions. Even though qualitative research can be considered as anecdote, when grouped by a number of informants, it provides conceptual understanding and proof that some phenomena appear with specific groups or individuals. This type of research allows the researcher to identify new and untouched phenomena, to provide a deeper understanding of mechanisms, to give one-on-one and anecdotal information, to provide verbal information that can sometimes be transformed into numerical form as it may reveal information that would not be identified through pre-determined survey questions.

Rubin & Rubin (2005) said that qualitative interviews were in a form of discussions in which the researcher kindly guided the interviewee in a broad conversation, raising depth and detail about a research topic by following up the answers. Rubin & Rubin discussed many different qualitative interview structures. Due to the nature of our questions, we chose a structured interview where questions were pre-developed and used.

Structured interviews are also known as formal interviews. They are conducted to generate data through the use of open-ended questions in a standardized order which are easy to quantify. We followed a guideline that did not deviate us from the interview schedule. This kind of interviews provides us and the interviewee with the flexibility to be free to express our views in our own terms about the questions. This type of interview is easy to replicate since it is fairly quick to conduct many interviews with many persons within a short amount of time. This means that through using the structured interviews, we could deal with a large sample resulting in the findings being representative and having the ability to be generalized to a large population which, in turn, will easily test the reliability.

A thoughtful and skilful researcher will plan a good structured interview which includes: identifying informants, determining the number of interviewees and preparing the interviews as a result it helps us develop a real sense of a person's understanding of a situation. Structured interviews can provide a reliable and comparable qualitative data and after having conducted it, a comprehensive analysis is needed.

### **3.31.2.2. Observation**

Qualitative research is sometimes known as explanatory research which means the study that strongly depends on observers taking into consideration the meanings of all what they observe (Stake, 1995, 2010). As well as a participatory study, because the researcher immerses her/himself in the setting where his/her respondents are, while taking notes and/or recording. Stake (1995) recommended that the researcher provided an opportunity for vicarious experience, by using a narrative style of reporting, with rich ingredients for this indirect practice.

Observation is one among many types of qualitative research method which includes both taking field notes on the participants, the setting, the purpose, the social behaviour, and the frequency and duration of phenomena. Several study sites are involved in designing the observational research. The data gathered throughout the observation process can be incorporated as auxiliary or confirmation research (Gray DE, 2009).

Qualitative research uses observation as the method of data collection. Observation is useful for the selection, a recording and generation in-depth description of people's behaviour in their environment to gain information that is otherwise unreachable and for conducting research when other methods are insufficient.

Observation can be classified as structured or unstructured research method. In structured or systematic observation, data collection is conducted through using specific variables and according to predetermined objectives, while, unstructured observation is conducted in an open and free way in a sense that there would be no predefined variables.

#### **3.31.2.2.1. Advantages of Observation**

Observation is a scientific double edged sword method too since there may be high levels of observer bias and an impact of the observer on primary data, in a way that presence of observer may influence the behaviour of sample group elements. However, the advantages of observation data collection method are uncountable such as that we are able to directly gather, first-hand information about the subject of his study, by using good and modern gadgets observations for the subject can be extended for a larger duration of time period for greater accuracy, reliability and validity in description and interpretation.

We have used observation since it is a superior technique of collecting information which helps in understanding both the non-verbal behaviour and verbal responses more effectively since the subjects of inquiry can be observed in their natural settings as a result artificiality in description and interpretation will be excluded and the results will be more precise. It is less demanding in nature and the fact of relying on informants is decreased, which makes it less bias in working abilities. Via the observation method, we could identify a problem by making it in depth analysis as we could easily access the research phenomena by flexibly applying and generating a permanent record of the stud to be referred to later.

#### **3.31.2.2.2. Purposes of Observation**

Like any other research method, we chose observation so as to facilitate the collection experimental data which are difficult to get through other methods. It enabled us to gather adequate data to complement or check the other information collected by other means, giving us the opportunity to accumulate the needed data to describe the variable aspect being examined which could not be accurately described without observation. Besides, through observation we could instantly collect raw data for our study for a more accurate description and interpretation.

#### **3.31.2.2.3. Types of Observation**

The observation research method includes many types, but the ones we worked with were the nonparticipant, structured and uncontrolled observation. In the nonparticipant one, we were merely by stand observing and taking notes about the group we were studying without taking any direct part or position so that not to influence the informants. The structured observation focuses on a specific aspect or aspects of the variable being observed. Finally, the uncontrolled one is usually done in a natural setting where there was no control placed on any variable within the observation area and where we remained neutral.

These observational methods are only conducted about observing the participants without explaining the purpose of the research or why they are being observed. There is no experiment done and no variables are manipulated. The observations are made without disturbing, influencing or altering the environment or the participants in any way. The same thing was done with all the groups to examine differences among individual reactions. The only disadvantage with this type of method due to the Hawthorne effect is that participants



may differently behave due to their awareness of being observed or due to our presence in the classroom.

No matter which observational method type is used, we organized a plan for gathering data. The kinds of information collected took many forms: first; audio / video recordings were often preferable since there were recordings indicating the data being analyzed. Audio or video recording was done in combination with manual recordings. Second, there was the written narrative field observations which was the most descriptive, illustrative and detailed form of data gathering. Third, there were templates or observation coding sheets, these formats may make the note taking procedure more potential to “code” observations of behaviour in a particular manner so that their numerical value can be determined. This makes both recording and data analysis much easier.

In addition, we decided on the method of sampling and the time needed to record data. In the case of event sampling, we identified the behaviours that concerned us and recorded all occurrences, without paying any attention to other behaviours. In time sampling, observations were made for predetermined time periods such as one hour a day. Finally, instantaneous sampling defines, beforehand, certain times when making observations. Types of data recording methods and sampling methods were important for the study reproducibility.

It is important to note that collecting data through observation may be linked to some ethical issues. The full and informed consent of the research participants is one of the fundamental ethical considerations that researchers are committed to. At the same time, the sample group members’ behaviour may negatively be influenced at the level of research validity if they are notified of the presence of the observer.

In short, observation methods were useful to us in many different ways. They provided us with ways to check for nonverbal expression of reactions, determine who interacted with whom, grasp how participants communicated with each other, and check for how much time was spent on various activities.

Triangulating the data collected will help increase confidence that what is observed and heard is correctly interpreted as well as no research method can stand on its lone, one boosts the other.

### **3.32. Research Methods**

All throughout this study a mixed-method research was used to join elements from both qualitative and quantitative paradigms to generate converging findings so as to answer the research questions. The primary purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which there was a difference in academic achievement in learning English between male and female students in classrooms taught by male or female EFL teachers. A second purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which there was a difference between female and male teachers as far as their performances were concerned. A third purpose of the study was to determine whether the teacher-pupils relationship and interaction were affected by the gender of both of them.

The qualitative component of this study involved six EFL teachers' interviews or tape recording in order to identify the way both male and female EFL teachers perceived and treated their pupils as well as to recognize the students' achievements in learning English based on their genders. In the qualitative approach, we explored a real-life case study through detailed and in-depth data collection.

A general interview guide was used in a structured way but with open-ended questions in an emergent design format developed to gain information from the interviewee. The questions for the interview guide were designed to explore the particular themes, concepts, and ideas, to be interpretive and which were drawn from a review of the literature so that to keep the conversation going in order to complete an idea, fill in a missing piece, or request clarification. Throughout the one-on-one interview that we conducted with each teacher, the participants were asked whether gender influenced learning English, about their attitudes toward male and female pupils achievements, who highly performed in their classes and whether, in their point of view, gender made differences on male and female students' performance, behaviour and interaction in the classroom.

It should be mentioned that a structured, single session and individual interview was selected because of its flexibility. On one hand, it had a formalized character with a predetermined question to be asked during the interview. On the other hand, the participants were allowed and encouraged to ask for more explanations and to add extra information to elaborate on some issues to benefit from its exploratory character (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 218).

So first, we started the research with the observation of six classrooms. In each classroom, we remained as a passive observer; we took notes on male and female pupils and their male and female EFL teachers' behaviours and interactions between each other. We separately observed each classroom, we devoted one hour of observation for each class. Within each classroom, our primary focus of data collection was the observation of the influence of gender on pupils learning process.

The quantitative component of the study was designed to identify the effects of gender differences of both EFL teachers and secondary school pupils on learning English as a foreign language. A questionnaire was accomplished and delivered to both teachers and pupils to collect data. The data were analyzed based on the responses of participants to the questionnaires. The percentages were used in the analysis of data to evaluate whether there were differences in the teaching/learning attitudes and efficiency between male and female teachers and pupils towards teaching and learning English.

According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) the questionnaire supplies a valuable, economical and efficient instrument to develop a broad understanding through mainly quantitative and qualitative data collection, which can then be statistically processed. It is useful and advantageous for instance: to generate a broad target audience; to collect standardized information, such as the same questions and tools used for all informants; to derive percentages by manipulating variables and key factors; to take data from multiple choice questions, open and closed questions and to provide inferential, illustrative and descriptive information. It permits responses from a large population that allow for generalization about certain factors or variables with a degree of confidence.

Although questionnaires can easily be managed and have the already mentioned advantages, they can also be difficult to design. Careful and accurate planning of the questionnaire with taking into account analytical considerations right from the beginning is critical to guarantee that difficulties or even insurmountable problems are avoided when it comes to data analysis (Glesne, 2005).

The previous thought requires involving a consideration about coding, non-responses and the way open questions are handled so that basic factual information is not lost. As it also needs taking into account the way individual questions are shaped and the justification for incorporating each question. How the questionnaire is organized, taking into account the

specific response formats choice and the variety of options, the complexity, difficulty, visibility and pertinence of questions all need to be taken into account (Cohen et al., 2011).

In addition, the questionnaire sent through e-mails was also an extra advantage as the data was gathered and collated at a relatively low cost and assures privacy of the answers. It also gave greater opportunities for participants to think about their answers so as to check information and to fill in the questionnaire when and where they preferred to do so. Therefore, a clear and an understandable questionnaire was needed right from the outset to facilitate for the informants to review its context. The quality and the quantity of the responses would also be affected by the appearance and size of the questionnaire, the method of arranging and changing questions, and the wording of the instructions provided (Cohen et al., 2011).

In other words, so as to achieve the study proposes we developed a mixed-method questionnaire both a hand by hand one and sent by e-mail. First, the e-mail questionnaire was done for many reasons among them; it had a strength that was the relatively costless and speed of data collection, gathering comprehensive and in-depth written information from the participants and teachers who had full schedules could easily fill in the questionnaire at the appropriate time that was best adequate for them. Second, the same questionnaire was delivered hand by hand to both EFL secondary school teachers and their pupils. Both the questionnaires of secondary school EFL teachers and their pupils provided an outcome of data that corresponded with teaching and gender differences.

In this research, data triangulation included conducting interviews with the teacher, classroom observations to corroborate interview data, looking at student work samples after teacher intervention, observing teacher-student interactions, and reviewing correspondence and questionnaires were given to fill in on the spot for both EFL teachers and their secondary school pupils which in turn too gathered both qualitative and quantitative data.

### **3.33. Justification of Methodology**

To answer the research questions, we used a consecutive mixed method research. Mixed method research or MMR, as being proposed by Riazi and Candlin (2014): “is more concerned with the conceptualization of reality at different levels and with multiple dimensions and how knowledge of the object of study can be produced using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies” (p. 141). Teddile and Tashakori (2010) stressed that MMR was a research approach that recompensed for the weakness of qualitative and

quantitative methods by joining both inductive and deductive approaches. Consistent with this, we utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to achieve deep insights into the problems. In other words these two research methods were used in a complementary way that one completed and strengthened the other.

On one side, the objective of the quantitative instrument was to collect data included a student self-report questionnaire, a teacher self-report questionnaire. The aim of pupils' questionnaire was to obtain information regarding their opinions about the influence of both their EFL teachers' and theirs gender on learning English. While, the purpose of teachers' questionnaire was established to deal with the differences in learning, language proficiency level, attitude and competence between male and female pupils in learning English as a foreign language, and whether their gender influenced their learning process. On the other side, for the qualitative instruments, data was gathered from observation and audio recordings of interviews with EFL teachers. The aim of these instruments was that teachers were expected to recall, consider and perhaps evaluate their pupils on the basis of observation, knowledge of learners and, first of all, teaching experience.

Quantitative research is deemed to be more objective because it collects experimental data. It can be carried out on a wide extent as it is easy to analyze and interpret, especially if an online questionnaire is used too. In addition, the objective of the qualitative research is to attain a deep insight by gathering the views and opinions of research participants (Punch, 2014). By using these materials, the study aimed at revealing students' opinions about the effects of teachers' gender on their learning process in the most comprehensible way for them, as well as to examine whether pupil's gender made a difference for EFL teachers.

These research approaches aim to illuminate and construct a way forward, as well as they are more objective. Both types of research are valid and useful. Since both qualitative and quantitative research do not exclude each other, it is possible that one investigation can use both methods (Jackson, 2009).

### **3.34. Data Collection Procedures**

This study was conducted at six secondary schools, in Tiaret, for this reason it needed a significant amount of data to be collected. The independent variables were teacher gender, student gender. Both Teachers' and pupils' data included their genders. The dependent variables were student academic growth in learning English. Both the independent

and dependent variables were imported into simple Excel percentage processing of Windows for the analysis.

The data collection procedure was carried out in three sessions; the first one was about the observation, the second one to fill in the questionnaires and the third one was the face to face interviews. The material was applied on the third week of April, 2018 in the schools of Tiaret city in Algeria. Before applying the material, we received an oral approval from the secondary schools' headmasters to gather data. Then, before going to the classes we had an informal discussion with the teachers to further explain the purpose of the study. Data were collected from ten classrooms. Out of these ten classrooms, four were taught by FEL male teachers and six were taught by EFL female teachers.

The process of data collection was comprised of three steps. The first step included the observation of classes (see appendix three). Totally, six classes were observed. We visited each classroom once for which we devoted one hour, resulting in a total of six visits. During each visit, we were present as a non-participant observer. We observed the classroom atmosphere and positioned ourselves in a non-invasive manner, where our presence was least acknowledged during ongoing class time. Once we arrived on the visit of each class, we informed the students at the outset of class that we would be in the classroom only once during their class period so as to avoid questions or anxiety as to the purpose of our observation for students.

When all the pupils have taken their seats, I have constructed a concept map of the arrangement of the classroom, paying more attention to male and female pupils' proximity to the front of the room. I have also taken notes on the discussions that were occurring between the students and the teacher, as well as non-verbal body language that was presented by male and female students and their teacher. I have also noted the teacher's verbal or non-verbal reaction to students' answers, as well as the number of times a teacher communicated with a particular gender.

We used the observation through taking notes about verbal interaction such as teacher praise and student responses, and any nonverbal classroom interactions to collect further insight. The written classroom observations were conducted using the Marzano Observational Protocol (1999). The observation served as a measure of credibility to ensure what we witnessed in the classrooms as well as in order to gather further evidence to corroborate information obtained from the other forms of collecting data.

Second, after observing all the teachers and their pupils, we distributed the questionnaires to both of them at a convenient time. We also gave the questionnaires to other four classes to be in total ten classes. We encouraged the pupils to be frank in their answers as they would not affect their relationship with their teachers since they would remain anonymous. We gave brief information about the study and the questionnaire. We were in the class during the procedures. We tried to make clear any difficult statement or procedure that the students could not accurately understand. We explained the vague statements for some of the informants. We also answered the questions about the procedure. The questionnaire was filled in the English courses in each school. It took from fifteen to thirty minutes for each class to complete the questionnaire. The data collection tool was applied following the same procedure in all schools and classes.

Then, the teachers' questionnaire (appendix two) aimed at capturing a broad perspective of EFL secondary school teachers' perceptions of gender-based difference in their classes. The literature study, which we did before, suggested some key challenges related to secondary school teachers' classroom management, teacher-student interactions, teacher-student gender differences and teacher collegiality that guaranteed further investigation. These challenges contained understanding if teachers perceived gender-based beliefs influenced classroom management, students' English learning process, teacher-student dynamics, and teacher collegiality. There is no universal consensus that the gender of teachers and of pupils does or does not influence both the teaching and the learning processes and this motivated us more to conduct our research study on such an argument.

The same questionnaire that was used in this study and delivered to EFL secondary school teachers was also sent to other teachers through e-mail. The questionnaire comprised a comprehensive list of questions that generated a combination of quantitative and qualitative data that were simultaneously collected. None of the questions were compulsory.

Approximately 30 questionnaire sheets were distributed to teachers in one week. Of which 20 sheets were fully answered and found reliable. We administered the questionnaire to make sure that there was no ambiguity in any of the questionnaire items. The questionnaire consisted of 41 statements and questions. It was organized into five sections (1-5). Section one comprised the general information of the participants e.g. their gender, age, years of work experience etc.

The second section contained questions about EFL teachers' collegiality with their partners, how did they perceive them in terms of classroom management, patience, being role models to their pupils, in other words reflecting on their perceptions of the female and male colleagues they worked with in the form of Likert scale statements. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements by ticking in one of the responses. Each response option was rated according to the teachers' answers: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD).

The third section included close ended questions about teachers' personality and the way they behaved with their pupils inside the classroom as well as to ask them about pupils' gender differences in the Algerian context. Both the fourth and the fifth sections contained open ended questions aiming at collecting data that would help get further insight into the issue. In these sections, we dealt with the EFL teachers' teaching styles and the influence of teachers' gender on their pupils.

Secondary school male and female pupils of all the three grades were also offered the chance to convey their opinions by filling in the questionnaire that we prepared (see appendix one). 200 sheets were distributed while only 170 pupils fully answered them. Pupils' questionnaire contained 32 questions as it was divided into three sections (1-3), section one elicited pupils' demographic information such as their gender, age, grade etc which were used to classify the students.

The questions of the second section were prepared on a two-degree frequency scale (Yes/No). This part of the questionnaire was about investigating learners' attitudes toward their male and female EFL teachers through close ended questions like whether they liked and respected their teachers, if their teacher was friendly or strict and if they were fairly treated by their EFL teachers or not taking into account their gender. The questions in this section were also about the effects of teachers' gender on the students' feelings, level of comprehension and responsibilities in the lessons and also out of the class.

The quality of pupils' academic performance was measured through the last third section which was allocated to them through four open ended questions asking them about their own opinions about their male or female teachers of English in an indirect way. They were asked to specify the reason that motivated them to study English well. Moreover, the learners were asked about their perception about their EFL teacher in relation to gender through mentioning the different characteristics the teachers held. They were also questioned



to explain why they liked to be taught by a male or a female teacher of English. Finally to add extra information about their teachers of English if they wanted to do so.

Eventually, the fact of using both closed and open-ended questions allowed for qualitative investigation and quantitative measurement in this research study. The quantitative data gathered from the closed-ended items of the questionnaire exposed all informants to the same response categories however the qualitative query provided participants with the opportunity to add comments describing their past or current experiences and to clarify their answers to the closed-ended questions. In others words, the questionnaire collected both quantitative and qualitative data.

At the end of the class instruction observation, we collected the questionnaire samples the students filled in. At the end of each session of observation and data gathering, we reflected on the notes we took as part of practicing reflexivity.

The third data collection procedure was about having interviews with the teachers separately (see appendix four). We asked them the pre-determined open-ended questions and they answered us in a direct way while we were recording them using the mobile. In doing so, we succeeded to gather both reliable quantitative and qualitative data.

### **3.35. General Characteristics of the Participants**

The research setting for this study took place at six public secondary schools where learning English as a foreign language was part of the curriculum. The research was held during the second trimester of the academic year 2017/2018. Twenty professionally qualified EFL male and female classroom teachers participated in this study. Out of these EFL teachers, eleven were females and the other nine were males. They were between 24 to 50 years old.

Data for this research was also collected from a total number of 170 secondary school pupils ranging in age from 14 to 20 years old, participating to complete the questionnaire. Gender was the variable of this study. For this reason pupils were dealt with as two groups: males and females. 84 were males and 86 were females. The participants were randomly selected and their level was intermediate. The three different grades included: 72 first year pupils, 79 were second year and 19 were third year. 47 pupils belonged to the literary stream while 123 ones belonged to the scientific stream. By moving to another grade, their teachers of English might be changed depending on the school administration and preferences of the teachers. So they might not have the same teacher from the first year to the

third year. Also they might not always have a teacher from the same gender. Availability was the most important criteria of subject selection. However, the classes were chosen in a way that equal number of mixed-gendered classes taken part in the study, for this reason there were ten mixed gendered classes, five classes with EFL male teachers and the other five classes with EFL female teachers. So this population became the sample group so that to generate rich data for interpretation and analysis to the present inquiry.

We were informed that the participants; the teachers and their pupils in this study were accustomed to having people in their classroom observing them, like the inspector or other researchers, so they were able to remain engaged in their learning and appear remarkably unaffected by the outside observers in the classroom. Since the participants were accustomed to blocking outside interference, the setting reinforced our ability to attain reliable data to analyze.

The teachers, as participants, were twenty with nine males and eleven females. Their teaching experience ranged between four years to more than twenty five years. They held also different university degrees like license and master ones. They all previously taught different levels and streams.

### **3.36. The Research Quality and Credibility**

Many authors like (Creswell, 2003; Gay, 1996; McMillan and Schumacher, 2006; Patton, 2001) described research as a systematic application of the scientific method of the issue under study. So without rigor, research becomes a fantasy and loses its value. Accuracy can be guaranteed only by considering validity and reliability in all types of research methods.

Both of the qualitative and quantitative research methods seek to find the same result which is the truth. It is widely known that both validity and reliability are necessarily used in the quantitative research because of its naturalistic approach, while, recently, they are also considered to be used in the qualitative research. The use of reliability and validity in the quantitative research method provides a starting point to inspect what these terms mean in the qualitative research. The triangulation used in quantitative research to test reliability and validity can also clarify some methods for testing or increasing validity and reliability of the quality of the study.

The word valid is derived from the Latin word “validus” which means strong. In statistics and science, validity is the extent to which the conclusion and the concept or

measurement is consistent with the real world and is well founded. The validity of the measuring instrument is tested by the degree to which the tool measures what it claims to measure.

The precise nature of “validity” is a very controversial subject in both educational and social research where there is no a single, common and determined definition of the term. Thus, so as to understand some of the meanings associated with “validity”, it is necessary to review a selection of a set of definitions provided by eminent authors.

Black and Champion (1976) defined validity as: “The measure that an instrument measures what it is supposed to” (pp. 232-234). Medley and Mitzel (1959) as cited in Hammersley (1987) also described it as “to the extent that differences in scores yielded...reflect actual differences.”

The definition of the term “validity” was much mentioned by Hammersley (1987) too: “An account is valid or true if it represents accurately those features of the phenomena that it is intended to describe, explain or theorize.” (p. 69). Even though this would seem to be a comprehensible and reasonable description, there are other many possible definitions and replacement terms for “validity” which propose that it is a concept totally related to the person’s system and the belief that stems from it.

Sarantakos (1994) emphasized on validity as a methodological element not only of qualitative but also of quantitative research. To quote Sarantakos (1994): “The types of measurement of the degree of validity and the definitions of validity should be considered when the quality of validity in quantitative and qualitative research contexts is evaluated” (p.76).

One of the most frequent features of critical discussions about “validity” is the blending of “validity” and “reliability” (Hammersley, 1987, p. 75; Kerlinger, 1964, p. 430; Simco & Warin, 1997). However, the “reliability” definitions are as diverse and complex as those of “validity”.

So reliability, on the other hand, means the system’s ability to perform its functions under specified conditions during a specific period of time. Reliability is the extent to which the instrument reliably measures what it is proposed to measure (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Hammersley (1987) clarified the extent to which validity and reliability were different from each other from different methodological purposes by providing two clear definitions: validity is “An agreement between two efforts to measure the same thing with different methods” Campbell and Fisk as cited in Hammersley (1987) while reliability is “An agreement between two efforts to measure the same thing with the same methods” Campbell and Fisk as cited in Hammersley (1987).

According to Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, and Spiers (2002) validity and reliability in all research methods are taken into a deep consideration. Several qualitative researchers declared that the both terms of validity and reliability were pertinent to quantitative enquiry but they were not relevant to the qualitative paradigm (pp. 13-22).

In addition, so as to assess the validity of qualitative research some scholars used the same terms and contents of validity in the quantitative investigation. Such as Lecompte and Goetz, (1982) in their work “Problems of Reliability and Validity in Ethnographic Research” dealt with two types of validity and used them in the qualitative research; internal validity, which means that there is an audio contest between the researcher’s observation and the theoretical ideas s/he develops and; external validity, as the sum of generalized results. While, other scholars inserted other different labels with nearly the same content like Guba and Lincoln (1994) in their work of “Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research” who proposed two main criteria in order to evaluate validity in a qualitative study; credibility, whether the findings were credible and transferability, and whether the results could be applied to other contexts.

Moreover, reliability and validity are the concern greatly described by the advocates of quantitative researchers. The validity and rigor criteria applied to quantitative research are not fully applied to qualitative research. Validity in qualitative research means the extent to which data is plausible, credible and trustworthy; and thus it is defensible when challenged.

While Guba and Lincoln (1981) substituted the terms validity and reliability used to measure the trustworthiness of qualitative research with four characteristics which were: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. All of those aspects were considered during this research.

In other words, the methods used by quantitative and qualitative researchers to establish trustworthiness differ in many ways. For quantitative researchers, the methods used

to establish trustworthiness include internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity. Whereas, for qualitative researchers, the methods used to establish trustworthiness include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

### **3.36.1. Quantitative Methods to Establish Trustworthiness**

“Reliability and validity are tools of an essentially positivist epistemology.” (Winter, 2000, p. 7)

All throughout the quantitative research, experimental methods and quantitative measures are used to test the hypotheses. It also stresses on the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables (Creswell, 2003 & McMillan; Schumacher, 2006).

Golafshani (2003) described the quantitative paradigm of research as:

*“Charts and graphs illustrate the results of the research, and commentators employ words such as ‘variables’, ‘populations’ and ‘result’ as part of their daily vocabulary...even if we do not always know just what all of the terms mean...[but] we know that this is part of the process of doing research. Research, then as it comes to be known publicly, is a synonym for quantitative research”* (p. 4).

In quantitative method, researchers always try to identify phenomena in measurable or common categories that can be applied to all substances (Winter, 2000). The most significant matter in the research is to assure reliability and validity. Joppe (2000) defined reliability as: “The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable”.

Kirk and Miller (1986) identified three types of reliability referred to in the quantitative research method, which related to: the degree of consistency of results i.e. the extent to which a measurement, used repeatedly, remained the same, the stability of a measurement over time and the similarity of measurements within a given time period (pp. 41-42). For this reason, Salkind (1997) described reliability as reliable thing that as it performed in the past, will do so in the future. In other words, a reliable test can assess the same thing more than once and still have the same results.

Charles (1995) abided with the ideas that the consistency in which the answers to the questionnaire or test were replied or that the participants' results kept relatively similar could be identified by the test-retest method at two different times. This feature of the instrument is in fact referred to as stability. If we are dealing with a constant measure, the results must be the same. A high degree of stability indicates a high degree of reliability consequently it means that the results are repeatable.

However, Joppe (2000) indicated to a problem which could turn the instrument, to a certain degree, unreliable when applying the test-retest method. She declared that using test-retests might sensitize the informants about the subject matter and therefore affected the answers provided by them. We can't guarantee that there is no change in external influences such as changing attitudes and answers which can lead to different results.

Crocker and Algina (1986), likewise, observed that when the participant re-answered the retest elements, the results obtained might be affected so s/he tried either to change her/his answers or to make them look more sophisticated. Consequently, as the whole test-retest scores may be changed this can lead to errors of measurement. These types of errors will diminish the accuracy and consistency of the instrument and test scores. It is therefore the responsibility of researchers to ensure a high degree of consistency and accuracy of the tests and results.

In other words, In order to ensure the instrument's utility and effectiveness through repeatability and improving its internal consistency and reliability, the researcher is going to delete or rewrite some questionnaire items but this can influence the validity of the test scores, instrument and the research itself. Taking into consideration what Crocker and Algina (1986) said: "Test developers have a responsibility of demonstrating the reliability of scores from their tests" (p. 106) We did not follow the test-retest method as we used only one test or questionnaire for both EFL teachers and their secondary school pupils to make sure that the results would be reliable, consistent and stable.

However, the validity identifies whether the research really measures what it is meant to be measured and whether the results are trustful. Wainer and Braun (1988) described validity in quantitative research method as "construct validity". The construct means the first concept, idea, question or hypothesis that shapes the basis for the researcher data collection and sampling design all consistent with the construct.

Joppe (2000) dealt with validity in the quantitative research and described it as the following:

*“Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. In other words, does the research instrument allow you to hit “the bull’s eye” of your research object? Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others”* (p. 1).

Validity is also defined as the extent to which a concept is accurately measured in a quantitative study. That is to say that validity refers to the strength of the conclusions that are drawn from the results. In other words, the degree of the results’ accuracy and whether the results actually measure what was intended to be measured.

So as to assure the usefulness and effectiveness of the results of quantitative research, there are several key issues that must be taken into account and addressed as part of the study design and analysis. So, there are several types of quantitative research trustfulness methods that are commonly examined to establish trustworthiness and they are as follow:

#### **3.36.1.1. Internal Validity**

The quantitative researchers examine the trustworthiness by evaluating the way the threats to internal validity are controlled and the validity of the tools and measurements used in the study. The data are analyzed by using questionnaire measures. Internal validity is supported when changes occur in the dependent variable from the independent variable only, and not of the other confusing variables. It is important for quantitative researchers to take into consideration the following possible threats to internal validity: duration, selection, instrumentation, subject attrition, statistical regression, experimenter effects and subject effects.

#### **3.36.1.2. External Validity**

External validity is used to generalize from the research sample to the larger population. It is important for quantitative researchers to take into account the assessment of the sampling technique in determining the credibility of the study. The external validity is used in such a way as the statistical confident limits in order to provide reasonably accurate data. The quantitative researchers should pay a great attention to the following factors that can

influence both external validity and generalizability: subjects, situation, time, intervention, and measures.

### **3.36.1.3. Reliability**

Quantitative researchers use reliability by examining the consistency of a group of measurements used in a study also known as internal consistency. It is widely known that in order to prove reliability, quantitative researchers use the test-retest method, which is known as stability, by administering one measure to the participants and wait for a certain period of time, and then to re-administer the same tool to the same participants or to follow the same way but by using different instruments on the same group of individuals and then correlate the scores from the two administrations and this what is known by equivalence.

However, we used another strategy of reliability. The same group of participants were once taught by a male teacher and another time they were taught by a female teacher. Then the tests were distributed to them to answer the questions. So in this way reliability was measured by observing whether the pupils behaved in the same way or not with both male and female teachers of English. The results of the tests will reflect the pupils' answers of their questionnaire. Reliability is important to quantitative researcher because it is a basis for validity, and measures whether or not a study obtains the same results each time.

### **3.36.1.4. Objectivity**

Objectivity is used through the methodology of measurements, data collection, and data analysis through which reliability and validity are established. Objectivity is achieved through methodological procedures like instrumentation and randomization, that is to say that instruments are well chosen but the participants are randomly selected. Quantitative researchers focus on the facts. Objectivity also refers to the convenient space between the researcher and the participants which reduces or even eliminates bias so as not to influence them or the study.

As far as the definitions of reliability and validity in quantitative research disclose two strands; first, concerning reliability, whether the result is consistent. Second, concerning validity, whether the tools of measurement are accurate and whether they are actually measuring what they are intended to measure.



However, the notions of reliability and validity are differently perceived by qualitative researchers who strongly consider these concepts defined in quantitative terms as insufficient. In other words, these terms as defined and used in quantitative terms may not apply to the qualitative research paradigm (Golafshani, 2003).

### **3.36.2. Qualitative Methods to Establish Trustworthiness**

Achieving validation and reliability in qualitative research is a challenge, but it is essential to ensure effective research. Validity is attained by assuring that the main objectives or actual research purposes are closely aligned with the concepts around which the data is collected, that is, they measure what is actually specified for measurement. In addition, to guarantee reliability within qualitative research, trustworthiness should definitely be examined. Trustworthiness can be obtained through the use of triangulation of data (Cohen, L. et al., 2011).

So as to establish validity in qualitative research there are two main components which are credibility and authenticity. Qualitative validity means that the researcher verifies the accuracy of the results by using certain procedures, whereas qualitative reliability shows that the approach the researcher follows is consistent. In other words, there are many kinds of qualitative research methods used to guarantee trustworthiness which they are:

#### **3.36.2.1. Credibility**

It is a method used by qualitative researchers to establish trustworthiness by investigating the data, data analysis, and findings to see whether or not the study is correct and accurate. Credibility is attained through researchers taking on activities that rise probability so that there will be trustworthy results. In order to increase credibility in the qualitative part of this study we used some procedures which are:

##### **3.36.2.1.1. Persistent Observation**

We used it to examine credibility by looking in details and in-depth at what we were examining and investigating.

##### **3.36.2.1.2. Peer Debriefing**

We followed this method to make sure we were not using any biased opinion. At this level we were in a daily touch with the supervisor asking her to look over the study for credibility and determine if the results seemed to align from the data.

### **3.36.2.1.3. Triangulation**

We used this method so as to investigate a large amount of different sources like an audio interviewing and observation. Contextual validation plays a significant role in triangulation since it examines the validity of a one part of a study by comparing it with other types of evidence on same points to find either similar results or different ones.

### **3.36.2.1.4. Negative Case Analysis**

It is used to demonstrate that not all the data will give the same results. This will improve enhance the credibility of the study because it proves that we were carefully and thoroughly looking over the cases, as it permitted us to display information from our study which did not stand with other themes, patterns, and overall results.

### **3.36.2.1.5. Referential Adequacy**

We followed this method in order to store primary and raw data in records for subsequent examination and comparison with other future studies to demonstrate the credibility of the data.

In short, credibility according to Mills (2011) is defined as the researcher's ability to take into account the complications and challenges that may appear in a study and to deal with patterns that will be difficult to explain. As a summary of what we have already mentioned above, in order to achieve credibility in our study we used many strategies as peer debriefing with our supervisor to help us reflect on the development of our study and analyze with additional perspective. We also practiced triangulation "to compare a variety of data sources and difficult methods with one another in order to cross-check data" (Mills, 2011, p. 104). Our triangulation in this study included experiencing data through observation in collecting field notes, enquiring data through questionnaires to both teachers and their secondary school pupils and audio recording interviews with the teachers.

### **3.36.2.2. Transferability**

In qualitative studies, transferability means applying research results to other contexts and settings in order to get at generalizability. It also indicates to researchers not generalizing data that are gathered to define "ultimate truths" about larger groups; instead the information is conclusively used within context (Mills, 2011, p. 114). We used this method to provide the collection of detailed descriptions of our study's site, participants and procedures

used to gather data, which will provide other researchers with opportunities to make comparisons and judgments with other contexts so as to assess whether or not applying the results of one study is a good match, and makes sense to generalize (Mills, 2011). The detailed descriptions that we collected from each classroom would show the measures of this group only.

#### **3.36.2.3. Dependability**

It is used to show consistency of the findings or the “stability of the data” through overlapping methods that are achieved through the triangulation process and establishing an audit trail (Mills, 2011, p. 105). Qualitative researchers describe in details the exact methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. We used many methods of triangulation to ensure the dependability, acceptability and credibility of our research. At this step we worked with the supervisor to examine the process of our data collection, analysis, findings, interpretation and recommendations with written substantiation to see whether the study is supported by data and is trustworthy so that for another researcher to carry out another study depending on ours.

#### **3.36.2.4. Confirmability**

Lastly, confirmability is the neutrality of the data (Mills, 2011). So as to ensure confirmability, we again practiced triangulation to crosscheck the raw data and reflexivity by taking notes of all my reflections during each time of data collection such as electronically recorded materials, written field notes, documents like questionnaires, and records. These techniques of confirmability will permit us to “...intentionally reveal underlying assumptions or biases” (Mills, 2011, p. 105). In other words, confirmability is attained when results of a study reflect from the participants and insure that the data speak for themselves, and are not based on our biases and assumptions. All of the above mentioned criteria were placed during the conduction of this research in order to validly present the data of gender and teaching.

One last method can be used in both quantitative and qualitative researches in order to establish trustworthiness is the reflexive journal. As its name signifies, it is a kind of a diary used on a daily basis or when needed for documentations of different data. We used this method in the qualitative part, as part of observation, so as to give information about reflecting upon our own beliefs and thoughts about our study. While, reflexive journal is used

in the quantitative part to provide information about the methodological procedures made and why certain methods, tools and data analyses of the research were chosen.

We used multiple sources of evidence to collect our data and keep careful notes to build a coherent justification for themes adds validity to the study (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002; Stake, 2010) and also serves as support for Stake's "high quality of understandings" (p. 88) that he asserts each researcher must obtain. Our interpretations are well grounded in the data we collected employing triangulation in our design consideration. We were persistent in our observations so as to generate rich data for analysis and interpretation.

To sum up, by using both qualitative and quantitative instruments of data collection, a broader and deeper vision helps in eradicating and avoiding the bias that can result from over-reliance on a single research method. Thus, this mixed-method approach helped in providing greater confidence in the results of this study. Using both an online and a normal questionnaire, an observation and audio recording interviews that enabled both qualitative and quantitative data analysis have helped in achieving reliability and validity within this study. The design of the questionnaire and interview protocols, wording of the questions, sampling; and the coding and categorizing of the responses and the analysis and interpretation of both the quantitative and qualitative data were all carefully taking into account.

### **3.37. Hypotheses Testing**

The present study will try to investigate the main research questions and the other following three sub-questions and their hypotheses which guided the research. This part includes four research questions with four corresponding hypotheses. Additionally, a description of the statistical analysis is included in this section.

The main research question is as the following: To what extent do secondary school EFL teachers' and pupils' genders affect learning English outcomes?

The hypothesis for the main question is: There may be a gender different effect in the academic performance in learning English as a foreign language between male and female secondary school pupils in classrooms taught by male teachers and/ or female teachers.

The second research question is: To what extent are secondary school EFL teachers similar to or different from each other as far as their performances are concerned?

The second hypothesis is: Male and female EFL teachers may use different/similar strategies while teaching which may also be affected by their gender.

The third question is: Due to the educational gender gap, to what extent is learning English a gender-related phenomenon?

The third hypothesis is: Learning English may be influenced by the gender of both the teacher and the pupil.

The fourth question is: To what extent is EFL classroom interaction gendered?

The fourth hypothesis is: The difference in interaction between pupils in classrooms with male teachers and pupils in classrooms with female teachers may be affected by the gender of both of them.

In order to test the research questions, the hypotheses and the variables, simple Microsoft Office Excel software was used with the quantitative research tool, while the qualitative tools were analysed through coding and categorizing themes.

### **3.10. Data Analysis**

The current research study mainly sought to investigate whether the gender of EFL students had an effect on their perspectives towards their English language teachers, as well as investigating if the gender of their teacher of English had an effect on the teaching of the language. The data collected was recorded, analysed and interpreted. Cohen et al. (2011) confirmed that a representative set of answers was what researchers should seek and strive to achieve. Although the number of teachers was relatively small, we were able to answer key questions and meet the objectives of the study.

Several types of data were collected for this research. The triangulation of research tools provided the framework and headings for the data analysis and interpretation of both the quantitative and qualitative data. Data analysis was done with the Statistical Software Excel. Firstly, a descriptive analysis was carried out to compute the differences of the quantitative data of the two questionnaires of male and female teachers and pupils through using percentages and graphic displays. Secondly, the qualitative results of the questionnaires were ordered and analysed. Thirdly, the qualitative findings obtained from the interviews and the observations were also coded and analysed. The main purpose was to check whether both the pupils' gender and that of their EFL teachers affect their English learning process.

Each statement was analysed according to gender. Analyses were done regarding the average score of the responses given to the statements. Pupils' answers were separately evaluated in connection with those who received education from a female teacher and the ones from a male teacher. Additional evaluation was done according to the participants' gender.

In the questionnaire of pupils and teachers, the answers varied from Yes/No, the four scale ones and open-ended ones. It was determined that Yes would be evaluated as a positive response, but No would negatively be evaluated for all statements from the 6<sup>th</sup> statement to the 28<sup>th</sup> one in the pupils' questionnaire except for the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup> statements that No was evaluated as positive.

It was the same also concerning the teachers' questionnaire, from the 14<sup>th</sup> till the 28<sup>th</sup> statement Yes was a positive answer, while the 16<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, and the 28<sup>th</sup> statements No was a positive response.

Other items on the questionnaire of teachers were that every response option was rated according to the teachers' answers: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD). The number of participants whose responses matched each other was added up and the results were graphed so as to illustrate and compare the extent to which the teachers' perceptions of their male and female colleagues varied. Some of the questions were not answered by the informants and hence the number of answers per question is noted. All the results from the teachers' questionnaire were also separately reported with regard to teachers' gender.

However, there are the qualitative data on which Patton (2002) advised: "because each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach will be unique. Because qualitative inquiry depends, at every stage, on the skills, training, insights, and capabilities of the inquirer, qualitative analysis ultimately depends on the analytical intellect and style of the analyst" (p. 433).

Data were analyzed following the steps outlined by Rubin & Rubin (2005) for responsive interviewing analysis techniques: first, through recognition which is about finding the concepts, themes, and topical markers in interviews; second, to clarify and synthesize through the systematic examination of the different interviews to begin understanding of the overall narrative; third, to elaborate through generating new concepts and ideas after clarification and synthesis; fourth, coding through systematically labelling concepts, themes, and topical markers, giving them a brief label to designate each and then marking in the interview text where they are found and lastly to sort the data units and ranking them and building relationships toward a theory (p. 207).

Once we collected all the qualitative data, we listened to the six teachers' interviews that were conducted with the audio recorder, and transcribed them through coding and labelling the conversation. We also made copies of our observation notes in order to code

these notes. Lastly, we organized the surveys that we received from the students and teachers by class and male or female.

We started the process of coding our observational notes, surveys, and teacher interviews once all data was organized in order to develop themes for the research study. First, we read all pieces to be familiarized with the data collection. We underlined all key words and starred aspects that originally shaped the main research question. In the second reading, we began to code to determine themes and categories. We also took a back look at some of the literature to note key aspects of related topics. We also searched for patterns or re-appearing aspects in the data by taking notes. In the final coding, we compared our data to some of the related literature to find aspects that coincided or contradicted each other. We solidified our decision on the themes of teacher and student classroom interaction, pupils' motivation to learn and teacher expectations of performance.

The following step included analyzing and categorizing both teachers' and students' answers on the open-ended questions in which the pupils were asked to answer some questions about their English language teachers and about studying the language. The additional information that the students and the EFL teachers were given at the end of the questionnaire were grouped and content analyses were similarly carried out. Throughout the analysis, pertinent comments made by the participants were selected for reporting in the findings.

### **3.11. Research Ethical Issues**

Deyhle et al. (1992) said: "Research in education, whether quantitative or qualitative, is basically applied research and the results of such research almost always have immediate or potential practical applications or implications" (p.610). Ethical issues are important concerns for mostly qualitative researchers because of the relationships which were developed. Deyhle et al. (1992) also argued: "Unique ethical considerations are inherent in designing a qualitative study, because the success of such research is based on the development of special kinds of relationships between researchers and informants" (p.618).

Through a formal oral request from the researcher to the headmasters of the selected secondary schools, only six schools agreed to participate in the study. The reasons mentioned by the principals for rejecting the demand included: either the school was already dealing with other researchers or that the teachers had an overloaded schedule, whereas other principals didn't provide any insight into why they did not want to include their schools in the study. The school principals' approval was seen as decisive to make sure that the study was carried

out in an ethical way. This approach was planned to guarantee the informed consent by the school and the teachers, as well as anonymity and confidentiality of the informants. One of the advantages of the approach taken by the principals was that this made sure that the identities of all the teachers in the school were known and accessible to only the researcher.

Consequently, in order to carry out this research study, we initially received an oral consent from the principals of the secondary schools. The letter informed the teachers about the study and then we asked the teachers, face to face, in search of classrooms willing to participate in this study. Following the acceptance, six teachers had accepted to be involved reflecting on their perceptions on the topic of study. They also informed their pupils that there would be a guest during their class periods so that the research results would not be influenced if the pupils really knew why we were there and this took place while we were following the observation procedure.

Being mindful of Deyhle et al.'s (1992) caution concerning how information is gained and divulged, we were explicit in describing the aim of our investigation with these study participants. The pupils were also informed of their rights, and to ensure them the information gathered on individuals remained confidential and any distinguishing marks would be removed. Furthermore, both the twenty EFL teachers and their pupils were asked not to write their names on the questionnaire they answered to make sure that their papers would remain anonymous. So, our relationship to this study participant was as a fellow teacher and this allowed us to obtain important information.

Whereas, several qualitative researchers like Yin (2009) and Deyhle, et al. (1992) declared that there were no 'ethical rules' for qualitative researchers to follow during conducting a study research, because best practices implied that conscious, mindful, aware and reflective strategies had to be at the forefront of the study design. In short, our interaction with this study participant did not exceed the frame of asking some questions or clarification of process, and assurance of confidentiality.

### **3.12.The Study Limitations**

Like any limitations found in other research studies, we met several limitations with this study. Lunenberg and Irby (2008) identified limitations as external factors that were out of the control of the researcher. Punch (2005) declared that many of the limitations of mixed methods research also applied to qualitative and quantitative research: namely small sample



size, inability to generalise to other situations, and reliance on participants' perceptions. Limitations for the current study were as follows in more details:

The first limitation we faced during this study was that as a young female researcher, which could have clouded the views of older male or female teachers; because at first some of the teachers, whether being male or female, didn't really accept us to attend their classes or to cooperate with us since they noticed that we were a young researcher so they thought that we were conducting the research to get the license or master degrees, but when we made things clear to them and informed them that it was done for the doctorate study, they changed their minds and they accepted to collaborate with us.

As a consequence, we noticed that most of the teachers tried to do their best inside their classrooms to show that they mastered the English language. During the interview process and subsequent observations, they seemed confident and at ease, providing full access to their classrooms for observations and extensive interviews. So it was difficult to know what, if any, effect our position had on the participants.

A further limitation was that when we provided the participants, we mean teachers, with a detailed explanation of the purpose of the study, we noticed that EFL male teachers thought that we would be a biased researcher towards the EFL female teachers since we were a female EFL teacher and that the results would be in favour of them, but the results of this study strictly reflected only the information that we received from the informants, whether being male or female EFL teachers or male or female secondary school pupils. Besides, while doing observations, we did not attend all the classes of each teacher; instead, we observed only six teachers with their pupils.

The second limitation was related to the low number of EFL male teachers who accepted to take part in this study. As a result, the research sample constituted mainly of female teachers and hence this could have compromised the validity of the research as this research presented both female and male EFL teachers' perceptions of gender-based differences. The relatively small sample of male teachers can constitute a serious limitation for the interpretation of these findings. The gender differences that were registered may, however, serve as an interesting starting point for further research.

The third limitation of this study was that the teachers voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. The results from the study may have significantly differed as the teachers were from the two different types of schools, rural or urban, who were randomly assigned to the study, since pupils living and studying in rural areas developed a certain

relationship with their male and female EFL teachers who differed from those in urban schools.

A fourth limitation stemmed from the fact that we previously worked with two or three teachers who took part in the study. Our connection with these teachers did not include so much contact during the study instead it was minimal, though a small degree of bias might be suggested with regard to the reporting and interpretation of the study's results and findings.

Other limitations to this study were due to the scope of the case that was studied and that the participants were both male and female secondary school EFL teachers and their male and female pupils. What was not included in this study was the perception and experiences of other populations of teachers, such as middle school EFL teachers and their pupils. It would be interesting to know if they concurred with the findings of this study or had any additional insight to add to this conversation. Including their perspective and experience building relationships with their male and female students could provide a broader range of effective strategies to use in the classroom and extended the discussion and this might be used and worked on for further research.

A further limitation was presented in the primary concern when conducting a research study which was the ability to generalize the findings. Nevertheless, Yin (2003) refuted that criticism, writing that the main purpose of case study research was to "expand on a broader body of knowledge by investigating within a real life context" (p. 10). He asserted that this allowed for analytic generalizations as opposed to a statistical generalization.

In addition, according to Stake (1995) "The real business of case study is particularization, not generalization" (p. 8). This design by its very nature highlighted the study of a case with the intent of coming to "know it well" (Stake, 1995, p. 8), as opposed to being able to generalize the findings to other, even similar cases. According to Creswell (2007), "To best generalize, however, the inquirer needs to select representative cases for inclusion" (p. 74).

The factors that can limit the generalizability and conclusions drawn from this study were that the latter was limited to some secondary schools in one state and might not be generalized to other schools of other qualification levels in the country. This suggested that caution should be used when generalizing our findings to other secondary school or to a bigger population where more varied gender differences had to be taken into consideration if inter-relationship of ideas were to be established. Although similar study may be done on

other secondary schools might produce quite different results.

Moreover, because of the strong relationship among certain variables such as gender, age and working experience, they were closely related to each other. The implication of these options was that the meaning of the gender influence had on teaching method and the relationship developed by teachers with their pupils might be overcast. For instance, was an effect of experience really an effect of age and or gender? We sought to draw attention to the multiple possible interpretations when necessary. However, the dismantling of how these variables had a real impact on teaching practices and the learning process of students was a fertile ground for future research for the development of a curriculum that would meet all the needs of students in the classroom.

To conclude, the study was restricted to investigating student's attitudes towards both English language learning and their EFL teachers with gender as the only variable and did not take into account other aspects like teachers' marital status, the other taught subjects, and the other educational levels, etc. Besides, when the secondary school pupils filled in the questionnaire they might provide us with false information or data that did not represent their real experiences and wants, and that the respondent's responses would only be precise to the items constructed in the questionnaire used. In short, although the abovementioned limitations the results of our research study will provide the field of education with precious insight into the development of teacher and student relationships that can benefit the learning environment for later.

### **3.13.Resources Required**

In order to accomplish this research study first we received an oral approval from the principals of the schools where we conducted this study, second we used the mobile to record the interview sessions, third a private space to conduct interviews with the EFL secondary school teachers, then interview and observation protocol sheets, next copies of questionnaires for both the teachers and the pupils of all levels and finally the computer software Excel to assist with data management and analysis to be purchased.

### **3.14.Conclusion**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of gender on secondary school pupils in learning English as foreign language. Specifically, this study looked at how EFL teachers' gender impacted both their students and the relationship they developed together and to examine the fact of girls' out performance over boys as well as to determine if

their academic achievement and school outcomes were negatively affected due to gender, and if so, what would be the solution to overcome this problem in education.

Chapter three began with discussing our role as the researcher of this study. Then it dealt with outlining the research question used in this study, providing an overview of the research design used for the current study, as well as information on the selection of participants, the research paradigm and sampling procedures for this study.

A mixed-method approach was selected as the most appropriate method of obtaining ample amounts of data which would provide answers for the research questions as well as to support the best possible understanding of gender's effect on pupils' educational outcomes. This chapter presented, in details, the design and procedures for this mixed methods study. We also dealt with a discussion of the study's mixed methods design and challenges that accompanied this design and the manner in which those challenges were dealt with.

Next, the participants were introduced in addition to the instruments that were used. Simultaneous collection of multiple measures of qualitative and quantitative data was done. The methods of data collection included questionnaires, observation and interviews in order to further analyze the case studied. This was followed by descriptions of the procedures that were utilized for the analysis to ensure the reliability and validity of the quantitative and qualitative data in the two distinct phases of the study, as well as the methods used as the two data sources were mixed. Data was analysed through using the Excel Software in order to identify and group the codes and comments obtained from the participants. This chapter concluded with a clearly discussion of the potential ethical issues. We examined the data to reveal trends and themes that generated the way gender impacted education, pupils' academic achievement and their relationship with their teachers.

Finally, the findings of this study will be documented in chapter four which will highlight the results of the hypotheses test that were used to examine the influence of both EFL teachers' and secondary school pupils' gender on learning English as well as to better understand the student-teacher relationship inside the classrooms.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

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#### 4.13. Introduction

Chapter four primarily describes the EFL teachers' gender effects on their secondary school students' enthusiasm towards learning English as a foreign language. The second purpose of the present study also aspires at gaining a better understanding of the importance of students' perspectives towards the gender of their teacher of English. The results are presented and analysed according to the order of the research questions.

The methodology applied in this study was a mixed-method one, including both quantitative and qualitative methods. These methods were constructed to see if there was any indication that a male teacher or a female teacher had more impact, or if there was an association with higher positive attitudes, and whether male or female pupils were particularly influenced by their teachers' gender too. And finally, an attempt was made to see if male or female teachers were particularly successful with pupils of the same or different gender.

In order to analyse the data, the quantitative part of this study was a questionnaire. The numerical data were analysed through Microsoft Excel. While, when it came to qualitative data, they were validated by employing triangulation techniques such as methodological triangulation; three data-gathering procedures, open ended questions, observation and interviews, were used.

Data collection was done in three sessions at all the secondary schools at the beginning of the spring trimester of the academic year 2017-2018 more exactly from April to June 2018. The first session was about observing the classroom atmosphere through taking notes, the second one was about asking both the EFL teachers and their pupils to fill in the questionnaires which took an average time between fifteen to thirty minutes to complete it and the third session was about having an interview with each teacher alone.

So, in this chapter, light will be shed first, on the addressed questionnaire to the high school pupils in order to determine the impact of their EFL teachers' gender on their academic performance in studying English as a foreign language. Second, we should consider secondary school EFL teachers questionnaire to elicit their opinions about how to deal with their pupils of different genders. Gender was the variable of this study. For this reason both teachers and their students were dealt with as two groups- males and females. Consequently, the answers of both questionnaires were very crucial to test the stated hypotheses.

To examine the effect of EFL teachers' gender on their learners' learning English, a questionnaire was developed and distributed to 200 male/female students studying English as

a Foreign Language at high school in their regular English class. However, only 170 questionnaires (84 males-86 females) were eligible to be used in the study. The participants were randomly selected. They were teenage learners and their level of English was intermediate. This information was inferred from demographics at the beginning of learners' questionnaire.

The reason for selecting secondary school pupils was that they were aware enough to understand each item and answer the questions. Prior to students' filling in the questionnaire, they were told that their responses to the questionnaire would remain confidential. Moreover, they were asked to respond to the items in the questionnaire as clearly as possible.

As well as the English language teachers teaching at high schools were also taken into account in order to administer the questionnaire which was used for the purpose of data collection in this study. Twenty teachers filled in the questionnaire which was comprised of a number of statements dealing with the impact of the English language teachers' gender on their pupils. Through which the participants were asked to express their agreement or disagreement to them, to answer by yes or no and to answer the open ended questions too. Out of the twenty teachers, the same questionnaire was also sent by e-mail to eight teachers. The participants were also assured that their personal information would be kept anonymously.

This chapter is divided into three parts and each part provides information about the participants and the methods used in this study to investigate the research questions. To start with, both the secondary school pupils' and the EFL teachers' questionnaires are divided into sections. The pupils' questionnaire contains three sections which are: the demographic information which is presented in section 1 in order to provide an overview of the participants' background in the present study. Section 2 describes the learners' attitudes toward their EFL teachers. Section 3 deals with the informants' responses to the four open-ended questions mentioned in the questionnaire. They are about pupils' perception of the influence of their teachers' gender on their English language learning process. These answers provide insight about the pupils' responses to the previous closed-ended items.

The EFL secondary school teachers' questionnaire is divided into five sections. Section 1 deals with the participants' background general information. Section 2 is about EFL teachers' commitment and collegiality so as to describe the participants' perception of their colleagues' teacher-student relationship as well as of their colleagues' collegiality. Section 3 describes the way EFL teachers deal with their pupils by taking into consideration their gender achievement gap. After that, the last two sections are about open-ended questions that



will support the closed-ended ones. Section 4 provides an insight about both male and female EFL teachers' classroom management and their teaching styles. The last section which is numbered as 5 describes the EFL teachers' opinions about whether their gender influences their both gender pupils' success in learning English.

#### **4.14. The Description of the Questionnaires**

##### **4.14.1. Pupils' Questionnaire**

The secondary school pupils' questionnaire aimed at having a deep understanding of whether the secondary school pupils' results were influenced by the gender of their teacher of English and if they preferred to be taught by a male or female EFL teacher. The learners were requested to answer thirty-two (32) questions; they were both closed-ended questions requiring from students to choose "yes" or "no" and open-ended questions requiring from students to give their own opinions.

Question (1) specified pupils' gender while question (2) their EFL teachers' gender.

Question (3) was about pupils' age. Questions (4) and (5) dealt with students' grade and the stream they studied at the secondary school.

Questions (6) and (7) aimed to know whether pupils liked to study or not no matter what their teachers' gender was as well as if they were interested in learning English.

In questions (8), (9) and (10) the objective was to know if the pupils were aware of the capacities their teachers held and the way they delivered the lessons to them.

Questions (11), (12) and (13) generated information about the impression pupils had about the temper of their teacher; whether s/he was angry or patient which in turn led to either an occurrence of problem behaviour or discipline in such classes.

The purpose behind asking questions (14), (15) and (16) was to know how pupils considered their teachers; as being friendly or strict, and if so, whether their paper tests were hard and severely marked and if they did their home-works accordingly.

Questions (17) and (18) examined the way pupils perceived their teachers, i.e. the way the teacher dealt with the success of his/her pupils as well as if s/he gave them the opportunity to decide on things, in other words if the teacher was careful and supportive or authoritative.

The objective behind asking questions (19) and (20) was to see if the pupils felt comfortable in speaking and dealing with their EFL teachers.

Questions (21) and (22) aimed at describing pupils' respect and feeling when being in the English class despite all their teachers' criteria mentioned above.

Questions (23) and (24) checked students' point of view about who taught English better and if the teachers of both genders discriminated between male and female pupils in dealing with them.

Questions (25) and (26) were devoted to check if pupils' school work or exam marks were graded all the same or it differed according to their gender.

Questions (27) and (28) determined pupils' opinions about being in single-gender classes and taught by a teacher of the same gender so as to achieve more in learning English.

In the last section, there were open-ended questions to obtain more information as well as to assess the level of each pupil in written expression and terminology in English. Another objective behind adding the next questions was that those questions were as a trap for pupils, through which they were going to either confirm what they previously answered in the previous questions or to say the opposite. Question (29) dealt with the objectives pupils set that motivated them to study English well. Question (30) directly addressed the pupils' awareness of the existing differences between male and female EFL teachers.

Question (31) unveiled the pupils' desire whether they wanted to be taught by a male or a female teacher of English, and their answers would be deeply based on their gender. In the last question (32) pupils were asked to add extra information describing their teachers of English the way they perceived them.

#### **4.14.2. Teachers' Questionnaire**

The secondary school EFL teachers' questionnaire sought to elicit their opinions, reactions and their professional experience about if the teacher's gender had an effect on the way pupils studied and whether they noticed any test score differences between their male and female pupils in learning English. Teachers were asked to answer forty-one (41) questions; which both need answers like "yes", "no", selecting the proper choice out of multiple ones and to giving their explanations and propositions through open-ended questions.

Questions (1) and (2) were devoted to specify teachers' gender and age. Question (3) was designed to know the highest level of education teachers have already reached. Question (4) indicated the teachers' years of teaching at secondary school, while question (5) dealt with the level teachers currently taught.

The aim of question (6) was to specify the area where teachers taught; in the city or the countryside. While the aim behind asking question (7) which dealt with how many EFL male and female teachers were working at high school was to know who took the big portion in the teaching field; male or female teachers.

The second part of the questionnaire dealt with the EFL teachers' commitment and collegiality among them. Question (8) revealed if teachers liked their profession or they just went to work to get money so as to meet their needs. Question (9) aimed at examining teachers' collegiality, if they worked all together and they shared ideas as one body or each one worked alone. Question (10) referred to the teaching styles teachers used in the classroom and how other teachers determined them as being effective or not.

Question (11) represented the perception of each teacher to the other one in dealing with classroom management, who was in control of his/her class and who faced troubles.

Question (12) denoted the teachers' patience with their pupils. Question (13) identified how teachers considered each other as serving their pupils as role models or not. We used this kind of questions, from (8) till (13), because every week EFL teachers attended at one of their colleagues' class, so they had an idea about how they taught and dealt with their pupils.

In the third section, question (14) denoted teachers' self-confidence about what they were teaching or the subject knowledge. The objective behind asking question (15) was to know if the teacher imposed his/her ideas or preferred to share decisions with his/her pupils in case of disagreement. The purpose of question (16) was to discover how the teacher treated pupils' mistakes; either to immediately correct them, which could hurt pupils' feelings and frustrate them, or to keep the correction till the end of the session for instance.

Question (17) referred to the help provided to the pupils by their teachers when needed. The goal of questions (18) and (19) was to know if the teacher was so permissive with the pupils. Whereas, questions (20), (21) and (22) dealt with the temper of the teacher in case any behaviour problem appeared in the class, as well as if s/he severely punished disruptive pupils.

Question (23) aimed at knowing whether schools in Algeria were in progress or in decrease so as to pave the way to the next questions. Question (24) demonstrated if the academic achievement gap between male and female pupils was, still, widening in the Algerian secondary schools especially in learning English.

Question (25) represented the way teachers interacted with their pupils of both genders. The purpose behind asking question (26) was either to prove or reject the idea that girls outperformed boys or the way around. Questions (27) and (28) aimed at knowing whether Algerian secondary schools provided any professional development to help teachers to be more effective at dealing with low-outcome pupils, as a result to ask if poorly trained teachers were to blame for the achievement gap between male and female pupils.

The fourth part of teachers' questionnaire dealt with both teaching styles and classroom management methods. So, question (29) signified the way teachers followed to control troublesome behaviour in their classes whenever they faced it. Question (30) aimed at finding out which effective method teachers used in order to attract the attention of their pupils to constructively help those who were not interested in learning English.

Question (31) denoted the efforts teachers made to foster their pupils' creativity in order to make them believe they could do well in English. In question (32) the purpose was to know what teachers could do to avoid routines in the class. Question (33) was asked to seek more details about how could teachers assess their pupils' understanding of the way they delivered the lessons to them. The objective behind asking question (34) was to see which teacher was going to pay attention to the falling students and which methods s/he was going to use to improve their efficiency. While question (35) revealed who cared more about the pupils and contacted their families to make sure they would do well at school and more specifically in learning English.

The last section in teachers' questionnaire mainly dealt with the influence of their gender on their relationship with their pupils as well as on their English learning outcomes. The aim of question (36) was to know if the teachers have ever noticed any score differences among their male and female pupils. In question (37) the objective was to know the other pupils' differences. Question (38) clearly aimed at gaining more ideas about whether the teachers were aware of the influence of their gender on their pupils. The question (39) demonstrated the way teachers thought about having more male or female teachers at secondary schools. While question (40) identified the differences teachers observed among themselves and which were influenced by their gender. The last question (41) aimed at asking

teachers to add any additional comments or remarks they wanted to write appertaining to this study.

#### **4.15. The Description of the Observation**

“Unlike quantitative data that condense huge amounts of information into files that can be maintained, analysed, and summarized numerically, qualitative data generates pages and pages of text, Images, or video” ,“Analysis is time consuming, detail oriented, and at times overwhelming” (Warren & Karner, 2010, pp.215-216).

In using the observational protocol, the observer must continually ask himself or herself the following questions: What am I observing right now? What should I observe? For this reason this observation protocol design not only provided information about teacher student relationship but it also provided a framework for observing classroom instruction. For this later purpose we organized it into five different descriptive parts.

Guided by the questions above “What am I observing right now? What should I observe? We filled in the appropriate sections of the observational protocol. To capture what was occurring in the classroom, we marked the specific teachers/pupils behaviours that were affected by their genders as described in the literature review i.e. the first two chapters. As well as we took field notes, in the space provided for each element, pertaining to verbal and physical interactions the teachers had with their pupils, as well as the physical layout of the classroom. We used this information as part of my triangulating process.

In the first section of the observation protocol, we mentioned both the observation site which meant the name of the secondary school and the person being observed i.e. the name of the observed teacher. The second part dealt with the physical settings of the observation who were the teacher and the pupils with mentioning the class level and stream so as to know whether all teachers behaved with all their pupils in the same way because first year pupils were not like third year ones and those who belonged to the literary branch were different from those who studied in the scientific stream.

The third element was about describing the observed activity that was executed in each class. The activity was about the lesson taught by the EFL teachers. This element was designed in order to see which strategy each teacher was going to use so as to explain the lesson to his/her pupils i.e. whether the strategy was planned in the lesson plan but not exhibited, s/he used the strategy but incorrectly or parts were missing, s/he used the strategy

but in a mechanistic way, s/he used the strategy and monitored student behaviour to determine if strategy had the desired effect or s/he adapted and created new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

The objective behind planning both the fourth and the fifth sections, which were named as pupils' and teachers' observation notes, was to gain as much data that reflected components of effective teacher student relationships which were in turn influenced by their genders, as well as to see which pupils preferred to take a seat at the front of the class, and which ones at the back. To see how each teacher either being a male or a female dealt with his/her male and female pupils, we mean to notice if there was any specific treatment from the teacher to his/her same/different gender.

The purposes behind planning observation in this research study were to obtain a synthesis of information about the development and maintenance regarding teachers' relationships with their pupils, as well as, specific components to the interactions considered essential for the students' learning environment. To check which gender of pupils was going to interact more with which gender of EFL teachers and to see who was participating and outperforming in the class; boys or girls.

#### 4.16. **The Description of the Interview**

When conducting interviews the researcher should have an open mind and abstain from showing controversies in any forms when opinions expressed by interviewees oppose his/her own ideas. Furthermore, time and location for interviews need to be effectively scheduled. Particularly, interviews need to be conducted in a relaxed environment, free of any forms of pressure and annoyance for interviewees whatsoever.

Respected scholars like Connaway, L.S. and Powell, R.P. (2010) warned: *“In conducting an interview the interviewer should attempt to create a friendly, non-threatening atmosphere. Much as one does with a cover letter, the interviewer should give a brief, casual introduction to the study; stress the importance of the person's participation; and assure anonymity, or at least confidentiality, when possible”* (p. 170).

Just like the observation, we also used a face to face interview protocol which consisted of eleven pre-determined questions that all the interviewees answered in the same way. We personally and directly coordinated the process of the conversation and usually

posed brief questions in an ordered way, and interviewees responded to them to elicit their information, opinions and impressions. We had a direct control over the flow of process as a chance to clarify certain issues during the procedure to the respondent when they needed more examples or explanations.

Interviewing teachers could paint a picture of what happened inside their classrooms and told us their perspectives about their pupils. As well as to unconsciously give their social cues such as their voice, intonation, body language etc. which could give us, as being the interviewer, a lot of extra information that would be added to the verbal answer of the interviewee on questions. This level of detailed description, whether it being verbal or nonverbal, could show an otherwise hidden interrelatedness between emotions, teachers, pupils unlike many quantitative methods of research.

The interview we are using is a structured one which forms an appropriate method to collect in-depth rich information from the participants. We asked them well-planned open-ended questions so that to allow them to express what they thought in their own words, as well as to understand their feelings, thoughts, attitudes, experiences and opinions knowledge about our research study.

The purpose behind using structured interview was to quickly conduct it which means that several interviews could take place in a short period of time. This also means that a large sample can be obtained resulting in the findings being representative and having the ability to be generalized to a large population.

The questions of the structured, scheduled or also known as formal interview, that we designed, were asked exactly as worded without any deviation which means that the same questions were asked to each interviewee in the same order. We recorded each conversation with every EFL teacher. We will write up the data we gathered from the interview in a form of table that contains both the questions and answers organised in a form of themes. Data analysis usually tends to be more straightforward because we will be able to compare and contrast different answers given to the same questions.

We interviewed the participants of this study on one occasion. The purpose of the interview was to describe the process for building a relationship of the EFL teachers with their students and who knows they might also share any anecdotal evidence they had to support what they were saying. To pay more attention in order to get more and deep details so as to

clarify observation data by listening for key ideas, words, or evolving themes that we considered to be important to the research questions. We were using this interview to probe for meaning in order to gain clarity and precision in our interpretation of the data being gathered.

The interview protocol was comprised first of the time, the date and in which high school it took place. Second, the name of the interviewer and the names of the interviewees which remained anonymous and instead we gave them codes. The aim of the first question was to have an idea about the period of the teaching experience of teachers, because novices were not like the experienced ones. The second question dealt with the classroom climate every teacher tried to create in his/her classroom, in other words according to their answers to this question we could understand if the teacher was a boring or a creative one.

The answers we got from question three described the way teachers built their relationships with their pupils; either being friendly with them or to come to the class just to give them what they needed as lessons and to leave the school, either to leave good or bad impressions on pupils. The previous question paved the way to question four because it made things clear about the relationship between teachers and pupils. The objective of this question was to elicit more information and why not some experiences they lived with their pupils about the strategies they applied in the classroom to limit problems of behaviour.

According to what we asked pupils on their questionnaire, we planned question five to understand more why some pupils were not interested in learning English. In the sixth question teachers were supposed to compare between their male and female pupils concerning who participated better than the other one according to what they noticed along their teaching experience. While the purpose of designing question seven was to exactly know the difference between pupils in the marks they got from their tests and exams of English.

In question eight, I asked teachers about their specific way to award their successful pupils. It differed from one teacher to another because some teachers praised their pupils while others did not even pay attention if they made any progress. The next question's, nine, aims were just like the previous one but it dealt with the mistakes pupils committed at the classroom. Some teachers immediately corrected their pupils and in that way they might embarrass them in front of their pupils, whereas there were some teachers who avoided giving correction on the spot.



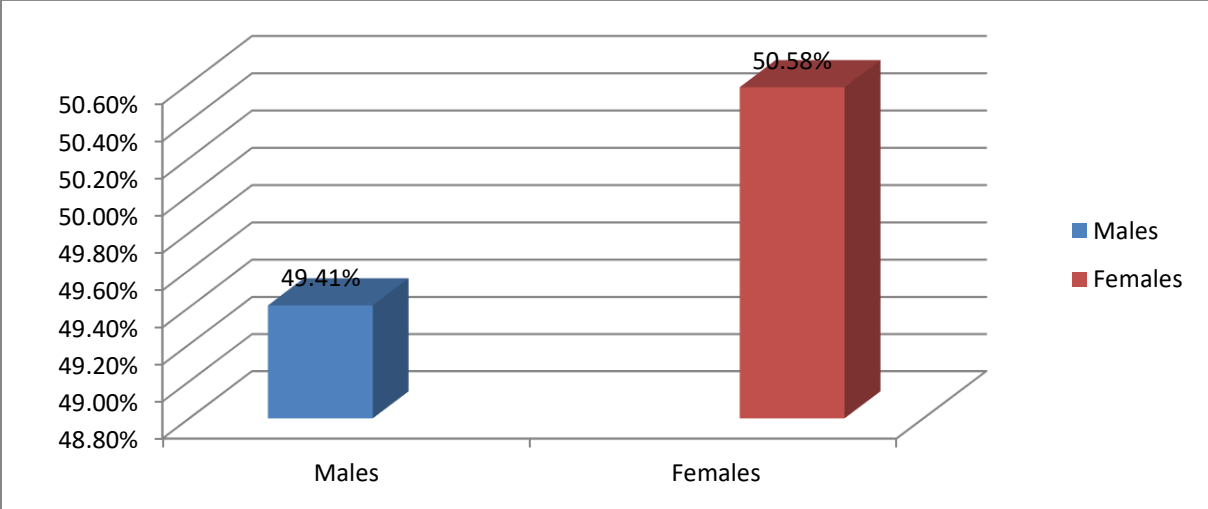
Question ten was asked in a direct way to draw out the remarks teachers noticed while teaching and dealing with secondary school pupils; whether the gender of both of them affected their students' performance, behaviour and results. So as to summarize all the interview questions, I scheduled question eleven to have a general idea about the relationship between EFL teachers and their pupils.

**4.17. The Results**

**4.17.1. Pupils' Questionnaire**

**4.17.1.1. The First Section: Participants' Background**

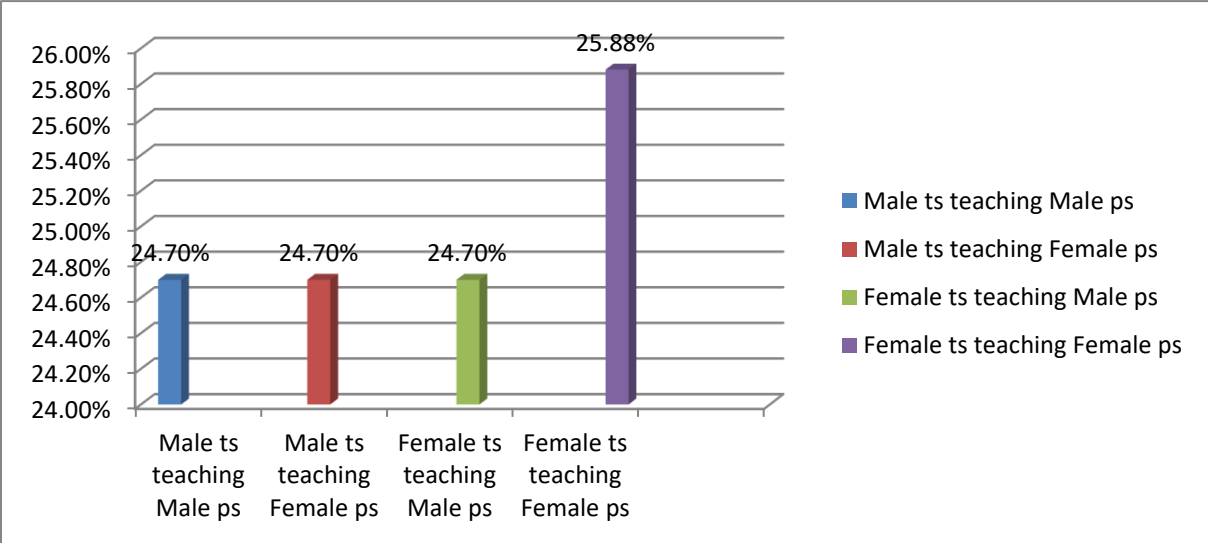
1. What is your gender?



**Figure 1: Pupils' Gender**

As shown in the figure, females' (50,58%) and males' (49,41%) percentages were nearly the same because we wanted to be so, when giving the questionnaires to them, so as to obtain fairly reliable results.

2. What is your teacher gender?



**Figure 2: Pupils' Teachers' Gender**

The second figure is more detailed and divided into four parts which are (24,70%) of male teachers were teaching male pupils and (24,70%) were teaching female pupils. Whereas, (24,70%) of female teachers were teaching male pupils and (25,88%) of them were teaching female students.

3. How old are you?

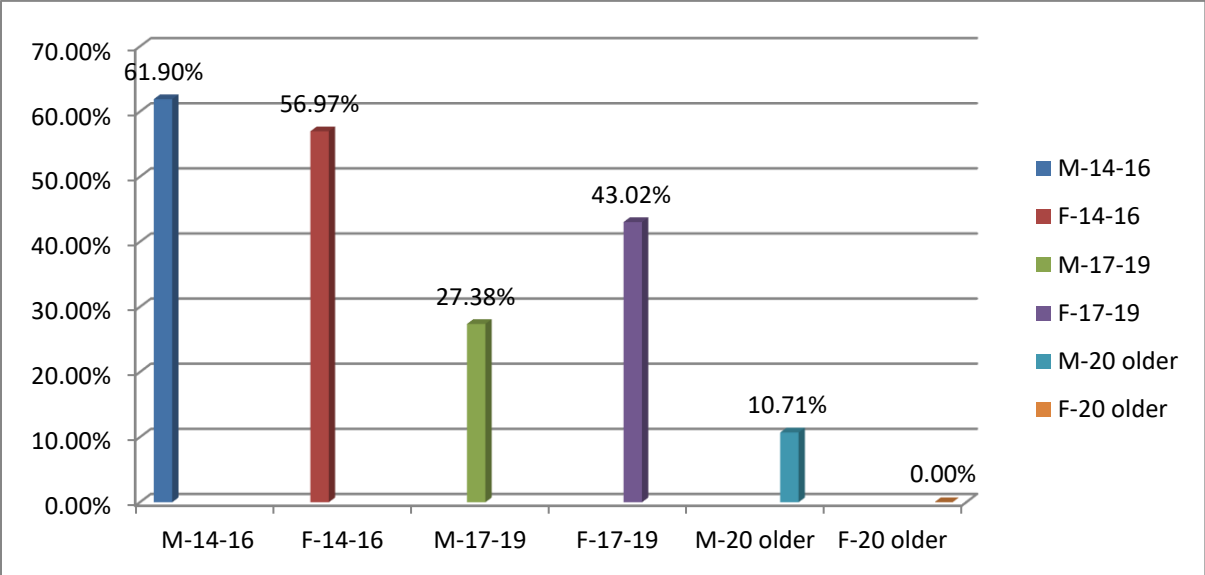


Figure 3: Pupils' Age

We can notice that most of male (61,90%) and female (56,97%) pupils were aged between 14 to 16 years old, (27,38%) and (43,02%) between 17 to 19 and (10,71%) of only male pupils whose age was more than 20 years.

4. What is your grade?

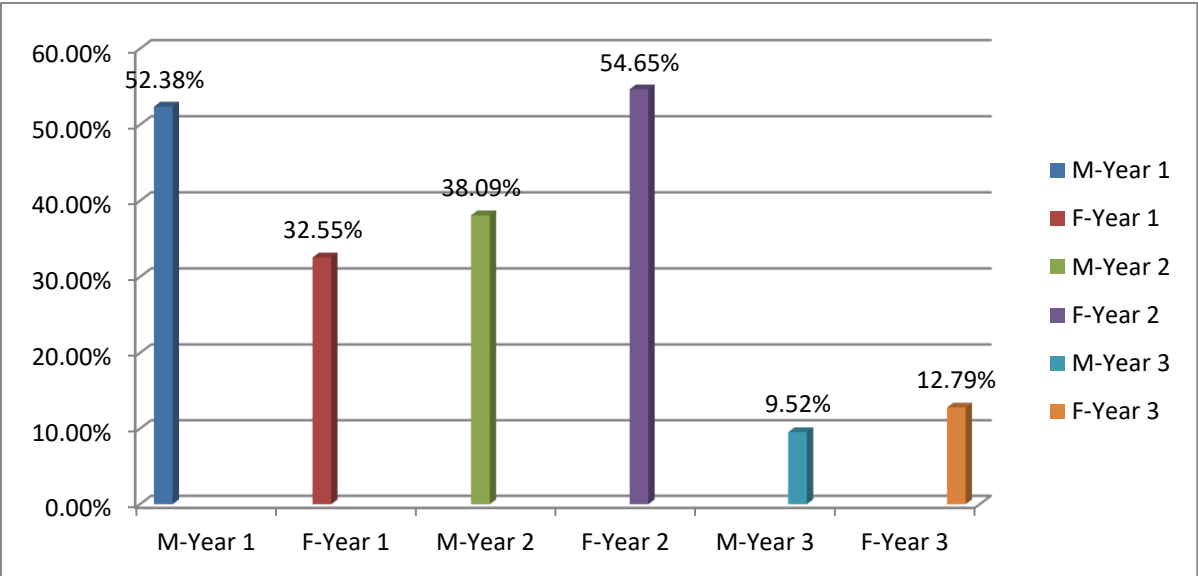


Figure 4: Pupils' Grades

In this figure we can notice that boys (52,38%) on the first year were more than girls (32,55%). Whereas, girls (54,65%) were more than boys (38,09%) on the second year. On the third year, there was not a big difference between the percentages of male (9,52%) and female pupils (12,79%), but still the results were in favour for girls.

5. Which stream do you study?

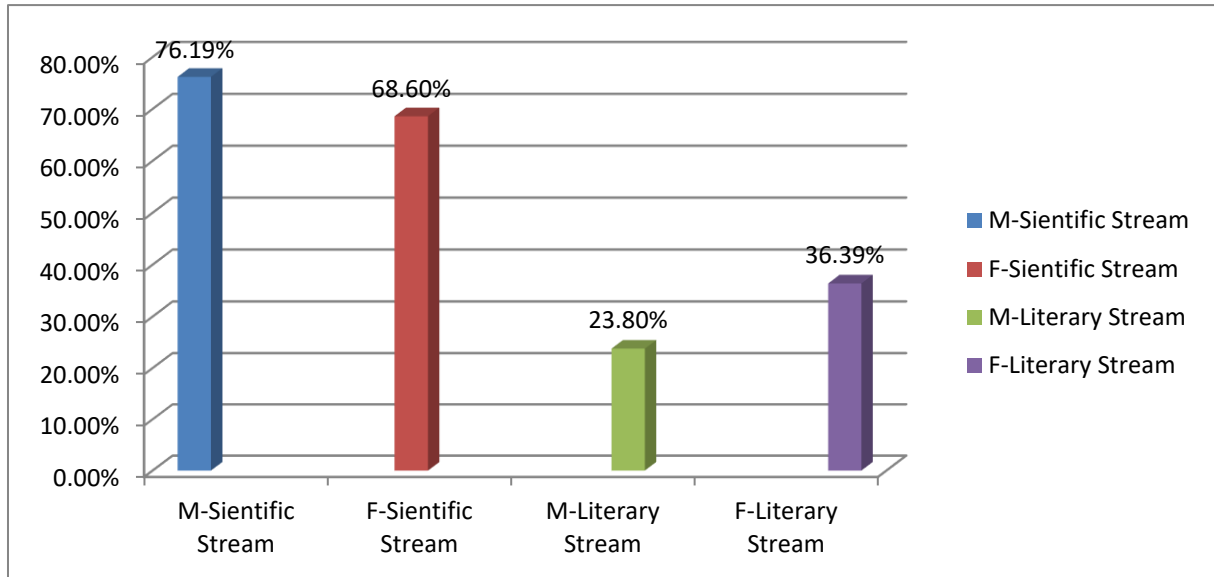


Figure 5: Pupils’ Studied Stream

The results obtained denoted that (76,19%) male pupils followed the scientific streams more than (68,60%) females. While in the literary branch was the contrary, girls (36,39%) were more than boys (23,80%).

4.17.1.2. The Second Section: Learners’ Attitudes toward their EFL Teachers

6. I look forward to go to school because I do well.

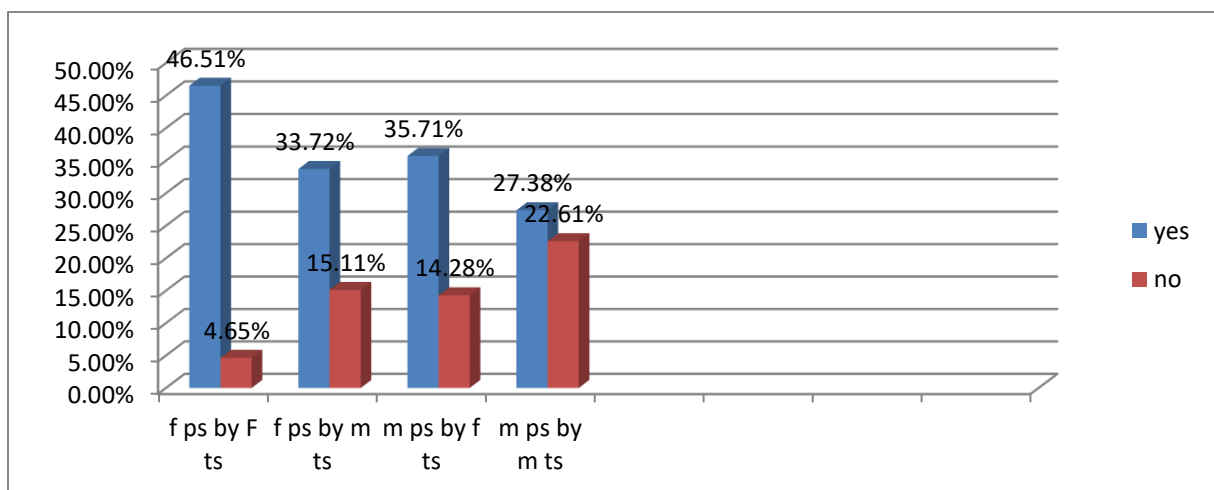
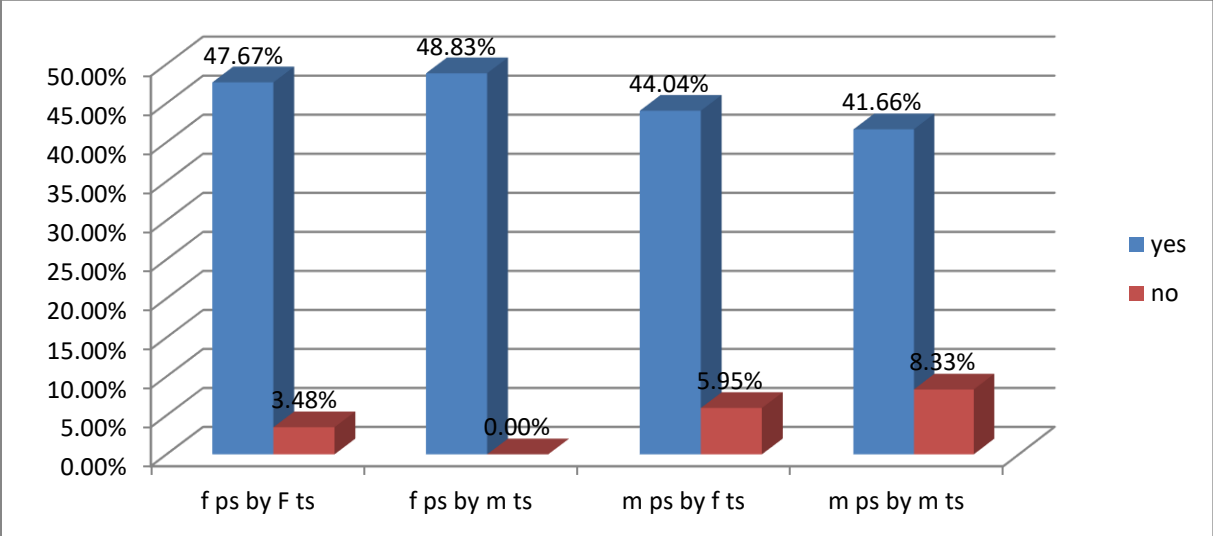


Figure 6: Pupils’ Desire to Go to School

The highest percentages of pupils who liked to go to school were those taught by EFL female teachers; female pupils (46,51%) and males (35,71%). (33,72%) represented

female pupils taught by male teachers and (27,38%) male ones taught by male teachers. However, (22,61%) of boys taught by males and (14,28%) by females said that they did not like to go to school. Moreover, (15,11%) of girls taught by males and only few of them (4,65%) taught by female teachers chose to say no.

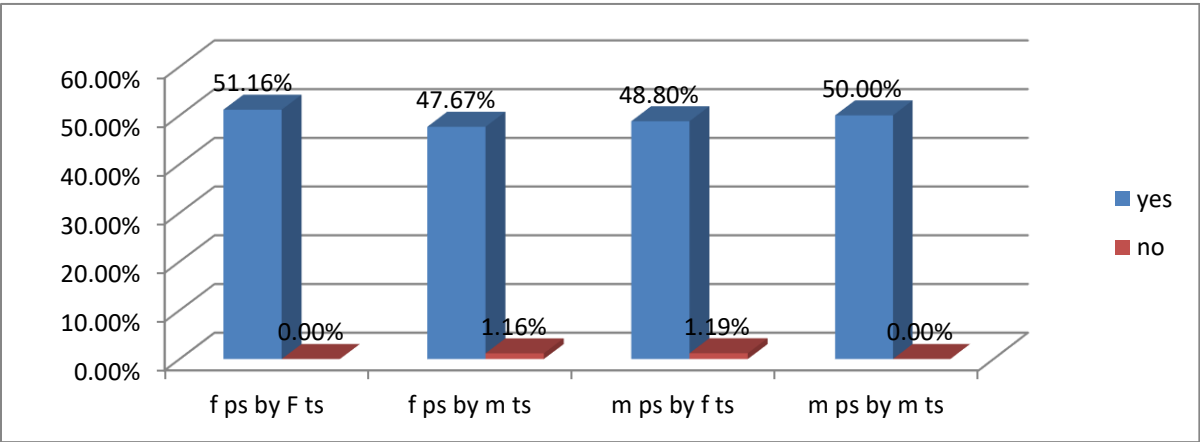
7. I consider English as a very important subject in my studies.



**Figure 7: Pupils’ Awareness of the Importance of English**

Through this figure it is very clear that most pupils were aware of the English language significance and dominance in the world. Since (47,67%) of female and (44,04%) of male pupils taught by female teachers, (48,83%) of female and (41,66%) of males taught by male teachers answered by saying yes. While, (3,48%) of girls and (5,95%) of boys taught by female EFL teachers, (8,33%) of boys and none of girls taught by male EFL teachers replied by no.

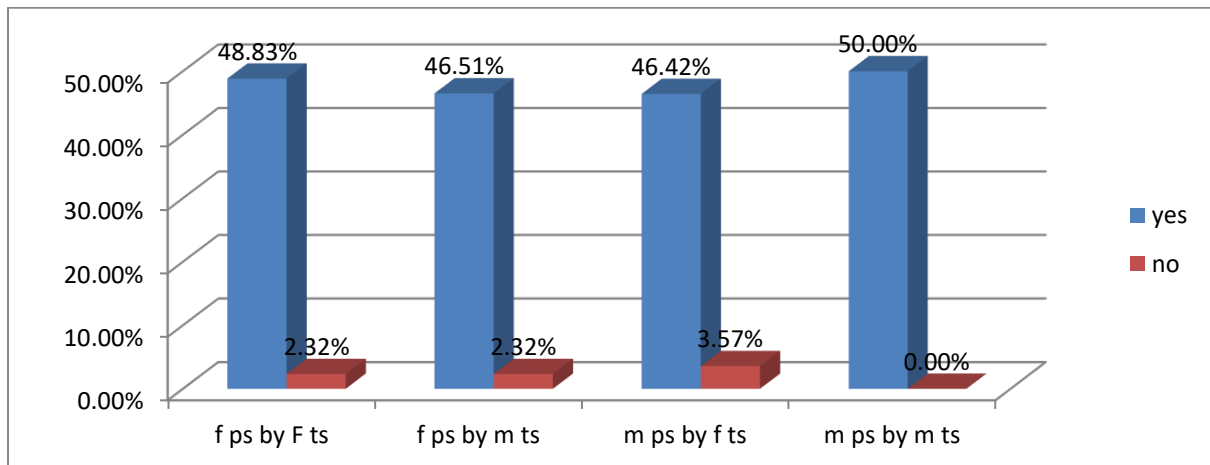
8. My teacher of English is sure of what s/he teaches us.



**Figure8: Pupils’ Evaluation of their EFL Teachers’ Information**

From the results obtained in this figure, most of the students said that their EFL teachers were sure of what they taught them because (51,16%) of female and (48,80%) of male pupils taught by female teachers, (47,67%) of female and (50%) of males taught by male teachers replied by saying yes. Whilst, only (1,16%) of girls taught by a male and (1,19%) of boys taught by female EFL teachers responded by no.

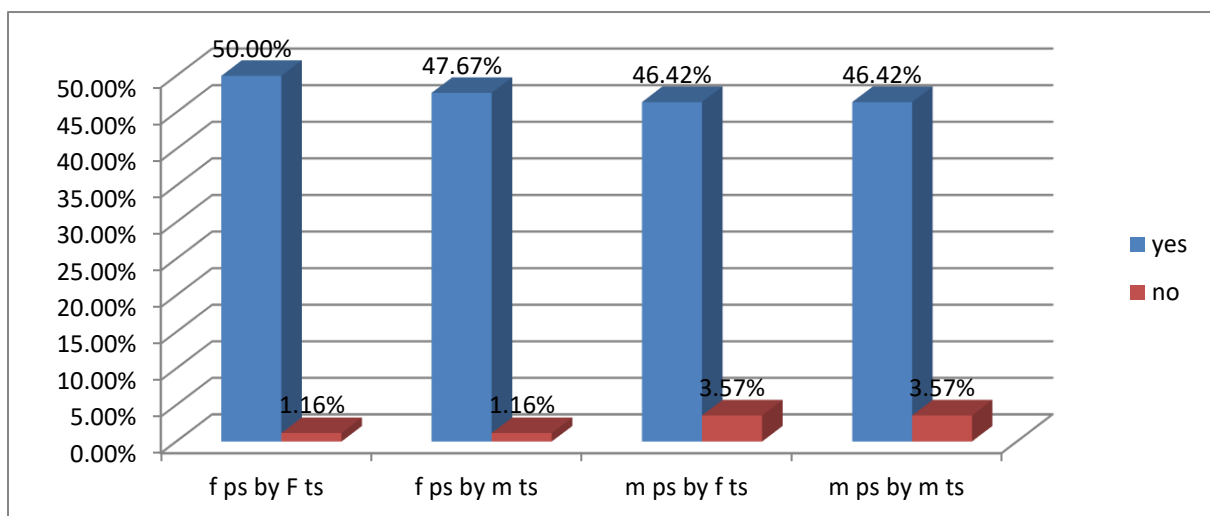
9. My teacher of English attracts our attention.



**Figure 9: Pupils' Attentiveness to their EFL Teachers**

According to the results displayed in figure (9), nearly everyone stated that their EFL teachers attracted their attention when teaching. So, (48,83%) of girls and (46,42%) of boys taught by female teachers and (46,51%) of girls and all the boys (50%) taught by male teachers attentively listened to their teachers of English. However, only few pupils who answered by saying no were: (2,32%) of female and (3,57%) of male students taught by female teachers and (2,32%) of female pupils taught by male teachers.

10. My teacher of English teaches the lesson in a comprehensible style.



**Figure 10: Pupils' Understanding their EFL Teachers' Way of Explaining**

Pupils were asked to answer if their teachers of English explained the lessons in a comprehensible way, so those who said yes were as the following: (50%) of girls and (46,42%) of boys taught by females and (47,67%) of girls and (46,42%) of boys taught by males. Those who said no shared the same percentages both being taught by a female and a male teacher of English (1,16%) of girls and (3,57%) of boys.

11. My teacher of English easily gets angry.

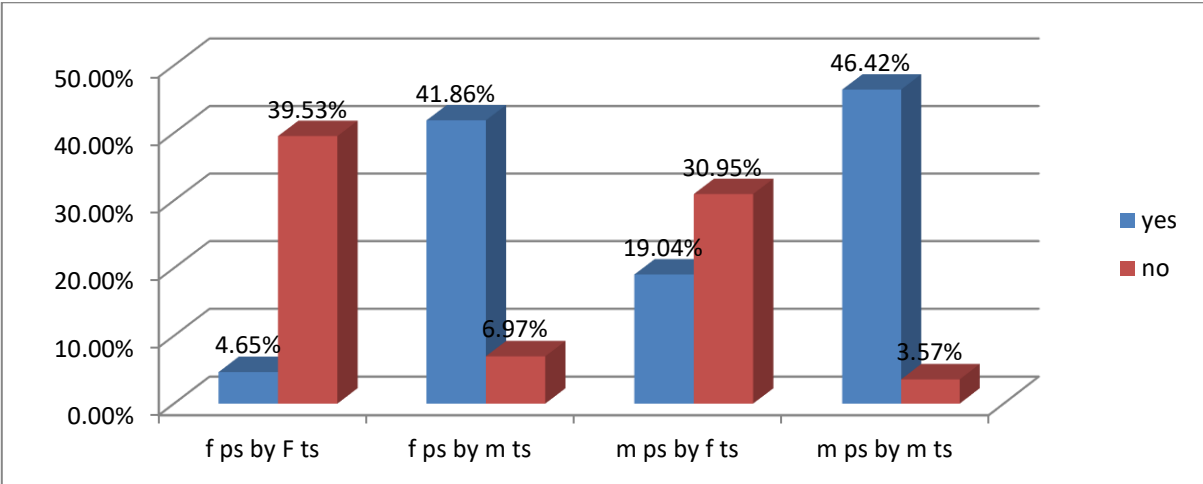


Figure 11: EFL Teachers' Temper Control

What is impressive in this figure is that the highest percentages about who quickly gets angry went to both female pupils with (41,86%) and male pupils with (46,42%) taught by male EFL teachers. While only (4,65%) of girls and (19,04%) of boys declared that female teachers easily got mad. For those who replied by saying that their teachers were patient with them were (39,53%) female and (30,95%) male pupils taught by female teachers, but only girls with (6,97%) and boys with (3,57%) taught by male teachers who said that they were not furious.

12. My teacher of English faces disruptive behaviour problems in our class.

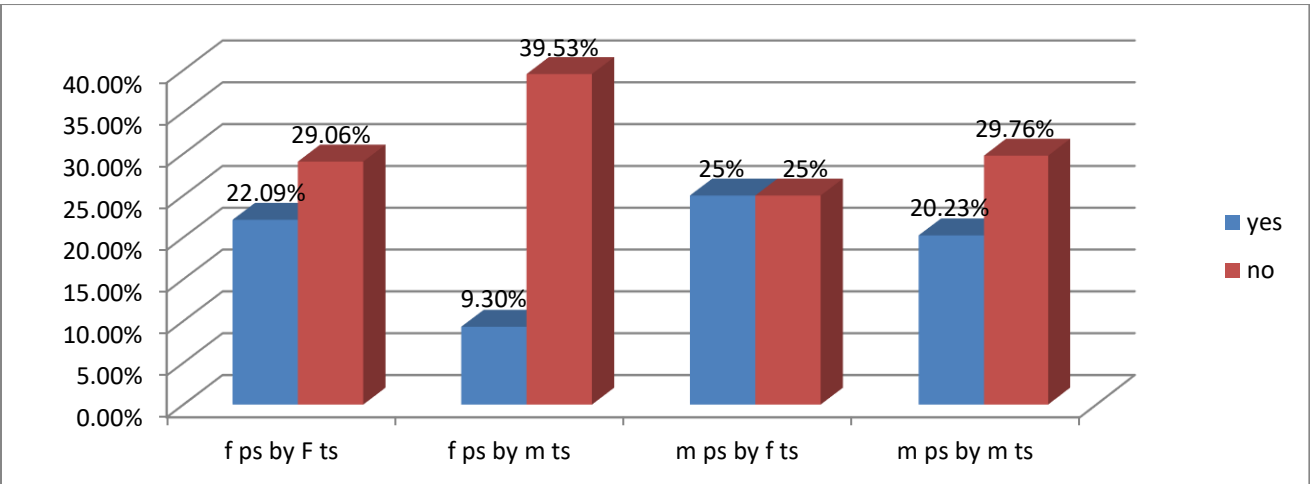


Figure12: Teachers' Control in the Classroom

Through this question, female pupils (39,53%) and male pupils (29,76%) said that their male teachers had a control over the classroom. (29,06%) of girls and (25%) of boys taught by female ones said that they had no problem of behaviour in their classes. (22,09%) of girls and (25%) of boys taught by females and (9,30%) of girls and (20,23%) of boys taught by males stated that their teachers faced some disruptive behaviours.

13. I seriously consider the warnings of my teacher and I correct myself.

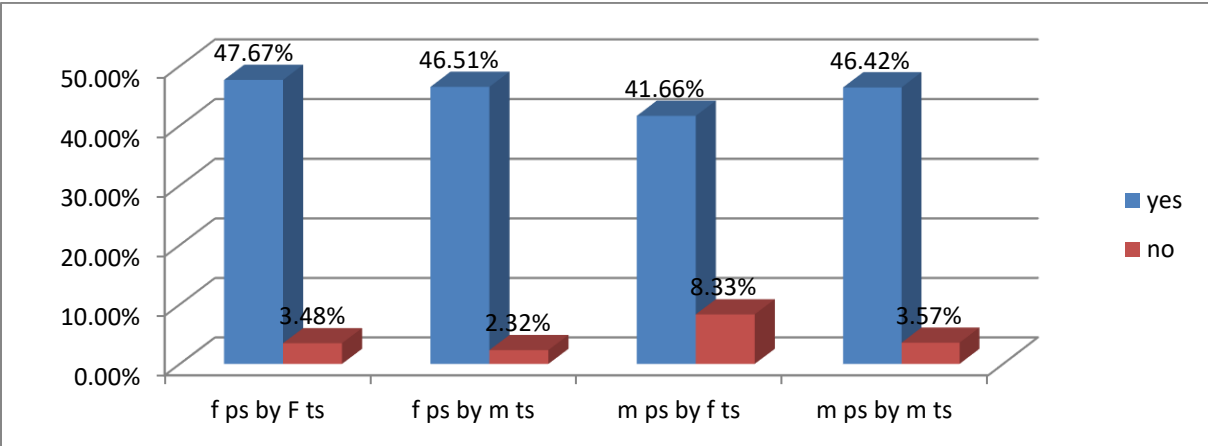


Figure 13: Pupils’ Fear of their Teachers

As it is clear from the obtained results, most of the secondary school pupils took into account the warnings of their teachers if they received any, since (47,67%) of females and (41,66%) of males taught by female teachers and (46,51%) of female pupils and (46,42%) of male pupils taught by male teachers said that they did so. Otherwise, the other students said that they did not care about their teachers especially males taught by female teachers (8,33%) compared to the others whose results were females (2,32%) and males (3,57%) taught by male teachers and last girls taught by females (3,48%).

14. My teacher of English is friendly/ strict.

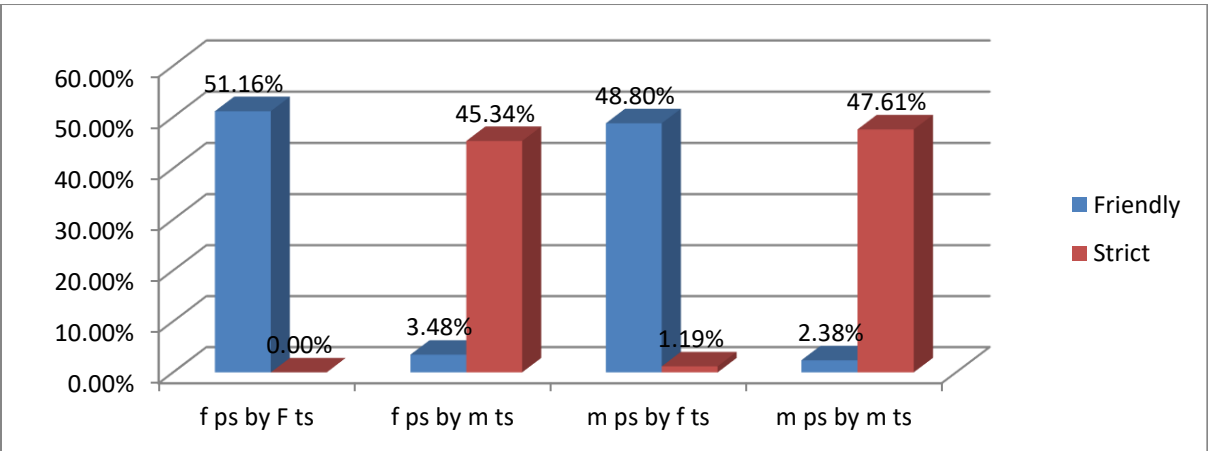
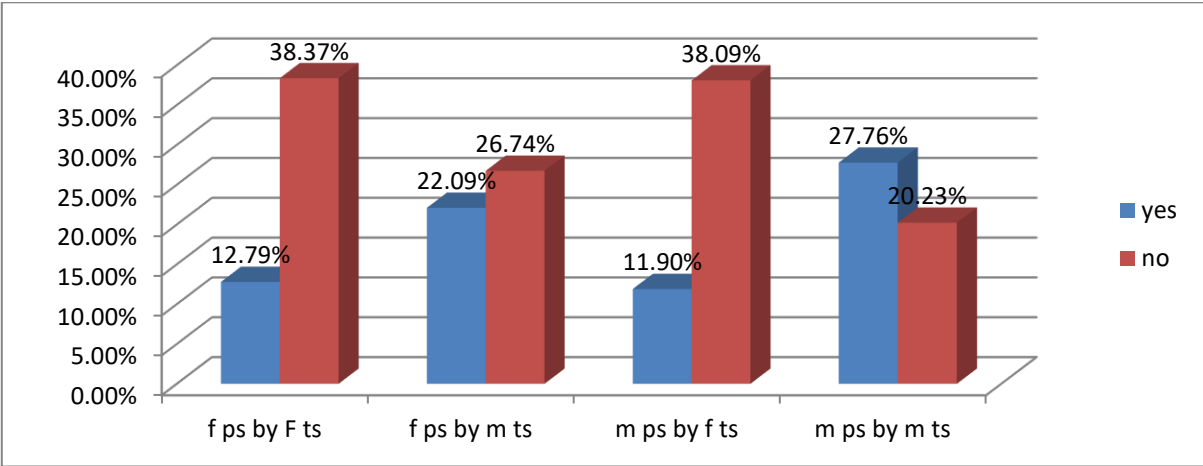


Figure 14: Pupils’ Perception of their EFL Teacher

As it is shown in the figure, all female pupils (51,16%) and most of male pupils (48,80%) said that their female teachers of English were friendly. While only (3,48%) of girls and (2,38%) of boys taught by males said they were so. Whereas, (45,34%) of females and (47,61%) of males said that their male teachers were so strict with them. (1,19%) of boys taught by female teachers said that they were severe.

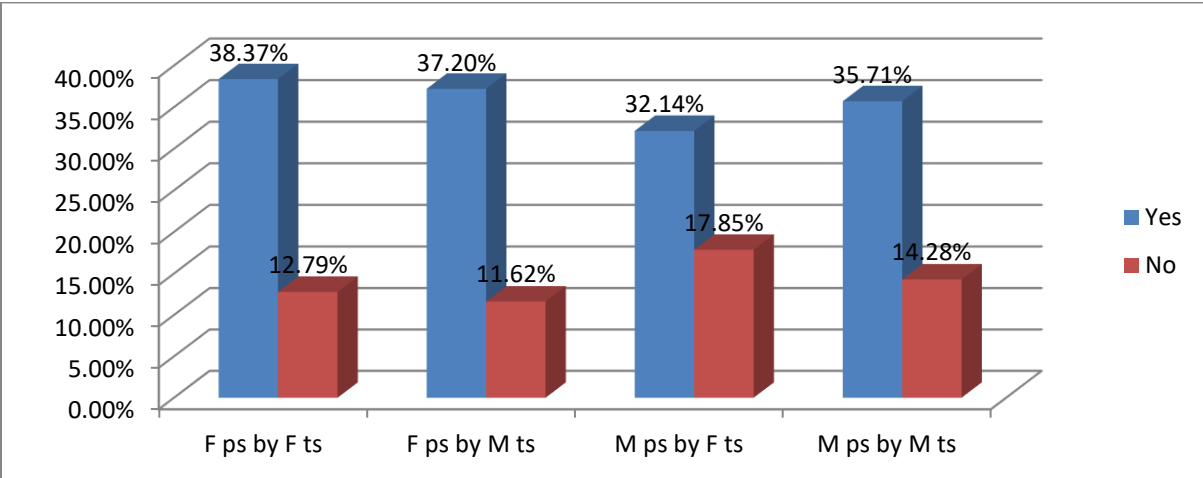
15. My teacher’s tests are hard and s/he is severe in marking papers.



**Figure 15: Pupils’ Noting their Teachers’ Tests Difficulty**

The results obtained denoted that females with (12,79%) and males with (11,90%) taught by female teachers and (22,09%) of girls and (27,76%) of boys taught by male teachers declared that their teachers’ tests were hard as they were sever when correcting. While the highest percentages were for female teachers when their female pupils (38,37%) and male pupils (38,09%) said that their exams were not difficult and were accessible to almost everyone. However, (26,74%) of females and (20,23%) of males taught by male teachers of English confirmed the statement mentioned in their questionnaires.

16. I regularly do my homework.

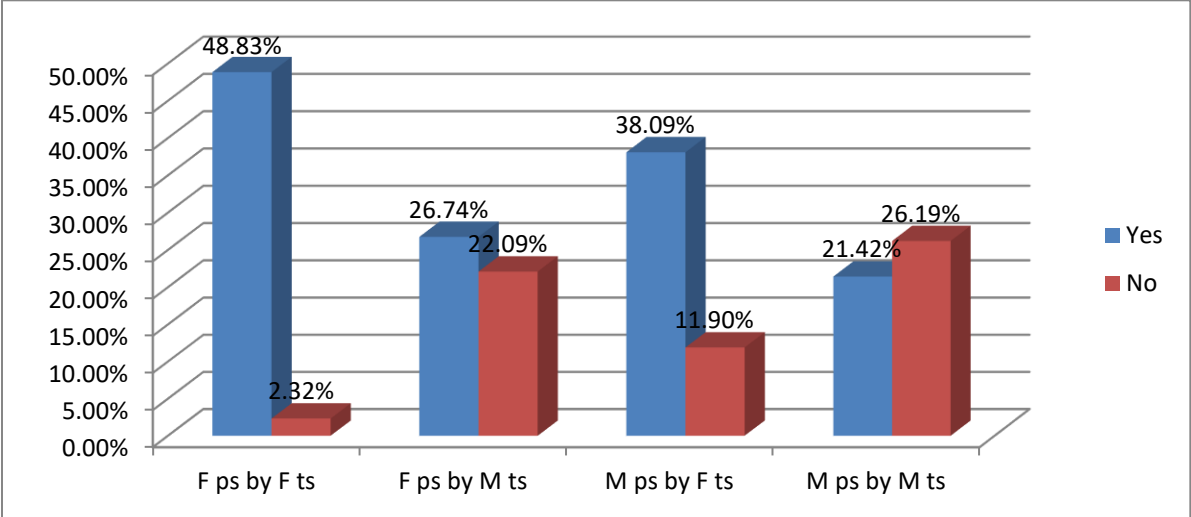


**Figure 16: Pupils’ Solving their Homework**



Depending on the results, most of the students did their home works since (38,37%) of girls and (32,14%) taught by females and (37,20%) of girls and (35,71%) of boys taught by males said that they did. While those who stated that they did not do the activities given to them were as the following: (12,79%) of female and (17,85%) of male pupils taught by females and (11,62%) of girls and (14,28%) of boys taught by male teachers.

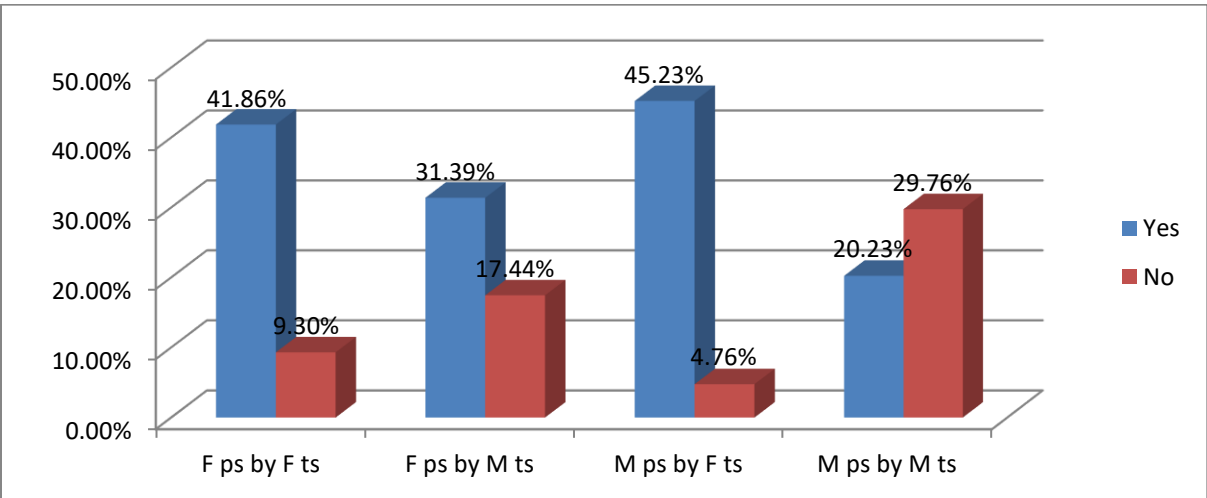
17. My teacher of English is supportive of my success and gives positive feedback.



**Figure 17: Pupils’ Assessing their Teachers’ Support**

When being asked about the support and the feedback they received from their teachers of English, pupils’ replies were: (48,83%) of females and (38,09%) of males taught by female teachers, while (26,74%) of girls and (21,42%) of boys taught by male teachers said that they did. The other (2,32%) of girls and (11,90%) of boys taught by females and (22,09%) of girls and (26,19%) of boys taught by males stated that they did not.

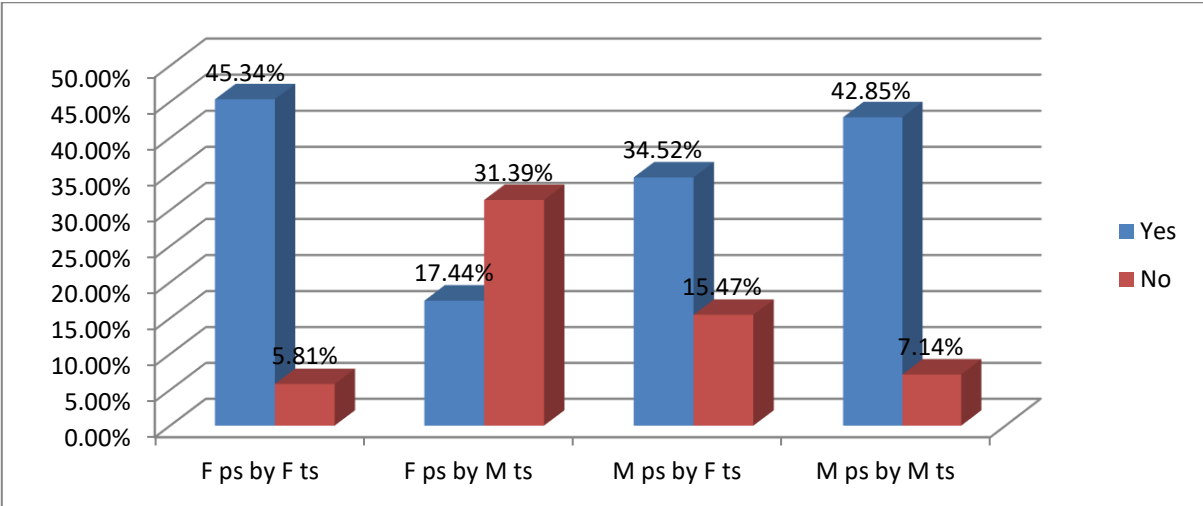
18. My teacher is interested in my point of view and allows me to take decisions on some things.



**Figure 18: Pupils’ Permitting to Take Decisions**

From the figure above we could conclude the following results: female pupils with (41,86%) and males ones with (45,23%) taught by female teachers and (31,39%) of girls and (20,23%) of boys had the chance to take some decisions in the class. While, (9,30%) of girls and (4,76%) of boys taught by females and (17,44%) of girls and (29,76%) of boys taught by males e said that they did not have such an opportunity.

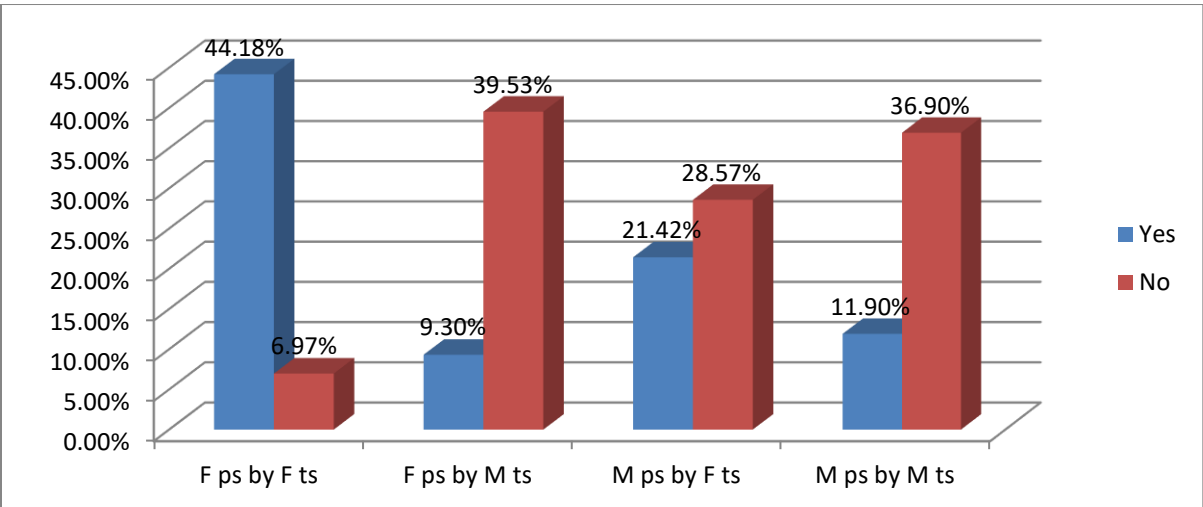
19. I can comfortably express myself and answer the questions.



**Figure 19: Pupils’ Feeling of Easiness in Speaking with their Teachers**

The figure above indicated that (45,34%) of female pupils and (31,39%) and male pupils taught by females and (17,44%) of girls and (42,85%) of boys taught by males said that they freely expressed themselves in the class. However, (5,81%) of females and (15,47%) of males taught by female teachers and (31,39%) of girls and (7,14%) of boys taught by male teachers stated that they did not feel at ease.

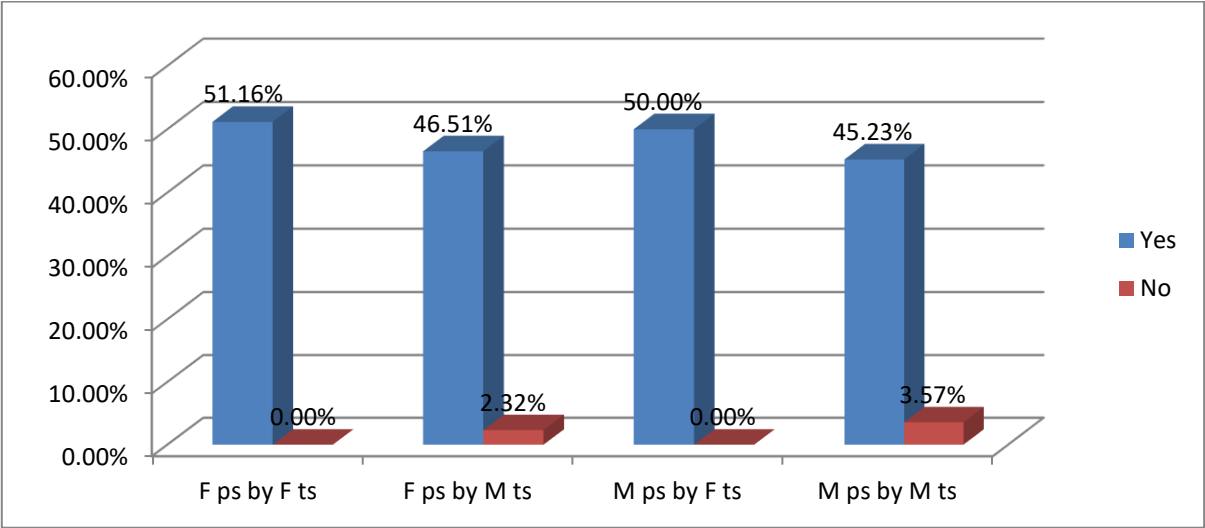
20. I don’t hesitate and I talk with my teacher about any problem out of class.



**Figure 20: Pupils’ Reference to their Teachers when Facing Problems**

The figure above represented the percentages of girls with (44,18%) and boys with (21,42%) being taught by females and (9,30%) of girls and (11,90%) of boys being taught by male teachers who declared that whenever they had a problem that had no relation with the class they didn't hesitate to consult their teachers. While, (6,97%) of female and (28,57%) of male pupils taught by female teachers and (39,53%) of female and (36,90%) of male pupils taught by male teachers said that they did not do so.

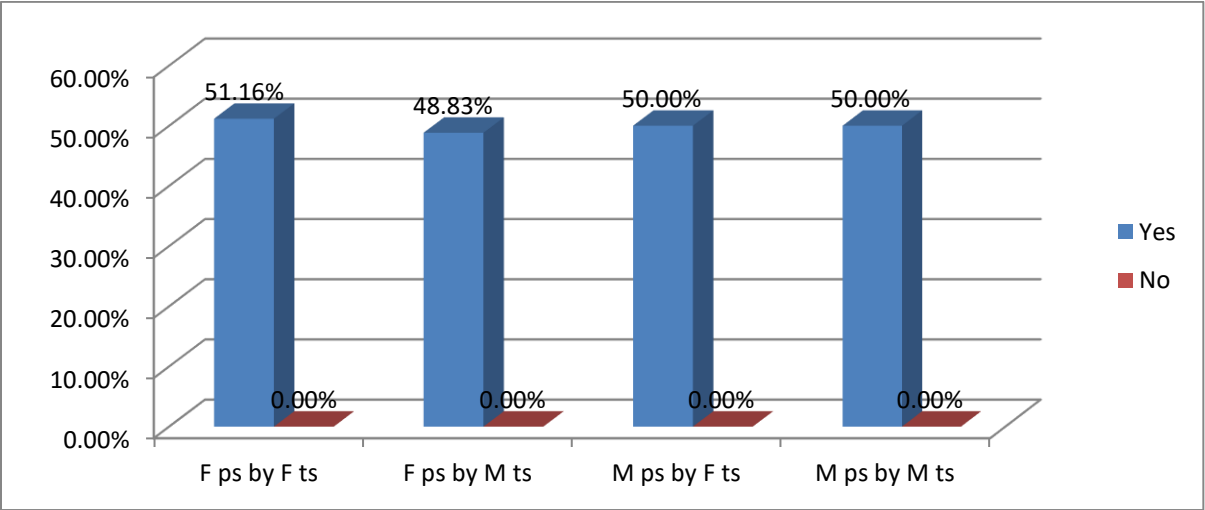
21. I like my teacher of English and I enjoy his/her classes.



**Figure 21: Pupils' Enjoyment of their Teachers' Classes**

As the results yielded, approximately all the percentages of the pupils denoted that they did like their teachers and their sessions, except for female pupils (2,32%) and male pupils (3,57%) both taught by male teachers who said that they neither liked their teachers of English nor enjoyed their classes.

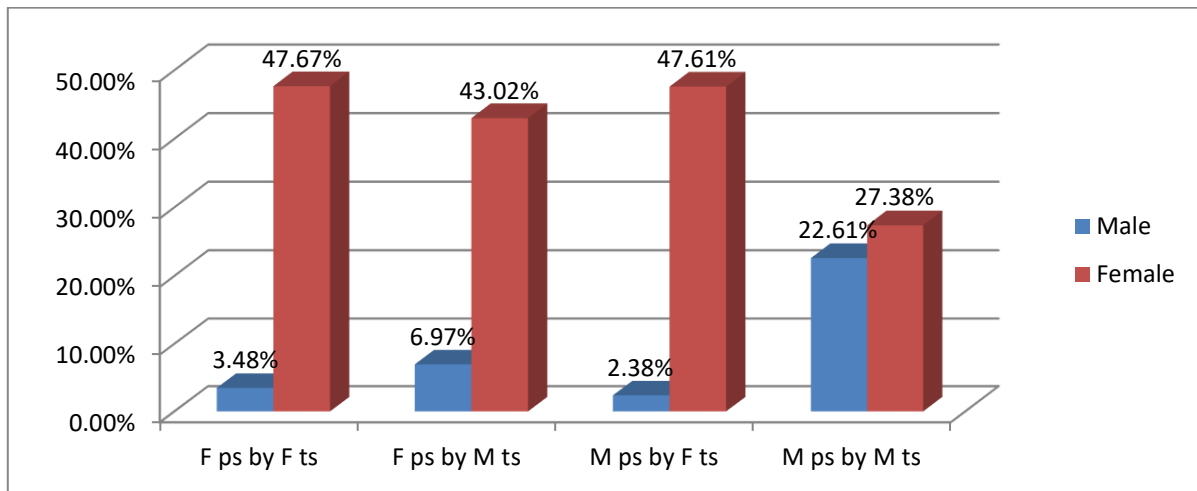
22. I respect my teacher of English



**Figure 22: Pupils' Respect to their Teachers**

All the pupils (100%) of different genders being taught by teachers of English of both genders said that they respected their teachers.

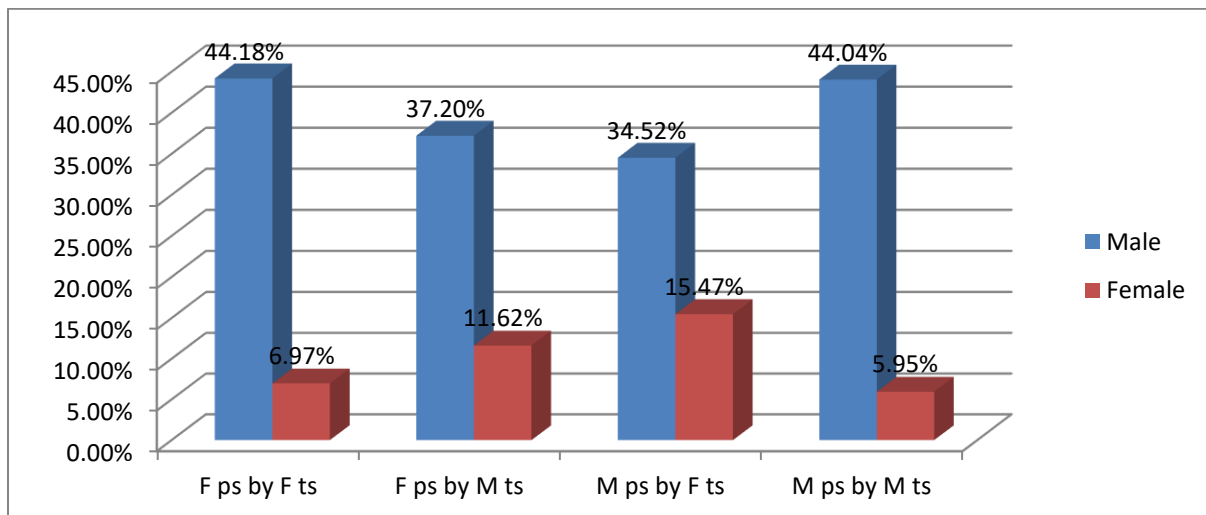
23. In my point of view, the one who teaches English better is:



**Figure23: Pupils’ Opinions about Who Teaches Better**

Most of pupils whether being taught by EFL female teachers or not said that they taught English better than males because the results obtained from the figure were as the following: (47,67%) of girls and (47,61%) of boys taught by females and (43,02%) of girls and of (27,38%) boys taught by males put a cross on female teachers on their questionnaire. Whereas, only (3,48%) of female and (2,38%) of male pupils taught by female teachers and (6,97%) of female and (22,61%) male pupils taught by male teachers stated that male teachers taught better English.

24. The teacher of English who discriminates between male and female pupils is:

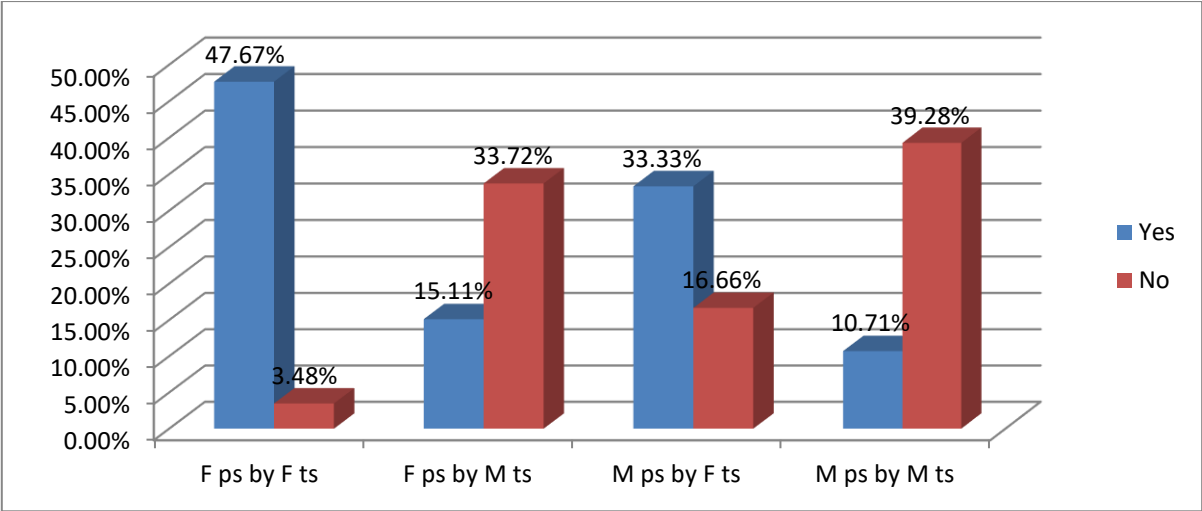


**Figure 24: Pupils’ Opinions about who discriminates between Pupils**

From the results displayed in the figure (24), we could notice that most of the high school pupils being a female (44,18%) or a male (34,52%) taught by females or female pupils with (37,20%) or males with (44,04%) taught by males professed that male teachers did not

treat all pupils the same way. While, only (6,97%) of girls and (15,47%) of boys taught by female teachers and girls with (11,62%) and boys with (5,95%) taught by male teachers declared that female teachers of English were the ones who discriminated between pupils of both genders.

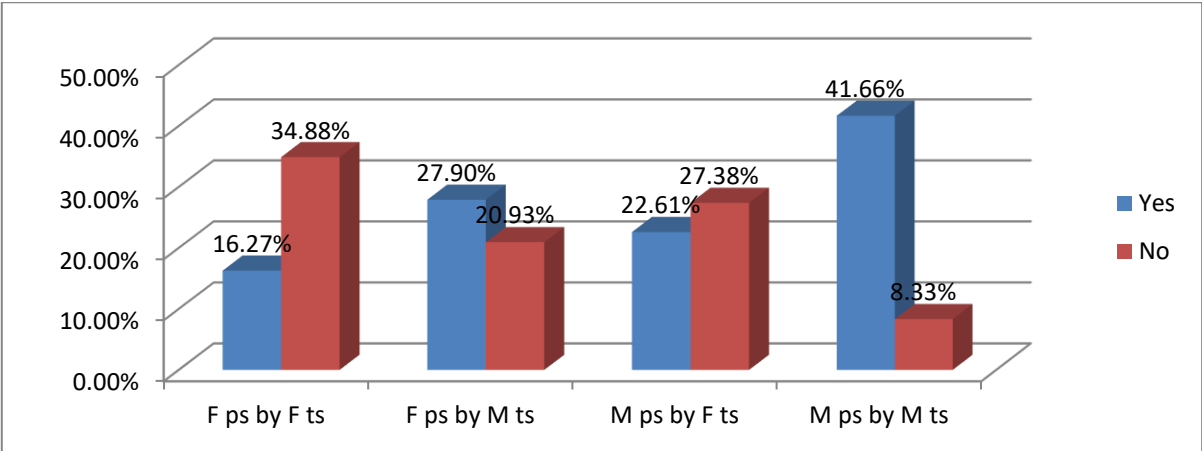
25. Do you think that girls' and boys' school works are graded equally and fairly?



**Figure 25: Pupils' Opinions about their Grades' Equality**

The results shown in this figure demonstrated that female pupils (47,67%) and male pupils (33,33%) taught by female teachers and only female pupils with (15,11%) and male pupils (10,71%) taught by male teachers of English said that their school works were graded the same as their classmates. While those who stated that their works were not fairly marked like the other pupils were: girls with (3,48%) and boys with (16,66%) being taught by females and girls with (33,72%) and boys with (39,28%) being taught by males.

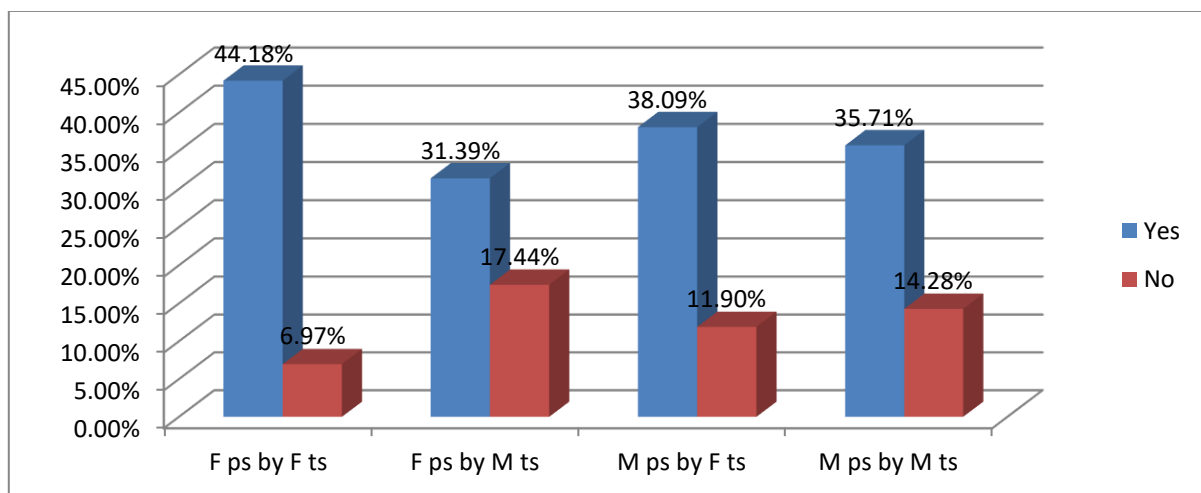
26. Do you ever compare your test marks to your male/female classmates so that to check if you are graded as fairly as them?



**Figure 26: Pupils' Comparison of their Tests' Marks**

When pupils were asked whether they compared their tests' marks with their male and female classmates the percentages that we obtained from their answers were as the following: those who said that they did are female (16,27%) and male pupils (22,61%) taught by female teachers and female (27,90%) and male pupils (41,66%) taught by male teachers. However, those who said that they did not were female (34,8%) and male pupils (27,38%) taught by female teachers and female (20,93%) and male pupils (8,33%) taught by male teachers.

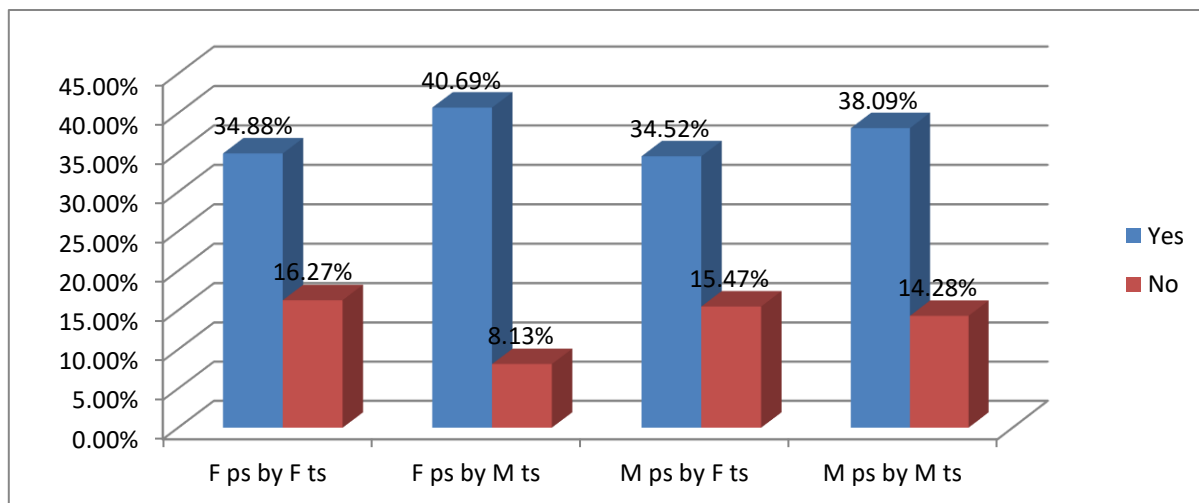
27. Do you think that your academic achievement would increase if your classroom was single-gender, all boys or all girls?



**Figure 27: Pupils' Academic Progress in Single-gender Classes**

As it is clear in the figure above, most of the pupils declared that they would study better if they were at gender-like classes since female (44,18%) and male pupils (38,09%) taught by female teachers and female (31,39%) and male pupils (35,71%) taught by male teachers said so. Whereas, those who said that they didn't think so were female (6,79%) and male pupils (11,90%) taught by female teachers and female (17,44%) and male pupils (14,28%) taught by male teachers.

28. Would you like to have the opportunity to learn in a classroom with just male/ female classmates and a male/female teacher of English?



**Figure 28: Pupils' Preferences about Single-gender Classes**

According to the results, the highest percentages went to the pupils who preferred to study at single-gender classes. (34,88%) of girls and (34,52%) of boys taught by females and (40,69%) of girls and (38,09%) of boys taught by males wanted to study at a class where all the pupils were of the same gender. While, (16,27%) of girls and (15,47%) of boys taught by females and (8,13%) of girls and (14,28%) of boys taught by males said that they didn't prefer so.

#### 4.17.1.3. The Third Section: Learners' Perception of the Influence of EFL Teachers' Gender on their Learning Process.

29. What would motivate you to increase your desire to study English?

The pupils' answers were somehow the same because they all said that English was the first spoken language in the world, their favourite subject, an easy language to learn, it was used wherever to travel and whoever to communicate with and the desire to be a teacher of English in the future. Both female and male pupils taught by female teachers of English said that they liked to study English thanks to their teacher who played a great role in motivating them.

30. Do you think that there are differences between male and female teachers of English? Why? Why not? Explain more what are these differences?

A great deal of pupils confirmed that there were differences between male and female teachers of English, since they were taught by both of them either at the middle or at the secondary school. In answering why and explaining the differences, they said that female teachers were open minded, understanding, patient, helpful, explicative, and gave pieces of advice about any problem whether being it inside or outside the classroom. However, they declared that male teachers were more nervous, strict, careless about their pupils' problems, not sympathetic and unfair.

31. Do you want to be taught by a male or a female teacher of English? Explain why.

According to the results obtained from this question, most of the pupils answered by saying that they wanted to be taught by EFL female teachers since they described them as being tender and affectionate like their mothers, kind, patient, friendly, respectful, to have a good pronunciation, not angry, hard worker, serious, to be motivated with them, to praise them when saying a correct answerer or when getting a good mark, to feel comfortable in communicating with them, to be fair in treating all the pupils.

The same pupils said that male teachers were sexist because they dealt more with boys, they were controller, emotionally careless about them, helpless, hard, difficult, and there was no communication with the pupils. Concerning the rest of the pupils who preferred to be taught by EFL male teachers said that they had a curiosity to see them how they taught, responsible, serious and controller. Only few pupils said that there was no difference between them because it depended on the pupil's will to study, teachers' competencies, experience and that they had the same gender as their male teachers.

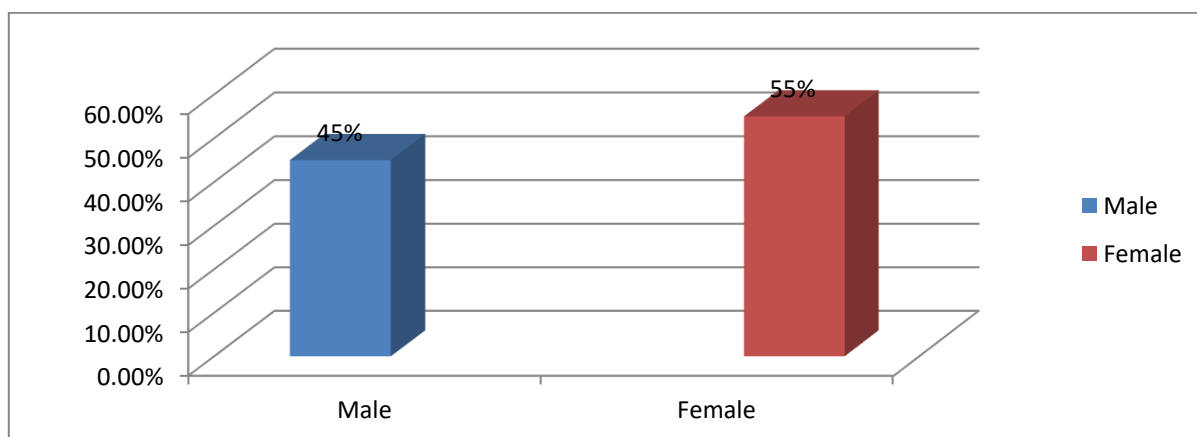
32. You can add extra information to describe your teacher of English.

All the pupils described their female teachers of English as being a model of a successful women, kind, polite, friendly, helpful, patient, and as having a good method of teaching. Whereas, pupils taught by male teachers of English said that their teachers were serious, respectful, angry, and very difficult.

#### 4.17.2. EFL Teachers' Questionnaire

##### 4.17.2.1. The First Section: The Participants' Background

1. What is your gender?

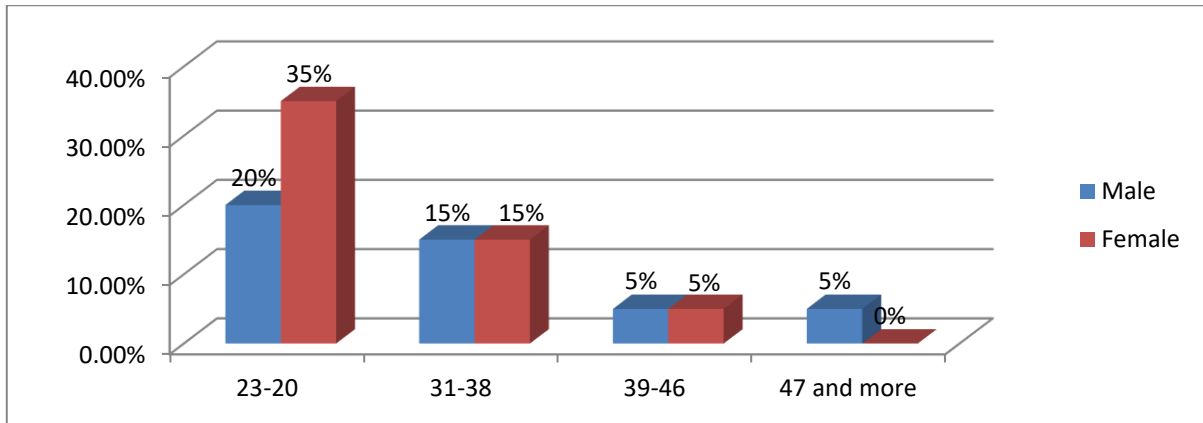


**Figure 1: EFL Teachers' Gender**

The EFL teachers who filled in the questionnaire were (45%) males and (55%) females.



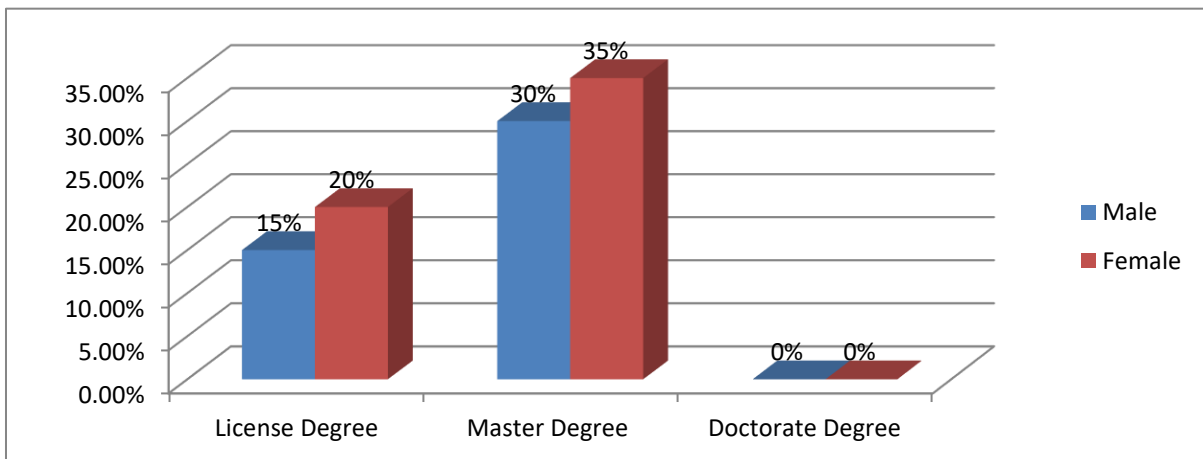
2. How old are you?



**Figure 2: EFL Teachers' Age**

According to the results shown in the figure male teachers aging between (23-30) years old represented (20%) and females (35%). Both male and female teachers of English aging between (31-38) years old represented (15%) and those between (39-46) years old represented (5%). While only (5%) of men aged more than (47) years old.

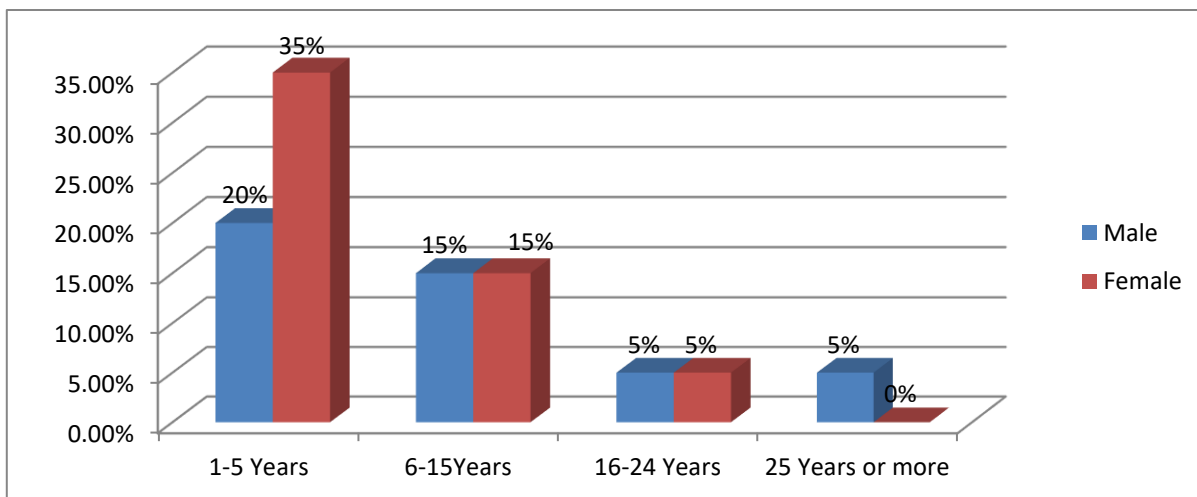
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?



**Figure 3: EFL Teachers' Educational Levels**

The results denoted that (15%) of males and (20%) of females held license degrees. (30%) of male teachers and (35%) of female teachers had master degrees, while none of them had any doctorate degree.

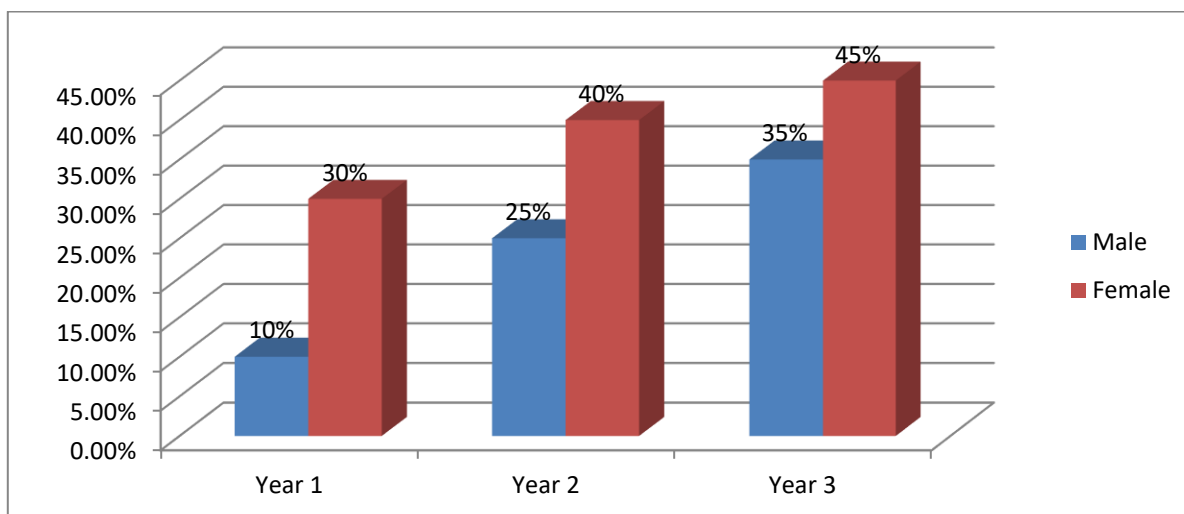
4. For how many years have you been teaching English at the secondary school?



**Figure 4: EFL Teachers' Working Experience**

Novice teachers who worked for 1 to 5 years were (20%) of males and (35%) of females. (15%) of both male and female teachers said that they worked for 6 to 15 years. Other male (5%) and female (5%) teachers stated that they worked 16 to 24 years. Whereas, only (5%) of EFL male teachers who said that their working experience was more than (20%).

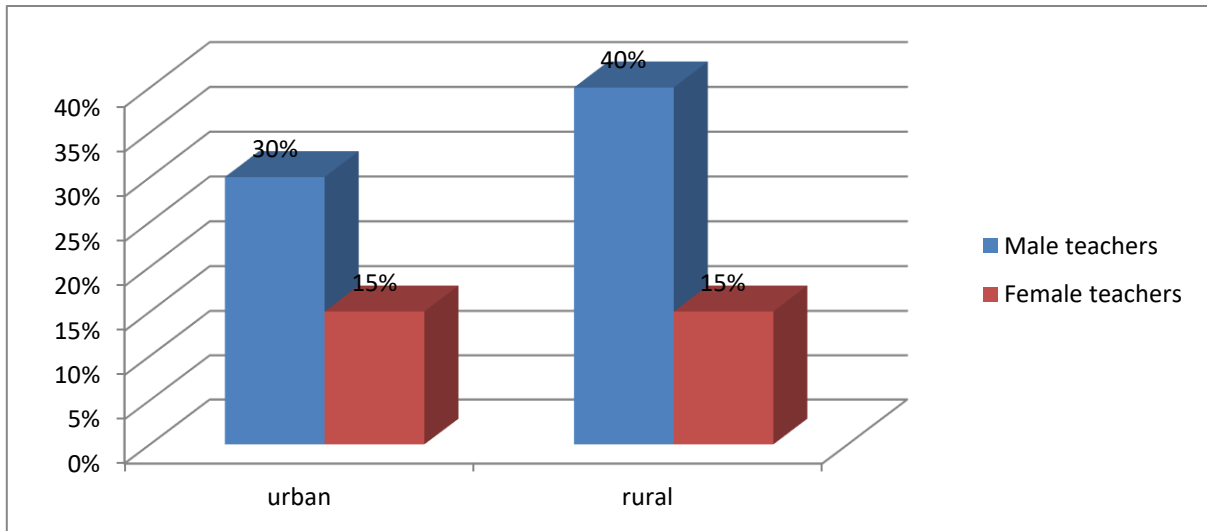
5. Which year level do you currently teach?



**Figure 5: EFL Teachers' Classes**

As it is clear that at the Algerian secondary schools there are three years to study, so when teachers were asked which level they taught their answers were as the following: male teachers with (10%) and female teachers with (30%) taught the first year pupils. (25%) of males and (40%) of females taught second year. The third year pupils were taught by males with (35%) and females with (45%).

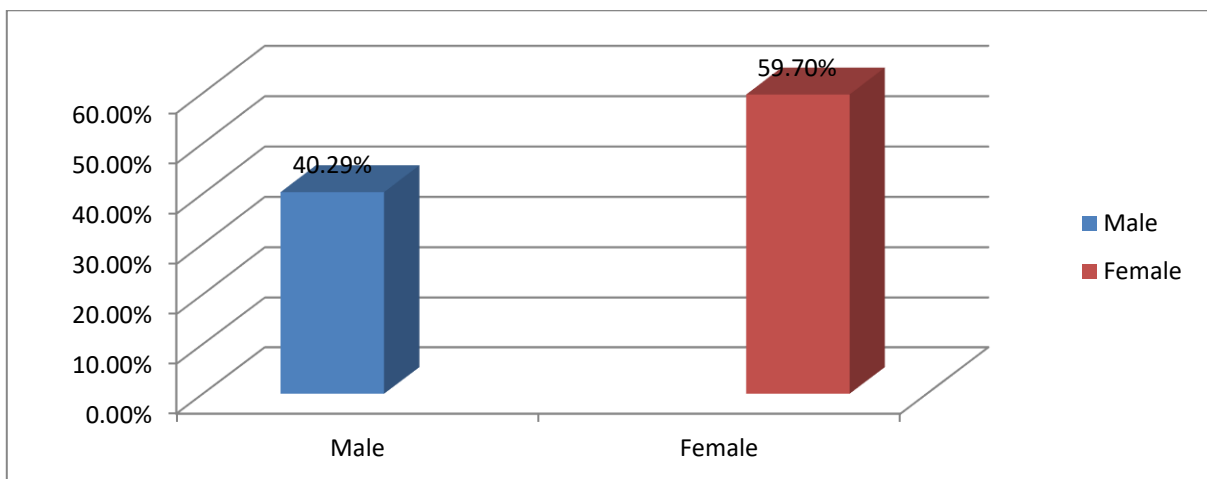
6. How can you characterize the secondary school you work at?



**Figure 6: EFL Teachers' Work Place**

In any state there are schools situated in rural and others in urban areas. (30%) of male and (15%) of female teachers of English said that they worked in the city, while (40%) of male and (15%) of female teachers worked in the countryside.

7. How many EFL teachers are there currently at the secondary school where you work?

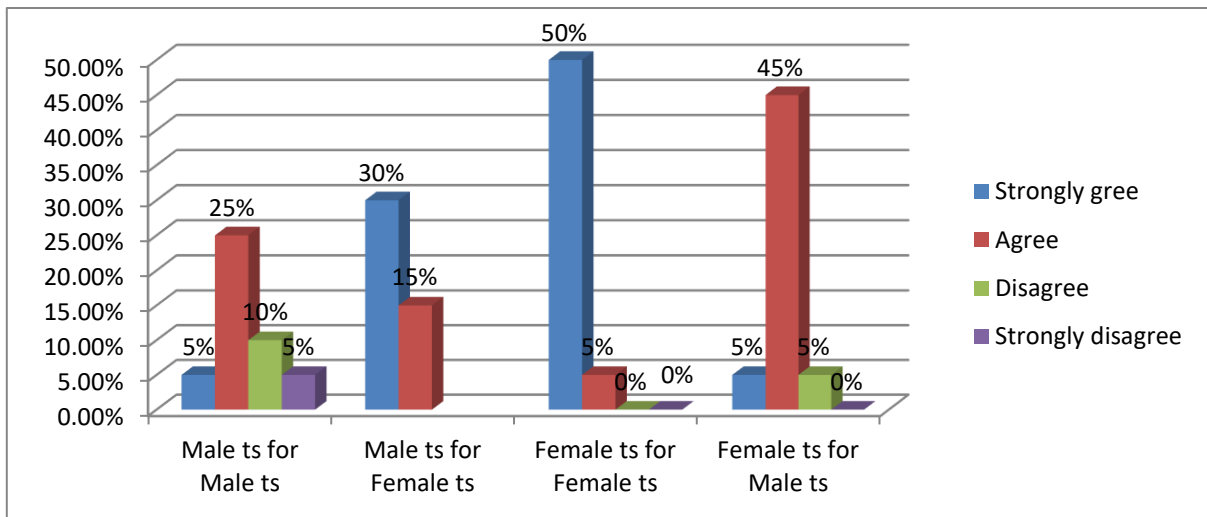


**Figure 7: EFL Teachers' Colleagues Number**

The results obtained from figure (7) demonstrated that the highest percentage of EFL teachers was for female ones with (59,70%) while male teachers of English represented (40,29%).

#### 4.17.2.2. **The Second Section: EFL Teachers' Gender-Based Differences**

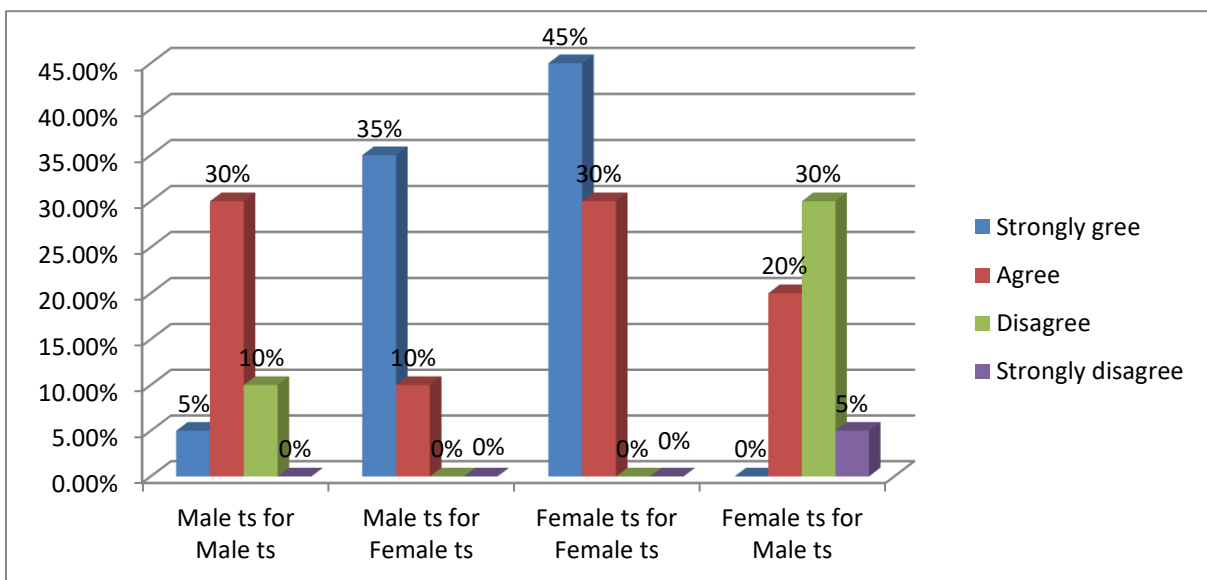
8. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with have generally positive attitudes about their profession.



**Figure 8: EFL Teachers' Attitudes**

The above results showed that male teachers of English graded their male colleagues about having positive attitudes towards their profession with (5%) as SA, (25%) as A, (10%) as D and (5%) as SD, while for their female counterparts with (30%) as SA, (15%) as A and with (0%) as D or SA. On the other hand, the female teachers saw their same gender workmates with (50%) as SA, (5%) A and (0%) for both D and SA, while they stated about their male fellow workers with (5%) SA, (45%) A, (5%) D and (0%) for SD, that they were committed to their career.

9. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with are collegial.



**Figure 9: EFL Teachers' Collegiality**

The results denoted from the above figure were that; male teachers strongly agreed with (5%), agreed with (30%), disagreed with (10%) and did not strongly disagree (0%) about the collegiality of their male workmates, and for the female teachers they worked with they strongly agreed with (35%), agreed with (10%) and (0%) for both disagreed and strongly

disagreed that they had the spirit of collegiality. While, (45%) of female teachers strongly agreed and (30%) agreed and none (0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they worked all together as one body. The same female teachers stated that (0%) as SA, (20%) as A, (30%) as D and (5%) as SD about their male colleagues who joined less work group.

10. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with have effective teaching styles.

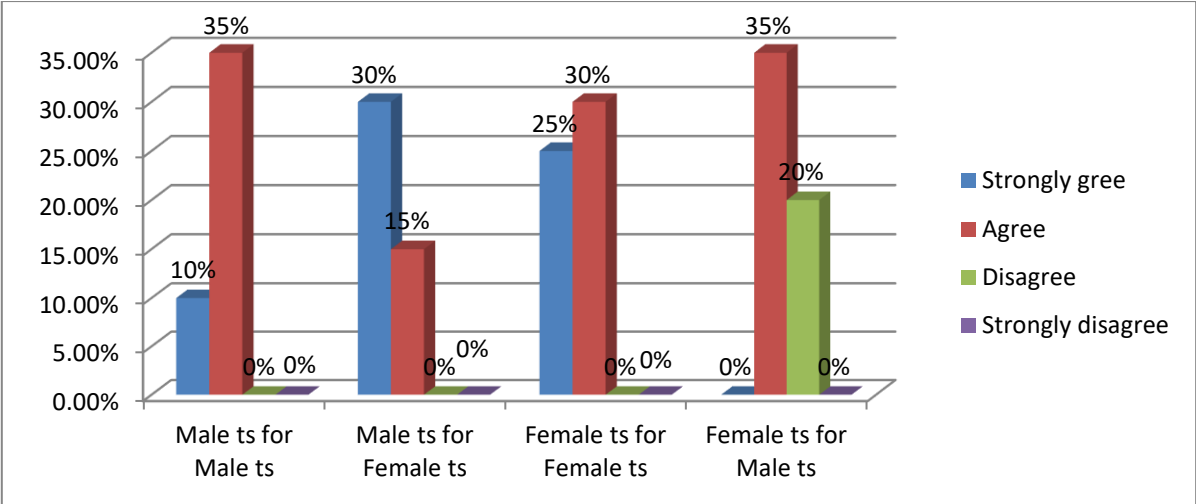


Figure 10: EFL Teachers' Teaching Styles

As it is clear in the figure, (10%) of male teachers strongly agreed, (35%) agreed and none (0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed on that male teachers used effective teaching styles to convey the lessons to their pupils. Concerning their female teachers colleagues, (30%) of male teachers strongly agreed, (15%) agreed and none (0%) disagree or strongly disagreed. On the other hand, female teachers of English graded their female school mates (25%) as SA, (30%) as A, (0%) as D and SA. Coming to their male workmates (0%) strongly agreed, (35%) agreed, (20%) disagree and (0%) strongly disagreed about using valuable teaching techniques.

11. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with use effective classroom management strategies.

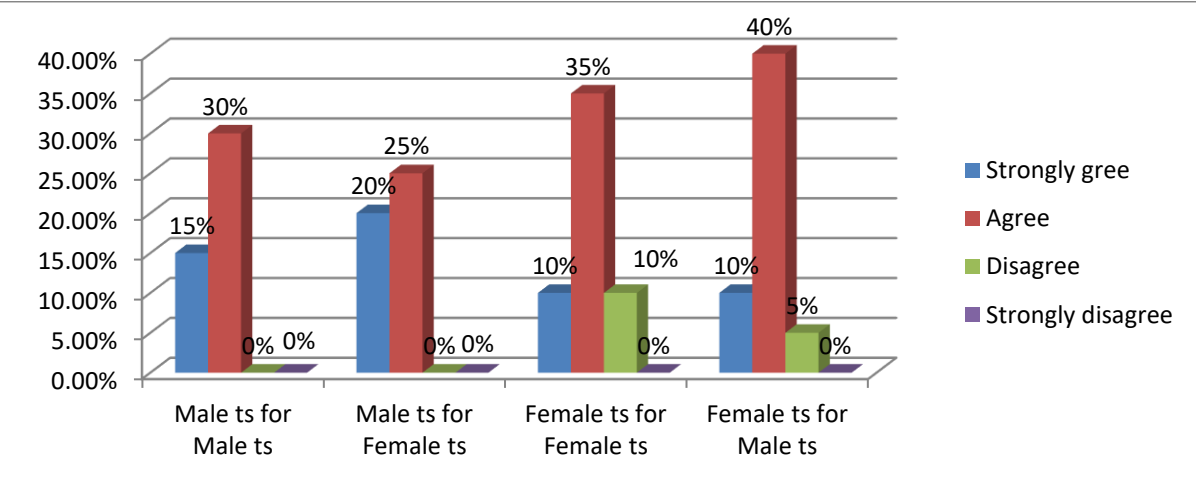
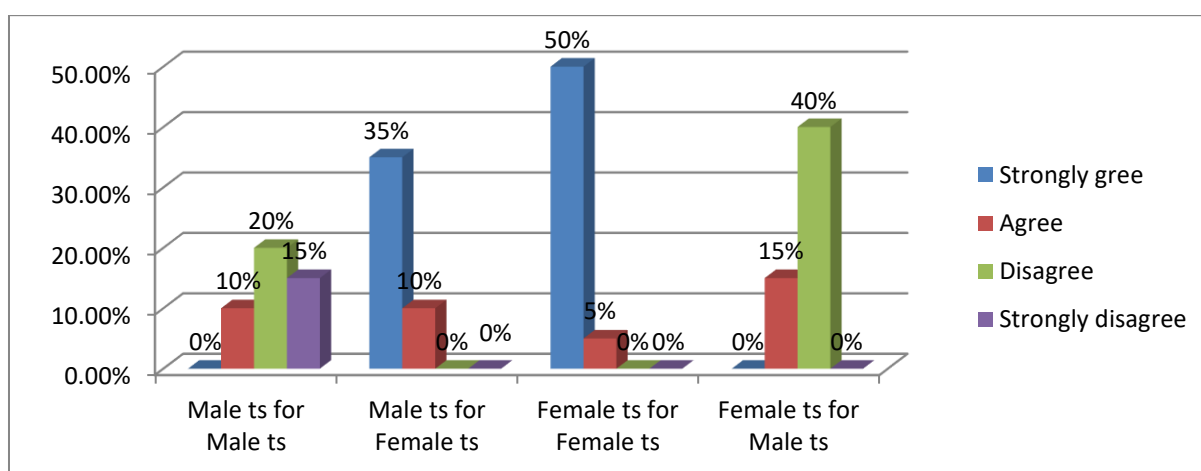


Figure 11: EFL Teachers' Classroom Management

From the above figure we could deduce that male teachers of English described their male colleagues as controllers because they strongly agreed with (15%), agreed with (30%) and they didn't disagree or strongly disagree (0%). Rating their female counterparts, they strongly agreed with (20%), agreed with (25%) and they also didn't disagree or strongly disagree (0%). Concerning female teachers ranking their gender-like partners they strongly agreed with (10%), agreed with (35%), disagreed with (10%) and (0%) for SD. While for their male teachers mates they strongly agreed with (10%), agreed with (40%), disagreed with (5%) and strongly disagreed with (0%) on the effective classroom management they used to control their classes.

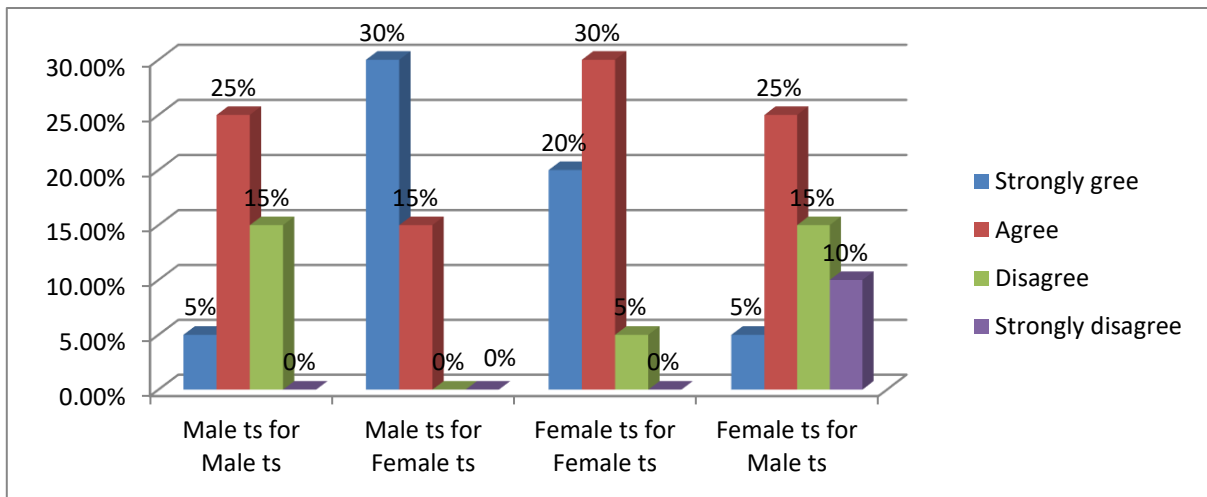
12. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with are patient and fair with their pupils.



**Figure 12: EFL Teachers' Patience and Fairness with Pupils**

This figure represents teachers of English as being patient and fair with their pupils. Male teachers graded their male co-workers' patience and fairness with (0%) as SA, (10%) as A, (20%) as D and (15%) as SD, and their female ones with (35%) as SA, (10%) as A and non for D and SA. Whereas, EFL female teachers described their female mates as being patient with their pupils since they strongly agreed with (50%), agreed with (5%) and none (0%) for disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Concerning the male teachers they worked with they answered with (0%) as SA, (15%) as A, (40%) as D and (0%) as SD.

13. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with effectively serve their pupils as role models.

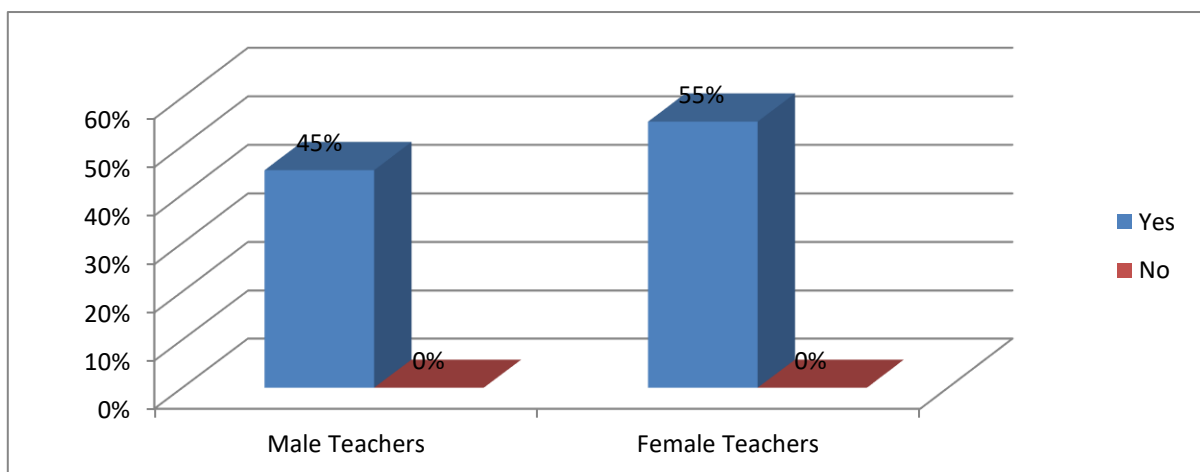


**Figure 13: EFL Teachers as Role Models**

In the results mentioned above about who served as a role model for his/her pupils, male teachers strongly agreed with (5%), agreed with (25%), disagreed with (15%) and strongly disagreed with (0%) that their same gender partners were good examples for their pupils. The same teachers strongly agreed with (30%), agreed with (15%), disagreed and strongly disagreed with (0%) that the female teachers they worked with were good models for their students. From the other side, female teachers of English rated their female partners with (20%) as SA, (25%) as A, (5%) D and (0%) SD. When estimating the male teachers, they strongly agreed with (5%), agreed with (25%), disagreed with (15%) and strongly disagreed with (10%).

**4.17.2.3. The Third Section: EFL Teachers' Treatment to their Pupils Regarding their Gender Gap.**

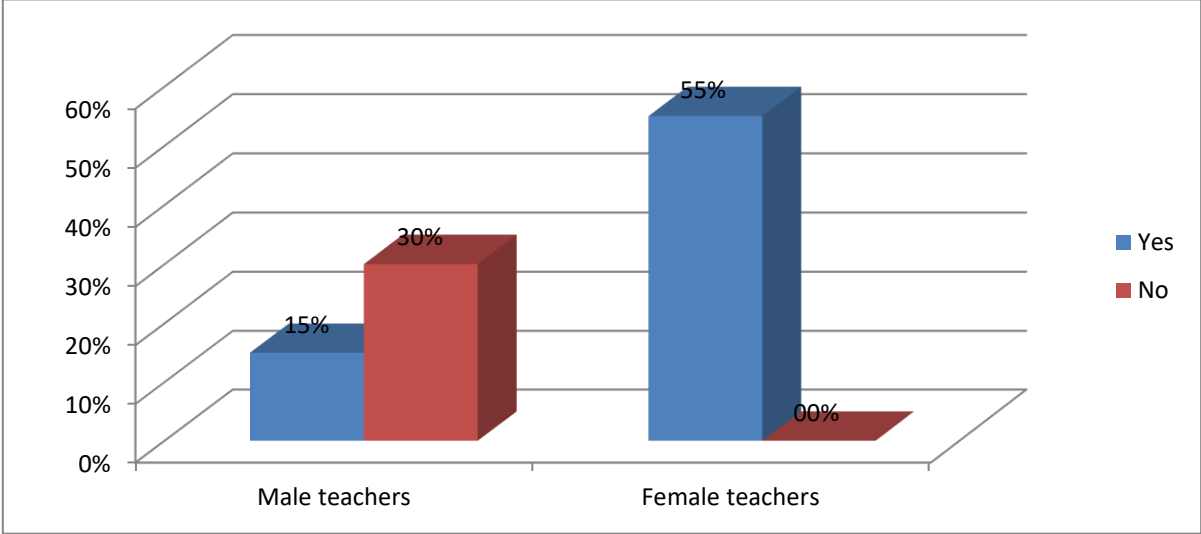
14. I act confidently and I talk enthusiastically about my subject.



**Figure 14: EFL Teachers' Self Confidence**

According to this figure, all female (55%) and male (45%) teachers of English said that they were sure of what they taught as they acted confidently with their pupils.

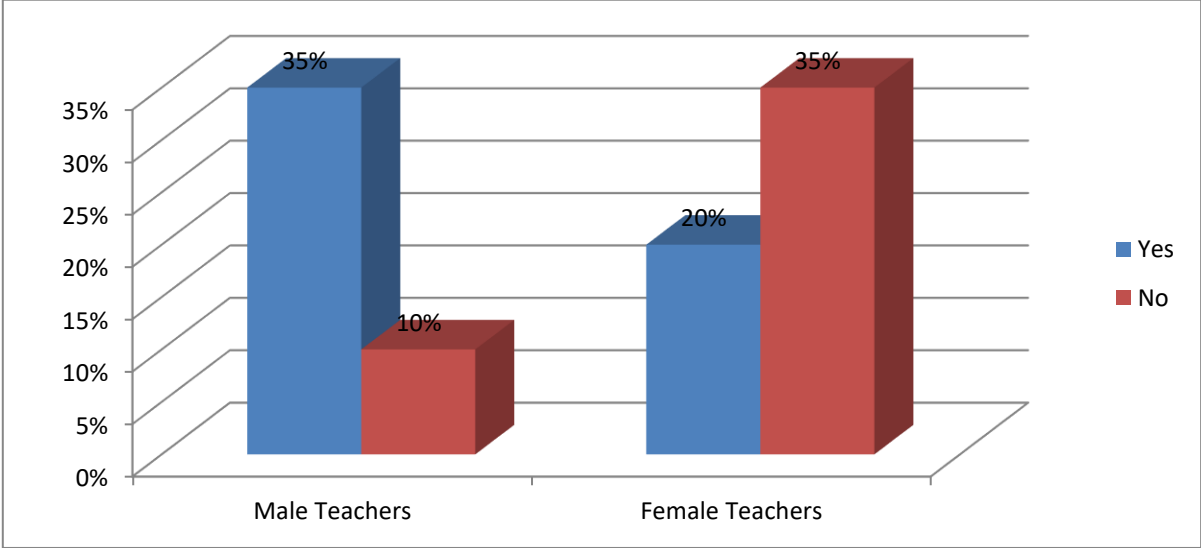
15. If my pupils don't agree with me and have something to say, I encourage them to convince me so as to share decisions.



**Figure 15: EFL Teachers' Agreement with the Pupils' Opinions**

When teachers were asked about whether they gave their pupils the chance to share decisions all female teachers with (55%) and (15%) of male teachers agreed on doing so, but the other (30%) of the latter didn't do it with their pupils.

16. I immediately correct my pupils' mistakes.

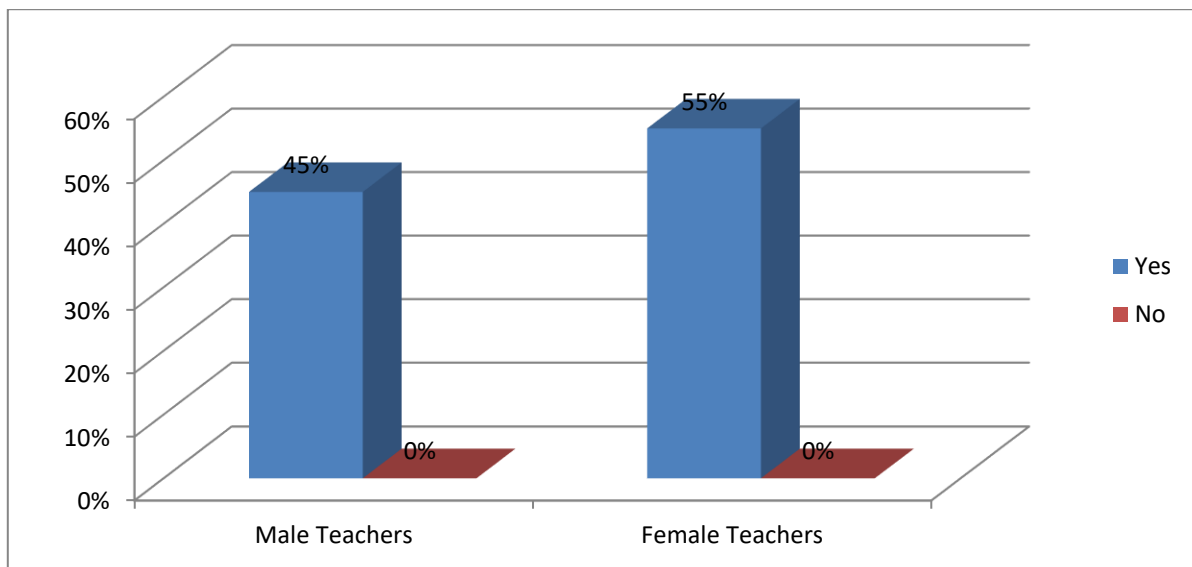


**Figure 16: EFL Teachers Correcting Pupils' Mistakes**

When pupils speak, read texts or participate make some mistakes or errors that need correction, (35%) of male and (20%) of female teachers said that they corrected them on the spot, while (10%) of male teachers and (35%) of female teachers preferred not to do so immediately.



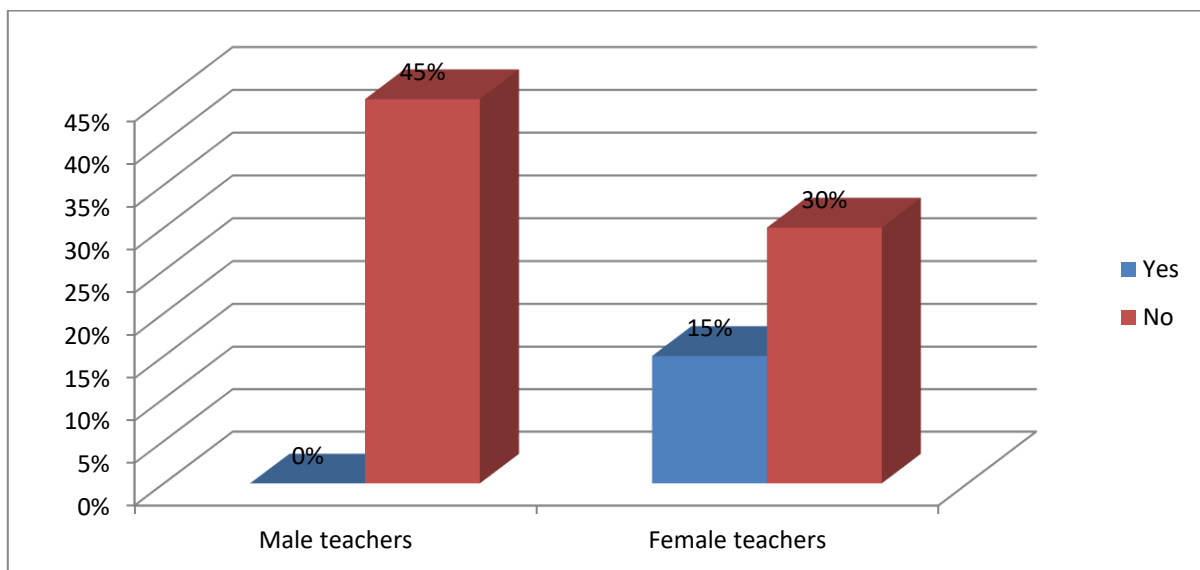
17. I help pupils with their work when needed.



**Figure 17: EFL Teachers' Help to their Pupils**

Most of the time pupils need help in doing the works given by their teachers in the classroom, so all male (45%) and female (55%) teachers of English stated that they did assist their pupils when needed.

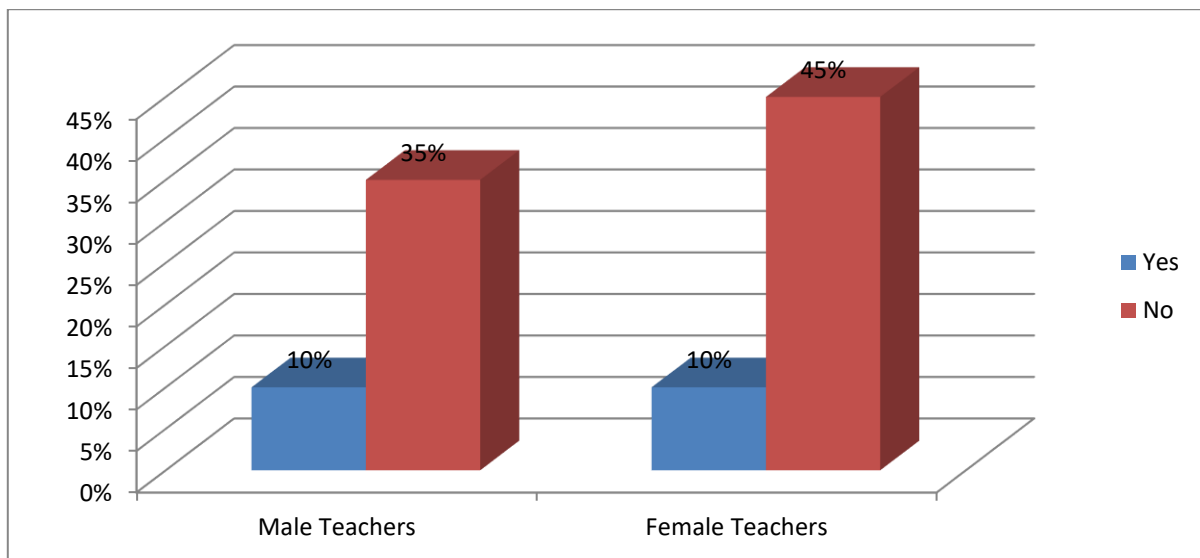
18. I am lenient; I give pupils a lot of free time.



**Figure 18: EFL Teachers' Leniency with the Pupils**

From the results obtained, (15%) of female teachers said that they were permissive with their pupils as they gave them free time in the class. Whereas, all males (45%) and some female teachers (30%) said that they were not lenient with their pupils.

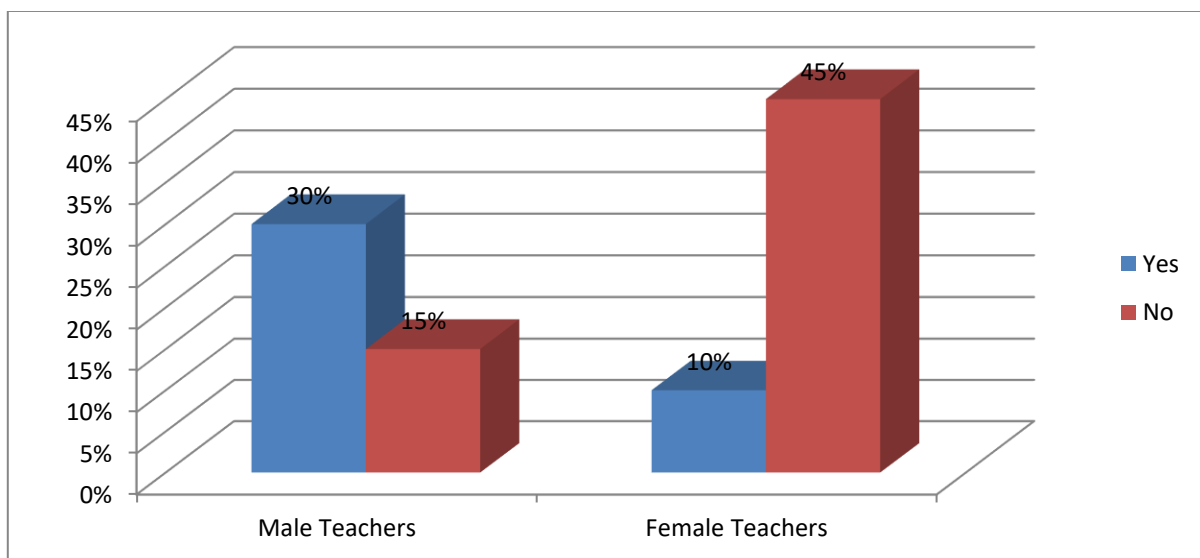
19. I am hesitant; I am not sure what to do when pupils fool around.



**Figure 19: EFL Teachers' Uncertainty about Pupils' Foolishness**

Sometimes some pupils behave in a foolish way in the classroom so that to make their mates laugh and interrupt the lesson, and each teacher has his/her own way to deal with this kind of pupils. So, (10%) of both male and female teachers of English didn't have an idea about what to do with them, while the other (35%) of males and (45%) of females declared that they knew how to react in such situations.

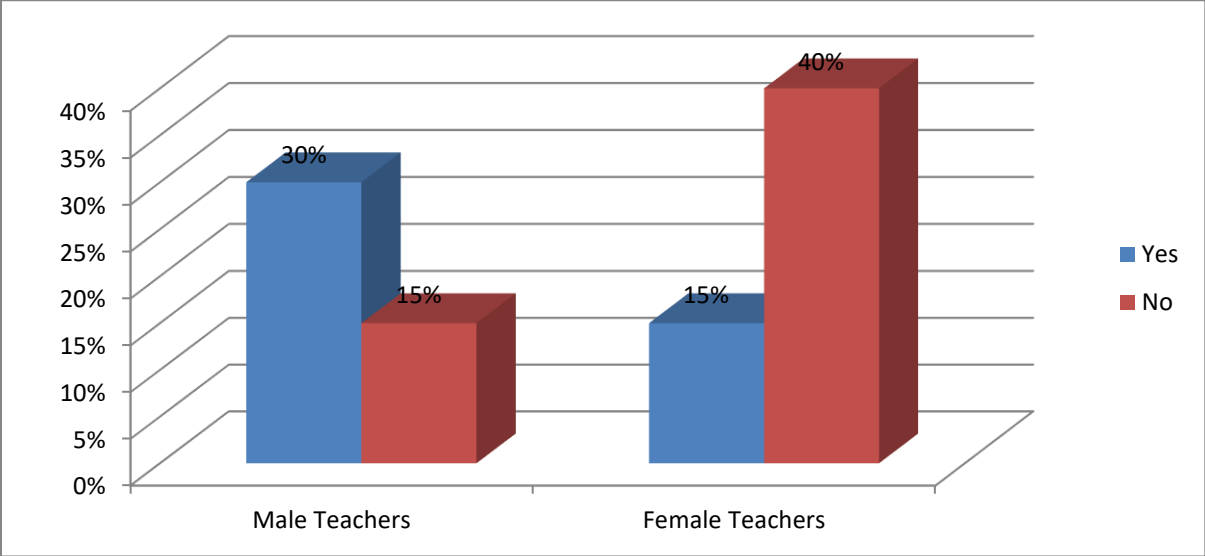
20. I quickly get angry because I am impatient.



**Figure 20: EFL Teachers' Temper**

To control temper is not something easy especially inside the classroom in dealing with some pupils. (30%) of male teachers and only (10%) of female ones who said that they easily got angry, while only (15%) of males and (45%) of females who were patient with their pupils.

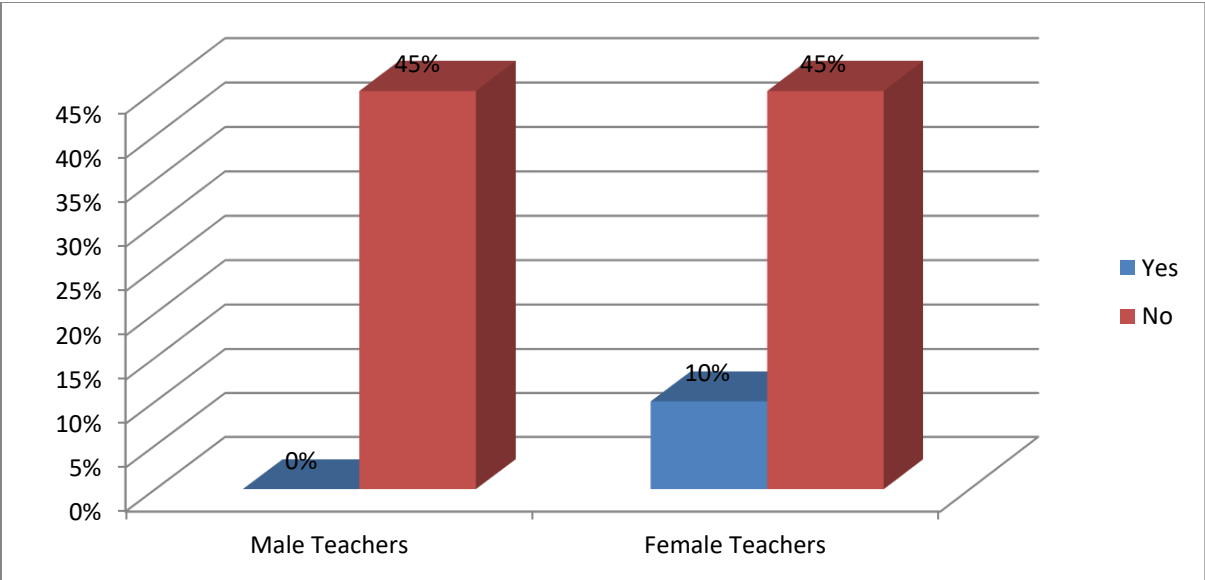
21. I put disruptive pupils down and severely punish them.



**Figure 21: EFL Teachers' Severe Punishment to Pupils**

In each class, there are some disruptive pupils who try to hinder the lesson flow and they behave in a way to make the teachers, especially if they are novice ones, afraid of them. So it is up to the teacher either to stop or to permit such behaviour. (30%) of males and (15%) of females said that they severely punished the trouble maker pupils. Surprisingly, (15%) of the other male and (40%) of female teachers stated that they would do nothing to them.

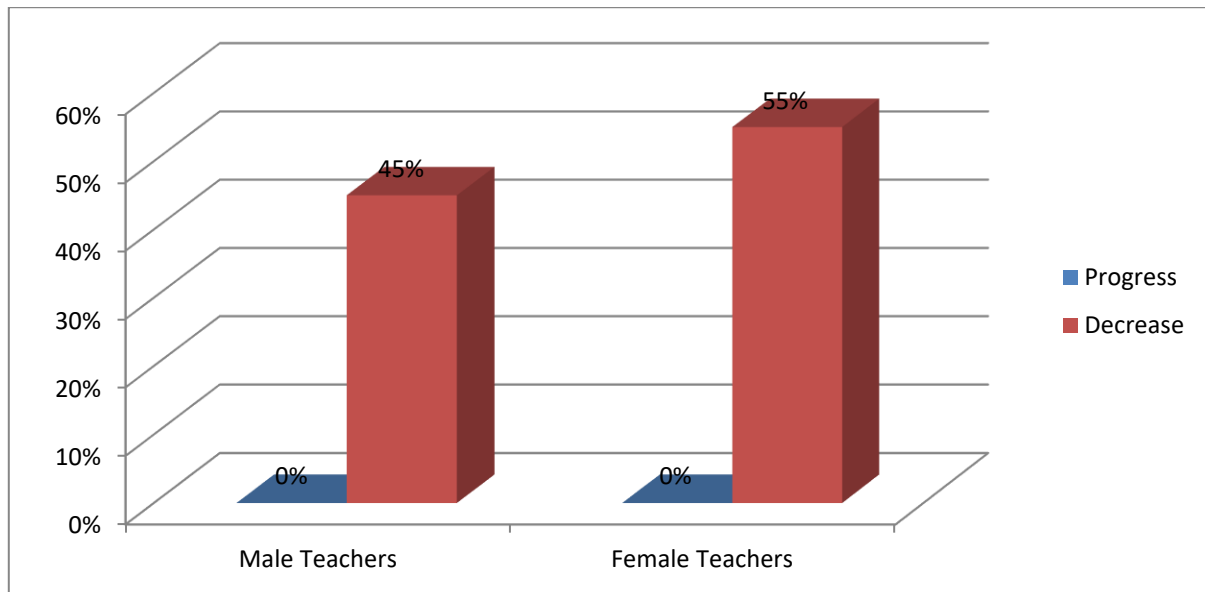
22. Discipline is a problem in my classroom.



**Figure 22: EFL Teachers' Facing Discipline Problem**

Following the previous question, all male teachers (45%) said that they faced no problem behaviour in their classes. However, (10%) of females said that they had such a behaviour in their classrooms and (45%) of them said that they did not do so.

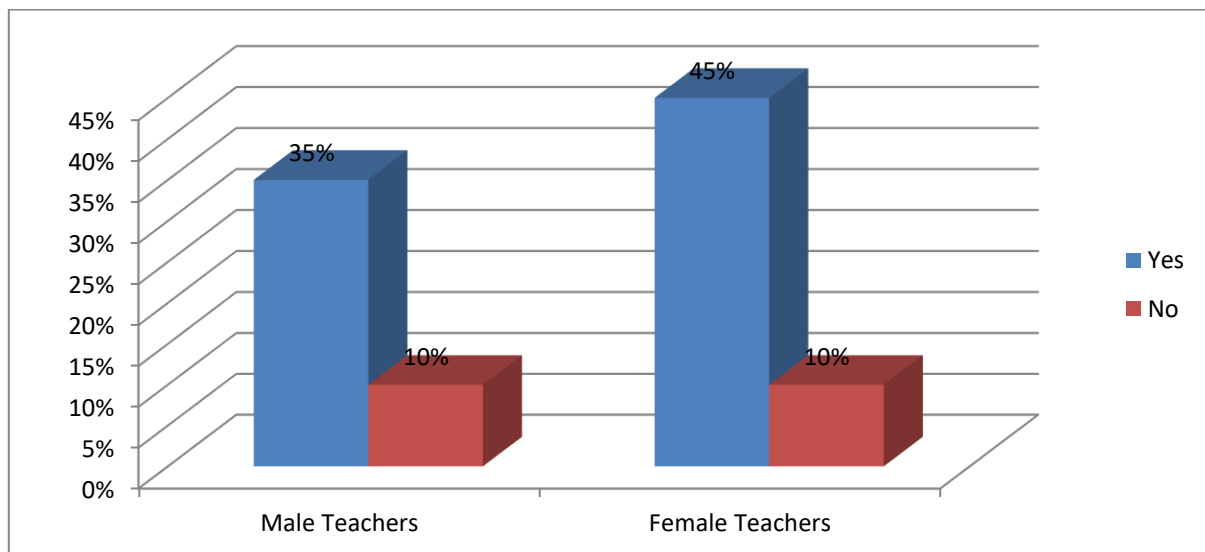
23. Schools in Algeria are in progress or in decrease.



**Figure 23: EFL Teachers' Opinion about Algerian School**

As it is clear in the figure above, all male (45%) and female (55%) teachers of English agreed upon the decrease that the Algerian schools witnessed the recent years.

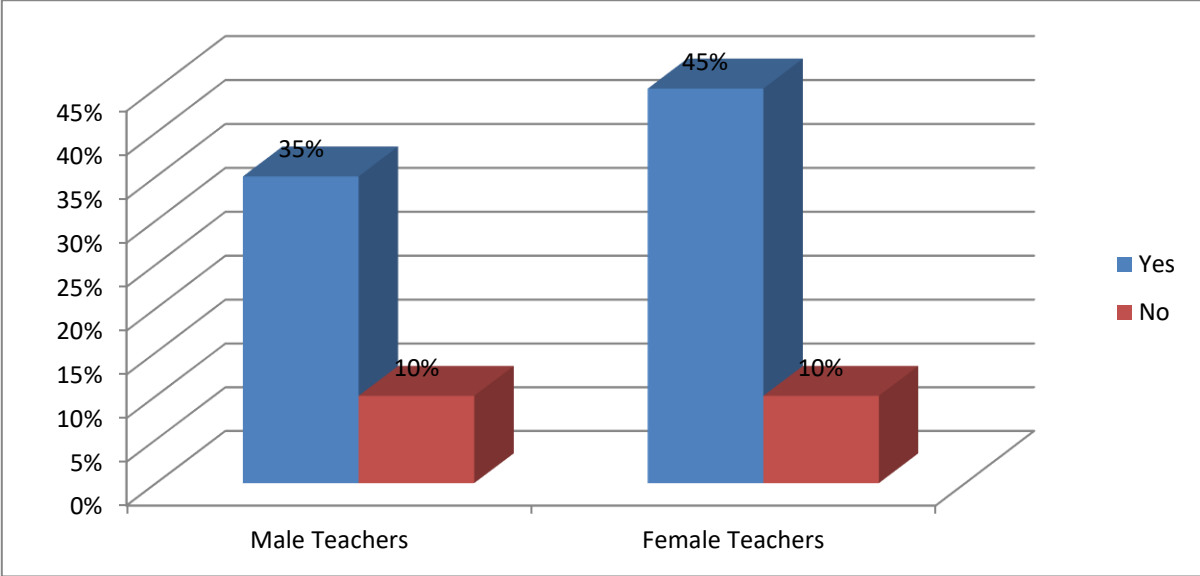
24. The academic achievement gap between girls and boys continues to widen in Algerian secondary schools.



**Figure 24: EFL Teachers' Opinion about Achievement Gap**

The highest percentages went to male (35%) and female (45%) teachers who noticed that the academic achievement gap between male and female pupils was increasing in Algerian secondary schools. While, only (10%) of both teachers said that there was no such a thing.

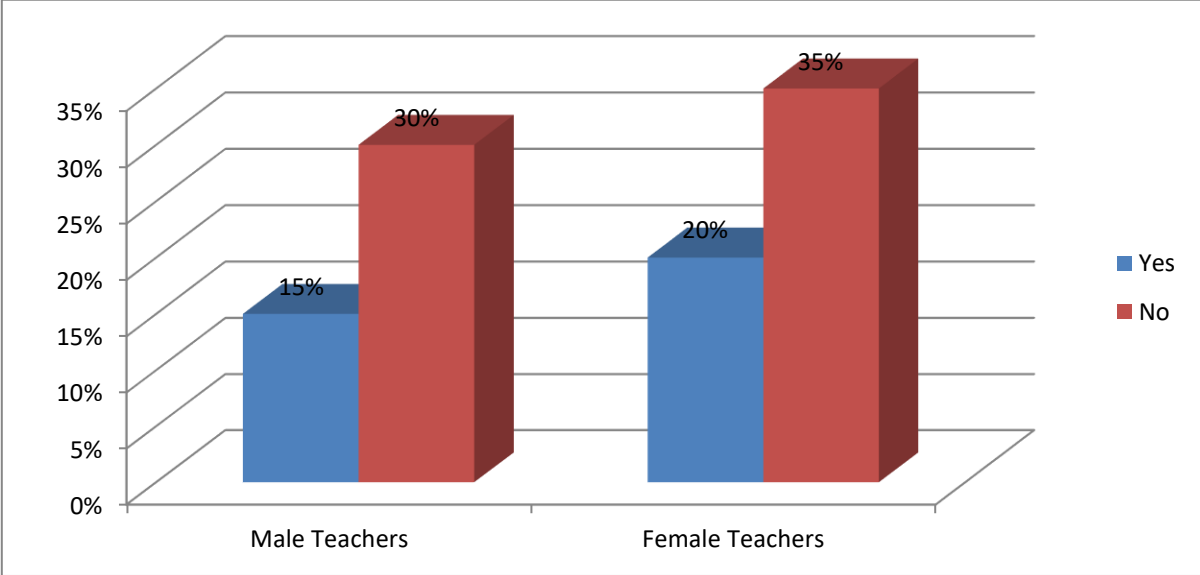
25. When I interact with pupils I don't notice their gender.



**Figure 25: EFL Teachers' Interaction with Pupils**

This figure confirmed the previous statement, since (35%) of male and (45%) of female teachers said that they noticed a difference between girls and boys in interacting with them. While both males and females with (10%) didn't pay attention to that in their classrooms.

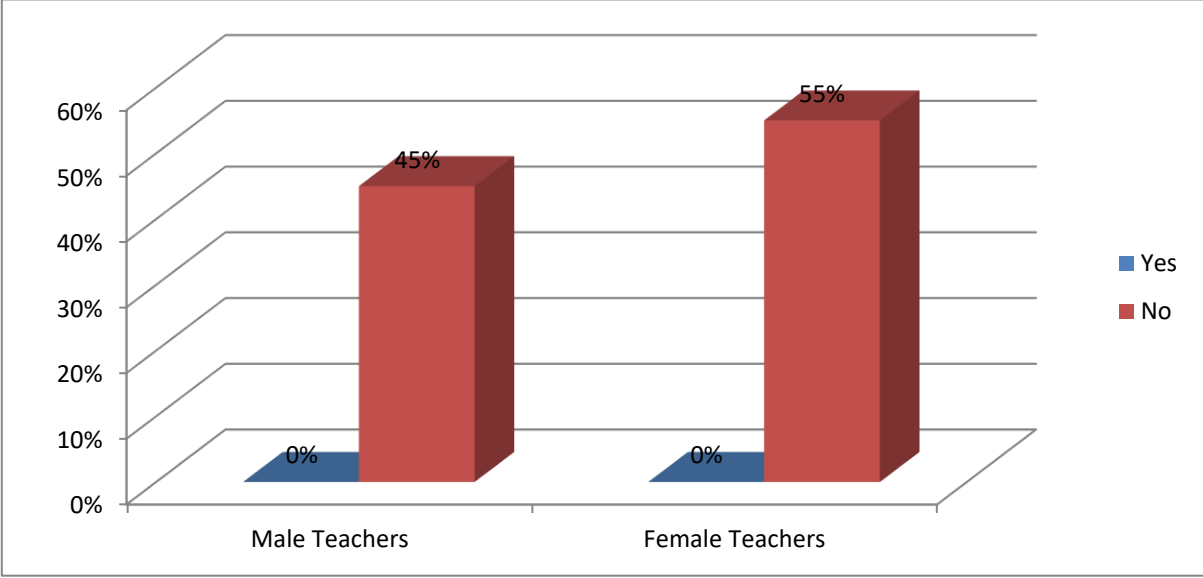
26. All pupils, regardless of gender can achieve academically in my classroom.



**Figure 26: EFL Teachers' Attention about Gender Gap in their Classes**

Another observation about the gender gap between pupils was confirmed by the teachers, because (30%) of males and (35%) of females said that not all pupils of both gender could get good marks in English. On the other hand, the teachers who stated that all their pupils could academically achieve in their classrooms were (15%) males and (20%) females.

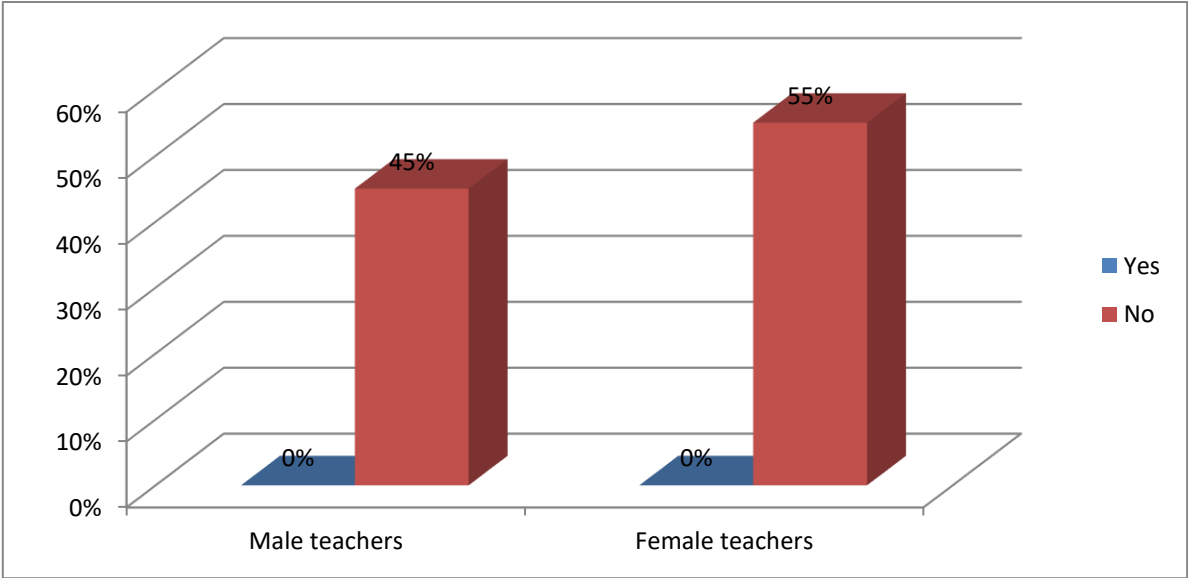
27. The school I teach at provides professional development to help teachers to be more effective educators of low-outcome male/female pupils.



**Figure 27: EFL Teachers' Professional Development**

From the results shown in the figure above, we could deduce that both male (45%) and female( 55%) teachers admitted that there was a lack of professional training to deal with low-outcome pupils so that to reduce the gap between them.

28. Poorly trained and prepared teachers are to blame for the achievement gap between male/female pupils.



**Figure 28: EFL Poorly Trained Teachers' Being Blamed for the Students' Gap**

The results obtained denoted that both male and female teachers declared that it was not the poorly trained and prepared teachers' fault for the gender gap.

#### 4.17.2.4. **The Fourth Section: Classroom Management and Teaching Styles**

29. How can you do to control disruptive behaviour in the classroom and to respond to the defiant pupils?

EFL male teachers' answers varied from accepting the challenge, having a silent pause with a severe eye contact, avoiding group work, using strict methods such as using sharp tones, excluding them, punishing them to calming them down with a joke so as to ease the interaction. However, the EFL female teachers said that they would contact their parents, giving them verbal warnings or facial expressions, punishing them through minuses, involving their hyperactivity in classroom' activities through attracting their attention or sending them out.

Both of the teachers had common answers like making the rules and the conditions clear right at the beginning of the year, ignoring the rude behaviour, being patient with them by focusing the their human side, asking them in private why they are doing so and giving them some pieces of advice and finally writing the reports to the administration.

30. How can you do to constructively help your pupils who show little interest towards learning English?

Male teachers stated that they would first solve their problems which could be academically, socially or even personally, to ask them to talk about their difficulties, to give them easy tasks to do and to be innovative for instance to create a competition among them so as to work hard and to praise them through gifts in order to encourage them.

While female teachers said that they would apply different methods of teaching such as teaching them in a funny way using various materials like the ICTs, games, songs and quizzes. They also said that they would simplify the given information, provide them with assistance, more explanation and remedial works which should be according to their needs, to give them positive feedback and avoiding insulting them if they made mistakes.

The common answers between both of them were that teachers would integrate them in the learning process through involving them to speak about interesting topics, motivate them by building their self-confidence to make mistakes and that they would raise their awareness about the life's requirement and the importance of the English language and how it would affect their future.

31. How can you do to foster pupils' creativity in learning English?

Male teachers of English suggested putting the pupils' English into practice through a variation of tasks from the easier to the difficult one. Making them believe in themselves through telling them real life stories and experiences of some people learning English.

Listening to their suggestions, thoughts ideas and to help them regain their self-confidence.

Whereas, the female teachers said that they would provide a comfortable learning that was related to their environment, teach English through academically songs, ask them to freely express themselves, involve the pupils by creating a program which aims at developing their creative skills, support, encourage, praise and give them rewards. The point that they agreed upon was to remind the pupils with the importance and the value of studying by giving them real examples.

32. How can you do to establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?

In order to avoid routines in the classroom, EFL male teachers stated that they would introduce some humour by telling jokes from time to time so that the pupils liked learning English and motivate them through doing new and funny activities. While the female ones said that they would like to vary the tasks, to use games, to raise interactions and to save time through flexibility and a good management of both the lesson and the pupils.

33. How can you do to measure pupils' comprehension of your teaching?

So as to test out whether the pupils understood the lesson or not, the teachers' answers were so close since they said that they would know that through the feedback they got from their learners at the end of the lesson, asking oral critical questions individually, using various types of assessment and evaluation like exams, tasks, activities, tests, home works, quizzes and to compare the results.

34. How can you do to improve the level of the student who is falling?

Male teachers suggested being selective in tasks and using direct instructions, easy vocabulary, synonyms, gesticulation, body language, visual aids like pictures and videos, re-explain when necessary and to give them simple information according to their needs and level.

However, the female teachers declared that they would first take a look at the pupil's social background so that to understand the reason behind his/her failure. To be closer to them so that to treat them psychologically and then educationally, to devote extra hours for more explanation and home works, to set the objective of the lesson according to the pupils' level, to degrade the questions, the lessons and the task, to refer to the already known terminology, to involve them in class discussions and to simplify both the language used and the teaching.

35. How can you do to assist families for helping their children in doing well at school?

On one hand, according to the results obtained, a small portion of the male teachers of English said that they would call their families in order to give them successful pieces of advice, ask them to assist and help their children, show them their children's points of



strength and weakness so that to work on them, periodically meet the parents and convince them with the importance of sharing ideas with their children. While, a great portion of the male teachers answered this question by saying that it was impossible to assist pupils' families because they preferred to teach and to go home without interfering in someone else's issues.

On the other hand, all the female teachers proposed to ask the parents to be in regular contact with them, to supervise their children at home, to continually check their performance and behaviour, to be aware of their children psychological status and to foster the role of the Parent-Teacher Association.

#### **4.17.2.5. The Fifth Section: Pupils' gender differences Versus the Influence of EFL Teachers' Gender**

36. What are, if any, the score differences among male and female pupils?

According to the Algerian educational system, the test marks elucidate the pupils' levels of both genders. As a result both male and female teachers of English proclaimed that girls performed better than boys and that the former most of the time scored substantially higher than the latter and the educational gap among them was widening.

37. How would you describe the other differences among your male and female pupils?

The answers for the question above were also the same since both teachers stated that female pupils' performance in the class was better than that of males because they made efforts, provided good ordered work, serious, disciplined, more participation, interested, motivated and they had a will to learn. While most of the boys, not all of them, were careless, less motivated, not interested and the problem of behaviour was always with them.

38. In what ways does the gender of the teacher influence the male/female pupils English learning outcomes?

EFL male and female teachers jointly admitted that the teacher's gender influenced the pupils' gender and consequently interactions, the teaching process and the pupils' English learning outcomes were also affected. They said that female teachers were more sensitive, patient and loved their pupils more. They also acknowledged that pupils preferred being taught by a female teacher of English since the former had a good relationship with both male and female pupils, as a result the latter felt at ease, relaxed and were more interested in learning English.

39. Is there a need for more EFL male or female secondary school teachers? Why or why not?

Both teachers believed that there was a need for male teachers because they were controllers and to be role models for male pupils, as well as to make the number of teachers balanced because there were many female teachers. They said that there was also a need for female teachers to fight the overcrowded classes and that they were more patient with the pupils and had strong relationship with them; as a result a good learning of English.

40. What differences, if any, are there between EFL female and male secondary school teachers?

EFL male teachers said that female teachers were more sympathetic and caring. They also said that they did not seem to let go their passion of teaching because they were more serious, had a good commitment to their jobs and make more efforts, unlike some male teachers who were somehow taking things for granted, strict and cared a lot about good learners only. Whereas, EFL female teachers stated that male teachers were controllers, their classes were well managed, they were severe, strict, less patient, and had few contact with their pupils. While, female teachers were tolerant, patient, serious, kind, explicative, more careful as they were in a good contact with their pupils because they treated them in a soft and emotional way like their mothers did.

41. Are there any additional comments you wish to add pertaining to this study?

Most of the teachers said that the research subject was very interesting and wished us a good luck. Others suggested another research topic for a further study which was that there was a need for a detailed study to analyse the needs that should be provided in our schools like the right atmosphere and the equipments to teach English with such as phonetic laboratories.

#### 4.17.3. **Observation**

##### 4.17.3.1. **EFL Female Teachers and their Pupils' Observation**

While we were observing both the EFL female teachers and their pupils, we took notes about what happened during the session. The names of the teachers will always remain anonymous. So, the teachers are identified through using letters: teacher A, teacher B and teacher C. the letter F stands for female; the gender of the teacher.

First, we observed teacher AF on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 10 to 11. The class being observed was the second year foreign languages and pupils were of mixed gender. The lesson was about reading and writing.

Second, we observed teacher BF on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 08 to 09. The class being

observed was the first year scientific stream and pupils of mixed gender. There was a correction of the third term test of English.

Third, we observed teacher CF on June 03<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 from 09 to 10. The class being observed was that of the second year literary stream and pupils were of mixed gender. There was a revision of the last studied unit “No Man is an Island” dealing with tasks about reported speech.

We analysed all the notes that we took during the classes of the three EFL female teachers together because they had many things in common. Our reflexive notes as an observer about the female teachers were that all of them were explicative as they devoted all their efforts to explain and to simplify any word written on the board. They did not hesitate to help their pupils whenever they were asked so. They had a smiling face and they were kind, polite as they used more polite words with their pupils. They had a good level of English. They had good and close relationships with their learners which were essentially based on respect and kindness.

Each time, when the female teachers asked their pupils to do something, they used polite requests ending them with the word please. When the learners answered the questions, the female teachers praised each one of them by saying “good job, very good, excellent ...etc”. The teachers were more cooperative, supportive and encouraging their pupils. So the class was a student-centred one.

The male and female pupils of the EFL female teachers were more attentive and participating. They were in a good interaction with their teachers. Pupils were always asking for help whenever they needed it. They had no fear to make mistakes while speaking. They liked the English language class. Female pupils got better scores than male ones in the test. However, some pupils were speaking to each other during the class. Another remark was that there was not much class control of the EFL female teachers over their pupils and that most of male pupils had a seat at the back of the classroom.

#### 4.17.3.2. **EFL Male Teachers’ and their Pupils’ Observation.**

As we used with the female teachers, we also labelled the EFL male teachers using letters A,B,C and we also analysed their observations all together because they had many points in common too.

First, teacher AM was observed on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 from 14:30 to 15:30. The class being observed was the second year technical mathematics. Pupils were of both genders. The lesson was about a practice of reported speech.

Second, the teacher BM was observed on June 02<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 from 11 to 12. The class

being observed was the third year literary stream which accidentally contained only female pupils. There was a revision for the Baccalaureate exam. The revision was about two activities; the first one was about dividing words into roots and affixes, and the second one was about classifying the stressed syllable in the right column.

Third, the teacher CM was observed on June 03<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 from 10 to 11. The class being observed was the third year scientific stream with pupils of mixed gender. There was also a revision for the Baccalaureate exam about the passive voice. The first task was about turning active sentences into the passive voice, while the second task was about turning the passive sentences into active ones.

The reflective remarks we were taking while observing the EFL male teachers were that all of them were explicative. They were controllers. They had a good level of English with little or no use of the mother language. The EFL male teachers were very serious and strict with the disruptive pupils for this reason they had no behaviour problems in their classes. They had a non smiling strict face with their pupils. They used imperative sentences and direct questions. There was a direct, strict and an immediate correction about the mistakes made by the pupils using expressions like: “not good, this is not the right answer, it is not correct” and a big “NO”. They also chose to use the word “good” when giving feedback for the pupils who correctly answered. So, they used only few and simple praising words. They had little or no band with the pupils. No polite requests were asked by the male teachers and the focus was only on the lesson.

However, the pupils of the EFL male teachers were somehow silent as if they were shy or afraid of giving answers. Only few pupils, who were mostly girls, answering the teachers’ questions. There was a poor interaction between the pupils with their male teachers of English. The class was well managed and controlled which resulted in well disciplined and quiet pupils. EFL male teachers’ classes were a teacher-centred class.

#### 4.17.4. Interview

We gathered the EFL female and male teachers’ answers for the interview we had with them into a table in which we classified the questions and the answers into themes.

##### 4.17.4.1. EFL Female Teachers’ Interview.

<b>Teachers</b> <b>Questions</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>FTB</b>	<b>FTC</b>
Theme 1: Years of Experience.	09 years	19 years	04 years

Theme 2: Classroom climate.	A friendly atmosphere based on interaction, motivation...etc	Interaction with the scientific stream pupils more than the literary ones.	Based on active interaction.
Theme 3: The relationship with the pupils.	Based on mutual respect, trust, pupils feel safe, supportive.	To treat them as their mothers, to advise them, to be cool.	Mutual respect, trust, confidence and kindness.
Theme 4: Disruptive behaviour.	To discuss the problem in private, not to put pupils down, not to worsen things.	To advise them, to be patient, to severely punish them, to look at them.	To ignore it, to give verbal warnings, to punish them through minuses, to look at them.
Theme 5: Pupils' lack of motivation.	The pupils underestimated their competences. It went back to the middle school.	The lack of oral practice and reading.	It went back to the middle school.
Theme 6: Gender interaction differences.	Females participated more; they showed more interest to learn English, as they were more careful and attentive than male pupils.	Females participated and interacted in the class more than males.	The interaction was mostly activated by the female pupils. They highly performed and participated more than males.
Theme 7: Test scores' gender differences.	Female pupils did better than males in most of the time.	Females were more successful than males.	Females got the best marks.
Theme 8: Teachers' celebration of pupils' success.	To feel happy, presents, to encourage them.	Oral congratulations.	Gifts, verbal encouragements, certificate signed by the headmaster.
Theme 9: Dealing with pupils' mistakes.	Not to immediately correct them, not to	To make them aware of the mistake and to	Not to immediately correct them, to give

	let the pupils down, to ask them to try again, to encourage them to participate even with false answers.	correct it.	the chance to other pupils to identify and correct the mistake, to intervene if it was not corrected in a smooth way.
Theme 10: Teachers' gender effect.	Yes, there was an effect. Most of the time, pupils liked female teachers because they felt at ease with them.	Yes, females were sensitive and they deserved to be teachers more than males.	Yes, pupils preferred to be taught by EFL female teachers because they cared about the social and emotional status of their students more than male teachers.
Theme 11: Teachers' feelings towards the pupils.	To like the hard workers and well disciplined ones.	They were like her sons and daughters. To love her pupils. To always laugh with them. To gently speak with them. They were considered to be the future of the country.	To treat them all the same. To consider them as brothers and sisters and not just as pupils. To love them.

#### 4.17.4.2. EFL Male Teachers' Interview.

<b>Teachers</b> <b>Questions</b>	<b>MTA</b>	<b>MTB</b>	<b>MTC</b>
Theme 1: Years of Experience.	19 years	28 years	05 years
Theme 2: Classroom climate.	A good climate, not to consider teaching as a job but as a message to deliver to	Appropriate	Warming up activities, a good atmosphere, to find out who was engaged

	the pupils.		in the lesson and who was not attentive.
Theme 3: The relationship with the pupils.	Understanding, good treatment.	Faith, love, honesty.	Mutual trust, understanding, encouraging, positive feedback.
Theme 4: Disruptive behaviour.	Sever reactions, warnings, strict and straight face.	Quick and smooth warnings.	Eye contact, severe look, to ask why, verbal threats, administrative reports.
Theme 5: Pupils' lack of motivation.	Not to love the teacher and because English was the second but not the first language, It went back to the middle school.	Due to social background, it went back to the middle school.	Lack of background of the language, not being interested in the English language, it went back to the middle school.
Theme 6: Gender interaction differences.	Girls were active; they performed better, while boys avoided participating.	Girls performed better than boys.	Female pupils were more interested; participated more even if they made mistakes. Males rarely participated and chose to have a sit at the back, not interested. Interaction was more common with female pupils.
Theme 7: Test scores' gender	Yes, girls were doing better than boys.	Yes, girls outperformed boys.	Yes, there was a huge difference;

differences.			females' scores were higher than those of males.
Theme 8: Teachers' celebration of pupils' success.	Presents, to kiss the heads of boys.	Cheers, smiles and rewards.	Show happiness, verbally, gifts like books and dictionaries.
Theme 9: Dealing with pupils' mistakes.	To immediately correct.	Remedial work.	To instantly correct, to ask why and to find the answer.
Theme 10: Teachers' gender effect.	Yes, female teachers were seen to be weak so they had problems in dealing with the pupils, while a male teacher was a symbol of a severe and strong person.	It depended on the personality of the teacher and in how to deal with the learners.	Gender played a major role. Pupils interacted more with female teachers because they considered them like their mothers. Male teachers were not close to students and they were more authoritative just like a police officer.
Theme 11: Teachers' feelings towards the pupils.	As sons and daughters; to treat them all the same.	Affectionate, sensitive and caring.	To like most of them, to rely on his authoritative skills with the pupils. To refuse to be friends.

#### 4.18. Conclusion

At this point, we were analyzing the specific components of every male and female teacher's interaction with his/her male and female students that were considered to be essential to the learning environment they created in their classrooms and to see to which extent the teachers' gender would affect their pupils to better learning English. The information gathered would allow us to answer the research questions that we set at the beginning of the study.



The EFL female/male teachers and male/female pupils of secondary school participating in this study provided both quantitative and qualitative data about our topic of research. Deep details were unveiled from pupils' questionnaires about whether their male/female teachers treated them fairly as well as about their preferences to their teachers' of English. As the great majority of them claimed that they felt more at ease and comfortable when being taught by a female teacher of English since they found them patient and kind with them.

Through this study and the answers we received from teachers' questionnaires, we also found that boys tended to perform less well than girls in learning English, and even the teachers declared that female pupils showed more interest, participated more and got higher test scores than their male classmates who were underperforming, and that also proved that there was a gender gap between male and female pupils in the Algerian schools as it was stated in both the literature review and the questionnaire.

Whereas, the answers obtained from the teachers' questionnaire helped us in drawing better analyses and confirming some facts. Overall the findings from the quantitative analysis suggested that differences between female and male teachers were found as far as their teaching practices were concerned. With regard to teachers' experience, we drafted conclusions about teachers' perceptions of gender-based differences between the male and female teachers they worked with.

The informants also positively responded to the questions which dealt with the teaching styles, the classroom management methods, a more positive attitude towards the profession, and as being a role model to the pupils. The qualitative data provided further insight into perceived gender differences among female and male teachers throughout the observation notes, the open-ended questions in the teachers' questionnaire and the interview that we had with both of them.

The findings mentioned above in this chapter provided a description of experiences and procedures that guided the development and maintenance regarding EFL teacher student relationships being influenced by their genders. These findings and their implications for the learning environment were highlighted and discussed further in the next and final chapter. Then, in conclusion, the implications of this study, along with suggestions for further research, will be discussed.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## **DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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## **5.1.Introduction**

The present study was conducted as a result of our own interest and as being motivated by our pupils to mainly check the impact of teachers of different genders teaching pupils of different genders, as well as to find out whether pupils' achievement was influenced by their teachers' gender or not. Other interests of investigations were the differences between male and female EFL teachers and with which teacher gender high school pupils interacted more. It was and still a topic of interest in the field of EFL education that was broadly researched and discussed for decades.

Research in the past showed that EFL female teachers had both more positive attitudes and higher performance than male ones. The same research also indicated that, in both male and female EFL teachers, preferential treatment and communication existed to a specific pupil gender. However, the current study does not decisively show one group of teachers (males or females) to be better or worse than the other one in teaching male and female pupils. Neither has it referred to generalizing data that were collected to define a definitive truth on wider contexts. But rather the obtained results would permit other researchers to make comparisons to other contexts.

The purpose of this research was to arrive at answers to both the following main research question: To what extent do secondary school EFL teachers' and pupils' genders affect learning English outcomes? And to the sub-questions: To what extent are secondary school EFL teachers similar to or different from each other as far as their performances are concerned? Due to the educational gender gap, to what extent is learning English a gender-related phenomenon? To what extent is EFL classroom interaction gendered?

Moreover, some solutions will be suggested to teachers and policy makers which, we hope, they would apply to these hypotheses: There may be a gender different effect in the academic performance in learning English as a foreign language between male and female secondary school pupils in classrooms taught by male teachers and/ or female teachers. Male and female EFL teachers may use different/similar strategies while teaching which may also be affected by their gender. Learning English may be influenced by the gender of both the teacher and the pupil. The difference in interaction between pupils in classrooms with male teachers and pupils in classrooms with female teachers may be affected by the gender of both of them.

In this chapter, the basic questions will be discussed in relation to the implementation of the triangulation process so as to get as much data sources as possible in order to compare

one with another and to cross-check them. The triangulation in this study included discussing the questionnaires' answers of both the teachers and their learners, analysing interview statements of the teachers and the class observations after collecting field notes at six secondary schools in one of the cities in the West of Algeria called Tiaret. The responses and the data gathered were sorted, coded, categorised, and reviewed to determine the key aspects of teacher-student relationships as described in the literature review and how each of the two groups perceived their personal interactions.

Although, the collected data of the population sample was not very large, the results could still provide validity to other high schools of similar demographics and variables. By studying these schools and matching them up with other similar ones, which were almost the same in Algeria, the results could be utilised to design workshops by specialised educators to identify both the gender influence and the differences among pupils. As they could also be used to help teachers to deeply think about the techniques that should be adapted to enhance their students' outcomes so as to overcome the achievement gap among their male and female pupils.

The analysis and interpretation of the synthesis of information we obtained at the end of this study, provided EFL teachers with classroom guides for the development and maintenance of their relationships with their students besides the specific components to the interactions which were considered essential for the learning environment.

The findings of this study will include the perspectives and actions of the research participants throughout it. In the following sections, key findings were drawn out and supported by the literature that currently existed in the field regarding teacher-student gender influence. At first, both the quantitative and the qualitative findings will be discussed according to what was discussed in the literature review. Second, the research questions and hypotheses will be answered. Then, recommendations will be suggested for teachers. The implications and the implementations of this study for educationists, for current practice and possible future developments will be then considered. The last section will provide a conclusion to the final chapter.

## **5.2. Discussion of the Findings**

It is important to note that not all the participants (teachers-pupils) answered all the questions, therefore the sample of participants who responded to each question was mentioned in the previous chapter in more details. In an attempt to clarify the influence of EFL secondary school teachers' gender on the pupils' achievements some questions, statements and remarks will be discussed alone while others in pairs.

While discussing the mixed method process results, we will first focus on the gender of the core subject “teacher” in estimating the effect of teacher gender on student academic performance. Second, we will dig deeper into discussing the results that we obtained about the teachers’ differences that were influenced by their gender, and their impact on the type of interaction they had with their same as well as opposite pupils’ gender in the classroom while taking the observation notes.

After analysing all the results in this research of field notes, teacher and pupil questionnaires, interviews and observations, several themes emerged. The following themes for both the teachers and pupils involved included teacher and student gender interactions, teachers’ classroom management, student engagement and preference to be taught by a certain teacher (male or female), pupils’ gender gap and teacher expectations of pupils’ performance.

### **5.2.1. Quantitative Results**

#### **5.2.1.1. Pupils’ Questionnaire**

##### **5.2.1.1.1. Participants’ Background**

As it was clear in the previous chapter, we put all our efforts to make both the number and the gender of male and female pupils being taught by male and female pupils equal to each other to the maximum so as to have reliable and fair results. It was revealed that most of the male and female pupils were aged between fourteen and nineteen. While, only few males, no girls, ageing more than twenty years old were still studying at high school which means that the male pupils failed to move to the next level or to get the Baccalaureate exam.

Even though male pupils formed the majority of pupils at the first year, girls were more than them at the second year, and this had one explanation which was that more girls than boys succeeded to move from the first to the second year and still the same difference at the third year level. Another difference between male and female learners was that the former were more interested to follow the scientific stream while the latter followed the literary stream. At this part of the questionnaire, it became so clear that the gender gap existed among male and female pupils and even their interests of study were not the same which were influenced by their gender as it was mentioned in the literature review.

##### **5.2.1.1.2. Learners’ Attitudes toward their EFL Teachers**

Most of the answers of both male and female pupils taught by female teachers of English were positive and only the minority was negative for the statement of “WE look forward to go to school because I do well.” However, this was not the case with pupils’ male teachers. So, it could be understood that due to the gender of their teacher, the pupils either

enjoyed being at school or they have just attended with absent minds. Even though with a slight difference, still female pupils were more interested in studying English and more aware about its significance at the international level.

According to the results obtained from the eighth and the ninth statements, most of the participants' answers specified that their teachers of English held a good knowledge of their subject. Interestingly, the highest percentages represented a strong effect of both teachers' and pupils' gender, since both female and male pupils were attracted by their same-gender teacher of English.

The results of the tenth statement proved the previous ones, since most of the students' answers were positive. These data could suggest that the same gender teacher was somehow more comprehensible for the pupils, which might be due to the logical work style of the brains, the voice pitch, the sound and the tone.

The next statement was "My teacher of English easily gets angry" also confirmed the widely known truth that male teachers were not patient like their female counterparts. The obtained results from this statement proved it because most of the pupils taught by males said that their teachers easily lost their temper. While, the majority of female teachers' pupils said that they were more patient with them. These results implied that female teachers were perceived to be polite or easy to deal with by the students, while apparently, the male teachers seemed to be perceived stricter or more disciplined by the informants.

Concerning the classroom management and the warnings pupils received every day inside the class by their teachers, it was revealed that due to the difficult temper of the male teachers, pupils were more disciplined and avoided making any problem in the class. While, some female teachers faced some behavioural issues especially with male pupils. This indicated that the participants seriously considered their teachers' warning by taking into consideration their gender, especially if they were male teachers, before thinking of committing any problem inside the classroom. At this point, the influence of teacher's gender became so clear.

The fourteenth and the fifteenth statements again proved that female teachers of English were friendly with their pupils, whether being boys or girls, and even their tests were not hard as they were not severe when marking their papers. In contrast, the other pupils indicated that their male teachers were so strict with them and while correcting their exam papers. Here we could conclude that a preference for being taught by a female teacher of English started to clearly appear by both male and female high school pupils.



Most of the participants agreed on doing their home-works given by their teachers. So, it could be derived that they had the responsibility for their own homework and duties. Although, the highest percentage, of those who were reluctant, went to the male pupils in the female teacher's class which might be caused either by the soft and/or tolerant personality of the teacher or the conflicts female teachers generally had with the boys. And here again gender played a great role inside the classroom among pupils themselves and with their teachers.

Giving positive feedback and supporting pupils' success was one of the most important duties teachers were asked to do, but some did not, do not and unfortunately will not do it. According to the pupils' answers, EFL female teachers cared more about their achievements, while some male ones were neither supportive nor giving them positive feedback which means that they did not care about them.

Again in the eighteenth statement "My teacher is interested in my point of view and allows me to take decisions on some things." Most of female teachers' pupils were lucky to have the chance to take part in making decisions. Whereas, the informants taught by males did not have such an opportunity. At this point, the male teachers' authoritativeness over their pupils was so clear.

The results, for the nineteenth statement, showed that the pupils whose teachers were females were more comfortable to express themselves and to answer the questions, comparing them to those taught by males who apparently did not feel relaxed and faced more difficulty while sharing their answers. Except for male pupils taught by male teachers who felt at ease to participate in the class which led again to the same-gender notion benefits.

The statement twenty "I do not hesitate and I talk with my teacher about any problem out of class" should be attention catching, as it could directly show the effect of teacher gender on their pupils. It was strongly obvious when the majority of the informants preferred their female teachers to share with them their problems that were out of the class whom they might consider as their mothers. They seemed to be more comfortable when their teachers of English were female ones according to their answers.

However, the great portion of the participants whose teachers were male ones preferred not to share any problem with their teachers. With this item it was revealed that students preferred to talk with their female teachers who they might consider like their mothers too. This usually became more visible that most pupils seemed to be affected by the gender of their EFL teachers. Thus, teachers' gender affected pupils' answers because those data generally suggested that all female classes, without any exception, were more enjoyable

compared to those of their male counterparts whose classes were neither liked nor enjoyed by some of their male and female learners.

In statement twenty-two “I respect my teacher.” All the students’ responses were positive regardless of their teachers’ gender. Such data suggested that generally, gender did not influence the level of respect for the teacher, but female pupils somehow showed more respect to their teachers in comparison to their male mates.

The statement “In my point of view, the teacher of English who teaches better is male/female” was purposely prepared to crosscheck and compare the responses attained from the previous statements. As a result, the great portions of the pupils whether being taught by female or male teachers of English, declared that the former were better in teaching English in a comprehensible style more than male ones.

Another point was that, the male teachers’ pupils’ answers unveiled that they had some concerns related to the gender of the EFL teacher, because they said that most male teachers were the ones who made discriminations between male and female pupils. This was, for sure, due to something they witnessed in the classroom; for instance when they compared how their school works were evaluated and the grades they obtained with other classmates of the different gender, they discovered that there was no fairness.

On the contrary, female teachers’ pupils’ answers showed that all pupils were treated the same and that their works were assessed all the same so they did not find a need to make any comparison among each other. Consequently, the results of both statements number twenty-seven and twenty-eight disclosed that most of the pupils accepted and welcomed the idea of studying with their same gender classmates and being taught by the same gender teacher so as to have better learning outcomes.

#### **5.2.1.1.3. Learners’ Perception of their EFL Teachers’ Gender Influence on their Learning Process**

In the last part of the questionnaire, the answers of the pupils to the twenty-ninth statement indicated that they were aware of the significance of studying English as being the first spoken language all over the world, they were motivated because it was their favourite subject, and that they had the desire to be a teacher of English in the future. But mainly, the EFL female teachers’ pupils were eager to study English thanks to their teacher who played a great role in inspiring them.

The participants’ answers showed that they were aware about the differences between their EFL male and female teachers. They said that female teachers were open minded, patient, helpful, explicative, and gave pieces of advice about any problem whether

being it inside or outside the classroom. However, they declared that male teachers were more nervous, strict, careless about their pupils' problems, not sympathetic and unfair in dealing with them.

The informants' answers also confirmed, even if in an indirect way, that the gender of their teachers influenced their learning process, since most of them wanted to be taught by an EFL female teacher for some reasons such as being tender like their mothers, kind, patient, respectful, to have a good pronunciation, hard worker, to be motivated with them, to feel comfortable in communicating with them and to be fair in treating all the pupils. Whereas, the few pupils who preferred to be taught by EFL male teachers said that they were responsible, serious, controller and that they just had a curiosity to see them how they taught.

When pupils were asked to add extra information about their EFL teachers, all the pupils described their female teachers of English as being a model of a successful woman, attractive, friendly, helpful, patient, and as having a good method of teaching. Whereas, pupils taught by male teachers of English said that their teachers were serious, respectful, angry, and very difficult in treating them.

According to the results obtained from the pupils' questionnaire, a significant influence of teachers' gender on students' academic achievement existed in learning English as a foreign language since pupils tended to be closer to the female teachers; hence the latter had positive effect on the performance of the students which was really clear and present in each response.

In addition, the ideas that female teachers had more interaction with their students (Rashidi and Naderi, 2012, pp. 30-36), and that more feedback was shared in female teachers' classes were supported by the results of the statements numbered 30, 31, 32. Moreover, the data obtained from the statements numbered from 17 to 20, and from 23 to 28 supported the results of some previous studies which suggested that there were considerable effects of teacher gender.

#### **5.2.1.1.4. Exploring the Gender Effect on EFL Learners' Learning English**

After statistically analysing the data presented in the fourth chapter, it was revealed that female pupils achieved better results than males. The research findings were in line with a previously conducted study by Gardner and Lambert (1972), Burstall (1975), Boyle (1987), Spolsky (1989), and Murphy (2010), in which female pupils outperformed males with higher overall means on second /foreign language proficiency tests. Dealing with a more recent research, the findings obtained from the pupils' questionnaire generally substantiated the results of Field (2000), Chavez (2001), Carr and Pauwels (2006), and Michońska-Stadnik

(2004). All those studies discovered that girls' performance was better than that of boys on second/ foreign language learning.

The fact that female students outperformed male students in learning a foreign language was gender-specific ideologies (cf. Murphy, 2010; Pavlenko & Piller, 2008). Men's macho culture, as shown in (Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1990), would significantly influence boys' performance at school so they hesitated to orally participate or exchange ideas with their female mates or they even did not express their thoughts in the writing tasks. As a result, they did not practise their linguistic skills as they should be. While, female culture appeared to make the girls more ready for collaboration and taking parts in conversations (Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1990), which would result in a more effective and successful learning.

The objective was to see whether there was a significant difference between male and female secondary school pupils in learning English as a foreign language or not. According to the results, it seemed, from their tests marks that male and female learners differed in learning English. The findings of the relationship between gender and learning English in the present study was consistent also with earlier studies such as Mohamed Amin, 2000; Mohd Nazali, 1999; Punithavalli, 2003 in which female pupils tended to use affective techniques more frequently than male ones. Green and Oxford (1995) concluded that the effect of using some strategies to study English that were attributed to gender difference could also originate from biological and socialisation related causes.

As Oxford (1989) proposed, the gender difference could also be related to a woman's larger social orientation, her stronger verbal skills, and her greater compatibility with both linguistic and academic standards. The findings of this research also sustained the obtained conclusion from second/foreign language learning studies that female pupils achieved better than males (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Slavin, 1988).

The results of this study were also supported by the psychological theories which claimed that females had strong traits such as: sensitivity, empathy, nurturance and emotion, contrary to males' traits which were aggression, dominance, assertiveness in expressiveness (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). Consequently, those psychological traits of males and females could strongly affect their both will and style of studying English.

Although the sociolinguists based their conclusions on learning the first language but it was still reasonable to draw equivalents between the patterns of acquiring the first language and learning the second/foreign language, where large experimental evidence demonstrated distinguished similarities between the methods of acquisition of the two systems (Ellis, 2012). The sociolinguists such as Coates, 1986; Labov, 1991; Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1996;

concluded that female learners were more eager to use the target language, which was English, and incorporate new linguistic forms with higher frequency of standard and prestigious styles in the foreign or second language input more than male learners.

A number of significant differences were also found in the perceived relationships tied to the pupils' gender. With reference to male teachers, few, if no, conflicts were found with male pupils and a lower level of closeness with both genders. For female teachers, there was a medium level of discipline conflict with male pupils and a higher level of closeness with their female pupils.

Several conclusions could be drawn from the findings of pupils' questionnaire. First, students' gender played a significant role in determining their interactions with their teachers of English. Male and female pupils did not have the same beliefs in relation to their needs in the classroom. Second, from the students' standing point, the gender of their EFL teachers had an important influence on their performance towards learning English as a foreign language since the answers of most female and male pupils indicated their preference to be taught by a female teacher, while only the minority preferred to be taught by a male teacher. Third, both male and female pupils agreed on the same ideas about the features which they would like to have in their teacher of English. For instance, their shared responses about the preferred teacher were: to be humorous, helpful, kind, respectful and attentive to their feelings and psychological status. As they also agreed on the negative characteristics which they did not like to have in their teachers of English, for example being strict, nervous, hard to deal with, to keep shouting and being careless about them.

To sum up, the pupils' questionnaire discussion gave clear evidence that the gender of both the EFL teachers and high school learners had a great influence on learning English as a foreign language and concluded that females showed more interests, positive behaviours and performances in comparison to male learners. Another conclusion that could be drawn was that the objective of a language classroom was not only about helping pupils to improve their English language, but also to take into consideration their needs which were in turn effected by their gender to create an appropriate learning atmosphere, to simplify the teaching approaches, to establish a rich, supportive, memorable and life enhancing learning experience and most importantly to avoid the pupils' gender gap when possible.

## **5.2.1.2. Teachers' Questionnaire**

### **5.2.1.2.1. Participants' Background**

As it was indicated in the fourth chapter, the number of EFL female teachers, who participated in the study, was more than the male ones, which revealed that there was somehow a feminization of the teaching profession in accordance to what was previously mentioned in the literature.

Dealing with the qualifications and teaching experience, both participants held university degrees but more females than males had a master degree because they were more novice than male ones who were more experienced in the field of teaching. Both genders taught different classes of different levels, but the final exam classes were given to female teachers more than males.

Work place or the location of the school could affect the teachers' effectiveness to the extent to produce gender specific differences. That trend was consistent with previous studies showing parallel results. Depending on the obtained outcomes, we found that urban school teachers were more effective than those at rural schools. To go more in details, we found that more rural and urban female teachers had secured comparatively better scores than the rural and urban male teachers in their effectiveness.

### **5.2.1.2.2. EFL Teachers' Gender-Based Differences**

In this part of the questionnaire, data was gathered and analysed so as to determine whether secondary school EFL teachers in Algeria perceived the gender differences among the male and female teachers they worked with so far, as well as to see how those differences influenced classroom practices and teacher-student dynamics. The analysis showed that secondary school teachers generally noticed that there were some gender-based differences between the female and male teachers they worked with.

The data will be discussed in particular to the following domains: teachers' commitment, collegiality, use of effective teaching styles, classroom management strategies, pupils' treatment and serving as being role models. The differences might occur due to the poor training teachers had during their first years of teaching.

### **5.2.1.2.3. Teachers' Commitment**

The choice of being a teacher can be driven through an inspiration of some persons by their teachers, family members and friends who are teachers. The participants were asked if their female and male mates had a commitment to their profession.

According to the quantitative data from the questions, it was worthy of note that female teachers were reported, by their both female and male colleagues, to have more

positive attitudes and to be more committed to the teaching profession than their male counterparts they worked with. This can be due to the fact that generally, the majority of males were not interested in the teaching profession but they found themselves obliged to work as teachers. As it is widely confirmed that the education sector is one of the most feminised and the lowest-paid in Algeria, so males usually look for other means of survival since the salary is not adequate to sustain their families. As a result, they showed less commitment to the profession.

The results obtained from this statement went along with Oake (1990) who agreed that the high feminisation of teaching influenced the low social standing of the profession and on the low financial wage. He also declared that there were significant gender differences for male and female teachers in job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to remain in the teaching profession. Unsurprisingly, female teachers had lower job satisfaction but higher organisational commitment and intention to teach longer than males. At the international level, a study conducted by Guarino et al. (2006) found that commitment, positive attitudes to the teaching profession and intention to enter the teaching profession were found to be higher among female teachers compared to male ones.

Other gender evidence was found too even when pupils were asked about the motivation behind studying English in their questionnaire, most of the female answers showed higher intentions and more positive attitudes towards being future teachers of English after graduation. We could conclude that the differences related to commitment to teaching were due to a difference in gender and gender roles. So, after those varying results it should be said that the relationship between gender and commitment to teaching should be further and deeply investigated.

#### **5.2.1.2.4. Teachers' Collegiality**

Teaching is not only about spending the whole day in the classroom with the pupils, to set exams and to correct the papers. However, teaching is also based on teachers' ability to develop effective collegial relationships among them through meeting all together to reflect, analyse and plan the lessons. Collegiality plays an important role in fostering teachers' knowledge through sharing, cooperation and discussion with their colleagues.

The participants' perception of gender based differences between the female and male teachers they worked with were examined in relation to teacher collegiality. The positive and negative answers were not similar. There were more favourable responses to female teachers. The quantitative data from the questions indicated that the informants strongly

agreed that the female teachers developed effective collegial relationships more than the male ones and that being collegial was determined by the gender of the teacher.

These results maintained what Bektas and Nalcaci (2012) declared that the teachers' personal values were so important in expecting teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession. According to the findings of Huang (2001), female teachers identified their school atmosphere as more favourable than male teachers. He reasonably explained those differences by saying that men and woman had different communication styles and this could influence the way in which they worked, which was again about gender effect.

#### **5.2.1.2.5. Teaching Styles**

Teaching styles or pedagogical content knowledge is the capacity to transfer teacher's understanding of his/her knowledge through various techniques of teaching so that the pupil can grasp the lesson content and to achieve better results. An effective teaching style is essential to make sure that the lesson content is explained in a way which ensures that learning takes place.

The participants' responses to the question pertaining to teachers' effective teaching styles were a little bit similar regarding the female and male teachers they worked with. It should be mentioned that male teachers were being agreed to have effective teaching styles according to the figure in the previous chapter, whilst the informants' answers for strongly agree indicated that the female teachers they worked with used effective teaching styles.

Fan and Ye's (2007) results demonstrated that female teachers preferred a more conservative teaching style whilst male teachers liked to try new teaching methods. For this reason, the quantitative results from the questionnaire suggested that the participants perceived that both the EFL male and female teachers they worked with had effective teaching styles but with a small recognition to female teachers.

One point that should be clarified is that the number of teaching years cannot necessarily convey that more experienced teachers use effective styles while the novice ones do not. The younger teachers are also interested in creativity and open-mindedness as they are less conservative with their pupils in selecting the teaching methods than their older colleagues. As Carrington and McPhee (2008) said that teachers should vary their teaching styles according to their students' learning styles which were affected by their gender.

#### **5.2.1.2.6. Teachers' Classroom Management**

Classroom management is about the techniques teachers follow to both manage the pupils' behaviour and to make sure they are learning the knowledge they need in accordance



with the social interaction. Each teacher has his/her own way to control the class which is influenced by many factors including their gender.

The quantitative data for teachers' classroom management styles were not too much different from each other regarding their female and male teacher counterparts. However, the most positive answers were in favour to male teachers. The participants agreed that most of the male teachers they worked with used strict classroom management styles to control their pupils. These results did not imply that female teachers did not know how to have power over their pupils or that they were not responsible, but rather they had their gender-specific patterns of interaction in the classroom. The classroom management methods strongly influenced girls' and boys' understanding and attitudes. In this study, the focus was on the gender of both the students and the teachers of English. This might reveal interesting elaborations of the results reported in the present research.

There are also other factors influencing classroom management like teacher degree, experience and beliefs. For instance the novice teachers preferred to share the decision making with their pupils while in contrast the older teachers favoured to hold a maximum responsibility in controlling their classrooms.

#### **5.2.1.2.7. Teachers' Patience and Fairness with Pupils**

Inside the classroom, the teacher is asked to provide his/her students with a favourable atmosphere when they need an emotional support in some special situations. The purpose behind acting such behaviour is to develop a trusting and accepting relationship between the teacher and the pupil. This nurturing teacher seeks to be accessible, empathetic, and supportive.

Being patient, nurturing and fair is essentially required so as to establish the right climate for an effective teaching and learning. Pupils expect their teachers to have the mentioned features. They expect their teachers to be patient with them, to treat them fairly and to understand the emotional cases they may go through. The teacher who withstands the pressures and irritations while being in the classroom with his/her pupils deserves to be described as a patient one.

The teachers' answers to the question related to female and male teachers' ability to be patient and fair with their students were not similar. Most of the participants' responses were negative indicating the male teachers as not having the ability to be patient and fair with their pupils. In contrast, the positive responses showed that the participants perceived that the female teachers they worked with were fair, nurturing, patient and sensitive to their students.

According to the teachers' responses, we think that there is a very fine line for male teachers when it comes to being patient. This argument may provide some insight into the reason that led most of the informants to answer with disagree and strongly disagree for the male teachers they worked as being patient with their students.

These findings support those of Spilt et al.'s (2011) which pointed out that female teachers were reported as having better relationships with their students than male teachers. In addition, Robinson's (1992) results also indicated that teachers, while using some methods in dealing with their pupils, did not only depend on their gender but also on their pupils' gender.

#### **5.2.1.2.8. Teachers' Role Models**

There is an absolute agreement which implies that teachers should be role models for their pupils. Teachers can be role models through being honest, respecting others, accepting and fulfilling responsibilities, fairly behaving, building a solid trust and living a moral life. All pupils need to have both male and female role model teachers because gender role models are dynamic and multifaceted. This will help each pupil to build his/her own gender identity and respect to the adverse gender in society in general and the classroom in particular.

Although, the obtained results revealed that most of the participants saw the male and female teachers they worked with as being role models for their students. A difference emerged in the negative category. The disagreement for male teachers was more than the one for the female ones as not serving their students as effective role models for their students.

The overall positive responses, to both female and male teachers' ability to serve as role models, could convey the idea of matching the gender of the teacher in accordance to that of the pupil. Male teachers can serve good role models to male pupils so as to overcome the perceived crisis in boys' education, behaviour management and at the social level regarding the lack of effective role models at home. As well as, female teachers can better enhance the academic performance of girls because the latter tend to be closer to the former.

The data collected from the preceding six questions persisted that there were some differences between male and female teachers of English which were influenced in a way or in another by their own gender. The differences were at the level of the attitudes and beliefs they held toward their profession, collegiality, the teaching styles and classroom management strategies they chose to follow, being patient and fair and serving their pupils as role models.

#### **5.2.1.2.9. EFL Teachers' Treatment to their Pupils Regarding their Gender Gap**

In this section, EFL teachers were asked about their subject content knowledge and the way they treated their pupils. Their answers would reveal the extent to which their existence in the class was influenced by their gender.

The content knowledge is about having a deep understanding of the concepts implanted in the field of teaching. An effective teacher feels that s/he is obliged to have a good content knowledge about the subject s/he teaches so as to help his/her pupils improve their learning and achievement. The subject knowledge is strongly related with effective methods which are acquired and developed through the teaching years of experience. The fact of knowing the content knowledge also influences the way teachers motivate their pupils to participate more in the subject matter, their way of assessments, the choice of educational materials and what students need and do not need to learn. Depending on the quantitative data obtained from the teachers' questionnaire, both of the EFL male and female teachers indicated to having an adequate amount of content knowledge. As it was predicted, all the male and female teachers were present whenever their pupils needed help and assistance.

On the following results, the gender effect was so clear. The teachers were asked if they shared decisions with their pupils. All the female teachers agreed on doing so, while most of the male ones did not give their pupils such an opportunity. The impact was also clear when most of the male teachers corrected their pupils' mistakes on the spot, whereas the females did not do so. Another gender effect was present at males' answers when no one of them permitted his/her pupils to have much free time or to be lenient with them and to know what to do when facing foolish behaviours. While some of the female teachers did so. These were due to the male masculinity dominance power over other which did not exist in females' nature.

The findings also reported that contrary to female teachers, EFL male teachers easily got angry and they severely punished their pupils; as a result they had no behaviour problem in their classes. Hence, the questionnaire results demonstrated that males tended to follow a more authoritative behaviour controlling and instructional management approaches. Therefore, this could be taken to mean that EFL male teachers in this study adopted a more teacher-centred approach to teaching style and classroom management.

Unsurprisingly, all the EFL teachers declared that the Algerian education was more and more decreasing than it used to be in the past due to many reasons which they did not mention. Unfortunately, the situation in education as seen by teachers themselves did not appear to be very rosy. This decline led to the creation of the gender gap between male and female pupils' learning outcomes. The gender gap phenomenon was confirmed by both male and female teachers when they observed gender differences at the level of interaction and English test scores.

One of the reasons that led to the emergence of gender gap was the lack or even the absence of the professional training of teachers, which should aim at providing them with enough knowledge about which effective techniques must be used to reduce the remarkable achievement differences between the boys and girls. All the high school teachers of English agreed on the latter. Their answers were almost the same since all of them said that the poorly trained teachers ought not to be blamed for the gender gap.

Teachers agreed on the same opinions that training was very important in helping the teacher to be more effective. For this reason, the policy makers of education should reconsider the value of the pre-service training. If the teacher received a significant training, there would be notable outcomes for student's participation and performance in the class.

Thus, teachers should attend a practicing training through which they have to examine real life classroom management approaches and teaching styles. The objective of training ought to check the validity of these practices to ensure successful English language learning. The responsible for the training also needs to guarantee that effective classroom management training is included in the programs for novice teachers.

The conclusion that we could draw from the third part of the questionnaire was that it was very important for the EFL instructors to be more informed about the gender effects. They must be equipped with more information about the existing differences between boys and girls. The results of this study will give instructors a deep insight in order to base their instructional strategies choice on their pupils' gender. This study proves that there is a significant difference between males' and females' performance. Thus, gender can have a huge influence on pupils' EFL achievement exams.

#### **5.2.1.2.10. Classroom Management and Teaching Styles**

The fourth part of the questionnaire deals with the methods teachers use for managing their classes and for transmitting the needed lessons to their pupils. When the teachers were asked how to behave with the troublemaker pupils, their answers were different and were more influenced by the nature of their gender. Male teachers tended to be more severe in punishing their pupils while female teachers preferred to use more soft ways so as to avoid violent conflicts with them.

On the following gathered quantitative data, it was noteworthy that the teachers' style of teaching was also affected by their gender. Male teachers seemed to choose a different way to motivate their pupils in learning English from that of the female teachers. Male teachers have just preferred asking their pupils the reason behind falling in learning English. While, the female ones tried to apply different methods of teaching so as to make

them simpler and to provide their pupils with positive feedback and assistance whenever needed. Just like in previous research on FSSE (Faculty Survey of Student Engagement) and others like Kuh et al. 2004; Statham et al. 1991, we found that gender differences in teaching styles persisted. We also found that female teachers tended to use both active and interactive activities to a greater degree than males.

The male teachers also stated that they would reinforce a self trust in their pupils in order to foster pupils' creativity in learning English. Whereas, the female teachers chose to encourage their pupils to freely express themselves, so that they could believe in their own abilities.

In order to avoid the routine, male teachers said that they might say some jokes. They also said that whenever they saw a student failing, they would only focus on being selective in tasks. However, the female teachers of English followed a more effective way through varying the tasks and using more instructional games so that no routine would occur in the class. They favoured to address the pupils' social background to understand why pupils did not achieve well in English, to pay more attention to their psychology and then to provide extra lessons and tasks as they suggested a more beneficial way which was by involving the failing pupils in class discussion.

The participants were also asked about what to do in case of assisting families to help their children having better results. As the males being influenced by their manhood feature, most of them declared that it was not their business to discuss their pupils' issues with their families, but instead they preferred to just teach and go home. While, the females as being effected by their motherhood nature, all agreed on being in contact with the students' parents and to provide them with effective methods to deal with their children so as to ensure better results.

As being both the researcher and teacher in the field of this study, we noticed that most of the teachers of English combined between the classroom management approaches and the teaching styles which were both influenced by their gender. The fact of this possible connection also occurred in earlier studies. Rahimi and Assodollahi (2012) found the same results when they examined the relationship between EFL teachers' classroom management orientations and teaching styles in Iranian high schools.

The outstanding similarity between the results of this study and those of Rahimi and Assodollahi (2012) and Yazdanmehr and Akbari (2015) could be due to the fact that the Iranian context is somehow similar to the Algerian one. Gender is a significant factor in determining teachers' behaviours and in forming their beliefs about the dominant teaching

style. For this reason, no matter where the teachers teach, the males tend to be more controlling in their classroom management and dominating their pupils in comparison to the female ones. That is, teachers' management approaches are consistent with their instructional approaches.

The research findings can also be in relation with the teachers' philosophy. Martin and Baldwin (1993) believed that in working with this philosophy, teachers could either use a teacher-centeredness or a student-centeredness. Drawing a clear-cut borderline between these two extremes was not an easy task, if not impossible (Tal, 2010). Apparently, EFL male teachers in this study adopted a more teacher-centred philosophy and applied control when it came to managing the students and teaching practice.

Understanding the relationship between teachers' gender and the teaching style they followed gave a clear idea about the implications that should be put into practice. Policy makers at the level of The Ministry of Education should be aware of the results obtained from this study which greatly ensure that gender differences do exist. The findings of this research can be used as a springboard to discuss how and why teaching styles differ and are influenced by gender and the best way to meet the needs of both teachers and students at different educational levels.

If a person has a conviction that he is able to perform a task, he will achieve it better than that person who has some hesitations, fears or reservations about that task. A person's effectiveness in any occupation directly influences his/her performance. The secondary school is an important level in giving the pupils a clear idea about what to choose to study at university and what to be in their future career. Studying the different degrees of the teachers' effectiveness is very crucial. Teachers' effectiveness is significantly affected by their gender at the stage of their individual differences in teacher practice. Many studies were recently conducted on the relationship between teachers' effectiveness and gender. The results showed that the gender of the teacher was a considerable predictor of effectiveness. Females were reported to be more effective teachers than their male colleagues.

According to the teachers' answers, the findings demonstrated differences between male and female teachers' effectiveness, teaching styles, pupils' treatment and parental assistance. Female teachers were regarded as higher effectives in comparison to their male counterparts. They had a solid relationship with their pupils because they were attentive to every detail in their daily school career; they showed a strong desire to rethink about changing the way of transmitting the lessons so as their pupils could grasp the needed information; they saw to be effective also when they accepted to involve the pupils' parents to assist the low

outcomes learners. The results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire were like the ones of shazadi, Khatoon, shamsa and Hassan (2011) who noticed that secondary school female teachers had better effectiveness than the males.

There is another issue that we should raise the attention to it which is that in the Algerian society teaching is regarded as a female job. The proof is when we find more females in the field of the teaching profession than males. It was agreed on that males did not feel comfortable when teaching because the latter was not a famous profession among males in here. For this reason, they faced some difficulties in making effective relations with their pupils. Creating a positive class atmosphere was related to the feeling of belonging where teachers worked, and since males were not persuaded by such a profession they sometimes failed in creating such a belonging.

However, females in Algeria are seen to be more effective and competent in instructional strategies and students' engagement because they are aware of the importance of these skills and it can be as well due to the motherly nature and the brought up of females in collectivistic society. They also feel more attached and secured while teaching rather than at any other job. Therefore, the Education Ministry should pay attention to this remark so as to make more efforts to attract males to join teaching as a profession at all levels.

All in all, in a way or another gender dynamics in teaching are complex and any given course is greatly influenced by the teacher's gender. The norms regarding teaching certain types of lessons also affect how gender influences teaching, which can clarify the reasons for the existing differences in the observed gender gap in presenting the courses. To go into further complications, faculty members' perceptions may differ from gender-specific restrictions, which could help explain why females teach trough using both active and effective practices more than males.

#### **5.2.1.2.11. Pupils' Gender Differences versus the Influence of EFL Teachers' Gender**

The last part of the teacher questionnaire is intended to obtain information concerning the teachers' opinions about the influence of both their gender and that of their pupils on learning English and as well to discuss the gender gap they also noticed among their learners.

EFL Teachers of both genders agreed upon the gender gap which got wider and wider over time. They noticed that the female pupils were outperforming males in learning English. The remarkable differences were at the level of the participation, the test's scores, the efforts made, and discipline and to showing more interest in studying more than the males who most of them were carless and misbehaving.

The results obtained from this questionnaire were supported by those of (Rammouz, 2003) who found that girls were better at learning a second or a foreign language than boys. These findings also revealed a significant gender effect on teachers-pupils interaction since the girls attracted their teachers' attention more than boys.

Female pupils were perceived by their teachers to be more organised in doing their activities and assignments. They also noticed that the girls were more future oriented because they thought about it, as they insisted on being successful to achieve their specific goals. Contrary to the male pupils, they were less likely to think about future consequences. Furthermore, they were seen by their teachers to be more disruptive in the class. The boys were reported to lose concentration through having a laugh in the class so as to impress their classmates thereby they missed necessary instructions and explanations.

In other words, the notion of gender gap was confirmed by both male and female teachers of English who maintained that girls were more academic than the boys. Even at the local, national and international levels, girls educationally attained and continued to higher education stages as proved by indicators like grades, enrolment in rigorous academic coursework at the secondary school level, graduation from high school, enrolment and completion at university. Whereas, boys significantly had more disciplinary referrals, were disproportionately represented in special education settings, had higher dropout rates, lower university enrolment and completion than the girls.

The EFL teachers admitted that their gender could significantly influence that of their pupils. They went further and said that this kind of effect could be seen in the pupils' participation, interaction, motivation and their learning outcomes. Both teachers said that female teachers of English had a much better relationship with their pupils than the male ones. The male teachers also acknowledged that even pupils preferred to be taught by females.

According to the answers, both teachers reported that there were differences between male and female teachers not only of English but of all the subjects. The males said that their female colleagues were caring, attentive, sensitive, patient, serious, and had a good commitment to the teaching profession. While, the female teachers described their male counterparts as being controllers, strict, less patient and had little contact with their pupils.

Consequently, some male teachers indicated that there was a need for more male teachers to be role models as a social concern regarding the lack of male role models at some pupils' homes. But the inquiry that should be raised was that whether those teachers perceived the need for male role models to enhance academic outcomes or as a social concern. Others said that there was a need for both male and female role models in the class because each one



would bring his/her unique and different dimensions to the classroom and due to the over crowdedness of the classes.

Previous studies suggested that female pupils' scores were better when they were taught by female teachers and the same case was with male pupils and teachers. Thus, there is a need to support the statement that boys study better with male teachers and girls academically achieve better with female teachers. We can say that the pupils' gender achievement differences are greatly influenced by the gender of their teachers. A great effective engagement and interaction will occur in the same-gender groups by avoiding the communication barriers if teachers and learners are of different genders.

All in all, we can say that the image is getting clearer about the gender influence depending on both teachers' and pupils' questionnaire answers. We will go deeper into proving such a statement through the results obtained from both the observation and the interview.

### **5.2.2. Qualitative Results**

The present subsection demonstrates the results of the qualitative data obtained from the teachers-pupils' observation and teacher interviews. The data were subjected to qualitative analysis which was executed through comparison and coding so as to provide more information about the relationship between teachers' and students' gender and the learning outcomes. The interview's answers were read for several times and the observation notes were reconsidered for multiple times too in order to categorise and classify every word, sentence, phrase and meaningful remarks. This formed a basis for constructing a set of re-emerging the same themes from the previous quantitative data about the being investigated.

#### **5.2.2.1. Observation**

At first, it should be mentioned that in all classes, only the number of responses that each student gave to the teacher was counted. In other words, the responses that were given by the whole class to the teachers were not counted because they were misleading since we couldn't notice any difference or effect in that way.

According to the obtained qualitative results from the observation, we significantly realised that the patterns of teacher-pupil interactions were also influenced by the gender of both of them. The effect was so clear between the acts produced in the females' classes and the ones occurring in the male teachers' classes.

Regarding the use of some acts like: being controller, polite, explicative, positive/negative feedback and the relationship with their pupils. Male and female teachers were somehow the same in explaining the lessons. However, there were many differences between

both teachers when using the above mentioned acts. For instance, female teachers showed more sympathy when dealing with their pupils as they used requests instead of giving orders, their motivation was surely politeness since girls and women tended to favour more polite and less direct forms of questions than males, and more positive feedback to praise them. Through using compliments, female teachers tried to build a bond with their pupils. There was little control over the class and the pupils, especially the male ones. Female teachers preferred to use more referential questions so as to encourage their pupils to talk and to interact with each other; by and large they were more interactive in fact. Even their pupils were in more interaction with their female teachers of English but mainly girls who were more interested than their male peers.

In contrast, male teachers chose to use more display questions which led to shorter exchanges with their pupils; as a result, their relationship was not remarkable like that of the female teachers. One of the male teachers' classes' characteristics in our study was the instructions which were given to the pupils in a form of more directives than their female peers. Concerning the evaluations' compliments, males preferred to provide their students with acknowledgements rather than positive feedback. Another feature which we noticed in those classes was the use of frequent warnings. Due to the warnings in male classes, no behaviour problem existed. These were the features that Chavez (2000) also used to describe the classes taught by male teachers. Even Rashidi and RafieeRad (2010) reported that female teachers were more supportive than male teachers since they gave more positive feedbacks to their pupils.

The differences found between male and female teachers of English proved that their classes were dissimilar from each other at the level of the different characteristics which existed in their patterns of interaction with their pupils. The significant differences were in association with the teachers' gender and their use of discourse acts.

The bottom line is that when taking into consideration the findings of the observation set on the relationship between teachers' and pupils' gender and their classroom interaction, we came to the conclusion that the difference in teacher-pupil interaction between male and female teachers was not accidentally significant. Patterns of teacher-pupil talk were gendered or gender-related and teachers with different gender had different behaviours in their classes. These results are supported by those of Canada and Pringle (1995), Chavez (2000), Sadker and sadker (1992) and Tannen (1991).

### **5.2.2.1.1. The Effect of Gender on the Patterns of Pupil-Teacher Interaction**

Besides the researches which studied the method educators of both genders dealt with their pupils, there were some different investigations which examined the effect of gender on students' behaviour. A large portion of these examinations showed that female and male learners had dissimilar ways of communication and interaction while studying.

The contrasts and similitude found among female and male pupils in this study were, for example; while the pupils were, by one way or another, comparative in inspiring affirmation or explanation from their educators, they were distinctive in evoking data. Like it was mentioned in the observation remarks in the previous chapter, females generally posed a greater number of inquiries more than their male peers. What was more, they answered their instructors' elicitations more in those classes. Whereas, male pupils for the most part gave their teachers short answers, female students' ones were longer and progressively advanced. At the end of the day, girls utilised new words and new sentence structures they learned in their interaction.

Right now, boys seemed to prefer teachers with a similar gender. Male pupils gave the majority of the criticisms to their male instructors whether through expressing gratitude, suggestions, recommendations or affirmation. This could be identified when they additionally posed a number of questions more than the girls when being taught by a male teacher. The females additionally were in contact with their teachers more than males in classes taught by females. While boys preferred to stop and pass the conversation to their educators or their colleagues, females attempted to start the discussions with their teachers. Since male pupils were speaking with their mates, female pupils were increasingly keen on interacting with their teachers. There were just few classifications, for instance, female pupils were more expressive. They frequently started the discussions more than the boys as they created more reactions to their educators' initiations. In general, both girls and boys tended to report events or express their opinions in the class. This was totally steady with the results of Canada and Pringle (1995) who studied gender differences in mixed-gender classrooms.

Moreover, it was seen that males in general used their mother language more than females. While females focused on communicating in English no matter how much time it took, males immediately switched to the Arabic language and attempted to end the discussion. Female teachers, nonetheless, were less permissive for using the native language. However, male teachers allowed some use of Arabic more frequently. Inside the class, teachers were more humorous with boys than girls. As well, in spite of the fact that females were interested in the content of their books, males appeared to be increasingly concerned with subjects

which did not have relation to their study; themes identified with the present social and sports issues. In classes taught by male teachers, we observed that boys were more dynamic than the girls.

It became so clear that there was an association between pupils' gender and their interaction with their teachers. Another remark was the significant existing differences between male and female pupils' communication in the classroom. This had an obvious explanation which was that the pupil-teacher interaction was affected by the gender of both of them. We also saw that pupils of different gender interacted with their teachers in different ways, for instance; girls interacted more with female teachers while boys did so with their male teachers. The findings of this study were the same like those of Chavez (2000).

In order to conclude the observation part, we could say that the pupil-teacher interactions and classrooms were gender-related and the communications were gendered since male and female teachers had different behaviours in their classes with their pupils of different genders. While, male teachers were more interactive with boys than girls, female teachers were more interactive with their pupils in their classes. These results were maintained by those of Thorne (1979) and Sadker & Sadker (1992). Female teachers were also more caring, helpful and patient. They provided their pupils with more compliments and used fewer orders. In this way, gender influenced the teacher-student interaction. This also meant that the gender of the pupil played a great role and an active part in bringing the gender differences while communicating with either the same or the opposite teacher gender. Some of the other studies which supported the notion of the classroom interactions as being gender-related were Canada and Pringle (1995), Francis (2004), Hopf and Hatzichristoo (1999), Kelly (1988) and Shomoossi et al. (2008).

#### **5.2.2.2. Interview**

Interviews with teachers were the last qualitative tool of eliciting qualitative data concerning the topic in search. The answers obtained indicated that gender inequalities existed at high schools. Providing pupils with a comfortable atmosphere, that met their needs, was very essential so as to guarantee better learning outcomes. All the female teachers' responses were about interaction; which meant that they took class discussions into much consideration more than their male peers who thought of the atmosphere as paying attention to who was and wasn't attentive to the lessons.

It is mostly understood that women take care of their children and the household. The idea, that these tasks are known to be their primary responsibility, made women to be stronger which in turn reinforced the idea that the teaching profession was particularly

suitable for women or as a female job. For this reason the female teachers described their relationship with their pupils as being a motherly one based on mutual respect, love, trust, safety and kindness. While, for male teachers, building such a relation with the learners was based much more on technical ways such as honesty, encouraging and positive feedback in which no affection took place.

When it came to setting rules and regulations for students' behaviour, male teachers were more severe in punishing the pupils than their female colleagues who have just preferred either to discuss the problem in private, to give an advice or to completely ignore the disturbance. The results of the qualitative phase of this research upheld the idea of executing controlling classroom management methods and teacher-centred style of teaching. The male teachers' answers proved that they used an excessive control over the classroom activities and learners' behaviour.

According to the male statements, they seemed to form the most important authority so as to possess the control over everything in their class starting from the selection of the activities to the discussion groups and especially to intervene when their learners show misbehaviours and deviance to reduce the problems.

Although English is the first spoken language in the world, teachers' answers for their pupils' lack of motivation to learn it demonstrated that some pupils were less interested due to the lack of practice and of language background which mostly went back to the middle school. The latter was evidence for the gender gap that both teachers noticed inside their classes. EFL Male and female teachers admitted that female pupils participated, were interested, activated the interaction and outperformed their male peers who showed less interest in the class as their marks were not sufficient.

In order to show their satisfaction towards pupils' success, both male and female teachers of English stated that they would do so through oral congratulations, smiles, gifts and encouraging them to achieve more. However, when it came to the way in dealing with the learners' mistakes, the teachers' answers were different from each other. All the female teachers' responses denoted that they took their pupils' psychology into account when they rejected the immediate correction procedure, and preferred to give them another chance to change their answers, while the male teachers did the contrary and instantly corrected their pupils' mistakes. In doing so pupils would think twice before giving answers, as they would also be afraid of making mistakes which would result in a refrain in participation and no interaction would occur in such classes.

To determine whether the gender of the teacher made a difference on male and female students' performance, behaviours and interactions in the classroom, interview analyses demonstrated that a significant positive relationship existed between EFL female teachers and their pupils. This statement was mentioned by both teachers; they said that pupils preferred to be taught by female teachers because they felt at ease with them, as they cared about their social and emotional status more than male teachers. It was said by male teachers themselves that pupils interacted with females more than with them. They claimed that female teachers were weak and faced more troubles with their pupils, but males were severe and formed a symbol of strength. Most of the informants described their feelings towards their pupils as being affectionate, friendly, sensitive and caring and to treat them all the same.

According to the results obtained, we noticed that even when teachers declared that there was a great gender gap among the pupils of both genders, no one of the interviewees mentioned to attempt to match their styles to the need of boys or girls in the classroom. It could be because they said so while answering the questionnaire or because they thought that they taught the majority and not individuals and that there was not much time to pursue the varied uniqueness of boys and girls, or it could go further to say that it was due to the lack of training since teachers did not have an idea about the way to adapt their teaching approaches to suit either genders. We should bear in mind that girls were very much accommodative, hard workers, easy to teach as they easily followed orders; however, boys were so active and were needed to be involved in challenging innovative tasks.

To sum up the research mixed method results, we can say that the English teaching and learning processes at the secondary school level is influenced, in a way or another, by the gender of both the teachers and the pupils. Thus, equipped with the necessary information about classroom management and the teaching styles, teachers are required to be in a superior situation to assess their practices and, in this manner, to settle on educated choices about these significances. This commonality, ideally, will bring about improvement of teacher reflectivity in EFL classes, and help educators in checking themselves and classroom interaction, setting practicable principles, and embracing the most fitting teaching style that meets the pupils' needs. Furthermore, the fact of having this knowledge will permit teachers to have a profound comprehension of components of pupils' learning process.

### **5.3. The Research Questions' and Hypotheses' Answers**

This section aims at answering both the research main and sub-questions and at proving the hypotheses which were set at the beginning of this study. After the analysis and the discussion of the data collected we can say that: through the first hypothesis we tried to

answer whether there was a significant relationship between teachers'/pupils' gender and the English learning outcomes. To investigate the second hypothesis which was designed to see if there were any significant similarities/differences among EFL teachers, while dealing with their pupils, as far as their teaching practices were concerned. The third hypothesis was to see if there were any significant differences among male/female pupils' achievements that could be attributed to the difference of the gender of their teacher of English. The fourth hypothesis was to see if the classroom interaction was gendered according to the students' responses, in relation to, the gender of their teacher of English.

According to the results obtained from both the quantitative and qualitative tools, they went in line with all the hypotheses, in other words, there was a significant relationship between students' gender and the gender of their teacher. In addition, the analysis of the data also showed that there were statically significant differences among male and female teachers and pupils in teaching and learning English.

The results indicated that both the teaching and the learning processes were influenced by the gender of both the EFL teacher and the secondary school pupil. The main hypothesis that investigated the impact of EFL teachers' gender on their secondary school pupils' academic achievement was proved. The results showed that there were interesting differences between male and female teachers in English language teaching along some dimensions. According to the students' responses, the gender of their teachers played a significant role on their attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language due to the answers of most of the pupils which reflected their preference to be taught by a female teacher of English for several reasons which they considered to be important for them and which were already mentioned above in the discussion part. All in all, the findings indicated that teachers' gender was not only a significant factor in EFL learning in secondary education but also an important and reasonable point of research and discussion as suggested by previous studies in this area.

Giving positive feedback and supporting pupils' success is one of the most important duties teachers were asked to do. According to the pupils' answers, EFL female teachers took into great consideration their achievements, while some male ones did not care a lot as they were not supportive. The pupils taught by female teachers were more comfortable in expressing themselves and answering the questions comparing them to those who, were taught by males, did not feel at ease and faced more difficulty while sharing their answers. Thus, teachers' gender affected pupils' answers because these findings generally suggested that female classes were more active compared to those of their male colleagues.

According to the results obtained from the pupils' questionnaire, it was revealed that there was a significant influence of teachers' gender on their academic achievement in learning English as a foreign language since pupils tended to be closer to the female teachers; hence the latter had positive effect on the performance of the students which was really clear in each response.

In sum, analysing the differences between male and female teachers in treating their pupils, according to the results of the study we found that male and female teachers were different from each other when dealing with their students. In other words, there was a great difference between the behaviour of men and women in the classrooms. To give some examples, male teachers were very severe with their pupils as they did not allow any misbehaviour to occur in their classes. They did not take the pupils' psychology into consideration while teaching them; instead they focused on the lesson itself. Their classes were more teacher-centred ones which led to a less interaction in the classroom to appear.

Though, female teachers were in a more contact with their pupils, they had an idea about the social and the psychological status of their learners. Female teachers were more interactive with their students; they encouraged different interactive tasks such as peer and group works in their classes which in turn promoted more interaction between the pupils and the female teachers. Female teachers were also more supportive and patient. They gave more compliments to their learners and used less directive forms.

The gender gap that is widening among male and female pupils was also approved in this research. Subsequent to getting the findings, we came to a comprehension that these findings were the same as those of the previous studies. According to the results, female pupils participated more as they were more interested than their male peers. As a result, they were outperforming males in their EFL tests and exams as it was stated by their teachers of English. At the present, it is clearly demonstrated that the EFL accomplishment of the total female pupils was superior and better than the one of the total male pupils. These results made it clear that the gender of the pupil was a factor in learning English and which should be taken into consideration so as to lessen the gender gap.

Based on the obtained results about the classroom interaction, we came to the conclusion that classroom discourse was gender-related. In other words, gender played an important role as it had a considerable influence in the way the participants of the classroom interacted with each other. The difference between male and female pupils' participation in the classroom was so significant. This means that the patterns of pupil-teacher talk were also affected by the gender of students, since male pupils were in more interaction with their male



teachers while, female pupils initiated more exchanges with their female teachers. Other researchers who found classroom interactions gender-related were Canada and Pringle (1995) and Kelly (1988).

#### **5.4. Transferability Dependability and Confirmability**

As it was already mentioned in the research study, we should not take it for granted that the obtained results are constantly applied at the universal level to all secondary schools which are of dissimilar different types and atmospheres. But at least we are able to generalise the results on the other secondary schools that have the same characteristics at the local level.

For instance, the teacher gender influence will be different depending on the country. Lets us take an example of a secondary school in one of the American States and another one in an Algerian village. The reason for this is the teachers as being roles models and the pupils' preferences will vary according to the way teachers perceive their pupils and the vice versa for pupils. For instance, in a village where parents are illiterate and have a low income, they may prefer their girls to stay at home due to the traditional concepts that entail girls to be prepared to the housework and marriage. As a result, this kind of parents prevents their girls from being well educated or having a career. So, in order to fight such traditions, female teachers perform as roles models to their female pupils who will in turn be inspired and motivated to study, achieve higher results and succeed to have a better life.

Whereas, in an American state, the fact that most parents are educated with a high income, education, then, is given more value and all their children, regardless of their gender, have equal opportunities to be at school. In this case, the impact of the teachers' gender becomes clearer. In addition, it will become an ideal topic for a further research to divide Algeria into two parts based on the school location so as to deeply assess the effect of teacher's gender on pupils' performance, since in this research it was tackled as only a one question among many others.

Even though we used the triangulation method, the data we obtained were stable. The same findings were found all throughout the collection, analysis and interpretation procedures. The dependability, acceptability and credibility were ensured in our research study. The achieved results showed consistency through overlapping methods. Again this study was trustworthy proved for another researcher to carry on his/her own study resuming ours.

In addition, the gathered information from the questionnaires, observations and interviews and the discussed results were free of bias and subjectivity, instead the data spoke

for themselves to guarantee that the current research remains objective, valid and reliable for both the readers and for future researchers.

### **5.5. Recommendations for EFL Teachers**

The significant purpose of the given mission to the teachers is to effectively educate their pupils so that they can attain a quality performance in their academics. To accomplish this target, it is important for teachers to see that gender greatly contributes to the academic achievement of the learners. It is also very important for teachers to have a comprehensible understanding that gender both benefits and hinders the academic progress of an individual's education. They need to consider the role of gender perspective in language learning, exposing various approaches to improve the pupils' attitudes, motivation and language performance as well.

According to the results obtained from this research study, it was greatly observed that pupils' gender in accordance to the one of their teachers strongly affected their academic performance, since female pupils outperformed and achieved better results than the male pupils, especially those being taught by female teachers of English. Therefore, we will provide some male teachers with some useful techniques to follow so as to guarantee achievement in their classes among their pupils. However, this does not mean that we are saying that female teachers are better than males, but they are really different from each other inside the class. Our pieces of advice and recommendations are written in this chapter as a consequence of the conducted study's results obtained from both teachers and pupils.

It is short-sighted to think about using similar technique, roles, and strategies in different EFL classes. One of the vital factors is the "gender composition" of the class which means the mixed-gender class case; how many are there male or female pupils, without forgetting the teacher's gender too which was the focus point of this study. Since the influence of EFL teachers' gender on secondary school pupils' learning process was clearly proved all throughout the study, thus male teachers should study and determine the scope of variables affecting their pupils' English learning.

Teachers should do their best to bridge the gap between them and their students through being aware of the potential psychological and sociological differences between genders before starting teaching them, because they are dealing with human beings and not machines. Teachers are not in the classroom just to teach, but they have to give their pupils more opportunities to take part in the classroom, to express themselves, to share decisions and to negotiate some ideas in relation to their studies. In doing so, teachers are providing useful guidance for their pupils so as to become successful language learners.

The teachers' role in the classroom is very significant. They have to pay attention to their pupils, their motivations, aims, learning styles and interests. They have to be careful observers for their behaviour, if they work together with their same or different gender peers, whether, pupils are eager to be in the teacher class, to ask for more explanation, verification or correction, and their understanding of the course to be taught.

Teachers should highlight the importance of the English language to their learners through effectively implementing the new appropriate methods and activities of teaching English, which should be based also on their learning styles, so that pupils will be interested and successful in studying such a language. It is a fact that every pupil in the same class has different learning styles, so the English language teachers ought to give a wide variety of learning strategies so as to satisfy diverse learning styles that meet the needs and expectations of their learners.

Besides the pupils, EFL teachers should not rely only on the content of their English textbooks. Rather, they should analyse them so as to check if the books are convenient to their pupils' needs or not, otherwise they should integrate up-to-date materials and supplementary resources that include the necessary language learning points which can help them capture learners' attention to successfully learn English.

Then, teachers should study their own teaching styles if they are implicit, explicit or both since they are affected by both their gender and that of their pupils. The teachers can see if their teaching permits their pupils to approach the task at hand in different ways or not. English language teachers should ask themselves about what to do before designing their lesson plans and assess them after the lessons to see if they can achieve the objectives implemented for each task or activity.

In addition, teachers should help their pupils to be aware of their preferred learning styles which will in turn help them to become more self-confident and successful language learners. In other words, teachers must encourage their students not only to use certain learning strategies, but also to develop new ones to facilitate the learning process. In order to succeed in doing so, EFL teachers are recommended to create a relaxed convenient atmosphere in the English classroom like involving the learners in a variety of communicative tasks. They should encourage the pupils to collaborate to choose topics for discussion and exchange their experiences and other issues regarding language learning within groups to promote their positive attitudes, enthusiasm and interest towards studying English. Thus, the teachers' role will be switched to be a facilitator who focuses on the communicative approach by supporting and motivating pupils' active participation in the learning process.

Building good teacher-pupil relationships is a key factor in creating gender change in schools and, specifically, encouraging educators not to discriminate and to respect their pupils. This might be accomplished in various manners: for instance, through the development of entire school strategies on gender, observing classroom interactions and levels of consideration and support given to the learners. Therefore, teachers should learn how to promote gender in schools so as not to hold wrong attitudes towards gender issues such as gender stereotyped ideas and expectations.

To conclude this part of this chapter, as EFL teachers, we have to be for the great and undeniable responsibility given to us; it is so important to prove that we are the significant source of social support for the EFL learners as we should encourage our pupils to interact and participate in the class. Hence, as far as we are concerned, the best teacher is the one who quickly adapts to the particular needs of different classes and understanding the distinctiveness of various pupils with different gender and situations.

## **5.6. Implementations and Recommendations for Educationists**

### **5.6.1. Gender as a Topic in Teacher Educational Training**

In some countries like Spain, Luxembourg and Portugal, specific courses are organized by education authorities on the inclusion of the topic of gender among general issues which form an essential part of the initial teacher education, the training institution, and at universities. In Belgium (French Community), Denmark, France, Austria and the Netherlands, the gender studies have to be taken into account in teacher education. There are also Belgium (Flemish Community), Sweden and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland). This is part of the gender mainstreaming policy (Austria), in the decree on initial teacher education (Belgium - French Community), in the bachelor programme for Folkeskole-teachers (Denmark), in competence requirements of teachers (the Netherlands).

In order to accomplish these purposes, several guidelines are suggested, for example: implementing departments of gender studies to offer specific training, exploring and elaborating the didactic material in the faculties of education, and in teacher training universities and in-service training centres. The objective is to form future teachers holding more theoretical and practical knowledge about how to act in a more gender-sensitive way in their work. While executing such a program, methodologies and curricula will be changed and developed as well as research programme results will be integrated into teacher education. The gender dimension will be given more space within initial teacher education programme and in courses covering this topic so as to highlight its importance for the students.

In other words, even though EFL teachers both apply useful teaching style and unprecedented solid abilities and background of the subject, gender-specific training should be considered as one of the important aspects of a teacher's professional development. It is therefore important to ensure that future and serving teachers receive training on gender issues and have access to ample information on critical thinking and a questioning of gender stereotypes. Yet, pupils are first concerned with their teacher's gender, then his/her teaching skills or the physical appearance. For this reason, teachers play a crucial role in developing pupils' understanding of their own gender roles since such understanding is also highly influential and can contribute either to maintaining or breaking gender stereotypes within schools. So, all educator training projects ought to have a significant module on gender. They also ought to be evaluated about general practices on during pre-service and in-service educational training programmes.

### **5.6.2. Gender in School Administration**

Dealing with the gender roles in schools is not a simple undertaking either for policymakers or for specialists in the field (educators, school administrators, counsellors, and so forth.). Few measures ought to be used, for example, the reviewing of school texts, and the reading and display materials. Others contain expanding focal on the educator drove work, changing to single-gender grouping where needed, or providing more noteworthy learning support. Teachers and school administrators likewise need practical direction on the legitimate setting for gender and on the best way to develop a fitting school atmosphere and more data on teaching, subject content and evaluation. Regarding themes organisation in schools, studies demonstrate that the manner in which subjects are given to the pupils may change gender interaction patterns.

Moreover, curriculum makers ought to reconsider both the content and the design of the curriculum to meet the needs and the interests of the learners. They are asked to consider the fact that the EFL pupils have different perceptions about learning English due to their disparities with respect to their gender, stream, year of study, and so forth. Subsequently, considering every one of these issues, the curriculum design should be re-evaluated so that pupils can see something else concerning the activities, content, topics, teaching practices etc. and be increasingly persuaded to study English.

### **5.6.3. Closing the Gender Gap in Pupils' Achievements' Difference**

In the United Kingdom and Australia, there were various involvements by the government to assist underachieving male pupils. In spite of those trials, the gender gap continued to be wider. Over the last two years, in U.S.A. there was a focus on the media about

the differences existing between male and female pupils' success, trying to identify and address the factors involved in order to understand the academic gender gap.

The gender gap and student achievement differences have and keep on being a predominant issue explored and examined by various researchers. Numerous perspectives can ascribe to the existing gender pupil accomplishment gaps, many of them were investigated all the more intently like the impact of the teacher gender which made an impacting difference on this matter. Numerous studies such as Lam et al. (2009) and Arnold (1998) yielded similar results; the former stated that female pupils superiorly outperformed male pupils and the latter demonstrated that there were differences between school grades of male and female learners, showing girls to receive higher school grades or achievement than boys did.

#### **5.6.4. Parental Involvement to Close the Gender Gap**

The parents' support is so significant in order to avoid gender gap in schools. Pupils' achievement was found to be improved when their parents got involved in the general work of schools, when they participated in specific gender projects and helped in developing their children positive attitudes towards school. Parents should raise their children's awareness about the importance of education and the significance of the English language all over the world. It is also vital to offer spaces and chances to parents to have a voice and representation; this might be achieved through the arrangement of various types of help and support, for example, data booklets, drop-in sessions and conversation groups to discuss the possible difficulties that could happen within pupils. This is especially significant in light of the fact that parents are a link to the outside world of the pupils.

#### **5.6.5. Matching Gender to Close the Gap**

Matching gender is when pupils study with their same gender peers as they are taught by their same gender teacher too. A study was conducted in 2006 in Essex, U.K. secondary schools about the influence of matching educators and learners by gender. The policy makers witnessed boys' underachievement, so they agreed on the idea that boys' academic performance and behaviour would benefit from having more men teachers, to particularly function as role models for them.

The teachers believed that a lack of male role models had an impact on the behaviour and attitudes of boys towards education and school. They showed more awareness of the argument and supported it. The teachers, who participated in the study, reported that boys were underachieving because they did not have a good relation with female teachers, and having a male teacher would solve some problems because they were stricter and were able to correct the boys' behaviour.

Other teachers also encouraged the idea of gender matching implemented in the government policy. They said that boys who did not enjoy being at school would be more engaged if they had a male teacher who would be considered as their role model. Male pupils would learn socially and educationally desirable behaviour from their male teachers. Different teachers added that boys thought that what female teachers did in school was quite boring and useless, so they were not achieving to the level they had to be achieving. When having male teachers, boys would be inspired and motivated to be like their teachers.

The teachers perceived matching by gender as definitely a positive decision to be taken by the policy makers. Male teachers would model broader behaviours than boys were used to. Male pupils would be exposed to a firm discipline and authority of male teachers that some female teachers did not somehow maintain it, simply because the former could find from where they would first start their behaviour improved.

Manliness is often related to some specific attributes, for example, dominance, seriousness, aggressiveness, strength and control. These qualities result from a blend of natural, cultural and social impacts and influence family and society in general and teachers-pupils in specific. So, the same teachers also raised an important point which was that some male pupils did not have male figures in their families; orphans, or separated parents. The advantages of gender matching would help the boys a lot to learn from their teachers and because that both of them shared the same interests that were influenced by the nature of their gender which in turn benefited boys' educational engagement.

One of the difficult issues at schools is the aggressive behaviour. It created discussion among brain theorists and gender watchers. Boys are commonly more aggressive than girls. Boys are more likely to play aggressive activities which contain touching as they use aggressive nonverbal gestures and competitive games. Girls are more quiet, tranquil, empathetic, and usually more socially manipulative than boys. These characteristics indicate trends in gender difference. The male and female brains and chemistry impel them to use those practices. Clearly, also, social patterns and pressure drive males toward more of this behaviour, and females toward greater use of behaviour based in immediate empathic reaction.

The British study attempted to do the most important work by helping both male and female pupils develop their gender characteristics that were greatly different from each other. That work was certainly worthwhile aiming at enhancing pupils' learning outcomes. Unlike girls who were more empathic and less aggressive, boys increased their violent behaviour toward a high peak especially at the secondary schools since they are building strength, focus,

attentiveness, and hierarchy through these actions. So, one key to decrease behavioural problems among boys is to be taught by male teachers. The implementation suggested in this study indicates that discipline and behaviour of male pupils are heavily influenced by the presence of males which will inherently calm down the classroom and the learning environment.

#### **5.6.6. Do Male Teachers Help Boys and Females Help Girls Achieve better?**

Learning English as a foreign language is complicated. This poses a great challenge to EFL teachers and pupils. If learners are taught to hold positive attitudes toward the teacher, the language, the classroom atmosphere, and the target culture, they will in general be more successful learners and subsequently consider their teacher as a more effective person in realising this achievement. One feature that can gather the different teacher characteristics, beliefs, and behaviours as it can have an effective function in determining teacher success as perceived by their learners is the fact of being a role model.

In the United States, Ehrenberg, Goldhaber & Brewer, (1995) conducted a study and analysed the collected data from more than 18,000 students and 15,000 teachers through the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988. They ended up with a conclusion that the learners' achievements were considerably influenced when their gender was matched with their teachers. The gender matching affected even teachers' subjectivity while assessing their pupils, for instance female pupils were highly rated by their female teachers than they used to be by their male teachers.

Moreover, at the point of school attitudes, obviously pupils being taught by female teachers had increasingly uplifting attitudes. According to this research results, it was found that both girls and boys taught by female teachers were progressively disposed to show positive attitudes towards school than their friends taught by males. Most definitely, our study shows that female teachers appear to draw out the best in both genders. Possibly, male teachers could have more prominent remarkable salience as good role models for male pupils.

#### **5.6.7. Teachers as Effective Role Models**

The importance of role modelling in teaching should be raised through excessive training. A good role modelling enhances both teaching and learning through different ways, for instance: a teacher can be a good role model by setting good example, s/he should not utter negative or cruel words, s/he should use good language and depict a great picture, s/he teaches by exhibiting good modals, s/he should be kind and interested in her/his pupils' needs, s/he should be honest, serious and straight, s/he should be seen by his/her pupils like a super star, s/he should herself/himself demonstrate enthusiasm and eagerness towards teaching



which will result in students' excitement to learning, s/he should be fair in dealing with all the students and a model teacher should have good thinking skills.

Therefore, in English learning and teaching, teachers should pay attention to the existing individual differences among learners. Effective teachers who mean to change the emotional sides of their pupils should initially know about their own emotional status. As Van Lier (1996) said: "teacher development involves three parts, having (knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy, of self and others), doing (their skills and their abilities to construct learning opportunities) and being (their personal qualities, their vision, and their sense of mission)" (p. 73). At the end of the day, successful language teachers should know and do, yet above all they additionally should think about their own passionate status. At this point, teachers' methods and techniques will considerably be more efficient. The more such teachers have a good knowledge about each pupil, and the more they know about their learners' styles, the more effective teaching will be and the more learners will like to study.

Another point that is noteworthy, female pupils perceive their female teachers as their role models and male teachers function as a role model for their male pupils. We interpret this as an evidence to support the idea that the role-model effect implies that students feel more inspired and motivated when taught by a same-gender teacher. Since their perceptions significantly vary by teacher gender, they will in turn consider their studies relevant and useful for their future. At the secondary school level, according to the pupils' questionnaire answers, they were more likely to prefer to be taught by their same gender teacher since it would provide them with a more positive and comfortable classroom's psychological atmosphere.

The positive side of role models is greatly reflected in the teaching learning atmosphere. Positive role model improves effective learning through having a good language pronunciation, transference of content knowledge and interacting skills. To be good role models, both male and female teachers are asked to be effective to address their pupils' requirements. Males can be good role models to their male pupils as well female teachers can be good role models to their female pupils. The fact of having the same gender is in itself an advantage since they have the same interests and inclinations.

#### **5.6.7.1. The Effectiveness of Male Teachers for Male Pupils**

Effectiveness and commitment to teaching are also influenced by the teacher gender. Male teacher effectiveness is represented in disciplining male pupils, having more in common topics of interest, being more active and energetic, being stricter, and having the ability to

control male students more than their female colleagues as they can attract the thinking of boys more than girls.

According to previous research results, there was an agreement on the role modelling of male teachers. It was found that males could model good behaviour for male pupils since they shared the same gender. Male teachers could be more sensitive to their male learners' needs, they could model good appearance of manhood, they could also encourage their male students to achieve better results through sharing their experiences with them, as they could be their mentors and facilitators for learning as they could reveal good study habits.

#### **5.6.7.2. Effectiveness of Female Teachers for Female Pupils**

Teachers are significant figures when it comes to pupils' gender-related attitudes towards learning English as a subject at high school. Unlike female teachers, male teachers lack the patience in dealing with pupils. Female teachers produce great results in teaching which can be clearly noticed in their pupils' tests' marks. Female teachers encourage their pupils to work hard and thus enhance their performance in examinations.

The existence of female teachers positively impacts girls' achievement as it was demonstrated by several studies. Female teachers can be role models to their female pupils when they support them and make them trust themselves to successfully complete their studies, to go to university and even to inspire them to become future teachers of English, the thing that we witnessed in our classes with our female pupils.

Female teachers can be role models when their female pupils ask them to listen to their problems and to provide them with the necessary pieces of advice which they can't ask from their parents. Female teachers can be role models when they reflect a good image about them especially in rural and conservative areas and communities. Through being a role model in such places, they can change the primitive idea that women can only be housewives. They can greatly show other possibilities for girls to be active agents outside home to contribute in the society development. In behaving so, female teachers are educating and socialising both boys and girls to avoid the gender stereotypes.

The relationship between female teachers and girls' success is more than a simple cause and effect since the latter outperformed boys on the subjects, not only English, taught by female teachers. These facts are found all over the world. Both previous and recent research findings suggest that female teachers can be role models through empowering girls' motivation so as to improve their learning outcomes. This has one meaningful explanation which is that female teachers are not only role models to inspire girls, but they are also crucial agents of change.

### **5.6.8. Teacher and Pupil Behaviour**

According to previous gender studies fields' results, teacher gender drove his/her behaviour in dealing with his/her pupils. The possibility of teachers' preference of pupils of a specific gender on others was proved. This would also lead to different behaviours with different pupils. Teachers give more feedback and time to their same gender pupils. Male and female teachers have different teaching styles and interacting methods, this drives us to suggest that it would be better to suit pupils with teachers of their own gender.

Taking into consideration the pupils' reactions, they differently perceived their teachers according to the latter genders. It was found that pupils felt motivated, comfortable and interested in the class when they were taught by their same-gender teacher without paying attention to the teachers' different characteristics. Female pupils felt less stressed with female teachers and male pupils felt more secure with male teachers. In this case, matching teacher-pupil gender was preferable by pupils in order to avoid stereotypes, for instance boys were more talented in mathematics and science and girls in languages which might otherwise impede one of them to perform at their maximum level.

Researchers found that even the type of class interactions were influenced by the gender of both the teacher and the pupil. Unlike female teachers who provided more attention and positive feedback to female pupils than boys, male teachers tended to address and praise boys more than girls. Since there was differential treatment of teachers based on pupils' gender, their academic performance would not be constant or enhanced unless the single-gender and matching education was put into practice.

The conclusion that can be revealed at this level implies that teachers' behaviour and roles vary according to their pupils' gender. Pupils' academic achievement is greatly improved when being taught by their same-gender teachers who consider them as their role models to be imitated. The previous mentioned results, either from the current study or from previous ones, help us explain how female teachers enhance girls' learning process and the vice versa concerning male teachers with male pupils.

### **5.6.9. Co-Education vs. Single-Gender Education**

The main purpose of co-education was to provide both genders with the same chance to attain education and furthermore to promote gender equality. The prevailing degree of this sort of arrangement did not exist since a long time ago in the European nations. Except for the Scandinavian nations, it was presented in most of European nations to a great extent after World War II yet, in other countries like Greece, Spain, Austria and Portugal, it existed during the 1970s. Despite the fact that it is viewed, these days, as being a standard of education in

most European nations, co-education was actually a practice that went back just 35 to 60 years before according to each country.

Co-education is regarded as an essential element in education all over the countries. Most of the countries are required to provide public education in mixed schools. For instance in Ireland and the United Kingdom, nonetheless, parental interest must be contemplated when choices are rolled out about improvements to arrangement in their area. Strikingly, in Ireland and the United Kingdom, there was a belief that single-gender schools were considered to be as better ones. Especially, in England there was a noteworthy overlap between academically selective and single-gender schools.

During the recent years, whether at public or private schools, the idea of single-gender education got a considerable consideration as it was even discussed in the media to some extent in many European countries. The explanation of this idea is that it permits female and male pupils to have a great opportunity to freely express themselves in the class. From one side, females will feel free to interact without being shy, besides enhancing their self-confidence, from the other side, males will be urged to work harder without worrying about making mistakes.

Learners are usually disposed toward coeducation. As they like to spend their time with the other gender ones, they also want to do so in separate-gender groups and separate-gender education. Depending on the following gathered facts, we would like to make the policy makers take into consideration these recommendations. We would like to raise a much discussion about the possibility to teach female and male pupils at separate schools.

Since their childhood, it was observed that boys' proclivity was to play with the other boys only. The same remark was found among girls who were craved to discover each other and keep away from boys in their games. Those observations started at the preschool and continued to the middle and even to the secondary schools. People of both genders appreciate each other's conversation, yet they prefer doing things with their own gender because they can easily understand each other.

For teachers, this commonsense perception permits them to consider separate-gender education as one of the various conceivable possibilities to enhance education. In following this new procedure, pupils are not hurt at all since they are inclined toward along these lines of being. Instead, teachers are helping many pupils who are not learning because of being shy when studying in mixed-gender classes. In various research studies, female pupils realised many improvements in girls-only schools and classes. Similarly, when male pupils studied with their same gender, they also achieved better outcomes and were more disciplined.

In the United States of America, some co-education schools have already started to experiment the separate-gender education. For instance in The Williams School in Norfolk, Virginia, pupils at the sixth grade were separated. That separation, which took place since 1994, contributed in a great rise of pupils' marks particularly in mathematics and science which were the initial subjects, there, to assess their level and achievement.

The Cranbrook Institute next to Detroit, Michigan, kept co-education from the first till the fourth grade and then changed to single-gender education from the fifth till the twelfth classes. Even California public schools established separate-gender schools and classrooms ever since former Governor Pete Wilson encouraged those efforts.

Moreover, there were separate-gender schools in San Francisco's Marina. The headmaster named John Michaelson said that both the pupils and the parents liked the program since it was more cohesive and less distracting. He also stated that pupils achieved better test scores and grades in those single gender classes. Even teachers faced little discipline problems in such classes and more interaction with their learners who were so shy and reluctant to participate in the co-education classes.

This recommendation should not surprise the Algerian authorities of the Ministry of Education since the human mind is sexualised. In some cases like verbal ones, females are powerful, while males are strong in spatial and higher math or science abilities. We are not forcing single gender education, but rather we are trying to point out the valuable advantages that every single pupil can benefit from it. It will be fruitful if we try to experiment the separate-gender classes and then schools. This kind of innovation will solve many problems at all the grade levels. Especially at the high school because learning and behaviour problems will be reduced or even removed if there are single-gender institutions.

#### **5.6.9.1. Single-Gender Classes**

Despite the fact that public single-gender schools are rare, they practically exist along with co-education in all European nations such as France, Liechtenstein and Sweden. Establishing single-gender classes agreements are commonly made at the school level. Denmark and the United Kingdom (Scotland) stated that the association of single-gender settings is connected to reflections on the most proficient method to balance underachievement and discipline issues.

The teachers believed that single-gender classes rendered male pupils more motivated, cooperative, engaged and interactive with them. Teachers reported that they gave more attention to their male pupils more than in mixed classes, since females participated more than males and did not give them the chance to take part in the class. The teachers

reported that male pupils paid more attention, interested more and worked hard in such kind of classes.

The same teachers noticed that they did not consider male underachievement and did not pay attention to the existing gender differences in their classrooms. The school counsellor observed that whenever there was a meeting none of the teachers tackled male underachievement as a topic to discuss. Instead, the teachers focused more on the socioeconomic side of the pupils as a factor. Since that, the teachers started to critically think about male underachievement through having significant discussion with each other.

The fact of taking into consideration the single-gender classes in public schools was a progressing educational topic universally and studies were conducted to discover conceivable learning achievements by gender. Investigations on single-gender schools in the U.S., Australia and the U.K. came up with many outcomes. The results showed that when pupils studied in single gender environment, they achieved better scores since they had differences in attitudes towards school as well as needs and learning styles which were also influenced by their gender. Even when pupils were asked to do projects, they inclined to be in their same gender groups. So, it would be beneficial and useful to have single-gender groupings in the classroom so as to improve pupils' learning process and communication styles for both of the genders. The school consultants themselves work with male and female pupils individually in order to meet their specific needs by gender.

At some primary schools, there was an attempt of separating classes into male and female pupils for shorter times of a day, without arranging permanent single-gender classes. The point is to provide both girls and boys with more space. In fact, implementing single-gender education at the primary school was not a new phenomenon in the United Kingdom (Scotland).

#### **5.6.9.2. Single-Gender Schools**

Single gender schools are the ones which include only male or female pupils solely studying with others of their same gender. In seven European countries and regions there are public single-gender schools. The number of such schools greatly differs from one country to another. There is only one in Scotland, 7 in Wales and 25 in Malta, there are 77 in Northern Ireland, 120 in Ireland (1) and over 400 in England. In Greece, there are 27 public single-gender secondary schools.

The concept of instituting single-gender schools appeared in 2006 in Poland. The Ministry indicated interest for setting up those schools within the government school system, expected to urge academic establishments to provide teachers with extensive training

programmes and to investigate the effectiveness of single-gender education. The objective behind doing so was to give better conditions to education at secondary schools. The Minister of National Education did not deny that the foundation of single-gender schools was one of the choices considered to fight and reduce violence among students in school. The Ministry looked to persuade the overall population of the matchless advantages of single-gender education over co-education, and that single-gender secondary schools would eradicate violence among pupils themselves and between teacher-pupil relationships.

### **5.6.9.3. The Logic of Single-Gender Secondary Schools**

The secondary school is the period of huge hormonal upheaval for both male and female pupils. Boys have a high level of testosterone, which they need to learn how to manage up this hormone. Secondary school boys frequently end up in unusual dispositions, furious, violent, awkward and incapable to express their feelings, concentrating on girls however terrified of them, contending with the other boys so as to attract girls, and somehow being unable to perceive the complexities of their own developing nature.

Similarly, females are at their years of puberty with high dose of progesterone. They also find themselves in a complicated change of their bodies even more than boys. They have to know the way to deal with their new body and mind. Girls, as well, encounter mood change, feeling of less self confidence, being more attentive to themselves and to the way they dress so as to look like or better than the other girls in order to attract the boys' attention. In contrast to them, girls usually get bothered by the immaturity of boys and their annoyance to their physical development or other obvious physical characteristics.

Separating gender is a great suggestion. The psychosocial stresses that both boys and girls are exposed to are going to be expelled, to some extent, from the learning procedure. The competition between them is averted. Female pupils do not have to fail in the face of males and the vice versa. Since girls like to work with their same gender pupils, they can develop and strengthen their academic psychosocial self-confidence without the feeling of prevention from the boys. Along together, they will figure out how to deal with their own and each other's changes. Correspondingly, male pupils, in turn, will learn how to control themselves and to discover security in studying with others who can instinctually understand them. Not all kinds of competitions are eliminated, yet pointless stressors are expelled, particularly those which are not natural to female and male pupils during their pubescence but rather socially and culturally forced.

Jackson (2002) and Rowe (1988) reported that male and female pupils differed in their psychological development; being in separate educational atmospheres would increase

their achievement, health, and social-affective aspects. Consequently, single-gender education is the main solution to avoid the poor performance of students at school and so as to provide them with equal learning opportunities in classroom interactions which do not exist in mixed environments.

In addition, comparative studies came up with a conclusion that female pupils were achieving better in foreign languages and arts when studying at differentiated schools (Wong, Lam, & Ho, 2002). These results were supported by other authors who found that even boys significantly increased their performance in mathematics and science when being in separate classes versus mixed ones (Marsh & Rowe, 1996). A systematic review on single-gender education has found that out of 40 studies, there was only one study showing superiority for co-educational schooling (Mael et al., 2005).

Concerning the psychosocial benefits, female pupils in single-gender schools are surer about their abilities, increase their self-confidence, develop more positive attitudes towards the school and have more chances to participate at the math and science subjects (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). As well as, boys, in same-gender schools, show more self-esteem, group work spirit, and participation and less aggressive behaviour.

In short, single-gender education has many advantages which are mainly based on observed successful examples of academic development. The occurrence of a better academic performance is due to that both male and female pupils are more likely to achieve their potential in a same-gender environment (García, 1998).

#### **5.6.9.4. Single-Gender Education for Improving Pupils' Achievements**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2004) indicated that most member nations of the U.N. adopted the co-education schooling system, and some countries legally chose this type of education as the only choice in public schools. The reason behind using co-education was based on considerations like incorporating women into society, equal opportunities for both men and women, and minimizing the costs of educational establishments.

However, after some years, there was a criticism for the insufficient results noticed in some situations. Countries like France and U.S.A. decided to reconsider the advantages of single-gender education after facing some problems with the co-educational system. For example, co-education could not meet its objectives of providing equal opportunities to both genders. Female pupils faced some undesirable effects, such as the radicalisation of stereotypes and segregation in specific classes since teachers might pay more attention to boys than girls in science and math. The absence of a positive setting for girls during breaks, since



boys were more dominant and aggressive. Moreover, the curriculum was censured for not including the differences in physical and psychological maturity, nor taking into consideration the pupils' interests and learning styles. Thus, the expected learning results for co-education were not accomplished, which put single-gender education again on the discussion to re-introduce it in schools.

Maccoby (2002) demonstrated that there was a preference for communication of pupils with those of their similar gender which began at early childhood. It was also observed by teachers of science that the interaction related to some lessons differed in single- and mixed-gender groups, both boys and girls preferred to separately discuss some scientific topics, but this wasn't constantly considered in co-education schools. Furthermore, female pupils attending co-education schools being smokers were twice of those at single-gender schools. Nowadays, this phenomenon is unfortunately increasing inside our Algerian mixed-gender schools.

From another side, Tannen (1994) also saw that this preference continued even when people were at work (pp, 286-289). Tannen (1990) reported that men had a tendency to consider society relationships as an order, so they drown on competitive and fact-oriented styles whilst they preferred to stay independent, even in some cases they thought any help would be seen as a characteristic of downgrading, and did their best not to fail. In other words, male's attitude is consistently divided into either a winner or a loser. However, women consider communication within groups as a means to exchange their feelings so as to gain new ideas and encourage each other. They continually counsel one another and are so quick to build up a close connection.

The main objective behind having a communication with others is to build relationships through which to share opinions and agreements. As it was mentioned in the second chapter and confirmed in the fourth chapter, Tannen (1990) studied the differences between male's and females' discourse and presumed that women's language mostly contained compassion, support, questions, more details and interest. What's more, they were more interested in being polite and grammatical. On the other hand, males were commonly aggressive and unfriendly. They were inclined to interrupt and mock the others, as they followed a more adversarial argumentative style, and demoralisation. Burr (1998) said that in mixed gender groups males interfered more and used more direct questions and sentences, while females preferred to be interrupted, to ask indirect requests and to give more conversational back up to the other speakers or by posing inquiries.

Another point that needs to be discussed is that when being in single-gender groups of female pupils with their female teachers, their way to take part in the conversation was a rotated one, which means that female speakers respected their turns to express their ideas and opinions. Their turns took more or less the same period of time. Females also use more displayed facial reactions. While listening, they often use facial expressions to show that they follow what the others are saying which makes the speaker feels relaxed and motivated to continue. Even when they speak, they wonder if the listener is following them or not. On the other hand, male pupils with their male teachers were communicating in a competitive way. They did not wait for each of them to finish his speech and the other to start; instead the time spent for taking was unbalanced and they even raised their voices while speaking to attract more attention. They generally did not use and did not pay attention to the aspect of facial expressions.

Another observation, which was also mentioned in the pupils' questionnaire, was that of feedback. Female pupils noticed that they did not get enough feedback from their male teachers in comparison to their female teachers, but this feature was not noticed on male pupils. One explanation could be that, as discussed so far, men do not care as much as women do about giving or receiving positive and supporting feedback and particularly facial expressions from their addressees. This was clearly in the average of the all of the evidences in the study results.

Other studies' results indicated that there was also a gender gap in confidence about academic achievement. Female pupils' self-confidence and grades were higher than boys when their teachers were females. In addition, it was found that females were less satisfied and unhappy than boys when their teachers were males. The female teacher-pupil interactions were also reported to be positive and significant. So, the presence of female teachers with female pupils seemed to have a greater influence on girls' academic performance.

Conversely, male pupils showed more acclimation, confidence and satisfaction when their teachers were males. Male pupils were in more interaction with their male teachers. Boys' mental stress and behaviour problems were reduced by male teachers. Male teachers' presence had also important effect over male pupils' learning outcomes.

In short, we can say that the teachers' gender greatly influences both students' academic and behavioural performance. For instance, high achievers are the ones who feel more likely confident and satisfied at school. Having the teachers of the same gender and being in the classroom with pupils of the same gender too will contribute to having higher self-confidence, better tests results, positive attitudes and social acclimation, which will also

in turn close the academic gender gap between male and female pupils. So, depending on the above mentioned reasons, both single-gender education and matching-gender teaching are beneficial for both male and female pupils so as to enhance the learning and the teaching processes.

#### **5.6.9.5.Evidence of Successful Separate-Gender Education in the World**

Since the separate gender experiment was done and was successful in Virginia, then teachers in Missouri also tried to benefit from the innovation so as to augment the results, otherwise the idea would be just about theory and logic. They applied single gender education at the level of classroom and waited how it worked. The obtained results exceeded the expectations. Let's see what the teachers witnessed while implementing this process over their pupils.

Darla Novick, a teacher in Kansas City, used gender-separate groups and shared her experience about endangered species lesson. She said that she divided her class into two groups: males and females. She gave the boys the role of loggers who would cut down the trees. However, the girls were conservationists, who tried to protect the spotted owl and to stop the loggers from cutting down the owl's habitat. Teacher Darla noticed that the same-gender groups worked very well and in a cohesive way. The headmaster of that school also enjoyed the separate-gender part of the day's lesson. Both the teacher and the headmaster noticed that all boys had the same ideas and so did the girls, but they were different from each other. The conclusion that the teacher came up with was that if the groups had consisted of both boys and girls together, the learning activity would not be successful and enjoyable.

One more teacher called Brenda Bock found the same outcomes and benefits when she separated the class into girls and boys. She said: "When we played our games we divided up into boy and girl teams. They worked better together when paired with same gender." Another teacher in the same city named Ruth Whertvine saw improvements for girls with this sort of arrangement. She reported that their school decided to separate girls into classes to study with their same gender mates. In doing so, they helped the girls to concentrate more on their lessons. The teacher, herself, noticed things about girls' behaviour she has never noticed before. The same remarks were taken by Ruth Whertvine about male pupils.

Even Jennifer, a teacher in Kansas City, observed a difference at the level of boys' behaviour. She said that when boys were taught together, they collectively worked with fewer discipline problems than they used to study with girls. Their colleague Linda, working at a different school, confirmed that too. One of her classes was composed of only boys; she also found that boys worked better in a collaborative way more than when being with girls in the

class. They helped each other as they were in less conflict in comparison to mixed gender classes since when there were girls the class totally became different.

The single gender education again certified the theoretical consideration of the male versus female competition and psychosocial stressors which could hinder learning. Many teachers, including me, also noticed in their classes that girls and boys seated themselves, a natural segregation occurred. The teacher Holla permitted her pupils to sit the way they liked. She observed that boys and girls segregated themselves anyway. We tried this experiment in our classes and we ended up with the same results.

Another interesting difference among male and female pupils was discovered by Shawna Middletree, a teacher at Smith-Hale School. Her pupils were separated, boys having a seat on one side and girls on the other side of the classroom. The teacher said that they had a reading of "Island of the Blue Dolphins". She asked them to react about the statement of seeking risks in life was better than being safe. The male pupils agreed with that. No girl raised her hand. That became an attractive topic to discuss in the class, which also led to a remarkable gender and psychological impact. It was available as an educational opportunity since the natural separation of boys and girls, by themselves, clearly demonstrated the gender difference among the pupils inside the classroom.

The teacher Shawna noticed a good development in her class when her pupils were separated in their seats. Pupils were working just with the others of their same gender. She even observed few behaviour problems as the previous teachers did. The pupils were comfortable with the setup chart and classroom interaction was improved.

While conducting a research in brain and gender, Rose, the teacher of music at Hickman Mills School decided to separate between boys and girls. She discovered that it worked quite well. The males were inclined to dance to the music but the girls did not. She believed that she was witnessing a great impact of gender on the pupils. Rose noticed that boys were less self-conscious and even less conceivably destructive in their physical movements when surrounded by the other boys.

We included other teachers' real life situations and examples so as to show to the Ministry of Education the benefits of single gender education. We wish we could inspire the educationists to use this technique first at the micro level for doing a team task or a project in the classroom, and then at the macro-level, innovation of separate-gender education for all schools. Finally, We hope the single gender education topic will be taken into consideration toward a larger social discussion on this innovation especially at the middle and secondary schools levels. This will potentially help millions of pupils learn, behave, self-express and

self-develop in a more relaxing, safer, organised and achieving way during their immensely vulnerable time in life.

#### **5.6.9.6. Single-Gender Education in Algeria**

Separate gender education in Algeria gains a wide room for discussion. On May 26<sup>th</sup> 2018, the journalist named Lila Masloub working at Echourouk Online Magazine wrote a report entitled “Private schools, which separate males and females, achieve great results”. The journalist stated that many people believed that the system of education in private schools was an open-minded and aristocratic one that attracted high-social classes which did not refuse the mixed gender learning, but rather encouraged it within schools. However, the reality was completely different from what we got used to, parents were willing and did welcome the first private school in Algeria which brought back the time of separation between males and females in the pupils’ physical, mental and emotional development, and to try keeping both genders apart in the classes by creating schools for girls and others for boys.

The bold idea, which was not expected to succeed, received much welcome and almost unanimously accept to establish this type of school, which, according to officials, aimed to protect the pupils in the pre-adolescence to adolescence periods from distracting their attention and being out controlled during the psychological and physical transformations they lived, which usually negatively affected their academic achievement at this sensitive stage, which was the stage of acquiring knowledge.

The private school, Kateb Yassine, in Koumba, Algiers, was the first model that resurrected the policy of single gender education as being influenced by previous schools that were pioneering in Algeria as Hassiba Ben Bouali and Warda Medad secondary schools, and the girls’ schools that were spread in previous years before they gradually started to disappear and to leave room for co-educational schools.

She carried on to ask the administrative working at Kateb Yassine school about the motives for going through this experience, Mrs. Hamoush, an administrative official, told her: “Yes, it is a bold step, and the results are amazed.” The school principal Mrs. Belaid, who studied throughout her career at girls’ schools in Hassiba Ben Bouali, and conveyed the positive side of such schools said: “We discovered that females are interested in their studies well when they are separated from the males, and vice versa that males do not study well in the presence of females. We have contacted the parents and suggested to them separate and mixed classrooms, and we gave them the total freedom to choose, so the surprise was that all the parents agreed, especially those who had daughters, but the male pupils’ parents refused

the idea. Since we embodied the idea of creating classes for girls, the results were impressive, and today we have two classes for girls at each level.”

As for the secondary school, Mrs. Belaid said that they sought to materialise the separation of the genders, because the number did not permit that, but in the future they would work with this system that proved effectiveness in all countries of the world that had an excellent educational system.

For her part, the principal of the school, Ms. Belaid, who had a teaching experience of 42 years, said that she did not study with male students in all the stages of her studies until university. That reinforced the acquisition of knowledge and the quality of the study. She added: “We are facing new changes, the family has changed, the values have changed, and society has changed and we discovered that the most dangerous and most important stage a child lives in, whether male or female, is the period that precedes puberty until adolescence between the ages of 11 to 15, at this age the child’s body changes, his mentality changes, he feels manliness, the hormones increase so the student becomes interested in his body and in the relationships he creates more than his interest in studying. ”

The Kateb Yassin School started separating girls from males in the middle stage as the first experiment, because it was the most important stage in education characterised by the acquisition of knowledge. It was the same stage that coincided with the change of the essence of the child’s interest from studying to other interests that represented what was going around him.

Ms. Belaid continued to say: “We did not force the parents, we wrote to them and explained to them our vision, and we left them free to choose. We found a great interaction, even the parents who we thought were rejecting the idea or what it seemed to us ... And the results spoke for themselves, we recorded great results for the girls’ school more than in the mixed ones. Even the teachers liked the separation of the genders, as it helped them to quietly work without disturbance and with ease, where lessons’ assimilation was good. Even the parents spoke to support this experiment and wish to generalise it at secondary school due to the satisfactory results.”

She also pointed out that the experience of Kateb Yassin in its beginning was not based on complete separation and isolation since males and females met in the school yard. However, the principal did not consider it as a hinder to establish complete separate schools, especially for girls, as it used to be previously and which gave positive results. To conclude the interview, Ms. Belaid said: “all throughout my study years, I was at girls’ school, do I look complicated?”

Secondary schools of Medea, in the city centre, are also single gender ones. There are four schools for girls and others for boys. There are even other separate middle schools. When the ex Minister of Education Mr. Ben Bouzid visited one of the middle schools, he was surprised by the well disciplined female pupils and he said: “Are we really in Algeria or in Kabul?” Throughout the last years, the secondary schools of Medea reached not less than 60% of success concerning the Baccalaureate exam. So why not the Ministry of Education generalises the single-gender procedure to cover all the educational stages all over Algeria so that no, less, gender gap will occur again between male and female pupils and to guarantee effective study results.

Recently on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, the Senator Mr. Mahmoud Kissari went far to speak about the Algerian Universities and described them as being the place for living emotional relationships which took all the students’ time instead of focusing on studying and getting degrees. He said that 11,6% of those relationships ended up with getting married while 88,4% with a failure in both studying and making a family. So, he suggested and asked the High Education and Scientific Research Minister Mr. Shems Eddine Shitour to establish a model single gender university so as to investigate the possibility of applying such kind of universities at the national level.

Our objective behind asking for single-gender education at least at the middle and secondary school levels is to clear the male and female pupils’ minds and to move away from anything that can divert them from being serious and responsible for their educational achievement. In implementing so, the pupils will be helped to safely pass their adolescence and with a psychological, mental and spiritual balance so as to achieve better results.

### **5.7. Further Research**

As with any investigative undertaking, once the researcher starts his/her study, other possible subjects to study begin to emerge and to look interesting, the same thing happened with us. The efforts we made to stay focused on our initial research questions and to keep the study streamlined helped us to put the other interests on the back burner for the time being. It is not easy, but not impossible, for the researcher to plan a valuable study which directs his/her thinking and looking towards the main objectives.

There are varieties of factors inside and outside school affecting the pupils’ learning process. The current research study has just focused on gender aspect that impacted the learners’ accomplishment. To determine all the impacting factors in a single attempt is an intricate task. It needs a great deal of sources and time for a researcher to investigate all the potential factors first and to discuss their causes and effects at once. It likewise necessitates a

deep and large preparing, training, ordered arranging and aptitudes to conduct such studies for deciding on the contributing components inside and outside school.

Further research is needed to explore the problem on a large sample from more schools including student factors, family factors, school factors and peer factors to compare results between urban, suburban, and rural schools. This type of study would expand the current body of knowledge to include a more varied group of pupils.

The procedure of identifying all variables must be given full consideration and priority so that educators can have the option to create instructional systems to avoid pupils' gender gap. This can be done through ensuring that all of them are given the chances to achieve equal results and to realise their fullest potential in learning and performance.

From the above results, we recommend the High Education and Scientific Research Ministry to re-conduct this study at the national level through including a larger sample of participants of both teachers and students by using the social media survey since this would be more representative and therefore, make results wider.

Our research study contains various implications for both policymakers and teachers. First of all, our results give valuable and reliable data to the educationists who look to adjust the existing gender differences among secondary school teachers of English. Then, our findings offer a deep sight for teachers concerning the differential effect of their gender on pupils' interactions like giving feedbacks, praising and the way of dealing with one gender more than the other.

The obtained results can likewise be utilised to expand our comprehension of the nature and sources of male pupils' academic difficulties. It is generally noticed and perceived that some boys have behavioural and social problems that may restrict their skills and capacities to attain better results. The findings can also help teachers pay attention to their behaviour so as to promote a more gender-neutral school environment, and this would be a valuable topic for further investigation.

It is also advisable for teachers to conduct the same research inside their own classroom or even among each other. They can attend and take notes about gender effect on their colleagues' pupils. For example, they can observe the questions asked to girls and those asked to boys or the questions each pupil asks or answers. The number and feature of those questions can then be compared. In addition, even pupils can do such a research on themselves and their mates. The findings can be presented and discussed as a valid interesting language learning activity. For instance, to notice whether girls tend to answer and ask questions more than the boys in the classroom or the vice versa. This may indicate that one of



them has less chances to perform in the class, but not necessary to mean that gender differences are disadvantageous because the pupils who keep silent may rather be consciously attending to and learning from the teachers' answers to the boys' or girls' questions.

It is recommended that future researchers replicate the present study and take in details data based on the initial achievement levels of pupils. The latter can be grouped into a lower achieving group, on-target group, and exceeds expectations group. At the end of the school year, the learner academic growth in these groups can vary by teacher gender.

It is also preferable to conduct future research through including other grade levels, like primary and middle schools and other subject areas such as science and social studies. Through this study, the significance of supporting pupils is highlighted so that they take part in collaborative discussions and activities through which they can effectively learn the English language and this can improve EFL students to notice and evaluate their advancement in the learning process.

While this research study gives insight into the influence of the EFL teachers' gender at the secondary school pupils' learning process, future research can examine other various significant inquiries. For instance, it is important to consider the long-range impacts of teacher gender on learners. Do these impacts decay or persevere to later education? It would also be interesting to investigate whether pupils are increasingly influenced by the novice teachers or by those who had a long teaching experience? Does the teachers' marital status influence their relationships with their pupils or not? Finally, future research can also explore the other school environment, family and social factors contributing in males' underachievement. Answers to these questions will help the policy makers in the field of education understand the impacts of school setting on both male and female pupils' improvement and long term accomplishments as well as the more brain research is explored, the more it will help support educators knowledge about gender differences, and the connection to male gender disparity in education.

Another point we want to raise, which will increase the pupils' level, is to implement English at the primary schools. We hope other university teachers or/and students will conduct a further research on the benefits of studying English at an early age like it used to be during 1988 at some schools. Why not to study English at all the levels and to make it the first spoken foreign language in Algeria since it is the first spoken language in the world. We wish this would be applied as soon as possible.

## 5.8. Conclusion

The empirical analysis conducted in the current study intended to explore the impact of EFL teachers' gender on pupils' outcomes in learning English at the secondary school level. Along with a respectable sample, interviews, observations and surveys, in combination with the results, could strengthen this study. Our data prove that the gender gap among pupils is persisted due to the strong effect of teacher gender on them. They also serve to support the contention that the classroom discourse is gendered and the interactions do matter since they enhance the learners' educational experience.

The current study affords teachers the opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge about the relationship between gender and teaching/learning style which can have implications for practice. The responsible educationists should be aware of the results of this study which indicate that gender differences do exist and the gender gap is increasing. The obtained results imply that female teachers are beneficial to most of the pupils' academic performance of both genders, but mainly girls. They are likely to be more satisfied at school with their female teachers. Female pupils to male ratio in learning English scores remain high, they outperform boys who are underperforming and losing. However, it is imperative not to assume that male teachers are teaching "better" than females or the vice versa. Instead, results from this study can be used as a springboard for conversations about the best way to meet the needs of both teachers and students in different environments.

In addition, we find evidence of teachers' behaviour that varies according to their learners' gender and the perception of the latter to their teachers as being role models. A significant point that should be mentioned is that this research study uses a fixed effect to reduce the threat of omitted variable bias in an attempt to deal with the issue of teacher-pupil gender so as to be prudent while planning the important policy recommendations and implications.

As being in the field of education, advantageous suggestions to bridge the gender gaps in performance can be through providing school programs containing role model ones, through which boys will be accompanied with male teachers and girls with female teachers. The teachers will help their same gender pupils highlighting the importance of being at school, as they can also be inspired and motivated to achieve better educational performance, since the attitude concept is considered as an essential component in English language learning. As the literature shown that gender had an influence on learning because male and female teachers illustrated the diversity of masculinity and femininity.

In this study, we have therefore tried to illustrate for practitioners as well as researchers some of the complexities of gender that can be avoided. Such useful recommendations will greatly help in closing the gender gap in educational performance among male and female pupils. On the long-term, they tend to perform better in learning English and why not to generalise it and apply it on the other subjects studied at the secondary school level and to other educational levels.

When using the strategies, that are well grounded in educational, sociological, and psychological research as discussed in the literature review, teachers can greatly affect the dynamics of their classrooms and build strong teacher-pupil neutral relationship so as to guarantee successful results. Such relationships should not be left to chance because they influence both the teaching and the learning processes as evidenced through teachers' and pupils' answers. Our main objective is to invest in the future pupil generations so as to increase their educational level.

In other words, while the study of gender is advancing apace, often in conceptually complex ways, new and even experienced language teachers are still continuing to discover its importance for the first time. A gender study is an important aspect having an impact on the process of learning and developing appropriate traits among students who may become teachers in the future. Moreover, gender studies can emerge as a higher investment priority not only in the process of teacher learning, but it is also important for the overall development of the society.

To conclude, most of this study reveals that teacher gender has a significant impact on various facets of the educational environment. It is our hope that this study will help promote an emphasis on discussing the topic of gender, therefore, worthy additional research should increasingly be conducted to expand to include a larger number of pupils in various educational institutions which would help in finding the impact of gender studies in the process of overall learning and teaching processes.

## **General Conclusion**

The current study was conducted as a result of our interest in how EFL teachers' relationships with their secondary school pupils were affected by the gender of both of them as well as on the latter English learning process. The impact of teacher gender on the outcomes of pupils is a topic of interest in the field of education which was broadly researched and investigated over decades. Our purpose for this study was to explore the various aspects of the gender effect on the teaching and learning processes. The research questions we sought to answer were: To what extent do secondary school EFL teachers' and pupils' genders affect learning English outcomes? To what extent are secondary school EFL teachers similar to or different from each other as far as their performances are concerned? Due to the educational gender gap, to what extent is learning English a gender-related phenomenon? To what extent is EFL classroom interaction gendered?

So as to answer the questions, we conducted the study at various secondary schools in Tiaret. The methodical procedures used in this research were the questionnaires and classroom observation followed up with interviews. The questionnaires provided information about the participants and the way they perceived the topic in search, the observations provided insights about the teacher-pupil interactions with focusing on the gender effect of both of them and the interviews, as being the final method, supported evidence and clarifications.

Since this research study further analysed the effect of teacher gender on secondary school pupil outcomes in learning English, our unique data afforded us a sample of six secondary schools and many pupils and teachers of both genders. The majority of our data came from students, through whom, we were allowed to take a closer look at the teacher-student interactions in a setting where the influence of gender could be particularly pronounced. Furthermore, the male and female teachers of English provided us with useful data allowing us to examine their relative effectiveness on the achievement of male and female students.

Secondary school teachers might pursue different objective orientations in their teaching, and through following their personal instructional strategies they showed to their students that school was the right place to learn, progress and to perform better so as to guarantee good future life conditions. Due to the importance of students' perceptions of the

learning environment, there were several studies focusing on the differences in the learning environment created by male and female teachers through their use of teaching methods.

According to the obtained findings, both of the male and female teachers held higher levels of the English language mastery. However, the EFL female teachers followed the pupil-centred approach as they were supportive more than male teachers, which in turn resulted in the good achievements that were found in the female teachers' pupils. Such relations were mainly stronger for girls than for boys. For the male teachers' pupils' performance was obviously different mainly for boys. So, it was concluded that teachers' gender had significant effects on the academic performance of their pupils. This implied that the rates of students' performance were not the same when being taught by a male or a female teacher as it was generated by the gathered data.

The results of this study formed a description of experiences and procedures that shaped the nature of teacher-pupils relationships. Based on the findings, the research questions were supported and resulted in proving the hypotheses suggested at the beginning of the study. Various fundamental actions, such as caring, respect and trust, were important in order to reinforce the interpersonal framework so that no room for the gender will be left to affect the pupils' English learning, as they served to promote a sense of cohesiveness in the classroom that were necessary for any teaching learning environments.

Our results showed that having EFL female or male teachers had a different impact on the male and female pupils' scores in secondary school; there were more positive achievements among students taught by female teachers, as there was a gender gap among the pupils with girls outperforming boys in studying English. At this level we could understand that due to the male and female teachers' differential observed characteristics, which were discussed in the second chapter, there was a disparity in the male and female pupils' results which was also mentioned in the first chapter. In short, we found that it was so evident that teachers of both genders had dissimilar impacts on pupils of both genders.

The question of whether the gender of the teacher influenced the achievements, attitudes and behaviour of secondary school pupils stood central. The assumption was, namely, that as female teachers' number increased, fewer male teachers took place in the educational sector. According to the research results, the pupils' gender gap and the boys' underachievement in comparison with the girls could detrimentally be affected by the decreased presence of males in the class as being role models for their male pupils. So, as it

was previously suggested matching pupils' gender with that of their teachers and/or classmates in a more relaxed atmosphere would help all the pupils to study more, achieve better results and be in a good behaviour.

Therefore, the obtained results of the current research gave a premise to educational policy makers and English language teachers with general and useful implications. As for the former, the findings showed that it was necessary to formally perceive the gendered contrasts in English language learning through implementing certain procedures which would bring regular observations about the gender differences in accomplishment and presenting new instructing and learning styles that would inspire male pupils to have the desire to learn English.

That was particularly significant in the light of the way that the educational framework ought to provide equivalent opportunities for everyone. In this way, the educational policy makers would be inspired to critically assess the English language, why not all the subjects, curricula for the sake of reformulating the teaching objectives and choosing the appropriate teaching techniques. Our findings also shed light on some other policy prescriptions for secondary school education. Research in educational psychology suggested that training programs focusing on method courses on gender studies can be useful to counteract and lessen that negative impact and improve the quality of classroom instructional interactions.

Concerning the benefits to the EFL teachers, the findings of the study served to develop teachers' comprehension of what was happening inside the classroom as looking at their pupils through social lenses which made them more mindful about the behavioural and classroom management problems they faced which were also mainly related to gender. They could also lessen the gender gap through fighting the anti-learning attitude among male pupils and using the purposely selective teaching methods which would ameliorate the male pupils' academic performance. Furthermore, teachers could greatly influence the boys by increasing their motivation, self confidence and esteem, changing their view about the importance of education and the significance of the English language all over the world.

However, the finding do not imply that one teacher is better or worse than the other, but instead there are some techniques to be followed to be an effective teacher no matter what the teacher's gender is. In terms of practical implications for educators, rather than saying that female teachers' pupils achieved better results, it might be more constructive to urge that the

search should be continued for the characteristics and behaviours associated with being a female teacher who led to better outcomes. Once identified, those characteristics could be analysed and addressed to the educational school programme.

Finally, with regard to foreign languages research, the outcomes reported in this research offered a window into the relationship between students'/teachers' gender and success in learning/teaching English as a foreign language. Since female and male teachers' interaction with female and male students was closely explored and pupils' beliefs of gender stereotypes could be leading to poorer English achievement, the gender differences which were observed would serve as an interesting starting point for further research.

We want to end by pointing out that our results applied to a very specific category of learners who were the secondary school ones. As such, it would be beneficial to consider that our results could be generalized to the other groups of the primary and middle school students. Having said this, future research should address this important issue in further detail, as it is needed to provide more definitive evidence about such an influence on pupils' desire to be at school no matter which subject they study. Despite this, the research analysis was a good first step at trying to understand why pupils of both genders were in favour to be taught by female teachers of English.

The conclusions of the study provided other researchers with a basis for addressing additional research questions, for instance: How do the social variables influence the individual dimensions in second/foreign language learning? How does gender influence learners' motivation or learning strategies/styles? These are topics for future inquiry.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix One: Pupils' Questionnaire

*Please put a tick ✓:*

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Section: Participants' Background

1. What is your gender? Female  Male
2. What is your teacher of English gender? Female  Male
3. How old are you?  
14– 16  17 – 19  20 and older
4. What is your grade?  
Year 1  Year 2  Year 3
5. Which stream do you study?  
Scientific stream  Literary stream

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Section: Learners' Attitudes toward their EFL Teachers.

6. I look forward to go to school because I do well. Yes  No
7. I consider English as a very important subject in my studies. Yes  No
8. My teacher of English is sure of what s/he teaches us. Yes  No
9. My teacher of English attracts our attention. Yes  No
10. My teacher of English teaches the lesson in a comprehensible style. Yes  No
11. My teacher of English easily gets angry. Yes  No
12. My teacher of English faces disruptive behavior problems in our class. Yes  No
13. I seriously consider the warnings of my teacher and I correct myself. Yes  No
14. My teacher of English is friendly/ strict Friendly  Strict
15. My Teacher' tests are hard and s/he is severe when marking papers. Yes  No
16. I regularly do my homework. Yes  No
17. My teacher is supportive of my success and gives positive feedback. Yes  No
18. My teacher is interested in my point of view and allows me to decide on things and/or make choices in class. Yes  No
19. I can comfortably express myself and I answer the questions. Yes  No
20. I don't hesitate and I talk with my teacher about any problem out of class. Yes  No
21. I like my teacher of English and I enjoy his/her classes. Yes  No
22. I respect my teacher of English. Yes  No



23. In my point of view, the teacher of English who teaches better is:

Male

Female

24. The teacher of English who discriminates between male and female pupils is:

Male

Female

25. Do you think that girls' and boys' school works are graded equally/fairly?

Yes

No

26. Do you ever compare your grades to a female/male classmate so that to check if you are graded as fairly as your female/male classmate?

Yes

No

27. Do you think that your academic achievement would increase if your classroom was single-gender, all boys, or all girls?

Yes

No

28. Would you like to have the opportunity to learn in a classroom with just male/ female classmates, and a male/female teacher of English?

Yes

No

**3<sup>rd</sup> Section: Learners' Perception of the Influence of EFL Teachers' Gender on their Learning Process.**

29. What would motivate you to increase your desire to study English?

.....  
.....

30. Do you think that there are differences between male and female teachers of English? Why? Why not? Explain more what are these differences?

.....  
.....

31. Do you want to be taught by a male or female teacher of English? Explain why.

.....  
.....

32. You can add extra information to describe your teacher of English.

.....  
.....

Thank You for Your Cooperation

## Appendix Two: Teachers' Questionnaire

### Letter of Request: Teachers

Dear Teacher,

I am conducting a thesis project for my Doctoral degree. This project involves a survey in which you are asked about your professional experience. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes. Responses will be kept confidential and anonymous, stored securely, and accessible only to my supervisor and I as the researcher.

Please feel free to contact me, through the e-mail provided below, if you wish to discuss any aspects of the study. Thank you very much for participating in this survey.

My e-mail: [sokguzel@hotmail.com](mailto:sokguzel@hotmail.com)

**Please pick one of the answers**

**1<sup>st</sup> Section: Participants' Background**

33. What is your gender? Female  Male

34. How old are you?

23 – 30  31 – 38  39 – 46  47 older

35. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

License Degree  Master Degree  Doctoral Degree

36. How many years have you been teaching English at the secondary school?

1-5  6-15  16 – 24  25 or more

37. Which year level do you currently teach?

Year 1  Year 2  Year 3

38. How can you characterise the secondary school you work at?

Urban  Rural

39. How many EFL male/female teachers are there currently at your secondary school?

Male  Female

**2<sup>nd</sup> Section: EFL Teachers' Gender-Based Differences.**

40. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with have generally positive attitudes toward their profession.

For males: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

For females: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

41. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with are collegial.

For males: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

For females: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

42. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with have effective teaching styles.

For males: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

For females: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

43. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with use effective classroom management strategies.

For males: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

For females: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

44. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with are patient and fair with their pupils.

For males: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

For females: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

45. The EFL male/female teachers I have worked with effectively serve their pupils as role models.

For males: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

For females: Strongly Agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

**3<sup>rd</sup> Section: EFL Teachers' Treatment to their Pupils Regarding their Gender Gap.**

46. I act confidently and I talk enthusiastically about my subject.

Yes  No

47. If my pupils don't agree with me and have something to say, I encourage them to convince me so as to share decisions. Yes  No

48. I immediately correct my pupils' mistakes. Yes  No

49. I help pupils with their work when needed. Yes  No

50. I am lenient; I give pupils a lot of free time. Yes  No

51. I am hesitant; I am not sure what to do when pupils fool around. Yes  No

52. I quickly get angry because I am impatient. Yes  No

53. I put disruptive pupils down and severely punish them. Yes  No

54. Behaviour is a problem in my classroom. Yes  No

55. Schools in Algeria are in progress or in decrease. Pro  Dec

56. The academic achievement gap between girls and boys continues to widen in Algerian secondary schools. Yes  No

57. When I interact with pupils I don't notice their gender. Yes  No

58. All pupils, regardless of gender can achieve academically in my classroom. Yes  No

59. The school I teach at provides professional development to help teachers to be more effective educators of low-outcome male/female pupils. Yes  No

60. Poorly trained and prepared teachers are to blame for the achievement gap between male/female pupils. Yes  No

**4<sup>th</sup> Section: Classroom Management and Teaching Styles**

61. How can you do to control disruptive behaviour in the classroom and to respond to the defiant pupils?

.....

62. How can you do to constructively help your pupils who show little interest towards learning English?

.....

63. How can you do to foster pupils' creativity in learning English?

.....

64. How can you do to establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?  
.....

65. How can you do to measure pupils' comprehension of your teaching?  
.....

66. How can you do to improve the level of a student who is falling?  
.....

67. How can you do to assist families for helping their children in doing well at school?  
.....

**5<sup>th</sup> Section: Pupils' Gender Differences versus the Influence of EFL Teachers' Gender.**

68. What are, if any, the score differences among male and female pupils?  
.....

69. How would you describe the other differences among your male and female pupils?  
.....

70. In what ways the gender of the teacher influences the males/females English learning outcomes?  
.....

71. Is there a need for more EFL male or female secondary school teachers? Why or why not?  
.....

72. What differences, if any, are there between EFL female and male secondary school teachers?  
.....

73. Are there any additional comments you wish to add pertaining to this study?  
.....

Thank You for Your Cooperation



Appendix Four: Interview Protocol

**Interview Protocol**

Time of interview :..... date : .....

Place :.....

Interviewer:..... Interviewee:.....

**Interview Questions**

1. How many years have you been teaching?  
.....
2. How do you shape your classroom climate?  
.....
3. How do you build your relationship with your pupils?  
.....
4. How do you deal with disruptive behavior in your classroom? Which strategies do you apply in such cases?  
.....
5. What is the main reason for pupils' lack of motivation in English class?  
.....
6. As a male/female teacher, how can you describe the dynamic or interaction in your classroom? In other words who performs and participates highly in your classes male or female pupils?  
.....
7. Do you notice an overall difference in test scores between male and female pupils?  
.....
8. How do you reward your pupils' success?  
.....
9. What feedback would you provide to your pupils' mistakes in the class?  
.....
10. Do you think the gender of the teacher makes a difference on male and female students' performance, behaviors and interactions in the classroom? How so?  
.....
11. Describe your feelings and attitudes towards your pupils  
.....

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## Summary

In the field of education, gender gains a great attention at the global level since it forms a significant difference in the scope of language teaching and learning. The present research study aims at investigating the influence of EFL teachers' gender on their learners' academic achievements at secondary schools. Gender differences were discerned through reporting the importance of students' perspectives towards the gender of their teacher of English, as well as the impact of the differences and similarities among male and female teachers in terms of the instructional strategies used in their classrooms. So as to evaluate the effect of teachers' gender, the study applied a mixed-method approach; the quantitative data were obtained from the questionnaires which were developed for both the EFL teachers and their pupils and the qualitative results were in a form of both classroom observations and teacher interviews. The overall findings of this study concluded that both parties held a strong conviction that gender played a major role in learning and teaching English. There was ample evidence that girls have significantly achieved better results than boys due to their teachers' gender. Although male and female teachers shared some aspects, the patterns of teacher-pupil interactions were gender related as their learners revealed the superiority of female teachers. Moreover, the patterns of pupil-teacher talk were also affected by the gender of the pupils since female pupils had more interaction with their female teachers while male pupils were in more contact with their male teachers. The present study also provides empirical implications for educational policy makers and English language teachers to enhance the learning experience, influence student success, and guide the development of teacher-pupil interactions which are considered essential for the pupils' learning environment.

## المخلص

في مجال التعليم يحظى نوع الجنس الاجتماعي باهتمام كبير على المستوى العالمي لأنه يشكل فرقاً كبيراً في نطاق تدريس اللغة وتعلمها. تهدف الدراسة البحثية الحالية للتحقق من تأثير نوع جنس معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية على الإنجازات الأكاديمية للتلاميذ في المدارس الثانوية. تم تمييز الفروق بين الجنسين من خلال الإبلاغ عن أهمية وجهات نظر الطلاب تجاه نوع جنس استاذ اللغة الإنجليزية، بالإضافة إلى تأثير الاختلافات والتشابهات بين الاساتذة رجالاً كانوا او نساء من حيث الاستراتيجيات التعليمية المستخدمة في فصولهم الدراسية. من أجل تقييم تأثير نوع جنس الأستاذ طبقت الدراسة منهجاً مختلطاً: تم الحصول على البيانات الكمية من الاستبيانات التي تم تطويرها لكل من اساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وتلاميذهم اما النتائج النوعية كانت في شكل ملاحظات مدونة في القسم ومقابلات مع الاساتذة. النتائج الإجمالية لهذه الدراسة خلصت إلى أن كلا الطرفين كان لديهما قناعة قوية بأن نوع الجنس يلعب دوراً رئيسياً في تعلم وتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. كانت هناك أدلة كثيرة على أن الفتيات حققن نتائج أفضل بشكل ملحوظ من الأولاد بسبب نوع جنس اساتذتهن. على الرغم من أن المعلمين والمعلمات يشاركون بعض الجوانب إلا أن أنماط التفاعلات بين المعلم والتلميذ كانت مرتبطة بنوع الجنس حيث كشف التلاميذ عن تفضيلهم لأساتذة نساء. علاوة على ذلك، تأثرت أنماط حديث التلاميذ والمعلمين أيضاً بجنس التلاميذ حيث كان لدى التلميذات تفاعل أكبر مع معلماتهن بينما كان التلاميذ الذكور على اتصال أكبر بمعلميهم الذكور. توفر الدراسة الحالية أيضاً أثراً تجريبية لوضعي السياسات التعليمية وأساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية لتعزيز تجربة التعلم والتأثير على نجاح التلميذ، وتوجيه تطوير التفاعلات بين الأستاذ والتلميذ والتي تعتبر ضرورية لبيئة تعلم التلاميذ.

## Résumé

Dans le domaine de l'éducation, le genre reçoit une grande attention au niveau mondial car il constitue une différence significative dans la portée de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage des langues. La présente étude de recherche vise à étudier l'influence du genre des enseignants d'Anglais sur les résultats scolaires de leurs apprenants dans les écoles secondaires. Les différences entre les genres ont été décelées en rapportant l'importance des points de vue des élèves sur le genre de leur professeur d'anglais, ainsi que l'impact des différences et des similitudes entre les enseignants et les enseignantes en termes de stratégies pédagogiques utilisées dans leurs classes. Afin d'évaluer l'effet du genre des enseignants, l'étude a appliquée une approche à méthodes mixtes; les données quantitatives ont été obtenues à partir des questionnaires qui ont été élaborés à la fois pour les enseignants d'Anglais et leurs élèves, et les résultats qualitatifs étaient à la fois sous forme d'observations en classe et d'entrevues avec les professeurs. Les conclusions générales de cette étude ont conclu que les deux parties étaient fermement convaincues que le genre jouait un rôle majeur dans l'apprentissage et l'enseignement de l'Anglais. Il a été largement démontré que les filles ont obtenu de meilleurs résultats que les garçons en raison du genre de leurs enseignants. Bien que les enseignants et les enseignantes partagent certains aspects, les modèles d'interaction enseignant-élève étaient liés au genre, car leurs apprenants révélaient la supériorité des enseignantes. De plus, les habitudes de conversation entre élèves et enseignants étaient également affectées par le genre des élèves, car les élèves féminin avaient davantage d'interactions avec leurs enseignantes tandis que les élèves masculins étaient plus en contact avec leurs enseignants. La présente étude fournit également des implications empiriques pour les décideurs de l'éducation et les professeurs d'Anglais afin d'améliorer l'expérience d'apprentissage, d'influencer la réussite des élèves et de guider le développement des interactions enseignant-élève qui sont considérées comme essentielles pour l'environnement d'apprentissage des élèves.