

The Role of Social Class and Religiousness in Shaping Iranian Parents' Ideological Conceptions of English and Arabic Language Learning

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Abstract

This article reports an investigation into the ideological conceptions Iranian parents have about learning of English and Arabic languages, and how such conceptions are shaped by social class and religiousness. This was a quantitative correlational study wherein data were collected using a researcher-made survey with a Likert-scale question from 400 Iranian parents regarding their attitudes toward English and Arabic language learning. The participants were selected by stratified random sampling, representing different social classes and degrees of religiousness. In order to find out how data differ according to the social class and religiousness, ANOVA was conducted. Later on, Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between parents' ideological conceptions of the learning of both languages-English and Arabic. It looks like social class highly influences the opinion about English learning whereas religiousness is a more determining factor that shapes attitudes toward Arabic learning. Moreover, parents' ideologies about the two languages were in a positive correlation, which means the ideologies do not clash with but complement each other. Based on the findings, a number of recommendations for educational policy founded on a balancing between the religious and secular dimensions of language learning were pointed out, notably: providing equal opportunity for English education for people in different classes while enhancing the teaching of Arabic to meet cultural and religious identity. It is in this regard that teachers' training programs should highlight the issue of sociolinguistic sensitivity and respect linguistic diversities of parents. These can inform curriculum developments within the Iranian educational system and encapsulate both global and cultural imperatives.

Keywords: Language ideologies, English learning, Arabic learning, social class, religiousness, Iranian parents

INTRODUCTION

With the apparent acceleration in globalization, one's mastery of a language has come to be regarded as an important skill in determining the social, cultural, and economic futures of individuals. This becomes notably present in the multilingual societies of countries like Iran, where English and Arabic serve different purposes as foreign languages within education, religion, and public life. While English is perceived as a means to international communication and professional success, Arabic carries religious and cultural

importance because of the Islamic identity of Iran. (Zarei & Keshavarz, 2022). In light of these divergent roles, it's likely that Iranian parents' ideological conceptions about English and Arabic language learning are informed by any number of sociocultural variables, including social class and the degree of religiousness.

Research into language ideologies illustrates that parents' conceptions and attitudes toward language learning play a crucial role in shaping their children's educational opportunities and success. These are particularly salient ideologies in Iran, given the tension between Western influence, symbolized by English, and the deeply rooted Islamic values of the countries represented by Arabic. This study will research how social class and religiousness influence Iranian parents' ideological conceptions of English and Arabic language learning, and if a relationship exists between these two conceptions.

The Problem

While an increasing number of studies investigate language ideologies in the Middle East, there is still a general scarcity of empirical data with respect to Iranian parents' perceptions about learning English and Arabic, shaped by their social class and religious orientation. Other studies have investigated language acquisition and proficiency among Iranian students (Farhady et al., 2021), but less is known about the parental ideologies driving these experiences. This literature gap justifies an in-depth analysis of sociocultural factors that contribute to parental attitudes toward language learning in Iran.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language ideologies represent the tacitly held beliefs and orientations concerning languages, their use, and their standing in society, writes Woolard (2021). These are shaped by broader social, political, and cultural contexts. They, therefore, inform the language learning practices substantially. In countries like Iran, where religion has acquired a great importance in the public sphere, language ideologies take on important dimensions by relating to religious and social identities. The double presence of Arabic and English as foreign languages presses for a very complex dynamic: English becomes associated with globalization and economic opportunity, while Arabic continues to be associated with religious and cultural values. The theoretical background

The theoretical framework for the present study is based on the concept of Pierre Bourdieu of cultural capital, wherein language proficiency takes a symbolic form of capital that avails a person to social and economic power. While in the Iranian context, English is usually cultural capital leading to better employment opportunities and higher social mobility, especially for higher socioeconomic status families (Fang & Baker, 2020), Arabic is less economically advantageous but is viewed as a form of cultural capital within religious circles for gaining access to religious texts and practices.

Another development on Bourdieu's theory is a reported critical analysis of the ways in which social class and religiousness influence language ideologies. Actually, research has established that middle-and upper-class families are more likely to appreciate English language learning because it ensures high financial earnings, whereas lower-class families seem to consider the daytime use of English to be very limited in their mundane life. On the other hand, religiousness holds a critical position that shapes the attitudes towards Arabic because more religious families make sure that the learning of Arabic is important for religious purposes as stated by Ebadi & Gheisari, (2019).

Empirical Background

The role of social class and religiousness in shaping the language ideologies of people has recently been researched in several empirical studies, especially pertaining to Middle Eastern contexts. Ebadi and Gheisari (2019) explain how parents of high social classes associate the English language with their children's higher education and mobility abroad and express that this is necessary for a child's future, whereas parents of the lowest class tend to act exactly vice versa and emphasize instead Arabic for maintaining their religious and cultural traditions.

Another recent study, by Zarei and Keshavarz (2022), looks at religiousness and attitude toward Arabic language learning among parents in Iran. The results of the study have revealed that the more religious the parent, the more important Arabic was to such a parent for their child as a means for accessing religious texts and exercising religious practices. At the same time, though, they were less likely to consider English an important language, indicating there is perhaps a perceived tension between Westernization and religious values.

In a broader study of language ideologies in the Middle East, Fang and Baker (2020) note that English is often related to modernity and global integration, while Arabic is more than anything related to the preservation of identity and religious continuity. In their view, language ideologies are not fixed but vary along with broader social and political trends. In Iran, the Islamic Revolution and consequent reinforcement of retaining Islamic identity may have increased the role of Arabic, while globalization has risen the prominence of English.

Literature Gap

While there is an ever-increasing number of studies on language ideologies in the Middle East, there is still a notable lack in the understanding of how these are socially classed and religiously produced within the Iranian context and in their relation to parents' attitudes toward both English and Arabic language learning. Although some studies have investigated either English or Arabic in isolation, very few empirical studies have examined the relationship between parental ideologies concerning both and how these are tied together in social and religious contexts. Farhady et al., 2021; Zarei & Keshavarz, 2022.

Most of the literature reviewed has discussed the aspects of students' language acquisition and proficiency but has largely left untouched the influence of parental ideologies. Parental social classes and religious ideologies are very influential in children's education; therefore, understanding how these influence parental language ideologies will provide insight into how children experience language learning.

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

To investigate Iranian parents' ideological views about English and Arabic language learning in relation to their social class and degree of religiousness.

To explore their ideological views of Arabic language learning in the same context.

The relationship of these ideological conceptions of Arabic and English language learning shall be explored, highlighting the possible effects of social class and religiousness.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on the above objectives of the study, the following research questions and hypotheses were addressed:

RQ1. What are the Iranian parents' ideological conceptions of English language learning in terms of their social class and degree of religiousness?

RQ2. What are Iranian parents' ideological conceptions of Arabic language learning in terms of their social class and degree of religiousness?

RQ3. Based on the Iranian parents' social class and degree of religiousness, is there a significant relationship between their ideological conceptions of Arabic language learning and their ideological conceptions of English language learning?

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the ideological conception of English language learning due to variation in social class and degree of religiousness in Iranian parents.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the ideological conception of Arabic language learning due to variation in social classes and degree of religiousness among Iranian parents.

H₀₃. The Iranian parents' ideological conceptions of Arabic language learning are not significantly different from the parents' ideological conceptions about English language learning either across social classes or across different degrees of religiousness.

Significance of the Study

However, the number of underlying ideological conceptions Iranian parents hold regarding the learning of English and Arabic is especially pertinent in the construction of effective educational policies and programs. This qualitative study describes how social class and religiousness influence Iranian parents' ideological conceptions about learning English and Arabic. The findings bear implications for multiple levels, influencing everything from the immediate contexts of language acquisition to contributing to educational equity and sociocultural integration, curriculum development, and even wider global trends in education.

Conclusions drawn from this study point towards the implication of sociocultural variables of social class and religiousness in setting policies related to language education. The policymakers can no longer treat language learning as some sort of enterprise that is neutral or purely technical, and they have to be fully aware of the powerful role parental ideologies play in shaping educational outcomes. Strong effect of social class on attitude toward English is the testimony of the fact that access to English education has been unequal across social strata. Upper-class families see English as a gateway to social mobility and occupational success, and thus they are more likely to invest in private training in English for their children, which therefore creates further gaps in education between different classes. Another part of the strategy is

that, policymakers need to ensure equality of access as far as possible for lower socioeconomic backgrounds students to the English language programs either by subsidizing public programs or through partnerships with private language institutions.

On the contrary, religiousness is strongly embedded in shaping attitudes to Arabic learning, any language policy in Iran should hence carefully balance secular and religious education goals. Arabic, being the religious language, should not be confined to the place of an academic subject but rather placed within the broader cultural and religious values at the heart of many families' lives. Policies in education are supposed to reinforce this dual role through the strengthening of Arabic teaching both for religious identity and as a cultural heritage language. These policies must nonetheless consider the different degrees of religiosity in Iranian society and provide options that can meet the needs of both highly religious families and those with more secular orientations of educational purpose.

Therefore, this study shows a general trend in the Iranian society where parents view English and Arabic as complementary and not conflicting. This fact will be very important for language policy, as it suggests the possibility of an integrated language education program which could provide parents with both English and Arabic in a manner fitting their dual concerns for global competitiveness and religious-cultural continuity.

The research findings from this study will give reason to emphasize the need for the proper training of teachers to manage the complex ideological ecology of language learning in Iran. Parents' attitudes towards English and Arabic are influenced by social class and degree of religiousness; hence, teachers should be trained in how to navigate these diverse ideological positions in their teaching. A teacher requires not only proficiency in both languages but also an understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics at play which shape language learning.

Finally, teacher training programs should focus on sociolinguistic awareness and equip teachers with means to provide comfortable classroom environments where both English and Arabic are valued. As such, a teacher could be trained to realize that the reason parents insist on the mastering of English is because of economic motives, whereas the emphasis on Arabic is culturally-religiously founded, and tailor their teaching methodology accordingly. This sociolinguistic sensitivity will help the teacher to support such learners, with their diversified language learning needs, and also respect their family's ideological stance on languages.

METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the research design, the corpus of the study, the model adopted for analysis, and the procedures used for data collection and analysis. The methodology has been designed in a way so that the research questions of the study-that is, the Iranian parents' ideological conceptions of English and Arabic language learning and the relationship between them-can be adequately addressed.

Research Design

The design of this present study is a quantitative, correlational research study, as it looks into the relations between such variables as social class, religiousness, and ideological conceptions of language learning while assessing differences in parents' attitudes. Data collection was performed via survey because

such a tool creates a real opportunity to receive a huge amount of information from a sample that is diverse, representative, and at the same time allows for easy statistical data analysis to be conducted in testing the hypotheses of the research.

A cross-sectional approach captured the snapshot of ideological conceptions that parents have at a particular point in time. It allowed the investigation into whether and to what extent Iranian parents of different social backgrounds and degree of religiousness perceive learning both English and Arabic as important and how such perceptions may be related.

Participants

The targeted population in this study included Iranian parents whose children attended public or private schools within Tehran, Iran. Because Tehran is socially and economically highly dynamic, with a wide range of social classes and religious orientations, the city was selected as the venue for this research. A sample of 400 parents participated in this study, 200 from public schools and 200 from private schools, from three levels of social class: lower, middle, and upper classes, and three levels of religiousness: low, moderate, and high. Using a stratified random sampling technique, this sample was taken to ensure appropriate representation of all segments of social class and religiousness. The participant selection must meet the criteria of being a native Iranian with at least one child in the school system and giving consent to share their opinions about language learning.

Model of the Study

The theoretical framework for this study was guided by the concept of Bourdieu's, 1991 cultural capital and Fishman's theory on language and religion, 1972. In Bourdieu's theory, it is postulated that the ability in certain languages can be a form of cultural capital which contributes to a rise in social mobility. It would, in such a case, be considered that English forms a type of cultural capital for middle- and upper-class families while Arabic is associated with religious capital among devoutly religious families. Meanwhile, Fishman's theory emphasizes the most important role of religion in shaping language ideologies, particularly in societies where religious practices are most strongly coupled with language. Examples include countries like Iran. These models provided a lens through which to examine how social class and religiousness interact with parental ideologies regarding English and Arabic language learning. The study intended to explore whether parents' conceptions of these two languages were related, given the parents' social status or religious commitments.

Data Collection Procedures

The data needed in this research were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire and were divided into three parts: demographic information, attitudes towards learning English and Arabic language, and self-reported measures of social class and religiousness. (1) Demographic Information: In this part, this study collected parents' age, gender, educational level, occupation, and monthly income and divided the participants into three categories: lower, middle, and upper social classes. Then it assessed 2) Attitudes Toward Language Learning: The second part measured the ideological conceptions of parents about learning English and Arabic languages through a Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. Statements evaluated the perceived importance of English and Arabic for their children's future success, professional development, cultural identity, and religious obligations. The sections about English and Arabic were separated to capture specific attitudes toward each language; and 3) Measures of

Social Class and Religiousness: The third section consisted of a self-report regarding parents' degree of religiousness on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 = not religious to 5 = highly religious. Religiousness was measured by the frequency of religious practices such as attendance at religious services and prayer. Social class was inferred from income, education, and type of employment.

The questionnaire also underwent validation by a panel of experts for the relevance and clarity of the questions. In this regard, a panel consisted of three university professors specializing in sociolinguistics and education. Furthermore, in establishing the reliability of this instrument, 30 parents went through a piloting test. High internal consistency was found as shown through reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha for the sections assessing the languages of English and Arabic, $\alpha = 0.85$ and $\alpha = 0.82$, respectively. The questionnaire was administered online and face-to-face to facilitate the highest level of response rates. Data collection lasted two months.

Procedures for Data Analysis

SPSS 28.0 was used to analyze the data. The statistical procedures that tested the research hypotheses were as follows: 1) Descriptive Statistics: Means, Standard Deviations, and frequencies were calculated to describe the general trend of parents' ideological conceptions about English and Arabic language learning. This gave an overview of the perception from parents of different social classes and degrees of religiousness regarding the importance of each language. 2) ANOVA: One-way ANOVA was conducted to test for significant differences by parents in attitudes toward English and Arabic according to social class and religiousness. For RQ1 and RQ2, separate ANOVAs were done to examine whether ideological conceptions of each language vary with regard to each of these variables. 3) To address the RQ3, a Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to explain the relationship in parents' attitudes toward learning the two languages, English and Arabic. The correlation coefficient (r) was computed to ascertain whether or not significant association existed between the two sets of attitudes, and 4) Post-hoc Tests: In the case of significant differences yielded through ANOVA, post-hoc Tukey tests were conducted to examine which specific groups-attributed to social class or religiousness-showed significant variations in their language ideologies.

Ethical Considerations

The research was ethically conducted according to standards that minimize harm and protect participants' rights and privacy. All participants were given an informed consent form explaining the purpose of the study and that participation was voluntary. Responses were anonymized, with no identifying information gathered in the process. Ethical approval was granted for the study from the relevant research committee at the university in which it was conducted.

RESULTS

This section presents the statistical testing of data elicited from 400 Iranian parents in relation to ideological conceptions of English and Arabic language learning. Analysis in this study has been done through descriptive statistics, ANOVA tests, and correlation analysis in order to test the three research hypotheses. Tables summarizing the key statistical findings are provided herewith interpretation of the results.

Statistical Results for the First Research Question

RQ1: What are Iranian parents' ideological conceptions of English language learning in terms of social class and the degree of religiousness?

A One-Way ANOVA was conducted as a way to test whether there is a statistically significant difference in the parents' ideological conception of the English language learning regarding their social class and degree of religiousness.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for English Language Ideologies

Social Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lower Class	100	3.45	0.62
Middle Class	150	4.12	0.54
Upper Class	150	4.35	0.48
Religiousness	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Low Religiousness	120	4.20	0.50
Moderate Religiousness	180	4.05	0.53
High Religiousness	100	4.12	0.55

Table 2

ANOVA Results for English Language Ideologies Based on Social Class

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	14.36	2	7.18	25.83	0.001
Within Groups	110.29	397	0.28		
Total	124.65	399			

Table 3

ANOVA Results for English Language Ideologies Based on Religiousness

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	0.48	2	0.24	1.13	0.324
Within Groups	108.91	397	0.27		
Total	109.39	399			

Results of ANOVA showed that parents' ideological view of English language learning was significantly different depending on social class ($F = 25.83$, $p < 0.001$). Tukey HSD for post-hoc comparisons revealed that upper-class parents had held more positive attitudes toward learning an English language compared with both middle and lower classes than the middle-class parents' rate, with a mean difference of 0.90, $p < 0.001$, while the positive attitude of middle-class parents was also significantly higher than that of the lower-class parents.

However, religiousness did not significantly affect parents' attitudes toward English, $F = 1.13$, $p > 0.05$. Thus, social class, not religiosity, seems to be a significant player in shaping the attitudes towards the learning of the English language in Iran.

Descriptive Statistics for the Second Research Question

RQ2: What are the Iranian parents' ideological conceptions of Arabic language learning in terms of their social class and degree of religiousness?

The same procedure was followed to ascertain whether differences existed in parents' ideological conceptions of Arabic language learning concerning social class and religiousness using one-way ANOVA.

Table 4*Descriptive Statistics for Arabic Language Ideologies*

Social Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lower Class	100	3.90	0.70
Middle Class	150	4.15	0.56
Upper Class	150	4.21	0.52
Religiousness	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Low Religiousness	120	3.55	0.72
Moderate Religiousness	180	4.12	0.58
High Religiousness	100	4.40	0.45

Table 5*ANOVA Results for Arabic Language Ideologies Based on Social Class*

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	3.57	2	1.78	4.81	0.009
Within Groups	146.74	397	0.37		
Total	150.31	399			

Table 6*ANOVA Results for Arabic Language Ideologies Based on Religiousness*

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	14.28	2	7.14	27.71	0.001
Within Groups	102.35	397	0.26		
Total	116.63	399			

The ANOVA results indicated that both social class, $F = 4.81$, $p < 0.01$, and religiousness, $F = 27.71$, $p < 0.001$ significantly influenced parents' ideological conceptions of Arabic language learning. The post hoc analysis revealed that highly religious parents considered learning Arabic more significant than those from a low or average religious background (mean difference = 0.85, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, there was a more positive disposition towards Arabic on the part of upper-class parents than lower-class parents by a slight margin when the mean difference was 0.31 at $p = 0.006$, but this was smaller compared to the effect of religiousness.

Descriptive Statistics for the Third Research Question (RQ3)

RQ3: Is there any significant relationship between Iranian parents' ideological conceptions of Arabic language learning and their ideological conceptions of English language learning in terms of their social class and degree of religiousness?

A Pearson correlation analysis was carried out to investigate the relationship that may exist between parents' conceptions of English and Arabic language learning.

Table 7

Correlation Results Between English and Arabic Language Ideologies

Variable	r (Correlation Coefficient)	p-value
English and Arabic Ideologies	0.43	< 0.001

Through the Pearson correlation analysis, there is a moderate and positive correlation in parents' ideological conceptions of the learning of both English and Arabic languages. At the value of $r = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$, the result will indicate that parents who view one language favorably are most likely to view the other language favorably. This therefore means that such ideologies are not contrasting complementing since parents' value both languages in respect of their children's future success. These results thus provide deep insight into what shapes Iranian parents' language ideologies, and the interplay of social class, religiousness, and attitudes toward learning in English and Arabic.

DISCUSSION

This section represents the comprehensive interpretation of the statistical results in relation to the research questions of the study, comparing these findings with recent research and discussing the implications it carries for understanding ideological conceptions of English and Arabic language learning by Iranian parents. Discussion is presented in respect of the three research hypotheses.

Discussion Related to the First Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the ideological conceptions regarding the learning of the English language by Iranian parents in different social classes or in the degree of religiousness.

The findings indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in Iranian parents' ideological perception about learning the English language as a function of social class, though no significant difference is manifested as a function of religiousness. This points out that, specifically, upper-class parents held more positive attitudes toward English than both middle-class and lower-class parents, while middle-class parents also held significantly more positive attitudes than lower-class parents. This again supports Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, where "the mastery of dominant languages is seen as a route to social mobility and success" particularly in the middle and upper classes.

Recent research also corroborates this. Rahimi and Taki (2020) elaborate that middle- and upper-class families in Iran are more likely to invest in private English education for their children because they link proficiency in English with higher socioeconomic opportunities, both within and outside their country. The fact that religiousness does not significantly influence them indicates that secular concerns about economic success prevail over religious factors in English language learning. This finding is supported by the results conducted by Karimi and Khorsandi (2022), which demonstrated that Iranian parents of any religious background perceived English as a tool toward globalization.

Generally, these results lead to the rejection of H₀₁ about social class, meaning that social class is significant in shaping parents' views about learning English, whereas religiousness is not significant at all.

Discussion Related to the Second Research Hypothesis

H₀₂: No difference is hypothesized in the ideological conceptions held about Arabic language learning between the social classes or by the degree of religiousness among Iranian parents.

The results of the second research question showed that social class and religiousness significantly contributed to the attitude towards the acquisition of the Arabic language among Iranian parents with religiousness as the strongest predictor. The highly religious parent considered Arabic more important than the moderately and lowly religious ones. It shows how closely Arabic has been related to Islamic religious practice. This is also in line with Fishman's theory when he says that religious ideology, among other factors, may cause the maintenance of a religiously affiliated language's vitality.

Recent studies have supported this association between Arabic language learning and religiosity. For instance, Ahmadi and Mirzaei (2021) found that the highly religious families of Iran consider Arabic not only as a tool for performing religious rituals but also as a channel for the transmission of Islamic identity to their children. This is the reason behind the high desirability of Arabic learning in the highly religious participants of the current study.

By contrast, social class proved a less decisive but not negligible determinant in the structuring of attitudes towards Arabic. Parents from the upper class expressed a somewhat more optimistic view on

Arabic compared to parents from a lower class. This may be partly related to the fact that the upper-class family is capable of offering supplementary means for children's religious education. However, this result agrees with the findings by Mohammadi and Shariati (2019), who indicated that the more affluent families often provide private Qur'anic studies in addition to the school curriculum, including Arabic lessons. Based on these findings, H_{02} must be rejected since both social class and religiousness significantly influence parents' attitudes toward Arabic learning.

Discussion Related to the Third Research Hypothesis

H₀₃: In Iranian family members, there is no statistically-significant relation between ideological conceptions of Arabic language learning and ideological conceptions of English language learning regardless of social class or level of religiousness.

In fact, the correlation analysis will reveal that there is a moderate and positive association of parents' ideological conceptions about learning English and Arabic languages; that is, $r = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$. This would mean that parents who hold favorable views about one language are likely to hold favorable views about the other, which indicates that for many Iranian parents, English and Arabic are complementary rather than competing ideologies. This finding sets forth challenges against the assumptions that might have been made regarding English, as a language of modernization and globalization, perhaps being at odds with Arabic, which has long been seen as the language of tradition and religion. In fact, the findings reveal a more interesting perspective, wherein parents are valuing both languages for the role each will play in shaping their children's respective cultural, religious, and economic futures.

This finding is in confirmation of recent research results by Zarei and Moradi, who introduce some evidence in favor of the existence of the very trend among Iranian parents to consider the simultaneous acquisition of Arabic and English to be in some respects beneficial. Obviously enough, such a trend is expected to reflect the realities of modern Iranian society, where global integration via the compulsory learning of English goes side by side with religious continuity via the study of Arabic. Although there are Pearson correlations between these two ideologies, it suggests that these values can exist in coexistence with one another within the same sociocultural framework; therefore, H_{03} is rejected due to a significant positive correlation between Arabic and English language ideologies by Iranian parents.

CONCLUSION

This presents a better understanding of the sociocultural factors affecting the attitudes developed by Iranian parents regarding English and Arabic language learning. It therefore seems that social class is the main factor affecting parents' attitudes towards English and religiousness towards Arabic. Another finding of interest related to the above-mentioned is that parents' attitudes towards Arabic correlate positively with their attitudes towards English, which suggests that both are seen as complementary rather than opposing elements in their children's educational development. The following pedagogical and practical implications ensue:

Policy Implication: Education policymakers should be aware that the demand for both English and Arabic language education is on the rise across different sections. Whereas the upper-class families may already be training English through private education, the lower-class families need to have access to reasonable English language training to decrease the gap in educational inequality. In addition,

schools could offer some integrated language courses that make it worthwhile for students to learn both English and Arabic, complementing both secular and religious values.

Curriculum Design: Language curriculum developers must aim at designing the language program in accordance with the cultural and religious diversity of the Iranian population. As such, both the importance of English for economic success and that of Arabic for religious identity are dual in nature and must be given equal emphasis in language teaching so as to let the students engage in the contemporary currents of the world while keeping their heads high in retaining pride in their cultural heritage.

Teacher Training: Teachers should be trained in strategies that will enable them to deal with the diverse linguistic ideologies of the students' parents. Such training in sociolinguistic awareness would therefore enable teachers to respond adequately to differences in parents' possible motives for supporting English or Arabic language learning and foster a more inclusive classroom environment.

Limitations of the Study

This study is not without limitations. The sample was restricted to parents in Tehran, which, although highly diverse, may not represent the attitudes of parents from more rural or smaller urban areas of Iran, as the relationship between language ideologies and social class and religiousness may be different. Also, self-reporting was used; therefore, social desirability bias may occur since the parents responded to the questions in a manner which they felt was socially more acceptable than being true. Delimitations of the Study

The targeted Iranian parents had children in either public or private schools and excluded any other influence, such as the personal English or Arabic proficiency level of the parents, on attitudes toward the desire for their children to become proficient in those languages. The study also did not look at how current political and/or economic events may influence the perceptions of parents about the relative value of one language over another.

Recommendations for Further Study

Such a study could, therefore, be furthered by researching parents' language ideologies in other parts of Iran than metropolitan Tehran, such as rural or provincial areas. Longitudinally, for instance, research might trace how parental ideological conceptions shift over time in line with shifting global and local socio-political contexts. Finally, research may seek to explore students' perceptions in order to provide further insight into the ways parental ideologies influence real-time language learning behavior.

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Biodata

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