

# Attitudes and motivation of Tunisian youth towards learning English as a foreign language

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**Abstract-** The current study aims at investigating the two most important social psychological variables: the motivation and attitudes in learning English towards a different level of education. A random sample of 170 students studying English in primary, secondary, and higher education was surveyed using the Attitude Motivation Test Battery. The 4 domains used to achieve the aim of the study were: (1) attitudes toward learning English as a foreign language (2) motivational intensity, (3) degree of integrativeness, and (4) degree of instrumentality. The findings show that the students have positive attitudes and high motivation for learning the English language. In addition, the data on the students' motivation demonstrates a positive orientation towards learning English in both integrative and instrumental factors, while their instrumental motivation slightly outpaces their integrative motivation. It is found that instrumental motives are regarded as the key basis of the students' attitudes toward learning English. The study, on the other hand, reveals a positive correlation between attitudes and motivation in total.

**Keywords:** attitudes, English as a foreign language, instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, Tunisian youth

## 1. INTRODUCTION

After Independence Day specifically in 1958, the English language was introduced in Tunisia. The presence of the English language resulted in competition with the French language as the most dominant foreign language in the country since the period of colonization. While the Arabic and French language continues to rival, English, on the other hand, has begun to spread. The introduction of English started in the educational system, therefore in the business industry, and since then, it has been known to increase in all domains (Daoud, 2001). After the 2011 revolution in Tunisia, English has become a compulsory subject at all levels of education, from the fourth grade in elementary school to the postgraduate level at university. This is due to growing awareness of English and the importance of teaching it at an early age in order to promote and gain mastery of it. (Dridi et al., 2020). "Nowadays, we can admit that English is present at all levels in the Tunisian square" (Smari et al., 2020: 222). Tunisian teenagers consider Tunisian Arabic (TA) as their official language, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) as their identity language, French as their second language, the language of prestige and status, and English as the language of affection (Jabeur, 2000). This increasingly favourable attitude towards English is bound to enhance its spread.

### 1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study investigates the English language learning perceptions of Tunisian students to see whether they are integratively or instrumentally motivated to learn English and also to gauge attitudes towards learning English. Based on the topic and the chosen country, the present paper aimed to answer these research questions: (1) What is the level of the students' attitudes towards English language learning? (2) What is the level of the students' motivation for English language learning? (3) What types of motivation – integrative or instrumental – could be the primary source of the student's motivation for learning English? (4) Is there a relationship between attitude and motivation towards learning the English language?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 LANGUAGE ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH IN TUNISIA

One of the most important aspects impacting language learning, according to Gardner and Lambert (1972), is the learners' attitude towards the target language. If a person has a positive perspective towards the target language and society, s/he wants to become a member of the language group and culture. Furthermore, s/he will consciously encourage her-/himself to fulfil her/his language learning objectives.

Language attitudes are "the feelings people have about their own language or the language of others" (Crystal, 1997: 215). Despite the linguistic situation in Tunisia, which is known as complex and diverse (Smari & Navracics, 2019; Dridi et al., 2020; Salah et al., 2020), the number of studies in Tunisia focusing on language attitudes is limited. Aouina (2013) studied the attitudes of Tunisian teachers and students towards languages. The results revealed that teachers have a more positive attitude towards French than English, whereas students seem to have a more positive orientation towards English. There is no proof that English takes the place of any other language in Tunisia, but it tends to occupy the scene. This is expressed in the positive attitudes of younger generations towards English as an international language and a language of technology and science. It has been shown that the language policy in Tunisia seems to favour English, and this was evident in the answers of the three language inspectors when asked about the most useful language to learn. Another similar research was carried out by Jabeur (1999). It studied the attitudes of teens on affection,

identity, and status. Modern Standard Arabic has been ranked as the main language of identity, while French has been associated with high status and English with affection.

Unlike Aouina and Jabeur, Bajaoui (2018) studied Tunisians' attitudes towards English and its use. The results showed that for the Tunisian people, English is culturally more recognized than French and receives positive attitudes as an international language. Moreover, English is triggering Tunisians' willingness to learn it. However, it depicts an attitude of ambivalence since a vast number of Bejaouis' participants do not value the social status of English but value its instrumental status (as cited in Salah et al., 2020).

The comparison of the attitudes and motivation of the students can assist in understanding the relationship between those variables. As a result, teachers should be notified of this relationship so that they can recognise problems in the language classroom and find better solutions (Genc & Aydin, 2017).

## 2.2 LANGUAGE MOTIVATION

The Latin verb *movere*, which means 'to move', is the origin of the term motivation. What motivates a person to make certain decisions, act, and continue in action – these questions are at the core of motivation theory and science (Ushioda, 2012). Motivation has gained a lot of interest in the field of second or foreign language learning studies, and it has been influenced by social-psychological approaches as one of the most influential fields (Deldeniya et al., 2018).

Gardner (1985) defines motivation as "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (p. 10). According to the author, it is critical to be aware of the learners' ultimate purpose or reason for learning the language in order to comprehend why language learners were motivated. This was dubbed *learner's orientation*. Gardner (2000) identifies two forms of motivation for learning languages: integrative and instrumental motivation. The researcher claims that the first one is critical to language learning performance. If the learners' attitudes and motivation towards the target culture are positive, second language learners rapidly integrate into the second language culture. Instrumental motivation is linked to the learners' real needs, such as finding a career, completing a test, or earning a lot of money (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Learners who are instrumentally motivated tend to reach a goal for their own enjoyment.

Concerning which sort of motivation is more connected with success in learning a foreign language, Gardner and Lambert (1972) discovered that in the example of bilingual Montreal, integrative motivation was more tied to proficiency in the French language. However, a study in India emphasised the significance of instrumental motivation in acquiring English proficiency, and it appears to be more beneficial for English learners (Lins, 2007). Furthermore, the importance of integrative orientation has been questioned by other research in various contexts; for example, Burstall and colleagues (1974 as cited in Graham, 1997; 1998) discovered that both integrative and instrumental motivation played a significant role in the success of second language learners in UK schools.

Integrative and instrumental motives are not found to be on different sides of a continuum, according to Dornyei (2001). They are connected positively, and both are effectively oriented objectives that might result in learning. They may both result in increased skill and accomplishment in the target language (Dornyei, 1994; 2001). Wan-er (2008) asserted that, while instrumental motivation does not have the same beneficial role as integrative motivation, it frequently works in tandem with integrative motivation in a learner's study.

However, most of the researchers agreed that "[n]egative attitudes toward the target language and its community may cause students' demotivation while positive attitudes may increase the level of motivation" (Deldeniya et al., 2018: 13). These two variables are thought to correlate with efficient language learning (Deldeniya et al., 2018).

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the present study, Gardner's (2004) Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) questionnaire was used as a base to design the used questionnaire. It consisted of two themes that respected the funnel technique by asking questions going from the foremost general to the most specific. The commencement of the survey includes a few demographic questions, such as gender, age, year of studying English, and fields of the study due to their possible impact on the data collected. The second part contained Attitude Item (25 questions), Integrative Motivational Item (13 questions), and Instrumental Motivational Item (10 questions). These questionnaire items were evaluated using a six-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). It is worth noting that the questionnaire items were developed in English for secondary school and university students and then translated into Modern Standard Arabic since primary school pupils would understand all the questions better in MSA than in English.

As far as the case study is about Tunisia, all the target participants were Tunisian students. The data was gathered from a group of 170 students which was completed by 50 pupils from primary school, 43 students from a secondary school as well as 77 university students. Further details will be presented in the next chapter.

The researchers initiated contact with the head of the 3 different educational institutions and got their oral and written approval and cooperation in carrying out the questionnaires. The surveys were presented to students during their regular class sessions in person by the first author of this study, and they were provided clear directions and explanations for completing the questionnaire. They were assured about the confidentiality and anonymity of the data collection, which will solely be used for research purposes. They were also asked to provide accurate and honest replies and to simply respond according to the statements that better match their own opinions and feelings. Furthermore, the participants were told to ask for any explanations they needed. There were some difficulties in administering the questionnaires, especially in high school education due to a large number of students in classes where the maximum was 30 students in one classroom. In this situation, the researcher found herself in obligation to read the questionnaire items one by one, sometimes to translate words into TA. As a result, the completion of the questionnaires last almost 45 minutes.

To treat such a form of data, the researchers tended to process them while using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to come up with results and use tables and charts to visualize the statistical results.

To interpret the mean score for students' attitudes and motivational levels, an interpretation process was used intended for English language acquisition, such as e.g., Vate-U-Lan & Masouras (2018) as indicated in the table below:

**Table 1. Explanation of 6-point Likert scale**

Scale	Mean Range	Score Range	Motivation Level	Attitude Level
6	Strongly Agree	5.17 – 6	Highest	Very positive
5	Agree	4.33 – 5.16	High	Positive
4	Slightly Agree	3.50 – 4.32	Slightly High	Slightly Positive
3	Slightly Disagree	2.67 – 3.49	Slightly Low	Slightly Negative
2	Disagree	1.84 – 2.66	Low	Negative
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00 – 1.83	Lowest	Very Negative

The mean score for each question reflected the degree of the student's attitude and motivation; a high score indicates that the students are highly motivated and have a very positive attitude, whereas a low score indicates that the students are less motivated with a very negative attitude. However, it's worth noting that the Likert scale for the statements with negative wording was reversed, which means that the lower the score, the stronger the agreement with the negative statement. In other words, a "strongly disagree" response got six points, a "disagree" response received five points, a "slightly disagree" response received four points, and so on. This was carried out to adjust for response bias and ensure that attitudes and motivation were accurately measured.

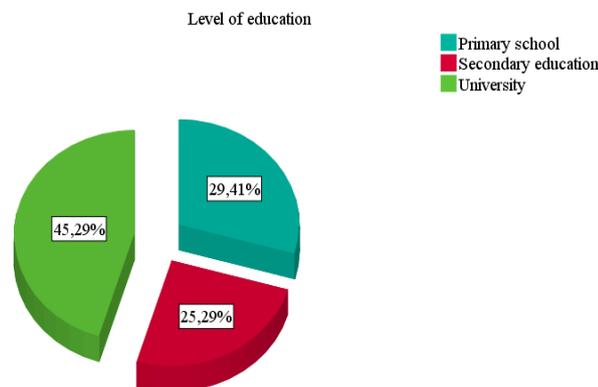
The statistic formula by Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$  or coefficient alpha) was used to measure the reliability or internal consistency of the questions on the survey, and it was discovered that the reliability of the attitude and motivation questions was 0.833, which can be interpreted as excellent internal consistency (CA, 2014).

#### 4. RESULTS

Calculating the mean responses and the Standard Deviation (SD) of each class and tabulating them led to the figures and tables from each questionnaire. Responses within each of the four categories in the questionnaire are analysed and discussed as follows. The 6-point Likert scale used in this study assumes an average rating of 3.50 as above slightly positive and 2.8 below. Results are shown by category and by item. The findings of this study are divided into four parts: (1) general information about the subjects, (2) students' attitudes and motivation, (3) type of motivation, and (4) relationship between attitude and motivation.

##### 4.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

The 170 respondents were 86 male and 84 female students aged between 11 and 19+ years. They were in different grades of study ranging from the sixth grade in primary school to the third year in university. Figure 1 below portrays the percentage of respondents at each year level.



**Figure 1: Students' level of education**

##### 4.2 THE LEVEL OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATION TOWARDS LEARNING ENGLISH

This section contains comprehensive information about the findings. The following tables (Tables 2, 3, and 4) outline all the questioned items, their resulting itemized total mean scores, using descriptive statistics of mean scores and SD, and their corresponding attitude and motivation levels, which serve as the basis for further interpretation and implications.

**Table 2. The overall mean of students' attitudes and motivation**

	Sum of Mean	Total Mean	SD	Level
<b>Attitude</b>	121,78	4,87	0,641	Positive
<b>Motivation</b>	117,53	5,11	0,605	High

Table 2 above indicates the overall mean score and average mean scores for the two social psychological variables: attitude and motivation. The results are presented in average mean scores indicating the levels based on the criteria outlined in Table 1.

**Table 3. Attitude level of Tunisian students in learning the English language**

<b>Descriptive Statistics of Attitude</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Level</b>
1. I wish I could speak many foreign languages	5.71	0.659	Very positive
2. I don't pay much attention to the feedback I receive in my English class	4.46	1.654	Positive
3. Learning English is really great	5.36	1.214	Very positive
4. Studying foreign languages is not enjoyable	5.12	1.512	Positive
5. I make a point of trying to understand all the English I see and hear	5.12	1.256	Positive
6. I hate English	5.12	1.557	Positive
7. I wish I could read newspapers and magazines in many foreign languages	4.78	1.563	Positive
8. I do not bother checking my assignments when I get them back from my English teacher	3.61	1.869	Slightly positive
9. I really enjoy learning English	5.14	1.338	Positive
10. If it were up to me, I would spend all of my time learning English	4.05	1.536	Slightly positive
11. I keep up to date with English by working on it almost every day	4.09	1.658	Slightly positive
12. When it comes to English homework, I just skim over it	4.61	1.551	Positive
13. I would rather spend my time on subjects other than English	4.15	1.709	Slightly positive
14. I would really like to learn many foreign languages	5.26	1.347	Very positive
15. I put off my English homework as much as possible	4.33	1.598	Positive
16. English is a very important part of the school program	4.88	1.568	Positive
17. I plan to learn as much English as possible in the Future	5.08	1.301	Positive
18. I really work hard to learn English	4.42	1.495	Positive
19. To be honest, I really have no desire to learn English	5.21	1.483	Very positive
20. I think that learning English is dull	5.04	1.475	Positive
21. I love learning English	5.25	1.341	Very positive
22. My attitude towards English speaking people is	4.86	1.520	Positive
23. My interest in foreign languages is	5.42	1.180	Very positive
24. My desire to learn English is	5.44	1.264	Very positive
25. My attitude towards learning English is	5.28	1.368	Very positive
<b>Sum of mean</b>	<b>121.78</b>	<b>15.992</b>	<b>Positive</b>

The numerical results of Table 3 generally show a positive attitude toward English language learning with the 8 highest-ranked items. This is shown clearly by the average mean score of ( $M = 4.87$ , and  $SD = 0.641$ ) in Table 2. For instance, statement number 1 ("I wish I could speak many foreign languages") has the highest mean (5.71) of all the subjects' results in the questionnaire. Statement number 24 ("My desire to learn English is...") is the second-highest mean score with 5.44 for attitude items, and statement number 23 ("My interest in foreign languages is...") has an average mean score of 5.42. The items showed no negative attitude result meanwhile 4 questions out of 25 received "Slightly positive attitude" with the lowest mean = 3.61 and the highest SD = 1.869 (statement number 8: "I do not bother checking my assignments when I get them back from my English teacher"). However, the overall mean score of students demonstrates a positive level of attitude.

**Table 4. Motivation level of Tunisian students in learning the English language**

<b>Descriptive Statistics of Motivation</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Level</b>
26. If Tunisia had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss	5.00	1.603	High
27. Studying English is important because it will allow me to be more at ease with people who speak English	5.46	1.187	Highest
28. I have a strong desire to know all aspects of English	5.08	1.307	High
29. My English class is really a waste of time	5.08	1.525	High
30. Studying English is important because it will be useful in getting a good job	5.64	0.832	Highest
31. Studying English is important because I will need it for my career	5.64	0.952	Highest
32. Knowing English isn't really an important goal in my life	4.92	1.597	High
33. I can't be bothered trying to understand the more complex aspects of English	4.02	1.833	Slightly High

34. Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with	4.41	1.604	High
35. Studying English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with more varied people	5.47	1.152	Highest
36. I really have no interest in foreign languages	5.03	1.589	High
37. Studying English is important because it will make me more educated	5.35	1.158	Highest
38. I wish I could have many native English-speaking friends	5.06	1.351	High
39. Studying English is very important because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate the English way of life	5.19	1.284	Highest
40. I would like to know more native English speakers	5.13	1.285	High
41. I enjoy meeting people who speak foreign languages	5.18	1.334	Highest
42. Studying English is important because other people will respect me more if I know English	4.82	1.526	High
43. When I have a problem understanding something in my English class, I always have my teacher for help	4.46	1.629	High
44. Studying English is important because I will be able to interact more easily with speakers of English	5.45	1.044	Highest
45. I tend to give up and not pay attention when I don't understand my English teacher's explanations of something	4.72	1.625	High
46. My motivation to learn English in order to communicate with English speaking people is	5.37	1.153	Highest
47. My motivation to learn English for practical purposes example to get a good job is	5.66	0.878	Highest
48. My motivation to learn English to get a good diploma is	5.39	1.227	Highest
<b>Sum of mean</b>	<b>117.53</b>	<b>13.921</b>	<b>High</b>

Responses to this category present that a high motivation can be perceived. Compared to Table 2, this category represents the biggest numerical value in the total mean response ( $M = 5.11 > 4.87$ ). 10 items were ranked with the highest motivation level. 6 items out of 10 showed an integrative orientation toward the target community, and 4 items out of 10 were the instrumental motivation. Of the two motivational constructs, namely, instrumental motivation and integrative motivation that have been the focus of the present study, instrumental motivation (items 47) received the highest mean scores, (overall  $M = 5.17$ ) as shown in Table 1. For example, the students highly favoured learning English for the purpose of getting a job as this reason had received the highest mean score i.e., 5.66. Learning English to enable them to get a good diploma is followed next in order ( $M = 5.39$ ). As Table 4 shows, the respondents have somewhat high motivation when it comes "to understanding the more complex aspects of English" ( $M = 4.02$ ).

#### 4.3 TYPES OF STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TOWARDS LEARNING ENGLISH (INTEGRATIVE OR INSTRUMENTAL)

**Table 5. The overall mean of students' integrative and instrumental motivation**

Motivation	Sum of Mean	Total Mean	SD	Level
<b>Integrative</b>	65.82	5.063	0.683	High motivation
<b>Instrumental</b>	51.68	5.168	0.634	High motivation
Total	117.5	5.115	0.658	

When the two forms of learning motivation are compared, it is shown that these students had about equal integrative and instrumental drive to learn English, with average mean scores of 5.063 and 5.168, respectively. Their instrumental motivation to study English is very high (5.168) and surpassed their integrative motivation by 0.105.

The subjects indicated that they were very highly instrumentally motivated to study English as the language will enable them to have a good career or to get a good diploma, and they were highly integratively motivated to learn English in order to meet with varied people, to understand the cultures and traditions of the other member countries, as well as their ways of life.

Figure 2 below shows a histogram in relation to frequency distribution.

The distribution of the instrumental motivation of the Tunisian students learning the English language is approximately symmetrical. The average instrumental motivation level of the 170 Tunisian students is about  $M = 51.68$  with a close Median = 52, and  $SD = 6.344$ .

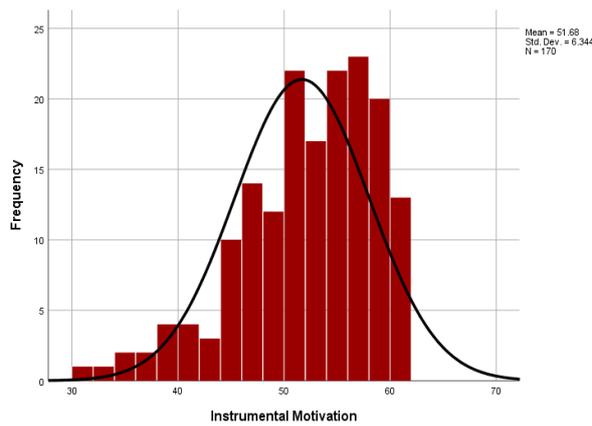


Figure 2. Instrumental motivation histogram of frequency distribution

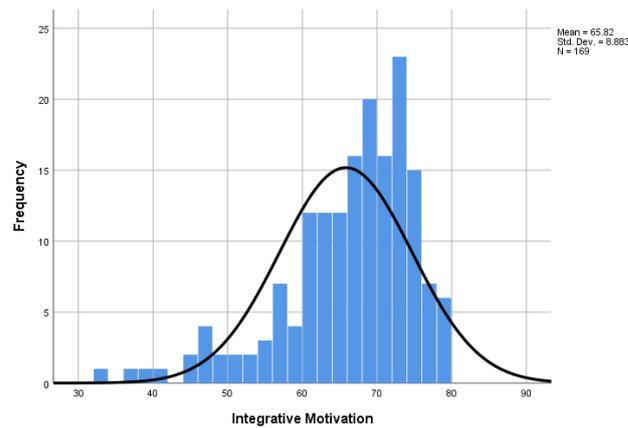


Figure 3. Integrative motivation histogram of frequency distribution

Figure 3 above presents a left-skewed distribution according to the direction of the tail with  $M = 65.82$  less than the Median = 68, and  $SD = 8.883$ . There appear to be several outliers that look pulled out to the left.

#### 4.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

Table 6. Correlation test between attitude and motivation in learning English

	Motivation	Attitude
Motivation	1	.773**
Attitude	.773**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result of the analysis using the Pearson r correlation in Table 6 shows that two variables have a high positive relationship which is attitude and motivation ( $r = 0.773$ ) close to 1. The results of the correlation test showed that the two variables were at a significant level of  $p < 0.01$ . This proves that the attitude and motivation of students in learning the English language influence each other. It shows that an increase in attitude behaviour would lead to a higher English language learning motivation.

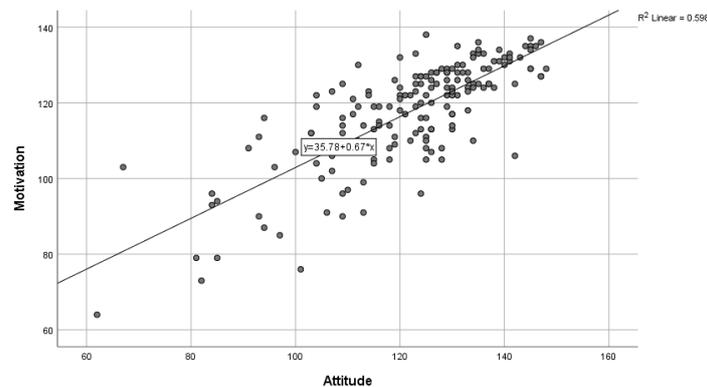


Figure 4. Scatterplot figure of the relationship between attitude and motivation

We conclude too from the scatterplot Figure 4 that there is a high positive linear relationship between  $X = \text{attitude}$  and  $Y = \text{motivation}$  in the population at the 0.01 level with the equation of the regression line  $y = 35.78 + 0.67 * x$  that best fits the points. The two variables move in the same direction as  $Y$  increases  $X$  increases.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Different studies have been conducted in various foreign language contexts on the attitude and motivation of learners. Many researchers have used Gardner's Motivation Theory as the theoretical framework but very few of these studies have been conducted in Arabic multilingual settings where L3 is a world language. The case of Tunisian learners of English is unique owing to the country's multicultural and multilingual background and its shifting focus on global English use in the country (Smari et al., 2020; Dridi et al., 2020; Salah et al., 2020). The findings with regard to the four research questions of this study are discussed in the following sections.

In the present study, we examined the attitudes and motivation for learning English and their relationship. Both types of motivation (integrative and instrumental) were included in order to provide a clearer picture of a wide range of motivational constructs of Tunisian students. One of the objectives of the study was to determine the students' attitudes and motivation levels toward English language learning. The study has determined that students have a positive attitude and high motivation for English language learning, and the findings were consistent with previous research. For instance, Vaezi (2008) found that Iranian students learning English as a foreign language were extremely motivated and had positive attitudes towards learning English. Another study conducted by Al Rifai (2010) evaluated the attitudes and motivation of 107 college students learning English as a second language in Kuwait, which matched the research findings. The results have demonstrated that the subjects were highly motivated to learn English and had a positive attitude towards the English language, and consequently towards the English culture.

Due to the fact that the two notions are closely connected or cannot be easily differentiated, the positive attitude of Tunisian students towards the target language English might possibly be attributable to their level of motivation. Nonetheless, as Ager (2001) argues, there is a hierarchical relationship between motivation and attitudes. In other words, motivation influences attitudes, which in turn influence language learning behaviour.

Similarly, Brown (1994) contends that positive attitudes aid second or foreign language learners whereas negative attitudes may lead to lower motivation. As a result of the mutual influence and correlation between motivation and attitudes, the high level of motivation and favourable attitudinal orientation towards the English language might be better understood. Furthermore, the high level of motivation and positive attitude of Tunisian youngsters towards the English language reflects the overall status of foreign languages in Tunisian culture, where command of a foreign language is generally highly valued (Dridi et al., 2020).

The next important task of this study was to identify what type of motivation (integrative or instrumental) could be the primary source of the student's motivation for learning English. According to the results, Tunisian students were found to be highly motivated to study English. It has also been discovered that learners are equally driven to study the language both instrumentally and integratively. However, a closer examination reveals that the pupils are slightly more motivated instrumentally to learn English. Though the associated results are not dramatic, the pupils' instrumental tendency is noteworthy.

Wimolmas (2013) discovered similar findings. He investigated the type and level of English language learning motivation (instrumental or integrative) of 30 first-year undergraduate students at an international engineering and technology institute in Thailand. His findings suggest that pupils are relative highly motivated to study English and found to be slightly more instrumentally motivated. Shirbagi (2010) suggested that Iranian students learn English primarily for utilitarian purposes rather than for integrative purposes.

Qashoa (2006) performed research among Dubai secondary school students. The objectives of the study were to (a) investigate students' instrumental and integrative motivation for learning English, and (b) identify the elements influencing learners' motivation. According to the data, pupils exhibit a greater level of instrumentality than integrativeness. Besides, Gardner and Lambert, on the other hand, argue that the integrative/instrumental distinction represents a continuum rather than two choices (cited in Ellis, 1985: 117). Learners of a second language, for example, may have a variety of motivations for learning a language and so possess both forms of motivation, which are not always easily differentiated.

Moiinvaziri (2008) indicated that Iranian students in her research were highly motivated in both instrumental and integrative orientations. The students' inclination for instrumental motivation may be of tremendous benefit to the three educational institutions of the present research in terms of improving the institutes' English language development programs through new emphasis. Simultaneously, the institutes should consider the prospects and methods for students' integrative motivation reasons to study English and, eventually, increase their skills. It may be advantageous for the institutions to create extracurricular language programs or events involving both education institute members and students in order to stimulate interaction and improve language exposure and usage. According to the findings of this study, the results are unique for these specific students, particularly their strong motivation in both instrumental and integrative components, with a minor preponderance in instrumental motivation.

As part of the study, the last research question was tested: Is there a relationship between attitude and motivation for learning the English language? The patterns of the results for the correlation between attitude and motivation in total are quite consistent across all the variables. The correlation analysis indicated a strong, significant, and positive correlation between attitude and motivation with the Pearson Correlation value which stands at ( $r = 0.773$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Previous research proves the existence of a relationship between motivation and attitude in language learning (such Nazari et al., 2015; Gardner, 1985; Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011; Liu, 2014).

This result is completely comprehensible due to the fact that high motivation is closely related to positive attitudes (Starks & Paltridge, 1996). Karahan (2007: 84) states that "positive language attitudes let learner have a positive orientation towards learning

English". Therefore, attitudes may play a vital role in language learning as they would seem to affect students' success or failure in second/foreign language learning (Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2009).

The relationship between motivation and attitudes has long been seen as a pillar of language acquisition research. Gardner and Lambert (1972, p.3) observe that "his [the learner's] motivation to learn is thought to be determined by his attitudes towards the other group in particular and by his orientation towards the learning task itself". Besides, Lifrieri (2005, p.14) states that "attitudes are necessary but insufficient indirect conditions for linguistic attainment. Only when paired up with motivation proper do attitudinal tendencies relate to the levels of student engagement in language learning, and to attainment".

In general, a better understanding of students' motivation and attitudes may aid ESL/EFL curriculum designers in developing a language teaching education system that fosters attitudes and motivation most conducive to the development of more successful ESL/EFL learners (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Midraj, 1998; 2003 cited in Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2009).

## 6. CONCLUSION

The findings paint a picture of students learning English in Tunisia. The first and second research questions yielded astonishing and, based on previous studies, unexpected results. The questionnaire revealed that learners had high positive attitudes toward learning English and were highly motivated to do so, with attitudes receiving a mean of 4.87 and motivation receiving a mean of 5.11. The data also demonstrated that instrumental motivation obtained a higher mean of 5.168 than integrative motivation, which received a mean of 5.063. In other words, the learners were more instrumentally motivated than integratively. These findings clarify the answer to the third research question. However, it was not surprising in light of other studies that came to the same conclusion in different nations, namely, that instrumental incentives exceeded integrative ones. The findings demonstrate that there is a link between the variables for the final research question concerning correlations, which meets one of the key objectives specified by this study: the Pearson Correlation score of 0.773 indicates a strong positive correlation between attitudes and total motivation. Considering high motivation is closely connected to positive attitudes, this result is completely understandable.

The purpose of the present study was to collect information and outcomes that would be useful to instructors or educators that educate Tunisian youth by highlighting their attitudes and motivation and determining whether they are integratively or instrumentally driven to learn English. The findings may be used to develop measures to boost students' learning motivation as well as teaching strategies and instructions for English language learning achievement. Furthermore, the findings of this paper will be useful to researchers, ESL/EFL teachers, and students, as well as course designers.

The current study included several limitations that should be noted in order to avoid generalisations and misinterpretations of the results. It is limited to 170 students from various educational levels (primary school, secondary school, and university) in the academic year of 2021/2022. The findings may not be representative or generalisable to other student groups or similar institutions in other locations. Future research should also include more variety of institutions or universities.

Another limitation was that the study presented overall results and did not show the results that distinguished each school type. However, to pursue deep information around the topic, interviews will be examined later regarding each school type because they are so useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences.

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